

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
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Minutes of a meeting of the Kendal in Bloom Committee held on Wednesday, 27 July 2022, at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Cllr A Blackman (Chair)	Present	Cllr K Blamire	Apologies
Cllr D Brown	Present	Cllr L Hendry	Present
Cllr R Sutton (Vice-Chair))	Present		

In attendance: Administrative Assistant (Flo McMahon), Townscape Officer (Pierre Labat) and Democratic Services Assistant (Inge Booth).

B1/2022 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr K Blamire.

B2/2022 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised.

B3/2022 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

No issues were considered for exclusion.

B4/2022 Notes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Kendal in Bloom Committee held on 13 April 2022 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.

B5/2022 Kendal in Bloom and Cumbria in Bloom Initiative

The Chair, Cllr A Blackman, presented a report from the Council Services Officer, agreeing with her comments that this had been a disappointing year for competition participation. This, he said, had been backed up by Cumbria in Bloom judges who had said that bloom initiatives had been slow to pick up in most places following Covid.

The Chair drew particular attention to the two schools, Heron Hill and St Thomas', which had participated in the schools challenge. The schools had replicated the Torchlight Theme – Scrapheap Legacy. St. Thomas' had created a caterpillar structure from plastic chairs no longer used by the school. The structure had incorporated, for example, empty plastic milk containers as labels for plants, and tractor tyres for raised beds. Heron Hill School had truly embodied their gardening project into the school curriculum, with an apiary for bees, raised beds and a polytunnel, with the children becoming very much involved. The Chair informed Members that he intended to ask the Chair of Governors at Heron Hill School if she would be willing to be co-opted onto the Kendal in Bloom Committee. He had also informally asked her if, instead of the usual Kendal in Bloom celebration in the Town Hall, this could be held

at Heron Hill School, with Jackie talking people through what had been done at the school. It was suggested that this might take place on Thursday, 15 September 2022, at 6.30 p.m.

The Chair talked about the Civic Planting throughout the Town which, he felt, looked amazing. On behalf of the Committee, he thanked the Townscape Officer for his contribution. He pointed out that the watering service organised through Continental had helped this year.

The Chair next referred to the Jubilee Bed on Aynam Road which had been opened by the Mayor on 2 June. He commended the Townscape Officer and helpers for their work which had had to be carried out at the same time as the gas works on Aynam Road. This had been the starting point for the Kendal in Bloom tour.

The Chair referred to the trees on Aynam Road which, as part of the Flood Scheme, were to be moved to Fletcher Park. The planters would also be relocated to an appropriate site. The Administrative Officer suggested that there should be some form of communication on the re-use of the trees.

The Chair provided detailed information on the Cumbria in Bloom judges' visit to Kendal on 11 July, when both he and the Council Services Officer had accompanied them on the tour. The sites visited had been the wildflower planting and Jubilee bed on Aynam Road; Heron Hill School; Rinkfield Allotments; Ford Park; Subscription Bowling Club; Victorian Fern Garden; Rosemary Lane Community Garden; Nobles Rest Park; Legendary Landscape Planter near the Library; and Unitarian Chapel Gardens. Initial feedback had been positive and the Council had been asked to provide the planting plan for the Jubilee bed which the judges wished to enter into a special award category. The Chair felt hopeful that Kendal may be invited to represent Cumbria in Britain in Bloom. The results would be known in October. The Chair emphasised the fact that biodiversity and climate change aspects had been addressed through Kendal in Bloom, for example the Townscape Officer's composting project and recycling. More such initiatives would be pushed for, and the Chair drew attention to the Committee's support to community groups within the Town. He was keen in time to come to see a community garden in the centre of Kendal run by volunteers, a focal point for people to become involved in. He felt that Chair of Governors at Heron Hill School would be happy to offer her support in such a project.

The Committee considered a number of points which were included within the report, firstly with regard to the merits of extending the wildflower planting to include the whole grass verge at Aynam Road. The Chair felt that this was worth of expansion.

With regard to a suggestion for wildflower planting on the roundabout at Asda, it was felt that this could be a great improvement to what existed, with the Kirkbie Kendal School roundabout being referred to as a good example.

The Council Services Officer had indicated enthusiasm for this year's colour scheme for the civic planting regime which had steered away from the traditional vivid colours, with use of more subtle colours.

The last point included in the report was regarding the re-evaluation and clarification of the aim for the Kendal in Bloom 2023 initiative, and the Chair suggested that this be included as an item on the Committee's October agenda.

Members of the Committee felt that a further report should be brought to the October Committee on proposals and costings around the extension of the wildflower planting at Aynam Road and on the Asda roundabout, and also regarding the colour scheme for the civic planting regime and the Kendal in Bloom 2023 initiative.

The Townscape Officer further sought agreement to the principle of extending planting on Finkle Street nearby to the three benches next to the former Beales store, however, the Chair indicated that it would be appropriate to wait until the future of the birdcage at the top of Finkle Street was known following recent damage to the structure.

Resolved:

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) arrangements be made for the Kendal in Bloom Celebration to be held at Heron Hill School on Thursday, 15 September 2022, at 6.30 p.m., with Jackie Cotton talking people through what had been done at the school; and
- (3) further reports to be brought to the October Committee on:-
 - (a) proposals and costings around the extension of the wildflower planting at Aynam Road and on the Asda roundabout;
 - (b) the colour scheme for the civic planting regime; and
 - (c) the Kendal in Bloom 2023 initiative.

B6/2022 Kendal in Bloom Portfolio

The Chair, Cllr A Blackman, introduced the Kendal in Bloom Portfolio which had been put together by the recently-appointed Project Officer. He explained that the Kendal in Bloom judges liked to have a Portfolio available so that they were able to see details on aspects which were not included within their tour around the Town. He informed Members that, should Kendal be invited to represent Cumbria in Britain in Bloom, the Portfolio would be developed for inclusion as part of that submission.

A query was raised with regard to the tree planting on Burneside Road detailed within the Portfolio.

Members commended the work carried out by the Townscape Officer on the window boxes at the Town Hall which had been planted up in Jubilee colours. It was recognised that in the context of the Environment Agency Flood Relief works around town the Kendal-in-Bloom necessarily focussed on parts of Kendal least affected by the works. The development of the portfolio in forthcoming months needed to include Community projects from all around the town especially those not included on the Bloom Judges tour. The Chair raised the importance, in the forthcoming months, of keeping a watch on the new footbridge at Gooseholme and the potential to soften the view with landscaping in the surrounding area.

Resolved:

- (1) to note the Kendal in Bloom Portfolio 2022;
- (2) to convey the Committee's thanks to the Project Officer for her work on the Portfolio; and
- (3) the Townscape Officer to look into the matter regarding tree planting on Burneside Road.

B7/2022 Funding Request for Providing Replacement Trees in Woolpack Yard

The Committee considered a report from the Council Services Officer and presented by the Townscape Officer which explained that the Environment and Highways Committee had recently improved Woolpack Yard, with the inclusion of six planters containing evergreen shrubs. These had been provided with support from the “welcome pack” fund administered by the District Council. Unfortunately, the shrubs had failed to survive and had had to be removed. Professional advice had been sought and assurance provided that bay laurels could thrive in that type of environment. It was essential that careful consideration was given to a planting and watering regime. The original “welcome pack” funds were no longer available. It was, therefore, being proposed that six four to five foot bay laurel trees be installed in the Woolpack Yard planters, to be supplied and planted by a contractor. The cost for this service would be £864.00 plus VAT, and the Town Council would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance.

Resolved: To approve funding to install the trees in Woolpack Yard and the ongoing maintenance, as outlined above.

B8/2022 Review of Spend against Budget 2022/23

The Chair referred to the £8,323 remaining in the Floral Display budget and the Townscape Officer explained that watering had only been included within the contract for the first year. The Chair felt that there was still room within that budget and suggested that it be re-examined at the end of the year.

Cllr L Hendry referred to the flood alleviation works at Hallgarth and landscaping in the sunken area which would take overflow water from the estate. Cumbria Wildlife Trust were due this Autumn (late November) to complete two or three mini copses in the area, and Cllr Hendry felt that it would be nice for St Thomas’ and Stramongate School children to plant bulbs in and around these copses at the same time, with involvement from Hallgarth residents and the Townscape Officer. She suggested that this might be given further consideration at the October meeting of the Committee when more facts and findings would be available. Cllr Hendry was very keen to get local children involved. She further referred to a path which had been made by Cumbria County Council in the area and the fact that Cumbria Wildlife Trust were going to instal some decking. This would all add to the biodiversity of the area. Cllr Hendry was keen for residents to take ownership and a pride in the area, also suggesting a local litter picking session, to be arranged through Hallgarth Residents’ Association. The Chair drew attention to the fact that the Town Council was able to loan litter picking equipment and raised the need to ensure coverage on social media. He further suggested that officers be asked to look into appropriate funding for the proposed planting scheme.

The Committee was informed that the Chairman and the Townscape Officer had recently noted the starkness of the Market Place on a non-market day, particularly during the 11 months during which there was no large Christmas tree in place. This had raised the potential for the installation of a circular, sectional post where the Christmas tree stood during December, with six arms for hanging baskets. The cost of such a structure would be £1,468.35 plus VAT. The proposal had not yet been put before the Town Clerk. Members, whilst supportive of the idea, drew attention to Kendal Vision who may have plans and to the question of the potential need for planning permission. The importance of ensuring that the proposal was compatible with Kendal Vision’s long term plan was raised. It was, therefore, suggested that the matter be brought back for consideration at the October meeting of the Committee pending assessment of these issues.

The Townscape Officer further sought a sum of £400 for a double composting box, pointing out that he could see the need to make more compost.

Resolved:

- (1) to note the review of spend against budget at June 2022;
- (2) a detailed and costed proposal with regard to bulb planting at Hallgarth be brought to the October meeting of the Committee;
- (3) a detailed and costed proposal with regard to the erection of a hanging basket structure in Kendal Market Place be brought to the October meeting of the Committee; and
- (4) a sum of £400 be allocated from the Kendal in Bloom budget for a double composting box.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.