

Meeting of the Council

**Monday, 1st December 2025 at 6.00pm
in the Council Chamber
The Council House, Priory Road, Dudley**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the numbered agenda items listed below.

Agenda - Public Session (Meeting open to the public and press)

Prayers and National Anthem

1. Apologies for absence
2. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct
3. To confirm and sign the minutes of the Extraordinary and Ordinary Meetings held on 20th October 2025 as correct records (Pages 8 – 23)
4. Mayor's Announcements
5. To receive reports from meetings as follows:

Meeting of the Cabinet dated 6th November 2025

Councillor P Harley to move:

- (a) 2025/26 Better Care Fund (BCF) Partnership Agreement (Section 75 Agreement) (Pages 24 - 28)

Meeting of the Appointments Committee dated 27th October 2025

Councillor P Harley to move:

(b) Appointment of Director of Adult Social Care (Pages 29 – 30)

6. Political Balance of the Council and Composition of Committees (Pages 31 - 40)
7. Results of Feasibility Study into a Parish Council for Cradley (Pages 41 - 45)
8. Notices of Motion

(a) To consider the following notice of motion received from Councillor P Lowe on 12th May 2025:

Black Country Flag

This Council notes the recent statement by a Westminster Party that they would 'only flags to be permitted to be flown on or in its buildings will be the Union Jack and St Georges Flag'. This was later amended to include 'County Flags'.

This Council further notes the positive impact that our Black Country Flag has had within Dudley, both economically and culturally.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (a) Reaffirm its commitment to fly our Black Country Flag with pride on July 14th and any other historic or important date in our calendar (other than days on which the Council receives directions that the Union Jack or other flags are to be raised).
- (b) Continue to encourage business and buildings to raise the flag and promote our Bostin Black Country.

- (b) To consider the following notice of motion received from Councillor S Edwards on 3rd June 2025:

Protecting Local Pubs

Pubs have been at the heart of our communities in the Black Country for hundreds of years. They are more than places to drink, they are centres of conversation, celebration, remembrance and belonging. As such, they should be classed as places of cultural importance and recognised as assets to our communities.

According to the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), 289 pubs closed across England and Wales in 2024, resulting in the loss of 4,500 jobs. The West Midlands was among the hardest-hit regions.

Despite consumer demand remaining strong, the BBPA has stated that “profits are being wiped out by sky-high bills.” The hospitality industry is weighed down by relentless taxation and charges, including the Government’s recent decisions to cut business rate relief and raise National Insurance contributions, both of which have made a bad situation worse. This comes despite Labour pledging to reform business rates to ensure the survival of small businesses.

While I acknowledge that successive Labour and Conservative Governments have been instrumental in weakening the pub sector, Dudley Council, too, has not done enough to safeguard what remains of this historic and vital industry.

We must do better. We must use the powers available to us as a devolved local authority to not only protect the remaining pubs we have, but to help independent hospitality businesses grow and thrive.

Let me be clear: this is not about propping up multinational chains which undercut local brewers and stifle independent trade. This is about supporting local pubs, community landlords, breweries, and micro-pubs that serve our residents and form part of our civic fabric.

For the purpose of this Notice of Motion, a pub should be regarded as any premises which are licensed for the sale and consumption of alcohol within those premises up to 11.00pm which is open to the public and does not require either membership or a booking to be made and has at least one area that is not laid out for meals.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- Recognise pubs for their cultural and community significance.
- Promote the concept of 'Asset of Community Value' within local communities, which will help towards the preservation and use of assets of community significance including pubs by:
 1. Ensuring the community has the right to bid on any Asset of Community Value (Pub) put up for sale, preserving its social and cultural function.
 2. Local planning authorities can take into consideration the ACV status when assessing planning applications, particularly those involving a change of use or demolition.
- Recommend that following a study to include a financial and equality impact assessment, Cabinet brings a report which considers amending its Non-Domestic Rates Relief Policy to allow pubs to be eligible for Discretionary Rate Relief.
 1. Allowing local pubs to apply for DRR could reduce their business rate burden.
 2. Encourage and prioritise applications from community-focused independent venues, ensuring their sustainability and continued benefit to local residents.
- Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to HM Government, on behalf of all parties and Elected Members, to:
 1. Call for the immediate reinstatement of the 75% business rates relief for retail and hospitality venues which would relieve financial pressure in the current economic climate.
 2. Call for the Government to honour its pledge to reform business rates in a way that allows small businesses, including pubs, to survive and thrive.

- (c) To consider the following notice of motion received from Councillor M Cook on 1st July 2025:

Free Parking

It has become obvious to me that it was a mistake by the Conservatives to remove free parking from Dudley Council car parks.

Businesses across the borough are reporting a massive drop in trade and shoppers are stating the parking charges are too high.

If someone wants to pop to the shop to get a bottle of milk, they are now lumped with a £1.60 parking charge.

The majority of shops on our high streets are independent shops owned by local people. They provide a good service and do an honest day's work, but this Conservative Council and the Labour Government are determined to price them out of business.

Other boroughs in the Black Country are charging just £0.60 an hour in some car parks and on street parking.

We must bring back the free parking period to help support our local businesses.

Therefore, this Council resolves to recommend that Cabinet considers bringing a report to Council with details of the income received by the Council from parking charges and the impact that it has had on local businesses and considers the measures set out below including the financial impact of them:

- Implementing 1-hour free parking on council car parks
- Reducing parking charges to £1 for the second hour and a half.
- Meaning shoppers can shop for up to 2 ½ hours for £1.

9. Questions from Members under Council Procedure Rule 11
10. To consider any business not on the agenda which, by reason of special circumstances, the Mayor is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972

Distribution: All Members of the Council

Balvinder Heran

Chief Executive

Dated: 21st November 2025

Meetings at Dudley Council House:

Recording and Reporting

- The public session of this meeting will be broadcast live, recorded and made available for viewing on the Council's [YouTube Channel](#)
- Mobile devices or electronic facilities may be used for the purposes of recording/reporting during the public session of the meeting. The use of any such devices must not disrupt the meeting – Please turn off any ringtones or set your devices to silent.

Health and Safety

- Ensure that you comply with any safety instructions that apply to the venue.

In Case of Emergency

- In the event of the alarms sounding, please leave the building by the nearest exit. Officers will assist in the event of an emergency. Please follow their instructions.

Public Seating

- Seating is subject to limits on capacity and will be allocated on a 'first come' basis.

No smoking

- There is no smoking on the premises in line with legal requirements. It is an offence to smoke in or on the premises. You cannot use e-cigarettes and/or similar vaping devices.

Submitting Apologies for Absence

- Elected Members can submit apologies by contacting Democratic Services.

Private and Confidential Information

- Any agendas containing reports with 'exempt' information should be treated as private and confidential. It is your responsibility to ensure that information containing private and personal data is kept safe and secure at all times. If you choose to retain the documents you should ensure that the information is securely stored and destroyed/deleted within six months.

General

- Public Wi-Fi is available
- Information about the Council and our meetings can be viewed on the website www.dudley.gov.uk
- Toilet facilities are available on site.

If you need advice or assistance

- If you (or anyone you know) requires assistance to access the venue, or if you have any other queries, please contact Democratic Services - Telephone 01384 815238 or E-mail Democratic.Services@dudley.gov.uk