

**KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th July 2025 in the
Kidderminster Room, Wyre Forest House**

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

In Attendance: Mr H. Peacocke, Chief Executive
Mr. Chris Pugh, Corporate Services Manager.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None- all present

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs. Carroll, Dyke, Oborski and Rayner declared their interests in items 6 (Provision of IT infrastructure and Services) and 7 (The Town Hall Transformation Project) on the Agenda, as members of Wyre Forest District Council. Their dispensations in this regard were noted.

Cllr. Brookes declared that as he was a member of the District Council's Executive, that he would not participate in the consideration of item 7, nor would he vote in the matter.

20. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Nil

21. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th June 2025 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

22. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The CEO told the meeting that the Council formally adopted the attached Strategic Risk Register at the meeting of Full Council on 16th of April 2025 and asked the Committee to carry out a quarterly review of the Register, to include an annual report to the April meeting of Full Council. The risks around supplier fraud had been added to this review, as an item identified by the internal auditor.

The meeting noted that the mitigation measures for some of the risks included training for officers and/or members but there were no plans or schedules for the completion of the training required. The CEO said that he would require officers to be trained regarding the risks of supplier fraud and data protection before the next committee meeting.

It was noted that town councillors are volunteers and that there are no mandatory training requirements. The CEO would discuss this matter with group leaders and advise Members accordingly.

RESOLVED: To add the risk of Supplier Fraud to the Council's Strategic Risk Register and to approve the review at 30th June 2025, subject to the requirements for training for officers and members, as above.

23. PROVISION OF IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

The Corporate Services Manager updated the Committee on the transition of ICT infrastructure services, including developments since the previous meeting, progress with a new provider, and the current position regarding the potential early exit from the existing Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC).

RESOLVED: To note:

- A) The progress made with Cloudy IT and the current installation timeline.
- B) The unresolved matter of financial implications relating to early exit from the SLA with WFDC.
- C) The continued development of the exit strategy, subject to receipt of outstanding information from WFDC.

24. THE TOWN HALL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

The CEO advised the meeting that the Council had sought authority from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to borrow up to £1.25M to complete the Town Hall Transformation project.

The Dept. was looking at issues around the LUF funding and also the level of borrowings on this project. The expectation was that at some stage, that the Council would get approval.

It was noted that the Council can borrow for up to 12 months, without approval. The District Council was seeking approval from their Cabinet to make a short-term loan to see the Town Council through until the loan was received from the Public Works Loan Board. This still required WFDC cabinet approval. It was also conditional on the Town Council repaying the District Council from the PWLB loan.

The CEO presented to the meeting the proposal by the District Council to utilise the Capital Projects fund to grant a Development Loan to Kidderminster Town Council. The loan would be drawn down to fund the construction costs and associated professional fees in delivering the final phase of the project – completion of the podium and final fit out.

The CEO presented cash flow projections for 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28 based on anticipated expenditure and income arising from these arrangements.

The CEO also advised the meeting of the update received from the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government on the afternoon of 7th July, which said that their preferred position at that time was that MHCLG would approve Kidderminster taking out the loan from Wyre Forest DC instead of the PWLB directly. It was pointed out that the Department's general position was that it was in everyone's interest to see this project finished and they were looking for a way forward where Kidderminster can access the necessary funding while allowing MHCLG to fulfil its duties to HMT, DMO, and the PWLB.

RESOLVED: To approve the arrangements for a short-term loan from Wyre Forest District Council towards the completion of the Town Hall Transformation project.

Meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____