

KENILWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Services Committee

Commencing at 7.02 pm on Thursday 14 December 2023

PRESENT: Councillor R G Dickson.

Councillors: D A T Bailey, A Chalmers, A M Dearing, K S Dickson, N A Eaton (from FGS.73), A Insley, P J Jones, A J Kennedy, Z L Leventhal, A Marsh, A W Milton, J Payne, M L Stevens and A M Summers.

Town Clerk: Miss M S Field.

Deputy Town Clerk: Miss G Honey

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

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chair announced the recent passing of Rusty Waughman, Royal Air Force veteran. Members passed on their condolences to his family.

FGS.54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

FGS.58	Allotments – update on current position	Cllrs A Chalmers, A Dearing, R Dickson & P Jones	Allotment Holders or KATA Member
FGS.64 and 68	Applications for Grant Funding - thekenilworthcentre	Cllr R Dickson	Previous Chair of Trustees - thekenilworthcentre
FGS. 69	Applications for Grant Funding – Compassionate Kenilworth	Cllr R Dickson	Trustee of Compassionate Kenilworth

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

FGS.55 APOLOGIES

Councillors R Minto & A Randall.

FGS.56 MINUTES

Members NOTED the Minutes of the Finance and General Services Committee held on 28 September 2023. These were received and approved by the Town Council (KTC) on 19 October 2023.

MATTERS ARISING

FGS.57 REVIEW OF CHRISTMAS EVENTS 2023 / DATE FOR 2024 (FGS. 27)

- (i) Cllr P Jones reported on the recent Lights Switch On events, and the various festive initiatives taking place within the Town. Both events were successful with minor hiccups. Members agreed to feedback to CJs that the traders within Talisman Square weren't well advertised and improvements could be made on this for future events.

Cllr P Jones said that the lights needed repairing on the High St but this was in hand via the Illuminations Committee. He commented that the Illuminations Committee were considering revising their methods of raising funds for future years, however, a full debrief was due to take place on 15 January 2024.

- (ii) Cllr A Dearing reported on the recent shop window competition. This proved the most successful yet with 29 entries. The winners were announced as Buds & Bows with second and third places going to Classics Hair & Beauty and Castle Home Luxuries. Cllr Dearing thanked Cllr Insley and the office staff for their involvement in making the competition such a success. Prizes would be handed out at Saturday's Christmas Market by the Mayor & Sir Jeremy Wright MP.
- (iii) The Town Clerk advised that WDC had asked for confirmation of Kenilworth Light Switch On dates for 2024. These were suggested as Friday 29 November 2024 and Sunday 1 December 2024. All Members were in agreement for these dates to be confirmed.

Members NOTED these updates.

FGS.58 ALLOTMENTS – UPDATE ON CURRENT POSITION (FGS.130, 140, 248)

The Clerk provided a verbal update on the current allotment position. On 12 December 2023, a Deed of Surrender of the KTC lease in relation to the original lease agreement between KTC and WDC, and a Revised Transfer document from WDC had been received.

The first draft of the new lease has been shared with KATA and comments re possible/suggested revisions have been received. These will now be sent to our legal team for guidance and advice.

The Chair thanked the office team for all of their work in taking this matter forward.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 59 BRAYS BUNGALOW

Whilst not on the original agenda, Cllr J Kennedy wished to provide a short verbal update on the progress/timetable of discussions surrounding Brays Bungalow. The Group had met on two occasions and work was in progress to bring a full report to Town Council on 29 February 2024.

Members NOTED this update.

STANDING MATTERS

FGS.60 REVIEW OF GRANTS AWARDED 2022-2023

The Chair reported that five grant reports had been received; Citizens Advice Impact Report 2023, Emergency Lighting grant report (tkc) 2023, Parenting Project report, tkc Youth Worker Grant report and tkc Youth Provision Review. These documents were shared amongst Members.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 61 INTERNAL AUDIT – REPORTS AND ACTION

The Chair reported that the Quarter 2 audit had taken place in October 2023 and there were no issues to report. The report was circulated amongst members for their information.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 62 TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Cllr A Chalmers reported that a recent meeting had taken place where all KTA Members were looking forward to the Bourg La Reine visit, along with a visit and trip to Eppstein in 2024. There remained difficulties with Roccalumera following the change of Government. Members were looking forward to sharing details of the association at the upcoming Christmas Market on Saturday 16 December 2023.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 63 CIL WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Cllr K Dickson shared a written report on recent CIL activity. The Working Group had met and discussed projects previously managed. Some of these projects had been completed including Clarkes Avenue bridge and the skatepark. Any surplus funds would be returned into the CIL budget code. The group also had a discussion regarding offering funding for public buildings that might be interested in lowering their energy costs and making their provision more energy efficient. This proposal was in its infancy and further discussions would be required.

The Chair summarised current CIL expenditure.

Cllr J Kennedy asked if the Town Council had received an update from Warwickshire Wildlife Trust following their initial CIL grant and whether any impact had been recorded following the recent bad weather. The Town Clerk said that we had received a report from them a few months earlier but further enquiries would be made including whether they still intended to approach this Council for a second grant.

Members NOTED this update.

NEW MATTERS

FGS. 64 APPLICATION FOR CORE FUNDING –THEKENILWORTHCENTRE

Members considered an Application for Core Funding support in the sum of £75,000 over a three year period from theKenilworthCentre. Cllr R Dickson did not take part in the discussion or vote on the proposal.

The Chair presented the published report on this application. Cllr J Kennedy said this is an important decision to make. TheKenilworthCentre was a lifeline for some and this is an opportunity for the Council to set up the centre for the next three years giving them time and space to develop their own fundraising activities and apply for further grants.

Members were overall in favour of supporting this application. Cllr K Dickson pointed out that theKenilworthCentre do not receive funding from WDC or WCC like other similar centres in the County. Cllr A Milton queried the rate/division of payment and it was proposed that, if the recommendation was made, it was suggested that the funding would be drawn down on a quarterly basis subject to a report each time by theKenilworthCentre so the activities can be monitored. There would also be a recommendation that a Member of the Town Council be invited to attend the Trustee meetings as an observer.

Members were in agreement that any report would have to be an agreed format in order that this was a useful but not burdensome document.

After consideration, it was proposed, seconded and:

RECOMMENDED that the sum of £75,000 be awarded to theKenilworthCentre over a three year period for their Core Funding costs.

FGS.65 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING – KENILWORTH OVER 30s SWIMMING CLUB

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £1,000 from the KENILWORTH OVER 30s SWIMMING CLUB.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered. A proposal was made by Cllr A Insley that funding be approved in the sum of £500 on the basis a sporting grant can be explored with WDC, and further marketing can be done by the club to boost their membership numbers, enhancing funding available. It was further noted some members of the club did not reside in the town, and a focus needed to be made on any grant awards benefitting the residents of Kenilworth. This proposal was seconded.

A discussion ensued and concerns were raised over subsidising the club for an activity other residents had to pay and travel for. It was also questioned how the club benefited the wider community. An amendment was made to the proposal that the application be rejected and no funding granted. This was seconded,

however, on a vote of 7 Members for and 7 Members against this amendment, the Chair cast the deciding vote to reject the amendment.

Cllr K Dickson proposed a further amendment that this Council offer a grant of £50 per Kenilworth resident who is a member of the club up to a maximum of £500. This was seconded and passed with a majority of 8 votes to 5.

The Council therefore duly:

RESOLVED that the sum of £50 be awarded per Kenilworth member of the KENILWORTH OVER 30s SWIMMING CLUB, up to a maximum of £500, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.66 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – PARENTING PROJECT

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £9,600 from PARENTING PROJECT.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered, along with brief details of the interview being shared. Members were very much in support of the organisations contribution to the Kenilworth community. It was therefore proposed, seconded and:

RECOMMENDED that the sum of £9,600 be granted to PARENTING PROJECT, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.67 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – SHAKESPEARE HOSPICE

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £2,500 from SHAKESPEARE HOSPICE.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered, along with brief details of the interview being shared. There was support for the bid, and it was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED that the sum of £2,500 be granted to SHAKESPEARE HOSPICE, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.68 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – thekenilworthcentre

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £3756.48 from thekenilworthcentre.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered, along with brief details of the interview being shared. There was support for the bid, and it was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED that the sum of £3756.48 be granted to thekenilworthcentre, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.69 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – COMPASSIONATE KENILWORTH

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £3295.88 from COMPASSIONATE KENILWORTH.

All submitted documentation and budgets were taken into account, along with brief details of the interview being shared. There was support for the bid, and it was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED that the sum of £3295.88 be granted to COMPASSIONATE KENILWORTH, from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

FGS.70 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – ARTS UPLIFT, COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

Members considered an Application for Funding support in the sum of £3000.00 from ARTS UPLIFT, COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY.

All submitted documentation and budgets were considered, along with brief details of the interview being shared. There was support for the bid, and it was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED that the sum of £3000.00 be granted to ARTS UPLIFT, COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY from the Grants (Unspecified Allocation) budget.

Cllr J Kennedy requested a full report for the next Town Council meeting advising Members how much of the grant budget had been spent to date and how much this may be exceeded should all applications be approved. The Clerk will arrange this.

FGS. 71 EXTENSION OF EXISTING CONTRACT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATION STORAGE

The Chair and Town Clerk explained that both of the three year contracts for (a) the maintenance and storage and (b) the fitting of the Christmas lights was coming to an end. Next year the Council will need to establish a way forward, however, for now, suitable storage arrangements are required for this coming year until further decisions are made. Turnocks have agreed to provide this for the sum of £7322 excl VAT.

After a brief discussion, it was proposed, seconded and:

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council enter into a one year extension of the current contract with Turnock Ltd for the sum of £7322.00 (excl vat) for the storage and maintenance of the current Christmas lights.

FGS.72 BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-2025

The Chair outlined the published budget proposals and his financial forecast, prepared following discussions with Group Leaders. The Chair pointed out that, given the recommendation made earlier in this meeting at FGS.64 concerning core

funding for the Kenilworth Centre, Members needed to focus on option B in the published documents.

The Chair further reported that WDC had shared the incorrect tax base when the documents had originally been published and this had now been revised and shared with Members.

The documents were considered in detail. Members noted two new budget lines relating to CIL admin costs (income) and core funding for the Kenilworth Centre (expenditure).

Members requested a full report from the Chair, setting out the financial reserves position clearly, and an agreed press release to be drafted explaining the final decision made in January 2024.

Members proposed, seconded and:

DECIDED that their preferred option B be incorporated into a final budget proposal for approval at the Town Council meeting on 11 January 2024.

Members proposed, seconded and:

RECOMMENDED the precept be set at £24.73 per household (Band D) for the financial year 2024-2025. The balance of funding for any adopted budget, beyond that provided by the precept, and other identified income, will be drawn from the earmarked and General reserves.

FGS. 73 EVENTS TO MARK D DAY 80

The Chair advised that discussions were underway with English Heritage concerning lighting a beacon at the castle along with holding the proclamation there. More detail will be available at the next Finance & General Services Meeting which will also include any cost implications.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS. 74 GRIT BINS AND ADVERSE WEATHER

Members noted the published report. Cllr A Chalmers advised a further grit bin was being delivered this week.

Members discussed how to raise awareness of the bins. All bins now had stickers attached advising residents to help themselves to the grit, however, social media can also be used to communicate this message. The Town Council do have a limited supply of grit salt available for residents use at times of adverse weather.

Members NOTED this update.

FGS.75 NEXT MEETING

Members NOTED that the date for the next meeting of the Finance and General Services Committee will take place on Thursday 1 February 2024, at 7pm.

The meeting concluded at 8:57pm.

Signed

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