Kidderminster Town Council Agenda

To all Town Councillors

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of Town Council, to be held at **6.00pm** on **Wednesday**, **23rd June 2021** in the **Corn Exchange**, **Town Hall**, **Vicar Street**, **Kidderminster** for the transaction of the business detailed below:

Com Besse

Tony Beirne Town Clerk 16/06/2021

<u>Public</u>

Agenda item	Subject	Page
PUBLIC		
1.	Apologies for Absences	
2.	Minutes To approve the minutes of the Council meetings held on 26 th May 2021 (attached)	3
3.	Declarations of Interests	
4.	Public participation In accordance with Standing Order 3(c), to allow members of the public to make representations, ask questions, and give evidence. Members of the public will be called in order of receipt of notice of their intention to speak. Please email townclerk@kidderminstertowncouncil.gov.uk or telephone 01562 732680 to give your name and an indication of the topic you intend to raise.	
5.	Report of the Internal Auditor (attached)	7
6.	External Audit – Annual Return To approve the i. Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 (attached) ii. Accounting Statement 2019/20 (attached)	21 27
7.	Committee Representation & Appointments (attached)	33

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct ("the Code") requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a Disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members' Code of Conduct for full details.

<u>Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)</u>

DPI's and ODI's are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that will be adopted by the Town Council at this meeting.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council's Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

Register of Interests

As part of managing the risk assessment Councillors are reminded to ensure they keep their register of interests up to date. If you have any questions please contact the Town Clerk

For further information

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Tony Beirne, Town Clerk, Kidderminster Town Council, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732680 or email townclerk@kiddermistertowncouncil.gov.uk
Documents referred to in this agenda may be viewed on Town Council's website

<u>Date of next meeting</u> <u>Wednesday 28th July 2021 at 6.00pm</u> <u>Town Hall</u>

Kidderminster Town Council MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 26th May 2021 at 6.00pm in the Corn Exchange, Town Hall, Kidderminster

Present: The Mayor (Councillor J. Smith)

Councillors J. Aston, R. Bishop, D. Chambers, G. Connolly, K. Gale, N. Gale, D. Hine, B. Hopkins, S. Miah, T. Muir, F. Oborski MBE, M. Rayner, S. Rook, D. Ross, and E. Stokes

C.611 Election of the Town Mayor 2020/21

It was proposed by Councillor D. Ross and seconded by Councillor R. Bishop that Councillor Juliet Smith be appointed the Town Mayor of Kidderminster for 2021/22

On being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED: - that Councillor Juliet Smith be appointed Town Mayor for Kidderminster for the 2021/22 Civic Year

C.612 Apologies

Councillors H. Dyke and J. Phillips.

C.613 Minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2021

RESOLVED: - that the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

C.614 Declarations of Interests by Members

None.

C.615 Public participation

None.

C.616 Election of the Deputy Town Mayor 2020/21

It was proposed by Councillor D. Ross. and seconded by Councillor R. Bishop that Councillor Kevin Gale be appointed the Deputy Town Mayor of Kidderminster for the 2021/22 Civic Year

On being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED: - that Councillor Kevin Gale be appointed Deputy Town Mayor for Kidderminster for the 2021/22 Civic Year

C.617 Motions

There were two motions relating to the appointment of Honorary Freemen of Kidderminster

i. Honorary Freemen Mr Mike Kelly

It was proposed by Councillor F. Oborski MBE and seconded by Councillor S. Rook "That in recognition of his service to Kidderminster spanning: Kidderminster Borough Council, Wyre Forest District Council, Kidderminster Charter Trustees and Kidderminster Town Council, this Council resolves to confer the status of Honorary Freeman on former Councillor Mike Kelly."

On being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED: - that former Town Councillor Mike Kelly be appointed Honorary Freeman of Kidderminster

ii. Honorary Freemen Mr Jeff Baker

It was proposed by Councillor J. Smith and seconded by Councillor D Ross "That in recognition of over 16 years' service to Kidderminster this Council resolves to confer the status of Honorary Freeman on former Town Councillor Jeff Baker"

On being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED: - that former Town Councillor Jeff Baker be appointed Honorary Freeman of Kidderminster

C.618 Town Mayor Succession Planning

Councillors considered the report on the Mayoral Succession Plan. It was **RESOLVED:** - that the Town Council agree the order of succession as detailed in the related report.

C.619 Committee Representation & Appointments

RESOLVED: - that

- i. the Committee structure detailed below, the nominations for chairmanships, vice-chairmanships and the other memberships be agreed
- ii. substitute appointments be allowed
- iii. Councillor D. Ross be appointed Leader of the Town Council

	Committee	Membership
a.	Finance & Overview (5 members)	D. Ross (Chairman); K. Gale (Vice Chairman); D. Chambers; D. Hine; and F. Oborski MBE
b.	Events & Services (7 members)	N. Gale (Chairman); R. Bishop (Vice-Chairman); G. Connolly; D. Hine, S. Miah M. Rayner and E. Stokes.
C.	Town Hall (5 members)	D. Ross (Chairman); K. Gale (Vice Chairman); H. Dyke; B. Hopkins and F. Oborski MBE
d.	Kidderminster Education Foundation	To be included within the brief of the Town Hall Committee
e.	Staffing (5 members)	J. Smith (Chairman); R. Bishop (Vice Chairman); H. Dyke, J Phillips and S. Rook
f.	Planning (6 members - 1 per ward) Aggborough & Spennells Blakebrook & Habberley South Broadwaters Foley Park & Hoobrook Franche & Habberley Offmore & Comberton	 D. Hine E. Stokes T. Muir (Vice-Chairman) K. Gale (Chairman) G. Connolly S. Miah

C.620 Committee Delegations

RESOLVED: - that the scheme of delegations as laid out in the related report be agreed.

C.621 Schedule of Meetings 2021/22

RESOLVED: - that the schedule of meetings for the Civic Year 2021/22 be noted.

C.622 Appointments to Outside Bodies

RESOLVED: - that

i. the appointments to outside bodies as detailed below be agreed

	Organisation	Councillor Appointment	Duration
a.	Carpet Museum Trustees (1)	B. Hopkins	Full term
b.	CALC (1)	G. Connolly	Full term
C.	Friends of St Mary's Church Committee (1)	K. Gale	Full term
d.	Historical Societies Group (1)	N. Gale	Full term
e.	Community Transport in Wyre Forest	D. Chambers	Full Term
f.	Fairtrade	R. Bishop	Full term
g.	Wyre Forest Local Children's Trust	S. Rook	Full term
h.	Local Plans Review Panel	To be confirmed	Full Term

ii. Councillor R. Bishop be appointed as the Town Council's Dementia Action Champion to lead the Kidderminster Dementia Action Alliance (KDAA)

C.623 Water Feature on the Great Wall, Kidderminster

The Council considered the update report on the Water Feature. After discussion it was **RESOLVED:** - that the

- i. report be noted
- ii. ongoing management and monitoring of the Water Feature be referred to the Services & Events Committee

C.624 Town Hall Development

Council considered the report on the future development of the Town Hall and **RESOLVED:** - that

- i. a bid of £8.7M for the 'Levelling Up Fund' being submitted in June 2021
- ii. a letter of support being included with the bid confirming the Town Council will cover the 10% match funding
- **iii.** £100,000 for 'Town Hall Development Project' be transferred from reserves to the Town Hall Committee budget to show the Town Council's intent to deliver the project
- iv. the Town Hall Manager, in consultation with the Chairman of the Town Hall Committee, be authorised to manage the funds to ensure the contractors are identified for delivery of the building of the project
- the Town Hall Committee take oversight and responsibility for managing the bid and its outcomes
- vi. the Town Hall Manager and the Town Hall Project Consultant, organise a presentation to be given to all Town Councillors on the proposed details of the 'Levelling Up Fund' bid

C.625 Parks Transfer

Council considered the update report on the parks transfer. Councillors expressed their desire to get the parks transferred to the management of the Town Council subject to completing the formal negotiations. After discussion it was

RESOLVED: - that

- i. the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Town Clerk, set up a Member Group to complete the negotiations with WFDC on the transfer of the parks
- ii. delegated authority be given to that Member Group to complete the negotiations within the finances previously agreed by Council
- iii. the Member Group report back to the Town Council meeting in July 2021

At 7.25pm Councillor T Muir left the meeting.

C.626 Finance Report

- a) Budget spend to date
- b) Accounts paid and income received to date

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the budget spend. He stated that balances as at 18th May 2021 were £607,723.04. There was also a £100,000 investment with Wyre Forest District Council.

A question on the local grants budget and the allocation of funds to individual councillors was raised.

The Town Clerk reported that a review of the Town Council's grants policies would be considered at the next Finance & Overview Committee and would be reported back to Council in due course.

After discussion it was

RESOLVED: - that Council

- i. notes the expenditure to date
- ii. approves the accounts paid to date
- iii. notes the income received to date
- iv. notes the current balances

C.627 Mayor Making 23rd June 2021

The Town Clerk reported the Town Council meeting programmed for 23rd June 2021 would be going ahead (subject to COVID restrictions) but the focus of the meeting would be the induction of four new freemen for the Town. Invitations and the agenda for the 'Town Council Freemen Investiture Meeting' would be sent out in due course. Council noted the update from the Town Clerk.

The mee	eting end	ded a	t 7.30	pm
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Mayor

Date

Kidderminster Town Council Wednesday 23rd June 2021

Internal Audit Report 2019/20

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to give Council an overview of the findings of the Internal Audit Report and to seek agreement to refer it to the Finance & Overview Committee for any detailed scrutiny

2. Overview of Findings

The detailed audit report is attached as the appendix to this report

The conclusion of the report states:

"In respect of the internal audit review for the financial year 2020~21 to include a review of key policies alongside the key financial and accounting systems, it can be reported that the financial records continue to be maintained to a high standard and are supported with detailed documentary evidence. On this basis it can be concluded that Kidderminster Town Council had in place adequate and effective internal control and governance arrangements for the financial year 2020~21."

3. Detail

There are 10 aspects that are reviewed by the Internal Auditor. They are summarised below:

	Section	Comment
a)	Review of Accounting Arrangements {Records & Bank	No significant matters
	Reconciliations} {Financial Regulation No5}	
b)	Review of Corporate Governance	No significant matters
c)	Review of Expenditure {Payment Controls} {Financial	No significant matters
	Regulation No 6}	
d)	Assessment and Management of Risk (Financial Regulation	have in place a risk
	No 15}	assessment policy,
		framework and matrix
e)	Review of Budgetary Controls (Financial Regulation No 4)	No specific matters
f)	Review of Income {Financial Regulation No 9}	No significant matters
g)	Review of Petty Cash Imprest {Financial Regulation 6.13}	No significant matters
h)	Review of Salaries {Payroll Controls} {Financial Regulation No	No significant matters
	7}	
i)	Review of Asset Register {Financial Regulation No 12}	No significant matters
j)	Review of Investments {Financial Regulation No 8}	No specific concerns
		raised

4. Risk

There are no strategic risks arising from this report.

5. Financial Implications

There are no strategic financial implications arising from this report.

6. Recommendations

Council is asked to refer the Internal Audit Report to the Finance & Overview Committee for detailed scrutiny.

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Background

Kidderminster Town Council formed on 1st April 2016 and in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 has a statutory responsibility to provide an adequate and effective system of Internal Audit of the accounting records and control systems including its risk management and governance processes.

Introduction

The role of the Internal Auditor is to provide an independent and objective review designed to improve the Council's operations and help the Council to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The outcome of the Internal Audit review is reported to the Town Council as part of the Annual Return to the External Auditors.

Internal Audit Approach

In undertaking this review, the detailed testing undertaken to be able to provide an assurance on the internal control environment has included selective sampling of transactions with detailed checks in some key areas in order to gain sufficient assurance that the Town Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for purpose. The review has followed the best practice as referenced in the National Association of Local Councils {Practitioners Guide} March 2020.

In addition, the audit has reviewed the governance arrangements to ensure that there are polices in place for the Risk Management Process, Treasury Management to include a Borrowing & Investment Strategy with regular review of the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

The audit review for the 2020~21 financial year has also acknowledged the financial processes and procedures in place in respect of the Kidderminster Town Hall following the transfer from Wyre Forest District Council of the management of the whole Town Hall complex from 1st April 2019 to the Town Council. This review considered in detail the arrangements in place in respect of Accounts Receivable {Corporate Debtors} and Income to Bank; Accounts Payable {Corporate Creditors} supported by procurement arrangements in respect of the Kidderminster Town Hall. During 2020~21 the Town Council has continued with the migration of its manual financial records to the Agresso accounting application to amalgamate both the manual financial records with the database held for transactions in respect of the Kidderminster Town Hall and the audit review has acknowledged the work completed to ensure a full reconciliation of all Kidderminster Town Council transactions on the Agresso Financial Management System as part of the amalgamation/migration process.

The COVID-19 pandemic and consequent Government lockdown announced on the 20th March 2020 had an impact on the work of the Kidderminster Town Council for 2020~21 and is acknowledged and referenced in this Internal Audit Report to support the governance arrangements put in place to ensure the Kidderminster Town Council could continue to provide albeit reduced services to the community, but enable Councillors to fulfil their role.

Conclusion

In respect of the internal audit review for the financial year 2020~21 to include a review of key policies alongside the key financial and accounting systems, it can be reported that the financial records continue to be maintained to a high standard and are supported with detailed documentary evidence. On this basis it can be concluded that Kidderminster Town Council had in place adequate and effective internal control and governance arrangements for the financial year 2020~21. With the Civil Emergency Committee in place for the commencement of the 2020~21 financial year, the Town Council clearly ensured a decision making process was in place, to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Review of Accounting Arrangements {Records & Bank Reconciliations} {Financial Regulation No5} **Objective Outcome** To ensure proper accounting records are →There is evidence that the year-end accounts are maintained; year-end accounts are prepared on an income and expenditure basis. prepared on an income and expenditure →The opening balances as detailed in the 2020~21 basis and agree with the cash book. Statement of Accounts were validated. Ensure that a cash book/nominal ledger is → Cash Book entries could be reconciled to the trial balance as at 31st March 2021 maintained to reflect the formally approved → Reviewed the March 2021 Closing Bank Reconciliation to budaet. Ensure that there are regular reconciliations ensure completed in a timely manner and that cash in to the Bank Statements. transit/unpresented cheque payments were appropriate and Confirm that there is an audit trail for evidenced. underlying financial records to the → Bank Reconciliations are completed on a monthly basis accounts, and that where appropriate with evidence held on file. debtors and creditors had been → Close down journals included accrual and prepayment appropriately recorded. calculations with detailed narrative to support the entries in the accounts.

Conclusion:

There were no significant matters arising from this review. The financial records continue to be well managed with the overall financial position detailed within the regular finance reports to the Town Council and the serving Committees.

Points for Action: None

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Review of Corporate Coremanoe	
Objective	Outcome
To ensure that there is a	→The Council's Governance Arrangements were c
corporate governance framework	Town Council mosting of 20th July 2020 to include

To ensure that there is a corporate governance framework in place, ensured that the Council has formally adopted Standing Orders & Financial Regulations; there is a Committee Structure in place; a Responsible Officer is in place with specific duties and that appropriate Corporate policies and procedures are in place.

- → The Council's Governance Arrangements were considered at the Town Council meeting of 29th July 2020 to include the Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Risk Management Strategy and Borrowing & Investment Strategy.
- → Following the Covid-19 global pandemic and subsequent Government lockdown of 23rd March 2020, the March meeting of the Town Council was suspended. The governance polices were rescheduled for the annual formal review by the Town Council in July 2020
- →In addition, the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy, the General Data Protection Regulations and Member Officer Protocol were also reviewed at the July meeting as part of the suite of corporate governance documents.
- → There were no significant changes proposed following the detailed review of 2019, and all were agreed {C.556}
- →In response to the Government lockdown to the global Covid-19 pandemic, which commenced on 23rd March 2020, formal arrangements were instigated by the Town Clerk and a Civil Emergency Committee established to have oversight of the Town Council services, expenditure and manage the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic for both the public and Councillors.
- → The Town Clerk has advised that the Civil Emergency Committee was constituted remotely and met twice in April 2020, once in May 2020 prior to being disbanded as agreed by the Town Council at its meeting of 19th June 2020 {C.546}.
- → A Covid-19 Action Plan for the Town Council's response to the pandemic in accordance with legislation and Government guidance was put in place and considered in detail at each meeting, thus enabling a decision making process to be put into action ensuring compliance with both Central and Local Government requirements.
- → The action plan acknowledged the advice from the National Association of Local Councils to hold meetings or obtain decisions virtually/e-mail as required.

→The Committee delegations included immediate support to the Community; duty of care to staff to include "keep in touch"; log events, decisions, actions taken for any subsequent debriefings; monitor the agreed budget and any amendments in light of the impact of Covid19 and set up a post Covid19 support plan.

As part of reviewing the Corporate Governance Arrangements, a review of the recommendations from the 2019/20 Internal and External Audit Reports were reviewed.

The Internal Audit:

→ The report was presented to the Town Council at its meeting of 29th July 2020. Councillors noted that there were no items of concern raised by the Internal Auditor for 2019~20. The report was referred back to the Finance & Overview Committee for detailed scrutiny. {C.554}

The External Audit:

There were no matters arising from the external audit review and annual return {C.555}

Conclusion: There were no significant matters arising from this review. There is evidence that the suite of corporate policies is kept under review and enhanced to ensure they remain fit for purpose to suit the needs of the Town Council as it continues to develop and grow. The findings of both the Internal and External Auditors are acknowledged and actioned as appropriate. The Town Council complied with the Government guidance in response to the Covid-19 pandemic with the establishment of the Civil Emergency Committee and a Covid-19 Action Plan to ensure a seamless decision making process was in place and able to adapt to circumstances as they changed, and as an independent local government body were able to support Councillors, Officers and the community.

Points for Action:

Governance arrangements will continue to be reviewed as part of future internal audits to ensure they remain fit for purpose. The 2021~22 audit review will acknowledge the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Kidderminster Town Council in respect of service delivery and central government support as restrictions are eased during the first quarter of the 2021~22 financial year, and allow for the Town Council to recommence delivering those services severely impacted by the closure of the Town Hall in particular.

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

	14" June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Oπicer				
Review of Expenditure {Payr	nent Controls} {Financial Regulation No 6}				
Objective	Outcome				
To ensure that payments are supported by appropriate documentation, evidence of authorisation.	→For 2020~21 the system comprised manual and electronic records, all payments are evidenced by an invoice/receipt and this is supported by the Creditor {Accounts Payable} payments in respect of the Kidderminster Town Hall following transfer to the Town Council from 1 st April 2019. →Following the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020, in accordance with Government Guidance to support the Town Clerk, the WFDC Accountant was migrated to homeworking and the continuation of service delivery to the Town Clerk has been seamless throughout 2020~21 →The Town Clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer {RFO} confirmed that all payments are authorised/approved by himself prior to passing for				
Expenditure has been recorded against approved budgets and minuted.	payment. →The Wyre Forest District Council Accountant is authorised for on-line banking, and payments via the Banks Automated Clearing System {BACS} and/or the internet. →For 2020~21 the process of electronic banking with payments were made via electronic banking methods {BACS} subject to expenditure having been agreed by Council or the appropriate Committee. →Payments are minuted, with regular finance reports to the Town Council to ensure that the whole Council has oversight of the financial position. →Expenditure is clearly referenced against the approved budgets and reported back to the respective Service Committee's on a regular basis to include actual expenditure against approved budget.				
VAT has been recorded and recovered periodically.	 →VAT on payments had been identified and recorded correctly in the financial records. →Quarterly claims had been submitted. 				

As appropriate, services have been competitively procured.

Following the transfer of the Kidderminster Town Hall complex detailed reviews were undertaken to ensure: -

- → there is a system in place for the raising and authorising of purchase orders for the procurement of goods and services within the Financial Agresso Management System.
- → that goods and services procured by corporate debit {procurement} card are approved by the Town Clerk, accurately recorded in the financial records and formally reported to the Town Council.

 $\{01.03.20\text{-}31.05.20\}$ $\{01.06.20\text{-}31.08.20\}$ $\{01.09.20\text{-}30.11.20\}$ & $\{01.12.20\text{-}28.02.21\}$

- → The Kidderminster {Reorganisation of Community Governance} Order 2015 provided for the acquisition of various assets and the provision of certain support services by the Town Council.
- → From April 2016, the Town Council had Service Level Agreements with WFDC for the provision of services to support assets transferred along with a formal agreement for additional services that do not form part of the services transferred at the commencement of the Town Council.
- → These arrangements continued in 2020~21 with new Service Level Agreements {SLA} formally signed off at the Town Council Meeting of 11th September 2019. The arrangement currently provides for support services to include Finance, Legal, ICT and Facilities Management and for operational services to include St Mary's Churchyard, Market Street Toilets, Floral Displays, Allotments, Street Furniture and Museum Collection.
- → These transactions form a major part of the expenditure incurred by the Town Council for the financial year 2020~21.
- → The payments under the Service Level Agreements were reconciled in full for the financial year 2020~21
- →The Town Clerk has advised that in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, remote meetings were put in place to enable the decision making process to continue, however, the Town Council, because of its size, and not having a corporate IT system buying in support from WFDC found this caused an issue specifically in that Councillors used their own email for correspondence. As a consequence, notice has now been served on WFDC to end the current SLA for ICT in April 2022. The Town Council will be independently reviewing its future ICT needs and be reporting back to Committee later in this calendar year with a new ICT specification for a full procurement exercise.
- → From a sample of invoices selected purchase orders had been raised however, on occasion it was noted that the purchase order had been raised after the goods and/or services had been received.
- → The workflow for each invoice was evidenced within the Agresso Financial Management System with all purchase orders having been approved by a nominated approver.
- →All purchase orders had been goods receipted before payment.
- → The audit review confirmed that new supplier accounts as created within the Agresso Financial Management System are independently validated to ensure all details are correct prior to the payment of invoices.
- → Debit cards are held by the Town Clerk, Town Hall Manager and Deputy Town Hall Manager, although goods/services are procured by other employees of the Town Council as/when required.
- → From the sample of transactions reviewed, a valid receipt was sighted for all, and where a receipt had not been available, copy documentation was provided by the Town Clerk.
- → Detailed narrative had been provided on the Agresso Financial Management System to support the purchase.
- → Transactions are clearly referenced in the Finance Reports received by the Town Council.

The Town Clerk advised that whilst there were no large procurement items for 2020~21, the Town Council has agreed to move the Town Hall into a Trust for the future and is currently in the process of applying for £7.8m from the Central Government Levelling Up Fund. The preliminary work has been set in motion during 2020~21, and will continue into

2021~22.

The Town Council currently bank with Barclays PLC, there is continued oversight of the costs of the service delivery, the Town Clerk advised that there is no significant competition in the market place. Barclays PLC continue to offer an excellent and efficient service to the Town Council, and in particular, good support over fraudulent activity. Therefore, at its meeting in July 2021, the Finance & Overview Committee will recommend that the Town Council remain with Barclays for another 3 years.

<u>Conclusion:</u> There were no significant matters arising from this review. Major items of expenditure are subject to the formal agreements being in place with evidence of Town Council approval as minuted.

- → The audit review acknowledges, that the Town Council agreed and entered into negotions with the District Council to take on the running of the whole Town Hall Complex from 1st April 2019, to include a four year grant from the District Council.
- →The service level agreements with WFDC which have formed part of previous internal audit reviews have been subject to review and change. These new arrangements from 1st April 2019 have been acknowledged as part of this internal audit review for 2020~21, taking into account the proposed changes for the delivery of ICT to the Town Council from April 2022.

Points for Action:

- → As opportunities for growth of Kidderminster Town Council arise requiring processes and procedures to be reviewed by the Town Council/Town Clerk, the changes and the effects will be considered as part of future internal audits to ensure the Council can deliver its vision and priorities.
- → With the amalgamation of both the manual financial records with the database held for transactions in respect of the Kidderminster Town Hall as transferred to the Town Council, this has assisted with the raising of purchase orders for the procurement of goods and services, however, it is noted that where purchases are via the debit cards, purchase orders are not raised prior to purchase allowing for commitment accounting against approved budgets.
 - ➤ As previously recommended following the 2019~20 internal audit review, consideration is giving to raising a purchase order for all goods/services procured as best practice, and ensuring a seamless workflow through to payments to suppliers and supporting commitment accounting and budget monitoring. Purchases with debit cards should be emergency payments as far as is practical.
- →When tendering for any future corporate ICT system, the Town Council consider the requirements for the transfer/migration of data between the old and new systems; the process should be seamless with dedicated end user testing to ensure any new corporate ICT system fully meets the needs of the Town Council in terms of financial records and telephony where currently have access via WFDC. The technical complexities of separation from the current Council ICT infrastructure should also be carefully considered together with the associated risk. Cyber security should be carefully specified as part of the tender process for an alternative supplier as the Town Council would cease to benefit from the District Council's well-developed security processes and systems. Consideration should also be given to the delivery on remote meetings and alternative methods of communication as the Town Council moves to more on-line methods of service delivery.
- →With the aim to move the Town Hall into a Trust, it should be acknowledged that this will be considered in more detail as part of the 2021~22 Internal Audit review.

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Assessment and Management of Risk (Financial Regulation No 15)

To ensure that the Town Council has assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and that it has in place arrangements to identify potential risks financial and non-financial to include review and minutes of any unusual financial activity.

Objective

- → The Council's governance arrangements do include the Risk Management Policy, Framework and Matrix. It is noted that the Risk Management Policy Matrix and Framework were reviewed by the Town
- Management Policy Matrix and Framework were reviewed by the Town Council at its meeting of 29th July 2020 as one of a suite of Governance Reports.

 → It is acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent

Outcome

→It is acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns/tier restrictions throughout 2020~21 presented new risks for the Town Council. The Council's priorities changed under such restrictions. The action plan approved by the Civil Emergency Committee acknowledged the risks associated with any proposals for service delivery for the financial year 2020~21 and was considered in depth at its meetings held in April and May 2020 to ensure plans were

in place to manage and follow the directives from Government.

- → Regular finance reports are presented to the Town Council to update the Council on the budget performance and the plans for future spending ensuring they are fully informed of any financial implications.
- → The insurance policy schedule was sighted as part of the Internal Audit review.

To ensure that insurance cover is appropriate and adequate.

Conclusion: The overall conclusion is that the Council have in place a risk assessment policy, framework and matrix to acknowledge the current and future risks faced by the Town Council and these corporate documents are kept under review. The approval of the Civil Emergency Committee in response to the Covid-19 pandemic at the end of March 2020 is evidence that the Town Council were able to and did respond promptly and appropriately in re assessing all risks associated with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, to ensure oversight of service delivery and expenditure.

The review ensured the Town Council as an independent local government body were able to support Councillors, Officers and the community in line with the action plan approved by the Civil Emergencies Committee.

<u>Points for Action:</u> Risk Management will be reviewed as a standing item as part of future internal audits. In particular, the 2020~21 review acknowledges the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Kidderminster Town Council in respect of service delivery and central government support and this will continue as part of the 2021~21 review as Central Government ease lockdown/tier restrictions and the Town Council is in a position to continue with delivering services to the local community.

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Review of Budgetary Controls (Financial Regulation No 4) Objective Outcome To ensure that the Town Council → Draft budget for the financial year of the Town Council 2020~21 has procedures in place to identify was formally approved at its meeting of 29th January 2020 to include the precept for 2020~21 and the potential future of Town Council future financial requirements and/or commitments; supported service provision, with a precept @ £640,988 →Estimated Budget for 2020~21 approved by an approved budget and formal determination of the required precept. To ensure that there is budgetary → Regular finance reports are presented to the Town Council to control and monitoring of update the Council on the budget performance and the plans for performance with explanations for future spending ensuring they are fully informed of any financial any variances, that Members implications. receive regular financial reports → There is evidence of detailed budget monitoring. Detailed budget and the budget is matched to the overviews by Committee of actual spend against the approved budget to include variances was reported in detail to the Town vear-end out-turn. Council at its meetings → A detailed financial performance overview of actual spend to date is considered by its respective committee for discussion and noting.

Conclusion: There were no specific matters arising.

As a going concern, the Town Council approve a precept to ensure it meets its commitments in service delivery. The overall conclusion is that there is evidence of detailed budget monitoring by the Town Council as a whole at its meetings and this is supported by scrutiny of their respective budgets and actual spend at each sub-committee meeting, with the discussions formally minuted.

Following the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020, in accordance with Government Guidance to support the Town Clerk, the WFDC Accountant was migrated to homeworking and the continuation of service delivery to the Town Clerk has been seamless throughout 2020~21.

Points for Action:

None

Town Clerk Comments:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Review of Income {Financial Regulation No 9} Objective Outcome In considering the Town Council's →For 2020~21 the Town Council had sources of income other than income streams ensure that the precept. Other sources of income were in respect of systems are in place to enable ~Grant support from WFDC to support the taking on and running of identification of all income due, the whole Town Hall Complex, for which quarterly payments were that the income is recorded sighted as part of this review; correctly and promptly banked. ~Grant support in the form of Covid-19 Business Support Grants as part of the Central Government funding to support those businesses severely impacted financially or forced to close under lockdown/tier restrictions during 2020~21; ~Grant support from the Arts Council, including a Cultural Recovery Grant: ~Some income to include, third party hirers and room bookings in line with approved fees and charges; ~Grant funding from the HMRC Job Retention Scheme to support furloughed employees. →Additional income had been received in respect of VAT and bank interest on investments and the working balance held in the Business Premium Bank Account. Following the transfer of the → From the sample of 10 invoices selected to cover room hire and Kidderminster Town Hall to the events at the Town Hall during those periods when the town hall Town Council: could open in 2020~21, all had been raised correctly subject to → the system in place for the commercial judgement. Confirmation of each booking had been raising of Debtor Accounts {Sales sighted with evidence of customer agreement to the charges applied. Orders for Accounts Receivable} →Where payment had been received the monies had been allocated was reviewed, to ensure that correctly within the financial records. accounts were raised correctly → Recovery action for any outstanding invoices is undertaken by the and in a timely manner, payments Town Hall Support Officer (NB: Reminder notices for any unpaid were banked and recorded debtor accounts are system generated from Agresso, collated by the WFDC Debt Recovery Officer prior to forwarding to the Town Hall accurately within the financial records and that effective Support Officer). Of the sample reviewed it was found that payment procedures were in place to for one invoice had been delayed by several weeks, reminder notices had been raised and issued and the arrears effectively pursued once pursue recovery of outstanding the business was able to open in line with government guidance. monies. → The WFDC Accountant confirmed that any outstanding invoices as at 31st March 20201 are evidenced in the Debtors entry on the Balance sheet. → the system in place for the → Following the transfer of the Town Hall complex to the Town receiving and receipting of income Council, for ease of recording and reconciling the daily income by WFDC via their ICON cash balances, income {cash/cheques/card transactions} would continue receipting application on behalf of to be processed through the WFDC Cash Receipting {ICON} the Town Council via was application directly into the WFDC Bank Account, and the monies reviewed to ensure that monies reconciled and transferred to the Town Council Bank Account. →Income banked was reviewed for the months of June/July 2020 were promptly transferred to the bank account of Kidderminster and March 2021 to ensure that there was supporting documentation

the closure of the banks at that time.

→ All income could be reconciled, although following the first national lockdown of March 2020, there was a delay in banking some cash received owing to the furlough of employees at the Town Council and

→In respect of card transactions these are processed through the PDQ terminal prior to uploading on to the ICON application by the

for each transaction.

Town Council, and income

detailed correctly within Agresso.

Town Hall Support Officer for reconciliation to the WFDC bank account prior to being transferred to the Town Council. On occasion, the information would not always be uploaded onto ICON on the date of receipt and/or several days may be uploaded together. It was possible to reconcile all income and ensure all had been recorded correctly in the Agresso Financial Management System for the Town Council financial records.

Ensure that the precept due to the Town Council agrees to the formal Committee approval.

- → The precept for 2020~21 had been reported to Kidderminster Town Council Committee 29th January 2020 for the formal budget approval.
- → Precept agreed @ £640,988. Paid in 2 instalments, April and September 2020 @ £320,494 and were sighted on the bank statements.

Conclusion: There are no significant matters arising from this review.

All income had been correctly recorded within the financial records to include the cash book and final accounts. There is evidence of a system in place for the raising of sales orders {Accounts Receivable} for events at the Kidderminster Town Hall with payments recorded for income promptly banked and any outstanding unpaid invoices actively pursued. It should be noted that the national lockdown from March 2020 did delay the pursuit of debts outstanding from the financial year 2019~20.

The embedding of the new process for reconciling the cash/cheque/card transaction income received has continued to cause issues in terms of the delay in posting income onto the ICON cash receipting application with the Wyre Forest Accountant having to support the Town Hall team to enable a detailed upload to the Agresso Management System, and full reconciliation to the Town Council's bank account.

Points for Action:

With the amalgamation of both the manual financial records with the database held for transactions in respect of the Kidderminster Town Hall as transferred to the Town Council, this has assisted with the raising of Debtor Accounts coupled with the functionality for pursuing any outstanding accounts.

- →However, with the knowledge that there are accounts over six months old that remain unpaid, the debt recovery procedures be reviewed and enhanced to ensure that once a reminder is system generated and issued, arrears are followed up promptly to maximise on income due to the Town Council.
- →In respect of the posting of card transactions receipted through the PDQ terminal, the procedure be reviewed to ensure all transactions are posted onto the ICON Cash Receipting application daily for ease of reconciliation and transfer of funds from WFDC to the Town Council.

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Review of Petty Cash Imprest (Financial Regulation 6.13)

To ensure that appropriate controls are in place for the recording of petty cash spend; that all expenditure incurred is supported by either a business invoice or till receipt, that the expenditure is appropriate, that VAT has been identified separately for periodic recovery, and that the cheque encashment from the main cash book is recorded correctly. To ensure that petty cash expenditure is reported to each

Objective

Outcome

- → Examination of the financial records indicate that expenditure in this area is small and used for minor/emergency purchases covering stationery items, refreshments for events, and postage.
- → The Town Clerk confirmed that the petty cash imprest is managed by the Office Manager.
- → Councillors are advised of petty cash spend, via the finance reports to the Finance & Overview Committee.
- → The general use of the petty cash imprest was very much reduced, used mainly to cover several small items of sundry expenditure for example stationery items, postage, refreshments for events and car valeting as appropriate and classified as general office expenditure within the cash book, amounts are considered to be not material to affect the detailed spend for the Kidderminster Town Council.
- →For the financial year 2020~21 it was noted that due to the infrequent use of the imprest account, it was only necessary to seek full reimbursement of the petty imprest account on one occasion.

Conclusion: There are no significant matters arising from this review.

Points for Action:

Council meeting.

In view of the general use of the petty cash imprest being very much reduced further during 2020~21, the Town Clerk maintains a watching brief with consideration being given to reducing the petty cash imprest

Review of Petty Cash Imprest (Financial Regulation 6.13)		
Objective	Outcome	
from £500 to £300.		
Town Clerk Response:		
14 th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsibl	e Financial Officer	

Review of Salaries {Payroll Controls} {Financial Regulation No 7} **Objective** Outcome To ensure that employees of the → Payroll Services are provided by WFDC as part of the external arrangements with Redditch BC and Bromsgrove DC. Town Council have contracts of payments for Kidderminster Town Council fall under the Service employment; and that salaries are paid as approved by the Council. Provision to External Bodies as defined by the Service Level To ensure that deductions for Agreement {SLA} between WFDC and RBC/BDC to provide a full National Insurance, Income Tax payroll service including the calculation of Employers Pension and and Local Government Pension NI for submission to Worcestershire County Council and the HMRC {LGPS} are correctly recorded, and as part of the Real Time Processing respectively. paid over to HMRC and → Salary payments are transmitted by WFDC via the Banks Automated Clearing Service {BACS} and at month end to Worcestershire County Council on Worcestershire County Council for pension contributions from both a timely basis. employee and employer and to the HMRC for NI and Tax to support the Real Time Information provided at the time of salary payments. →The Town Clerk confirmed that all staff have contracts of employment as prepared in association with County Association of Local Councils (CALC). → Salary payments were validated in detail {gross to net} as part of the Internal Audit Review to cover the September 2020 monthly payroll runs for a sample of Kidderminster Town Council employees. → As part of the review staff record forms were sighted; salary increments, and pension contributions validated. → During 2020~21 as part of the financial support available from Central Government to assist businesses during the pandemic, funding was granted as part of the HMRC Job Retention Scheme to support the Town Council with those employees placed on furlough during the national lockdowns. → The Town Clerk advised that the Staffing Committee at its September 2020 meeting, oversaw a major staffing review following the running of the Town Hall for a year and the need to realign services as the Town Council developed. Taking into consideration the impact of Covid-19 which had highlighted a need for all services to be reviewed, and the outcome of the Heritage Lottery work which had shown a need to develop the service, 3 staff posts were identified as being redundant during the financial year 2020~21. The changes to the staff structure were implemented from 1st October 2020. Where there were pension implications for the redundant post(s), the Staffing Committee when approving the restructure, agreed that these costs would be met in full by the

<u>Conclusion:</u> There are no significant matters arising from the review of payroll controls. The staffing review had however identified additional costs to be considered when making redundancies whereby the post holder would be entitled to full pension. It was noted that any future transfer negotiations of staff would include a full pension risk analysis to inform the full costs to the Town Council.

Town Council from savings within the service {S.108}

Points for Action: None

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Review of Asset Register (Financial Regulation No 12)			
Objective Outcome			
All Councils are required to	→ Following the formal creation of Kidderminster Town Council on		

Review of Asset Register (Financial Regulation No 12)		
Objective	Outcome	
	1st April 2016 certain land, property, rights and liabilities were transferred from WFDC to the Kidderminster Town Council. → The Town Clerk confirmed that there were no additional assets or acquired or disposals by the Town Council during the financial year 2020~21, although the Town Council has taken on responsibility for the management of the Water Feature on the Great Wall in Kidderminster {NB: The Great Wall remains the property of Worcestershire County Council}. → For completeness, the insurance policy schedule to 31st March 2021 was sighted and noted the increase sums insured for assets to include the management of the whole Kidderminster Town Hall complex {Town Hall Building and Contents}. → The insurance policy schedule also included cover for the Horsefair Clock due for installation in 2019~20 but rolled over into the 2020~21 financial year as noted previously. → In addition, the Town Clerk has advised that the Town Council have agreed in principle to take on four parks from the District Council as part of the Localism agenda as agreed at its meeting on 3 rd February 2021 and will be formally transferred during 2021~22.	

Conclusion: There are no significant matters arising from this review.

It is noted that the current long-term agreement with the Councils Insurers ceased on 31st March 2021. However, the Town Clerk has confirmed that the Town Council have secured an extension with the Councils insurers through the contract procured by Wychavon on behalf of the Worcestershire District Councils when the Town Hall was transferred to the Town Council, thus maximising benefits and keeping costs down. The new contract runs until 31st June 2024.

Points for Action: The Town Clerk ensures that the insurance arrangements for the Town Council are regularly reviewed and any future new long-term arrangements provide value for money for the Town Council. The transfer of the four parks from the District Council will be reviewed as part of the 2021~22 internal audit review.

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Review of Investments (Financial Regulation No 8)		
Objective	Outcome	
To ensure that the Town Council is managing reserves, reviewed the arrangements for investing surplus funds, to ensure that they are in accordance with an approved Treasury Management Policy.	 →There is a Borrowing & Investment Strategy in place adopted by the Town Council at the meeting of the Finance & Overview Committee in December 2017; agreed at its meeting in May 2018 and endorsed 10th April 2019. {C.471} Reviewed July 2020 as part of the complete governance review {C.556} →A review of the investment agreements was undertaken, and investment income reconciled accordingly. →For the financial year 2020~21 the Town Council had £100,000 invested with WFDC for a term of 12 months from 7th May 2020 to 9th May 2021. This comprised an initial investment of £30,000 transferred from the Kidderminster Charter Trustees, and the £70,000 surplus identified at the year-end for 2016~17. 	

Conclusion: it is acknowledged that alternative investment options for the Town Council have been but to mitigate any risk and in view of current low interest rates coupled with the Covid~19 pandemic, the Town Council continue to keep the £100,000 invested with WFDC.

Points for Action/Noting:

- → As the Town Council continues to grow and potential future alternative investment opportunities are identified, these will continue to form part of future Internal Audit Reviews.
- → The Borrowing & Investment strategy continue to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Town Clerk Response:

14th June 2021 ~ Report to Responsible Financial Officer

Consultees:

Tracey Southall, CPFA, MAAT Corporate Director: Resources, S151 Officer Wyre Forest District Council

Diana Evans, CPFA Accountant, Wyre Forest District Council

Tony Beirne, Town Clerk Kidderminster Town Council

Report Prepared By: Cheryl Ellerton, MAAT, Audit Manager, Wyre Forest District Council **Date: 14th June 2021**

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Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 Part 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - · are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21

- 1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 must complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
- 2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
 - The Annual Internal Audit Report must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - Sections 1 and 2 must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - Section 3 is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
- 3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2021.**
- 4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2021.** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2021
 - · an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability Section1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2021 authorities must publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2020/21, approved and signed, page 4
- Section 2 Accounting Statements 2020/21, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2021 authorities must publish:

- · Notice of conclusion of audit
- Section 3 External Auditor Report and Certificate
- · Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority should receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2021.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers
 all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank
 reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting
 statements (Section 2, page 5). An explanation must be provided of any difference between Box 7 and
 Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on page 5. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2020) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2021).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, must set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which must include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority must publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor before 1 July 2021.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	1	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	1	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	1	
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?	1	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2021 been reconciled to Box 8?	1	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	1	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB : do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	1	

^{*}Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

Kidderminster Town Council

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2021, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2020/21 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	V		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	1		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	1		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	1		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	1		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	1		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	1		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	1		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	1		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	1		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, it publishes information on a website/ webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.		1	
M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	1		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	1		

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	1		

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

14/06/2021

Cheryl Ellerton

INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

14/06/2021

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

Kidderminster Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, that:

Agreed					
	Yes	No*	'Yes' mea	ans that this authority:	
We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	1		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.		
We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	1		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.		
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.		
We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	1		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.		
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	1		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.		
We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	1		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.		
We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	1		responde external	ed to matters brought to its attention by internal and audit.	
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	1		disclosed everything it should have about its business activit during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.		
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent	Yes	No	N/A	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.	
examination or audit.					

^{*}Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:	Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:		
and recorded as minute reference:	Chairman		
MINUTE REFERENCE	Clerk	SIGNATURE REQUIRED	

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Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

Kidderminster Town Council

	Year e	nding	Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £ (Restated)	31 March 2021 £	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.
Balances brought forward	315,282	359,899	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	620,676	640,988	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	323,611	329,385	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	345,039	372,054	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	554,631	476,649	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash- book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	359,899	481,569	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	317,479	429,536	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	348,889	348,889	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) re Trust funds (including ch		Yes No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		1	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Taylero

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DDMMAA

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 - External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of

Kidderminster Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a limited assurance review is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is not a full statutory audit, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has

	trol. The authority prepares an Anroes which:		
summarises the accounting of confirms and provides assura	records for the year ended 31 Marc nce on those matters that are releva	ch 2021; and int to our duties and respon	sibilities as external auditors.
2 External auditor's lin	mited assurance opinion	2020/21	
our opinion the information in Sections	y)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 s 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Ac ention giving cause for concern that relevan	countability Return is in accorda	ance with Proper Practices and
(continue on a separate sheet if requi	red)		
Other matters not affecting our opinion	n which we draw to the attention of the auth	nority:	
(continue on a separate sheet if requi	red)		
3 External auditor cer	tificate 2020/21		
We certify/do not certify* that we Accountability Return, and discounted the year ended 31 March 2021	ve have completed our review of Scharged our responsibilities under t	ections 1 and 2 of the Anr the Local Audit and Accou	nual Governance and ntability Act 2014, for
*We do not certify completion because	9ť.		
External Auditor Name			
	ENTER NAME OF EXTER	RNAL AUDITOR	
External Auditor Signature		Date	



PRE-AUDIT

FINAL ACCOUNTS

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED

31ST MARCH 2021

Income and Expenditure Account for the Period Ended 31st March 2021

1st Apr 19 to 31st Mar 20			1st Apr 20 to 31st Mar 21
(Restated) £			£
_	INCOME		_
620,676.00	Precept		640,988.00
1,354.45	Interest		817.11
25,000.00	Rent and Registrars Income		0
0.00	Cultural Recovery Fund Income		3,104.35
5,506.50	Miscellaneous		10,503.67
44,730.00	National Heritage Grant		4,763.00
125,340.00	WFDC Grant		74,220.00
121,680.33	Town Hall Income		19,342.37
0.00	Other Grants		216,634.09
944,287.28			970,372.59
	EXPENDITURE		
	General Administration		
330,933.39	Staff Costs		361,520.59
14,105.38	Mayoral Allowances	Note 6	10,532.95
14,070.96	General Office	Note o	18,269.38
6,099.56	Parishing / Town Council Costs		5,755.30
365,209.29	ransining / rown council costs		396,078.22
303,203.23	Running Costs		330,070.22
22,568.37	Insurance		23,405.40
5,332.33	Mayor's Car		4,113.12
18,035.71	Civic Events		3,579.00
0.00	Elections		733.43
155,832.90	WFDC Services / Grants		140,675.00
21,050.00	Christmas Lights		21,050.00
23,806.04	Civic Assets		16,331.78
9,850.00	Grants		35,400.00
11,618.96	Miscellaneous		0.00
59,225.68	Town Hall Redevelopment		36,798.34
207,141.10	Kidderminster Town Hall Expenditure		136,941.43
0.00	Cultural Recovery Fund		33,596.74
534,461.09			452,624.24
899,670.38			848,702.46
44,616.90	Surplus / (Deficit) on Period		121,670.13
		•	
315,282.19	FUND BALANCE	b/f	359,899.09
44,616.90	SURPLUS FOR YEAR		121,670.13
359,899.09	BALANCE	c/f	481,569.22

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2021

1st Apr 19			
to			1st Apr 20
31st March 20			to
(Restated)			31st March 21
£			£
	<u>Current Assets</u>		
51,604.40	Debtors	Note 1	37,187.61
27,843.00	Prepayments	Note 2	62,572.04
100,000.00	Investments	Note 3	100,000.00
216,979.02	Cash - Current Account		329,036.27
500.00	Cash - Petty Cash		500.00
396,926.42			529,295.92
	Less		
	Current Liabilities		
(37,027.33)	Creditors	Note 4	(47,726.70)
359,899.09	Net Assets		481,569.22
	Represented by:		
359,899.09	Fund Balance	Note 5	481,569.22
359,899.09			481,569.22

Notes to the Accounts

		1st April 19 to	1st April 20 to
			31st March 21
		£	£
Note 1	<u>Debtors</u>		
	VAT to be reclaimed	28,112.59	6,320.78
	Income for Lengthsman Scheme	5,167.50	7,670.75
,	Town Hall Income	18,324.31	22,375.28
	Grant Income	0.00	820.80
		51,604.40	37,187.61
Note 2	Prepayments Prepayments		
	ICT Strategy Contribution	25,200.00	16,800.00
	Town Hall Expenditure	2,643.00	23,402.24
	Insurance	0.00	22,369.80
		27,843.00	62,572.04
Note 3	<u>Investments</u>		
	Investments with Wyre Forest District Council	100,000.00	100,000.00
Note 4	<u>Creditors</u>		
	Mayoral Allowances - Tax / NI	(4,122.36)	(4,122.36)
	Electricity & Water - Public Conveniences and Clock Tower	(552.80)	(167.58)
	General Office Expenses	(605.08)	(2,332.60)
	Civic Events	(114.48)	(250.00)
	Town Hall Redevelopment	(6,680.00)	(9,030.70)
	Lenghtsman Scheme	(348.75)	(325.50)
	Kidderminster Town Hall Expenditure	(18,514.70)	(22,541.36)
	Grants	(500.00)	0
	Mayors Car	(81.00)	0
	Cultural Recovery Fund	0	(3,936.92)
•	Town Hall Income	(5,508.16)	(5,019.68)
		(37,027.33)	(47,726.70)
Note 5	Fund Balance		
	Balance 1st April	315,282.19	359,899.09
	Surplus for Year	44,616.90	121,670.13
	Balance 31st March	359,899.09	481,569.22

Note 6 Mayoral Allowances

Mayoral Allowances is made up as follows:

	1st April 19 to 31st March 20	1st April 20 to 31st March 21
	£	£
Town Mayor	9,372.14	7,732.15
Deputy Town Mayor	3,421.24	2,260.00
Tax / NI	1,312.00	540.80
	14,105.38	10,532.95

Note 7 **Trust Funds**

Kidderminster Town Council acts as Corporate Trustee for Kidderminster Educational Foundation. Responsibility for the role of Trustee transferred to Kidderminster Town Council on 1st April 2016 from Wyre Forest District Council. Kidderminster Educational Foundation is a registered charity, whose main activity is as grant-maker to individuals, and also to assist other organisations in activities which comply with the governing objectives of the Foundation. The fund is invested in the money market with Wyre Forest District Council but not included within Kidderminster Town Councils balance sheet. The capital balance invested during the year was £271,209 whilst the revenue balance was £4,603 as 31st March 2021.

	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Liabilities
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Kidderminster Educational	0	0	276	0
Foundation				

Note 8 Capital Accounting

The Council is not required to comply with capital accounting requirements. However assets have been identified and valued; listed below. This includes a number of assets including Kidderminster Town Hall that have been transferred with effect from 1st April 2016 to the Council from Wyre Forest District Council as part of the October 2015 Reorganisation Order. In accordance with Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, March 2018, these have been included with a nominal one pound (£1) value. All other assets are shown at their insurance valuation.

SCHEDULE OF ASSETS

	1st April 19	1st April 20
	to	to
	31st March 20	31st March 21
	£	£
Regalia and Plates	175,935	175,935
King Charles Room, Council Chamber and Stairs - Paintings, Mayoral		
Boards, Photographs etc	100,700	100,700
Mayor's Parlour - Furniture, Pictures, Clock etc	24,090	24,090
Store Room - Robes, Uniforms, Deeds & Documents etc	43,640	43,640
Office - Furniture & Office Equipment etc	4,500	4,500
Kidderminster Town Hall	1	1
Public Conveniences, Market Street	1	1
Land Adjacent to St Mary's Church (excluding Car Park)	1	1
Angel of Peace Statue	1	1
War Memorial, St Mary's	1	1
Baxter Statue	1	1
Clock at Worcester Street*	1	1
Horse Statue, Horsefair*	1	1
Rowland Hill Statue*	1	1
Allotments	8	8
Bus Shelters	6	6
Miscellaneous Assets (including baskets for floral displays, benches,		
finger posts and boundary signs)	1	1
	348,889	348,889

^{*} excluding land

Kidderminster Town Council Wednesday 23rd June 2021

Membership of Outside Bodies

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to agree the appointment of two Town Council representatives to the Local Plans Review Panel.

The nominations received are detailed below:

2. Outside Bodies

	Organisation	Councillor Nominations	Duration
1)	Local Plans Review Panel (2)	T. Muir	Full term
		S. Miah	

3. Recommendation

Town Council are asked to agree two appointments to the Local Plans Review Panel.