



Kendal Futures Board Meeting Minutes
Monday 16th December 2019
3.00 to 5.00 pm, The Mintworks

Present:

Martyn Nicholson, Chair
Paula Scott, Kendal Futures
Susanne Long, Kendal Town Council
Louise Shrapnel, Kendal College
Julian Rayner, Transport/Distribution
Brian Harrison, Kendal BID
Geoff Cook, South Lakeland Local Committee
Mark Cropper, Large Employers
Robin Ashcroft, South Lakeland District Council
Matt Williams, SLDC
Mandy Dixon, K Village
Jamie Allison, Young Professionals Group
Jim Bland, NFU

Apologies:

Rhian Harris, Culture & Festivals
Miriam Randall, Creative Industries & Innovation

1. Apologies and membership

See item 6 for new member information.

2. Declarations of interest

None declared.

3. Minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th October were agreed as a true record.

Matters arising:

ACTION: P Scott is still to analyse the trend in footfall during the main shopping hours.

M Williams said that the Kendal markets tender process will open for bids in January and invited a KF representative to get involved in the shortlisting/selection panel if appropriate. Information will be shared with P Scott initially, including shortlisting/interview/presentation dates, to circulate to the KFB and discuss again at the next meeting.

ACTION: M Williams to share the tender details when available and the KFB to discuss at the next meeting.

4. Vision for Kendal

P Scott explained that due to illness, the consultant had been unable to provide a first draft of the Vision ahead of the meeting. An updated timetable for producing the Vision was shared with, and agreed by, the KFB and a first draft was now expected to be shared on Friday 17th December. The Vision will now be published in mid-February. The outline structure of the document was discussed and agreed.

When shared with Board members, the draft document must be treated confidentially, and Board members were requested to consider whether it covers the main issues they, and other stakeholders, have highlighted. There are likely to be some areas of sensitivity regarding some opportunity sites.

Two payments from funders for the project remain outstanding and P Scott will chase again in January.

ACTION: P Scott to send an enewsletter update to the Vision stakeholder contacts and those who requested updates at the public participation events detailing the timescale and reminding everyone of the information already available to view on the JTP website.

SLDC and KF are keen to avoid confusion with the emerging Town Centre Strategy and further thought will be given about how to create complimentary links. Both documents will inform the next Local Plan. The Vision is expected to be published first, as the ideas/Visionary document with the Town Centre Strategy providing more detailed planning guidance and additional opportunity sites, with references to those that are also featured in the Vision.

5. Vision Publication and Promotion

A local business has offered to print the Vision as their contribution to the project. Several copies will be printed for stakeholders, partners and funders, and members of the public will also be able to request a printed copy. Digital copies will be available to download. A Kendal Vision website could be produced to host the document and provide ongoing progress updates in future. Partners could also be asked to host it on their websites. It is important to ensure the Vision is recognised as a Kendal Futures document, and shouldn't be confused with plans and strategies owned by public sector partners.

The publication of the Vision will be announced in the local media. **ACTION: P Scott to draft a press release and develop a wider communications plan for sharing and publicising the Vision when published.**

6. Next steps for driving the Vision

The reception to the Vision and the feedback about the process so far has been very positive. Several meetings have been held with stakeholders and land owners, such as Stagecoach and the Westmorland Shopping Centre to discuss their future plans, barriers and opportunities.

The large numbers of people consulted and the Visionary nature of the change and ideas suggested in response creates a strong case to bring inward investment to Kendal. M Cropper said there is a clear role for KF to continue to bring people together and raise funding which would take some additional resource, in addition to P Scott's role as Project Manager.

P Scott shared a suggested new structure for Kendal Futures, detailing the KFB, CIC and a new Vision Team or working group. This Vision Team could eventually be supported by several Action Groups to support and drive forward particular themes or topics. A Vision Manager could be contracted for two days a week, to begin the conversations around funding with stakeholders and partners, and develop the Action Groups. M Cropper proposed contracting Nick Taylor on a temporary basis. Nick was part of the JTP team involved in the public participation workshops and has previous experience in similar role in Scarborough.

M Cropper has already discussed the possibility of further funding from private sector partners and the public sector would also be asked to provide match funding. Cumbria LEP has said its funding guidelines mean it would be unlikely

to grant funding to the Vision work but M Cropper would like to seek further clarification. M Cropper suggested a target of £150k a year, in addition to P Scott's role which should continue to be funded by the three councils. One third would be funded by the private sector, with a 2 year commitment required. Initially, funding is needed to cover contractor's time, a website/communications, meeting facilities, publications and possibly premises.

A discussion was held about potential funding opportunities and funding requests and it was agreed that this was more difficult without a published Vision. The public sector would also need information about the deliverables from the Vision in the short, medium and long term. However, funding is needed to help establish much of this work.

ACTION: M Cropper and P Scott to better define a funding ask some of the early to medium term deliverables.

The Action Groups should link to, or be formed around, existing groups to avoid duplication and gain the needed knowledge, such as the emerging Citizen's Jury, Civic Society and BID.

The KFB agreed the overall structure and future direction presented, subject to further refinement of the action groups at a later date.

The KFB also agreed to contract Nick Taylor, via the KF CIC, as the Kendal Vision Manager for a limited time according to the level of private sector funding raised. It was agreed not to publically procure this post due to the low cost of the contract, and Nick's previous experience in a similar role and involvement with the Vision to date. Nick's first task would be secure additional private sector funding and complete funding bids. M Cropper asked the KFB to support the fund raising efforts through their own contacts. **ACTION: All.**

M Williams offered a hot desk for the Kendal Vision Manager at The MintWorks or SLDC, and the KFB thanked him and SLDC.

P Scott proposed inviting new members to join the KFB to better reflect the areas highlighted in the Vision. The KFB agreed to appoint Cath Purdy from South Lakes Housing as the housing representative, and John Haley from Edwin Thomson for Professional Services. It was also agreed to invite a Cumbria LEP Board member to join the KFB. If they agree, they will be invited to the January meeting for election. **ACTION: P Scott to ask Cumbria LEP if they would appoint a Board member to the KFB, preferably someone with an interest in the town. ACTION: P Scott to invite Cath Purdy and John Haley to join the KFB.**

7. Partner and project updates

Project updates

Visit-kendal.co.uk

P Scott outlined a potential funding issue for the website. KTC has funded the website in 2019-2020, but additional funds requested from Kendal BID (around £3k) have been refused unless it can be matched by private sector advertising revenue. P Scott shared some website stats, which had also been shared with Kendal BID. The website benefits the whole town, and creates a positive first impression for visitors, shoppers and anyone thinking about coming to live and work in Kendal. B Harrison said Kendal BID are keen to issue grants for projects which are self-sustaining but that a request for funding could be reconsidered. He suggested selling enhanced directory listings on the website. P Scott reminded the KFB that the directory listings are simply pulled in a feed from SLDC's business directory in order to avoid duplication.

The KFB discussed some of the issues, including the additional resource needed to attract and manage the advertising, the cost of additional developer time to incorporate changes into the site, the need to avoid worsening the visitor experience, and whether businesses should be left off the site if they don't pay in favour of those who do.

ACTION: P Scott to discuss advertising ideas, opportunities and concerns with Stacy Hurley at KTC and Anna Bailey who manages the website content, investigate additional development costs for enhanced directory listings and

advertises and sound out some potential business advertisers about possible options. Options to be discussed again at a future KFB meeting.

Footfall updates

P Scott has had a request to share monthly footfall data with Lancaster BID. The KFB agreed to share the information.

Partner updates

SLDC: R Ashcroft updated the group about progress with the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region, and looking at the possibility of achieving a growth deal for the area through joint economic initiatives. Private sector board members commented that businesses find the initiative very confusing and it seems to add another layer of bureaucracy.

M Williams reported that SLDC has been invited to reapply to the Future High Street Fund early in 2020 and the Vision will play an important role. The KFB agreed that P Scott could offer support to the application process and that partnership working is vital to make the best case for Kendal.

M Williams also said that the s106 monies (c£250k) from the Sainsburys development was going to be spent on low impact improvements to the pedestrian route from Longpool/the station into the town centre. It was discussed working with CCC as they completed the junction and cycle way works in the area. SLDC have to spend the funding by 2023, and M Williams proposed waiting to see if some match funding could be gained, through the Future High Street Fund, or elsewhere, to complete a higher impact scheme. The KFB agreed to wait for the Future High Street Fund application and suggested the money should be spent in a concentrated area and used to develop a high quality scheme. **ACTION: P Scott to include a regular agenda item for updates at future meetings.**

M Cropper asked SLDC and CCC to address the issue of the restrictive number of contractors available via their tender frameworks in order to achieve more ambitious public realm schemes in future.

Large Employers: M Cropper met with the Westmorland Shopping Centre to discuss their future development plans and encouraged them to be ambitious in line with Vision. Currently, they have gained planning permission for a hotel development, and discussions are ongoing with SLDC about accommodating a gym with parking spaces for the site.

Transport/distribution: J Rayner reported on a meeting with Sam Rayner from Lakeland, M Nicholson and P Scott and CCC officers to discuss Victoria Bridge. CCC is confident the bridge is protected from further damage for the winter, and they plan to complete the in river repairs in early summer in 2020 to try to avoid higher rainfall months. They have learned several lessons about the approach to avoid future damage and road closures while the repairs are undertaken. They also discussed alternative options for managing a diversion route in the town, should the bridge need to be closed again, and an improved communications plan to avoid putting out messages which imply the town is closed. This information will be shared with the KFB for comment at a later date.

Kendal College: The KFB congratulated L Shrapnel on the College recently been recognised as No 1 nationally by its students for satisfaction levels and student progression. A lack of accommodation for students and issues with travel were identified by students as part of the Vision process, and the College recognises a great opportunity to further grow and develop by working with other partners in the town. A new welding course has been launched in response to local business needs.

BID: B Harrison reported that the BID's income stream is reducing as business rates have reduced and some businesses have closed. They are restricting the grants offered for this financial year and creating a waiting list of applicants for 2020. They are applying to Cumbria LEP for additional funds and the LEP is keen for the BID to establish a festival toolkit to share resources among the different festivals groups. A meeting will be held with the town's festivals and KTC to discuss further.

K Village: M Dixon said Kendal Civic Society has agreed to hold the funds for the K Shoes Heritage Centre collection related work and act as accountable body. Lakeland Arts has agreed to rehouse the collection at the Museum of Lakeland Life post redevelopment but in the meantime a temporary storage solution may need to be found. A scoping document with possible options for the K Shoes collection will be developed in the New Year. R Ashcroft reported that Lancaster County Council is intending to develop a museum storage facility but it is likely to be some time away.

Travelodge is expected to open ahead of schedule in July. Work will continue on the residential flats into the following year.

CCC: G Cook reported that CCC's proposed draft budget (Council Tax) is out for consultation and their Government settlement for the new financial year isn't yet known. Council Tax rises will be a maximum of 2% plus 1.99% for social care. Comments can be left via the CCC website. CCC has put Ulverston forward for potential Borderlands Initiative investment. One town could be submitted per district council area and Kendal didn't fit the required socio-economic criteria.

The Kendal Northern Access Route outline business case has now been presented to DfT and a response is expected in a few months.

M Nicholson and P Scott attended a CCC walking and cycling infrastructure workshop recently and fed back some of the early Vision findings.

Young Professionals Group: P Scott to present the Vision to the group when published.

8. Any other business

A draft Annual Report for 2019 will be shared with the KFB in January for comment.

9. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 22nd January – The Mintworks – 3 – 5 pm

2020 meeting dates were circulated.