

**Kidderminster Town Council  
Finance & Overview Committee**

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 6.00pm in the  
Town Hall, Vicar Street, Kidderminster

**To Councillors N. Knowles (Chairman), H. Dyke, K. Gale, F. Oborski MBE, and D. Ross**

The next meeting of the meeting of **Finance & Overview Committee**, will be held on **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 6.00pm in the Town Hall**, Vicar Street, Kidderminster for the transaction of the business detailed below:



Tony Beirne  
Town Clerk  
08/07/2020

**AGENDA**

<b>Public</b>		
<b>item</b>	<b>subject</b>	<b>page</b>
1.	Apologies	
2.	Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2020 ( <b>attached</b> )	<b>3</b>
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	Meetings Protocols & I.T. Provision ( <b>attached</b> )	<b>5</b>
5.	Managing the Town Council Budgets - Budget Overview 2020/21 to date ( <b>attached</b> )	<b>9</b>
6.	Exclusion of the Press and Public To consider passing the following resolution: "That, under Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with Standing Order 3(b), the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "confidential information" or "exempt information" as defined in the standing orders."	
7.	Grant Application – Kidderminster Choral Society ( <b>attached</b> )	<b>19</b>

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KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE  
Held in Kidderminster Town Hall, Kidderminster  
On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 6.30pm

**Present:** Councillors N. Knowles (Chairman), H. Dyke, N. Gale, F. Oborski MBE and J. Smith (substituting for K. Gale).

- F.139**            **Apology**  
Councillor K. Gale
- F.140**            **Minutes of the Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019**  
**RESOLVED:-** that the Minutes of the meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 be agreed as a correct record
- F.141**            **Declarations of Interests by Members**  
None
- F.142**            **Budget Overview 2019/20 actual spend to date**  
The Town Clerk went through the current budget spend. After discussion it was **RESOLVED:-** that the Budget Overview be noted and reported to Council
- F.143**            **Budget Planning**  
The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the current options to agree the precept for 2020/21. He said Council will need to agree the precept at the Council meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020.  
Councillors examined the draft budget and agreed that the report should be referred to Council without any draft recommendation. The Committee  
**RESOLVED:-** that the decision to
- i.    agree the frequency of the running of the Community Awards be referred to Council
  - ii.   agree the future running of St George's Paddling Pool be referred to Council
  - iii.  set the precept be agreed at Council on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020

The meeting ended at 7.00pm

Chairman

Date

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## Finance & Overview Committee

### Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

#### Town Council Policy

#### Meetings Protocol and I.T. Provision

##### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to agree a policy regarding holding virtual meetings through video conferencing

##### 2. Background

The current pandemic has shown the Town Council's limitation to hold its meetings in a timely and agreed way.

##### 3. Detail

The specific issues are:

- i. The willingness of Councillors to meet virtually
- ii. The ability to set up virtual meetings
  - a. Kit
  - b. Training
  - c. Systems
- iii. An agreed policy for meetings
- iv. An understanding of the revised social distancing guidelines post 4<sup>th</sup> July 2020 issued by NALC

##### 4. Town Council IT

The Town Council has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with WFDC to provide its IT services. Also, at the outset of the setup of the Town Council, Town Councillors agreed they would use their own email accounts for Town Council business.

Both these issues are now impacting on our ability to conduct our business.

The initial plan was an IT review which would set the Council up post 2020 election to give every Town Councillor dedicated kit and a Town Council email address. The intention was also to improve the Wi-Fi at the Town Hall to help develop the business. This work was initially halted because of Covid19 but it has now been carried out and this report recommends a way forward

##### 5. Current Challenges

- i. Member Feedback  
The feedback from Councillors ranges from those who are happy to move forward with virtual meetings to those who are against them and believe meetings should be in person. There is still a strong desire from many Councillors to have meetings in person if at all possible
- ii. Set up  
The Town Council is limited by its IT set up, poor Wi-Fi in the Town Hall and no virtual meetings system in place
- iii. Kit  
A significant number of Councillors do not possess the kit to be able to participate in virtual meetings

We have tried to combine personal attendance at the Town Hall with video conferencing. It did not work. Councillors will need to agree a specific policy

##### 6. Proposals

- i. To upgrade the Town Hall systems to improve the Wi-Fi and have a preferred virtual meeting system in place

- ii. To ensure every Councillor has the appropriate kit to give all Town Councillors the ability to take part in meetings via a remote set up. (It is recognised that some Councillors already have kit that can be used for this purpose)
- iii. To deliver the new social distancing guidelines that will allow us to set up meetings in the Town Hall if needed
- iv. To give each Committee Chairman the discretion of whether they conduct their meetings in the Town Hall or remotely (once everyone is set up to participate)

## 7. Social Distancing

The following advice was issued to Councils on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 from NALC To remind Councillors, NALC is the National Association of Local Councils. It is the national body representing the interests of parish and town councils and 100,000 councillors. NALC works in partnership with county associations to support, promote and improve local councils

### **NALC's Specific Advice – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

#### **Local council meetings**

*Following the government announcement of further easing of lockdown restrictions from 4 July, as at 26 June, both NALC and SLCC strongly advise local councils to continue to meet remotely, without the need for face to face contact. The government rules still state that we should all work from home if we can.*

*Local councils have the powers to hold public meetings remotely by using video or telephone conferencing technology until May 2021 and so most councils will have no need to meet in person. Furthermore, local councils have the duty to allow the public to observe council meetings without placing restrictions on the number attending, which many council meeting venues will not be able to accommodate in a safe way at this time.*

***However, where a local council does have an identified need to hold a physical meeting, as they are unable to conduct council business any other way, they can consider doing so from 4th July. These meetings must be managed within the social distancing and 'safer workplaces' guidance produced by Government, which includes the requirement to conduct a risk assessment to determine if it is feasible and safe to hold a physical meeting.***

***It is important that this risk assessment is carried out, and any identified actions to reduce risk to attendees are implemented before any face to face meetings resume. Councils must keep documentation of this risk assessment and the reasons why the council has taken the decision to return to face to face meetings.***

This advice does allow the Town Council to reinstate it's 'physical' committee meetings subject to the appropriate risk assessments being carried out. For Kidderminster this is an appropriate way forward as it will not disenfranchise any councillors.

## 8. Timescales

It will take a period of time to procure kit, train Councillors and get the remote meeting system set up. The target for delivery would be 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

## 9. Risk

There are three main risks relating to this report.

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
a)	Not to disenfranchise Councillors from their democratic voting/attendance rights	Town Council to agree a definitive policy for meeting set up
b)	Deliver business continuity	To have a policy and systems in place should there be a future 'lockdown'
c)	Managing contentious business	The ability to hold physical meetings to ensure no Councillors are disenfranchised

## **10. Financial Implications**

The initial estimate to upgrade all Councillors kit, set system up and improve Wi-Fi is circa £20K. To deliver this work a specification is being produced and there will be consultation with Councillors and it will be procured competitively.

## **11. Way Forward**

It is proposed that: -

- i. The Town Council upgrades its IT hardware and software to ensure it is set up to deliver business continuity for the future. And that officers, in consultation with Councillors produce the specification and deliver the upgrade.
- ii. Each Councillor is furnished with the appropriate kit to ensure all Town Councillors have the ability to take part in meetings via a remote set up
- iii. The risk assessments for the Town Hall are carried out to allow Committee meetings to resume
- iv. (From September 2020) To give each Chairman the discretion of whether they conduct their meetings in the Town Hall or remotely.

## **12. Recommendation**

Committee to recommend to the Town Council

- i. a policy on virtual committee meetings
- ii. procuring the appropriate kit to enable all Town Councillors to be able to take part in any future virtual meetings

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# Finance Committee

## 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

### Managing the Town Council Budgets

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek the agreement of the Committee to freeze and defer certain budgets to best help manage the impact of Covid-19.

#### 2. Overview

The financial implications of the pandemic are still impacting the economy but the full scale of the economic effect is not yet clear.

This report seeks agreement to take certain actions to help protect the Town Council's financial position.

#### 3. Detail

As a result of the pandemic the Town Council has sought to minimise its spend, maximise any income opportunities, and review all budgets. The Town Council is also seeking to continue the project to develop the Town Hall. The Town Council is aware of its role to provide services for the community to best support recovery for the future.

#### 4. Budgets

It is recommended that the following budgets are suspended for this civic year to best protect reserves and future services

	Budget	Comment	£
Staffing & Civic			
i.	Training	Defer any training or look to deliver it at no cost	2,000
ii.	Twinning	Reduce by 50% - if there is a visit this Civic Year it will be a private Mayoral visit	1,000
Events & Services			
iii.	St George's Paddling Pool	Reduce by £3,500 – unable to open because of social distancing but need to keep maintenance cost	3,500
iv.	Grit Bins	Defer any future programme to 2021	2,000
v.	Kidderminster Arts Promotion	Defer to 2021/22	1,500
vi.	Town Centre Planting	Reduce by 50% and include in maintenance programme	2,000
Town Hall Committee			
vii.	Civic Furniture	Defer future work to 2021/22	9,400
viii.	Streaming	Defer new system to 2021/22/Arts Council Grant	10,000
ix.	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>31,400</b>

#### 5. Services Under Consideration

The Committee should also be aware of two further issues: -

- a) there is a full staffing review being managed by the Staffing Committee
- b) the Town Hall Manager is currently reviewing all Town Hall budgets; the current reviews include: -
  - I.T. for the Town Council
  - Utilities to ensure best value

The Town Council has outline plans to support or deliver the following events but these are subject to social distancing guidance and may not go ahead (or may go ahead in a much reduced or different format). We are anticipating final decisions in August/September 2020

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Events &amp; Services Committee</b>			
<b>x.</b>	KAFF Kidderminster Arts & Food Festival	These events will be subject to any developing social distancing guidance restrictions and we will know from Government later in the year. Specifically we will know by September 2020	5,000
<b>xi.</b>	Christmas Lights Switch on		8,000
<b>xii.</b>	Santa in the Town Hall		2,520
<b>xiii.</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>15,520</b>

## **6. Managing The Uncertainty**

The biggest financial impact on the Town Council this year is the closure of the Town Hall and loss income associated with that closure (including potential Hub development). The intention is to review our budget estimates in August/September, when future social distancing guidance will be updated and we have a clearer impact of the loss of income on the overall budget.

Making savings now and carrying out other reviews will help reduce costs and help manage the impact of the loss of income to the Town Council.

## **7. Financial Implications**

This report

- a) seeks to defer certain budgets, as detailed in paragraph 4, to 2021/22. The cost of these budgets is £31,400.
- b) itemises other budgets at risk, in paragraph 5, at a cost of £15,520
- c) refers to the budget estimates review to be carried out in August/September 2020

## **8. Risk**

The focus of this report is to help protect the Town Council's financial position as the Covid19 pandemic impacts our income streams. This report proposes a way forward to help mitigate this risk.

## **9. Recommendation**

The Committee are asked to

- i. note the report
- ii. agree the budget freezes identified in paragraph 4 at a cost of £31,400
- iii. agree an update report on the services under consideration in paragraph 5
- iv. note the revision of estimates will be carried out in August/September 2020
- v. agree the further reports be presented to the next meeting of this Committee in September 2020

<b>KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL</b>	<b>2020/21 Original Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20</b>	<b>2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>COMMITTEE</b>			
1. COUNCIL	(630,990)	(320,494)	(310,496)
2. FINANCE	72,290	20,907	51,383
3. STAFFING & CIVIC	146,170	27,872	118,298
4. EVENTS & SERVICES	112,820	1,932	110,888
5. TOWN HALL DEVELOPMENT	63,810	27,854	35,956
6. TOWN HALL MANAGEMENT	279,040	77,544	201,496
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE/(INCOME)</b>	<b>43,140</b>	<b>(164,385)</b>	<b>207,525</b>
<b>WORKING BALANCE PROJECTION</b>			
<b>Balance at 1st April</b>	(315,282)		
Less: Deficit/(Surplus) on Year	43,140		
<b>(Surplus) Working Balance at 31st March</b>	<b>(272,142)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20	2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual
	£	£	£
<b>1. COUNCIL</b>			
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
Contribution to future Election costs	10,000	0	10,000
Contribution to future Election costs (b/f from 17/18, 18/19 & 19/20)	38,450	0	38,450
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>48,450</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>48,450</b>
<u>INCOME</u>			
Precepts	(640,990)	(320,494)	(320,496)
Earmarked Reserve - Election costs	(38,450)	0	(38,450)
<b>GROSS INCOME</b>	<b>(679,440)</b>	<b>(320,494)</b>	<b>(358,946)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE / (INCOME)</b>	<b>(630,990)</b>	<b>(320,494)</b>	<b>(310,496)</b>

KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20	2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual
	£	£	£
<b>2. FINANCE</b>			
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES			
General Office Expenses	5,000	(317)	5,317
Audit Fees	1,300	0	1,300
Professional Subscriptions	3,000	2,942	58
Insurances	8,000	6,898	1,102
Discretionary Grants	10,000	9,000	1,000
Ward Grants	9,000	2,800	6,200
Covid-19 Grant Expenditure	0	1,585	(1,585)
SUPPORT SERVICES			
WFDC Finance support	20,500	0	20,500
WFDC ICT	9,980	0	9,980
WFDC Legal	5,510	0	5,510
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>72,290</b>	<b>22,907</b>	<b>49,383</b>
INCOME			
Grant Income - Covid-19	0	(2,000)	2,000
<b>GROSS INCOME</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(2,000)</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE / (INCOME)</b>	<b>72,290</b>	<b>20,907</b>	<b>51,383</b>

KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20	2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual
	£	£	£
<b>3. STAFFING AND CIVIC</b>			
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEE COSTS			
Basic Pay Salaries	92,340	23,313	69,027
National Insurance	6,990	1,943	5,047
Pension	9,220	2,137	7,083
Town Crier	500	0	500
Town Mayor's allowance	6,860	1,301	5,559
Deputy Mayor's allowance	2,260	2,260	0
Contingency for Tax/NI	2,000	(4,122)	6,122
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES			
Training	2,000	0	2,000
Mayoral Car	5,000	1,027	3,973
Mayor and Civic Budget	15,000	(6)	15,006
Twinning	2,000	0	2,000
HR Advice (CALC)	2,000	20	1,980
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE / (INCOME)</b>	<b>146,170</b>	<b>27,872</b>	<b>118,298</b>

<b>KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL</b>	<b>2020/21 Original Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20</b>	<b>2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>4. EVENTS AND SERVICES</b>			
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
St Mary's Churchyard	12,360	0	12,360
Statues and Memorials	4,950	304	4,646
Maintenance of Street Furniture - cleaning and replacement	5,200	0	5,200
St Georges Paddling Pool	4,500	0	4,500
Market Street Public Conveniences	25,000	970	24,030
Grounds Maintenance (Allotments)	4,000	0	4,000
Signage Boards (b/f from 2017/18 & 2018/19)	7,360	0	7,360
Lengthsman	200	310	(110)
Dementia Services	3,000	0	3,000
Grit Bins	2,000	0	2,000
Kidderminster Arts and Food Festival	5,000	0	5,000
Kidderminster Arts Promotion	1,500	0	1,500
Town Centre Hanging flowers	12,040	0	12,040
Town Centre Planting	4,000	0	4,000
Christmas Lights	30,000	0	30,000
Christmas - Santa in the Town Hall	2,520	0	2,520
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>123,630</b>	<b>1,584</b>	<b>122,046</b>
<u>INCOME</u>			
Lengthsman - Income from WCC	0	349	(349)
Earmarked Reserve - Baxter / Rowland Hill Statue	(500)	0	(500)
Earmarked Reserve - War Memorials	(2,950)	0	(2,950)
Earmarked Reserve - Signage Boards	(7,360)	0	(7,360)
<b>GROSS INCOME</b>	<b>(10,810)</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>(11,159)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE / (INCOME)</b>	<b>112,820</b>	<b>1,932</b>	<b>110,888</b>

KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20	2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual
	£	£	£
<b>5. TOWN HALL DEVELOPMENT</b>			
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEE COSTS			
Salary	45,810	10,606	35,204
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES			
Civic Furniture	3,000	0	3,000
Civic Furniture (b/f from 2018/19 & 2019/20)	6,400	0	6,400
Heritage Lottery Fund Consultants	0	7,220	(7,220)
Town Hall Alterations	5,000	0	5,000
ICT Contribution	8,400	8,400	0
Streaming / Webcasting Service	10,000	3,048	6,952
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>78,610</b>	<b>29,274</b>	<b>49,336</b>
INCOME			
Grant Income - HLF	0	(1,420)	1,420
Earmarked Reserve - Civic Furniture	(6,400)	0	(6,400)
Earmarked Reserve - ICT Contribution	(8,400)	0	(8,400)
<b>GROSS INCOME</b>	<b>(14,800)</b>	<b>(1,420)</b>	<b>(13,380)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE / (INCOME)</b>	<b>63,810</b>	<b>27,854</b>	<b>35,956</b>



KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20	2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual
	£	£	£
<b>6. TOWN HALL MANAGEMENT</b>			
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEE COSTS			
Basic Pay Salaries	141,170	34,755	106,415
National Insurance	11,460	2,789	8,671
Pension	31,190	6,908	24,282
Honorarium - Town Hall Organist	400	0	400
Staff Car Parking Passes	1,000	0	1,000
RUNNING COSTS			
Mobile Phone Charges	530	25	505
Broadband/WIFI	200	0	200
Purchase & Rental of Vending Machines	330	41	289
Clothing and Uniforms	400	0	400
Print Management Recharge	750	(53)	803
General Office Expenses	1,150	(12)	1,162
Bank Charges	500	61	439
Phonographic Performance Licence	460	809	(349)
Arts Council Expenditure	0	2,250	(2,250)
OVERHEADS			
Repairs and Maintenance of Buildings	50,000	749	49,251
Lift Maintenance	2,000	0	2,000
Maintenance of Town Hall Organ	1,880	0	1,880
Miscellaneous Licences and Rentals	470	180	290
Electricity	24,410	2,083	22,327
Gas	10,560	201	10,359
Non Domestic Rates	24,470	5,789	18,681
Water and Sewerage Rates	11,290	11,599	(309)
Fire and Burglar Precaution Alarms Maintenance	3,000	0	3,000
Window Cleaning	1,390	0	1,390
Waste Disposal Charges	2,790	2,418	372
Contractor Charges - Cleaning	25,940	594	25,346
Hygiene and Towel Services	2,950	353	2,597
Insurance	18,600	16,508	2,092
First Aid Support	450	0	450
Sound and Lighting	3,500	0	3,500
Support Services - Finance	13,950	0	13,950
Support Services - ICT	19,230	0	19,230
Support Services - Legal	1,360	0	1,360
Support Services - Facilities Management	9,800	0	9,800

<b>KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL</b>	<b>2020/21 Original Budget</b>	<b>2020/21 Actual to 07/07/20</b>	<b>2020/21 Variance Budget to Actual</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>EVENTS AND MARKETING</b>			
Marketing and Design	9,200	1,257	7,944
Wedding Ceremonies and Receptions Expenditure	100	0	100
Christmas Events	8,000	0	8,000
Youth Makes Music Expenditure	2,000	0	2,000
Event Expenditure	14,000	(569)	14,569
Hirers Ticket Expenditure	10,000	0	10,000
Sales Expenditure	1,300	0	1,300
Third Party Hirers PL Insurance	180	0	180
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>462,360</b>	<b>88,735</b>	<b>373,625</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
Grant Income	(74,220)	0	(74,220)
Grant Income HMRC	0	(3,952)	3,952
Grant Income Arts Council	0	0	0
Sales	(2,500)	0	(2,500)
Wedding Ceremonies and Receptions	(22,500)	(4,324)	(18,176)
Rents	(25,000)	(1,855)	(23,145)
Third Party Hirers Insurance Income	(600)	(130)	(470)
Hirers Ticket Income	(13,000)	(830)	(12,170)
Sound and Lighting Income	(3,500)	(100)	(3,400)
Bar Income and Bar Charge	(8,000)	0	(8,000)
Event Income	(18,000)	0	(18,000)
Registrar Rental Income	(8,000)	0	(8,000)
Youth Makes Music Income	(5,000)	0	(5,000)
Duty Manager Recharge	(3,000)	0	(3,000)
<b>GROSS INCOME</b>	<b>(183,320)</b>	<b>(11,191)</b>	<b>(172,129)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE / (INCOME)</b>	<b>279,040</b>	<b>77,544</b>	<b>201,496</b>