

Attendance

Mayor Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)
Deputy Mayor Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Obaida Ahmed	Cllr Val Evans (V)	Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Qaiser Azeem	Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal	Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Mary Bateman	Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre	Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE	Cllr Celia Hibbert (V)	Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Olivia Birch	Cllr Keith Inston	Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	Cllr Jasbir Jaspal (V)	Cllr Susan Roberts MBE
Cllr Ian Brookfield	Cllr Jaspreet Jaspal (V)	Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Paula Brookfield	Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal	Cllr Stephen Simkins
Cllr Chris Burden	Cllr Rashpal Kaur	Cllr Clare Simm
Cllr Alan Butt	Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur	Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Craig Collingswood (V)	Cllr Linda Leach	Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Claire Darke (V)	Cllr Asha Mattu	Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman(V)
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar	Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN	Cllr Gillian Wildman
Cllr Steve Evans	Cllr Beverley Momenabadi	

Conservative

Cllr Paul Appleby	Cllr Andrew McNeil
Cllr Simon Bennett	Cllr Andrew Randle
Cllr Adam Collinge	Cllr Mak Singh
Cllr Jonathan Crofts	Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Wendy Dalton	Cllr Udey Singh (V)
Cllr Christopher Haynes	Cllr Wendy Thompson
Cllr Stephanie Haynes	Cllr Ellis Turrell
Cllr Sohail Khan	Cllr Jonathan Yardley

Employees

Tim Johnson	Chief Executive
Mark Taylor	Deputy Chief Executive
David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
Charlotte Johns	Director of Strategy
Richard Lawrence	Director of Regeneration
Laura Gittos	Head of Governance
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager

The proceedings opened with Prayers

Item No. *Title*

1 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence submitted.

2 Declarations of interest

Councillor Clare Simm declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5 (Report of Leader of the Council) as an employee of the Department for Work and Pensions.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

The Mayor proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded, and it was resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 15 September 2021, be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Mayor.

4 Communications

1. Sir David Amess MP

The Mayor extended the deepest sympathies of the Council to the widow of Sir David Amess MP, who was murdered whilst undertaking his public duty. He reported that he had written a letter to Lady Julia on behalf of the city.

The Council stood in silent tribute to the late Sir David Amess MP.

2. COVID-19 Update

The Mayor reported that there were over 850 positive cases reported in the City in the week prior to the meeting. He encouraged eligible people to book both their booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and the flu vaccine.

3. Black History Month

The Mayor reported that City of Wolverhampton Council had hosted an active Black History Month during October. He reported that this year's theme had been 'Proud to Be', and that events had celebrated identity and culture. He listed some examples of events that had taken place during the month.

He noted that it had been an active and educational month and thanked all those involved.

4. Green Flag Awards

The Mayor was delighted to report that a fifth Wolverhampton park had been awarded Green Flag status by an environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy. He noted that Phoenix Park in Blakenhall now joined West Park, East Park, Bantock Park and Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve on the prestigious list.

5. Kickstart Scheme

The Mayor reported that the Wolves at Work was encouraging young people and city employers to get involved in the Kickstart scheme after it was extended until March 2022.

He noted that the scheme was open to 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment, and offered a 6-month job placement to gain valuable work experience.

The Mayor encouraged all Councillors to familiarise themselves with the scheme.

6. Wolves Online – Closing the Digital Divide

The Mayor reported that Wolves Online had distributed over 550 devices to city residents to help develop their digital skills to access learning, employment, and essential services.

The Mayor offered his congratulations to all those involved in this important scheme.

7. Queens Awards for Voluntary Services Award Ceremony

The Mayor reported that he had attended the awards ceremony for the Queens Award for Voluntary Service on Sunday 17 October 2021.

He was pleased to report that awards had been presented to the following groups:

- Big Local Venture Centre
- Friends of Bantock House, Museum and Park
- The Well Foodbank
- TLC College
- Wednesfield in Bloom

The Mayor offered thanks on behalf of the City to all the volunteers for the hard work in making a difference in people's lives.

8. St John Ambulance – District Manager's Commendation for Exceptional Service

The Mayor reported that he had attended the annual awards ceremony of the Staffordshire and Wolverhampton Branch of St. John Ambulance on Sunday 24 October. He was pleased to report that he had received a District Managers Commendation for Exceptional Service on behalf of the City Council, in recognition of the assistance provided by the Council during the pandemic.

The Mayor offered congratulations to all those involved in winning the prestigious award.

9. Diwali Celebrations

The Mayor reported that he had attended a funfair and fireworks display at Phoenix Park on Sunday 23 October to celebrate Diwali. The Mayor was

delighted to see families and communities come together to mark this festival.

The Mayor wished all Sikh members a happy Bandi Chhor Divas.

10. Cazoo Grand Slam of Darts – 13 to 21 November 2021

The Mayor reported that the Grand Slam of Darts would return to Aldersley Leisure Village from Saturday 13 November. He noted that hosting this major sporting tournament would put Wolverhampton in the international spotlight once again.

11. UNESCO Learning Cities

The Mayor reported that he had attended the UNESCO Fifth International Conference on Learning Cities – Plenary Session II, entitled “Resilient Cities: Strengthening Communities and Local Learning Systems” on Thursday 28 October.

The Mayor reported that he had given a presentation on the City and faced a question-and-answer session. He noted that this had raised the profile of Wolverhampton and its learning opportunities to a global audience.

12. Fireworks Night

The Mayor reported that Wolverhampton Racecourse would once again host Fireworks Night festivities on Saturday 6 November 2021.

The Mayor reported that he would be attending and expressed hope that he would see as many people as possible there.

13. Councillor Christopher Burden

The Mayor offered his congratulations to Councillor Christopher Burden for being nominated for Young Councillor at the Year for the LGIU Awards.

5 Report of Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield, extended his condolences to the family of Sir David Amess MP.

He provided Council with an update on the Government’s Annual Budget.

The update was debated by Council.

6 Wolves at Work 18-24 - Tackling Youth Unemployment

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report Wolves at Work 18-24 – Youth Employment. The report sought approval for the developing and resourcing of the Wolves at Work 18-24 scheme, which would support young people currently claiming benefits and aged 18 to 24 into sustainable employment, apprenticeships, education or training.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield noted that the youth unemployment levels in the City were more than double the national average and that this scheme would help tackle the issue.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield proposed the recommendations and Councillor Stephen Simkins seconded the recommendations.

The report was debated by Council.

Resolved:

1. That the launch of a new Wolves at Work 18-24 Programme of targeted interventions which puts our young people at the centre of activity be approved to urgently deliver the step change needed in our City to give unemployed young people opportunities for secure, sustainable employment, apprenticeships, education or training.
2. That an initial £3 million budget, from a combination of the Recovery Reserve and Covid Emergency Grant be approved to deliver Wolves at Work 18-24 and galvanise a 'One City' approach to create opportunities for our young people.
3. That the establishment of a £100,000 'City Ideas Fund', initially (funded from the £3 million available) be approved, for City employers and partners to bid for and put forward ideas that will get more young people into sustained employment, apprenticeships, education or training.
4. That authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance, to approve:
 - a. Wolves at Work 18-24 targeted interventions and the allocation of the associated budget (from the £3 million available).
 - b. The scope and governance arrangements for the 'City Ideas Fund'.

7 **Overview of Electoral Cycles**

Councillor Paula Brookfield presented a report on Overview of Electoral Cycles. She advised that the Governance and Ethics Committee had recommended that the electoral cycle be changed but that only Full Council had the authority to approve such a change.

Councillor Paula Brookfield moved an amendment to the recommendation in the report that this Council maintain its commitment to local democracy and continues to elect by thirds. She outlined the rationale for the amendment.

The amended motion was seconded by Councillor Paul Birch.

The amended motion was debated by Council.

Upon being put to the meeting, and a division having been demanded and taken voting thereon was as follows:

Overview of Electoral Cycles (Resolution)	
Councillor Greg Brackenridge	For
Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE	For

Councillor Obaida Ahmed	For
Councillor Paul Appleby	Against
Councillor Qaiser Azeem	For
Councillor Mary Bateman	For
Councillor Philip Bateman MBE	For
Councillor Simon Bennett	Against
Councillor Olivia Birch	For
Councillor Dr Paul John Birch J.P.	For
Councillor Ian Brookfield	For
Councillor Paula Brookfield	For
Councillor Christopher Burden	For
Councillor Alan Butt	For
Councillor Adam Collinge	Against
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	Against
Councillor Wendy Dalton	Against
Councillor Jasbinder Dehar	For
Councillor Steve Evans	For
Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal	For
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	For
Councillor Christopher Haynes	Against
Councillor Stephanie Haynes	Against
Councillor Keith Inston	For
Councillor Rashpal Kaur	For
Councillor Sohail Khan	Against
Councillor Linda Leach	For
Councillor Asha Mattu	For
Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN	For
Councillor Andrew McNeil	Against
Councillor Beverley Momenabadi	For
Councillor Lynne Moran	For
Councillor Anwen Muston	For
Councillor Phil Page	For
Councillor Rita Potter	For
Councillor Andrew Randle	Against
Councillor John Reynolds	For
Councillor Susan Roberts MBE	For
Councillor Zee Russell	For
Councillor Stephen Simkins	For
Councillor Clare Simm	For
Councillor Gurmukh (Mak) Singh	Against
Councillor Paul Singh	Against
Councillor Tersaim Singh	For
Councillor Paul Sweet	For
Councillor Wendy Thompson	Against
Councillor Ellis Turrell	Against
Councillor Gillian Wildman	For
Councillor Jonathan Yardley	Against
Carried	

Resolved:

1. That this Council maintain its commitment to local democracy and continues to elect by thirds.

8 **Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2020 - 2021**

Councillor Alan Butt presented the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2020-2021 for approval. He summarised the main areas of work undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee during 2020-2021. He added that the Audit and Risk Committee had an instrumental role in providing independent and high-level focus on audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

Councillor Alan Butt noted that the internal audit team had been praised at the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)- Audit and Risk meeting for offering a professional independent internal audit service to the WMCA. He offered his congratulations to Peter Farrow, Head of Audit, and his team.

Councillor Alan Butt proposed the recommendation and Councillor Jonathan Yardley seconded the recommendation and thanked all internal and external auditors and officers for their hard work.

Resolved:

That the contents of the 2020-2021 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report be approved.

9 **Changes to the Constitution**

Councillor Paula Brookfield presented the report Changes to the Constitution for approval. The changes would ensure continuing lawfulness and effectiveness of the constitution.

Councillor Paula Brookfield, outlined the minor amendments to be made to the constitution and the rationale for making these changes.

Councillor Paula Brookfield proposed the recommendations and Councillor Tersaim Singh seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That the amendments to the Constitution as detailed in this report be approved.
2. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to implement the changes.

10 **Revised Petitions Scheme**

Councillor Paula Brookfield presented a report on Revised Petitions Scheme for approval. The Councils' Petition Scheme has been reviewed to ensure the scheme is legal, fair, transparent and efficient. She noted that the revisions to the scheme would make the process of submitting a petition easier for the public.

Councillor Paula Brookfield proposed the recommendation and Councillor Rita Potter seconded the recommendation.

Resolved:

That the revised Petitions Scheme, as detailed in Appendix 1 be approved.

11 **Adopting a Definition of Islamophobia**

Councillor Paula Brookfield presented a report on Adopting a Definition of Islamophobia for approval. The report recommended that Council adopt the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia and continue to prioritise tackling hate crime and Islamophobia.

Councillor Paula Brookfield noted that the report would form part of the Council's ongoing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda.

Councillor Paula Brookfield proposed the recommendations and Councillor Obaida Ahmed seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That the adoption of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims (APPG) definition of Islamophobia as follows "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness" be approved.
2. That the Council confirmed that it would continue to prioritise tackling hate crime and Islamophobia in partnership with all stakeholders; listen to their concerns and develop policies that would continue to ensure we lived in an inclusive city.

12 **In Year Appointments for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report In Year Appointments for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield proposed the recommendations and Councillor Stephen Simkins seconded the recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That the appointment of Councillor Milkinder Jaspal to the Audit and Risk Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year 2021/2022 be approved.
2. That the appointment of co-opted member Tina Richardson, representing Healthwatch Wolverhampton to the Health Scrutiny Panel for the remainder of the Municipal year 2021/2022 be approved.
3. That the appointment of Councillor Dr Mike Hardacre as a co-opted member on the Strategic SEND and Commissioning Partnership Board be approved.

13 **Motion on Notice**

Councillor Ellis Turrell moved the following motion:

“That this Council notes with disappointment the 8% increase in charges for the Garden Waste Collection Service for 2022 without any detailed explanation or prior scrutiny of this decision; notes that the principle of double taxation is fundamentally wrong; and therefore agrees to abolish all charges for garden waste collection at the next Budget and to provide this service as standard alongside household and recycled waste collections.”

Councillor Ellis Turrell outlined the rationale for motion. Councillor Stephanie Haynes seconded the motion.

Councillor Steve Evans moved the following amended motion:

“That this Council notes the Government’s ongoing consultation on waste collection and as part of this, they are considering mandating councils to provide free garden waste collections by 2023-25. However, they have yet to outline how they are going to fund this.

This Council, therefore, calls on the government to announce that they will fully fund free garden waste collections. This would enable us to provide this service as standard alongside household and recycled waste collections.”

Councillor Steve Evans outlined the rationale for the amended motion. Councillor Stephen Simkins seconded the motion.

The amended motion was debated by Council. The amended motion was carried.

Resolved:

That the substantive motion on garden waste be agreed.

14 **Written Questions by Councillors**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Brookfield responded to questions put to him by Councillor Paul Singh on sporting legends, and Councillor Andy Randle on driving training.

The Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities, Councillor Paula Brookfield responded to a question put to her by Councillor Jonathan Crofts on external legal services. She also responded to a supplementary question on the same subject matter.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work, Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre responded to a question put to him by Councillor Wendy Dalton on unemployment support. He also responded to a supplementary question on the same subject matter.

The Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Steve Evans responded to questions put to him by Councillor Mak Singh on the World Powerlifting Championship and Councillor Paul Appleby on fly tipping. He also responded to a supplementary question from Councillor Mak Singh on the same subject matter.

The Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy, Councillor Stephen Simkins responded to questions put to him by Councillor Chris Haynes on the Westside scheme, Councillor Udey Singh on Heath Town baths, Councillor Wendy Thompson on support to shops and small businesses and Councillor Adam Collinge on the draft Black Country Plan. He also responded to supplementary questions on the same subject matters.

The Cabinet Member for Digital City, Councillor Obaida Ahmed responded to a question put to her by Councillor Simon Bennett on digital projects. She also responded to a supplementary question on the same subject matter.

That the responses to written questions be noted.