

**KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held at 6pm on Thursday 23 May 2024
In the Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House**

Present:

Councillors G. Connolly (Town Mayor), J. Aston J. Beckingham, B. Brookes, L. Carroll, D. Chambers, V. Caulfield, B. Connor, H. Dyke, N. Gale, D. Hine, S. Hollands, M. McDonnell, S. Miah, F. Oborski (MBE), M. Rayner, D. Round, M. Smith.

Hugh Peacocke, Chief Executive
HR/ Office Assistant

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/ REPORTS

The Mayor welcomed new members to the Council and thanked the former members who were no longer on the Council for their service. He encouraged all members to work together in the best interests of the community.

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All members were present.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Regarding item 5. On the agenda, Councillors F. Oborski, S. Miah, M. Rayner, and L. Carroll declared that they were members of the "Save the Paddling Pool" group.

7. DISPENSATIONS

RESOLVED: to approve the following dispensations for members, for a 4- year period:

- For all members to discuss the Council's budget and set the Council's precept;
- For members of Wyre Forest District Council and/or Worcestershire County Council, to discuss business relating to those Councils, on condition that they are doing so regarding the Town Council's position in the matter; when it is raised at the other Councils, they will at that time consider all the evidence before them.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Nil

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting of Kidderminster Town Council held on 18th March 2024 and the Annual Meeting (Mayor-making) held on 16th May 2024.

Members noted the draft minutes of the Finance & Overview Committee held on 10th April 2024, the Planning Committee held on 2nd April and 25th April 2024.

10. NOTICE OF MOTION

Amended motion proposed by Councillor Fran Oborski and Shazu Miah:

1. Council resolves to work towards reinstating the much-loved St. George's Park Paddling Pool with the aim of reopening it as soon as is sustainably possible.
2. Council further resolves to consider that, once reopened the Paddling Pool should operate for the same period (May to September) as the Stourport Paddling Pool and Brinton Park Splash Pad.
3. Council therefore instructs the Services Committee to work with Officers and our external funding consultant, the community and businesses to achieve the reinstatement and reopening. This should include a full financial forecast of oncosts to ensure sustainability is achieved.
4. Having regard to the expected petition from "The Save Our Paddling Pool" group: That the Operational Services Committee, at its meeting on 5th June 2024, should set up a Working Group, to make recommendations regarding this matter. The "Save Our Paddling Pool" group should be included in the membership of the Working Group.
5. St. Georges Paddling Pool should be a standing item on the Full Council Agenda until this is resolved.

The Mayor invited a deputation from the "Save the Paddling Pool" group to address the meeting. The Group was represented by Mr. Nick Grace and Mr. Peter Young who presented a petition calling on the Council to re-open the paddling pool at St. George's Park. They told the Council that they had collected 212 signatures on their paper petition and over 1,900 on the online petition.

RESOLVED: That the motion, as amended, be approved.

11. Scheme of Delegations to Committees and Officers

Members received the draft scheme, proposing delegations and Terms of Reference for the following Standing Committees:

1. Finance & Overview
2. Operational services
3. Town Hall
4. Staffing
5. Planning
6. Civic and Events

RESOLVED: To approve the Scheme of Delegations to Committees and Officers

12. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

The Mayor told the meeting that the Council was continuing its practice of making these appointments having regard to the political proportionality of the groups elected to the Council.

RESOLVED: To make the following appointments to the Council's Standing Committees:

Finance & Overview	Cllrs. M. Smith, D. Round, S. Hollands, H. Dyke and F. Oborski
Operational Services	Cllrs. L. Carroll, B. Connor, N. Gale, V. Caulfield and S. Miah
Town Hall	Cllrs. J. Beckingham, B. Connor, B. Brookes, D. Hine and F. Oborski
Staffing	Cllrs. L. Carroll, B. Connor, G. Connolly, H. Dyke and F. Oborski
Civic and Events	Cllrs. D. Round, B. Connor, N. Gale, D. Chambers, M. Rayner, J. Aston and S. Miah
Planning	Cllrs. M. McDonell, J. Beckingham, D. Chambers, S. Hollands, D. Hine, M. Rayner and S. Miah

RESOLVED: To appointment the following Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Council's Standing Committees:

Finance & Overview	Cllr. M. Smith (Chair) and Cllr. H. Dyke (Vice Chair)
Operational Services	Cllr. L. Carroll (Chair) and V. Caulfield (Vice Chair)
Town Hall	Cllr. J. Beckingham (Chair) and D. Hine (Vice Chair)
Staffing	Cllr. H. Dyke (Chair) and B. Connor (Vice Chair)
Civic and Events	Cllr. M. Rayner (Chair) and D. Round (Vice Chair)
Planning	Cllr D. Hine (Chair) and M. McDonell (Vice Chair)

The meeting agreed that Substitutes should be allowed where members sent apologies for committee meetings and that they should have voting rights- to be included in Standing Orders review.

It was also agreed that given the extended remit of the Civic and Events Committee, and the need to plan for upcoming events, that this committee should also meet 4 times a year (rather than just twice).

13. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The meeting received the schedule of Council and committee meetings for 2024/25.

14. STANDING ORDERS

The CEO told the Meeting that it was good practice to regularly review the Council's Standing Orders. Some minor amendments were proposed, shown as tracked changes for assistance of Members.

RESOLVED: To approve the Council's Standing Orders, as amended.

15. MEMBER-OFFICER PROTOCOL

The meeting received a draft Protocol from the CEO setting out recommended working arrangements between Members and Officers. He told the meeting that good working relationships between Members and Officers were essential for the successful delivery of the Council's aims, objectives and services.

RESOLVED: To approve the Member-Officer protocol for Kidderminster Town Council.

16. STRATEGY AND VISION FOR KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

The Council received a headline report from the CEO, listing the Strategic Objectives which the Council might consider in a 4-year Strategy Plan.

He pointed out the benefits of a Strategic Plan:

- Clear guidance for members, public and staff
- Informs and directs budgets, policies and other decision-making (Action plan)
- Clear guidance as to what's in and what's out
- Better quality decision-making.

He said that some of the objectives were already part of the services delivered by the Council, others were new/ additional and would require extra resources, if supported by the Council.

RESOLVED: To set up a Strategy Working Group, and that the Council sets the Terms of Reference for the Working Group at the Council meeting on 26th June.

(It was also agreed that the Working Group would consult/ survey the public on spending priorities for the Council, to assist in their recommendations.)

(Cllr. M. Smith left the meeting at 7.10 pm.)

17. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Mayor told the meeting that it was important that the Council was aware of the main risks to the Council's business continuity arrangements. The Strategic Risk Register aims to identify these risks to the Council and the measures which the Council was taking to address them. The Register should be reviewed regularly, at least once a year.

RESOLVED: To approve the Strategic Risk Register

18. FULL COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25

The Mayor presented the Forward Programme and invited members to comment or propose any additions for future meetings.

Additions:

1. Add "Town Hall Update" as Standing Item for all meetings of Full Council
2. Add "St. George's Paddling Pool Update" as Standing Item
3. For Full Council 26th June: Terms of Reference for Vision/ Strategy Working Group (To include membership form each of the Council's Political groupings)
4. Review of Strategic Risk Register- 16/4/2024
5. For a future meeting- to invite West Mercia Police to a Council meeting

The Meeting concluded at 7.46 pm.