

**KIDDERMINSTER TOWNCOUNCIL
TOWNCOUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held at p.m. on Wednesday 22nd April 2026
In the Council Chamber, Kidderminster Town Hall**

Present:

Councillors Doug Hine (Town Mayor), John Aston, John Beckingham, Liam Carroll, Vicky Caulfield, Darren Chambers, George Connolly, Bernadette Connor, Mark Crosby, Helen Dyke, Nicky Gale, Steve Hollands, Mary McDonnell, Shazu Miah, Fran Oborski (MBE), Mary Rayner and Mike Smith.

In Attendance

Hugh Peacocke, Chief Executive Officer
Adam Stockhall, Operational Services Manager.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Ben Brookes.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

47. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None

48. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The draft minutes of the previous Full Council were amended to show Councillor Ben Brookes as not present and Councillor Mike Smith left the meeting at 7.55 pm.

RESOLVED: To approve, as amended, the minutes of the meeting of Kidderminster Town Council held on 28th January 2026.

49. TOWNMAYOR'S REPORT

Councillor Doug Hine, Town Mayor, reported on Mayoral activities since the last meeting of the Council.

He thanked members and officers for their support at the Mayor's charity ball and told the meeting that he was planning one further charity fund-raising event, a Curry evening on 6th May 2026.

50. Nomination of Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor for 2026-27 and approval of Mayor's Charities for 26-27

50.1 Nomination of Mayor Elect: The Mayor advised the meeting that it was the accepted practice of the Council that the Deputy Mayor succeeds the Mayor at the Annual meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Fran Oborski, seconded by Councillor Mary Rayner and unanimously

RESOLVED: That Councillor Shazu Miah, the current Deputy Mayor, be elected Town Mayor for 2026-27 at the Annual Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 12th May.

50.2 Approval of Mayor’s Charities for 2026-27

Councillor Miah thanked his proposer and seconder and told the meeting that his chosen charities for his Mayoral Year would be Kidderminster and District Youth Trust and HELP, the community help centre, based at The Tulip Tree Centre in Kidderminster.

RESOLVED: That the Council approved KDYT and HELP as the Mayor’s charities for 2026-27.

50.3 Nomination of Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor for 2026-27

The Mayor pointed out that the CEO had circulated a copy of the Council’s Mayoral succession plan to all members. Under this arrangement, the next Deputy Mayor would be Councillor John Beckingham.

RESOLVED: That Cllr. John Beckingham be nominated for election as Deputy Mayor for 2026-27, at the Council’s Annual meeting on 12th May 2026.

51. Annual Review of Strategic Risk Register

The Mayor advised the meeting that risk management is an essential part of the Council’s governance structure and a legal requirement for the Council. To assist in this, the Council has a risk register which is reviewed annually.

The CEO presented the report, with proposed amendments to the register. The amendments addressed the risks around devolution and local government reorganisation.

RESOLVED: That the Council’s Strategic Risk Register for 2026-27, as amended, be approved.

52. The Transfer of Parks from Wyre Forest District Council to Kidderminster Town Council

The Mayor invited the Operational Services Manager, Adam Stockhall, to present his report outlining the arrangements approved at District Council level and the recommendations of the Council’s Services Committee, regarding further devolution of parks from the District Council.

Adam reported that the Cabinet at Wyre Forest District Council had approved the transfer of a further 9 parks to the Town Council from 1st April 2027 and a financial assistance package to support the transfers.

He gave a comprehensive overview of the issues around the transfers and proposed staffing and resources commitments which would be required to deliver the transfers. These arrangements had been considered by the Council’s Services Committee who recommended them for approval by the Full Council.

In answer to Members’ questions, the following points were noted:

- The Town Council would engage its own legal adviser to handle the transfers;

- The District Council had confirmed that there were no TUPE implications arising from the proposed transfers;
- The grounds maintenance programme would be outsourced, offering a 3 years' contract, with 12 months' review and break clauses;
- Social value and local employment would form part of the criteria for awarding the grounds maintenance contracts;
- The Community Engagement Officer's role would encompass making bids for grants and other external funding pots, as well as enhancing working relations with friends' groups, and
- The Town Council would explore opportunities to partner with neighbouring towns, where economies of scale might be possible.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve the transfer of parks as set out in the report and endorses the recommendations of the KTC Services Committee, and

That Full Council proceeds with the preferred option to outsource the grounds maintenance contract, while continuing to monitor performance and review future delivery options as part of a longer-term strategic approach.

53. Council Committees for 26-27

The Mayor told the Council that there were now 5 groups on the Council and the composition of the Council was as follows:

Conservative group: 5 members, Labour group 4, Independents 4, Liberals 2 and Free 2, which made a total of 17 members in groups.

The group leaders had met to review this and to make recommendations to the Council. Excluding the Finance & Overview Committee, the proposal was to appoint members to committees in proportion to the numbers in each group, and to allow the smaller groups to be represented on each committee. This resulted as follows:

- Conservative group: 10 appointments
- Labour group: 8 appointments
- Independents: 8 appointments
- Liberals: 5 appointments, and
- Free group: 5 appointments.

This gave a total of 36 appointments for 2026-27, 1 more than last year, which was 35.

The Committee numbers agreed were as follows:

- Operational Services: 7 Members
- Town Hall: 7 members
- Planning Committee: 8 Members
- Civic, community & Events: 7 members
- Staffing: 7 members

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference for committees should be presented in a standard format.

RESOLVED: For Mayoral year 2026-27,

- A) That the Council appoints the members and Chairs to the above Committees, as per Appendix 1 to the minutes.
- B) That the Finance & Overview Committee comprise the Mayor of the Council, the Chairs of the above Committees and the leaders of the 5 groups on the Council, and
- C) That the Council approves the Terms of Reference for each of the above Committees, with one addition, that arrangements for display and storage of Town Council artefacts be delegated to the Town Hall Committee.

54. Committee Meetings

The Council noted the minutes of the Committee Meetings held since the Council meeting on 22nd January (already circulated to Members and published on the Council's website):

- The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 24th February and 24th March 2026, presented by the committee Chair, Councillor Bernadette Connor;
- The minutes of the Town Hall Committee held on 26th February 2026, presented by the committee Deputy Chair, Councillor John Beckingham;
- The minutes of the Services Committee held on 18th March 2026, presented by the Committee Chair, Councillor John Beckingham;
- The minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 19th February 2026, presented by the Committee Chair, Councillor Helen Dyke;
- The minutes of the Finance and Overview Committee held on 15th April 2026, presented by the Committee Chair, Councillor Steve Hollands.

55. Internal Auditor's Report

The CEO presented the first interim report from the Council's new Internal Auditors, LCC. He told the meeting that the report and the responses had been considered by the finance and Overview Committee, who received the report and approved the proposed actions and response from the Council.

RESOLVED:

- A) To receive the interim internal audit report for 2025-26,
- B) To approve the Council's response to the Report and to Approve the Internal Control Framework, and
- C) To add the internal control Checklist to the Forward Work Programme for Full Council on 11th June 2026.

56. Vision 2025-2029

The meeting heard that the Finance and Overview Committee had considered this matter last week and recommended that Full Council review the objectives relating to "Kidderminster in Bloom" and Community Awards", both of which are currently showing as red on the Council's Action Plan.

As no provision had been made for these objectives in this year's budget, the committee recommended that the Council review them.

The amendment for "In Bloom" was that the Council would support any organisation wishing to promote this campaign in Kidderminster, through the budgets for floral displays, Town centre planting and where possible, through parks works.

It was recommended that Community Awards be considered in the context of Local Government reorganisation and what support or assistance might arise at that stage.

To Approve the review of the Council's Vision for 2025 to 2029, with the addition of the above amendments.

57. FULL COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2026-27

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

Noted that the following items would be included in the agenda for Full Council on 11th June:

- Approval of the internal control checklist, as recommended by the internal auditor,
- End of Year Statutory Accounts
- To review the Council's Financial Regulations
- Appointments to outside bodies and Reports from Outside body representatives
- Bus companies?
- West Mercia Police? (Town Centre team)
- To review Standing Orders and make any amendments agreed.
- The Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Working Group is to meet before the end of May and report to the next meeting
- A final report on the Townhall Transformation project to be presented to a future meeting.

The Meeting concluded at 7.35 pm.

Signed: _____

Town Mayor

Date: _____