

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

SPECIAL COUNCIL

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER**

26TH MARCH 2014 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: F M Oborski (Chairman), G W Ballinger, R Bishop, C Brewer, J-P Champion, S J M Clee, E Davies, N J Desmond, H E Dyke, P Dyke, N Gale, B T Glass, D R Godwin, J Greener, I Hardiman, P B Harrison, J A Hart, M J Hart, P V Hayward, V Higgs, A T Hingley, T Ingham, M B Kelly, N Knowles, H J Martin, D C H McCann, B McFarland, C D Nicholls, T L Onslow, J W Parish, J Phillips, M Price, M Rayner, C Rogers, M A Salter, A M Sewell, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard, N J Thomas, S J Williams and G C Yarranton.

C.85 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Aston.

C.86 Declarations of Interests by Members

There were no declarations of interests.

C.87 The Future Governance of Kidderminster

Council considered a report from the Chief Executive on the future governance of Kidderminster, as recommended by the cross-party working group which had been examining the options.

The Chairman of the working group, Councillor G W Ballinger presented the report to Members and advised that this was an opportunity for the Council to make a historic decision by pursuing a town council for Kidderminster. This would mean that the town would have the same governance arrangements, advantages and opportunities as the towns of Bewdley and Stourport-on-Severn.

Councillor M B Kelly spoke in favour of the proposals and stated that people had been fighting for 40 years for Kidderminster town status.

An amendment was moved by Councillor M J Hart on behalf of the Conservative Group. He stated the people of Kidderminster should be given the democratic opportunity to vote in a referendum and the amendment was about the process and timing of the review.

Councillor T Ingham left the meeting at this point, (6.44pm), and returned at 6.45pm.

A robust debate ensued and several Members agreed holding the referendum alongside the local and general elections in May 2015 would be both cost effective for the Council and hopefully encourage more residents to vote as electoral turnout is historically higher for general elections.

Following a vote the amendment was carried.

Decision:

- 1. To adopt as its policy to ask the public whether it supports the creation of a town council for Kidderminster.**
- 2. To initiate a community governance review under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 with effect from 1 February 2015 in order to progress its policy.**
- 3. To conduct consultation with local government electors in Kidderminster through a referendum to be held as a local poll under section 16 of the Local Government Act 2003 on the day of ordinary elections in May 2015.**
- 4. To receive a further report in autumn 2014 to approve:**
 - (i) the terms of reference for the review;**
 - (ii) the wording of the referendum for the review;**
 - (iii) any other procedural matters that require decision in accordance with section 116 of the 2003 Act, including the information document that would be sent to all electors in Kidderminster.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.10pm.