

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
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Minutes of the meeting of the Mayoralty and Arts Committee held on Monday, 24 October 2022 at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Cllr J Brook	Absent	Cllr S Coleman	Absent
Cllr J Dunlop (Vice-Chair)	Present	Cllr L Hendry	Apologies
Cllr D Rathbone (Chair)	Present	Cllr M Severn	Apologies
Cllr G Tirvengadam	Present		

In attendance: Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk) and Inge Booth (Democratic Services Assistant).

MA11/2022 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs L Hendry and M Severn.

MA12/2022 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised under this item.

MA13/2022 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

No items were considered for exclusion.

MA14/2022 Minutes from the Last Meeting

Resolved: To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Mayoralty and Arts Committee held on 11 July 2022 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.

MA15/2022 Review of Spend against Budget

The Town Clerk presented the Committee's budget monitoring report (actual year to date month 7) for 2022/23, drawing attention to the new format which presented the information by both expenditure and cost centre. He explained that the Council had never previously disaggregated the miscellaneous functions and expenditure and so it was difficult to show exact details on spend in this area. He referred to the money put aside for the coach trip to Rinteln and informed Members that only one Member had taken up this opportunity (the Chair referred to Resolution (3), Minute No.MA5/2022, of the previous meeting and explained that he would be unable, after all, to attend the October event in Rinteln).

Members noted that only £173 had been spent on mayoral travel to date and that this was likely to increase at Quarter 1.

Resolved: To note the budget monitoring report (Actual Year to Date Month 7) for 2022/23.

MA16/2022 Kendal Museum

Members were asked to consider a proposal from Kendal Museum that they accessed the whole of the funds earmarked but not drawn for the current and previous two financial years, totalling £6,000. The Town Clerk explained that the funding had been allocated prior to Covid at a time when the Town Council had a greater link with the Museum, as well as responsibility for the building, and that it had been successfully earmarked for two years and was ringfenced.

Members wished to know how this money was going to be spent and it was suggested that the Museum should be asked to make a presentation at the next Full Council meeting in December. In addition, the Committee felt that it would be appropriate for Members to be provided with a familiarisation tour of the Museum, particularly given the fact that they were trustees of the building. The Chair drew attention to the fact that he had recently asked the Museum for details on current and forthcoming offers but that he had heard nothing back; he was keen for a start on some sort of engagement.

Resolved:

- (1) Approval be given for Kendal Museum to access the earmarked funding totalling £6,000.
- (2) Kendal Museum be asked to make a presentation to the next Full Council meeting in December.
- (3) Kendal Museum be asked to arrange a familiarisation tour of the Museum for Kendal Town Councillors as trustees of the building.

MA17/2022 Twinning

The Committee was being asked to consider any issues relating to the Town's twinning arrangements with Killarney and Rinteln.

The Chair informed Members that he and his Consort had attended the Alstadfest event in Rinteln in August. This had been a very successful event and he had returned with a number of gifts which had been put on display in the Town Hall. The return visit to Kendal by representatives from Rinteln, as well as the German Consul General, had also gone very well, with all having enjoyed and having been thoroughly impressed with the Torchlight Festival. These visits had been arranged in order to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of and to re-affirm the Kendal and Rinteln twinning. In addition, the Chair reported that the Lakes Gospel Choir were on their way to Rinteln today. Both Towns were keen to re-commit to the twinning following Covid and the Chair, referring to a recent meeting of the Association, drew attention to the aspirations for the coming together of hobby groups and societies in both Towns, in relation to, for example, model railway and inter-faith groups.

The Committee went on to discuss the twinning relationship with Killarney which appeared to have broken down somewhat now that Killarney Town Council no longer existed. The Town Clerk suggested that he should contact Kerry County Council to find out if they were in support of the twinning arrangement and who exactly he needed to talk to with a view to bringing a report back to Committee. In response to a query, he informed Members that Killarney were invited to Kendal Town Council events but that they did not attend.

The Committee talked about options moving forward in the event that the relationship with Killarney could not be resurrected and also discussed whether there was still an international drive for twinning. The Town Clerk explained that the EU had originally been keen for twinning arrangements, that there had been plenty of funding available and that there had

been dedicated officers in this regard; it had been felt that lessons could be learnt and information shared between foreign municipalities.

The Chair raised the potential for the Town Council to pay expenses for future mayoral trips to Rinteln and also to encourage and subsidise Council Members wishing to visit the Town. The Town Clerk suggested that a coach should be sent annually, taking, for example, sports clubs, choirs or orchestras.

Resolved:

- (1) To receive the verbal update.
- (2) The Town Clerk to contact Kerry County Council to find out if they are in support of the twinning arrangement between Kendal and Killarney and to establish who exactly it is that he needs to talk to and to report back to a future meeting of the Committee.

MA18/2022 Town Council Collection

The Chair referred to Resolutions (2) and (3) Minute No.MA6/2022 of the last meeting of the Committee and raised the fact that Members had not yet received a copy of the catalogue of the Council's artefacts with thumbnails and that nor had a tour of the Mayor's Parlour and Picture Store yet been arranged for Members. He asked the Town Clerk to follow this up.

Members were being asked to consider whether there should be a process for the loaning out of artworks from the store, particularly considering if rules might be required for securing limited public access.

The Town Clerk referred to a recent request from a private individual to borrow a small painting by Cuthbert Rigby to hang in their home. He indicated that whilst the Town Council did loan items to museums which already housed pieces of value, he had reservations with regard to the loaning out of items to private individuals. Members asked the Town Clerk to provide a list of what items were currently on loan.

Members discussed the potential of people being able to benefit from the Town Council's collection of art and whether there was a safe and equitable way in which to achieve this. Members were keen to enable more people to access the works and to develop a set of suitable criteria by which to achieve this. It was noted that previous mayors had swapped items displayed within the Parlour and that this could also be done throughout the Town Hall building. The need to involve all Members of the Council was raised, initially by getting them interested through the provision of the catalogue with thumbnails. The Town Clerk pointed out that some works were more suitable for display than others.

Further raised was the potential for disposal of some of the items, with the proceeds being used to fund art related projects. The Town Clerk raised potential legal aspects in relation to disposal of capital assets.

In response to a query as to why the Council wished to retain old mayoral portraits, the Town Clerk pointed out that the majority of Art UK's portfolio consisted of old mayoral portraits from the 19th century. This was a distinctive municipal art collection and he raised the question as to where the Town Council sat in this. The need to raise awareness of the existence of the Mayor's Parlour and contents was raised and it was noted that more directional signage was required within the Town Hall lobby. Also raised was the need for the District Council to be approached with regard to the display of Town Council artworks within the Town Hall, particularly with the impending cessation of the District Council in

around five months' time. The need for suitable legal documentation, as well as a list of what items were currently hung by the District Council, was raised.

The Committee felt that once all Members had been provided with the catalogue of what existed and what was actually suitable for display, consideration could then be given to an appropriate policy. With regard to the request from the private individual wishing to borrow a piece of artwork, it was suggested that they should be advised that the Council would be reviewing its display and policy over the next 12 months.

Discussion further took place with regard to Minute No.MA8/2022 of the previous meeting of the Committee and Resolutions (1) and (2) regarding the reinstatement of the rolls of honour in the Town Hall atrium and provision to Members with a copy of the list of names of those Kendalians who fell in World War II. The Town Clerk indicated that he had just three names so far and that moving stories were being collated, albeit rather slowly. The Chair referred to the need for the inclusion of people from Oxenholme on the Natland memorial.

Resolved:

- (1) To receive the verbal report.
- (2) The Mayor's Attendant to send to all Members of the Committee a copy of the catalogue of the Council's artefacts, including thumbnails, and indicating which items are suitable for display.
- (3) The Town Clerk to provide the Committee with a list of what Town Council artworks are currently out on loan.
- (4) The Town Clerk to consider a suitable lease agreement regarding what is displayed by South Lakeland District Council, together with an audit of what works are currently displayed by the District Council.
- (5) A tour of the Mayor's Parlour and Picture Store be arranged for all Members on rising of a Full Council meeting, publicising the aim for Members to come back to the Mayoralty and Arts Committee with any suggestions.
- (6) The Town Clerk to make arrangements for a sign to the Mayor's Parlour in the Town Hall entrance.

MA19/2022 Civic Regalia and Insignia

The Chair provided a brief verbal update on the Mayoral Chain informing the Committee that it was currently in Birmingham for repair and was due to be collected early in November 2022. Following discussion at the last meeting (Minute No.MA7/2022) regarding the Town Council's motto wearing off the chain, a photograph had been sent to the jewellers and this also was being refurbished as part of the repair. A chain box was also to be provided and the total cost was to be £4,000. Quotes were awaited in relation to boxes for the charters and the refurbishment of the Town Council's smaller jewels.

Resolved: To note the verbal update.

MA20/2022 Civic Events Programme

Members were asked to consider the Civic Events Programme for the remainder of the current cycle and the next (copies circulated at the meeting) and to make any necessary decisions and recommendations.

The Town Clerk explained that there was a lot contained within the Programme, that the Events Officer was new in post and that as she grew in experience, things would become easier. He further referred to challenges relating to events as a result of the need for liaison with District Council colleagues, and explained how the Events Advisory Group including membership from a number of tiers worked in order to meet required standards, with the District Council having responsibility for overseeing events management, in particular where events took place on District Council land.

The Town Clerk sought guidance on which month to hold the 2023 Charity Dinner, and it was felt that this should take place in February, with early discussion with the Events Manager on a suitable venue and numbers. It was noted that the Coronation of the King had been set for 6 May 2023, and it was suggested that the Annual Meeting take place on 8 May, with the Mayor Making on 18 May. Some discussion took place with regard to Mayor's Sunday which currently appeared twice on the Programme, in March and in July, with timings having become out of synch due to Covid lockdowns. It was raised that Civic Sunday was traditionally an opportunity to introduce the new Mayor and councillors to the Town following local elections and Members expressed a wish for only the July date to be retained.

The Town Clerk indicated to Members the need for the Town Council to sharpen up Council promotion and social media which he would address later in the meeting when considering the 2023/24 Budget.

Thoughts turned to the Coronation and preparation for the event. The Town Clerk had not yet received any information on this, however, assumed that there would be a beacon lighting, and attention was drawn to the need to ensure that this ran smoothly. It would be the Christmas Lights and Festivals Committee that would give consideration as to what these celebrations would entail and the need for liaison by that Committee with the Mayoralty and Arts Committee was stressed.

The Town Clerk reported that the Events Officer, supported by two other officers, was in the midst of preparations for the Christmas Lights Switch-on event which was now being teamed with the Kendal Mountain Festival.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the report.
- (2) To alter the Programme as per discussion outlined above, with the Charity Dinner to be held in February and Mayor's Sunday in July.

MA21/2022 Exhibitions

The Committee was asked to consider how it could develop a sustainable Exhibition Programme and what that Programme might include. Previously, in the last ten years, the Council had delivered, amongst other things, the works of Cuthbert Rigby and on the impact of the First World War, using artefacts from the Council's collection. The Council had expressed an ambition to develop this aspect of its collection, but the impact of Covid and the regeneration of the Town Hall had effectively curtailed any activity for three years. The Committee now had the opportunity to reflect on this and consider whether it was in a position to plan or fund a further exhibition.

The Chair reminded the Committee that, at the last meeting of the Committee, Members had raised the potential for something around the theme of Kendal's links with the slave trade.

The Town Clerk sought Members' views on exactly what type of exhibition was required, where this should take place and as to whether this should be a passive display or an event, suggesting that a corridor lining of a series of banners and wall posters together with a series of talks by the Mayor's Attendant and Special Project Officer may be appropriate.

Discussed was the idea of an exhibition that reflected the importance of the 18th and 19th centuries; the importance of the wool and snuff industries and the wealth created; abolition of the slave trade; the use of Kendal's hard-wearing cloth for colonies; and how the liberal traditions of the town developed. This history could be detailed through the prism of the Town Council's collection.

The Town Clerk felt that a period of around six months' research would be required and it was suggested, therefore, that the exhibition, could take place as part of the Unity Festival in June.

Resolved: The Town Clerk to commence on research with regard to arranging an exhibition on Kendal's links with the slave trade to take place in June 2023.

MA22/2022 Wine Provision for Kendal Town Council Events

The Committee was asked to consider a report on how the Town Council purchased wine for its events with a view to reviewing and potentially changing priorities. The current position was that, Kendal being a Fair Trade Town, all of the refreshments provided at Council events were supposed to be Fair Trade. The issue was that Fair Trade wine was from South Africa and Chile and so was potentially more environmentally harmful than other options, one of which was to purchase wines that were identified as carbon neutral and which could be sourced from Majestic wines.

Members discussed the matter and options at some length. The Committee was mindful of both Fair Trade parameters and the need to have regard to the Climate Emergency and felt comfortable in leaving decisions on the purchase of wine to officers, as in the past. The Town Clerk suggested that the Town Council needed to be able to justify what it was doing and promote the purchase of Fair Trade items as much as possible, in relation to, for example, tea, coffee and sugar. As regards wine, there was a need for cognisance with regard to Fair Trade and the Climate Emergency and, where this was not possible, then local providers should instead be supported. In addition, whilst there was a need for value for money, there was also a need to recognise that cheapest was not necessarily best. With reference to a suggestion for the purchase of British wine only, it was raised that this would be too expensive and that there was no British producer of red wine. It was suggested, therefore, that local wine merchants might be approached with a view to sampling what was on offer.

The Town Clerk felt that the discussion had provided enough direction to enable officers to draw up guidelines.

Resolved: Based on discussion above, officers to draw up an appropriate policy and guidelines with regard to the purchase of wine for Town Council events.

Note – At 9.05 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.

MA23/2022 Budget 2023-24

Note – During consideration of this item, Cllrs J Dunlop and D Rathbone declared pecuniary interests with regard to the Mayoral Allowance Budget. The Town Clerk, as Proper Officer, therefore, duly granted the two Members dispensation for this meeting to consider and vote on the matter in order for the meeting to remain quorate and due to it being in the interests of the Council and persons living in Kendal to despatch the business of the Committee.

The Committee gave consideration to the budgetary provision for the next Financial Year (2023/24).

The Town Clerk referred to the Mayor Making and Torchlight Budget lines, suggesting that these should each increase by £2,000 in 2023/24, with a decrease in the Miscellaneous Functions and Expenses Budget line in order to compensate. He also suggested that the Committee may wish to consider the creation of a small, specific budget to spend on entertainment. He drew attention to the fact that £2,000 currently remained in the Exhibitions Budget, and sought the Committee's thoughts on how this should be dealt with and as to whether that Budget should alter for 2023/24.

The Town Clerk highlighted the fact that the information contained within the Budget paper at Agenda Item No.5 (Minute No.M15/2022 above refers) was as at Month 7 of 2021/22 and so was somewhat out of date.

Discussion took place on Mayoral Travel and the Chair pointed out that the two trips to Rinteln took up a large part of the allocation of £800. The Town Clerk suggested that the costs of the visits to Rinteln should be shared between the Mayoral Travel Budget and the Twinning Budget.

Consideration was also given to the need for funding of around £3,000 to put towards the Town Council's corporate image, for example for pop up banners, Town Council crests, draper banners and Parlour labelling, and it was suggested that £2,000 could be taken from the Management Budget (Miscellaneous) for these purposes. Further raised was the need for the purchase of three polo shirts bearing the Town Council crest.

The Town Clerk proposed, therefore, a final Mayoralty and Arts Budget figure for 2023/24 of £23,050, which was an increase of £3,000, with that additional figure to come from the Management Budget meaning that this could be considered as re-apportionment and not an increase.

Resolved: To approve a proposed 2023/24 Mayoralty and Arts Budget figure of £23,050 along the lines set out above, for onward submission to Full Council.

MA24/2022 Newsletter

Members were keen to see all matters discussed at the meeting featured within the Newsletter. It was further suggested that a "News in Brief" section be included within each edition.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the latest edition of the Newsletter was about to go to press and that the deadline for items for inclusion in the Spring edition would be February 2023.

Resolved: To put forward a proposal for a “News in Brief” section to be included within each edition of the Newsletter.

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.