

Kendal Town Council

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



Minutes of the meeting of Kendal Town Council held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal, on Monday, 7 April 2025, at 7.40 p.m.

Councillors

G Archibald	Present	A Blackman	Present
S Blunden	Apologies	J Brook	Present
D Brown	Present	A Campbell	Apologies
S Coleman	Apologies	J Cornthwaite (Mayor)	Present
J Dunlop	Present	L Edwards	Present
R Edwards	Present	D Evans	Present
S Falshaw	Present	A Finch	Present
L Hendry	Present	H Ladhams	Present
E Hennessy	Apologies	D Miles	Apologies
S Long	Present	C Russell	Present
D Rathbone	Present	K Simpson	Present
M Severn	Absent	P Thornton	Present
G Supka	Apologies	R Sutton (Deputy Mayor)	Present
G Tirvengadam	Present	One Vacancy	

In attendance: Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk), Inge Booth (Democratic Services Assistant) and Natalia Williams (Development and Delivery Officer (Deputy Clerk)).

Also present: Martin Varley, Ian Kell, representatives from Walk and Wheels Kendal and a number of members of the public.

Note – The Council paid silent tribute to the memory of Phil Clayton who had been standing in the by-election to the Council on behalf of the Green Party. He had played an enthusiastic role within the community and would be sorely missed.

Note – The Mayor welcomed recently-elected Member for Kendal Nether, Sharon Falshaw, to the Council.

Public Participation

Ian Kell addressed Council regarding both his and flood action groups within the Town's concerns about the future progress of the Kent Flood Alleviation Scheme. Mr Kell pointed out that the whole scheme had been predicated on achieving a "1-in-100" protection from flooding for the Town, with approval and funding having been granted on against this Environment Agency promise. He said that a separate business case for Phase 1 in-town defences alone had not been made. He also said that Phase 1, when and if completed, would give a "1-in-20" protection compared to the existing "1-in-5" protection of the 1970s scheme and would introduce a new hazard of retention of flood behind walls designed for the full "1-in-100" scheme. Mr Kell felt that a business case for Phase 1 alone would almost certainly have failed. Mr Kell stated that the "meat" of the Scheme in terms of protection afforded lay in two key elements: the provision of adequate managed upstream storage volume and the provision of an additional channel to divert Stockbeck flow. He said that the technical setbacks in identifying upstream storage sites were well known. Options were said

to be in development for presentation later this year. Similarly, the preferred option for an additional channel for Stockbeck, Stockbeck North, or whatever it was now called, was said to be ready.

Mr Kell's main concern was whether the Scheme would ever be delivered in full. He referred to recent communications between himself and the authorities involved, and said that none of them would commit to completion of the Scheme to the intended "1-in-100" level of protection. None of them would confirm that funding was secure to complete the scheme. Mr Kell believed that completion of the Scheme as intended would be a political decision and pointed out that Kendal Town Council was the first-line political troop to fight for the Town. He urged the Council, therefore, to fight for the funding to complete the Scheme as originally conceived and to resist any watering down.

Two representatives from Walk and Wheels Kendal next addressed the Council. The Group represented walkers and cyclists from across the community in Kendal and advocated for all who wished to participate in Active Travel. The representatives referred to Agenda Item no.9 on the Agenda (20MPH) (Minutes No. 8/2024 below refers). The Group strongly supported 20's Plenty within Kendal and wished to collaborate with the Council. The representatives stressed the benefits of a 20mph speed limit within the Town, particularly around safety, traffic flow reduction and potential decreases in insurance premiums.

Penrith2Kendal Arc Landscape Recovery Project

Martin Varley from Cumbria Connect, who were developing the Penrith2Kendal Arc Landscape Recovery Project, made a presentation to Council on the Landscape Recovery Scheme.

Mr Varley informed Council about the Cumbria Connect Endangered Landscape and Seascape Programme, which was a five-year enabling project (2023-2028) covering 35,000ha, involving five partners, £4m funding, for nature restoration, future farming, community and science programmes. Mr Varley provided an overview of P2K, which was a DEFRA farming support scheme part of Environmental Land Management Scheme programme. The Round 2 project development phase had started on 1 May 2024 and was being delivered through Cumbria Connect, with Lowther as named lead. 35 land managers had signed up, with a mix of owners and tenants. The project covered 16,000ha in total, with holdings ranging from 5ha to 2,500ha, lowland to upland. The implementation phase was due to start in Spring/Summer 2025. Priority Habitats included species rich grasslands; wood pasture; montane scrub and heath; peatlands, rivers, floodplains and wetlands; and temperate rainforest. Flagship/Indicator species included water vole – wetland restoration and control of INNS; marsh fritillary – damp pasture and sustainable grazing; red squirrel – expansion and connectivity of woody habitats; willow warbler and tree pipit – expansion of scrubby habitat mosaic; barn owl – healthy habitat mosaics and small mammal populations; atlantic salmon/brown trout – functional river systems and clean water; and sphagnum – peatland restoration and carbon sequestration. Missing species and potential reintroductions would be corncrake; pine marten; golden eagle; beaver; black grouse; and wild cat. Key interventions would be a shift to sustainable grazing; restoration of functioning hydrology; promotion of natural regeneration; targeted scrub and woodland planting; and species reintroduction and reinforcement. Ecological/ecosystem outcomes would be improved habitat connectivity; abundant flowering and seeding; switch from carbon source to carbon sink; flood risk reduction; and improved landscape resilience. Social, economic and culture outcomes would be secure income streams for project partners; support transition towards nature positive land management; continuity of culturally and ecologically valuable agricultural habitats, such as Wood Pasture and Hay Meadows; wider community bought into landscape change with more opportunities to connect through volunteering, education and events; and enhanced access and ecotourism opportunities, which did not have

negative impact on landscape or communities. Mr Varley talked about communicating change, saying that success would depend largely on how they communicated and engaged with their partners. It was recognised that change was not easy and that they needed to take their partners on a journey. They would share positive examples of farmers who had already switched to different ways of farming. They would offer, not force, and show, not tell. They would spend time listening and respect different points of view. They would aim to build productive and trusting relationships. They would try to make it clear that change was a continual process, and set what was happening now in a historical context. Mr Varley highlighted progress to date around recruitment and team building; engagement with partners; drafting up land management plans; starting work on CIC; drawing up outline land management and monitoring plans; heritage impact and opportunities assessments; and the P2K trail, a map of which was displayed. Mr Varley outlined the delivery concepts which were a multifunctional CIC at the heart of the project, providing ongoing support and advice to partners; monitoring and reporting; dispersal of project funds; attracting further inward investment; practical land management support (ranger service); representation for all project partners ; communications; match payment rates available elsewhere (CS, SFI); farming/nature – ratcheting mechanism; and a flexible approach to payment rates to promote succession and ecotones. Mr Varley finally outlined the Vision; in 20 years, the landscape would be a carbon sink; hydrologically functional; driven by natural processes; well connected; economically resilient; valued by people; and quantifiably richer.

The Mayor thanked Mr Varley for his presentation. Mr Varley answered questions raised by Members who expressed support for the project, also drawing attention to the Town's own river connectivity project.

70/2024 Apologies

Resolved: To receive and accept apologies for absence from Cllrs Blunden, Campbell, Coleman, Hennessy, Miles and Supka.

71/2024 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Archibald, Brook, Cornthwaite, Thornton, Ladhams and Rathbone all declared an other registrable interest in Agenda Item No.8 (Footway Lighting) (Minute No.77/2024 below) by virtue of the fact that they were Members of Westmorland and Furness Council. Whilst they would remain in the room during the discussion on the item, they would abstain from voting thereon.

72/2024 Exclusion of Press and Public

It was raised that an item relating to a confidential matter appeared later on the Agenda at Item No.13 (Wainwright Award 2024-25), at which point a vote would be taken to exclude the press and public from the meeting, in accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960.

73/2024 Minutes of Last Council Meeting

Attention was drawn to the fact that Cllr Brook's apology for absence, whilst noted in the list of attendees, had not been noted within Minute No.56/2024.

The need for more regular attendance at Full Council meetings by Cumbria Police was stressed.

Resolved: Subject to the amendment raised at the meeting and outlined above, to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 3 February 2025 and to authorise the

Chair to sign them as a true record.

74/2024 Minute Action Sheet

Members considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions and recommendations made at previous meetings of the Council.

The Town Clerk referred to Item Ref.24 regarding the need for an interim statement on outside bodies to be brought to the next meeting of the Council. He apologised for not having yet done this and undertook to bring an active statement to the Annual Meeting, also pointing out that the number of outside bodies that the Council appointed was proposed to be decreased following a review which had been carried out by officers.

Resolved: To note the report.

75/2024 Mayor's Communications and Announcements

The Mayor presented a report on his recent activities pointing out that this had been a busy time. He highlighted a number of events which he had attended and urged Members to attend the Annual Town Assembly which was due to take place at 6.15 p.m. on Monday, 14 April. The Mayor further drew particular attention to the 80th Anniversary of VE Day and events which were due to take place, starting on the morning of 8 May at the Market Place Memorial, with an event later in the evening on Kendal Castle; a tea dance was due to take place in the Assembly Room at the Town Hall on the afternoon of 9 May. In addition, the Mayor drew attention to Mayor Making which would take place on the evening of 15 May, after Annual Council on 12 May.

The Mayor raised the fact that this would be his last Full Council meeting as Chair and Mayor and took the opportunity to thank all Councillors for having elected him to the position and for their support throughout the year.

Members expressed their appreciation to Cllr Cornthwaite.

Resolved: To note the report.

76/2024 Schedule of Meetings 2025/26

Council was asked to consider the Schedule of Meetings for 2025-2026 and, in addition, changes to the previously-approved Schedule of Meetings for 2024/25 around April to June 2025 due to events taking place on VE Day 80th Anniversary. The Town Clerk stressed the fact that the Schedule was contingent on the outturn of the Community Governance Review currently being carried out by Westmorland and Furness Council in terms of election years. The Calendar was based on the proposed move of the Town Council's Elections from May 2026 to May 2027, however, could be subject to change.

Resolved: To approve the Schedule of Meetings for 2025/26 and, in addition, changes to the previously-approved Schedule of Meetings for 2024/25.

77/2024 Footway Lighting

Note - Cllrs Archibald, Brook, Cornthwaite, Thornton, Ladhams and Rathbone all declared an other registrable interest in this item of business by virtue of the fact that they were Members of Westmorland and Furness Council. They remained in the room during the discussion on the item, however, abstained from voting thereon.

It was reported that the Town Council was a lighting authority under s3 Parish Council Act, 1957. This power to provide lighting extended to roads and public spaces, subject to the consent of the highway authority, or the landowner.

In Kendal, the Town Council had inherited a peculiar collection of lights which had not been passed to either South Lakeland District Council or Cumbria County Council in 1974. Subsequently, over the intervening 50 years, the Town Council had installed new lights in places where the district or county councils had not felt it was within their budgetary scope. Some of the old, inherited lights, were gas lamps, which had been converted to electricity over time. In recent years, all the Town Council's lighting stock had been converted to LED. As recently as March 2025, the Town Council had overhauled five of its existing stock to create lighting that was 'dark sky compliant'.

The Town Council would usually budget around £5,000 per year to maintain and power its footway lighting stock. This would be recharged from Cumbria County Council, via South Lakeland District Council, to reflect any maintenance work required. In the last two years, Westmorland and Furness Council had waived footway lighting costs.

At its Cabinet meeting on 18 March 2025, Westmorland and Furness Council had adopted a new policy on non-highway lighting across the whole of the unitary district. Two approaches were offered for the future maintenance of footway lighting:

- (1) To transfer all Kendal Town Council's existing stock to Westmorland and Furness Council.
- (2) To be a standalone lighting authority, maintaining Kendal Town Council's own stock under whatever terms the Council was able to negotiate.

It was recommended that the Council chose Option 1. Although this would mean writing off the value of the investment the Council had made in lighting over the years, this would also remove the liability for the existing lighting stock and provide Kendal residents with clear reporting procedures when reporting faults (all lighting would be Westmorland and Furness Council lighting).

The Council would remain a lighting authority under the 1957 Act, but would not have to exercise that power. New lighting would be subject to the consideration of Westmorland and Furness Council's lighting team, as it was in effect, currently, since most public spaces and all highways were within their control.

The unitary authority was committed to improving its lighting stock in terms of efficiency and nature recovery, and was better able to make use of efficiencies of scale when introducing new control mechanisms to support these aims.

Appended to the report was a letter from Westmorland and Furness Council's Lighting Manager, the current lighting list which would be fully reconciled prior to transfer should Option 1 be chosen and the Westmorland and Furness Council Lighting Policy.

In response to a suggestion that the Town Council would maintain control of what happened with Kendal's lights, Cllr Thornton pointed out that this was not actually correct, as all lighting would be owned and controlled by Westmorland and Furness Council. However, he stressed the fact that it would be in that Authority's interest to listen to the wishes of the Town Council. Cllr Thornton added that dark skies and dimming of lighting was fully recognised by Westmorland and Furness Council. Members welcomed the proposal of Option 1, to transfer all Kendal Town Council's existing stock to Westmorland and Furness Council.

Resolved: To transfer all Kendal Town Council's existing stock to Westmorland and Furness Council.

78/2024 20 MPH

In the absence of Cllr Hennessy, Chair of the Environment Committee, Cllr Archibald, the Committee's Vice-Chair, presented a progress report on the Council's aim to bring all of Kendal into a 20mph scheme.

In December 2023, Westmorland and Furness Council had introduced an application process to make it easier for communities to request 20mph speed limits in their area as part of their broader initiatives to enhance road safety, promote active travel and to tackle air quality and emissions. They had since received number of proposals for speed limit schemes, covering 79 locations in Westmorland and Furness. Scheme proposals were being progressed over a three-year period, which would end in 2027. Schemes would be part funded by investment from Westmorland and Furness Council's Priority Investment Fund. This phased strategy ensured that each community's unique needs and feedback were considered, promoting safer environments for all road users.

Kendal was among the locations scheduled for the 2025 to 2026, second phase of the 20mph Speed Limit Programme. Oxenholme had already progressed through the initial consultation stages as part of the first phase of proposals. Meetings were now underway with officers at Westmorland and Furness Council to determine the precise scope of the scheme and to discuss the most valid methods of consultation. It was hoped that a 20mph scheme for Kendal should be ready for informal public consultation in late summer/early autumn of 2025. Subsequently, a decision would be made by the South Lakeland Locality Board as to whether Kendal should progress to the next stage of full formal consultation which would result in the implementation of a mandatory 20mph speed limit in Kendal in line with the scope agreed following the informal process.

Details behind the reasons for the scheme were provided. The United Nations and the World Health Organisation both agreed that, in places where people lived, worked and socialised, the default speed limit should be 20mph. Local councils had a duty to protect residents, and these organisations had made it clear that implementing 20mph limits was an essential measure to achieve this.

Implementing a town-wide 20mph speed limit in Kendal offered several benefits around:

- Enhanced Safety.
- Environmental Benefits.
- Encouragement of Active Travel.
- Tackling Congestion.
- Improved Community Atmosphere.
- Financial implications around car insurance.

Further to recent progress as outlined and in relation to the motion passed by Full Council on 4 January 2021, Members were asked to:

- Reaffirm their support for a town wide 20mph speed limit.
- Reaffirm their support for a "signs only" approach to implementation.
- Instruct the Chair of the Environment Committee (and others as required) to work with officers with regards to effective communication of the reasoning behind, and benefits to the town, of 20mph speed limits, and to utilise available funding where required.

- Provide feedback on the proposed scheme (this could be done after the meeting, following the distribution and explanation of appropriate mapping).
- Provide thoughts and feedback regarding Kendal Town Council's communication strategy on this matter.

Members welcomed the proposals and the work which had been carried out by the Chair of the Environment Committee in this respect. Attention was also drawn to the fact that Kendal Town Council's ten year ambition in this respect had fed into Westmorland and Furness Council's policy around making it easier for town and parish councils to achieve 20mph within their areas. Kendal Town Council could be proud and take credit for assisting in the shaping that policy.

Resolved: To re-affirm Kendal Town Council's approach to the implementation of a 20mph speed limit across the whole of Kendal, as detailed within the report and outlined above.

79/2024 Minutes from Committees

The Council was presented with the following minutes from recent meetings of the Council's standing committees and committee chairs were invited to give a brief account of their committee's recent activities, if they so wished:

- (a) Allotments Committee on 24 February 2025 – Cllr Finch presented the minutes.
- (b) Audit Committee on 20 January 2025 – Cllr Russell presented the minutes, referring to the good work carried out by the Committee in recent years to tidy up the budget process and develop a reserves policy.
- (c) Culture and Communities Committee on 27 January 2025 – Cllr Ladhams presented the minutes. She drew attention to Minute No.CC43/2024 and to the communication which had been due to be sent to Westmorland and Furness Cllrs Archibald and Thornton regarding the Birdcage and Markets. Cllr Ladhams undertook to ensure that this was dealt with as soon as possible.
- (d) Environment Committee on 13 January and 10 March 2025 – In the absence of Cllr Hennessy, Cllr Archibald presented the minutes. He congratulated officers on the detailed project log, encouraging Members to look at it. In addition, Cllr Archibald encouraged Members to let either the Chair or the Town Clerk know if there were locations within their wards where bus stops would benefit from seating or improvements to footpaths were required. The Environment Committee had significant funds for both of these items. This led to discussion on the need for improvements to bus routes within the Town, particularly at Parkside Road. It was raised that many councils lobbied in this regard and was suggested that Kendal Town Council might wish to do the same. This could potentially be a topic for the Environment Committee to discuss in the forthcoming year, with the new Projects Officer becoming involved.
- (e) Management Committee on 3 March 2025 – In the absence of Cllr Coleman, Cllr Dunlop presented the minutes. In response to a query, the Town Clerk explained how the appointment of a Health and Safety Advisor had come about, following a number of issues, mostly procedural in nature, having been identified. The appointment related mostly to projects and so would be paid for in the first year from the Projects Budget, following which time it would become a core function.
- (f) Planning Committee on 20 January, 3 February, 17 February and 3 March 2025 – Cllr Rathbone presented the minutes. He thanked Members of the Planning

Committee for their diligence in attending these twice-monthly meetings.

Resolved: To receive the minutes of recent meetings of the Council's standing committees shown above.

80/2024 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Council considered a report from the Council representative on the following outside organisation:

- Integrated Community Care (a written report from Cllr Sutton) – In response to a query, Cllr Sutton explained that the LSCft was a partner in the Lancashire and South Cumbria Health and Care Partnership which dealt with mental health and learning disabilities.

Resolved: To receive the report from representative on the outside organisation shown above.

81/2024 Schedule of Payments

The Council was presented with the schedule of payments for January and February 2025. The Town Clerk responded to queries raised by Members.

Resolved: To receive the schedule of payments for January and February 2025.

Part Two

The next item was considered following a resolution to exclude the Press and Public due to the confidential or commercial sensitivity of the report.

82/2024 Wainwright Award 2024-25

Note – At this stage in the meeting, Cllr Archibald declared an interest in the item by virtue of the fact that his brother-in-law was related to one of the nominees. He left the Council Chamber for the remainder of the meeting.

All Members having received the relevant documentation, the Council considered nominations for the Wainwright Award 2024-25.

During discussion, it was proposed that all nominees in each year should be presented with a framed certificate to indicate that they had been a nominee for this prestigious award.

Resolved: Moving forward to present all nominees in each year with a framed certificate to indicate that they have been nominated for the Wainwright Award.

Following detailed consideration of the nominations, a secret ballot took place which was tied. Following a second secret ballot, it was

Resolved: To present the Wainwright Award 2023-24 to Memory Wheelchairs.

The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.