

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
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Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Committee held on Monday, 15 May 2024, at 7.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

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

In attendance: Town Clerk (Chris Bagshaw) and Anne-Marie Sanderson (Projects Officer) and one member of the public.

E1/2024 Apologies

Resolved: To receive and accept apologies for absence from Cllr M Helme

E2/2024 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised under this item.

E3/2024 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

There were no excluded items on the agenda.

E4/2024 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2024 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a true record.

E5/2024 Minute Action Sheet

The minute action sheet was not included in this meeting's agenda due to all items appearing within the following item.

E6/2024 Project Update Report

The Committee was presented with a report including an update of ongoing projects. Progress at the Eddington, the new climate hub and home of Waste into Wellbeing at the former URC on Highgate, was highlighted and welcomed by councillors. Councillors expressed an interest in visiting the site prior to its official opening, which was planned to take place in the coming weeks.

A councillor enquired on progress relating to the water fountain project; this was now being considered by W&FC officers as part of the wider Heart of Kendal Levelling Up Funding projects.

Attention was drawn to the need to promote the Committee's Biodiversity Grants.

In response to a query, the Town Clerk informed the Committee that installation of bus stop seating at Windermere Road was pending completion of the Council's new Bus Shelter Policy which would soon be forthcoming.

Relating to 20mph, the Chair drew the Committee's attention to the first round of implementation, which would encompass Oxenholme. Further information was required, and it was:

Resolved: That the Town Clerk would approach W&FC officers to understand costs and timescales and report back to the committee.

The Vice Chair spoke of the aspiration to clean up Bowling Fell, while enhancing its biodiversity. Clarity was sought regarding the extent of currently planned works and whether this would include improving access to the top of the Motte.

Resolved: That the Projects Officer circulates the initial project brief for Bowling Fell to the Committee.

Progress to the Pumptrack project was welcomed by Councillors. The Town Clerk spoke of positive working relationships with W&FC Councillors and Officers in relation to this project and to footpath work, especially regarding the path from Shap Road to Beezon Fields and the footpath at Scroggs Wood.

E7/2024 Environment Budget 2023/24

The Town Clerk presented a report on the Environment Budget 2023/24. The issue of lack of transparency in bin charges served by W&FC was raised.

Resolved: To make a request to W&FC's Portfolio holder for Waste for a unified policy and equitable payment scheme to be implemented.

The Town Clerk reminded Councillors that lighting charges had not been made by W&FC. A councillor noted that the word "green" remained on several budget headings.

Resolved: To update budget headings accordingly.

In response to a query regarding the Birdcage, Councillor Long explained a long-term horizon project was being considered by W&FC and that a short-term repair project was due in the meantime. Cllr Russell expressed a desire to involve the Civic Society in the design process. Cllr Long informed the committee that the Town Team is engaging with the Civic Society to ensure continuity of design through the town centre. The Chair emphasised that the Birdcage is one of the Committee's priorities, and requested that officers write to Angela Jones to request the design and that of the market square, and to request that repairs to the Birdcage are carried out as soon as possible.

Resolved: To note the report and to write to Angela Jones to request the design and that of the market square, and to request that repairs to the Birdcage are carried out as soon as possible.

E8/2024 Heron Hill Lighting

The Committee considered a report on footway lighting in Heron Hill open space. It was reported that this item had been considered by the Committee prior to local government reorganisation, and that at that time support had been requested from SLDC and CCC. The safety concerns posed to footpath users by the lack of lighting in this area had not yet been resolved and it was proposed to approach W&F Council to implement a lighting scheme using CIL funds. Emphasis was placed on the need for any new lighting to be dark sky compliant and to be of a colour spectrum safe for insects, as per KTC's Biodiversity Policy and in alignment with recommendations arising from the Climate Change Citizens' Jury. Also noted were the efforts of Natural Kendal in this regard.

Resolved: To approach W&FC's Portfolio Holder for lighting and relevant officers to implement a lighting scheme using W&FC's Community Infrastructure Levy funds.

E9/2024 Collinfield/Vicarage Drive Open Spaces

Consideration was given as to whether there were actions that the Town Council could take to encourage and coordinate efforts to improve drainage, sustainable planting and access in the open spaces of the town's western heights, to the south of Kirkbarrow.

With the housing developments taking shape on the land south of Brigsteer Road, there was considerable additional pressure on the downslope open spaces, both in terms of use and drainage. There was an opportunity to coordinate with the Planning Authority, the use of Community Infrastructure Levy funding to protect and enhance the remaining open spaces. The Committee's views were sought on how this might be taken forward.

Cllr Simpson pointed out the desirability of natural flood management rather than hard engineering. The importance of approaching this area as part of wider efforts around water management and footpaths was raised, and attention drawn to the Natural Kendal Conference which would be discussing some aspects of this. Cllr Cornthwaite expressed a preference to utilise an existing culvert in the area. It was suggested that additional planting further up the hill would provide benefits.

The Chair suggested undertaking a site visit of Councillors together with W&FC officers. The Vice Chair informed the committee that W&FC had funding available for natural flood management projects within Cumbria. It was also suggested that a 'Friends of' group be established to aid the safeguarding of the park's future. The Town Clerk emphasised the importance of naming green spaces.

Resolved: To organise a site visit with Cllrs and W&F officers.

E10/2024 Footpath Priorities in Kendal

The Committee was provided with a brief verbal report on current footpath improvement initiatives across Kendal. It was pointed out that there was a range of footpath improvement activity taking place across the town, from a variety of initiatives. The Committee's views are sought on prioritising the Town Council's input on these over the next 12 months. The Vice-Chair referred to the footpath audit already undertaken by Officers and requested that this be reviewed internally. Cllr Cornthwaite made a query relating to footpath progress at Vicarage Park School. It was reported that works to this path had been delayed by wet weather and the path was now due to be completed during May half term. Clarity was sought regarding funding for future footpath work at Mintsfeet; the Town Clerk advised that a request from Westmorland and Furness Council would be forthcoming in due course, relating to the path

between Beezon Field and Mintsfeet, which W&FC were looking to complete. The possibility of seeking funding from National Highways M6 Lune Gorge Social Value projects was raised by the Chair for further consideration.

Resolved: To conduct an internal review of footpath priorities to be brought by officers to a future meeting of the committee.

E11/2024 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.

Resolved: To publicise the following:

- 1) Footpath work at Vicarage Park
- 2) Details of work to be carried out at Bowling Fell
- 3) Promotion of KTC's Biodiversity Grants

The meeting closed at 8.42 p.m.