

Kendal Town Council

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



Minutes of a meeting of the Management Committee held on Monday, 20 May 2024, at 7.30 p.m., in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Cllr A Blackman	Present	Cllr E Hennessy	Apologies
Cllr S Coleman (Chair)	Apologies	Cllr H Ladhams	Present
Cllr J Cornthwaite	Present	Cllr S Long	Apologies
Cllr J Dunlop (Vice-Chair)	Apologies	Cllr D Rathbone	Present
Cllr A Finch	Apologies	Cllr C Russell	Present

Also present: Cllr L Hendry

Officers in attendance: Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk).

M1/2024 Election of a Chair

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Cllr Rathbone was elected to the Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Resolved: That Cllr Rathbone assume the chair for the duration of the meeting.

M2/2024 Apologies

Resolved: To receive and accept apologies for absence from Cllrs Coleman, Dunlop, Finch, Hennessy and Long.

M3/2024 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised under this item.

M4/2024 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

Resolved: Prior to consideration, to vote on moving into Part Two for consideration of Agenda Items Nos.12 (Property and Office Accommodation) and 13 (Employment and Staffing Matters).

M5/2024 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Management Committee held on 4 March 2024 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.

M6/2024 Minute Action Sheet

Members considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings. Noting the Council had committed to improving the website, a query was raised about a complaint from a resident at the last Full Council meeting that the website didn't include a copy of the agenda for the meeting until the Friday before the meeting. The Clerk explained that he had corrected this technical breach of the Transparency Code immediately, and noted that the other

elements of the meeting were lawful in the scope of the Local Government Act 1972 – councillor notice, public notice etc. Following the complaint, the Clerk had checked with both CALC and NALC that his legal position was correct. They had concurred that it was and the member of the public had been reassured. The issue highlighted the need to ensure that maintenance of the Website was a part of the Council's resilience strategy. It was suggested that the issue also highlighted concerns about the visibility of the office and the Clerk suggested this be considered under the accommodation item later.

It was suggested item 53 be removed from the list and that the Audit Committee be reminded to consider an item on Civility and Respect Self Audit at their next meeting, as this was an outstanding action.

Resolved: To note the report.

M7/2024 Council Activity Report

The Town Clerk presented a report on progress made across the various actions the Council was involved in. On the issue of the market, it was noted that the Town Team had been working on this but the report to W&FC by The Assembly Line consultants had not yet been published, so was unavailable to be shared with a wider reference group. It was suggested that once the report was published, a wider group of interested councillors, or the Culture & Communities Committee be encouraged to consider its proposals.

It was noted that the recent visit from twin-town friends from Rinteln had highlighted the absence in town of a central tourist information point. The W&FC Reception area was not available at peak times and there were currently few other places to acquire tourist information. The library was suggested, and the BID's programme with new interactive tourist information pillars was mentioned. It was suggested that all this debate should take place in the Culture & Communities Committee, who included Tourist Information and the visitor economy in their terms of reference.

It was suggested that the format of this agenda item could be improved by placing the actions under their respective plan headings, so that they could be more easily assessed for relevance and performance. This suggestion was passed back to the Chair and Vice Chair for a decision. Cllr Russell offered to assist in this.

Resolved: To note the report.

M8/2024 Budget 2024-25

The Town Clerk presented a report detailing expenditure against budget in the current year. Noting that it represented only a single month's expenditure, and explaining that the report had been distributed late, because it had to wait until the month had been closed down on the Rialtas system, he drew the Committee's attention to a couple of notable items. The Precept had been paid in by the Collecting Authority in its entirety. In previous years this has been paid in two instalments. The result was a very high cash balance in the Council's accounts, which the Finance Officer was considering how to ensure that the interest return was maximised. Secondly the money allocated to a reserve fund over four years to contribute £150,000 towards the installation of glass panels instead of concrete walls along some of the most prominent sections of the new flood defences had reached its target. The Town Council was now awaiting an invoice from Westmorland and Furness Council to draw down the funds.

An ear-marked reserve called 'Connectivity' it was noted, really belonged to a previous finance scheme, and should be drawn down by the Environment Committee to contribute to existing works on the River Corridor.

Resolved: To note the report.

M9/2024 Safeguarding Policy

The Committee gave consideration to a report on the Council's Safeguarding Policy with a view to recommending it to Council for adoption. The Clerk gave some context as a condition of funding from Cumbria Community Foundation. It was suggested that the Council subscribe to the 'Purple Book' as a base point of reference. The Clerk explained that the Council needed to improve its training and resilience in this sphere and that the policy was the first step towards that.

Resolved: To accept the report and commend the policy to the Council.

M10/2024 Community Infrastructure Levy

The Committee considered a report on the current allocation of the Community Infrastructure Levy, recent payments, and a recent request that it is used to fund footpath survey work by the railway viaduct at Beezon Fields. It was noted that this was a part of an emerging scheme, to be mostly funded by Westmorland and Furness Council, to deliver the long talked about connectivity corridor along the river.

Resolved: To allocate £15,000 from the CIL towards survey work around the gap between Beezon Fields and Mintsfeet riverside.

M11/2024 Carbon Literacy Training

The Committee was asked to consider a proposal for Carbon Literacy Training for councillors and staff. Cllr Hendry had initiated the proposal, explaining that it represented a significant step forward from the position of declaring a climate emergency. There was debate about the cost-effectiveness of the training, its application to staff or elected members and how it could contribute to the Council's understanding of the issues. It was noted that the proposal as it was presented would exceed the current budget allocation for training across the whole council.

Resolved: To ensure that new staff and those existing staff members who have not yet attended training on Climate Literacy, be encouraged to take the courses this financial year, and that the issue of training for members be reviewed in the autumn when budget-setting for 2025-26 was being considered.

M12/2024 Newsletter and Publicity

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

Resolved: The newsletter could include the new Mayor, 20mph in Oxenholme, the developments on the river corridor, diary dates and festivals, Rinteln news and the Flood scheme.

Part Two

Members voted to exclude the Press and Public for the following two items of business, due to the confidential nature of the discussion. Cllr Hendry left the meeting.

A Fuller version of the minute recording the Confidential business considered is on file.

M13/2024 Property and Office Accommodation

The Committee discussed a matter relating to property and accommodation.

Resolved: To note the report, and to encourage the Clerk to escalate inquiries as appropriate to get a response.

M14/2024 Employment and Staffing Matters

(a) The Town Clerk reported verbally on progress in recruiting a new Deputy Town Clerk and other posts. A new Admin Officer had been appointed and would be starting work in early June. Initially they would be line managed by the Council Services Officer. A Development and Delivery Manager (Deputy Town Clerk) had also been appointed and she would begin work in the summer., once she had completed her notice period.

Resolved: To note the verbal update.

(b) The Committee considered two matters relating to Staffing and Staff Welfare.

The Chair reminded all chairs that Committee members should be mindful of their roles and responsibilities, and that respect and civility should be a cornerstone of the Council's culture. Committee chairs should reinforce the point that their respective committees have Terms of Reference agreed by the Council in May. Any activity beyond these Terms of Reference is outside the powers delegated by the Council to the Committee, and should be ruled out of order by the Chair.

Resolved: To note the verbal update.

The meeting closed at 9.42 p.m.