

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
www.kendaltowncouncil.gov.uk



Minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee held on Monday, 27 June 2022, at 7.10 p.m. at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

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

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

CLF1/2022 Apologies

There had been no apologies for absence.

CLF2/2022 Declarations of Interest

Cllr M Helme declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No.CLF9/2022 below by virtue of the fact that she was a coach at the Gymnastics Lab and had involvement with Kendal Judo Club.

Cllrs H Ladhams and C Russell declared Other Registrable Interests in relation to Minute No.CLF6/2022 below due to their involvement with Kendal Torchlight. The Town Clerk, as Proper Officer, therefore, duly granted the three Members dispensation for this meeting to consider the matter in order to enable them to participate in discussion and vote on the matter in order not to impede the transaction of the business and in the interests of persons living in Kendal.

CLF3/2022 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

No issues were considered for exclusion.

CLF4/2022 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 31 March 2022 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.

CLF5/2022 Queen's Platinum Jubilee

(a) Event Funding

Members were informed that an application for a grant for a Jubilee Street Party had been received from the Fellside and Greenside Forum but had been omitted from the previous agenda due to timing. The event had taken place.

Resolved: To confirm a grant of £250 to the Fellside and Greenside Forum for a Jubilee Street Party.

(b) Members were asked to review the Queen's Platinum Jubilee events and to consider making any recommendations for future events.

Concern was expressed regarding to the method of communication of grants for street parties and the need for improvement in the Council's social media techniques was raised. Also raised was the need for more time in the run up to events in order to be able to cover for all eventualities and for more meetings to be held in advance. It was suggested that rehearsals should be held for pageant events so that suitable timings could be established. A point was raised for the need to be mindful in future of how the Town Council was influenced by the District Council and for the Town Council to have confidence in stamping its own authority on future events.

The success of the beacon event and that of the afternoon tea event was acknowledged by all, although it was felt that the tea event could have offered good engagement potential had all Members been able to become involved. Members expressed disappointment in the lack of localised events.

Resolved: To take on board the comments raised during discussion.

CLF6/2022 Kendal Torchlight

The Committee was asked to consider how the Council supported Torchlight and to make any recommendations about the municipal element of the festival. A discussion paper from Torchlight had been circulated to Members under separate cover.

Members were informed that Torchlight was promoting its role in the local community and its significance for 'outdoor art'. It wished to be seen as 'a sustainable asset within the economic and cultural life of Westmorland and Furness'. Presently, the Town Council funded the festival (through a grant from this Committee's budget) but also organised a Civic reception, alongside South Lakeland District Council, which was an integral part of the programme. This element is currently budgeted under a Mayoralty and Arts heading.

Cllr C Russell explained the significance of Kendal Torchlight to the Town, the event having been going for 52 years. The event was being professionalised and, although there was still a voluntary committee, there were now paid, contracted staff. Part of the process was gaining recognition of the Arts Council which funded a lot of events in Cumbria (the committee had been trying unsuccessfully to gain recognition from Lakes Culture for the last eight years). Cllr Russell informed Members that most local authorities had a professional organisation that generated festivals, for example Barrow and Eden, however, that Kendal did not. Torchlight was supporting Rag Tag Arts' application to the Arts Council for portfolio status but this may take some time. Cllr Russell said that Kendal Torchlight wished to flag up with the Town Council that the Town was short of something in relation to events and that there was a need to assess what culture producers were required within the community and what could be done to generate culture in Kendal. Furthermore, there was a need to raise the matter with South Lakeland District Council and the Westmorland and Furness Shadow Authority. Cllr Russell added that Kendal Torchlight had yet to submit a grant application to Kendal Town Council.

The Town Clerk suggested that the Committee should focus under this item on the Town Council's support for the festival, note that Kendal Town Council had yet to submit a grant application and consider the role of the Civic Reception.

During discussion, Members suggested that conversations should take place with the Ulverston Clerk. Ulverston was very successful with events which were a big part of that Town's culture. The fact that Kendal Town Council paid £3,500 towards the Civic Reception was raised and the value of this was questioned.

The Town Clerk suggested that the Committee might hold an additional meeting to consider the Kendal Torchlight grant application and that representatives of Kendal Torchlight might be invited to that meeting in order to discuss the matter further. Another suggestion was for a working party meeting to be held to consider this year's Civic Reception.

Resolved:

(1) arrangements be made for a working group meeting to be held on Thursday, 14 July 2022, at 10.00 a.m., with both the Town Council's Administrative Assistant and the District Council's relevant Case Management Officer (or alternative officer if unavailable) in attendance, for discussion on the 2022 Kendal Torchlight Civic Reception; and

(2) arrangements be made for an additional meeting of the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee to be held on Monday, 25 July 2022, at 6.00 p.m., to discuss:-

- (a) Kendal Torchlight's grant application;
- (b) further discussion on Kendal Town Council's support for Kendal Torchlight;
and
- (c) the role of Kendal Torchlight,

with representatives of Kendal Torchlight and the relevant portfolio holder from Westmorland and Furness Shadow Authority to be invited to that part of the meeting.

CLF7/2022 Christmas 2022 and Future Years

The Committee was asked to consider the plans for the Christmas Lights display and switch-on event for 2022, and to make any necessary recommendations for the Display and event for 2023 and anything subsequent.

The Council Services Officer explained that the Town Council had set its budget for the current year and had an agreement with Christmas Plus which included the display for 2023. The Town Council currently owned its Christmas lighting stock and the agreement with Christmas Plus was for its storage, maintenance and installation. The Switch-On event had traditionally been managed by third parties, but had reverted to the Town Council in 2018. The small budget of £3,500 which had been set for 2022 reflected the relatively modest capacity of the Council to deliver events directly. The Council Services Officer added that she had spoken with Christmas Plus who had indicated a cost of £20,000 to lease lights. She also reported that the switch-on event had already been set for 19 November, early enough to re-arrange in the event of something unforeseen happening.

The Town Clerk sought direction from the Committee on how Members wished to move forward, explaining that for this year, it would only be possible to shuffle what existed, for example by restringing some of the lights. Attention was drawn to the fact that Kendal BID was happy to offer support.

A lively discussion ensued and the importance of making more out of the switch-on event was stressed, with a decorative and magical gathering place being the focal point. Problems relating to road closure and market orders were highlighted and it was suggested that the Westmorland Shopping Centre might be a suitable location, particularly with it being under cover. The fact that the Mountain Film Festival was taking place on the same weekend was raised and so the potential for added value, synergy and promotion, for example by introducing Cumbrian produce to visitors. In addition, the farmers' market would be taking place on the Saturday, which, it was pointed out, could be enhanced for the occasion. A suggestion for inclusion of local craft stalls was raised, however, it was pointed out that the Brewery Craft Fair was taking place on the following weekend and, furthermore, that there was a need to be mindful of the regular market stall holders. The fact that the Town Council was trying to redevelop the association with Rinteln was also raised and the potential for inclusion of something in that regard. There was a suggestion for Taylors Funfair to be asked if they could set up smaller rides for younger children.

Additional ideas were for the Kendal Lion's sleigh and Father Christmas to be present; a snow globe; bring local school children on board through, for example, making snowflake decorations; live music, for example, drums, choirs, bands; the Christmas card competition; the need to make the event environmentally friendly; a grotto; decorations; mulled wine; and a story teller.

Resolved:

- (1) that discussion take place with the Kendal Markets Officer in order to identify a suitable space and explain what the Town Council wishes to do and, in addition, the Manager of the Westmorland Shopping Centre, Kendal Vision, a Rinteln representative, Kendal Bid and the Lions Club be approached on the matter; and
- (2) firm plans be brought back before the Committee at its additional meeting on 25 July 2022 and, in addition, discussion on future years.

CLF8/2022 Festival Grant Applications

The Committee considered four Festival grant applications.

The fact that the Cumbria Opera Festival was a Cumbria-wide Festival was noted. Discussion took place on the that the Kendal Community Fireworks event did not meet the Town Council's aspirations on Climate Change, however, it was acknowledged that this was likely to be the only organised event of its type in Kendal. Members welcomed the aim of the Kendal Micro-Fest and were supportive of the Kendal Wool Gathering.

Resolved: To make the following grants:-

- (1) £1,500 to Cumbria Opera Festival towards the delivery of the 2023 Festival;
- (2) £2,000 to Kendal Community Fireworks towards the delivery of an annual firework display for the Town;
- (3) £1,500 to Kendal Micro-Fest towards the delivery of a one-day mini music festival;
and
- (4) £2,500 to Kendal Wool Gathering towards the delivery of the 2022 event.

Note – At 9.10 p.m., in accordance with the Council’s Standing Orders No.3 Meetings Generally x, a meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours, the Committee voted to continue the meeting.

CLF9/2022 Active Kendal

Cllr M Helme informed Members of a proposal to deliver a programme supporting inclusive sport and activities among young people in Kendal and for Kendal Town Council to administer the scheme. The scheme was to enable people the children of premium families in Kendal to attend extracurricular activities of their interest and so make the activities accessible to all and ensure that every child had access to a hobby, for example dance or judo. Furthermore, she raised the potential of the scheme to enable all premium families in Kendal to enjoy a weekend away. Funding of a minimum of approximately £50,000 would need to be sought, which the Town Clerk advised could be sourced either through self-funding or externally. He also explained that a report on the subject would need to be presented to the Management Committee at its meeting on 4 July advising of the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee’s support for the proposal prior to adoption by Full Council.

Cllr Helme undertook to send to Cllr R Sutton explanatory information.

Resolved: To express the Committee’s support for the proposal to the Management Committee.

CLF10/2022 Budget Monitoring 2022-23

A copy of the paper, which had been omitted from the Agenda in error, had been circulated at the start of the meeting.

The Committee considered a budget monitoring report for 2022/23 and the Council Services Officer informed Members that £30,000 remained in the budget. She pointed out, however, that a number of grant applications had yet to be received and that this was likely to result in the budget being fully allocated.

In response to a query, the Town Clerk suggested that the Committee had the power to vire funds within its own budget.

Resolved: To receive the report.

CLF11/2022 The Role of the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee

The Town Clerk reported verbally on the future role and aspirations of the Committee, referring to its current, limited remit. He explained that the roles of the Council’s committees were evolving and that the Management Committee would be considering a report on 4 July 2022 containing a series of proposals to try to transform the way in which the Council worked. He provided a brief overview of the proposals which were based on three themes:-

- Culture, Arts, Heritage and Community;
- Nature and Diversity; and
- Assets

This would result in community and festival grants falling within the remit of culture and the potential for one committee to deal with this area of work, with a larger membership and more meetings. The Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee’s role would be merged with that of the Mayoralty and Arts Committee. The Town Clerk, in addition, provided details regarding a proposed staffing restructure to support the transformation.

The Town Clerk stressed the fact that other options could be proposed, should Members so wish.

The importance of Christmas was raised and the likelihood of the establishment of sub-committees to deal with certain areas of work was raised, including the potential to involve other organisations, with the Town Council initiating and supporting events. The Town Clerk provided examples of how this had worked in other town councils.

Resolved: To note the report.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.