

Open

Council

Agenda

6.00pm
Wednesday, 15th May 2013
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Council

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

7th May 2013

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, HONORARY ALDERMEN,

PRESS AND PUBLIC

Dear Member

YOU ARE INVITED to attend a meeting of the Wyre Forest District Council to be held **at 6.00pm on Wednesday 15th May 2013**, in the Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster.

The Agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Yours sincerely,

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 this constitution for full details.

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

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

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

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

(A) TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL

The Council

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

(B) MATTERS RESERVED TO THE COUNCIL

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wyre Forest District Council

Council

Wednesday, 15th May 2013

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Prayers To be read by Reverend Mary Austin from Trinity Methodist Church, Kidderminster.	
2.	Election of Chairman To elect a Chairman of the Council for this Municipal Year.	
3.	Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office 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.	Chairman’s Response The Chairman of the Council will express thanks for his or her election.	-
5.	Retiring Chairman The Leader of the Council will thank the retiring Chairman of the Council.	-
6.	Retiring Chairman – Presentation of Badges To present the retiring Chairman of the Council with a Past Chairman’s Badge. The retiring Chairman may wish to respond.	-
7.	Appointment of Vice-Chairman To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Council for this Municipal Year.	-
8.	Vice-Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office 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.	-

9.	<p>Vice Chairman's Response</p> <p>The Vice-Chairman of the Council will express his or her thanks for his or her appointment.</p>	-
10.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>To receive apologies for absence.</p>	-
11.	<p>Declarations of Interests by Members</p> <p>In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered.</p> <p>Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.</p>	-
12.	<p>Minutes</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th February 2013 and the Minutes of the Special meeting held on 13th March 2013.</p>	11
13.	<p>Public Participation</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 no later than 12 noon Friday 3rd May 2013.</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 Director of Community Assets and Localism will rule on whether or not the matter is urgent and that ruling will be final.</i></p>	-
14.	<p>Questions</p> <p>One question has been received in accordance with Standing Orders (Section 7, 1.9) by Members of the Council, details of which have been received by no later than 12 noon Friday 3rd May 2013.</p> <p><i>In the case of an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline above, and could not have reasonably been known at that time, it must be delivered in writing to the Director of Community Assets and Localism no later than 9am on the day of Council.</i></p>	26

15.	<p>Chairman's Communications</p> <p>(a) To note the engagements of the outgoing Chairman since the Council's last meeting. <i>(This will be tabled at the meeting.)</i></p> <p>(b) To receive such communications from the new Chairman of the Council.</p>	-
16.	<p>Leader of the Council Announcements and Reports</p> <p>To receive announcements and any matters to report from the Leader of the Council.</p>	-
17.	<p>Members' Annual Activity Reports and Attendance 2012/2013</p> <p>To note the schedule of Members' Annual Reports giving details of their activities in their role as District Councillors for the 2012/2013 municipal year and to receive a record of Members' attendance for the 2012/2013 municipal year.</p> <p><i>These reports have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details)</i> <i>Copies will also be available with the pre council refreshments.</i></p>	27
18.	<p>Annual Reports for the Municipal Year 2012/2013</p> <p>(a) Cabinet</p> <p>(b) Scrutiny Report</p> <p>(c) Ethics and Standards Committee</p>	29
19.	<p>Political and Constitutional Structures 2013/2014</p> <p>(a) To consider a report from the Director of Community Assets and Localism on the proposed political and constitutional structures for 2013/2014. This report will include the municipal calendar and the proposed amendments to the constitution.</p> <p>(b) Appointments to outside bodies.</p> <p>(Please note that this item is marked to follow)</p>	-

20.	<p>Motions Submitted Under Standing Orders</p> <p>One motion has been received in accordance with Standing Order (Section 7, 4.1).</p> <p><i>From Councillor J Shaw, Leader of the Labour Group.</i></p> <p><i>"While acknowledging the limitations set down by European procurement regulations, Council believes that, for work carried out on its behalf by contractors, employees working on qualifying service contracts should be paid at Living Wage rates. Therefore, Council resolves to promote the Living Wage principle in its contacts with potential contractors."</i></p>	-
21.	<p>Urgent Motions Submitted Under Standing Orders</p> <p>To consider any motions in the order in which they have been received, which, by reason of special circumstances, should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Standing Order (Section 7 4.1 (viii)).</p>	-
22.	<p>Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission in respect of Council Size</p> <p>To receive a report from the Chief Executive which asks Council to consider the submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission about the size of the Council.</p>	32
23.	<p>Half Yearly report of the Chief Executive</p> <p>To receive a half yearly report from the Chief Executive.</p>	
24.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Community Assets and Localism before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	
25.	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>"That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act".</p>	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

26.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services 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.	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER

27TH FEBRUARY 2013 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: J Aston, G W Ballinger, R Bishop, C Brewer, J-P Campion, S J M Clee, E Davies, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, N Gale, B T Glass, D R Godwin, J Greener, I Hardiman, P B Harrison, J A Hart, M J Hart, P V Hayward, V Higgs, A T Hingley, T Ingham, M B Kelly, N Knowles, H J Martin, D C H McCann, B McFarland, F M Oborski, T L Onslow, J Phillips, M Price, M Rayner, C Rogers, M A Salter, A M Sewell, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard, N J Thomas, S J Williams, and G C Yarranton.

C.61

Prayers

Prayers were said by Monsignor Canon J Moran from St Mary's Church, Harvington.

C.62

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C D Nicholls, and J W Parish.

C.63

Declarations of Interests by Members

There were no declarations of interest.

C.64

Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C.65

Public Participation

No members of the public addressed the meeting.

C.66

Questions

The Council received a report setting out a range of questions from Councillors Knowles, and Rayner. Two further urgent questions were tabled with the agreement of the Chairman from Councillors Phillips and M Hart.

Question 1. From Councillor N Knowles to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services Councillor M Hart.

Given that many municipal contracts for waste collection and deposit are advertised internationally – for instance the municipality of Cinquecitta, Italy, invited tenders for door to door collection of domestic waste tenders by 5th February 2013 (Daily Telegraph) – contract value £5,970,352 Euros plus VAT – what safeguards can be taken to ensure that Wyre Forest District Council keeps its contract ‘in-house’ and we continue to employ our own local workforce to collect domestic waste in Wyre Forest?

Response from Councillor M Hart

With reference to the question about ensuring that Wyre Forest District Council continue to employ our in house own workforce, my response is that if we were to consider outsourcing, like any other authority in England and Wales, we would have to be mindful of the regulations of 2006 and any proposals would have to be advertised in the normal way. I place on record my thanks for the sterling work that the refuse and recycling crews, some 92% of whom live in the District undertake in this District. Whilst of course we can, in the future, look to see how we provide the service, we have no plans to externalise our waste contract.

Supplementary Question from Councillor N Knowles

In relation to this whole business of maintaining the in house service and being bound to notice the example of what Cinquecitta, Italy did and the choice in tendering, I am heartened by the comments that the administration has no plans to put the contract out to tender; this is a good commitment and I do hope you could respond to pressures from government to put more services out to private contract.

Response from Councillor M Hart

I’m not that close to government and of course there are no plans in the foreseeable future. We have all kinds of services, waste or whatever, and the most important thing is to serve the local electorate and bring better services for the tax payers. There are no firm plans in the immediate short term future but that is not to say that future administrations won’t look at it and, in terms of government, I haven’t met any colleagues to externalise this service.

Question 2. From Councillor N Knowles to the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping, Councillor A Hingley

Would the Council support naming the street between the Town Hall in Kidderminster and Husum Bridge, Richard Baxter Walk and that we ask the landowners for permission to name it such.

Response from Councillor A Hingley

Thank you for your question, and I like your idea. It is recognised that Richard Baxter is an important person for Kidderminster, however, when

charging street names, the Council has to be mindful of the rules and regulations that cover such activity and the Council would also need the permission of Hendersons to carry out consultation. Moreover the Royal Mail would not be keen on changing established street names. It may be more appropriate to name a new street after Richard Baxter.

Supplementary Question from Councillor N Knowles

I am disappointed with the response, as Richard Baxter is really associated with Kidderminster and a new street would not be in the heart of the town or public activity. We should not be put off by the Royal Mail or the cost. Kidderminster needs identification and the identification will bring extra interest and commerce.

Response from Councillor A Hingley

If changes went through, it would be Richard Baxter Walk, Weavers' Wharf and the cost of the changes, including postcodes, would be payable by the users of units 1 – 10. The Council needs to use common sense in this matter and if Richard Baxter was here today he wouldn't mind a new road being named after him.

Question 3. From Councillor M Rayner to the Leader of the Council, Councillor J-P Campion

How are outside contractors monitored in the delivery of their building project like Wyre Forest House by the District Council?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

Wyre Forest House has been externally project managed by RLB and also monitored by an identified officer within the district council, i.e. the Chief Executive.

Supplementary Question from Councillor M Rayner

I am concerned and would like reassurance that the Chief Executive had input in to the monitoring the project and what the Leader considers his role in this remit?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

Whilst there have been changes to the role of Leader within this authority there are clear distinctions between the head of paid service and an elected councillor. I am not the chief executive and don't want to be so; I have every confidence in the stance of the project and I am confident of the ability to deliver major projects well. There was appropriate oversight and regular briefings were given, it was a major project that was complex and I was pleased that we took appropriate advice on the project that you refer to.

Question 4. Question from Councillor M Rayner to the Leader of the Council, Councillor J-P Campion

What was the carbon footprint for the Ege carpets to be put into Wyre Forest House?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

The Council does not hold the information being required.

Supplementary Question from Councillor M Rayner

Has a comparison with Ege carpets been made on moving the carpets from Denmark; what does this say about the incumbent decision makers?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

Nothing would please me more than to spend money on services in the District, however the law doesn't allow it and I do not hold that information.

Question 5. Question from Councillor M Rayner to the Leader of the Council, Councillor J-P Campion

What materials make up the carpet that has been put into Wyre Forest House?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

I don't hold the information that the Councillor requires.

Supplementary Question from Councillor M Rayner

I believe that the product is polypropylene which is not sustainable or renewable. Why not wool which is sustainable and renewable?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

I am surprised that you asked when you already know the answer already and wool does come from sheep.

Question 6. Question from Councillor M Rayner to the Leader of the Council, Councillor J-P Campion

Can you please tell us what is happening to the heating system in Wyre Forest House?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

The heating system isn't working as designed or specified, we have a contract in place and every effort is being made to resolve this issue. There are temporary heaters in the building. The builders have tried some changes, there are to be further studies and we are working with the contractors to get it fixed so that it is the right environment for staff to work

in. It was not effective at the beginning but at the moment we need to protect the Council's legal position.

Supplementary Question from Councillor M Rayner

Thank you for your comprehensive answer. I am aware that electricity is being used and who is paying for it. I am also concerned about the system being applied to the leisure centre.

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

This matter is being tested through the contract and we will make sure that we hold the contractors to account and the Chief Executive is acting for us. There is no planning application for the Leisure Centre yet. Ground source heating was the right thing to do; with hindsight there have been problems but ultimately it was the right thing for this site. It is working but not at the levels it was expected to. If any Member wishes to speak to me in private please speak to me or the Chief Executive.

Urgent Questions

Question 1. Question from Councillor J Phillips to the Leader of the Council J-P Campion

With the Independent Police & Crime Commissioner, Bill Longmore, announcing his intention to support closing a number of police stations and bases within West Mercia, including Bewdley, there will be some in our community that will be concerned by the uncertainty this news brings.

Could I ask the Leader of the Council, as a matter of urgency to assist West Mercia Police in identifying an alternative police base (preferably in a co-location/partnership basis) within Bewdley to ensure local policing can continue to be delivered at the heart of the Town?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

I am concerned to hear this and will be supporting consultation so that there is community consensus. The Police need to be face to face and I would ask that the Chief Executive makes contact with the Chief Constable's team and other public sector partners to make sure that the levels of police can be maintained in the District.

Supplementary question from Councillor Phillips

I am pleased to hear the Leader shares this view. There are many commercial interests in the town centre and Wribbenhall; would the Leader consider suggesting to the Police a location outside of a public sector organisation to be considered. Outside bodies and groups would welcome the modest income this would bring and the added profile.

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

I will take this on board.

Question 2. Question from Councillor M Hart to the Leader of the Council J-P Campion

Would the Leader of the Council agree with me that the news outlined in today's Joint Services Review announcement that all three existing acute sites with Worcestershire are to remain open is excellent news for local residents and, furthermore, specifically for Wyre Forest would he welcome the fact that services are to remain at the Kidderminster site and endorse the fact that wherever possible residents of Wyre Forest wish that their services to remain local?

Response from Councillor J-P Campion

I welcome the announcement today, it is good news for our community in Wyre Forest and the future of the Kidderminster Hospital site. There has been a lot of cross party co-ordination and indeed the devil will be in the detail,, it is good news for Kidderminster and a positive day for people power.

C.67 Chairman's Communications

Council received a tabled list of appointments carried out by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council. In addition the Chairman announced that Alderman Mrs Mills had celebrated her 101st birthday and that a card and congratulations had been sent. Best wishes and a speedy recovery were also sent to Councillor J Parish. The Chairman concluded by advising Members that there were a few places available at his charity dinner.

C.68 Leader of the Council Announcements

Copies of the Leader's announcements were circulated to all Members. Members were further advised that the application for the Hoobrook relief road which would connect the Worcester Road with the Stourport Road was being progressed and, if the application was successful, would start in the next 24 months. Further, that the State of Area debate would take place on 7th March which would be webcast and consultation was being undertaken on the new leisure centre.

In response to a Member's question regarding the money being returned from the Icelandic Banks, Members were advised that as preferential creditors we had seen impressive returns and were expecting to receive nearly all of the money invested. Moreover, that the Council wished to get most value back and that might take time rather than to rush things.

C.69 Motions submitted under standing orders

Council received the following motion, from Councillor J Shaw, Leader of the Labour Group.

"Council resolves to support in principle the appointment of a Wyre Forest District councillor as Armed Forces Champion, the primary function of the office to be improving access to services and support for serving and ex-service men and women.

In order to appreciate fully the scope of this role, Council delegates to Scrutiny the task of setting up a working party in a timescale which would enable an appointment to be made for the new municipal year."

Council briefly debated the motion and agreed that it was very welcome. Subject to the second paragraph of the motion being deleted, Council voted unanimously to support the motion.

C.69 Urgent motions submitted under standing orders

No urgent motions were received.

C.70 Community Governance Review

Council received a report from the Director of Community Assets and Localism of the community Governance Review of Kidderminster

Members debated at length the merits of the review, supporting their arguments with recollections of the history of Kidderminster and the merits in allowing the electorate to respond to the consultation.

Decision

- 1. The Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review be agreed as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 2. The Director of Community Assets and Localism be given delegated authority to make any minor modifications to the Terms of Reference as necessary during the course of the review.**

C71 Elections and Election Fees

Council received a report from the Returning Officer on the elections held in May and November of 2012 and the proposed fee structure for future elections, referendums and polls.

Members were reminded that Town Councils already paid fees should they hold a by-election and the revisions to the level of the fees that would be charged were modest.

Decision:

- 1. That the Returning Officers report on the elections held in May and November 2012 be noted.**
- 2. The revised scheme of fees and charges for the local elections and referendums as set in Appendix 3 of the report to Council take effect from 1 March 2013.**

C.72 Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2013 – 14

Council received the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for 2013 -14 with the purpose of deciding the scheme of allowances that should be paid to Members for the financial year 2013/14.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report, stating that he felt it was flawed and based purely on averaging out the level of allowances paid across all of the County Districts and Boroughs. Moreover that the Panel had no understanding of the role of Councillors in Wyre Forest and there were inconsistencies in their approach. Members were reminded that the allowances had been frozen from 2008 and that the current rate of allowances was justifiable.

The Labour Group tabled an amendment to the substantive report as detailed below;

The Leader of the Labour Party introduced the motion and explained the rationale for amendments. The motion was vigorously debated with Members speaking both for and against the amendment; however, upon a vote, the amendment was lost.

Members then moved to debate the substantive item. This was thoroughly debated with Members speaking both against the substantive item and in favour.

Decision:

- 1. The Council had regard to the conclusions and recommendations of the IRP when agreeing the scheme of allowances as set out in Appendix A of the report to Council for the financial year 2013 -14, with the addition that an allowance for the Chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee be agreed.**
- 2. The Director of Community Assets and Localism be authorised to amend the constitution as appropriate to give effect to the Council's decisions.**

C.73 Policy And Budget Framework – Matters which require a decision by Council

Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14

Council received the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting of 19th February 2013.

Decision:

- 1. The restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2013/14 to 2015/16 included in Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet be approved and the change in the External Debt Indicator explained in paragraph 16.4 of the report to Cabinet be noted.**

2. **The updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 and the detailed criteria are included in Section 10 and Appendix 5 of the report to Cabinet) be approved.**
3. **The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet be approved.**
4. **The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator included in Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet be approved.**

Wyre Forest District Revised Statement of Community Involvement Adoption

Council received the recommendations of the Council meeting of 19th February 2013

Decision: The Revised Statement of Community Involvement as set out in Appendix 2 to the report to Cabinet be adopted and that the responses to the representations made, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report to Cabinet be endorsed.

C.74 Budget Proposals 2013/2016

The Leader of the Council presented the administration's proposals for the budget. He thanked the members of the Corporate Management Team and officers for the work put into the budget proposals for this year. He explained that the Council had some difficult decisions to make. It was perceived that the proposals would benefit the community by offering business rate relief and an apprenticeship scheme.

The Leader advised Members that he had been pleased how well the budget scrutiny process had gone and comments had been taken on board from the alternative budgets received from other political groups.

A robust debate ensued on the budget proposals, during which Members of each of the political groups made their comments on the proposals.

The Labour Group presented an amendment to the budget which asked for the Council to create a new post of an Empty Homes Officer as it was felt that this could help to bring the housing waiting list down. However upon a vote the amendment was lost.

A Member asked why the seconded Empty Homes Officer had not been continued as it had proved successful in bringing some homes in the district back into use. Members were informed that the appointment had been for a fixed term only using windfall monies from Central Government.

The Labour Group presented a second amendment to the budget asking to

increase the amount of resources for the disabled facilities grants. This was discussed at length, however upon a vote the amendment was lost.

At the conclusion of the debate, the decision was carried.

1. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 ONWARDS** (pages 91-101 of the report to Council)
 - 1.1 The updated Base Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as presented to the Cabinet on 18th December 2012 and further amended to incorporate the Cabinet Proposals identified in Appendix 2 along with the updated Prudential Indicators presented in the separate report on this agenda be approved.
2. **FEES AND CHARGES** (pages 47-86 as updated of the report to Council)
 - 2.1 The fees and charges, noting the recommendations from the Licensing and Environmental Committee, as attached in Appendix 1 be approved.
3. **THREE YEAR BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2013/16** (pages 1-45 as updated of the report to Council)
 - 3.1 The contents of the Reports of the Director of Resources on the Three Year Budget and Policy Framework 2013-2016 (pages 1-45 incorporating the Base Budget Variations (pages 27-28) supplemented by the updated report approved by Cabinet on 22nd January 2013, be *ENDORSED* and in doing so *APPROVE* the Revised Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2012/13.
 - 3.2 That any Final Account savings arising from 2012/16 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Finance Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated to the Working Balance be approved.
 - 3.3 The following General Fund Revenue Budget be *APPROVED* including *CABINET PROPOSALS (Appendix 2)* and *FEES AND CHARGES* as proposed by Cabinet on 22nd January 2013 and related amendments (*Appendix 1 of the report to Council*):

Agenda Item No. 12

	Revised 2012/13 £	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £
Net Expenditure on Services (per Appendix 3 (New Appendix 3 updating the position as at 22 nd January and now taking into account Social Fund Grant) <u>Add/(Less)</u> Cabinet Proposals - (Appendix 2)	13,076,950	12,691,410	12,410,560	12,055,100
Net Expenditure	13,076,950	12,809,220	12,222,780	11,791,530
Contribution from Reserves	(344,150)	(524,300)	(636,070)	(665,860)
Net Budget Requirement	12,732,800	12,284,920	11,586,710	11,125,670
<u>Less</u> Business Rates, Revenue Support Grant and Collection Fund Surplus	5,615,730	6,179,120	5,390,570	4,933,200
Council Tax Transitional Grant	-	28,630	-	
Community Right to Bid/Challenge	-	16,400	16,400	-
Homelessness Funding	109,270	108,650	108,650	-
Council Tax Income	<u>£7,007,800</u>	<u>£5,952,120</u>	<u>£6,071,090</u>	<u>£6,192,470</u>
Wyre Forest District Council Tax Level assuming no change in 2013/14 then a 2% increase 2014/15 onwards.	<u>£197.62</u>	<u>£197.62</u>	<u>£201.57</u>	<u>£205.60</u>

Final Government Grant Analysis

Year	Value of Government Support £	Decrease	
		£	%
2012/13	5,391,294		
2013/14	4,884,507	506,787	9.40
2014/15	4,095,955	788,552	16.14
2015/16	3,882,440	213,515	5.21

Note to Government Grant Analysis table: These figures relate to business rates and revenue support grant; they exclude Grants for Homelessness and Council Tax Support, and also Transitional and Freeze Grants (source LG Futures as updated for the final Grant Settlement). The new funding regime for Business Rates greatly increases the significance of the collection of Business Rates, with more emphasis on the actual sums collected rather than collection rates. This change of emphasis may require the Director of Resources to consider deployment of additional staffing resource to ensure maintenance of the Business Rates baseline,

including even closer liaison with the Valuation Office. It is hoped this can be achieved within existing resources.

3.4 Reserves available as part of the Three Year Financial Strategy:

Reserves Statement	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000
Reserves as at 1 April	2,511	2,167	1,643	1,007
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(344)	(524)	(636)	(666)
Reserves as at 31 March	2,167	1,643	1,007	341

3.5 That the decisions on use of the Social Fund Grant, including any revision of the provisional distribution reflected in the base budget, should lie outside the normal Financial Regulation requirements for Supplementary Estimates and Virements be agreed.

3.6 Notes the following updates to the Risk Matrix as published on the 18th December 2012:

- **Since the Financial Strategy was presented to Cabinet in December 2012, the position regarding the Contractor’s Claim for the construction of the New Headquarters has developed further. The financial impact of finalising the account is unknown at this stage and could vary from zero to a potentially significant sum. This will continue to be managed by the Chief Executive and Director of Community Assets and Localism in close liaison with our specialist project managers.**
- **The continued depressed economy and resultant poor property market continues to represent significant risk to the financial strategy in terms of assumed funding from asset disposals and asset transfers. It is hoped that the position will improve, but assumptions made within the budget will continue to be carefully monitored against results achieved and any significant variances included in future reports to Members.**

4 COUNCIL TAX

4.1 SETS a Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property of £197.62 for 2013/14 (£197.62 2011/12) which represents no increase on Council Tax from 2012/13.

4.2 ADOPTS A PLANNING ASSUMPTION OF a provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2014/15 of £201.57 and £205.60 in 2015/16 an increase of 2 % per annum over 2013/14.

4.3 NOTES that the new Council Tax Discount Scheme approved by Council in November 2012 (subject to minor revision due to a removal of the Class L, repossessed properties, Council Tax exemption) will be effective from 1st

April 2013, and that there is a risk from the scheme that there will be a greater financial burden on the Council.

- 4.4 **NOTES** the decision taken to join the Worcestershire Business Rates Pool to protect the Council from any business rate reductions and help maximise the benefit by retaining more of the business rates delivered from economic growth within Worcestershire.

C.75 Council Tax 2013/2014

Council received a report, the purpose of which was to enable Council to calculate and set the Council Tax for 2013/14.

Decision: The formal Council Tax Resolution 2013/14 as set out at Appendix 1 of the report to Council, taking into account the information contained in Appendices 2 to 5 of the report to Council be approved.

There being no further business the meeting finished at 21.52.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

SPECIAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER

13TH MARCH 2013 (6.45PM)

Present:

Councillors: J Aston, G W Ballinger, R Bishop, C Brewer, J-P Champion, S J M Clee, E Davies, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, N Gale, B T Glass, D R Godwin, J Greener, I Hardiman, P B Harrison, J A Hart, M J Hart, P V Hayward, V Higgs, A T Hingley, T Ingham, M B Kelly, N Knowles, H J Martin, D C H McCann, B McFarland, C D Nicholls, F M Oborski, T L Onslow, J Phillips, M Price, M Rayner, C Rogers, M A Salter, J A Shaw, N J Thomas, S J Williams and G C Yarranton.

C.76 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: J W Parish, A M Sewell and D R Sheppard.

C.77 Declarations of Interests by Members

There were no declarations of interests.

C.78 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Decision: Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of “exempt Information” as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

C.79 Wyre Forest District Council Management Review

The Leader of the Council introduced a report from the Chief Executive regarding proposals for the implementation of a revised Management Structure for Wyre Forest District Council.

An amendment to the motion was moved; the Chief Executive left the meeting at this point, (6.57pm).

A robust debate ensued and following a show of hands the amendment was lost. The Chief Executive returned to the meeting at this point, (7.48pm).

The debate continued and upon a vote the substantive motion was carried.

Agreed:

- 1. With effect from 1st August 2013 the changes to the management structure set out in paragraph 4.5 and Appendix A of the exempt report to Council be approved.**
- 2. The Director of Community Assets and Localism to amend the Constitution as appropriate to give effect to the Council's decisions.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING
15TH MAY 2013
QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL

- 1. Question from Councillor M Rayner to the Leader of the Council, Councillor J Champion.**

What are the actual costs or savings for Wyre Forest House compared to the costs or savings to the last predicted budget costs or savings?

**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

	Attendance Percentage for 2012/13	Number of Meetings Attended
Councillor J Aston	70%	19/27
Councillor G W Ballinger	83%	20/24
Councillor R Bishop	100%	45/45
Councillor C Brewer	83%	29/35
Councillor J-P Campion	93%	25/27
Councillor S J M Clee	53%	8/15
Councillor L Davies	76%	39/51
Councillor N J Desmond	80%	20/25
Councillor H E Dyke	84%	38/45
Councillor P Dyke	69%	18/26
Councillor N Gale	91%	31/34
Councillor B T Glass	63%	17/27
Councillor D Godwin	84%	27/32
Councillor J Greener	89%	32/36
Councillor I Hardiman	86%	31/36
Councillor J Hart	90%	35/39
Councillor M J Hart	95%	40/42
Councillor P V Hayward	72%	26/36
Councillor V Higgs	94%	34/36
Councillor A T Hingley	83%	24/29
Councillor T Ingham	76%	29/38
Councillor M B Kelly	74%	28/38
Councillor N Knowles	79%	23/39
Councillor H J Martin	78%	43/55
Councillor D McCann	84%	37/32
Councillor B McFarland	100%	40/40
Councillor C D Nicholls	81%	22/27
Councillor F M Oborski	89%	35/39
Councillor T L Onslow *	44%	8/18
Councillor J W Parish *	43%	9/21
Councillor J Phillips	91%	20/22
Councillor M Price	93%	43/46
Councillor M Rayner	93%	38/30
Councillor C Rogers	78%	25/32
Councillor M A Salter	82%	31/38
Councillor J A Shaw	100%	25/25
Councillor D Sheppard	75%	27/36

Councillor N J Thomas	70%	26/37
Councillor S J Williams	92%	45/49
Councillor G C Yarranton	79%	38/48

** Please refer to the individual Members Activity Reports for further details.*

**Index of Members' Activity Reports Not Received as of the date
of publication of the Council Agenda**

	Attendance Percentage for 2012/13	Number of Meetings Attended
Councillor P B Harrison	97%	58/60
Councillor A Sewell	64%	18/28

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor John Aston

Ward: Aggborough & Spennells

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	1
Planning	12	10

This represents an overall attendance of 70% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

Prostate Cancer Group.

School Governor for Heronswood Primary School.

Wyre Forest Dog Rescue.

Sea Scouts on Hoo Road.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

- Still campaigning for a crossing by the Spennells Play Area.
- Continuing to work with Worcestershire County Council to reduce the speed limit from 60 mph to 40 mph on Wilden Lane.
- Looking forward to seeing the Old Crown Pub at Hoobrook renovated as we understand it has now been sold.
- Still pushing for footpaths and road repairs on Aggborough and Spennells as there have been quite large areas of roads resurfaced on Heronswood but there is still a lot more to do.
- I have requested more dog bins to tackle problems with dog mess.
- I have also asked for more grit bins in various areas which cause problems in bad weather and I am negotiating this with Worcestershire County Council.
- Trying to resolve issues regarding the bridle path from the post box going up on to the railway line main bridle path.
- I have regular meetings at my house to discuss ward problems usually relating to litter and dog fouling, etc .
- I carry out Ward work on a day to day basis.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

It has been a great privilege to be the Mayor of Kidderminster over the past 12 months and my Consort and I have attended nearly 300 engagements. Also we have beaten all records by raising nearly £10,000 for our chosen charity which is Wyre Forest Mind which we are looking to establish as an ongoing project for the future.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Graham Ballinger

Ward: Greenhill

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Budget Review Panel	3	3
Cabinet Review Panel	1	0
Cabinet Review Panel – NNDR	1	1
Council	6	6
Ethics & Standards	3	3
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	4
Treasury Management Review Panel	3 *	1

This represents an overall attendance of 83% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	<p>11</p> <p>(Audit – 2) (Licensing & Environmental – 1) (Overview & Scrutiny – 2) (Planning – 6)</p>

* Replaced Councillor Jim Parish after 2 meetings had been held.

Section 2: Community Involvement

My work in the Greenhill ward where I was first elected in 1979 continues, with the usual issues about planning, dog fouling and anti-social behaviour, dominating the referrals.

Unemployment and the consequent implications are an issue in the ward and sadly there are so few job opportunities that locals feel are suited to their capabilities.

For much of the year, the Wyre Forest constituent office for Independent Community & Health Concern which is based in the ward at Station Approach in Kidderminster has been a focus of my attention in supporting the continued expansion of our interest throughout the district and most especially in Greenhill. I hold surgeries here every Tuesday between the hours of 10am – 1pm.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Links I have with churches and local groups continue to remind me of the valuable work that these organisations undertake in the community without any fuss, publicity and false claims. The concerns in the community have been the loss of the potential Glades Leisure Centre on its existing site – a valued asset to the hundreds, if not thousands locally, who use this facility in the high density adjacent to the town centre.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

-



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Rose Bishop

Ward: Offmore & Comberton

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Housing Review Panel	10	10
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	7
Members Forum	7	7
Overview & Scrutiny	13	13

This represents an overall attendance of 100% of committees appointed to.
 (This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

Attending meetings of Offmore Tenant Consultative Committees (TCC).
 Governors meetings of Offmore Primary School.
 Local Partnership & Communities Together (PACT).
 Community action groups.
 Attending charity events at the new coffee shop drop in centre in the community.
 Annual Party in the Park on Borrington Park, Kidderminster.
 Council Member on the board of DC Leisure.
 Council Member on D.A.W.F. (Disability Action Wyre Forest).



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

New park bench and rubbish bin installed on Borrington Park, Kidderminster.

Planted 10,000 crocus bulbs on Offmore and Comberton gateways to communities.

Outdoor Christmas carol concert.

Fund raising for youth in my ward.

In conjunction with Offmore TCC and members allowance purchased fixed stage for Offmore Primary School.

Working with a Kidderminster business man acquired 52 seats for Offmore School to attend the last Harriers football match of the season.

With Offmore Primary P.T.A. and DC Leisure acquired free passes to the glades during the Easter holidays for local children.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

-



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Cliff Brewer

Ward: Mitton

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	7
Members Forum	7	4
Overview & Scrutiny	13	10

This represents an overall attendance of 83% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Planning)

Section 2: Community Involvement

- 1) Stourport Town Council.
- 2) Stourport Town Council Parks Committee (Chair Person).
- 3) Stourport Town Council Grants Committee.
- 4) Riverside Conservation Group (Brittania Gardens) (Chair Person).
- 5) Stourport Housing Association.
- 6) Sandy Lane Business Association.
- 7) Partners and Communities Together (PACT).
- 8) Stourport Town Council Working Party.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

1. Help in housing Elderly through Housing Group.
2. Involvement with constituents on all issues involving Stourport, working in conjunction with officers of W.F.D.C.
3. Setting up Business Associations (SLBA) and Residents Projects (i.e. Britannia Gardens with residents and Head Ranger of WFDC.)
4. Resolving a variety of different problems for constituents with WFDC, Town Council and County Council.
5. Working together with other Councillors, regardless of political leaning, to achieve what is best for Stourport.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I was elected very much as a Councillor who will work hard for the good of the community. Although a member of ICHC, I am not politically minded and enjoy helping and solving any issues relating to Stourport. This I will continue to do.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor John-Paul Campion

Ward: Sutton Park

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Cabinet	9	9
Cabinet Review Group	3	3
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	5

This represents an overall attendance of 93% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

I attend in my capacity as Leader of the Council a wide number of regional and national bodies that promote joint working and strive to improve the outcomes for our communities. Of the many bodies which I am involved I would highlight the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership which I attend on behalf of North Worcestershire. The Partnership has taken huge steps forward in co-ordinating the public sector and businesses response to the economic downturn and ensuring that Wyre Forest and the wider County continues to improve its economic outlook.

I also serve on the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Transport Board. This Board enables me to influence how strategic transport decisions are made and ensure that the voice of Wyre Forest is loudly heard in the region.

I have also played an active role during the year in the Local Government Association and District Councils Network. We have worked together on a number of issues not least of which, the recent proposed changes to planning law.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have regularly communicated with my electorate through our ward newsletter with my colleagues Cllr Mrs Tracey Onslow and Cllr Marcus Hart. Our newsletters not only give details of the current issues within the ward but also what action we are taking to address them. The newsletters also include my contact details.

I regularly undertake ward walks with my colleagues as well as addressing issues that are raised directly with us by constituents.

I make myself available throughout the year directly via post and telephone, also via face to face meetings and the increased use of social media.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

The role of a Councillor is always varied, challenging and ever changing! I am proud to be a Councillor in Sutton Park.

I believe the Council has had to take difficult decisions during this year and I am proud to be part of that process that has enabled the Council to address the challenges that affect our community.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Stephen Clee

Ward: Bewdley and Arley

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	0

This represents an overall attendance of 53% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Ethics & Standards)

Section 2: Community Involvement

I sit on Bewdley Museum Management Committee and hold the Chairman post. We have a great team of members, many from the voluntary sector and it is great to see visitor numbers remained over 120,000 during the past 12 months.

I am also a Board Member of Wyre Forest Community Housing

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Members' Surgeries

- Ward Surgeries held every Saturday 9.00am - 10.00am
- Monthly distribution of Activity sheets inviting comments from constituents.
- Ward newsletters delivered all year round to every house - 18,000 in total
- Regularly writing to specific streets and areas about local issues.



Section 4: Supplementary Information

Since May 2012 I have had the privilege to be Chairman of Wyre Forest District Council for a second consecutive year. Being Chairman I have been supported by Miss Susan Morris of Rock to represent this Council at all Civic and Council events.

There have been many events we have attended and supported and I want to thank all colleagues and officers for their support at attending both my Christmas Carol Service and my Chairman's Annual Dinner. Both events passed off very well indeed and I am delighted to announce we raised £4,825.70 for my chosen charity Kemp Hospice over the past two years.

I have chaired all Council meetings between the Annual meeting in May 2012 and the last Council meeting of 2013, together with two additional Council meetings!!

Highlights:

Some of the highlights of the Civic year have been:

- Being elected Chairman – unanimously for a second year!
- Being presented with the Olympic Torch at Bewdley and travelling to Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway and receiving a massive reception.
- Finally opening the new Council's Headquarters at Finepoint.
- Being invited to Lunch with HM Queen and Duke of Edinburgh at Worcester Guildhall to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee.
- Supporting the carnivals of Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley.
- Hosting an Armed Forces Day ceremony.
- Meeting the Duke of York on at visit to Thomas Vales in Stourport.
- Visiting our Honorary Alderman Mrs Elizabeth Mills – 101st Birthday.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Liz Davies

Ward: Wribbenhall

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Housing Review Panel	10	9
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	3
Overview & Scrutiny	13	10
Planning	12	9
Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy Working Group	1	0

This represents an overall attendance of 76% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

Wribbenhall Parish Room Committee – Chairman.
 Link's – Health Scrutiny Organisation – Member.
 Bewdley Town Council – Councillor.
 Wyre Forest Friendship Club – Committee Member.
 Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council – occasional attendance.
 Northwood Lane meetings.
 Tenant Consultative Committee – occasional attendance.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I am always available for phone or personal contact.

Assistance given:

Education – School placements.

Care of elderly – funding.

Housing.

Waste Collection – occasional failure of service.

Highways issues and potholes.

Advice on handling problems – multiple small matters.

Northwood Lane problem.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

The main highlight of the year, with the exception of the above list, has been the Housing Review Panel. This has been an outstanding piece of scrutiny work, with councillors and officers working together, to identify problems and pose solutions. The in-depth scrutiny – with many witnesses has proven very valuable and illustrates what scrutiny can do given time to study specific areas.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Nathan Desmond

Ward: Oldington & Foley Park

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Cabinet	9	9
Cabinet Review Group - NNDR	1	1
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	2

This represents an overall attendance of 80% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

- Member of the Oldington and Foley Park Partners and Communities Together (PACT).
- Member of Birchen Coppice Primary School Governors.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

My main focus of work in Oldington and Foley Park over the last year has been to continue to improve the quality of life for all residents.

I have worked extremely hard over the last year to improve roads and pavements across my ward and was successful in getting Jubilee Drive completely resurfaced as it was in a very poor condition. I also campaigned successfully to get the pavements in Severn Grove and Spring Grove Crescent resurfaced and extended which delighted local residents. Other notable achievements over the last year included getting a new bus stop and shelter on the Walter Nash Road, Birchen Coppice and I have had new street lights installed in Clent Avenue, Birchen Coppice. I have worked closely with WFDC to highlight litter spot areas and get these areas tidied up.

I have also supported Birchen Coppice Scouting Group as I have volunteered my time to help out and support the group at St Peters Church. I have delivered six newsletters over the last 12 months to the whole of my ward, highlighting my achievements and priorities. These newsletters contain a contact phone number and e-mail address that constituents can call me on and indeed I have responded to hundreds of phone calls/emails/letters from constituents in which I have acted on their issues or concerns.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I have a degree in History and Politics which helps my understanding of the intricacies of politics on a national and international level. I also help run the family business in industrial and commercial flooring which gives me insight into challenges and pressures of the private sector.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Helen Dyke

Ward: Aggborough & Spennells

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Area of Highest Needs	4	3
Cabinet Review Group	3	3
Council	6	6
Ethics & Standards	3	1
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	5
My Street My Community	2	2
No Surprises Review Panel	1	1
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13	13
Treasury Management Review Panel	3	2
Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy Working Group	1	0

This represents an overall attendance of 84%
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	3 (Licensing x 1) (Planning x 2)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Aggborough and Spennells PACT Panel Member.
 Governor at Heronswood Primary School.
 Governor at Comberton Primary School.
 Corporate Parenting Panel.
 Charter Trustees.
 Children and Young People's Theme Group.
 Aggborough and Spennells Community Action Group (Treasurer) .
 Members Champion for Centres.
 Safer Town Centre Group.
 Town Team.
 Community Safety Operational Group.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I write, print and deliver with the help of volunteers regular Newsletters to keep residents informed about what is happening in the area. Each Newsletter contains a cut off slip which residents can complete and send back to us with any concerns or ideas for our area. We use a FREEPOST address to make it as easy as possible for residents to return the slips to us. We also include all our contact details, phone numbers, address and email address on everything we send out to residents in the ward.

I arrange site meetings with residents and officers where possible to discuss parking and highway issues, the aim is to either solve the problems if possible or at least reach a compromise. I visit residents in their home to discuss issues they wish to raise with me but a lot of my ward work is now being conducted more and more by email or telephone. I no longer hold Ward Surgeries as they were expensive to run and residents didn't feel comfortable attending especially if their issue was confidential.

As a member of the Aggborough and Spennells Community Action Group, I work with the members to organise and carry out Litter Picks, Community Events and Fundraising. We hold monthly meetings to plan our events and have been successful in attracting funding to carry out some of these events. In 2012 the group helped by local residents and children and working with the Husum Twinning Association planted over 20,000 purple crocus corms around the Hoobrook War Memorial. Both Councillor Peter Dyke and I donated some of our Community Grant Monies to help fund the purchase of the Crocus Corms.

I attend every Aggborough and Spennells PACT Meeting which are held every 3 months and report back to the residents the priority issues in editions of our Newsletter.

We have a number of unadopted walkways which are in desperate need of some clearing. They are very overgrown with shrubs, overhanging branches, litter and fly tipping. As they are unadopted no one has the responsibility for keeping them clear so I submitted a bid for 2 days intensive work to help clear up the walkways carried out by the Community Payback team and am happy to say I was successful with the bid. When it has been completed it will enable local residents to use the walkways on a more regular basis.

My current project working with the Community Group is to take over some unused changing rooms on Spennells Playing Field and to convert them for general community use. We are looking into funding for this project at the moment.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I am in full time employment so it is not always easy to fit in everything I would like to do but luckily enough I have an understanding Manager which does make things a lot easier.

After having lived in the area for over 32 years and having been a District Councillor for Aggborough and Spennells for 17 years I know I have acquired an enormous amount of local knowledge which does help an awful lot when working with residents and officers on any issues.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Peter Dyke

Ward: Aggborough & Spennells

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	4
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	3
Members Forum	7	3

This represents an overall attendance of 69%
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Planning)

Section 2: Community Involvement

In the past twelve months I have continued to work with local residents to resolve issues that affect their daily quality of life such as litter and fly tipping problems and potholes. A lot of issues raised by residents mean that I have to liaise with the County Council on a regular basis.

As a Community Neighbourhood Warden working for the local housing company, I attend TCC (Tenant Consultative Committees) and PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meeting and also attend the Community Action Newtown meetings.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I continue to deliver newsletters around Aggborough and Spennells on a regular basis. This is a good way of keeping people in our ward informed and aware of what is going on in and around the ward. It also carries full contact details for both myself and Councillor Helen Dyke

Section 4: Supplementary Information

-



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Nicky Gale

Ward: Oldington & Foley Park

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Area of Highest Needs	4	3
Council	6	5
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	6
My Street My Community	2	2
Overview & Scrutiny	13	13

This represents an overall attendance of 91% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

I am Chair of governors of Birchen Coppice Primary School and have continued to attend regular meetings throughout the year.

I am the Chair of the Oldington and Foley Park Partners and Communities Together (PACT) and urban safety group and attend regular meetings throughout the year.

I have been appointed to the Community Housing Board and have attended meetings throughout the year.

I have attended some meeting with The Children Centre.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

This year using my Community monies I have donated to the following groups:

St Peter Church Youth Club £200 for equipment to be used within the group.
YMCA £200 for equipment to be used within the group.
Night Stop £200 donation for things to use with people who are at crisis point.
The Children Centre (Tree Top) £100 to purchase stair gates to promote children safety.
The Wyre Forest Gymnastic Club £100 to purchase equipment.
Foley Park First School £200 to Fund an arts project within the school.

I have been involved with helping to sort out issues such as fly tipping, dog fouling, helping sort out a tenants problem with a poor kitchen, overcrowding, ASB issues, sign posted constituents to where to sort out benefits issues making phone calls on their behalf, helping out someone who was having a flood problem, helping solve the issues of unexplained holes and getting them filled in .

Some of my Constituents will know me by sight and will stop me in the street or at School, some will come to my house if they need to know something, others will contact me by phone even emailing me.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I listen to what my Constituents have to say about local issues and I will raise them in meetings.
I walk around the area regular and I will highlight issues to the Hub to get them resolved.
I will have conversations about things that may be changing with the Ward.
I do try my best to keep abreast of what is going on within the area.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Brian Glass

Ward: Lickhill

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	1
Planning	12	8

This represents an overall attendance of 63% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

As an active member of Partners and Communities Together (PACT) for Lickhill & Mitton, I spend quite a considerable amount of time doing activities that result from these meetings.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

My shop in the High Street, Stourport acts as a surgery for people in both Lickhill and Mitton wards. I also still co-ordinate the Stourport Stop Watch in conjunction with the police to make it a safer place to live and shop.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

This year I have mainly solved problems in my ward, i.e. roadworks, problems in Lickhill Park, drainage problems, housing problems, etc.

I am also a Member on the District Council's Planning Committee.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Douglas Godwin

Ward: Rock

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Ethics & Standards	3	2
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Local Development Framework Review Panel	2	0
Members Forum	7	6
Planning	12	11

This represents an overall attendance of 84% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

I am in contact with local Scouts and Guides and their leaders, the Parish Church, the local Police and CSO staff, Parish Council where I have been a member for over ten years and a past chairman for 3 years. I am a Council member on The Community Housing Group. I took part in the parish celebrations for the Queen's Jubilee attending events throughout the Ward.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Over the past year potholes and road surface deterioration have been of major concern and I have been in continuous contact with Highways Department. Each time I send a photograph to the Highways and most issues have been followed up to a satisfactory conclusion, but there is always more to do and that can be done.

I have had to deal with a major sewerage pumping station problem at Sugar's Lane over many years which is now being dealt with and included major road works, it has required a great deal of negotiation and encouraged co-operation with Severn Trent, the Parish and County Council.

I have dealt with housing problems and issues over children being eligible to receiving assistance with school transport.

There have been and still are some major planning issues where residents do attempt to fault the law when it comes to erecting buildings in the countryside, where they believe things will go unnoticed.

Residents of the Ward were very troubled by the proposed travellers site being allowed planning permission and located in the Ward. I had to attend various meetings on the subject and received and great many telephone calls, e-mails and letters.

Uncontrolled dogs worrying livestock has cropped up several times, as has the problem of fly tipping. There have been broken water mains and the problem of surplus water running off fields and damaging roads and drainage systems.

Speeding along the A456 is a common concern and large lorries and farm vehicles damaging kerbs etc. Keeping the balance between a very important agricultural community trying to earn a living during what, has been a dreadful year and other local residents is a delicate line to tread. I attend many NFU meetings, which keep me updated with farming concerns such as TB in the wildlife population (Badgers & Deer), and through my work I meet local farmers at the weekly live stock markets.

I try to make members of the public aware the realistic costs and complexity of some of the District Council's procedures and decisions. To give information on how their Council Tax is spent for the benefit of all the residents of the Ward.

I believe in face-to-face contact dealing with the individual's problems. I feel that "face book" and "twitter" are too impersonal, work allowing I spend a great deal of time in the Ward with my family. People know me and know that I know the Ward.



Section 4: Supplementary Information

As you are aware Rock Ward is a large rural ward which includes three main areas of population being Rock, Heightington and Callow Hill/Far Forest, this means it requires a different approach when it comes to keeping up to date with local concerns, making yourself available and approachable. Over the last year I have tried to attend as many local events as possible, these range from the local pantomime, village fetes, church fundraising concert, art and craft show and coffee mornings, jumble sales and charity events, as well as performance held at the three main halls by visiting professional players. Here I see a number of constituents and get to chat to them face to face. My family and I also attend the Parish Church regularly where once again I have been approached by those with concerns or by those who know of someone with a problem and I have then been able to follow up by visiting them at home or taking more direct action with those bodies who can or should help further. I travel around the Ward most weekends and can often be seen in my distinctive old Land-Rover, whilst driving through I can report on the state of roads, fencing, flooding/drainage matters as well as site visits for planning applications, inspection of and research into fly tipping. Monitoring road conditions and visiting sites of road accidents, if necessary and working with the police to improve road safety.

I have family connections with both the local school in Far Forest and relatives attending the other primary and secondary school that lie just outside my Ward but whose intake includes families from Rock. This means I have an ear to the ground when it comes to any problems re school transport, school performance and local issues relating to education and social problems.

I am a school governor at a Kidderminster primary school and although not in my Ward it does keep me updated with the workings of a school generally and enlightens me as to the problems of education provision in these straightened times

Each month I write an article for the local magazine, (The Rock & District News) a popular publication in which I report on my activities over the past month, giving details of my attendance of meetings and updating people on the problems that have arisen and how I have or hope to deal with them. This also provides constituents with all my telephone numbers and email address.

If there is a particular problem relating to one area of the Ward I write to them individual and put the letters through doors myself.

I was born and brought up in the area and I know it very well, it has been a privilege to serve the people of Rock for the last five years.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Jenny Greener

Ward: Bewdley & Arley

Section 1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	5
Licensing Sub	1	1
Members Forum	7	6
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12

This represents an overall attendance of 89% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Housing Review Panel x 1) (Planning x 1)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Bewdley Town Council.

Wyre Forest Citizens Advice Bureau.

Kidderminster Youth Trust.

Kidderminster District Scout Council.

Wyre Forest Community Housing, Board Member for Sheltered Housing.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Regular leaflets delivered to all households in Bewdley including my phone number.

Over the past year, I have dealt with matters including litter, planning enquiries, toilet provision in Bewdley, graffiti, path/alley clearance and maintenance, overhanging vegetation, illegal camping, street lighting, public transport provision, potholes, empty properties, confusion over house numbering, skateboarding on car parks, speeding and many personal enquiries and grievances.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I regularly attend Bewdley Town Council and Environment and Town Centre meetings and am up to date on all local issues.

I always respond to telephone calls, emails and letters and do my best to resolve issues.

I am a strong supporter of the provision of services and promotion of the interests of Bewdley and all its residents.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Ian Hardiman

Ward: Habberley & Blakebrook

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Cabinet	9	9
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	4
Planning	12	10

This represents an overall attendance of 86% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Ethics & Standards)

Section 2: Community Involvement

I serve as a School Governor of St. John's Primary School where I am Chairman of the Premises Committee. I attend the local Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings at St. Pius' Church and the Junior PACT meetings at St. John's School where I help to resolve issues raised by residents. I attend Habberley Tenants' Committee meetings and Committee Walkabouts. I am a committee member of Samurai Judo Club.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have, again, responded to many varied concerns by residents , including helping to have the County Council install two new bus shelters on Habberley Estate and a hard-standing at the Blakebrook bus stop; arranged for the introduction and correct positioning of new litter bins in four locations; convinced the County Council to introduce double-yellow lines at the junction of St. John's Avenue/ Holmwood Avenue for the safety of school children walking to school.

I distribute several newsletters each year across the ward; these invite residents to contact me on any issues they may have.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

As WFDC Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, I have been much involved with many local organisations and events including several sports' events which have provided many opportunities to support such good work by wonderful volunteers in Wyre Forest.

I believe that I engage well with residents and that they in return find me approachable. My considerable supervisory and management experience in problem solving equips me well to resolve problems efficiently. I take advantage of ongoing councillor training provided by the Council.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor John Hart

Ward: Wolverley

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	4
Council	6	5
Housing Review Panel	10 *	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	6
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12

This represents an overall attendance of 90% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	5 (Licensing & Environmental - 4) (Planning - 1)

* Resigned from Panel due to becoming board member of The Community Housing Group.

Section 2: Community Involvement

Wolverley Consultative Committee.
Partners and Communities Together (PACT) Committee.
Parish Council.
Wolverley Planning Group Committee.
Community Housing Group.
DC Leisure Partnership.
Friends of Wolverley.
Assist with Wolverley Carnival.
Scrutiny Housing Group sub-committee.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Negotiated with WFDC the transfer of an allotment site to the residents of Wolverley, involving numerous meetings with surveyor, solicitor and allotment association representative

The lead councillor in Wolverley Parish Councils desire to apply for a Heritage Lottery Grant with street lighting appropriate to the style and age of Wolverley Conservation area involving meetings with Community Development officer, chairman of the Friends of Wolverley and Parish Council.

Numerous consultations and meetings with Worcester Regulatory officers, Wyre Forest District Council Solicitors and police regarding illegal music festival held in Wolverley.

Meetings with James Houghton and residents reference 6 acres property where illegal occupation has taken place.

Numerous discussions with residents reference motor cycle events at Court Farm, Wolverley.

Visited numerous roads at the request of residents regarding potholes, reported to appropriate bodies.

Assisted resident's complaint with regard to incomplete work carried out to a poor standard by local authority sub-contractor.

Visited residents regarding inconsiderate and dangerous parking around Wolverley High School.

Visited resident who had concerns regarding a dangerous wall in conservation area.

Site visits to Brown Westhead Park on numerous Sundays to monitor inconsiderate and dangerous parking.

Reporting residents complaints regarding faulty dog waste bins involving numerous visits to site.

Have resolved several issues regarding grass cutting and grass verges.

Constituents are aware that they can contact me by phone, email, details of which are available on the Wyre Forest District Council website. Phone number and address available in Wolverley Parish magazine which is distributed to all residents in Wolverley plus phone number and address is available on the Wolverley Parish Council website.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I have good local knowledge of Wolverley, good listening skills and the ability to respond to residents concerns quickly and efficiently in my quest to resolve any issues that they may have.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Marcus Hart

Ward: Sutton Park

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Cabinet	9	9
Cabinet Review Group	3	3
Council	6	6
Ethics & Standards	3	2
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	6
Planning	12	12

This represents an overall attendance of 95% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Licensing & Environmental)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Kidderminster Special Educational Benefits Trust.
 Chairman and Trustee of Kidderminster District Scout Council.
 Chairman of Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board.
 Member of the Kidderminster Charter Trustees.
 Governor at Sutton Park Primary School, Baxter College and Wyre Forest School.
 Trustee of Kidderminster Harriers Football in the Community Trust.
 Trustee of Kidderminster District Youth Trust.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have responded to all queries raised to me by constituents either by telephone call, letter, email, home visit, by organising a residents meeting or a combination of some or all of these means of communication.

I respond to literally dozens of letters/emails relating to casework issues within the ward on a weekly basis.

I also deliver a regular newsletter to all households within the ward together with my two ward colleagues and this is done six times per year.

In addition to the regular newsletter, there are often issues which affect a particular street or area and I always communicate regarding those issues as well.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

As well as my public duties I am also employed as a solicitor specialising in criminal and road traffic law.

I do find that my legal background has helped me, particularly when sitting on the Planning Committee. Whilst I am by no means an expert in planning law, I did study some planning law at university and do understand the general principles which I have found assisted me greatly in determining what is and is not a material planning consideration.

I also sit on the Ethics and Standards Committee and find that again, my legal background has helped me in respect of this. Again, I sit on the Appointments and Appeals Committee and my legal training has helped me tremendously to be able to play a positive role on this committee.

Also, as indicated as a criminal law specialist, advocacy is a big part of my job and therefore speaking at Council meetings and meetings with residents comes a lot easier.

In terms of whether any outside obligations impact on my role, clearly being employed does have an impact as it means I cannot be a completely full time Councillor but believe the balance between being employed in the workplace and my democratic role compliments itself very well.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Pauline Hayward

Ward: Blakedown & Chaddesley

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	6
Members Forum	7	1
No Surprises Review Panel	1	1
Overview & Scrutiny	13	10

This represents an overall attendance of 72% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

-

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I am always available to my local residents either in person or via the telephone or "the web".

Having been the local ward councillor for 31 years, I am well known and approachable about any type of difficulty.



Section 4: Supplementary Information

Member of the Parish Council.

Attend tenants meetings.

Any "special" meetings with regard to our local primary school.

Attend church at whichever there is a service – Broome, Blakedown and Churchill.

I am a member of the Parochial Church Council.

Help and support any event held, e.g. fetes etc.

Member of Churchill Forge Trust (Scheduled Ancient Monument).

Member of the British Legion.

Member of the Penn & Bennet Trust (Local charity for benefit of Churchill Church).



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Vi Higgs

Ward: Areley Kings

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	6
Licensing Sub	1	1
Members Forum	7	7
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12

This represents an overall attendance of 97% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Planning)

Section 2: Community Involvement

-

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have met with and visited many constituents over the last year, plus attended many meetings. ie: Tenant Consultative Committee, Walshes Walkabouts, Walshes Community Hall meetings to try and save the hall. Spend many hours on the computer and telephone talking to those with problems.

I do not have specific surgeries but as I live in Areley Kings and am well known I am stopped anywhere at any time for any consultations. If possible I usually try to sort out the problems myself but if not sure of anything I will consult a fellow counsellor or ring the Hub or WFDC offices and speak to an officer. I also meet with officers at times convenient, perhaps before or after a council meeting. The officers are a font of knowledge and are very helpful. I actively encourage people to contact me. During the year I and fellow councillors in Areley Kings contact our constituents at least 4 times per year with up to date information which also includes tel. no, names and addresses plus email addresses.

Sometimes I contact people by post and I encourage visitors, too.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I am part of the Walshes Community Hall Action Group who are trying to update the hall and keep it going. We are paring down the cost of running the hall by fundraising, which of course involves the public.

I am also the chair of Age UK in Wyre Forest.

I am the senior steward at the Areley Kings Methodist Church.

Along with a small group I am assisting to run the local Messy Church club held at St Bart's and Wilden schools.

I am part of the Areley Kings Village Hall management group and was on the committee who raised funds to actually build it.

For over 12 years I have been a school governor. Firstly at Wilden and Areley Common schools but since the schools review I have been a liaison governor and then Community governor at Burlish Park Primary School.

I have been chair of Wilden Village Hall for many years, too.

If there is anything else I have missed it.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Anne Hingley

Ward: Franche

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Cabinet	7 *	6
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	5
Members Forum	7	5

This represents an overall attendance of 83% of committees appointed to.
 ((This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Planning)

* Replaced Councillor Julian Phillips after 2 meetings had been held.

Section 2: Community Involvement

- Established working partnership with police officers through the Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings held 4 times a year in Franche Community School, Chestnut Grove.
- Governor at Franche Community School, Chestnut Grove.
- Governor at St Catherine's C of E Primary School, Marlpool Lane.
- Trustee of Claire Witnell and Blount Almshouses, Wilton Avenue.
- Attend regular tenants meeting Community Housing Group Franche.
- Member of Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Advisory Group.
- Charter Trustee of Kidderminster.
- Member of the Health and Well Being Board.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

As an established Councillor I continue to keep in contact with residents through regular Franche Matters newsletters, personal contact by home visits, phone calls and emails.

This year with my District Colleague, I have facilitated an information morning in the Franche Community Church with the Citizens Advice Bureau. This was well received by people requiring an understanding of the new welfare reforms.

Keeping Franche ward tidy and clean is a priority and I am grateful to the Lengthsman who assists the Council's team in carrying out this function.

Through my involvement with the community I have come to know residents and have been able to help with council officers resolve locality problems throughout the council year.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

This year I split my £1,000 Community Leadership Fund three ways. I was very pleased to be able to support Barnabees Nursery School with £320. They purchased a purpose built dressing up trolley, a microwave to enable cooking activities and digital equipment for learning pathways.

I also supported the Odell Centre based in Plimsoll Street who deliver services for people with learning disabilities and I thanked the volunteers who live in Franche ward for the unstinting support they have given over many years to this service. I supported them in the sum of £320.

The remaining £360 was given to Sandicliffe Close to support a project to improve a corner piece of surplus highway land with planted tubs. These will be managed and cared for by local residents.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
Annual Report and review 2012/2013



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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Mike Kelly

Ward: Habberley & Blakebrook

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	4
Council	6	6
Housing Review Panel	10	7
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Kidderminster Education Foundation Working Group	2	0
Licensing & Environmental	7	3
Members Forum	7	6

This represents an overall attendance of 74% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Ethics & Standards - 1) (Overview & Scrutiny - 1)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Over the last 12 months I have dealt with many enquiries and complaints, most of them from my ward of Habberley and Blakebrook.

The main thrust of the complaints are Housing based and I have a very good working relationship with Wyre Forest Community Housing.

I also receive many complaints about Highways and Education matters, unfortunately the working relationship with the County Council is not so good, I find the County Council a very difficult and frustrating organisation to work with.



I put out five newsletters a year. This is intended to keep the residents within my ward informed on Council issues and decisions. There is always a return slip on the newsletter with my address and phone number, so that the residents can contact me to request a visit or make any point they wish to make. I have always done and continue to do walkabouts in different parts of my ward. Meeting people in the street or in their gardens and engaging them in conversation on Council issues, this is both popular and effective. I find that people are genuinely interested and want to talk as long as it's not during an election period.

I along with my colleague Cllr McFarland hold regular surgeries in the church annex on Habberley Est. This is extensively advertised in our regular newsletters and there is a permanent notice on the church notice board.

I am a Council representative on the Kidderminster and District Youth Trust.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

With my fellow Councillor we hold 6 surgeries per year. The surgeries are advertised in our regular newsletters and dates are posted in Church hall.

Regular newsletters are sent to all the electorate in my ward, and weekly walkabouts are also effective.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I regularly attend committees that I am not an official member of.

Attended various training courses on I.T.

Attended various seminars run by W.F.D.C.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Nigel Knowles

Ward: Franche

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	4
Council	6	6
Ethics & Standards	3	2
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	7
Members Forum	7	2

This represents an overall attendance of 79% of committees appointed to.
 (This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Overview & Scrutiny)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings.
 Franche Tenants Committee.
 British Legion (Poppy seller).
 Kidderminster Hospital Volunteer.

I AM NOT A DELEGATE FROM WFDC TO ANY OF THE ABOVE.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I hold an Advice Centre in Franche Ward on the First Monday of each month.

I have assisted constituents in Housing issues, Benefit issues, also issues related to Highways and Road Safety. I have also advised on Policing issues and Grant Aid to a Community Organisation. I have also advised on Transport issues, particularly for those in need.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I am a regular user of The Hub and thank staff for their help. I am a Trade Union and Co-operative member. I am of course always available any member of the public in Franche Ward. I consider my committee work is important in the delivery of Council Services and my role in the Council Chamber. I appreciate the help from staff employed at WFDC.

I am of course always available for any member of the public in Franche Ward to pursue their enquiries.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Howard Martin

Ward: Broadwaters

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Area of Highest Needs	4	4
Budget Review Panel	3	3
Cabinet Review Group	3	3
Cabinet Review Group – NNDR	1	0
Council	6	5
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	2
Overview & Scrutiny	13	10
Planning	12	11
Treasury Management Review Panel	3	2
Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy Working Group	1	1

This represents an overall attendance of 78% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

Clinical Commissioning Group Forum – Council appointment – 4 meetings per year.

Horsesfair, Broadwaters, Greenhill Partnership (HBGP) Council appointment – 4 meetings per year.

Clare Whitnall & Blount Charity – Trustee – Alms Houses.

Broadwaters Residents Action Group (BRAG) – community role – 12 meetings per year – regular attendee.

Parks “Friends of..” Groups - Broadwaters, St Georges, Baxter Gardens, Springfield Park – each hold monthly meetings – totalling 48 meetings a year – attended ad hoc, but regular contact with all groups on issues requiring Member input.



Save Kidderminster Library Gallery Action Group – Chair.
Kidderminster Hospital Alliance – cross party – Labour appointee.

The general “rule” I adopt is the first meeting in the diary is the one I attend where there is a clash except where it relates to Full Council meetings, which take overriding priority, but for some issues I give priority to meetings with the Community which is why in the attendance list of council committee and sub committee work above, some meetings are missed in favour of Community work.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

The level of community involvement this year has been at its highest since I first became a Councillor with more requests for help and advice from residents than in previous years.

It is particularly heavy now on benefits matters and housing issues. There is also a fair amount of contact with residents on council service issues such as a missed bin collection, street cleaning, grass cutting etc – these matters are often quickly resolved by direct contact with appropriate council staff who remain helpful and willing to address problems.

A major recent success, typical of others, was to liaise with the Housing Company to help prioritise a move for a young family of two adults and two children housed on an upper floor of a tower block of flats – there were other pressing social and medical issues – they had been unable to resolve it through normal channels and Member involvement, at an appropriate level, resolved the issue in a couple of weeks.

I am available to residents by home and mobile phone, email, letter and Twitter. My contact details are on both the Council and Labour web sites and appear in Ward leaflets.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

As well as being a Councillor, I am Labour Party Media Officer and Parliamentary Spokesperson. The latter role involves me in wider issues of national and regional government. It involves contact with others involved in a wide range of public issues from outside the immediate area giving me a useful insight to the problems faced by other local authorities and how they resolve them.

I also still do some work as an advisor in employment law and best practice. I am a fully qualified Counsellor (Dip Coun) but do not currently practice.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Daniel McCann

Ward: Franche

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	4
Council	6	5
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	4
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12

This represents an overall attendance of 84% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

As Vice Chair of Governors at Franche Community Primary School, I am taking a real interest in the future development of the school and have attended full governor and committee meetings.

I have attended the Franche Tenant Association to listen to any concerns and updated local residents.

I am also a Kidderminster Charter Trustee.

I also represent the Council on the Kidderminster and District Youth Trust.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have found it to be extremely diverse with varying issues like parking, speeding, anti social behaviour, litter and potholes to name a few.

I have worked closely on common issues with my colleague Councillor Hingley.



Section 4: Supplementary Information

I have a degree in Business Management, which supports my understanding of the issues faced of a Council delivering quality and efficient front line services. This helps me especially on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

As Chairman for the Audit Committee I am proud of the work that has been done by the committee. I feel the committee has played a valuable part in the process of delivering services to local residents that offer value for money.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Barry McFarland

Ward: Habberley & Blakebrook

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	7
Overview & Scrutiny	13	13
Planning	12	12

This represents an overall attendance of 100% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	<p>7</p> <p>(Housing Review Panel – 2) (Kidderminster Education Foundation Working Group - 2) (Licensing & Environmental – 3)</p>

Section 2: Community Involvement

Unfortunately I have not been elected to any outside bodies.

However I have engaged with Habberley Brownies, Habberley Tenants' Club and The Wyre Forest Navy Training Corps.

I have attended and played an active part in all Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings in my Ward.

I strive to attend any community activities within my Ward, e.g. The Habberley Father Christmas event.

Attend all TCC meetings and Estate Walkabouts.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

- Publish quarterly Newsletters delivered to each dwelling in the Ward. More frequent Newsletters are delivered during election periods.
- Deliver 'Street Letters' on specific issues when required.
- On all communications my contact details are clearly shown.
- Communicate with residents via visits, telephone, e mail and letters.
- Other relevant information may be found on The Local Labour Party Website.
- Take regular 'Walkabouts' throughout the ward.
- Hold monthly surgeries.
- Hold meetings with groups of residents on specific issues.
- Use business cards and calling cards with residents.
- Take part in TCC meetings and Estate walkabouts.
- Strive to give all residents support in a variety of ways, eg

Advice and Guidance

Liaison with WFDC

Liaison with WCC

Liaison with TCHG

Liaison with other bodies

Signpost to appropriate agencies

Undertake a variety of casework

Represent residents at appeals.

- In short I strive to keep residents informed of all matters relevant/important to them and offer diverse opportunities for them to contact me and keep me informed - if I don't know I can't act.
- Given the amount of communication I get from residents, thus far, communication systems appear to be successful. I have considered the use of social media sites but not sure about the appropriateness in this context.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I attend as many Civic Functions as is practicable as I believe that such actions illustrate community commitment.

I have actively campaigned for the Parishing of Kidderminster.

I have attended all training opportunities and members' briefing offered by WFDC - all of which have been of great value to me and hence my effectiveness.

Although not a member, I have played an active, and hopefully productive, part on The Housing Review Panel.



My membership of Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council, in my view, enhances my effectiveness as a District Councillor and offers no conflict of interest.

Previous experience in industry, education and senior management has proved invaluable in carrying out my duties as an elected member. As, indeed, have my firm beliefs in democracy, fairness and a focus on people not systems.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Christopher Nicholls

Ward: Cookley

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	5
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	5
Planning	12	10

This represents an overall attendance of 81% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

- Chairman of Wolverley and Cookley Partners & Communities Together (PACT).
- Member of Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council.
- Governor at Cookley Primary School.
- Member of Cookley Surgery's Patient Participation Group.
- Trustee of the Sebright Educational Foundation.
- A trustee of Wolverley Charities.
- Regular attendance at Cookley Tenants Consultative Committee.
- Communication with the community via newsletters and public meetings.

I continue to promote the interests of our village community e.g. maintaining the Green Belt and representing residents' views at relevant Council and committee meetings.

I liaise with the police and other outside bodies via Partners & Communities Together (PACT) meetings to resolve issues for the benefit of our community.

I continue to monitor the Parish Plan.

As a Governor for Cookley Primary School, I continue to assist in its development.

I continue to play an active role in the life of our village.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I hold regular surgeries at Cookley Village Hall and Sports Club. Surgeries are held on the first Saturday of each month between 12 noon and 1 pm.

Monthly consultations are carried out with residents regarding planning applications in conjunction with other parish councillors.

Using the wealth of experience I have gained as your District Councillor for the last 22 years, I continue to listen to you and promote your views and interests.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

The Development of the Lea Castle site was a major focal point this year. I attended the Planning Inspectorate's public examination into the site allocations plan which focused on the potential uses for the site. Following this I called a public meeting to discuss the issues raised these issues were passed onto the Inspectorate and we are awaiting the final outcome. Many thanks once again to the residents who attended this meeting.

In January, we held our party tradition dictated that we still call it a Christmas Party and we still had our carols, tinsel and crackers and a good time was had by all!

Cookley continues to be a great place to live.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Fran Oborski

Ward: Offmore & Comberton

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Area of Highest Needs	4	4
Cabinet Review Group	3	3
Cabinet Review Group – NNDR	1	1
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Kidderminster Education Foundation Working Group	2	2
Local Development Framework Review Panel	2	2
Members Forum	7	6
Planning	12	9

This represents an overall attendance of 89%
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Licensing & Environmental – 1 (Overview & Scrutiny - 1)

Section 2: Community Involvement

We hold an Advice Centre at Brookside Children's Centre on the first Tuesday in the month from 10- 12 and at Cafe Chad on the Wednesday or Monday of each week.

I serve on the PACT Panels in Offmore Comberton Ward and, as County Councillor, Greenhill Ward and attend all meetings.

I serve on the board of Wyre Forest Community Housing.

I attend meetings of Offmore and Greenhill Tenant Consultative Committees.



I am an active member of OCAQ (Offmore Comberton Action Group) and am very much involved in the community activities it organises including our Annual, Borrington Bash, which is our very well supported local Community Carnival.

I am a Member of the Friends of St. George's Park and am also heavily involved in Community Events organised in the Park. The highlight of these is our annual Celebration of St. Georges Day.

I am a Governor of: Offmore Primary School; Comberton Primary School; King Charles 1 School and the new Wyre Forest School. I am Vice Chair of Governors at King Charles 1 and the Wyre Forest School.

I represent Kidderminster Charter Trustees on the Management Committee of the Kidderminster Husum Twinning Association and also at the meetings of HOGS (Heritage Opportunities Group); I also Chair the Kidderminster Remembrance Day Planning Committee.

In partnership with Kidderminster-Husum Twinning Committee arranged for purple crocuses to be planted at "Gateways" to Kidderminster. I am arranging for much of the actual planting to be done by Kings Charles 1 Eco Group..

We are actively involving pupils from the King Charles 1 School Eco Group in managing and planting areas of Borrington Park.

As Polish Honorary Consul I run an Advice Session for the Polish Community every Sunday lunchtime at the St. Ambrose Club.

I have arranged for "Gardening" licences to be issued to the Friends of St. Georges Park for land at Anchorfields and to Farfield Residents' Association for land at the junction of Farfield and Chester Road South.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Along with my Ward colleague Mike Price, I produce and deliver our monthly FOCUS Newsletter to every house in the Ward at least 12 times a year.

I serve on the Advisory Board of Brookside Children's Centre.

In my County Councillor role, I am leading on the "Action Learning Sets" Community Involvement Initiative with my District Colleagues and we carried out a Community Audit with local residents.

I have deal with over 300 individual items of casework this year as well as those issues raised by community groups.

I chair the Children & Young People's Panel of the LSP which is to become the Local Children's Trust.

I am a personal Trustee of the Kidderminster & District Youth Trust.

Much of the year has been taken up with the development of the Council's Local Development Framework. Although there was much contention around Gypsy Sites I believe that the publication of the Government's New Planning Framework has completely vindicated the WFDC approach.



The most exciting activity this year has been, without a doubt, being involved, as Skills Champion, in the State of the Area Debate.

This genuine cross-party involvement has led to the setting up of the cross Party Cabinet Committee and hopefully will lead to tangible improvements and progress in the Regeneration of our towns.

For much of last year, I was the Treasurer of the Friends of Kidderminster Library Gallery.

I am on the Cabinet Review Group – State of the Area, I am skills lead and have regular meetings with the further education colleges.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

With almost 40 years experience as a Councillor my main interests and skills remain in Housing and Planning, although, with the development of the State of the Area I am able to use my Educational professional experience as Skills Champion.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Tracey Onslow

Ward: Sutton Park

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	5
Ethics & Standards	3	1
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	0

This represents an overall attendance of 44% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	Maternity Leave 1 st June 2012 – 31 st December 2012
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

I am a regular attender at Partners and Communities Together (PACT) Meetings.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have been contacted by residents on: parking, litter, maintenance of private properties, noise, flooding, anti-social behaviour, Brinton Park, overhanging trees and potholes.



Section 4: Supplementary Information

As the only Councillor on WFDC with young children (I think), I feel this gives me an insight into the problems residents have with childcare, schools, child safety and activities/amenities for children. As a working Mother, it also allows me to understand the pressures faced by many women in similar circumstances.

As the Director of a Property Company, I also have an insight into the difficulties of running a business in very difficult financial times.

I am a regular attender at the WFDC State of the Area Debate Meetings and, as someone who has lived in Kidderminster most of her life, have found these very interesting in shaping the future of the area, particularly Kidderminster Town Centre. Where appropriate, I have represented the views of residents at these meetings.

I also organised a Tea Dance at the Town Hall in Kidderminster in May 2012.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Jim Parish

Ward: Lickhill

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	1
Council	6	4
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	2
Treasury Management Review Panel	2	0

This represents an overall attendance of 43% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	Heart Problem - 7 th January – 10 th April 2013
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

Police – Help on many local issues with local force, also serve on Partners and Communities Together (PACT) and dealing with issues that arise.

Citizens Advice Bureau – Board Member.

CAN – Community Action Newtown, attend meetings and help with local issues.

Leader of Stourport Town Council – Member of the “Civic Project Board”.

Worcestershire County Councillor – Leader of ICHC group – serving on Health Scrutiny, Finance and Education Committees.

Governor of Wilden School.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Confidential work on residents problems.

Attending meetings of Sandy Lane Traders Association, advise and assist with problems arising.

Working with and supporting events arranged at the High School.

Supporting Lickhill School in its fund raising events.

Supporting Local Guides in fund raising events.

Helping to resolve the traveller issues over the recent Bank Holiday parking problem.

Worth Crescent play area - still working to raise enough finance to finish the project.

Advising on the "Civic" project is still ongoing and will hopefully be concluded in 2014.

I am always available to help with local problems. The Hub and other council staff direct enquiries to me.

Also being well known in the town residents are directed to me if they have any issues or problems.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Julian Phillips

Ward: Bewdley & Arley

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Cabinet	9 *	2
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	5
Overview & Scrutiny	13 **	5

This represents an overall attendance of 91% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Overview & Scrutiny - 1 (Planning - 1)

* Substituted by Councillor Anne Hingley after attending 2 meetings.

** Replaced Councillor Paul Harrison after 8 meetings had been held.

Section 2: Community Involvement

I am a member of the Partners and Communities Together (PACT) panel for Bewdley along with representatives of the Police, County Council, Town Council, Community Housing Group and the local churches. The PACT panel tries to work on issues brought to it by residents by way of PACT meetings, surgeries and via the post card scheme at various locations in Bewdley.

I assist the committee that organises the Christmas Festival in Bewdley and give physical help on the day of the event in terms of erecting stalls and disassembling them after the event as well as marshalling crowds for the 'switching on' of the lights.

I am the District Council's representative to the board of Bewdley Development Trust (BDT). The officers of BDT hold regular meetings with officers of the Council in any case, however my attendance at those board meetings have been useful in informing my view of its wider activities. BDT has been heavily involved in the redevelopment of St George's Hall, a project which the District Council has supported by way of financial assistance. Along with most residents of the town, I look forward to the completion of this project.



I am also a member of Bewdley Round Table which raises money at local events such as the Carnival and Christmas Festival as well as it's "Santa" collections at Christmas. This money is then donated to local causes that make applications to us. Although it is Bewdley by name, in reality it covers all of Wyre Forest since the folding of Kidderminster and Stourport Round Tables. Recent examples of our donations include a contribution towards the refurbishment of Wribbenhall Parish Room, picnic benches for Springfield Park and a hot water urn for the Elizabeth Mills Centre.

Cllr Greener and I act as Presiding Officers for the annual election of the committee of Pound Green Village Hall every April. One of us also tries to attend the meetings of Upper Arley Parish Council each month to keep aware of issues in the parish.

I am also a Member of Bewdley Town Council which is responsible for maintaining a number of small but important functions in the town such as benches, life belts, the lengthsman scheme, the town clock, Christmas lights and other items. It is also stakeholder for consultations for projects in the town such as the possible Medical Centre redevelopment and the recent footpath refurbishments. It is often the 'first port of call' when several residents in the community want to highlight an issue. It also has representatives that attend the meetings of other organisations in the town such as the Civic Society, Twinning Association, PACT, Museum management and BDT.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have assisted residents with many forms of issues including planning, environmental concerns, council tax, litter, anti-social behaviour, transport, refuse collection and much more. I do not hold surgeries as those that have been held in the past have not been taken up by the public. However I am contactable by phone, email and letter and I always respond. I am also regularly in or around Bewdley Town Centre and often speak with residents about issues then. If residents want to meet me in person to discuss issues I am always happy to go and meet them.

My ward colleague and I feature in a newsletter that is delivered every 6-8 weeks to every household in the ward. As well as providing our contact details, these inform residents of big projects that we are involved in as well as news about council policy.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

It is an honour to serve as a District Councillor for Bewdley & Arley and as a Town Councillor for Bewdley's East Ward. Both roles I take very seriously and do my best to serve my residents on top of my full time employment and other commitments.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Mike Price

Ward: Offmore & Comberton

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Housing Review Panel	10	10
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	7
Members Forum	7	6
My Street My Community	2	1
Planning	12	11

This represents an overall attendance of 93% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Ethics & Standards - 1) (Overview & Scrutiny - 1)

Section 2: Community Involvement

I serve as a Governor of Comberton Primary School.

I have attended Offmore and Comberton Action Group (OCAg) and served as Vice-Chair, where I also serve on a sub group planning a sixth community event to take place in July 2013 on Borrington Park. I have attended Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings for Offmore and Comberton and also Tenant Consultative Committee (TCC) meetings.

I attend a monthly advice centre meeting at The Children's Centre in Borrington Road, Kidderminster.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Regular Focus leaflets and individual casework.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I am Chairman of the Housing Review Panel and we have held 10 meetings since it commenced in July 2012. This Panel has made recommendations to Cabinet on various issues.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Mary Rayner

Ward: Broadwaters

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Local Development Framework Review Panel	2	2
Members Forum	7	6
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12

This represents an overall attendance of 93% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Planning)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Organisations and community groups that I have been involved with include most of the parks groups in the ward. I have attended a large number of their meetings and also worked with them when they have needed help this can be weeding, litter picking or any other job they may need doing. I have also worked with Broadwaters Residents Action Group (BRAG) and done litter picking when possible around the area. I have also started a new group within the community called Sion Avenue Residents Group (SARG) and helping to meet their specific needs within the community. I have started to link this group into other organisations that maybe of help to them. I have also attended most of the 3 Tennant consultative committees within the ward and given them support in situations when needed particularly over the problems of the electricity supply to Sion Hill estate.

I have attended most Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings and I have also liaised closely with the police over specific issues that have occurred within the ward.

I have also been made a Trustee of the Community Housing group which I find very interesting as I feel housing is a very important issue for the community and also very challenging at times.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have managed a reasonable case load of about 2/3 issues a week from constituents. I have found that most people prefer to talk to me face to face when they meet me in the ward, phone or email me. I generally respond to them within 24 hours to acknowledge their communication and give them feedback. As I am walking around my ward several times a week I find out many of the problems and issues that concern people. The key one is dog fouling which is also mentioned frequently at PACT. I have reported and requested street cleaning for many of the roads however it is back the next day. Dog fouling is a problem which many people in the ward find irritating, and causes the most concern along with street parking and speeding traffic in various areas and streets.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I was a Health Care Professional, with research, business and leadership as subject specialised areas for many years in Higher Education. During that time in Higher Education part of my role also included income generation into the university. I found that those qualities that I have helped me communicate with people at all levels and also helped me to problem solve to case work within the community/ward. I have been a member of Worcestershire Link and hope to be in the new Health watch group monitoring healthcare in the area. I have also found having a background in business has been useful when reading financial papers when these have been presented at meetings.

I am also an instrumental instructor for a Scout and Guide Band helping to teach young scouts and guides to play musical instruments. As I have these skills both professionally and as an amateur I hope to bring a wide variety so that I can facilitate people to achieve more for themselves and their communities.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Chris Rogers

Ward: Mitton

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	4
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Members Forum	7	1
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12

This represents an overall attendance of 78% of committees appointed to.
This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Planning)

Section 2: Community Involvement

I am not currently appointed with any outside bodies, but have in the past been involved with the Elizabeth Mills Centre.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

My contact details are publicised where ever possible in order for constituents to be able to contact me. I am always available by phone and do my best to respond as quickly as possible. I am also contactable by email, and again respond as soon as I can.

I make it my business to be aware of any issues that affect local residents and the wider Wyre Forest community as a whole. In this way I am able to respond to issues & concerns that are brought to me. Also in this way I hope to be able to be proactive rather than reactive. It is far better to be able to respond to constituents with positive action that I have already taken.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

-



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor Michael Salter

Ward: Mitton

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Audit	4	3
Council	6	4
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	6
Members Forum	7	6
Planning	12	10

This represents an overall attendance of 82% of committees appointed to.
This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	4 (Ethics & Standards - 1) (Overview & Scrutiny – 3)

Section 2: Community Involvement

I have advised residents on various queries. I have also been involved in Stourport Forward, Age Concern, Stourport Town Council, Wilden Village Hall, Stourport Carnival Committee, Wilden Sports Club and Sandy Lane Business Association.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

All the following are in the Mitton Ward – Tesco, Arub Investments, Vale Road Car Park, Parsons Chain Development, Civic Centre, road and sewerage maintenance, Hartlebury common, gypsy and traveller sites in Sandy Lane and the concern between business people in the area. Millfield Estate roads still not made up. Constant calls from residents regarding damage to cars, etc. Traffic in the town. When comments come from County Highways, they seem to come from people who have no idea of Stourport.



Section 4: Supplementary Information

I know my town well and obviously the residents contact me direct to explain what is taking place and the Council's aims and the reasons for them. The Stourport Hub is very small and open and residents do require some privacy in discussing their problems.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name of Member: Councillor James Shaw

Ward: Areley Kings

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Area of Highest Needs	4	4
Cabinet Review Group	3	3
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Local Development Framework Review Panel	2	2
Members Forum	7	7
No Surprises Review Panel	1	1

This represents an overall attendance of 100% of committees appointed to.
This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	10 (Licensing – 1) (Overview & Scrutiny – 7) (Planning – 2)

Section 2: Community Involvement

As an active participant in the Walshes Community Partnership in 2012-13, I was involved in a number of initiatives. These included the Walshes Community Hall Action Group, which is trying to save from closure this essential meeting place at the heart of the Walshes Estate. The Action Group has managed to increase community use of the hall and did itself stage a number of special events, such as a Christmas Fair. A business plan has been drawn up and will be presented such to the hall's owner, the Community Housing Group.

A second Partnership, involvement was, and is, Cleaner, Safer, Greener Working Party, which is working towards a "Tidy Britain" accreditation, and a third a health project seeking to locate more services in the community.



I remained a trustee of Areley Kings Village Hall, a monthly commitment. I have responsibility for Licensing.

My regular attendance at PACT, (Partners and Communities Together), and TCC (Tenants Consultative Committee), meetings continued throughout the year. At most of these meetings, I left with new ward tasks to carry out. I continued to serve as a governor of St. Bartholomews Primary School. I was not in school as frequently as some of my fellow governors, but hope that my 34 years in Education allowed me to make a useful contribution.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

In 2012-13, residents of Areley Kings ward received a quarterly newsletter from me and my colleagues, for the thirty-first consecutive year. Therefore, I consider myself accessible to the people I have been elected to serve. My casebook of ward tasks was varied, as always, but also included familiar issues, including several cases of homelessness, one of which remains unresolved as I write. Other ward matters included caravan park licensing queries; campaigning for a new bus shelter successfully; raise pollution; anti-social behaviour complaints; house tenancy issues; litter clearance; removal of graffiti, the usual range of highways requests and trees. In fact 2012-13 saw me deal with more tree-related requests than ever before, including a long email correspondence with a landowner based in London.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I continued to be Leader of the Labour Group during 2012-13. This involved an extra range of meetings with officers and leaders of other political groups, dealing with regional and national bodies such as the Local Government Association and the Labour Party and organising Group business.

While I was in full-time employment, my wife Josie described my council work as a "full-time hobby". Now, in retirement it gives me structure and interest for at least five days a week. I am grateful to the residents of Areley Kings for electing me to serve them.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Dixon Sheppard

Ward: Lickhill

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	5
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	6
Members Forum	7	1
No Surprises Review Panel	1	1
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12

This represents an overall attendance of 75% of committees appointed to.
This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	2 (Planning)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Elizabeth Mills Centre (Stourport Social Day Centre) - I am the WFDC representative on the Board of Trustees.

Lickhill and PACT (Partners and Communities Together) - I serve on the panel.

Stourport Town Centre Forum.

Stourport Forward.

Stourport-on-Severn Town Councillor - also Chair of the Twinning Committee.

Campaign Action Newtown (CAN) - serve on the Committee.



Severn Valley Railway – working volunteer Member.

Stourport-on-Severn Civic Society Member.

Worcestershire Acute NHS Trust – sounding board member.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I mainly assist the public through telephone enquiries as well as at the PACT meetings. My colleague Brian Glass takes many direct enquiries as a result of having a business on Stourport High Street.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

The Elizabeth Mills Centre under the Chairmanship of Ann Hill is now going from strength to strength. It is being much better used by both senior citizens as well as outside societies and clubs. The number of meals served has risen substantially, since lunches have been available 5 days a week. This has enabled improvements to be made to the Centre whilst expenditure on overheads has been contained. There is generally now a very happy atmosphere prevailing in the centre.

Although forced into early retirement 10 years ago, I am probably busier now than when I was working!! Outside the Wyre Forest, I am the Chairman of the Rover PG Club. The Rover PG celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2013 and the 20th Anniversary of the Club. My wife, Janice also keeps me busy! We have two married children and five grandchildren living in Worcester and Esher, Surrey.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Nigel Thomas

Ward: Areley Kings

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Kidderminster Education Foundation Working Group	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	5
Licensing Sub	1	1
Members Forum	7	3
Planning	12	7

This represents an overall attendance of 70% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	4 (Housing Review Panel – 1) (Overview & Scrutiny – 3)

Section 2: Community Involvement

-

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

-

Section 4: Supplementary Information

My highlight of the year was nominating Areley Kings Allotment Association as the benefactor of my Council allowance of £1,000. This will contribute to the building of a concrete path on the allotments which, in turn, will allow wheelchair access to disabled people. It is hoped that we can then make allotments available, i.e. special built up ones for the disabled and people with learning difficulties.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Stephen Williams

Ward: Blakedown & Chaddesley

Section1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Area of Highest Needs	4	4
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Kidderminster Education Foundation Working Group	2	1
Local Development Framework Review Panel	2	2
Members Forum	7	5
Overview & Scrutiny	13	12
Planning	12	12
Worcestershire Infrastructure Strategy Working Group	1	1

This represents an overall attendance of 92% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	1 (Audit)

Section 2: Community Involvement

Outside Body – Executive Committee on Museum of Carpet.

Advising on all health and safety issues.

I attend all meetings of Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council making reports at most meetings.

I have been helping Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council with the preparation of their Neighbourhood Plan serving on the Housing and Environmental Working Group.

I attend meetings and help if required Churchill and Blakedown, Stone, Rushock, and Broome Parish Councils.



Member – Margaret Delabere Almshouse Trust.

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have assisted my constituents and others with many Planning and other problems. I like to my constituents when I get my daily newspaper from the local shop or after church on a Sunday.

My telephone number is published in the Parish magazine and on the Chaddesley Corbett website.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

I have attended and contributed to all group meetings helping to formulate policy.

I have used my community fund allocation wisely helping my local village hall and new school.



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report and review 2012/2013



Name of Member: Councillor Gordon Yarranton

Ward: Wribbenhall

Section 1: Attendance at Council / Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Name of Committee	No. of meetings held during the year	No. of meetings attended
Council	6	6
Kidderminster Education Foundation	2	2
Licensing & Environmental	7	7
Licensing Sub	1	1
Members Forum	7	1
Overview & Scrutiny	13	9
Planning	12	12

This represents an overall attendance of 79% of committees appointed to.
(This reflects attendance up to 30th April 2013)

Period of Extended Absence, (i.e. Maternity leave/Sick leave):	-
Number of meetings attended as a substitute:	-

Section 2: Community Involvement

Wyre Forest Community Housing.



Section 3: Assisting Constituents

I have kept in regular contact with the local residents by delivering a quarterly newsletter.

I have reinstated bus services in Wribbenhall to a much improved service than before they stopped it altogether.

I have supported the Monday club with funding for the "Knit and Natter" at All Saints Church that knit garments for the Royal Hospital at Worcester and the Dudley Road Hospital for premature babies

I have arranged for regular litter picks and road sweeping within Wribbenhall.

I have worked with Wyre Forest Community Housing to improve the entrance to the Queensway by removing vegetation and planting 1,000 crocus bulbs.

I have allocated additional funding to support various charities and groups within my Division.

I have also negotiated with Worcestershire County Council for funding for a rebuild at Cookley Primary School and the purchase of land at the rear for an orchard and playing field.

I have also allocated funding for 5 benches to commemorate the Queens Diamond Jubilee. Two in Wolverley, two in Trimpley and one in Wribbenhall.

Section 4: Supplementary Information

-



Wyre Forest District Council
Cabinet
Annual Report 2012/2013



Report from the Leader

The municipal year 2012/13 has been another busy year for Wyre Forest District Council. The agenda has been challenging as usual but I am confident that the Council has continued to make progress against its three main priorities of securing the economic prosperity of the district, delivering together with less and improving community well being.

The Council hosted its second State of the Area debate focussing on the local economy in the spring of this year. The event not only included a traditional panel question time style event but also a very successful regeneration fair prior to the meeting. The fair was an opportunity for the Council and its partners to demonstrate the action that had been taken since the first State of the Area debate a year ago.

This past year has seen significant progress with delivering one of the District's main key infrastructure projects being the Hoobrook link road. The first phase is well underway in construction and the second phase funding applications have been submitted. The Council remains committed to the delivery of the Hoobrook link road as a key development to unlock growth in the southern part of Kidderminster.

During this municipal year the Council has occupied Wyre Forest House. I am very proud of the dedicated staff who have continued to deliver day to day services whilst the inevitable upheaval of centralising to one municipal office. The new headquarters is a vastly improved working environment for our staff and in the short time we have been here, the operational benefits are already very apparent.

The financial case for moving to the new HQ remains and some further work will be undertaken shortly to update the financial model to demonstrate the savings.

The final account for the building still remains open as some issues are yet to be resolved including the heating. These matters, whilst unfortunate, are being addressed by the project team.

The Council has continued along its journey of transformation with a view to significantly reducing our annual revenue expenditure. It is important to remember that we will have seen our total budget reduced by nearly a quarter over a four year period whilst our grant from Government will have reduced by nearly 50%. This has presented significant challenges to the organisation. I am proud of the way that the Council has responded to these challenges with ever more ingenious schemes.



The budget debate this year again demonstrated the value of the Council's budget scrutiny process. The nature of the debate and alternatives offered showed that the differences between the political parties this year were ever smaller. This may be a result of greater understanding and striving for consensus or it may just be the reality of much less resources to spend!

The last year has also seen significant progress against the Council's next main capital project being the new leisure centre. The existing arrangements for three leisure centres continued to be unaffordable and the Council continues to progress delivering a single new site that will serve the district as a whole and reduce the annual expense to the taxpayer.

I would like to place on record my grateful thanks to the Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team and all officers within the Council for their help and support this year. I know that the challenges within local government grow ever larger year on year, but the drive and commitment shown by the officers within our Council never cease to amaze me.

I would also like to place on record my grateful thanks to my Cabinet colleagues for their support and counsel during this last year.

In summary, this last municipal year has seen significant challenges and yet significant progress towards the Council's main corporate priorities. The Council, in difficult circumstances, has done its very best for the community that it serves.



Wyre Forest District Council
Annual Scrutiny Report
2012/2013



Foreword of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The 2012/13 municipal year has been very busy for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Work Programme was varied and extensive for every month. Throughout the year I have always tried to take on board and implement any suggestions or ideas made by members for an improved Scrutiny process. I think it is important that all Members feel able to take part in Scrutiny and am pleased to say we have had many observers attend during the year.



The Committee has met 13 times during the year and has worked hard to ensure that the decisions the Council has had to take have been thoroughly scrutinised on a cross party basis, some have proved to be more controversial than others, especially items such as the Draft Worcestershire Infrastructure Plan. This scrutiny resulted in the committee sending a letter registering our great concern on some aspects of the plan to the Cabinet Member at County Hall. We have now received a reply which will be sent out to all committee members as soon as possible.

The Committee has responsibility for discharging the Council's Crime and Disorder Scrutiny function. The Committee received a presentation on crime and disorder issues and scrutinised the progress made against the Wyre Forest Community Safety Partnership's priorities, and a special meeting was held to receive a briefing from Superintendent Kevin Purcell of West Mercia Police on the changes being implemented on how West Mercia performs its policing duties in North Worcestershire.

I have enjoyed chairing the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and have found the work to be most rewarding. I would like to thank the Vice Chairman of the Committee, the Members of the Committee and the Officers for the support they have given me during the municipal year.

Councillor Helen Dyke



Scrutiny at Wyre Forest

The Council's scrutiny function was carried out through a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The committee consisted of 20 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. 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 2012/2013 year:

Name	No. of meetings	Purpose
Budget Review	3	Detailed scrutiny of the Cabinet's budget proposals and alternative proposals from the other groups
Treasury Management	3	Allowed detailed scrutiny and training in respect of treasury management
Housing Review	11 + 2 site visits	Detailed review of a range of housing policy issues
Local Development Framework Includes co-opted Members from Town Councils	3	Detailed scrutiny of the draft policy documents relating to the local development framework, helping to shape them before the formal process of consultation or adoption
Area of Highest Needs Review	4	Review of the impact of work in the District's areas of highest need
No Surprises Protocol Review	2 + 1 focus group with Officers	Review of the Council's protocol relating to arrangements for keeping Members informed of what is happening within their wards
Sports and Leisure Centre Management Review	1	Detailed review about the business case for investment in a new leisure centre



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, the Committee have considered feedback from Cabinet regarding their recommendations so that there was a clear means of tracking the outcome of recommendations.

In addition, the Committee looked back at the recommendations made in the previous year, so that they were able to examine the progress made in implementing the recommendations. This was carried out and there were no concerns raised over outstanding recommendations. The tracking recommendations from this years Committee will be reviewed at the first meeting of the Committee of the new municipal year.

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: committee.section@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.



3. Reviews any decisions or proposed decisions of the Council and of the Cabinet. In undertaking such reviews, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall in particular consider:
 - (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.



Agenda Item No. 18b

10. Ensures consideration is given to encouraging public participation and engagement in functions of the Committee.
11. Ensures that the views of any invitees and co-opted Members (where appropriate) are taken into account when conducting investigations.
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 2012/2013

Foreword by the Chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee

The introduction of the Localism Act and the impact that it has on the current ethics and standards regime is significant. Much of what is to come with the ethics and standards will be local choice however this will still be clearly shaped by the desire of central government to promote transparency within local government decision making. The changes that the new Code will bring will need to be firmly embedded and I hope that they continue to be the backbone of ethical decision making within Wyre Forest.

I would like to thank all the Members for their attendance and assistance in the work of the Ethics & Standards Committee and in particular would like to thank the independent members for the voluntary work and service to the Council and our community.

I would also like to thank the Solicitor to the Council, Mrs Caroline Newlands for her dedicated support of myself and the former Chair persons of this committee. I personally would like to thank Caroline for wading through the considerable documentation in relation to the Localism Act and its implications for the District Council and its operation generally. It is a particularly cumbersome piece of legislation that will continue to influence council and our work in the communities to varying levels in the years to come.

**Councillor Douglas Godwin
Chairman – Ethics and Standards Committee**

Members of the Ethics and Standards Committee

Members:

Councillor D R Godwin (Chairman) Councillor H E Dyke (Vice-Chairman),
Councillor G W Ballinger, Councillor M J Hart, Councillor N Knowles
Councillor T L Onslow.

Independent Members – Rev J A Cox, T J Hipkiss, R Reynolds.
Parish Councillors - Councillor Hobson.

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 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.

Activities

The Ethics and Standards Committee met three times during the 2012/2013 municipal year.

The Localism Act 2011 – Dispensations

The Committee received a report from the Monitoring Officer that asked for consideration of arrangements for granting dispensations and to recommend appropriate generic dispensations. The recommendations included that dispensations would be granted to all Members for a period of 4 years in respect of matters detailed below

1. Membership of outside bodies.

A general dispensation under s33(2) (c) and (e) of the Localism Act and under the Code of Conduct to allow the full participation at Council, Committee and other meetings where members of the Council or their spouse or partner are members of or employed by one or more of the following bodies, and who because of this would or could be prevented from participating in such meetings unless a decision relates directly to their own (or spouse or partner) financial circumstances:

- (a) any parish or town council.
- (b) Worcestershire County Council.
- (c) any other body of a public nature to which the member has been appointed as the Council's nominee or representative.

2. Addressing committees considering matters in which a member has an interest.

A general dispensation under s33(2)(c) and (e) of the Localism Act and under the Code of Conduct to allow members who would otherwise be prevented from doing so to address Council.

[NB Such a member must still then withdraw from the meeting once they have addressed it.]

3. A general dispensation for all matters relating to council tax, the council tax discount scheme and precept setting for all councillors/partners who have any property interests registered.

4. A general dispensation for members whose spouses/partners are employed by another public body (or quasi public body) unless a decision relates directly to their own financial circumstances.

Independent Persons

The Committee was asked to appointment a panel of independent persons pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 and this was agreed at Council.

The persons detailed below were duly appointed for a period of 4 years. This was agreed at Council on 26th September 2012.

- David Coulson
- James Hipkiss
- Catherine Mangan
- Raymond Needham
- Fred Noble
- David Warner.

Register of Interests

The Committee received a report on the completion of the Register of Interests and authorised appropriate follow up action in respect of all outstanding forms from district and parish councillors to ensure full compliance with the 2011 Act.

Member Complaint Updates

Members were informed that all incidents involving potential breaches of the code of conduct had been successfully addressed in accordance with the new Ethical framework and there had been no formal investigations necessary in the current municipal year . Members were been thanked for adhering to the code. It was noted that the independent person can now intervene in the complaint if frivolous or vexatious.

Procedure for allegations of Code of conduct Breaches

Members approved a new process that will be followed for breaches of the Code of Conduct and the role of the independent person in judging the seriousness of any allegation.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
15TH MAY 2013

Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission about size of the Council

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	-
CORPORATE PLAN AIM:	Delivering together, with less
CABINET MEMBER:	Leader of the Council
DIRECTOR:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller ian.miller@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix A : draft submission to LGBC Appendix B : projections of electorate in 2019

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission about the size of the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Council is RECOMMENDED to:

- 2.1. **APPROVE** the submission about size of the Council in Appendix A;
2.2 **NOTE** the projections of electorate at polling district level in 2019 in Appendix B.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Full Council resolved on 18 May 2011 as follows:

“The Council resolves to invite the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to conduct an electoral review, with the aim of reducing the size of the council by 20 to 25%.

The Council resolves to invite the Commission to produce recommendations for the implementation through all-out elections in May 2015.

The Council delegates to the Chief Executive decisions on any relevant steps to progress the resolutions.”

- 3.2 The Commission confirmed in March that it would commence the review in April 2013. The process would be completed by the autumn of 2014 and implemented through all-out elections in May 2015. The timetable is set out in “next steps” in section 4 of this report.
3.3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. These include:

The total number of councillors to be elected to the council.

The names, number and boundaries of wards or divisions.

The number of councillors to be elected from each ward or division.

- 3.4 The Commission must, by law, take into account several key factors when taking decisions on an electoral review.

The need to secure equality of representation across the local authority area.

The need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities.

The need to secure effective and convenient local government.

The need to ensure that the electoral arrangements of a local authority reflect its electoral cycle.

- 3.5 These are known as the statutory criteria. As the Commission takes decisions on the most appropriate electoral arrangements, it will seek to achieve a balance between the criteria.

4. **KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Council's budget and staff numbers are reducing, in line with the significant fall in Government funding. The budget has already fallen in absolute terms by about 25% between 2009-10 and 2013-14, and will continue to decline on present projections. There have also been some significant changes in functions and decision-making since 1974, in particular the transfer of the housing stock and the introduction of executive arrangements. The Council is a smaller organisation and this needs to be reflected in the size of the councillor body.

- 4.2 The tasks that the Council needs to undertake in respect of the review in the short term are:

- 4.2.1 **to approve its submission about future size of the council.** This needs to address the issues raised in the Commission's guidance note. The submission sets out the Council's view about the appropriate number of councillors. Whatever number of members the Council argues for, it will need to set out how this will allow the various roles and functions with the Council to be discharged (Cabinet, scrutiny, regulatory committees etc) alongside the representational role of councillors. The draft submission at Appendix A has been prepared in full consultation with Group leaders and takes account of comments that they have raised;

- 4.2.2 alongside the submission, the Council needs **to provide estimates of the electorate in 2019 by polling district.** They are set out in Appendix B. Wyre Forest has clear development plans in place and we had already prepared estimates of the timing of new housing development for the purposes of estimating income from the new homes bonus. These have been used to prepared estimates of the impact on electorate;

4.2.3 **in July 2013, a special meeting of the Council will be held to decide whether or not it will move to “all out” elections every four years.** The electoral cycle has an impact on the shape of the Commission’s recommendations. The proposed size of the Council in the submission (33 members) could operate successfully whether the Council retains election by thirds or moves to all out elections. It is a legal requirement that any change to the electoral cycle is considered by a specially convened meeting of Council, which will be held on the same night as the ordinary meeting in July. Because of the legal requirement, it is unnecessary to discuss the merits or otherwise of a change to the electoral cycle at tonight’s meeting.

NEXT STEPS

4.3 The Commission has set out the following timetable for the review:

Mid May 2013	Council size submission from WFDC
June 2013	Commission takes initial decision on council size
25 June – 5 August 2013	Public consultation on council size
September 2013	Commission takes decision on council size
24 September – 16 December 2013	Consultation and submission of information and proposals for ward boundaries
18 March 2014	Commission’s draft recommendations on warding arrangements published
18 March – 9 June 2014	Public consultation on draft recommendations
23 September 2014	Completion of review – Commission publishes final recommendations which will take effect, subject to Parliamentary procedure
7 May 2015	All-out elections for Wyre Forest District Council

4.3. The Council has the chance to shape the Commission’s proposals through its submission about size of the Council and the decision that it takes on its electoral cycle. It will also have the opportunity to comment on the warding patterns and draft recommendations as part of the public consultation process: they would be the subject of reports to full Council at the appropriate times. Ultimately, however, the decisions on what recommendations to make and implement are for the Commission, subject only to the ability of Parliament to overturn them.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications that arise directly from approving the submission to the Commission. The costs of responding to the Commission’s consultations during the electoral review will be met from existing budgets.

5.2 The potential reduction in the size of Council was reflected in the financial strategy and budget for 2015-16 onwards adopted by Council in February 2012, and

therefore the savings arising from a reduction in the number of councillors have already been taken into account.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The relevant provisions governing the review are in Part 3 of, and Schedule 2 to, the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The proposals in this report have been screened for their impact on the various equality strands. No adverse impact has been identified and a full impact assessment is not therefore required.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The Commission is responsible for managing risks related to the completion of the review. For its part, the Council will put in place timely consideration of its input, including the submission on council size, a decision on whether to change the electoral cycle and responding to the Commission's proposals.

9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 On this report: the Leader of the Council and Corporate Management Team.
- 9.2 On the submission at Appendix A: Group Leaders have considered the draft at their meetings in April and May and their comments have been incorporated in the document.
- 9.3 The lead Commissioner for the review, Dr Peter Knight, held briefing meetings with councillors, group leaders, parish councils and relevant officers on 8 May 2013.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

(These papers are available electronically)

- 10.1 LGBC guidance on submissions about council size
http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_documents/lgbce/guidance-policy-and-publications/guidance/council-size-guide.pdf
- 10.2 Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/20/part/3>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/20/schedule/2>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

SUBMISSION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND IN RESPECT OF COUNCIL SIZE

Executive summary

The Council proposes that the appropriate council size for Wyre Forest District Council should be 33 members.

The number of councillors has not changed since 1973, when the council was first elected. There have been very significant changes in functions and decision-making since 1974, in particular the transfer of the housing stock, the implementation of a wide range of shared services and the introduction of executive arrangements in place of service committees.

The Council believes that a council size of 33 members would provide effective and convenient arrangements for members to discharge their decision-making, scrutiny and representational roles. The final section of this submission illustrates a potential model for the size of committees. It would provide balanced workloads for Councillors, requiring most or all Councillors to undertake two roles, in addition to membership of full Council, any appointments to external bodies and the representational role in their wards.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council welcomes the Boundary Commission's decision to conduct an electoral review following the Council's resolution of 18 May 2011:

"The Council resolves to invite the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to conduct an electoral review, with the aim of reducing the size of the council by 20 to 25%.

The Council resolves to invite the Commission to produce recommendations for the implementation through all-out elections in May 2015."

- 1.2 This submission first explains the current governance, scrutiny and representational roles in the Council before setting out how the proposed council size would allow these roles to continue to be effectively discharged. This submission was [approved by full Council on 15 May 2013].

2. Current arrangements – governance and decision-making

- 2.1 The Council has 42 members. Elections are held by thirds at present, with 14 seats being contested in three years out of four. There are 17 wards in total. Most of the district is divided into 3 member wards, although there are three 2 member wards and three single member wards.

- 2.2 The Council operates executive arrangements under the leader and Cabinet executive model set out in the Local Government Act 2000. Terms of reference for, and the functions of, the Council, Cabinet and committees are set out in the articles of the Constitution as well as sections 3 to 5 of the Constitution. The Council's Constitution may be seen at:
- www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/your-council-and-elections/democratic-process/council-constitution.aspx
- 2.3 With the exception of the Licensing and Environmental Committee and the Appointments and Appeals Committee, all meetings of Council, Cabinet and committees take place at 6pm. With the exception of Council and Cabinet, all Committees operate arrangements where a substitute may be appointed from the same political group if a member is unable to attend and if they have undergone appropriate training (in the case of a regulatory committee). These arrangements are used to varying levels throughout the year but they generally ensure that all committee meetings are fully attended. In addition, some members attend meetings of the Cabinet or committees in an observer capacity – for example, there are generally 3 or 4 other members present when Cabinet meets. Since November 2012, meetings of full Council, Cabinet, Planning Committee and the Licensing and Environmental Committee have been webcast; the webcasts are available to view for 6 months after the meeting.
- 2.4 **Full Council** usually meets five times a year. In each of the last two years, there has been an additional meeting of the Council to take decisions on matters relating to the senior management structure. Council meetings generally last between 2 and 3 hours. In addition, because the Council is the trustee of the Kidderminster Educational Foundation, all councillors meet as the Foundation usually at least twice a year. These meetings follow on immediately from a Council meeting and last no more than a few minutes, to approve the Trust's accounts etc. – all other decision-making is devolved to a working group consisting of four councillors, who meet 2 or 3 times a year to decide applications for grants from the Foundation. In recognition of their civic roles, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman do not sit on Cabinet although they can be members of other committees such as scrutiny or planning.
- 2.5 The decision-making bodies other than full Council are as follows.
- 2.6 **Cabinet** This consists of 5 members including the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council. The Leader is elected by full Council and he then appoints other members of the Cabinet. The current portfolios are attached at [annex 1](#). The Cabinet meets monthly with the exception, usually, of May and August. Meetings generally last 30 minutes or so and only occasionally exceed one hour. However the Cabinet also meets the Corporate Management Team at least monthly to discuss the proposed agenda for Cabinet meetings and other key topics – these meetings usually last 2-2.5

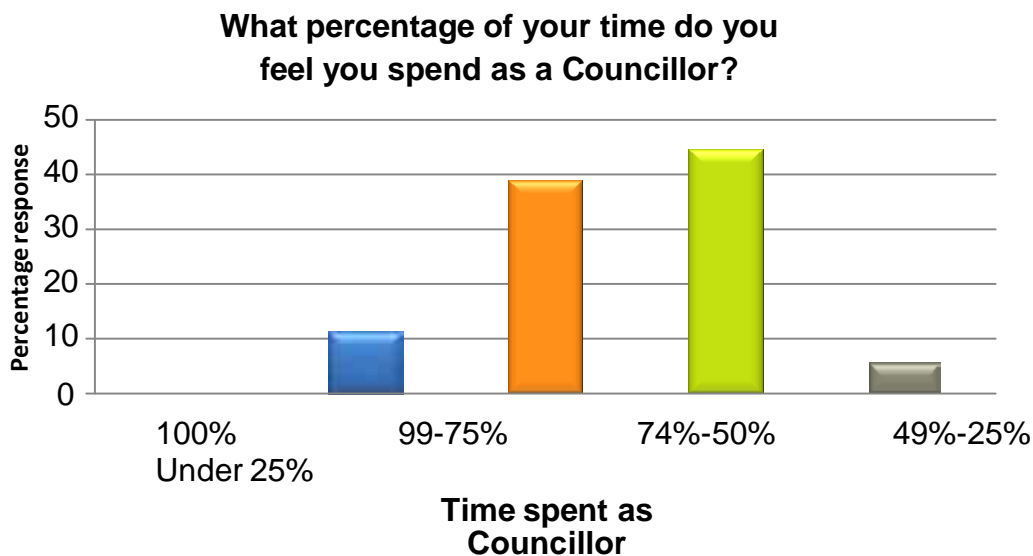
hours. In addition, as portfolio holders, Cabinet members undertake a varied range of additional tasks and engagements such as meetings with directors and service managers, external partners and other organisations. These include attendance at groups or committees responsible for some shared services. The current range of shared services is set out in the table in [annex 2](#).

- 2.6.1 In 2012, a total of 31 reports were considered by full Cabinet meetings and 27 decisions were taken by individual members under delegated powers. There is an extensive scheme of delegation to officers in section 4 of our Constitution. Cabinet members serve on a range of other decision-making partnerships and sub-regional bodies. The current list of appointments to external bodies is set out in [annex 3](#).
- 2.6.2 There is one ongoing Cabinet review panel, on economic regeneration – this involves a mixture of two Cabinet and five non-Cabinet members and acts as a sounding board for the director’s decisions (under powers delegated by Cabinet) on how to spend moneys that the Council has allocated to support economic regeneration in the district. It met 4 times in 2012/13. Another Cabinet review panel, on business rate relief policy, had four members, met once for about 1.5 hours and made recommendations to the Cabinet on a new policy.
- 2.6.3 The roles of Cabinet members are not considered to be full time because of other public and private roles that they undertake, such as membership of the County Council and external employment. The roles as Cabinet members in WFDC involve a more significant time commitment than for many other WFDC Councillors.
- 2.7 **Planning Committee** This consists of 16 members at present – before 2012, it used to have 12 members, the increase in size resulting from a desire to achieve better political balance across this and other committees. As with all committees other than the Cabinet, the allocation of seats follows political balance. The Planning Committee meets monthly, meetings generally lasting for about 1-2 hours. There are occasional site visits during the year (2 in 2012/13).
 - 2.7.1 There is an extensive scheme of delegation to officers in respect of planning, set out in section 4 of the Constitution.
- 2.8 **Licensing and Environmental Committee** This consists of 15 members at present – before 2012, it used to have 12 members. The Committee meets 4 or 5 times a year although meetings are occasionally cancelled for lack of business. There is an extensive scheme of delegation to officers, set out in section 4 of the Constitution. The Committee’s functions are supported by officers from Worcestershire Regulatory Services, which is a shared service between the county council and six district councils. As a result of changes to the delegation scheme agreed by full Council in 2012, the previous practice of the Committee inspecting certain vehicles that were the subject of

applications for hackney carriage licences has come to an end – these will now be dealt with by officers. The inspection meetings used to take up several hours, often over at least two meetings of the Committee. Sub-committees consisting of 3 members are formed from time to time to hear and decide contested applications or requests for reviews of the various licences. There were three meetings of sub-committees in 2012/13.

- 2.9 **Audit Committee** This consists of 8 members. It has some delegated functions from Council in respect of approving accounts and monitoring the Council's governance framework, as well as overseeing the work of internal and external audit. The Committee meets quarterly, most meetings lasting an hour or so.
- 2.10 **Ethics and Standards Committee** This consists of 6 members and 6 non-voting co-opted members. It meets a few times a year (4 in 2012/13) depending on workload, in particular whether or not there are significant developments in the ethical framework that require its attention and whether or not there are complaints about councillor behaviour (generally there are very few complaints). This committee has the Statutory responsibility for setting and maintaining high ethical standards for the Authority. Meetings generally last less than an hour.
- 2.11 **Appointments and Appeals Committee** This consists of 8 members. It meets infrequently: the last meeting was in March 2012 to deal with a director-level appointment. The length of meetings is determined by how many candidates have to be interviewed. Panels of 3 members provide the last stage of certain employment-related appeals, which can involve a whole day or more of sittings. Again these are infrequent – the last appeal panel met in July 2011.
3. WFDC has adopted a [role description](#) for councillors set out in annex 4.
- 3.1 Many members serve on external bodies. Appointments are made by full Council at its annual general meeting, although any vacancies that arise in year are dealt with by Cabinet. The full list of external appointments is set out in [annex 3](#).
- 3.2 WFDC provides induction and refresher training for members on a regular basis. An induction session for any new members is held after each set of elections (although returning members are welcome to attend too). A programme of training is also held at least annually in respect of planning, licensing and the ethics regime. It is a requirement that Councillors who sit on the Planning or Licensing and Environmental Committees undergo training. In addition, training sessions are run for members of the Audit Committee and Treasury Management Review Panel so that they have a full understanding of their roles. Finally, the Members' Forum which generally meets every two months for about 1.5 hours is also used to share information about various initiatives and areas of work in order to build members' knowledge.

- 3.3 A member survey undertaken in December 2012 provided the following estimates about the amount of time spent on duties as councillors (18 of 42 members responded to the survey).



- 3.4 In 2012-13 and again in 2013-14, the Council has provided a community leadership fund worth £1000 for each councillor to allocate to support worthwhile initiatives or organisations in the district. The administration for the fund is kept as simple as possible and generally councillors are required to make minimum allocations of £200 for each initiative/organisation. Several councillors have “clubbed together” in making their allocations.

4. Current arrangements – scrutiny functions

- 4.1 The scrutiny function is discharged through a single **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** consisting of 20 members. This was increased from 15 members in 2012 in response to concerns about the number of councillors involved in scrutiny and in order to provide better political balance. Some of the groups on the Council believe that there should be two scrutiny committees, which was the position from 2009 until 2011. They cite concerns about the workload of one scrutiny committee.
- 4.2 The Committee operates robust arrangements for forward planning of its work programme. It meets 10 times a year, with meetings generally lasting about 1.5 to 2 hours. It sometimes holds additional meetings. In addition, there is a range of scrutiny review panels which operate on a standing or ad hoc basis. They allow more detailed work on particular topics to be done and inform recommendations to the Scrutiny Committee (which, in turn, makes recommendations to Cabinet). The arrangements in 2012/13 were:
- Budget review panel. Four members (but many others attend as observers or contributors, including Cabinet members), 3 meetings. Enables detailed

scrutiny of the Cabinet's budget proposals and alternative proposals from the other groups.

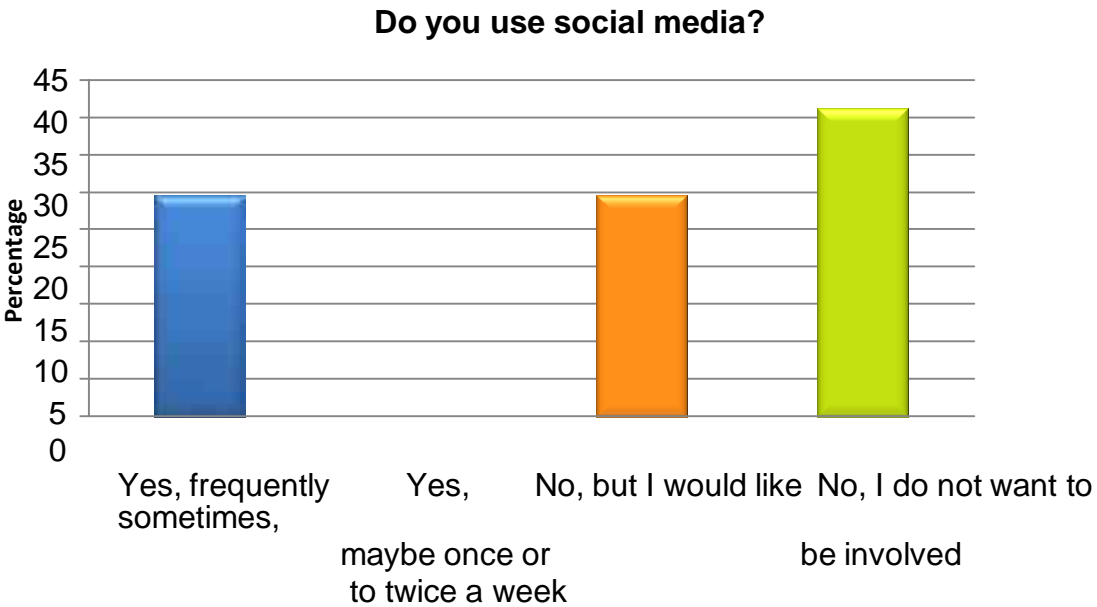
- Treasury management panel, 5 members, 3 meetings. This allows detailed scrutiny and training in respect of treasury management. The panel was instituted following some of the Council's investments being "frozen" in Iceland in 2008, demonstrating the need for greater councillor awareness of the detail of treasury management activities
- Housing review panel, 6 members, 10 meetings and two site visits. Reviewing a range of policy issues relating to housing.
- Local development framework review panel, 5 members plus three co-opted from town councils, 4 meetings. The panel has scrutinised in detail the draft policy documents relating to the local development framework, helping to shape them before formal processes to consult on them or adopt them.
- Areas of highest need review panel, 7 members, 4 meetings. Reviewing the impact of work in the district's areas of highest need, most of which is funded by a grant by the previous Government.
- "No surprises" protocol review panel, 4 members, 1 meeting. Has commenced review of protocol governing arrangements for keeping members informed of what is happening in their wards.
- Sports & leisure centre management review panel, 9 members, 1 meeting. Reviewed detailed information about the business case for investment in a new leisure centre.

5. Representational role of Councillors

5.1 WFDC Councillors discharge their representational role in a variety of ways. There is not a universal model. Some councillors play a very active role in their communities, being involved in a wide range of formal or informal groups or organisations or attending relevant meetings such as PACT meetings. Others play a more reactive role. *Members provide a summary annual report on their activity and the reports for 2012/13 are available from page 29 onwards of the pdf at this link:*

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc47941_20130515_council_agenda.pdf

5.2 A minority of councillors make almost no use of IT even though a laptop and training on how to use it is provided. Electronic agendas, briefings and the intranet are used as a primary means of communicating with Members and channel shift is a corporate priority to achieve budget savings. Some councillors are very active in using social media and websites to communicate with local residents. The member survey in December 2012 provided the following responses about use of social media:



- 5.3 Councillors are encouraged to raise day-to-day issues on behalf of local residents with the Worcestershire Hub (the customer service centre) or to encourage residents to do so themselves. The Council does not generally provide administrative support in respect of casework or representational roles, although obviously it seeks to provide advice, to respond to issues that are raised or to pass them to the appropriate body for action (such as the county council in respect of highways issues). The Chairman and members of the Cabinet receive administrative support such as planning their diaries, obtaining briefings for meetings that they attend or responding to correspondence.
- 5.4 Few councillors hold regular surgeries for local residents. Many of them distribute newsletters; the minority do so only in the run up to elections. Outside Kidderminster, all areas have a parish council with the exception of Ribbesford. Several WFDC Councillors are also members of parish or town councils; others may attend meetings of parish or town councils in an observer or liaison capacity. *The role description in annex 4 refers to liaison with parish councils as a way in which councillors can promote community leadership.*
- 5.5 In Kidderminster, there are charter trustees whose role is to maintain the mayoralty and other civic privileges under the charter. Since 1974, district councillors who represent wards in Kidderminster have also served as the charter trustees. Following a petition, the Council initiated a community governance review at its meeting in February 2013. See the report at page 22 onwards of this link:
www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc47705_20130227_council_agenda.pdf
- 5.6 The review is consulting electors in the town about the parishing of Kidderminster and the creation of a town council. A decision will be taken at the Council's meeting in July 2013 on whether to proceed with the creation of a town council. If the decision is to proceed, the town council could be created in temporary form by the end of 2013 with elections to be held in May 2014 (although they may be delayed to June 2014 depending on the outcome of the Government's consultation on moving the election date to align with elections to the European Parliament). The Council will be responsible for deciding, as part of the reorganisation order, the number of members of a town council for Kidderminster and how they will be elected (e.g. single "ward" for the whole town or a series of wards), and also what assets should be transferred from WFDC to the town council with effect from 1 April 2014.
- 5.7 The creation of a town council for Kidderminster would reduce the workload of district Councillors in the town marginally because they would cease to serve as charter trustees. However some or all of them might seek election to a town council in the same way as some other WFDC Councillors do in other parts of the district.

6. Options considered

- 6.1 The Council's resolution of May 2011 implies a reduction of between 8 and 11 councillors ($42 \times 20\% = 8.4$; $42 \times 25\% = 10.5$). This would produce a Council of between 31 and 34 members. In considering options, it is necessary to select a council size that would operate successfully with either elections by thirds (which requires a multiple of 3) or with all-out elections every four years. The legislation also provides an option of biennial elections.
- 6.2 There may be a temptation to think that a council size of 30 would provide an easy solution on warding, by having three member wards based on the county council divisions. There are eight single member divisions and one double member division in Stourport-on-Severn. However the boundaries of the county council divisions do not, in the Council's opinion, reflect some of the distinct natural communities in the district. For example, the Chaddesley division crosses parish boundaries and includes part of Kidderminster.
- 6.3 The following options have been considered but rejected:
- Council size of 27 - This would involve a reduction significantly in excess of the parameters in the Council's resolution, *and could lead to an excessive number of roles to perform within the structure of committees and external appointments.*
 - Council size of 30 - This would involve a reduction slightly outside the parameters in the Council's resolution. Because it is an even number, it also means that there is a greater likelihood of the Chairman being called upon to use his or her casting vote. The dynamic politics in the district over a period demonstrate that there are rarely lengthy periods where one political group is in dominant control, and the political balance often changes with (at present) four political groups holding seats on the council.
 - Council size of 36 - This would not provide for a sufficient reduction and is outside the parameters in the Council's resolution.

7. The future – the Council's proposal

- 7.1 The Council believes that the size of the council should be reduced to 33 members for the following reasons:
- 7.2 The number of councillors has not changed since 1973, when the council was first elected. No account has thus been taken of very significant changes in functions and decision-making since 1974, in particular the transfer of the housing stock, the implementation of a wide range of shared services and the introduction of executive arrangements in place of service committees.

- 7.3 The localism agenda means that the council has active plans to transfer assets and services to community groups, in particular town and parish councils. For example, the Civic Centre and Civic Hall in Stourport-on-Severn are about to be transferred to the Town Council and the County Council. The most significant opportunity relates to the potential creation of a town council for Kidderminster;
- 7.4 The Council's budget and staff numbers are reducing, in line with the significant fall in Government funding. Staffing numbers have fallen from about 420 FTEs in June 2009 to about 330 in December 2012 (-21%) and numbers will fall further. The budget has already fallen in absolute terms by about 25% between 2009-10 and 2013-14, and will continue to decline on present projections. The Council is a smaller organisation and this needs to be reflected in the size of the councillor body;
- 7.5 *While it is recognised that it is not a factor that the Commission would take into account*, the public strongly supports reducing spend on councillors. This is also seen in public comments when councillors have voted not to implement recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel to reduce allowances. For example, consultation on the budget proposals in early 2012 produced 250 responses. By far the strongest support for any proposal related to reducing the number of councillors and their costs: 65% strongly supported the proposal and a further 24% supported it, with only 5% opposing or strongly opposing the proposal. In 2011, a consultation exercise on priorities resulted in spending less on "members and committees" being selected as by far the most popular area among the public for reducing expenditure. Councillors themselves chose it as their second most favoured area for reduction.
- 7.8 Following the Council's resolution to ask for an electoral review, the Council reflected the potential reduction in councillors in the financial strategy and budget for 2015-16 onwards. This was adopted by Council in February 2012, and assumed a £50,000 cost saving in 2015-16 rising to £60,000 in 2016-17.
- 7.9 The Council believes that a council size of 33 members would allow the range of decision-making, scrutiny and representational roles to continue to be effectively discharged.
- 7.10 Depending on the number and pattern of wards recommended by the Commission, the representational role might relate to a range of approximately 2,300 electors (for a single member ward) to 7,000 electors (for a three member ward). This is not dramatically higher than the current range of 1,948 electors in a single member ward to 5,551 electors in a three member ward.
- 7.11 The Council would need to decide the size of committees once the final recommendations of the review have been confirmed and implemented. **For illustrative purposes**, the following pattern could provide balanced workloads for Councillors:

Agenda Item No. 22
Appendix A (revised)

Cabinet 4-5 members (statutory limits: minimum 3 members,
maximum 10)

Planning 10-12 members

Licensing 10-12 members (statutory limits: minimum 10 members,
maximum 15)

Audit 6-8 members

Ethics and Standards 4-6 members

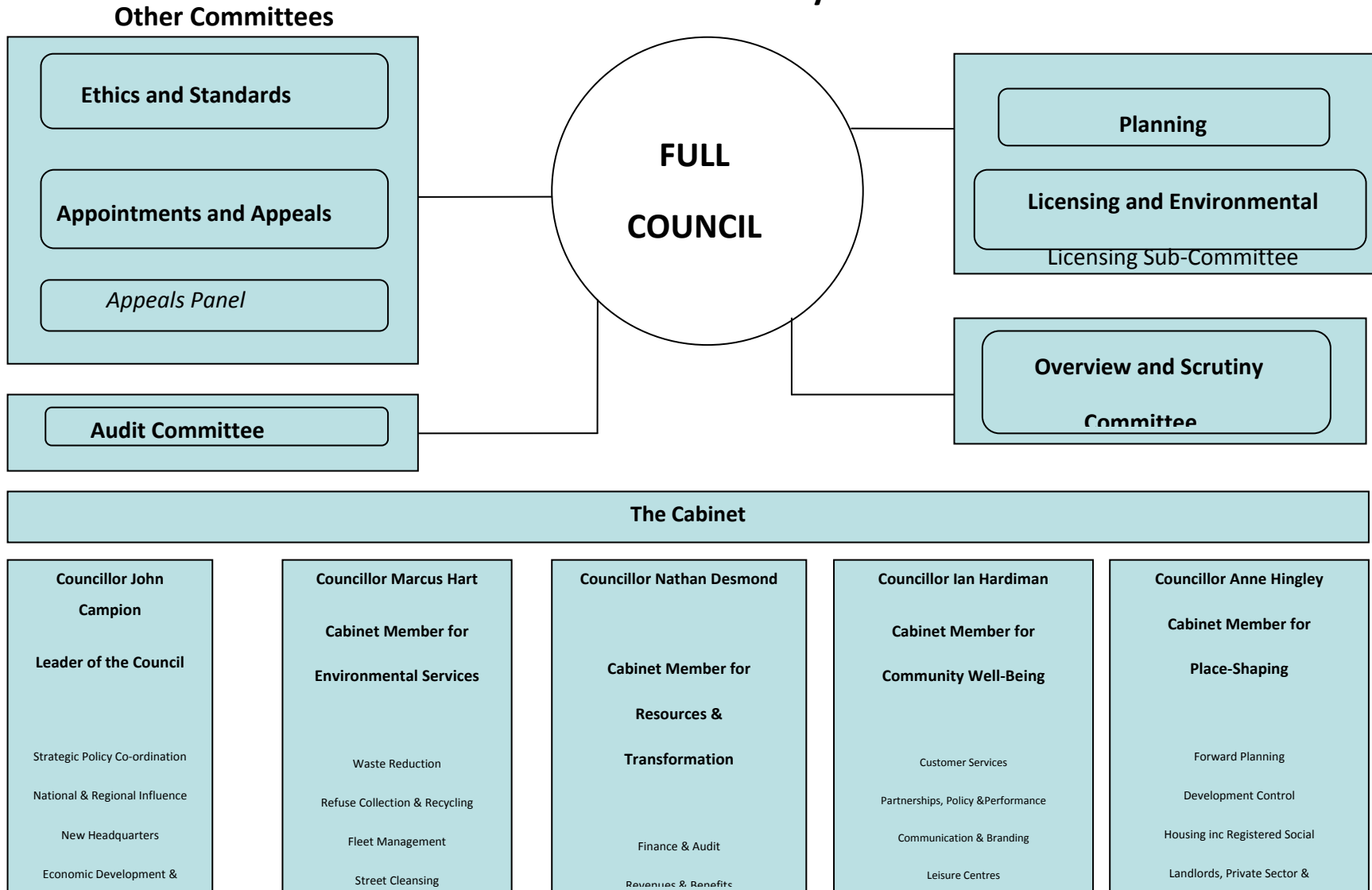
Scrutiny – one committee of 12-18 members or two committees of 6-9
members

Appointments & Appeals 4-6 members

This provides a total of 50-67 “seats” and would allow most or all
Councillors to undertake two roles in addition to membership of full
Council *and any appointments to external bodies.*



Political Structure May 2012



Annex 2 OVERVIEW OF SHARED SERVICES – APRIL 2013

NAME OF SHARED SERVICE ARRANGEMENT	ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED	HOST AUTHORITY	START DATE	DURATION OF AGREEMENT AND DATE FOR REVIEW
Worcestershire Regulatory Services	District Councils in Worcestershire and Worcestershire County Council	Bromsgrove District Council	1 June 2010	10 years (June 2020)
Human Resources	Worcestershire County Council	Worcestershire County Council	1 November 2010	5 years and 4 months (31 March 2016)

NAME OF SHARED SERVICE ARRANGEMENT	ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED	HOST AUTHORITY	START DATE	DURATION OF AGREEMENT AND DATE FOR REVIEW
Payroll	Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council	Redditch Borough Council	1 April 2011	5 years (March 2016)
North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration	Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council	Wyre Forest District Council	1 June 2011	10 years June 2021

NAME OF SHARED SERVICE ARRANGEMENT	ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED	HOST AUTHORITY	START DATE	DURATION OF AGREEMENT AND DATE FOR REVIEW
Procurement	Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council	Redditch Borough Council	November 2012	Temporary Support (2 days a week / or as required)
Kidderminster Hub and Community Housing Group	Community Housing Group	Wyre Forest District Council	May 2011	3 years (May 2014)
North Worcestershire	Redditch Borough Council	Wyre Forest District Council	1 November 2011	10 years November 2021

NAME OF SHARED SERVICE ARRANGEMENT	ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED	HOST AUTHORITY	START DATE	DURATION OF AGREEMENT AND DATE FOR REVIEW
Water Management	Bromsgrove District Council Worcestershire County Council			
North Worcestershire Building Control	Bromsgrove District Council Redditch Borough Council	Bromsgrove	1 November 2011	10 year November 2021
North Worcestershire	Redditch Borough	Wyre Forest	1 April	1 April 2015

NAME OF SHARED SERVICE ARRANGEMENT	ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED	HOST AUTHORITY	START DATE	DURATION OF AGREEMENT AND DATE FOR REVIEW
Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Service	Council Bromsgrove District Council	District Council	2012	

Annex 3

**Representation on Outside Bodies 2013/2014
[to be inserted following Council's decisions on 15 May 2013]**

Annex 4

Wyre Forest District Council

Elected District Councillor Job Description

Responsible to: Wyre Forest District Council and the local community.

Role purpose: To represent the views of the communities of the Wyre Forest District within and outside the Council.

Main Role:

1. Collectively to be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate decision making functions;
2. Represent the community and bring their views into the Council's decision making processes and become an advocate of and for your community;
3. Consider different interests within your Ward and represent the Ward as a whole.
4. To represent the interests of the district as a whole by contributing to the strategic representation and decision making that affects the Wyre Forest.
5. Contribute to the good governance of Wyre Forest and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making. Local people can expect to be informed about:
 - services in their area;
 - decisions that affect them;
 - the reasons why decisions are taken by the Council;
 - the rights of constituents of Wyre Forest;
 - how decisions are made and what access is available to the public.
6. Deal with individual casework and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances;

7. Be available to represent the Council on outside bodies; and
8. Every Councillor will serve on either the Cabinet or Scrutiny Committees. Part of the scrutiny process is to undertake reviews and councillors will be expected to participate fully in these.
9. Note that the main Council bodies are:
 - Cabinet
 - Scrutiny Committees
 - Regulatory Committees
 - Review Panels
 - Audit
 - Appointment and Appeals
 - Ethics and Standards
10. Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.

Duties and Responsibilities of full Council include:

1. Adopting and changing the Constitution.
2. Approving or adopting the policies of the Council and the budget within which the Council and its bodies work.
3. Reviewing and adopting the Corporate policies.
4. Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman and Leader positions within the Council.
5. Appointing representatives to outside bodies unless the appointing is a function of the Executive, has been delegated by the Council or for a vacancy that arises during the municipal year.
6. Confirming the appointment of the Head of Paid Service according to the procedure defined in the Constitution.
7. All other matters which, by law, must be reserved to Council.

Rights and Duties

1. Councillors will have a right to be informed of any matter which affects their Ward.
2. A councillor has the right to be consulted on any substantial issue or service which specifically affects or is within their Ward – No Surprises Protocol.
3. Councillors will have such rights of access to such documents, information and buildings of the Council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law – refer to Constitution.
4. Councillors will not make public information which is Confidential or Exempt (“confidential” and “exempt” information is defined in the Council’s Constitution) without the consent of the Council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a councillor or officer entitled to know it.
5. Councillors will develop and maintain a working knowledge of the authority’s services and policies and take advantage of appropriate training and development opportunities to enable them to fulfil their role.
6. To uphold the Council’s Constitution and ethical standards.

Wyre Forest District Councillor Role Definition

As a councillor your role covers the following areas:

1. **Ward Representative** – to represent your Ward and the individuals who live in it. These local activities should include:
 - Holding surgeries and undertaking casework.
 - Representing the community within the Council and to other agencies.
 - Developing links with all parts of the community and seeking them to help to negotiate solutions to meet local needs.
 - Supporting local partnerships and organisations.
 - Campaigning on local issues.
 - Winning resources for your Ward.

2. **Decision-maker** – you have a part to play in helping the Council make decisions that impact not only on your Ward but across the whole Council District. You may be required to make decision through your role:
 - On regulatory Committees, i.e. Planning or Licensing & Environmental.
 - On local voluntary organisations as a representative of the Council.
 - As a Member of partnerships.
 - As an employer of staff on appointment panels or disciplinary and grievance appeals.
 - As a Member of the Cabinet.

3. **Policy and Strategy – Review and Development** – as a councillor you have an important role to influence both the development and review of Council policies and strategies which have an influence on the 90,000 (approximately) residents in the Wyre Forest. You can contribute to these processes through:
 - The Scrutiny function.
 - Involvement and advisory groups.
 - Interaction with Cabinet Members.
 - As a representative on local community groups.
 - On any Area Forums/local committees.
 - As a Town/Parish Councillor.
 - Casework.
 - Membership of political group

4. Scrutiny – a responsibility to monitor and scrutinise the performance of the Council. The Scrutiny role allows you to:

- To monitor the performance of the Council.
- Provide a check on the activities of the Executive through ‘call-in’.
- To monitor and review policy formulation and policy implementation.
- Policy development – quality reviews.
- Scrutiny of external bodies and agencies which affect the District.

5. Regulatory Function – membership of the Planning and Licensing Committees involves you in a quasi-judicial role with the right of appeal on any decision taken falling to either the local Magistrate’s Court or the Secretary of State for the Environment. As a Member of the local authority you are not just responsible for providers but also the regulation of certain activities. Quasi-judicial meetings function more like courts of law and hear evidence from interested parties and reach decisions based on the evidence presented. They have strict rules of procedure which have to be adhered to in order to avoid a decision being vulnerable to challenge. Rules of Procedure for Quasi-Judicial meets are guided by the Rules of Natural Justice and by Article 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998. these provide for a fair hearing without bias.

6. Community Leader – community leadership is at the heart of the role of modern local government. Councils are the best placed organisations to take a comprehensive overview of the needs and priorities of the local areas and the communities and to lead the work to meet these needs. Active partnerships with other organisations are a key activity to meeting these needs and you can promote community leadership through:

- Maintaining an interest in voluntary sector organisations.
- Liaising with Town and Parish Councils.
- Representation on school governors and other voluntary sector organisations.

7. Modernisation/Democratic Renewal – to assist with the modernisation of local government through partnership working, community leadership and the encouragement of members of the public to play a full and active role in the affairs of the local authority through partnership working, consultation, attending meetings, scrutiny reviews and general dialogue.

8. Standards – the requirements for people in public life are clearly catalogued. It is important to ensure you meet these requirements to safeguard the reputation of the Authority and therefore its integrity with the wider public.

- 9. Self-development/Awareness** – there is a need for you to ensure you have the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively undertake your duty as a Wyre Forest Councillor. To this end you will need to strive to keep abreast of local and national issues and undertake the appropriate training opportunities which will be offered to you.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
15TH MAY 2013
HALF-YEARLY REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 I will concentrate on an overview of the issues facing the district and the Council; key actions being implemented against the priorities in the corporate plan for 2011-14; and the progress that we have made in transforming the Council.

2 Overview of the issues facing the district and the Council

- 2.1 The most significant issue facing the Council remains its financial position. Our net revenue budget will have reduced from £16.4m in 2009-10 to £11.8m in 2015-16 on current plans. This represents a fall of over 25% in absolute terms, and more in real terms. Alongside this significant reduction, the Council is overseeing its most significant capital investment programme in many years, including a new cemetery, Wyre Forest House and new leisure centre as well as major injections of finance in its key priority of securing the economic prosperity of the district. But there is much more to do.
- 2.2 The level of Government funding will have reduced by 45% in four years. We know that it will fall further in future, and the Comprehensive Spending Review on 26th June will announce figures for the period to March 2016. Despite the major savings from the Wyre Forest Forward programme already built into the budget (£701k in 2014-15 rising to £801k in 2015-16), the Council still has a significant financial structural deficit of over £600k a year in 2014-15 onwards. This is the gap between what we are spending and our income.
- 2.3 The deficit is likely to get worse for reasons outside WFDC's control. As a result of Government announcements in March, the following further changes may or will affect us:
- Further 1% cut in Government spending in 2014-15. This is in addition to the 2% additional cut announced in the "autumn" statement;
 - Further reductions in funding to take account of Government assumptions on public sector pay and removing progression pay;
 - Removal of contracted out rate for National Insurance in April 2016. This will cost WFDC an estimated £100k a year;
 - Potential nationalisation of land charge searches in 2015 or 2016. While the system will depend on data provided by councils, there is uncertainty about whether we will lose some or all of the present income stream of £140k a year.
- 2.4 The Council needs to take action to address this situation sooner rather than later – we are not allowed to become insolvent as a matter of law but, on current projections, we will exhaust our general reserves at some point in 2016. I said in my November report: "Tough decisions will be required in order to produce a balanced budget as we cannot carry on drawing on reserves forever, and inevitably what we do and how we do it will have to change." We will be organising a seminar for all Councillors shortly to initiate work to help all political groups contribute to reshaping the Council's priorities for 2014 onwards and the reduction in spending on services that will be necessary to address the budget gap and to provide scope for any future investment in priorities.

- 2.5 Last month, the Council successfully implemented significant changes relating to the local government finance system, with devolution of responsibility to the Council for deciding what council tax discounts to give to people of working age in place of council tax benefit. We are monitoring implementation of the new arrangements closely for the impact that they have on the Council's income. We have adopted an integrated approach with the former social fund moneys that have been devolved via the county council from the Department for Work and Pensions, allowing us a wider range of tools to help people who are genuinely in financial crisis.
- 2.6 While we are working with the administrators and other parties, Sealine's move into administration is an early reminder of how the Council's finances are now tied to the vibrancy of the local economy – reductions in business rates arising from closures of businesses will affect the Council's funding. Conversely, securing growth in business rates will benefit the Council, however marginally. It is good to see the progress that has been made with the site clearance at Silverwoods, the former British Sugar site. This is the most significant mixed-use development in Wyre Forest, and the first blocks of housing have received planning permission. The Council needs to remain focussed on securing growth in housing and the local economy, and I will encourage this approach in the discussion about future priorities and budget allocations.

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

- 3.1 We have been in Wyre Forest House since October. The account has still not been finalised because of unresolved issues relating to various issues, principally the ground source heat pump system. We have commissioned independent technical advice on the steps that need to be taken to ensure that the system works fully effectively, and to allow us to protect the Council's position in discussions with the contractor. An updated report on achievement of annual revenue savings against the business case projection of £500k will be presented to the scrutiny committee in the summer.
- 3.2 Some other significant achievements since my last report are:
- a. Further progress towards acquiring the site for the new leisure centre, which is our next major capital project. Outline planning permission is being sought from the Planning Committee on 14th May and this will allow us to commence the procurement process for the delivery partner;
 - b. Continuing progress on investing the £1.5m fund for "securing the economic prosperity of the district" following the State of the Area debate in 2012. A successful follow-up event was held in March and demonstrated the broad support for what the Council is doing. We will see more capital expenditure committed this year following consultation on improvements to Kidderminster town centre and to progress the creation of some business incubator units;
 - c. Completion of the inspector's examination in public of the site allocation policies within our local development framework. Her report is due to be received in the near future and, assuming this will find that the Council's policies are sound, Council will be invited formally to adopt these key planning policies at its meeting in July. If this turns out to be the case, Wyre Forest will remain far advanced of other councils in Worcestershire.
- 3.3 These achievements are not attributable solely to me or the directors: it depends on the contribution and commitment of our staff, to which I would like to pay tribute. The Council

continues to be recognised in regional and national awards. Since my report in November, these have related to Wyre Forest House:

- Shortlisted for sustainability award in West Midlands Business Insider awards, 2012. Rider Levett Bucknall, our project managers, won the award for project management team of the year in respect of their work on Wyre Forest House;
- Shortlisted in the British Council for Offices annual awards for Midlands and East Anglia – the results will be known on 10th May.

4 The progress that we have made in transforming the Council

- 4.1 We have continued with the arrangements for involving members in the Wyre Forest Forward transformation programme. There is a regular meeting of Group leaders and their deputies with members of the Cabinet and Corporate Management Team, to oversee all aspects of the programme; and we have continued with regular meetings of the Members' Forum to ensuring that members are briefed on key issues and that they receive reports back from members sitting on external bodies. The Forum is generally well-supported with over half of councillors attending each meeting. Members have set a full programme of topics that they wish to consider over the coming 12 months.
- 4.2 Our transformation work is proceeding satisfactorily. The latest reviews using systems thinking have resulted in new processes and savings including a significant reduction in management costs in respect of depot-based services. In March, the Council agreed my proposals for senior management restructuring – which also contribute towards the savings target - and steps are in hand to secure implementation by the beginning of August. The shared services that we host are all progressing well. However last autumn's staff survey revealed some disappointing results in terms of staff satisfaction and morale. We have developed an action plan involving managers, staff and councillors and are implementing it with the aim of seeing improved results in this year's survey. The key actions relate to rebalancing team and individual workloads to take account of the significant reduction in budget and staffing over the last few years; and to seek to provide greater certainty to staff about the future. To that end, we are in discussion with the unions about the possibility of agreeing a local pay deal over 3 years.

5 Conclusion

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