



Kington Town Council

The Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington HR5 3DP

Telephone 01544 239098 Mobile: 07483 914 485

email: clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 7th March 2022 at the Old Police Station, Kington

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr. R. Widdowson - Chair
Cllr. E. Banks – Agenda item 7 onwards
Cllr. R. Banks
Cllr. J. Cooke
Cllr. M. Fitton
Cllr. F. Hawkins
Cllr. D. Redmayne
Cllr. E. Rolls
Cllr. I Spencer
Cllr. R. Warne

IN ATTENDANCE

Liz Kelso - Clerk
Cllr. T. James – Herefordshire Council

1 member press
3 members of the public

Agenda

Item	Minute
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The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming members and members of the public to the meeting. A one minute silence took place in support of Ukraine following the invasion by Russia.

To note apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation

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| 1 | 027-22 | Apologies were noted from Cllrs. T. Bounds, R. MacCurrach and B. Macleod-Needs. There were no requests for dispensation. Declarations of Interest were made as follows: |
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Cllr. R. Widdowson: Disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 7(b) as co-sponsor of Marches Makers Festival

2	028-22	Minutes
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Minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2022, which had been previously circulated, were approved and the Chairman authorised to sign the Minutes as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

3 029-22 Public Participation

a) Police Report

A written report from West Mercia Police was read by the Clerk and noted.

b) Matters raised by Members of the Public

A member of the public raised the matter of the poor pavement in Duke Street where a lady fell recently. This was addressed further under agenda item, 6, Clerk's Report.

c) Ward Councillor Report

Members noted the verbal report from Cllr. James including:

- Confirmation that Council Tax by Herefordshire Council has been agreed with an increase of 2.99%
- Herefordshire Council are coordinating efforts to support Ukraine and make plans for potential refugees from Ukraine coming to Herefordshire
- Ongoing difficulties with Children's Services and safeguarding and the likely inclusion of Herefordshire in a forthcoming TV documentary

4 030-22 Mayor's report

Cllr. Widdowson reported that due to forthcoming surgery, he would be in isolation for two weeks followed by a period of recuperation. Mayoral duties would be undertaken by one of the deputies. Forthcoming engagements include tree planting for the Queen's Green Canopy at Lady Hawkins School, attendance at the Mayor's meeting in Hereford and a coffee morning to install a bench for Kington surgery staff use at the Surgery. It was also noted that adoption of the Economic Development Plans for the Market Towns by Herefordshire Council has been delayed until later in March.

Reports from Councillors on external meetings attended or to be

5 031-22 attended

There were no items to note under this agenda item.

6 032-22 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report, as attached to these Minutes, was noted.

7 033-22 Financial Matters

a) Payments

Payments totalling £7,957.62 (inc. VAT) as detailed in the attached schedule were approved. These payments excluded those authorised under agenda item 7(b).

b) Community Grant Awards

Having declared an interest in this agenda item, Cllr. Widdowson left the room and Cllr. E. Banks took the chair.

Members agreed the recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the award of a grant to the following community groups:

Citizens Advice Bureau (laptop for use in delivery Of advice in Kington)	£500.00
Kington Walks (to support footpath maintenance)	£500.00
Marches Makers Festival (printing of leaflet)	£500.00

Applications from Kington Art Society and Kington Hockey Club were deferred to the next financial year as both organisations have already received funding this financial year.

Cllr. Widdowson then returned to the meeting and resumed the chair.

c) Welcome Back Funding

i. Christmas Decorations Project

The project for 2021 is now considered completed with the final invoice having been authorized under agenda item 7(a) above.

ii. Festivals Marketing

Following the delegation of authority to complete this project last month, members noted that an order for printing 8,000 copies of the agreed brochure has now been placed with delivery expected shortly. The project is expected to be delivered just under the original authorized budget.

d) Great Places to Visit Funding

i. Shop Front Grant Scheme applications

Members noted and approved the recommendation of the working group to approve the following applications for inclusion in the shop front grant scheme:

Bees Knees Cookshop	£811.00
1 High Street	£3,500.00
15 High Street	£3,200.00
Walking Hub	£3,500.00
Forget-Me-Nots	£2,678.00

It was further noted that the scheme is now closed to new applicants

ii. Suspension of Financial Regulations

In recognition of the need for expediency in awarding contracts in order to benefit from external funding availability in both cases and having regard to attempts to obtain comparative quotations for the work/projects envisaged, it was agreed to waive financial regulations 11.1(h) for the following two contracts to be funded through the Great Places to Visit Fund

iii. Kington in Bloom Planter Project

Members noted that quotations had been invited from potential suppliers of planters and contents but only one has been received. It was therefore agreed that this quotation be accepted from J&P Turner for a contract price of £9,765.00 plus VAT

iv. Rights of Way Signage/Map project

Members noted that quotations had been invited from potential artists and suppliers of the map but only supplier had responded, although offering three options for consideration. After due consideration, it was agreed to accept the quotation for option (a) with the map produced on 3mm Dibond at a cost of £4,760.00 plus £795.00 for installation by the manufacturer with an additional approved contingency of £445.00 for any unforeseen costs associated with manufacture and installation making a total budget of £6,000 of which £5,000 is to be met by the Great Places to Visit Fund.

e) Green Spaces Grant Funding

1. Suspension of Financial Regulations

In recognition of the need for expediency in awarding a contract in order to benefit from external funding availability and having regard to attempts to obtain comparative quotations for the work/projects envisaged, it was agreed to waive financial regulations 11.1(h) for the following contract to be funded through the Green Spaces Grant Fund.

2. Outdoor Gym Equipment

It was noted that quotations had been sought from three suppliers in accordance with the agreed specification for this project but only two quotations have been received. After due consideration, the quotation from supplier Caloo was accepted at a total indicated price of £9,711.63 (excl. VAT) in accordance with their quotation reference 041948.

f) Appointment of Internal Auditor

Members agreed the recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee that Iain Selkirk FCA be reappointed as internal auditor for the forthcoming year.

8 034-22 Transport Study Brief

It was noted that Herefordshire Council are to appoint consultants to deliver the Transport Study requested by the Town Council. The brief for the study having been

supplied for comment, it was agreed that the following items be included in the brief:

- That stakeholders should include representatives from surrounding parishes/villages
- Residential and visitor parking
- Traffic movements and speed along the by-pass
- Pedestrian movements across the by-pass where public rights of way cross this road
- Electric vehicle charging options
- Public transport availability

The Clerk will discuss these further with Herefordshire Council.

9 035-22 Car Park Charges

Following the successful and well-attended public meeting held on 2nd March, it was noted that a response from Cllr. Harrington should be received within the next few days. In the meantime, the Clerk presented a draft letter to Cllr. Harrington summarising the points raised at the meeting and it was agreed that this be sent on behalf of the Town Council.

10 036-22 Community Asset Transfer

Noting that this item arises out of the suggestion by Herefordshire Council that the Town Council might assume responsibility for the management of the car parks in Kington as part of the parking strategy, members noted with some disappointment that the documentation provided by Herefordshire Council gives no information at all on the specific proposal, seems to relate solely to transfers to the voluntary sector (i.e. not a town or parish council) and requires an indication of willingness to proceed despite providing no information on the potential financial or other implications of any transfer.

It was agreed that without further information, no further comment is possible at this stage.

The Clerk reported that the historic transfer of Crooked Well meadow to the Town Council which stopped when the first lockdown was announced has been raised by Herefordshire Council who appear to have mislaid the paperwork/transfer document which was returned to them by the Town Council for the correction of the name of the Transferee. The document is to be redrawn by Herefordshire Council in due course but will require a further authorisation by the Town Council if there is a wish to proceed as the original authorisation is considered out of date.

11 037-22 Midborder News

After due consideration, it was agreed to continue with the purchase of two pages of the Midborder News on a quarterly basis for the forthcoming year, at a cost of £250.00 per issue.

12 038-22 Annual Town Meeting

It was agreed that the Annual Town Meeting be convened for Wednesday 18th May 2022 at 7.00pm. The format to include reports from local organisations and information on the Transport Study and proposal for Parking Charges plus the award of Civic Awards.

It was noted that an additional meeting of the Town Council may be necessary to consider nominations for a civic award at the end of April.

13 039-22 Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Cllr. Ben Macleod-Needs who is leading on this project was not in attendance at the meeting but it was noted that a meeting to include Kington Rural and Huntingdon had not yet taken place. The Golf Club are to arrange for the beacon and the Chamber of Trade have applied for funding towards the celebrations. There is also expected to be a special church service to mark the Jubilee.

14 040-22 Committee Membership

It was agreed that Cllr. Ruth Warne be added to the agreed membership of the Personnel Committee and the Planning Committee.

15 041-22 Herefordshire Council consultation on Environmental Building Standards

It was agreed that authority to respond on behalf of the Town Council to this consultation by Herefordshire Council be delegated to the Planning Committee

16 042-22 Committee Reports

a) Planning Committee held 21st February 2022

The draft Minutes of the planning committee held on 21st February were noted.

b) Services Committee held 21st February 2022

Members noted that the Services Committee scheduled for 21st February had not taken place as the meeting was inquorate.

c) Personnel Committee held 21st February 2022

The draft Minutes of the personnel committee held on 21st February were noted.

d) Finance and General Purposes Committee held 28th February 2022

The draft Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes committee held on 28th February were noted.

17 Next meeting

The next meeting of the Town Council will take place on Monday 4th April 2022 at 7.00pm in the Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington. There were no items raised for the next agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

Appendix 1

Agenda item 6 - Clerk's Report

This report identifies activities of the Clerk since the last meeting other than those addressed elsewhere on the agenda or addressed by other Members as part of their report and includes some items which are for information.

1. Town Council meetings

The legal restrictions relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic have been lifted meaning that the wearing of masks and social distancing in public places (including public meetings) is no longer a legal requirement, as is the requirement for self isolation if you test positive for Coronavirus. Free lateral flow tests are also to be phased out. Clearly this has implications for council and committee meetings but does not remove the requirement under Health and Safety legislation to provide a safe working environment for staff and volunteers working on behalf of the Town Council and/or Recreation Ground Trust. Accordingly, Members, staff and members of the public are asked to please continue to take a lateral flow test before attending a meeting and not to attend if that test is positive.

2. Town Council offices

For the immediate future the Town Council offices will also remain closed to casual visitors but anyone wishing to visit the office is asked to make an appointment to do so. Not only does this avoid distractions but helps to ensure a safe working environment for staff or volunteers working alone in the office and, importantly, avoids a wasted visit if the office is unmanned.

3. Code of Conduct Statement of Financial Interests

Members are reminded that any change in matters reported in the Statement of Financial Interests must be notified to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the change. Failure to do so could, in some circumstances, incur criminal penalties. If you are unsure whether you need to include something on the form, please check with the Monitoring Officer or ask the Clerk. Copies of your existing form/declaration can be obtained from the Clerk.

4. Market Towns Maintenance Fund

The meeting to discuss this as reported at the last full council meeting was cancelled by Balfour Beatty due to operational difficulties and has not, at the time of writing, been re-arranged although it is hoped that this will be resolved shortly although it is currently unclear whether this is to take place in Kington or Hereford. Initial indications are that this funding is not for new work but for maintenance already identified and details provided suggest that little is actually within the town boundary. A map has now been provided and work on the pavements to rectify the poor surface where a lady recently fell has been suggested as an option for use of the fund.

5. A44 Road Safety

There has still been no formal response to our letter to Cllr. Harrington regarding road safety on the A44 although receipt has been acknowledged and the Clerk has had a conversation with the new Director of Transport at Herefordshire Council who has confirmed that speed reduction on the road is considered a priority.

6. Staffing Matters

As noted at the last meeting, the resignation of the Assistant Clerk/Green Spaces Administrator means that there is currently a staff vacancy. The Personnel Committee has met and will be meeting again shortly to consider a proposal to recommend a change to the job description for this post to take into account the ever changing challenges of the Town Council. A proposal will be brought to the next Full Council meeting for consideration.

7. Parish "Talk", formerly known as Parish Summit

Herefordshire Council's next Parish Summit, now known as Parish Talk is to be held via zoom on 22nd March at 7pm with the focus for this event being changes that are being made for a greener future including the new rubbish and recycling collection arrangements. If you would like to attend, please let the Clerk know as places are limited. Recordings of the event can be found afterwards on the Talk Community You Tube Channel.

8. FOI Request

A request has been received under the Freedom of Information Act requesting how many British Muslims have been recruited specifically to communications and media roles within the Town Council in the last 12 years. Your Clerk has responded.

9. Staff Salaries

Town Council staff are paid in accordance with national scale rates for council clerks and associated staff, with scale rates agreed nationally each year starting in April. For April 2021 onwards, there was no agreement until this week when a final 1.75% increase was agreed, backdated to 1st April 2021.

Appendix 2
Agenda item 7(a)
Approved Payment Schedule

Kington Town Council
Schedule of payments to be approved on 7.3.2022

Voucher #	Payee	Payment type:	Detail	Minute Ref.	Net	VAT	Total Payment
151	HMRC	BACS	Tax, NI		£ 827.34		£ 827.34
152	Amazon EU	BACS	Admin - stationery (files)		£ 15.48	£ 3.10	£ 18.58
153	Amazon EU	BACS	Admin - stationery (copier paper)		£ 26.40	£ 5.28	£ 31.68
154	Amazon EU	BACS	Admin - stationery (copier paper)		£ 26.40	£ 5.28	£ 31.68
155	Amazon EU	BACS	Rec Grant - Equipment		£ 179.63	£ 35.92	£ 215.55
156	Lloyds Bank	DD - 16.2.2022	Admin - office expenses		£ 28.80	£ 4.07	£ 32.87
157	KBS	BACS	Rec. Grant - consumables		£ 89.26	£ 17.85	£ 107.11
158	Herefordshire Council	BACS	Admin - Office Rental		£ 190.00		£ 190.00
159	Lite Ltd.	BACS	Christmas Lights installment		£ 4,760.00	£ 952.00	£ 5,712.00
160	Wayne Summers	BACS	Festivals Marketing - booklet design		£ 250.00		£ 250.00
161	Amazon EU	BACS	Admin - stationery (plastic wallets)		£ 12.48	£ 2.49	£ 14.97
162	Countrywide	BACS	Rec Grant - grass cutting		£ 154.87	£ 30.97	£ 185.84
163	Wayne Summers	BACS	Festivals Marketing - booklet prep.		£ 340.00		£ 340.00
							£ -
							£ -
							£ -
							£ -
							£ -
			Total payments this month excluding salaries		£ 6,900.66	£ 1,056.96	£ 7,957.62

FOR INFORMATION

Total of payments made through grants received:							
Welcome Back Fund					£ 5,010.00	£ 952.00	£ 5,962.00
Great Places to Visit Fund					£ 590.00		£ 590.00
Total of payments made as a grant							
Recreation Ground Trust					£ 268.89	£ 53.77	£ 322.66
Kington Town Council Grant Scheme							£ -

Net total salary payments made Feb:

£ 2,726.97