

Open

Council

Agenda

6pm
Wednesday, 15 July 2026
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Council

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COUNCIL MEETING

7 July 2026

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND HONORARY ALDERMEN

PRESS AND PUBLIC

Dear Member

YOU ARE INVITED to attend a meeting of the Wyre Forest District Council to be held **at 6.00p.m. on Wednesday 15 July 2026**, in the Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster.

The Agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Yours sincerely

IRMiller

Ian Miller
Chief Executive

Disclosure of Interests

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider in ADVANCE of each meeting whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer or other legal officer in good time before the meeting.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPIs and ORIs at the meeting. Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted an advance dispensation.

Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the MEMBER to decide whether disclosure is required. Again please ensure you have spoken in ADVANCE to the relevant legal officer and determined whether it is appropriate to declare the NRI and leave.

Conduct at formal meetings

Members are reminded that whilst they may differ from time to time on political views, it is important that they always treat each other with respect.

Debate can be robust without being personal or unkind.

Members help is appreciated in ensuring the highest standards of conduct at formal meetings.

(A) TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL

The Council

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

(B) MATTERS RESERVED TO THE COUNCIL

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

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

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

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* Unless there are no reports in the open session.

Wyre Forest District Council

Council

Wednesday, 15 July 2026

Council Chamber

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Prayers To be read by Rev. David Hildred, Team Rector, Kidderminster East.	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the last meeting held on 13 May 2026.	9
5.	Public Participation In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 6 July 2026. No requests for public participation were received by the deadline. <i>If you wish to speak on an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline and you could not reasonably have known about it at the time, you should register your interest in speaking no later than 9am on the day of the meeting of Council. In the case of a request to speak on an urgent matter, the Director of Legal & Governance will rule on whether or not the matter is urgent and that ruling will be final.</i>	
6.	Chairman's Communications To note the engagements of the Chairman of the Council since the Council's last meeting.	19

7.	Leader of the Council Announcements To receive announcements from the Leader of the Council.	
8.	Amendments to the Constitution – Delegation Scheme for Licensing To receive a report from the Chief Executive to agree amendments to the delegation scheme for licensing in Section 4 of the Constitution.	20
9.	Mileage Allowances To receive a report from the Chief Executive To consider aligning mileage allowances for staff and members with the HMRC approved rate.	24
10.	Appointments to outside bodies To receive a report from the Chief Executive to consider changes to appointments to outside bodies.	30
11.	Questions To receive questions submitted by Members of the Council and the replies of the Leader of the Council, or relevant Cabinet Member, in accordance with Standing Order 1.9, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 6 July 2026. Six questions have been received by the deadline. <i>In the case of an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline above, and could not have been reasonably known at that time, it must be delivered in writing to the Director of Legal & Governance no later than 9am on the day of Council.</i>	33
12.	Motions Submitted under Standing Orders To consider Motions in the order in which notice has been received. No motions were received by the deadline.	
13.	Emergency Motions submitted under Standing Orders To consider Emergency Motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.1 (i).	
14.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal & Governance 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.	

15.	Exclusion of the Press and Public To consider passing the following resolution: “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”.	
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Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

16.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal & Governance before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER**

13 MAY 2026 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: P Harrison (Chairman), G Connolly (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, E Bourne, J F Byng, L Carroll, V Caulfield, N J Desmond, R Drew, H E Dyke, P Dyke, K Gale, N Gale, J Griffiths, I Hardiman, M J Hart, K Henderson, D Little, N Martin, M McDonnell, S Miah, D Morehead, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, D Ross, D Russell, L Whitehouse, N Wilson and P W M Young.

C.01 Prayers

Prayers were said by Rev Sallie Butcher of Wyre Forest West (Baynton, Clows Top, Far Forest, Heightington, Mamble and Rock).

C.02 Election of Chairman

Councillor G Connolly was nominated as Chairman. This was moved by Councillor M Hart and seconded by Councillor D Ross.

Decision: Councillor G Connolly be elected as Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2026/2027.

C.03 Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

After being invested with his Chain of Office, Councillor G Connolly made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman.

C.04 Chairman's Response

The Chairman thanked members for this appointment. He said it was a great pleasure and privilege to be elected as Chairman of the Council. He announced that his chosen charity for the municipal year was Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA).

C.05 Retiring Chairman

On behalf of the political groups: Conservative Group, Councillor M Hart, Independent and Green Group, Councillor H Dyke, Labour Group, Councillor L Carroll and Liberal Party Group, Councillor F Oborski MBE thanked the retiring Chairman for his contribution to the role during his term of office. He was praised for the calm and measured way he had chaired the meetings during the year.

Councillor P Harrison thanked members for their kind words. He said he

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had done his best to represent the Council and show civic pride in Wyre Forest by attending more than 70 engagements during his term of office. He was pleased to announce that he had raised just under £3000 for his chosen charity, Citizens Advice Wyre Forest.

C.06 Election of Vice-Chairman

Councillor M Hart nominated Councillor K Henderson as Vice-Chairman. This was seconded by Councillor D Ross.

Decision: Councillor K Henderson be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2026/2027.

C.07 Vice-Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

After being invested with his Badge of Office, Councillor K Henderson made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

C.08 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: B Brookes and A Sutton.

C.09 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor M Hart declared for openness and transparency, in respect of agenda item 19 – notice of emergency motion, that he is a season ticket holder of Kidderminster Harriers football club.

Councillor F Oborski MBE declared in respect of agenda item 19 – notice of emergency motion, that she is a season ticket holder and player sponsor of Kidderminster Harriers football club.

Councillor P Young declared in respect of agenda item 19 – notice of emergency motion, that he is a season ticket holder of Kidderminster Harriers football club.

Councillor L Carroll declared in respect of agenda item 19 – notice of emergency motion, that he is a volunteer for Kidderminster Harriers football club. He takes no payment from the club for his duties.

C.10 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following:

C.77 Policy and Budget Framework - Recommendations from Cabinet, 11 February 2026 - Food Waste Collections

The words 'by majority' be added to the final sentence before the decision.

C.11 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

C.12 Chairman's Communications

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

C.13 Leader of the Council Announcements

The Leader of the Council referred members to his tabled report. A copy of the announcements is available for viewing on the Council's website.

https://forms.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/docs/doc61352_20260513_council_report.pdf

C.14 Political and Constitutional Structures 2026/2027

Council considered a report from the Director of Legal & Governance on the proposed political and constitutional structures for the municipal year 2026/2027.

The Leader presented the report and formally moved the full suite of recommendations as set out in the report for approval. Councillor D Ross seconded the proposals.

Upon a vote, the recommendations were agreed.

Decision: Council;

- 1.1 AGREED the revisions to the Constitution as set out in section 4 and Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 1.2 APPROVED the proposed Political Management Structure of committees for 2026/2027 as set out in Appendix 2.**
- 1.3 AGREED the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of committees as contained in Appendix 3.**
- 1.4 ADOPTED the Municipal Calendar as set out in Appendix 4.**
- 1.5 AGREED the appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 5.**
- 1.6 APPROVED the revised table of political balance in Appendix 6.**
- 1.7 AUTHORISED the Director of Legal & Governance 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.**

C.15 Members' Annual Activity Reports and Attendance 2025/2026

Council received the schedule of Members' Annual Reports giving details of their activities in their role as District Councillors for the 2025/2026 municipal year and a record of Members' attendance for the 2025/2026 municipal year.

Decision: The reports and attendance be noted.

C.16 Annual Reports for the Municipal Year 2025/2026

(a) Cabinet

(b) Overview & Scrutiny Committee

(c) Ethics & Standards Committee

(d) Audit Committee

Council received the annual reports from the Leader of the Council and the Chairmen of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Ethics & Standards Committee and Audit Committee.

Decision: The annual reports for Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Ethics & Standards Committee and Audit Committee be noted.

C.17 Questions

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

The Chairman announced that question five had been withdrawn.

1. Question from Councillor L Whitehouse to the Leader of the Council

Given the fairly recent decisions by two members of your group to step away and sit as non-aligned councillors, how do you interpret this shift, does it reflect isolated personal choices or does it point to deeper concerns about political leadership, direction or internal cohesion within your group that merit public explanation?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

The fact that I was elected unanimously again at the Conservative Group's annual meeting shows what the administration feels about the leadership of this council. I think your question would be better directed further up the road at Worcestershire County Council.

I will try and answer your question in the spirit in which it is intended. I genuinely believe that it relates to the former and not the latter. It would not be appropriate or necessary for me to provide a live and running commentary on the mechanisms of the Conservative Group and I do not feel it deserves any further public explanation.

Supplementary question

Unless I am interpreting his response incorrectly, it would appear to me that it is the individual circumstances rather than wider issues. My question back to the Leader is, what specific steps is he taking to reassure both the remaining group members and the public that there is no underlying breakdown in communication, trust or shared direction within his Cabinet?

Answer

You might already know the answer to that, but I am not entirely persuaded or indeed think that I have ever known a situation where Leaders of Councils and Leaders of political groups discuss what goes on in their private group meetings and provide a running commentary.

I am very proud and delighted that when I was elected as Leader of this Council, I was a member of the Conservative party and a member of the Conservative Group on this Council, and I am still a member of the same group I was elected to serve.

It is very regrettable that two members who were elected in 2023 are no longer members of the Conservative Group; that is 2 out of 20. I know you are not a member of the Labour party now, but they lost over 1500 Councillors last Thursday and it would be better served to direct questions like this to others as opposed to simply trying to make an issue of something that really isn't an issue at all.

You will have seen from the report previously agreed, Councillor Harrison is continuing to serve on a number of outside bodies, and the Conservatives are delighted that he is doing so. The Conservatives have also gifted one of their places on the Licensing and Environmental Committee to Councillor Harrison, so I can assure you and assure all the members of the Council and members of the wider public that there are no issues whatsoever within the Conservative Group on this Council.

2. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Can the Cabinet Member tell me if the incidence of Japanese Knotweed growing in the district is being increasing or decreasing and how many outbreaks of this destructive plant are currently known?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

We do not keep a record or a register on Japanese Knotweed on private or public land within the Wyre Forest so we cannot prove if it is decreasing or increasing. It is not a legal requirement to report Japanese Knotweed. We do not believe that County Council keeps a register either but if I can be helpful in terms of Wyre Forest owned land which you may or may not be asking about.

We had 6 cases of Japanese Knotweed over the last 5 years. We are not really seeing a big increase overall. We have treated Japanese Knotweed at:

Blakemarsh Nature Reserve - this was a small area of 4 square meters,

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which is currently under treatment.

Stourport Gateway, behind the Royal Mail sorting office – this was very large, approximately 10m x 10m, and has been under treatment for circa 3 years. We believe it is finally eradicated.

Falling Sands beneath the Silverwoods Bridge – this is a large outbreak again, 10m x 10m again. It is under treatment and has significantly reduced in size.

Springfield park - it is a very small outbreak and under control.

Mitton Marsh - a small area 2m x 2m. We believe that is the latest outbreak and treatment has begun. We also had outbreak at Stourport Riverside Park on the banks of the River Severn and that is a very small area which has been treated, and we believe it has been eradicated.

We have not seen any more cases which we are aware of and therefore we have few outbreaks on our land.

Supplementary question

One of the areas you mentioned was Springfield Park, I am concerned that there might be Japanese Knotweed on any park or land that might be going to be transferred to one of the Town Councils, Can I be assured that if there is any such land about to be or possibly about to be transferred to a Town Council that you will liaise with officers of that council about the treatment before just transferring the land?

Answer

Yes, you have my assurance on that. If there is an outbreak, we will be treating it. In order to eradicate Japanese Knotweed, it is not a 5-minute process and can take 3-4 years to fully eradicate it stem by stem. If we did have an outbreak in any park, it can still be there at handover so we will do all we can to eradicate any outbreak we have.

3. Question from Councillor V Caulfield to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Following Council's decision not to proceed with mandatory food waste collections. Can the Cabinet member advise whether the government has responded to council on this decision?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

The short answer is no; we have not had any in depth response. We have had a formal response from Defra which was a very brief acknowledgement to the Chief Executive's letter of the 26th of February which was sent to the Director General for Environment at Defra following Council's decision on the 25th but no formal feedback from Government.

Supplementary question

This Council has a business waste service which I believe collects food waste. A lot of comments or the reasons for not going ahead, which I understand, was the huge cost. I am wondering now if we have a service that collects food waste from businesses, was it not looked at to see if that existing service could be expanded and thus reduce costs? The new laws for businesses came a year earlier than residential, so food waste has had to be collected from businesses for the last year or so.

Answer

The commercial food waste service is a relatively new service. Without going into the sensitivities of the business case, there is no service whether that is commercial or otherwise that would bridge the funding gap. The gap in the revenue funding is too significant that we can bridge by any commercial exercise that we undertake. To reiterate the position of the Cabinet - we have no objection in principle to food waste collection. This is far from the case. Had the sums added up, then we would have undertaken this important service. We will not be reckless and irresponsible with the public purse, and with the finances of this authority. If we did undertake this service with no Government funding for the revenue support, then this Council's finances would be in serious jeopardy. Until the Government provides significant revenue funding, we have no option but to simply defer this proposal.

4. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Can the Cabinet Member please tell me: How many abandoned vehicles have been dealt with by WFDC Staff during 2025-26 and is the number increasing or decreasing year on year?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

In the calendar year of 2025, we have processed 293 cases. Further action was taken on 143 cases, and no further action was taken on 150 cases. Of the 143 cases of further action, where 7 days notices and fixed penalty notices have been issued, resulted in 10 vehicles being physically removed by Wyre Forest District Council at a cost of £1500. From January to the end of April this year, we have processed 55 cases and taken further action on all of those cases. So far, we have removed 12 vehicles at a cost of £3281. So, we are seeing a steady increase in the number of cases we have taken further action on and also the number of vehicles we are removing. On current trend it is a 15% increase from last year to this year.

The trend is definitely upwards, if you look back at 2023, further action cases was 102, in 2024 it was 121, 2025 was 143 and if the current trend of the first 4 months continues then it will be 165 cases. By my own reckoning that is a 60% increase since 2023. So, we are definitely seeing a sharp rise on abandoned vehicles in the Wyre Forest.

Supplementary question

Is there any process by which we could, at a full recovery charge, help owners of private land where a car has been dumped?

Answer

We need to make a distinction between public and private land with abandoned vehicles. On private land, which is not open to the public and if that vehicle presents no risk to the public, then invariably no action will be taken. If it is on private land that is accessible to the public, such as a church or private car park etc. then Wyre Forest District Council will first and foremost contact the landowner and make it their responsibility. We do have powers if we think there is a public health issue such as it being set on

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fire or anything like that, then yes, we can have the necessary powers to take action. It is far easier if it is on public land. The bottom line is yes, if it ticks certain boxes, we will take action and we will work very closely with the private landowner.

5. Question from Councillor V Caulfield to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services - withdrawn.

6. Question from Councillor V Caulfield to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Can the Cabinet Member share whether any progress has been made on reducing use of glyphosate since I last asked over 6 months ago?

Answer from the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Yes, we have significantly reduced our use of herbicide across our services. In fact, we have bought no new herbicide this year. We only use herbicide where it is absolutely necessary such as along hard standing, around some path edges. We do not spray around trees, parks or play areas. Any spraying is done early in the season, which is in April and May, and done when the weather is dry and calm.

Also, as a consequence of our reduction in the use of herbicide is that we have reduced by 50%, our operatives who are trained and have licence to spray. So, we have gone from circa 6 operatives to 3 as a direct consequence of our reduction in herbicides. So yes, we have significantly reduced our use of herbicide. However, the consequence of this is obviously our maintenance in open spaces is a lot more intensive now in terms of more mowing, more trimming etc. and physically pulling the weeds so that is a direct consequence of us not using herbicide as we have done in previous years.

Supplementary question

Do you agree with me and many residents, organisations and other Councillors that this substance is not safe and that is why we have reduced it so much? We do need to find an alternative for those hard standing areas and paths.

Answer

It is a really pertinent question. I am not going to say it is not safe because it depends on what you read and it is well publicised. We have to distinguish between what the County Council does in terms of spraying all the verges, roads and pavements etc, and what we do.

Obviously, I am not here to speak for County, but they use herbicide which is heavily diluted. It is diluted 50 to 1 and they do it in the early part of the year. At the moment driving round the district there is very little weeds, there is a lot of brown singed weeds across the district.

On balance, it is the most effective way of killing mass weeds over many miles. It is the cheapest and the quickest method. In terms of other options, there are not many other options out there. You can use hot foam; however, it is extremely expensive and it is not an effective alternative. You

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can use vinegar; however, this is not healthy to the wider vegetation as it changes the pH balance of the soil.

In terms of what we do there are not many credible options or alternatives available. We have reduced it, but as I have said we still spray on hard standing surfaces which is an absolute must as there is no real credible alternative that will do such a good job.

C.18 Motions Submitted under Standing Orders

No motions were received by the deadline.

C.19 Emergency Motions submitted under Standing Orders

One emergency motion had been submitted in accordance with standing orders.

Notice of Emergency Motion from Councillor M Hart.

The Leader presented the emergency motion. Councillor F Oborski MBE seconded the proposal.

Councillor M Hart outlined the reasons for the emergency motion. He said that the promotion to the National League was a great achievement for the football club. He said that when the club does well, the town does well and he spoke about the social and economic benefits to the wider community.

A discussion on the motion ensued. Several members spoke in favour of the motion and congratulated the football club on their success.

Upon a vote, the emergency motion was unanimously agreed.

Decision: The Notice of Emergency Motion from Councillor M Hart be agreed:

This Council congratulates Kidderminster Harriers Football Club on its stunning victory away at South Shields at the National League North play off final to secure promotion to the National League.

This Council recognises the superb season long effort by all of the players, management team, coaching staff, the board and everyone involved at the club and of course all of the fans throughout the season and especially the 1,100 who made the long journey up to South Shields.

This Council recognises that football unites all members of our community and from across the political divide.

When the football club does well, Kidderminster and the wider Wyre Forest does well and has that feel good factor and going up a league will have immense social and economic benefits for the community as a whole.

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Finally, this Council invites the Chairman to liaise with the Mayor of Kidderminster to look at a potential celebration event to recognise their success.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.25pm.

Chairman's List of Functions – 2026/27

May 2026 to July 2026

2025/26 Chairman and Vice Chairman

Wed 6 th May	The Mayor of Ludlow	20's Style Dinner and Charity Auction, Castle Lodge, Ludlow
Mon 11 th May	Bewdley Town Council	Mayor Making Ceremony, St. Georges Hall, Bewdley

2026/27 Chairman and Vice Chairman

Tue 26 th May *	Redditch District Council	Mayor Making Ceremony, Parkside, Bromsgrove
Mon 1 st June	WFDC Pride Flag raising ceremony	Wyre Forest House, Kidderminster
Mon 1 st June	St. Basils civic visit	Visit to the charity, Bromsgrove Street, Kidderminster
Mon 1 st June	Jellyman's Heritage Centre Civic visit	Visit to the centre, Townshend Works, Puxton Lane, Kidderminster
Sun 14 th June	Mayor of Kidderminster Civic Sunday	St. Mary and All Saint's Church, Kidderminster
Fri 19 th June *	Mayor of Evesham Pleased To Meet you evening	Hampton Ferry, Boat Lane, Evesham
Mon 22 nd June *	Bewdley Town Council Armed Forces Flag raising ceremony	Guildhall, Bewdley
Sat 4 th July *	Wyre Forest Symphony Orchestra Hollywood in Harmony concert	Kidderminster Town Hall

* Denotes attendance by Vice Chairman

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
15 JULY 2026

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION – DELEGATION SCHEME FOR
LICENSING

OPEN	
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller Chief Executive ian.miller@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Tracey Onslow, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Arts and Community Safety
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – proposed amendments to the Constitution

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To agree amendments to the delegation scheme for licensing in Section 4 of the Constitution.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Council is asked to **AGREE** the amendments to the Constitution in Appendix 1.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 There have been a number of recent pieces of legislation on licensing that do not feature in the list of “licensing and registration functions” in Table 3 of Section 4 of the Constitution. They need to be included.
- 3.2 The first is the **Automated Vehicles Act 2024**. The Government made regulations which came into force on 15 May [The Automated Vehicles \(Permits for Automated Passenger Services\) Regulations 2026](#). No request for the Council’s consent for deployment of automated vehicles in the district has been received – and it is unknown if or when any such request will occur.
- 3.3 The second is the **English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026**, which received Royal Assent in late April. Sections 70 to 86 in Part 3 of the Act introduce new powers for the Secretary of State to prescribe national standards for licences for taxis and private hire vehicles. It is proposed to add these self-standing provisions about national standards for taxis to the delegation scheme.

3.4 The delegation scheme does not list Acts relating to environmental health as they are not “licensing and registration” although there are specific provisions in the delegation scheme relating to “local choice functions” such as statutory nuisances. Acts relating to environmental health are covered by the generic “environmental health” delegation to the Chief Executive. This would include the smoking ban in the Health Act 2006 and would also encompass **the Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026** (which contains self-standing enforcement powers and other provisions that relate to the district council). However it is not yet known whether regulations to be made under section 16 about the retail licensing scheme will give the licensing function to district councils or to county councils. Therefore, so that the delegation scheme does not need to be amended on a subsequent occasion, the 2026 Act is also proposed for addition to the list of licensing Acts.

3.5 In addition, some Acts mentioned in the delegation scheme have been removed. The 1973 and 1991 Acts have been repealed whereas the 2006 Act was an erroneous, duplicate reference to the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The update relates to recent changes to legislation so that the delegation scheme remains up to date.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 An assessment is not required at this stage as no decision is being sought on the detail of how the Council would discharge its functions.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The proposed arrangements ensure that the Council’s constitution is fully aligned with the licensing legislation.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The Council is invited to approve the amendments to the Constitution set out in Appendix 1.

9. CONSULTEES

9.1 The Leader of the Council.

9.2 Director of Legal and Governance and Director of Resources.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Report to Licensing and Environmental Committee, 6 October 2025 – Update on Policy Developments in Licensing
https://forms.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/docs/doc60797_20251006_l_and_e_committee_agenda.pdf
- 10.2 Report to Licensing and Environmental Committee, 1 June 2026 – Update on Legislative and Policy Developments in Licensing
https://forms.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/docs/doc61385_20260601_l_and_e_committee_agenda.pdf

Appendix 1

Amendments to Section 4 of the Constitution: Responsibility for Functions. Table 3:
DELEGATION TO OFFICERS OF FUNCTIONS THAT ARE NOT EXECUTIVE
FUNCTIONS **(amendments shown in bold)**

Licensing and registration functions

To exercise authority, including approval and refusal, amendment, suspension and revocation, reinstatement, service of notices and orders or other matters requiring a decision by the Council under the Council's published policy and practice notes and the following legislation, regulations and guidance (and any re-enactment or replacement or consolidation of the statutes or regulations or guidance, or any modifications or extensions thereof):

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963

Animal Welfare Act 2006

Automated Vehicles Act 2024

~~Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 2006~~

~~Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991~~

Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960

Caravan Sites Act 1968

Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

Chapter 6, Part 3 of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026

Gambling Act 2005

Game Act 1831

Licensing Act 2003

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

Motor Salvage Operator Regulations 2002

Pet Animals Act 1951

Police, Factories, & c. (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916

Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970

Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013

Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026

Town Police Clauses Act 1847

Video Recordings Acts 1984 and 1993

Hackney Carriage Licensing

Private Hire (including driver, vehicle and operator) Licensing

Control of Sex Establishments (including lap dancing and sexual entertainment venues)

Street Trading

Street Amenity Licences

Zoo Licensing Act 1981

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

15th July 2026

Mileage Allowances

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor David Ross, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and the Capital Portfolio
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Ian Miller, Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller, Chief Executive ian.miller@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Ext 2700
APPENDICES:	None

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider aligning mileage allowances for staff and members with the HMRC approved rate (currently 55p/mile).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **The Council is asked to DECIDE that the mileage allowance for staff and members should be the HMRC approved rate with effect from 1 August 2026.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In respect of staff, the mileage allowance for motor cars has been set at 40p/mile regardless of power source since 1 March 2011. In addition, 5p/mile is paid for carrying a WFDC passenger who could otherwise claim mileage. (Rates for motorbikes and bicycles are 24p and 21p respectively.) The introduction of the current mileage rate of 40p/mile in 2011 was a contested process. It involved moving away from NJC rates that increased to 65p/mile for casual users in 2010-11 and involved lump sum payments of £1239/year for essential users, alongside a lower mileage rate of 50.5p/mile. Different arrangements were made for the Chief Executive and Directors: they were paid a flat rate annual allowance of £2,400 covering mileage within the West Midlands, based on an assumed annual mileage of 4,000 miles whether or not they travelled that far.
- 3.2 Following a review commissioned as part of the 2010-2013 MTFS, and negotiations with unions and staff, Council agreed on 28 July 2010 to proceed

with a common approach, based on recommendations from the Cabinet on 20 July 2010.

- 3.3 Ultimately following further negotiation with the unions and staff, it was not possible to secure agreement from all to implement the change and a process of dismissal and re-engagement on altered terms and conditions was used to implement it for some staff. (As an aside, such a process would not be possible under the Employment Rights Act 2025.)
- 3.4 Because the WFDC mileage rate was expressed as 40p/mile (not “HMRC rate” as other councils had done), the change in the HMRC rate when it increased to 45p/mile in April 2011 had no effect in WFDC. The Chancellor announced on 21 May 2026 that the HMRC rate was being increased to 55p/mile backdated to April 2026. Likewise that has no direct effect in WFDC.
- 3.5 Successive Independent Remuneration Panels have recommended that the mileage rate for members should also be 40p/mile.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 It is proposed to change the mileage rate to the HMRC rate (currently 55p/mile) with effect from 1 August 2026. This would apply to both staff and members. In line with HMRC rates, it would apply for the first 10,000 miles (although no member of staff travels that far on business in a year) and fall to 25p/mile thereafter. The additional 5p/mile for carrying one or more WFDC passengers would be maintained.
- 4.2 There are two reasons for making this change:
 - 1) Alignment with other councils in Worcestershire prior to reorganisation. Four other districts use the HMRC rate whereas Malvern Hills pays 46.9p. The county council currently operates a complicated system that ties mileage rates to emissions, ranging from 45p/mile for vehicles with low emissions to 36p/mile for vehicles with the highest emissions. The county council is understood also be planning to move to the HMRC rate. A change in WFDC would remove an inconsistency which otherwise our successor council would have to address;
 - 2) Removal of differences between staff as a consequence of the creation of the Worcestershire Home Adaptation Service in April 2026. Staff transferred to WFDC under TUPE Regulations benefit from a higher mileage rate than other staff. While there are many other differences between staff terms and conditions as a result of the TUPE transfer, this is the easiest to resolve.
- 4.3 Costs of operating vehicles have increased overall since 2011 but the most significant and visible element of that is fuel prices. The recent spike because of the Iran War has triggered questions from staff (as also happened in 2022

after the Russian invasion of Ukraine). There are robust data about fuel prices at this link: [UK pump prices over time](#). Immediately prior to the Iran War prices were in fact similar to the levels in April 2011. Research suggests that across the period from 2011, reductions in average insurance costs have been offset by increases in maintenance costs, as summarised in the table.

Comparison of insurance and maintenance costs, 2011-2026

AI summary (Google)

The cost of owning and running a car in the UK has experienced significant volatility between 2011 and 2026, with insurance premiums peaking dramatically before falling in 2025-2026, while maintenance costs have generally trended upwards due to inflation and increased vehicle complexity.

1. Average Car Insurance Costs (2011 vs 2026)

- **2011:** Car insurance was rapidly rising, with average comprehensive premiums sitting around **£850–£920+** per year, driven by high personal injury claim costs.
- **2026:** After experiencing record highs in late 2023/2024 (approaching £1,000), premiums have fallen by 9–16% due to market corrections. The average cost is roughly **£550–£711**, depending on the data source, which is actually lower in nominal terms than the 2011 peak.
- **Key Trend:** Prices are now falling for 2026, particularly for young drivers (e.g., 17-year-olds seeing a 23% drop in some instances).

2. Average Maintenance & Running Costs (2011 vs 2026)

- **2011:** While data from that specific year is less comprehensive, servicing and minor repairs for older cars were relatively cheaper compared to the modern era, with routine maintenance for older cars (10+ years) sometimes averaging around £250–£300 a year.
- **2026:** Maintenance and repair costs have increased significantly (roughly 40% up compared to 2020). The average UK driver spends around **£500–£600 annually on repairs and servicing**.
- **Total Running Costs:** When including fuel and maintenance, running a car is costing motorists upwards of **£3,500 annually** in 2026.

Summary Comparison Table

Cost Component	Approx. 2011 Costs	Approx. 2026 Costs	Trend
Insurance (Comp)	£850 – £920	£550 – £711	Decreased from 2011 peak

Maintenance/Servicing	Lower (£200-£300)	£500 – £600	Significant Increase
Overall Context	High insurance, lower tech	Moderate insurance, high repair cost	Higher total cost of ownership

- 4.4 Apart from the peak in fuel prices in 2022/23 and now, overall the cost of motoring has not changed dramatically. However the Chancellor’s announcement reflects a Government conclusion that the HMRC rate, which had remained unchanged for 15 years, should be reviewed.
- 4.5 The context of the change made for staff in 2010/11 was very different – forcing through a cost-saving measure from an adopted budget in face of opposition from unions and some staff (the small group who received the essential user allowance). It was necessary to seek and obtain explicit member support. The context of this change is that there will be no opposition from unions or staff as it is a betterment of the current position. Because the current arrangements are based on an explicit decision by Council in 2010 and notwithstanding the relatively modest impact of the proposed change, this is considered to be “an overriding policy” that limits the Head of Paid Service’s scope for action under the delegation scheme.
- 4.6 In respect of members, the most recent report from the Independent Remuneration Panel was considered by Council on 25 February 2026. That report did not make any recommendation in respect of mileage allowances and there was no discussion or decision by Council on that aspect of the scheme of allowances. Regulation 19 of the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 No 1021 provides that, in making or amending the scheme of allowances, the Council is required to ‘have regard to the recommendations made in relation to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel’. The Council is not obliged to adopt a recommendation from the Panel, even if one is made, and it is therefore open to the Council to decide to maintain parity of treatment between staff and members, which has been the case for over a decade.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Based on mileage claimed in the last two financial years, the impact would be modest. In respect of staff, the additional cost would be £5-6k/year spread across a wide range of services, some of which are funded from specific grants (such as rough sleeping and homelessness). Councillors have routinely claimed less than £1k/year in mileage allowances in recent years (in

the range of £600 to £800) meaning that the additional cost would be £200-300/year. The impact of these changes can be absorbed by existing budgets.

- 5.2 The cost of mileage overall has dropped dramatically from the estimated £59k/year in the July 2010 report to £13k in 2025-26 (£15k in 2024-25). This is because of a range of factors:

(1) introduction of shared services, such as Worcestershire Regulatory Services – licensing and environmental health officers will have been among the largest mileage claimants historically;

(2) change in working patterns as a result of home working and flexible working, underpinned by introduction of Teams/Zoom for large proportion of internal and external meetings;

(3) shorter mileage distances between WFDC's main sites: Stourport Civic Centre to Duke House was nearly 5 miles when Wyre Forest House to Green Street depot is only just over 2 miles.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, staff "shall hold office on such reasonable terms and conditions, including conditions as to remuneration, as the authority appointing him think fit". The terms and conditions of staff are not an executive function. Other relevant legislation and policy issues have been cited throughout the report.

7. IMPACT AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 7.1 An initial assessment has been undertaken and no adverse implications for protected characteristics have been identified. No impacts have been identified in respect of climate change or health.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 No significant risks have been identified. The change is likely to be supported by staff and unions. The risk of adverse public comment is considered to be low because the mileage rate will be aligned with the figure approved by HMRC which many other councils and bodies already use.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Council is invited to approve the recommendation in section 2.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 The Leader of the Council.
- 10.2 Corporate Leadership Team

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Report to Cabinet, 20 July 2010 WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
- 11.2 Report to Council, Independent Remuneration Panel report 2026-27, 25 February 2026 [doc61170_20260225_council_agenda.pdf](#) (page 17 onwards)

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

15th July 2026

Appointments to outside bodies

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Marcus Hart, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategy
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Ian Miller, Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller, Chief Executive ian.miller@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Ext 2700
APPENDICES:	None

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider changes to appointments to outside bodies.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Council is asked to DECIDE that the following members should be appointed as the Council's representatives for the remainder of this municipal year:

Appointment	Councillor to be appointed for the remainder of the municipal year 2026/27
Bewdley Museum Management Committee	Councillor Dan Morehead
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Partnership Assembly, substitute member	Councillor David Ross
Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Fran Oborski
Worcestershire Health and Well-being Board, substitute member	Councillor David Ross

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its meeting in May, Council agreed appointments to outside bodies for the 2026/27 municipal years in line with section 4 of the constitution which provides for Council to deal with “appointment of any individual to any office, body or committee of such a body”. The Cabinet has delegated authority to make such appointments where a vacancy arises during the municipal year, for example if a member resigns or a new external body appointment is identified. However only Council can change the appointments that have been agreed at the AGM.
- 3.2 For clarity, the “six month rule” in paragraph 4.5 of the Council’s procedure rules (section 7 of the Constitution) is not relevant. That provision applies only if a member moves a motion or amendment that has the effect of rescinding a resolution passed within the previous six months.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 At the time of the AGM, Councillor Paul Harrison was sitting as a non-aligned independent. Council agreed a recommendation from the Administration that he should continue to serve on four external bodies. Subsequently Councillor Harrison joined Reform UK. Now that he has aligned himself with a political party, the Administration considers it appropriate to review whether he should continue to serve on external bodies as a representative of the Council. The recommended replacement appointments are set out in paragraph 2.1 of this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council’s powers to make appointments to external bodies arise under various statutory provisions or other formal governance documents for the bodies concerned. Relevant provisions of the Council’s constitution have been cited elsewhere in the report.

7. IMPACT AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 7.1 No adverse implications for protected characteristics have been identified, and no impacts have been identified in respect of climate change or health.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 No significant risks have been identified.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Council is invited to approve the recommendation in section 2.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 The Leader of the Council.

10.2 Director of Legal and Governance and Director of Resources.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Political and constitutional structures, appendix 5 (appointments to outside bodies), Council, 13 May 2026

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**COUNCIL
15 JULY 2026**

QUESTIONS

1. Question from Councillor F Oborski MBE to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and the Green Agenda

In view of the importance of their regular nesting site to swifts will the Cabinet Member look into ways in which WFDC can encourage developers to install " Swift Bricks" into new build properties?

2. Question from Councillor M Rayner to the Cabinet Member for Operational Services

Please can the cabinet member for responsibility for grass cutting of verges on behalf of the county council tell me if there is still a policy of No mow May?

3. Question from Councillor V Caulfield to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio

How many bookings/events have been held at The Weaving Sheds since it opened?

4. Question from Councillor H Dyke to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio

Can the cabinet member responsible please give details of the current occupancy numbers for the Councils Old Court Building?

5. Question from Councillor H Dyke to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio

Would the relevant cabinet member agree with me that it is concerning to see the number of staff that are listed in Wyred Weekly as leaving the depot each week. Can he advise council what measures are being taken within the depot to retain staff?

6. Question from Councillor H Dyke to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and the Green Agenda

Can the relevant Cabinet Member advise if there are any forthcoming plans for the corner of Market Street site as it has now been empty for nearly 15 years?