

Open

Council

Agenda

6pm
Wednesday, 25th February 2015
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Council

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4. If you have any special requirements regarding access to the venue and its facilities including audio and visual needs please let us know in advance so that we can make arrangements for you.
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COUNCIL MEETING

17th February 2015

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

PRESS AND PUBLIC

Dear Member

YOU ARE INVITED to attend a meeting of the Wyre Forest District Council to be held **at 6.00p.m. on Wednesday 25th February 2015**, in the Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster.

The Agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "I R Miller".

Ian Miller
Chief Executive

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct (“the Code”) requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members’ Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council’s constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI’s and ODI’s are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council’s Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

(A) TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL

The Council

1. Is the ultimate decision making Body.
2. Determines the Budget (but reserves powers to itself in relation to requirements).
3. Is responsible for appointing (and dismissing) the Leader of the Council.
4. Appoints at its Annual Meeting, the Regulatory Committees, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other Committees/Forums necessary to conduct the Council’s business.
5. Decides on matters where the Cabinet is not minded to determine a matter in accordance with Council policy.

(B) MATTERS RESERVED TO THE COUNCIL

1. Those reserved by Law e.g. levying a rate, borrowing money, promotion of or opposition to a Bill in Parliament.
2. Matters reserved to the Council by financial regulations.
3. The adoption and amendment of Standing Orders, including the powers and duties of Committees and other forums.
4. Power to make, amend, revoke or enact or enforce any byelaws.
5. The determination of the objectives of the Council.
6. Matters of new policy or variation of existing policy as contained within the budget and policy framework.
7. Local Development Framework adoption.
8. Any function where a decision would be contrary to a plan, policy, budget or strategy previously adopted by the Council, which would be contrary to the Council’s Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or Executive arrangements.
9. The Scheme of Delegations to Officers.

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At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

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By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to be filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and or training purposes.

If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the Stourport and Bewdley Room where they can still view the meeting.

If any attendee is under the age of 18 the written consent of his or her parent or guardian is required before access to the meeting room is permitted. Persons under 18 are welcome to view the meeting from the Stourport and Bewdley Room.

If you have any queries regarding this, please speak with the Council's Legal Officer at the meeting.

Wyre Forest District Council

Council

Wednesday, 25th February 2015

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Prayers To be said by Reverend Rose Lawley - Kidderminster Parish Church Team Ministry.	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 th December 2014.	11
5.	Public Participation In accordance with the Council's scheme for public speaking at meetings of Council, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 16 th February 2015. <i>If you wish to speak on an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline and you could not reasonably have known about it at the time, you should register your interest in speaking no later than 9am on the day of the meeting of Council. In the case of a request to speak on an urgent matter, the Solicitor to the Council will rule on whether or not the matter is urgent and that ruling will be final.</i>	
6.	Questions One question has been submitted in accordance with Standing Order A5 by a Member of the Council.	22

	<i>In the case of an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline above, and could not have been reasonably known at that time, it must be delivered in writing to the Solicitor to the Council no later than 9am on the day of Council.</i>	
7.	Chairman's Communications To note the engagements of the Chairman of the Council since the Council's last meeting.	23
8.	Leader of the Council Announcements To receive announcements from the Leader of the Council.	
9.	<p>Motions Submitted under Standing Orders</p> <p>Two motions have been received in accordance with Standing Orders (Section 7, 4.1).</p> <p>1. Motion from Councillor J Shaw, Leader of the Labour Group</p> <p><i>Council, noting</i></p> <p><i>that Scotland's independence debate has decisively changed the debate about devolving power to English communities;</i></p> <p><i>that Scotland has benefitted from greater control over tax, spending and public services as a consequence of devolution and has received further powers recently;</i></p> <p><i>that, in stark contrast, similar powers and financial incentives are not currently on offer to communities in England;</i></p> <p><i>that England is a nation of 54 million people, with major cities and counties in themselves as populous as the devolved nations of the union, with public sectors on a comparable scale;</i></p> <p><i>considers</i></p> <p><i>that, if the UK Government has recognised that it must empower Scotland more fully, it cannot escape the political logic of doing the same for English communities, as the perceived unfairness of leaving England as the last outpost of the old UK way of doing things would be permanently destabilising;</i></p> <p><i>that an urgent conversation on the future of devolution is needed. The UK Government must establish a new deal with English local government and the communities that these councils represent. It is time for the UK Government to commit to offering England the political and fiscal devolution currently on the table in Scotland;</i></p> <p><i>that all areas in England, including cities and shires, should have greater financial powers and control over the delivery of public services so as to ensure local choice, discretion and competition; and that currently existing structures such as combined authorities,</i></p>	

	<p><i>mayors, health and wellbeing boards, joint committees, local enterprise partnerships and public service boards, amongst others, should be utilised in effecting devolution;</i></p> <p><i>that consideration needs to be given to the issue of fair funding across the UK : the sharing-out of tax and spending between the four countries needs to be put on to a new, sustainable and fair basis; and</i></p> <p><i>resolves</i></p> <p><i>to support the immediate establishing of a constitutional convention to debate and agree a fair devolution settlement across the UK. A convention of this type would not imply delaying devolution; it is simply a way of ensuring that all areas of the UK benefit a comparable level of devolution as Scotland;</i></p> <p><i>to make the council’s position clear to the Secretary of State.</i></p> <p>2. Motion from Councillor J Shaw, Leader of the Labour Group</p> <p><i>Council, recognising</i></p> <p><i>that one major area to be revised in the District Local Plan will be Kidderminster town centre,</i></p> <p><i>that the use of land for housing will be a significant element in this revision,</i></p> <p><i>that, particularly, new use designations will be necessary for the land from the Kidderminster Eastern Gateway through to Worcester Street,</i></p> <p><i>that Wyre Forest District Council is a major landowner in this area of the town centre,</i></p> <p><i>that Wyre Forest District Council is the Authority responsible for overall housing provision in the district, including the range of house types, social mix, and tenures,</i></p> <p><i>and that Wyre Forest is a low-waged area in which 55% of households do not earn enough to buy a house priced at £120,000,</i></p> <p><i>resolves, in principle,</i></p> <p><i>that, at an early stage in the redevelopment, an offer of a significant site in this area for a joint venture with a housing association or housing co-operative will be made, to provide properties to rent at affordable, “social rent” levels.</i></p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Urgent Motions submitted under Standing Orders</p> <p>To consider motions in the order they have been received which, by reason of special circumstances, should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Standing Orders (Section 7, 4.1 (vii)).</p>	

<p>11.</p>	<p>Policy and Budget Framework</p> <p>Matters which require a Decision by Council.</p> <p>a. Recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 5th February 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management Service Strategy 2015/16 <p>b. Recommendations from Licensing & Environmental Committee, 9th February 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Fees and Charges for Licensing the Council's Regulatory Service Function for 2015/2016 <p><i>Please note that the reports and associated documents, referred to above, have been circulated electronically to Members. Public inspection copies are available on request. Please refer to the front cover for contact details.</i></p>	<p>24</p> <p>26</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Financial Strategy 2015-18</p> <p>To approve the Council's budget for 2015-18 having considered the proposed decision and budget reports recommended to Council by Cabinet on 17th February 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees and Charges • Three Year Budget, Capital Programme and Policy Framework 2015-18 • Council Tax 2015-16 • Report of the Chief Financial Officer in respect of Sections 25 – 28 Local Government Act 2003 	<p>27</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Council Tax 2015-16</p> <p>To consider and approve the formal resolution for setting the Council Tax for 2015-16. The amount of Council Tax depends on the budget proposal recommendations from Cabinet to Council on 17th February 2015 which includes the precepts by Worcestershire County Council, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority.</p>	<p>56</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>The Future Governance of Kidderminster</p> <p>To consider a report from the Chief Executive which asks Council to approve the household information leaflet and information for the Council's website for the Community Governance Review of Kidderminster.</p>	<p>67</p>

15.	<p>Half Yearly Report from the Chief Executive</p> <p>To consider a half yearly report from the Chief Executive.</p>	79
16.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	
17.	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in the paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p>	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

18.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

10TH DECEMBER 2014 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: S J Williams (Chairman), C Rogers (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, G W Ballinger, R Bishop, C Brewer, J-P Champion, S J M Clee, A R Clent, E Davies, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, B T Glass, D R Godwin, J Greener, P B Harrison, J A Hart, M J Hart, P V Hayward, V Higgs, A T Hingley, J Holden, L Hyde, M B Kelly, N Knowles, R J Lloyd, B McFarland, C D Nicholls, F M Oborski, T L Onslow, J W Parish, J Phillips, M Price, M Rayner, A M Sewell, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard, M J Stooke, P Wooldridge, M J Wrench and G C Yarranton.

C.51 Prayers

Prayers were said by Pastor Rob Palmer of Franche Evangelical Church, Kidderminster.

C.52 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence

C.53 Declarations of Interests by Members

There were no declarations of interest.

C.54 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C.55 Public Participation

One member of the public had registered to speak to act as spokesman for a number of traders located in Worcester Street, Prospect Hill and Coventry Street, Kidderminster. He addressed Council as follows:

“Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Russ Kelsall and I am here tonight as the spokesman for a number of traders located in Worcester Street, Prospect Hill and Coventry Street.

As a group we feel let down, frustrated and amazed in how the streets we are all located in have been neglected for the last 10 plus years.

For the last 5 years or so I have been involved with the town centre partnership to try to influence and support the town centre as much as possible, but for all the time I have spent in meetings nothing has been done to improve these streets !

In July this year I and two other retailers had a meeting with Marcus Hart and John Campion to discuss our concerns and to try to find out if the council had any plans for improvements to these streets in the near future - to say we all left feeling frustrated and fobbed off would be an understatement!

In the last couple of months since then we have spent time being interviewed by the local press, radio and being part of email discussions with certain members of the council, trying to raise the plight of these streets but have we got anywhere - NO !

So recently we have been in discussion with a couple of members of the council who have been interested in listening to our issues, they have tried to help, hence why I am here tonight to appeal to all of you, the entire members of the Wyre Forest council for help and support and the weight of action and votes to get something done for these streets sooner rather than later -

In short we have issues with

The poor state of the Christmas lights.

Damaged safety bollards and bicycle shelter which have been waiting for repair for well over a year.

The lack of any flower tubs / hanging baskets in Worcester street this year.

Lack of on street parking - and why did the on street parking that had been planned to be done within Worcester Street get cancelled?

Business rates historically high, and are overdue to be recalculated.

It appears as if Worcester Street and other areas have been, and continue to be purposely neglected - why?

In the Express and Star on the 27th of November John Campion is quoted as saying that he hoped to make an announcement early in the new year as to when work may commence on the phase for improvements to Worcester street - for the business holders involved can you please give us an early Christmas present and give us some good news as to when we can expect this to happen - or is just more mere words and you have no idea as to when work will start ?

Worcester street is currently used by lorries, delivery trucks, vans, cars, fire engines, bin wagons etc etc, if it safe for these vehicles to do so, and we have been told the road surface is more than adequate for these vehicles to go up and down, why can't the street be opened up in the short term without the road surface being replaced, just get the signage and road markings put in place and get traffic moving along the street - it will cost a

fraction of the reported price of one million.

What is happening with Crown House? Why has it been possible to discuss a 5 year lease if the unit is due to be demolished?

In Summary, so from what I have just explained here tonight, you can see there are a number of questions that need to be asked and answers sought - and most importantly there are business's within the town that need supporting, not ignoring - please, please hear us, and support us!"

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration thanked the public speaker for his comments and advised that the Council had carried out extensive consultation on the public realm in Kidderminster and the results had been displayed in the former T J Hughes building. The value of the project was £2m which had been funded by the Council and £1.5m by Worcestershire County Council. Phase 2 would see an extension of Weavers Wharf through to Lower Mill Street and the demolition of Crown House. The third phase would see one way traffic introduced in Worcester Street and on street parking but there was no funding in place at present. The Council had taken significant steps to support traders through the Empty Grant Scheme and had offered free parking and cultural activities.

C.56

Questions

Council received two questions which had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order A5 by Members of the Council.

Question from Councillor N Knowles to the Leader of the Council

The Chairman has refused me, for the second Council meeting running, to ask a Question of the Leader after he gave his announcements. Which rule is it that precludes a Member questioning the Leader on his announcements?

It ought to be a democratic right. My question was, as I indicated, a seven word question "When will the link road be finished?" I respectfully ask whether, in future, the Leader will agree to take questions on his announcements.

Answer from the Leader of the Council

The short answer is no. I'm a little surprised you have now asked the question in this way, and to be fair to you, you have the jist of how the constitution works. The constitution clearly sets out leaders announcements and they are to receive those announcements. The decision of the Chairman, who I fully support as a fair chair of this chamber is final.

Supplementary Question from Councillor N Knowles

I am disappointed but not entirely surprised, seem scared of taking questions on report. Do you think we could change the constitution and so we could ask questions, County Council and other councils take questions,

even the Chief Executive takes questions?

Supplementary Answer from the Leader of the Council

Thank you but you are missing the point, this is not a report, it's a suite of announcements, in my County Cabinet role, I take questions and the Chief Executive here does a report twice a year. These are announcements but please ask questions in the appropriate way.

Question from Councillor N Knowles to the Leader of the Council

Would the Leader of the Council tell me if he still supports Kidderminster having its own elected Town Council and if he is prepared to use his office to help achieve it?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

I don't know if I did support or not. I don't think it's for us to dictate to the good people of Kidderminster who can make their own mind up. My position is clear and consistent, I support the democratic right of every single elector in Kidderminster to have their say, yes or no. We will be talking about this at agenda item number 14 of the report.

Supplementary Question from Councillor N Knowles

I notice his job is not to dictate but to advocate. Just thought the Leader of the Council was advocating for a Kidderminster Town Council.

Supplementary Answer from the Leader of the Council

Not sure what to say to that, other than not for me to advocate.

C.57 Chairman's Communications

The Council received a list of functions attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the Council's last meeting. He thanked his vice-chairman for his support and thanked Members who had attended the Civic service on 30th November. He also thanked all members and staff for their contributions to the foodbank appeal. He advised Members that he would be holding a Winter Warmer charity event at Rowberrys Nursery on 30th January 2015 and entertainment would be provided by the Kidderminster Male Voice Choir with tickets priced at £12.50.

C.58 Leader's Announcements and Report

The Leader of the Council referred Members to his report and reported the excellent work done by Kay Higman for securing a £2m grant for the new leisure centre.

There would be two sets of tenants moving into Wyre Forest House and thanks were given to Alison Braithwaite and her team for all the work involved. The local government settlement announcement was awaited.

C.59 Motions Submitted Under Standing Order No. D1 (1)

One motion had been received in accordance with Standing Order D1(1).

From Councillor J Shaw, Leader of the Labour Group.

“Council concerned that the average workplace wage in Wyre Forest is below the national average, and mindful of the example set by Salford City’s Charter for Employment Standards, resolves to convene meetings with local employers and trade unions, in order to discuss ways in which remuneration could be increased towards, and ultimately attain, the level of the Living Wage.”

Councillor Shaw presented his motion and advised Council that this referred to the average wage of people that worked in the Wyre Forest area and not household remuneration.

A robust and lengthy debate took place. Some members felt that the Council should take the initiative and help to create job opportunities for people.

There were concerns that people were being made to travel to work outside of the area because of no work locally and it was up to local Councillors to do the best for people. The average wage in the Wyre Forest area was perceived to be £17,000 per annum which was lower than the national average wage.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee advised Council that an item on poverty had been added to the work programme and would be presented to the March committee. It was possible that there could be recommendations to Council.

Decision:

The following motion from Councillor J Shaw, Leader of the Labour Group not be agreed:

Council concerned that the average workplace wage in Wyre Forest is below the national average, and mindful of the example set by Salford City’s Charter for Employment Standards, resolves to convene meetings with local employers and trade unions, in order to discuss ways in which remuneration could be increased towards, and ultimately attain, the level of the Living Wage.

C.60 Urgent Motions Submitted Under Standing Order No. D1 (7)

No notices of motions were received in accordance with Standing Order D1(1).

C.61 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

Council considered a report from the Chief Executive which asked Council to agree changes to the Polling Places and Polling Districts.

The Leader of the Council led Members through the report and advised he was pleased with the consultation response and that the proposals would lead to a reduction of six polling stations which in turn would save money. It was hoped that many electors would still vote on 7th May 2015 and there was an option of having a postal/proxy vote if they felt their polling station was too far away.

Councillor J-P Campion left the meeting at this point, 19.26pm and returned at 19.26pm.

Councillor P Dyke left the meeting at this point, 19.28pm and returned at 19.30pm.

Council held a robust debate. Several amendments to retain or provide additional polling places were moved as follows

- a. Walshes Community Hall (AK-B) (moved by Councillor J Shaw, seconded by Councillor V Higgs).

The Leader of the Labour Group proposed to retain the Walshes Community Hall and advised that the hall was not under threat of closure and had had money spent on it recently.

Councillor L Hyde left the meeting at this point, 19.33pm and returned at 19.36pm.

It was felt that the access to the proposed polling station was not adequate and the walking distance would be doubled.

- b. St John's Church Hall, Habberley (moved by Councillor N Knowles, seconded by Councillor B McFarland).

Councillor V Higgs left the meeting at this point, (19.48pm).

An amendment was presented by The Labour Group that the status quo be maintained at St. Johns Church Hall and that all residents be allowed to vote at that polling station. A petition of 400 signatures was handed in which had been signed by residents of the Habberley area.

Councillor V Higgs returned to the meeting at this point, (19.50pm).

It was felt that the proposed polling station was too far away for residents and people would be denied their vote.

Councillors D Godwin and D Sheppard left the meeting at this point, (19.56pm). Councillor D Godwin returned at 19.57pm and D Godwin returned at 19.59pm.

It was pointed out that the previously used Worcestershire County Council building was still taking bookings. It was felt that there would be chaos in the car park at the Gainsborough Hotel and people would struggle to cross the main road to get to the polling station.

Councillor G Yarranton left the meeting at this point, (20.16pm).

- c. St Oswald's School, Sion Hill (BR-B) (moved by Councillor M Rayner, seconded by Councillor A Sewell).

It was proposed to continue using St Oswald's School on Sion Hill as people would have to cross a busy main road and a very steep hill to navigate, making it difficult for electors to vote at the new polling station.

Councillor G Yarranton came back to the meeting at this point, (20.18pm).

- d. The Y Centre, Rifle Range Community Centre (OL-A1) (moved by Councillor M Wrench, seconded by Councillor P Wooldridge).

The Leader of UKIP asked for The Y Centre to be retained as a polling station.

Councillor M B Kelly left the meeting at this point, (20.33pm).

The polling station was in the heart of the community and residents should not be sent down a busy road to cast their vote.

In response, it was confirmed that this polling station was no longer viable to be used as turnout figures were very low and had not improved over the years. No responses had been received from residents on the closure of this location.

Councillors J Hart and M Stooke left the meeting at this point, (20.57pm).

- e. Old Rose and Crown Public House, Stourport-on-Severn (MI-B) (moved by Councillor J Holden, seconded by Councillor P Wooldridge).

It was proposed that the polling station be retained at the Old Rose & Crown Public House as there was a large electorate that voted at this location.

Councillor L Hyde left the meeting at this point, (20.58pm).

Councillor J Hart returned to the meeting at this point, (20.58pm).

There had been no complaints from this location being used as a polling station and people could walk to the venue and use it also for social gatherings. The new tenant had also agreed that he was prepared to reduce the fee charged for the premises.

Councillor Stooke came back to the meeting at this point, (21.01pm).

Councillor B T Glass left the meeting at this point, (21.01pm).
Councillor L Hyde came back to the meeting at this point, (21.02pm).
Councillor B T Blass came back to the meeting at this point,
(21.03pm).

- f. Wilden Village Hall (MI-C) (moved by Councillor D Sheppard, seconded by Councillor V Higgs).

It was proposed to keep Wilden Village Hall as a polling station as the distance to St Wulstans Community Centre was much too far. Wilden Village Hall was used by many elderly electors and although there were not many electors that voted at this place, it was a busy station. In addition, it was stated that there were busy roads to cross and there were no bus stops until you reached Mitton Street.

- g. Other Polling Place Proposals Received

It was proposed to use the Odell Centre, Park Street, Kidderminster as a polling station (moved by Councillor M Wrench, seconded by Councillor M Stooke).

Councillor M Rayner left the meeting at this point, (21.20pm).

The location has been used in the past and the Elections Team had visited the site and the facilities were deemed fit for purpose.

Councillor M Rayner came back to the meeting at this point, (21.23pm).

Councillor P Wooldridge left the meeting at this point, (21.23pm).

It was felt that the Odell Centre would be more a suitable venue for the residents in the area.

Councillor P Wooldridge came back to the meeting at this point, (21.26pm).

The centre had only just been reopened after the building being closed for many years. It was confirmed that the electors of SP-A1 and SP-A2 could use the Odell Centre instead of the Evangelical Church in Greatfield Road.

Councillor P B Harrison left the meeting at this point, (21.38pm).

Councillor J Parish advised Council that the proposed Stourport Working Mens Club location was landlocked and had no public right of way, it was private ground and it was considered that this was an unsuitable venue. It was confirmed that the Working Mens Club were willing for the venue to be used as a polling station but this would be double checked.

Councillor P B Harrison came back to the meeting at this point, (21.41pm).

A vote was taken on each amendment and the result on each occasion of the named vote was:

For: Councillors: G W Ballinger, C Brewer, A Clent, E Davies, B T Glass, V Higgs, J Holden, L Hyde, M B Kelly, N Knowles, R L Lloyd, B McFarland, C D Nicholls, J Parish, M Rayner, A Sewell, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard, M Stooke, P Wooldridge and M Wrench.

Against: Councillors: J Aston, R Bishop, J-P Campion, S J M Clee, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, D R Godwin, J Greener, P B Harrison, J Hart, M J Hart, P V Hayward, A T Hingley, F M Oborski, T Onslow, J Phillips, M Price, C Rogers, S J Williams and G Yarranton.

On each occasion, the Chairman exercised his casting vote against the amendment and the amendment therefore fell.

Decision: The polling districts and polling places set out in the chart at paragraph 4.5 of the report to Council be agreed to be used with effect from the elections in May 2015.

There was a short comfort break at this point, (21.49pm) and Members returned at 21.58pm.

Councillors A Clent and B T Glass left the meeting at this point, (21.49pm).

C.62 The Future Governance of Kidderminster

A report was considered from the Chief Executive which asked Council to agree various matters relating to the Community Governance Review of Kidderminster, which is to commence on 1st February 2015.

Members were taken through the report and advised that a report would be presented to the February 2015 Council meeting.

Councillors G Ballinger, P Hayward, J Greener, P Harrison, McFarland, C Nicholls, F Oborski, M Rayner, M Stooke and G Yarranton came back to the meeting at this point (21.59pm).

Decision:

- 1. The terms of reference for the review in Appendix 1 of the report to Council be agreed.**
- 2. The question to be asked in the local advisory poll on 7th May 2015, together with the franchise and other procedural rules for the local poll, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Council be agreed.**

C.63 Corporate Governance

Council considered a report from the Solicitor to the Council which asked Council to agree the revised political balance.

Decision: The revised political balance of the Council as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be agreed.

Councillor J Holden came back to the meeting at this point, (22.03pm).

C.64 Independent Remuneration Panel Report for 2015/16 Onward

The Leader of the Council took Members through the report and were advised that work has been carried out by a new Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and although he did not agree with all the recommendations, he asked Council to accept them so the Council could start afresh with the reduction of Councillors in May 2015. Members were reminded that in addition to the savings that the IRP recommendations would make, additional savings of £37K would be made with the reduction of councillors.

A debate ensued and it was proposed that the report be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee but this proposal was later withdrawn.

Councillor J Holden left the meeting at this point, (22.26pm).

Decision:

- 1. That regard should be had to the conclusions and recommendations of the IRP in making any amendments to the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2015/16.**
- 2. The Panel's recommendations for basic allowances and special responsibility allowances for the municipal year 2015/16, coming into effect on 11th May 2015 be adopted.**
- 3. The basic and special responsibility allowances should be increased by an index for the years commencing 1st April 2016, 1st April 2017 and 1st April 2018. The index to be used shall be the Consumer Prices Index as published by the Office for National Statistics for the month of January immediately prior to the financial year in question.**
- 4. The Dependent Carer's Allowance be extended to include an elderly relative or disabled person who resides with a councillor and cannot be left alone.**
- 5. The mileage allowance at 40p per mile be maintained.**
- 6. The Council's Solicitor be authorised to amend the Constitution as appropriate to give effect to the Council's decisions.**

C.65 Policy and Budget Framework

Matters which require a Decision by Council.

a. Recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6th November 2014

- **Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid Year Report 2014/15**

Decision: The mid-year review and updated Prudential Indicators be approved.

b. Recommendations from Licensing & Environmental Committee 8th December 2014

- **Licensing Act 2003 Review of Statement of Licensing Policy**

Decision: The revised Statement of Licensing Policy attached at Appendix 1 of the report to the Licensing & Environmental Committee be approved and published with effect from 11th December 2014.

The meeting ended at 22.32 pm.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
25TH FEBRUARY 2015
QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL

1. Question from Councillor D Sheppard to the Leader of the Council

Are the Cabinet aware that a major leisure organisation in Worcestershire is still interested in acquiring Stourport Sports Centre, Harold Davies Drive for the continued benefit of the residents of Stourport and the surrounding area?

CHAIRMAN'S LIST OF FUNCTIONS

2014/15

DECEMBER 2014

3rd Wyre Forest Sports Awards
6th Worcester Male Voice Choir at Pershore
Abbey
12th Mayor of Kidderminster's Carol Service
13th Pershore Operatic and Dramatic Society
20th Kidderminster Choral Society

JANUARY 2015

7th Unveiling of VC Paving Stone
18th Wychavon Civic Service
25th Holocaust Memorial Service
30th WFDC Winter Warmer
31st Monday Night Group Pantomime

FEBRUARY 2015

8th Worcester Civic Service
14th Kidderminster Valentines Concert
16th Mercian Regiment Freedom of the District
Parade – Bromsgrove
20th Wyre Forest Dance Festival
21st Tenbury Wells Charity Show "Fit for a Queen"

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
25TH FEBRUARY 2015

POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK
MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A DECISION BY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 5TH FEBRUARY 2015

Purpose of Report

To consider recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on matters outside the policy framework or approved budget of the Council.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Would Councillors please note that the related reports and documents have not been included in the Council book, as they have already been sent to Members via the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agenda. A public inspection copy is available on request. The policy documents, referred to below, have been posted on the Council's website.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL	CABINET MEMBER
<p>Treasury Management Service Strategy 2015/16</p> <p>Recommend to Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2015/16 to 2017/18 included in Appendix 3 of the report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5th February 2015 be approved. These will be revised for the February 2015 Council meeting, as per paragraph 7.3 of the report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5th February 2015, following any changes to the Capital Programme brought about as part of the budget process. 2. The updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 of the report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5th February 2015 and the detailed criteria is included in Section 10 and Appendix 5 of the report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5th February 2015) be approved. 3. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5th February 2015 be approved. 	<p>Councillor N J Desmond</p>

<p>4. The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator included in Appendix 3 of the report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5th February 2015 be approved.</p>	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
25TH FEBRUARY 2015

POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK
MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A DECISION BY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LICENSING & ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMITTEE – 9TH FEBRUARY 2015

Purpose of Report

To consider recommendations from the Licensing and Environmental Committee on matters outside the policy framework or approved budget of the Council.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Would Councillors please note that the related reports and documents have not been included in the Council book, as they have already been sent to Members via the Licensing & Environmental Committee agenda. A public inspection copy is available on request. The policy documents, referred to below, have been posted on the Council's website.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL	CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE
<p>Increase in Fees and Charges for Licensing the Council's Regulatory Service Function for 2015/2016</p> <p>Recommend to Council:</p> <p>The proposals for fees and charges within the Council's Licensing, Food, Health, Safety and Pollution Control functions for 2015/2016, as detailed in the report to the Licensing & Environmental Committee at its meeting on 9th February 2015, be included in the 2015/2016 budget strategy.</p>	<p>Councillor P B Harrison</p>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**COUNCIL**
25th FEBRUARY 2015**Financial Strategy 2015-18**

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor N J Desmond
RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS:	Chief Financial Officer/Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Tracey Southall, Ext. 2100 tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
Appendix 1	Updated Base Budget Projections 2015-18
Appendix 2 - Part 1	Updated Capital Programme
Appendix 2 - Part 2	Updated Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals Schedule
Appendix 3	Updated Cabinet Proposals
Appendix 4	Fees and Charges
Appendix 5	Report of the Chief Financial Officer in respect of Sections 25-28 Local Government Act 2003
	<i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request.</i>

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Council on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-18 and make recommendations on the proposed budget decision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The **CABINET RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL** that it:

2.1 THREE YEAR BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2015-18

- 2.1.1 **APPROVES** the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-18;
- 2.1.2 **APPROVES** the updated Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council’s Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2015-18 as shown in Appendix 3;
- 2.1.3 **APPROVES** the fees and charges in line with this Strategy and the impact on the Council’s Revenue Budget for 2015-18, as shown in Appendix 4;
- 2.1.4 **APPROVES** the updated Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as set out in Appendix 2, Parts 1 and 2;

- 2.1.5 **APPROVES** that the first £244,000 of Right to Buy (RTB) receipts in 2015-16 and subsequent years be allocated to Disabled Facilities Grants (to a maximum Capital budget of £800,000 pa) and any extra RTB Capital Receipts be allocated to general capital reserves;
- 2.1.6 **APPROVES** that any Final Accounts savings arising from 2014-18 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Financial Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated by the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader;
- 2.1.7 **The General Fund Revenue Budget be APPROVED** including all updates from the position in December 2014 as set out in this report.

2.2 COUNCIL TAX

- 2.2.1 **SETS the** Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property at £205.36. for 2015-16 (£201.45 2014-15) which represents a 1.94% increase on Council Tax from 2014-15.
- 2.2.2 **ENDORSES** the provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2016-17 of £209.34 and £213.40 in 2017-18, an increase of 1.94 % per annum over 2015-16.
- 2.2.3 **NOTES** the Chief Financial Officer's opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet in this report, as detailed in Appendix 5 of this report.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 On 17th February 2015, Cabinet considered an updated report on proposals for the Budget Strategy for the period 2015-18. This report provided an updated position including the Final Settlement for 2015-16 now this has been published and recommended a proposed budget decision for Council to consider at this meeting.
- 3.2 The Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) Report 2015-16 was announced on the 3th February 2015. This confirmed that council tax increases of 2% and above will trigger a referendum. Therefore the 1.94% increase assumed within the Strategy and endorsed by the recent public consultation exercise (see paragraph 3.3 below) would not trigger a referendum. Taking into account the freeze in council tax for three years prior to 2014-15 the increase for 2015-16 means that council tax for Wyre Forest District Council will have been held below inflation across that five year period.
- 3.3 As agreed by the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel, a Council Tax Consultation exercise was launched on the 17th December 2014 to run until the 22nd January 2015. The results of this consultation were reported to Cabinet and showed that over 70% of the 183 respondents are in favour of the Council Tax increase of just under 2% for 2015-16. This has informed the final decision to recommend the small increase in 2015-16, rather than accepting the freeze grant offer.

- 3.4 The Capital Programme considered by December Cabinet has now been updated to include all final amendments. The revised Capital Programme for this Financial Strategy is included in Appendix 2.
- 3.5 Fees and Charges requiring Council approval are detailed in Appendix 4.
- 3.6 The overall financial implications of the updated Cabinet Proposals are shown in Appendix 3. Revisions are as detailed below:
- 3.6.1 Firstly, additional expenditure for economic regeneration of £200,000 in total over the Strategy. The Council is committed to supporting local economic recovery and through the ReWyre and State of the Area programmes has already supported growth in local businesses, stimulated inward investment in new jobs and infrastructure, offered new opportunities to improve skills and improve town centres. The new proposal will continue to support these and other essential strategic imperatives including the priority for setting out development plans for Worcester Street and the wider Eastern Gateway in Kidderminster. Funding will also continue for the Town Centre's Manager post for a three year period to progress the work already underway to support retail centres.
- 3.6.2 Secondly, in line with the Council's current position and in the light of alternative budget proposals, to continue to progress a commercial approach in all areas of service activity and seek sponsorship where ever possible. This will include a review of the effectiveness of economic regeneration in respect of Christmas activities. No savings have been assumed but are to be confirmed in due course.
- 3.6.3 Thirdly, to consider ideas put forward within the alternative budget proposals as part of the planned car parking review to be reported in June 2015.
- 3.6.4 Fourthly, to retain the Community Leadership Fund for 2015-16 in line with the already approved budget and then in light of the consultation response, to undertake a review to consider the future of the fund to be fed into the budget process next year. This changed approach reflects the feedback from the consultation, in which a majority of respondents opposed the proposal to provide funding in 2016-17, with 49% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. This response is consistent with current and past surveys that have shown a high level of opposition to spending on or associated with councillors (for example in respect of allowances and the frequency of elections).
- 3.6.5 Fifthly, to recognise continuing pressures on the waste collection service as a result of the new homes built in the district, there is a proposal to provide additional revenue funding of £105k over the Strategy. This is for additional waste crew resource to meet increased demand as and when this is needed to ensure this key service can be maintained. Costs could include temporary vehicle hire to cover extensive repairs of council owned vehicles. As part of this proposal, but outside the term of this strategy an extra refuse vehicle is needed in 2018-19 at a capital cost of £170k and revenue costs (including the cost of borrowing) of around £60k pa.
- 3.6.6 Finally, to continue to explore and consider alternative provision of service delivery by joint working, sharing and /or commissioning to protect front-line

services. This includes continued active participation in the county-wide Project Optimise initiative. A business case for each proposal will be considered taking into account affordability, efficiency and service delivery when financial implications will be confirmed.

- 3.7 The question in the consultation that received by far the strongest support was moving to whole council elections (84% support or strongly support, of whom 67% strongly support). The benefits of whole council elections would, among other things, include savings worth £150k over a three year term. The strategic alliance supports such a change and has sought to build support from the other political groups to bring forward a proposal to change the electoral cycle for consideration by a special meeting of the Council. It has now been confirmed that there is insufficient political support to progress this approach at this time.
- 3.8 The decision to remain a member of the Worcestershire Business Rates Pool will help to protect the Council from any business rate reductions and help maximise the benefit by retaining more of the business rates delivered from economic growth within Worcestershire. Economic and subsequent business rates growth remains a key priority for this Council. The position in relation to appeals and resultant uncertainty due to the impact on performance remains a concern; this is being managed by the Chief Financial Officer in conjunction with the other treasurers within the Pool. Business rates projections included within the December Cabinet report are now confirmed.
- 3.9 Taking these measures into account the projected Base Budget net expenditure for 2015-16 is estimated to be £13,393,230 (see paragraph 7.5). This is £518,570 more than currently estimated to be raised from Council Tax, Business Rates Income retained, Collection Fund Surplus and Revenue Support Grant.

4. LOCAL AUTHORITY REVENUE FINANCE SETTLEMENT FOR 2015-16

- 4.1 The Final Local Government Settlement announced on 3rd February 2015 confirmed the provisional figures released in December 2014. The Settlement was for 2015-16 only. As predicted, the austerity measures look set to continue until 2019, although the outlook for local government will be confirmed following the general election in May. The Council's updated summary Budget can be seen at Table 7.5.
- 4.2 The LGA has calculated that councils across England will receive 8.5% less funding from government to run local services for 2015-16, when council tax, ring fenced funding and the element of the Better Care Fund attributable to the NHS is removed from the calculation.
- 4.3 The following table identifies the position in relation to total Government grant taking into account the one-year Finance Settlement for 2015-16 confirmed on the 3rd February 2015. The table includes specific grants such as the Council Tax Freeze Grant, Council Tax Localisation Grant and Homelessness Prevention Grants, along with projected Business Rates income. Business Rates projections as previously reported in December are also confirmed. The total funding position is £88,870 better off than originally predicted over the term of the Strategy compared to the December 2014 Cabinet report. This assumes the funding increase notified in 2015-16 continues going forward, reduced in line with other funding assumptions.

Year	Government Support as at December 2014 including Business Rates	Government Support as per Finance Settlement (2015-16 only)	Variance to Assumption	Year on Year Decrease based on Finance Settlement Figures including Business Rates	
	£	£	£	£	%
2013-14	6,287,770	6,287,770	n/a		
2014-15	5,459,370	5,459,370	n/a	828,400	13.17
2015-16	4,545,210	4,581,630	36,420	877,740	16.08
2016-17	4,179,220	4,208,360 est	29,140	373,270	8.15
2017-18	3,998,420	4,021,730 est	23,310	186,630	4.43
	Total Variance	More Grant	88,870		

4.3.1 Business Rates

The Finance Settlement included an additional circa £18k Business Rates growth for 2015-16 compared to assumptions in the above table. Our slightly more pessimistic estimates are based on local knowledge and business rates intelligence on the risk of further appeals that reduce our potential total Business Rates collectible for the year. Any improvement in performance will be factored into next year's budget strategy when there is more certainty that this is achievable.

4.4 The local welfare support funding passported by the County to this Council was previously only confirmed for the two years 2013-14 and 2014-15 as part of the Social Fund. However the Final Government Settlement 2015-16 included an announcement of £74m additional funding for upper-tier authorities to assist them in dealing with pressures on local welfare and health and social care. The County have confirmed they will passport a share of this funding to district councils, our share will be £105k. In addition to this, the County has further committed to providing a total allocation from their own budgets of £0.4 million for 2015-16 as long as the allocation is matched by district councils. This Council's share of this funding is £84k and can be match funded in total, for the greater part by our renewed funding of the homelessness budget from our own resources rather than use of the previously passported monies. This funding is currently used to assist people in financial crisis. These new funding arrangements with the County Council will mitigate what would otherwise have been a significant impact in terms of services for these individuals and our running costs. It is hoped that this further funding may last two years.

4.5 The Council remains in the Worcestershire Business Rates Pool to help mitigate any reduction in this key funding stream. The most up-to-date monitoring figures for 2014-15 forecast that this Council's position will be slightly above baseline. Depending on the overall performance of the Pool at the end of 2014-15 we may not need to be compensated from the Risk Reserve this year but are unlikely to achieve anything above minimal growth already assumed. Nevertheless pool membership is still beneficial in overall financial terms and it is possible the position will improve slightly at year-end. Going forward it is vital we attract new businesses to grow our Business Rates.

5. COUNCIL TAX BASE

- 5.1 The Council Tax Base for 2015-16 has now been confirmed and has risen from the previously assumed 30,930 to 31,814 being an increase of 884 or a healthy 2.85% compared to 2014-15 due to the number of new houses being built and forecast to be occupied. This is forecast to generate additional Council Tax income of £182k in 2015-16, rising over the term of the Strategy to take into account planned increases of just under 2% per annum, resulting in additional income of around £555k over the three year term. Modest stepped increases have now also been assumed of 150 additional properties per year from 2016-17 onwards.
- 5.2 It was agreed that tax freeze grant for 2014-15 and 2015-16 would be built into the Spending Review baseline and this has been confirmed for 2014-15. Whilst this has been done with the intention of giving maximum possible certainty for councils that the extra funding for freezing council tax will remain available, it fails to compensate councils fully for the loss of income from this key funding stream if a freeze is agreed and the grant taken. This is due to a lower council tax baseline for future years and a 1% freeze grant offer rather than up to the referendum limit.
- 5.3 A Budget Consultation exercise was launched following the December 2014 Cabinet meeting and this included two specific questions related to Council Tax increases. The results of this consultation have been considered by February Cabinet and this has informed the final decision to maintain the proposal for a modest increase of 1.94%.

6. NEW HOMES BONUS

- 6.1 The Council had previously estimated the income it expected to receive from new homes bonus and this was built into the base budget. The assumption continues to be adopted that new funding will not be provided after 2015-16 due to the General Election. It is as yet unknown, if and how this funding stream might be replaced by the next government.
- 6.2 Notification of our New Homes Bonus allocation for 2015-16 was received on the 30th January 2015. Unfortunately, for the first time this falls below our estimates. This is due to a lower number of net additional new homes for which the grant is payable compared to the base budget projection. The updated figures are shown in the table in 7.5 demonstrating that this reduction can be contained within the overall budget strategy as updated in this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Cabinet Proposals previously considered have now been supplemented and a new schedule is shown in Appendix 3.
- 7.2 The Council Tax Collection Fund surplus for 2015-16 has now been confirmed at £75k an improvement on the former estimate of £50k. Projections of £50k pa can also now be included for 2016-17 and 2017-18.
- 7.3 The savings of £40k pa from 2015-16 due to the approval of the IRP and Polling Places recommendations by December Council are also reflected in the updated figures.

7.4 Earmarked reserves of £55k have been identified as no longer required and released into general balances.

7.5 The following table demonstrates the updated position for the Council when all the revisions included in this report are incorporated into the Base Budget. The Council is forecast to hold a balance of £1,122k at the end of 2017-18 (see reserves table in 7.6).

	Revised 2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £
Total Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 1)	12,789,130	13,235,590	12,888,360	12,820,510
Add/(Less)				
Cabinet Proposals identified in Appendix 3		157,640	146,800	77,000
Net Expenditure	12,789,130	13,393,230	13,035,160	12,897,510
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	292,660	(518,570)	(400,850)	(546,460)
Net Budget Requirement	13,081,790	12,874,660	12,634,310	12,351,050
Funded by:				
Revenue Support Grants (including Bellwin 2014-15)	2,974,200	2,019,010	1,583,940	1,305,530
Business Rates	2,547,170	2,562,620	2,624,420	2,716,200
New Homes Bonus	1,263,170	1,684,610	1,684,610	1,426,190
Community Right to Bid/Challenge	16,400	0	0	0
Collection Fund Surplus	50,000	75,100	50,000	50,000
Council Tax Income	6,230,850	6,533,320	6,691,340	6,853,130
WFDC Council Tax @ 1.94% increase 2015/16 onwards	201.45	205.36	209.34	213.40

7.6 Reserves available as part of the three year financial strategy are as shown in the following table. Taking all of the revisions contained in this report into account this shows a reduction of £98k at the end of 2017-18 compared to the December forecast. Consideration was given to funding the overall net additional expenditure from the saving that would accrue if the council moved to whole council elections. However, as noted in the reports to February Cabinet the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel concluded that there was a lack of political consensus about that issue. Therefore it is proposed that the net increase in expenditure should be funded from reserves. However, the reduction is not considered to be significant, given that the reserves level remains at over £1m and additional funding for economic regeneration work should result in increased business rates income in the fullness of time.

Reserves Statement	2014-15 £'000	2015-16 £'000	2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000
Reserves as at 1st April	2,295	2,588	2,069	1,668
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	293	(519)	(401)	(546)
Reserves as at 31st March	2,588	2,069	1,668	1,122

8. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

8.1 Where the Cabinet Proposals represent significant changes to service delivery, an EIA on the protected groups has been undertaken.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 Achieving financial sustainability is the most significant risk facing the Council. The work undertaken by the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel provided some options for the Cabinet to consider in making its recommendations on the medium term financial strategy.
- 9.2 The improved council tax base and continuing progress with the Wyre Forest Forward Transformation savings both contribute to the mitigation of the financial risk of this budget strategy.
- 9.3 The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 require Local Authorities to fully consider and manage Risk as part of the Budget process. Appendix 5 of the December 2014 Cabinet report showed an analysis of the significant financial risks which are affecting the Council. This has been reviewed and remains current.
- 9.4 All local authorities are required to formalise their approach to risk management and evidence it more directly as part of the budgetary process. This requirement has arisen as a result of:-
- a. ***The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.***
 - b. ***Prudential Framework:-***
 - i. The assessment of affordability of financial plans requires a judgement about risk. Prudential Indicators are the monitoring tool to assess performance and risk.
 - c. ***CIPFA Guidance on Reserves and Balances:-***
 - i. Highlighting the need to consider risks facing the authority. The risks posed by the continuing austerity measures place pressure on the Council to hold higher levels of reserves to ensure ongoing sustainability. This is detailed in Appendix 5.

10. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Local Government Act 2003
- 10.1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 (Sections 25-28) places duties on Local Authorities on how they set and monitor budgets.
 - 10.1.2 Sections 25-27 require the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of its proposed financial reserves. This is reported to Council as Appendix 5 of this report.
 - 10.1.3 Section 28 places a statutory duty on an Authority to review its budget from time to time during the year. If the Budget Monitoring Report shows that there has been deterioration in the Authority's financial position, the Authority must take such action as it concludes necessary. The Council currently reviews the Budget on a quarterly basis, with CLT/Cabinet receiving monthly budget monitoring reports, and this practice will continue.

11. CONSULTEES

- 11.1 Corporate Leadership Team.
- 11.2 Cabinet.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.
- 12.2 Cabinet Report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015–18 16th December 2014.
- 12.3 Agendas and Minutes of the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel.
- 12.4 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2015-16.
- 12.5 Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2015-16 including Referendum Relating to Council Tax Increase (Principles) (England) Report 2015-16 – confirmed 3th February 2015; final approval 10th February 2015.
- 12.6 Cabinet 17th February 2015.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

REVENUE BUDGET TOTAL REQUIREMENTS - DISTRICT COUNCIL PURPOSES

SERVICE	2014/15		2015/16			2016/17			2017/18		
	Original Estimate £	Revised Estimate £	At Nov.14 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.14 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.14 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	5,237,290	5,714,420	5,150,440	59,410	5,209,850	5,267,370	112,000	5,379,370	5,408,480	165,860	5,574,340
COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT	6,420,450	6,348,920	6,355,890	90,350	6,446,240	5,760,820	139,530	5,900,350	5,052,800	189,470	5,242,270
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE	2,423,370	2,198,870	2,336,520	28,850	2,365,370	2,264,850	55,970	2,320,820	2,253,960	90,070	2,344,030
LESS: CAPITAL ACCOUNT	14,081,110	14,262,210	13,842,850	178,610	14,021,460	13,293,040	307,500	13,600,540	12,715,240	445,400	13,160,640
INTEREST RECEIVED	(1,059,650)	(1,397,580)	(653,670)	800	(652,870)	(510,960)	1,570	(509,390)	(73,320)	2,310	(71,010)
INCREASES IN FEES AND CHARGES	(129,600)	(75,500)	(76,540)	0	(76,540)	(90,000)	0	(90,000)	(100,000)	0	(100,000)
	0	0	(56,460)	0	(56,460)	(112,790)	0	(112,790)	(169,120)	0	(169,120)
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	12,891,860	12,789,130	13,056,180	179,410	13,235,590	12,579,290	309,070	12,888,360	12,372,800	447,710	12,820,510
LESS: CONTRIBUTION (FROM) TO RESERVES	104,370	292,660			(360,930)			(254,050)			(469,460)
NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	12,996,230	13,081,790			12,874,660			12,634,310			12,351,050
LESS: REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	(2,912,200)	(2,912,200)			(2,019,010)			(1,583,940)			(1,305,530)
BUSINESS RATES	(2,532,170)	(2,547,170)			(2,562,620)			(2,624,420)			(2,716,200)
COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID/CHALLENGE	(16,400)	(16,400)			0			0			0
COLLECTION FUND SURPLUS	(50,000)	(50,000)			(75,100)			(50,000)			(50,000)
NEW HOMES BONUS	(1,254,610)	(1,263,170)			(1,684,610)			(1,684,610)			(1,426,190)
BELLWIN GRANT	0	(62,000)			0			0			0
GENERAL EXPENSES - COUNCIL TAX INCOME	6,230,850	6,230,850			6,533,320			6,691,340			6,853,130
COUNCIL TAX LEVY		201.45			205.36			209.34			213.40
COUNCIL TAX BASE		30,930			31,814			31,964			32,114

Agenda Item No. 12

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014 TO 2018

APPENDIX 2 - Part 1

Detail	2014/2015		2015/2016 Estimate £	2016/2017 Estimate £	2017/2018 Estimate £	Prior to 01/04/2014 £	Total £
	Original £	Revised £					
1. COMMITTED EXPENDITURE							
1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE							
New Headquarters - Office Accommodation	-	604,030	-	-	-	9,395,970	10,000,000
Contribution towards replacement of Civic Facilities in Stourport-on-Severn (following the Community Asset Transfer of the Civic Centre in 2013/14)	-	450,000	-	-	-	10,000	460,000
Boundary Wall at 49 Worcester Street	10,000	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
ICT Strategy	641,080	477,250	200,000	-	-	1,829,960	2,507,210
SUB TOTAL	651,080	1,531,280	210,000	0	0	11,235,930	12,977,210
2. COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT							
Future Leisure Provision	7,616,530	2,237,640	8,215,840	3,621,450	-	127,270	14,202,200
Paddling Pools - Strategic Review	-	10,600	-	-	-	220,110	230,710
St Mary's Churchyard Boundary Wall	-	2,840	-	-	-	36,960	39,800
Northwood Lane Improvements	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	-	20,000
Liveability Scheme: Brinton Park	210	-	210	-	-	388,290	388,500
Stourport Sports Village	18,170	18,170	-	-	-	511,690	529,860
Franchise Street S106 - Brinton Park	53,370	-	53,370	-	-	8,840	62,210
Franchise Street S106 - Arts Development	9,330	-	9,330	-	-	-	9,330
Public Conveniences Refurbishment	20,530	10,000	10,530	-	-	-	20,530
Parking Facilities: Payment under Contractual Agreement	159,280	95,000	64,280	-	-	33,220	192,500
Parking Facilities: Improvement to Car Parks	19,860	-	19,860	-	-	280,140	300,000
Waste Strategy - Garden Waste Containers	-	3,330	-	-	-	64,150	67,480
SUB TOTAL	7,897,280	2,387,580	8,383,420	3,621,450	0	1,670,670	16,063,120
3. ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE							
Housing Strategy:							
Disabled Facilities Grants	462,100	800,000	556,000	556,000	-	8,347,390	10,259,390
Affordable Housing Grants to Registered Social Landlords	69,000	-	69,000	-	-	3,023,740	3,092,740
Housing Assistance (including Decent Homes Grant)	456,110	150,000	403,840	-	-	1,546,530	2,100,370
Planning Delivery Grant Capital Projects	26,240	-	26,240	-	-	231,520	257,760
Flood Relief	32,010	32,010	-	-	-	166,990	199,000
Repair and Renew Flood Grants	-	8,000	25,000	-	-	-	33,000
North Worcs Water Management Capital Projects - Redditch Schemes	134,380	60,000	84,380	-	-	5,620	150,000
North Worcs Water Management Capital Projects - Bromsgrove Schemes	36,370	37,300	-	-	-	17,100	54,400
WETT Programme - Regulatory Services	53,360	105,110	-	-	-	21,580	126,690
Regeneration of Economic Development	1,063,060	328,710	600,000	-	-	371,290	1,300,000
Carbon Management Plan	128,800	128,810	22,960	-	-	55,600	207,370
Bewdley Medical Centre	250,000	100,000	-	150,000	-	-	250,000
Bridge Street Capital Works	90,000	90,000	-	-	-	-	90,000
Future Investment Evergreen Fund*	-	-	424,000	316,000	451,000	-	1,191,000
* Subject to Business Case consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Committee							
SUB TOTAL	2,801,430	1,839,940	2,211,420	1,022,000	451,000	13,787,360	19,311,720
4. VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT & SYSTEMS RENEWAL SCHEDULE							
Vehicles & Equipment	882,420	556,420	463,000	348,000	941,500	5,712,590	8,021,510
Financial Management System Replacement	67,470	20,000	49,500	-	-	17,570	87,070
SUB TOTAL	949,890	576,420	512,500	348,000	941,500	5,730,160	8,108,580
TOTAL COMMITTED EXPENDITURE	12,299,680	6,335,220	11,317,340	4,991,450	1,392,500	32,424,120	56,460,630

Agenda Item No. 12

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014 TO 2018

APPENDIX 2 - Part 1

Detail	2014/2015		2015/2016 Estimate £	2016/2017 Estimate £	2017/2018 Estimate £	Prior to 01/04/2014 £	Total £
	Original £	Revised £					
2. FINANCING							
Capital Receipts: Funding Approved	1,005,270	927,990	546,380	-	-		1,474,370
New Headquarters Office Accommodation - Temporary Borrowing/Asset Disposals	-	604,030	-	-	-		604,030
Evergreen Fund - Future Asset Disposals	-	-	424,000	316,000	451,000		1,191,000
Contribution towards replacement of Civic Facilities - Capital Receipts Funding	-	450,000	-	-	-		450,000
Future Leisure Provision Scheme - Temporary Borrowing/Asset Disposals	-	-	-	1,429,000	-		1,429,000
Future Leisure Provision Scheme - Sport England Grant	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	1,000,000	-		2,000,000
Future Leisure Provision Scheme - Prudential Borrowing	6,616,530	2,237,640	7,215,840	1,192,450	-		10,645,930
Prudential Borrowing for WETT Programme - Regulatory Services Scheme	53,360	105,110	-	-	-		105,110
Prudential Borrowing for Regeneration of Economic Development Scheme	1,063,060	328,710	600,000	-	-		928,710
Prudential Borrowing for Paddling Pools Scheme	-	10,600	-	-	-		10,600
Prudential Borrowing for Carbon Management Scheme	128,800	128,810	22,960	-	-		151,770
Disabled Facilities Grant	462,100	462,100	556,000	556,000	-		1,574,100
Decent Homes Grant	301,310	150,000	176,850	-	-		326,850
Liveability/Heritage Lottery Grant Funding (for Brinton Park)	210	-	210	-	-		210
Planning Delivery Grant	26,240	-	26,240	-	-		26,240
S.106 Funding (Parking - Contractual Agreement)	159,280	95,000	64,280	-	-		159,280
S.106 Funding (Franchise Street)	62,700	-	62,700	-	-		62,700
S.106 Funding (for Stourport Sports Village)	18,170	18,170	-	-	-		18,170
Flood Relief Grant (from DCLG)	32,010	32,010	-	-	-		32,010
Repair and Renew Flood Grants (from DCLG)	-	8,000	25,000	-	-		33,000
North Worcs Water Management Capital Projects - Redditch BC Funding	134,380	60,000	84,380	-	-		144,380
North Worcs Water Management Capital Projects - Bromsgrove DC Funding	36,370	37,300	-	-	-		37,300
Vehicles & Equipment (Prudential Borrowing)	882,420	556,420	463,000	348,000	941,500		2,308,920
Financial Management System Replacement (Prudential Borrowing)	67,470	20,000	49,500	-	-		69,500
<u>Direct Revenue Funding:</u>							
Waste Strategy - Garden Waste Containers	-	3,330	-	-	-		3,330
Bewdley Medical Centre	250,000	100,000	-	150,000	-		250,000
	12,299,680	6,335,220	11,317,340	4,991,450	1,392,500		24,036,510

Agenda Item No. 12
VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS
RENEWALS SCHEDULE 2014 TO 2018

APPENDIX 2 Part 2

Detail	2014/2015		2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
	Original £	Revised £	Estimate £	Estimate £	Estimate £
1. VEHICLES					
Refuse Freighter	80,000	86,000	-	-	80,000
Refuse Freighter	80,000	86,000	-	-	80,000
Refuse Freighter	80,000	86,000	-	-	80,000
Refuse Freighter	80,000	-	-	-	80,000
Refuse Freighter	-	-	-	-	80,000
CMP Electric Bin Lifts	18,000	36,000	-	-	31,500
Refurbishment Fund	-	25,000	-	-	-
Refuse Freighter - training re-fit	-	7,000	-	-	-
Refuse Freighter	-	80,000	-	-	80,000
Refuse Freighter	-	80,000	-	-	80,000
Flatbeds for Bulky	-	-	-	45,000	-
Flatbeds for Bulky	-	-	-	-	40,000
Ford Fusion	12,000	-	12,000	-	-
Ford Fusion	12,000	-	12,000	-	-
Ford Connect	18,000	-	18,000	-	-
Ford Connect	-	-	-	18,000	-
Ford Ranger 4x4	23,000	-	23,000	-	-
Ford Ranger 4x4	23,000	-	-	23,000	-
Blitz Vehicle	-	-	-	30,000	-
Mechanical Sweeper (Medium)	120,000	-	120,000	-	-
Mechanical Sweeper (Johnson V650)	-	-	-	100,000	-
Mechanical Sweeper (Small JOHNSON C200)	-	-	-	-	70,000
Mechanical Sweeper (Small JOHNSON C200)	70,000	-	70,000	-	-
Mechanical Sweeper (Small JOHNSON C200)	70,000	-	70,000	-	-
Transit Van	20,000	-	20,000	-	-
Transit Van	-	-	-	20,000	-
Transit Van	20,000	-	20,000	-	-
Garage Equipment - Replacement (slippage from prior years)	23,420	23,420	-	-	-
Iveco Daily	30,000	-	30,000	-	-
Iveco Daily	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	-
Iveco Daily	-	-	-	-	30,000
Iveco Daily	-	-	-	-	30,000
Iveco Daily	-	-	-	-	30,000
Iveco Daily	-	-	-	-	30,000
Iveco Daily	-	-	-	-	30,000
Iveco Daily	-	-	-	-	30,000
Midi Tractor	-	-	-	-	30,000
Mowing Machine	35,000	35,000	-	-	-
WeedSprayer (mobile)	-	12,000	-	-	-
Timberwolf chipper	-	-	-	30,000	30,000
Tractor	-	-	-	32,000	-
Canter	38,000	-	38,000	-	-
Small Van - Low range electrical	-	-	-	20,000	-
2. OTHER					
Financial Management System replacement	67,470	20,000	49,500	-	-
	949,890	576,420	512,500	348,000	941,500

REVISED CABINET PROPOSALS 2015/16 ONWARDS

Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF CABINET PROPOSAL	KEY	CHANGE IN RESOURCES			
			2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	After 2017/18 £
SUCCESSFUL LOCAL ECONOMY						
R705	Economic Regeneration Activities To continue funding for Town Centre Manager post for a further three years when the current funding ceases at the end of March 2015 with 50% funded from the SotAD approved revenue budget.	C R S	- 16,640 1.00	- 16,800 1.00	- 17,000 1.00	- - -
R705	Economic Regeneration Activities The Council is committed to supporting our local economic recovery and through our ReWyre and State of the Area programmes has already supported growth in our local businesses, stimulated inward investment in new jobs and infrastructure, offered new opportunities to improve skills and improved our town centres. We will continue to support these and other essential strategic imperatives including our priority for setting out development plans for Worcester Street and the wider Eastern Gateway in Kidderminster.	C R S	- 100,000 -	- 100,000 -	- - -	- - -
R705	Commercial Activity/External Income In line with Council's current position and in light of alternative budget proposals, to continue to progress the commercial approach in all areas of service activity and seek sponsorship where ever possible. This will include a review of the effectiveness of economic regeneration in respect of Christmas activities.	C R S	- tbc -	- tbc -	- tbc -	- tbc -
R187	Car Parking To consider ideas put forward as part of alternative budget Proposals as part of planned car parking review to be reported in June 2015.	C R S	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
CLEAN, GREEN AND SAFE COMMUNITIES						
R335	Parish Localism Funds To create two Parish Localism funds of £25k each from the balance of the existing fund of C£24k supplemented by Parish Councils and the second for an extended range of Community Groups. There will be revised award criteria for this funding to facilitate easier access and more clarity.	C R S	- 26,000 -	- - -	- - -	- - -
R720	Community Leadership Fund In light of the consultation responses and alternative budget proposals, to retain this fund of £1,000 per Member for 2015/16 and then to undertake a review to consider its use and effectiveness to inform decision making for 2016/17.	C R S	- - -	- tbc -	- - -	- - -
R002	Waste Collection Services Due to the projected growth in new homes in the District provide additional resources for waste collection crew and vehicle support.	C R S	- 15,000 0.75	- 30,000 1.50	- 60,000 3.00	170,000 120,000 3
Various	Joint Working To continue to explore and consider alternative provision of service delivery by joint working, sharing and or commissioning to protect front-line services. To include continued participation in the county wide Project Optimise initiative. A business case for each proposal will be considered taking into account affordability efficiency and service delivery.	C R S	tbc tbc tbc	tbc tbc tbc	tbc tbc tbc	tbc tbc tbc
	TOTALS	C R S	- 157,640 1.75	- 146,800 2.50	- 77,000 4.00	170,000 120,000 3.00

KEY - Changes in Resources

- C Capital
- R Revenue
- S Staffing - Stated in FTEs

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

FEES AND CHARGES 2015/2016

COUNCIL

Cost Centre	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTION	KEY	CHANGES IN RESOURCES		
			2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £
R310	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</u>				
	<u>Council Tax and NNDR</u>	C	-	-	-
	Summons Costs £50	R	-	-	-
	Liability Order Costs £30 £80	S	-	-	-
	Bi-annual review of summons costs and liability orders to reflect inflation and additional Magistrates Court costs.				
R310	<u>Council Tax and NNDR</u>				
	New penalties for non Compliance Discount applications / failure to notify of change implemented in 2014/15, so no increase proposed.	C	-	-	-
		R	-	-	-
		S	-	-	-
R500	<u>Elections and Electoral Registration</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	120 CR	120 CR	120 CR
		S	-	-	-
R605	<u>ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE</u>				
	<u>Development Control - Planning Advice</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	20 CR	20 CR	20 CR
		S	-	-	-
R605	<u>Development Control - Permitted Developments</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	30 CR	-	-
		S	-	-	-
R605	<u>Development Control - Pre-application advice</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	350 CR	250 CR	250 CR
		S	-	-	-
R625	<u>Building Control - Decision Notices</u>				
	To increase charges by 5% for copies of decision notices held by the Council prior to the formation of the North Worcestershire Building Control Shared Service.	C	-	-	-
		R	-	-	-
		S	-	-	-
R605	<u>Development Control - Sale of Documents</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	110 CR	110 CR	110 CR
		S	-	-	-
R637	<u>Environmental Health - Water Sampling</u>	C	-	-	-
	Water sampling and analysis charges are set by Worcs Regulatory Services. No increase is being proposed.	R	-	-	-
		S	-	-	-
R638	<u>Licensing Activities - Hackney Carriages</u>	C	-	-	-
	To propose no increase to Hackney Carriage licences	R	-	-	-
		S	-	-	-
R638	<u>Licensing Activities - General Licensing</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by 5% in line with Council Policy.	R	1,210 CR	1,210 CR	1,210 CR
		S	-	-	-
R638	<u>Licensing Activities - Gambling Act 2005 (Premises)</u>	C	-	-	-
	Increase charges by either 5% in line with Council Policy or up to prescribed maximum level (if this is lower).	R	320 CR	320 CR	320 CR
		S	-	-	-
	TOTALS	C	-	-	-
		R	2,160 CR	2,030 CR	2,030 CR
		S	-	-	-



Service	Elections and Electoral Registration	Service Managers	Head of Transformation and Communication
Directorate	Chief Executive	Cabinet Member	Resources and Transformation

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31/03/2015 £	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ *	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ **
Elections and Electoral Registration Council Tax and NNDR			
SALE OF EDITED AND FULL ELECTORAL REGISTERS			
Charges for Market Registers only (per legislation)			
Edited and Full Register			
Data	20.00 plus 1.50 per 1,000 entries	21.00 plus 1.60 per 1,000 entries	No VAT currently charged
Printed	10.00 plus 5.00 per 1,000 entries	11.00 plus 5.25 per 1,000 entries	No VAT currently charged
Overseas Electors			
Data	20.00 plus 1.50 per 1,000 entries	21.00 plus 1.60 per 1,000 entries	No VAT currently charged
Printed	10.00 plus 5.00 per 1,000 entries	11.00 plus 5.25 per 1,000 entries	No VAT currently charged
Marked Registers			
Data	10.00 plus 1.00 per 1,000 or part	11.00 plus 1.05 per 1,000 or part	No VAT currently charged
Printed	10.00 plus 2.00 per 1,000 or part	11.00 plus 2.10 per 1,000 or part	No VAT currently charged
Council Tax and NNDR			
Summons costs	45.00	50.00	No VAT currently charged
Liability Orders	30.00	30.00	No VAT currently charged
Penalties for non Compliance Discount applications / failure to notify of change	New charge	70.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

- * Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
- ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate



Service	Planning & Building Control	Service Manager	Development Control Manager
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Planning and Economic Regeneration

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31/03/2015 £	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Planning Advice			
Building Control Decision Notices (Pre 01/01/2012)			
Sale of Copy Documents			
Reply to general individual queries, Planning or Building Control for up to 6 questions (after that the full Local Land Charge Search fee will be charged)	22.00 per Question	23.00 per Question	No VAT currently charged
If any query requires a site visit to be made (e.g. compliance with conditions)	59.00	62.00	No VAT currently charged
Charges for Copy Documents			
Monthly Decision List	Free	0.00	0.00
Weekly Planning Application List	Free	0.00	0.00
Decision Notices	17.00	15.00	18.00
Decision Notices Additional Copies	1.00	0.83	1.00
A4 - For each copy	1.00	0.83	1.00
A3 - For each copy	1.10	0.83	1.00
A2 - For each copy	2.70	2.50	3.00
A1 - For each copy	3.50	3.33	4.00
A0 - For each copy	4.60	4.17	5.00
Note Copies, where appropriate, are available free up to a cumulative single transaction value of £10 for individuals (the discretion of Director of Service to be applied in cases of multiple separate transactions) and charged at full cost to representatives of professional and/or commercial companies.			

NOTES:

- * Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
- ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate



Service	Planning	Service Manager	Development Control Manager
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Planning and Economic Regeneration

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31/03/2015 £	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Permitted Developments and Pre-application Advice			
Permitted Development enquiries			
Proposed development type			
Householder	Free	Free	Free
Other	Free	Free	Free
Pre-Application advice			
Householder	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
1 - 4 dwellings	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Cost of Highway Advice	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	Free	Free	Free
Residential Development (see note 1)			
5 - 9 dwellings (site <1ha) (gross floor area <1,000m2)	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Cost of Highway Advice	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	Free	Free	Free
10 - 49 dwellings (site 1-1.25ha) (gross floor area 1,000 - 2,499m2)	1,182.00	1,034.17	1,241.00
Cost of each additional meeting	591.00	517.50	621.00
Cost of Highway Advice	414.00	362.50	435.00
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	207.00	180.83	217.00
50 -199 dwellings (site 1.26-2ha) (gross floor area 2,500 - 9,999m2)	2,365.00	2,069.17	2,483.00
Cost of each additional meeting	875.00	765.83	919.00
Cost of Highway Advice	828.00	724.17	869.00
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	307.00	268.33	322.00
200+ dwellings (site 2+ha) (gross floor area +10,000m2)	3,547.00	3,103.33	3,724.00
Cost of each additional meeting	1,182.00	1,034.17	1,241.00
Cost of Highway Advice	1,241.00	1,085.83	1,303.00
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	414.00	362.50	435.00
Non Residential/Commercial Development (see note 1)			
Gross floor area up to 500m2 (site up to 0.5ha)	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Cost of Highway Advice	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	Free	Free	Free
Gross floor area 501m2 - 999m2 (site 0.5 -1ha)	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Cost of Highway Advice	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	Free	Free	Free
Gross floor area 1,000 - 2,499m2 (site 1-1.25ha)	1,182.00	1,034.17	1,241.00
Cost of each additional meeting	591.00	517.50	621.00
Cost of Highway Advice	414.00	362.50	435.00
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	207.00	180.83	217.00
Gross floor area 2,500 - 9,999m2 (site 1.26-2ha)	2,365.00	2,069.17	2,483.00
Cost of each additional meeting	875.00	765.83	919.00
Cost of Highway Advice	828.00	724.17	869.00
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	307.00	268.33	322.00
Gross floor area +10,000m2 (site +2ha)	3,547.00	3,103.33	3,724.00
Cost of each additional meeting	1,182.00	1,034.17	1,241.00
Cost of Highway Advice	1,241.00	1,085.83	1,303.00
Cost of each additional meeting with Highway Authority	414.00	362.50	435.00



Service	Planning	Service Manager	Development Control Manager
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Planning and Economic Regeneration

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Proposed Charge
	TO 31/03/2015 £	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Permitted Developments and Pre-application Advice			
Other Categories			
Advertisements	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Change of Use	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Telecommunications	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Glasshouses/Poly Tunnels	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Others (see note 2)	Free	Free	Free
Cost of each additional meeting	Free	Free	Free
Historic Environmental and Tree related enquiries			
Separate Listed Building and Conservation Area Advice (Up to 3 Separate Matters)	37.00	32.50	39.00
(More than 3 Separate Matters)	72.00	63.33	76.00
Cost of each additional meeting	18.00	15.83	19.00
Separate Tree related Advice - number of trees not exceeding 10	37.00	32.50	39.00
Cost of each additional meeting	18.00	15.83	19.00
Separate Tree related Advice - number of trees over 10 but not exceeding 30	72.00	63.33	76.00
Cost of each additional meeting	18.00	15.83	19.00
Exemptions			
As set out in Guidance Note (e.g. Parish Councils, etc)			

NOTES:

* Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
 ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate

Note 1 - If only principle to be discussed

Note 2 - Includes other development proposals such as variation or removal of conditions-proposed changes of use, car parks and certificates of lawfulness.



Service	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Service Manager	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Officer
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Environmental Services

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31/03/2015 £	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Water Sampling and Analysis Charges - Set By Worcestershire Regulatory Services			
POLLUTION CONTROL			
Water Sampling Charges			
The Regulations allow local authorities to charge a fee, subject to prescribed maximum levels to enable reasonable costs of services (lab fees etc) to be recovered.			
Proposed Fees and Charges			
Risk Assessment	40.00 per hour (up to £500 Max)	40.00 per hour (up to £500 Max)	48.00 per hour (up to £600 Max)
Sampling (each visit)	100.00 Max	100.00 Max	120.00 Max
Investigation (each investigation)	40.00 per hour (up to £100 Max)	40.00 per hour (up to £100 Max)	48.00 per hour (up to £120 Max)
Granting an Authorisation	100.00 Max	100.00 Max	120.00 Max
Analysing a sample			
- taken under regulation 10 (small supplies)	25.00 Max	25.00 Max	30.00 Max
- taken during check monitoring	100.00 Max	100.00 Max	120.00 Max
- taken during audit monitoring	500.00 Max	500.00 Max	600.00 Max

NOTES:

* Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
 ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate
 Where the request is made by the Owner/Occupier and the Authority is not the only service provider - VAT will be added
 Where the authority instigates the testing under regulations i.e. Periodic tests, assessments - VAT is not applicable in this instance



Service	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Service Manager	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Officer
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Environmental Services

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31/03/2015 £	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Fees			
Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers Licence (valid for 2 years)	295.00	295.00	No VAT currently charged
Drivers' Knowledge Test	54.00	54.00	No VAT currently charged
Drivers Badge	25.00	25.00	No VAT currently charged
Hackney Carriage Vehicle	416.00	416.00	No VAT currently charged
Private Hire Vehicle	416.00	416.00	No VAT currently charged
Private Hire Operators	463.00	463.00	No VAT currently charged
Vehicle Decals - Replacements	19.00	19.00	No VAT currently charged
Vehicle Retest Fee (if re-tested within 48 hours of failure)	31.00	25.83	31.00
Vehicle Retest Fee (if re-tested after 48 hours of failure)	59.00	49.17	59.00
Change of Business (Sell Car and Transfer Plate)	105.00	105.00	No VAT currently charged
Exemption Notice (Executive Vehicles)	29.00	29.00	No VAT currently charged
Internal (Executive Vehicles) Car Plate	21.00	21.00	No VAT currently charged
External Car Plate	49.00	49.00	No VAT currently charged
Disclosure Scotland check	62.00	62.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

* Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
 ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate



Service	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Service Manager	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Officer
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Environmental Services

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Proposed Charge
	TO 31/03/2015 £	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Licensing and Registration			
Acupuncture, Tattooing, Electrolysis, Ear Piercing, Skin Piercing & Semi-Permanent Skin Colouring -			
Certificate of Registration: (a) Person	156.00	164.00	No VAT currently charged
(b) Premise	226.00	237.00	No VAT currently charged
(c) Persons & Premises	380.00	399.00	No VAT currently charged
Animal Boarding Establishments*** Initial	321.00	337.00	No VAT currently charged
Renewal	212.00	223.00	No VAT currently charged
Vet fees/Animal welfare visit (if applicable)	Charged at Cost	Charged at Cost	
Dangerous Wild Animals*** Initial	321.00	337.00	No VAT currently charged
Renewal	212.00	223.00	No VAT currently charged
Vet fees/Animal welfare visit (if applicable)	Charged at Cost	Charged at Cost	
Dog Breeding Establishments*** Initial	321.00	337.00	No VAT currently charged
Renewal	212.00	223.00	No VAT currently charged
Vet fees/Animal welfare visit (if applicable)	Charged at Cost	Charged at Cost	
Pet Animals Act*** Initial	321.00	337.00	No VAT currently charged
Renewal	212.00	223.00	No VAT currently charged
Vet fees/Animal welfare visit (if applicable)	Charged at Cost	Charged at Cost	
Public Realm and Streetscene (Control of Street Furniture)	303.00	318.00	No VAT currently charged
Riding Establishments*** Initial	321.00	337.00	No VAT currently charged
Renewal	212.00	223.00	No VAT currently charged
Vet fees/Animal welfare visit (if applicable)	Charged at Cost	Charged at Cost	
Sex Establishments Initial	4,740.00	4,977.00	No VAT currently charged
Renewal	1,820.00	1,911.00	No VAT currently charged
Transfer	329.00	345.00	No VAT currently charged
Zoo Licences*** Initial	1,549.00	1,626.00	No VAT currently charged
	(plus Inspector's expenses)	(plus Inspector's expenses)	
Renewal	1,391.00	1,461.00	No VAT currently charged
	(plus Inspector's expenses)	(plus Inspector's expenses)	
Vet fees/Animal welfare visit (if applicable)	Charged at Cost	Charged at Cost	

NOTES:

* Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
 ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate
 ***Plus Vet fees where applicable



Service	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Service Manager	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Officer
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Environmental Services

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge TO 31/03/2015 £	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	Proposed Charge FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Gambling Premises License Fees			
Bingo Club - New Application	2,302.00	2,417.00	No VAT currently charged
Annual Fee	659.00	692.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to vary	1,152.00	1,210.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to Transfer	790.00	830.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for re-instatement	790.00	830.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for Provisional Statement	2,302.00	2,417.00	No VAT currently charged
Licence Application (Provisional Statement holders)	790.00	830.00	No VAT currently charged
Copy Licence	35.00	25.00	No VAT currently charged
Notification of change	66.00	50.00	No VAT currently charged
Betting Premises - New Application (excluding Tracks)	1,976.00	2,075.00	No VAT currently charged
Annual Fee	395.00	415.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to vary	987.00	1,036.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to Transfer	790.00	830.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for re-instatement	790.00	830.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for Provisional Statement	1,976.00	2,075.00	No VAT currently charged
Licence Application (Provisional Statement holders)	790.00	830.00	No VAT currently charged
Copy Licence	35.00	25.00	No VAT currently charged
Notification of change	66.00	50.00	No VAT currently charged
Tracks - New Application	1,646.00	1,728.00	No VAT currently charged
Annual Fee	659.00	692.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to vary	822.00	863.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to Transfer	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for re-instatement	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for Provisional Statement	1,646.00	1,728.00	No VAT currently charged
Licence Application (Provisional Statement holders)	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Copy Licence	35.00	25.00	No VAT currently charged
Notification of change	66.00	50.00	No VAT currently charged
Family Entertainment Centres - New Application	1,317.00	1,383.00	No VAT currently charged
Annual Fee	492.00	517.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to vary	659.00	692.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to Transfer	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for re-instatement	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for Provisional Statement	1,317.00	1,383.00	No VAT currently charged
Licence Application (Provisional Statement holders)	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Copy Licence	35.00	25.00	No VAT currently charged
Notification of change	66.00	50.00	No VAT currently charged
Adult Gaming Centres - New Application	1,317.00	1,383.00	No VAT currently charged
Annual Fee	659.00	692.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to vary	659.00	692.00	No VAT currently charged
Application to Transfer	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for re-instatement	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Application for Provisional Statement	1,317.00	1,383.00	No VAT currently charged
Licence Application (Provisional Statement holders)	625.00	656.00	No VAT currently charged
Copy Licence	35.00	25.00	No VAT currently charged
Notification of change	66.00	50.00	No VAT currently charged
Temporary Use Notices - New Application	335.00	352.00	No VAT currently charged
- Copy of Notice	25.00	25.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

- * Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
- ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate



Service	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Service Manager	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Officer
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Environmental Services

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Proposed Charge
	TO 31/03/2015 £	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Street Trading			
Single Unit up to 12 x 12 (max 5m length) Food - Initial	1,918.00	2,014.00	No VAT currently charged
- Renewal	1,824.00	1,915.00	No VAT currently charged
Single Unit up to 12 x 12 (max 5m length) Non-Food - Initial	1,604.00	1,684.00	No VAT currently charged
- Renewal	1,442.00	1,514.00	No VAT currently charged
For every additional 12 x 12 or part thereof or length more than 5m	790.00	830.00	No VAT currently charged
Mobile Traders	752.00	790.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

* Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
 ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate



Service	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Service Manager	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Officer
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Environmental Services

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Proposed Charge
	TO 31/03/2015 £	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013			
Site Licence - Initial	305.00	320.00	No VAT currently charged
Site Licence - Renewal	252.00	265.00	No VAT currently charged
Collectors Licence - Initial	152.00	160.00	No VAT currently charged
Collectors Licence - Renewal	100.00	105.00	No VAT currently charged
Variation of Licence	68.00	71.00	No VAT currently charged
Copy of licence (if lost or stolen)	26.00	27.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

* Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
 ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate



Service	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Service Manager	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Officer
Directorate	Economic Prosperity & Place	Cabinet Member	Environmental Services

PROPOSAL OF SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

INCOME DESCRIPTION	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Proposed Charge
	TO 31/03/2015 £	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges before VAT *	FROM 1/04/2015 £ Charges inclusive of VAT **
Control of Dogs			
Dog Recovery Fee	25.00	26.00	No VAT currently charged
Dog Recovery Fee - out of hours	55.00	58.00	No VAT currently charged
Repeat offence - charge in addition to fees above	25.00	26.00	No VAT currently charged

NOTES:

* Charge before VAT (if applicable) at the prevailing rate
 ** Charge inclusive of VAT (if applicable) i.e. total fee payable at the prevailing VAT rate

**Report of the Chief Financial Officer in respect of
Sections 25-28 Local Government Act 2003**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Chief Financial Officer in respect of statutory duties placed on Local Authority Chief Financial Officers in relation to budget setting and monitoring.

2. RECOMMENDATION (see 2.2.3 of main report)

THAT COUNCIL NOTE:

- 2.1 The Chief Financial Officer's opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet on 17th February 2015, as detailed in this report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Sections 25 to 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 (The Act) place statutory duties on Local Authorities on how they set and monitor budgets. The Act requires local authorities to ensure that the Budget estimates are robust, Reserves are adequate and the Budget is monitored on a regular basis.
- 3.2 Section 25 requires the Chief Financial Officer to report to the Council on the robustness of the estimates it makes when calculating its budget requirement under Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and on the adequacy of its proposed financial reserves.
- 3.3 Section 26 requires authorities to adhere to their approved policies in relation to Reserves when setting budgets to ensure that the minimum Reserve levels are maintained.
- 3.4 Section 27 requires the Chief Financial Officer, at the time of the budget setting, to report if it appears that a reserve in relation to the previous financial year is likely to be inadequate. The reasons for the inadequacy and a recommended course of action must be considered by Council.
- 3.5 Section 28 places a statutory duty on the Council to review its budget and all calculations related to it from time to time. If the review shows a deterioration in the financial position, the Council must take such action as it considers necessary (if any) to address the situation.
- 3.6 Whilst Sections 25-27 relate specifically to budget and council tax setting for the following financial year, these Sections are being more widely interpreted by External Auditors to include the period of the Council's Financial Strategy; as a consequence it is necessary to report not only on next year's Budget but on the period covered by the Three Year Budget Strategy (2015-18).

4. KEY ISSUES – CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER’S OPINION ON 2015-18 BUDGET & THREE YEAR BUDGET STRATEGY

In respect of the Budget Proposals recommended by the Cabinet, in my opinion:-

- 4.1 The estimates made for the purposes of Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 calculations are robust.
- 4.2 The Reserves outlined in the Three Year Budget and Policy Framework Report to the Cabinet on this agenda are adequate in relation to the 2015-18 Budget. The work done by the Cabinet Financial Strategy Advisory Panel this year and resultant Cabinet report recommendations, supplemented by the updates included in the latest Cabinet report are instrumental in continuing to promote economic growth and moving the Council closer to a sustainable balanced budget in the future, that is less reliant on the use of reserves. The continuing Transformation Programme required to deliver the savings required is progressing well but remains challenging and is not without risk; this will need to continue to be carefully managed and mitigated by the member and officer Leadership team.
- 4.3 The Council have adopted the general principles of the CIPFA Guidance on Local Authority Reserves and Balances, which outline a minimum Reserve (Working Balance) for this Council which has been adhered to in the Financial Strategy 2015-18.
- 4.4 It is important that the level of reserves is carefully monitored and reviewed as the impact of the Local Government Finance Reforms become clear and also once future funding levels are known. The Local Government Finance Reforms place significantly increased risk on local authority income and funding streams and the levels of reserves may need to be reviewed as the reforms are implemented and their impacts become clear.
- 4.5 The Cabinet monitors Budgets on a monthly basis in accordance with Section 28 of the 2003 Act, including ‘Budget Risk Management’ and takes appropriate action to ensure financial accountability.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no Financial Implications.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These are contained in Paragraph 3 of this report.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken and it is considered that there are no discernible impacts on the six equality strands.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 Contained within the Financial Strategy 2015-18 and subsequent Cabinet reports are the significant risks and mitigating actions which have been identified, allied to the budget process.

- 8.2 There are three significant financial risks affecting the Council over the next three years:
- Future funding from Central Government in light of continued austerity and uncertainty presented by the General Elections in May;
 - The volatility of future income due to the Local Government Finance Reforms and;
 - Further savings required from the Transformation Programme are significant and will prove challenging to deliver.
- 8.3 It is for the reasons such as the above that the Council retains a working balance reserve of £1,000,000, increased from £700,000 in 2012/13. This fund is also available to provide cover for urgent unforeseen expenditure e.g. in respect of a civil emergency. The Transformation Fund is held to fund one-off costs of implementation of Transformation work and consideration should be given to increasing this from Final Accounts savings, in accordance with the delegations in the separate budget report on this agenda.

9. CONCLUSION/FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Whilst the Council continues to be reliant on contributions from reserves to balance its budget over the term of the Financial Strategy, the ongoing Transformation Programme should deliver ongoing savings to improve this. However the uncertainty around future funding streams and levels mean it is difficult to confirm when net expenditure and funding should be aligned.
- 9.2 There is the risk that further reductions in grant beyond 2015-16 will be greater than originally anticipated. Any reductions in grant would require to be met with further reductions in spending and increased income from fees and charges. It would not be realistic to expect any further shortfall to be met from reserves.
- 9.3 The Local Government Finance Reforms and political uncertainty due to the General Election in May 2015, mean that there is increased volatility in income and funding streams and the level of reserves may need to be reconsidered once the impact of the reforms become clear.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Leader of the Council
 10.2 Cabinet Member for Resources and Transformation
 10.3 CLT

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2003 Sections 25-28
 11.2 Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 32

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**COUNCIL**
25TH FEBRUARY 2015**Council Tax 2015-16**

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor N J Desmond
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Financial Officer
CONTACT OFFICERS:	Tracey Southall - Ext. 2125 tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Lisa Hutchinson - Ext. 2120 lisa.hutchinson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Council Tax Resolution 2015-16 Appendix 2 - Council Tax Schedule 2015-16 Appendix 3 - Parish and Town Council Precepts 2015-16 Appendix 4 – District Council Tax, including Parish/Town Council Precepts, 2015-16 Appendix 5 – Total Council Tax, including Major Precepting Authorities and Parish/Town Council Precepts, 2015-16

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Council to calculate and set the Council Tax for 2015-16.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to approve:

- 2.1 **The formal Council Tax Resolution 2015-16 at Appendix 1, taking into account information contained in Appendices 2 to 5.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by The Localism Act 2011, requires the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year.
- 3.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, includes specific guidance in relation to Council Tax referendums. The Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2015-16 is excessive and therefore the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum.

4. WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL'S COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT

- 4.1 Cabinet, on 17th February 2015, approved and recommended to Council the 2015-16 revenue budget requirement.
- 4.2 Cabinet recommended that Wyre Forest District Council's element of the Council Tax 2015-16 be agreed at £205.36 for Band D properties. This represents an increase of 1.94% on the current rate.
- 4.3 In approving the District Council's element of the Council Tax, account has to be taken of:
- Government Support Grants
 - Other non ring-fenced Government Grants
 - Any surplus or deficit arising from the Collection Fund

The District Council's Council Tax requirement also has to reflect Parish and Town Council spending. The following table sets out the position:

Council Tax Requirement 2015-16	£'000	£'000
Wyre Forest District Council Budget Requirement 2015-16	13,394	
Less: Contribution from Balances	(519)	
	12,875	
Parish & Town Councils' Requirement (Appendix 3)	485	
		13,360
Less:		
Government Support Grants	(2,019)	
Business Rates	(2,563)	
New Homes Bonus	(1,685)	
		(6,267)
Less: Surplus on Collection Fund		(75)
Council Tax Requirement 2015-16	£'000	7,018

- 4.4 Wyre Forest District Council's Council Tax at Band D for 2015-16 is £205.36, determined as follows:

Council Tax Requirement (as detailed in paragraph 4.3 above)	£7,017,936
Divided by Council Tax Base	31,814
Council Tax at Band D (including Parishes)	£220.59
Deduct Parish Element	(£15.23)
Council Tax at Band D for Wyre Forest District Council	£205.36

5. PRECEPT LEVELS

5.1 The Precept levels of other precepting bodies have been received, and are detailed below:

5.1.1 Parish and Town Councils

The Parish and Town Council Precepts for 2015-16 are detailed in Appendix 3 and total £484,615.82. The increase in the average Band D Council Tax for Parish and Town Councils is 1.80% and results in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £15.23 for 2015/16.

5.1.2 Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire County Council has stated its precept for 2015-16 to be £34,351,793, adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £367,588. The increase in the Band D Council Tax is 1.94%, resulting in a Band D Council Tax of £1,079.77. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1.3 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia has stated its precept for 2015-16 to be £5,914,361.75, adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £63,257. The increase in the Band D Council Tax is 1.99%, resulting in a Band D Council Tax of £185.90. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1.4 Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has stated its precept for 2015-16 to be £2,433,664.37, adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £26,049. The increase in the Band D Council Tax is 1.92%, resulting in a Band D Council Tax of £76.50. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

6. SPECIAL EXPENSES

6.1 Special Expenses are defined as those expenses incurred by the Council in performing, in part of the District, a function performed elsewhere by a Parish or Town Council. The Local Government Act 1992 allows the Council to treat any special expenses as general expenses, i.e. as part of its own budget requirement for Council Tax purposes, provided the Council resolved accordingly.

6.2 It is reasonable for the Council to continue to treat special expenses as general expenses, and for clarity it is considered sensible to reaffirm this position on an annual basis. For clarification this Council does not currently have any Special Expenses.

7. COUNCIL TAX LEVELS

7.1 The formal resolution for setting the Council Tax is set out in Appendix 1.

7.2 The Council Tax Schedule 2015-16 is set out in Appendix 2.

- 7.3 The Parish & Town Council precepts 2015-16 are set out in Appendix 3.
- 7.4 The District Council Tax, including Parish/Town Council precepts, 2015-16 is set out in Appendix 4.
- 7.5 The Total Council Tax, including Major Precepting Authorities and Parish/Town Council precepts, 2015-16 is set out in Appendix 5.

8. KEY ISSUES

- 8.1 That the formal Council Tax resolution presented in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act, be approved.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Financial Implications of this Council Tax report are included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Three Year Budget and Policy Framework, as updated by the Proposed Decision, also on this Council agenda.

10. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council must set its Council Tax for 2015-16 in accordance with all statutory requirements.
- 10.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by The Localism Act 2011, requires the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, require Local Authorities to fully consider and manage Risk as part of the Budget process. This was fully set out in the Financial Strategy December Cabinet Report.
- 11.2 There is a greater future risk of a referendum requirement should Council Tax increases exceed the threshold as required in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and laid down in The Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) Report 2015-16.

12. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 12.1 This is a financial report and there is no requirement to consider an Equality Impact Assessment.

13. CONCLUSION

See Recommendations.

14. CONSULTEES

Cabinet.
CLT.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1 Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by Localism Act 2011 and Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
- 15.2 The Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) Report 2015-16.

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2015-16

The Council is recommended to resolve as follows:

1. It be noted that the Council has calculated the Council Tax Base 2015-16:
 - (a) for the whole Council area as **31,814** [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (“the Act”)]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in column 5 of the attached Appendix 3.

2. To calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2015-16 (excluding Parish precepts) is **£6,533,320**.

3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015-16 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) **£55,650,515.82** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
 - (b) **£48,632,580.00** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) **£7,017,935.82** being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. [Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act]
 - (d) **£220.59** being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - (e) **£484,615.82** being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix 3).
 - (f) **£205.36** being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.

4. To note that for the year 2015-16 Worcestershire County Council, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as shown below.

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL							
Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£719.85	£839.82	£959.80	£1,079.77	£1,319.72	£1,559.67	£1,799.62	£2,159.54

THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR WEST MERCIA							
Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£123.94	£144.59	£165.25	£185.90	£227.22	£268.53	£309.84	£371.81

HEREFORD AND WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY							
Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£51.00	£59.50	£68.00	£76.50	£93.50	£110.50	£127.50	£153.00

5. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in Appendix 5 as the amounts of Council Tax for 2015-16 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
6. To determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2015-16 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
7. To note that, as the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2015-16 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

COUNCIL TAX SCHEDULE 2015-16

<u>District Council and Major Precepting Authorities</u>	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Wyre Forest District Council	136.91	159.72	182.54	205.36	251.00	296.63	342.27	410.72
Worcestershire County Council	719.85	839.82	959.80	1,079.77	1,319.72	1,559.67	1,799.62	2,159.54
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	123.94	144.59	165.25	185.90	227.22	268.53	309.84	371.81
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	51.00	59.50	68.00	76.50	93.50	110.50	127.50	153.00

<u>Parish & Town Councils</u>	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	2.80	3.27	3.73	4.20	5.13	6.07	7.00	8.40
Upper Arley Parish Council	31.75	37.04	42.33	47.62	58.20	68.78	79.37	95.24
Bewdley Town Council	17.14	20.00	22.85	25.71	31.42	37.14	42.85	51.42
Broome Parish Council	8.61	10.04	11.48	12.91	15.78	18.65	21.52	25.82
Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council	21.97	25.64	29.30	32.96	40.28	47.61	54.93	65.92
Churchill & Blakedown Parish Council	21.07	24.58	28.09	31.60	38.62	45.64	52.67	63.20
Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council	14.19	16.56	18.92	21.29	26.02	30.75	35.48	42.58
Ribbesford Parish Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rock Parish Council	14.15	16.51	18.87	21.23	25.95	30.67	35.38	42.46
Rushock Parish Council	19.55	22.81	26.07	29.33	35.85	42.37	48.88	58.66
Stone Parish Council	17.35	20.25	23.14	26.03	31.81	37.60	43.38	52.06
Stourport on Severn Town Council	18.08	21.09	24.11	27.12	33.15	39.17	45.20	54.24
Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council	16.33	19.06	21.78	24.50	29.94	35.39	40.83	49.00

PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPTS 2015-16

<u>Parish & Town Councils</u>	2014-15			2015-16			Council Tax Increase/ (Decrease) (£)	Council Tax Increase/ (Decrease) (%)
	Tax Base	Precept £	Council Tax Band D (£)	Tax Base	Precept £	Council Tax Band D (£)		
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	15,647	65,717.40	4.20	16,040	67,388.00	4.20	0.00	0.00
Upper Arley Parish Council	318	15,143.16	47.62	344	16,381.28	47.62	0.00	0.00
Bewdley Town Council	3,403	87,491.00	25.71	3,482	89,522.22	25.71	0.00	0.00
Broome Parish Council	178	2,300.00	12.92	196	2,530.00	12.91	(0.01)	(0.08)
Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council	690	22,569.90	32.71	720	23,731.20	32.96	0.25	0.76
Churchill & Blakedown Parish Council	738	23,320.80	31.60	776	24,521.60	31.60	0.00	0.00
Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council	368	8,307.00	22.57	398	8,474.00	21.29	(1.28)	(5.67)
Ribbesford Parish Council	151	0.00	0.00	145	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rock Parish Council	1,158	24,850.00	21.46	1,194	25,350.00	21.23	(0.23)	(1.07)
Rushock Parish Council	75	2,050.00	27.33	75	2,200.00	29.33	2.00	7.32
Stone Parish Council	241	6,150.00	25.52	255	6,637.65	26.03	0.51	2.00
Stourport on Severn Town Council	6,394	167,010.00	26.12	6,584	178,554.00	27.12	1.00	3.83
Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council	1,569	37,875.66	24.14	1,605	39,325.87	24.50	0.36	1.49
TOTAL/AVERAGE	30,930	462,784.92	14.96	31,814	484,615.82	15.23		

DISTRICT COUNCIL TAX (INCLUDING PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPTS) 2015-16 APPENDIX 4

<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	VALUATION BANDS 2015-2016							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	139.71	162.99	186.27	209.56	256.13	302.70	349.27	419.12
The Parish/Town Council of:								
Upper Arley	168.66	196.76	224.87	252.98	309.20	365.41	421.64	505.96
Bewdley	154.05	179.72	205.39	231.07	282.42	333.77	385.12	462.14
Broome	145.52	169.76	194.02	218.27	266.78	315.28	363.79	436.54
Chaddesley Corbett	158.88	185.36	211.84	238.32	291.28	344.24	397.20	476.64
Churchill & Blakedown	157.98	184.30	210.63	236.96	289.62	342.27	394.94	473.92
Kidderminster Foreign	151.10	176.28	201.46	226.65	277.02	327.38	377.75	453.30
Ribbesford	136.91	159.72	182.54	205.36	251.00	296.63	342.27	410.72
Rock	151.06	176.23	201.41	226.59	276.95	327.30	377.65	453.18
Rushock	156.46	182.53	208.61	234.69	286.85	339.00	391.15	469.38
Stone	154.26	179.97	205.68	231.39	282.81	334.23	385.65	462.78
Stourport on Severn	154.99	180.81	206.65	232.48	284.15	335.80	387.47	464.96
Wolverley & Cookley	153.24	178.78	204.32	229.86	280.94	332.02	383.10	459.72

TOTAL COUNCIL TAX 2015-16**APPENDIX 5**

<u>Parts of the Council's Area</u>	VALUATION BANDS 2015-2016							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	1,034.50	1,206.90	1,379.32	1,551.73	1,896.57	2,241.40	2,586.23	3,103.47
The Parish/Town Council of:								
Upper Arley	1,063.45	1,240.67	1,417.92	1,595.15	1,949.64	2,304.11	2,658.60	3,190.31
Bewdley	1,048.84	1,223.63	1,398.44	1,573.24	1,922.86	2,272.47	2,622.08	3,146.49
Broome	1,040.31	1,213.67	1,387.07	1,560.44	1,907.22	2,253.98	2,600.75	3,120.89
Chaddesley Corbett	1,053.67	1,229.27	1,404.89	1,580.49	1,931.72	2,282.94	2,634.16	3,160.99
Churchill & Blakedown	1,052.77	1,228.21	1,403.68	1,579.13	1,930.06	2,280.97	2,631.90	3,158.27
Kidderminster Foreign	1,045.89	1,220.19	1,394.51	1,568.82	1,917.46	2,266.08	2,614.71	3,137.65
Ribbesford	1,031.70	1,203.63	1,375.59	1,547.53	1,891.44	2,235.33	2,579.23	3,095.07
Rock	1,045.85	1,220.14	1,394.46	1,568.76	1,917.39	2,266.00	2,614.61	3,137.53
Rushock	1,051.25	1,226.44	1,401.66	1,576.86	1,927.29	2,277.70	2,628.11	3,153.73
Stone	1,049.05	1,223.88	1,398.73	1,573.56	1,923.25	2,272.93	2,622.61	3,147.13
Stourport on Severn	1,049.78	1,224.72	1,399.70	1,574.65	1,924.59	2,274.50	2,624.43	3,149.31
Wolverley & Cookley	1,048.03	1,222.69	1,397.37	1,572.03	1,921.38	2,270.72	2,620.06	3,144.07

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
25TH FEBRUARY 2015

The Future Governance of Kidderminster

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	The Leader of the Council
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller, Ext. 2700 ian.miller@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Proposed Household Leaflet and Information for the council's website

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To agree the draft household information leaflet and a lengthier information document for the council's website which explains the consultation process for the community governance review, together with factual information about what a town council could do for Kidderminster if it was created.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is asked to:

- 2.1 **APPROVE** the household leaflet and information for the council's website for the Community Governance Review for Kidderminster as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 **DELEGATE** authority to the Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council to add further information to the council's website in response to additional questions of public interest on the community governance review.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Council has resolved to undertake a community governance review of Kidderminster under section 82 of the Local Government and Public Involvement Health Act 2007. The review commenced on 1 February 2015 with the formal publication of the Terms of Reference, which were agreed by council on 10 December 2014 and can be viewed at <http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com55.htm#mt7498>. The detailed rules for the Local Advisory Poll have recently been published by the Counting Officer and are set out at <http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/media/734173/20150130-local-advisory-poll-rules.pdf>.

- 3.2 As part of the community governance review, it is necessary for the Council to undertake consultation with local government electors for the area and with interested bodies. In respect of registered local government electors in Kidderminster, this will be achieved by conducting a local advisory poll under section 116 of the Local Government Act 2003. The poll will be held on 7 May 2015 at the same time as, but not formally combined with, the General Election and district council elections which are being held on that day.
- 3.3 In order to ensure that electors are equipped with relevant, factual information about what a town council's powers might be and to deal with other questions that electors might have, an A5 household information leaflet and lengthier information document for the council's website have been drafted as set out in Appendix 1. Both documents have been produced with significant input from the cross-party member working group on options for Kidderminster. The final content and design of these documents was agreed at the working group's meeting on 10 February 2015. In order to ensure that further factual information can be added in response to additional questions of public interest, which are not covered by the existing material, one of the recommendations delegates authority to the Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council to add further information to the council's website as appropriate. The information leaflet will be delivered to all households in Kidderminster by early April. Council is therefore invited to agree the information material.
- 3.4 It should also be noted that the community governance report to Council on 10 December 2014 inadvertently referred at various points to Section 16 of the 2003 Act in respect of the local advisory poll. The references should instead have been to Section 116 of the 2003 Act.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The estimated cost of the consultation process, including the local advisory poll and A5 leaflet to be distributed to 43,000 electors, is £40k which can be met from an existing specific reserve for community governance reviews. Otherwise, the costs of staff time in progressing the review will be met from existing budgets.

5. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 sets out the powers associated with Community Governance Reviews. The Council is also required by Section 100(4) to have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State relating to Community Governance Reviews.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 In carrying out the review, the Council is required to engage with local communities to address their needs and any impact on community cohesion. No potential adverse impact has been identified at this stage and therefore a full impact assessment has not been undertaken.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Risks will be mitigated by ensuring that the Community Governance Review accords with the legislation and guidance given by the Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Council is invited to confirm the content of the household leaflet and information for the council's website about what a town council's powers might be and to deal with other questions that electors might have.

9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 On this report: the Leader of the Council; and the Corporate Leadership Team.
- 9.2 On Appendix 1 of this report: the cross-party member working group on options for Kidderminster.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Reports to Council:

Council on 10 December 2014 and minutes

<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com55.htm#mt7498>

Special council meeting on 26 March 2014 and minutes.

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc48939_20140326_special_council_agenda.pdf

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc49084_20140326_special_council_minute.pdf

Earlier reports:

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc48860_20140226_council_agenda.pdf

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc48167_20130724_council_agenda.pdf

- 10.2 DCLG Guidance on Community Governance Reviews.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-governance-reviews-guidance>

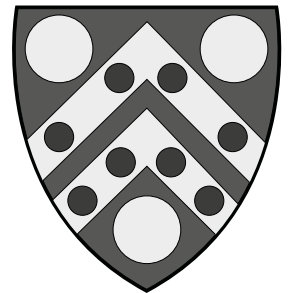
- 10.3 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Part 4, Chapter 3.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/28/part/4/chapter/3>

- 10.4 Papers of the cross-party working group, 26 November 2014, 7 January 2015 and 10 February 2015.



**Should Kidderminster
have a Town Council
like Bewdley and
Stourport?**



What would a Town Council do?

A Town Council would give Kidderminster the same strengths, opportunities and voice as Bewdley, Stourport and most other towns and villages in Wyre Forest and elsewhere.

It would have various powers to provide and run services and facilities for the town.

It could also provide funding towards local projects, activities and initiatives that would benefit the town.

A Town Council would provide a democratic voice for Kidderminster - and only for Kidderminster - on the range of issues that affect the town.

It would be formally consulted on planning applications affecting the town.

A Town Council could take over responsibility for local buildings, other assets and services in Kidderminster that are presently run by other bodies - for example, parks, play areas, statues and toilets.

The Councillors would be directly elected by people in Kidderminster. The number of town councillors has not yet been decided.

If created, Kidderminster Town Council would replace the Charter Trustees.

The Charter Trustees are able only to support the Mayor and other civic events in the town.

The Town Council would elect a Mayor to undertake civic duties to represent the town.

You live in Kidderminster and you are being asked to vote on:

'Should Kidderminster have a Town Council?'

The Local Advisory Poll is taking place on Thursday 7th May (when the General Election and District Council elections are also taking place).

This leaflet explains:

- why you are being asked to vote
- what a Town Council could do for Kidderminster
- what effect it might have on you



Why you are being asked to vote

The Local Advisory Poll has been organised by Wyre Forest District Council as part of a '**Community Governance Review.**'

This review is considering whether to create a Town Council for Kidderminster.

It is an important issue that affects the town and its residents.

We want as many of you as possible to take part in the Local Advisory Poll to make sure the result reflects the views of local people.



How much could a Town Council cost? Appendix 1

A Town Council would fund its activities from council tax.

It would decide how much you would have to pay. At the moment the average household pays £3.27 a year to Kidderminster Charter Trustees.

The Charter Trustees have a limited role compared to a Town Council.

As a guide, similar households in the other towns pay:
 Bewdley Town Council: £20.00 a year
 Stourport-on-Severn Town Council: £21.09 a year

Members of Town Councils do not receive pay or an allowance for being a councillor.

However their council can choose to pay their costs in travelling to attend meetings.

Make your voice heard

Please use your vote on Thursday 7th May.

You will be able to vote at the same polling station as the general and district council elections.

If you are voting in those elections by postal vote or by proxy, you will vote in the Local Advisory Poll by the same method.

You can also send us additional comments by 30th June 2015 to **kidderminsterpoll@wyreforestdc.gov.uk**

Or write to: Sue Saunders, Electoral Services
 Wyre Forest District Council, Finepoint Way,
 Kidderminster DY11 7WF

Website information

Will be live at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/kidderminsterpoll

Consultation on creation of a Town Council for Kidderminster

This information explains the consultation process. It gives information about what a town council could do for Kidderminster if it was created and what effect it might have on you.

What question are local people being asked about whether Kidderminster should have a town council?

The consultation includes what is known as a local advisory poll. It is similar to a referendum.

The question that will be asked is “Should Kidderminster have a town council?” and people will be able to vote “Yes” or “No”.

As part of the consultation, we are also consulting Worcestershire County Council and a range of other organisations.

Who can vote?

If you live in Kidderminster and are entitled to vote in local council elections, you can vote in the local advisory poll.

“Kidderminster” means the current district council wards of Broadwaters, Greenhill, Offmore and Comberton, Aggborough and Spennells, Oldington and Foley Park, Sutton Park, Habberley and Blakebrook and Franche. These are being replaced with effect from 7 May 2015 by the new district council wards of Broadwaters, Offmore & Comberton, Aggborough & Spennells, Foley Park & Hoobrook, Blakebrook & Habberley South and Franche & Habberley North. If you live in one of these wards, you will be able to vote in the poll if you are registered to vote in local elections.

<link to maps>

What would a town council do?

A town council would give Kidderminster the same strengths, opportunities and voice as most other towns and villages in Wyre Forest and elsewhere.

A town council for Kidderminster could provide funding towards local projects, activities and initiatives that would benefit the town. By way of comparison, Bewdley Town Council helps to fund developments in the town including play facilities for young people and the Christmas decorations for the town. It maintains bus shelters, repairs the war memorials, and checks the lifebuoys along the river. It pays for summer and winter planting of tubs and hanging baskets in the main street. It also

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Appendix 1

has responsibility for a "Millennium" Town Green situated at Wribbenhall. It is able to provide grant funding to a number of local voluntary and sporting organisations based in the town. Town Councillors represent the Town Council on a number of local organisations, such as Bewdley Civic Society, Community Transport Wyre Forest, Bewdley Development Trust and the Bewdley Medical Practice Patients' Advisory Group plus a host of other community groups.

A town council for Kidderminster would have various powers to provide and run services and facilities for the town. By way of comparison, Stourport-on-Severn Town Council owns and runs the War Memorial Park in Lickhill Road and the Town's Cemetery at St. Michael's. In addition, the Town Council owns and manages two allotment sites, open space land, common land and the War Memorial Gardens and the Villeneuve-le-Roi Gardens in the centre of the Town. Following its transfer from Wyre Forest District Council, the Town Council owns the Civic Hall which is occupied and run by a Charity named the Civic Group; and adjacent to the Hall is the Civic Centre office building which is now owned by the County Council, following transfer from the District Council, where the Town Council will be in occupation of the top floor from early 2015.

A town council *could* take over responsibility for some local buildings and physical assets in Kidderminster such as parks, play areas and toilets. It *could* also take over responsibility for some services in Kidderminster that are presently run by other bodies. Some of these physical assets or services are being or could be affected by reductions in public spending, as the County Council, District Council and other public bodies decide what services they can afford to provide and operate in Kidderminster in future.

A town council would fund its activities from council tax. It would decide what amount of council tax to raise.

A town council would provide a democratic voice for Kidderminster - and only for Kidderminster - on the range of issues that affect the town. In particular, it would be formally consulted on planning applications affecting the town, in the same way as other town and parish councils are consulted about planning.

In summary, a town council for Kidderminster would mean that the town enjoyed the same advantages and opportunities as Bewdley and Stourport and villages in the district, such as Chaddesley Corbett, Cookley and Wolverley. As the Wyre Forest's largest town, it is possible for a town council over time to have a greater impact than other town and parish councils.

How much could a town council cost me?

It is likely that you will have to pay more council tax than you do now.

Town and parish councils decide how much funding they wish to raise from council tax.

The average house in Kidderminster pays council tax at Band B. In Wyre Forest, for 2015-16, the Band B council tax set by parish and town councils ranges from £10.04

to £37.04 for the whole year. This compares to £3.27 at Band B for the Kidderminster Charter Trustees. The two town councils have a Band B council tax of £20.00 (Bewdley) and £21.09 (Stourport-on-Severn).

The decision about council tax would be taken by a town council if one is created. For example, if a town council for Kidderminster decided to set its council tax for a year at about £20 at Band B, it would represent an increase of about £17, or about 32p a week, for properties in Band B.

How large would the town council's budget be?

It depends mainly on the town council's decision about council tax. If a town council set its council tax at about £20 at Band B, it would raise about £412,000 a year.

A town council might also be able to obtain some funding from other sources. Depending on which buildings and land were transferred from Wyre Forest District Council to the town council, Wyre Forest District Council could contribute funding to the town council to meet part of the cost of running those assets.

Would a town council have any buildings or land?

A town council can decide to rent or own buildings and land. These decisions would be taken by the town council if created.

However if a town council is created for Kidderminster as a result of this review, Wyre Forest District Council can choose to transfer some of its buildings and land to the town council as part of what is called a reorganisation order.

No decisions have yet been taken and the reorganisation order would be the subject of a separate consultation later in 2015. Buildings and land that *might* be transferred from the district council to a town council include:

- the parks and playing fields. This would not affect the management of playing fields by the Worcestershire Football Association or Kidderminster Carolians Rugby Football Club;
- toilets not in parks e.g. Market Street;
- statues and memorials not in parks e.g. statues of Richard Baxter and Sir Rowland Hill;
- ownership of land comprising allotments. This would not affect their management by the allotment associations.

The ownership of the Town Hall or other rights in respect of it *might* also be transferred from the district council to a town council. This will depend on the outcome of a separate process to examine whether a charity or cultural trust might take over ownership of the Town Hall.

If any assets were transferred to the town council, it would have to meet at least some of the costs of running those assets.

How many town councillors would there be and would they be paid?

A town council would be made up of councillors directly elected by people in Kidderminster.

The number of town councillors has not yet been decided. This would be covered by a reorganisation order to be made by Wyre Forest District Council. The reorganisation order would create the town council, set out the arrangements for elections and so on. It would specify the number of town councillors and the areas that they would be elected to represent. The reorganisation order would be the subject of separate consultation later in 2015.

Members of town and parish councils do not receive pay or an allowance for being a councillor. However their councils can choose to pay their costs in travelling to attend meetings.

What would happen to the Charter Trustees and the Mayor of Kidderminster?

If created, Kidderminster Town Council would replace the Charter Trustees.

The town council would elect a Mayor to undertake civic duties to represent the town.

How do I take part?

If you register for a postal vote for the local government elections on 7 May 2015, you will also be sent a postal voting pack for the local advisory poll. You should follow the instructions in the pack and return your completed vote as quickly as possible. It needs to arrive no later than 10pm on Thursday 7 May 2015. You can also hand it in at a polling station on 7 May.

If you register for a proxy vote for the local government elections on 7 May 2015, the person you appoint as your proxy will be able to cast a vote on your behalf in the local advisory poll.

If you do not register for a postal or proxy vote, you can cast your vote in person at the same polling station that you will use for the local government elections on 7 May 2015. The polling station will be open from 7am to 10pm.

The list of polling stations that will be open on 7 May can be seen <here>

What happens after 7 May?

The votes in the local advisory poll will be counted on Monday 11 May 2015. The results of the poll will be published then.

Wyre Forest District Council will consider the results of the poll together with any other comments from the consultation at its meeting on 29 July 2014. It will then

decide whether or not to go ahead with the creation of a town council. We will make sure that the Council's decision is widely publicised.

I signed the petition for a town council in 2013. Do I need to vote?

Yes, you should let us know what you think. A review was undertaken in 2013 following the petition but this is a fresh review – if you want your views to be taken into account, you should use your vote.

We had a review in 2013. Why is there another review being held on the same issue?

Wyre Forest District Council feels that the previous review did not explain fully the reasons why a town council might be created. There may have been some confusion about what was being proposed and who should take part in the consultation.

For example, in order to create a town council for Kidderminster, the town would have to be made into an administrative parish: this is not the same thing as a Church of England parish. People who had signed the petition may have felt that they did not also need to take part in the consultation we held in 2013 – as a result, their views were not taken into account.

Finally, the Council did not pay for return postage in the consultation in 2013 and this may have put some people off from taking part.

How much money is it costing to hold this consultation?

The estimated cost is £40,000. This is being met by Wyre Forest District Council from a specific reserve intended for this purpose.

Who has organised this consultation?

The consultation has been organised by Wyre Forest District Council as part of what is called a “community governance review” for Kidderminster. The community governance review began on 1 February 2015.

A community governance review can consider a number of issues, including: whether to create a new parish/town council, whether to alter the boundary of an existing parish; and whether to group a number of parishes together in a grouped parish council. This review is looking only at whether or not to create a town council for Kidderminster.

Where can I find more information?

Wyre Forest District Council has published terms of reference for the community governance review which can be seen at <insert link>

You can also read the reports considered by Wyre Forest District Council:

- on 26 March 2014. This sets out more detailed background and other options that were considered. <link>

- on 10 December 2014. This covers the terms of reference for the review and the procedures to be used at the local advisory poll <link>.

The website of the National Association of Local Councils contains information about the role and work of town and parish councils. www.nalc.gov.uk

I have some other comments that I want to send in. What do I do?

Please use your vote to let us know what you think. If you've got some additional comments that you want to make, please send them by email or post to arrive no later than 30 June 2015:

kidderminsterpoll@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

or

Sue Saunders
Electoral Services
Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF

Any more questions about the consultation?

If this information has not answered your question about the consultation, please email us at kidderminsterpoll@wyreforestdc.gov.uk and we will try to answer you. If several people ask a similar question, we will update this information so everyone can see the answer.

If you wish to register to vote and have not already registered, please register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote If you wish to arrange a postal vote or proxy vote, or have any other questions about the arrangements for voting on 7 May, please phone 01562 732928.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
25th FEBRUARY 2015
HALF-YEARLY REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 I will concentrate on an overview of the issues facing the district and the Council; key actions being implemented against the priorities in the corporate plan for 2014-19; and the progress that we have made in transforming the Council.

2. Overview of the issues facing the district and the Council

- 2.1 The most significant issue facing the Council remains its financial position. The updated medium term financial strategy, which will have been considered earlier in tonight's meeting, provides a balanced approach for the next three years. It continues to draw on general reserves at a rate of up to about £550k a year. In addition, there are about £390k a year of savings from the previous medium term financial strategy that have yet to be identified and implemented. The scale of savings that need to be achieved by further efficiency measures and potentially some service changes is therefore over £900k a year by 2017-2018. Whichever political group or groups form the administration after May's all out elections will not be able to avoid some difficult decisions.

- 2.2 In October, the Appointments and Appeals Committee completed its work on the structure Corporate Leadership Team, following an independent review. The review was naturally an unsettling time for senior staff. The decision was to implement an "enhanced status quo", with CLT members spending more of their time on strategic rather than operational issues. This has been reflected in the way that discussions in the regular meetings of Cabinet and CLT focus more on strategic issues, as well as how CLT spends its time as a collective body. A balance needs to be struck, as no organisation would be able to take effective strategic decisions in the absence of knowledge of operational issues. I also discussed with my appraisal panel (which is made up of the Leader of the Council and the leader of the two largest opposition groups) what this should mean for where I focus my efforts. The strategic issues I identified were:

- Developing and delivering the "enhanced status quo" model;
- Overseeing implementation of actions under the organisational development strategy, including further efforts on staff engagement;
- Options for future savings including driving service redesign and on-line services;
- Wyre Forest House;
- Community governance review;
- Preparing for elections in May, including review of polling districts and places;
- Horizon-scanning, including work on Wyre Forest's position in respect of future devolution within England e.g. joining a combined authority.

- 2.3 Preparation for the community governance review about whether to create a town council for Kidderminster has taken a considerable amount of time in recent months. Council approved the key arrangements I proposed for the local advisory poll at its meeting in December, and as counting officer I published the remaining detailed procedural rules at the end of January. The leaflet for households and information for the website will have been considered earlier in tonight's meeting. The absence of an effective local organisation covering the whole of Kidderminster continues to be felt – generally, community groups do not wish to take over assets (even though grant funding is offered) and there is no town council with which such issues can even be discussed. Looking at the range of services and assets that Wyre Forest

District Council has successfully transferred to town and parish councils elsewhere, it is apparent that there is a significant strategic gap in the range of tools that the Council can use in pursuing localism and greater local control over local services and assets in Kidderminster. If the outcome of the review is that a town council is not created, it will limit the options that the Council has in future for reducing costs and transforming service delivery.

- 2.5 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England published its final recommendations for the electoral review of Wyre Forest in October. A detailed review of polling districts and polling places was undertaken and Council in December took decisions about the final arrangements. As returning officer, I will provide my usual report on the elections to Council at its meeting in July. In moving to a Council of 33 members, it is inevitable that some serving councillors will choose to stand down or may fail to be re-elected. Therefore there will be changes, both perhaps in faces but also in political structures and roles, as the Council's AGM in May will need to revise committee structures to reflect the smaller size of the Council.
- 2.6 Another electoral issue that has been considered recently is whether or not Council should consider again the question of moving to whole council elections. Looking at this from the perspective of strategic decision-making and what is in the best corporate interests of the Council, it is disappointing that the political groups have been unable to reach sufficient consensus to deliver the 2/3 majority that is required to make such a change. This means that the Council's ability to behave strategically and take major decisions may continue to be hindered because of elections which are, in effect, held every year. Wyre Forest District Council is among the minority of district councils in England that retain elections by thirds (67 out of 201 districts). It is also anomalous when contrasted with the all out elections used for every other democratic representative body for Wyre Forest: parish and town councils, the county council, the UK Parliament and the European Parliament.
- 2.7 The national picture in respect of the impact of dealing with the UK's financial deficit continues to give concern. The consensus between the parties nationally about giving real terms increases in funding for the NHS now seems to extend also to schools. Other spending priorities, including the "triple lock" on the state pension, reduce the scope for the Government of the day to balance the budget (whatever definition is used). This inevitably means that unprotected areas, including local government, will continue to face significant reductions in funding. We have already planned for further reductions in the medium term financial strategy. It remains to be seen whether they will be even sharper than we have projected. For some - perhaps many - district councils, there is a realistic prospect that they will cease to receive any general core funding from central government within a few years. This underlines the importance of continuing to grow the Council's income streams, by growing the domestic and business tax base (more houses, more businesses and more successful businesses) and by other methods, such as selling services and generating income from the Council's assets. I have led the work on drafting a new specification to generate income from the wide range of opportunities for advertising and sponsorship presented by the Council's buildings, vehicles and other assets. It is hoped to commence the tender process before the end of March.

3. Key actions implemented against the priorities set in the corporate plan

3.1 Since my last report in June 2014, the focus has been on implementation of previously agreed changes and projects. We have continued to see good progress on a number of other fronts by the Corporate Leadership Team and I would like to record my thanks to Mike Parker, Linda Collis, Caroline Newlands and Tracey Southall. I am pleased that this report is able to refer to a number of major steps that have been taken:

- a) There has been **significant progress in achieving the target for savings in the previous medium term financial strategy** including the Wyre Forest Forward transformation programme. The total target was £1.5m in the current financial year rising to £2.3m in 2016-17. The latest estimate of savings is that about 80% of these challenging targets have already been met across all three years. As I predicted in my report in June, there has been a slight underachievement in the earlier part of the plan. The Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet reviewed the position last summer and concluded that there was no need for any precipitate action, given the Council's past track record in strong financial management and delivering underspends each year. This has been borne out by the quarter 3 budget monitoring report which shows a modest underspend of £43k projected for 31 March 2015, even though budgets have been adjusted to reflect the progress with achieving savings;
- b) award of the **contract to design, build, maintain and operate the new leisure centre to Places for People, saving £390k a year**. The centre is due to open in the summer of 2016, when the existing sites in Kidderminster and Stourport will close and be available for redevelopment. Since award of the contract, the first tranches of borrowing have been undertaken at rates significantly lower than had been projected, which will add to the annual savings. The successful bid to Sport England for capital funding of £2m assisted significantly with the level of savings. This funding award recognises the quality of the Council's plans to rationalise provision and invest in modern leisure facilities. I would like to pay tribute to the hard work that Kay Higman and other colleagues have put into reaching these successful stages in the process;
- c) we have **redoubled our efforts to generate more income from our services, activities and assets**. Over £90k of additional income has been generated in 2014-15 from depot-based services, cultural and arts events and so on. Next month, we welcome dhjh llp and Worcestershire Regulatory Services to Wyre Forest House. We will achieve income of £150k in a full year from these important tenancies, which mean that all the space that we had available for letting to partners has been taken. Again I would like to pay tribute to the excellent work done by Alison Braithwaite and her team in securing these tenancies and making the moving process as smooth as possible;
- d) **significant progress continues to be made with regeneration of the district**. Last summer's announcement about a significant investment by Amtek in the redundant recycling site on Stourport Road is the most compelling recognition of the benefits of investing and expanding in Wyre Forest. Further significant announcements are in the pipeline. We are still the only district in Worcestershire with an up-to-date local development plan, and we have maintained a clear focus on working to support businesses at all stages in their development. The SPACE incubator units at Hoo Farm are now fully let, and the SPACE incubator offices at the Civic Centre in Stourport are about to come on stream. Henderson Global Investors' plans for expansion of Weavers Wharf are moving closer to implementation, and works to improve the public realm

with the creation of Exchange Square and improvements to Vicar Street and High Street are under way following successful joint working with the County Council. The ReWyre ReNewed conference in October identified, among other things, the need to adopt a new vision for areas such as Bromsgrove Street and Worcester Street (the Eastern Gateway) that will see residential-led redevelopment: the additional funding for economic regeneration in the budget for 2015-16 and 2016-17 will support progress with this. Work on phase 2 of the Hoobrook link road commences in spring 2015, following Government funding announced last July. Finally, the redevelopment of Kidderminster railway station and creation of an improved transport interchange will be able to move forward now that the full £4.3m funding package has been secured by both the Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnerships;

- e) we have **continued to review and streamline internal processes** to make the Council as efficient as possible and reduce cost. Work under the Wyre Forest Forward transformation programme continues and members have received a full briefing recently at the Members' Forum on the major cross-cutting review of finance. This is revising a number of financial processes that affect the entire organisation and will lead to proposals for structural and staffing changes to be implemented by the beginning of September. Another significant cross-cutting review under way relates to human resources, with reviews of processes and policies to simplify systems and support the organisational development strategy that was put in place last July.

4. Looking ahead

- 4.1 The Council continues to face significant challenges over the coming period. Despite their magnitude, I continue to feel confident that Councillors and our staff will rise to meet them, and that the Council will continue to demonstrate its ability to provide effective community leadership. Finally I would like to thank members and others for the support that I have received.

Ian Miller
Chief Executive
February 2015