

Open

Council

Agenda

**To be held remotely
6PM
Wednesday, 12th May 2021**



Council

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COUNCIL MEETING

4th May 2021

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND HONORARY ALDERMEN

PRESS AND PUBLIC

Dear Member

YOU ARE INVITED to attend a meeting of the Wyre Forest District Council to be held **remotely at 6.00p.m. on Wednesday 12th May 2021.**

The Agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Yours sincerely

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

Ian Miller
Chief Executive

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(A) TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL

The Council

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

(B) MATTERS RESERVED TO THE COUNCIL

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

Wyre Forest District Council

Council

Wednesday, 12th May 2021

To be held remotely

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Prayers To be read by Rev. Collison, Minister at Kidderminster and Stourport Methodist Circuit.	
2.	Election of Chairman To elect a Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021-2022.	
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 Leaders of the largest political groups will thank the retiring Chairman of the Council.	
6.	Appointment of Vice-Chairman To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021-2022.	
7.	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.	
8.	Election of Leader To elect a Leader of the Council for the period to the annual general meeting following the ordinary elections in 2023, in accordance with sections 44A and 44D of the Local Government Act 2000.	9

9.	Apologies for Absence	
10.	<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>	
11.	<p>Minutes</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 24th February 2021, 1st March 2021 and 21st April 2021.</p>	11
12.	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's scheme for public speaking at meetings of Council, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Friday 30th April 2021</p> <p><i>If you wish to speak on an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline and you could not reasonably have known about it at the time, you should register your interest in speaking no later than 9am on the day of the meeting of Council. In the case of a request to speak on an urgent matter, the Solicitor to the Council will rule on whether or not the matter is urgent and that ruling will be final.</i></p>	
13.	<p>Questions</p> <p>No questions have been submitted in accordance with Standing Order Section 7, 1.8 by Members of the Council.</p> <p><i>In the case of an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline, could not have been reasonably known at that time, it must be delivered in writing to the Solicitor to the Council no later than 9am on the day of Council.</i></p>	
14.	<p>Chairman's Communications</p> <p>To note the engagements of the Chairman of the Council since the Council's last ordinary meeting.</p>	32
15.	<p>Political and Constitutional Structures 2021-2022</p> <p>To consider a report from the Solicitor to the Council on the proposed political and constitutional structures for the municipal year 2021-2022</p>	33
16.	<p>Members' Annual Activity Reports and Attendance 2020-2021</p> <p>To note the schedule of Members' Annual Reports giving details of their activities in their role as District Councillors for the 2020-2021 municipal year and to receive a record of Members' attendance for the 2020-2021 municipal year.</p>	63

	<p><i>These reports are available electronically on the website</i></p> <p>http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com55.htm#mt8077</p>	
17.	<p>Annual Reports for the Municipal Year 2020-2021</p> <p>(a) Cabinet</p> <p>(b) Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>(c) Ethics and Standards Committee</p>	<p>64</p> <p>67</p> <p>74</p>
18.	<p>Leader of the Council Announcements</p> <p>To receive announcements from the Leader of the Council.</p>	
19.	<p>Urgent Motions submitted under Standing Orders</p> <p>To consider motions in the order they have been received which, by reason of special circumstances, should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Standing Orders (Section 7, 4.1 (vii)).</p>	
20.	<p>Policy and Budget Framework</p> <p>Matters which require a Decision by Council.</p> <p>a) Recommendations from Cabinet – 22nd December 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Strategy 2021-31 <p>Please note that the reports and associated documents, referred to above, have been circulated electronically to Members. Public inspection copies are available on request. Please refer to the front cover for contact details.</p>	<p>77</p>
21.	<p>Management review</p> <p>To consider a report from the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on changes to the senior management structure of the Council.</p> <p>The Council may move to exclude press and public during consideration of this item.</p> <p>(Mr Colin Williams, associate, West Midlands Employers, will attend throughout this item.)</p>	<p><i>Report to follow</i></p>
22.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	

23.	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in the paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p>	
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Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

24.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	
25.	<p>Management review</p> <p>To continue consideration of a report from the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on changes to the senior management structure of the Council.</p> <p>(Mr Colin Williams, associate, West Midlands Employers, will attend throughout this item.)</p>	

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**COUNCIL**
12TH MAY 2021**Appointment of Leader of the Council**

OPEN	
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller, Ext. 2700 ian.miller@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	None

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To appoint a Leader of the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Council is asked to APPOINT the Leader of the Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 1st December 2010, the Council adopted a new governance model for its executive arrangements with effect from May 2011. The Local Government 2000 (as amended by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) required Councils to adopt what has been described as a “strong leader” in governance terms for executive arrangements.
- 3.2 Under this model Council appoints the Leader, who then appoints the Cabinet and allocates Cabinet responsibilities. The Leader has a strengthened role and is directly responsible for deciding the discharge of the functions which are the responsibility of the executive.
- 3.3 The Leader of the Council decides the size of the Cabinet (the legal maximum of 10 remains) and areas of Cabinet member responsibility. The Leader of the Council must appoint at least 2 other Councillors to the Cabinet, and under Article 7 of the Council’s Constitution must appoint one of them as Deputy Leader.
- 3.4 The Leader allocates responsibility for the discharge of executive functions, whether by himself or herself, the Cabinet collectively, individual members of the Cabinet, or officers, or any combination. The discharge of functions which are not the responsibility of the executive (e.g. Planning, Overview and Scrutiny and Ethics and Standards) remains unaffected.
- 3.5 Councillor Graham Ballinger was appointed as Leader at the annual meeting in May 2019 for the period to the annual general meeting of the Council following the next ordinary elections in May 2023. He has submitted his resignation with effect from 5pm on the day of this meeting and therefore Council needs to appoint a new Leader.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Under section 44E of the 2000 Act, the Council was required to appoint its Leader for up to a 4 year term of office. The term of office was linked to the term of office of the Member as a Councillor, as set out in article 7 of the Council's constitution. Section 44E has since been repealed by the Localism Act 2011. In accordance with the permissive powers in section 9I of the 2000 Act (as inserted by the 2011 Act), Wyre Forest's constitution continues to make provision for the term of office of the Leader to be linked to his or her term of office as a Councillor. This will be a period until the annual general meeting of the Council following the next ordinary elections in May 2023.
- 4.2 The position described above in respect of the term of office of the Leader reflects what is required by the Council's constitution. Council is reminded that, under Article 7 of its constitution, it has the ability to vote to remove the Leader from office following submission of a motion to that effect; and any Leader has the ability to resign from office.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None. The Council's budget includes provision for the special responsibility allowance for the role of Leader of the Council.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The relevant provisions of the 2000 Act and the Council's constitution have been mentioned above. A Leader should be appointed as required by the legislation and the adopted governance model for the council's executive arrangements.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report relates to an appointment to be made by the Council and an equality impact assessment is not required.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 If the Council fails to appoint a Leader of the Council, the powers would be discharged by the Head of Paid Service in consultation with Group Leaders.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Council is invited to appoint the Leader of the Council.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 The Corporate Leadership Team.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

HELD REMOTELY

24TH FEBRUARY 2021 (6PM)

Present:

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

A moment of silence was observed in memory of former Wyre Forest District Council Chairman and councillor, Mike Salter who sadly passed away on the night of Wednesday 20 January.

C.58 Prayers

Prayers were said by Councillor P Young.

C.59 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

C.60 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor T Onslow declared, in respect of agenda item number 15 – Council Tax Setting 2021-2022, that she was the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for West Mercia, and the PCC set the Council Tax for The Office of the PCC.

C.61 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C.62 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

C.63 Questions

One question had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order Section 7, 1.8 by Members of the Council.

Question from Councillor Anna Coleman to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for

Localism

With an aim to secure the community involvement in the new Bewdley Museum Trust, would Cabinet Member agree to consider a formation of an advisory group to the trustees, which will represent the established successful town community organisations?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism

Thank you for your question. Working within the localism agenda over the past two years, I have become more and more aware of the local organisations and groups that exist and work for our communities in our three towns. Their time and commitment is amazing and I do understand their concern when it is looked at doing things differently; even though with the idea of the setting up of an independent trust for Bewdley museum it is being done as well with a view to help protect the future and sustainability of the museum with continued funding from Wyre Forest District Council. I understand that concerns may have been raised further by the comments from our MP calling it a “dumb” idea in the press without having met with anyone from Wyre Forest District Council to understand or talk about these proposals. May I assure everyone that the adverts for the roles of trustees will be advertised widely with a view of attracting the variety of skills needed for the continued success of the museum. I do not feel it would be appropriate for us to set up groups for the trustees to work with before they are in place and know what they are looking for. When they are in place it should be their choice who they decide to work with and may well include the setting up of some form of liaison group with representatives from the local community. I have no problem with making the new trustees, when they are in place, aware of the variety of organisations and groups working in Bewdley that may be able to assist them in someway with the future for the museum. As Councillor Coleman may be aware, myself and the Chief Executive will be meeting some representatives of Bewdley organisations next week.

C.64 Chairman’s Communications

The Council received a list of functions attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the Council’s last meeting.

C.65 Leader of the Council Announcements

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

Since Council’s last meeting, on Boxing Day, we had the excellent news of the £20.5m grant from the Future High Streets Fund – our officers have put in a huge amount of work on that. It was an item started off by the Conservative Administration which we are very grateful for. The grant is the single largest competitive grant award secured by the District Council in its history since 1974.

Council tonight is being asked to agree a consequential amendment to the capital programme. The hard work on implementing all of these exciting projects that form part of our bid is already under way, and we have got until

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2024 to complete it which is not long, staff are working hard already to get that underway. I know Council would want to join me in paying tribute to everyone who has been involved in achieving the successful grant award. I should mention, Ostep Paparega and Jon Elmer in North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration and Mike Parker, the Corporate Director with responsibility for planning.

It is good to see other items that are going ahead with local enterprise initiatives in the District. They include:

- the Churchfields highway scheme which was completed by Worcestershire County Council last month but funded with a Homes England grant of £3m secured by the District Council together with contributions from our two local enterprise partnerships namely the Worcestershire LEP and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP;

- major investments at Silverwoods by Community Housing Group in 65 independent living apartments in phase 2 of Berrington Court and by Birton Firtop in their new manufacturing facility. They are moving from a neighboring authority and it is good that staff have secured that enterprise coming into our area; and

- the County Council's improvements at the Hoobrook roundabout, to reduce congestion. Residents have been waiting for that for along time and it is good to see it is underway and look forward to it being completed.

The floods came back again in January following Strom Christoph. It affected Bewdley yet again, and Stourport to a lesser extent. Our thoughts go out to all those residents that were affected and had to move out of their houses and had water lapping at their doors. Many of you would have seen the recent BBC Midlands Today 20-minute programme, which really highlighted precisely how difficult it is with climate change; and it is affecting all of us and is a serious subject. Unlike Mr. Trump who dismissed it and said that is something created by the Chinese, we are serious about it in this area and we want to make sure we do something about it. However, the Government is saying there are not sufficient funds to do that.

I must thank our own staff that again that went that extra mile with their assistance to those who were affected both immediately and as part of the ongoing clear up. I wrote to the Secretary of State, George Eustice, immediately afterwards to press the case again for Government funding for permanent flood defences to protect Beale's Corner. There is heightened concern about the position because the Environment Agency has decided not to deploy the temporary barriers at present. We will discuss a motion on this topic on tonight's agenda.

Since the last meeting of Council, I have made some changes to the membership of the Cabinet. I would like to extend thanks again to Councillor Fran Oborski for her contribution to the work of the Cabinet in the period from May 2019 to last month, and also for her great assistance in helping to set up the Progressive Alliance two years ago and that was

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crucial. When I announced that she was leaving the Cabinet, I made some changes to portfolios including appointing Councillor Helen Dyke as Deputy Leader and I said that I would review membership of the Cabinet and make a further announcement in due course.

I am able to inform Council that, tomorrow, I intend to appoint Councillor Mary Rayner as a member of the Cabinet and that she will take over the finance portfolio from me primarily, other adjustments will be made in the coming days. There will be other thoughts on individual portfolios, and we will set that out in a formal decision later in the week. Councillor Rayner, as a consequence, will cease to serve as chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee, and I will invite Council under item 11 on the agenda to appoint a replacement for the period to the Annual General Meeting.

Finally, I would also like to make a personal announcement. When I was re-elected to the council in May 2019, I was honoured to work with colleagues in various political parties and groups to secure a change in the Council's political direction and leadership, and it was a deeply personal honour for me to be elected as leader in May 2019 which was almost 35 years after I had last held that office; I appreciated that gesture.

Much has happened over the last two years, and much has changed. All members of the District Council of all parties can be proud of what has been done in maintaining services and securing investments and improvements in Wyre Forest, notwithstanding the impact of the dreadful pandemic over the last 12 months.

My term of office as leader ends in May 2023, I shall be getting on a bit by then. I have been reflecting on whether I should serve for the full term or, now that we have reached almost the half way point in the life of this council, and an element of good stability stand aside in order to allow for transition to new leadership.

After considerable discussion and further consultation with colleagues and others, I am therefore informing Council now that I plan to resign as leader at the time of the AGM in May. Council will be invited at that meeting to elect a new leader for the period to the elections in May 2023, and I will work to ensure that there is a full and smooth transition.

I will remain as a councillor and as a member of the Progressive Alliance, and I will provide my full support for the election of the Alliance's candidate-designate for the role of leader, namely Councillor Helen Dyke. I hope that colleagues will find it helpful to have this forewarning of my plans. I thought rather than do this at the annual meeting, it was best to do it now and I wanted to get somebody in place to take on my finance portfolio which is crucial to the work of the Council.

C.66 Motions Submitted under Standing Orders

One motion had been received in accordance with Standing Orders (Section 7, 4.1).

1. Notice of motion from Councillor C Edginton-White

Further to the thorough review of the 2020 floods by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Council's resolution in September 2020, Council:

(a) notes with dismay that properties at Beale's Corner and elsewhere in the district were flooded again following Storm Christoph;

(b) pays tribute to the response of the Environment Agency, blue light services and other organisations to the flooding;

(c) expresses concern that the temporary barrier at Beale's Corner is not being deployed by the Agency at the moment, giving a greater probability of disruption to the local community from road flooding and increasing the vulnerability of some properties;

(d) asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to request an early update from Worcestershire County Council and the Environment Agency on the outcome of the initial investigation into the potential highway issues and the failure of the temporary barrier;

(e) calls on the Leader of the County Council to ensure that any necessary measures required to reinforce and repair the highway to ensure future deployment of the temporary barrier are delivered as a matter of urgency;

(f) strongly endorses the letter that the Leader has sent to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to call for urgent confirmation of Government funding for permanent barriers at Beale's Corner; and

(g) decides that this resolution should be communicated to the Secretary of State, Chair of the Environment Agency, Leader of the County Council and Mark Garnier MP.

Councillor C Edginton-White presented the motion. In doing so she acknowledged the work that had already taken place to gather evidence from residence and the agencies with regard to the serious flooding events of February 2020 and the recognition by all agencies that permanent flood defences are a priority for Beales Corner and the town end of Stourport road in Bewdley.

She explained that from site visits, initial investigations and interim reports already been provided by the Environment Agency, it appeared that there are major concerns about the surface and sub structure of the highway adjacent to the river bank in Stourport road up to the Beales corner junction. Until the safety issues to the road are resolved the temporary barriers cannot be re-deployed. She added that the motion aims to invite not just the Environment Agency but also Worcestershire County Council to collaborate in an effective resolution to these issues so that the temporary barriers can be re-instated while not compromising the funding of the permanent scheme moving forward. She said that she will be asking the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to add this as an agenda item of the Committee at his earliest convenience.

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The motion was seconded by Councillor A Coleman. She thanked the Council's Housing and Water Management Teams for the work they are doing in processing Defra grants for the affected households and businesses.

A discussion ensued. Several members spoke in support of the motion.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor M Hart, said it was important to keep the issue in the forefront of everybody's minds. He said that the Environment Agency had been invited to attend a meeting and he would like the committee to consider who else they would like to hear further and better information from as it had been a multi-agency response to the incidents. He said that the flooding was devastating to those residents who had endured it and said that the Conservative Group fully supported the motion.

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

C.67 Urgent Motions submitted under Standing Orders

There were no urgent motions submitted under Standing Orders.

C.68 Political Balance

A report was considered from the Solicitor to the Council to approve the revised table of political balance.

The Leader presented the report and formally moved an amendment to the recommendations set out at paragraph 2.2 of the report. The proposed amendment was displayed electronically for all members to read and consider.

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc56538_20210224_council_minute.pdf

The proposals were seconded by the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism.

In regard to 2.2 (b) of the amendment, Councillor F Oborski MBE said that Councillor A Totty had not resigned from the Audit Committee and felt it was totally inappropriate to change a Chairman when there was only one meeting of the committee left in this municipal year. She added that at considerable expense to the Council, Councillor Totty had gone to London to undertake training as Chairman of the Audit Committee and moved an amendment to the amendment that he be confirmed as Chairman of the Audit Committee until the annual meeting of Council in May. Councillor Oborski's amendment was seconded by Councillor S Miah.

Councillor M Hart said that he did not have any issues with the other parts of the Leader's amendment. However seeking to remove a sitting Chairman that had not resigned prior to annual Council was not in the spirit of working with all political groups and parties; and was not in the spirit of

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openness and transparency. He added that it was completely the wrong time and the Conservative Group would support the amendment put forward by Councillor Oborski.

A discussion ensued. Several members spoke in support of the amendment proposed by Councillor Oborski as they agreed it was not the appropriate time to change the Chairmanship of the Audit Committee.

The Leader said the Chair of the Audit Committee was a very important position. The post holder had access to a lot of detailed information regarding the Council's finances and in his opinion the post holder needs to be a member of the Administration. He added that Councillor R Coleman had the appropriate financial skills to take on this very important role and would be able to 'hit the ground running'; it was something that could not be left in abeyance for the next couple of months before that post was taken by a member of the Administration.

A vote on the amendment proposed by Councillor Oborski was taken and agreed.

A vote on the substantive motion was taken and agreed.

Decision: Council;

1.1 Approved the revised table of political balance in Appendix 1.

1.2 Appointed:

- a) Councillor Helen Dyke as vice chairman of the Appointments and Appeals Committee;**
- b) Councillor Anna L'Huillier as chairman of the Ethics and Standards Committee, all appointments to take effect from the date of this meeting for the remainder of the municipal year 2020/21.**

C.69 Polling Place Review

Council considered a report from the Returning Officer for the Council to take decisions following the review of polling districts and places in the wards of Blakebrook & Habberley South and Franche & Habberley North, which was commissioned at Council on 26th February 2020.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services presented the report and formally moved the recommendation for approval. The Leader of the Council seconded the proposals.

A robust discussion ensued. Following a show of hands, the vote was carried.

Decision: Council NOTED the responses to the consultation and CONFIRMED that no change is made to the polling places in the

wards of Blakebrook & Habberley South and Franche & Habberley North.

C.70 Policy and Budget Framework

Matters which require a Decision by Council.

a) Recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 4th February 2021

- Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2021-22

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny presented the recommendations and formally moved them for approval. The proposal was seconded by the Chairman of the Treasury Management Review Panel, Councillor S Miah.

Upon a show of hands, the vote was carried unanimously.

Decision: Council;

- 1.1 Approved the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2021-22 to 2030-31 included in Appendix 3. (Revisions have been made, as per paragraph 7.2 of the report, following changes to the Capital Programme brought about as part of the budget process and are reflected in the schedule that followed Council approval).**
- 1.2 Approved the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 and the detailed criteria is included in Section 10 and Appendix 5).**
- 1.3 Approved the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 1.**
- 1.4 Approved the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator included in Appendix 3.**
- 1.5 Noted that the separate, but intrinsically linked, Capital Strategy 2021-31 to be approved separately by Council, sets out the policy statement covering non-treasury investments including the related suite of prudential indicators.**

(b) Recommendations from Cabinet – 9th February 2021

- Amendment to Capital Programme to include Future High Streets Fund project

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The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism presented the recommendations and formally moved them for approval. She said that she had worked in the town centre for approximately 45 years and this had to be the most exciting thing to happen to Kidderminster town centre in that time. She thanked everybody who was involved in the project and hoped that Council would support the proposal.

The Leader seconded the proposal and upon a show of hands, the vote was carried unanimously.

Decision: The Capital Programme is amended to accommodate the sum of £21.761m to ensure the delivery of the Future High Streets Fund programme of initiatives. Funding will be met from the £20.51m external funding award and £1.25m allocation following the principles of, but in addition to, the existing Capital Portfolio Fund for co-funding from this Council.

At 7.50pm Council agreed unanimously to suspend the Council Procedure Rules (Standing Orders) 1.1 (iii) to allow the meeting to continue until 10pm.

(c) Recommendations from Cabinet – 9th February 2021

- Pay and Grading Review

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services presented the recommendations. She said the administration believes staff should be appropriately paid for the work that they do; that is why the authority was going back to applying national pay increases from April, as Council decided in 2019.

She added that the Council's approach to local pay prior to 2019 gave certainty in financial planning and saved the Council money but this was at the price of how much the staff took home each month; it hit them in their pockets. The NJC pay award for April 2020 was 2.75% compared to the local agreed increase of 1.25%.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services further explained that Council also agreed in 2019 that there should be a pay and grading review to modernise the pay structure and ensure that staff in the lowest paid jobs are lifted above the National Living Wage. She said she was delighted that the outcome has been backed by overwhelming results in the union ballots and that we can conclude a collective agreement.

She added that, as the table in paragraph 4.2 of the report to Cabinet showed, most staff would benefit from the review; the lowest paid staff will be benefitting the most. She said there are a few staff who will unfortunately be adversely affected. However arrangements to protect their pay for 18 months have been agreed with the unions. She added it would not be appropriate to comment on individual cases and said Council

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needed to focus on the overall package negotiated with the unions. She said Council approval was needed as the cost falls outside the remit set by Council in September 2019. She assured members that the medium term financial strategy, on the agenda later, takes into account of the impact and it is affordable in the context of the MTFS.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services added that the Council's staff had gone the extra mile and done everything that local residents, businesses or councillors have asked of them in the last unprecedented year. She said it was appropriate that the Council should recognize their contribution and need to go beyond the many warm "thank you" messages that Councillors and Council had given. That is why the Cabinet has recommended a modest one-off payment, funded from underspends on the salary budget this year.

In conclusion, she said there was a need to amend the pay policy statement to reflect the return to using national pay increases and the changes arising from the pay and grading review. In line with previous statements, the statement has been drafted to avoid the need to update it every year.

The Leader seconded the proposals.

A lengthy debate ensued. Several members spoke for and against the recommendations. Councillor Hart spoke on behalf of the Conservative Group. He said whilst they agreed in principle with the review as it was right and proper that the authority paid its staff the national living wage; however, concerns were raised about the overall funding envelope. He said it was not the right time to put the extra financial burden on the Council and the Group could not support the pay and grading review as it currently stood.

Upon a show of hands, the vote on the recommendations was carried.

Decision: Council;

- a) **approved the implementation of the pay and grading review, as summarised in appendix 1;**
- b) **approved a non-consolidated COVID response acknowledgement payment of £125 for every employee who was employed continuously between 26 March 2020 and 31 December 2020 and who undertook regular work during that period, other than staff on the Deputy Chief Officer grade or higher;**
- c) **adopted the revised pay policy statement for the financial year 2020-21 and each subsequent financial year, until it is amended by Council (appendix 2).**

The meeting was suspended at 8.40pm and resumed at 8.52pm.

C.71 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-2024

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Resources which sought approval of the Council's budget for 2021-2024 having considered the proposed decision and budget reports recommended to Council by Cabinet on 9th February 2021 including:

- Base Budget Projections 2021-2024 including Cabinet Proposals
- Capital Programme 2020-2021 onwards
- Updated Capital Programme Non Treasury Prudential Indicators 2020-24
- Fees and Charges
- Report of the Chief Financial Officer in respect of Sections 25-28 Local Government Act 2003
- Amendment to the Corporate Plan

The Leader of the Council presented the report and formally moved the recommendations for approval. He said the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was set against the greatest uncertainty and resultant risk the Council had ever faced. He said the proposals represent a realistic way forward that will allow the authority to balance the books in the wake of the most challenging period in the Council's history.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism seconded the proposals.

Councillor Desmond moved a suite of amendments, as set out on pages 45 to 50 of the report, on behalf of the Conservative Group. He said that the proposed budget strategy had been well crafted over many weeks and was a genuine attempt to give real strategic direction to the authority, addressing the financial gap whilst delivering real benefits to the residents of Wyre Forest. He said the two strategies were similar in that the same tools were being used, namely; shared services, the localism agenda and further efficiencies by reducing costs in-house. However, the Conservative proposals differed on emphasis. He said that the Group firmly believed that the Administration's emphasis on localism and the savings accruing from this area was wholly unrealistic.

He thanked the Corporate Director: Resources and her team for their dedication and effort in helping to put the strategy together.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor M Hart.

A discussion on the amendment ensued. The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism that it was always the aim of the Administration to work with Town and Parish Councils which they will continue to do. She said that the authority had developed an amicable working relationship with the Town and Parish Councils and thanked those that had taken part in negotiations so far.

Named votes on the Conservative Group proposals were recorded as

follows and the amendment was defeated:

For (12)

Councillors: J Byng, S Chambers, B Dawes, N Desmond, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, T Onslow and C Rogers.

Against (18)

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

Abstained (3)

Councillors: S Miah, F Oborski MBE and A Totty.

Councillor Oborski MBE moved a suite of amendments, as set out on pages 51 to 56 of the report, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group. She outlined the main parts of the proposals. She paid tribute to Councillor H Dyke for her leadership on Localism and Councillor M Rayner for her work on Kidderminster Town Council's localism negotiating team. She said they had done an excellent job. However after all their hard work the Liberal Democrat Group felt that the targets were unobtainable in the timescale of the MTFs, hence the reduced target.

The proposals were seconded by Councillor A Totty.

At 9.47pm Council agreed unanimously to suspend the Council Procedure Rules (Standing Orders) 1.1 (iii) to allow the meeting to continue until 11pm.

The Leader said that funding for Community Groups from the Wyre Forest Lottery and Localism targets were on track. He said that bids for the Wyre Forest Lottery would be looked at by an all party working group to ensure that they were considered in a fair and equitable way and not used for political purposes. He urged members to vote against the proposals.

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

For (4)

Councillors: S Miah, F Oborski MBE, A Totty and L Whitehouse.

Against (16)

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

Abstained (13)

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Councillors: J Byng, S Chambers, B Dawes, N Desmond, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, T Onslow, C Rogers and S Rook.

A robust debate on the substantive proposals took place. A number of members spoke against the proposals as they felt they lacked clarity in certain areas and would be detrimental to the communities that elected members serve.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments and for Localism urged members to vote for the budget. She said it had taken a long time to put together and the Administration knew what direction they were going in, and it was a positive one.

In conclusion, the Leader said that the Cabinet were not looking at a plan of reducing staff numbers, they were looking at ways of utilising them better with a view to creating more opportunities to create extra income. That will be the way forward. He added that the budget was deliverable and urged members to vote in favour of it.

A named vote on the substantive budget proposals was recorded as follows and was tied.

For (16)

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

Against (16)

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

Abstained (1)

Councillor S Rook.

As the vote was tied, the Chairman used his casting vote and voted against the proposals, which were therefore defeated.

Decision: At 10.43pm Council agreed unanimously to adjourn the meeting until 5.30pm on Monday 1st March 2021.

The adjourned meeting resumed remotely at 5.30pm on Monday 1st March 2021.

Present:

Councillors: S Miah (Chairman), J Aston (Vice-Chairman), G W Ballinger, C J Barnett, J F Byng, V Caulfield, S J Chambers, A Coleman,

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R H Coleman, B S Dawes, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, N Gale, S Griffiths, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M J Hart, K Henderson, L J Jones, A L L'Huillier, N Martin, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, S E N Rook, D R Sheppard, J W R Thomas, A Totty, L Whitehouse and P W M Young.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of former District Councillor Ken Stokes who had sadly passed away that day.

The Chairman said that budget setting was a very important part of what members of the Council did. He said it was important that all members were professional and maintained a high degree of standards, and debate with dignity and respect to one another.

C.72 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

C.73 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor T Onslow declared, in respect of agenda item number 15 – Council Tax Setting 2021-2022, that she was the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for West Mercia, and was involved in setting the Council Tax for The Office of the PCC.

C.74 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-2024

The Council considered an amendment to the recommendation in the report which had been circulated to members prior the meeting.

The Leader presented the amendment and formally moved it for approval. He said that following a series of meetings with all parties, the Administration were able to put together the proposals. He acknowledged the support from the Labour Group and thanked the Leader of the Group, Councillor S Rook, for her help and said that the Progressive Alliance had taken heed of some of the points the Group had made.

He said that it was important that the Council set a budget that was in the interests of the population of Wyre Forest and urged members to support the amendment.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Localism seconded the proposals.

A discussion ensued.

Councillor F Oborski thanked the Leader for the revisions he had made to the budget proposals and said that the Liberal Democrat Group would be supporting them. She said it was important that when the outcome of the Local Plan Review was known, a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission be undertaken to look at the District Council ward boundaries in Wyre Forest to take account of the housing growth, and

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hoped that the County Council boundaries would also be included in the review.

Councillor M Hart thanked the Leader and Officers for putting forward the revised proposals. He said that the Conservative Group were pleased that there was going to be a management review with a view to it being implemented by April 2022. He acknowledged that the Leader had done enough with the proposals that the Conservative Group would not allow the budget to fail; however it was still poles apart from the Conservative Group's position, and therefore it was felt that the Group could not positively support the proposals.

Councillor S Rook said that she had discussed the management review with the Progressive Alliance and the Chief Executive and had made her views known. She said that this was a vote for the budget and voting on the outcome of the management review was for another time.

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

For (21)

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

Abstained (12)

Councillors: J Byng, S Chambers, B Dawes, N Desmond, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, T Onslow and C Rogers.

There being no further amendments. A named vote on the substantive budget proposals as amended was recorded as follows and was agreed:

For (21)

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

Abstained (12)

Councillors: J Byng, S Chambers, B Dawes, N Desmond, N Gale, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M Hart, K Henderson, L Jones, T Onslow and C Rogers.

Decision: Council;

1.1 APPROVED the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021-2024;

- 1.1.2 APPROVED the revised Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council’s Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2021-2024 including:**
- a) Approval of a further programme of phased savings for the strategic repositioning of the Council from the Wyre Forest Forward Savings Programme of £0.817m in 2021-22, £1.208m in 2022-23, £1.5m in 2023-24 ongoing after this year;**
 - b) Confirmation that the Wyre Forest Forward Savings Programme is expected to reduce management costs as a result of implementing new service delivery models and a holistic review, to be led by the Chief Executive, is planned for implementation by April 2022 at the latest;**
 - c) Confirmation that the Council should not seek a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to reduce the number of Councillors but recognising that a review is likely to be necessary to allow redrawing of ward boundaries to take account of future population growth as a result of the local plan;**
 - d) Approval of £200k generic capital budget to support expansion of the Council’s income generating activity, to be funded from prudential borrowing with the revenue costs met from within approved financially viable business cases. The Innovation Fund will be used to fund any one-off revenue business case costs.**
 - e) Approval of arrangements to withdraw the Community Leadership Fund, with final allocations of £33k being £1000 per Councillor in 2021-22, reduced to £16.5k being £500 per Councillor in 2022-23 and zero thereafter.**
- 1.1.3 APPROVED the fees and charges in line with this Strategy and in line with the recommendations of the Licensing and Environmental Committee of 9th December 2020, and the impact on the Council’s Revenue Budget for 2021-2024, as shown in Appendix 3;**
- 1.1.4 APPROVED The amended Corporate Plan as set out in Appendix 5, including removal of the priority about affordable housing.**
- 1.1.5 APPROVED the Council’s updated Capital Strategy including the following Indicators and limits that have been revised for the February 2021 Council Meeting following any changes to the Capital Programme brought about as a result of the budget process:**
- a) Approval of the Capital Strategy 2021-2031 including the associated non- Treasury Prudential Indicators in Appendix 2 of the December Cabinet report now updated for Cabinet Proposal and inclusion of the Future High Streets Funding**

(FHSF) as set out in Appendix 2/2 of the report;

- b) **Approval of variations to the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals Schedule as set out in Appendix 2 of the report (which updates Appendix 1, Appendices A and B of the Capital Strategy report to December 2020 Cabinet);**
 - c) **Approval of the limits for gross debt of non-treasury investments compared to net service expenditure and for commercial income as a percentage of net service expenditure as set out in Appendix 2 of the December report now updated for Cabinet Proposals and FHSF as set out in Appendix 2/2 of the report;**
 - d) **Approval of the limits for loan investments as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the 22nd December 2020 report.**
- 1.1.6 APPROVED that any Final Accounts savings arising from 2020-2024 over and above the target allowed for in the Council's Financial Strategy, together with surplus Earmarked Reserves, be allocated by the Corporate Director: Resources in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Finance;**
- 1.1.7 The General Fund Revenue Budget be APPROVED including all updates from the position in December 2020 as set out in the report.**
- 1.2 COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES**
- 1.2.1 The Council Tax increase is confirmed as £5 pa and Council:**
- a. **SETS the Council Tax for Wyre Forest District Council on a Band D Property at £224.34 for 2021-2022 (£219.34 2020-2021) which represents an increase of 2.28% on Council Tax from 2020-2021.**
 - b. **ENDORSES the provisional Council Tax on a Band D Property in 2022-2023 of £229.34 and £234.34 in 2023-2024, being increases of 2.23 % and 2.18% respectively.**
- 1.2.2 NOTED the Corporate Director: Resources (as Chief Financial Officer) opinion on the budget proposals, recommended by the Cabinet in the report, as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report.**
- 1.2.3 NOTED that the Local Council Tax Support Grant in 2021-22 will initially be added to General Fund Reserves to offset the Collection Fund loss as a result of the reduction in Council Tax Base and APPROVED delegation to the Corporate Director Resources in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Strategy and Finance to divert any portion of this for Hardship relief if appropriate.**

C.75 Council Tax Setting 2021-2022

Council considered the formal resolution for setting the Council Tax for 2021-2022. This included the 2.28% increase in the District Council's element of Council Tax, as recommended by Cabinet on 9th February 2021, and the precepts and council tax increases in the elements of Council Tax set by the following bodies: Worcestershire County Council (+2.50%); The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia (+6.66%); Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority (+1.97%).

The Leader formally moved the recommendations for approval. The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Localism seconded the proposals.

Councillor M Hart thanked the Council's Section 151 Officer, Tracey Southall, and her team for all the hard work they had done in respect of the process.

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

For (33)

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

Decision: Council approved the formal Council Tax Resolution 2021-22 at Appendix 1, taking into account information contained in Appendices 2 to 5.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.40pm.

The full meetings are available for viewing on the Council's website <https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/53298>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL

HELD REMOTELY

21ST APRIL 2021 (6PM)

Present:

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

C.76 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: V Caulfield and D R Sheppard.

C.77 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interests were made.

C.78 Coronavirus pandemic – Temporary continuation of remote meeting arrangements

Council considered a report from the Chief Executive which proposed to continue with remote meeting arrangements for the period to 31 July 2021 as a proportionate public health response to the serious and imminent threat to public health which is posed by the incidence and spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). In line with decisions taken by the Council on 21 April 2020, the temporary changes are required to eliminate the need for non-essential face-to-face contact whilst still allowing transparent and participative decision-making to take place.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and formally moved the recommendations for approval. He said the proposals to continue with remote meeting arrangements for the period to 31 July 2021 was a proportionate public health response to COVID-19. He said it was welcome news locally that infection rates had fallen and the numbers of people in hospital and sadly losing their lives had also reduced sharply in recent weeks.

He explained that the Council chamber at Wyre Forest House was simply not large enough to allow for adequate social distancing during a period when there will still be legal restrictions on the size of gatherings both inside and outside, and not all adults have yet been offered a first vaccination.

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He said the issue had been discussed by group leaders last month and there was a clear consensus not to move the meetings to large, unwieldy spaces. He added that there was no support for the Council to prevent members from attending a face-to-face meeting or to adopt some of the other suggestions from the Government, such as delegating the Council's decisions to officers or to small committees of members.

The Leader said it would be preferable if there was explicit legislation about remote or hybrid meetings, and we do not yet have the ruling from today's court case. However, in the circumstances it was responsible for the Council to carry on eliminating the need for non-essential face-to-face contact whilst still allowing transparent and participative decision-making to take place. He said the Council had to strike a balance between the COVID legislation and its other duties, including under health and safety legislation.

He added the proposals set out in the report continue with some aspects of the temporary changes to the constitution that Council agreed on 21 April 2020 and would apply for the period to 31 July 2021 only.

In conclusion, he said the annual meeting would be held remotely, as scheduled, on 12 May 2021. The Council would revert to its "normal" arrangements for the end time of meetings at 10pm and for motions and questions that applied prior to 21 April 2020. So, there would be up to 30 minutes for questions including the ability to ask a supplementary question. The other minor changes to the consultation that were agreed last April would continue as well.

The Deputy Leader seconded the proposals. She said that the Council had to continue to take the necessary precautions, as it would not be an ideal situation to have one meeting spread across a number of rooms.

Councillor S Chambers joined the meeting at 6.10pm

The Leader of the Conservative group, Councillor M Hart, said that the group would be supporting the recommendations. He said they particularly welcomed the proposals for reverting back to "normal" arrangements regarding the end time of meetings and the ability to ask a supplementary question. He said in his view there was no point in having a hybrid model. It would be farcical for everybody to be in different rooms at Wyre Forest House. Therefore the group is prepared to support dealing with the matter by full Council in May and July being held virtually until we can revert to safe face-to-face meetings.

The vote was carried unanimously.

Decision: Council AGREED the following temporary changes to its Constitution which would apply until 31 July 2021:

(a) the revised Section 7: Council Procedure Rules in Appendix 1;

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- (b) the changes to other parts of the Constitution, set out in paragraphs 2.3.2 to 2.3.5 of the report agreed by Council on 21 April 2020.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.14pm.

The full meetings are available for viewing on the Council's website
<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/53298>

Chairman's List of Functions – 2020/21

MARCH 2021

-

APRIL 2021

16/04 Service of evening worship (HRH Duke of Edinburgh)
– Worcester Cathedral

16/04 Official Opening of Nisa Local - Habberley

17/04 Memorial Service

MAY 2021

* Denotes attendance by Vice Chairman

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

12TH MAY 2021

Political and Constitutional Structures 2021/2022

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

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the Political and Constitutional Structures for the municipal year 2021/2022

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

The Council is asked to:

- 2.1 **Agree the revisions to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1**
- 2.2 **Approve the proposed Political Management Structure of committees for 2021/2022 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.**
- 2.3 **Agree the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees as contained in Appendix 3.**
- 2.4 **Adopt the Municipal Calendar as set out in Appendix 4.**
- 2.5 **Agree the appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 6.**
- 2.6 **Authorise the Solicitor to the Council to settle any outstanding details relating to the political structures and to make changes as necessary to the Council's Constitution to give effect to the Council's decisions and any other revisions necessary to reflect needs or circumstances.**

3. **BACKGROUND**

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

Vice-Chairmen of Committees at its meeting on 22 May 2019. Apart from changes agreed at the Council’s meetings in September 2020 and February 2021, they have continued to serve for the municipal year 2020/21 because no annual general meeting was held in 2020, as a result of COVID-19.

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

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 No group secured a majority as a result of the elections on 2 May 2019. And there have been a number of changes in constitution and membership of groups since then. Two of the groups have come together to form the “Progressive Alliance” but the allocation of seats in accordance with political balance will be based on the five groups that exist. The Progressive Alliance’s proposals for the 2021/2022 political structure are detailed in Appendix 2.

Political Balance

- 4.2 Council approved the political balance shown in appendix 5 at its meeting on 24 February 2021. There have been no changes since that date so Council is not required to re-calculate political balance. Councillors have formed themselves into political groups of the following numbers.

Conservative	12
Health Concern	12
Independent	4
Liberal Democrat	3
Labour	2

Legislation requires that the aggregate allocation of committee seats must be in accordance with the principles of political balance and proportionality. Subject to this,

individual committee membership should reflect the political balance of the Council as far as practicable. Council can depart from these principles provided no member votes against doing so. As usual, it is not possible to achieve precise political balance. The political balance of committees is set out in Appendix 5 for Council's information.

Amendments to Constitution

- 4.3 Two amendments to the constitution are set out in Appendix 1 for the Council's approval.
- 4.3.1 The proposed terms of reference for the Strategic Review Panel for the 2021-22 municipal year are based heavily on the approach of previous years.
- 4.3.2 In light of the move to more homeworking, the availability of officers to deal with the procedural sealing of legal documents will very much be determined by the timings of the transaction. Since the temporary changes to the council procedure roles were introduced, the requirement for the Chairman to sign documents has been removed and they are only signed by authorised signatories, being the Solicitor to the Council or officers that she authorises. This has enabled transactions to be completed much more efficiently and, where necessary, on short notice where historically a matter could not be concluded until the Chairman or Vice Chairman was available to attend the offices. It is proposed that this become a permanent arrangement as has been the case for some time with other councils, such as Worcestershire County Council, where only an officer is required to attest the seal.

It is therefore proposed that section 7.2 Sealing/Execution of Documents, of the Council Procedure Rules (Standing Orders) be made as a permanent change, when the remainder of the Council Procedure Rules revert to their previous format from the end of July.

Committee Appointments

- 4.4 After determining its political structures and allocations of seats to committees, Council must appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to committees. The nominations for these posts are set out in Appendix 3. The Solicitor to the Council will fill other seats in accordance with the nominations from the respective political Groups.

Municipal Calendar

- 4.5 The calendar of meetings for 2021/2022, attached at Appendix 4, has been prepared based on the Council's proposed decision-making structure and in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Outside appointments

- 4.6 Each year the Council appoints Members as representatives on a number of outside bodies. Council appointed Members at its meeting on 22nd May 2019 and they have continued to serve for the municipal year 2020/21 because no annual general meeting was held in 2020, as a result of COVID-19.

The attached schedule at Appendix 6 details the appointments due at this time and the number of nominations required for each body. Members will note that the

appointments are made for the municipal year 2021/2022 unless otherwise annotated.

- 4.7 The schedule in Appendix 6 sets out the proposals for who should be appointed in each case. The proposals have been shared with Group Leaders.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no significant risks associated with the proposed political management structure for 2021/2022.

9. CONCLUSION

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

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 The Chief Executive.
- 10.2 Group Leaders – in respect of the municipal calendar (March 2021) and appointments to outside bodies

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Appendix 1 – Amendments to the Constitution

Section 5 – Terms of Reference

13. Strategic Review Panel

The Panel will perform an advisory role on a range of issues including some that may be confidential during policy development and prior to formal decision-making and announcement. The Panel's papers will not therefore be published, although they will be available for all members of the Council.

Membership: nine members, to be allocated in accordance with political balance. The membership includes the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the review panel who will be appointed by full Council. As an advisory panel, the Panel's membership does not count towards the statutory calculations of political balance.

All other councillors have the right attend. Flexibility will be exercised by the Chairman regarding substitutions.

Purpose: To consider each year the Cabinet's proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy, capital strategy and budget options, and to provide recommendations to Cabinet for its meeting in December each year to inform the Cabinet's proposed strategy and budget and for the meeting in February each year in respect of any alternative budget proposals. To act as a cross-party sounding board for other strategic change proposals, including considering any proposals that may be made to amend the Corporate Plan for 2021-2023. The work of the Panel will be undertaken within the context of the Council's approach to transformation as set out in the Wyre Forest Forward programme. The Panel should take account of the latest information about the Council's financial position and revised projections of future Government funding in formulating its recommendations.

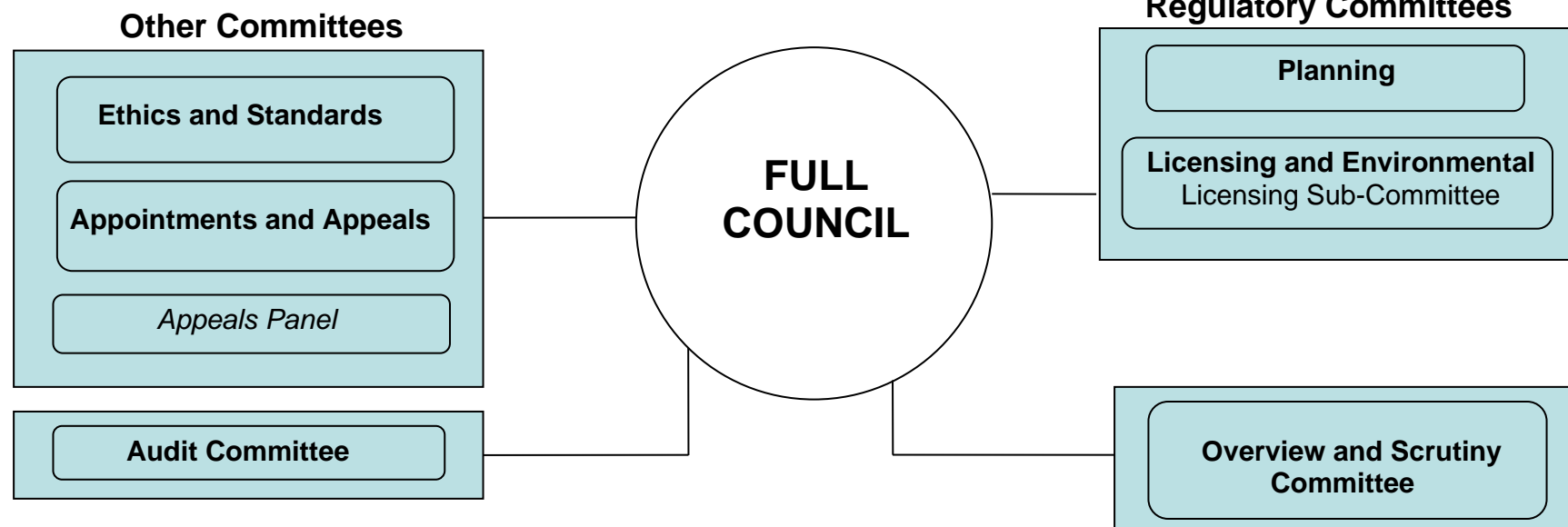
Section 7 Council Procedure Rules (Standing Orders)

7.2 Sealing/Execution of Documents

- (i) The Common Seal of the Council shall not be affixed to any documents unless the sealing has been authorised by a resolution of the Council or of a Committee to which the Council has delegated the powers to do so, but a resolution of the Council (or of a Committee which has been given the power) authorising the acceptance of any tender, the purchase, sale, letting, or taking of any property, the issue of any stock, the presentation of any Petition, Memorial, or Address, the making of any rate or contract, or the doing of any other thing, shall be a sufficient authority for sealing any document necessary to give effect to the resolution.
- (ii) The affixing of the Seal shall be attested by the following person: the Solicitor to the Council or her authorised representative, and an entry of every sealing of a document shall be made and consecutively numbered in a register kept for the purpose and shall be signed or initialed by the persons who have attested the Seal (in all cases signing electronically where permissible).
- (iii) Wherever legally permissible, any document that is required to be executed by the Solicitor to the Council or her authorised officer, may be executed by using an electronic signature



Political Structure May 2021



The Cabinet

Membership and portfolios of Cabinet members to be announced by the Leader appointed on 12 May 2021.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS
WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
COMMITTEES 2021/2022

<p>Appointments and Appeals Committee</p> <p>Chairman: Vice-Chairman:</p>	<p>Leader of the Council Deputy Leader</p>
<p>Audit Committee</p> <p>Chairman: Vice-Chairman:</p>	<p>Councillor Roger Coleman Councillor Young</p>
<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Chairman: Vice-Chairman:</p>	<p>Councillor Hart Councillor Rook</p>
<p>Licensing and Environmental Committee</p> <p>Chairman: Vice-Chairman:</p>	<p>Councillor Peter Dyke Councillor Anna Coleman</p>
<p>Licensing Sub-Committee</p>	<p>A rota of 3 Members of the Licensing and Environmental Committee, including, and Chaired by, the Committee's Chairman or Vice-Chairman.</p>
<p>Planning Committee</p> <p>Chairman: Vice-Chairman:</p>	<p>Councillor Edginton-White Councillor Barnett</p>
<p>Ethics and Standards Committee</p> <p>Chairman: Vice-Chairman:</p>	<p>Councillor L'Huillier Councillor Griffiths</p>
<p>Local Plans Review Panel</p> <p>Chairman: Vice-Chairman:</p>	<p>Councillor Harrison Councillor Sheppard</p>

Strategic Review Panel Chairman: Vice-Chairman:	Leader of the Council Deputy Leader
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MAY 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3 Bank Holiday	4 CLT	5	6 WCC, PCC and Kidderminster Town Council Elections	7 WCC & KTC elections - count	8	9
10 PCC election - count	11	12 6pm Council	13 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	14	15	16
17	18 CLT 6pm Planning	19 4.30pm Group Leaders 6pm Cabinet	20	21 10am Cabinet Advisory Panel – Green Agenda	22	23
24	25 Cabinet/CLT	26 6pm Audit	27	28	29	30
31 Bank Holiday						

JUNE 2021

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

JULY 2021

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

AUGUST 2021

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

SEPTEMBER 2021

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

* TMRP meeting & training to be programmed in

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

OCTOBER 2021

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

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

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

NOVEMBER 2021

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

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

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

DECEMBER 2021

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

JANUARY 2022

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

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

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

FEBRUARY 2022

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

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

MARCH 2022

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

APRIL 2022

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

MAY 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2 Bank Holiday	3 CLT	4	5 Ordinary day of elections – none are scheduled	6	7	8
9	10	11 6pm Council	12 6pm Overview & Scrutiny	13	14	15
16	17 CLT 6pm Planning	18 4.30pm Group Leaders 6pm Cabinet	19	20	21	22
23	24 Cabinet/CLT	25 6pm Audit	26	27	28	29
30 (Bank Holiday moved to 2/6/22)	31 CLT					

JUNE 2022

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

Agenda Item No. 15 Appendix 4

JULY 2022

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

		Conservative		Labour		Health Concern		Independent		Lib Dem		Total
No. of Cllrs.			12		2		12		4		3	33
Percentage			36.36%		6.06%		36.36%		12.12%		9.09%	100.00%
Executive Cttees												
	Membership											
Appts & Appeals	5	2	1.82	0	0.30	2	1.82	1	0.61	0	0.45	5
Audit cttee	8	3	2.91	0	0.48	3	2.91	1	0.97	1	0.73	8
Ethics & standards *	6	2	2.18	0	0.36	2	2.18	1	0.73	1	0.55	6
Scrutiny												
Scrutiny Committee	11	4	4.00	1	0.67	4	4.00	1	1.33	1	1.00	11
Regulatory												
Planning	12	4	4.36	1	0.73	4	4.36	2	1.45	1	1.09	12
Lic & Env	12	4	4.36	1	0.73	4	4.36	2	1.45	1	1.09	12
Total	54	19	19.64	3	3.27	19	19.64	8	6.55	5	4.91	54
Percentage		35.19%		5.56%		35.19%		14.81%		9.26%		100.00%
Difference between % No. of Cllrs. And % Number of Seats		-1.18%		-0.51%		-1.18%		2.69%		0.17%		

* the table shows only district councillor members

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

Representation on Outside Bodies 2021/2022

External Body	Representative 2020/2021	Representative 2021/2022	Number of Representatives
Age UK	Councillor Susie Griffiths	Councillor Susie Griffiths	1 Councillor
Bewdley Development Trust	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	1 Councillor
Bewdley Museum Management Committee	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Paul Harrison Councillor Anna Coleman	Relevant Cabinet Member Councillor Paul Harrison Councillor Anna Coleman	Relevant Cabinet Member plus 2 Bewdley & Rock Ward or Wribbenhall & Arley Ward Councillors
Sir Edward Blount's Charity (operates as Witnell Blount Charity)	Councillor Graham Ballinger (appointed November 2019 until next ordinary elections in 2023 – resigned late 2020)	Vacancy	Requirement is to appoint a “competent person” who “may be but need not be a member of the council” (The charity’s main role is operating and maintaining six almshouses in Franche & Habberley North Ward.)
District Councils' Network	Councillor Graham Ballinger Substitute: Councillor Helen Dyke	Leader, Deputy Leader as named substitute	Leader, Deputy Leader as named substitute
Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Marcus Hart Substitute: Councillor Sally Chambers	Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee Substitute: Vice Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1 Councillor and 1 named substitute (not Members of the Cabinet)

External Body	Representative 2020/2021	Representative 2021/2022	Number of Representatives
Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Supervisory Board (Joint Committee)	Councillor Graham Ballinger Substitute: Councillor Helen Dyke	Leader, Cabinet Member as named substitute	Leader, Cabinet Member as named substitute
Kidderminster and District Youth Trust	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Mary Rayner Councillor Anna L'Huillier	Councillor Graham Ballinger Councillor Mary Rayner Councillor Anna L'Huillier	3 Councillors
Local Government Association General Assembly	Councillor Graham Ballinger	Leader of the Council	Leader of the Council
National Parking Adjudication Joint Committee	Councillor John Thomas Substitute: Councillor Fran Oborski	Relevant Cabinet Member Substitute: Cabinet Member to be appointed by Leader	Relevant Cabinet Member, 1 Councillor as named substitute
Stourport Forward Board	Councillor Claire Barnett	Councillor Claire Barnett	1 Stourport Councillor / 1 Officer
The Elizabeth Mills Centre (formerly Stourport Day Centre)	Councillor Dixon Sheppard	Councillor Dixon Sheppard	1 Stourport Councillor
10:32 Wyre Forest Early Help (formerly Tree Tops Sure Start Children's Centre)	Councillor Sally Chambers	Councillor Sally Chambers	1 Foley Park and Hoobrook Ward Member
West Mercia Police and Crime Panel	Councillor Helen Dyke	Relevant Cabinet Member	1 Councillor

External Body	Representative 2020/2021	Representative 2021/2022	Number of Representatives
West Midlands LGA	Councillor Graham Ballinger	Leader of the Council	Leader of the Council
Worcestershire County Council Corporate Parenting Board	Councillor Helen Dyke	Councillor Fran Oborski	1 Councillor (Expectations from WCC: Relevant Cabinet Member or Councillor with relevant experience)
Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	Councillor Calne Edginton-White	1 Councillor
Worcestershire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board – co-opted member for scrutiny of Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership	Councillor Graham Ballinger	Cabinet Member to be appointed by Leader	1 Councillor
Worcestershire County Waste Forum	Councillor John Thomas	Relevant Cabinet Member	Relevant Cabinet Member
Worcestershire Health Improvement Group	Councillor Nicky Martin	Relevant Cabinet Member	Relevant Cabinet Member
Worcestershire Leaders Board	Councillor Graham Ballinger Substitute: Councillor Helen Dyke	Leader, Deputy Leader as named substitute	Leader, Deputy Leader as named substitute
Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Peter Dyke	Relevant Cabinet Member Chairman of Licensing & Environmental Committee	2 Councillors (Past practice: Relevant Cabinet Member & Chairman of Licensing & Environmental Committee)

External Body	Representative 2020/2021	Representative 2021/2022	Number of Representatives
Wyre Forest Citizen's Advice Bureau - Management Committee	Councillor Shazu Miah	Councillor Shazu Miah	1 Councillor
Wyre Forest Community Leisure Association Ltd - Local Partnership Board	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Anna L'Huillier	Relevant Cabinet Member Councillor Anna L'Huillier	2 Councillors / 2 Officers
Wyre Forest Local Children and Young People's Trust	Councillor Helen Dyke Councillor Susie Griffiths	Relevant Cabinet Member Councillor Susie Griffiths	2 Councillors including relevant Cabinet Member / 1 Officer
Wyre Forest Nightstop and Mediation Service Management Committee	Councillor Nicky Martin	Relevant Cabinet Member	Relevant Cabinet Member

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

The Leaders of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest will agree North Worcestershire representation on the bodies below for 2021/2022.

External Body	Representative 2020/2021 (position from 25 January 2021)	Representative 2021/2022
Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP)	Councillor Karen May (Bromsgrove) Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy Committee (ESIF)	Vacancy Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Worcestershire LEP	Vacancy Sub: Councillor Karen May (Bromsgrove)	
Worcestershire Local Transport Board (WLTB)	Councillor Adam Kent (Bromsgrove) Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Worcestershire ESIF Committee	Vacancy Sub: Councillor Matt Dormer (Redditch)	
Worcestershire Health and Well-being Board	Councillor Shirley Webb (Bromsgrove) Sub: Councillor Julian Grubb (Redditch)	
Worcestershire Local Access Forum	Councillor Julian Grubb (Redditch)	

Armed Forces Champions (for information)

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

	2020/2021	2021/2022
Armed Forces Champion	Councillor Nicky Gale Councillor Susie Griffiths	To be appointed by Leader elected on 12 May 2021

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

Name	Attendance Percentage for 2020/21	Number of Meetings Attended
Cllr John Aston	84%	16/19
Cllr Graham Ballinger	100%	19/19
Cllr Claire Barnett	86%	19/22
Cllr John Byng	100%	15/15
Cllr Vicky Caulfield	97%	31/32
Cllr Sally Chambers	96%	23/24
Cllr Anna Coleman	100%	21/21
Cllr Roger Coleman	100%	14/14
Cllr Berenice Dawes	100%	19/19
Cllr Nathan Desmond	97%	28/29
Cllr Helen Dyke	100%	17/17
Cllr Peter Dyke	100%	15/15
Cllr Calne Edginton-White	100%	31/31
Cllr Nicky Gale	80%	8/10
Cllr Susie Griffiths	100%	20/20
Cllr Ian Hardiman	100%	15/15
Cllr Paul Harrison	100%	19/19
Cllr Marcus Hart	100%	32/32
Cllr Ken Henderson	100%	10/10
Cllr Lisa Jones	95%	18/19
Cllr Anna L'Huillier	87%	13/15
Cllr Nicky Martin	96%	22/23
Cllr Shazu Miah	100%	32/32
Cllr Fran Oborski	100%	29/29
Cllr Tracey Onslow	100%	19/19
Cllr Mary Rayner	97%	32/33
Cllr Chris Rogers	97%	31/32
Cllr Sarah Rook	100%	20/20
Cllr Dixon Sheppard	84%	16/19
Cllr John Thomas	94%	32/34
Cllr Alan Totty	100%	16/16
Cllr Leigh Whitehouse	96%	24/25
Cllr Peter Young	100%	17/17

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

Cabinet

Annual Report 2020/2021

Report from the Leader

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

The municipal year 2020/2021 has yet again been a very exciting and busy year for Wyre Forest District Council.

However, the excitement has been tarnished by what has happened particularly relating to Covid-19. Throughout the district I am sure there is not a family that has not been affected by the aftermath of the pandemic and our thoughts and prayers are with all those people. With the continued success of the vaccination programme, I hope that there can be some return to normal in the not too distant future.

As a Council we continue to have a lot of compliments on the way we operate and the way our staff are working. The whole Council staff of Wyre Forest have done what they can for the public of Wyre Forest during these very difficult circumstances. I would like to pay tribute to the efforts that Worcestershire Regulatory Services are making as part of the "One Worcestershire" response to the pandemic, supporting work on test and trace, undertaking enforcement work and also hosting Worcestershire's COVID advisors, posts which have been funded by the district councils by pooling Government funding.

On Boxing Day, we had the excellent news of the £20.5m grant from the Future High Streets Fund – the single largest competitive grant award secured by the District Council in its history. The hard work on implementing the exciting projects that form part of our bid is already under way. I would like to pay tribute to everyone who has been involved in achieving the successful grant award; in particular Ostap Paparega and Jon Elmer in North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration and Mike Parker, the Corporate Director.

I am pleased to report about other significant developments in the District that have been completed or are on their way to completion. They include:

- the Churchfields highway scheme which was completed by Worcestershire County Council last month but funded with a Homes England grant of £3m secured by the District Council together with contributions from our two local enterprise partnerships;
- major investments at Silverwoods by Community Housing Group in 65 independent living apartments in phase 2 of Berrington Court and by Birton Firtop in their new manufacturing facility; and
- the County Council's improvements at the Hoobrook roundabout, to reduce congestion.

Agenda Item No. 17 (a)

It was very disappointing to see local residents and businesses being affected again by flooding following Storm Christoph in January. I would like to thank the Council's staff for their assistance to those who were affected, both immediately and as part of the clear up. I wrote to the Secretary of State, George Eustice, to press the case again for Government funding for permanent flood defences to protect Beale's Corner.

During the year I have made changes to the membership of the Cabinet. I would like to extend thanks again to Councillor Fran Oborski for her contribution to the work of the Cabinet in the period from May 2019 to January 2021. I made some changes to portfolios including appointing Councillor Helen Dyke as Deputy Leader and appointed Councillor Mary Rayner who took over the finance portfolio from me. I informed Council in February of my decision to resign as Leader at the time of the AGM in May. My term of office as Leader ends in May 2023 and now that we have reached almost the half way point in the life of this council, I have decided to stand aside in order to allow for transition to new leadership.

When I was re-elected to the council in May 2019, I was honoured to work with colleagues in various political parties and groups to form the Progressive Alliance and to secure a change in the Council's political direction and leadership, and it was a deeply personal honour to be elected as leader in May 2019 – almost 35 years after I had last held that office.

Much has happened over the last two years, and much has changed. All councillors can be proud of what has been done in maintaining services and securing investments and improvements in Wyre Forest, notwithstanding the impact of the pandemic over the last 12 months.

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

Councillor Graham Ballinger
Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategy, Culture and Leisure

Wyre Forest District Council
Annual Scrutiny Report
2020/2021



Foreword of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

This is now my second annual report as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As I stated in my report last year, I very much feel that scrutiny should be professional and inclusive debate, discussion and sometimes interrogation of the executive on policy decisions. Indeed, scrutiny should also not be just about the opposition or indeed members of the administration opposing things for opposition's sake as indeed there are many policy proposals that come before scrutiny that are often unanimously supported. This has certainly been true again this year.

Wyre Forest has a rich history of involving the scrutiny committee in advance of decision making to allow recommendations to go on and be considered by the executive decision makers in advance as opposed to retrospectively. I am very pleased that this convention has continued this year.

I am very pleased that our meetings which are, of course, made up of a cross party membership and politically balanced as the legislation requires are good natured with all members of the committee actively participating. The committee was made up of 10 councillors; 4 Conservative members, 2 HC members, 1 Labour member, 1 Liberal Democrat member, and 2 Independent members, but then as a result of the changes made to the political balance as a result of certain group changes, under the revised political balance Labour were not to have a seat and therefore Council approved an increased committee of 11 members at its February meeting. The committee therefore now has 11 members, 4 Conservatives, 3 HC, 2 Independents, 1 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat. We have recently welcomed Cllr. Anna L'Huillier as the additional HC member and Cllr. Peter Dyke, replacing Cllr. Mary Rayner as she has of course been elevated to the Cabinet.

I am also very pleased that the new administration are keeping with the convention of the committee having a non-administration chairman and vice-chairman for the good governance of the council.

Our workload this year has been a busy one; it has been wide and varied and has considered matter such as housing policies, treasury management and financial matters, policies in respect of our capital portfolio fund and investment strategy and also the very important matter of our local plan. Perhaps the most important work we have undertaken this last year is our scrutiny exercise into the February 2020 flooding as a result of the unanimously supported notice of motion and also the PSPO renewal, having reached its 3 year point.

We have considered 29 reports in all.

The committee meets monthly and has met 7 times this municipal year.

There have been 3 meetings cancelled – as there were no items to be considered, and therefore to ensure that officer resource and member time is

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used most efficiently and not wasted, the Chairman in consultation with the Committee members decided to cancel the meetings.

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

However, we have held 3 additional meetings and so met 10 times over the year.

Clearly, as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, things have certainly been different in 2020-2021 but with the support of our IT team we have been able to all fully participate using virtual meetings and indeed we have had a number of members of the public give evidence virtually to us in public participation, both in respect of flooding and also the PSPO in particular addressing us in respect of dogs. We have also had witnesses give evidence from the Environment Agency, Worcestershire County Council, Severn Trent, West Mercia Police and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

I do, however, look forward to us getting back to normal as best we can and as soon as we can to have a busy 2021-2022.

Finally I would, on behalf of myself and the entire committee, wish to thank all of the officers who have presented reports and taken questions and in particular to Sian Burford and Louisa Bright, our committee clerks.

Councillor Marcus J. Hart



Scrutiny at Wyre Forest

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

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

Review Panels

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

The following Panels have taken place during the 2020/2021 year:

Name	No. of meetings	Purpose
Treasury Management	3	Allowed detailed scrutiny and training in respect of treasury management. Recommendations from the Panel were made to Council via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Fireworks Review Panel	2 to date – will continue into the 2021/2022 municipal year	Following a scrutiny proposal form submitted by a member regarding loud fireworks and the distress it causes to vulnerable people and animals, a review commenced to examine the current legal framework on the use of fireworks and fully explore the situation across the district with a view to recommending appropriate ways to deal with the issues identified as part of the review.

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. There were no concerns raised over outstanding recommendations. The tracking recommendations from this year's Committee will be received 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: CommitteeSection@wyreforestdc.gov.uk telephone: 01562 732763, or in writing to Democratic Services, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster DY10 7WF.

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

Terms of Reference - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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



discharged in another way.

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.

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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 2020/2021

In February 2021, Council appointed me as Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2020-2021. Up to that date I was the Vice-Chairman of the Committee; a role I was first appointed to in May 2019.

The Ethics and Standards Committee has met once during the 2020-2021 municipal year to agree generic dispensations for all members for a period of 4 years.

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

The Committee are scheduled to consider the Local Government Association (LGA) Member Code of Conduct in the next municipal year and intends to provide the very latest version of Code of Conduct Training for all members at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor Anna L'Huillier

Chairman – Ethics and Standards Committee

Role of the Standards Committee / Terms of Reference

1. Promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members.
2. Assists the councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.
3. Advises the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.
4. Monitors the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.
5. Advises, trains or arranges to train councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.
6. Considers complaints against any member relating to alleged breach of the Code of Conduct, to make findings of fact and decisions in respect of the action to be taken, and where necessary to make recommendations to full Council.
7. Grants dispensations, if necessary, to councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.
8. Exercises (1) to (6) above in relation to the parish councils' wholly or mainly within the Wyre Forest District area and the members of those parish councils'.

9. Recommends approval and adoption of relevant codes, plans and policies.
10. Oversees the Whistle Blowing Policy.
11. Oversees the complaints handling and Ombudsman investigations.
12. Keeps the operation of the constitution under review so far as it relates to ethics and standards of behaviour.

Member Activity Reports

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

Membership of the Ethics and Standards Committee

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

Chairman: Councillor A L'Huillier
Vice-Chairman: Vacant

Councillors: B Dawes, S Griffiths, I Hardiman, S Miah and M Rayner

Independent Members: R Reynolds and Rev J A Cox
Parish Council representatives: Councillors R Drew, D Killingworth and
W Mack

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
12TH MAY 2021

POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK
MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A DECISION BY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET
22ND DECEMBER 2020

Purpose of Report

To consider recommendations from the Cabinet on matters outside the policy framework or approved budget of the Council.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Would Councillors please note that the related reports and documents have not been included in the Council book, as they have already been sent to Members via the Cabinet agenda. A public inspection copy is available on request. The policy documents, referred to below, have been posted on the Council's website. See the report on page 143 of the pdf at this link:

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc56260_20201222_cabinet_agenda.pdf

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL	CABINET MEMBER
<p>Capital Strategy 2021-31</p> <p>The Cabinet RECOMMEND to Council that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegation of authority to Cabinet to make amendments to the Capital Programme in instances where the Council receives external capital grants and the full amount of the grants to be distributed is met from the external funding source. 2. Delegation to the Corporate Director: Resources and Corporate Director Economic Prosperity and Place to make revisions to the Capital Portfolio Strategy and Asset Management Strategy in order to comply with best practice and latest relevant guidance. 	<p>Leader of the Council / Relevant Cabinet Member</p>