

Minutes of the meeting of Council held at Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Friday 23 May 2025 at 10.30 am

Present: Councillor Roger Phillips (chairperson)
Councillor Stef Simmons (vice-chairperson)

Councillors: Polly Andrews, Bruce Baker, Jenny Bartlett, Chris Bartrum, Graham Biggs, Harry Bramer, Jacqui Carwardine, Simeon Cole, Frank Cornthwaite, Pauline Crockett, Clare Davies, Dave Davies, Barry Durkin, Matthew Engel, Toni Fagan, Elizabeth Foxton, Carole Gandy, Catherine Gennard, Peter Hamblin, Liz Harvey, Helen Heathfield, Robert Highfield, David Hitchiner, Dan Hurcomb, Terry James, Jim Kenyon, Jonathan Lester, Nick Mason, Ed O'Driscoll, Aubrey Oliver, Rob Owens, Justine Peberdy, Dan Powell, Ivan Powell, Philip Price, Ben Proctor, Adam Spencer, Louis Stark, Pete Stoddart, John Stone, Elissa Swinglehurst, Charlotte Taylor, Richard Thomas, Kevin Tillet, Diana Toynbee, Rebecca Tully, Allan Williams, Rob Williams and Mark Woodall

Officers: Chief Executive, Director of Governance and Law, Corporate Director - Economy and Environment*, Corporate Director Community Wellbeing*, Director of Finance and Democratic Services Manager

*denotes virtual attendance

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

(The Vice-Chairperson of the Council assumed the Chair during the election of the Chairperson of the Council)

Councillor Dan Hurcomb proposed and Councillor David Hitchiner seconded the nomination of Councillor Roger Phillips as Chairperson of the Council.

A vote was taken and Councillor Phillips was elected Chairperson of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Roger Phillips is elected Chairperson of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

Councillor Phillips made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

(Councillor Phillips assumed the Chair of the meeting as the Chairperson of the Council)

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Roger Phillips proposed and Councillor Justine Peberdy seconded the nomination of Councillor Stef Simmons as Vice-Chairperson of the Council.

A vote was taken and Councillor Simmons was appointed Vice-Chairperson of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Stef Simmons is appointed Vice-Chairperson of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

Councillor Simmons made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dave Boulter and Mark Dykes.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council noted the Chairman's and Chief Executive's announcements as printed in the agenda papers.

7. ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst proposed and Councillor Barry Durkin seconded the nomination of Councillor Jonathan Lester as Leader of the Council.

A vote was taken and Councillor Lester was elected as Leader of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Jonathan Lester is elected Leader of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

8. ANNUAL REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS - SCRUTINY REVIEW

Council considered a report by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer which provided the outcomes of the scrutiny review and recommended changes to the council's constitution.

Councillor Roger Phillips moved the report and proposed the recommendations and Councillor Jonathan Lester seconded the recommendations.

There was an adjournment at 11:19 a.m.; the meeting reconvened at 11:28 a.m.

Councillor Liz Harvey proposed and Councillor Pauline Crockett seconded an amendment to the proposed recommendations as below:

That Council:

- 1. Receives and notes the contents of the Scrutiny Review (in appendix 1) and agrees the Statutory Scrutiny Officer's recommendations except:
 - Council proposes a reduction in the number of scrutiny committees from five to four, and**
- 2. That public questions are focussed on agenda items under consideration by the committee meeting to which they are submitted.*

Council debated the amendment.

The amendment was put to the vote and was lost by a simple majority.

The original recommendations were put to the vote and were carried by a simple majority.

RESOLVED – That:

Council:

- a. **Agrees with the contents of the Scrutiny Review (in appendix 1) and the Statutory Scrutiny Officer's recommendations;**
- b. **Agrees that the number of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees should remain as current (as set out in 9 J, below); and**
- c. **Authority is given to the Monitoring Officer to make any requisite changes and amendments to the council's constitution as a result of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer's recommendations (as set out in 9 M-O, below).**

There was an adjournment at 11:33 a.m.; the meeting reconvened at 11:55 a.m.

9. APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Council considered a report by the solicitor to the Council relating to appointments to committees of the Council and outside bodies in line with the rules of political proportionality. The Chairman outlined the tabled supplement, published on 23 May, which contained: an updated table under paragraph 11 of the report with two proposals for the allocation of a Conservative seat on the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee; and an updated appendix 2 with details of the number of seats on the scrutiny management board and the allocation of seats to political groups.

Recommendation (a)

Councillor Roger Phillips proposed and Councillor Dave Davies seconded recommendation (a) which was carried.

RESOLVED: That the list of ordinary committees listed at paragraph 10 are confirmed with their terms of reference as set out in the council's constitution.

Recommendation (b)

Councillor Jonathan Lester proposed and Councillor Dan Hurcomb seconded proposal 1 – as contained in the tabled supplement published on 23 May 2025 – to allocate a Conservative seat on the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee to the Not Aligned members.

Councillor Diana Toynbee proposed and Councillor Mark Woodall seconded proposal 2 – as contained in the tabled supplement published on 23 May 2025 – to allocate a Conservative seat on Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee to the Independents for Herefordshire group.

Council voted on the two proposals above and proposal 1 was carried by a simple majority.

RESOLVED: That the number of seats on each committee as set out in the table below is approved:

Committee	Con	IfH	Lib Dem	Green	T Ind	NA	Total
Audit and Governance	3	1	2	1	0	0	7
Children and Young People Scrutiny	3	1	1	1	1	0	7
Connected Communities Scrutiny	3	1	2	1	0	0	7
Employment Panel	2	1	1	1	1	0	6
Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny	2	0	2	2	0	1	7
Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny	3	1	2	1	0	0	7
Planning and Regulatory	6	2	3	3	1	0	15
<i>Total</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>56</i>

Council raised a query related to the substitution of not aligned members on committees and it was explained that information would be provided following the meeting.

Recommendation (c)

Recommendation (c) was put to the vote and was carried.

RESOLVED: That the allocation of seats on outside bodies to political groups as set out in paragraph 13 is approved.

Recommendation (d)

Recommendation (d) was put to the vote and was carried.

RESOLVED: That the appointment of five co-opted members of children and young people scrutiny committee is approved as follows:

- i. one representative as nominated by the diocese of Hereford
- ii. one representative as nominated by the archdiocese of Cardiff
- iii. three parent governors as elected from the school sector

Recommendation (e)

Recommendation (e) was put to the vote and was carried with no votes against.

RESOLVED: That the suspension of the rules of proportionality in respect of the standards panel, the River Lugg Drainage Board, and the Wye Valley National Landscape Joint Advisory Committee is approved.

Recommendation (f)

Council noted the table of committee membership (in appendix 1 to the report) which outlined the current chairpersons and vice chairpersons of Council committees. The Chairman updated the table listed in appendix 1 with the following changes:

- Councillor Ben Proctor as Vice Chairperson of the Children and Young Person Scrutiny Committee; and
- Councillor Kevin Tillett as Vice Chairperson of the Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

The table in appendix 1, as amended, was put to the vote and was carried.

RESOLVED: That the appointment of committee chairpersons and vice chairpersons for the forthcoming municipal year is approved as follows:

Committee	Position	Councillor
Audit and governance committee	Chairperson	Councillor David Hitchiner
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Mark Woodall
Children and young people scrutiny committee	Chairperson	Councillor Toni Fagan
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Ben Proctor
Connected communities scrutiny committee	Chairperson	Councillor Ed O'Driscoll
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Frank Cornthwaite
Employment panel	Chairperson	Councillor Jonathan Lester
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Diana Toynbee
Environment and sustainability scrutiny committee	Chairperson	Councillor Louis Stark
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Justine Peberdy
Health, care and wellbeing scrutiny committee	Chairperson	Councillor Pauline Crockett
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Kevin Tillett
Planning and regulatory committee	Chairperson	Councillor Terry James
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Clare Davies
Licensing sub-committee	Chairperson	Councillor Polly Andrews
Scrutiny management board	Chairperson	Councillor Ben Proctor
	Vice Chairperson	Councillor Louis Stark

Recommendation (g)

Council noted the updated table in appendix 2, as contained in the tabled supplement of 23 May, which was put to the vote and was carried.

RESOLVED: That the size and political allocation of seats of the scrutiny management board is agreed as below:

	Con	IfH	Lib Dem	Green	Tind	NA	Total
Scrutiny Management Board	5	2	3	2	0	0	12

The meeting ended at 12.19 pm

Chairperson