

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
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Minutes of the meeting of the Mayoralty and Heritage Committee held on Monday, 9 October 2023, at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Cllr J Brook	Present	Cllr J Cornthwaite (Vice-Chair)	Present
Cllr J Dunlop (Chair)	Present	Cllr L Hendry	Present
Cllr M Severn	Present	Cllr D Rathbone	Present
Cllr C Russell	Present	Cllr G Tirvengadam	Present
One Vacancy			

In attendance: Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk) and Simon Unsworth (Heritage Officer)

MH1/2023 Apologies

All members were present.

MH2/2023 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised under this item.

MH3/2023 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

There were no excluded items on the agenda.

MH4/2023 Minutes from the Last Meeting

Resolved: To receive the minutes of the meeting of the former Mayoralty and Arts Committee held on 19 June 2023 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a true record.

MH5/2023 Minute Action Sheet

The Committee considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings of the former Mayoralty and Arts Committee. The Heritage Officer reported that the plaque for the Parlour door was in abeyance because he had been off work, but was now in a position to action. A quote for £350 had been received for two signs, one at the foot of the stairs and one on the door. It had been suggested that Westmorland and Furness Council be approached to contribute to this, since it was the absence of the Parlour on the main sign that prompted the requirement in the first place.

The Heritage Officer confirmed that he had received 13 or 14 members of W&FC staff in the parlour to help familiarise them with the Town Hall collection and history. This was mostly frontline reception staff and he would now widen this offer to other staff in the Town Hall and W&FC offices.

Resolved: That the Town Clerk approach W&FC for a contribution to the door plaque and direction sign.

Resolved: To note the report.

MH6/2023 New Terms of Reference

The Committee reviewed its new Terms of Reference, which had been approved by Council on 31 July 2023, to come into effect on 2 October 2023. They noted that this now included oversight of the Visit Kendal budget, and this would require some consideration in due course of the content of the leaflets.

Resolved: To note the Committee's Terms of Reference.

MH7/2023 Review of Spend against Budget 2023/24

The Committee considered the budget monitoring report, which now included figures for Visit Kendal and Kirkland banners. Queries were raised about the management of banners generally, which the Clerk would investigate and report back to members as a point of information (they mostly appear under budget lines from other committees).

Resolved: To note the budget monitoring report as at 26 September 2023.

MH8/2023 Budget Review 2024/25

The Town Clerk asked Members to give consideration to proposed budget requirements for the next financial year. There was some discussion about the Torchlight reception and the value of this event, especially now that it had more of a community focus, which councillors felt was much more in keeping with the spirit of the festival. There was a debate about whether to uplift the Mayoral Travel element, but it was felt that this was sufficient currently. Noting a proposed uplift in the region of 5.9%, it was agreed to commend the following budget to the full council.

Item	2023-24	Proposed 24-25	Change
Mayoral Allowance	5,524	5,000	-9.5%
Mayoral Travel	800	800	0%
Mayor Making	2,200	2,500	13.6%
Torchlight	1,730	2,000	15.6%
Remembrance	300	350	16.7%
Pictures & others	100	250	150%
Misc Functions and expenditure	3,170	4,000	26.2%
Twinning	1,500	1,500	0%
Exhibitions	1,000	1,000	0%
Museum	2,000	2,000	0%
Sub total	18,324	19,400	5.9%
Kirkland Banners	1,500	1,600	6.7%

Visit Kendal Leaflets	8,280	9,000	8.7%
Visit Kendal website	2,500	3,000	20%
Visit Kendal content coordinator	6,770	7,250	7.1%
Sub total	19,050	20,850	9.5%
Total	37,374	40,250	7.7%

The Art and Heritage Reserve would continue to have interest paid from the general reserve, and it was noted that better rates may be available, currently. It was further suggested that the £1,000 currently allocated to the Exhibition be rolled in to next year's £1,000 allocation to bring the budget for the Exhibition back up to £2,000 in 2024-25.

Resolved: To recommend the proposed budget requirements for the next financial year, as attached to the report, for consideration by the Management Committee prior to presentation to Full Council.

MH9/2023 Slavery and Kendal Exhibition

The Heritage Officer provided a brief verbal report on progress of plans for the Slavery and Kendal Exhibition. A new date would be required for the exhibition, now he was back at work. It was suggested that it be held to tie in with the next Unity Festival which would be in June 2024. It was noted that this had been an aspiration for the 2023 Exhibition but that insufficient preparation time had been available. It was suggested that connections were made with AWAZ and Multicultural Cumbria, as well as Anti-Racist Cumbria, who had been identified as useful points of reference previously. Various venues were discussed which the Heritage Officer confirmed could now be approached with a date in mind.

Resolved: To note the verbal report and to invite AWAZ and Multiracial Cumbria to join the discussion panel advising on the Exhibition, which will be held during the Unity Festival in June 2024 (perhaps the weeks either side, also).

MH10/2023 Acquisition, Retention and Discard

The Heritage Officer provided a verbal update on progress made towards developing a priority list for acquisition, retention and discard in the collection. He explained that he was working through the catalogue to score entries, using the criteria in the policy. He stressed that this did not signal any indication of intent to dispose. There was discussion about what the criteria for retention might be if the collection reflected the ordinary lives of the working people of Kendal, rather than just the great and the good. The Committee also explored other possibilities for displaying the collection – in other parts of the Town Hall for instance. It was noted that this was the beginning of a process, that further conversations would be required with stakeholders such as the Civic Society and Westmorland and Furness Council.

Resolved: To note the verbal update. The Heritage Officer will circulate his preliminary results along with the low res version of the collection catalogue to members in due course.

MH11/2023 Museum Provision

The Chair of the Committee reported verbally on the recent meeting between stakeholders in Museum provision for Kendal. She explained that representatives from Kendal College, Kendal Futures, Lakeland Arts and Westmorland and Furness Council and Kendal Town Council presented brief sketches of their current position and their organisation's aspirations. It was noted that 9-11 Church Walk was being put up for auction by Lakeland Arts, as it no longer fitted with their plans to re-

open the Museum of Lakeland and was threatening a considerable net drain on their resources. The Director of Kendal College explained how the Kendal Museum finances worked and their relationship with the funding of the College's educational programme. He had explained that no cross subsidy was possible. Cllr Virginia Taylor, whose portfolio at W&FC covers museums, had explained that the new council was just beginning to formulate policies for Arts and Heritage across their new unitary area. The Assistant Director for Community Assets had offered staffing time to look at museum provision in Kendal, and this had been welcomed by the meeting. It had also been noted that the Archive Service and Quaker Tapestry should be considered important stakeholders on the issue. Future finance for any project or proposal was a considerable impediment to progress.

Following the Chair's report, the Committee considered points raised about the future plans of Kendal Museum and threats to its continued existence. The Committee discussed the need to reinvigorate a historic working group which at one time liaised between the former district council and the museum, and also involve the necessary stakeholders in this task. It was suggested that the W&FC officer support offered at the stakeholder meeting should be the focus to pull the various threads together on this and that the timescale should be considered to be one of some urgency.

Resolved: To note the report.

Resolved: The Town Clerk to follow up actions with W&FC.

MH12/2023 Twinning

The Chair provided a brief account of her trip to Rinteln for the Altstadt Festival, which she described as very well organised and welcoming. Recent contact with the two town's rugby clubs has suggested that there may be a sporting link developing, which would be very exciting. Stronger interest has also been picked up from friends in Killarney, suggesting there may be some movement on this relationship imminently.

Resolved: To note the verbal update.

MH13/2023 Newsletter and Publicity

The Committee was asked to consider which items discussed at the meeting, if any, would be included in a press release and, in addition, items for the next edition of the Council's Newsletter. The newsletter deadline would be early November now, as staffing challenges had necessitated a brief delay in production. The Mayor noted that many of her recent activities had been reported on Facebook.

Resolved: To liaise with officers over further newsletter items in due course.

The meeting closed at 8.49pm.