

## **Civil Parish of Kendal**

### **Annual Assembly of Electors**

**4 April 2022**

You are invited to attend the annual meeting of the electors of the Civil Parish of Kendal, at 7pm on Monday 4 April, 2022 at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

#### **Agenda**

**1. Opening Remarks from the Mayor of Kendal**

The Mayor of Kendal, Cllr Doug Rathbone will open the meeting.

**2. Apologies**

To receive any apologies from people who are unable to attend.

**3. Annual Report of the Town Council**

The Mayor will present the Annual Report of the Town Council for the year 2020-2021.

**4. Reports from Council Committees**

The meeting will receive reports from the Chairs of the Council's Committees.

**5. Questions**

To receive any questions from the public on matters relating to the Council or the Town generally.

**6. Closing Remarks from the Mayor of Kendal**

**Minutes of the proceedings at the Annual Town Assembly  
held on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7pm (via Zoom)**

**PRESENT** The Mayor (Councillor A Finch) in the Chair;  
Councillors G Cook, J Brook, G Archibald, S Coleman, S Evans, M Severn, G Tirvengadam, A Blackman, C Hardy, R Hogg, R Sutton, J Owen, D Rathbone (Deputy Mayor), J Cornthwaite, J Dunlop, A Edwards, P Gibson, E Hennessy, H Ladhams, S Long, D Miles, M Miles, C Rowley and K Simpson

J Rushworth – Newsquest Reporter  
G Harrison and I Kell – members of the public

**OFFICERS** Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk) and Nicky King (Council Secretary)

**01 OPENING REMARKS FROM THE MAYOR OF KENDAL**

The Mayor opened the meeting, commenting that he had not expected to be reporting during a second term of office as Mayor. He reflected on a difficult year and the challenges faced due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**02 APOLOGIES**

Councillors G Vincent, M Severn, C Hogg, D Miles, M Miles and T Perkins.

**03 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Town Clerk gave an introduction to Kendal Town Council and presented the 2020-21 Annual Report.

The Council serves a community of approximately 30,000 residents, with an electorate of 23,000. It consists of 10 Wards served by 28 Councillors who are elected for a term of 4 years.

Most Council meetings are held on Monday evenings and are open to the public to attend. During the Covid-19 pandemic the Council moved its meetings to the virtual Zoom platform. Full Council meet on the first Monday of each month, Planning Committee meetings are held fortnightly and the majority of other Committee meetings are held on a quarterly basis. Every Councillor is a Member of at least one Committee.

**04 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

Each Committee Chair gave a 5 minute presentation.

**Allotments Committee – Councillor A Finch**

Councillor Finch outlined the principal function of the Allotments Committee, which is to administer, with the help of the Town Council Officers and staff, the maintenance, improvement and use of the Town Council statutory allotment sites and those managed on behalf of South Lakeland District Council.

Lockdown presented allotment holders with a unique opportunity of available time and this brought about increased activity on sites. Government did not restrict or ban access to allotments and it was allowed to form part of your daily exercise. This saw the whole of the allotment landscape change in a matter of months and the number of uncultivated plots decreased dramatically. The allotment community thrived and supported the wellbeing of tenants during challenging times.

Increased waiting lists for plots has been another consequence of the restrictions, with demand reaching an all-time high.

Committee have acknowledged their commitment to moving away from the traditional allotment practices and promoting biodiversity on allotments. A small sub-group was formed to focus on developing a strategy to support biodiversity on allotments.

Priorities are to continue on a programme of improvement works on current sites, ensuring all available allotment land is used to its maximum capacity and supporting biodiversity across the allotment community.

### **Audit, Grants & Charities Committee – Councillor M Severn**

As the Chair of the Committee, Councillor Severn, was not present, no verbal presentation was made

### **Kendal in Bloom Committee – Councillor A Blackman**

Unfortunately the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown through the spring and summer of 2020 brought all Committee's plans to a sudden halt. It was not possible to organise, promote and support the usual programme of competitions in schools and across the town and Countywide and National Bloom events also fell victim. However, Committee pressed on with Civic planting to ensure the town looked its best in the hope that shops, cafes and businesses would open up later in the summer and the deserted streets would be humming with life once again.

Councillor Blackman talked about the Legendary Landscape Trial initiative which was able to progress and thanked Terry Parr of Kendal Conservation Volunteers, for his inspiration and input.

Thanks were also extended to Kendal Rotary for the planting of crocus bulbs around the town.

One further initiative supported by the Committee was the introduction of hedgehog houses onto allotments. Councillor Blackman commended the young man responsible for promoting the project for his enthusiasm. It is hoped to extend the scheme to other sites around town.

Councillor Blackman announced that confirmation has now been received that a Kendal in Bloom competition will take place this year, albeit limited in scope.

Particular thanks went to Janine Holt, Council Services Officer for her tremendous support throughout the year.

### **Christmas Lights & Festivals Committee – Councillor S Evans**

Councillor Evans reflected on the pandemic and the impact this had on the many events and festivals planned for 2020. Despite the restrictions new ways were found to have fun and enjoyment and many festivals, such as the Unity Festival, Wool Gathering, Comic Arts and Kendal Mountain Film Festival, went 'virtual' and continued to provide opportunities for people to join in. The Kendal Torchlight was able to go proceed with a 'real' procession in a new format to keep everyone safe.

The film commissioned to showcase the Christmas Lights was shared far and wide and received lots of positive feedback. It is hoped to have a film and a switch-on event this year.

During the pandemic, Committee pledged continued support for all Kendal's festivals, awarding them the same grants as usual. Funding has also been put side to help support ideas for new festivals. Grants of £500 are available for innovative ideas that will help boost Kendal in what continues to be uncertain times.

The Council Services Officer was thanked for all her hard work during the year.

### **Environment & Highways Committee – Councillor J Owen**

Councillor Owen remarked that the past year has been dominated by the Climate Change Jury. Despite the restrictions of Covid, virtual meetings continued, culminating in a report of 27 actions. Committee are currently in the process of taking these recommendations to other tiers of Government.

2020 also saw the completion of a comprehensive report on the possibility of reducing traffic speed across the town to 20mph.

An expert group was set up to support active travel across the town. Budgetary provision has been made to support the development of the river corridor for walkers and cyclists.

Committee have also focused on the issue of air pollution, working hard to support SLDC in this respect with innovative projects such as green walls and ivy screening.

### **Planning Committee – Councillor D Rathbone**

Councillor Rathbone presented the report from the Planning Committee, as Chair of that Committee.

Kendal Town Council is a statutory consultee in planning matters. It does not have statutory powers itself, but its views are taken into account by SLDC. The Planning Committee meet twice a month and have full delegated authority to make these comments on behalf of the Council. They then form part of the SLDC Planning Officer's own delegated decision, or their report to the SLDC Planning Committee.

Councillor Rathbone mentioned issues encountered with affordable

housing and environmental matters. This has highlighted the inadequacies of the planning procedure as a whole in respect of the needs of Kendal. Committee have written to the Secretary of State objecting to various proposed changes in planning law which will reduce local democratic input, the ability to require affordable housing as well as environmental concerns.

Committee have considered large new developments such as Brigsteer Road, smaller developments such as Longpool and the Magistrates Court retirement properties and ongoing projects like Strawberry Fields. The majority of applications, though, are for small scale development.

The Committee strongly welcomes public participation from members of the public, Town Councillors or developers at meetings. Close attention is also paid to residents' comments submitted on the SLDC portal.

The flood relief working group (which reports through the Planning Committee) continues to work to improve the visual impact of plans from the Environment Agency, as well as take the opportunity to create a Kendal river corridor with enhanced biodiversity.

Councillor Rathbone thanked all Committee members for their work. He added that Committee look forward to continuing to serve the community.

### **Management Committee – Councillor S Coleman**

The role of the Management Committee is to manage the day to day governance of the Council. Membership is drawn mainly from Chairs of Committees and provides a discussion forum for new ideas and strategic planning.

This particular year has been very challenging with all the aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic preventing meetings in person and the resignation of the previous Town Clerk. This committee has been very involved in steering the Council through these issues and in recruiting a very experienced full-time Clerk as a replacement.

Sadly the Tourist Information services for our town, provided by Fantastic Kendal on Finkle Street, closed their doors in this year. Committee are keeping Tourist Information services in review and continue to explore what can be done to assist new provisions as plans evolve to support our town in a post-lockdown environment.

The Committee has continued to keep a roving eye on issues related to the previous flooding in Kendal and measures to prevent future flooding. Committee have been very involved in working with the Environment Agency on their Flood Relief Scheme. The focus more recently has been on ensuring that longer term benefits for Kendal are realised.

Councillor Coleman thanked all staff for their support and diligence throughout difficult times.

05

### **QUESTION TIME – OPPORTUNITY TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COUNCIL AND ITS WORK**

No questions were raised.

**06**

**CLOSING REMARKS FROM THE MAYOR OF KENDAL**

Councillor Finch closed the Annual Town Assembly by thanking all Councillors for their work and the members of the public for attending