Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of Droitwich Spa Town Council held in the Council Chamber at St Richards House on **Monday 27 April 2026** at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs C Bowden (Mayor)
Councillor E Bowden
Councillor S Brazier
Councillor GR Brookes
Councillor Mrs JM Chaudry
Councillor P Clements
Councillor DI Davidson
Councillor R Deller
Councillor GA Duffy
Councillor N Franks
Councillor RP Hopkins
Councillor RJ Morris
Councillor AM Sinton

APOLOGIES for absence: Councillors J Grady & VP Humphries.

NOTES

(1) Town Council Meetings are recorded for monitoring purposes.

(2) Live streaming of meetings has resumed from the January 2026 Meeting date following a short period of temporary relocation for Council and Committee meetings at the Community Hall. This was for the reason to enable building works at St Richards House during summer and autumn 2025.

(3) The start of the Full Council Meeting was preceded by Prayers and Reflection led by the Mayoral Chaplain – Reverend Laura Handy.

398. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
None received.

399. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2026 - To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 19th January 2026 *[attached with Agenda].*

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Council held on 19 January 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

400. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS
Mayor's Announcements 17th April 2026

The Chairman updated the following information. That she had attended 56 events and accepted invitations during her Mayoral Year since May 2025. This had enabled the honour to represent the Town and the Town Council, together with the opportunity to partake in and

support wonderful Community Events and to meet so many lovely people. Councillor Mrs Bowden expressed sorrow that this time was coming to an end with the change over of the Mayoral Role on the 11th May at the AGM. Another recent highlight had included the afternoon strawberry tea hosted by CVS and in support of the Parkinsons Group which is one of the designated Mayoral Charities for 2025/2026. There are still events scheduled to look forward before the AGM including the Young Firefighter Cadets passing out Ceremony on Saturday 9th May and a Civic Dinner invitation at Pershore on Friday evening 8th May.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

401. POLICING IN DROITWICH SPA

The Clerk had circulated the report originated by PCSO Ben Mawby on Monday 27th April 2026 prior to the Meeting to all Members. The Chairman welcomed PCSO Mawby.

Ben covered his report as follows,

"There have been more changes to the Local Policing Teams that we need to make you aware of. PC Vincent has now left the local policing team and is now working in a new role. PC Graysmark has now left the force. PC Bullock will be leaving soon and moving to Worcester. We will have three new PCs that will be starting in May / June.
We've had a meeting with our partner agencies, including Wychavon District Council, Platform and the Youth Hub, along with some of our councillors. This was to address community concerns in Droitwich
The meeting was very successful with ideas discussed and actions to take away from all those involved. Future joint working will be key to affective outcomes.
One idea discussed was a regular joint newsletter, detailing police actions, drop-in sessions, and any other good news stories. We will link in with partners, displaying their logo and adding anything useful from partner perspective, such as activity dates or good news stories. The frequency hasn't been determined at this time.

Shoplifting is still ongoing and still happening, Sainsburys Garage have been phoning in thefts. BP have phoned in two shop thefts for a prolific shoplifter Boots have recently reported on 999 two high value thefts. Each incident reported is investigated by collating the evidence, so it is important to have the CCTV footage from the store, along with a statement detailing item stolen. The suspect then needs to be identified, so could take a while to complete these actions.
On the 08th of March, we had a phone call from a member of the public who reported that they could see two individuals who were spray painting on Tagwell Road which was underneath the motorway bridge. The two persons were spraying the ASKER tag, FSC / FSG. There was the outline of like a monster tag which we've seen before. Caller spoken to and gave a limited description of the offenders which has been helpful, reassured they made the right decision to phone it into us as they were advised that the Police wouldn't be interested. An idea of splash painting the underpass was raised with Cllr Dan Birch, completed by local children. Dan Birch will be able to provide more details on this.

On 10/03 – bike theft from Morrisons. Investigation completed and the police have been unable to identify the suspects. The victim has been provided an update.
On 12/03, there was a Cannabis grow discovered in Colman Road. Two people arrested. Investigation is still ongoing. The local policing team are remaining vigilant and will continue to check the property for any suspicious activity. Nottingham knockers around King George Avenue, area search completed but nobody found matching the description. Then in the evening there was some in Cuckoo Close, Droitwich. These issues are sporadic.
On 14/03, Morrisons phoned up 999 to report a customer shouting in the store. Officers attended and obtained details. No offences discovered. On the same date, Waitrose phoned up as they had detained a shoplifter. An officer attend and this is being investigated.
On the 14th and 15th March there was a report of some cars having their window smashed and damaged around the Padgewell Hill area. There were also properties that had smashed windows as well, these were damaged by ball bearings. Three youths have been arrested and interviewed and a fourth has been interviewed and they are all under investigation.
On the 15/03, there was a report of a male masturbating in the Lido. Very limited information passed across to us by caller.
On the 18/03, there was a report of multiple youths racing around on E Bikes and an electric motorbike, the informant was spoken too and no suspects have been identified and this was in the Lido park. The park, especially now the warmer weather is here, will be patrolled to identify and deal with any ASB.

On the 20/03, we were made aware of earth cabling being stolen from the Lido, no more than 2 metres. No idea when this happened as it happened between the 25/06/2025 until the date it was reported. Crime has been filed due to no lines of enquiry. It is not clear if this was a crime or work conducted by maintenance staff.

On the 01/04/2026, we did a warrant at the old HSBC in Victoria Square and Cannabis factory was discovered, one male person found inside and arrested for cultivation offences. Male has been remanded but is also due to be deported due to immigration offences.
On the 02/04/2026, Tesco in Mulberry Tree Hill was broken into. Just over £6,000 was taken. This is still a current investigation.
On the 07/04/2026, Salvation Army, Droitwich was broken into again. Believe through CCTV enquiries have established this happened on Easter Sunday. At this time no clear facial images of suspects to identify suspect, but enquiries are being conducted to identify any evidence.
Between the hours of 23:00 05/04/2026 to 08/04/2026 16:00, St Augustine Church. Vines Lane, Dodderhill, Droitwich, WR9 8LU, had a small window broken in the Vestry. No other damage or forced entry discovered.
In February there were two crimes reported, first one was between 13/02/2026 13:00 to 15/02/2026 07:30 whereby entry was gained into the Vestry door and an attempt was made to open the safe causing so much damage it couldn't be reopened.
The second was entry was forced into the Church by bending bolts in the Vestry door by brute force, nothing was taken. This was between 16/02/2026 17:00 to 19/02/2026 14:00.
Droitwich Methodist Church, Worcester Road, Droitwich, WR9 8AN between 04/04/2026 17:00 to 08/04/2026 15:00. A pane of stained glass was broken to enable people to access the premises, the toilets were messed up and then left using the fire exit.

Droitwich Baptist Church, Ombersley Street East, Droitwich, WR9 8QS between 15/04/2026 20:30 to 16/04/2026 10:00. 22/34025/26. Person's unknown had forced entry into the church by breaking the key safe, one inside the till was forced open but haven't taken any money. They have broken further doors inside that were locked via a keypad.
All the Churches targeted have been spoken to and our rural and businesses crime officer, who also deals with crime prevention advice has visited, to provide advice and support, to try and prevent further incidents. The suspect to these offences has not been identified yet, but enquiries continue.
On the 22/04/2026, we had a report of a male who had allegedly taken a picture of 15-year-old girl which was up her skirt. The male was subsequently located and arrested and has been given bail conditions. As this happened at the Railway Station, British Transport Police CID are dealing with the investigation and he has been bailed away from the area.
Further afield than Droitwich, there have been some car key burglaries near Hanbury and in Crowle. Suspects have entered residential premises to steal the keys to a BWM, golf R type and an Audi Q6. This has been highlighted on our Droitwich Police page to update the community. Drop-in sessions have been conducted and further ones arranged for the residents, along with security advice. This is being investigated by our CID department.
Also, there was an armed robbery at the Wychbold Post Office, which was attended by several different departments at the time. CCTV trawls and house visits conducted to collate evidence. CID are investigating this incident and continue to collate evidence. SNT have provided a community drop in to provide reassurance and to collate any further intelligence. Also, there are future drop-in session planned moving forward.

<u>For general Policing Questions</u>,

Councillor DI Davidson commented on the reporting data for crime incidents for the Droitwich East Ward. Ben clarified that variables on shop theft reporting by retailers can often distort the recorded incident trends. For example, a recent push to encourage shop theft reporting will show as an increase trajectory. Social media is also a factor as the content is often speculative and inaccurate which is not a true representation of factual reported crime statistics.
Councillor RJ Morris asked whether the crime statistics quoted were bench marked at a local or national level in the context of any increasing trends? Ben explained that figures and opinions both had a degree of subjectivity – for example the major fire significant incident affecting the former Raven Hotel building in August 2025 continues to influence local public opinion and tolerances towards the perception of criminality within the community in general.

Councillor DI Davidson asked for clarification on measures to intervene and detain an offender by a member of the public, for example in the scenario of a shop lifting incident. Ben confirmed that common law powers do permit such interventions by members of the public in what is essentially measures for a citizen's arrest – however the best advice from the Police is to always call for a professional response from an Officer using 999 for any live incidents. This to ensure public safety whereby the recommended approach is for trained Officers to apprehend those persons involved in criminality.

The Chairman thanked PCSO'S Mawby for his report and attendance.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

402. HIGH SCHOOL To receive an update from the Senior Students Team at Droitwich Spa High School *[if appropriate]*

Councillor RJ Morris explained that there was no representation or update available from the High School on this occasion.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

403. YOUTH COUNCIL – To receive an update from the Youth Council *[if appropriate]*

Councillor RJ Morris updated on the following matters.

That Matthew Kenny had been put nominated and successful in attaining the Wychavon Star Award in recognition of his great work in the voluntary sector. Matthew is an active Member of the Royal British Legion (Droitwich Spa branch), Army Cadets, Droitwich cycling, walking & wheeling action group and the Youth Council.

Last weeks Youth Council meeting had hosted Jo from the Crafty Café presenting for National Reading Week. The session has featured the book – "Tom Gates Epic Adventures" by the author Liz Pichon and covered a workshop where youth members made lanterns decorated with favourite phrases and text extracts taken from the book and journeys

The Chairman thanked Councillor Morris for his report and input.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

404. WORCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST - To receive a short presentation with the opportunity for questions and answers from Julie Grainger- Projects Manager for Wilder Worcestershire. Item arranged by Councillor DI Davidson.

The Chairman welcomed Julie Grainger from the Wildlife Trust. Julie presented a series of power point slides and updated on the Wildlife Trust Initiative that seeks to encourage 1 in 4 persons to take action for nature by 2030. The full power point pack was circulated to all DSTC Members on the day following the meeting-28th April 2026. This project concentrates on community engagement empowering people to become involved, especially in more local urban environments including Droitwich Spa and Worcester City. The work includes engagement with the community for local groups, organisations, cubs, scouts, brownies & girl guides and schools, with a target range of people aged from 13 to 35 years. The objective seeks to encourage this age range which is currently statistically least likely to interact most regularly with nature. The general localised area for the project covers between the rivers

Severn and Salwarpe including successful initiatives at Fernhill Heath, Worcester, Droitwich Spa and Kempsey. The WWT Team comprises three officers to help lead on the project activities. The workstream is a three-year plan and has one year remaining. This may be extended subject to securing additional funding from Central Government. The resources for the WWT Team are spread thinly which determines the approach for the Officers to support and empower groups to deliver their nature projects. This includes concept development, designs, upskilling and professional expertise to encourage groups to own and deliver the projects. Recent highly successful examples of project work include Worcester College – SEN group creating a community garden space and St Josephs Primary School in Droitwich Spa creating a "tiny forest" on urban space land. This latter project has been in collaboration with Worcestershire County Council and enabled every child at the school to plant their individual tree. Other related WWT engagement work for the community includes walks & talks in the areas of Copcut and Pulley Lane. This covers a variety of themes for interest and participation including bulb planting, coppicing and traditional hedge laying skills. The mantra of the WWT work is "that what is good for wildlife is goof for people". When considering proposals and ideas for similar community focused projects it is important to always get the land owners approval from the outset.

For general Questions,
Councillor DI Davidson enquired when the 3-year term for the current initiative expired? Julie clarified that this was set to March 2027 and it is hoped to extend subject to securing additional funding scope from Central Government.
Councillor RJ Morris commended Julie and her team for their community work and the benefits for bio diversity positive impact.
Councillor AM Sinton enquired whether WWT collaborated with different volunteer sector Groups for example the Friends of the River Salwarpe? Julie confirmed that the Trust worked with many different groups and organisations although she was unfamiliar with the Group quoted.

The Chairman thanked Julie for her report and input

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

405. COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS - To receive reports on County Council matters *[if appropriate]*

Councillor RJ Moriis updated on the following County Council matters. That new parking restrictions and yellow line proposals are currently being worked up for public consultation at New Chawson Lane. Yellow lines are being implemented at Berry Hill Industrial Estate and for sections of junctions and bends on Westwood Road – conducive to mitigating against inconsiderately parked vehicles and improving lines of sight from emerging side roads. Other Highways interventions include similar yellow lines provision at St Nicholas Street and Steynors Way and anticipated footpath resurfacing in July at Ploughman's Way and Burrish Street. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

406. DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTERS – To receive reports on District Council matters *[if appropriate]*

Councillor GA Duffy updated on the following District Council matters.

Wychavon update 27.04.26

5-Year Housing Land Supply the Inspectors confirmed as part of their findings on the SWDPR that the Council has a 5year housing land supply with a 5% buffer on adoption of the plan. The Planning team are now undertaking monitoring work for the 2025/26 period to provide an updated 5-year housing land supply calculation taking account of completions and changes in the supply of housing. This data will be published in early summer.

A Chair, a Shelf, a Story:
Droitwich Spa Launches Reading Pledge This month Wychavon have been working closely with colleagues at Droitwich Spa Library and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School to launch the Droitwich Spa Reading Pledge, as part of the National Year of Reading. The pledge invites local businesses and community organisations to create small reading spaces and free book swap shelves. It's a simple idea that supports our wider wellbeing ambitions and helps make reading part of everyday life in the town. The library will be supplying starter packs of books, and we're already seeing great enthusiasm from local venues. This is a brilliant example of partnership working and community spirit in action. If you know a business that might like to get involved, please encourage them to contact Nicki at the library at NHitchcock@worcestershire.gov.uk or 01905 844481.

Wychavon Growth Fund
As of 1 April 2026, the Wychavon Growth Fund is now live for businesses within Wychavon to apply for. The attached map shows previously supported projects based on the applications we received through the former Wychavon Rural Fund. We are keen to support business improvements across the whole district and promote applications and growth in less well subscribed areas. Please note that unlike the Wychavon Rural Fund, the Wychavon Growth Fund is also open to businesses in the three towns. What is the Wychavon Growth Fund? The Wychavon Growth Fund, fully funded by Wychavon District Council, supports projects that help businesses grow with grants of up to £15,000. This could include investment in new equipment, facility expansion, job creation, and productivity improvements. Who Can Apply? Applicants must: • Be an SME based in Wychavon (fewer than 250 employees and either a turnover of £44 million or less, or a balance sheet total of £38 million or less). • Demonstrate that the project will support business growth. • Provide at least 50% match funding. • Contact us before applying if the project involves building works or planning considerations. For more information and to access the application form please visit www.wychavon.gov.uk/growth.

Supporting the Next Generation of Digital Talent Our ICT team has been playing an important role in developing future local tech talent through a partnership with Heart of Worcestershire College. Two second-year T Level students have been completing their industry placement with us after struggling to secure opportunities in their first year. Many tech companies now operate remotely or specialise in narrow areas of work, making it difficult for students to gain the broad, hands-on experience required for their qualification. ICT stepped in to bridge that gap, offering practical support, mentoring and exposure to a wide range of real-world digital services. Alongside hosting the students, the team has also been working with the college to review elements of its curriculum. This collaboration gives us a valuable opportunity to help shape the skills and knowledge of our future workforce and strengthen local pathways into digital roles. In recognition of this work, Wychavon has been nominated for an employer award celebrating organisations that go above and beyond in supporting T Level students. The awards ceremony takes place on 3 June 2026, and Mike Phelan will be attending on behalf of our shared ICT service. We're hoping for a positive outcome — and Mike has promised to capture photos from the event so we can share the good news more widely if we're successful.

Outdoor seating costs cut to help businesses thrive
The cost of creating outdoor seating areas for cafés, coffee shops, pubs and restaurants is being slashed by Wychavon as part of efforts to support hospitality businesses and town centres.
A 70 per cent discount is now available on pavement licences, applying to both new applications and renewals. Pavement licences allow businesses selling food and drink to place tables and chairs on public footpaths outside their premises. They can also be used for other types of removable furniture, such as counters or stalls for selling food and drink outside, heaters, benches and other types of seating.
Placement of advertising hoarding or A-boards, or anything which cannot be removed from the footpath after closing time, is not covered by a pavement licence and requires separate consent.

Bin collections and street cleaning to move 'in-house'
Waste and recycling collections, along with street cleaning, will be delivered directly by Wychavon for the first time in decades, as part of preparations for changes to local councils.
Councillors have agreed to move the services 'in-house' once the current contract with FCC Environment ends on 31 March 2028. This is the day before Wychavon is set to be abolished under Local Government Reorganisation and replaced by either a South Worcestershire Unitary Council or a single unitary council for Worcestershire.

It is believed beginning a new contract, potentially with a new contractor, on the same day as the biggest change to local government in more than 50 years would pose a risk to the delivery and quality of the service to residents. Extending the existing contract is not an option.
All the other district councils being abolished within Worcestershire already operate their own waste and recycling services. If Wychavon started a new long-term contract with an external provider, it could tie the hands of the new unitary council, making it more difficult to achieve efficiency savings and improve the service.

Councillor N Franks commented on WDC opportunities including Health Skills and a Grants Scheme for local organisations towards bio diversity and energy efficiencies. Full details can be provided through local District Members.
Councillor AM Sinton commented on the new splash pads at Liso Park. In general discussion it was mentioned that the public opening times appeared variable and there had been some teething problems with the operation. Councillor RJ Morris confirmed that there is a three-year warranty in place with the Service Provider and they are actively engaged through WDC to address any snagging issues that arise. Councillor N Franks confirmed the facilities are open to the public until 6pm.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

407. WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL – DROITWICH SPA PLACE BOARD UPDATE – To receive an update on Place Board project work from Councillor AM Sinton *[for information]*.

Councillor AM Sinton explained that the Place Board Chairman – Mr Matt Nicol was unfortunately unable to join the meeting but hoped to attend a future meeting of the Town Council. This would be better placed after the emerging plans for the Lido facility and park investment which had recently been announced in the press, have been fully considered through WDC for their final design specification and approval. The Place Board have worked closely with WDC on input for the design aspects and options from the outset of the proposals and scheme in 2024.

Councillor RJ Morris commented that the WDC investment extended further and included the pump track, skate park and Leisure Centre improvements as well as the Lido proposals.

Councillor Sinton summarised that there were several ongoing Place Board projects including collaborations for a town trail & features for Tower Hill working with the Heritage Centre , emerging proposals to improve the public realm areas of Victoria Square & Gurneys Lane , the Park Run initiative for Lido Park working towards a September start date, the popular monthly Bike Nights and the Town of Culture 2028 Bid Submission - which is currently awaiting the decision for outcome

Councillor N Franks expressed disappointment that the Place Board Chairman was unable to join the meeting. He asked how he could refer suggestions to the Place Board for consideration of interest towards possible partnership projects? Councillor Sinton clarified that any suggestions can be put through himself, Councillor Morris or the Clerk to take forward for referral as Place Board Members.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

408. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN – To consider and ratify approval for the following 3 documents prepared by the Consultant and conducive towards final submission to Wychavon District Council of the prepared final amended version of the NDP. All finalised documents provided to Elected Members on 31st March for early review ahead of this meeting. The anticipation is to submit the final versions to WDC on 28th April 2026.

- Basic Conditions Statement
- Revised updated NDP (against the new SWDPR and to reflect the Regulation 14 consultation changes from feedback).
- Consultation Statement

Councillor GR Brookes referred to the three documents as presented and confirmed the proposal to formally ratify the final submission to Wychavon District Council. He commented that this was the culmination of 4 years work since inception of the latest NDP project in July 2022. The Clerk explained that there would then be a further ensuing period during which the submission is reviewed as part of the statutory Regulation 16 Stage of the NDP process by the Planning Inspectorate. Thereafter the adoption of the NDP will be considered by the electorate through referendum. It was added that the Screening Report undertaken by WDC as the Local Planning Authority in autumn 2025 had confirmed that the submission was a quality fit for purpose document. It was noted that the alignment with the recently adopted local plan (SWDPR) also set to 2041 and the anticipated LGR changes from 2028 are additional benefits of the NDP for the Community. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the formal submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to WDC and the process stage Regulation 16 be ratified. To include submission to the following documents as presented,

- Basic Conditions Statement
- Revised updated NDP (against the new SWDPR and to reflect the Regulation 14 consultation changes from feedback).
- Consultation Statement

There were 11 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.

409. ASSERTION 10 - Assertion 10 is a new 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) requirement for English parish and town councils, focusing on digital/data compliance. It mandates secure, council-owned email domains, strict GDPR adherence, website accessibility compliance, and robust IT policies. Councils must prove they manage digital risks effectively.

- To consider the following supporting information and two attached drafted documents for adoption, (Template Guide to Information provided by Parish / Community Councils under the model publication scheme & Information Technology Policy *(both attached)*

Road Map **WHY THIS ROADMAP?**

This roadmap breaks down data protection into four clear stages:

1. Mapping what data you hold and why
2. Identifying the lawful basis for each purpose
3. Assessing risks and protecting people's rights
4. Creating policies and embedding good practice

Each stage provides plain English explanations of key concepts, supported by checklists, reflective questions, and worked examples to help you apply the steps in your own council.

Where more detail is needed, we signpost you to authoritative resources from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), so you can explore further with confidence.

KEY PRINCIPLES TO KEEP IN MIND

At its heart, data protection is about respecting people's right to privacy. It ensures that individuals' personal data is handled with care, fairness, and transparency. The law is based on seven key principles, which guide everything you do with personal data. Achieving compliance should be seen as a journey, and not a one-off task. The journey is most effective when each stage is approached methodically, rather than trying to complete everything at once. By working through the stages in order, your council will build a strong foundation and sustainable framework.

It is also important to remember that every council is unique. This roadmap is designed to help you make decisions that fit your council's size, functions, and resources, rather than follow a one-size-fits-all template.

Finally, good data protection builds trust. It reassures residents and stakeholders that their information is safe, reduces the risk of complaints, and gives councillors and staff confidence that they are acting responsibly.

HOW TO USE THIS ROADMAP

Work through each stage in order, and resist the urge to jump to the final stage. Refer to the checklists and questions to guide your thinking. Use the examples to spark ideas, and adapt them to your council's circumstances. Record your decisions as you go - your documentation will become the central reference point for all your data protection work.

By the end, your council will have:

A clear picture of what personal data you process and why.

- Considered data protection principles, and documented lawful bases and risk decisions.
- Policies and a notice that explains your approach.
- Embedded practices that make compliance part of everyday council business.

This roadmap is not about perfection or legal jargon. It is about giving parish and town councils the confidence, structure, and tools to make data protection manageable and meaningful.

(a) Template Guide to Information provided by Parish / Community Councils under the model publication scheme

(b) Information Technology Policy

In addition, the Town Council have to demonstrate the following two requirements-

(c) When the Council last conducted a web site accessibility test. *Verified with Website Administrator that current accessibility statement dates from March 2023 coinciding with last build update of main website, Refreshed version initiated through Provider – March 2026 to align with new Assertion 10 requirements. Cost quotation is £350.00. Instructed with Website Administrator 30th March 2026.*

(d) When the Council last conducted a data audit in accordance with GDPR practices
Summary requirements attached for review with Transparency Code explanation – within the criteria and threshold for Councils with annual turnover exceeding £200K

The Clerk explained the new testing and control aspects and the information as presented. The website accessibility Test (aspect c) was confirmed by the Clerk as having been completed this month by the Website Service Provider (Active Marketing), The resultant

report will be made available to update as part of the June 2026 Full Council Meeting. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED To adopt the following two recommended policy documents to accord with the updated Assertion 10 changes effective for 2026/2027.

- **Template Guide to Information provided by Parish / Community Councils under the model publication scheme**

- **Information Technology Policy**

Two confirm review of the following additional responsibilities

- **When the Council last conducted a web site accessibility test- April 2026**

- **When the Council last conducted a data audit in accordance with GDPR practices - April 2026 from review of the presented information -** *Summary requirements with Transparency Code explanation – within the criteria and threshold for Councils with annual turnover exceeding £200K.*

410. ASSET REVIEW Annual Asset Review 2026/2027. To update the attached schedule of Town Council assets. The previous annual review was completed in March 2025. Full reinstatement valuations have been completed by professional consultants for both public building premises in January 2024 which are referenced for information. To accord with Auditors best practice recommendations Elected Members are encouraged to look at the owned assets comprising the two buildings, contents (including Heritage Centre and Museum collection) and various land holdings as they so wish. There is anticipated to be some changes to owned assets as the proposed LGR Changes proceed towards 2028. From the latest Insurance renewal, the works to improve the St Richards House Heritage Centre have not made any tangible difference to the insurable value of the premises or contents. This is for the reason that the improvements fall within internal reconfiguration. The nominal changes to the prior year asset total are due to insurance value market fluctuations and acquisition of some renewal IT items (March 2026). The Register cross references to the updated insurable values from the latest Policy Renewal as at 1st January 2026 and already covered through Full Council in December 2025. The Town Council maintains the policy of valuation at historic purchase price and insurable value *[Updated register of assets attached with Agenda papers as at March 2026 for information].*

The Clerk explained the process for annual review and the accompanying updated assets register. There were no question arising.

RESOLVED To confirm the annual review of the register of assets held by the Town Council.

411. INTERNAL AUDIT ENGAGEMENT LETTER 2025/2026. Pursuant to minute number 310/2025-2026 of the meeting of Full Council on 19th January 2026 for the acceptance of the Interim Report 2025/2026 (as noted below),

310. INTERNAL AUDITORS INTERIM REPORT FOR PERIOD 2025/2026 - To receive and approve the Internal Auditors Interim Report and Recommendations as presented. The Interim Review Visit was undertaken on Monday 24th November 2025 and the Report was received on 8th December 2025

To reaffirm the Internal Audit Engagement letter provided at that time (dated 22nd September 2025 (attached again). To adhere with the External Auditors requirement to evidence that the Smaller Authority has reviewed and confirmed the independence of the

Internal Auditor for the current period 2025/2026 *[Internal Auditors Engagement Letter attached for review and information]*.

The Clerk explained the process and the requirement to review the independence of the Internal Auditor for the current period 2025/2026

Councillor RP Hopkins commented that he had not received the populated version of the latest Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Clerk reminded that these had been updated and the version unanimously adopted as part of the December 2025 Full Council Meeting. A further copy would be provided for Councillor Hopkins and it was confirmed that the populated recommended version documents had been attached to the Governance section of the website following the adoption in December 2025. The Clerk reaffirmed that this agenda item was as outlined to confirm review of the suitability and independence of the Internal Auditors annual arrangements only.

RESOLVED To confirm review of the suitability and independence of the Internal Auditors arrangements as presented within the Audit Engagement Letter.

412. TOWN OF CULTURE 2028- To confirm submission of the Partnership led Expression of Interest (EOI) application in collaboration with the Droitwich Spa Place Board as at 30th March 2026. This accords with the mandate for the Town Council to undertake and fulfil the accountable and deliverable body responsibilities for the Bid. A copy of the EOI is attached for information. Outcomes and progress for the bid are anticipated to be notified over the next few weeks *[EOI attached with agenda for information]*.

The Clerk updated the submission position and that the decision outcome for the bid was currently still awaited. It was reaffirmed that the application is for a partnership bid working with the Place Board and the Town Council undertaking the responsibilities of the Deliverable & Accountable Body. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

413. ARMED FORCES DAY – SATURDAY 27TH JUNE 2026- Early notification for the flag raising ceremony. The annual date is very important to the Town Council and the Community for the reason of the Armed Forces Covenant. The Covenant was adopted by DSTC on 25th September 2023 and formally accepted by the MOD on 24th January 2024.

We are delighted that the Droitwich Air Cadets will participate in the Ceremony including a band performance again this year.
At this forward stage it is envisaged that the ceremony will be very similar to last year as described below. The Army Cadets & RBL Standards are anticipated to attend and participate in the ceremony as well.

10.45 am –Assemble at St Richards House frontage garden – adjacent Flag Pole
10.55am - Announcement by Town Crier
11.00 am –

- Welcome Remarks from Town Mayor and Councillor Richard Morris (Lead Elected Member for Armed Forces Covenant).
- Moment of Prayer and reflection led by Mayoral Chaplain.
- Raising of the Special Armed Forces Day Flag
- Band Performance by ATC Droitwich 2516 Squadron.

The Clerk explained the arrangements. Councillor RJ Morris commented on the importance of the annual date and the significance for the adopted Armed Forces Covenant for Droitwich Spa.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

414. To receive and consider the Minutes of the under-mentioned Committee meetings,

1. Planning Committee 2nd February 2026 *[previously provided]*
2. Resources & Sustainability Committee 2nd February 2026 *[previously provided]*
3. Community & Amenities Committee 23rd February 2026 *[previously provided]*
4. Resources & Sustainability Committee 23rd February 2026 - *[previously provided]*
5. Planning Committee 23rd March 2026- *[previously provided]*
6. Resources & Sustainability Committee 23rd March 2026– *[previously provided]*
7. Planning Committee 13th April 2026 -– *[previously provided]*
8. Community & Amenities Committee 13th April 2026 – *[previously provided]*
9. Resources & Sustainability Committee 13th April 2026 – *[previously provided]*

The Chairman moved these draft minutes on block.

RESOLVED To accept on block the 9 sets of Committee Meeting minutes as true and correct records.

415. GERMAN TWINNING ASSOCIATION VISIT & CIVIC RECEPTION – Friday evening 5th June 2026. To receive an update from Councillor AM Sinton.

Councillor Sinton updated on the forthcoming German twinning visit to Droitwich Spa in early June. The Museum and Heritage Centre will be open later on the Friday evening 5th June to welcome a visit from the delegation and their local host families. It is anticipated that the visitors from Bad Ems will number approximately 33 people including their Stadt Burgermeister (Town Mayor). Councillor Sinton hoped that many of the Town Council Elected Members would be able to join with him and the mayor for the visit and reception, starting from 5.30pm.

The newly printed town guide leaflets in French and German language were referenced as conducive to supporting visitors to the Town, tourism, commerce and the established twinning links.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

416. HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY CONSULTATION- Further to the general notification to Elected Members dated 14th April 2026 to advise of the WDC consultation open for responses until 24th May. The Town Council welcomes partnership working for Community Initiatives. To maintain this approach – to consider a corporate response opinion for the consultation from DSTC.

Consultation link details as follows,

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy -https://www.wychavon.gov.uk/about-wychavon-district-council/consultations/draft-homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-strategy-quick-guide

The Clerk explained the consultation process and strategy including the opportunity for the Town Council to consider a corporate response. Councillor R Deller added context and the importance of this strategy to support vulnerable persons throughout the local community. The Clerk referenced that homelessness problems were poignantly evident this week with persons rough sleeping outside the nearby Community Hall.

Councillor DI Davidson commented on the WDC proposals for the sheltered accommodation in Town and some public opinion raised concerns towards the location. For this reason, Councillor Davidson mentioned that he may have to abstain from voting. The Clerk clarified that the agenda item was only to consider a corporate opinion response for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy – and was not with regard to the sheltered accommodation location details.

Following general discussion, the following statement of support was unanimously resolved as the corporate opinion of the Town Council for the WDC Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation.

RESOLVED The Corporate Opinion of Droitwich Spa Town Council for this Consultation was resolved at the Full Council meeting of 27th April 2027 as follows.
> To commend Councillor Rick Deller for his work and contribution in taking this important Initiative forwards.
> Fully supportive of the three principles - protecting young people at risk of homelessness, prohibiting unsuitable temporary accommodations such as bed & breakfast premises and fully supporting of proper and fit for purpose "safe place community designated accommodation". Overall to develop a focus on caring, support networks, partnership working and positive intervention towards the prevention of homelessness scenarios in the Community.

417. MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION – "SUPPORT FOR THE FRIENDS OF RIVER SALWARPE GROUP". To consider the motion as presented by Councillor N Franks *[details below & attached with agenda]*.

Motion: Support for the 'Friends of River Salwarpe' Group

This Council notes:

- The ecological, cultural, and historical importance of the River Salwarpe to Droitwich, including its rare brine-influenced habitats and biodiversity.
- The increasing national concern regarding river pollution, sewage discharges, nutrient loading, and declining freshwater biodiversity.
- The proven success of river-guardian and citizen-science monitoring groups across the UK, whose work, supported by The Rivers Trust and local catchment partnerships, has helped identify pollution sources, improve water-quality data, and strengthen community engagement.
- The establishment of the **Friends of River Salwarpe**, a new volunteer group working with The Rivers Trust and Severn Trent Water to undertake river walks, map all inlets and outfalls, monitor biodiversity, test water quality, and help identify potential pollution sources along the Salwarpe.

This Council believes:

- That community-led monitoring and stewardship are essential tools in protecting the health of our river.

- That early detection of pollution events, misconnected drains, and ecological changes is vital to safeguarding the Salwarpe's unique saline environment.

- That supporting the **Friends of River Salwarpe** aligns with Droitwich Town Council's commitments to environmental protection, community wellbeing, and local heritage.

This Council resolves to:

1. **Formally express its support** for the work of the **Friends of River Salwarpe** and recognise the value that their contribution will make to the town.

2. **Invite the group to present updates** to the Town Council annually (or more frequently if required) on their findings, activities, and any emerging concerns.

3. **Promote the group's volunteer opportunities** through Council communication channels to encourage wider community participation.

4. **Work collaboratively** with the **Friends of River Salwarpe**, The Rivers Trust, Severn Trent Water, and relevant authorities to help address any issues identified through monitoring.

It was confirmed through the Chairman that Councillor N Franks was the proposer and Councillor RP Hopkins the seconder for this motion. Councillor Franks spoke in support of his motion.

The Clerk confirmed that an amended version of the motion had been circulated to all DSTC Elected Members on Thursday morning 23rd April 2026 by email. It was confirmed that this was to be proposed by Councillor R Deller and seconded by Councillor GA Duffy. Councillors Deller and Duffy explained the rationale for the amendment which is to widen the statement of support by DSTC to include a variety of other active Community Groups and Organisations. This is conducive towards inclusivity within the Community, rather than exclusivity for one group (in this case the referenced Friends of the River Salwarpe). As such the amendment became the substantive motion and was taken to the vote.

Councillor N Franks expressed his disappointment with the amendment.

Councillor RJ Morris commented that the amendment was important to demonstrate that the Town Council was open to supporting and recognising the value provided by all Community Groups, including the many different active "friends of groups". He added that the work of environmental and bio diversity monitoring of the River Salwarpe was commendable and the Town Council had recently supported this initiative by a Community Grants contribution to the Severn Rivers Trust (April 2026).

Councillor GR Brookes confirmed that the amendment fully conformed with Standing Orders and there was no desire to negate the original motion.

RESOLVED **Amended Motion - Motion: Support for Community "Friends of" Groups (amendment)**

This Council notes:

1. The valuable ecological, cultural, and community contributions made by "Friends of" groups and similar volunteer organisations across the town and surrounding areas.
2. The increasing importance of community-led stewardship, environmental monitoring, and local engagement in enhancing public spaces, biodiversity, and heritage.
3. The proven success of volunteer-led groups working in partnership with organisations and local stakeholders to deliver positive outcomes for their communities.

4. The ongoing work of various “Friends of” groups who undertake activities including environmental conservation, biodiversity monitoring, public engagement, and the identification of local issues requiring attention.

This Council believes:

1. That community-led groups play an essential role in supporting and improving the town’s environment, wellbeing, and shared spaces.
2. That recognising and encouraging the work of these groups strengthens community cohesion and civic pride.
3. That collaboration between volunteer groups, local organisations, and the Council is key to achieving sustainable and positive outcomes.

This Council resolves to:

1. Formally express its support for all “Friends of” groups and similar organisations that benefit the town and surrounding areas, and recognise the good work they are doing alongside others.
2. Note that groups the Town Council supports include, but are not limited to: Friends of the High Street, Friends of the Lido, Friends of the Station, Friends of Copcut & Pulley Woods, Sacred Heart Mosaics, and Friends of the River Salwarpe.
3. Welcome presentations from these groups to the Town Council to share updates on their activities, achievements, and any emerging needs or concerns.
4. Encourage such groups to apply for appropriate grant funding to support and expand their work.
5. Promote opportunities for community involvement and collaboration through Council communication channels where appropriate.
6. Droitwich Town Council will provide support to these groups by coordinating with relevant organisations and ensuring they are connected with the appropriate bodies to assist in the delivery and development of their activities.

There were 11 votes in favour and two against.

418. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT *[lists attached with Agenda]*

Creditor Payments were presented to the Council totalling £27,913.43 and supplementary payments totalling £4,099.60. Total expenditure presented = £32,013.03

There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the statement of accounts be received and the expenditure of £32,013.03 be approved and duly passed for payment. **(Total expenditure = £32,013.03)**

The Meeting Closed at 7.48 pm

Chairman of Council ----------

15 June 2026