

Open

# Council

# Agenda

6pm  
Wednesday, 11 May 2022  
Council Chamber  
Wyre Forest House  
Finepoint Way  
Kidderminster



## Council

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**COUNCIL MEETING**

**3 May 2022**

**TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND HONORARY ALDERMEN**

**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 11 May 2022**, 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.

## WEBCASTING NOTICE

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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.

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\* Unless there are no reports in the open session.

Wyre Forest District Council

Council

Wednesday, 11 May 2022

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
1.	<b>Prayers</b>  To be read by Revd Shaun Armstrong, Curate, Kidderminster Ismere Team in the Diocese of Worcester.	
2.	<b>Election of Chairman</b>  To elect a Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2022-2023.	
3.	<b>Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office</b>  To invest the Chairman of the Council with the Chain of Office after which the Chairman will make his or her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.	
4.	<b>Chairman’s Response</b>  The Chairman of the Council will express thanks for his or her election.	
5.	<b>Retiring Chairman</b>  The Leaders of the largest political groups will thank the retiring Chairman of the Council.	
6.	<b>Election of Vice-Chairman</b>  To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2022-2023.	
7.	<b>Vice-Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office</b>  To invest the Vice-Chairman of the Council with his or her Badge of Office after which the Vice-Chairman will make a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.	
8.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
9.	<b>Declarations of Interests by Members</b>  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	

	<p>following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered.</p> <p>Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2022, and the special meeting of the Council held on 26 April 2022.</p>	10
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Public Participation</b></p> <p>In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full 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 Friday 29 April 2022.</p> <p>No requests for public participation were received by the deadline.</p> <p><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></p>	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>To receive questions submitted by Members of the Council and the replies of the Leader of the Council, or relevant Cabinet Member, in accordance with Standing Order 1.9, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Friday 29 April 2022.</p> <p>No questions were received by the deadline.</p> <p><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></p>	
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Chairman's Communications</b></p> <p>To note the engagements of the Chairman of the Council since the Council's last meeting.</p>	31
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>Political and Constitutional Structures 2022-2023</b></p> <p>To consider a report from the Solicitor to the Council on the proposed political and constitutional structures for the municipal year 2022-2023. <i>Appendix 3 to follow.</i></p>	32
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>Constitution: code of conduct</b></p> <p><b>To consider recommendations from Ethics &amp; Standards Committee – 4 May 2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Amended Member Code of Conduct</b> (this report is to follow)</li> </ul>	

16.	<p><b>Members' Annual Activity Reports and Attendance 2021-2022</b></p> <p>To note the schedule of Members' Annual Reports giving details of their activities in their role as District Councillors for the 2021-2022 municipal year and to receive a record of Members' attendance for the 2021-2022 municipal year.</p> <p><i>These reports are available electronically on the website</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com55.htm#mt8077">http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com55.htm#mt8077</a></p>	66
17.	<p><b>Annual Reports for the Municipal Year 2021-2022</b></p> <p>(a) Cabinet</p> <p>(b) Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>(c) Ethics &amp; Standards Committee</p>	67 70 77
18.	<p><b>Leader of the Council Announcements</b></p> <p>To receive announcements from the Leader of the Council.</p>	
19.	<p><b>Ethics Regime in Local Government</b></p> <p>Following the Council's resolution in February, to await the final Government response to the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, to consider any recommendations from the Ethics and Standards Committee on 4 May 2022. (to follow)</p>	
20.	<p><b>Emergency Motions submitted under Standing Orders</b></p> <p>To consider Emergency Motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.1 (i).</p>	
21.	<p><b>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.</b></p>	
22.	<p><b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b></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

<b>23.</b>	<b>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.</b>	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,  
KIDDERMINSTER

23 FEBRUARY 2022 (6PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: J Aston (Chairman), P Dyke (Vice-Chairman), G W Ballinger, C J Barnett, J F Byng, V Caulfield, S J Chambers, A Coleman, R H Coleman, B S Dawes, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, C Edginton-White, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M J Hart, K Henderson, L J Jones, A L L'Huillier, N Martin, S Miah, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, S E N Rook, D Ross, D R Sheppard, J W R Thomas, A Totty, L Whitehouse and P W M Young.

**C.69 Prayers**

Prayers were said by Rev. Sue Levitt, Stourport Wesley Methodist Church.

Councillor A Totty joined the meeting at 6.01pm.

**C.70 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**C.71 Declarations of Interests by Members**

As recorded later in the minutes, Councillor T Onslow declared in respect of agenda item nine, Council Tax Setting 2022-2023, that she was the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia.

**C.72 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

Councillor T Onslow joined the meeting at 6.03pm.

Councillor C Edginton-White joined the meeting at 6.04pm.

**C.73 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**C.74 Chairman's Communications**

The Council received a list of functions attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the Council's last meeting. The Chairman announced that his Charity Dinner event in December had gone very well and thanked Councillor A Coleman for her help in making it a successful evening.

**C.75 Leader of the Council Announcements**

The Leader of the Council referred members to her tabled report.

**C.76 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-2025**

A report was considered from the Head of Resources which sought approval of the Council's budget for 2022-2025 having considered the proposed decision and budget reports recommended to council by cabinet on 8 February 2022.

The report also sought approval of the Capital Strategy for 2022-2032 including prudential indicators which set limits for non-financial investments and to fulfil the key requirements of the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Investment Guidance.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio presented the report and formally moved the recommendations for approval. She said that the report presented the budget proposals to balance the books and included recommendations for both the Revenue budget and the Capital Strategy. She said achieving financial sustainability continued to be the Council's most significant challenge, which was exacerbated by the sharp rise in inflation, currently running at 5.4% and the pressure that it puts on pay and energy budgets. She added that inflation was expected to go up to over 7% after April.

The Cabinet Member advised that the final settlement had been debated in parliament. There were no significant changes from the provisional settlement which provided additional one-off funding for 2022-23 of £685k, and no additional flexibility to allow districts to approve slightly higher council tax increases without a referendum.

She added that the proposals set out in the budget could be balanced in light of the additional strains on council finances and had been shaped by public opinion. She said the views of 789 residents who completed the council's annual budget consultation had been taken into account. She explained that, rather than focussing on cutting services, the report continued with the significant programme of work to consider options for how the council might deliver services differently in future to save costs and protect front line services. She added that this could include joining forces to deliver services in partnership with other local authorities and organisations or reshaping how the authority delivered services itself.

The Cabinet Member outlined the two cabinet proposals for reductions in discretionary services. She said that having carefully considered the alternative budget proposals the Cabinet were sympathetic to providing funding for community groups to mark the unique Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. She advised that £5,000 had been allocated from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund for Jubilee events organised by community groups for activities that meet the purposes of the grant.

She added that the cabinet also concur with the proposal to progress the

## **Agenda Item No. 10**

development of the solar farm business case and this would be funded from the existing Evergreen fund.

In conclusion, she said that closing the funding gap to balance our expenditure with our income continued to be a significant challenge. At present the authority had reduced the gap from over £2m to a projected £1.68m in 2024-25.

She said the Final Settlement confirmed the assumed council tax rise of £5 can proceed. She assured councillors that the authority would continue to work hard to build on the impressive track record of the council to achieve savings required whilst protecting services as far as possible.

The Leader seconded the proposals.

On behalf of the Conservative Group Councillor N Desmond moved a suite of amendments as set out in appendix 5 of the report. He said that the proposals set out an alternative of a growing and ambitious budget that would improve services for the council's residents and communities. He thanked the previous and current S151 Officer for their dedication and advice in helping to shape the budget package.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor M Hart.

A discussion on the amendment ensued.

**Named votes on the Conservative Group proposals were recorded as follows and the amendment was defeated:**

For (16)

Councillors: J Byng, S Chambers, B Dawes, N Desmond, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, S Miah, F Oborski MBE, T Onslow, C Rogers, D Ross and A Totty.

Against (17)

Councillors: J Aston, G Ballinger, C Barnett, V Caulfield, A Coleman, R Coleman, H Dyke, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, A L'Huillier, N Martin, M Rayner, S Rook, D Sheppard, J Thomas, L Whitehouse and P Young.

Abstained (0)

On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group Councillor Oborski MBE moved a suite of amendments as set out in appendix 5 of the report. She outlined the main parts of the proposals. She said the proposals were not just providing the basic services: they were looking at things to make people's lives more interesting. She said that the proposals had been fully costed and thanked the previous and current S151 Officer for their support.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor S Miah.

A discussion on the amendment ensued.

**Named votes on the Liberal Democrat Group proposals were recorded as follows and the amendment was defeated:**

For (16)

Councillors: J Byng, S Chambers, B Dawes, N Desmond, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, S Miah, F Oborski MBE, T Onslow, C Rogers, D Ross and A Totty.

Against (17)

Councillors: J Aston, G Ballinger, C Barnett, V Caulfield, A Coleman, R Coleman, H Dyke, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, A L'Huillier, N Martin, M Rayner, S Rook, D Sheppard, J Thomas, L Whitehouse and P Young.

Abstained (0)

Councillor N Martin left the meeting at this point, (7.34pm) and returned at 7.37pm.

Councillor A Totty left the meeting at 7.37pm and return at 7.39pm.

A robust debate on the substantive proposals took place. A number of councillors spoke against the proposals as they felt they were not ambitious or lacked vision.

Councillor P Young left the meeting at 7.51pm and returned at 7.55pm.

The Leader addressed several of the issues raised during the debate. She said that the administration was concerned about the deficit and were mindful of the need for it to be reduced. She added that the budget proposals had been worked within the boundaries of the finance that was available and urged council to support the proposals.

**A named vote on the substantive budget proposals was recorded as follows and was agreed:**

For (17)

Councillors: J Aston, G Ballinger, C Barnett, V Caulfield, A Coleman, R Coleman, H Dyke, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, A L'Huillier, N Martin, M Rayner, S Rook, D Sheppard, J Thomas, L Whitehouse and P Young.

Against (16)

Councillors: J Byng, S Chambers, B Dawes, N Desmond, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, S Miah, F Oborski MBE, T Onslow, C Rogers, D Ross and A Totty.

Abstained (0)

**Decision: Council;**

- 1.1 THREE YEAR BUDGET, CAPITAL STRATEGY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2022-2025**
- 1.1.1 APPROVED the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022-2025.**
- 1.1.2 APPROVED the Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council’s Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2022-2025 as shown in the tables in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 and as set out below:**
- a) Approval to close 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 to end discretionary support of 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.**
- 1.1.3 APPROVED the fees and charges in line with this Strategy and in line with the recommendations of the Licensing and Environmental Committee of 6th December 2021, and the impact on the Council’s Revenue Budget for 2022-2025, as shown in Appendix 3.**
- 1.1.4 APPROVED the Council’s updated Capital Strategy:**
- a) Approval of the Capital Strategy 2022-2032 set out in Appendix 2 of the February 2022 Cabinet report including the associated Quantitative Indicators in Appendix 2 of the December 2021 Cabinet report.**
  - b) Approval of the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals Schedule as set out in Appendices 1A and 1B, of the Capital Strategy report to December 2021 Cabinet.**
  - c) Approval of the limits for gross debt for non-treasury investments compared to net service expenditure and for commercial income as a percentage of net service expenditure as set out in Appendix 2 of the December report.**
- 1.1.5 APPROVED that any Final Accounts savings arising from 2021-2022, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated by the Head of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio.**
- 1.1.6 APPROVED the General Fund Revenue Budget including all**

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updates from the position in December 2021 as set out in the report.

## **1.2 COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES**

**1.2.1 The Council Tax increase is confirmed as £5 p.a. and that Council;**

- a. SET the Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property at £229.34 for 2022-2023 (£224.34 2021-2022) which represents an increase of 2.23% on Council Tax from 2021-2022.**
- b. ENDORSED the provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2023-2024 of £234.34 and £239.34 in 2024-2025, being increases of 2.18% and 2.13% respectively.**

**1.2.3 NOTED the Head of Resources' (as Chief Financial Officer) opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet in the report, as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report.**

### **C.77 Council Tax Setting 2022-2023**

Councillor T Onslow made her declaration at this point (8.13pm).

Council considered the formal resolution for setting the Council Tax for 2022-2023. This included the 2.23% increase in the District Council's element of Council Tax, as recommended by Cabinet on 8 February 2022, and the precepts and council tax increases in the elements of council tax set by the following bodies: Worcestershire County Council; The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia; and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority.

The Leader formally moved the recommendations for approval. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio seconded the proposals.

**A named vote on the Council Tax resolution was recorded as follows and was agreed:**

For (33)

Councillors: J Aston, G Ballinger, C Barnett, J Byng, V Caulfield, S Chambers, A Coleman, R Coleman, B Dawes, N Desmond, H Dyke, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, A L'Huillier, N Martin, S Miah, F Oborski MBE, T Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, S Rook, D Ross, D Sheppard, J Thomas, A Totty, L Whitehouse and P Young.

**Decision: Council approved the formal Council Tax Resolution 2022-23 at Appendix 1, taking into account information contained in Appendices 2 to 5.**

At 8.22pm the meeting was adjourned for a short comfort break and resumed at 8.34pm.

**C.78 Policy and Budget Framework**

**Recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 03-02-2022**

- **Treasury Management Strategy 2022-23**

The chairman of the committee, Councillor M Hart presented the recommendations and formally moved them for approval. The chairman of the Treasury Management Review Panel, Councillor S Miah seconded the proposals.

**Decision: Council;**

- 1.1 Approved the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2022-23 to 2031-32 included in Appendix 3. These will be revised for the February 2022 Council meeting, as per paragraph 7.2 of the report, following any changes to the Capital Programme brought about as part of the budget process.**
- 1.2 Approved the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 and the detailed criteria is included in Section 10 and Appendix 5).**
- 1.3 Approved the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 1.**
- 1.4 Approved the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator included in Appendix 3.**
- 1.5 Noted that the separate, but intrinsically linked, Capital Strategy 2022-32 to be approved separately by Council, sets out the policy statement covering non-treasury investments including the related suite of prudential indicators.**
- 1.6 Noted the implications of the revised Codes as detailed in section 3.1. the new Codes apply with immediate effect, in particular that an authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. Implementation of the new reporting requirements is deferred until the 2023 24 financial year.**

Councillor L Jones returned to the meeting at this point.

**C.79 Ethics regime in local government**

Council considered the response and further information provided by the



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Government following the Council's resolution of 8 December 2021 and the actions taken by Mark Garnier MP.

The chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee, Councillor A L'Huillier, said that the response was clearly seeking to reassure the authority that they were taking the matter seriously and that council could expect a proper response imminently. She said she felt it would be fair and just to allow them a little longer to respond to the recommendations, possibly until the end of April. She said that would allow adequate time to review the situation at the May meeting of council with a view to her seeking support to move a further motion if no action had been taken by that time.

**Decision: Council noted the responses and await the final Government response to the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life. The item to be added to the agenda for the May meeting.**

### **C.80**

#### **Questions**

Eleven questions had been submitted by members of the council in accordance with standing orders.

#### **1. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Leader of the Council**

Climate Emergency U.K. has assessed the Council Climate Action Plans of Councils in the top two tiers of Local Government according to 28 questions across 9 Sections based on the expert approved Checklist for Council Action Plans.

Is the Leader content with the performance of Wyre Forest D.C. on the resultant scorecard?

#### **Answer from the Leader**

This is very much a tick box exercise by Climate Emergency UK, and what I am not content with is that it has not correctly recorded the achievements of progress that have been made by Wyre Forest District Council.

#### **Supplementary question**

I understand that the average for UK councils is 47% and even with the adjustments that were made at the Green Panel, I think we now score 37%. Even with those improvements we compare badly with Malvern Hills District Council on 47%, Worcestershire County Council on 40%, Worcester City Council on 47% and Wychavon on 49%. We are better than Bromsgrove on 10% and Redditch with a stunning 0%. But in view of our supposed green credentials, could the Leader tell me what steps the administration is going to take to make sure that we are able to score at least the national average?

#### **Answer**

It was discussed at the Cabinet Advisory Panel last week which I observed. I am content that most of the information required to improve our scores is already on our website and that was debated at the Green Panel, it is just

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not in the right place, and in the correct format. Yes, the council needs to update that, and that was an action in the Green Panel meeting. I think it was decided at that meeting that the panel, working with officers, will begin looking at collating those existing results so they appear in the correct place on the website and looking at ways of achieving higher scores. I think one of the things debated at that meeting was working with parish councils for their involvement.

### **2. Question from Councillor Marcus Hart to the Leader of the Council**

Could the Leader of the Council please confirm that she values the process used in respect of the appraisal of the Chief Executive?

#### **Answer from the Leader**

I can.

#### **Supplementary question**

Would she agree with me that it was exceptionally coincidental that at 2.05pm on 14 February this year, I received a request for my availability for the Chief Executive's Appraisal Panel, scheduled for 7 April this year particularly given that was after the 12noon deadline when my question would have been public?

Secondly, would she comment if she values it so much, that when it was agreed on 13 April last year, there would be a half yearly review in October, and we are now nearly at the end of February, why the half yearly review has not taken place hitherto and when is it proposed to take place or is the half yearly review taking place in April?

#### **Answer**

I confirm that appraisals are important, and I am sure members will remember that in October we were still working through a very difficult time on the council, especially with being given all sorts of concerning comments about the omicron variant. Internally I admit the focus was not on the appraisal at the time it was on the medium-term financial strategy, the new management structure and all the other things that were hitting the council at that time. I feel there were more important issues to deal with than the mid-term review. The Chief Executive and I were already talking about it, but you did prompt us, so thank you.

### **3. Question from Councillor Nathan Desmond to the Cabinet**

#### **Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio**

Could the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio comment on how she feels the budget process and Strategic Review Panel has worked this year?

#### **Answer from the Leader**

I will be taking that question as I am the Chair of that panel. I feel, and I think that our cabinet members do as well, that the budget process has worked well this year.

#### **Supplementary question**

Would the Leader agree with me that this particular year the process has

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been more like a damp squib and achieved very little? Not only did the third meeting last a mere 7 minutes, but there was also no update from the cabinet or cabinet member on the budget. It is clear to me that despite the rich history, over the last 15 years or so, of consensus on the budget, certainly by the former Leaders Councillor Campion and Councillor Hart, where they were always looking to take on board alternative proposals, isn't it clear that this administration has no desire whatsoever to work with any particular party or take on any particular policy initiative however helpful it may be?

### **Answer**

I disagree with you. This particular year I organised extra meetings to meet with Group Leaders or representatives of the opposition groups, attended by myself and the Deputy Leader. Whether you believe me or not, I can honestly say that cabinet and myself considered all the alternative budgets in detail and we did not make any decision rashly. We did consider them, we just felt that we were unable to take them on board at this time.

### **4. Question from Councillor Tracey Onslow to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

When will work commence at Brinton Park in respect of our Heritage Lottery Fund Project further to the grant of £2.4m of funding in 2020?

### **Answer from the Leader**

I think this question was originally directed at me when it went to the council meeting when we didn't consider all the questions, and I have been involved in it, so I will take this question.

The work will commence soon after the procurement for the capital work has been completed and the contract awarded. It is on the cards and will be happening as soon as possible.

### **Supplementary question**

I am sure she has heard the rumours that HLF are pulling out. Would she therefore confirm that the leasing, risk assessment and ownership issues, which HLF had concerns about, have they now been resolved? Can she also confirm when HLF last confirmed their support for the project?

### **Answer**

At my last briefing there was no mention of HLF pulling out. We are nearing completion of some legal issues that we are dealing with, with particular groups within the park. I am happy to keep you informed, as with other ward councillors as we already work on other projects with Brinton Park, so as soon as I have more of an update I will be in touch.

### **5. Question from Councillor Ian Hardiman to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

When can we expect all WFDC units on the Frencro site to be let by?

### **Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

Progress with the units is going very well and the interest in the units is extremely high. Five units are already under offer, and there is a waiting list

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of many people interested in the remaining four units. I am sure you will agree that these units will go extremely quickly once they are completed.

### **Supplementary question**

I am not sure that you quite rightly answered the question. I am saying on the Frecco Site when will they be let by? Not if they are going to be let. Could you please clarify that? Are they going to be ready next week, next month, that was the question?

### **Answer**

The units should all be completed by the end of March and hopefully by then some of the units will have already been let and companies will be in those units and working from them.

### **6. Question from Councillor Chris Rogers to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

Could the Cabinet Member please tell me the latest position of how much of Wyre Forest House is now rented out to external tenants.

### **Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

Wyre Forest House has a square footage of 18,740, this is office space only and does not include meeting rooms and other non-lettable areas. 14,000 square feet or 75% is currently leased out, including the space under offer to Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership for the Betaden North project.

### **Supplementary question**

As the Chief Executive's and the Leader's offices no longer appear to be used, could they be rented out as well?

### **Answer**

We will look at all possibilities within the building. If the Chief Executive does not want his office, then we will let it out, but I am sure he has plenty of use for his office and it is well used.

### **7. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

Worcestershire County Council is to be congratulated on passing a motion recognising that we face a Biodiversity Emergency. That Motion stated:

“Council welcomes the focus of the new Environment Act 2021 (the 2021 Act) which updates and strengthens the existing Biodiversity Duty on Public Bodies ( including local authorities) contained in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 ( NERC Act)”

Will the Cabinet Member agree with me that, although the primary responsibility will lie with the County Council, it would be appropriate to request the Green Panel, in compliance with and subject to, the requirements of the Act, to work with partners including WCC towards producing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy which would build on the emerging Local Plan and set out the priorities for protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the district, to include key habitats and

geographical locations of focus?

**Answer from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services**

I have spoken to Councillor Vicky Caulfield, who is the current Chair of the Green Panel and unfortunately, she feels at the moment our top ten priorities need to remain within the top ten. However, I spoke to Paul Allen our Countryside and Technical Services Manager, and he is very keen to work with the county council with regards to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. He feels it is a very powerful document. However, we as a district need a strong steer within this document because we have some areas of interest. We are as a district taking this seriously.

**Supplementary question**

Could we ask for a report back from the officer of the progress being made and what he suggests we do?

**Answer**

I can certainly ask him.

**8. Question from Councillor Marcus Hart to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio**

Could the Cabinet Member comment on how she feels she has taken on board the views of all members as part of this year's budget?

**Answer from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio**

We did take on board all the comments made by the opposition and there are some that have been incorporated within our budget. It was democratically done; all leaders of the opposition groups were invited to meet with the Leader and Deputy Leader to discuss the proposals for their budgets.

**Supplementary question**

Clearly something has gone wrong in this process because opposition groups were not invited to negotiate, opposition groups were invited to meet the Leader and Deputy Leader to answer questions on our proposals. Does she agree with me that it is most regrettable that not one miniscule slither of an opposition parties alternative budget proposals have been taken on board by this administration, or certainly not the Conservatives', which is a retrograde step from previous years?

**Answer**

No, we do not agree with you. All the things you have mentioned were taken on board by the Leader and Deputy Leader. They listened to you and took notice of what was being said.

**9. Question from Councillor Ian Hardiman to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

Since the work from home guidance has been relaxed and we move to our hybrid model of working could the Cabinet Member advise on how many staff have been physically working from Wyre Forest House each day since 1st February?

**Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services**

We do not usually monitor how many staff are in Wyre Forest House at any one time. However, coincidentally and not prompted by your question, we have started collecting data from the 1 February, in order to assess what space we as a council might require in the future now that the hybrid model, which this council approved, is being worked to. The data is only a snapshot in time, it is not taken every day and it is taken at different times of the day. Please bear in mind that when the snapshot is taken, it is of how many Wyre Forest District Council staff are at a desk. It does not count anybody who may be in the meeting rooms or may have left a desk or may have walked out of the building temporarily when the data was collected. For the 10 days that the data has been collected between 1 February and 17 February inclusive, the number of staff counted ranged from 13 to 27, the average being 21.

**Supplementary question**

Please confirm how many staff, if all are present at Wyre Forest House, are there in total normally? How many employees were taken on to work in this building?

**Answer**

To give an accurate answer off the top of my head, I cannot do that. I will write to you with that answer.

**10. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services**

Can the Cabinet Member tell me how many homeless families have we housed at the Travel Lodge at Hartlebury?

**Answer from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services**

I am told that you have been given this information, I will indulge you again. It is six households that have been accommodated at the Travel Lodge at Hartlebury.

**Supplementary question**

Could you tell me how many of those households have had children?

**Answer**

Three.

**11. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services**

Given that rooms in the Travel Lodge at Hartlebury have no cooking facilities and there are no shops nearby how can this possibly be a suitable accommodation with people with no cars?

**Answer from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services**

The accommodation is suitable in the sense that it provides a roof over vulnerable and distressed homeless people Should the case of

transportation and food arise then they are provided for.

**Supplementary question**

On Monday night, the HELP night kitchen was called to take a food parcel to a homeless person, not a Wyre Forest one, at that Travel Lodge, because all they had in their room was a kettle and they had absolutely no food at all. The person who took the food parcel was advised it was not the first time that people had been there with no food. Please can the Cabinet Member ensure that in future, if people with no transport are placed at Hartlebury, some sort of arrangement to give them at least some basic food can be undertaken?

**Answer**

That is not a situation I am aware of. I am thankful that HELP was able to help them. We as a council, just like other councils across the board, are struggling with temporary accommodation. I am not saying that the Travel Lodge is the most suitable, what I am saying is we provide what we have on offer to us. Sometimes unfortunate situations will happen, we always endeavour for them not to happen and I am thankful that help was there at the time.

**C.81 Motions Submitted under Standing Orders**

Three motions had been received in accordance with standing orders.

**1. Notice of motion from Councillor H Dyke**

The Leader presented the motion which was seconded by Councillor G Ballinger.

A discussion ensued and councilors welcomed the motion. Councillor M Hart proposed that when the letter of thanks and congratulations to Her Majesty be sent, it would be nice to request a royal visit to showcase some of the excellent work within the district.

The Leader confirmed that she was happy to accept the amendment. Upon a show of hands, the motion was unanimously agreed.

**Decision: The following motion from Councillor H Dyke, as amended by Councillor M Hart be agreed:**

**On the occasion of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee on 6 February 2022 – a unique achievement in the history of the UK Monarchy - Council resolves that the Chairman should send a Humble Address to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Second to convey the congratulations of the Council and the residents of Wyre Forest and to express their grateful thanks to Her Majesty for Her dedicated service to the United Kingdom.**

**The Council work with the Lord-Lieutenant to request a royal visit to showcase some of the excellent work within the district.**

**2. Notice of motion from Councillor G Ballinger**

Councillor G Ballinger presented the motion which was seconded by the Leader.

A discussion ensued and several councillors shared their experiences of the fourth round FA cup match day.

Councillor P Harrison left the meeting at 9.13pm and returned at 9.17pm.

Upon a show of hands, the motion was unanimously agreed.

**Decision: The following motion from Councillor G Ballinger be agreed:**

**Council resolves to congratulate Kidderminster Harriers Football Club on their run in the FA Cup and welcomes that this has fostered pride in the Club and the town and has brought positive publicity for the town and Wyre Forest. Council further resolves that the Chairman should send a letter to the Club to convey the Council's congratulations and to extend best wishes to the team for the remainder of the 2021/22 season.**

**3. Notice of Motion by the WFDC Conservative Group**

*This Council **acknowledges** the fact that there has been a reduction in senior leadership capacity as a result of the deletion of three corporate director posts in the last 2 years plus a number of other officer posts.*

*This Council further **acknowledges** that there are positives that can come out of the Covid-19 pandemic in respect of virtual and remote ways of working.*

*This Council does not wish to undermine and indeed acknowledges and supports a hybrid model of working.*

*This Council further **acknowledges** that it needs to be an attractive, good and responsible employer and that work life balance has a part to play in the recruitment and retention of staff.*

*However, this Council **regrets** the decision made by the Head of Paid Service and supported by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and his announcement to group leaders on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 that he will be permitting officers of this Council to attend and participate remotely at formal meetings of the Council.*

*This Council **welcomes** the role that Officers play in advising and supporting members of this Council in discharging their functions as democratically elected representatives.*

*This Council is deeply concerned about the message this sends to our workforce, residents and taxpayers and the effect it will have on the cohesion of the council and decision making.*

*This Council **calls** upon the Leader of the Council to respect and positively*



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*respond to the views of members of the Council that deplore and object to this decision and find that as a result of this decision we believe that there will be a discourtesy to all members at meetings and therefore **commit** to personally ensuring that this decision is reversed with immediate effect.*

Councillor M Hart presented the motion on behalf of the Conservative Group. The motion was seconded by Councillor N Desmond.

Councillor Hart outlined the reasons for the motion and a robust debate ensued.

Councillor T Onslow left the meeting at 9.50pm and returned at 9.51pm.

At 9.55pm Council agreed unanimously to suspend the council procedure rules (standing orders) 1.1 (iii) to allow the meeting to continue until 10.15pm.

In view of the number of councillors that had spoken on the issue, the Deputy Leader moved that the question be put. The proposal was seconded by the Leader.

It was the opinion of the Chairman that sufficient debate on the motion had taken place.

Upon a show of hands, a vote on the proposal that the question immediately be put was taken and agreed.

A vote on the motion submitted by the Conservative Group was taken. Upon a show of hands, the motion was defeated.

**Decision: The motion was defeated.**

### **C.82 Emergency Motions submitted under Standing Orders**

There were no urgent motions.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 10.03pm

The full meeting is available for viewing on the Council's website <https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-committees-and-meetings/council-meetings/>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,  
KIDDERMINSTER

26TH APRIL 2022 (6PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: J Aston (Chairman), P Dyke (Vice-Chairman), G W Ballinger, C J Barnett, J F Byng, V Caulfield, S J Chambers, A Coleman, R H Coleman, B S Dawes, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, C Edginton-White, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M J Hart, K Henderson, L J Jones, A L L'Huillier, N Martin, S Miah, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, S E N Rook, D Ross, D R Sheppard, J W R Thomas, A Totty, L Whitehouse and P W M Young.

**C.83 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**C.84 Declarations of Interests by Members**

Councillor C Edginton-White declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in respect of agenda item 4 - Adoption of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036, as she has a financial and family interest in one of the brownfield sites allocated for housing in the plan. She advised that she would not remain in the council chamber for the debate or take part in any vote.

Councillor A L'Huillier declared, in respect of agenda item 4 - Adoption of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036, that as Ward Councillor for Franche and Habberley North she had publicly and internally repeatedly declared her opposition to the removal of the land at Habberley Road from the green belt. She could neither deny nor debate that this meant she did not attend the meeting with an open mind. She said she agreed with many members of the public from her Ward who challenge the Council on this matter this evening. She said she hoped that all remaining members who were attending with no predisposed position listened and truly heard all arguments for and against prior to their final decision.

**C.85 Public Participation**

In accordance with the Council's scheme for public participation at meetings of Full Council, the following members of the public addressed the meeting at this point.

**Oliver Swain – Wyre Forest resident**

Mr Swain had previously submitted a petition to the Council asking for the

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decision to be paused and the plan reformed. He spoke about his opposition of building on the green belt; infrastructure and service gaps across the district and said that the green belt should not be removed unless for exceptional circumstances; which was not the case here given that there were still brownfield sites available.

### **Nicholas Mayman – Wyre Forest resident**

Mr Mayman said his statement was threefold: to challenge the Local Plan's proposed loss of green belt in general and in particular as it relates to the Bewdley Housing target; to demonstrate that site no. WA/BE/1 (Stourport Road Triangle) was inappropriate for the number of dwellings and lastly to question why WFDC had apparently failed to secure any compensatory improvement for green belt status removal from this site.

### **Mark Turner, Solicitor, instructed by Dr Merlyn Wilcox – Wyre Forest resident and member of Stop the Habberley Road Development Public Group**

Mr Turner's statement included the public opposition to green belt release and raised points in relation to; NPPF 141(a): As Much Use as Possible of Brownfield and Under-Utilised Land; NPPF 141 and 68: Headroom; and NPPF 137-142: Contribution to Green Belt. He said the solution was to vote against adoption of the Local Plan and to start again.

The Leader of the Council thanked the public speakers for their participation, and for the many letters and emails that Councillors had received prior to the meeting. She said that the Council welcomed community engagement on subjects like this one.

In response to a comment from a public speaker suggesting that the Council had already got a plan in place to 2026, the Leader explained that was the end date on the Council's adopted plan; it did not mean that the plan was now up-to date. She said that it predated the national planning policy framework (NPPF) and was considered to have been out of date by the time the Council commenced the preparation of the new plan in 2015. She added that the Council needed an up-to date plan if it was going to continue to be able to exercise effective control over where development happened.

Councillors C Edginton-White and A L'Huillier left the meeting at this point, (6.13pm).

## **C.86**

### **Adoption of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036**

The Council considered the recommendations of the Cabinet on 26 April 2022.

The Leader presented the recommendations that had been circulated prior to the meeting. She said that adoption of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036 was one of the most important decisions that the Council had to make for the area and its residents.

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She explained that the compilation of the plan had not been a quick process and had started as far back as 2015. She said the political spectrum of the Council at that time was very different with the Conservative Group being the administration. By the time the Progressive Alliance became the administration in 2019, much of the public consultation and groundwork had been undertaken. She said that she mentioned the distinction to highlight that in the process of putting a local plan together it was possible that it would have passed through several administrations and had input from more than one political party. She said she felt positive that every member of the Council wanted the best for the Wards they represented. However as the title of District Councillor underlines, members must consider what is best for the whole district of Wyre Forest too.

The Leader thanked the members of the public that had taken part in the Local Plan consultation during the 7-year period from 2015. She said there had been approximately 3,000 respondents making 7,000 representations along with 2 petitions.

The Leader further explained that the Local Plan would be used for the purposes of determining planning applications. The plan would give developers and landowners clear guidance where developments should take place and to what standards. She added that developers would be reluctant to submit applications which are contrary to the Local Plan. Without a plan in place the authority would be unprotected against “hostile” planning applications from developers across the district including on green belt land.

In response to concern from residents relating to the loss of any amount of green belt and doubt that the Council had explored the use of every possible brownfield site, the Leader explained that the Council carried out a call for sites in 2014 and again in 2017. She said the brownfield sites in the plan that have willing landowners account for just under 50% of all allocated sites. She added that the Council cannot compel owners of sites to put them forward for development if they do not want to.

The Leader said, although the Government had made comments about changes concerning the green belt in their 2019 manifesto, no legislation had been published in draft or brought forward to Parliament. She added that the Local Plan would require 2.1% of green belt. However, without a Local Plan in place more of the green belt could be at risk of planning applications due to the Council not having a 5-year land supply.

In conclusion, she said that the Cabinet were aware that some aspects of the proposed Local Plan would not be popular with all Councillors or residents, but the alternative was to leave the district without planning protection and possibly the lack of democratic control over the Council's planning procedures. She formally moved the recommendations for approval and asked Council to support the plan and vote in favour of it.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded

the proposals.

A discussion ensued. Several Councillors spoke against the proposals. Councillors M Hart, I Hardiman, F Oborski MBE, D Ross, C Rogers, S Miah, L Jones and N Desmond outlined their reasons for not supporting the adoption of the Local Plan.

A number of Councillors spoke in favour of the proposals. Councillors N Martin, M Rayner and G Ballinger spoke about the importance of having a sound, adopted Local Plan.

In response to a point of order raised by Councillor S Rook, the Solicitor to the Council advised that it was the personal responsibility of individual members to use their integrity and decide if they should declare the existence of any interests. She said that confidential advice was available to all members prior to any meetings. She confirmed that every decision made by the Council was vulnerable to challenge.

The Leader agreed to a call for a named vote from Councillor F Oborski MBE.

**A named vote on the proposals was recorded as follows and was agreed:**

For (14)

Councillors: J Aston, G Ballinger, C Barnett, V Caulfield, A Coleman, R Coleman, H Dyke, P Dyke, N Martin, M Rayner, S Rook, D Sheppard, J Thomas and P Young.

Against (13)

Councillors: J Byng, B Dawes, N Desmond, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, S Miah, F Oborski MBE, C Rogers, D Ross and A Totty.

Abstained (4)

Councillors: S Chambers, N Gale, T Onslow and L Whitehouse.

**Decision: Council;**

- (a) adopted the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-2036) as set out in Appendix C;**
- (b) approved the adoption statement set out in Appendix D, which will be published and made available in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004;**
- (c) delegated to the Head of Strategic Growth in consultation with**

**Agenda Item No. 10**  
**the Leader of the Council any minor amendments,**  
**typographical and grammar corrections to the documents prior**  
**to publication.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.01pm.

The full meeting is available for viewing on the Council's website  
<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-committees-and-meetings/council-meetings/>

**Chairman's List of Functions – 2021/22**

**March 2022 - May 2022**

4<sup>th</sup> March - Kidderminster Mayor's Ball

25<sup>th</sup> March - Wyre Forest Young Voices Concert\*

31<sup>st</sup> March - King Charles High School Presentation Evening

1<sup>st</sup> April - Stourport Mayor's Ball

22<sup>nd</sup> April - Mayor of Droitwich Riverboat Cruise

24<sup>th</sup> April - Wyre Forest Scout & Guide St Georges Day Parade

28<sup>th</sup> April - Mayor & Mayoress of Bewdley Afternoon Tea

29<sup>th</sup> April - Mayor of Worcester – Charity Banquet

\* Denotes attendance by Vice Chairman

## WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COUNCIL

11 MAY 2022

## Political and Constitutional Structures 2022/2023

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	The Leader of the Council
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	Solicitor to the Council
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Caroline Newlands, Ext. 2715 caroline.newlands@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	Appendix 1 - Revisions to the Constitution Appendix 2 - Political management structure Appendix 3 - Committee appointments Appendix 4 - Municipal calendar Appendix 5 - Political balance Appendix 6 - Appointments to outside bodies

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the Political and Constitutional Structures for the municipal year 2022/2023.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

The Council is asked to:

- 2.1 Agree the revisions to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1**
- 2.2 Approve the proposed Political Management Structure of committees for 2022/2023 as set out in Appendix 2.**
- 2.3 Agree the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees as contained in Appendix 3.**
- 2.4 Adopt the Municipal Calendar as set out in Appendix 4.**
- 2.5 Agree the revised table of political balance in Appendix 5.**
- 2.6 Agree the appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 6.**
- 2.7 Authorise the Solicitor to the Council to settle any outstanding details relating to the political structures and to make changes as necessary to the Council's Constitution to give effect to the Council's decisions and any other revisions necessary to reflect needs or circumstances.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Council is responsible for establishing the political structures which are not the responsibility of the Leader and Cabinet. Council appointed Chairmen and**



Vice-Chairmen of Committees at its meeting on 12 May 2021. The position of Vice-Chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee has been vacant since October 2021 due to the elected member resigning from the Council. The position of Chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee became vacant in April 2022 due to the elected member resigning from the Council.

- 3.2 Under the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Leader of the Council is responsible for appointments to the Cabinet and allocating responsibilities to Cabinet members. Since 2011, the Council has appointed the Leader of the Council under the “strong leader” model. Council appointed the Leader at its meeting on 12 May 2021 until the annual general meeting following the next ordinary elections in May 2023. On 3 May, the Leader made a minor adjustment to portfolios of two Cabinet members.
- 3.3 It remains Council’s role to establish such Committees as it thinks fit to carry out the discharge of functions which are not the responsibility of the Cabinet. This report addresses the political and constitutional structures for the Council to decide. It also appoints their Chairmen and Vice Chairmen.
- 3.4 Under section 7, 1.4 of the Council’s constitution, it is a function of full Council to make appointments to external bodies including relevant joint committees. Vacancies that arise during the course of the municipal year are dealt with by the Cabinet.
- 3.5 Under Article 15 of the Constitution, it is for full Council to agree material changes to the constitution. There are two such amendments proposed, which are set out in section 4 below and Appendix 1. A recommendation from the Ethics and Standards Committee in respect of the code of conduct, which is also forms part of the Constitution, is reported separately on tonight’s agenda.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 No group secured a majority as a result of the elections on 2 May 2019, and there have been a number of changes in constitution and membership of groups since then. Three of the groups have come together to form the “Progressive Alliance” but the allocation of seats in accordance with political balance will be based on the five groups that exist. The Progressive Alliance’s proposals for the 2022/2023 political structure are detailed in Appendix 2.

**Political Balance**

- 4.2 Council approved the political balance at its meeting on 8 December 2021. Since that date there has been a change in the political balance as a result of the resignation of a Councillor on 27 April. Council is required to re-calculate political balance shown in appendix 5. It will need to recalculate political balance again at its July meeting, following the by-election which is to be held on 16 June. Councillors have formed themselves into political groups of the following numbers.

Conservative	13
Health Concern	10

Independent	4
Liberal Democrat	3
Labour	2

Legislation requires that the aggregate allocation of committee seats must be in accordance with the principles of political balance and proportionality. Subject to this, individual committee membership should reflect the political balance of the Council as far as practicable. Council can depart from these principles provided no member votes against doing so. As usual, it is not possible to achieve precise political balance. In order to produce workable allocations of seats to groups, the size of the Audit Committee is being reduced from eight to seven members. It is intended to revert to a committee with a higher number of members at the July meeting. The political balance of committees is set out in Appendix 5.

**Amendments to Constitution**

4.3 Two sets of amendments to the constitution are set out in Appendix 1 for the Council’s approval.

4.3.1 The Scheme of delegations to officers in respect of planning matters is proposed to be updated. As well as updates to reflect changes to legislation, there are changes proposed to allow decision making in respect of enforcement cases and Tree Preservation Orders to be taken more swiftly and clarifications in respect of which applications need to be reported to committee to ensure that Planning Committee can focus on the larger applications and applications that are locally controversial. In respect of enforcement actions, the changes would remove delay from the process where it is concluded that action is necessary: at present, it takes a minimum of eight days and to up to five weeks to obtain authority to serve an enforcement notice, for example, depending on the date of the next Planning Committee meeting. The revised arrangements require prior consultation with the chair or vice-chair of the committee and ward members in the case of enforcement actions, and with the ward members and parish council in the case of confirmation of tree preservation orders. In respect of minor development proposals where the officer decision accords with the recommendation of the Parish Council, the Parish Council’s response will not mean that the application is reported to Committee solely for that reason. Finally, it is proposed that the definition of “planning application” in the delegation scheme should exclude works to trees subject to tree preservation orders and applications for listed building consent so that these technical matters are dealt with by relevant qualified officers. Full details of the updated delegations are set out in Appendix 1.

4.3.2 The Council Procedure Rules (standing orders) relating to the rules of debate at council meetings are proposed to be updated. The amendments are to brigade all closure motion details in one place and remove ambiguity and have previously been discussed with Group Leaders. The updated sections are also set out in Appendix 1.

**Committee Appointments**

4.4 After determining its political structures and allocations of seats to committees, Council must appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to committees. The nominations

for these posts are set out in Appendix 3. The Solicitor to the Council will fill other seats in accordance with the nominations from the respective political Groups.

### **Municipal Calendar**

- 4.5 The calendar of meetings for 2022/2023, attached at Appendix 4, has been prepared based on the Council's proposed decision-making structure and in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

### **Outside appointments**

- 4.6 Each year the Council appoints Members as representatives on a number of outside bodies. Council appointed Members at its meeting on 12 May 2021.
- 4.7 The attached schedule at Appendix 6 details the appointments due at this time and the number of nominations required for each body. Members will note that the appointments are made for the municipal year 2022/2023 unless otherwise annotated.
- 4.8 The schedule in Appendix 6 sets out the proposals for who should be appointed in each case. The proposals have been shared with Group Leaders.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

## **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposals comply with the requirements of Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 which require one or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees to be established.
- 6.2 The proposals for the allocation of seats on committees reflect political balance in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and it is considered that there are no discernible impacts on the six equality strands.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 There are no significant risks associated with the proposed political management structure for 2022/2023.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The proposals contained within this report meet the requirements of the relevant legislation including the Local Government Act 2000 and provide clear links to the Council's priorities.

**10. CONSULTEES**

10.1 The Chief Executive.

10.2 Group Leaders – in respect of the municipal calendar (January 2022), appointments to outside bodies & amendments to Council procedure rules (April 2022); Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning Committee in respect of amendments to scheme of delegation for planning.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1 Local Government Act 2000, Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Local Government and Housing Act 1989, The Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006; Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000; the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 as amended by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 No. 881; the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 No 234.

**Appendix 1 – Amendments to the Constitution**

**Section 4 – Responsibility for Functions**

**Table 3: DELEGATION TO OFFICERS OF FUNCTIONS THAT ARE NOT EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS**

**Amendments shown in *italics***

To exercise authority in respect of all applications, notifications, service of notices and orders or other matters requiring a decision by the Council under the Council’s published policy and practice notes and the following legislation, regulations and guidance (and to any re-enactment or replacement of the statutes, or regulations or guidance or any modifications thereof):

Acquisition of Land Act 1981

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Brownfield Land Register Regulations 2017

Building Act 1984

***Business and Planning Act 2020***

Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

Commons Act 2006

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Electricity Act 1989

Environmental Protection Act 1990

***Environment Act 2021***

Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995

Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Regulations 1995

***Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013***

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

Highways Act 1980

***Housing and Planning Act 2016***

Hazardous Substance Regulations 2015

***Infrastructure Act 2015***

Land Drainage Act 1991

Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017

Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)

Planning and Compensation Act 1991

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Planning Act 2008

Procedural Guide Planning Appeals – England

Self Build and Custom Housing Act 2015

Self Build and Custom Housing (Register) Regulations 2016

Telecommunications Act 1984

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements)(England) Regulations 2007

Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015  
Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations  
2017  
Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015  
Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004  
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Subject to;

- A) All delegated decisions being in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan or emerging Development Plan policies.
- B) The following being with prior consultation with the Chairman or in his/her absence, the Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee as appropriate, and relevant Ward Members:
- Service of Building Preservation Notices
  - Service of Listed Building Enforcement Notices
  - Service of Temporary Stop Notices
  - **Service of Enforcement Notices**
  - **Service of Stop Notices**

***But not including Notices relating to retrospective developments where planning permission has been refused, where no such consultation is required.***

- C) The following consultation and/or notification (in addition to statutory or published requirements) having first been carried out:
- The relevant Parish Council and Ward Members in respect of the removal of hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.
  - The relevant Ward Members and Parish Councils in respect of applications for works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders.
  - ***The relevant Ward Members and Parish Councils in respect of the confirmation of Tree Preservation Orders.***

The delegation shall not apply;

1. If a Wyre Forest District Councillor makes a written request for a Planning Application to be considered by the Planning Committee within 21 days of the date of the ***neighbour notification letter or the site/press notice;***
2. ***If, before the deadline date set out in the consultation notification, a Parish Council makes a request to speak on a Planning Application as part of their formal consultation response either objecting to or supporting the application, and the officer recommendation is contrary to the recommendation of the Parish Council***
3. If the Planning Manager or another officer nominated by him/her considers it is a matter that should be considered by the Planning Committee;
4. If the applicant of the Planning Application is Wyre Forest District Council or is made on land owned by Wyre Forest District Council;
5. If the applicant of the Planning Application is, or the Planning Application is made on land owned by, a serving Wyre Forest District Council Councillor or a serving Councillor representing Wyre Forest District on Worcestershire County Council;
6. If the applicant of the Planning Application is, or the Planning Application is made on land

owned by, a serving Wyre Forest District Council Officer.

7. To any Planning Application which will result in a net increase of ten or more residential units or, in the case of non-residential application, a net increase 1000 square metres of floorspace;
8. To any Planning Application, other than a Householder Application, where a Statutory Consultee (including Parish Councils) has responded to the application in writing with a clearly made planning objection and the application is recommended for approval; or
9. To any Planning Application that is recommended for approval and a request by a third party objector has been made to speak at the Planning Committee, within 21 days of the date of the neighbour notification letter or the site/press notice, and the request accords with the Council's published policy and procedure for speaking at Planning Committee.

For the purposes of interpretation the following definitions will apply;

- 'emerging plan' is any plan for the District that has been submitted to the Secretary of State
- 'Planning Application' excludes;
  - any notification under the above mentioned Acts or Orders;
  - applications under S.73 of the Planning Act where the nature of the original development permitted remains substantially unaltered;
  - Certificate of Lawfulness under S.191 or S.192 of the Planning Act;
  - applications for non material amendments;
  - applications for approval of conditions;
  - consultations from neighbouring authorities or the County Council;
  - notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area;
  - **applications for works to trees that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order; or**
  - **applications for Listed Building Consent**
- **'Statutory Consultee' is any consultee that is required to be consulted under Article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended) and included in Schedule 4 to the Order.**

Subsequent to the resolution of the Planning Committee, delegated authority is given to update the wording of, or include additional conditions to planning permissions before the issuing of the Decision Notice, as long as the intentions of the Planning committee are not undermined in so doing and the principle of the development remains unaffected.

## Section 7 - Council Procedure Rules (Standing Orders)

### 4.2 Motions and Amendments with may be moved without Notice

#### **Add wording at beginning of paragraph 1:**

Subject to the provision made in respect of closure motions in standing order 4.4(xiv) below,

### 4.4 Rules of Debate at Council Meetings

#### **Amend wording at item (g) paragraph (v) When a member may speak again:**

(g) To move or to speak on a procedural Motion set out in Standing Order 4.4 (xiii).

***Amend wording to paragraph (xiii) Motions which may be Moved during Debate:***

When a Motion is under debate, the only other Motions which may be moved (either singly or combined and with any necessary added words) are the following:

- a. To withdraw a Motion.
- b. To amend the Motion.
- c. Not to hear a Member further under Standing Order 3.8.
- d. By the Chairman to require a Member to leave the meeting under Standing Order 3.8.
- e. To exclude the press and public in accordance with the Access to Information Rules.
- f. To suspend one or more Standing Orders under Standing Order 8.4.
- g. To extend the time limit for speeches.
- h. Under Standing Order 3.6, (Declaration of Interests by Members - Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters) to invite a Member to remain.
- i. To give any consent required by these Standing Orders.

***Amend wording to paragraph (xiv) Closure Motions***

At the end of a speech by another Member, and provided that at least four Members have already spoken on the matter in hand, a Member who has not spoken on that business may move without comment that:

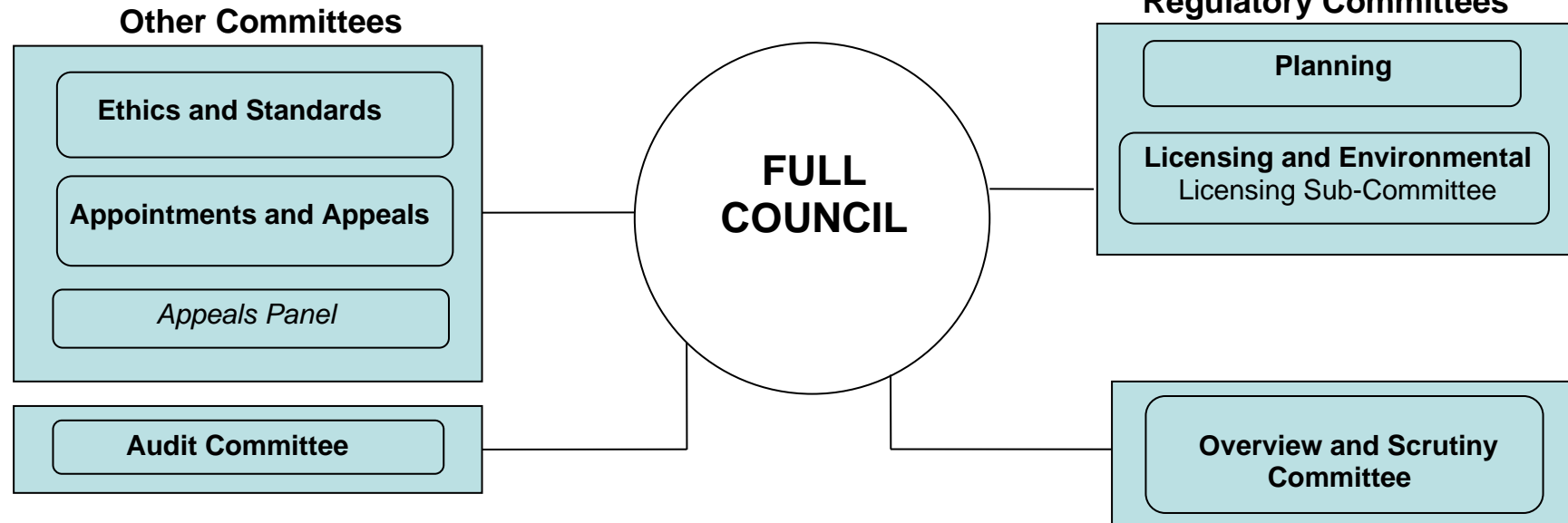
- j. The debate be adjourned.
- k. The meeting be adjourned,
- l. The Council proceed to the next business.
- m. The question be put.

If the Motion is seconded the Chairman of the Council shall proceed as follows if in his/her opinion the matter before the meeting has been sufficiently discussed: the Chairman shall invite the mover of the original Motion to reply and then put the closure Motion to the vote and (if a motion under sub-paragraph (m) of this Standing Order is carried) immediately put the original Motion to the vote.





### Political Structure May 2022



The Cabinet				
<p><b>Councillor Helen Dyke</b> Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Localism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic policy co-ordination</li> <li>National &amp; Regional Influence</li> <li>Partnerships, policy and performance</li> <li>Wyre Forest Forward</li> <li>Communications &amp; branding</li> <li>Economic Development &amp; Regeneration</li> <li>Town Centres</li> <li>Tourism</li> <li>Implementation of major regeneration projects, including Future High Streets Fund projects</li> <li>Spatial Planning including Local Plan</li> <li>Development Management</li> <li>Land charges</li> <li>Building Control</li> <li>Localism agenda including asset transfers; relations with parish councils</li> </ul>	<p><b>Councillor Graham Ballinger</b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural and leisure services</li> <li>Countryside service</li> <li>Sustainability</li> <li>Community Safety</li> <li>Emergency planning</li> <li>Safeguarding</li> <li>Relations with voluntary sector</li> </ul>	<p><b>Councillor Nicky Martin</b> Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Housing, Private Sector Housing &amp; Homelessness</li> <li>Health and well-being</li> <li>Water Management</li> <li>Democratic services</li> <li>Human resources</li> <li>Equality &amp; diversity</li> <li>Regulatory services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Councillor Mary Rayner</b> Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finance &amp; Audit</li> <li>Revenues &amp; benefits</li> <li>Customer Services</li> <li>Information and Communication Technology, digital services</li> <li>Legal services</li> <li>Capital portfolio fund, development loan fund</li> <li>Wyre Forest Lottery</li> </ul>	<p><b>Councillor John Thomas</b> Cabinet Member for Operational Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks and open spaces</li> <li>Grounds Maintenance</li> <li>Waste Reduction</li> <li>Refuse Collection &amp; Recycling</li> <li>Fleet Management</li> <li>Street Cleansing</li> <li>Public Conveniences</li> <li>Parking Services</li> <li>Cemeteries</li> <li>Health and safety</li> <li>Building maintenance and construction, estate and facilities management including Wyre Forest House</li> </ul>

**Agenda Item 14 Political and  
Constitutional Structures 2022-2023 –  
Appendix 3 Committee appointments**

TO FOLLOW

10 FOLLOW

MAY 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2 Bank Holiday	3 Cabinet/CLT	4 5pm Ethics & Standards	5 BTC – Bewdley- Wribbenhall By-Election	6	7	8
9	10	11 Cabinet/CLT Away day  6pm Council	12 CLT  6pm Overview & Scrutiny	13	14	15
16	17 CLT  6pm Planning	18 4.30pm Group Leaders  6pm Cabinet	19	20 10am Cabinet Advisory Panel – Green Agenda	21	22
23	24 Cabinet/CLT	25 6pm Audit	26	27	28	29
30  (Bank Holiday moved to 2/6/22)	31 CLT					

JUNE 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2 Bank Holiday	3 Bank Holiday	4	5
6 10.30am Licensing & Environmental	7 CLT	8	9 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 CLT 6pm Planning	22	23	24 10am Cabinet Advisory Panel – Green Agenda	25	26
27	28 Cabinet/CLT	29	30			

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**JULY 2022**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
				1	2	3
4	5 CLT	6 6pm Audit	7 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	8	9	10
11	12	13 4.30pm Group Leaders  6pm Cabinet	14 6pm Members Forum	15	16	17
18	19 CLT  6pm Planning	20 6pm Council	21	22 10am Cabinet Advisory Panel – Green Agenda	23	24
25	26 Cabinet/CLT	27	28	29	30	31

AUGUST 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 10.30am Licensing & Environmental	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 CLT 6pm Planning	17	18	19	20	21
22	23 Cabinet/CLT	24	25	26	27	28
29 Bank Holiday	30	31				

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**SEPTEMBER 2022**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
			<b>1</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Overview &amp;</b> <b>Scrutiny</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Ethics &amp;</b> <b>Standards</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> <b>6.30pm</b> <b>Parish Forum</b>	<b>13</b> <b>4.30pm</b> <b>Group</b> <b>Leaders</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Cabinet</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>  <b>10am</b> <b>Cabinet</b> <b>Advisory</b> <b>Panel –</b> <b>Green</b> <b>Agenda</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>  <b>CLT</b>	<b>20</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Planning</b>	<b>21</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Council</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>  <b>Cabinet/CLT</b>	<b>28</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Audit</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>		

\* TMRP meeting & training to be programmed in



**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**OCTOBER 2022**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> <b>10.30am</b> <b>Licensing &amp;</b> <b>Environmental</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>  <b>CLT</b>	<b>6</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Overview &amp;</b> <b>Scrutiny</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Members</b> <b>Forum</b>	<b>14</b>  <b>10am</b> <b>Cabinet</b> <b>Advisory</b> <b>Panel –</b> <b>Green</b> <b>Agenda</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b>  <b>CLT</b>	<b>18</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Planning</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>Cabinet/CLT</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b>						

\* TMRP meeting to be programmed in (October / November)

\*\* Strategic Review Panel to be programmed in (October / November)

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**NOVEMBER 2022**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
	1	2 CLT	3 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	4	5	6
7	8 4.30pm Group Leaders  6pm Cabinet	9	10	11	12	13
14 CLT	15 6pm Planning	16	17	18 10am Cabinet Advisory Panel – Green Agenda	19	20
21	22 Cabinet/CLT	23 6pm Audit	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 CLT				

\* TMRP meeting to be programmed in (October / November)

\*\* Strategic Review Panel to be programmed in (October / November)

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**DECEMBER 2022**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
			<b>1</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Overview &amp;</b> <b>Scrutiny</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> <b>10.30am</b> <b>Licensing &amp;</b> <b>Environmental</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Council</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Planning</b>	<b>14</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> <b>10am</b> <b>Cabinet</b> <b>Advisory</b> <b>Panel –</b> <b>Green</b> <b>Agenda</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <b>4.30pm</b> <b>Group</b> <b>Leaders</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Cabinet</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> <b>Bank Holiday</b>	<b>27</b> <b>Bank Holiday</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Offices Closed</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Offices Closed</b>	<b>30</b> <b>Offices</b> <b>Closed</b>	<b>31</b>	

JANUARY 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2 Bank Holiday	3	4 CLT	5 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 CLT	17 6pm Planning	18 6pm Audit	19	20	21	22
23	24 Cabinet/CLT	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

\* TMRP meeting & training to be programmed in (January / February)

\*\* Strategic Review Panel to be programmed in (x2)

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**FEBRUARY 2023**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
		<b>1</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>2</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Overview &amp;</b> <b>Scrutiny</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> <b>10.30am</b> <b>Licensing &amp;</b> <b>Environmental</b>	<b>7</b> <b>4.30pm</b> <b>Group</b> <b>Leaders</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Cabinet</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>14</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Planning</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>  <b>Cabinet/CLT</b>	<b>22</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Council</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>  <b>CLT</b>	<b>28</b>					

\* TMRP meeting & training to be programmed in (January / February)

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**MARCH 2023**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Overview &amp;</b> <b>Scrutiny</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>Cabinet/CLT</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Ethics &amp;</b> <b>Standards</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Members</b> <b>Forum</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Planning</b>	<b>15</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>16</b> <b>6.30pm</b> <b>Parish Forum</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>4.30pm</b> <b>Group</b> <b>Leaders</b>  <b>6pm</b> <b>Cabinet</b>	<b>22</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Audit</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		

APRIL 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3 10.30am Licensing & Environmental	4	5	6 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	7 Bank Holiday	8	9
10 Bank Holiday	11	12 CLT	13	14	15	16
17	18 6pm Planning	19	20	21	22	23
24 CLT	25 4.30pm Group Leaders  Cabinet / CLT	26	27	28	29	30

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**MAY 2023**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<b>1</b> <b>Bank Holiday</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Elections</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>CLT</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Council</b>	<b>18</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Planning</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> <b>Cabinet/CLT</b>	<b>24</b> <b>6pm</b> <b>Audit</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>Bank Holiday</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>CLT</b>				



JUNE 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1	2	3	4
5 10.30am Licensing & Environmental	6	7 CLT	8 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	9	10	11
12	13 4.30pm Group Leaders  6pm Cabinet	14	15	16	17	18
19 CLT	20 6pm Planning	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Cabinet/CLT	28	29	30		

**Agenda Item No. 14 Appendix 4**

**JULY 2023**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
					1	2
3	4 CLT	5	6 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	7	8	9
10	11 4.30pm Group Leaders  6pm Cabinet	12	13 6pm Members Forum	14	15	16
17	18 CLT  6pm Planning	19 6pm Council	20	21	22	23
24	25 Cabinet/CLT	26	27	28	29	30
31						

		Conservative		Labour		Health Concern		Independent		Lib Dem		Total
No. of Cllrs.			13		2		10		4		3	32
Percentage			40.63%		6.25%		31.25%		12.50%		9.38%	100.00%
<b>Executive Cttees</b>												
	Membership											
Appts & Appeals	5	2	2.03	0	0.31	2	1.56	1	0.63	0	0.47	5
Audit cttee	7	3	2.84	0	0.44	2	2.19	1	0.88	1	0.66	7
Ethics & standards *	6	2	2.44	0	0.38	2	1.88	1	0.75	1	0.56	6
<b>Scrutiny</b>												
Scrutiny Committee	11	5	4.47	1	0.69	3	3.44	1	1.38	1	1.03	11
<b>Regulatory</b>												
Planning	12	5	4.88	1	0.75	4	3.75	1	1.50	1	1.13	12
Lic & Env	12	5	4.88	1	0.75	4	3.75	1	1.50	1	1.13	12
Total	53	22	21.53	3	3.31	17	16.56	6	6.63	5	4.97	53
<b>Percentage</b>		<b>41.51%</b>		<b>5.66%</b>		<b>32.08%</b>		<b>11.32%</b>		<b>9.43%</b>		<b>100.00%</b>
Difference between % No. of Cllrs. And % Number of Seats		0.88%		-0.59%		0.83%		-1.18%		0.06%		

\* the table shows only district councillor members

1. Each member is required to notify the Proper Officer which political group, if any, he or she wishes to be identified with. A group comprises of two or more members.
2. Each Group Secretary is required to notify the Proper Officer which members of his or her groups he/she wishes to sit on each relevant committee or sub-committee.
3. The allocation of seats required the rounding up or down of calculated figures to give whole numbers.
4. Single party representatives and independent members (who do not form part of a political group) are not legally entitled to seats on committees to which the rules of proportionality apply.

Representation on Outside Bodies 2022/2023

External Body	Representative 2021/2022	Representative 2022/2023	Number of Representatives
Age UK	Councillor Susie Griffiths	Councillor Dixon Sheppard	1 Councillor
Bewdley Development Trust	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	1 Councillor
Bewdley Museum Management Committee	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Paul Harrison Councillor Anna Coleman	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Paul Harrison Councillor Anna Coleman	Relevant Cabinet Member plus 2 Bewdley & Rock Ward or Wribbenhall & Arley Ward Councillors *Body will cease to exist as consequence of creation of independent museum trust*
Sir Edward Blount's Charity (operates as Witnell Blount Charity)	Rev Jason Borlase (for the period to the next ordinary elections in May 2023)	Rev Jason Borlase (for the period to the next ordinary elections in May 2023)	Requirement is to appoint a "competent person" who "may be but need not be a member of the council" (The charity's main role is operating and maintaining six almshouses in Franche & Habberley North Ward.)
District Councils' Network	Councillor Helen Dyke Substitute: Councillor Graham Ballinger	Councillor Helen Dyke Substitute: Councillor Graham Ballinger	Leader, Deputy Leader as named substitute

<b>External Body</b>	<b>Representative 2021/2022</b>	<b>Representative 2022/2023</b>	<b>Number of Representatives</b>
Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Marcus Hart Substitute: Councillor Sarah Rook	Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Group Substitute: Vice Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1 Councillor and 1 named substitute (not Members of the Cabinet)
Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Supervisory Board (Joint Committee)	Councillor Helen Dyke Substitute: Councillor Graham Ballinger	Councillor Helen Dyke Substitute: Councillor Graham Ballinger	Leader, Cabinet Member as named substitute
Local Government Association General Assembly	Councillor Helen Dyke	Councillor Helen Dyke	Leader of the Council
PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee	N/A	Councillor John Thomas Substitute: Councillor Dixon Sheppard	Relevant Cabinet Member, 1 Councillor as named substitute
Stourport Forward Board	Councillor Claire Barnett	Councillor Claire Barnett	1 Stourport Councillor / 1 Officer
The Elizabeth Mills Centre (formerly Stourport Day Centre)	Councillor Dixon Sheppard	Councillor Dixon Sheppard	1 Stourport Councillor
10:32 Wyre Forest Early Help (formerly Tree Tops Sure Start Children's Centre)	Councillor Sally Chambers	Councillor Sally Chambers	1 Foley Park and Hoobrook Ward Member
West Mercia Police and Crime Panel	Councillor Graham Ballinger	Councillor Graham Ballinger	Relevant Cabinet Member

<b>External Body</b>	<b>Representative 2021/2022</b>	<b>Representative 2022/2023</b>	<b>Number of Representatives</b>
West Midlands LGA	Councillor Helen Dyke	Councillor Helen Dyke	Leader of the Council
Worcestershire County Council Corporate Parenting Board	Councillor Fran Oborski	Councillor Fran Oborski	1 Councillor (Expectations from WCC: Relevant Cabinet Member or Councillor with relevant experience)
Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	1 Councillor
Worcestershire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board – co-opted member for scrutiny of Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership	Councillor Graham Ballinger	Councillor Graham Ballinger	1 Councillor
Worcestershire County Waste Forum	Councillor John Thomas	Councillor John Thomas	Relevant Cabinet Member
Worcestershire Health Improvement Group	Councillor Nicky Martin	Councillor Nicky Martin	Relevant Cabinet Member
Worcestershire Leaders' Board	Councillor Helen Dyke Substitute: Councillor Graham Ballinger	Councillor Helen Dyke Substitute: Councillor Graham Ballinger	Leader, Deputy Leader as named substitute
Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board	Councillor Nicky Martin Councillor Peter Dyke	Councillor Nicky Martin & Chairman of Licensing & Environmental Committee	2 Councillors (Past practice: Relevant Cabinet Member & Chairman of Licensing & Environmental Committee)
Wyre Forest Citizen's Advice Bureau - Management Committee	Councillor Shazu Miah	Councillor Shazu Miah	1 Councillor

<b>External Body</b>	<b>Representative 2021/2022</b>	<b>Representative 2022/2023</b>	<b>Number of Representatives</b>
Wyre Forest Community Leisure Association Ltd - Local Partnership Board	Councillor Graham Ballinger Councillor Anna L'Huillier	Councillor Graham Ballinger Councillor Peter Young	2 Councillors / 2 Officers
Wyre Forest Local Children and Young People's Trust	Councillor Nicky Martin Councillor Susie Griffiths	Councillor Nicky Martin Councillor Helen Dyke	2 Councillors including relevant Cabinet Member / 1 Officer
Wyre Forest Nightstop and Mediation Service Management Committee	Councillor Nicky Martin	Councillor Nicky Martin	Relevant Cabinet Member

**Outside Bodies – Wyre Forest District Councillors Representing North Worcestershire Districts (for information).**

The Leaders of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest will agree North Worcestershire representation on the bodies below for 2022/2023.

<b>External Body</b>	<b>Representative 2020/2021 (position from 25 January 2021) – no notification received for reps for 2021/2022</b>	<b>Representative 2022/2023</b>
Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP)	Councillor Karen May (Bromsgrove) Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy Committee (ESIF)	Vacancy Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Worcestershire LEP	Vacancy Sub: Councillor Karen May (Bromsgrove)	
Worcestershire Local Transport Board (WLTB)	Councillor Adam Kent (Bromsgrove) Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Worcestershire ESIF Committee	Vacancy Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Worcestershire Health and Well-being Board	Councillor Shirley Webb (Bromsgrove) Sub: Councillor Julian Grubb (Redditch)	
Worcestershire Local Access Forum	Councillor Julian Grubb (Redditch)	



**Armed Forces Champions (for information)**

These appointments are to be made by the Leader of the Council.

	<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>2022/2023</b>
Armed Forces Champion	Councillor Nicky Gale	

**Index of Members' Activity Reports Received as of the date of publication of the Council Agenda**

Electronic Copies of all reports are available on the Internet

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attendance Percentage for 2021/22</b>	<b>Number of Meetings Attended</b>
Cllr John Aston	72%	13
Cllr Graham Ballinger	100%	19
Cllr Claire Barnett	90%	19
Cllr John Byng	100%	21
Cllr Vicky Caulfield	85%	29
Cllr Sally Chambers	95%	20
Cllr Anna Coleman	91%	31
Cllr Roger Coleman	95%	21
Cllr Berenice Dawes	92%	22
Cllr Nathan Desmond	84%	26
Cllr Helen Dyke	92%	22
Cllr Peter Dyke	97%	30
Cllr Calne Edginton-White	91%	30
Cllr Nicky Gale	63%	5
Cllr Ian Hardiman	85%	17
Cllr Paul Harrison	84%	16
Cllr Marcus Hart	97%	31
Cllr Ken Henderson	85%	11
Cllr Lisa Jones	100%	18
Cllr Nicky Martin	88%	21
Cllr Shazu Miah	85%	28
Cllr Fran Oborski	94%	32
Cllr Tracey Onslow	78%	14
Cllr Mary Rayner	97%	30
Cllr Chris Rogers	86%	31
Cllr Sarah Rook	83%	15
Cllr David Ross	100%	6
Cllr Dixon Sheppard	63%	12
Cllr John Thomas	88%	21
Cllr Alan Totty	69%	9
Cllr Leigh Whitehouse	93%	27
Cllr Peter Young	87%	20

The calendar of meetings is agreed at the beginning of each municipal year. Occasionally the need arises for additional meetings to be arranged at short notice which not all Members are able to attend due to previous commitments. The table shows only the meetings in the agreed municipal calendar: additional meetings are ignored.

**Cabinet**

**Annual Report 2021/2022**

## **Report from the Leader**

It gives me great pleasure to produce my first report as Leader of Wyre Forest District Council.

My appointment followed Councillor Graham Ballinger's announcement in February 2021, that he would be stepping down from the role at the end of the municipal year.

I was voted the new leader at the full council meeting on 12 May 2021. I was previously appointed as deputy leader in January 2021, having been on the Cabinet since May 2019 when the Progressive Alliance administration was formed. I had been a Cabinet member previously and held other senior positions on the council, including chairing the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

This is an exciting time to be Leader of the council. It can be a challenge at times; however, I have enjoyed the past 12 months and I am looking forward to the next year.

Those who know me know I am passionate about our town centres and supporting a successful local economy is one of the council's priorities. We have also focused on creating a safe, clean and green living environment in the district. Our localism agenda is going well too, bringing services closer to communities.

The municipal year 2021/2022 has yet again been a very busy and exciting year for Wyre Forest District Council.

The Future High Streets Fund grant of £20.5m announced on Boxing Day 2020 was the largest grant award ever secured by the Council. Progress is good. Planning permission has been secured for redevelopment of the former magistrates' court; a number of site purchases have been completed; and procurement will get under way soon for a construction contractor. We also received the excellent news of the £17.9m grant from the Levelling Up Fund which involves projects led by the county council, Kidderminster town council and this Council.

We also had positive news about a number of projects being funded from the Community Renewal Fund, including the cleantech Betaden boot camp that is being hosted at Wyre Forest House and provides 90 days of support to start-up and scale-up businesses in Worcestershire to enter the growing green sector of the economy.

The financial landscape faced by this authority and many other local authorities across the country remains exceptionally challenging. In February, the Administration's third medium term financial strategy was approved at full council. I would like to thank the hundreds of residents who took time to comment and give their views on our budget proposals. We believe our new financial strategy very much reflects what people told us.

## **Agenda Item No. 17 (a)**

During the past 12 months we have been faced with many unprecedented events both across the district and nationally; the damage and destruction caused by flooding, and the Coronavirus pandemic.

We have continued to work with Parish and Town Councils on various Localism Projects and I would like to thank them for their co-operation.

At a special meeting on 26 April, Council agreed to adopt the Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2016-2036. This is one of the most important decisions for development of our district and its residents.

I am very proud of the way that Officers across the Council have come together as a whole to continue to provide a first-class service to residents and businesses across the district.

I would like to thank my Cabinet and Progressive Alliance colleagues for their support throughout the year.

I also give my grateful thanks to the Chief Executive and the Corporate Leadership Team for all the advice, support and guidance they continue to give to me and other Council colleagues.

**Councillor Helen Dyke**  
**Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration,**  
**Planning and Localism**

**Wyre Forest District Council**  
**Annual Scrutiny Report**  
**2021/2022**



**Foreword of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

It gives me great pleasure to write my third annual report as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In this municipal year, we have considered 30 reports in all, with 1 call in in respect of car parking.

The committee has met 11 times during this municipal year, 9 of which have been ordinary meetings, 1 special meeting and 1 sub-committee meeting. I have attended all meetings, save for 1, when I was self-isolating due to Covid and the Vice-chairman very ably stepped in.

There have been 2 meetings cancelled – as there were no items to be considered, and therefore to ensure that officer resource and member time is used most efficiently and not wasted, the Chairman in consultation with the Committee members decided to cancel the meetings.

I do not wish to cancel meetings lightly but as stated I do not wish officer and member resource to be unnecessarily wasted.

I am very grateful to all members of the scrutiny committee for their measured consideration, critical analysis and sound scrutiny on all items that come before us, whether they be the regular performance monitoring reports or other important reports regarding our district.

We have considered a wide variety of issues and reports such as car parking charges, the health and well-being plan, the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership plan, recommendations from the Fireworks Review Panel, the Levelling Up Fund Application, various property acquisition reports, the Future High Streets Fund delivery programme reports, the Electric Vehicle Charging Points report, together with regular reports from the Treasury Management Committee and also our external advisors from Jones Valerio in respect of our Capital Portfolio Fund to name but a few.

I am very pleased that we have, at last, seen a return to normality, in being able to hold face to face meetings, as whilst virtual meetings were perfectly adequate when 'needs must', there is no substitute for face to face, human interaction, it works far better. The committee is as required by law, politically balanced and despite this I am pleased that there has not been too much 'politics' albeit this is inevitable on some more contentious issues. That said, the majority of votes that have been taken have been unanimous with only a few being majority votes.

I am also pleased that the municipal year at least started off with a Chairman and Vice-chairman that are not part of the ruling group as this is important for the good governance of the Council. Obviously with a change to the make-up of the administration part way through the year there was a change to this position.

**Agenda Item No. 17 (b)**

The committee is made up of 4 Conservatives, Councillor N Desmond, Councillor M Hart, Councillor T Onslow, Councillor D Ross, 3 Independent Health Concern, Councillor A Coleman, Councillor A L'Huiller, Councillor D Sheppard, 2 Independents, Councillor C Edginton-White and Councillor P Dyke, 1 Labour, Councillor Sarah Rook and 1 Liberal Democrat, Councillor S Miah.

I would like to thank all members of the committee for their hard work and all the officers for their attendance and input at meetings.

I look forward to the final year of this Council to continue the important work that scrutiny does in keeping a check and balance on the Executive.

*M. J. Hart*

**Councillor Marcus J. Hart**





**Scrutiny at Wyre Forest**

For this municipal year, the Council’s scrutiny function was carried out through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee consisted of 11 cross party Members. The workload included scrutinising proposals for new or amended policies before their consideration by the Cabinet and Council, undertaking detailed reviews into existing procedures and policy, and monitoring the schedule of proposed decisions as set out in the Council’s Forward Plan.

**Review Panels**

Review Panels are in depth investigations into issues conducted by Members outside of the formal Scrutiny Committee setting. Only a Member of the Scrutiny Committee may Chair a review panel established following a request from the Committee. They allow more detailed work on particular topics and make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which in turn make recommendations to Cabinet. Their flexibility allows for a wide range of evidence sources, guests and methods of evidence gathering to be considered.

The following Panels have taken place during the 2021/2022 year:

<b>Name</b>	<b>No. of meetings</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Treasury Management	3	Allowed detailed scrutiny and training in respect of treasury management. Recommendations from the Panel were made to Council via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Fireworks Review Panel (continued from the 2020/2021 municipal year)	2	Following a scrutiny proposal form submitted by a member regarding loud fireworks and the distress it causes to vulnerable people and animals, a review commenced to examine the current legal framework on the use of fireworks and fully explore the situation across the district with a view to recommending appropriate ways to deal with the issues identified as part of the review. Recommendations from the Panel were made to Cabinet via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## Recommendation Tracking

As Scrutiny Committees can only make recommendations and do not take decisions, it is important to keep track of what has happened to the recommendations made by Scrutiny.

After recommendations have been made, all members receive the Cabinet decision list which records what decision Cabinet took in respect of any scrutiny committee recommendations. This is a clear means of tracking the outcome of recommendations.

## Public and Stakeholder Involvement in Scrutiny

Scrutiny is an important means of involving the community in the Democratic Process. If you have any suggestions or comments for issues affecting your area which you feel Scrutiny could consider, please contact the Democratic Services Team via email: [CommitteeSection@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteeSection@wyreforestdc.gov.uk) telephone: 01562 732763, or in writing to Democratic Services, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster DY10 7WF.

More information on Scrutiny at Wyre Forest District Council can be found at <http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/your-council-and-elections.aspx>

## Terms of Reference - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. Reviews the policies of the Council and the Cabinet and recommends to the Council or the Cabinet:
  - (i) Whether any new policies are required.
  - (ii) Whether any existing policies are no longer required.
  - (iii) Whether any changes are required to any existing policies.
  - (iv) Whether any action is required to make the policies more effective.
2. Reviews the discharge of Cabinet functions, and recommends to the Council or the Cabinet:
  - (i) Whether any action should be taken to improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of those functions.
  - (ii) Whether any action should be taken to improve the co-ordination of the various functions within the Authority, or with any other person or body.
  - (iii) Whether the function should continue to be discharged or be discharged in another way.



- (i) Whether the relevant criteria were used.
  - (ii) Whether the decision is in accordance with the budget and policy framework of the Council.
  - (iii) Whether the decision or action was within the powers of the Authority.
  - (iv) Whether the decision was lawful.
  - (v) Whether the decision contributes to the efficient, effective and economic discharge of the function.
4. Recommendations should all take account of the following:
- (i) Whether the decision should be reconsidered, and if so, what alternative decision should be taken.
  - (ii) Whether the proposed decision should be taken or taken in a different form.
  - (iii) Whether any further action should be taken in the experience of that decision to ensure proper or better implementation of decisions.
  - (iv) Whether any further actions should be taken in the experience of that decision to improve the manner or quality of decision-making for the future.
5. Considers any matters which affect the Council or its administrative area or the inhabitants of that area and makes recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet arising from that consideration.
6. External Partners
- Reviews the performance and effectiveness of the Council's external partner organisations, including the duty to scrutinise the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.
7. Review Panels
- Establishes time limited Review Panels which focus upon specific issues of concern raised by Members through a Scrutiny Proposal Form, consider evidence, and subsequently make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A protocol for the establishment of Review Panels is attached as Appendix C at section 10 of the Constitution.
8. Review the Forward Plan
- Regularly reviews the Forward Plan with a view to deciding which, if any, forthcoming items require consideration.
9. Sets and agrees an Annual Work Programme and prioritises the work of the Committee.
10. Ensures consideration is given to encouraging public participation and engagement in functions of the Committee.



12. Monitors the implementation of scrutiny recommendations.
13. Reviews and scrutinises relevant public bodies and partners in the District, including the Council's contribution and relationship with them. Where necessary, requesting them to address overview and scrutiny about their activities, performance, particular decisions, initiatives or projects.



**Wyre Forest District Council**  
**Ethics and Standards Committee**  
**Annual Report 2021/2022**

## **Agenda Item No. 17 (c)**

The Ethics and Standards Committee has met three times during the municipal year.

The Committee regrettably had to censure one member of the district council and gave consideration to the Government's lack of response to the 2019 report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL).

Following recommendations to Council, correspondence was sent to the MP to highlight the years of inaction in respect of the CSPL.

Regrettably, the eventual response from Government declined to accept the CSPL's firm recommendations and proposes no legislative steps to ensure that Councils have appropriate powers to deal with Member misconduct.

The slightly amended LGA code is being considered at the meeting on 4 May for recommendation to Council, but in reality the LGA code makes very little difference to the extant Code of Conduct and introduces no additional sanctions. The LGA acknowledged that without statutory reform it is not able to bring forward meaningful sanctions.

The Committee continues to work closely with the Monitoring Officer, Independent Persons and public to ensure that any conduct issues are dealt with as quickly as possible.

The Committee's vice-chair resigned as a councillor in the autumn and the Committee's chair likewise resigned in April, and the Committee extends its thanks to them for their service. The Committee's recommendations from its meeting on 4 May are reported elsewhere on the agenda of the annual general meeting.

### **Role of the Standards Committee / Terms of Reference**

1. Promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members.
2. Assists the councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.
3. Advises the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.
4. Monitors the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.
5. Advises, trains or arranges to train councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.
6. Considers complaints against any member relating to alleged breach of the Code of Conduct, to make findings of fact and decisions in

## **Agenda Item No. 17 (c)**

respect of the action to be taken, and where necessary to make recommendations to full Council.

7. Grants dispensations, if necessary, to councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.
8. Exercises (1) to (6) above in relation to the parish councils' wholly or mainly within the Wyre Forest District area and the members of those parish councils'.
9. Recommends approval and adoption of relevant codes, plans and policies.
10. Oversees the Whistle Blowing Policy.
11. Oversees the complaints handling and Ombudsman investigations.
12. Keeps the operation of the constitution under review so far as it relates to ethics and standards of behaviour.

### **Member Activity Reports**

Members continue to submit an annual activity report which outlines their activities during the municipal year, significant work has been undertaken to ensure that the reports are detailed and are a useful tool for Members of the electorate to see the activities their elected Member have been undertaking during the municipal year.

### **Membership of the Ethics and Standards Committee**

(6 Councillors, 3 co-opted Independent Members non-voting,  
3 Parish Councillors non-voting)

Chairman: Vacant

Vice-Chairman: Vacant

Councillors: G Ballinger, B Dawes, I Hardiman, S Miah, M Rayner and P Young

Independent Members: R Reynolds and Rev J A Cox

Parish Council representatives: Councillors R Drew, D Killingworth and W Mack