

KENILWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Services Committee

Commencing at 7.00 pm on Thursday 28 September 2023

PRESENT: Councillor R G Dickson.

Councillors: D A T Bailey, A Chalmers, A M Dearing, K S Dickson, N A Eaton, A Insley, P J Jones, A J Kennedy, Z L Leventhal, A W Milton, R J S Minto, M L Stevens and A M Summers.

Town Clerk: Miss M S Field.

Deputy Town Clerk: Miss G Honey

Administration and Facilities Assistant: Mr M Wyatt-Smith

The fire and safety brief was displayed on the screens prior to the commencement of the meeting.

FGS.23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

FGS.26	Allotments – update on current position	Cllrs A Chalmers, A Dearing, R Dickson, P Jones & R Minto	Allotment Holders or KATA Member
FGS.27	Christmas-2023 Arrangements	Cllr Z Leventhal	Member of Pop Voices Choir
FGS.41	Application for Grant Funding – New Hope Christian Counselling	Cllr R Minto	Personal
FGS.42	Applications for Grant Funding - thekenilworthcentre	Cllr R Dickson	Previous Chair of thekenilworthcentre
FGS.43	Application for Grant Funding – Kenilworth Lions (carols)	Cllr M Stevens	Member of Kenilworth Lions
FGS.44	Application for Grant Funding–Kenilworth Lions (pantomime)	Cllr M Stevens	Member of Kenilworth Lions

Councillors K S Dickson, R G Dickson, A J Kennedy and A W Milton made a general declaration of personal interest in relation to any items regarding Warwick District Council.

FGS.24 APOLOGIES

Councillors A Marsh, J Payne and A Randall.

FGS.25 MINUTES

Members NOTED the Minutes of the Finance and General Services Committee held on 6 July 2023. These were received and approved by the Town Council (KTC) on 27 July 2023.

MATTERS ARISINGFGS.26 ALLOTMENTS – UPDATE ON CURRENT POSITION

The Clerk provided a verbal update on the current allotment position. The Council's appointed solicitor continues to chase WDC with regard to the Transfer of Beehive Hill. In the meantime progress is being made on the lease and the first draft should be sent to the Town Council within a few days.

The Clerk reported that the last administration asked various questions and for information to help in setting the new rent and any other requirements. This information has been provided by the Chairman of Kenilworth Allotment Tenants Association (KATA) and was shared with Members in a handout.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.27 CHRISTMAS 2023 ARRANGEMENTS

- (i) To receive an update report from the Illuminations Committee representative Cllr P Jones

Cllr P Jones presented the published update and added that the Committee has funds to see it through for two years at present.

Cllr N Eaton said he believed Christmas 2023 was the final year the Christmas lights were under contract for storage and maintenance. The Clerk confirmed this was correct and work had already begun in the office to take this matter forward. The Chair advised the matter will be brought back to the next Finance & General Services Committee meeting with the Council's options going forward.

- (ii) Confirmation of dates and arrangements to be planned for the 2023 Festive Period, including the Christmas Market.

The Chair reported that we had received permission to hold a Christmas Market in Talisman Square again this year on 16 December 2023. CJs Events had also provisionally confirmed the organisation of this on behalf of the Council. Cllr K Dickson recognised that we often held a number of stalls back for charity and community purposes. Members agreed to request three stalls for this purpose.

Members were enthusiastic to hold a Christmas Shop Window Competition this year after the Chair explained previous arrangements that had taken place. Members discussed how the judging would be taken forward following previous feedback received. Councillors A Milton, A Dearing and A Insley volunteered to

finalise arrangements. The Deputy Town Clerk agreed to share previous posters and flyers that had been used to give an indication of the format used.

The Chair asked whether we would also have the use of any empty shop windows for this year. The Clerk reported that enquiries had been made, however, these were as yet unconfirmed.

Members NOTED these updates.

FGS.28 ETHICAL BANK – SWITCH

Cllr D Bailey presented the published report. He advised that the group were currently considering the Warwick District Council ethical procurement statement and would report back to the Finance & General Services Committee in December 2023.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.29 FINANCIAL TRAINING FOR MEMBERS

Members NOTED that financial training would be delivered by the Clerk on 17 October 2023. This would include details of the budget/precept and how to read and interpret the finance reports that our system produces, together with a brief overview of how our financial controls work.

STANDING MATTERS

FGS.30 REVIEW OF FINANCIAL POSITION AND CURRENT BUDGET

The Town Clerk provided a brief overview of the position for the first five months of the financial year. We are on target at present, some administration is on a slight underspend but the accounts generally all look healthy. The Council are expecting to receive the second half of the precept at the end of September/beginning of October. It should also be noted that the interest we receive has risen a lot higher than anticipated.

Cllr J Kennedy enquired whether we hold an Earmarked Reserve for Brayes Bungalow due to a lot of recent maintenance work. The Clerk confirmed that we do and we have already been utilising this for any work required.

The Chair drew Members attention to expenditure line 10, 4900 (unspecified allocation) with a budget of £35,000, and 4923 (town events) holding a budget of £15,000. This information would be useful for Members later on in this meeting when considering the upcoming grant requests.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.31 KTC FINANCIAL RESERVES FORECAST – YEAR END 2022/23

The Chair presented the published reports and advised this would be useful background information for Members when considering what budget to set at the next meeting in December.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.32 REVIEW OF GRANTS AWARDED 2022-2023

The Chair reported that we had received five grant reports from the Scouts, New Hope Christian Counselling, Citizens Advice and two from Kenilworth Lions. These were shared amongst Members.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 33 INTERNAL AUDIT – REPORTS AND ACTION

The Chair reported that the Quarter 1 audit had taken place in July 2023 and there were no issues to report. The report was circulated amongst members for their information.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 34 CEMETERY

The Chair presented the published report. He advised a few incidents had been reported involving the cemetery being locked early. This had been reported to WDC and corrected. The leaves were due to be cleared shortly and it should be noted the opening times of the cemetery had now changed moving into Autumn.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 35 CIL WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Cllr K Dickson advised that the Warwick Road Gateway to Kenilworth scheme consultation had now finished and the Council's submission had been sent to WCC. With regard Kenilworth School's CIL funding agreed previously, the Council were still awaiting payment details and the school had indicated they hoped they could drawdown on funds by October half term. Cllr K Dickson further advised that a report had been received from Warwickshire Wildlife and the Council were awaiting an invoice in order to make the first payment.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 36 TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Cllr A Chalmers reported that efforts were ongoing to build relationships with Roccalumera as the new Chair was no longer in post. He reported on a successful visit to Eppstein in September and all are looking forward to a visit from Bourg La Reine in April 2024. The group had recently experienced some successful fundraising and Cllr A Chalmers will remind them of the option to send in their events for publication on the KTC website.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 37 UYOGO FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Cllr D Bailey reported that the group had successfully proven a new method of making money transfers in Tanzania and plans were continuing for replacement of the school roof. He advised that Kenilworth School and Sixth Form were enthusiastically preparing for Africa week where lots of activities were planned.

Members NOTED this update.

NEW MATTERS

FGS. 38 REMEMBRANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Members NOTED that the Town Clerk is working alongside Warwick District Council and the Royal British Legion to bring forward the arrangements for Remembrance for the town on Sunday 12 November 2023. The annual memorial event is also being planned for 2pm on November 21 for a wreath to be laid at Abbey End, to mark the explosion which killed 26 people in 1940. No issues were raised at the recent SAG meeting.

FGS.39 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING – CHAMBER OF TRADE

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £3,500 from the CHAMBER OF TRADE.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered. It was noted the sum requested was divided into £2,500 funding support for social media and newsletters over 12 months. The remaining £1,000 was to assist in funding the upcoming Business Expo at the Holiday Inn. A query was raised concerning the need for such an amount for social media/newsletter support and a discussion ensued. Overall there was support for the bid and it was proposed the social media funding request be halved in this round of applications. Following the Chamber of Trade's evaluation of this external service, a further application can be made. The proposal was seconded and the Council therefore:

RESOLVED that the sum of £2,250 be granted to the CHAMBER OF TRADE. This is made up of £1,250 funding support for social media and newsletters from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget, and £1,000 for the upcoming Business Expo from the Town Events Support budget.

FGS.40 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – CITIZENS ADVICE

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £2,600 from CITIZENS ADVICE.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered. Members were very much in support of the organisations contribution to the Kenilworth community and would encourage a further approach should there be any upcoming additional projects. It was therefore proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED that the sum of £2,600 be granted to CITIZENS ADVICE, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.41 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £3,500 from NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered. There was support for the bid, and it was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED that the sum of £3,500 be granted to NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.42 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – thekenilworthcentre

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £9,000 from thekenilworthcentre.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered. A discussion ensued and it was noted Members had not received an application on these terms previously. Members were in full agreement on the importance of the role thekenilworthcentre played in our community, however were minded that further applications of this nature could not be sustained. Overall there was support for the bid with the hope this would enable additional funding sources to be pursued.

It was proposed, seconded and:

RECOMMENDED that the sum of £9,000 be granted to thekenilworthcentre, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.43 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – KENILWORTH LIONS (CAROLS)

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £1000.00 from KENILWORTH LIONS for their Carols at the Castle Event.

All submitted documentation and budgets were taken into account. A concern was raised regarding the involvement and donation of £250 for an associated organisation and their inclusivity. A discussion ensued between Members. A proposal was made that a reduced sum of £750 be awarded. This was seconded and on a majority of eight votes to four with one abstention, it was:

RESOLVED that the sum of £750.00 be granted to KENILWORTH LIONS, from the Town Events Support budget.

POST MEETING NOTE

At the full Town Council meeting on 19 October 2023 this item was reconsidered as additional information had come to light. As such a proposal was made for the

full value of £1,000, with Cllr A Insley confirming that all aspects of the Grant request met with our policies and criteria.

It was therefore proposed seconded and:

RESOLVED that the sum of £1,000.00 be granted to KENILWORTH LIONS, from the Town Events Support budget.

FGS.44 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING –KENILWORTH LIONS (PANTOMIME)

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £500.00 from KENILWORTH LIONS for their annual charity theatre trip.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered. There was support for the application and on a majority of eleven votes to two with one abstention it was:

RESOLVED that the sum of £500.00 be granted to KENILWORTH LIONS, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.45 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING –KENILWORTH ARTS FESTIVAL

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £6,000 from the KENILWORTH ARTS FESTIVAL.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered. There was support for the bid, and it was proposed, seconded and:

RECOMMENDED that the sum of £6,000 be granted to KENILWORTH ARTS FESTIVAL, from the Town Events Support budget.

FGS. 46 BRAYES BUNGALOW

Cllr J Kennedy provided a brief background for new Members advising the bungalow is currently let on an 18 month shorthold tenancy which expires in October 2024. It was desirable to put together a Task and Finish group to assess the long term options for the property and report back to the Council for a decision to be made on its future.

Cllrs A Chalmers, N Eaton, Z Leventhal and J Kennedy volunteered and will report back to the December meeting.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.47 TIMETABLE FOR BUDGET AND PRECEPT SETTING

The Chair presented the proposed timetable for budget and precept setting as follows:

The Chair and RFO will produce a technical budget for use by Group Leaders by 31 October. Any meeting required with Group Leaders, Chair of Finance and RFO

to take place in November. Final proposals put forward by groups will be published on 8 December, prior to consideration at F&GS on 14 December. Recommendations of F&GS will then be considered and ratified by Full Council on 11 January 2024.

Cllr J Kennedy suggested the Vice Chair also be included in the production of the technical budget to aid understanding, which was welcomed.

Members NOTED this timetable.

FGS. 48 BLUE PLAQUE SCHEME

The Chair outlined a recent Government National expansion of the current Official Blue Plaque Scheme to include local figures. It was suggested the Council form a Task & Finish Group to consider this going forwards and whether it was something Kenilworth will participate in. Members were enthusiastic for the scheme believing this would aid tourism in the town and was something we could involve local historians in. Cllrs A Chalmers, D Bailey and A Dearing volunteered.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 49 BUSINESS EXPO

The Chair advised that the Town Council were due to have a stall at the upcoming Business Expo at the Holiday Inn. Volunteers were required to run the stall on a rota basis. Cllr Z Leventhal advised she had already begun the organisation of this and was happy to continue if Members wished to let her know their availability.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.50 WALC AGM – NOMINATION OF VOTING REPRESENTATIVES

The Chair advised that the Council had been invited and encouraged to nominate and delegate authority to a representative Member for the WALC AGM on 15 November 2023. The Clerk explained that a consultation should take place with other Members prior to any vote being made. Cllr R Dickson volunteered to take up the role with all Members in agreement.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.51 D-DAY 80

The Chair advised that there is a national aspiration that each County will have 80 beacons lit to mark the D-Day 80 event on 6 June 2024. Cllrs A Chalmers and R Dickson volunteered to take this forward and report back to the next meeting in December 2023 with ideas and costs.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.52 EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2022-23 NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT

Members NOTED that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2023 was certified without qualification or opinion by the External Auditor Moore.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit together with the certified AGAR (Sections 1, 2 & 3) has been published on the Noticeboard at Jubilee House and the Town Council website since 19 September 2023.

Cllr J Kennedy said this was a real achievement and wished to record thanks to the Clerk and the Office team for their work on this.

FGS.53 NEXT MEETING

Members NOTED that the date for the next meeting of the Finance and General Services Committee will take place on Thursday 14 December 2023, at 7pm.

The meeting concluded at 20:58 pm.

Signed

Dated.....