

Kidderminster Town Council
MINUTES of the virtual meeting held on Wednesday 3rd February 2021 at 6.05pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor S. Rook)
 Councillors J. Aston, J. Baker, R. Bishop, S. Chambers, H. Dyke, K. Gale, N. Gale,
 L. Hyde, M. Kelly, N. Knowles, F. Oborski MBE, M. Rayner, D. Ross, J. Smith,
 M. Stooke and P. Young

C.589 Apology
 Councillor M. Cheeseman

C.590 Minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2021
RESOLVED: - that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

C.591 Mayor’s Engagements – Christmas Review
 The Mayor referred to the various virtual events that had been delivered over Christmas

- i. Christmas Lights Switch On video**
 The video had featured Santa, the Town Crier and the Mayor. It had been viewed over 20,000 times and had over 100 shares.
- ii. Christmas Lights Switch On ‘Bloopers’ video**
 The Town Hall team also produced a bloopers video as part of the project and the reaction to this video was quite amazing. A few people enjoying this as much as the official video
- iii. Kidderminster Christmas Story**
 The Mayor also said that on Christmas Eve the team delivered a video story tailored to Kidderminster, it featured familiar faces from around Kidderminster. The production had also proved very popular, especially with younger viewers. The video had over 7,000 views
- iv. Elf Trail**
 Finally, The Mayor referred to the Elf Trail, organised by the BID Manager and Town Hall team. It was set up to encourage people to visit local stores in the town over Christmas. She said was pleased to select the winners of who found all the elves hiding around the town.

RESOLVED: - that the report of the Mayor’s Engagements be noted

C.592 Declarations of Interests by Members

	Councillor	Declaration	Minute	Reason
1.	H. Dyke	ODI	C.593	Councillor Dyke was the WFDC portfolio holder for the services affected by the Localism discussion.

C.593 Public participation
 None.

C.594 Water Feature on the Great Wall, Kidderminster
 Councillors considered the proposal to reinstate the Water Feature on the Great Wall in the town, specifically as a memorial to the way the town had reacted to and dealt with the Covid19 pandemic.
 After discussion it was
RESOLVED: - that, the Town Council agree in principle, subject to the Events & Services Committee carrying out a full risk assessment on the project, to:

- i. contribute £2,500 to help complete the restoration of the Water Feature**

- ii. take on the running and maintenance of the water feature once reinstated, the costs to be met within the ongoing maintenance budget

C.595 Localism – Kidderminster Parks

Councillors discussed the Town Council taking on 4 of the parks currently run by Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC). Specifically, the transfer of

- a) Brinton Park
- b) St George's Park
- c) White Wickets Park and
- d) Springfield Park

The financial implication was a £16.50 increase in the precept managed over 4 years. After discussion it was

RESOLVED: - that, the Town Council agree to:

- i. the transfer, of the 4 parks
 - a) Brinton Park
 - b) St George's Park
 - c) White Wickets Park and
 - d) Springfield Park
- ii. the ownership and management of the parks transfer being finalised and delivered during the 2021/22 financial year.
- iii. the Staffing Committee be delegated authority to agree the staffing and legal hiring issues related to the transfer
- iv. an increase of £5.50 (Band D equivalent) in the Council Tax for 2021/22 to yield a precept of £734,442.50 (to specifically finance the running of the 4 parks)
- v. note that, over the coming years, there will need to be further increases in the precept to manage the parks
- vi. to continue the appointment of 3 Councillors (D. Ross, N. Knowles and M. Rayner) to support the Town Clerk in completing the details of the transfer

Councillor Dyke had declared an interest and took no part in the voting.

Councillors Aston, Hyde and Kelly wished to be recorded as having voted against the resolution.

Councillor Knowles wished to be recorded as abstaining.

C.596 Finance Report

- a) **Budget spend to date**
- b) **Accounts paid and income received to date**
- c) **Horsefair Clock**

The Town Clerk stated that officers continued to monitor budget expenditure and were working to minimise spend and maximise income opportunities including potential grants.

The Town Clerk went through the expenditure list. He stated that balances as at 26th January 2021 were £605,292.61

Councillor Oborski MBE raised the issue of potential damage to the Horsefair Clock. The Town Clerk said investigations were in progress and this would be reported to the Events and Services Committee for review.

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.597 The Precept 2021/22

The Town Clerk updated Council on the proposed budget options for 2021/22. He said the estimated reserve for 2021/22 was likely to be in the region of £400K. This was a healthy position to help the Town Council manage its way through the future Covid19 implications.

He also said the tax base had reduced by 43 households in 2021/22 meaning a reduction of £1,591 in total precept at a standstill basis.

The estimates on current services represented a standstill budget which absorbed the precept loss. The only factor affecting the precept increase was Councillors agreement to take on the 4 parks in Kidderminster.

The Town Clerk reiterated these were estimated budgets and would be continually reviewed in the light of the ongoing impact of the pandemic

Councillors discussed the various issues affecting the precept and reiterated their decision to take on the 4 parks in Kidderminster.

It was then

RESOLVED: - that Council

- i. agree a £5.50 (Band D equivalent) increase in the Council Tax for 2021/212 to yield a precept of 734,442.50
- ii. note the future precept implications of the four year grant proposal from WFDC to support taking on running the 4 parks

Councillors S. Rook (Mayor), J. Baker, R. Bishop, S. Chambers, H. Dyke, K. Gale, N. Gale, F. Oborski MBE, M. Rayner, D. Ross, J. Smith, M. Stooke and P. Young voted in favour of the motion

Councillors J. Aston, L. Hyde and M. Kelly voted against the motion

Councillor N. Knowles abstained

The meeting ended at 7.26pm

Mayor

Date