

KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

Environment and Highways Committee

**Monday, 23rd November 2009 at 7.15 p.m.
in The Mayor's Parlour, The Town Hall, Kendal**

PRESENT Councillors Tom Clare (Chairman), Geoff Cook, Tony Rothwell, Katy Thompkins and John Veevers.

APOLOGIES Councillors Paul Bramham, Rob Boden, Keith Bracey, C. Feeney-Johnson, and Austen Robinson

OFFICERS Liz Richardson (Town Clerk) and Margaret Graham (Committee Clerk).

Members of the Kendal-in-Bloom Committee had been invited to attend the meeting for the item on Parks and Public Spaces.

418/09/10 MINUTES – 17TH SEPTEMBER 2009

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th September 2009 be accepted as a correct record.

The Chairman proposed that the presentation on Energy Saving be taken as the next item, and this was agreed.

419/09/10 ENERGY SAVING

The Committee received a presentation from Caroline Turner, Climate Change and Sustainability Officer, South Lakeland District Council.

Ms Turner explained that her work concerned reducing the carbon footprint in SLDC and the wider community, encouraging people to look at their use of energy and fuel and see what they could do to reduce it. She said SLDC was hoping to achieve a 25% reduction in carbon emissions (SLDC had signed up to the 10:10 Climate Change Campaign) by 2013 and was participating in a series of projects to achieve this, e.g. sensor lighting in its buildings, boiler room insulation, lowering voltage in computers and electrical equipment where practicable. The projects would be monitored and evaluated to assess the potential energy and financial savings.

Members asked why the energy use per person in Cumbria / South Lakeland was high compared to other areas in the North West; it was felt this was due in part to the rural nature of the County and lack of good public transport links.

The Chairman said that the Town Council supported the general principle and asked what it could do specifically, bearing in mind that its own energy use was limited and tied in to the Town Hall (which is run by SLDC). Ms Turner felt there was a role for the Town Council in putting out information to the general public, e.g. by leaflets or on its website. She circulated an Energy Savings Trust leaflet which people can use to check their own fuel and energy use and see what they can do to reduce it.

The Town Council could do its bit by turning off lights and computers, cutting down on paper and stationery, and reducing travel outside the town. Bigger savings could be achieved by looking at things like the Christmas Lights (LED lighting) and Twinning (travelling). Also, an expectation could be put on allotment holders to save rain water in barrels rather than using mains water, composting (in bins), using peat-free compost, recycling spent compost, and more sustainable planting.

Ms Turner said that SLDC were considering a travel to work plan (by March 2010) and measures such as car sharing. The Chairman pointed out that there was a commitment to reducing vehicle use in the Local Transport Plan / Local Development Framework.

Councillor Cook felt there was a great deal to take on board, but the Town Council could influence the community - leading by example.

Ms Turner was asked to find out from SLDC what exactly could be put in with the green bin waste, to reduce waste going to landfill, and get back to the Town Clerk with the information.

The Chairman and Members thanked Ms Turner for her interesting and helpful presentation.

420/09/10 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 17TH SEPTEMBER 2009

Minute 270/09/10 – Traffic Issues

The Town Clerk said that she would be taking the issues up with the Police, who were going to produce a quarterly report for the Town Council.

Minute 266/09/10 – Bus Stop Seat, Sandylands

The Town Clerk reported that she had not been able to make any progress to date, but would continue to work on getting costings, etc

RESOLVED that the situation be noted.

421/09/10 PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

The Chairman said that he had discussed the parks situation with Tony Naylor, who was going to report their discussions to SLDC and the Kendal Futures Board. The Chairman had drafted a note and gone to see the SLDC Director, Lawrence Conway, about bio-diversity and “natural” open spaces. Mr Conway had felt that a strategy was needed for open spaces, working jointly with the County Council.

The Chairman had been directed to Lorraine Woodend at SLDC, who is working on an “open spaces” project, parallel to the Local Development Framework, outside the National Park, taking into account allotments, play areas, etc. Lorraine had explained that there was a national scoring system in place. Areas with less than 60% for quality needed improvement. Areas discussed included Kendal Castle (OK), Abbot Hall (64%), and Ford Park (46%).

It was felt there was potential to establish a framework and guide for future years, and the Chairman had agreed with Lorraine Woodend to take away a list and try to deliver. Newton Rigg had supplied ideas for bio-diversity and natural meadows, and the Wild Life Trust has provided advice for Town View Fields. Councillor Clare had written to the Wildlife Trust seeking advice for local schools, some of which had expressed an interest in establishing/improving their own wildflower areas, plus the restoration of the wetland below the Castle. Expert guidance was available from the Wildlife Trust and the Grassland Trust at costs between £150 and £250 per day. It had been stressed that grassland could not be restored without undertaking chemical soil tests first. It was proposed to write to the local schools interested, informing them that expert advice is available on bio-diversity.

The Chairman said he had spoken to representatives of the Fellside Forum. Apparently they were not keen on interpretation panels for Serpentine Wood.

The interpretation panels for the Riverside had still not been produced. Councillor Clare had met an artist from Milnthorpe who produced a similar style of work. She had agreed to produce drafts of some interpretation boards for Serpentine Wood, quoting a figure of £375 for the initial work. The areas at Ford Park / Wattsfield Road / Romney Gardens needed to be looked at in terms of planting, seating, etc.

Tony Naylor had indicated that Nobles Rest, New Road and Gooseholme would be in the (SLDC) programme for 2010. Councillor Veevers suggested asking the Rivers Authority to dredge the River Kent before any work takes place next year.

It was agreed that Council approval should be sought to the release of funds to allow progress to be made on the issues discussed, including

- £375 to a wildlife artist to produce two different designs for interpretation panels at Serpentine Wood for consultation with the Fellside Forum.
- Payment of a wildlife consultant to advise four primary schools on how they might best achieve *their* plans to create wildflower areas; and prepare a management plan to improve the wetland to the immediate east of Castle Hill. (The consultant charges £150 per day and it is anticipated the schools would need only a short meeting).
- Employment of a contractor to fence the wooded area between Heron Hill School and the canal so that the area can be coppiced and planted with plugs of wildflowers in the future.

The Chairman and Town Clerk would liaise on these issues.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to approve the release of finance to fund the projects listed above.

422/09/10 SPEED INDICATOR BOARD (SIB)

The Town Clerk reported that she had been in contact with Keith Masser of Cumbria County Council and had forwarded potential locations for the SIB from the Committee and Ward Members. Mr Masser would discuss these with the Police to arrive at a "priority list" of twelve roads, but it was felt that the preferred locations would be on main traffic routes and collision sites. A decision would also have to be made on which type of SIB was most suitable. The Town Clerk would continue to push for a decision.

RESOLVED that the situation be noted.

423/09/10 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME – STRICKLANDGATE / SANDES AVENUE

Members were asked to consider three options drafted by Cumbria County Council to change pedestrian crossing arrangements at the junction to Stricklandgate / Sandes Avenue. The preferred option was Option 1. Members asked about proposed improvements at the junction of Stricklandgate and Maude Street, and were under the impression that these had been agreed.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be requested to convey the Committee's preference to the County Council.

424/09/10 SPEND AGAINST BUDGET

The spend against budget was noted. It was agreed to request Council's approval to spend as detailed at Minute 421/09/10 above.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be requested to include this issue as an agenda item for next full Council.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve expenditure in respect of Parks and Open Spaces projects (as listed at Minute 421/09/10 above).

425/09/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Committee be held in Monday, 22nd February 2010.

The meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.