

Governance and Ethics Committee

14 March 2024

Time 2.00 pm **Public Meeting?** Yes **Type of meeting** Advisory group

Venue Committee Room 3 - 3rd Floor - Civic Centre

Membership

Chair Cllr Rita Potter (Lab)
Vice Chair Cllr Rohit Mistry

Labour

Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal
Cllr Lovinyer Daley
Cllr Paul Brookfield
Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Susan Roberts MBE

Conservative

Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Jonathan Crofts

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

Contact Donna Cope
Tel/Email 01902 554452 or Email: donna.cope@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Address Democratic Services, Civic Centre, 1st floor, St Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i> |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Apologies for absence |
| 2 | Declarations of interest |
| 3 | Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 6)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 February 2024 as a correct record]. |
| 4 | Matters arising
[To discuss any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting]. |
| 5 | Petitions Schedule (Pages 7 - 14)
[To note the actions taken in relation to petitions received by the Council during the last year]. |
| 6 | Update on Preparations for May 2024 Combined Authority Mayoral and Local Elections (Pages 15 - 20)
[To note and provide feedback on the preparations underway for the forthcoming elections]. |
| 7 | Councillor Handbook and Induction Programme 2024 (Pages 21 - 100)
[To approve the City of Wolverhampton Councillor Handbook and Induction Programme 2024-2025]. |
| 8 | Councillor Development Programme 2024-2025 (Pages 101 - 122)
[To endorse the proposed Councillor Development Programme 2024–2025]. |
| 9 | Code of Conduct for Councillors - Annual Report 2023 (Pages 123 - 132)
[To note the Annual Code of Conduct Report]. |

Attendance

Members of the Governance and Ethics Committee

Cllr Rita Potter (Chair)
Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal
Cllr Lovinyer Daley
Cllr Paul Brookfield
Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Jonathan Crofts
Cllr Sally Green

Employees

David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
Surjit Tour	Deputy Director of Governance
Laura Noonan	Electoral Services & Scrutiny Manager
Donna Cope	Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rohit Mistry and Councillor Anwen Muston.

Councillor Sally Green attended as a substitute for Councillor Muston.
- 2 Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest made.
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting**
That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 January 2024 be approved as a correct record.

4 **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

5 **Cross Boundary Election Protocol**

David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer, introduced the report: Cross Boundary Election Protocol. The report outlined the rationale for a cross boundary parliamentary protocol agreement and the agreed roles and responsibilities of Wolverhampton and Walsall Acting Returning Officer's for a Parliamentary election.

Laura Noonan, Electoral Services Manager, outlined the report and highlighted significant points within the Protocol. She summarised the key responsibilities of each Acting Returning Officer (ARO) and the rationale behind these arrangements.

Councillor Rita Potter moved the recommendations within the report. Councillor Milkinder Jaspal seconded the recommendations.

The report was considered by Committee, and Councillor Wendy Thompson commended officers for their hard work and planning on such a complicated matter.

Resolved:

1. That the Cross Boundary Election Protocol be noted.

6 **Code of Conduct Annual Report**

Resolved:

1. That the item be deferred to a future meeting.

7 **Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2024-2025**

David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer, outlined the report: Municipal Calendar of Meetings 2024-2025. The annual report outlined the proposed timetable for Council and committee meetings for the next Council Municipal Year (2024-2025).

The Chief Operating Officer highlighted the following key changes and welcomed feedback from members:

1. That the annual Budget Council meeting would start at the earlier time of 4pm.
2. That the Councillor Development Advisory Group would be stood down, and matters considered by that group would be covered by the Governance and Ethics Committee instead.

Councillor Rita Potter moved the recommendations within the report. Councillor Milkinder Jaspal seconded the recommendations.

The report was considered by Committee, and it was queried whether the other Advisory Groups could also be stood down and incorporated into other meetings. The Chief Operating Officer responded to comments made and agreed to discuss the matter again with the relevant Cabinet Members.

Resolved:

1. That Council be recommended to approve the City of Wolverhampton Council Municipal Calendar of Meetings for 2024-2025.

2. That consultation with the political groups on the City of Wolverhampton Council Municipal Calendar of Meetings for 2024-2025 be approved.
3. That any amendments to the City of Wolverhampton Council Calendar of Meetings for 2024-2025 be delegated to the Chair of Governance and Ethics Committee in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer following consultation with political groups.

8 **Best Value Standards and Intervention Guidance**

David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer, outlined the report: Best Value Standards and Intervention Guidance. The report outlined the new draft statutory guidance on Best Value for local authorities and demonstrated how the Council was meeting its Best Value duty against that new guidance.

The draft guidance set out what was expected of local government in order to deliver best value and provided the 'characteristics' of a well-functioning local authority.

A detailed self-assessment exercise had been undertaken with officers to benchmark the council against the characteristics outlined in the guidance. The self-assessment included details as to why the Council believed it met the requirements of the Government's draft guidance and the work being undertaken by the Council.

The Chief Operating Officer outlined the self-assessment in detail and noted that a further report would be brought back to Committee once the final draft had been released.

The report was considered by Committee, and the Chief Operating Officer responded to comments made.

Councillor Rita Potter moved the recommendations within the report. Councillor Milkinder Jaspal seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That it be noted that Government had released new draft statutory guidance for local authorities on the Best Value Duty
2. That members reviewed and commented on the self-assessment undertaken to benchmark the City of Wolverhampton Council's performance against the new draft guidance.
3. That it be agreed that members received future reports once Government had published the final guidance.

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Governance and Ethics Committee 14 March 2024
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Report title	Schedule of Petitions	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
Originating service	Democratic Services	
Accountable employee	David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
	Tel	01902 550320
	Email	David.pattison@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	N/a	

Recommendations for noting:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is asked to note:

1. The actions taken in relation to all petitions received by the Council during the last year.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To note the actions taken in relation to petitions received by the Council during the last year, attached at Appendix 1.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At the Council meeting on 3 November 2021, Council approved the revised Petitions Scheme.
- 2.2 Section 46 of the Localism Act 2011 repealed all of Chapter 2 of the Local Democracy Economic Development & Construction Act 2009, which in essence removed the requirement for Local Authorities to have a statutory petitions scheme. Therefore, the Council now has greater discretion in how it decides to deal with citizens' petitions.
- 2.3 However, it is still considered good practice for a Council to retain a petitions scheme as it sends a clear message to the public that the Council takes their views seriously and encourages their engagement in the democratic process.

3.0 Implementation and Monitoring of the Petitions Scheme

- 3.1 All petitions submitted to the Council are received and monitored by Democratic Services.
- 3.2 Following receipt, petitions will be forwarded to the relevant service who will confirm if the Council can action the petition.
- 3.3 Petitions with fewer than 2499 signatures are considered and responded to by employees, within 28 days of receipt by the relevant service area. A summary of responses will be reported to the relevant Cabinet Member(s), and the relevant Ward Members.
- 3.4 Petitions with 2500 – 4999 signatures are considered by the relevant scrutiny panel with recommendation made for action by employees or review by the Executive as appropriate.
- 3.5 Petitions with more than 5000 signatures are considered by Full Council.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report as Councillors are asked to only note the actions taken in relation to petitions received by the Council. [SR/25012024/A]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 The duty for Local Authorities to operate a statutory petition scheme was abolished by the Localism Act 2011. [SZ/07022024/P]

6.0 Equalities implications

6.1 The proposals outlined in this report do not require an equalities analysis. The recommendations will not affect the Council's practice of encouraging, considering and responding to petitions.

7.0 All other Implications

7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

8.0 Schedule of background papers

8.1 Revised Petitions Scheme, Council, 3 November 2021

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Schedule of Petitions

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Date Received	Issue Raised	Number of (Valid) Signatories	Responsible Officer	Status and Action Taken
6 June 2023	<p>Issues in Cadman and Copes: Concerns about disruption on the green by some residents</p> <p>Petition asked the Council to "... call upon Isabella's Home at 60 Cadman Crescent to ensure that their residents behave in an appropriate manner on and around Cadman Crescent and Copes Crescent. Residents have raised with us their concerns about nudity on the Copes Crescent green and other anti-social and inappropriate behaviour."</p>	37 (+eight letters of support and other supplementary information).	Christopher Jellyman, Neighbourhood Safety Co-Ordinator	<p>Status – Closed</p> <p>The Lead Petitioner was advised that Council officers had met with senior management at Isabella's Homes, the Wolverhampton Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team and West Midlands Police to enquire about complaints in the last 12 months regarding the behaviour of occupants.</p> <p>Isabella's Homes gave reassurances that they would respond to any issues going forward.</p> <p>The Lead Petitioner was provided contact details for Isabella's Homes, West Midlands Police and the Wolverhampton ASB Team to register any complaints in future.</p>
5 December 2023	<p>Chapel Street, Bilston; Save Our Shop, Say No to Road Closure</p> <p>Petition offered various reasons why Chapel Street should stay open: "Reasons for objection 1. Blocking speedy access for emergency vehicles.</p>	20	Adrian Dawson, Consultant Engineer	<p>Status – Closed</p> <p>The Lead Petitioner was made aware that the petition was presented to the appropriate Cabinet Member alongside the results of a wider consultation, and that a decision was made to postpone the formal closure of Chapel Street and investigate other solutions.</p>

Date Received	Issue Raised	Number of (Valid) Signatories	Responsible Officer	Status and Action Taken
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Adding extra traffic to an already very busy junction at Oxford and Loxdale Street. 3. Loss of trade for our local shop who is a vital part of the local community, which and would be sorely missed if forced to close. 4. The considerable extra traffic which has been using Chapel Street since the opening of the taxi licensing centre only have 1 way in and out. 5. Cause more U-turns, reversing especially when these involve large vehicles such as bin collection and delivery vans.” 			The Lead Petitioner was advised that a further consultation would be undertaken when another solution was prioritised.
20 December 2023	<p>Parking Bays for Rudge Avenue</p> <p>Petition asked the Council to create “parking bays . . . similar to the ones in nearby Lewis Avenue [due to] problems finding space to park and [the] lack of space . . . causing</p>	14	Mark Richards, Service Manager – Network Management and Response	<p>Status – Ongoing</p> <p>Officers in Traffic and Road Safety indicated that the location requested for parking bays by the Lead Petitioner fell under the remit of Wolverhampton Homes.</p> <p>The petition was subsequently sent to Wolverhampton Homes for a response. The Lead</p>

Date Received	Issue Raised	Number of (Valid) Signatories	Responsible Officer	Status and Action Taken
	potential hazards as cars are parking on corners/bends and making it difficult to see any oncoming traffic.”			Petitioner was advised of this and was also advised that they would be contacted once a response from Wolverhampton Homes had been received.

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	<h1>Governance and Ethics Committee</h1> <p>14 March 2024</p>
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Report title	Update on preparations for May 2024 Combined Authority Mayoral and Local Elections	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
Originating service	Electoral Services	
Accountable employee(s)	Laura Noonan Tel Email	Electoral Services and Scrutiny Manager 01902 55 4939 Laura.noonan@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Election Board Cabinet Member Briefing – Governance and Ethics	14 February 2024 6 March 2024

Recommendation for action

The Governance and Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Note and provide feedback on the preparations underway for the forthcoming elections.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on preparations underway for the elections taking place on Thursday 2 May 2024, at present the elections confirmed as taking place are 20 City Council seats, the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority. The issue regarding the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is covered in paragraph 2.2

2.0 Background

- 2.1 A detailed preparation report was presented at the Governance and Ethics Committee on 11 January 2024. This report provides some further updates on preparations that have taken place since.
- 2.2 Subject to Parliamentary procedures, the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner functions are due to transfer to the Mayor of West Midlands Combined Authority, therefore the scheduled West Midlands PCC election will not take place. However, contingency arrangements are still planned for in case a PCC election does need to take place.

3.0 Implementation of Election Act measures

- 3.1 Since the launch of the online absent vote service on 31 October 2023, 331 postal vote applications and 30 proxy vote applications have been received online. Candidates, agents and political parties are strongly advised to encourage electors to apply online for their absent vote as this is the quickest way to ensuring their absent vote is put in place. Uploading paper applications to the online portal is a cumbersome process and Electoral Services are keen to reduce the number of paper applications received for this reason.
- 3.2 Since the new rules relating to overseas electors came in to force in January 2024, 41 overseas applications have been made, with the majority of these being electors who left the UK more than 15 years ago, requiring a check of historic registers at the archives. It is expected that the most significant rise in applications for overseas electors will be made when a general election is called.
- 3.3 Since January 2024, 64 Voter Authority Certificate applications have been made. A voter ID leaflet will be included with the council tax bills in March and information will be provided on the poll cards. Therefore it is expected that the number of applications for VAC's will increase from the end of March. Electors are encouraged to apply online but if they need support they can visit the Civic Centre between 10am and 3pm on weekdays or attend one of the drop in sessions taking place across the city:
- Monday 25 March, 10am – 1pm, Ashmore Park Library
 - Tuesday 26 March, 12pm – 3pm, Bilston Library
 - Wednesday 27 March, 10am-1pm, Blakenhall Library
 - Thursday 28 March 10am – 1pm, Finchfield Library

- Tuesday 2 April, 10am – 1pm, Collingwood Library
- Wednesday 3 April, 12pm-3pm, Pendeford Library
- Thursday 4 April, 10am – 1pm, Low Hill Library
- Thursday 4 April, 4pm – 7pm, Bert Williams Leisure Centre
- Monday 8 April, 10am – 1pm, Long Knowls Library
- Tuesday 9 April, 10am – 1pm, Spring Vale Library
- Wednesday 10 April, 10am – 1pm, Tettenhall Library
- Friday 12 April, 10am – 1pm, Penn Library
- Monday 15 April, 10am – 1pm, East Park Library
- Monday 15 April, 4pm – 7pm, Central Library
- Tuesday 16 April, 10am – 1pm, Whitmore Reans Library
- Wednesday 17 April, 10am – 1pm, Warstones Library
- Thursday 18 April, 10am – 1pm, Wednesfield Library
- Thursday 18 April, 4pm – 7pm, Aldersley Leisure Centre

4.0 EU Citizens

- 4.1 There are no changes to EU citizens voting and candidacy rights for the May elections, but changes will be coming in to force immediately after from 7 May 2024.
- 4.2 The majority of EU citizens already registered will remain eligible to vote and stand in local government elections. However a number of EU citizens will become ineligible and will need to be removed from the register.
- 4.3 Those EU citizens who will no longer be eligible will be those who took up residence in the UK after the UK left the EU (31/12/2020) and who are not citizens of one of the 5 EU member states that the UK has a bilateral voting and candidacy rights agreement with (Denmark, Portugal, Spain, Luxembourg and Poland), or Ireland, Cyprus and Malta.
- 4.4 A one-time review of the register will be carried out to determine the eligible of EU citizens already on the register from June 2024, and the process must be completed by 31 January 2025.
- 4.5 It is estimated that 9318 EU citizens on the register in Wolverhampton will have their eligibility confirmed via a data-based review, and 3803 EU citizens will require a correspondence-based review which will involve sending them a review notice to establish their eligibility. If they do not respond, they will be sent another reminder and a personal visit to their address before being send a notification of removal.

5.0 Candidates and Agents

- 5.1 The Returning Officer held a candidates and agents briefing on Thursday 29 February. A second candidates and agents briefing will be held on Wednesday 17 April at 5.30pm.
- 5.2 The Notice of Election will be published at 9am on Thursday 21 March. The nomination period will run weekdays from 10am on Thursday 21 March 2024 until 4pm on Friday 5 April 2024.
- 5.3 All information for candidates and agents has been uploaded on the election's website. The candidates and agents' guidance contains all of the information about polling stations, postal vote opening and the verification and count.

6.0 Poll cards and postal votes

- 6.1 Poll cards will be dispatched on Thursday 21 March. A second batch will be dispatched on Wednesday 24 April for people who registered after 1 March up to 16 April.
- 6.2 The poll card is now an oversized poll card to include all of the new information relating to Voter ID.
- 6.3 Currently there are 32,909 postal voters in Wolverhampton. Postal Votes will be dispatched on Wednesday 17 April for those who had applied to vote by post by 25 March, and a second batch will be dispatched on Monday 22 April.
- 6.4 Postal votes will have additional wording on the front of envelopes to encourage electors to post them in a red royal mail post-box to reduce numbers that are handed in due to the new postal vote handling roles.

7.0 Recruitment and training

- 7.1 A total of 1,115 job roles have been recruited to work election duties across polling stations, the count and postal vote opening.
- 7.2 Training for all roles will commence in April.

8.0 Polling Stations

- 8.1 All 127 polling stations have been booked and there have been no further changes to polling station venues.

9.0 Postal Vote Opening

- 9.1 Postal Vote Opening will take place daily from 10am – 5pm weekdays in the City Suite, Civic Centre from Tuesday 23 April – Wednesday 1 May.
- 9.2 On polling day, postal vote opening will take place at WV Active Aldersley from 2pm – 6pm and a final opening session will start at 8pm.

9.3 The postal packs are combined so there will be two ballot papers to sort in each postal vote pack (one for local election and one for combined authority mayoral election). There are currently 32,909 postal voters in Wolverhampton.

10.0 Verification and Count

10.1 The verification and count will be held at WV Active Aldersley Leisure Centre, Aldersley Road, Wolverhampton, WV6 9NW

10.2 Receipt of ballot boxes and final postal vote opening session take place on Thursday 2 May 2024 from 10pm until midnight.

10.3 Count venue will open to candidates and agents from 9.30am on Friday 3 May 2024. The verification will commence from 10am. It is anticipated that verification for all wards will be finished by 1.30pm. The count for the city council 20 seats will commence straight after the verification on Friday. It is anticipated that all wards will be declared by 7pm at the very latest.

10.4 The count for the Combined Authority Mayoral election will take place from 10am on Saturday 4 May. The Count venue will open to candidates and agents from 9.30am on Saturday 3 May 2024.

11.0 Financial implications

11.1 The total cost of the all-out standalone election in May 2023 spanning 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 was just over £495,000. This includes expenditure incurred in introducing Voter ID and ensuring compliance with accessibility requirements under the Elections Act. The initial implementation of the Act has been supported by grant funding. A bid for additional funds has only just been accepted and the total grant now awarded over the two financial years is £137,306. In addition to this a by-election was also held in September 2023 at a cost of just over £20,000.

11.2 Elections costs have significantly increased recently under a range of pressures. These include increased polling station costs due to greater use of private venues and temporary polling stations in place of schools, increases in polling station hire against a background of rising energy prices, Royal Mail postage charge increases, higher poll letter costs compared to poll cards and increases in staffing fees with the introduction of holiday pay and in line with national living wage rates. Early preparations for the May 2024 election indicate that further cost increases in some areas, polling station hire for example, are anticipated.

11.3 The cost of running local elections to the Council in any year is dependent on whether they are standalone or combined with Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner or Combined Authority Mayoral elections. Combined elections costs are effectively shared, part funded by Government or the Combined Authority. In the event of combined elections or fallow years, significant underspends against the local elections budget will

provide scope for contributions to the Elections Reserve which can be drawn upon in years of increased cost.

- 11.4 The budget set aside for elections in 2024-2025 is £277,000. A grant of £48,943 has also been awarded to support with ongoing costs associated with Voter ID and accessibility improvements, as well as new measures around online absent voting, overseas electors and changes to EU Citizens. It is difficult to forecast the Council share of the cost of the forthcoming combined election given uncertainties around electoral arrangements for the Police and Crime Commissioner role. Previous experience of combined elections suggests that in any event, costs will easily be accommodated within the budget and allow for a contribution to the Elections Reserve.

[GE/28022024/T]

12.0 Legal implications

- 12.1 All preparations outlined in this report are in line with the statutory provisions covering the delivery of local and combined authority mayoral elections, and the implementation of the Election Act 2022.

[SZ/28022024/P]

13.0 Equalities implications

- 13.1 Planning for these elections complies with the Public-sector equality duty and the new accessibility arrangements set out in the Elections Act 2022. Reasonable adjustments to vote are made available for electors with disabilities in the polling stations, and staff working election duties receive substantial training on this.

14.0 All other Implications

- 14.1 There are no other implications arising from the report at the current time.

15.0 Schedule of background papers

- 15.1 Preparations for May 2024 Combined Authority Mayoral and Local Elections, Governance and Ethics Committee, 11 January 2024.

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Governance and Ethics Committee 14 March 2024
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Report title	Councillor Induction Programme and Handbook 2024
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer
Originating service	Governance
Accountable employee	Lukhvinder Sanger Councillor Support Manager Lukhvinder.Sanger@wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 555242
Report has been considered by	Strategic Executive Board - 27 February 2024 Cabinet Member Briefing - 4 March 2024 Governance Directorate Leadership Team – 15 February 2024 Leader’s Briefing – 4 March 2024

Recommendations for decision:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the City of Wolverhampton Councillor Handbook 2024-2025 as detailed in Appendix 1.
2. Approve the City of Wolverhampton Councillor Induction Programme 2024-2025 as detailed in Appendix 2

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To approve the proposed roll out of the new Councillor Induction Programme 2024 to take place after the local elections held on May 2, 2024
- 1.2 To review and approve the Councillor Handbook 2024 to be distributed to all Councillors in readiness for the new municipal year.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Since 2023 the Councillor Induction Programme has been coordinated by the Councillor Support Team prior to being with the Organisational Development team. Working closely with Councillors and is therefore able to tailor the programme based on direct feedback from users.
- 2.2 At City of Wolverhampton Council, in addition to the induction programme, we also produce a handbook for all Councillors which is refreshed each year to provide current and useful information and guidance about the roles.

3.0 Councillor Handbook and Induction Programme 2024-25

3.1 Councillor Handbook

The Councillor Handbook is refreshed each year in readiness for the new municipal year. The document provides a guide to all councillors about what the role entails and how different systems, policies, and procedures at the council work to assist Councillors to discharge their duties. It is especially useful for new councillors during their first few weeks in office. Each section within the handbook is written by a subject matter expert from the relevant department and they are asked to review and refresh their section on an annual basis.

3.2 Councillor Induction

Councillor Induction Programme has been updated to allow new and existing councillors to take part in a comprehensive training programme after the May 2024 local elections to familiarise them with the Council and prepare them to best undertake their duties as a councillor.

The refreshed induction programme has built on the previous programme from last year, but crucially has used Councillor feedback and data from last year to build a training package that more effectively meets the needs of Councillors. 3.3 The new induction programme has been designed to include key elements that are essential for new Councillors to undertake such as code of conduct and Data Protection, as well as further beneficial sessions that both new and existing Councillors may find useful or interesting these include, City environment, Wolverhampton Homes and Housing and Anti-Social

behaviour. New elements, such as tours of the city, have also been incorporated to add value to the Councillors' experience.

After positive feedback from last year City Tours have been retained as part of the induction in 2024

4.0 Financial implications

4.1 There will be a cost of around £250 for the printing and publishing of 60 Councillor Handbooks and 25 Councillor Induction programmes. This cost will be met from the combined £2,000 budget set aside for Books and Publications in the Councillor expenses budget. [SR/06032024/A]

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 No legal implications. [DP/06032024/B]

6.0 Equalities implications

6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 All Other Implications

7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

8.0 Schedule of background papers

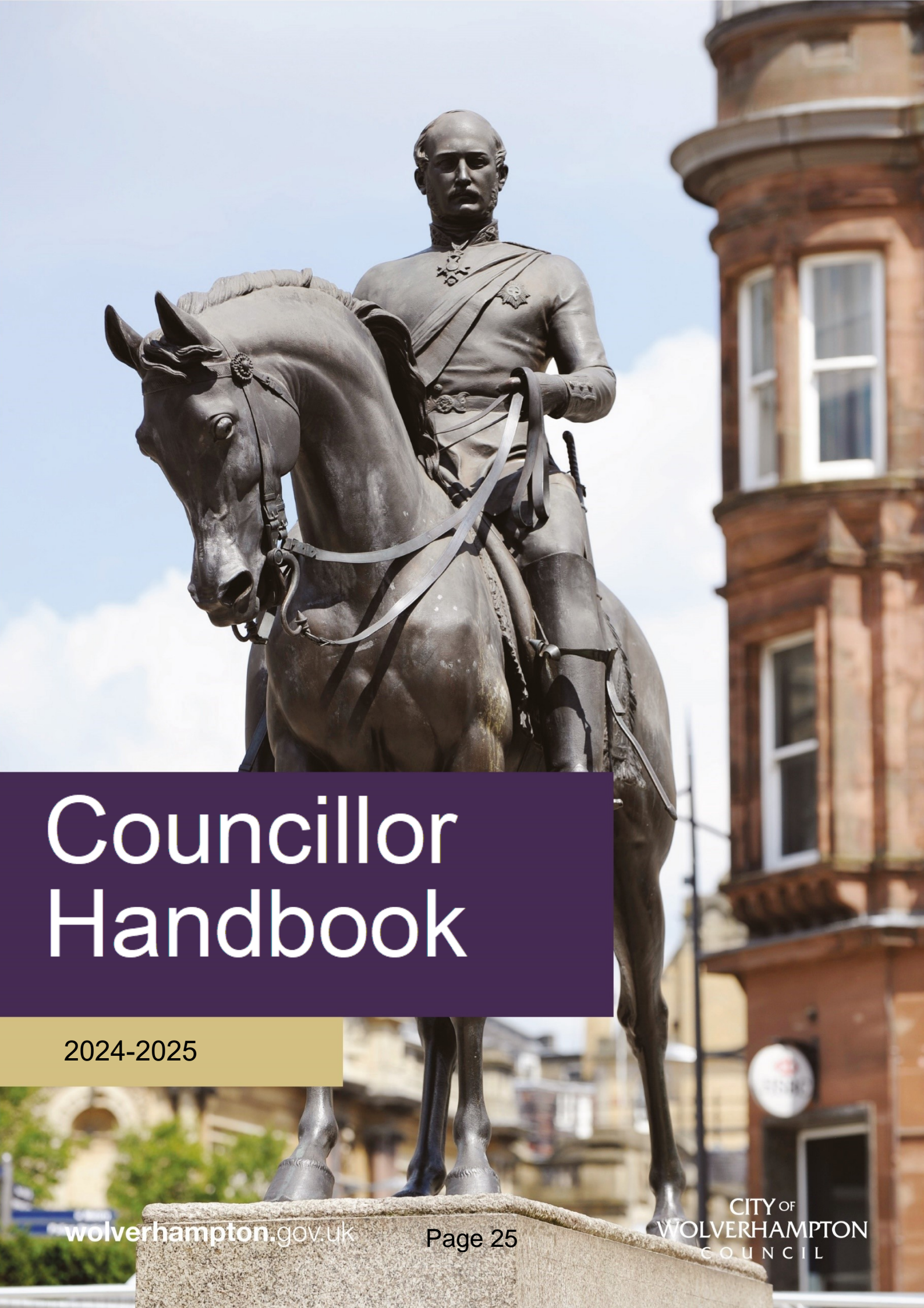
8.1 None.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Councillor Handbook 2024

9.2 Councillor Induction 2024

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Councillor Handbook

2024-2025

Introduction and Welcome

Congratulations on being elected as councillor for the City of Wolverhampton Council. This councillors' handbook has been produced to give you information to help you in the first weeks after becoming a councillor and to set out all of the support you will be provided with during 2024/25 to help you in your new role. Please note that the Committee Chairs and other Councillor posts included in this handbook will be updated following the Annual general Meeting on 15 May 2024 where appointments will be decided by Council.

Serving as a democratically elected councillor is an honour and carries with it significant responsibilities. As well as representing the people of your ward, and Wolverhampton generally, you are responsible (with others) for running a large and complex public organisation with more than 4,000 (non-school) staff and a budget of £330m+.

Councillor Stephen Simkins
Leader of the Council



"Congratulations on being elected to serve the people. It is a tremendous honour and a great responsibility to be elected by your peers. I hope you find your time as a councillor to be rewarding and enjoyable. It won't always be easy, but I strongly believe that dedicating yourself to public service remains a noble and fulfilling calling."

Tim Johnson
Chief Executive



"Officers are here to serve the Council. We ensure the policies you decide upon are implemented and it is our job to provide professional advice and support in an environment of mutual respect."

Councillor Wendy Thompson
Leader of the Opposition Party



"Congratulations on being elected as a councillor at City of Wolverhampton Council. You have chosen to dedicate yourself to public service and representing the people who have elected you into office is one of the greatest honours you can have. I hope your time as a councillor is fulfilling and that you find this handbook useful."

David Pattison
Chief Operating Officer



"This will be another busy and exciting year, where Council members will be engaged in discussions as we deliver on the strategic vision for our City set out in Our City Our Plan and closely monitor Council performance to achieve the plan outcomes."

Welcome from Local Government Association (LGA)

The national voice of local government

The LGA is the national membership body for local authorities and we work on behalf of our member councils to support, promote and improve local government. Twenty-one years ago, local government came together to create the LGA to support, promote and improve local government. LGA are politically led and cross-party, working with and on behalf of councils in England and Wales to give local government a strong, credible voice at national level.

Having one national voice gives local government the capacity to:

- Pick up emerging government thinking and ensure that local government's views are heard at the heart of government
- Think ahead to shape and develop the policies that councils need
- Work with public, private, community and voluntary organisations to secure their support for local authorities' priorities and their understanding of our perspectives
- Ensure that the right issues are raised with the right people at the right time, increasing their chance of resolution
- Speak with one voice to the public through the national media
- Take responsibility for driving innovation and improvement across local government.

As a councillor you will automatically have access to the full range of services that LGA provide.

You will be able to find more information and the range of services provided by LGA at <https://www.local.gov.uk/> and you will be able to create a new account by registering at <https://www.local.gov.uk/user/register>.

Section 1 – Being an Elected Councillor

Role of a Councillor and Officers

Councillors provide the democratic leadership of the council.

They:

- represent members of the public
- provide leadership and direction to the council
- scrutinise service delivery.

Officers are employees of the council.

They:

- implement the policies agreed by councillors
- organise and deliver services
- provide unbiased, professional advice and support to councillors.

Councillors and officers have a collective corporate responsibility. But aspects of their roles are distinctly different. Research has shown that the greater the degree of openness and understanding about this, the better the working relationship. Most councils attempt to provide this clarity through joint working protocols, anchored in the Constitution.

The most effective councillors gain a good appreciation of:

- the distinct contribution that councillors and officers make in the running of the council and the boundaries between them, e.g. officers must act with political impartiality, serving the whole council rather than particular groups or councillors
- the areas in which roles and responsibilities overlap and councillors and officers must act together to provide democratic governance.

Councillors and officers are indispensable to one another and mutual respect and communication between both is essential for good local government. Together, they bring the critical skills, experience and knowledge required to manage an effective council. Councillors provide a democratic mandate to the council, whereas officers contribute the professional and managerial expertise needed to deliver the policy framework agreed by councillors.

Membership of Political Groups

If you are a member of a political group, you will need to complete a political affiliation form (this is not required if you are an independent), which will be made available to each Political Advisor to the Political Groups. The form will need to be completed ahead of the Annual General Meeting.

Register of Interests

All members of a council are required to complete a register of interests form to provide details of any interests that might give rise to a conflict of interest when undertaking their duties as a councillor.

There are two types of interests: pecuniary and non-pecuniary and these are prescribed by regulations and set out in the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors, Appendix B. Each councillor must register their interests as soon as they take up office, and in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests must by law keep their statutory register up to date and inform the council's Monitoring Officer, David Pattison of any changes within 28 days of the change occurring via monitoring.officer@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Failure to provide this information at all or within time limits, or providing false or misleading information, are offences under the Localism Act 2011.

The register of interests contains details of:

- any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Sponsorship - any payment or other financial benefit (other than from the Council) within the relevant period (12 months) for any expenses incurred in carrying out duties as a Councillor/Co-opted Member, or towards your election expenses, including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union.
- Contracts - any current contracts for goods, services or works between you (or a body in which you have a beneficial interest) and the Council.
- Land - any beneficial interest in land within the area of the Council.
- Licences to occupy land within the area of the Council.
- Corporate Tenancies where the Council is the landlord and the tenant is a body in which you have a beneficial interest.
- Securities
- Membership to any other public bodies (Membership of certain other bodies i.e. political groups, trade unions, school governor, bodies appointed to by the Council).
- Gifts and hospitality received by you with an estimated value of £50 or more.

The register of interests of all councillors are a public record and must be available online for members of the public to view. Please ensure that information is detailed in full and acronyms are not used as these can have multiple meanings.

Unless the interest is a sensitive one as agreed by the Monitoring Officer, interests must be declared in any proceeding of the Council or its Committees even if the interest has already been included on the Register of Interests, or where there is a notification pending to the Monitoring Officer.

Interests can extend to those of your spouse, partner, civil partner, family members or persons with whom you have a close association or personal relationship and you are aware that they have the interest.

A person with whom you have a close association means someone that you are in either regular contact with over a period of time or a significant contact who is more than an acquaintance or can be considered to be a friend, a colleague, a business associate or someone whom you know through general social contacts.

The Register of Interests form is available [here](#) and from the Councillor Support Team. The Council has produced Guidance for members to assist them in completion of the statutory register [here](#) as well as a Frequently Asked Questions guide [here](#).

Legal responsibilities

- You must comply with the requirements of the law and the Council in registering your interests in the Register of Councillor's Interests. Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 and as detailed in section 11.0 of the [Code of Conduct for Councillors of City of Wolverhampton Council \(Part 5 of the Constitution\)](#).
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 sets out the requirements for how organisations should handle personal data. As a Councillor, you are a Data Controller (those who hold and process personal data). A [GDPR Councillor Pack](#) is available on the information governance pages of the Governance Portal to make you aware of the requirements of GDPR. The pack includes a Data Protection Ongoing Compliance Checklist for Councillors. Organisational Development will confirm details of training sessions for this in due course as part of the Councillor Induction Programme.
- Councillors must attend at least 1 formal meeting of the Council or a committee or certain other meetings in a consecutive six-month period. If that does not happen your seat is vacated under section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 and by-election would generally take place.
- The Council has made clear the standards expected of you in your capacity as an elected member, which helps uphold the legal requirement to maintain high standards of conduct by its Councillors. The standards are set out in the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Code of Conduct for Councillors

It is important that Councillors are aware that they can be held accountable and are required to adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. Councillor Conduct can affect the reputation of all councillors and it can cause the public to lose confidence in and ignore the good work being done by the Council as a whole. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want

individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

Councillors represent residents and work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of Councillors and entrust them to represent our local area; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. Councillors have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

It is a requirement of accepting your position that you abide by the Code of Conduct for Councillors at all times when acting as a Councillor, and you must put in writing your understanding of and agreement to uphold the standards required of you.. It is important that if you are in any doubt about the requirements of you, or whether you might have a conflict of interests, you must seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or one of his deputies

Complaints about breaches of the Code of Conduct are made to the Monitoring Officer and ultimately may be considered by a hearing panel comprising members of the Governance & Ethics Committee. Sanctions may be imposed if a Councillor is found to have behaved in a way that falls below the required standard.

More information on the Code of Conduct is available from the Monitoring Officer or one of their deputies either direct with that person or via monitoring.officer@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

Gifts and Hospitality

You must, within 28 days of receipt, notify the Monitoring Officer of any gift, benefit or hospitality with a value in excess of £50 which you have accepted as a Councillor from any person or body other than the Council.

Councillors should declare gifts, benefit or hospitality by updating their Register of Interests form which is located on the [Councillor's individual page on Modern.gov](#) or [here](#) Should you require any assistance please contact the Councillor Support Team or Democratic Services.

Rules of Debate – Full Council

Councillors should make themselves aware of rules around conduct during Full Council meetings and note that 'No councillor shall impute unworthy motives to or use offensive or unbecoming words about another councillor or be guilty of tedious repetition.'

If this occurs the person presiding shall immediately stop the councillor and if repeated the councillor will not be heard any further. The Monitoring Officer as the person responsible for ensuring that the authority acts lawfully shall ensure that this rule is complied with.

The key powers for dealing with issues at Full Council meetings in the Constitution can be found [here](#) and specifically the rules of debate [here](#).

The key aspects are:

- Points of Order
- Point of Explanation (used to be called Point of information)
- Rules of Debate – when can Councillors speak
- Unacceptable behaviour
- Rules on failing to follow person presiding's directions

[Part 4A of the Constitution](#) sets out how meetings take place. Guidance on both Rules of Debate and Points of Order is located within [Full Council Rules Training document](#).

For more information on the Council Meetings Protocols contact the Monitoring Officer (or their Deputy) via monitoring.officer@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act entitles any person to ask a public authority in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, including Government departments, for any recorded information they keep. A list of organisations covered by the Act is available at GOV.UK via [this link](#). The Act gives everyone greater access to information about how decisions are taken in government and how public services are developed and delivered.

For further information contact: Head of Information Governance and Customer Assurance Anna Zollino-Biscotti on 01902 555166 or email: Anna.Zollino-Biscotti@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

Confidentiality

There are three distinct areas where confidentiality might apply:

- In relation to Council/councillor decisions -as set out in the Local Government Act 1972
- Prior to a decision being reached
- In relation to a legal duty of confidentiality or other legal restriction (e.g Data Protection rules)

The starting point for this Council has always been one of transparency, the Council seeks, wherever possible, to avoid matters being restricted from publication or debate.

Councillors will at times have access to highly confidential information and as such there are certain limited situations when the Council needs to restrict sight of the papers and to restrict access to a meeting discussing the papers in relation to a formal decision or prior to reaching that decision, a good example would be where

authority is being sought to purchase or sell a property at a specific price, if the other party (or others) were to become aware of this it would adversely impact on the Council's negotiating position. Another good example is when making a decision about the fitness of a potential taxi driver and any convictions that they may have (as shown by an enhanced criminal records disclosure search), that information clearly cannot be shared widely and must stay confidential.

A comprehensive overview of the rules on Confidentiality regarding Council matters as available to view within the briefing note ['Rules on Confidentiality'](#).

The Pre-election Period

The pre-election period describes the period immediately before elections or referendums when care should be taken by the Council to avoid showing – or giving the impression of showing – any bias, favour or support to any candidate for election or any political party. The term 'heightened sensitivity' is also used, and this was previously referred to as "Purdah".

Both positive or negative publicity associated with a politician or particular political party could impact on a person's perception and therefore influence their vote.

The pre-election rules restrict the Council's usual publicity arrangements, but also its other activities such as the use of council facilities and resources, developing new policies and holding of events (including some meetings) featuring elected officials. Such activities should be carefully considered during the Pre-election Period.

What this means in practice for the council

During the pre-election period, officers will consider the following, to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice:

Publicity – All proactive publicity involving any candidates and other politicians should cease (including Council's website and social media output). We should avoid proactively publicising any controversial issues or reporting views, proposals or recommendations in a way that identifies them with individual politicians or political parties. We should do not include photographs or quotes of candidates. Quotes used in press releases should be attributed to the relevant senior officer.

Campaigns – We should think very carefully about starting any campaigns during this period. If a campaign is already running and is non-controversial (and would be a waste of public money to cancel or postpone them, then continue. However, we should always think carefully if a campaign could be deemed likely to influence the outcome of the election. In such cases we should stop or defer them. An example might be a campaign on an issue which has been subject of local political debate and/or disagreement.

Consultations – Generally we should not launch any new consultations. Unless it is a statutory duty or considered normal council business, such as budget consultations. We should consider carefully before starting any new consultations or

publish report findings from consultation exercises, which could be politically sensitive.

Press queries – All responses to events should be factual and non-political.

Cabinet members – Councillors holding key positions, such as Cabinet Members, continue to be accountable for relevant services and policy areas, and should be able to comment in an emergency or when there is a genuine need for a Councillor-level response to a situation beyond the Council's control.

Political Impartiality – No communications or publicity activity should occur that could call into question the political impartiality of the Council or any particular employee. We must not supply council photographs or other materials to councillors or political groups unless we have verified that they will not be used for campaigning purposes.

Requests for advice from parties/candidates – Requests for advice or information from candidates or political parties should be treated with even handedness and dealt with as soon as possible, with any response being purely factual.

Business as usual

It is important to note that during this period the Council should continue to discharge normal council business (including determining planning applications, even if they are controversial) but with particular care in terms of publicity and communications. Local government sometimes views this period as a time when communications have to shut down completely, but this is not necessary.

Councillors can continue to carry out their role as the ward Councillors/any position of responsibility such as Cabinet member or Committee Chair and carry on case work/Council work, they should not however use Council resources for campaigning purposes.

The Monitoring Officer's pre-election rules and guidance for Councillors during the pre-election period is available to view on the below link:
Guidance for Councillors during the pre-election period.

The LGA have also produced a guide to 'Publicity during pre-election period'.

If you require support on any aspect of the pre-election period, please contact:

David Pattison
Monitoring Officer, Chief Operating Officer
01902 554910
david.pattison@Wolverhampton.gov.uk

Michelle Rowe
Deputy Monitoring Officer, Solicitor
Michelle.rowe@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Guidance on Councillors' use of Social Media and Mobile Devices

This guidance applies to Councillors, it is also general good practice for professional conduct. Social media is a fantastic tool to communicate and engage with your constituent and many Councillors are increasingly using it to do just that. This guide is therefore not designed to put you off using social media, but rather to help you avoid its pitfalls. The Council's Corporate Communications Team, who run the council's popular Wolverhampton Today [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts and [@WolvesCouncil on X](#) (formerly known as Twitter), are available to help you with any questions you might have about social media.

What is the purpose of this guidance?

- The purpose of this guidance is to provide parameters for Councillors' appropriate use of social media and mobile devices.
- Improper use of social media and mobile devices could be used as grounds for challenging a contentious decision or result in complaints of breaching the Councillors Code of Conduct, for a failure to show respect for others or bringing the Council or the office of Councillor into disrepute.
- Good practice on the use of social media and mobile devices

Popular social media platforms include Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and blogs (web logs). Types of mobile devices include smart-phones, tablets and laptops.

Councillors may use these and other platforms in their official capacity but should remember that the public may still perceive them as acting in that capacity even when that is not their intention. A general rule of thumb is that if you wouldn't say something in a public meeting, do not say it on social media.

Councillors should:

- consider whether they need to set appropriate privacy settings for any blog or networking site – especially if it is a private, non-political blog;
- keep an eye out for potentially defamatory, untrue or obscene posts from others and remove them as soon as possible to avoid the perception that they condone such views;
- be careful about any connection with service users who are vulnerable adults or children, as this could be regarded as a safeguarding issue;
- ensure they use Council facilities appropriately
- be aware that by publishing information that they could not have accessed without their position as a Councillor, they will be seen as acting in their official capacity;
- be careful about being too specific or personal if referring to individuals; and
- be aware that the libel laws and other legislation cover blogs, social media and other forms of digital content publication.

Councillors should not:

- place images or text on their site from a copyrighted source (for example

- extracts from publications or photos) without permission
- post comments that they would not be prepared to make face to face;
- refer in a blog to any information identified by the Council as confidential or exempt;
- disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone or information acquired by them which they believe or are aware is of a confidential nature;
- publish personal data of individuals except with express written permission to do so;
- give the impression that they are expressing the views of the Council where it is not appropriate to do so; and
- if they are involved in determining planning or licensing applications or other quasi-judicial decisions, publish anything on their blog that might suggest they do not have an open mind about a matter they are involved in determining.

The Use of Social Media and Mobile Devices at Meetings

Use mobile devices sparingly, discreetly and with common sense at meetings, considering the impression they are giving to others. Councillors should remember that most meetings are now recorded. There may be occasions when texting or emailing between Councillors during meetings on matters relevant to the debate at hand may be valuable (on the same basis as circulating paper notes to other Councillors). Mobile devices also enable Councillors to manage their busy lives when time is at a premium. However, frequent use of these devices during meetings may give the public the impression that the Councillor is not paying full attention to an item that is being discussed in a debate on a decision that is to be made.

Examples of acceptable use:

- reading and annotating meeting papers and background information relevant to that meeting;
- communicating with others at the meeting on matters relevant to the debate at hand
- sending and receiving communications to/from home relating to domestic circumstances (e.g. childcare arrangements), within reason and with common sense.

Avoid the following:

- using social media during quasi-judicial meetings or during the consideration of confidential or exempt items of business at meetings; and
- frequently checking emails and messages that are not related to the meeting;
- taking and sending electronic images of proceedings; and
- extended periods of use that suggests that insufficient attention is being paid to the meeting.

The LGA (Local Government Association) has developed some background information on the use of social media for Councillors which is available to access [here](#). Further support and guidance such as do's and don'ts when using social media are also available from the LGA and available to access [here](#).

If you have any queries relating to communications or the use of social media, or for further advice please speak to:

Constitution

The City of Wolverhampton Council has agreed a [constitution](#) which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are to be followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by the law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose. For further information on the decision-making process, report writing or guidance to Modern.gov contact Democratic Services on: democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Councillor Meeting Membership

The Council has six Scrutiny Panels and a Scrutiny Board, which co-ordinates the Scrutiny work programme and considers cross-cutting issues. In addition, sometimes Special Scrutiny Review Groups are set up. There are also certain regulatory bodies, such as the Planning and Licensing Committees. Following your election, you will be formally appointed to various bodies at the Annual Council Meeting. The Council's Rules of Procedure provide that each Councillor must serve on at least two bodies. Further information on the Constitution, the decision-making structure and scrutiny will be provided through the new Councillor's induction sessions.

Section 2: Information for Councillors

Allowances

As a Councillor you will be entitled to a basic allowance of £12,883 Councillors who undertake significant responsibilities i.e., chairing a committee will receive a Special Responsibility Allowance.

Councillor Portal

The [Councillors' Portal](#) is a digital self-serve portal which has been designed to enable councillors to access key information to assist in your role and help manage enquiries in order to represent your ward and the people who live it in.

It covers a large number of areas with links to your enquiry dashboard, handbooks, Modern.Gov along with planning, safeguarding, out of hours.

The Councillors' Portal is a live page designed for councillors which is evolving and Councillor Support Team appreciate feedback and suggestions for future development.

Councillor Case Work

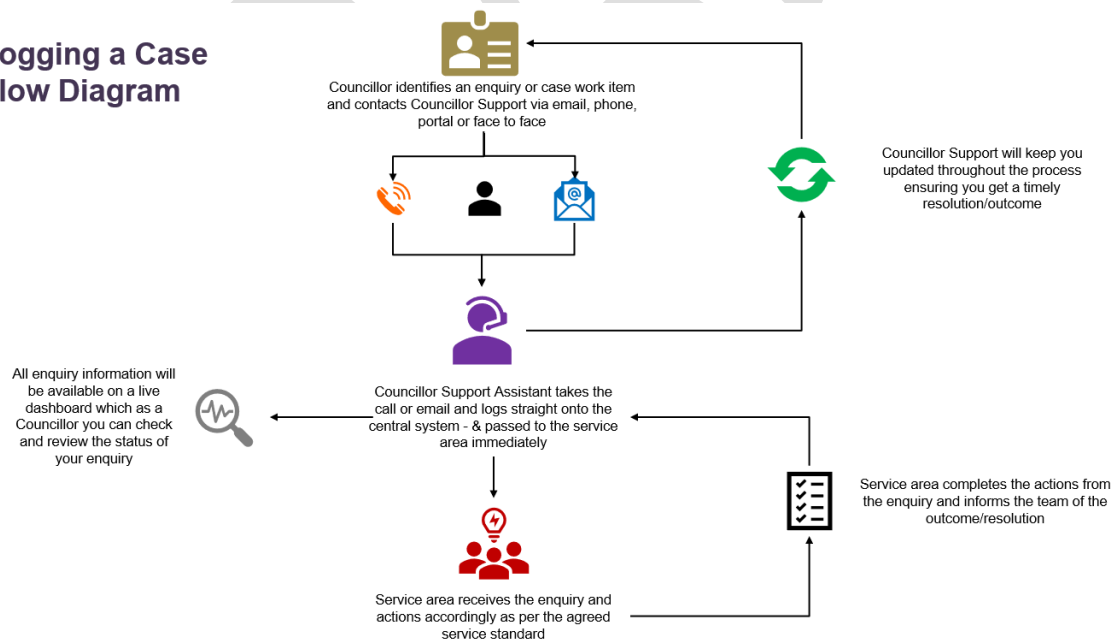
The Councillor Support Team is the single point of contact for all councillors' case work. The team has a dedicated phone number and email address for all case work to be logged. The team will manage case work, contact services to monitor the progress of your case and provide you with regular updates.

The process:

- Councillor contacts Councillor Support via phone or email to log a case.
- The Councillor will be given a case reference number and receive an email with a summary of the case
- The team will monitor the case and keep the Councillor updated with its progress.
- The team will chase cases with service areas if no update or closure notification has been received as it approaches the agreed service standard.
- Once the team has confirmation the case has been resolved they will update the Councillor and close the case.
- In the event of a change of councillor Cases are re-allocated to the new Councillor, councillors are updated on these cases and allocated to them – ensuring any sensitive cases are reviewed and shared in-line with GDPR guidelines.

A visual diagram of the process is detailed below:

Logging a Case Flow Diagram



When logging your enquiry, please:

- Include as much detail as possible relating to the case you want logged
- Provide full details of the nature of the complaint and location (ie potholes / fly tipping).
- Provide the full name and address of any residents involved in the enquiry involves a resident

- Provide proof of consent from the resident if required (e.g. for social care enquiries).

The consent Forms for completion and [Multi-Agency Children Services Threshold Guidance: Continuum of Help & Support 2020](#) are available for use below:

[Consent Form – Adults](#)

[Consent Form – Childrens](#)

The team offers a more efficient process, ensuring consistent responses for councillors and help you better assist your constituents.

For Councillor Support, please contact the team via:

Email: councillors.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk

or

Tel: 01902 550200

Councillor Support operating hours are as follows:

Monday to Thursday 09.00am to 5.00pm

Friday 09.00am to 4.30pm

For out of hours urgent enquiries telephone the Emergency Duty Team on 01902 552999 or in an emergency call 999.

For further information please refer to the out of hours information on our Council website: [Emergency Duty Team \(out of hours\)](#)

For external contacts please see section 8 of this document – this details how to contact Canals and River Trust, Severn Trent, BT etc.

Car Insurance

All Councillors and employees who use their vehicles on Council business should have the necessary insurance cover and information on this is contained in the Councillor Information Pack.

For any loss or damage incurred by Councillors when using Council car parks or on Council business, the Council cannot accept any liability in the absence of negligence.

Risk Management and Insurance Services can arrange for top-up cover for no claim's bonus protection and the cost of this is borne by the individual Councillor (see letter from the Risk Management and Insurance Services [Section and application form](#)).

For further information on Risk Management and Insurance Services contact: rmis@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Personal Insurance

The Council's personal accident insurance applies to Councillors whilst acting on behalf of, or with the approval of, the Council. This includes attendance at Councillors' surgeries and a copy of the Council's Liability Insurance letter can be found Council's insurance cover does not apply where the actions of the Councillor are purely political or personal and cannot be deemed to be actions undertaken on behalf of City of Wolverhampton Council. The Council's public liability insurance cover has similar provisions.

Councillor Benefits

There are a range of benefits Councillors have access to which are listed below:

Your Care Wellbeing Platform

Your Care is our brand new wellbeing platform offering a range of personal, emotional, and financial wellbeing tools to help you build mental resilience and strengthen your personal, emotional, and financial wellbeing.

Free to employees and accessible via the Our Rewards portal, Your Care includes:

- **Assessments** - Identify the risk of developing leading lifestyle-related diseases, along with mental health and financial scores
- **Goals** - The option to set health-boosting goals with small, sustainable lifestyle changes
- **Resources** - Podcasts, blogs, videos, articles, tips and real life stories providing inspiration and motivation on everything from sleep strategies to smoking cessation and financial fitness to healthy recipes
- **Support** - Access to 24/7 support and counselling, 365 days a year. Whether you need advice, short term support, or a specialised treatment, Your Care is on hand to help. Call 0800 023 9324.

To access all of these fantastic resources, visit the Our Rewards portal www.ourrewards.co.uk and click on 'Your Care Wellbeing'.

Not yet registered for Our Rewards? Follow these simple steps:

1. Go to ourrewards.co.uk and click on the Register button.
2. Complete the registration page with First Name, Last Name, Email and create a new Password. You will also require your Employee Number – this is also known as your Res ID and can be found on your payslip or in Agresso. It is important that this is entered correctly.
3. Once you've read them, tick the box to agree to the terms & conditions and privacy notice and then click next.
4. You will receive a confirmation email to complete your account setup. Click the link "Confirm my account" and you will then be taken through to the Vivup portal.

Having problems? Contact Vivup's Customer Care team on 01252 784540.

Our Rewards Viv Up

The Our Rewards scheme includes a one stop portal to get all your councillor

benefits in one place.

Simply visit www.ourrewards.co.uk and click on 'register' to access the following:

- Access a huge range of discounts to help you save money across hundreds of the UK's favourite high-street and online retailers
- Access Local offers including information on Community Shops
- Save on the cost of commuting by bus, train and tram with a National Express travel card.
- Join WV Active for a discounted rate and enjoy the latest in fitness at all three of our WV Active sites.
- Save yourself hundreds of pounds a year on everyday healthcare costs such as visiting the dentist, opticians or physiotherapist by joining Paycare's corporate health cash plan for less than you may think.
- Take advantage of the free will writing service from Dunham McCarthy solicitors.
- Get great rates on ethical savings and loans with deductions taken directly via payroll with Wolverhampton City Credit Union. Visit www.wccul.co.uk for further details.

Further information on all the above benefits is available on the HR intranet and on the Our Rewards portal. If you have any specific enquiries you can contact the HR Support desk on HR.SupportDesk@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

Key information following the election

Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Following the Election, successful Councillors may not act as a Councillor (this includes attending and voting at meetings) until the declaration of acceptance of office has been signed.

The Declaration of Office form shall be provided immediately after Election results by a member of the Councillor Support Team. The declaration must be made within two months from the day of election.

If you do not submit your declaration by this deadline, the seat will be declared vacant, and a by-election will be held.

Submitting your election spending returns

Within 35 calendar days of the election result being declared your election agent will need to prepare and submit to the Returning Officer an election spending return to show that you have stayed within the legal spending limit – this amount will have been communicated to you by Electoral Services in the candidates and agents guidance. Expenses are not reimbursed. Both the candidate and election agent will need to sign a declaration stating that the return is complete and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. You must return election expenses even if it is a nil

return. Electoral Services will send you a reminder following the election with the key information you will need. However Electoral Services are not able to advise any further on expenses, as this is a role of the Electoral Commission.

The election expenses form and guidance on completing it can be found on the [Electoral Commission website](#).

Election expenses can be returned to:

The Proper Officer, C/O Electoral Services

City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St Peters Square, WV1 1SH

Alternatively, scanned copies of completed election expenses can be sent to:

candidates@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Expenses will legally be kept for 2 years and are available for public inspection.

Access to Electoral Register

As a Councillor you are entitled to request one copy of the electoral register for the ward you represent as per The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001. All Councillors will be sent a register request form ahead of the annual publication of the revised register every December. All newly elected Councillors will be sent a register request form in May. You will need to return the completed register request form to: Electoral.Services@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Information from the Electoral Register may only be used as specified in the Representation of the People Regulations 2001. It may be used for electoral purposes and to facilitate the democratic process; it must not be used for commercial purposes. Under the Regulations referred to above, anyone who fails to observe these conditions may be guilty of an offence. The penalty is a fine of up to level 5 on the standard scale (currently £5,000).

The full electoral register is available for public inspection under supervision in accordance with the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001. Information from this register may be recorded only by making handwritten notes. Photocopying or electronic recording are not permitted by law.

If you would like to view the full electoral register, please contact Electoral Services to make an appointment: Electoral.Services@wolverhampton.gov.uk / 01902 55 5050.

Induction Programme

The Induction Programme shall be provided as part of your Councillor Information Pack. This will detail the training programme to provide you with the relevant information to accompany you in your role as a Councillor.

The programme is split into two sections:

- Mandatory
- Beneficial – please note these sessions are open to new and current Councillors.

Development Programme

Organisational Development support with Councillor Development and will provide information on training courses and development opportunities. The proposed Councillor Development programme is co-produced with Councillors and will be communicated at the start of the municipal year. This may be subject to change throughout the year should there be further development needs. Upcoming training and development opportunities will also be communicated regularly as part of the Councillor weekly email.

If you have a particular training or development request, please contact Councillor Support Team via email councillors.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk with details of the event, the reason you would like to attend and the benefits it will deliver.

The request will then be sent to the Organisational Development Team, who will review this against the Councillor Development Programme, and dependent on suitability and resources, will co-ordinate and book the course or conference. Confirmation details will then be sent to the Councillor and Councillor Support Team. Where the Organisational Development Team is aware of other opportunities, they may recommend an alternative to your request.

Mandatory Training

All Councillors are expected to complete mandatory training. The mandatory training e-learning modules are to be completed via the Our People Portal.

The following modules are required to be completed:

- An Introduction to Equality and Diversity
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Climate Change Toolkit
- Corporate Parenting
- Customer Service
- Dementia Awareness
- Health & Safety
- Political Awareness
- Protecting Information
- Safeguarding Against Violent Extremism (PREVENT)
- Safeguarding Awareness
- Using Restorative Practice

All Councillors must ensure they complete all modules and remain up to date with any new mandatory training that may be introduced throughout the year.

Councillors can access the Our People Portal from the City People homepage. The image below is the login page for the Our People Portal. All Councillors should login using the *CoWC device users login* button at the bottom left of the screen.

Instructions

If you are a City of Wolverhampton Council employee: Please login using the City of Wolverhampton Council button below. If you do not have a work device, you will need to login through My Applications before doing this.

If you are employed by an agency: Please contact OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk to request an account.

If you have been instructed to self-register for an account: Please use the Self-register your account button below. It is crucial that you select the correct organisation or your account request may be rejected.

Agency and Self-Registrations: Once you have your login details, use the login form to access the system.

If you have any queries or problems logging in please contact OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Self-register your account
CoWC device users login:
City of Wolverhampton Council

Log in

Username

Password

Remember username

Log in

Forgot username or password?

ⓘ Cookies must be enabled in your browser

Once logged into the Our People Portal, Councillors can view and access any incomplete mandatory training under the Required Learning tab.

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL

Dashboard Record of Learning **Required Learning** Reports My Bookings Find Learning Help

Dashboard / All Staff Homepage - Wellbeing

LATEST NEWS

Please do not use Internet Explorer to carry out your eLearning under any circumstances
It may not be recorded on the system. We strongly recommend that you use Google Chrome to ensure compatibility.

ACCESSIBILITY

A- A A+ R A A Launch ATbar

CALENDAR

January

Mo	Tu	We	Th
1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18

Our People Portal

Our People Portal holds information that will support you with wellbeing, employee information,

If you require further support with accessing the Our People Portal, please contact the Organisational Development Team via OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

Political Leadership

To view the current Political Leadership at the Council which is located on Modern.gov, [use this link to take you to the Modern.gov 'Your Councillors' page](#). To view the details of the Officer Structure at the Council, [use this link to find the most up-to-date Structure Chart](#) which shall also detail Heads of Service and Lead Officers.

You will be able to access contact details of employees via Microsoft Teams where you can use the 'Search' function to find employee details. Alternatively, you can access an address book through Microsoft Outlook.

Keeping you informed

Currently all councillors receive a weekly update distributed via email which provides information on operational and strategic activity including:

- Relevant national or regional news
- Data regarding the City
- New policies
- Training and development opportunities
- Local financial implications and activity
- General information

Each Cabinet Member will also undertake weekly Cabinet Member briefings with their relevant Director. These meetings provide detailed briefings and decisions that need to be made regarding Council business. These are co-ordinated by the Director's Executive Assistant (or their designated 'buddy' when on leave) who will liaise with those which occupy a Cabinet Member post and all papers can be accessed through [Modern.gov](https://modern.gov) and via the modern.gov app.

Access to the building(s)

To access Council buildings – you will require an Access Card. Access cards are multifunction and are used for ID purposes, access to the Civic and scanning/photocopying.

The Councillor Support Team will send your information along with a photograph showing head and shoulders against a white or cream background to Business Support to request a new card. The Councillor Support Team will advise when your access card is ready for collection from the Civic Centre. If your access card is lost or stolen, please contact the Councillor Support Team immediately so that the card can be cancelled in order to alleviate any security issues. The Councillor Support Team will liaise with Business Support to ensure a new access card is issued.

Councillors and employees are required to always wear their access cards while in the Civic Centre and other council buildings.

Councillors' Space

Space for Councillors is provided on the third floor of the Civic Centre. The Councillor's Area is covered by the access card system. Councillors can access the area Monday - Friday between 8am and 8pm, Saturday 9am – 1pm (in the event of evening meetings extending over this time, this can be extended subject to facilities management approval).

The area consists of shared agile working space and 2 separate offices for the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition.

Facilities in the Councillors shared office space include:

- A bank of desks for agile working
- A printer/scanner
- Confidential waste disposal unit
- Drinks machine
- Drinking water
- Recycling facilities

There are meeting rooms made available for Councillors to use on the 3rd Floor of the Civic Centre. These can be booked by councillors provided that it is for use by Councillors in their role as a Councillor, which can of course include political meetings including group meetings and discussions with politicians from other authorities or other bodies – this process is applied equally and fairly to all Councillors. The bookings are not regulated but will be investigated where there are concerns and potentially, if the booking system is misused, we would restrict the use if required. The meeting room usage does however change under legislation of the pre-election period, please see the pre-election period section on page 11.

Two small interview/meeting rooms are located in the corridor leading to the Councillor's Area for Councillor's use. The rooms can be used for meetings with members of the public and Officers.

These rooms can be booked through self-serve in Outlook, if you need assistance please contact: councillors.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Committee Rooms 1 to 5 are available for larger meetings. Meeting rooms can be booked through self-serve in Outlook, if you need assistance, please contact: councillors.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Toilet facilities and a kitchen are also located in the corridor leading to the Councillors' Area.

Postage

All Councillor's post received at the Civic Centre Mail Room is delivered to the Councillor Support area on the 3rd Floor of the Civic Centre, on a daily basis.

Do not use the Civic Centre address for any personal postage items.

IT Support and Equipment

As part of your induction, you shall receive a laptop and mobile phone to carry out your Councillor role. At the point of receiving your new equipment you will have a 1-2-1 session with a Digital & IT Services engineer to ensure everything is setup and working to your satisfaction, including E-mail and Microsoft Teams.

Should you require further support with your IT equipment at any point you can contact the Digital & IT Services Support Desk via: DigitalandIT@wolverhampton.gov.uk or Phone: 01902 558000 Alternatively you can contact a member of the Councillor Support Team who can arrange for a member of

the IT team to contact you to arrange a suitable time to deal with your request.

Microsoft Teams training sessions led by the Digital & IT Business Critical Support Team are also available both on a 1-2-1 basis and as part of a wider Council group session.

If your equipment is lost, stolen or damaged, please contact:
councillors.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Using Council Devices Abroad

Please note that for security reasons you will not be routinely able to use your council mobile phone, laptop or any other device connected to the network when travelling abroad. Roaming will not be activated, but devices are all WIFI enabled – when using WIFI please ensure that it is a secure network.

This also includes the ability to access your E-mails or Microsoft Teams from a council or non-council issued device. You will need to make a request, via the Councillor Support Office, providing at least two working days' notice if you wish to have roaming access enabled on your mobile phone or to have access to Microsoft Office 365 (Email, Teams etc). Please ensure you provide your travel location and dates.

Agile Working

The City of Wolverhampton Council recognises agile working enables employees to maximise their performance and productivity whilst maintaining a good work life balance.

As a public service organisation, the Council's focus is to ensure we deliver the very best possible services for our city and residents. Our customers and business needs remain central to any agreed working arrangements across teams and services. Nevertheless, working in a smarter way supports the Council to be an employer of choice and to continue to attract, develop and retain high quality staff.

All Council roles are categorised into one of the following workstyles - fixed, flexible or field. The fixed workstyle denotes that the postholder will have fixed base location and is not expected to travel to other office locations on a regular basis. The flexible work style denotes that the postholders base location is flexible to meet the needs of the business. Employees in this workstyle can work from a mixture of home and any council office as required subject to business delivery requirements. The field workstyle includes employees that predominantly work out in the community with a base location that is a council office.

This flexibility ensures everyone is supported to undertake their role in the most effective way possible while delivering service improvements for the customer. This sees us support employees through a range of policies, technology, management techniques and training to be flexible and responsive in the way they work.

All Councillors and employees are encouraged to work in an agile way which brings people, processes, connectivity, technology, time and place together to find the most

appropriate and effective method of working. It is appreciated that not all roles within the Council can be flexible and the flexibility will be dependent on the workstyle assigned to the role and the demands and needs of the service, taking into account internal and external customer requirements and business needs. Individual preferences and circumstances will also require consideration to enable the best form of agile working.

Councillors' Surgeries

Any appropriate Council building under the direct control of the Council in or adjacent to a Councillor's own ward which is available at the times required for Councillors' surgeries will be provided free of charge on request.

Bookings should be made directly with the Community Association, a detailed list of Community Centres and Hubs can be found [here](#).

There is no charge for Councillor surgeries at Community Centres and Hubs but any activities (coffee mornings, consultations etc) would be chargeable at the rate set by each Community Association. Each centre is managed by a Community Association and they are responsible for the day to day management of their centre (pricing, bookings etc) and therefore will need to be contacted directly for bookings. If a Councillor wishes to use any other Council property for surgery purposes this can only be provided at the appropriate hiring charge. The Council does not cover such costs. Councillors can make their own arrangements with other venues within their wards such as church halls etc at their own cost.

Printed "Councillors' Surgery Notices" / "Down Your Way" flyers in the corporate style can be provided. Please contact the Councillor Support Team if you require flyers printed.

Health and Safety

Your health and safety as a Councillor is very important to us. It is essential that risks to health and safety are properly controlled through an effective health and safety management system and commitment at all levels within the organisation.

Please familiarise yourself with the [Health and Safety Policy](#) as well as completing mandatory e-learning training available via the Learning Zone on the Our People Portal.

You can seek advice / guidance from the [Health and Safety Portal](#) or by emailing: healthandsafety@wolverhampton.gov.uk

All newly elected Councillors will be offered to attend a health and safety induction as part of their role as a Councillor. At this time all existing or re-elected councillors will also be given the opportunity to re-attend to refresh themselves on the appropriate aspects of health and safety and being a Councillor.

How to stay safe as a Councillor

It is the policy of the Council to make sure that as far as is reasonably practicable no Councillor will be exposed to any uncontrolled risk to their health and safety. This could arise from a violent or aggressive act by a member of the public, or other person for which they have not been adequately prepared and trained.

The Council will not tolerate violence, aggression or abuse against any employee or Councillor under any circumstances.

Councillors are wherever possible required to withdraw from violent or potentially violent situations and follow the appropriate procedure for summoning assistance. However, the Council recognises that there may be situations where Councillors may have to intervene or where they are unable to withdraw.

Councillors must be aware of the potential risk of violence and avoid any action which places either themselves or colleagues at risk.

An updated Employee Risk Alert System (ERAS), which identifies people with a history of violent or threatening behaviour and pose a risk to council staff or Councillors, is now in place. The updated platform can be found [here](#) along with other related information.

[A Councillor Guide to Personal Safety](#) has been developed by the City of Wolverhampton Council Health and Safety Team to support keeping you safe as a Councillor.

If you have any concerns or queries relating to your safety as a Councillor, please contact:

Tim Munro
Head of Service – Health and Safety
01902 554058
tim.munro@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Health and Wellbeing

The Health and Wellbeing of Councillors is a priority within CWC, resources to support your wellbeing can be accessed on the [Our People Portal](#)

Employee Assistance Programme

The Organisation is pleased to announce, that from December 2023, we have introduced a brand new and improved Employee Assistance Programme for our councillors and our employees.

The new scheme is delivered by Viv Up and has many of the same benefits as the previous scheme, the ability to contact a qualified professional 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, face to face counselling and confidential information and guidance.

In addition to these benefits the new Employee Assistance Programme has many other tools and resources to support the maintenance of your wellbeing, from a personalised wellbeing dashboard that allows you to set health goals, to recipes,

podcasts, blogs, debt support, self help guides and much more.

Support for Bereavement, Mental and Physical wellbeing is available.

Contact details:

Telephone: 0800 0239 324

Or visit the website: [Viv Up Your Care](#)

Councillor Profiles

You can find the full list of Councillors for City of Wolverhampton Council on Modern.gov under the [‘Your Councillors’](#) heading.

Car Parking

A car parking permit can be obtained via Councillor Support. The permit will facilitate parking on the Ceremonial car park or any other council owned car park, except for the Civic Centre underground car park. This permit is for use whilst on official Wolverhampton Councillor business only. An annual permit charge may apply.

Customer Feedback

The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to delivering excellent Customer Service. For details on how to complain, submit comments or compliments on the services City of Wolverhampton Council offer, please visit [Customer Feedback](#) on the City of Wolverhampton Council’s Website.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

The Local Government and Social Ombudsman look at individual complaints about councils, all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies) and some other organisations providing local public services. They are a free service. They investigate complaints in a fair and independent way. Results are reported back to Councillors in a six monthly and annual report at Governance and Ethics Committee.

Please visit [Home - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#) for more information.

Section 3: Important Information about the City of Wolverhampton

Local Government in Wolverhampton

The City of Wolverhampton is a place which is proud of its history, celebrates its diversity, and is ambitious for the future.

- Wolverhampton is a young, vibrant, and diverse city with a population of over 267,000 people. The city covers an area of 69.4sq km and includes the city centre and the town centres of Bilston and Wednesfield. The city is growing and diversifying even further, with the population predicted to rise to 296,102 by 2043. Some of the city's key characteristics are outlined below: Population of 267,651
- 45% of the population identify as being from ethnic minority groups (non-White British)
- 18% of the city's population are disabled
- There are over 88 languages spoken in the City
- 15% of residents aged 3+ do not speak English as their main language23% of the population were not born in the UK
- Wolverhampton has an average age of 38 years old
- 3.17% of the population aged 16+ identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual or Other

0.55% of residents aged 16+ have a gender identity different to the sex registered at birthThe Council uses the [WV Insight](#) Website to collect data about protected groups in Wolverhampton. It provides data, research and information about topics such as health, education and population, and provides a specific [Equalities Dashboard](#).

Cabinet Members, Scrutiny and Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs







City of Wolverhampton Council

Cabinet Members, Scrutiny and Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs 2023/2024

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

The Cabinet

The Cabinet comprises the following Councillors. Lead roles are indicated below although it should be noted that these may be shared with the Leader or other Cabinet Members.

 <p>Leader Stephen Simkins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan West Midlands Combined Authority International relations, regional and sub-regional leadership External relations, Public Relations and Reputation Management New Communities and regeneration Our City, Our Plan - driving economy and jobs in the city 	 <p>Deputy Leader: City Housing Steve Evans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan - good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods City Housing Strategy and Housing Policy City Prevention of Homelessness Strategy City Housing Needs & Materials Housing and Temporary Accommodation City Housing Services Inc. (Housing and Self-Help) Solar Homes Inc. National Heatbeat Building Safety Programme City (Historical) Landmark Services Wolverhampton Home Area's Length Management Company City (Historical) Landmark Services - Asset Management Organisation Part 10 Housing Asset Organisation and Cooperatives City Housing Company - WJ Living Ltd City Housing Development Strategy
 <p>Governance and Equalities Paula Brookfield</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan - Fair and inclusive priority leading equalities Legal Community Services and School Appeals Scrutiny Electoral Registration and Elections Information Governance Chair of the Mayor and Councillor Support and Councillor Empowerment Corporate Governance and Feedback Our People Strategy Inc. HR and 	 <p>Resources Louise Miles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Money including Section 106 financial planning Asset Strategy Inc. (ASCI) Budget Development process Financial Management Strategy Capital and asset business plan Housing Health and Wellbeing Inc. (HHWI) Procurement and Commercialisation Asset and Corporate Inc.
 <p>Children and Young People Chris Burden</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan - strong families where children grow up and schools that fulfil potential Our City, Our Plan - better lives for all with quality care for those that need it Children's safeguarding, i.e. protection of vulnerability Children in need and in need of protection Children and young people in care and care leavers Corporate parenting Early life nutrition, prevention and specialist services 	 <p>Adults and Wellbeing Jasbir Jaspal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan - Address the needs of all people from health and care through to housing, employment, education, leisure, and transport Our City, Our Plan - Wellbeing, care support and care pathways Health and Care teams including the role of care and mental health Adult Services Respite services Specialist Social care
 <p>Jobs, Skills and Education Jaqueline Coogan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan - more local health in the good (and bad) training Part 10 School Education provision Adult Education Further and higher education (incl. Wolverhampton College, training providers and apprentices) School governance Skills and employability including careers advice, workset at work, Impact and Inforce School standards and attainment 	 <p>Environment and Climate Change Craig Collingswood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan - healthy inclusive communities Our City, Our Plan - good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods Our City, Our Plan - climate resilience Strategic Transportation Operational Transportation Inc.
 <p>Digital and Community Inclusion Obaida Ahmed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our City, Our Plan - driven by digital Our Digital Strategy for our digital and IT services Our Data including data and analytics Digital Inclusion and connectivity Digital Inclusion including digital skills Digital Inclusion Digital Projects 	 <p>Visitor City Bhupinder Gakhai</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor Experience Partners Activities Voluntary and Community Social Inclusion Community Engagement Leisure and Community Initiatives

Scrutiny Board

 <p>Chair Philip Bateman</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Ellis Turrell</p>
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Mayor

 <p>Mayor Dr Michael Hardacre</p>	 <p>Deputy Mayor Linda Leach</p>
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Opposition Leader and Deputy Leader

 <p>Opposition Leader Wendy Thompson</p>	 <p>Opposition Deputy Leader Simon Bennett</p>
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Scrutiny Panels

 <p>Chair Val Evans</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Chris Haynes</p>
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Adult

 <p>Chair Caizer Azæem</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Staphanie Haynes</p>
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Children and Young People

 <p>Chair John Reynolds</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Sohal Khan</p>
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Resources & Equality

 <p>Chair Susan Roberts MBE</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Paul Singh</p>
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Health

 <p>Chair Jacqui Sweetman</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Uday Singh</p>
---	---

Economy & Growth

 <p>Chair Anwen Muston</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Wendy Dalton</p>
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Climate Change, Housing and Communities



Committees

 <p>Chair Jaspreet Jaspal</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Mary Bateman</p>
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Audit and Risk

 <p>Chair Rita Potter</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Rohit Mistry</p>
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Governance & Ethics

 <p>Chair Zoe Russell</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Rashpal Kaur</p>
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Regulatory and Statutory Licensing

 <p>Chair Milkinder Jaspal</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Tersam Singh</p>
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Pensions

 <p>Chair Paul Sweet</p>	 <p>Vice Chair Gillian Wildman</p>
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Planning

WCC 489 20.09.23

Councillors

Political control

Wolverhampton has 60 councillors. In order to take overall political control of the Council, a party must hold more than 30 seats. The Labour group currently holds 47 seats and therefore has political control of the Council. The leader of the Labour group, Cllr Stephen Simkins, is Leader of the Council.

Council seats are currently distributed as follows:

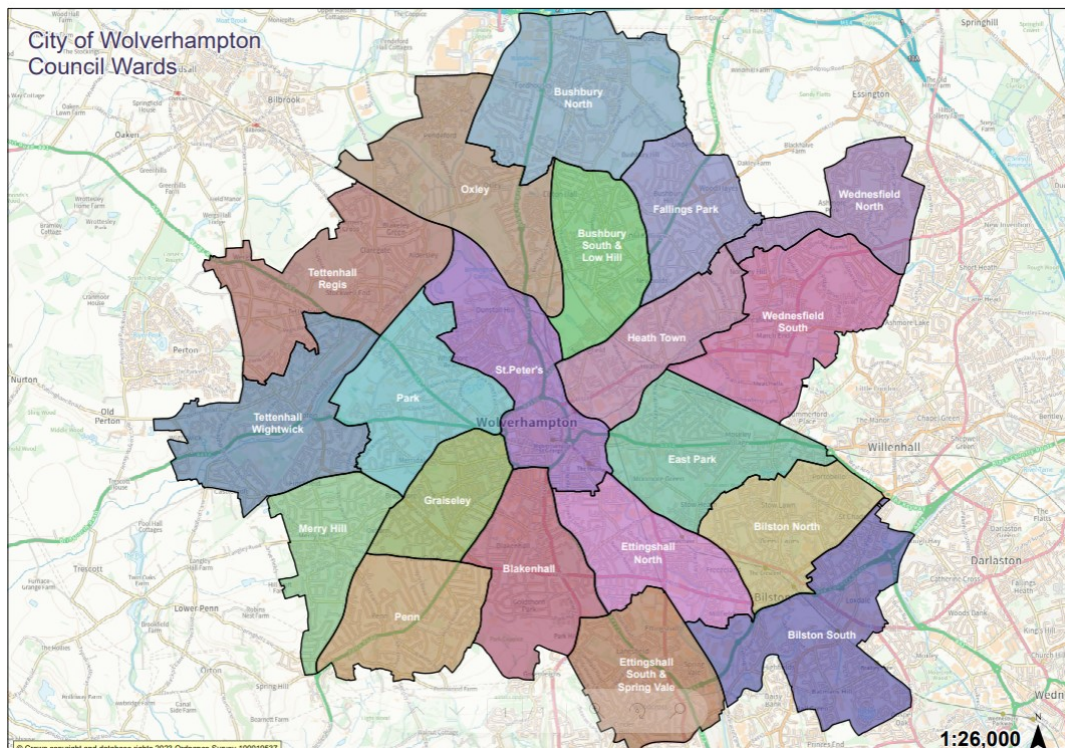
Labour: 47

Conservative: 13

Local Councillors are elected by the community to decide how the council should carry out its various activities. They represent public interest as well as individuals living within the ward in which he or she has been elected to serve a term of office. They have regular contact with the general public through council meetings, telephone calls or surgeries. Surgeries provide an opportunity for any ward resident to go and talk their councillor face to face and these take place on a regular basis. Councillors are not paid a salary for their work, but they do receive allowances. By law, all members of the Council are required to complete a declaration of interest form, the details of which are published annually.

To find your Councillor please use: [Find your councillor](#)

Wards



Director Ward Champion Role

There are five Director Ward Champions who work with four wards each across the city. The role has a number of functions including; Supporting and enhancing the representation of communities in discussions, providing a regular and direct link between Councillors and Director Ward Champions, promoting Love Your Community by using data and evidence to help inform conversations and co-produce activity in communities and maximise allocation of ward funds, building community capacity and resilience. Current Director Ward Champions and their four wards are detailed in the below table:



Director Ward Champions and their Wards



David Pattison

➤ Merry Hill, Penn, Tettenhall Regis, Tettenhall Wightwick



Ian Fegan

➤ Bushbury South & Low Hill, East Park, Wednesfield North, Wednesfield South



John Denley

➤ Graiseley, Heath Town, Park, St. Peter's



John Roseblade

➤ Blakenhall, Bushbury North, Fallings Park, Oxley



Richard Lawrence

➤ Bilston North, Bilston South, Ettingshall North, Ettingshall South & Spring Vale

WV Insight Portal

The open access WV Insight Portal provides service, ward and city level data in one place. It aims to consolidate key data to build up a holistic picture of the city and its residents to facilitate decision making and help Councillors actively support their communities by providing thematic dashboards. To complement WV Insight, a [Ward Profile](#) has been setup on the Councillors' [Portal](#) which has key information by ward, localised for each Councillor, on demographics, housing, health, skills, employment, unemployment, deprivation, and Council Tax bands; Census 2021 data is disseminated on this Ward Profile.

Corporate Parenting

The City of Wolverhampton Council has a unique responsibility to children who are cared for by the authority and care leavers as their 'corporate parents'. In simple terms, a corporate parent is intended to carry out many of the roles a good parent would. The Council may not be able to provide everything a loving parent can, but they should still be able to provide the children and young people they're responsible for with the best possible support and care.

The City of Wolverhampton Council encourages people and organisations to do as much as they can to make sure children and young people feel in control of their

lives and able to overcome the barriers they face using a Restorative Practice Approach. This is a high support/high challenge methodology embedded in the council and has an emphasis of working with people, rather than doing things for them or to them. The city council has a strong commitment to Corporate Parenting making it a priority for everyone in the City from the Chief Executive down to front line staff, as well as elected council members and the wider city community, as if they were our own children and young people.

The concept of Corporate Parenting was introduced by the Government in 1998 as part of a drive to improve the lives of children who are looked after by the local authority. The Corporate Parenting responsibility was reiterated and reinforced in 2007 with the release of the White Paper Care Matters-Time for Change and the underpinning legislation, Children and Young People Act 2008. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 compels local authorities to evidence how they meet the seven principles as they are statutory in relation to looked after children and care leavers.

The corporate parenting principles set out seven fundamental requirements for looked after children and care leavers, as follows:

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people
2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
3. To take into account of the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work
7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The Corporate Parenting Board is made up of cabinet member for children and young people and 10 elected members. The board meets six times per year to consider and provide clear strategic and political direction in relation to corporate parenting.

This includes satisfying themselves that:

- All Councillors and the City of Wolverhampton Council Service Groups are all fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as corporate parents proactively and make a demonstrable commitment to prioritising the needs of looked after children and young people.
- The city has high ambitions and aspirations for all looked after children and care leavers.
- Undertake regular monitoring of the outcomes associated with the seven principles.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding vulnerable children and adults is everyone's responsibility and a crucial aspect of council work, linking to many local agendas, including police and criminal justice, care quality, disability hate crime, community safety and cohesion, domestic violence, forced marriage, exploitation and support for carers.

As a councillor you are likely to encounter some of the most vulnerable people in our city and therefore it is important to understand the key principles of safeguarding including:

- knowing how to recognise and report it
- knowing who is responsible for intervening
- knowing what people's rights are to protection, support, choice and advocacy

Online training is available to all Councillors in relation to this as well as face to face induction in addition to this further information about safeguarding in Wolverhampton can be found at the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Website:

<https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/>

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is the single point of contact for all safeguarding and early intervention concerns/requests for support regarding children and young people and the single point of contact for triaging and assessing all safeguarding concerns regarding adults in Wolverhampton. It brings together expert safeguarding professionals from services that have contact with children, young people, adults and families, making the best possible use of their combined knowledge and information to keep people safe from harm.

All concerns that a child or adult is at risk of abuse or neglect, should be referred to the MASH. If you wish to discuss your concerns and seek advice on what you should do next, then please contact the numbers below. Concerns about abuse or neglect should not be sent to individual officer's emails as this may cause a delay in response.

MASH24 deal with all out of hours safeguarding concerns. For out of hours call 01902 552999, your call will be answered by a 24-hour control call handler. Please have the name, date of birth and address of the person you are calling about as well as your phone number. The information will be passed to a social worker who will call you back as soon as they are able.

Children Safeguarding concerns - Tel: **01902 555392** (Mon-Thurs 8:30am - 5pm {4:30pm on Fridays}) or **01902 552999** (out of hours)

Adult Safeguarding concerns - Tel: **01902 551199** (Mon-Thurs 8:30am - 5pm {4:30pm on Fridays}) or **01902 552999** (out of hours)

If you wish to make your referral about children's concerns in writing then you can complete the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF)

<https://marf.wolverhampton.gov.uk/>

If your concern is about an adult you can complete the form available at the following link <https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/report-a-concern>

If you are intending to contact the MASH, consent from your constituent should be sought before doing so. Consent should not be sought where you feel doing so will place the individual at immediate risk of harm. Further guidance on consent can be found in appendix 1 of the thresholds guidance [Multi-Agency Children Services Threshold Guidance: Continuum of Help & Support 2020](#).

[Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together](#) Partnership is the statutory body that convenes safeguarding partners across the City including West Midlands Police, Clinical Commissioning Group and Local Authority, alongside Education and the Voluntary sector to work in close collaboration to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults with care and support needs in Wolverhampton.

If you would like to highlight broader safeguarding issues within your constituency these can be sent to wst@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

The Council takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously and all councillors require a basic DBS check as a minimum requirement. A more detailed enhanced DBS check is required for those Councillors who may, by virtue of their responsibilities, have unsupervised contact with children.

The Constitution sets out that the following Councillors require an enhanced DBS check: Mayor, Council Leader, Deputy Council Leader, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Cabinet Member for Education, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Chair of the Children Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel and all members of the Corporate Parenting Board.

DBS checks are required every four years (normally to coincide with election or re-election). The Councillor Support Team will make the necessary arrangements with Councillors when a DBS check is due. It is vital that you cooperate when you are asked to apply for a DBS and provide your identification documents when requested. Failure to cooperate within a reasonable timeframe to complete your DBS check will be reported to the Monitoring Officer as it is essential that these checks are completed for all councillors.

Please note that even though you may already have a DBS check in place by virtue of another role (e.g. if you are a school governor), you may still require a new DBS check to be carried out and processed by the council.

The Council recognises that information released in DBS certificates can be extremely sensitive and personal. Receipt, handling and consideration of the certificates will therefore be carried out in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service's code of practice.

Appointments, as indicated above which are made at Annual Council will be subject to the completion of a satisfactory enhanced DBS check where that is required by the role. In the event the checks reveal that a candidate is 'barred' the council reserves the right to withdraw the appointment. Additionally, Councillors should report any change in personal circumstances that may impact on their suitability or appropriateness to undertake roles. All declarations should be made without delay.

Many Councillors regularly work with local party members and volunteers in your role as an elected member. It is vital that you are mindful of who is helping you, especially if they are in contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. Safeguarding must always be at the forefront of everyone's mind.

Social Security Benefits

The [Social Security Benefits](#) page on the Council's website provides access to the 'Information and Advice Directory' which provides details of local groups and organisations that may assist on issues connected to benefits, debt, housing and employment. From here you can also obtain access to a wide range of Information Guides, Fact Sheets and Benefit Bulletins designed to provide information and updates on key benefits and topical issues. Details are also herein included on the 'Benefits Helpline' a helpline through which people living in Wolverhampton may receive free and confidential advice on Social Security benefits.

Voluntary Organisations within the City of Wolverhampton

You are able to find information on Wolverhampton Voluntary Organisations by using the [Wolverhampton Information Network](#) (WIN). This will provide an oversight of the Voluntary groups within the City with ability to filter the groups by; services offered, people supported, postcode, health service type and health organisation type.

Funding for Groups within Wards

If you have a project or a group/trust within your ward that require funding, the External Funding Team may be able to provide support such as doing a funding search using GRANTfinder (a funding database which has access to the latest local, national and international sources of funding) or act as a critical friend reading through and offering suggestions for funding bids.. Please contact Catherine Perry for more information and advice: catherine.perry@wolverhampton.gov.uk

To get the latest funding information aimed at voluntary sector and community groups, you can subscribe to a roundup of funding opportunities collated in the Wolverhampton Voluntary & Community Action newsletter. You can also follow WVCA – Wolverhampton Voluntary & Community Action on Facebook and Twitter to get the latest information on grants open to voluntary and community organisations. Wolverhampton Voluntary & Community Action can also offer advice and support with identifying and applying for funding opportunities. Please visit <https://www.wvca.org.uk/> for more details.

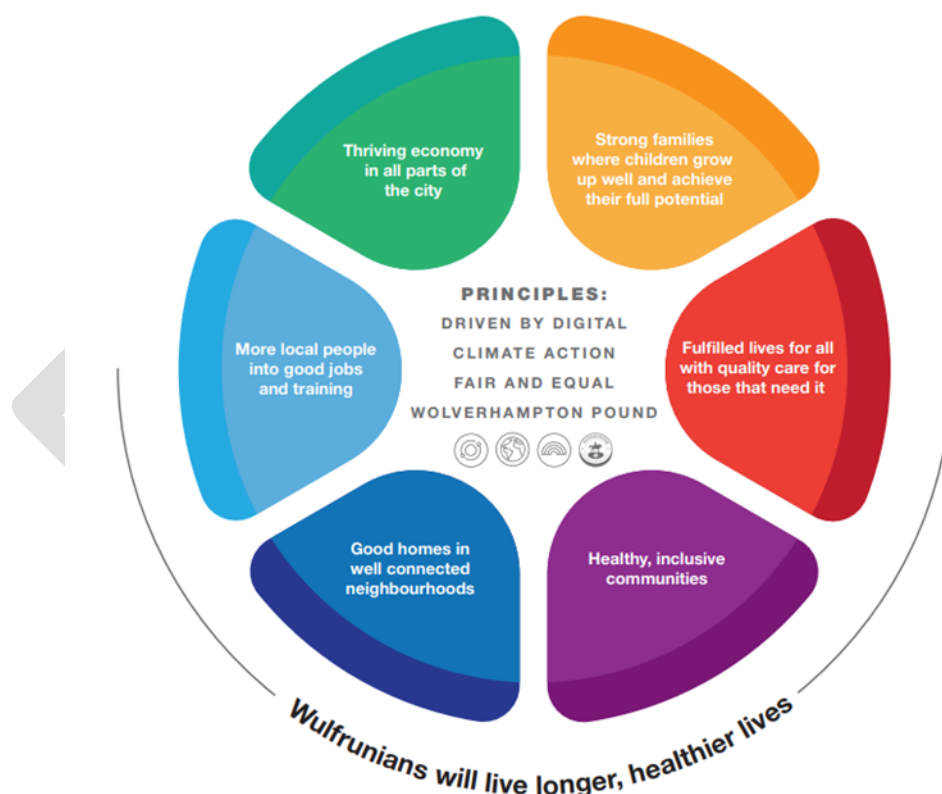
Section 4: How does the Council work?

Council Priorities – Our City: Our Plan

The plan sets out how we will work with our partners and communities to build a more prosperous and inclusive Wolverhampton where everyone can share in the opportunities and success of our city.

The plan sets out an ambition that ‘Wulfrunians will live longer, healthier lives.’ Delivery of this ambition will be supported by six overarching priorities.

1. Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential
2. Fulfilled lives for all with quality care for those that need it
3. Healthy, inclusive communities
4. Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods
5. More local people into good jobs and training
6. Thriving economy in all parts of the city



These priorities together with the associated key outcomes, objectives and activity form a framework to deliver our levelling up ambitions. While they are presented as six separate priorities, they interlink and support one another.

Supporting the six priorities are four cross cutting principles:

- **Climate Action:** The plan is aligned to the Council's climate change strategy 'Future Generations' and our target to make the Council net carbon zero by 2028. Reducing carbon emissions will continue to be a local and national priority.
- **Driven by Digital:** Wolverhampton is at the forefront of digital infrastructure and innovation, and now more than ever we have seen the importance of digital skills and connectivity to social and economic participation for the City's residents.
- **Fair and Equal:** The Council will continue to tackle the inequalities in our city which impact on the opportunities of local people. The plan is aligned to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy which is underpinned by directorate level action plans.
- **Wolverhampton Pound:** Through the Wolverhampton Pound we want to use the combined power of institutions, businesses and communities to retain local wealth, creating new jobs and opportunities. We'll do this in partnership with the city's anchor institutions.

All that we do as an organisation will support these strategic priorities. We cannot do this in isolation, we will continue to work as one council and one city to ensure that these priorities are delivered.

Our People Strategy

Wolverhampton is a city on the move! The face of the city is changing, with a visual transformation of the city centre, and an investment in developing and improving housing stock. But economic regeneration is equally, if not more, important - creating learning and employment opportunities for people to reach their full potential. The city has strengths that are not always visible, and a diverse culture steeped in history. It is a city that is embracing technology and coming together to support both young and old.

A dynamic city needs a dynamic Council, that attracts, supports and retains the best people. A Council where employees can be responsive to local regional and national initiatives. This strategy sets out how together we can meet those goals over the next few years across the employee lifecycle for the whole organisation, that as of today, our 4,500 employees.

Together we are making a real difference to the city we serve.

[Our People Strategy](#)

Our Council

The City of Wolverhampton is a multi-cultural, diverse city of over a quarter of a million people. The City is divided into 20 wards, with three Councillors in each ward to represent its residents. In total, there are 60 Councillors in the City. Local elections take place three out of every four years, with a fallow year on the fourth year.

Wolverhampton Pound

On the 20 January 2021 Cabinet approved the Wolverhampton Pound initiative, which brings together major public sector organisations in Wolverhampton with a pledge to keep more of their £834 million collective spending power in the city.

The initiative will see the Council, City of Wolverhampton College, Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, University of Wolverhampton and Wolverhampton Homes commit to spending more money within the city and working with businesses, communities and the voluntary community sector to retain local wealth, create new jobs and opportunities for residents.

The Wolverhampton Pound focusses on 5 key objectives;

- retaining and growing local wealth by prioritising local spending through procurement and commissioning approaches to strengthen and support local supply chains, encouraging the growth of new sectors and creating new local jobs
- embedding social value in the city – leveraging maximum value from investments through social value to strengthen local supply chains, supporting local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and building skills for the future
- leading the green transition – The city is at the forefront of the green transition with the development of the National Brownfield Institute and the National Centre for Sustainable Construction and the circular economy. There are growing green energy, retrofit and green construction clusters in Wolverhampton with more than 2,000 SMEs engaged in these industries
- supporting and growing the health and wellbeing economy – health and residential care provide thousands of local jobs. There is a need to develop a robust skills pipeline for the city’s health and wellbeing sectors, strengthen health and care business models and grow local SMEs
- growing and promoting Wolverhampton as a cultural and creative city – Generating a vibrant city which is built on the city’s cultural strengths, the partners will explore the use of cultural and creative improvement districts to support the growth of the arts, cultural and creative industries

Council Functions

The City of Wolverhampton Council offer the following services:

- [Council Tax](#)
- [Health and Social Care](#)
- [Education and Schools](#)
- [Recycling and Waste](#)
- [Licences](#)
- [Planning](#)
- [Benefits](#)
- [Your Council](#)
- [Births, Marriages and Deaths](#)

- [Visiting](#)
- [Environment and Climate](#)
- [Parking and Roads](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Jobs and Careers](#)
- [Libraries](#)
- [Food Businesses and Safety](#)
- [Sports and Leisure](#)
- [Trading Standards](#)
- [Community](#)

Visit the City Council website [‘Our Services’](#) page for more details about each of the abovementioned services.

Key Dates and Events

We have summarised some key dates for your diary (please note that dates were correct at time of going to print but may vary and you are strongly advised to check before attending). This is to assist you with forward planning your diary should you wish to attend any of the events listed below. The list includes some important local and national dates, as well dates of events which are due to take place in the City throughout the coming year. Further details about events are usually communicated via City People, Council Website and email updates. Other unforeseen events may be added to the list as and when they arise.

Key Dates and Events	Dates
Annual Council Meeting and Mayoral Inauguration	Wednesday 15 May 2024
International Day Against Homophobia Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT)	Friday 17 May 2024
Agender Pride Day	Sunday 19 May 2024
Pansexual and Panromantic Awareness Day	Friday 24 May 2024
Wolverhampton African Day	Saturday 27 May 2024
Civic Sunday	Sunday 2 June 2024
Pride Month	Throughout June 2024 (including Wolves Pride on Saturday 8 June)
Gypsy and Roma Travellers' Month	Throughout June 2024
D-Day 80 th Anniversary	Thursday 6 June 2024
Eid in the Park (please note the precise date is determined by sighting of the moon)	Sunday 16 or Monday 17 June 2024
Armed Forces Day Flag Raising Ceremony	Monday 24 June 2024

International Refugee Week	Monday 17 to Sunday 23 June 2024
Learning Disabilities Week	Monday 17 to Sunday 23 June 2024
National Windrush Day	Saturday 22 June 2024
Armed Forces Day Celebration Event	Saturday 29 June 2024
Remembering Srebrenica	Thursday 11 July 2024
Wolverhampton Arts Festival	Saturday 6 to Sunday 7 July 2024
Black Country Day	Sunday 14 July 2024
Non-Binary People's Day	Sunday 14 July 2024
South Asian Heritage Month	Thursday 18 July to Saturday 17 August 2024
VJ Day	Tuesday 15 August 2024
Raksha Bandhan	Monday 19 August 2024
Janmastami	Monday 26 August 2024
Krazy Races	Sunday 1 September 2024
Bi Visibility Day	Monday 23 September 2024
Black History Month	Throughout October 2024
Navatri	Thursday 3 October to Saturday 12 Oct 2024
World Mental Health Day	Thursday 10 October 2024
Yom Kippur	Friday 11 October 2024
Dyslexia Week	Wednesday 2 October to Tuesday October 2024
National Coming Out Day	Friday 11 October 2024
World Sight Day	Saturday 12 October 2024
Diwali Celebration Event – Phoenix Park	October 2024 TBC
Pronouns Day	Wednesday 16 October 2024
Wear it Pink – Breast Cancer Awareness	Friday 18 October 2024
Karwa Chauth	Sunday 20 October 2024
Asexual Visibility Day	Sunday 20 October 2024
Intersex Awareness Day	Thursday 26 October 2024
Bandi Chor Diva	Thursday 31 October 2024
Diwali	Thursday 31 October 2024
Islamophobia Awareness Month	Throughout November 2024
Fireworks Spectacular	TBC
Intersex Day of Remembrance	Wednesday 8 November 2023
Armistice Day/Dutch War Graves	Saturday 9 November 2024 (TBC)
Remembrance Sunday	Sunday 10 November 2024
Armistice Day	Monday 11 November 2024
Guru Nanak's Birthday	Friday 15 November 2024
Disability History Month	Saturday 16 November to 16 December 2024
Christmas Light Switch On – City Centre	Saturday 16 November 2024
International Men's Day	Tuesday 19 November 2024
Trans Day of Remembrance	Wednesday 20 November 2024

Christmas Light Switch On - Wednesfield	Thursday 21 November 2024
Christmas Light Switch On - Bilston	Friday 22 November 2024
Christmas Light Switch On - Tettenhall	Saturday 23 November 2024
Christmas Light Switch On – Bantock	Sunday 24 November 2024
International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (Start of Orange Wolves)	Monday 25 November 2024
St Andrew’s Day	Saturday 30 November 2024
World Aids Day	Sunday 1 December 2024
Christmas Day	Wednesday 25 December 2024
St David’s Day	Saturday 1 March 2025
St Patrick’s Day	Monday 17 March 2025
St Georges Day	Wednesday 23 April 2025
VE Day	Thursday 8 May 2025

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

As a City, we are committed to equality, diversity and social inclusion. Promoting equality and tackling inequalities is at the heart of our goals at City of Wolverhampton Council. We are a confident council committed to fairness & equality to ensure that everyone has a chance to benefit; working as one to serve our city alongside customers, colleagues and partners.

The Council’s responsibility to EDI is a:



Legal Responsibility

Under the Equality Act 2010 local authorities have a duty to consider or think about how our policies and decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.



Moral Responsibility

As an Organisation we have a moral responsibility to ensure that we are treat all of our citizens equally and with respect. We need to demonstrate that we are being authentic by doing the right thing.



Business Responsibility

As a Business we have a Social Responsibility to demonstrate how EDI is part of Our City: Our Plan and delivers on equity. When colleagues and citizens are able to truly be themselves a business truly thrives.

As a Councillor you have a responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:



If you would like more information on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion please contact:

Jin Takhar – Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Email – Jin.Takhar@wolverhampton.gov.uk

EDI Email – EDI@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Section 5: How Do Meetings Work

Notice of Meetings and Publicity

In this section you can access information and documents relating to the Council's decision-making processes, find out about forthcoming Cabinet, Council and other Councillor meetings, search for forthcoming or recent decisions and obtain details for your local Councillors.

Meeting information

Information regarding [Council, Cabinet and other Councillor meetings](#).

In this section you can find the agendas, minutes and reports for previous meetings, as well as the dates of future meetings and the documents for them (once available). Historical Council, Cabinet and other Councillors meetings can be viewed [here](#). Councillors are required to access paperwork for Committee/Council Meetings electronically as this reduces the costs for the Council and reduces our Carbon footprint. Should you have an accessibility issue please contact Democratic.Services@Wolverhampton.gov.uk Chairs and Vice Chairs could will receive paper copies and a script to assist with chairing the meeting.

Decisions

Information regarding the [decisions taken by Cabinet, committees, etc](#), as well as individual executive decisions taken by Cabinet Members. To view documents in pdf format you will require the free [Adobe Acrobat Reader software](#). Which shall be pre-loaded onto laptops. For note, PDF's will open in the Chromium (Edge) Internet Browser.

Councillors and MPs

Click [here](#) to see details of all Wolverhampton Councillors.

Wolverhampton has three MPs:

Wolverhampton North East – [Jane Stevenson MP](#) (Conservative)

Wolverhampton South West – [Stuart Anderson MP](#) (Conservative)

Wolverhampton South East – [Pat McFadden MP](#) (Labour)

How to get involved

It is possible to [subscribe to updates](#) in order to receive information via e-mail regarding particular issues and committee meetings.

You can also access and sign current [ePetitions](#) submitted to this Council, as well as accessing information on ePetitions that have already been completed.

Outside Bodies

Contact details for the Council representatives on [outside bodies](#) and forums that are independent from the Council.

Scrutiny Panel Meetings

The scrutiny process aims to make sure that services and policies delivered by the Council and others best meet the needs of the people of Wolverhampton. Scrutiny makes recommendations to Cabined, Council and external partners.

The agreed remits and Chairs of the Panels are below:

Topic	Chair for 2023-24 Municipal Year
Scrutiny Board	Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel	Cllr John Reynolds
Economy and Growth Scrutiny Panel	Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman
Climate Change, Housing and Communities	Cllr Anwen Muston
Health Scrutiny Panel	Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Adult Scrutiny Panel	Cllr Val Evans
Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel	Cllr Qaiser Azeem

Scrutiny Panel Members should ensure that they:

- Contribute to the work programme by suggesting topics for review Read all the papers for the meeting and do their own research as appropriate (see key research tools below)
- Contribute to the meeting discussion and in particular provide feedback from residents.
- Make recommendations in the meeting as appropriate.
- Carefully craft questions which are important to be asked on the relevant topic area.
- Liaise with Officers beforehand should clarification be needed on some of the main points in reports.

Attendance at Scrutiny Meetings

If you cannot attend a Scrutiny meeting, you must formally submit apologise to the Scrutiny Officer for the meeting via email and notify the Scrutiny Officer and the Chief Operating Officer of any substitutions.

Key scrutiny research tools:

- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny
- Local Government Association
- Houses of Parliament – Select Committee Reports
- The King’s Fund (Health and Social Care)
- National Audit Office
- Black Country Consortium

E-mail: scrutiny@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Section 6: Fire Alarms

The City of Wolverhampton Civic Centre building operates a fire alarm test at 11:00am every Thursday.

Action on discovering a fire or symptoms of fire:

- Operate the nearest Fire Alarm or use any telephone and dial **4444**, stating your location
- Attack the fire if possible, with the appropriate extinguisher **BUT NOT AT RISK OF PERSONAL INJURY**

Action on hearing the alarm intermittent tone:

- The alarm system has been activated and the building is being checked
- Stay alert but take no further action at this stage

- If you require additional time to exit, or are unable to evacuate yourself from the building, please contact Councillor Support who will arrange for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan to be completed with you.
- If the intermittent tone stops the alert is over and normal duties can be resumed

Fire assembly point is adjacent to the Cenotaph in the Piazza Do not congregate close the building. Keep behind the steps leading to Lady Wulfruna's statue.

Action on hearing the continuous tone:

- Leave the building immediately using the nearest safe exit and make your way to the Assembly Point - **DO NOT USE LIFTS**
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- All doors, wherever possible, should be closed whilst evacuating the building to prevent the rapid spread of fire
- Switch off any equipment that may be dangerous to leave on
- On reaching Assembly Point remain in an orderly manner, do not obstruct the traffic flow. A Sub-Controller will check that all persons are accounted for in conjunction with the site investigation team.
- No person should re-enter the building under any circumstances until instructed to do so

For more information regarding fire evacuation procedures contact Workplace Strategy Manager - Kulwinder Kudhail - Kulwinder.Kudhail@Wolverhampton.gov.uk

Section 7: Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team

An Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team exist within the Council as part of the Governance Directorate. The team's key responsibilities are to ensure that the authority is meeting the seven statutory duties placed upon it, as a Category 1 Responder, outlined within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. These are to:

- assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning;
- put in place emergency plans;
- put in place business continuity management arrangements;
- put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency;
- share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination;
- co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency;
- provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

The team work collaboratively with services across the wider Council to put in place arrangements to prepare for and respond to emergency incidents. The aim being to build resilience and minimise impacts on our communities when incidents do arise.

Emergency Planning

Emergency planning comprises of the processes for developing response arrangements; risk assessments to determine the plans required, consultation and collaboration for development of planning documents, strategies for response and recovery.

A generic response plan is held to outline the key response structures and actions to be taken in a major emergency. Some responses that require a specifically tailored response will be documented in risk specific plans/frameworks; for example, the Severe Weather Coordination Framework, and Fuel Disruption Plan.

Business Continuity

The Council must ensure that no matter what disruptive event takes place, that steps have been taken as far as reasonably practical to ensure delivery of its critical services.

The responsibility for business continuity is council-wide, and clearly documented in the corporate Business Continuity Policy. The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team undertake the role of coordinating the Corporate Business Continuity Programme, supporting development of arrangements and monitoring progress of Council activity.

Governance

The work undertaken within the Council is governed by the City of Wolverhampton Council's Resilience Board, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer. The Team also represent the Council as members on the West Midlands Conurbation Local Resilience Forum where joint multi-agency working is undertaken with other responding agencies including the emergency services and neighbouring authorities.

What do the team consider an emergency?

Definitions

An Emergency is defined within the Civil Contingencies Act as:

“An event, situation or incident which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or the security of the UK or of a place in the UK.”

The Act also recognises that some emergencies are of such a scale to require implementation of special resources and processes; these are known as Major Incidents, defined as:

“An event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency.”

Incident type

Some examples of incidents that could trigger an emergency response from our team include:

- Large industrial fires
- Extreme weather events
- Residential fires
- Terror attacks
- Major transport accidents
- Declared major incidents within the City or wider conurbation
- Police evacuation orders

DRAFT

- Large scale public disorder

All calls received are assessed against a set of trigger criteria to determine the most appropriate response. **It is important when activating an emergency response that it is of time critical urgency.**

Incident Response Activation

The Council provide a 24/7 means of escalation for managing emergency incidents; meaning that no matter the time or day, there will be someone available to respond.

Office Hours (09:00-17:00 Working Days)

During office hours, the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team manage all calls. Notification of an incident is often received directly from the emergency services but can also be received via other council services and or the public through the Customer service desk.

Emergency In Hours Phone Number: 01902 55 5511.

The team will activate the necessary response plans and work with the relevant services to meet the needs of the incident.

Out of Hours

Out of hours (including evenings, weekends and bank holidays) all reports of an incident should be received through the Concierge Management Centre. It is very important that the calls go via this route to ensure that the correct processes can be activated effectively.

Emergency Out of Hours Phone Number: 01902 55 2999.

The Concierge will assess the caller information; for calls meeting emergency criteria, these will be passed through to the duty Emergency Response Officer who will then respond and activate response arrangements as appropriate. The Emergency Response Officer may work alongside the SEB Duty Director and the Duty Comms Officer as is necessary for the response.

Where a call is not assessed as an emergency via the Concierge, they will assist where they can by utilising their Out of Hours Service Instructions to deploy available resource as is appropriate to the request.

Council Incident Response Roles

The principal concerns for all Local Authorities are to support and care for the wider community, support the emergency services in the response and the co-ordination of the response by additional responders. As the incident progresses, the emphasis will switch from response to recovery, which City of Wolverhampton Council leads, focusing on rehabilitating the community and restoring the environment.

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team (In Hours) / Emergency Response Officer (Out of Hours)

- Respond at an operational and tactical level to an incident, attending scene and coordinating resource with other responding agencies.
- Advise the SEB Duty Director on plans and processes in place that could be utilised and implementing them when authorised to do so.
- Liaising with external agencies as part of a multi-agency response.
- Liaise with internal services (and Concierge Management Centre out of hours) for deployment of council resource and support, as well as to advise on business continuity response.
- Ensure any support of local residents continues throughout the response until residents are able to return home.

SEB Duty Director

- Respond at the strategic level to an incident.
- Authorise the activation of council response plans and the incident control room.
- Declare a Major Incident where appropriate.
- Liaise with external agencies as part of a multi-agency response.
- Set the strategic direction of an incident response and the strategic objectives for other responders to work towards.
- Role of media spokesperson where required.
- Attendance at internal and multi-agency strategic coordinating groups.

Duty Communications Officer

- Advise on best methods of communication with regards to the incident at hand.
- Produce communications in liaison with the SEB Duty Director and disseminate as appropriate.

Concierge Management Centre (Wolverhampton Homes)

- Triage all out of hours call and notify the Emergency Response Officer for activation where triggers are met.
- Deploy council services and resources.

Other Council Services

- Deploy their services as necessary as both part of their day to day roles and as part of a wider coordinated response and recovery effort.

Role of an Elected Member

Elected Members provide an invaluable role during incidents, varying upon the individual's skill set and knowledge, interest and if the incident affected is within their Ward. The importance of taking advice and guidance from City of Wolverhampton Council Officers, prior to becoming involved cannot be underestimated. Generally, the following guidance should be followed:

- Incidents are usually followed by a period of confusion; it may take some time

whilst officers clarify the information and are in a position to share accurate information with you.

- Members need to be aware of the emergency planning and business continuity arrangements.
- You must be briefed before involvement ; generally briefings will be provided by a member of Strategic Executive Board.
- You should keep a record of your involvement and the rationale of why you did it.
- Enable Council Officers to concentrate on their tasks by shielding them from unnecessary distractions.
- Support the business continuity arrangements that may be activated.
- Maintain an advocacy role at the local level.
- Attend any public meetings within your ward.

During an incident, your local knowledge will be invaluable if an incident was to occur in your ward. You will be able to assist us in identifying vulnerable people and acting as a channel of communications to and from the public, however, at all times following advice and guidance from Corporate Communications.

Acting as the pillar of the community you can help to disseminate information on how people can help themselves whilst they wait for further resources and assistance from responders. As the incident begins to enter the recovery phase, you will be asked to attend meetings to promote recovery. Members of the public may feel more comfortable talking to you, raising issues, placing you in an ideal position to share appropriate information with residents or helping to arrange appeal funds or memorial services.

The following should be avoided:

- Passing comment or advice without taking advice or guidance from officers.
- Taking on tasks that you are not trained for.
- Putting yourself in danger at the scene of an incident.
- Issuing individual or press statements.
- Making statements or implying failure or blame.

City of Wolverhampton Council have Duty Communications Officers that should be contacted in the event of an incident, with all media inquiries dealt with through them.

Section 8: Useful Internal and External Contacts

Internal

Team	Telephone Number	Email
Communications Team	01902 555439 (9am-5pm)	communications@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Insurance Services	01902 554567	rmis@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Democratic Services	01902 550320 01902 555046	democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Electoral Services	01902 555050	Electoral.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Councillor Support Team	01902 550200	councillors.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Customer Services	01902 551155	customer.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Emergency Out of Hours	01902 552999 (This will direct to the Wolverhampton Homes Contact Centre)	
Health and Safety Team	01902 551212	healthandsafety@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Information Governance	01902 555166	InformationGovernanceSecure@secure.wolverhampton.gov.uk
HR Support Desk	01902 552345	HR.SupportDesk@Wolverhampton.gov.uk
Adult Safeguarding	01902 551199 If you are concerned for an adult telephone the Emergency Duty Team on 01902 552999 or in an Emergency call 999.	AdultMASH@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Children Safeguarding	01902 555392 If you are concerned for a child out of hours, telephone the Emergency Duty Team on 01902 552999 or in an Emergency call 999.	MASHsecure@secure.wolverhampton.gov.uk
Facilities Management	01902 555075/555076	fm.enquiries@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Digital & IT Service Desk	01902 558000	digitalandit@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Car Parks Team	01902 550303	CarParks@wolverhampton.gov.uk

External Numbers

Organisation	Telephone Number	Email or webpage
Canal and Rivers Trust	N/A	Canal and River Trust
BT Telephone Boxes	0800 661 610	Contact BT via the link or email Customer.serv.payphones@BT.com
BT Cabinets and other issues	N/A	https://www.openreach.com/help-and-support/when-to-get-in-touch-with-openreach
Virgin Media	0330 333 0444	N/A
Transport for West Midlands	0121 2147214 Out of Hours: 0871 200 2233	Network West Midlands
Royal Mail	0345 6021021	N/A
Post Boxes	N/A	postbox.appearance@royalmailpfs.com
Western Power	N/A	West Midlands Western Power
Railway Lines	03457 114141 (24 hrs)	Network Rail
Severn Trent	0800 783 4444	https://www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/report-a-problem/
For SEND / HAF Events	N/A	YO: yowolves.co.uk Voice4Parents https://www.voice4parents-wolves.co.uk
Bromford Housing	0330 123 4034	customerservices@bromford.co.uk
Midland Heart	0345 602 0540	councillor.enquiries@midlandheart.org.uk

Contacting the Council

Customer Services

General enquiries can be made by residents through our Customer Services on **01902 551155, Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm.**

If your call is in regard to an emergency, please contact **01902 552999**

Human Resources

For any HR related queries please contact the HR Support Desk.

HR.SupportDesk@Wolverhampton.gov.uk

Payroll

For any Payroll related queries or information email

payroll.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Councillor Support Team

Name	Title	Telephone Number	Email Address
Lukhvinder Sanger	Councillor Support Manager	07771 836027	lukhvinder.sanger@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Larissa Carless	Councillor Support Officer	01902 550200	Councillors.Support@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Kavita Paul	Councillor Support Assistant	01902 550200	Councillors.Support@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Katie Robinson-Bill	Councillor Support Assistant	01902 550200	Councillors.Support@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Sungita Kumari	Councillor Support Assistant	01902 550200	Councillors.Support@wolverhampton.gov.uk

You can get this information in large print, braille,
audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155

wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155

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City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Councillor Induction Programme

May 2024

Councillor Induction Programme 2024

Welcome

We are very pleased to welcome you to the City of Wolverhampton Council and congratulate you on your success in the elections.

The City of Wolverhampton is a place which is proud of its history, celebrates its diversity and is ambitious for the future. Our vision is that Wolverhampton will be a place where people come from far and wide to work, shop, study and enjoy our vibrant city. It will be transformed while still retaining all those attributes that give our city its unique identity. A healthy, thriving, and sustainable international 'smart city' - renowned for its booming economy and skilled workforce, rich diversity and a commitment to fairness and equality that ensures everyone has the chance to benefit from success.

Your induction programme will help you to fulfil your role as a Councillor and will guide you through the things that we believe will be of most assistance to you.

Councillor Induction Programme 2024

This induction programme is designed for new and returning Councillors. Over the last few years there have been many changes to the way the council operates. It is therefore important to provide a programme of training and development that ensures you are equipped to best deliver your role and provides the necessary information and support that you need to fulfil your duties as a Councillor.

The programme is scheduled over 7 weeks. Building on the experiences and feedback of previous councillors and driven by data from our Councillor Enquiries Unit, it is designed to make it easier for you to attend and access all the training you need. The programme is developed by Councillors for Councillors and is supported by Officers to ensure it is delivered. We highly recommend that you attend each facilitated session and we have included optional drop-in sessions to support you further. Most sessions offer the choice of either a daytime or evening slot, making it easier for Councillors to be able to attend.

The Induction is split into two sections. The first section contains essential sessions that must be attended by all newly elected Councillors. The second section is made up of optional sessions, but they will still provide you with important information that may affect your residents and support you in your role as a Councillor, all new and returning Councillors are welcome to attend.

Please see below a high-level calendar overview of the programme for 2024. The following pages in the pack will give you a brief overview of what each session will contain, key contacts and the support you can expect to receive.

Note that if you have been designated as a member of Licensing committee, you are required to attend training before taking part in any licensing committee meetings.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
New Councillor Essential Sessions				
6 May Bank Holiday	7 May No Scheduled Training	8 May Meet and Greet the Directors 5:30pm	9 May No Scheduled Training	10 May No Scheduled Training
13 May Councillor: Code of conduct 11:30am or 5:30pm	14 May Health and Safety 10am or 5pm	15 May Council – Annual General Meeting at 5:45pm	16 May Councillor Support and Mayoral Support 10am or 5pm	17 May Safeguarding Adults and Children 10am or 4pm
20 May Democratic Services 10am or 5pm Scrutiny 11am or 6pm	21 May City Planning 9.45am or 5pm Information Governance: Using Data in a Safe Way 11am or 6pm	22 May Finance Directorate Overview 10am or 5.30pm	23 May Ward Funds & Ward Profile 9.30am or 5pm	24 May Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion 11am or 4pm
New and Existing Councillor Beneficial Sessions				
27 May Bank Holiday	28 May Environmental Services 10am or 5pm Transport Services 11.30am or 6:30pm	29 May Communications & Social Media 10am or 5pm Customer Services 11am or 6pm	30 May Welfare Rights - Benefits Information 10am or 5pm Anti-Social Behaviour 11am or 6pm	31 May Working with Health in Wolverhampton 10am or 4pm
3 June City Housing & Housing Managing Agents 10am or 5pm	4 June Emergency Planning & Resilience 10am or 5pm	5 June Licensing (external provider) 10:30am (TBC)	6 June Corporate Parenting - Children in Care 10am or 5pm	7 June No training
10 June How to access your payslips 5pm	11 June Prevent Training 10am or 5pm	12 June School Admissions and Appeals Process 10am or 5pm	13 June Organisational Development 11 am or 5.30 pm	14 June Key Sights Tour –Walk 12noon – 2pm
17 June West	18 June No Scheduled	19 June WMCA &	20 June No Scheduled	21 June No Scheduled

Midlands Police 10am & 4.30pm	Training	Regional Understanding 11am or 6pm	Training	Training
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IT Equipment Collection

Your IT equipment (laptop and mobile phone) will be setup and configured after the close of the election results. You will be asked to choose a collection slot on the day of the election results by the IT team.

Slots will be available from Wednesday 8 May 2023 until Friday 10 May 2024 – please contact councillors.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Essential Sessions for All New Councillors

All morning sessions are available as hybrid sessions.

Meet and Greet the Directors

Wednesday 8 May 2024

5:30pm

City Suite, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre

1 Hour

Attendees: Chief Executive and Directors

This session with the Chief Executive and Directors. This is intended to be an informal session to build relationships.

- Tim Johnson, Chief Executive
- Mark Taylor, Deputy Chief Executive
- David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer
- Charlotte Johns, Strategic Director of Economy

The Role of a Councillor: Code of Conduct

Monday 13 May 2024

Session 1: 11:30am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5:30pm - Online via Teams

1.5 Hour

Committee Room 3, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre

Officers Attending

David Pattison – Chief Operating Officer (Monitoring Officer)

Michelle Rowe – Locum Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Tracey Christie – Head of Legal Services

This will assist you in understanding your role as a Councillor, looking closely at the Code of Conduct and key areas of the constitution.

Decision Making:

- Code of Conduct/social media
- Constitution/Rules of Debate
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Gifts and hospitality
- Registration and disclosure of interests
- Bias and predetermination
- Councillor complaints

Health and Safety

Tuesday 14 May 2024

Session 1: 10.00am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5.30pm - Online via Teams

1.5 Hours

Officers Attending

Tim Munro, Head of Health and Safety

Tim Munro the Head of Health and Safety will discuss elements around health and safety and wellbeing that you need to know when representing the Council in and out of the office.

This will cover:

- How health & safety impacts the community
- Overview of health & safety system
- Roles and responsibilities
- Personal safety and available support
- Alertcom overview

Councillor Support Team and Mayoral Support Team

Thursday 16 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

45 minutes

Officers Attending

Lukhvinder Sanger - Councillor Support Manager

Tim Clark – Mayoral Support Manager

This session will provide information about the Mayoral and Councillor Support Teams who will show you how the services can support you in your role as a Councillor. You will also be offered one to one support to understand the system outside the session to assist you in obtaining information.

- Councillor Support Team
- Councillor Portal
- Councillor Handbook
- Dashboard Overview
- Mayoral Support Team

Please note Lukhvinder Sanger will contact you directly to go over the Councillor Casework Dashboard once you have logged cases, so you can see fully how the dashboard operates and supports you to access your data.

Safeguarding Adults and Children

Friday 17 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 3, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 4pm - Online over Teams

1.5 Hours

Officers Attending

Victoria Bowles – Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board Manager

Sarah Ashton-Jones – Head of Adult Services

This very important session explains the role of the council in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's business, and you will need to fully understand the council's safeguarding responsibilities and what is expected from you.

The session will cover:

- What is safeguarding
- Facts & figures
- Number of child protection plans by ward
- What lies behind the statistics
- The number of alerts and the numbers referred and/or investigated
- Who is at risk
- Scenarios
- Referral process

Democratic Services

Monday 20 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officer Attending

Jaswinder Kaur – Democratic Services and Systems Manager

The Democratic Services Team, led by Jaswinder Kaur, Democratic Services, and Systems Manager, will guide you through what they do as a service, how this impacts you and give you a better understanding of your role as a Councillor.

- Councillor role as a committee member
- Council and committees
- Key Decisions Forward Plan and accessing webcasts from previous meetings.

Scrutiny

Monday 20 May 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 6pm - Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officers Attending

Martin Stevens – Scrutiny Team Leader

This session helps you understand the role of scrutiny and how you can get involved in the big issues that are important to you and your community.

The session will include:

- Purpose of scrutiny
- Effective scrutiny
- Understanding your role as a member of scrutiny
- Scrutiny Work Programme from 2022-2023, and accessing webcasts from previous meetings

City Planning

Tuesday 21 May 2024

Session 1: 9:45am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

1 hour

Officer Attending

Stephen Alexander – Head of City Planning

After an introduction from Stephen Alexander, the Head of Planning, the session will guide you through and help you understand the planning process, including:

- Understanding the planning process
- How to use Planning Online
- Accessing planning applications

Information Governance: Using Data in a Safe Way

Tuesday 21 May 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 6pm - Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officer Attending

Anna Zollino-Biscotti – Information Governance Manager

The information governance manager, will look at information governance, laws around GDPR and data and handling of records.

The session will cover:

- Information Laws
- What is information
- Consent and information sharing
- Record handling

Finance Directorate Overview

Wednesday 22 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5:30pm - Online over Teams

1.5 Hours

Officers Attending

Alison Shannon – Deputy Director of Finance

Darren Herries – Head of The Hub

John Thompson – Head of Procurement

Tracey Richards – Head of Revenues and Benefits

Parvinder Uppal – Head of Commercial

Ian Cotterill – Head of Audit

The finance directorate is an important function in the council. Various heads of service will talk to you about how the finances of the council work.

The session will cover:

- The council budget – where our funding comes from and what we spend it on
- Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits
- An Introduction to the finance teams

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

Friday 24 May 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 4pm - Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officer Attending

Jin Takhar – Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This session will look at the important role that equality, diversity and inclusion plays as part of your Councillor role.

Topics included will cover:

- EDI Strategy
- The role of the Council
- The Public Sector Equality Duty.

Director Ward Champions

There are five Director Ward Champions who work with four wards each across the city. The role has a number of functions including supporting and enhancing the representation of communities in discussions, providing a regular and direct link between Councillors and Director Ward Champions and informing place-based activity in communities by using data and evidence to help inform conversations and co-produce activity in communities to maximise allocation of ward funds, building community capacity and resilience.

David Pattison – Chief Operating Officer

Tettenhall Wightwick, Tettenhall Regis, Merry Hill, Penn

Ian Fegan - Director of Communications and External Relations

Bushbury South and Low Hill, East Park, Wednesfield South, Wednesfield North

John Roseblade - Director of Resident Services

Bushbury North, Oxley, Fallings Park, Blakenhall

Richard Lawrence - Director of Regeneration

Bilston North, Ettingshall North, Ettingshall South and Springvale

John Denley - Director of Public Health

Heath Town, Park, St Peter's, Graiseley

Ward Walk introductions will be booked with Ward Directors around your own flexibility. Executive Assistants who support Directors will contact you directly to arrange this.

Ward Funds and Ward Profile

Thursday 23 May 2024

Session 1: 9:30am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officers Attending

Debbie Thompson – Stakeholder Engagement Manager

Adrian Barlow – Analyst (Insight & Performance Team)

Ward Funds

Every council ward has been allocated a pot of funding for Councillors to determine how it can best be spent to make improvements and help residents. The session will explain what ward funds are for, how you can apply for funding and what is suitable and appropriate to receive ward funds.

Ward Profile

This session will show you how the ward profiles dashboard works (navigation) and the topic pages with key information about your ward, giving you access to essential data.

The topics on the dashboard include:

- Diversity and demographic
- Housing and health
- Skills and qualifications
- Employment and unemployment
- House prices
- Deprivation

Beneficial Sessions for New and Existing Councillors

Environmental Services

Tuesday 28 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

1 hour

Officers Attending

Claire Walters – Environmental Based Service Manager

Paul Hodgetts - Services Performance and Intelligent Service Lead

David Millington - Green Spaces and Bereavement Manager

Emma Caddick - Service Manager

You will have a session with Officers from both environmental and transport services, covering some of key areas below:

- Trees and Arbor front line
- Bins and Fly tipping/ pest control
- Environmental Crime
- Parks. green spaces/ bereavement
- Commercial, regulation, private sector housing, licensing

Transport Services

Tuesday 28 May 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 6pm - Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officers Attending

John Roseblade - Director of Resident Services

John Charles - Head of Strategic Transport

This session covers the transport services section and will inform you on what this covers, best practices and types of enquiries that your residents would raise:

The session will look at:

- Road maintenance
- Road repairs
- Traffic light and street sign repair and maintenance
- Traffic control
- Parking
- Traffic and road safety

Communication and Social Media

Wednesday 29 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

45 minutes

Officers Attending

Richard Wyatt – Head of Communications

This is a light touch session which will demonstrate how communications are managed in the council. It will help you understand the different channels used and available and how good communications benefits the council.

The session will cover:

- Role of corporate communications
- Communications services and channels
- Impact of communications
- Social media
- Support for Councillors

Customer Services

Wednesday 29 May 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre

Session 2: 6pm - Online over Teams

30 minutes

Officer(s) Attending

Lisa Powell – Contact Centre Manager

Customer Services is the main point of contact for the residents of Wolverhampton to address their questions and enquiries. It's based at the Civic Centre and offers a comprehensive service by phone or face to face and offers IT access for residents to access their online accounts.

This session includes:

- Customer Services structure
- Functions of Customer Services
- Love Your Streets app
- Overview of our Teams and how we support City of Wolverhampton Council services
- You will be offered the opportunity to visit customer services at a later date to listen to calls and understand the service better.

Welfare Rights: Benefits Information

Thursday 30 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officers Attending

Marc Perlic – Welfare Rights Service Manager

The programme will continue with a session from Marc Perlic, Welfare Rights Service Manager about Benefit information and how the team can help your residents.

Topics Covered:

- What we do: benefits information and advice, casework and appeals
- Making a difference
- Macmillan, working with the university and stakeholders
- Advice and Information Directory

- Training for local groups and organisations

Anti-Social Behaviour

Thursday 30 May 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 6pm - Online over Teams

30 minutes

Officers Attending

Lynsey Kelly – Head of Communities

Hannah Pawley – Community Safety Manager

Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) is Wolverhampton's statutory Community Safety Partnership. It is formed of a range of partners committed to working together to tackle issues of crime and community safety in a coordinated way to deliver a collective response.

The session will cover:

- Safer Wolverhampton Partnership and its functions
- Crime and anti-social behaviour
- How to report concerns
- Community Engagement

Working with Health in Wolverhampton

Friday 31 May 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 4pm - Online over Teams

45 minutes

Officers Attending

John Denley – Director of Governance

Madeleine Freewood – Public Health Partnership & Governance Lead

The role and relationship of the Council in the new NHS system

The session will cover:

- The general picture of health in Wolverhampton
- An introduction to key health stakeholders
- The council's role in health
- The remit of the Integrated Care Board

City Housing and Housing Managing Agents

Monday 3 June 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

1.5 hours

Officers Attending

Jenny Lewington – Deputy Director of City Housing

Michelle Garbett – Service Lead Housing Strategy

Andrew Finch – Customer Experience Manager (Wolves Homes)
Jon Cooper – Head of Housing Solutions (Wolves Homes)
Anthony Walker – Head of Homelessness and Migration
William Humphries – Service Manager, Private Sector Housing

This session is run jointly with Wolverhampton City Council Housing Department and Wolverhampton Homes. City Housing is responsible for housing strategy and policy, housing development and landlord services. The City Council owns almost 22,000 homes, which are managed on the Council's behalf by housing managing agents. This includes Wolverhampton Homes, an arm's length management organisation (ALMO) and three Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs).

Wolverhampton Homes manages the majority of the Council's housing stock, but the responsibility for ensuring tenants receive an excellent service and that homes are safe and maintained, remains the responsibility of the Council. Working closely together, City Housing and the housing managing agents ensure we provide good quality homes and customer service for the tenants and leaseholders of the City.

The session will cover

- City Housing – responsibilities and structure
- Housing policy and new homes
- Wolverhampton Homes and TMOs
- CWC and our role with the housing managing agents
- Homes in the City and the Housing Allocations Policy
- Housing Options and Homelessness
- Private Sector Housing, landlords and private tenant enquiries
- Councillor enquiries

Emergency Planning and Resilience

Tuesday 4 June 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

45 minutes

Officer Attending

Chelsea Sibley – Resilience Manager

A session around your role when it comes to emergency planning and resilience.

This session will cover:

- What's your role as a Councillor and where you fit in
- Why the council must respond
- How we activate our emergency procedures
- What the Council can provide

Licensing Training – (Essential for Committee members)

Wednesday 5 June 2024 TBC

10:30am

1.5 Hour

Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre

External Provider

This is an externally provided session which will help you make the most of council licensing meeting sessions. This is open to all councilors but is mandatory for members of the licensing committee.

Corporate Parenting: Children in Care

Thursday 6 June 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

45 minutes

Officer Attending

Hannah Finch – Corporate Parenting Officer

A corporate parenting officer from the service will give a brief overview of what this is and what it means to you.

This session includes:

- What is Corporate Parenting
- What are your responsibilities as a Councillor.

How to Access Your Payslips

Monday 10 June 2023

Session 1: 5pm - Online over Teams

30 Minutes

Online Session via Teams

Officers Attending

Lukhvinder Sanger – Councillor Enquiries Manager

Agresso is a key IT system used by the council and it holds HR information as well as all your payroll and allowance information, digital p60s and pay slips. This session will teach you how to use Agresso.

Prevent Training

Tuesday 11 June 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

45 Minutes

Officer Attending

Deborah Smith – Prevent and Cohesion Coordinator

This session involves an introduction to Deborah Smith who is the Prevent and Cohesion Co Ordinator, who will talk through the Prevent Duty and the Counter Terrorism Local Profile for Wolverhampton

The session will cover the below

- The Prevent Duty
- The thematic threat assessment for Wolverhampton ISL, ERWT, LASI
- Different forms of extremism and terrorism and common signs and symbols seen across the different ideologies.
- How to make a Prevent referral and the interventions and support available

School Admissions and Appeals Process Overview

Wednesday 12 June 2024

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5pm - Online over Teams

45 Minutes

Officer Attending

Bill Hauge – Head of School Business and Support

David Kirby – Service Manager – School Organisation and Support

Jaswinder Kaur – Democratic and Systems Manager (incl. Appeals)

This session will cover the Council's admission policy and the appeals process.

Organisational Development Team

13 June 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 5:30pm Online over Teams

1 Hour

Officers Attending

Jo Grocott- Head of People Development and Experience

Chloe Elwell- Organisational Development Advisor

Sarah Preston-Loader- Organisational Development Advisor

This session will help you to understand the role of the Organisational Development Team and provide an overview of the upcoming development opportunities for 2024-25 to support you in your role as a Councillor.

The session will include:

- Role of the Organisational Development Team
- Councillor Development Programme 2024-25
- Conference and course booking process
- Accessing the Our People Portal and completing Mandatory Training
- Wellbeing support available to Councillors

Wolverhampton Neighbourhood Policing Unit, West Midlands Police Session

Monday 17 June 2024 (TBC)

Session 1: 10am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor, Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 4.30pm - Online over Teams

45 Minutes

Officer Attending

Richard Fisher – Chief Superintendent

This session will provide information around West Midlands Police and how they work with Wolverhampton City Council:

The session will cover.

- Overview of policing and crime related matters in the borough
 - How we are structured
 - Roles and responsibilities
- Strategic responsibilities and governance
 - Community Safety Partnership (SWP)
 - Safeguarding (WST)

- Health and Well-being
- Contest- Protect, Prepare and Prevent boards
- Community engagement and partnership working
 - PACT
 - Love your community
- How we can help and how best to engage with us to maximise effectiveness and support engagement with communities.

WMCA and Regional Understanding

Wednesday 19 June 2024

Session 1: 11am - Committee Room 4, 3rd Floor Civic Centre – Hybrid

Session 2: 6pm - Online over Teams

45 Minutes

Officer Attending

Charlotte Johns – Strategic Director of Economy

This session will cover:

- The role and function of the West Midlands Combined Authority
- How the council works with the WMCA
- The city's role in the wider region
- Partnership working with other local authorities and organisations.
- Find out more about the unique 3 Cities collaboration between Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Coventry

Key City Sites Tour Walking (2 hours max)

Friday 14 June 2024 12 noon – 2pm

As new Councillors, this tour will give you the chance to see sites around the city that have been developed or are due to be developed, as well as areas of key significance for Wolverhampton.

Feedback

Feedback from Councillors is extremely valuable and helps to design the programme for future years. At the end of each week, electronic feedback forms will be shared, as well as an overall feedback form at the end of the programme.

Mandatory E-Learning and Additional Training for Councillors

The Council are committed the training and development of Councillors. Below you will see other courses provided by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Local Government Information Unit (LGiU), many of these courses you can complete at your own leisure.

There is also information about the mandatory e-learning courses that the Council asks that you complete, these are done via the online Learning Zone.

If you need help or assistance booking any of these, please contact:
 Organisational Development via email OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk
 Civic Support Team on 01902 554090 or email

Additional Mandatory Council E-Learning – Mandatory Online Modules			
Flexible	Approx. 30 minutes	Child Sexual Exploitation	Learning Zone
		Corporate Parenting	Learning Zone
		Dementia Awareness	Learning Zone
		PREVENT Training	Learning Zone
		Political Awareness	Learning Zone
		Climate Change Toolkit	Learning Zone
		An introduction to Equality & Diversity	Learning Zone
		Safeguarding Awareness	Learning Zone
		Using Restorative Practice	Learning Zone
		Health & Safety	Learning Zone
		Protecting Information – (Information Governance, GDPR etc.)	Learning Zone

LGA New Councillor Hub

[Councillor hub | Local Government Association](#)

The New Councillor hub provides newly elected members with all the essential information and amongst other things, covers: the councillor’s role; how local government is organised; the model code of conduct and standards; and decision making. It includes information on the offers and services offered by the LGA with links to the political groups at the LGA; regional teams; information on our support and development offers; and a host of other information essential for newly elected members.

LGA Councillor workbooks on a variety of topics – <https://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-workbooks>

[LGA e-learning platform](#) (modules on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, holding council meetings online, Facilitation and conflict resolution, Effective ward Councillor, Scrutiny, influencing skills, Local government finance, and supporting mentally healthier communities)

LG Inform brings together in one accessible place a range of key performance data for authorities, alongside contextual and financial information, in an online too. LG Inform – <https://www.local.gov.uk/benchmarking-data-lg-inform>

Available Additional Sessions from the LGA and LGiU					
Date: TBC	Start: 5:30pm Duration: 2 hours	Zoom	LGA National Events: Welcome to newly elected councillors This will be a great opportunity for new councillors to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore what their role means • Learn about challenges facing councils 	Delivered Virtually	LGA

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet colleagues from other councils <p>The session will cover a range of national and regional issues of interest, along with an opportunity to meet experienced councillors and hear more about the LGA's support for members</p>		
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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Governance and Ethics Committee 14 March 2024
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Report title	Councillor Development Programme 2024–2025		
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield, Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities		
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer		
Originating service	Organisational Development		
Accountable employee(s)	Chloe Elwell	Organisational Development Advisor	
	Tel	01902 552765	
	Email	Chloe.Elwell2@wolverhampton.gov.uk	
Report to be/has been considered by	Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities Briefing	04 March 2024	
	Councillor Development and Information Technology Advisory Group	12 April 2024	

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Endorse the proposed Councillor Development Programme 2024–2025.

Recommendations for noting:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is asked to note:

1. The Councillor Development Programme 2024–2025 may change or develop as the year progresses dependent on additional learning needs that may arise.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report will outline the Councillor Development Programme 2024–2025, which includes in-house courses, mandatory training requirements, and additional courses and webinars available by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- 1.2 This report will also highlight a recommended process for approval of Councillor requests for external courses and conferences that have an associated cost.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Every year a Councillor Development Programme is created, outlining training and development opportunities available to support Councillors in their role.
- 2.2 Within this Programme a variety of training and development opportunities that are aligned to Our City: Our Plan and the strategic direction of the Council have been proposed for the forthcoming financial year. These opportunities include in-house courses, mandatory training modules, LGA free and costed courses, as well as information on other resources and webinars. In addition, within the Programme a proposed booking process has been outlined for Councillors requesting attendance at other external courses and conferences. See Appendix 1 for the proposed Councillor Development Programme 2024 – 2025.
- 2.3 The following in-house courses have been identified to be arranged for 2024 – 2025.

Date	Course	Provider	Attendees
May	Licensing Committees, Taxi Licensing and Licensing Act 2003 Training	James Button & Co	Licensing Committee Members
June	Probity in Planning	Bethan Evans Governance Training and Consultancy	Planning Committee Members
September/ January	Digital Skills Workshops	Internal	Open to all
September	Suicide Awareness	Integrated Care Board	Open to all
September	Treasury Management	TBC	TBC
October	Supporting yours and your residents' wellbeing with Able Futures	Able Futures	Open to all
November	Climate Action Awareness and Communication	Internal- Green Cities and Circular Economy	Open to all
December	Councillor Code of Conduct	Internal- David Pattison (Chief Operating Officer)	Open to all

January	Digital Skills Workshop	Internal	Open to all
TBC	Treasury Management Training	TBC	Resources and Equalities Scrutiny Panel Members

- 2.4 Councillors may also request attendance at external courses and conferences. However, it should be noted that these requests will need to be reviewed thoroughly to ensure they are appropriate and aligned with Our City, Our Plan or Councillors individual development needs. A proposed booking process for this has been included in Appendix 2.
- 2.5 Each request for an external course or conference will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The factors that will be considered in reviewing the appropriateness of the request are: the Councillor’s role and responsibilities; alignment to the Council’s Our City: Our Plan and strategic direction; provider reputation; cost and available financial resource; availability of alternative opportunities and location.
- 2.6 The Councillor Development Programme provides information regarding the mandatory training modules that should be completed by all Councillors on becoming an elected member of the Council. This will be reviewed annually as to whether any changes are required.
- 2.7 In addition, a list of opportunities available to Councillors via the LGA have been included. Some of these opportunities are free of charge and others are costed on a per person basis. Many of these courses, are aimed at Councillor roles, such as Committee Chairs and Cabinet Members.
- 2.8 The LGA also provide a number of other development resources such as webinars, workbooks, e-learning modules that all Councillors are encouraged to access.
- 2.9 All upcoming training and development opportunities will be regularly communicated to Councillors via the Councillor weekly email.
- 2.10 It should be noted that as the year progresses, the Councillor Development Programme may change and develop dependent on additional learning needs that may arise.

3.0 Progress

- 3.1 The Councillor Development Programme 2024–2025 has been developed following an initial discussion with the Councillor Development and Information Technology Advisory Group to seek their feedback on councillor development needs.
- 3.2 In developing the Programme, consideration has been given to feedback from all Councillors. Councillors have been offered the opportunity to share any development or training needs; this request for feedback was communicated to Councillors via the

Councillor weekly bulletin. Any feedback and requests received from Councillors over the last year have also been considered.

- 3.3 Discussions have also been had with service areas who requested Councillor training in 2023 to understand if they anticipate any further training requirements for the 2024–2025 Programme. Where training is required, this has been factored into the 2024–2025 Programme.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 The budget set aside for Councillor Development in 2024–2025 is £10,000. This is intended to cover any fees charged by external providers for the delivery of courses, either in this location or outside, and conference attendance requests from Councillors.
- 4.2 There are currently three proposed courses to be delivered by external providers in situ in 2024-2025, Planning Committee training, a Civic Coaching Programme and Treasury Management training. The combined estimated cost of these is £4,800, leaving just over half of the £10,000 budget remaining for other courses and conferences. Requests to attend external courses or conferences will be made through the proposed booking process and monitored through the Cabinet Member for Governance and Councillor Development and Information Technology Advisory Group.

[GE/27022024/Y]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 Appropriate procurement processes will be carried out in line with the financial regulations where required.
- 5.2 There are no other legal implications.

[TC/23022024/E]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 The courses within the Councillor Development Programme will be available to all Councillors, unless attendance is only required for Councillors sitting on particular Committees or holding leadership positions.
- 6.2 The LGA offer several workshops specifically to support leadership development for Councillors who identify with certain protected characteristics. These workshops have been included as opportunities as part of the Councillor Development Programme.
- 6.3 Where requested by a Councillor, reasonable adjustments will be made for any in-house courses to support all Councillors to attend and fully participate within a training session.

7.0 Digital Implications

7.1 The Councillor Development programme supports the driven by digital agenda and provides opportunity for Councillors to develop digital skills through in-house workshops where appropriate.

7.2 **Health and Wellbeing Implications**

7.3 Councillors have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for support with health and wellbeing needs. The EAP is delivered by Viv Up and Councillors may access counselling support and confidential information and guidance from a qualified professional 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

7.4 Through Viv Up, Councillors can also access the Your Care wellbeing platform. The platform offers a range of personal, emotional, and financial wellbeing tools and resources to help build mental resilience and strengthen personal, emotional, and financial wellbeing.

7.5 The details of the support available can be found in the Councillor Handbook or by contacting the Organisational Development Team.

8.0 **Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1: Proposed Councillor Development Programme 2024–2025

8.2 Appendix 2: Proposed booking process for external course and conference requests from Councillors

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Councillor Development Programme 2024 – 2025

Councillor Development Programme 2024 – 2025

The Organisational Development (OD) Team is pleased to present the Councillor Development Programme 2024 – 2025.

Outlined within this Programme is a variety of training and development opportunities that are aligned to Our City: Our Plan and the strategic direction of the Council, supporting you to be effective in your role as a Councillor and enabling you to advocate for the residents of Wolverhampton.

The Programme has been developed through discussions at the Councillor Development and Information Technology Advisory Group and the Governance and Ethics Committee, as well as through seeking feedback from all Councillors via the weekly Councillor email.

As the year progresses, the offer may develop dependent on additional learning needs that may arise.

All upcoming training and development opportunities will be regularly communicated via the Councillor weekly email.

We are very keen to receive any feedback you may have on the sessions we arrange and will send out feedback forms following attendance at a course.

If you have any queries regarding training and development, please contact: OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk.



Training Courses

Please see below a variety of in-house training courses available to Councillors this forthcoming year.

Quarter 1 (April – June)				
Date	Training Course	Provider	Session Information	Attendees
May	Licensing Committees, Taxi Licensing and Licensing Act 2003 Training	James Button & Co	This course will examine the role of the licensing/regulatory committees and the decision-making process.	Licensing Committee Members
June	Probity in Planning	Bethan Evans Governance Training and Consultancy	This course will look at the importance of probity in the planning process and the approaches/ protocols which can ensure high standards and robust decisions.	Planning Committee Members
Quarter 2 (July – September)				
Date	Training Course	Provider	Session Information	Attendees
September	Digital Skills Workshop	Internal	This short workshop will assist with improving your digital skills. The session will cover topics such as using Microsoft Teams and Outlook; accessing City People and the Our People portal; and reviewing committee papers via a digital device.	Open to all
September	Suicide Awareness	Integrated Care Board	This workshop is designed to develop awareness and knowledge of Suicide Safety Planning and assist with signposting individuals to support.	Open to all

September	Treasury Management Training	TBC	This short workshop will aim to give you an understanding of the treasury management strategy and functions of treasury management within the Council.	TBC
Quarter 3 (October – December)				
Date	Training Course	Provider	Session Information	Attendees
October	Supporting yours and your residents' wellbeing with Able Futures	Able Futures	This workshop will provide information on the Able Futures' wellbeing support. This session will be useful to support both your own wellbeing and employed residents of Wolverhampton.	Open to all
November	Climate Action Awareness and Communication	Internal- Green Cities and Circular Economy Team	This short workshop will cover the key information on climate change, including how to drive awareness and simply, yet effectively communicate climate change information to residents.	Open to all
December	Councillor Code of Conduct	Internal- Monitoring Officer	This training session will provide Councillors with an understanding of the provisions of the Code of Conduct and to feel better equipped to carry out their roles effectively and lawfully.	Open to all
Quarter 4 (January – March)				
Date	Training Course	Provider	Session Information	Attendees
January	Digital Skills Workshop	Internal	This short workshop will assist with improving your digital skills. The session will cover topics such as using Microsoft Teams and Outlook; accessing City People and the Our People portal; and reviewing committee papers via a digital device.	Open to all

Additional Training Courses

The below courses may be organised on an ad hoc basis dependent on need.

Training Course	Provider	Session Information	Attendees
Unconscious Bias	Inspiring Insights	These online workshops aim to demystify how our brains unconsciously affect our behaviours, decisions and interactions with others. The sessions will take a non-judgmental approach to explore how unconscious bias operates and how it can inadvertently impact our lives.	Required for Councillors sitting on Interview Panels
Chairing Skills	LGiU	This half-day online session will help you to improve your chairing skills for online, hybrid and in-person meetings and learn techniques to manage participation.	New Committee Chairs
Carbon Literacy Training Session	Internal- Green Cities and Circular Economy Team	The Green Cities and Circular Economy team will be delivering fully certified carbon literacy training. The training will cover climate change causes, consequences, and solutions to increase awareness. Successful completion of coursework is required to achieve the carbon literacy certification. The course duration is eight hours, which will be split into two four-hour sessions over two days.	Open to all

Mandatory Training

All Councillors are expected to complete mandatory training when elected as a Councillor.

All Councillors should ensure their mandatory training is up-to-date and complete any new modules that may be introduced throughout the year.

The mandatory training modules are in the format of e-learning and are to be completed via the Our People Portal. If you experience any difficulties logging into the [Our People Portal](#) or accessing the e-learning modules, please contact OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

A list of the current mandatory training modules can be found below.

- An Introduction to Equality and Diversity
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Climate Change Toolkit
- Corporate Parenting
- Customer Service
- Dementia Awareness
- Health & Safety
- Political Awareness
- Professional Conversations
- Protecting Information (must be re-completed every two years)
- Safeguarding Against Violent Extremism (PREVENT)
- Safeguarding Awareness
- Using Restorative Practice

Process for booking external courses and conferences

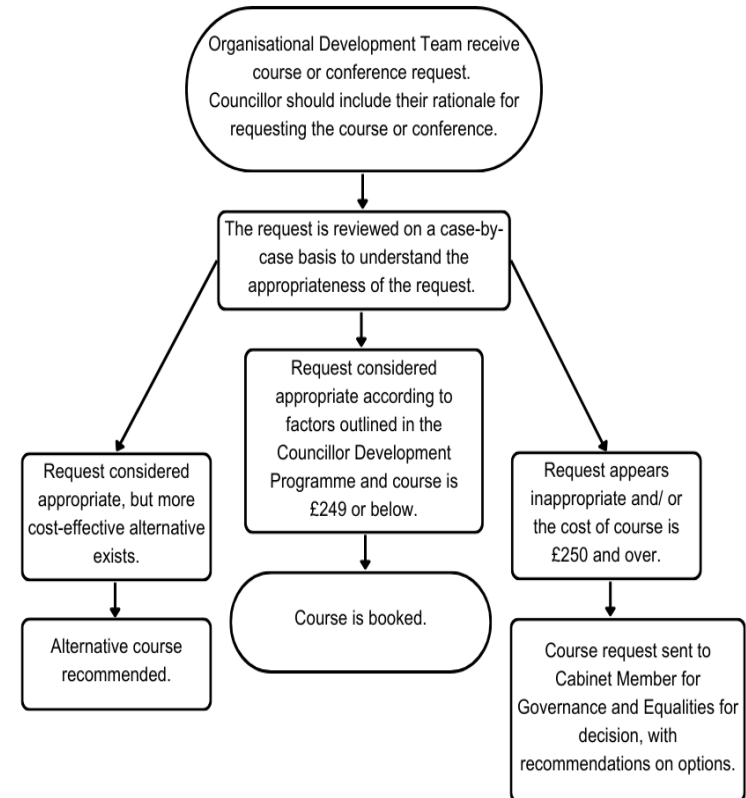
On occasion, Councillors may request attendance at an external course or conference.

It should be noted that the budget for Councillor Development for 2024 – 2025 is £10,000. This budget is also used to cover the cost of in-house training courses, which can cost in the region of £1500 per course.

Therefore, individual requests will need to be reviewed carefully on a case-by-case basis. The following factors will be considered in deciding the appropriateness of the request:

- Councillor's role and responsibilities
- Alignment to the Council's Our City: Our Plan and strategic direction
- Provider reputation
- Cost
- Availability of alternative opportunities
- Location

See the diagram on the right for information on the booking process.



LGA Training and Development Courses

Please contact OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk for further information on the below courses.

Please note dates for some courses are yet to be announced.

LGA Training and Development		
Course	Information	Attendees
Communication and Media Political Leadership Masterclass	The LGA run a masterclass to develop and enhance your media interview skills with journalists. The session is run by Scott Chisholm, who advises senior politicians and corporate executives.	Councillors who hold leadership positions such as cabinet members, committee chairs and opposition group leaders.
Disabled Councillors Leadership Programme	The Disabled Councillors Leadership Programme has been shaped in co-production with disabled people and Councillors. The topics and activities will take disabled councillors through a six-month journey of personal development to accelerate their leadership skills and support them to be resilient and confident local leaders.	Disabled Councillors
Leadership Essentials: Adult Social Care	The programme will explore leadership within the current policy and practice context, including the NHS White Paper and Bill, changes to public health, implications of Covid response and recovery, adult social care funding and reform, and ongoing health and care integration.	Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing
Leadership Essentials: Audit Committees	This programme will discuss how Audit Committees can be most effective. Drawing on the insights of regulators and practitioners, it will provide space for participants to reflect on how their committee functions and how it can gain assurance that their council's governance arrangements are fit for purpose.	Chair of Audit Committee
Leadership Essentials: Children's Services	This development event aims to support Cabinet Members with the key challenges they face in the changing policy landscape and to	Cabinet Member Children and Young People

	develop leadership capacity, share learning and provide a valuable networking opportunity.	Chair of Children & Young People Scrutiny
Leadership Essentials: Cultural Services	The programme aims to help participants to develop a better understanding of the role integrated cultural services can play in communities and to understand the extent of transformation that is required in the planning, delivery and development of cultural services.	Cabinet Member for Visitor City
Leadership Essentials: Digitalisation	This programme will provide councillors with an opportunity to learn about their role in creating strong digital and inclusive cultures for the benefit of all residents whilst managing security-based risks.	Leader Deputy Leader Cabinet Member for Digital
Leadership Essentials: Finance	This programme will help Councillors to understand the financial challenges facing their authority. The programme will cover how councils can set longer term strategies for sustainability as well as balancing the budget on an annual basis and working with officers to ensure that the Council is making the most of its opportunities.	Leader Cabinet Member for Resources Chair of Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel Chair of Audit and Risk Committee
Leadership Essentials: Finance for Non-Finance Cabinet Members	This course will de-mystify the financial elements of your portfolio. The programme will increase members' understanding of the contemporary local government finance system; provide practical advice to enable cabinet members to navigate their financial systems and control; enable participants to better integrate financial information with non-financial service performance information.	Non-finance cabinet members Non-finance committee chairs
Leadership Essentials: Leading Healthier Places	The programme will support participants to consider the national, regional, system and place context for Health and Wellbeing Boards including public health and prevention. The programme will	Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing

	also cover how governance arrangements enable collaboration and effective decision-making and what does best use of data look like.	
Leadership Essentials: Prevent and Counter-Extremism	The programme will explore themes including national and local approaches to Prevent delivery, counter extremism and cohesion work; national and local threats; emerging and evolving challenges; and communications and community engagement on divisive issues and effective leadership.	Open to all Councillors
Leadership Essentials: Risk Management Political Leadership	This seminar will enable participants to develop their understanding of how risk should be identified, assessed, and managed throughout the council.	Open to all Councillors
One-to-one Coaching	The LGA is offering coaching support to councillors wishing to develop their leadership skills. Councillors can benefit from one-to-one support from an experienced coach to develop into brilliant community leaders. Each councillor will have an initial meeting, where they will get to know their coach. This is followed by three one-hour coaching sessions.	Councillors who hold leadership positions such as the Leader, cabinet members, committee chairs and opposition group leaders. Coaching is also available to Disabled Councillors.

LGA Training and Development Courses

The courses below are delivered by the LGA but incur an additional charge. Attendance at these courses will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please contact OD.Team@wolverhampton.gov.uk for further information. Please note dates for some courses are yet to be announced.

LGA Training and Development		
Course	Information	Attendees
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Councillors Weekender	The LGA run weekender events for black, Asian and minority ethnic councillors. This programme has supported many councillors in their political and strategic thinking. Previous events have covered the topics of developing your political brand and developing your political leadership skills.	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Councillors
Effective Opposition	This programme is designed to help participants to get a better understanding of how they can enhance the effectiveness of their role in leading an opposition group at their council.	Opposition Leader Deputy Opposition Leader
Leadership Essentials: Being an Effective Cabinet Member	The course examines the aspects of being a successful cabinet member, including understanding the legacy you want to leave, working with your director, working with other cabinet members, making effective decisions and managing your workload.	New Cabinet Members
Leadership Essentials: Effective Scrutiny	This programme will cover leading and managing a scrutiny review; chairing scrutiny meetings; and increasing participation by members and the public.	New Scrutiny Chairs
Leadership Essentials: Getting your Message Across	This event will provide leading councillors with the new ideas, strategies and techniques for achieving more effective communication with both internal and external audiences.	Leader Cabinet Members Opposition Leader Opposition Deputy Leader

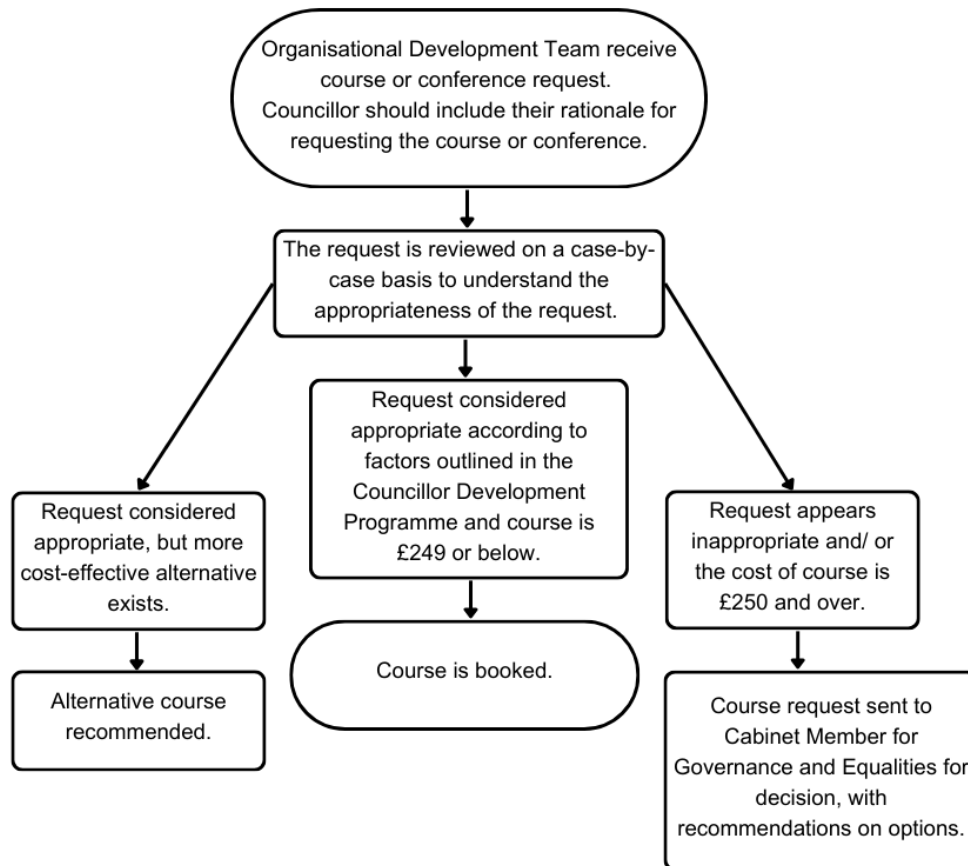
Leadership Essentials: Licensing	This course will focus on good quality decision making at licensing committee and how a good licensing committee is run. Attendees will be able to compare how their committee operates with other authorities and share ideas with other councillors.	New Licensing Chairs
LGBTQ+ Councillors Weekender - "I'm Me"	Councillors will explore some of the challenges facing LGBTQ+ elected members given the societal pressures facing LGBTQ+ communities and will have the opportunity to hear experiences from other LGBTQ+ leaders. Councillors will have time to reflect on your personal leadership style and explore key leadership skills such as influencing, networking and creating impact.	LGBTQ+ Councillors
Young Councillors' Weekender	This event is designed to give councillors aged 40 and under an opportunity to receive focused leadership skills development aimed at helping you to progress in your political career. The event also provides a chance to build up your network of other young councillors from different political parties across the country.	Councillors aged 40 and under

LGA Resources

LGA Resources	
Resource	Information
New Councillor Hub	The LGA has developed a Councillor Hub to provide newly elected members with the essential information that you may need.
LGA Councillor Workbooks	The LGA have developed several Councillor workbooks that cover key topics and policy areas. Example workbooks include: Acting on Climate Change, Engaging Young People, Local Government Finance, Mentally Healthier Communities, and more.
LGA E-learning Platform	The LGA provides a dedicated e-learning platform. There are a range of modules available including: Children's Services, Economic Development, Handling Intimidation, Stress Management and Personal Resilience, and more. Councillors wishing to register on the platform will need to use their Wolverhampton.gov.uk email address.
LGA Events and Webinars	The LGA regularly organise a variety of events and webinars on topical areas. Previous webinars have included: Personal Safety, Cyber Security, Introduction to Local Government Finance, Data and Managing Council Performance. These opportunities will be communicated throughout the year via the Councillor weekly email.

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Appendix 2 Proposed booking process for external course and conference requests from Councillors



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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Governance and Ethics Committee 14 March 2024
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Report title	Code of Conduct for Councillors – Annual Report 2023	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
Originating service	Various	
Accountable employee	David Pattison Email	Chief Operating Officer David.Pattison@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be considered by	N/A	

Recommendations for action or decision:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is asked to:

1. Note the annual report addressing the promotion, operation, and monitoring of the members' code of conduct.
2. Note the complaints about members received and considered by the Monitoring Officer during 2023.
3. Make any comments or recommendations about the process for managing complaints or any other relevant matters.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the operation and promotion of the Council's member code of conduct and associated arrangements ("member standards framework") during the 2023/24 calendar year.
- 1.2 For the committee to be assured that high standards of conduct continue to be met by members of the Council.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council has a **duty** to:
 - Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members and co-opted members; and
 - When discharging its duty, adopt a voluntary code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted member of the authority when they are acting in their capacity as members (that is, in an official capacity).
- 2.2 There is therefore no requirement to comply with the code of conduct where members are acting in their personal capacity (i.e. in relation their private lives) although disqualification under Part V of the Local Government Act 1972 remains as a result of events such as bankruptcy or certain criminal offences and sanctions.
- 2.3 The decision in *Livingstone v. Adjudication Panel for England* (2006) EWHC 2533 helpfully clarified that "official capacity" in the previous 2007 Model Code that applied in England meant:
 - conducting the business of the authority or the member's office.
 - acting, claiming to act or giving the impression that a member is acting as a representative of their authority.
- 2.4 Therefore, any conduct in a member's private capacity will only be covered by the Council's members' code of conduct only if they engage in an activity that has a link with the functions of the member's office (which includes not just their councillor role but any other role to which they have been appointed by virtue of being a councillor i.e. any SRA related roles). Accordingly, in the *Livingstone* case, words spoken to a journalist by the former Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, likening the journalist to a concentration camp guard, were not only not spoken in an official capacity, but also were not arguably in the performance of his functions as Mayor.
- 2.5 The seven Nolan principles (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership) are set out in section 28 of the Localism Act 2011. Section 28 provides that a local authority in England must ensure that its code of conduct includes appropriate provisions for registering, and disclosing:

- Pecuniary interests.
 - Interests other than pecuniary interests.
- 2.6 The body that oversees the member standards framework is the Council's Governance and Ethics Committee. The Committee is tasked with monitoring the effectiveness and operation of the member standards Framework, promoting high standards of conduct, receiving an annual report, and making appropriate recommendations for improvement where deemed necessary.
- 2.7 Section 28(6) of the Localism Act 2011 also requires a relevant authority to have arrangements in place to deal with complaints that its members' code of conduct has been breached, including arrangements for:
- Complaints to be investigated.
 - Decisions on allegations to be made.
- 2.8 The Council's constitution provides that the Monitoring Officer will receive, assess, refer and determine complaints that Councillors have not complied with the members' code of conduct and will refer these to the Council's Governance and Ethics Committee for determination where an investigation has taken place and a breach of the code found.
- 2.9 The approach that the Council adopts for dealing with complaints is in line with the LGA's recommendations on dealing with complaints.
- 2.10 The arrangements are designed to ensure that the most serious complaints are considered by the sub-Committee and not those that are considered capable of informal resolution or not proportionate to be investigated.
- 3.0** All members and co-opted members agree to abide by the members' code of conduct upon their election.
- 4.0 Continuous improvement and training**
- 4.1 An Internal Audit Report on Members' Register of Interests was published in accordance with the internal audit plan 2023/24. The report identified a number of areas of good practice in the Council's management of risk through appropriate controls such as training on the register, which is provided as part of Councillor induction, and on the member standards framework which is offered at least annually to members and delivered to all new members shortly after the elections each May. Training on the member standards framework is comprehensive, covering principles and expectations, interests, and complaints.
- 4.2 The report also identified that several Councillors had not updated their electronic Register of Interests in the previous 12-month period; although this is not a legal requirement, it is considered to be best practice. Members are reminded of this in the guidance note for members which they are required to read. To mitigate against

members overlooking to review and update their Register of Interest, the following recommendations were agreed:

- A reminder to be sent to all members to check and resubmit their details annually.
- A reminder to all members detailing the arrangements for redacting details of their property interests (or other interests) in accordance with section 32 of the Localism Act 2011 ('sensitive interests').
- In light of the increase in partnership working, and in the interests of clarity and transparency, members are required to declare their interests across other local and combined authority boundaries.

4.3 All three actions have been undertaken.

5.0 Complaints - procedure

5.1 In September 2021, the Local Government Association published Guidance on Member Model Code of Conduct Complaints Handling and these arrangements were adopted by Committee on 7 July 2022. A routine annual review of the complaint arrangements including associated documents was undertaken in 2023 to ensure they remain fit for purpose, and no changes were considered necessary.

5.2 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for dealing with allegations that a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members and for administering the local ethical framework.

5.3 A complaint that a member has breached the rules relating to the registration and declaration of pecuniary (financial) interests would be dealt with by the Police as a criminal matter. The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any such allegations being made against members.

5.4 All other complaints that a member has breached the Code are dealt with according to the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Code of Conduct Complaint ("Arrangements") which adhere to the Local Government Association's Guidance on Member Model Code of Conduct Complaints Handling.

5.5 The Arrangements follow a three-stage process:

- a) **Initial review.** This is undertaken by the Monitoring Officer (or Deputy Monitoring Officer) as a desk-top exercise to first determine if the complaint qualifies for consideration in accordance with the arrangements and is not vexatious or the conduct in question related to member acting in their official capacity. If it does qualify, consideration will be given to the complaint and any evidence provided by the complainant, any response to the allegations provided by the member complained about (referred to as the Subject Member), and publicly/readily available information relating to the circumstances or behaviours complained of. The arrangements set out the

assessment criteria that the Monitoring Officer will have regard to when reaching a decision on the available information.

The Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, which might involve an apology or training or some other form of mediation.

A written response is sent to the complainant and Subject Member to advise them of the Monitoring Officer's considerations and decision. There is no right of appeal against the Monitoring Officer's decision at this stage.

- b) **Investigation.** Where informal resolution is not appropriate, for example where the matters complained about are significant and require witnesses to be interviewed, an investigator will be appointed to consider the matter and make recommendations to the Monitoring Officer about the next appropriate steps. On receipt of the investigator's recommendations, the Monitoring Officer might deal with the matter via informal resolution as noted previously or refer the matter to a formal Hearing (see below).
- c) **Hearing.** The Monitoring Officer will refer the investigator's report to the Governance and Ethics Committee which will convene a panel to determine whether the Code of Conduct has been breached. If they do find evidence of a breach, they may:
- Censure or reprimand the Subject Member.
 - Require the Subject Member to issue an apology (which could be both private and public) to the complainant (and any other person/body deemed appropriate).
 - Recommend to the Subject Member's group leader (or in the case of un-grouped Councillors, recommend to Council) that they be removed from any or all Committee, Sub-Committees or Panels of the Council.
 - Recommend to the Leader of the Council that the Subject Member be removed from the Cabinet or removed from particular portfolio responsibilities.
 - Recommend to Council that the Subject Member be replaced as Leader.
 - Instruct the Monitoring Officer to arrange training for the Subject Member.
 - Publish its findings in respect of the Subject Member's conduct.
 - Report its findings to the Governance & Ethics Committee for information.

- 5.6 The Hearing Panel has no power to suspend or disqualify the Subject Member or to withdraw or suspend allowances or restrict access to or use of Council facilities. The Subject Member is required to discharge their obligations as a Ward councillor and cannot be prevented from attending meetings of Full Council.

6.0 Complaints - Independent Person

- 6.1 Local authorities must appoint an “independent person” whose views must be sought by the local authority before the complaint is determined following an investigation. The views of the independent person can be sought at other times if considered necessary, and so too can the councillor subject to the complaint if they wish to.
- 6.2 The Council currently has one Independent Person who is about to retire, and the appointment of two further persons is being progressed.
- 6.3 The Monitoring Officer is grateful for the work and support from the outgoing Independent Person. Ray Tomlinson has been the Council’s Independent Person for a number of years and throughout that time has discharged his responsibilities and duties as Independent Person professionally and diligently. He has proactively supported the Council’s ethical framework and this Committee by sharing his measured and informed views and judgements, which have helped the Council discharge its duty to maintain and promote high standards of conduct.

7.0 Complaints - received and considered during 2023

- 7.1 The Council received 14 complaints members over the calendar year. This includes informal complaints which were made in writing but not on the required form or without the requisite information. Of the 14 complaints, 5 were made by members against other members of the Council.
- 7.2 On analysis of all the complaints received, the primary cause for complaints relates to allegations of lack of respect shown by members at meetings or events, or on social media.
- 7.3 Of those **14** complaints:
- a) **8** were either withdrawn by the complainant at various stages of the process, or requests for further information in order to begin the progress were not responded to and considered withdrawn by the Monitoring Officer.
 - b) **2** cases were outside the jurisdiction of the Council’s arrangements (and therefore the Monitoring Officer’s powers) and so could not be dealt with.
 - c) **2** complaints were dismissed and not considered, as the matters complained about were being dealt with via a different legal route.
 - d) **2** complaints are currently ongoing (both of which are covered in more detail in Appendix 1).
- 7.4 The Committee are asked to note that in view of 5 of the complaints received during 2023 were made by CWC members about other CWC members, the Monitoring Officer will, where it is clear to the Monitoring Officer that there has been a general breakdown of relationships between certain members, involve Group Leaders to assist with addressing the behaviour or underlying issues that are giving rise to poor standards of conduct.

7.5 The Committee are asked to note that there have been times when some members have not cooperated with an investigation or the arrangements. The Code of Conduct for Councillors expressly states that a member must “cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination”. However, the Monitoring Officer has no power to compel members to be interviewed or provide information relevant to the complaint made about them. In such circumstances, the Monitoring Officer will escalate the lack of cooperation to the relevant Group Leader, and where that action has not addressed the issue satisfactorily, or where the member is without a party, lodging a fresh complaint against the Subject Member for failing to comply with the Members’ Code of Conduct (as detailed above) will be considered.

8.0 Financial implications

8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

[AS/06032024/J].

9.0 Legal implications

9.1 The Council is required by section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 to have a Code of Conduct for Councillors which includes arrangements for dealing with complaints.

9.2 The key legal implications are set out in the main body of the report.

[DP/06032024/A].

10.0 Equalities implications

10.1 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act;
- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

10.2 The Code of Conduct and the Council’s arrangements adhere with national guidance and fully comply with the public-sector equality duty.

11.0 All other Implications

11.1 There are no other implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

12.0 Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1 – Code of Conduct complaints – individual complaints.

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Appendix 1**Code of Conduct complaints considered by the Monitoring Officer during 2023**Type and outcome of complaints

	Complainant	Topic	Formal complaint	Current Position/Outcome
1	CWC Councillor	Inappropriate comments made on social media.	Y	Ongoing. The matter has been referred for investigation and an investigator appointed who is endeavouring to progress the investigation.
2	CWC Officer	Rudeness/bluntness when corresponding about a Council service.	Y	Withdrawn by complainant following Initial Review and discussion with the Monitoring Officer.
3	Member of the Public	Councillor wrote to residents about the Member of Public's planning application which contributed to it not being approved.	N	Complainant did not complete relevant complaint form when asked (as a method to obtain all necessary information), therefore it was considered withdrawn.
4 & 5	Member of the Public	Councillors giving incorrect Wolverhampton address as their place of residence	Y	The Monitoring Officer decided to take no action as the complaint was being dealt with via a separate statutory route.
6	CWC Councillor	Derogatory comments made about another Councillor.	Y	The complaint was outside the Monitoring Officer's jurisdiction as the member was not acting in their official capacity as Councillor when the incident occurred. This was dismissed.
7	CWC Councillor	Poor and inappropriate behaviour towards another Councillor.	N	Complainant did not complete relevant complaint form when asked (as a method to

				obtain all necessary information), therefore it was considered withdrawn.
8	CWC Councillor	Various issues.	N	Complainant did not want to make the complaint formal, so it was considered withdrawn.
9 & 10	Member of the Public	Councillors failed to respond to correspondence.	N	Complainant failed to respond to correspondence or engage in the process, therefore it was considered withdrawn.
11	CWC Councillor	Poor and inappropriate behaviour towards another Councillor.	Y	Withdrawn by complainant following Initial Review.
12	Member of the Public	Councillor's family member was not included on the electoral register at their address.	Y	The complaint was outside the Monitoring Officer's jurisdiction as the member was not acting in their official capacity as Councillor in relation to the matter complained of (amongst other reasons). This was dismissed.
13	CWC Officer	Poor and inappropriate behaviour towards the officer, in person and electronically, over a period.	Y	Ongoing. The matter has very recently been received and is being considered under the initial assessment stage of the process.
14	Member of the Public	Inappropriate comments made on social media.	N	Complainant did not complete relevant complaint form when asked (as a method of obtaining all necessary information), therefore it was considered withdrawn.