

FORM 2**NOTICE OF DECISION OF CABINET MEMBER**

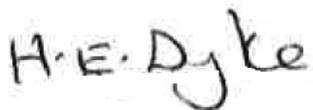
Pursuant to Section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended by section 63 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the senior executive member may discharge any of the functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet or may arrange for them to be discharged by another member of the Cabinet or Officer. On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted the Strong Leader Model for Corporate Governance 2011 as required under Part 3 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The 2007 Act).

In accordance with the authority delegated to me, I have made the following decision:

Subject	Decision	Reason for decision	Date for Decision to be taken
Decisions that would otherwise have been taken at the Cabinet meeting on 21 December 2021	To approve the recommendations in the reports for the 21 December, set out in the schedule in Appendix 1 to the report	To enable the business of the Cabinet to be discharged in a timely fashion	22 December 2021

I confirm that the appropriate statutory officer consultation has taken place with regard to this decision.

Dated: 22 December 2021



Signed:

Councillor: Helen Dyke
Leader of the Council

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT
COUNCIL
STRONG LEADER REPORT**

**DECISIONS THAT WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN TAKEN AT
THE CABINET MEETING ON 21 DECEMBER 2021**

OPEN	
DIRECTOR:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller
DATE:	22 December 2021
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1: schedule of decisions

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To take decisions on the reports that were issued for the Cabinet meeting on 21 December 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Leader is asked to confirm **APPROVAL** of the decisions set out in the schedule in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Leader has the power to take a decision on any executive function and therefore the business of the Cabinet does not need to be disrupted simply because the Leader decided to implement arrangements to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID, including the Omicron variant.
- 3.2 The Leader decided to implement the following arrangements in respect of Cabinet reports that had been issued for the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 6pm on Tuesday 21 December:
- Decisions would be taken by the Leader under the strong leader model;
 - Consideration of reports began at 6pm on Tuesday on Zoom. A special participant link was sent separately to councillors and staff, with members of the public and press being able to view the proceedings by live web stream;
 - Members were invited to declare any interests as usual, given that the proceedings are in effect a meeting of councillors at which decisions will be taken. However approval of the minutes of 9 November will take place at the next formal meeting of Cabinet. There were no requests for public participation but they would have been facilitated within the Zoom call if any had been made;
 - The reports were discussed as usual with the Cabinet member who introduced each report inviting the Leader to consider the recommendations set out in the report (rather than “moving” the recommendations and asking for a seconder), followed by any

contributions from other Cabinet members and contributions/questions from other members as usual.;

- At the conclusion of consideration of each item, rather than Cabinet voting to approve the recommendations, the Leader would announce her decision on whether she approves the recommendations under strong leader powers (the strong leader decisions would be published on line as normal, the following day);
- As this was not be a formal meeting of Cabinet proceeding under local government legislation and the Council's procedure rules, there was no need to move a resolution to exclude the press and public before the final report. Instead an announcement was made that the live webcasting will be brought to an end, leaving only councillors and staff who are participants in the Zoom meeting to continue on the call.

3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Sub-committee met on 20 December and indicated that they did not support the proposed property acquisition in Kidderminster – this is addressed further in section 8 below.

3.4 You announced your decisions to agree each set of recommendations as part of the Zoom call but this report now invites you to confirm them in documentary form.

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 These are set out in each of the Cabinet reports.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications of the various decisions in respect of the Cabinet Reports are set out in those reports.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The legal and policy implications of the various decisions in respect of the Cabinet reports are set out in those reports.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 An equality impact needs assessment in respect of the Cabinet reports are set out in those reports.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The risk implications of the various decisions in respect of the Cabinet reports are set out in those reports.

8.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee considered the proposed property acquisition. Its recommendation concludes "Notwithstanding the potential benefits of the proposal, concerns were raised about the number of risks that remain to be addressed, the Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee recommend to the Leader not to proceed with the acquisition at this stage".

Appropriate regard had to be given to this recommendation but that does not mean that you as Leader were bound to accept it. It will be appreciated that the Cabinet report includes officers' views and professional advice and assurance that full due diligence would be undertaken, including external professional advice, that could allow the acquisition to go ahead subject to the delegations.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Leader is invited formally to confirm approval of the decisions in the schedule set out in Appendix 1.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Corporate Leadership Team

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Reports issued for the Cabinet meeting on 21 December 2021.

Appendix 1 - Schedule of decisions

1. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-25

To NOTE:

- 1.1 The fees and charges as set out in Appendix 4 – Part 1.
- 1.2 The comments from the Strategic Review Panel at its meeting on the 3rd November 2021;
- 1.3 The results of the Budget Consultation survey included in Appendix 6 and summarised in paragraph 9 of the report;
- 1.4 The recommendations in the separate Capital Strategy 2022-2032 report that are intrinsically linked to this MTFS report.

To ENDORSE and RECOMMEND to the Strategic Review Panel for scrutiny:

- 1.5 The Council's updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy taking into account the results of the Budget Consultation;
 - 1.5.1 There are two Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council's Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2022-25 (paragraph 10.2) as follows;
 - a.) Approval of the closure of the small business grants scheme currently administered by North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration after March 2022. This would save £35k each year from 2022-23 onwards which will be utilised to fund additional resource in the NWEDR team to assist with delivery of the externally funded projects for the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) and the Levelling up Fund (LUF);
 - b.) Approval of the end of discretionary sport and leisure facilities from April 2023 namely, phasing out involvement in Bewdley Leisure Centre and Stourport Sports Club. This would save £38k each year from 2023-24 onwards;
 - 1.5.2 The level of net expenditure and resultant Council Tax for 2022-25 as per paragraphs 10.1 and 10.4 including the revenue implications of the Capital Strategy report also on the agenda;
 - 1.5.3 The fees and charges in line with this strategy and the impact on the Council's Revenue Budget for 2022-25, as shown in Part 3 of Appendix 4 (paragraph 10.1 also refers) which incorporate decisions taken by Council on 8th December in respect of licensing fees and charges;
 - 1.5.4 The budget neutral change to the Highways Verges service from 1st April 2022, as set out in paragraph 6.21 c) restricting this Council's work to towns only.

1.6 To APPROVE the fees and charges as set out in Appendix 4 – Part 2.

2. Capital Strategy 2022-32

2.1 To ENDORSE and RECOMMEND to the Strategic Review Panel for scrutiny:

The Council's updated Capital Strategy:

- a) Approve the Capital Strategy 2022-32 including the associated Quantitative Indicators in Appendix 2, the updated Capital Portfolio Strategy in Appendix 4;
- b) Approve variations to the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals Schedule as set out in Appendix 1, Appendices A and B;
- c) Approve the limits for gross debt of non-treasury investments compared to net service expenditure and for Capital Portfolio Fund as a percentage of net service expenditure as set out in Appendix 2;
- d) Approve the revised geography for the Capital Portfolio Fund as set out in paragraph 4.2
- e) Note that the Development Loans Fund initiative is ceased and Approve that the balance of the £10m funding of £8.268m is allocated to a new generic Capital Fund that will follow the same principles for approval and affordability as the Capital Portfolio Fund as set out in paragraph 4.3.
- f) Approve delegation to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio to allocate capital receipts up to the value of any proceeds from sales of Capital Portfolio Properties to be recycled/applied back to the Capital Portfolio Fund, to finance further financially viable acquisitions in line with corporate priorities. See paragraph 4.4.1.
- g) Approve that the extant delegation to Cabinet to make amendments to the Capital Programme in instances where the Council receives external capital grants and the full amount of the grants to be distributed is met from external funding sources be replaced with a delegation to Cabinet to make amendments to the Capital Programme in instances where 100% of the cost of expenditure will be met by external grants or funding sources. See paragraph 4.4.2

3. Acquisition of Property in Kidderminster

3.1 To DECIDE that, in principle, the acquisition of the property in Kidderminster, as detailed in the confidential report, should proceed as set out in the report, noting that there are a number of risks that remain to be addressed.

3.2 To DELEGATE to the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration, in agreement with both the Solicitor to the Council and the

S151 Officer and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Localism, completion of the purchase and all necessary steps to secure occupation of the building as detailed in the confidential report.