

# Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED  
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## Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Committee held on Monday, 11 March 2024, at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Cllr G Archibald (Vice-Chair)	Present (part)	Cllr S Blunden	Apologies
Cllr D Brown	Present	Cllr J Cornthwaite	Present
Cllr M Helme	Present	Cllr E Hennessy (Chair)	Present
Cllr S Long	Present	Cllr C Russell	Present
Cllr K Simpson	Present (part)		

**In attendance:** Town Clerk (Chris Bagshaw), Inge Booth (Democratic Services Assistant), and Anne-Marie Sanderson (Projects Officer).

### **E70/2023 Apologies**

**Resolved:** To receive and accept an apology for absence from Cllr G Archibald.

**Note – Cllr Archibald, however, joined the meeting later in the proceedings.**

### **E71/2023 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr C Russell declared an interest in Agenda Item No.8 (Natural Kendal), as outlined within Minute No.E77/2023 below.

### **E72/2023 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)**

There were no excluded items on the agenda.

### **E73/2023 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**Resolved:** To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2024 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a true record.

### **E74/2023 Minute Action Sheet**

The Committee considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings. The Town Clerk confirmed that all the actions were up to date, as identified within the report.

**Resolved:** To note the Minute Action Sheet.

### **E75/2023 Project Update Report**

The Committee was presented with a report including an update of ongoing projects.

The Projects Officer reported that repairs to the Bench at Burneside Road were now complete.

Members discussed The Eddington Climate Hub and Café and the question of how the Town Council could be represented on the organisation.

**Resolved:** The Chair to write to enquire whether Kendal Town Council should become formally involved in The Eddington Climate Hub and Café.

In response to a query, the Projects Officer explained that Men in Sheds were constructing the bee boxes in relation to Cumbria Plan Bee and that they had been assured that all of the units would be used, either for schools or in relation to Kendal in Bloom.

Discussion took place on Vicarage Drive Land and Natural Kendal and the need to pursue this matter, liaising with Adam Smith who had been appointed by Natural Kendal to lead on conservation and educational work.

Reference was made to progress in relation to the Mintsfeet Footpath and riverside connectivity. The Town Clerk explained that work on this had been delayed by the recent lack in staffing resources. He informed the Committee that both he and Cllr J Cornthwaite were due shortly to visit the site with the contractor to identify and prioritise work which could be met within the Council's small budget. The need to ensure that the footpath was durable and resilient was stressed. Cllr C Russell expressed a wish to join in on the site visit and to contribute his expertise.

The Projects Officer drew attention to the fact that the improvements to the footpath from Collinfield Lane to Vicarage Drive were due to be carried out during the Easter school holidays. It was suggested that this should be followed by a grand opening.

**Resolved:** To note the Project Update Report.

#### **E76/2023      Environment Budget 2023/24**

The Town Clerk presented a report on the Environment Budget 2023/24. He was pleased to announce that the new bin had been installed at Helmside Road in Oxenholme earlier in the day and that the intention was to hold an opening ceremony; the bin would be charged for in the new financial year. He further made reference to the projected charge of £4,200 for footway lighting which, due to a review currently being carried out by Westmorland and Furness Council of footway lighting, would not now be charged for; this money would, therefore, go back into the General Fund. This would be the same for 2024/25, as the Town Council had been reassured by Westmorland and Furness Council that there would be no charge for footway lighting in either this year or the following year. The Town Clerk next referred to the Development Fund Budget, explaining that if the Council was to be successful in spending all money earmarked for projects this year, it would have to spend approximately £176,000 in the next three weeks. He explained the reasons behind this and suggested that the Committee would at some stage need to reconsider its projects in order to curtail this budget and return money to the general reserve. He also suggested the need in future to earmark funding only when expenditure was due.

Reference was made to the need to change a number of the budget headings, for example Green Mintsfeet Development which no longer required "green" in its title. In addition, in relation to projects for biodiversity, it was pointed out that The Birdcage should not lie here but within Projects – Public Realm Enhance.

**Resolved:** To ensure that budget titles are correct within future budget reports.

Members acknowledged the need to carry out a full review of projects and the need to return money to the general reserve and the Town Clerk undertook to report back to the next meeting with a full list of projects, including details on progress and what money had been spent.

**Resolved:** A report to be brought to the next meeting of the Committee to enable a full review of projects to be carried out.

Discussion took place on river corridor connectivity and the need for clearer details within the budget report. Also raised was the need to change the word “green” to “sustainable” or “natural”. The need to ensure that terminology was clear to members of the public was also stressed.

**Resolved:** To ensure that suitable terminology is used within future budget reports.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

### **E77/2023      Natural Kendal**

***Note – Cllr C Russell declared an interest in this item as Chair of Natural Kendal.***

Cllr C Russell presented a report on Natural Kendal, which had agreed that it would like to invite Kendal Town Council and Westmorland and Furness Council to be part of a Local Nature Recovery Partnership for Kendal. Details of Natural Kendal as a Partnership were provided within the report.

The report drew attention to the Nature Recovery Network, which was a crucial initiative led by DEFRA and Natural England, spanning from our cities to the countryside, mountains to the coast. It aimed to create a national network of wildlife-rich places supported by green and blue spaces. Details of what it sought to achieve were provided.

The Natural Kendal Partnership would be launched via a conference later in the year. This event was also part of the Westmorland and Furness Nature Conversation that would start to devise the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cumbria.

The report provided details of a collaborative conference between Natural Kendal, Kendal Town Council and Westmorland and Furness Council, due to be held on 18 May 2024. The conference was for all who were passionate about nature recovery in Kendal and was being organised by Natural Kendal to encourage people to join with the local community and interest groups who were promoting and developing biodiversity within and around Kendal. It would establish Natural Kendal as the Nature Recovery Partnership and Network bringing together local groups concerned about and delivering nature recovery in Kendal.

Whilst Members expressed support for the Town Council being part of a Local Nature Recovery Partnership for Kendal, some concern was raised with regard to additional pressure which may be put on the Council’s officers. It was, however, pointed out that Natural Kendal would seek to source its own funding and employ individuals as necessary, although, with the organisation assisting in the delivery of some of the Town Council’s priorities, it was also felt that assistance would need to be provided in the medium term. Also raised was the potential for Adam Smith from Natural Kendal to provide assistance to the Town Council in relation to education around biodiversity. The Town Clerk drew attention to the two most important recommendations of the Climate Change Jury around Active Travel and Nature Recovery and the need for the Town Council to work in partnership with others in their delivery.

**Resolved:** To note the report and to express support for the Local Nature Recovery Partnership for Kendal.

### **E78/2023      Items for Press Coverage and the Newsletter**

Consideration was given to which items from the meeting should be the subject of items for inclusion in the Newsletter or for press coverage this week. The Town Clerk explained that he hoped to commence work on the Newsletter by the end of this month. The Chair indicated that he would be willing to provide assistance in writing or proof-reading any items.

**Resolved:** To publicise the following:

- (1) plans to complete the improvements to the footpath from Collinfield Lane to Vicarage Drive during the Easter school holiday as one of many paths which Kendal Town Council will work on in the near future, including quotes from interested parties such as parents of children at Dean Gibson School and Vicarage Park School;
- (2) details regarding footpath delivery at Mintsfeet;
- (3) information on the work being carried out at Bowling Fell by Kendal Town Council;
- (4) a short article on Kendal Town Council's no use policy in relation to herbicides and pesticides; and
- (5) the Kendal Natural Recovery Conference.

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.