

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED

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Minutes of a meeting of the Culture and Communities Committee held on Monday, 30 October 2023, at 7.00 p.m., in the Georgian Room at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

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

In attendance: Town Clerk (Chris Bagshaw); Development Manager (Helen Watson-Moriarty).

CC1/2023 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs R Edwards, M Helme and R Sutton.

CC2/2023 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised under this item.

CC3/2023 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

There were no excluded items on the agenda.

CC4/2023 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: To receive and accept the minutes of the meeting of the former Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee held on 26 June 2023 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a true record.

CC5/2023 Minute Action Sheet

The Committee considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings of the former Christmas Lights and Festivals and Audit, Grants and Charities Committees. A query concerning the supply of three-phase power to a potential site for a temporary ice rink was answered by the Development Manager, who recently met with staff from W&FC (as landowner) and Lakeland Arts (as tenants). Aspects of the project were being investigated and the Committee would hear more in due course.

Resolved: To note the actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings of the former Christmas Lights and Festivals and Audit, Grants and Charities Committees.

CC6/2023 New Terms of Reference

The Chair reminded members that the former Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee had been re-named with new Terms of Reference coming in to effect from 1 October. The new terms re-focussed the Committee's role away from the narrow issue of Christmas Lights and into the wider area of community development. To support this goal, the Committee was taking on the grant-giving roles previously held by the former Audit, Grants and Charities Committee. As well as responding to applications for Community Grants (and deciding what the criteria for those grants might be), the Committee was also being delegated the function of being the managing committee for the School of Science and Art (Sale Proceeds) Charity, a standalone Charity for which the Council was the Sole Trustee. The Town Clerk drew attention to the new Terms of Reference and asked the Committee to consider any actions required.

It was noted that the Terms of Reference related to the 'Thriving Towns' element of the Unitary Council's plan, and this implied that economic development was one of the Committee's core objectives. It was suggested that for this reason, the Council's Visit Kendal' work, probably should also belong to this Committee, rather than to Mayoralty and Heritage.

The Committee noted that the School of Science and Art (Sale Proceeds) (SoSA) charity could benefit from having a review of its funding criteria, which both could and should be different from those of the Council, generally.

It was noted that the breadth of the Committee's sphere of interest would include the voluntary faith and community enterprise sector, and that concepts like a 'Faith Covenant' for the Council would also be in this area.

Resolved: To note the Committee's new Terms of Reference.

Resolved: That the Chair would raise the issue of Visit Kendal with the Management Committee.

Resolved: That the next meeting of the Committee would be followed by a meeting of the SoSA management committee, which ought to consider the criteria for funding applications.

CC7/2023 Budget Monitoring 2023/24

The Committee considered its budget monitoring report for 2023/24 as at 13 October 2023 and the Town Clerk responded to queries raised by Members.

A virement from the underspends on both the Coronation and the Jubilee budget lines to the current Christmas Lights switch on budget was noted.

It was suggested that some elements of the budget report were still unclear to members and the Clerk agreed to look at how things might be clarified for future meetings.

Resolved: To receive and note the report.

Resolved: That the Clerk look at the scope for clarifying the presentation of the report from the Council's Finance system to ensure that members can fully understand what is being presented to them.

CC8/2023 Budget Review 2024/25

The Committee considered a report on its draft expenditure aims for the next financial year.

The table contained within the report showed the current budget and estimated outturn, as set out below. In addition, the table showed the estimated amount required in the next financial year to complete the Council's actions and the percentage variance on the previous year's budget.

The Town Clerk drew attention to the fact that the Coronation budget line had dropped out, but that he was proposing an additional £5,000 for contingencies or other priorities, allowing the Committee to develop social and cultural initiatives if it saw fit. The Committee felt this was better expressed as 'Cultural initiatives'.

The Chair proposed that the Christmas Lighting display element be uplifted to £30,000, to ensure that the programme for 2024/25 had genuine wow impact. It was noted that this would enable the Council to lease new lighting displays, which would serve to lift the existing infrastructure considerably. She was also optimistic that the Kendal Business Improvement District (BID) would contribute further funding to this, aiming for £40,000 in total.

The Committee considered if the Town Council needed to make budgetary provision for the development of the town's markets. It was noted that Westmorland and Furness Council, currently the town's market authority, had allocated £750,000 funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, for the refurbishment of the markets, following the unsuccessful Levelling Up Fund application earlier in the year. It was suggested that the Town Council's role in the running of Kendal's markets might be the subject of a longer term plan, which didn't require a budgetary allocation at this stage, but should begin with a conversation with colleagues at W&FC.

Item	Budget 2023-24 £	Estimated Outturn £	Proposed 2024-25 £	% change
Community Grants	43,000	43,000	43,000	0
Festival Grants	25,000	25,000	23,000	0
Xmas Lights	18,000	18,000	30,000	+67%
Lights infrastructure	4,726	4,726	5,000	+6%
Electricity	850	850	1,100	+29%
Switch on	8,470	8,470	10,000	+18%
Bunting	1,250	1,100	1,500	+20%
Coronation	6,032	6,032	0	-100%
Cultural Initiatives	0		5,000	
Total	107,328	107,328	120,600	+8%

Resolved: To recommend the proposed budget requirements for the next financial year, as outlined above, for consideration by the Management Committee prior to presentation to Full Council.

CC9/2023 Mountain and Sky Christmas Lights Switch On 2023

The Committee considered a report from the Development Manager. The Kendal Switch-On Event was due to take place on 16 November in partnership with Kendal Mountain Festival. The report provided finer details of the event, which would include a parade from Abbot Hall

Park to the Market Square. The Committee thanked the Development Manager for picking up this task and also Stacey Hurley who was assisting with comms.

Resolved: To note the report.

CC10/2023 Festival Grant Applications

The Committee was asked to consider three applications for festival grant funding, as follows:

(a) *Kendal Zine Fest - £489*

The grant, if approved, would be put towards costs associated with Zine Fest. It was noted that the Chair had been delegated an assessment of the applicant's suitability, in the absence of the required number of signatures. The Chair reported that she had seen the quality and enthusiasm of the previous event and that it was the type of event that the council should be encouraging through its events grant system.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £489

(b) *Kendal Mountain Festival - £5,000*

The grant, if approved, would be put towards costs associated with delivering the festival.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £5,000

(c) *Kendal Rugby Union Football Club - £2,000*

The grant, if approved, would be put towards a firework display on Bonfire Night. The Club accepted that the figure of £2,000 may be more than the amount available. The Committee noted that the Council had offered a grant of this nature in the previous year, but the club had not been able to run the event, so had returned the money.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £2,000

CC11/2023 Community Grant Applications

The Committee was asked to consider three applications for community grant funding, as follows:

(a) *Kendal Windows on Art - £500*

The grant, if approved, would be put towards supporting the delivery of art outreach in Kendal.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £500

(b) *Abbot Hall Bowling Club - £75*

The grant, if approved, would be put towards supporting the Alexander Cup festival of bowling 2023.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £75

(c) *Kendal South Choir - £250*

The grant, if approved, would be put towards supporting the presentation of two concerts in Kendal.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £250

(d) *Space2Create - £5,000 per annum for three years*

The grant, if approved, would be put towards supporting the establishment of a community exhibition and events programme.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £1,500 pa

(e) *St Thomas' Community Connections - £480*

Cllr Thorton drew the Committee's attention to his connection to this application, and took no part in the decision making.

The grant, if approved, would be put towards assisting in provision of Christmas Meal day for the Cedars Support Group.

Resolved: To offer a grant of £480

Resolved: All grant recipients were to receive Conditions of Funding which set out the Council's expectations for publicity and feedback. The Festivals Grant criteria require review to ensure they fitted the Council's expectations and a report should be brought to a subsequent meeting of the Committee..

CC12/2023 Community Resilience

The Town Clerk provided a brief verbal report on a Community Resilience Planning project being run by Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT). Giving the context that the Council had previously supported the Kendal Community Emergency Plan group, both financially and in back office support, and that now the subject required reinvigorating, he explained that ACT was in receipt of government funding to develop a scheme in Kendal, but was seeking a delivery partner, such as the Town Council. The role would be similar to the Council's previous involvement but could be set up with more up to date governance arrangements.

Resolved: To note the verbal report and seek further information and a proposal from ACT.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.