

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

23rd May 2012

Political and Constitutional Structures

OPEN	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	-
CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY:	Delivering Together, with Less
CABINET MEMBER:	The Leader of the Council
DIRECTOR:	Director of Community Assets & Localism
CONTACT OFFICER:	Penelope Williams, Ext. 2728 penelope.williams@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 Political Management Structure Appendix 2 Political Balance Appendix 3 Committee Appointments Appendix 4 Municipal Calendar Appendix 5 Appointments to Outside Bodies Appendix 6 Revisions to the Constitution

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the Political and Constitutional Structures for the municipal year 2012/2013.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to:

- 2.1 Approve the proposed Political Management Structure for 2012/2013 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 2.2 Agree the political balance of the Council as set out in Appendix 2.**
- 2.3 Agree the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen as contained in Appendix 3.**
- 2.4 Adopt the Municipal Calendar as set out in Appendix 4.**
- 2.5 Agree the appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 5.**
- 2.6 Agree the revisions to the Constitution as set out in appendix 6.**

- 2.7 Authorise the Director of Community Assets & Localism 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.
- 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. The Council appointed the Leader of the Council under the "strong leader" model in 2011 until Councillor Campion's term of office as a district councillor comes to an end in 2014.
- 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. Council also determines the size of, and allocation of seats as between political groups on, those Committees. It also appoints their Chairmen and Vice Chairmen.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Administration's proposals for a revised political structure are detailed in Appendix 1 and it suggested that they be brought into operation with immediate effect. In practice, the Director of Community Assets & Localism will need to settle outstanding details and make changes to the Constitution to incorporate the decisions of Council. The main changes are:
- 4.1.1 Increasing the size of the Planning Committee and Licensing and Environmental Committee to 16 members each will involve more councillors in these decision making committees and contribute to a better political balance.
- 4.1.2 Increasing the size of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to 20 members, to ensure that more members are formally involved in the scrutiny process;
- 4.1.3 Continuation of the Local Development Framework Review Panel for 2012/13 to enable it to complete its work later this year, when the Council is expected to adopt the remaining development plan documents;
- 4.1.4 Creation of a Housing Review Panel for 2012/13 only to examine various aspects of policy on housing, the terms of reference being set out in appendix 6. As with the LDF Panel, this Panel reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- 4.1.5 A changed membership structure for the Ethics and Standards Committee, which will include 6 district councillors.

Political Balance

- 4.2 Following the elections on 3rd May 2012, Councillors have formed themselves into political groups of the following numbers:

Conservative	21
Labour	8
Independent Community and Health Concern	8
Liberal & Independent Group	5

- 4.3 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. The proposed allocation of seats on committees is set out at Appendix 2 of the report. It meets the legal requirements, reflecting the composition of the new Council and the principles of political balance. The political balance and proposed allocations of seats on committees have been discussed with Group leaders and now require formal ratification by full Council.

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 Director of Community Assets & Localism will fill other seats in accordance with the nominations from the respective political Groups.

Municipal Calendar

- 4.5 The calendar of meetings for 2012/2013, 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.

Appointments to Outside Bodies

- 4.6 Each year the Council appoints Members as representatives on a number of outside bodies. The attached schedule at Appendix 5 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 2012/13 unless otherwise annotated.

Ethics & Standards Committee – Amendments to Constitution

- 4.7 It is appropriate that the Council constitutes the Ethics & Standards Committee in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and adopts new terms of reference for the Committee, which are set out in appendix 6. However, the Council is not able to

adopt a new code until the June 2012 Council meeting when the disclosable pecuniary regulations should have been received.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report and they can be met from existing budgets.

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 political balance of committees reflect the allocation of seats in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no significant risks associated with the proposed Political Management Structure for 2012/13. There are no risk management issues associated with the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference contained within this report.

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
- 9.2 The proposed political structure of committees is set out in Appendix 1. The principal changes to the structure of Committees are summarised in paragraph 4.1.
- 9.3 The proposed allocation of seats to the Council's Committees for 2012-2013 is set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
- 9.4 The proposed appointments of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen for the Council's Committees for the 2012/2013 municipal year are set out Appendix 3 of this report.
- 9.5 The proposed municipal diary of meeting dates for 2012/2013 is set out in Appendix 5 of the report.
- 9.6 Revised terms of reference for the Ethics and Standards Committee and terms of reference for the Housing Review Panel are in appendix 6 of the report.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 The Leader of the Council.

10.2 The Chief Executive.

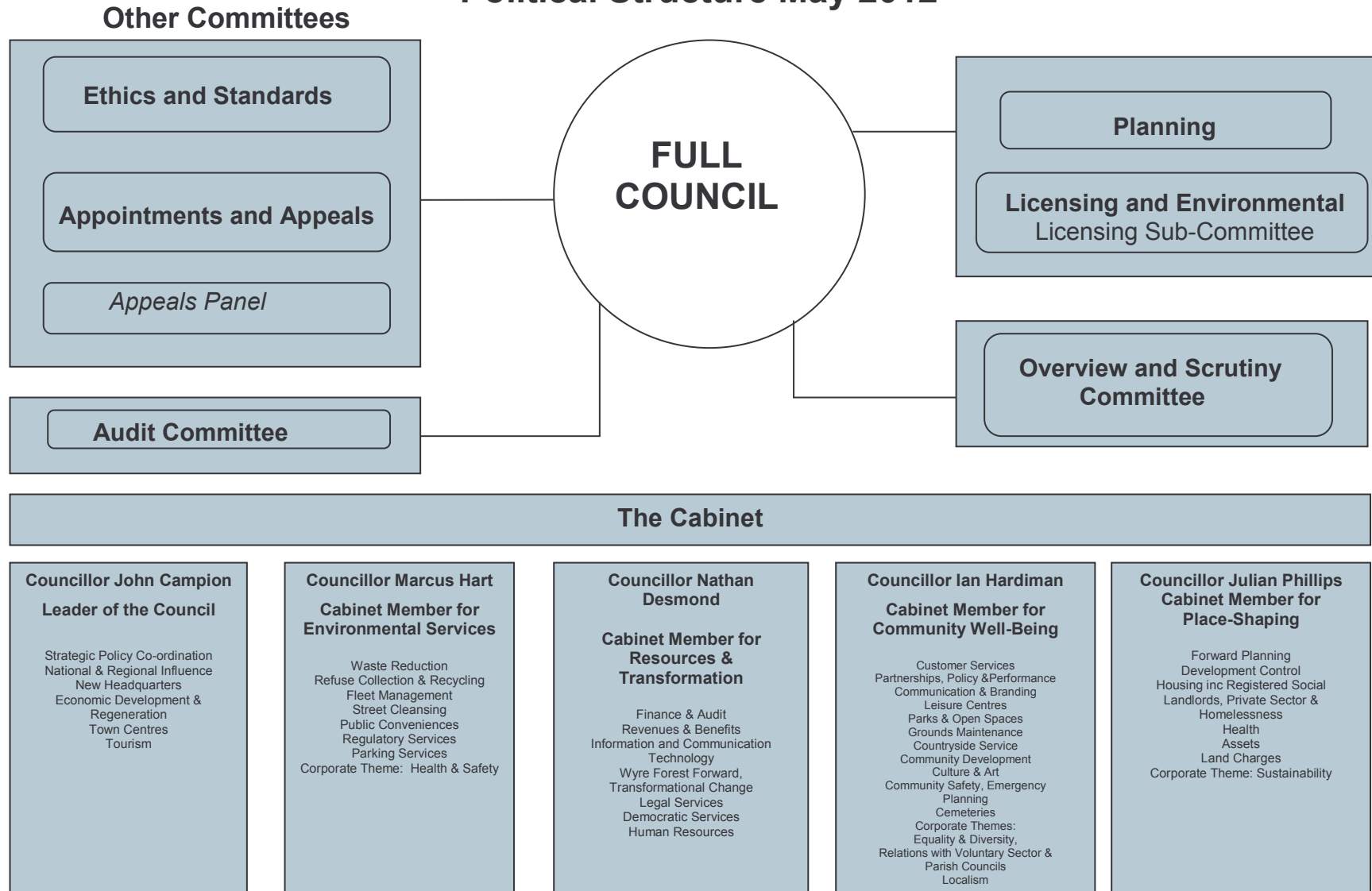
10.3 Group Leaders in respect of political balance and structure of committees.

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 and Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities (England) Regulations 2000.



Political Structure May 2012



		Conservative		Liberal & Independent Group		Labour		IndeCommunity		Total
No. of Cllrs.			21		5		8		8	42
Percentage			50.00%		11.90%		19.05%		19.05%	100.00%
Executive Cttees		Membership								
Appts & Appeals	8	4	4.00	1	0.95	1	1.52	2	1.52	8
Audit cttee	8	4	4.00	1	0.95	2	1.52	1	1.52	8
Ethics & standards *	6	3	3.00	1	0.71	1	1.14	1	1.14	6
Scrutiny										
Scrutiny Committee	20	10	10.00	2	2.38	4	3.81	4	3.81	20
Regulatory										
Planning	16	8	8.00	2	1.90	3	3.05	3	3.05	16
Lic & Env	16	8	8.00	2	1.90	3	3.05	3	3.05	16
Total	74	37	37.00	9	8.81	14	14.10	14	14.10	74
Percentage		50.00%		12.16%		18.92%		18.92%		100.00%
Difference between % No. of Cllrs. And % Number of Seats		0.00%		0.26%		-0.13%		-0.13%		

* 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.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS
WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
COMMITTEES 2012/2013

Appointments And Appeals Committee Chairman: Vice-Chairman:	Councillor J-P Campion Councillor M J Hart
Audit Committee Chairman: Vice-Chairman:	Councillor D McCann Councillor M Salter
Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chairman: Vice-Chairman:	Councillor H E Dyke Councillor T Ingham
Licensing And Environmental Committee Chairman: Vice-Chairman	Councillor P B Harrison Councillor A T Hingley
Licensing Sub-Committee	A rota of 3 Members of the Licensing and Environmental Committee, including, and Chaired by, the Committee's Chairman or Vice-Chairman.
Planning Committee Chairman: Vice-Chairman:	Councillor S J Williams Councillor G C Yarranton
No Barriers Review Panel Chairman:	Councillor H J Martin
Local Development Framework Review Panel Chairman:	Councillor F M Oborski
Housing Review Panel Chairman:	Councillor M B Kelly
Ethics and Standards Committee Chairman: Vice-Chairman:	Councillor G W Ballinger Councillor D Godwin

MAY 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1	2	3 Elections	4	5	6
7 Bank Holiday	8	9	10 CMT 5.30 pm Accessing Council IT	11 1.30 pm New Members Induction Day	12	13
14	15 4 pm Cabinet Review Group	16	17 <i>WCC Council</i>	18	19	20
21	22 5 pm Members Scrutiny Event	23 6 pm Council	24 CMT <i>Charter Trustees Mayor Making</i>	25 <i>WCC Cabinet</i>	26	27
28 6 pm Planning Committee	29 4 pm CMT 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	30 6 pm Community Housing Group Presentation	31 4 pm Scrutiny Training 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee			

JUNE 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4 Bank Holiday	5 Bank Holiday (Queen's Diamond Jubilee)	6 4 pm My Street/My Community Working Group	7 CMT	8	9	10
11 5.30 pm Planning Training	12 6 pm Planning	13 5.30 pm Licensing Training	14 6 pm Special Overview & Scrutiny	15	16	17
18 10.30 am Licensing and Environmental	19 9.30 am Group Leaders	20 6 pm Council	21 CMT <i>WCC Cabinet</i>	22	23	24
5.30 pm Audit Training	6 pm Cabinet					
25 6 pm Audit	26 5.30 pm Bewdley Museum Management Committee	27	28 4 pm CMT 6 pm CMT/Cabinet <i>WCC Council</i>	29	30	

JULY 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2 5.30 pm Housing Training	3 <i>CHG</i>	4	5 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6	7	8
9 6 pm Cabinet	10 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 6 pm Council (if required)	19 CMT <i>WCC Cabinet</i> 6 pm Members Forum	20	21	22
23 <i>CHG</i>	24	25	26 5.30 pm KEF Working Group	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST 2012

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

SEPTEMBER 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3 4 pm CMT	4 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	5	6 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	7	8	9
10	11 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	12	13 WCC Council 6 pm Members Forum	14 4 pm Highways Partnership Forum	15	16
17 6 pm Ethics & Standards	18 6 pm Cabinet	19 <i>Charter Trustees</i>	20 CMT <i>CHG</i>	21	22	23
24 6 pm Audit	25 5.30 pm Bewdley Museum Management Committee	26 6 pm Council	27 WCC Cabinet	28	29	30

OCTOBER 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	5	6	7
8 10.30 am Licensing & Environmental 4 pm CMT 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	9 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 7 pm Parish Forum	18 CMT <i>WCC Cabinet</i>	19	20	21
22	23 6 pm Cabinet	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1 4 pm CMT 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	2	3	4
5	6 9.30 am Group Leaders	7 6 pm Members Forum	8 <i>WCC Cabinet</i> 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	9	10	11
12 6 pm Cabinet	13 6 pm Planning <i>CHG</i>	14	15 CMT <i>WCC Council</i> <i>PCC Elections</i>	16	17	18
19	20	21 6 pm Council	22	23	24	25
26	27 5.30pm Bewdley Museum Management Committee	28	29 CMT	30		

DECEMBER 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3 6 pm Audit	4 4 pm CMT 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	5	6 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	7	8	9
10 10.30 am Licensing & Environmental	11 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	12 <i>Charter Trustees</i>	13 <i>WCC Cabinet</i>	14 4 pm Highways Partnership Unit Forum	15	16
17	18 6 pm Cabinet	19	20 CMT	21	22	23
24 Offices Closed	25 Bank Holiday	26 Bank Holiday	27 Offices Closed	28 Offices Closed	29	30
31 Offices Closed						

JANUARY 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1 Bank Holiday	2	3 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4	5	6
7 6pm CMT/Cabinet	8 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 6 pm Members Forum	18	19	20
21	22 6 pm Cabinet	23	24 CMT	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

FEBRUARY 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4	5 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	6	7 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8	9	10
11 10.30 am Licensing & Environmental	12 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 6 pm Cabinet	20	21 CMT Overview & Scrutiny Committee (if required)	22	23	24
25	26 Cabinet (if required) CHG	27 6 pm Council (need to check when WCC meeting is?)	28			

MARCH 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	8 4 pm Highways Partnership Forum	9	10
11 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	12 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	13	14 6 pm Members Forum	15	16	17
18 6 pm Audit	19 <i>CHG</i>	20 <i>Charter Trustees</i>	21 CMT 6 pm Ethics & Standards	22	23	24
25	26 6 pm Cabinet	27 5.30pm Bewdley Museum Management Committee	28 CMT 5.30 pm KEF Working Group	29 Bank Holiday	30	31

APRIL 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Bank Holiday	2	3	4 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny Committee	5	6	7
8 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	9 9.30 am Group Leaders 6 pm Planning	10	11	12	13	14
15 10.30 am Licensing & Environmental	16	17	18 CMT	19	20	21
22	23 6 pm Cabinet	24	25 7 pm Parish Forum	26	27	28
29	30					

MAY 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2 Elections	3	4	5
6 Bank Holiday	7 9.30 am Group Leaders	8	9 CMT	10	11	12
13	14 6 pm Planning	15 6 pm Council	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23 CMT <i>Charter Trustees Mayor Making</i>	24	25	26
27 Bank Holiday	28 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	29	30	31		

JUNE 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3	4 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	5	6 CMT 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny	7	8	9
10	11 6 pm Planning	12	13	14	15	16
17 10.30 am Licensing & Environmental	18 9.30am Group Leaders 6 pm Cabinet	19	20 CMT	21	22	23
24 6 pm Audit	25 5.30pm Bewdley Museum Management Committee	26	27	28	29	30

JULY 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2 6 pm CMT/Cabinet	3	4 CMT	5	6	7
8	9 6 pm Planning	10	11 6 pm Overview & Scrutiny	12	13	14
15	16 6 pm Cabinet	17	18 CMT 6 pm Members Forum	19	20	21
22	23	24 6 pm Council	25 5.30 pm KEF Working Group	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Representation on Outside Bodies 2012/2013

External Body	Representative 2011/2012	Representative 2012/2013	Number of Representatives
Age Concern	Councillor Mike Salter	Councillor Mike Salter	1 Councillor
Bewdley Development Trust	Councillor Stephen Clee	Councillor Julian Phillips	1 Councillor
Bewdley Museum Management Committee	Councillor Stephen Clee Councillor Jenny Greener Councillor Tracey Onslow	Councillor Stephen Clee Councillor Jenny Greener Councillor Ian Hardiman	Relevant Cabinet Member plus 2 Bewdley District Councillors
Carpet Museum Trust	Councillor Paul Harrison Councillor Jeffrey Baker	Councillor Mike Price Councillor Stephen Williams	2 Councillors
Citizen's Advice Bureau - Management Committee	Councillor Paul Harrison	Councillor Paul Harrison	1 Councillor
Community Housing Group	Councillor Steven Clee Councillor Douglas Godwin Councillor Nicky Gale Councillor Jenny Greener Councillor Ian Hardiman Councillor Gordon Yarranton <i>(Appointment for September 2011 – August 2012)</i>	Decision to be taken at Council on 20 th June 2012	6 Councillors

External Body	Representative 2011/2012	Representative 2012/2013	Number of Representatives
District Councils Network	Councillor John-Paul Campion Councillor Marcus Hart	Councillor John-Paul Campion Councillor Marcus Hart	Leader, Deputy Leader as named substitute
Horsefair Greenhill and Broadwaters Community Neighbourhood Partnership	Councillor Mumshad Ahmed Councillor Tim Ingham Councillor Howard Martin Councillor Graham Ballinger Councillor Paul Harrison Councillor Adrian Sewell	Councillor Graham Ballinger Councillor Paul Harrison Councillor Tim Ingham Councillor Howard Martin Councillor Mary Rayner Councillor Adrian Sewell	Greenhill & Broadwaters Ward Councillors / 5 Officers
Kidderminster and District Youth Trust	Councillor Daniel McCann Councillor Michael Kelly Councillor Jenny Greener Councillor Tracey Onslow	Councillor Jenny Greener Councillor Ian Hardiman Councillor Michael Kelly Councillor Daniel McCann	4 Councillors
Local Government Association Rural Commission	Councillor Douglas Godwin Councillor Julian Phillips	Councillor Douglas Godwin Councillor Julian Phillips	2 Members or 1 Member & 1 Officer
Local Government Association Urban Commission	Councillor Howard Martin Councillor Fran Oborski	Councillor Howard Martin Councillor Fran Oborski	2 Members or 1 Member & 1 Officer
North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	-	Councillor Ian Hardiman	Relevant Cabinet Member
Stourport Forward Board	Councillor Mike Salter	Councillor Mike Salter	1 Councillor / 1 Officer

Agenda Item No. 19

External Body	Representative 2011/2012	Representative 2012/2013	Number of Representatives
The Elizabeth Mills Centre (formerly Stourport Day Centre)	Councillor Chris Rogers	Councillor Dixon Sheppard	1 Councillor plus Mayor of SOS Town Council
Tree Tops Sure Start Children's Centre	Councillor Nicky Gale	Councillor Nicky Gale	1 Oldington & Foley Park Ward Member
West Mercia Police and Crime Panel	-	Councillor John-Paul Campion	1 Councillor
West Midlands Councils	Councillor John-Paul Campion	Councillor John-Paul Campion	Leader of the Council
Worcestershire County Council Corporate Parenting Board	Councillor Helen Dyke	Councillor Helen Dyke	1 Councillor
Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Fran Oborski	Councillor Fran Oborski	1 Councillor
Worcestershire County Waste Forum	Councillor Marcus Hart	Councillor Marcus Hart	Relevant Cabinet Member
Worcestershire Health & Well-Being Board	Chief Executive (Shadow Board)	Councillor Julian Phillips	Relevant Cabinet Member
Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee	Councillor Jeffrey Baker Councillor Marcus Hart	Councillor Marcus Hart Councillor Paul Harrison	Relevant Cabinet Member & Chairman of Licensing & Environmental Committee
Wyre Forest Community Leisure Association Ltd - Local Partnership Board	Councillor Jeffrey Baker Councillor Ian Hardiman	Councillor John Hart Councillor Rose Bishop	2 Councillors / 2 Officers

External Body	Representative 2011/2012	Representative 2012/2013	Number of Representatives
Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Consortium Advisory Group	Councillor John Aston Councillor Ken Prosser	Councillor John Aston Councillor Howard Martin	2 Councillors
Wyre Forest Highways Partnership Forum	Councillor Arthur Buckley Councillor Helen Dyke	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Nicky Gale	2 non-voting Councillors
Wyre Forest Matters Children and Young Peoples Sub Group	Councillor Fran Oborski Councillor Tracey Onslow	Councillor Fran Oborski Councillor Ian Hardiman	2 Councillors including relevant Cabinet Member / 1 Officer
Wyre Forest Matters Strategic Board	Councillor John-Paul Campion	Councillor John-Paul Campion	Leader of the Council / Chief Executive
Wyre Forest Nightstop and Mediation Service Management Committee	Councillor Julian Phillips	Councillor Julian Phillips	Relevant Cabinet Member

Ethics & Standards Committee – revised terms of reference for constitution

Part 5 – Section 13

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 and on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.
6. Grants dispensations, if necessary, to councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.
7. Considers complaints against any member relating to alleged breach of the Code of Conduct, to make findings of fact and decisions in respect of the action to be taken, and where necessary to make recommendations to full Council.
8. Exercises (1) to (7) 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.

Housing Review Panel – Membership and Terms of Reference

Six members: 3 Conservative, 1 Labour (Chairman), 1 Independent Community & Health Concern, 1 Liberal and Independent.

The Panel will report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and will complete its work during the municipal year 2012/13 (by 30th October 2012, in respect of any proposals that affect the budget for 2013-14 onwards).

The Panel will consider the following issues:

1. Future level and method of funding Disabled Facility Grants, to inform budget setting for 2013/14;
2. Provision of new affordable housing – review of need, options for delivery and financing;
3. Empty Homes - the level of empty properties and reasons. The actions open to the Council to bring more of them back into residential use and potential funding streams for this work;
4. Housing Advice services, delivered outside of the contract with Community Housing Group. This would cover services provided in house such as the Mortgage Rescue Advice Service as well as services the Council commissions from the third sector to help prevent homelessness, such as debt advice with the CAB.