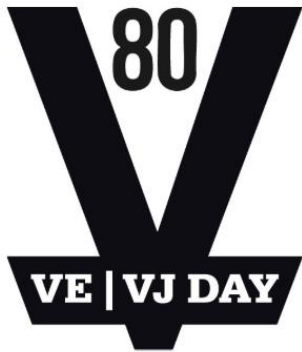


Chairman of Council report – Council Meeting
10 October 2025

Chairs Report to Council



This August saw the 80th anniversary of Victory in Japan and the end of the second world war hostilities . I attended several commemorative events across the county to mark the occasion and remember the sacrifice given by so many people. Given the many challenges in our world today and the strong military presence in our county it is right to reflect on this significant landmark.

Our head of finance, Rachael Saunders, made a presentation on the changing funding of local authorities at the Rural Conference organised by the Rural Services Network (RSN). The online conference held over four days had 1,400 attendees and covered a range of topics focusing on rural areas including enterprise, housing, health care, net zero, connectivity and transport. The RSN continues to lobby on behalf of rural services <https://www.rsnonline.org.uk/>

Hereford hosted the 297th Three Choirs Festival in July which is one of the longest established music festivals in the world and was attended by HRHs The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester. The Festival will return in 2028 for its 300th anniversary in Hereford.

The council has been working with the Hereford City Guides, a group of local volunteers who give guided tours of our city, to replace the old wooden statue of the bulldog of the former cathedral organist. The bulldog fell into the River Wye off the banks of the now King George V Playing fields and frantically scrambled to get back to the bank.



The organist turned to Edward Elgar who was with them at the time and challenged him to put the scene into music. He did – it is the 11th Enigma variation. The new stone statue was unveiled and the council will now take on the ownership of this special memorial. The old wooden statue will be retained in our museum.



The Leader and I attended the opening of the Pavillion on Castle Green, a new community facility which was supported by the Stronger Towns Fund. The original building which is a Grade II listed Georgian

building on Medieval foundations is spectacularly positioned overlooking the river Wye adjacent to the Castle Green. It housed the Hereford Art College for about 100 years and was owned by Herefordshire Council.

Herefordshire Council transferred the ownership to the friends of Castle Green who sought public funding to enhance the building including a new modern extension. The Chair paid tribute to the support and cooperation of the Council in delivering the project which gives the City a gem of a facility for meetings, activities and exhibitions together with a café. The versatile space with water frontage also continues to give a home to the City's Youth Canoe Club.



The King's Awards for Enterprise are for outstanding achievement by a business. The awards are highly prized by companies and only granted to exceptional businesses. There were over 1,200 applications nationally of which 119 were awarded with two companies in Herefordshire awarded. I was delighted to attend the awarding of the Kings Award to Level Peaks who are based in

Holmer by His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant Edward Harley for their outstanding achievement in international trade.

The defenced based company has developed a product used in training for security personnel which has huge take-up across the NATO alliance and beyond. If members consider they have successful companies in their wards please find out more details below:

[The King's Awards for Enterprise: About the awards - GOV.UK](#)

The Council will know of our Chief Executive`s decision to retire next March and while there will be opportunities to properly record our thanks in the future I wanted to express my thanks to him for his continued common sense and practical approach to overseeing the delivery of our public services.

The Little Princess Trust celebrated its 20th anniversary with a special service at the Cathedral. The trust which makes real hair wigs for children is also the largest charity to support research into Child cancer in the UK. We can be rightly proud that the charity still maintains its operations in Hereford.

The Vice Chair and I have attended many events over the last few months including the Battle of Britain commemorations this year in Ross, and the Baton of Hope suicide prevention initiative.

Cllr Roger Phillips JP