

KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 October 2026 Held in Unit 2, Forest
Industrial Park at 6pm

Present:

Councillors:

Councillor H. Dyke (Chair)
Councillor G. Connolly
Councillor V. Caulfield
Councillor N. Gale
Councillor B. Brookes

In attendance:

Mr. A. Stockhall – Operational Services Manager (OSM)
Mr. R. Beeston – Operational Services Officer (OSO)

1. Apologies for absence:

None

2. Absences:

Councillor L. Carroll
Councillor S. Miah

3. Declarations of interest.

To receive declarations 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.

Resolved:

Councillor N. Gale declared that she is the Ward Councillor for both the District and Town Councils, for the Silverwood Estate, where Clement Dalley Play Park is located.

Councillor B. Brookes declared that on occasions he attends Church Services at St Mary's Church.

4. 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.

Resolved: Nil

5. Minutes.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on Wednesday 1st July 2026 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

6. Operational Services Update

To receive an Operational Services Update.

Resolved: Members noted the Services update.

7. Clement Dalley Play Park (Silverwood's)

To receive a report and consider recommendations.

Resolved: That the Committee agreed to the transfer of the park and recommends that Full Council approve the adoption of the play area.

8. Friends of Parks

To receive a copy of the Friends Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and update on the current operational position.

Additional Recommendation Presented by Officers

That the Committee agrees that all Friends Groups must formally acknowledge and agree to the MoU with Kidderminster Town Council (KTC) as a condition of being formally recognised by the Council as an active Friends Group operating within a KTC-owned park.

The MoU establishes clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for both parties, supporting effective, transparent and accountable partnership working.

Where a Friends Group does not agree to the MoU, KTC will not formally recognise the group as an operating Friends Group within the relevant park.

It was noted that an additional section be added to the MoU to include the following,

“Mutual Respect and Standards of Behavior”

Kidderminster Town Council (KTC) and Friends Groups are committed to maintaining a positive, constructive and respectful working relationship in support of the Council's parks.

All officers, Friends Group members and volunteers are expected to treat one another with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times. Communication should remain professional, constructive and appropriate, including during meetings, site visits, email correspondence and other interactions.

Differences of opinion or concerns should be raised through appropriate channels and addressed in a reasonable, respectful and constructive manner. Harassment, intimidation, bullying, abusive language or unreasonable behaviour towards officers, volunteers or other representatives will not be tolerated.

Both parties should recognise and respect their respective roles, responsibilities and decision-making authority, acknowledging that Council officers are responsible for carrying out their duties on behalf of KTC and in accordance with the Council's policies, procedures and decisions.

Where concerns arise regarding conduct or working relationships, these should be raised with the appropriate Council representative so that they can be addressed fairly and proportionately.

Maintaining mutual respect and professional standards is essential to effective partnership working and to ensuring that the interests of the parks, their users and the wider community remain the shared priority.

Resolved: To note the Memorandum of Understanding and reaffirm the Council's commitment to working in partnership with Friends Groups to support the ongoing maintenance, enhancement and promotion of the Council's parks and green spaces, and to approve the updated Memorandum of Understanding.

Friends of the Parks Groups are required to formally acknowledge and sign the updated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a condition of maintaining their recognised status and continuing to operate as an officially recognised Friends Group within the Council's parks.

That the Committee approved the inclusion of an additional section within the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), entitled "*Mutual Respect and Standards of Behaviour*", to establish clear expectations regarding professional conduct, courtesy and mutual respect between Kidderminster Town Council officers and Friends Group members. The additional section is intended to promote positive working relationships, ensure concerns are raised and addressed appropriately, and support effective, constructive and accountable partnership working across the Council's parks and green spaces.

9. Procurement of the Parks, Green Spaces and Market Street Public Toilets Maintenance and Cleansing Contract.

To receive a report and consider recommendations.

Resolved: That the Operational Services Committee notes the progress made to date in relation to the procurement of the Grounds Maintenance, Market Street Public Toilets Cleaning and associated Open Spaces contract.

That the Committee notes the completion of the initial Request for Information (RFI) exercise, including the five expressions of interest received, and the subsequent progression to the formal tender stage.

That the Committee endorses the continued use of the West Mercia Police Contracts and Procurement Team as the Council's specialist procurement support throughout the remainder of the procurement process, providing appropriate professional advice, governance and assurance.

That the Committee notes the proposed contract value of approximately £290,000 per annum and the scope of services included within the procurement, comprising grounds maintenance for the Council's existing parks, the Market Street Public Toilets cleaning service and St Mary's Church grounds maintenance.

That the Committee endorses the proposed evaluation methodology of 40% price and 60% quality, ensuring that the procurement considers overall value for money, service quality, capacity, experience, methodology and the contractor's ability to meet the Council's operational requirements.

That the Committee notes the proposed evaluation panel comprising the Operational Services Manager, Operational Services Officer, Chair of the Operational Services Committee and appointed Procurement Officer, with all tenders to be assessed against the published criteria and procurement requirements.

That, following completion of the tender evaluation and all necessary procurement checks, the Committee considers the recommendation to award the contract at its proposed meeting on 18 November 2026.

That the Committee delegates authority to the appropriate officers, in consultation with the Chair of the Operational Services Committee and the Council's procurement specialist, to undertake any necessary clarification, due diligence and mobilisation activity required to support the implementation of the contract following approval of the award.

10. Dog Waste Dispensers

To receive a report and consider recommendations

Resolved: That Members considered the proposal to install dog waste bag dispensers and expressed concern that this could undermine the purpose of the existing Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), potentially encouraging reliance on Council-provided bags rather than ensuring dog owners take responsibility for bringing their own and clearing up after their dogs. Members also highlighted the potential risk of dispensers being misused or vandalised. It was therefore agreed that targeted promotional activity and social media messaging to raise awareness of responsible dog ownership and dog fouling would be a more appropriate approach, to be progressed once the new Community post is in place from April 2028.

11. Protection of the Forecourt area – St Mary's Church

To receive a report and consider recommendations

Resolved: That Members requested officers to prepare a comprehensive 12-month cost breakdown for the ongoing maintenance of the area, identifying the full financial implications and resources required to maintain it to an appropriate standard. This information is to be presented at the next Services Committee meeting to inform Members' consideration of any additional safety measures required to protect the forecourt.

12. Operational Services Work Programme

To receive and note upcoming Operational Services Work Programme.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Operational Services Work Programme.

13. Additional Report

Springfield Park Outbuildings & Spennells Car Park Outbuilding

Resolved: The Committee noted the report and update on progress.

Additional Comments

The Operations Manager highlighted previous concerns regarding asset transfers involving Stourport and Bewdley Town Councils, where delays had occurred in completing the transfer of assets within the agreed timescales. Members were advised that similar delays could affect the planned transfer of the additional nine parks to Kidderminster Town Council (KTC), scheduled for 1 April 2027.

The Services Committee acknowledged that KTC would proceed with the transfer and assume responsibility for the parks from **1 April 2027, irrespective of any delays in completing the formal sign-off process**, in accordance with the agreed transfer arrangements.

The Committee recognised the importance of maintaining the agreed transfer date and confirmed that, should delays in formal sign-off arise, officers would continue to work closely with Wyre Forest District Council to resolve any outstanding matters and complete the necessary documentation as soon as practicable. In the meantime, KTC would proceed with

assuming responsibility for the parks from 1 April 2027, ensuring that appropriate management and maintenance arrangements were in place to support continuity of service.

Acknowledgement of Operational Services

Councillor N. Gale, on behalf of the Committee, requested that the minutes formally record Members' appreciation of the work undertaken by both officers within Operational Services. The Committee recognised their continued commitment, professionalism and dedication to the development of the service, acknowledging the positive progress being made in maintaining and improving the Council's parks and public realm.

Members also noted the ongoing development of the service, including improvements to operational management, the delivery of services to the community and the work being undertaken to prepare for the proposed transfer of additional parks. The Committee expressed its thanks to both officers for their continued efforts and contribution to the effective delivery and future development of Operational Service

