

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED

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Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on Monday, 7 June 2021 at 7.30 at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Cllr A Blackman	Present	Cllr A Finch	Absent
Cllr S Coleman	Present	Cllr S Long	Apologies
Cllr G Cook	Present	Cllr J Owen	Present
Cllr J Dunlop	Apologies	Cllr D Rathbone	Present
Cllr S Evans	Present	Cllr G Tirvengadam	Present

In attendance: Town Clerk

Also present: Cllr H Ladhams

M1/21/22 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs J Dunlop and S Long.

The Chair clarified the role of Vice Chairs on the Management Committee. It was noted that whereas the practice of a Vice Chair deputising for the Chair of a committee in their absence was fairly well established, it was unclear what the situation was if the Chair of a committee was entitled to attend because they had more than one role, for instance as Mayor, and as Chair of a committee. The Chair expressed the view that in these circumstances, the Vice Chair of the committee should represent that committee's interests on the Management Committee.

It was noted that it was for the Chair of a committee to liaise with their deputy and brief them on Management Committee matters, prior to their deputising.

Resolved: That the Council adopts the practice of Vice Chairs attending Management Committee in the circumstance that the Chair of their committee is already an ex officio member of the Management Committee.

M2/21/22 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Blackman drew the Committee's attention to his involvement with Kendal Walking Festival, and took no part in the consideration of the item relating to this.

M3/21/22 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

The Committee considered whether to exclude the press and the public from item 12, as it related to a commercially confidential matter.

Resolved: To exclude the press and public from item 12.

M4/21/22 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Council received the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2021. A query was raised as to why the Somervell Gardens project appeared under Kendal in Bloom, when actually it was an Environment & Highways matter. It was suggested that officers and the two

Committees liaise over related issues. The capital for the Somervell Gardens project came from an E&H budget.

Resolved: To accept them as a true record.

M5/21/22 Matters delegated to the Committee

The Committee considered the items which were delegated for its consideration at the meeting of the Full Council on 4 May.

Following an opportunity to question relevant Chairs, it was suggested that action points from the Committees should be accepted, but the minutes themselves would be subsequently considered by the Full Council at its next available meeting.

It considered the recommendations of the following committees

Audit Grants and Charities	26 April 2021
Planning	4, 17, 24 May 2021
Christmas Lights and Festivals	10 May 2021, including grants proposed in C9/21/22
Environment and Highways	17 May 2021

Resolved: To accept the recommendations within the scope of the Committee's delegated powers.

M6/21/22 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Committee considered a request from the Town Clerk for guidance on the matter of the date of the Council's consideration of the Annual Return. Scheduling issues arising from Covid, new ways of working, and staff changes, mean that the Council will not meet to confirm the end of year reports until Monday 5 July. The reports are required by the external auditor on 30 June, but PKF Littlejohn will not receive them until Tuesday 6 July, six days outside the regulated timeframe. The internal auditor's report was the last element of the year end report, and this was still in production. The Clerk apologised for these circumstances and explained that scheduling should be simpler in 2022, when the Pandemic and other factors should be out of the way. The external auditor had been made aware of the circumstances and would accept a late submission, though their conclusion will probably include the warning that submissions should be made within the statutory timetable. The alternative to this circumstance was that the Council convene an additional meeting with the AGAR as a single agenda item. Given that this would have to be during the last week in June, when the Government is considering the impact of the Delta variant of Covid 19, the Committee felt it was acceptable to minimise the necessity for a face-to-face meeting and delay the report by the four working days.

Resolved: That the Council submits its AGAR on Tuesday 6 July, 2021.

Resolved: That the Clerk sets out the schedule of meetings for 2022 in such a way as to ensure the Council meets its statutory timetables.

M7/21/22 Report on the Work Programme

The Committee considered a report from the Town Clerk on the Council's work programme. There was some discussion about the way in which the Council was responding to the challenges of the Covid 19 Pandemic, in relation to the schedule of meetings and the arrangements for physical, face-to-face interactions.

A query was raised about the extent of the Council's response to the apparent surge in rabbit numbers across the allotment estate. The Clerk reported that the Council Services Officer was preparing a strategy to be considered by the next meeting of the Allotments non-

statutory working group which included costing for an extension of rabbit proof external fencing across a number of sites. He further added that he thought it likely that a population surge was often followed by a rise in myxomatosis infections, in due course, which would result in a more effective reduction of the rabbit population than trapping or culling measures. He noted that the Council would not be in a position to sanction the culling of wild rabbits with firearms on Council-owned land in an urban setting.

Resolved: To note the report.

M7/21/22 Grants and Payments

The Committee considered a report on Grants and Payments from the Clerk. It proposed that the Mayor's allowance be formalised through payroll, so as to improve the its compliance with HMRC rules. It was suggested that this should also apply to the Deputy Mayor's allowance, which was currently, and for historical reasons, paid by the Mayor. There was some discussion as to how this might be carried out, but the general principle was accepted.

Resolved: To note that the Clerk as RFO had suspended use of the Council's credit card, except in very limited and authorised circumstances.

Resolved: To confirm that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's allowance be paid through payroll, and that a review of the appropriate amounts be considered as a part of the 2022-23 budget.

Resolved: To instruct the Clerk to bring a report on the policy and payment of grants to a future meeting.

M8/21/22 Refurbishment of the Town Hall

The Clerk observed that the Committee had now seen some of the new décor in the refurbished Town Hall, since this is where the meeting was taking place. He suggested that the contrast with the un-refurbished Mayor's Parlour now looked a little stark and that perhaps in due course the Council should consider budgeting to bring that room up to a modern standard, too. The Council's office administration area was still some way from completion, and he was in negotiation with colleagues at the District Council for more storage space. In the meantime, the accommodation at The Mintworks was proving very successful.

Resolved: To note the report.

M9/21/22 Democratic Services Assistant

The Clerk reported that he had received several applications for the vacancy of Democratic Services Assistant, and would like to arrange interviews as soon as possible.

Resolved: That an interview panel of Cllrs Blackman, Ladhams and Rathbone (dep Dunlop) assist the Clerk in selecting a suitable recruit.

M10/21/22 Other Staffing Matters

The Committee's attention was drawn to the requirement for the Clerk to have an appraisal after six months with the Council.

The Clerk reported no other issues for the Committee's consideration.

Resolved: That the Clerk liaises with Cllr Blackman to conduct his appropriate appraisal.

M11/21/22 Property Matters

This item was considered following the resolution to exclude the Press and the Public, due to the issue being a matter of commercial and legal confidentiality. A separate confidential record of the extended minute and resolution is kept on file.

The meeting closed at 21.09.