

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
www.kendaltowncouncil.gov.uk



Minutes of the meeting of the Mayoralty and Arts Committee held on Monday, 27 March 2023, at 6.00 p.m. in the Mayor's Parlour at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

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

* Left at 7.40 p.m. during consideration of Agenda Item No.11 (Museum Provision), Minute No.MA47/2022 below.

In attendance: Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk), Simon Unsworth (Heritage Officer) and Inge Booth (Democratic Services Assistant).

MA37/2022 Apologies

An apology for absence was received and accepted from Cllr G Tirvengadam.

MA38/2022 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised under this item.

MA39/2022 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

No items were considered for exclusion.

MA40/2022 Minutes from the Last Meeting

Resolved: To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Mayoralty and Arts Committee held on 23 January 2023 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.

MA41/2022 Minute Action Sheet

The Committee considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings.

MA16/2022 (Kendal Museum) – The Heritage Officer reported that he had met with representatives of the Museum and that arrangements were being made for the familiarisation tour to take place on Tuesday, 18 April 2023, at 11.00 a.m. Details would be circulated to all Members once finalised.

MA17/2022 (Twinning) – The Town Clerk informed the Committee that he had heard nothing further from Kerry County Council with regard to the twinning arrangement between Kendal and Killarney. Further discussion would take place under Agenda Item No.12 (Twinning), Minute No.MA48/2022 below.

MA18/2022 (Town Council Collection) – With regard to arrangements for a sign for the Mayor’s Parlour door, the Heritage Officer reported that he was able to obtain a small brass plaque at a cost of £50. Members confirmed that the sign should simply read “Mayor’s Parlour”. Further discussed was the need for a sign at Town Hall ground level, with directions to the Mayor’s Parlour and the Heritage Officer undertook to discuss with the relevant Westmorland & Furness Officer appropriate signage in keeping with house style. A cautionary note was raised with regard to the future potential for a mayoral combined authority, with its own mayor.

MA22/2022 (Purchasing in relation to Kendal Town Council Events) – The Heritage Officer reported that purchases had been made for Mayor Making and other public events.

Resolved: The Heritage Officer to purchase a small brass plaque for the door to the Mayor’s Parlour at a cost of £50, to read “Mayor’s Parlour”.

Resolved: The Heritage Officer to meet with the relevant Officer at Westmorland & Furness to discuss appropriate signage for directions to the “Mayor’s Parlour” at Town Hall ground floor level, in keeping with house style.

Resolved: To note the report.

MA42/2022 Review of Spend against Budget 2022/23

The Town Clerk presented the Committee’s budget monitoring report (year to date month 12) for 2022/23. He pointed out that the figures reflected the agreed transfer from earmarked reserves for mending the Mayor’s chain.

In response to a query with regard to details in relation to the breakdown of staffing costs for individual committees, the Town Clerk explained that the old system of recharging was no longer used, with all staffing costs now being kept centrally. He suggested the possibility of reverting to recharging following the Council’s forthcoming transition.

Resolved: Following the Council’s forthcoming transition, to consider the possibility of reverting to recharging in relation to staffing costs for individual committees.

Resolved: To note the budget monitoring report (year to date month 12) for 2022/23.

MA43/2022 Council Collection – Storage, Retention and Discard Policy

The Heritage Officer provided a verbal report on the progress of the production of a policy with regard to the storage, retention and discarding of items in the Council Collection. He informed the Committee that this was a work in progress and that he had already produced a very comprehensive draft to ensure that there was flexibility as to what was specific to the Town/should be retained/sold on/etc. He stressed the fact that the Council currently had more assets than it had either storage or display space. A lot of work had been carried out in relation to a robust and recognised scoring system in relation to the policy. He hoped to bring the draft policy to the next meeting for Members to recommend the document to Full Council for adoption.

Members acknowledged that the benefit of the process was to open up the Town Council's collection to all and to allow more control of what gifts were accepted and the ability to suggest other options of County Archives or Kendal Museum. To this end, the Town Clerk drew attention to discussion which would take place under Agenda Item No.11 (Museum Provision), Minute No.MA47/2022 below. The Chair was keen to ensure that there was a change in attitude in thinking what access should be provided to the collections as opposed to were to store it.

Resolved: The final draft of the Council Collection – Storage, Retention and Discard Policy to be brought to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration for recommendation to Full Council for adoption.

Resolved: To note the verbal report.

MA44/2022 Slavery and Kendal Exhibition

The Heritage Officer provided a verbal update on progress for plans for the Slavery and Kendal Exhibition. Eight boards would be created, providing a picture of Kendal and context; details on families and individuals involved; fundamental information around, for example, tobacco and snuff; with the last board providing a round up.

The Heritage Officer had met with the two curators from Kendal Museum and had discussed the polar bear which had belonged to the Lowther family who had mostly been involved in the coal industry, however, had had earlier links to slavery. He explained that he had received no further input from Members, and so would now be writing up the information he already had, with a view to having it verified by someone academic with the correct historic knowledge. Consideration also needed to be given as to where the display should be housed.

Members stressed the need to ensure that the exhibition was not focussed on the negative side of slavery but that it was a relatively passive exhibition, demonstrating how slavery and Kendal merged together. With regard to where to place the display, it was suggested that the Brewery Arts Centre may be appropriate, particularly if timed to be displayed at the same time as the Unity Festival. The Heritage Officer undertook to make enquiries with the Brewery, pointing out that he should at least be able to prepare a leaflet publicising the event by that time, with a trail aimed at primary school children. He stressed the importance of ensuring that what was produced was correct.

Also raised were the exhibition's links to the Heritage Officer's talks in the Town Hall and to Anti-Racist Cumbria. In addition, the potential for the inclusion of something in relation to modern slavery on the boards was raised. The Heritage Officer explained his intention to include the fact that slavery was an ongoing issue, as well as the fact that this year it was 200 years since the anti-slavery movement.

Suggested was the need also for Cllr J Dunlop to meet with the Heritage Officer.

Resolved: The Heritage Officer to make enquiries with the Brewery Arts Centre with regard to display of the exhibition.

Resolved: The Heritage Officer to prepare a leaflet to publicise the event during the Unity Festival, together with a trail aimed at primary school children.

Resolved: to include information regarding modern slavery, as outlined above.

Resolved: The Heritage Officer to meet with Cllr J Dunlop to discuss the exhibition.

Resolved: To note the verbal update.

MA45/2022 Mayor Making and Town Assembly

The Committee was asked to consider the arrangements for Mayor Making 2023 and for the parish meeting or Town Assembly, which had to be held between 1 March and 1 June. Dates had been agreed for Mayor Making to take place on 18 May in the Assembly Room, with the Annual Town Assembly and launch of the Town Plan to take place at 7.00 p.m. on 22 May, potentially in the Kendal Town Council Chamber. Details would be publicised through press releases, social media, flyers, etc. The relevant staff had been appraised and would be available as necessary, with the Events Officer arranging invitations. The need to involve both Cllrs J Dunlop and C Russell was raised.

Resolved: To note arrangements for Mayor Making 2023 and the Annual Town Assembly.

Resolved: To ensure that Cllrs J Dunlop and C Russell are involved in arrangements.

MA46/2022 Town Hall Signage

This item had been dealt with under Agenda Item No.5 (Minute Action Sheet), Minute No.MA41/2022 above.

MA47/2022 Museum Provision

The Committee was asked to consider any actions required to support museum provision in Kendal.

The Town Clerk referred to a recent discussion held with representatives from Lakeland Arts. It was felt that there was work to be carried out with regard to co-ordination of Kendal's museum provision and various collections between Kendal Museum and Lakeland Arts, with involvement from the Town Council and the Westmorland & Furness Library Service.

Attention was drawn to the fact that nowhere actually told the story of Kendal and the potential to create a trail leaflet, including information relating, for example, to tenter hooks, Bowling Fell, snuff, K Shoes, etc., was raised. Also raised was the need to bring on board the relevant Westmorland & Furness portfolio holders and officers. To this end, it was suggested that a meeting should be initiative between relevant stakeholders, with further people being brought in following that meeting.

Members welcomed this suggested direction of travel. The Heritage Officer undertook to encourage Members to attend the visit to Kendal Museum on 18 April and the Town Clerk undertook to make the necessary arrangements for a stakeholder meeting immediately after the Torchlight event in September.

Resolved: The Heritage Officer to encourage all Town Council Members to attend the visit to Kendal Museum on 18 April 2023.

Resolved: The Town Clerk to make arrangements for a stakeholder meeting, probably after the Torchlight event in September, with a view to discussions in relation to co-ordination of Kendal's museum provision and collections, through the creation of a trail leaflet.

MA48/2022 Twinning

The Committee considered the activities and affairs of the Town's two twinning relationships.

With regard to the relationship with Killarney, the Chair advised that the Clerk had made attempts to make contact and he himself had responded to a number of communications on Facebook. The Town Clerk explained that the relationship had struggled since the abolition of Killarney Town Council. It was felt that consideration now needed to be given with regard to how to move forward.

Attention was drawn to the strong community of Ukrainians living in Kendal and the potential for developing a link with that country. The question, however, of whether the Council had the ability to do justice to a new relationship was raised, as well as the need to bring on board the whole Council and Town and District of Kendal. Various different options were discussed and the general consensus of opinion was that the Council should continue to look to foster relationships with Killarney, as well as looking at options for twinning in the future.

The Town Clerk suggested a need in future for reports to be submitted by Kendal's twin towns.

Attention was drawn to the fact that Rinteln were hoping to bring four representatives to Mayor Making in May and also to a virtual quiz due to be held at 3.00 p.m. on 19 April between Rinteln and Kendal.

Resolved: To continue to look to foster relationships with Killarney, as well as looking at options for twinning in the future.

Resolved: To make arrangements for reports to be submitted to the Council from its twin towns.

Resolved: To note that a virtual quiz is due to be held at 3.00 p.m. on 19 April 2023 between Rinteln and Kendal.

MA49/2022 Newsletter and Publicity

The Committee considered which items discussed at the meeting would be included in a press release and items for the next edition of the Council's Newsletter.

It was suggested that a press release be written in relation to the Annual Town Assembly and process for and the launch of the Kendal Plan, including the first priorities of Climate Change and Biodiversity.

It was further suggested that the next Newsletter include information on the success of the five recent Mayor's Parlour Talks, all of which were over-subscribed, with attendees having been both interested and engaged. Details in relation to future dates needed to be included, the Heritage Officer reporting his intention to hold two or three sessions in each month up until September. He also wished to encourage group bookings and for invitations to be extended to Westmorland & Furness staff.

Resolved: A press release to be written in relation to the Annual Town Assembly and process for and the launch of the Kendal Plan, as outlined above.

Resolved: The next Newsletter to include information on the success of the five recent Mayor's Parlour Talks, and details with regard to future dates, also encouraging group bookings

Resolved: Invitations be extended to the staff of Westmorland & Furness to attend Parlour Talks.

The meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.