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2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Members are summoned to attend the meeting of the **FINANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE** which will be held in the **KIDDERMINSTER ROOM, WYRE FOREST HOUSE** at **6:00 PM** on **7<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025**.

Hugh Peacocke

Chief Executive

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**Membership:** Councillors Steve Hollands (Chair), John Beckingham, Ben Brookes, Liam Carroll, Bernadette Connor, Helen Dyke (Vice Chair), Doug Hine, Fran Oborski, Mary Rayner.

## **AGENDA**

### **1. Apologies for absence**

### **2. Declarations of interest**

To receive declarations for items under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Members are reminded that should you declare a pecuniary interest at a meeting, it is your responsibility to inform the Monitoring officer.

### **3. Public Question Time**

In accordance with Standing Order 3(c), to allow members of the public to make representations, ask questions, and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

### **4. Minutes (Appendix 1)**

To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting of Finance and Overview Committee on held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

### **5. Strategic Risk Register (Appendix 2)**

Quarterly review of the Council's Strategic Risk Register

### **6. Provision of IT infrastructure and Services (To follow)**

Update on the provision for the Town Hall and the Town Council

### **7. The Town Hall Transformation Project (To follow)**

To approve arrangements for an interim loan towards the completion of the project.

**KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL  
FINANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

**PRIVATE Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 in the  
Kidderminster Room, Wyre Forest House**

**Present:** Councillors: Steve Hollands (Chair), Liam Carroll, Helen Dyke (Vice Chair), Fran Oborski, Mary Rayner.

**In Attendance:** Mr H. Peacocke, Chief Executive  
Mr. Adam Stockhall, Public Realm and Operations Manager, and  
Mr. Chris Pugh, incoming Corporate Services Manager.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Doug Hine, John Beckingham, Ben Brookes and Bernadette Connor.

The Chairman welcomed Chris Pugh to the meeting and the members wished him well in his new role.

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**2. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

**3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Chairman welcomed members to the first meeting of the expanded Finance and Overview Committee.

Members noted the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

**5. ACCOUNTS PAID**

The Committee received the cash book reports detailing income and expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025. It was noted that the finances continue to be dominated by Town Hall income and expenditure.

The total income for the period was £ £644,839.37, comprising largely of the first instalment of the precept - £612,143.

The total expenditure from 1st April 2025 to 31st May 2025 was £ 1,528,424.76, including £ 223,723.77 VAT.

Payments related largely to the Town Hall: £1,275,700 on the transformation project and £18,838 towards re-opening costs.

The other substantial payments were for loan charges of £78,472 and April salaries totalling £31,578.

**RESOLVED:** To approve payments totalling £ 1,528,424.76, including £ 223,723.77 VAT for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

## **6. BANK RECONCILIATIONS**

The Committee received the Bank reconciliations for April, May 2025.

It was noted that the Council's bank balance had declined from £2M at the end of April to £1.3M at the end of May. This arose from ongoing expenditure on the Town Hall project, which no longer receives grant funding.

## **7. BUDGET MONITORING**

The meeting reviewed the Council's income and expenditure at 31<sup>st</sup> May against budgets set for 2025-26.

**RESOLVED:** To vire the expenditure on agency costs, as detailed in the report.

## **8. Accounting Statements 2024-2025 (Appendix 6, to follow)**

The Committee received the Council's annual accounts statement for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

The Committee noted the points made in the report and noted that the Council was awaiting the internal auditor's report/ certification to Full Council on 25 June 2025.

## **9. Internal Audit Report**

The CEO told the meeting that officers continued to address the items raised in the internal Auditor's report, including the 2 policies for approval later in this meeting:

- 15.1 Document retention Policy, and
- 15.2 Subject Access Requirement Policy

## **10. Vision 2025-2029 Action Plan**

The CEO told the meeting that full council had approved the Vision 2025-2029 and that officers had now prepared an action plan to monitor how the objectives in the Vision were being progressed and delivered.

The Action plan contains KPI's and Metrics against which officers would report to each meeting of this committee, updating the status, as required.

Members discussed the arrangements at the tennis club and access for the public to use the courts. It was agreed that a representative from the Tennis Club be invited to a future meeting of the Services Committee.

**RESOLVED: To Approve** the Action Plan for the delivery of the Council's aims and objectives, as set out in the Council's Vision 2025-29.

## 11. Local Government reorganisation and Devolution Proposals (Appendix 8)

The Committee was requested to:

- Review the list of assets held by WFDC in the parish of Kidderminster .
- Authorise officers to conduct due diligence on all proposed assets.
- Assess the financial implications—short and long term.
- Consider associated risks, including legal liabilities, maintenance obligations, and delivery capacity
- Require the relevant independent surveys as noted in the table below, to be funded by WFDC.
- Require WFDC to pay KTC legal fees for any transfer.

The meeting noted the report and recommended that the Council's Officers are to progress this with WFDC, including financial arrangements to enable the Town Council to absorb the financial costs arising from these transfers.

In view of the above, the Committee recommended that the Town Council defers the decision to transfer the following parks:

- King George V Park
- Willowfield Park
- Forester Way Park
- Jerusalem Walk Park

This deferral accords with the consideration of a wider, more strategic approach from WFDC regarding devolution, as recommended above.

The Committee recommended:

The response from the Town Council to the District Council should require the following:

1. A strategic agreement by the District Council that Kidderminster Town Council should become the "Parks Authority" for all parks and open spaces in the parish of Kidderminster.

This should exclude White Wickets, unless/ until the various issues around title and buildings were resolved.

It was noted that the nature reserves would be transferred to other organisations.

2. The Town Council should request the transfer of strategic town centre car parks, which are important town centre infrastructure. Our partners in Kidderminster BID are also strongly of this view. The following car parks are recommended:

- Aldi Long Stay Car Park
- Bromsgrove Street Car Park
- Bullring Car Park

- Comberton Place - serves as a strategic link for those arriving by train and could strengthen our efforts to support sustainable travel into the town.
- St Mary's- has the potential to relieve some of the parking pressure currently placed on the churchyard and memorial area, where informal parking is causing ongoing damage and concern.
- The Horsefair triangle, - a key gateway to the town, is of interest to us given the location of our horse statue there. It represents a chance to visibly enhance arrival into Kidderminster while improving functionality at a prominent location.

Local management of all these sites would help ensure that decisions reflect the town's character, priorities, and day-to-day realities.

3. The Town Council should explore options on the Wyre Forest Leisure Centre
4. The Town council should request the transfer of the unit at Crosbie Grove, currently occupied by KTC Services team.

Members asked if it might be possible to add the ward address to the lands, parks and open spaces listed.

## **12. Press Release Protocol**

The meeting considered a draft press release protocol.

It was noted that in the Vision Action plan, the aim was to have at least one press release per week.

**Resolved: To Approve** a Press release protocol for the Council.

## **13. Worcestershire Pension Fund Employers' Discretion Exercise**

As this item was likely to disclose personal details, consideration was deferred until after the resolution was passed to exclude the press and public.

## **14. Approval of Policies**

The CEO explained that these policies were part of the list of items picked up by the Council's Internal Auditor and were required for governance purposes.

**Resolved: To Approve** the Document Retention Policy and the Subject Access Policy, as presented.

## **15. Forward Work Programme**

Noted.

## **16. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved:** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as confidential financial and personal information are likely to be disclosed.

## **17. Provision of IT infrastructure and Services**

Members considered a report setting out future options for IT infrastructure and support services in the Town Hall.

Currently this is covered by an SLA with Wyre Forest District Council. The Town Council sought quotes for infrastructure from other suppliers which were much more competitive and also better tailored to Town Council operations and requirements. There was also concern regarding the longer term

It was noted that the SLA extends to 31 March 2027.

Members asked that security issues be addressed.

### **Resolved:**

1. That the Town Council engage Cloudy IT to provide our Infrastructure and new line.
2. Officers are authorised to work on an exit strategy from our IT SLA with Wyre Forest District Council.
3. Officers to update the next Committee meeting.

## **18. Worcestershire Pension Fund Employers' Discretion Exercise**

As part of the Worcestershire Pension Fund annual Employer Discretion Exercise, the LGPS noted that they do not hold a current policy for this Council on their records. They have therefore requested the Council to provide them with our current employer discretions policy by the 30th of June 2025.

The Council does not have this policy in place. Three of the Council's employees are members of the Scheme. Two employees carried their membership over when TUPE'd from Wyre Forest Council to this Council. One part time employee is also a member of the Scheme.

### **Resolved:**

- A. To apply the same discretions that were allowable at the time of their transfer to the 2 employees TUPE'd over to this Council in 2018.
- B. The CEO is directed to check if the District Council discretions policy has changed since then and to report back to this Committee on any matters that might need to be considered, if there has been any changes since then.
- C. No discretions will be allowed for the part-time employee who is a member of the scheme.

Meeting closed at 7.40 pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Kidderminster Town Council**

**Public report to Finance & Overview Committee 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Agenda Item – 5. Strategic Risk Register**

Quarterly review of the Council's Strategic Risk Register

**Background**

The Strategic Risk Register is used by the Council to identify, assess and manage risks that could impact the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives. It serves as a centralised document that lists potential risks, their likelihood and impact, and the mitigation measures, current and proposed, to deal with identified risks.

The Council formally adopted the attached Strategic Risk Register at the meeting of Full Council on 16th of April 2025.

This Committee is tasked under its terms of reference to carry out a quarterly review of the register. This will include an annual report to the April meeting a Full Council.

**Regular reviews**

The review process involves:

1. Updating risks: assessing new risks that may have emerged and removing any that might have been resolved;
2. Evaluating mitigation strategies: reviewing the effectiveness of existing risk management strategies and making any adjustments necessary;
3. Monitoring changes: keeping an eye on external and internal factors that may affect risk levels;
4. Evaluating any changes to the likelihood or impact of identified risks.

**Issues**

1. The valuation of likelihood and impact of risks is a relatively subjective exercise. The attached review of the Strategic Risk Register includes some adjustments to likelihood and impacts, shown as tracked changes. The Committee is requested to consider these adjustments.
2. The internal auditor has identified supplier fraud as a risk that should be added to the Register. Please see item 15, where this matter is addressed.

**Recommendation**

The Committee is recommended to consider the attached amendments to the Strategic Risk Register and carry out the quarterly review of the Register.

Hugh Peacocke, Chief Executive Officer

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025.

\*The impact relates solely to the impact on Kidderminster Town Council as a corporate body.

\*\* Inherent Risk is the product of Impact multiplied by Probability. Both Impact and Probability are assessed on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is a low score and 10 the highest. Therefore the higher the Inherent Risk Score, the more significant it is thought to be. Inherent Risk Score provides a means of prioritising management time and effort by highlighting areas of concern on a numerical scale. Subsequent experience and changes in circumstances over time can result in the need to re-value the scores for Impact and Probability.

\*\*\*Residual Risk is the perceived risk remaining after current and planned actions have been taken. While good controls and mitigating plans are essential in managing strategic risks, some risks cannot be completely eliminated or may take some time to control following an incident.

Risk No.	Risk or Trigger Event	Impact*	Probability	Inherent Risk Score **	Current Controls	Other Mitigating Plans	Revised Impact	Revised Probability	Residual Risk ***
1.	IT Systems failing	8	3	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WFDC SLA</li> <li>Disaster recovery service in place.</li> <li>Daily data back-up in place.</li> <li>Hardware replacement service in place.</li> <li>All documents and emails in 'the Cloud'</li> <li>Accounts software hosted with a provider</li> <li>Cyber insurance in place</li> </ul>	Through SLA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular testing of disaster recovery</li> <li>service and data backup</li> <li>Warranty in place for onsite server with NBD Response</li> <li>Email Backup in place for testing</li> <li>Spare laptops to provide to affected users</li> </ul>	10	1	10
2.	Town Hall project non-completion	9	<del>43</del>	<del>3627</del>	Project management and cost control consultants	Project cash flows and tight control of expenditure	9	<del>32</del>	<del>2748</del>
					Weekly Client meetings	Weekly updating of risk register			
						Seeking additional funding			
3.	Town Hall not delivering	8	<del>34</del>	<del>2432</del>	Planning for return, to cover all classes of use.	Recruited business development officer. Commissioning necessary infrastructure to make it work	<del>34</del>	2	<del>68</del>
4.	Grounds Maintenance contractor not performing	8	4	32	Terms of contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular review meetings/</li> <li>Reporting against KPI's</li> </ul>	2	2	4
5.	Sudden loss of key staff	8	4	32	Employment benefits <u>Staff restructured to better enable progression.</u>	<del>Staff restructure to better enable progression.</del> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff retention programme</li> <li>Buy in outside expertise</li> <li>Review employment Policies</li> </ul>	6	2	12



<b>Risk No.</b>	<b>Risk or Trigger Event</b>	<b>Impact*</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Inherent Risk Score **</b>	<b>• Current Controls</b>	<b>• Mitigating Plans</b>	<b>Revised Impact</b>	<b>Revised Probability</b>	<b>Residual Risk ***</b>
6.	Significant change in funding, sudden large unexpected expenditure, inflation, abnormal materials inflation	10	5	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget monitoring and reporting.</li> <li>• Insurance to cover major identifiable risks.</li> <li>• Reserves position frequently monitored.</li> <li>• Four-year budget planning in place.</li> <li>• Reserves policy in place.</li> <li>• Procurement arrangements in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Public Works Loan Board and other sources to obtain funds.</li> <li>• Use reserves.</li> <li>• Increase precept.</li> <li>• Increase income from services.</li> <li>• Longer-term financial planning</li> </ul>	4	3	12
7.	Disaster impacting on the town	7	2	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency contact list and list of resources maintained by the Services Team.</li> <li>• Key individuals will make themselves available. Active monitoring of information sources.</li> <li>• Accept instructions from Category 1 responders, i.e. emergency services, WFDC. WCC. WMP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take part in consultations and exercises run by Category 1 responders.</li> <li>• Initiate and/or take part in post incident reviews.</li> <li>• Undertake any relevant training.</li> </ul>	5	2	10
8.	Fraud, misconduct, gross underperformance	7	2	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Regulations in place, including payments authorisation, quarterly internal audits, spot checks.</li> <li>• Audit reports reviewed.</li> <li>• Insurance cover for identifiable risks.</li> <li>• Performance management procedures in place, including monthly reviews and annual appraisals.</li> <li>• List of payments and Income and Expenditure presented quarterly to F &amp; O.</li> <li>• Code of conduct for members and officers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider obtaining news management service if an incident occurs.</li> <li>• Additional management performance training.</li> <li>• Additional risks to be covered by insurance</li> <li>• Extra staff resources for improved compliance</li> </ul>	3	1	3

Risk No.	Risk or Trigger Event	Impact*	Probability	Inherent Risk Score **	• Current Controls	Mitigating Plans	Revised Impact	Revised Probability	Residual Risk ***
9.	Confidential or sensitive information being disclosed.	5	2	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor and staff induction and</li> <li>• training in place.</li> <li>• Security measures in place, e.g. use of</li> <li>• safe(s), shredder.</li> <li>• (Very little sensitive confidential information is</li> <li>• held).</li> </ul>	Training for Data Protection Regs and use of email	5	1	5
10.	Loss of access to offices	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kit available to facilitate working from home.</li> <li>• Zoom/ Virtual meetings</li> </ul>	Ensure all staff have capability for remote working, where applicable.	1	3	3
11.	Loss of Town Hall contents including civic regalia	6	3	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All contents including regalia insured.</li> <li>• Most valuable regalia kept in safe place/ storage.</li> <li>• Attendant with Mayor at all times when full chain is worn.</li> <li>• All important paperwork scanned to IT System.</li> </ul>	Return to Town Hall safe when feasible	2	2	4
12.	Injury or accident at an event organised by the Council	9	3	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk assessments carried out for each event.</li> <li>• Training/ guidance provided to all workers/ volunteers at each event.</li> <li>• Insurances in place.</li> <li>• PPE and hi-vis jackets provided, where required.</li> <li>• Lost/ found, first aid cover provided</li> </ul>	Each event reviewed afterwards	3	2	6

Risk No.	Risk or Trigger Event	Impact*	Probability	Inherent Risk Score **	Current Controls	Mitigating Plans	Revised Impact	Revised Probability	Residual Risk ***
13.	Illegal or unauthorised action by the Council	9	2	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing orders</li> <li>• Financial Regulations</li> <li>• Code of conduct for Members and officers</li> <li>• Trained officers</li> <li>• Legal SLA with WFDC</li> <li>• Advice from networks- WALC, SLCC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development where required for members and officers.</li> <li>• Annual reviews of Standing Orders, Financial regulations and Strategic Risk register</li> </ul>	9	1	9
14.	Injury or accident arising on KTC properties or delivery of KTC services	9	4	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurances in place</li> <li>• Services Dept has comprehensive risk management plans</li> <li>• Relevant staff training</li> <li>• Recruitment of staff with relevant skills and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Hall will have risk management plan</li> <li>• Health and Safety champion appointed</li> </ul>	7	2	14
<u>15.</u>	<u>Supplier fraud.</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>32</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>always call the supplier to check the veracity of a request, using details in your system, rather than those on any associated letter or email.</u></li> </ul>	<p><u>training for staff to alert them to the potential risks of providing sensitive company information, by phone or other means, especially contract and account information. ( we do call suppliers to verify, on the odd occasion when this arises)</u></p> <p><u>The Corporate Services Manager to approve a supplier bank account change after having reviewed the process undertaken to verify the supplier details change</u></p> <p><u>Annual review of supplier accounts to be undertaken to remove any dormant accounts.</u></p>	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>16</u>

						<div>- <u>checking address and financial health details with Companies House?</u></div> <div>- <u>checking samples of online payments to supplier invoices to ensure the payment has been made to the supplier bank account.?</u></div>			
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