



Kendal Futures Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 16th January 2019

3.00 to 5.00 pm, James Cropper, Burneside

Present:

Martyn Nicholson, Chair
Paula Scott, Kendal Futures
Susanne Long, Kendal Town Council
Brian Harrison, Kendal BID
Graham Vincent, SLDC
Derek Armstrong, Cumbria Chamber
Mark Cropper, Large Employers
Jim Bland, NFU
Geoff Cook, South Lakeland Local Committee
Julie Chapman, Cumbria Tourism
Jamie Allison, Young Professionals Group
Matt Williams, SLDC

Apologies:

Mandy Dixon, K Village
Louise Shrapnel, Kendal College
Spencer Hannah, FSB (Member)

1. Apologies and membership

2. Declarations of interest

None declared.

3. Minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th December were agreed as a true record.

P Scott has requested further information from CCC officers about the s106/s278 Sainsburys monies and the possible extension of bus services. **ACTION: P SCOTT to report back at the next meeting.**

ACTION: P SCOTT to write again to SLLC about the need for additional coach parking in the town to encourage space to be made available at County Offices.

4. Large employers meeting

Kendal Futures is holding a meeting on 12th February with local businesses to discuss the potential Northern Access Route and find out whether they support early proposals for a new road. It will be hosted by Lakeland and around 70 businesses from across the town have been invited. CCC officers will update on progress to date and discuss the challenges in establishing a business case for the proposal. M Nicholson said that the meeting will not discuss the detail of the actual route but will focus on business views about the impact of current traffic and transport issues. Shorter term, low level town centre interventions have also been proposed by the consultants and KF agreed that this was essential, along with continuing to discuss issues with bridges.

M Cropper said that he believed that studies conducted to date reveal that the benefits are currently insufficient to justify the cost of a new road, which would only be viable with significant future development and growth to the north of the town.

5. Vision and CIC progress

The KFB agreed the brief to procure consultants for the Kendal Vision and for P Scott to discuss procurement via The Chest with SLDC, and include invitations to companies who have completed similar work. The Working Group will score applications, hold interviews/clarification meetings and make a recommendation to the KFB before selecting the consultants. **ACTION: P SCOTT to speak to the procurement team at SLDC and issue the brief asap.**

M Nicholson, M Cropper and P Scott attended a Partnership Meeting with CCC and SLDC and discussed the Vision and plans to become a CIC. Both SLDC and CCC agreed to be involved in the Vision process at Member and Officer level and thought the CIC route was a good opportunity for KF. **ACTION: P SCOTT to continue to form the CIC with the aim to be trading by the time the Vision consultants are ready to be contracted.**

6. Strategic and annual goals

The KFB agreed the Purpose paper circulated ahead of the meeting, and noted that it aligned well with the goals of partners. The KFB discussed how they could best influence key strategic issues for the town, such as the need to gain investment in the Lakes Line to deliver a 30 minute service and housing policies to benefit the working age population. They agreed the following:

Strategic Goals for the next 2 – 3 years:

1. Projects relating to the delivery of the Vision
2. Influencing and supporting the Local Plan (March-19) (supported by the Vision)
3. Influencing policies and infrastructure development
4. Addressing working age population issues (housing policy)

Annual action plan (current time to March 2020):

- Deliver the Vision for Kendal document
- Influencing the outcome of the EA flood risk alleviation plans to provide the best possible outcome for Kendal
- Supporting SLDC to improve Kendal's markets offer
- Supporting the Kendal Town Centre Future High Street Fund
- Projects to support the delivery of Kendal Town Council's Action Plan
- Sustain and grow Visit-Kendal

P Scott has offered to support M Williams in writing and evidencing an expression of interest for the Future High Street Fund due by 22nd March. **ACTION: P SCOTT to share more details at the next meeting.**

ACTION: P SCOTT to add further detail and polish to the goals and circulate for the KFB to agree at a future meeting.

7. EA Flood Risk Management Scheme

M Nicholson and P Scott met with Tim Farron MP to discuss concerns with the flood proposals, particularly the lack of public awareness about the scheme impacts, the felling of trees and effect on the river corridor and public realm. Additional detail about some of these issues has now been supplied by the EA to the SLDC planning portal and the EA are holding drop-in events at the Westmorland Shopping Centre on Wednesday afternoons. The consultation period has been extended to enable the public to comment on the new information by 3rd March.

M Cropper reiterated his concerns that the centre of Kendal will suffer as a result of the plans for the flood walls which will impact on Kendal's economy, health, community and wellbeing. Concerns were raised that the need to secure the £5m EU grant to protect Mintsfeet was forcing the walls to be built ahead of the delivery of the storage areas. Without successful delivery of the storage areas, the walls will be ineffective and the EA are only in the very early stages of conversations with landowners. The KFB questioned whether the town could make a case for the delivery of the stage 3 storage areas first and ensure the money from Government could be ring fenced for later use.

B Harrison reported that anecdotally Kendal BID members weren't in favour of the scheme and the KFB asked if they could be polled formally? **ACTION: B HARRISON to discuss whether BID member views can be captured formally.** They also felt it was important to hear the views of the Mintsfeet businesses as they are most likely to benefit from the proposed protection. KF only has access to email addresses for some businesses in the area but an online survey could be attempted. **ACTION: P SCOTT to investigate the practicalities of running an online survey to gain the views of businesses in the Mintsfeet area.**

The KFB agreed that the EA have been given an impossible task and elements of the scheme, such as the protection to Sandylands was important but should resilience be considered more strongly?

8. Project/partner updates

Kendal BID: B Harrison discussed a paper which was not for sharing publicly at this time but has potential to bring a new visitor audience to the town and requested support from the KFB. The KFB agreed to consider again when more details, including the sustainability of the project, were known.

Kendal BID's objectives for their successful second term which begins in April can be found on their website (www.kendalbid.co.uk). The BID levy income is anticipated to fall from £160k to £140k annually due to a change in rateable values. BID/SLDC have completed an exercise to ensure the levy is collected efficiently and economically. British BIDS advise that BIDs should pay around 3% in levy collection charges, but in Kendal this is 8% due to the large number of businesses in the BID area who each pay a lower levy charge.

An election will be held to recruit a new Board of Directors. All positions are available to view on the website and nominations forms will be sent to all members with opportunities advertised in the Gazette.

They will continue to support the existing festival programme and encourage the festivals to use this contribution to gain additional match funding. They have also agreed to support a new Xmas event on New Road, the return of the LED lamppost Xmas trees and an armed forces day. The BID don't believe the Kendal branding has met their expectations so they plan to ask members for opinions and will feedback. They expect to continue to contribute towards the cost of running visit-kendal.co.uk as long it remains relevant. Other plans include running an ambassador service from Fantastic Kendal.

CoC: D Armstrong reported that the CoC have become the delivery body for a new business support programme called Catalyst which will offer support to those businesses, including retailers, who have previously been unable to access funding via the Growth Hub. The SLDC/CoC Partners Dinner will be held on 15th March at the Castle Green and tickets are on sale.

SLDC: G Vincent reported that SLDC is partnering with Barrow Borough Council and Lancaster City Council to create the Lancaster and South Cumbria economic region to encourage public and private sector investment and develop a list of funding asks to Government. The area is the sixth biggest economy in the NW.

CCC: G Cook said CCC has put a request into Government about the early development of a Cumbrian Unitary Authority but stressed that the county's District Councils are not in favour of the proposals.

Footfall: P Scott reported that the footfall figures for December were 5000 down overall on the previous year which does reflect the national picture. SLDC has also conducted an empty shop count in December and Kendal has a vacancy rate of 9.5%, down from 10% in June and 10.6% in December 17. The Westmorland Shopping Centre has announced plans for redevelopment including housing a hotel on the site.

K Shoes Heritage Centre: P Scott reported that she has been working with M Dixon to find a new home for some of the K Shoes Heritage Centre collection at K Village. Positive conversations have been held with the Museum of Lakeland Life but they are waiting to discuss in more detail with their new Chief Executive when in post.

9. Any other business

The Post Office has announced a public consultation to gain views about their move into WH Smith. The consultation makes it clear that the move will take place but they are seeking views about access, open times etc. The KFB discussed the issue and agreed a response to the consultation wasn't required.

10. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 27th February – The MintWorks – 3 pm.