

KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

Environment and Highways Committee

Monday 30th November 2020 at 7.30 pm
(Via Zoom)

PRESENT

Councillors Jonathan Owen (Chair), Eamonn Hennessy (Vice Chair), Giles Archibald, Susanne Long, Shirley Evans, Julia Dunlop, Jonathan Cornthwaite, Adam Edwards and Chris Rowley

Also in attendance:

Councillor Kate Simpson

Councillor Helen Ladhams

Graham Harrison – in respect of the Kendal Flood Relief Scheme

APOLOGIES

None

OFFICERS

Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk) and Helen Moriarty (Project Manager)

440/20/21

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

441/20/21

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

442/20/21

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair proposed taking agenda item 8 (Burning Rubbish) as the next item of business. This was seconded by Councillor Archibald and carried unanimously.

443/20/21

BURNING RUBBISH

Councillor Ladhams talked about the issue of burning rubbish, stating that it is generally bad for the environment and biodiversity, bad for the carbon zero objective as well as for hedgehogs and other animals. The Government can do an abatement notice as they do with noise if really bad but unlikely to do that and the Council are unlikely to sue anybody because of it. Could speak to SLDC re a license for people that want bonfires. Ask Environment & Highways Committee to make a statement to go to Allotments Committee to see what they think about it. It is currently in allotment leases that rubbish should not be burned, but she has seen fires on sites.

Discussed the current position of the Allotments Committee. Councillor Rowley commented that there are certain circumstances when bonfires are needed on allotments, but it is discouraged and there has been an article in the newsletter. They are not banned.

Chris Bagshaw added that allotment holders are generally allowed to burn allotment waste. They would contravene their contract if they were to burn anything not off their garden/garden waste.

Councillor Hennessy asked whether there is any signage on allotments. Chris Bagshaw will raise with the Allotments Committee.

The Chair suggested a newsletter item – discouraging bonfires and giving reasons such as environment and biodiversity.

Members agreed burning rubbish should be discouraged in general, not just on allotments. Councillors Cornthwaite and Simpson were keen to promote composting and discourage bonfires. Councillor Ladhams mentioned SLDC had discounts on the cost of composting bins which could link to the composting initiative. Chris Bagshaw to pick up newsletter article.

RESOLVED

Chris Bagshaw to arrange a newsletter article. Also liaise with Allotments Committee re signage on allotment sites.

444/20/21

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29TH SEPTEMBER 2020

The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2020, which had been approved by full Council on 5th October 2020.

Minute ref 291/20/21 – it was requested that “youths on bikes” be changed to read “young people on bikes”.

Minute ref 301/20/21 – Councillor Hennessy clarified that funding for a previously specified project was no longer required, but would need to remain ring fenced for some future point.

Councillor Archibald proposed that the minutes be approved as a correct record. This was seconded by Councillor Hennessy and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29th September 2020 be accepted as a correct record.

445/20/21

TABLE OF RESOLVED ACTIONS

Helen Moriarty highlighted the following points:

Biodiversity Grants

The deadline for applications was today. Three applications have been received from the Friends of Nobles Rest, Appleby Road Community Garden and the composting project – totalling £2,200. The grant available is £5,600. It was agreed to set up a task and finish group to score the bids and decide which awards are made. The group will comprise Councillors Hennessy, Dunlop and the

Project Manager. The Chair requested the group ensure applications are within scope.

Ivy Screening

The Project Manager has heard back from CCC re permission to put ivy screening near the Citizens Advice Bureau. CCC apologised for the delay and advised they are looking into a special permit arrangement between KTC and CCC for street furniture in general on the Highways to make this kind of project easier going forwards.

RESOLVED

That a task and finish group be set up to score bids for Biodiversity Grants and decide which awards are made.

446/20/21

20MPH

The Chair referred to the 20mph Zone Feasibility and Cost Estimate prepared by Markides, previously circulated with the agenda papers. This report had been commissioned by KTC. A mandate was given from Full Council to re-energise the 20mph project and commission an options document. The results were (a) do nothing, (b) blanket right over Kendal (c) something in between. A data driven approach was taken by Markides which changed things – they said guidance from the Department for Transport suggest 20mph signs only works for mean speeds up to 24mph. SLDC Councillor Peter Thornton is happy to work with KTC once a way forward has been agreed. The Chair asked Committee to consider what they wished to take to Full Council in January and what should Council then ask of other tiers.

Councillor Hennessy said from speaking to residents there is overwhelming support for 20mph in all residential areas. When speaking about the benefits people come on board with a wider area – safer for pedestrians, cleaner area, more friendly/welcoming, potentially better for congestion etc. He added that it is more applicable to arterial routes because accidents are more likely to happen there than in residential areas. Looking to propose to Full Council to extend out to the majority of town including residential areas.

Councillor Evans had concerns regarding table 2.1 in the report which suggested emissions from petrol cars at 20mph go up rather than down. Otherwise she agreed with Councillor Hennessy that the vast majority of accidents are on arterial routes so felt these should be included. She commented that there are good statistics and graphs to make a good case for the majority of town.

The Chair clarified this would be out to the purple line shown in the report. Further consultation needs to be done by CCC.

Councillor Archibald referred to emissions and said the data is not clear that it increases air quality but it does make it more likely people will use bikes. He agreed some consultation is needed. As it is difficult to define an arterial road that isn't a residential road as well it would be simpler to do the whole town. Educate people and get views before finalising.

Councillor Rowley was also in favour of a town-wide option but commented that some resistance was likely. He pointed out that the original objective was to encourage active travel and the most likely way of doing this is to interact with main roads. He said the costings appear confusing in table 6.1, suggesting the cost for town-wide traffic calming is anywhere between £50,000 - £600,000, the reason being due to all sorts of options. Figures are vague but slowing moving traffic will make journeys easier, reducing stop-start and braking which is one of the main causes of pollution.

Councillor Edwards pointed out that planned changes for electric/hybrid cars for 2031 will be more beneficial with 20mph. This is a great opportunity for the town to adopt a new approach.

Councillor Hennessy said communication will be key. He believed when presented with the facts people do come on board. He asked whether funding remaining in the pot could be used for communication eg. a video. Chris Bagshaw to investigate underspend available.

Councillor Long supported whole town approach. She felt an ageing population would suggest a greater chance of success. She also considered some traffic calming measures will be needed, particularly on downhill sections.

Councillor Dunlop referred to the summary in the report that lists the main points to note. She highlighted point 8.1.4 which indicates people are not travelling that quickly, below 20mph in many cases, and questioned whether there is a need to do anything. Councillor Hennessy commented that a lot of data is based on average speeds. Councillor Long said when people have the opportunity they tend to travel faster. Need to show when accidents happen and at what speed were they travelling. Councillor Cornthwaite commented that Shap Road/A6 is difficult to manage at 30mph let alone 20mph and asked whether any statistics from the police were available showing the number of people fined in that area travelling in excess of 30mph. He asked whether the signs would be mandatory and how it would be enforced. The Chair explained that the National College of Police Chiefs left it up to constabularies to make resource based decisions on whether they would back Council 20mph limits – this has since changed and they are now saying whatever local authorities chose they will enforce. There is now a national police policy and significant policy change. Councillor Archibald made the point that plenty of towns have introduced 20mph so there should be plenty of evidence available. Kate Simpson queried how to get bite and traction and get public engagement. What would be KTC's role around implementing it to make it an effective change? The Chair replied that, along with Councillors Hennessy and Rowley, he is clear this should be located as a subset and Duncan Pollard who joined SLACC recently (used to be Nestle CSR person). Councillor Rowley said it should be based on the KTC broadcasting a vision of a future Liverpool-Kendal. What does Kendal look like and feel like and therefore what should we do in order to achieve that vision. Rather than a sense of loss and the cons there is a piece of work to do around the cons. Councillor

Simpson commented that Covid has given people a chance to see what it is like with less traffic on the roads.

Councillor Rowley referred to costs and said there is a strong case to argue this isn't a cost, but a saving. Fewer accidents results in massive savings. A couple of accidents would easily cost £100k. The Chair mentioned analysis by an organisation called PACTS titled 'What Kills Most on the Roads'. At award level they have worked with Agilis who are big number crunchers in local government – they can zoom into where minor, moderate and fatality accidents have been and can pinpoint hotspots.

The Chair summarised that Members appeared to be minded to take to full Council that Committee wish to proceed with a town wide and majority of town option. This was proposed by Councillor Hennessy, seconded by Councillor Long and carried with 1 abstention.

Chris Bagshaw clarified Committee wished to take the choice of majority of town or whole town to Full Council in January. It was agreed that of the 4 point options appraisal that was explored by the feasibility study the preference is that full Council either choses between town wide or majority of town or proceeds with those two options and then engages with CCC. At this point Councillor Archibald expressed his understanding that it had been agreed to go ahead with the whole town option. The Chair's understanding was a recommendation for the option of whole or majority was to be put forward. A general discussion then ensued and the Chair opened to proposals. Councillor Evans was not against town wide but said she would rather have 90% of the cake in 2 years than 100% in 5 years. Wished to get as much done as soon as possible. Councillor Hennessy said ideally he would wish to see all of town, but acknowledged this may not be feasible for certain reasons but didn't want to end up with nothing. Councillor Archibald suggested if there was doubt about going ahead with full town Committee should proceed with the majority of town option. Councillor Rowley proposed that the preference of the Committee is to go for the whole town option but if that fails at full Council then they would support the second option. Councillor Long supported town wide but felt it would unachievable on certain road. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Hennessy and carried with 1 abstention.

It was agreed to consider funding later in the agenda under Development Fund Proposals.

RECOMMENDATION That Committee's preference is for Full Council to support a 20mph limit across the whole town. Should that not be agreed Committee would support the second option of the majority of town.

447/20/21

DEVELOPMENT FUND PROPOSALS

Town Centre Defib

Councillor Hennessy explained BT had been approached with regard to the phone box soon to be removed from outside McDonalds. Original idea was to use it as some kind of display purpose for notifications, a mini library etc. BT advised unless used as a defib it

would be removed. There is no defib in the town centre so it would be beneficial. Councillor Archibald advised London Heart have offered to contribute £200 and offered to match this from his SLDC grant. Suggested further match funding could be sought. The cost of £1,600 is based on the cost of the Oxenholme defib.

Councillor Rowley made the point that this is the end of town where emergency services is based. He asked whether it would be quicker to call emergency services or use the defib.

Councillor Gibson pointed out that the Oxenholme project utilised an existing defib located in the Post Office. Only relocation costs were required.

Councillor Cornthwaite raised the potential for vandalism in that location.

Chris Bagshaw commented that, as a former first responder, the recommendation would be for timely use of a defib ahead of an ambulance. Using the two together save lives.

Councillor Archibald will forward information to the Project Manager in respect of reduced prices for defibs available from London Heart.

Councillor Cornthwaite asked whether housing a defib inside McDonalds would be an option. The Chair agreed this would be a plan B, however First Responders might have a view on 24/7 access.

Citizens Jury Recommendations Task Force

The Chair introduced this item. Kendal is the only town to pull off a Citizens Jury and it's been achieved during a pandemic. There needs to be some resource put behind it. Making sure the subset of jurors who want to continue to put heat on the 27 recommendations are supported. It would involve commissioning Peter Bryant's organisation, so rather than KTC turning to other tiers of Government the jurors would do it themselves. There is a strong piece of advocacy to do that. The funding requested goes across 3 years. The notion is that the next oversight panel is the final one, whilst it functions really well it has served its purpose.

Councillor Archibald pointed out he has been involved in this project since the outset and has always been very enthusiastic, but had envisaged this as a task and finish who would come back with "this is what we think you should do". He understood KTC would take responsibility for whatever it could then request SLDC/CCC etc to implement what they could. The Chair replied that there is a need to ensure the jurors keep the heat under KTC and KTC in turn to other organisations that might be best positioned to effect change. So for transport for example Highways are the lead authority so they would have someone on the task force, for housing it might look different and for planting trees.

Councillor Hennessy said KTC should be proud of its achievements. He urged everyone to look at the recommendations, commenting that there is some innovative and surprising content. His concern related

to budget and he asked Committee to consider whether the funding request is sufficient, in order to avoid requesting further funds at a later date.

Councillor Rowley said, having seen the recommendations and being involved in some of the discussions around them, he was excited this was going to be a lot more than just a lot of recommendations which some people take on board and some don't. Some of the ideas are quite fundamental, not only to the environment, but the way we work with the public. He gave an example of the idea for a series of TED talks, perhaps leading to a climate festival in Kendal in a few years' time. He thought the cost was cheap considering what we are achieving with it. Bringing the jurors on board is really important as they bring with them a sense of authenticity and that's the only thing which will make these recommendations happen – he felt it was important to have the jurors seen in public on Zoom talking about their experience.

Councillor Archibald expressed his opinion that money would be better spent on organising the TED talks, climate festival etc not funding jurors to attend meetings to encourage us to do these things. He suggested they be asked to carry out this role voluntarily. The Chair said members of the oversight panel have been really clear the jurors should be retained. Councillor Archibald commented that it is tax payers' money and he needed to be convinced.

Councillor Edwards had noticed comments on Facebook incorrectly connecting the jury with the river ways and advised caution in ensuring the correct message gets out.

Councillor Rowley said the amount paid to jurors is relatively small in comparison to the whole – approx £400 per year, less than £1,000 to pay the jurors. The bulk was to pay Shared Future and whilst he is not normally in favour of KTC paying external bodies, in this case the jury was run by Shared Future and Pete Bryant at half to two thirds of his normal rate. What he offers is the ability to maintain our link with a national network and maintain our link with jurors in a way that is protected.

Councillor Archibald's understanding was that we were asking for money in order to organise and pay some of the jurors to monitor the actions that we and others would be taking based on the recommendations. He felt that should be the role of KTC and we should therefore be directing money towards implementing some of the recommendations. The Chair replied that as elected members we are uniquely positioned to have a blind spot around democratic deficit that these kind of bodies are intended to address.

Helen Moriarty acknowledged Councillor Archibald's point but felt what was missing in the paper was the influence the jury has which is more than KTC might have on its own. The idea is that if the other committees and organisations that make up the oversight panel are attending a twice yearly meeting with the jury that might help to motivate them and action the recommendations.

Belmont Biodiversity Garden

This is a proposal for disused land at the end of Belmont. The Fellside Forum wish to make a diversity patch. They are providing some funding, along with Councillor Archibald. Question was raised as to whether this should fall under Biodiversity Grants. There is a further patch to be turned into a biodiversity area too. Fellside Forum have a history of success with such projects.

Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership

Councillors Rowley and Blackman represent KTC on the Canal Regeneration Group. The main objective is to bring a cycle active travel route from Lancaster to Kendal. There have been lots of delays over the years, the group is now managed by Morecambe Bay Partnership. Part of the funding is in doubt relating to an extra contribution towards a feasibility study for a high quality path for the whole route. That would be a maximum contribution for whole route, KTC are really only concerned with our end of the route so that could be reduced.

Councillor Archibald highlighted that SLDC allocated £140k towards this route. Councillor Rowley advised this funding is still being held specifically for the work at our end, particularly a drainage issue.

Councillor Archibald raised the matter of the annual partners' fee and asked whether this is something KTC normally pay and have budgeted for. Helen Moriarty was not sure whether this was an additional amount or which budget it would come from but could check.

The Chair commented that the canal is a wonderful part of our heritage and it is exciting for KTC to be involved.

Kendal Composting Project

Councillor Rowley talked about this project which has 3 phases. The proposed plot of land is next to the existing waste recycling depot, at the entrance to the allotments by the tow path. It is leased to KTC by SLDC and was felt to be the best site as it is unused and has very good accessibility. First phase is an application for biodiversity funds for £500 for a feasibility study. If that failed the rest of the money would not be sought. The purpose is to engage someone to assess whether or not phases 2 and 3 are feasible. Phase 2 is what this funding is for, opening up the site and putting in some simple boxes for different types of compostable, initially compostables which are already there from our own town council operation via Pierre, plus beginning to establish something for the heavier waste from allotments etc. Part of phase 2 would be the payment for the management of that to apply for national grants for phase 3, involving the purchase of an aerobic digester at a cost of approximately £7k.

Councillor Hennessy was supportive and queried timings. He was advised that results from the feasibility study should be available early in the New Year. Funding is being applied for now to ensure we are in a position to proceed if the feasibility says it is viable.

Councillor Dunlop queried whether the feasibility would look at any threat of increased rat population as there are already concerns in that location about rats. Councillor Rowley advised that the type of composting in phase 2 is not attractive to rats. Only phase 3 introduces food waste and this would be entirely enclosed in an aerobic digester.

Councillor Long asked whether this would be moveable should a more aspirational project come along. Councillor Rowley said it would not be difficult to move to another site.

Councillor Evans asked how the site would be managed. Councillor Rowley advised phase 2 would be managed by KTC since the only waste would be our own. Phase 3 would require somebody to be on site every day and collect food from local businesses. Access to the site has been considered and whilst there is often a queue at the moment, this varies during the day and the recycling centre closes at 4pm.

Kendal Walking and Cycling Local Infrastructure Plan

The Chair highlighted that since the pandemic the Department for Transport has upped its game on active travel. There is now a whole new active travel policy and every local authority is responsible for highways. If they want to be in receipt of infrastructure monies for active travel they have to be in receipt of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Somervell Garden

Councillor Hennessy talked about this bid and explained that this area is one of the few areas of green space in Kendal that we have any control over. In 2005 there was a proposition for it to become a sensory garden. It was given the ok by SLDC and KTC but didn't materialise. KTC manage and pay towards it but it has potential to be more. Councillor Hennessy suggested there should be a set pot for biodiversity each year, as previously discussed.

Castle Pump Bike Track

Councillor Hennessy referred to the recent presentation to Committee by Jane Willis. There are 320 members on a social media page and a survey suggests 98% are positive and feel this is something Kendal should have. There are a lot of different ideas and several previous attempts have failed. Help will be required from SLDC in sourcing some land. It is important to show some support and a task force will be set up. Some initial costs are inevitable and Councillor Hennessy suggested money be put aside in this respect. Councillor Edwards considered it to be a great idea, commenting that it is now an Olympic sport and we should be encouraging young people.

Kendal Flood Relief Scheme, Improved Connectivity Project

Councillor Cornthwaite said this is following on from receipt of funding of £1.5k which was gratefully received. This shows the overall scheme – looking to connect these public realm areas and river corridor with a decent surface track. They won't all be classed as cycle routes because of the implications involved, so this is to get the

best surface possible. Councillor Cornthwaite explained this particular area was owned by SLDC and said an area has been highlighted on the east bank, the river Kent at the bottom of Mintsfeet Industrial Estate which is currently owned by private land owner. There would be a missing link in this connection between Beezon Fields and biodiversity green public realm works that the EA are going to carry out in that area and one at the Sandy Bottoms area. This won't come to fruition through the EA as they are not carrying out any work in that area. The working group has carried out negotiation with the land owner and the Architect has advised an approximate figures of £50-80k to make this section happen. There has been correspondence with Network Rail about the section that goes under the bridge over the river Kent. This area is not very user friendly for people who are not surefooted. It is still owned by SLDC and the proposal is to raise funding to make this missing link section part of the overall scheme, along with working with the EA. A more comprehensive document will be made available to the press and public.

20mph

Earlier in the meeting it had been agreed to consider whether to submit a development fund bid for the 20mph scheme. Councillor Archibald commented that he would not expect SLDC or CCC to agree to provide funding without some contribution from KTC. He considered earmarking a minimum of £5k would be appropriate. This would be in addition to the approximate sum of £4,200 remaining in the 20's plenty budget currently.

At this point the Chair asked Chris Bagshaw what the implication would be if Committee recommended the whole package to Full Council. Would it have precept implications? Chris Bagshaw advised that Management and Full Council could always trim down the bids if they deemed necessary.

Councillor Archibald suggested moving the two biodiversity projects to the biodiversity pot. He said if it was necessary to raise the precept for the 20mph scheme, flood relief scheme etc he would be willing to stand behind these projects.

It was proposed by Councillor Archibald and seconded by Councillor Cornthwaite that the two biodiversity projects be moved to the biodiversity pot.

Councillor Cornthwaite proposed that the full package of development fund bids, minus the two biodiversity projects, be recommended to Full Council. In respect of the 20mph scheme, the underspend would roll over plus an additional £5k. This was seconded by Councillor Hennessy and carried unanimously.

A weighted score system will be prepared by the Management Committee and put to Full Council. Councillor Archibald commented that previously the Environment & Highways Committee had not scored highly.

RESOLVED

That the two biodiversity projects be moved to the biodiversity pot.

RECOMMENDATION That the full package of development fund bids, minus the two biodiversity projects, be recommended to Full Council

448/20/21

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

- Burning rubbish
- Flood scheme press release
- Reasons for 20mph
- Citizen's Jury

449/20/21

REVIEW OF SPEND AGAINST BUDGET 2020/21

Members considered the Budgetary Control Statement showing expenditure to 31st October 2020.

Councillor Evans referred to her previous request for a litter bin at Castle Crescent some time ago and asked for an update. It was agreed she will liaise with Helen Moriarty and take forward as a piece of Ward work.

Green wall project – whilst commitment is shown costs are expected.

Kendal Leaflet Series - it was concluded at the last meeting to take this item to the Management Committee.

450/20/21

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

January 2021 (tbc).

The meeting closed at 9.57pm.

Summary of Information, Resolutions and Recommendations to Council

Min	Subject	Information/Resolution/Recommendation to Council	
443	Burning Rubbish	RES	Chris Bagshaw to arrange a newsletter article. Also liaise with Allotments Committee re signage on allotment sites.
445	Table of Resolved Actions	RES	That a task and finish group be set up to score bids for Biodiversity Grants and decide which awards are made.
446	20mph	REC	That Committee's preference is for Full Council to support a 20mph limit across the whole town. Should that not be agreed Committee would support the second option of the majority of town.
447	Development Fund Proposals	RES	That the two biodiversity projects be moved to the biodiversity pot.
		REC	That the full package of development fund bids, minus the two biodiversity projects, be recommended to Full Council