

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED

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Minutes of a meeting of the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee held on Monday, 20 February 2023, at 7.00 p.m., in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Cllr M Helme (Vice-Chair)	Present	Cllr H Ladhams (Chair)	Present
Cllr C Russell	Present	Cllr K Simpson	Apologies
Cllr R Sutton	Present	Cllr P Thornton	Present

In attendance: Town Clerk (Chris Bagshaw), Council Services Officer (Janine Holt) and Democratic Services Assistant (Inge Booth).

CLF37/2022 Apologies

An apology for absence was received and accepted from Cllr K Simpson.

CLF38/2022 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C Russell raised the fact that, as a Trustee on the Organisation, he had an interest in matters relating to Stricklandgate House.

Cllr R Sutton raised the fact that he was a member of the Unity Festival Committee and, in addition, that he was an actor in the Kendal Community Theatre.

CLF39/2022 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

No issues were considered for exclusion.

CLF40/2022 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee held on 21 November 2022 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a true record.

CLF41/2022 Minute Action Sheet

The Committee considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings.

With regard to CLF31/2022 (Budget Monitoring 2022-23), the Council Services Officer had now received feedback and was able to report that the Kendal Rugby Club's Firework Display had not taken place due to a lack of staffing resources. The Club had, however, indicated that it was hoped that the event would take place this year and that they would return to Kendal Town Council with a completed grant application. The Council Services Officer confirmed that the funding in relation to the grant approved for the 2022 event had not been paid.

With reference to CLF32/2022, the Council Services Officer informed the Committee of the reason why the representative from Kendal Micro Fest had been unable to attend this evening's meeting due to sickness. A representative would, however, attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide feedback on the festival and plans for the future.

The Committee was informed that the Town Clerk had now written to the applicant with regard to the Anti-Racist Summit 2022, as requested at CLF33/2022.

With regard to CLF33/2022, the Council Services Officer advised that feedback remained outstanding in relation to a draft procedure on the processing of grant applications. It was, however, hoped to implement the streamlined procedure from 1 April 2023.

The Council Services Officer lastly referred to plans in relation to the King's Coronation. She informed Members of a task and finish group which sat under the Kendal in Bloom Committee and which was considering the event. She informed the Committee that plans were on schedule.

Resolved: To note the actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings, as well as the verbal update with regard to plans in relation to the King's Coronation.

CLF42/2022 Budget Monitoring 2022-23

The Committee considered a budget monitoring report for 2022/23.

The Council Services Officer informed the Committee that the Christmas Lights budget would be fully spent.

With regard to Infrastructure Development and Maintenance, the Council Services Officer informed Members that Christmas Plus did not anticipate the need for many replacement lights, and she suggested, therefore, that £1,000 be set aside for maintenance. She drew attention to a number of infrastructure issues, one being at Paul Holland photography, with a need to move the fuse box out of that building and to place it outside at an appropriate height. This would be at a cost of £3,923. The Council Services further referred to problems at the Wheatsheaf and to the need to move the fuse box lower down on the outside wall, at a cost of £1,200. The Committee discussed the need for quotes to be sought and a preference for using a Kendal contractor, although it was pointed out that there were no suitably qualified electricians in Kendal, with a highways ticket being required to carry out this type of work. Discussion took place on the need for a survey to be carried out on all of the fuse boxes, and the potential for electronic switches and remote switch on was raised. The Council Services Officer undertook to bring a report to the next meeting.

The Council Services Officer referred to the Christmas Electricity budget and informed Members that the unmetered supply bill had not yet been received. The Christmas Switch On budget had been overspent by £80. £246 remained in the Bunting budget and the Council Services Officer advised that the bunting would go back up at the beginning of Spring; she would be meeting with Christmas Plus to highlight the need to ensure that the new bunting should not snap and to question the quality of what had been provided. With regard to the Platinum Jubilee budget, £1,726 remained, and it was being suggested that this might be put towards something for the Coronation. The potential to ask Management Committee to allocate this figure to the Switch On for next year was, however, raised. The Council Services Officer turned lastly to the Festival Grants budget in which £7,000

remained, and she drew Members' attention to two grant applications which were due to be considered later on in the agenda.

Resolved: To approve a sum of £3,923 from the Infrastructure Development and Maintenance budget to remove the fuse box from Paul Holland Photography.

Resolved: To approve a sum of £1,200 from the Infrastructure Development and Maintenance Budget to rectify the fuse box problems at the Wheatsheaf.

Resolved: To request Management Committee to carry over a sum of £1,726 from the Jubilee Budget into the 2023/24 Budget to be used to bolster the 2023 Switch On Event.

Resolved: A report to be brought to the next meeting of the Committee on arrangements for a survey to be carried out on all of the fuse boxes and on the potential for electronic switches and remote switch on.

Resolved: To receive the report.

CLF43/2022 Christmas 2023

The Council Services Officer presented a brief report from the Events Officer and Development and Delivery Manager on the Christmas Lights switch-on event due to take place on Thursday, 16 November 2023.

The Christmas Switch On event 2022 had been a great success. Kendal Mountain Festival (KMF) were keen to continue the partnership with the Town Council to recreate last year's event in a similar way, on Thursday, 16 November 2023.

The report included a number of improvements/changes which had been agreed by KMF and Town Council officers, namely:-

- to provide a larger centralised stage with improved sound quality that extends to most of Market Place and therefore ensure all audience members can hear stage activity;
- to change the parade route to Highgate to benefit from a more direct route with good lighting. It will also accommodate the parade size of around 500 people or more;
- to include another high spectacle act via a Tightrope Walker provided by KMF;
- to have a marquee or sectioned off area specifically for an Event Management base and designated lost child space that is separate from the stage area;
- to improve communications with Radio Walkie Talkies and visibility with high visibility jackets;
- involving additional stakeholders such as Kendal Bid to who may wish to run and manage a street food market on Finkle Street;
- to create a flag element whereby flag bearers would be part of the parade and flags would be installed and displayed throughout the KMF festival; and
- to create a fun positive atmosphere in the parade by retaining the stilt walkers and band and incorporating free cow bells.

The report also included a draft event delivery timetable and estimated Switch On Event Budget Proposal, and sought feedback from the Committee and suggestions on how to cover the additional costs to create the improved event.

The Council Services Officer drew attention to the total budget of £6,300 and a shortfall of £1,800, also suggesting the need for a decision on the purchase of cowbells at an estimated cost of £400.

Discussion took place during which it was suggested that arrangements might be made for a mini slack line for children. It was raised that applications for road closure orders, etc., were currently suspended pending the start of the new Westmorland and Furness Authority, and it was, therefore, suggested that the necessary applications be made in any case, with Cllr P Thornton being copied into any communication. It was further raised that “Lancaster on Ice” were keen to bring an ice rink and Christmas market to Abbot Hall. It was, however, pointed out that this may not be possible in 2023, partly due to Local Government Reorganisation and problems in relation to appropriate power supplies. Attention was also drawn to the need to ensure that the opening of an ice rink, if this went ahead, should not clash with the opening of the KMF event. It was stressed that discussions in relation to proposals for an ice rink and Christmas market should be held with KMF, pointing out that this would be complementary to the main event and not in competition. It was noted the parade route would be changing this year, due to the fact that it had previously been too dark and due to the influx at Branthwaite Brow in the previous year.

Resolved: To look into arrangements for inclusion of a mini slack line for children at the Switch On event.

Resolved: To approve the purchase of cowbells at an estimated cost of £400.

Resolved: For discussions to be held with KMF with regard to proposals for an ice rink and Christmas market.

Resolved: To note the report.

CLF44/2022 Grants Criteria

The Council Services Officer presented the current grants criteria, explaining to Members the need to adhere to the document when considering applications for grants. She highlighted the fact that £5,000 was the Committee’s funding limit per festival per year.

Resolved: To note Kendal Town Council’s Grants Criteria for General and Festival Grants.

CLF45/2022 Festival Grant Applications

Note – Cllr R Sutton had earlier raised an interest in the Kendal Unity Festival and in Kendal Community Theatre. Cllr Sutton did not take part in the voting on the decision on Kendal Unity Festival. During consideration of this item, it was noted that Cllr R Sutton also had an interest which was not pecuniary in the Kendal Walking Festival.

The Committee was asked to consider two applications for grant funding.

To consider the following applications for grant funding (see attached):-

- *Kendal Walking Festival - £1,200*

Attention was drawn to the fact that the Walking Festival would be amalgamating with the Cycling Festival in the following year.

- *Kendal Unity Festival - £2,000*

Whilst it was recognised that this was a fast-growing and popular event that brought in a lot of people, some discussion took place as regards to whether the funding would be used for the Kendal element of the Festival only or Cumbria-wide.

The opportunity was taken to commend Kendal Community Theatre for its recent production.

Resolved: To make the following grants:-

- (a) £1,000 to Kendal Walking Festival; and
- (b) £2,000 to Kendal Unity Festival, subject to the organisation demonstrating that this funding is being used to benefit Kendal only.

CLF46/2022 Active Kendal

Cllr M Helme informed the Committee that Kendal Town Council would no longer be progressing the Active Kendal Programme, with its budget being unable to accommodate the initiative. She further explained that it was felt that the work involved in pushing the programme through as a Council project was too great.

Cllr Helme reported, however, that it was her intention to set up a refugee community network. She felt that it may be more suitable to drive the Active Kendal Programme through this network and instead to apply to the Town Council for funding. The Town Clerk referred to the Council's concept for a sport and leisure club at Mintsfeet which, he felt, may be able to link to the initiative.

The potential for third sector projects to tie in with council structures and so provide more longevity was stressed. Also raised was the possibility of building an association in Kendal, with access to Council funding, to work with young people.

Resolved: To note the verbal update.

CLF47/2022 Community Resilience

Note - Cllr C Russell had earlier raised the fact that, as a Trustee on the Organisation, he had an interest in matters relating to Stricklandgate House.

Whilst the Chair pointed out that the subject did not fall within the remit of the Committee, Cllr C Russell suggested that his plan was to seek to change that remit.

Cllr Russell went on to make a detailed presentation on wellbeing and empowerment. Cllr Russell's presentation focussed on sustainable community hubs which were co-ordinated groups of agencies from the third sector who were involved in strategic and development within communities to address social, health, neighbourhood and environmental issues. He referred to a proposal to seek to set up such a hub for Westmorland and Furness, based in Kendal at Stricklandgate House. He suggested the need for the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee to become a "Community and

Culture” group to carry forward this agenda and ensure Kendal Town Council’s partnership with third sector organisations.

Discussion took place and the Town Clerk explained that it was for Full Council to appoint its committees and their terms of reference. Members referred to the Council Plan which was currently being developed, from which a committee structure would be developed in order to deliver that Plan, followed by development of an appropriate budget and staffing structure. The Council Services Officer took the opportunity to raise the importance of this piece of work, with officers currently unsettled by a level of uncertainty. The Town Clerk stressed the need for approval of the Plan and structure by Full Council at its Annual Meeting in May, with proposals being passed through Management Committee at its meeting in two weeks’ time. It was, therefore, proposed that a working group should be established to address the matter urgently, and that this Committee make a recommendation to Management Committee for an appropriate structure to be brought into being.

Resolved: The Chair of the Committee be delegated to work with Cllr C Russell and a working group to bring a proposal to Management Committee for an appropriate structure to be brought into being in order to address the wellbeing and culture agenda.

The meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.