

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

16 September 2025

Town Clerk's Open Report

Agenda Item 11

1. Members Allowances

- **To consider an annual review**

It is a requirement of the Council's Terms of Reference that Councillors conduct an annual review of members' allowances.

As Councillors are aware, Stratford-upon-Avon Town Councillors do not currently receive an allowance for their service. However, reimbursement may be claimed for expenses incurred whilst undertaking official Council business, such as car parking charges when attending meetings or performing civic duties.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provide the framework enabling local councils to pay allowances to their members. Such allowances are intended to compensate Councillors for their time and expenses incurred in carrying out their duties. The adoption of such a scheme is discretionary and rests with each individual council.

The Mayor receives a separate allowance to cover expenses incurred during his or her Mayoral year.

Councillors are now asked to review the current position and determine whether they wish to consider investigating the implementation of a basic allowance scheme for members, or whether no change is required.

2. Report on Virement of Funds – Organisational Review

- **To note the decision of the Finance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 9 September 2025**

Arising from a meeting of the Personnel Committee, where consideration was given to a recommendation from the Internal Auditor that the Town Council undertake an Organisational Review.

The scope of the review was to include:

- Assessing the consistency, relevance, and accuracy of all job descriptions
- Evaluating current workloads, role distribution, and organisational capacity

- Examining the Council's readiness for potential changes in service delivery, including the impact of local government reorganisation

It was noted that the Council has not undertaken a full staffing structure review for some time and although job descriptions are reviewed annually with staff, several are now outdated and may not fully reflect current responsibilities.

This was duly considered by the Finance and Audit Committee who have delegated authority within budgets to agree to virements and accordingly, it was agreed that the underspend in the 2025/26 Audit Budget be used to fund the Organisational Review.

3. Warwickshire Association of Local Councils – AGM

- **To appoint one voting member for the Warwickshire Association of Local Councils AGM**

All Councillors and Officers are invited to attend the virtual conference on Wednesday, 12 November 2025 (further details to follow).

The Annual General Meeting will be held from 6.00pm to 7.00pm, during which the Town Council is required to appoint one voting representative, being either an officer or a councillor.

4. Local Government Reorganisation – Consultation

- **To consider response to the Warwickshire County Council questionnaire for Town and Parish Councils.**

The Government's English Devolution White Paper (December 2024) proposed replacing the current two-tier system of county and district/borough councils with single-tier unitary councils. Warwickshire Councils were instructed to submit an interim plan in March 2025, which outlined two options: a single countywide unitary or two unitaries. Final proposals must be submitted by 28 November 2025, supported by evidence of engagement with local residents and organisations.

The Borough and District Councils consulted on their proposals between 17 August and 14 September 2025, while Warwickshire County Council (WCC) ran a separate consultation from 25 July to 25 August 2025. As the consultations were not geared towards organisational responses and coincided with the holiday period when the Town Council was not meeting, all Town Councillors were encouraged to submit individual responses.

WCC has recently circulated a questionnaire to Town and Parish Councils requesting their feedback. Responses must be submitted by 5.00pm on Friday, 26 September 2025.

A copy of the extract of the Consultation is attached as an Appendix for consideration.

Town Clerk
10 September 2025