

Kendal Futures Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 8th July 2020

3.00 pm - 5.00 pm

Video Meeting via Zoom



Present:

Mark Cropper, Chair

Paula Scott, Kendal Futures

Susanne Long, Kendal Town Council

Julian Rayner, Transport/Distribution

Jamie Allison, Young Professionals Group

Robin Ashcroft, South Lakeland District Council

Matt Williams, SLDC

Mandy Dixon, K Village and Tourism

Cath Purdy, Housing

John Haley, Professional Services

Brian Harrison, Kendal BID

Graham Booth, Board Observer for Cumbria LEP

Kelvin Nash, Kendal College

Rhian Harris, Culture & Festivals

Nick Taylor, Kendal Futures

Geoff Cook, South Lakeland Local Committee

Apologies:

Derek Armstrong, Cumbria Chamber of Commerce

Miriam Randall, Creative Industries & Innovation

1. Apologies and membership

M Cropper welcomed Kelvin Nash to the Kendal Futures Board as the new Kendal College representative. Kelvin is replacing Louise Shrapnel, who was thanked in her absence for her time and commitment to the KFB. M Cropper emphasised that the College is an important stakeholder in the Vision process. K Nash said the College attracts over 3,500 students annually, including 1,300 16-18 years old, 1,000 apprenticeship plus adult learners who travel from a wide area. The KFB encouraged K Nash to tell them what was needed in future to support young people and drive change in the town.

Nick Taylor also attended the meeting, having completed some work earlier in the year for KF and is keen to stay in touch while the KFB seeks further funding to develop the Action Groups with Nick's help.

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made for the meeting agenda.

3. Minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th May were agreed as a true record.

Matters arising

- P Scott is working on transferring CIC bank account signatory authority to J Haley.
- P Scott has requested information from CCC about their Professional Services Framework and Capital Works Framework, including what opportunities are available outside of the framework, how smaller contracts are awarded and how smaller firms not on the framework can access it. More information will be shared when available.
- P Scott is presenting to Kendal BID at their early August meeting to support the funding request of £3k for visit-kendal.co.uk funding. B Harrison has proposed the BID could pay the £3k of funding in return for a

separate section of the website (on the top level of navigation) for Passport to Kendal. The request includes the need to have complete control over that area of the website in terms of design and updating content which would require a separate login and access. The developer has quoted £1200 for the work, plus a further £100 to £600 for design/development depending on the changes needed. P Scott has said existing pages for Passport to Kendal can be made available with content updated via the content manager at no cost and the BID does already have a lot of content promoted on the website. Back engineering a website is always more costly and the BID may find better value in developing a new Passport to Kendal website for this project.

- CCC has confirmed that they submitted the Strategic Outline Business Case at the end of last year to the DfT for the Northern Access Route along with the KFB letter of support. They have since responded to several queries but are waiting for an announcement about whether funding to develop the scheme to the next stage, an Outline Business Case, is successful.
- The KF funding request was resubmitted to SLDC and R Ashcroft and M Williams are progressing it to discussions with Informal Cabinet on 4th August and a decision by full Cabinet expected on 9th September.
- SLDC has reissued the Kendal Markets tender with a submission deadline of today. Interviews/presentations are planned for 31st July and the tenderers have to 31st August to produce business and investment plans which will be evaluated as the basis for award. M Williams confirmed that KF would be involved in the process. **ACTION: P SCOTT to confirm KFB involvement with Sion Thomas at SLDC.**
- **ACTION: P SCOTT to request the replacement Gooseholme Bridge design from CCC and share with the KFB.**
- The Kendal Citizens Jury for Climate Change has been appointed and the first session held.

4. Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme

Craig Cowperthwaite from the Environment Agency joined the meeting. A newsletter was circulated ahead of the meeting and presentation slides shared during the meeting.

The EA are currently submitting updates and information to SLDC to validate and discharge their planning conditions. The information will then be available on the planning portal. The EA will then conduct further consultation with the public about some issues and KF will be able to share their views in that process. The Traffic Management Plan is one of the conditions still to be discharged and will be available soon.

Work on the defences will begin in September/October, downstream of Romney Road Bridge. Works in the town centre and Aynam Road will begin in February 2021 with service diversion and tree works, and the main works in spring. The highways details are being developed, but the work is likely to involve a one lane closure or partial closure on Aynam Road. New Road is also likely to see a lane closure and the footpath will be closed on Waterside. The KFB urged the EA to provide a concise plan with timescales to the community and businesses as soon as possible.

The original planning application was for 90m of glass over 5 different locations on Aynam Road, 130m of glass at Waterside and 35m at Gooseholme. Discussions are now taking place with KTC and SLDC about them providing additional funding to increase the glass on Aynam Road to 410m. Discussions about affordability are ongoing and will depend on the prices quoted by suppliers. Any additional glass will form part of a planning amendment. On Aynam Road, where the wall reaches 1.2m or above it will include a 600mm glass panel. For example, the maximum height wall of 1.42m will include 600mm glass and 800mm of wall.

The KFB asked whether the EA could fund the additional mitigation work within the £76m programme, rather than rely on an additional levy on taxpayers. While final costs are still to be confirmed, the EA is covering around £194k of

the additional estimated cost of £645k. Phase 1 will have a build cost of £16-18m with contingency needed for phases 2 and 3.

B Harrison asked for the Traffic Management Plan to be made available quickly and reported that Kendal BID members were concerned about disruption to trade. Communication about roadworks and lane closures is vital to divert traffic without discouraging people from visiting the town. C Cowperthwaite confirmed that the Traffic Management Plan will be available as soon as it has been validated by SLDC's planning team and added to the planning portal. The EA will provide more information in their next newsletter.

S Long reminded the KFB that KTC and SLDC is also working to ensure that additional mitigation measures, such as cycle paths and bio-diversity measures, are being progressed as positive outcomes for the town. The public arts strategy information is included in the slides. **ACTION: ALL to look at the public arts strategy information and engage in further consultation. P SCOTT to ensure the R Harris and M Randall are included in a future meeting about this work.**

5. Kendal Vision

5.1 Vision priorities

A paper was shared prior to the meeting and on screen and M Cropper discussed his thoughts for priorities to progress the Vision. He suggested initially focusing on a small number of topics, encouraging conversations around those and challenging current thinking with the different partners involved.

1. Kendal Traffic Study

The Vision consultation revealed that people feel strongly about Kendal's traffic system. It's regarded as problematic and vehicles dominate the town. The town will benefit from a new, independent view that may differ to that of the Highways team at CCC. It will cost £7k and be conducted by Andrew Cameron who has completed work in many other towns and cities. CCC can't contribute funding but have previously offered support with data and officer time.

The KFB agreed the study is worthy of further investigation at this cost, particularly as traffic produced strong views in the Vision and this may encourage new ideas for the longer term. Existing reports will be shared with the consultant and they were also used to inform the Vision. **ACTION: P SCOTT to confirm officer and data support with CCC, confirm Andrew Cameron's quote and investigate how to raise the necessary funding.**

R Ashcroft said that SLDC has received £92k ERDF monies for the district for temporary measures to manage COVID-19 social distancing which can include some traffic interventions, most of which is already committed. CCC has also received some funding for cycling and walking infrastructure improvements which could be used to look at future improvements. Wildman Street is being considered but it is challenging to find an acceptable solution to businesses, car users and walkers/cyclists. In the longer term, Kendal may benefit from the High Street Task Force and future associated funding but this work is currently on hold due to COVID-19.

2. Market Hall, Market Place and Westmorland Shopping Centre

The KFB agreed that a strong market offer could be a key attractor for Kendal and the SLDC markets tender was an important decision which could impact aspirations for the wider area.

3. The Railway Station and surrounding area

This area is likely to involve land assembly which is complicated but common in other areas. Early discussions about land ownership will be important in this context. Government funding can be used to buy property and precedents are being set in Carlisle around the development of their station. KF can begin to have conversations with site owners about wider aspirations.

SLDC has recently issued a Call for Sites for the next Local Plan which is an important opportunity to include plots of land suitable for housing and employment. However, there needs to be an intention that owners are agreeable to development to be included in the plan. SLDC need options to appraise and identify whether they are appropriate for development and it is vital to get engagement about the right type of development. Investment may be needed to help bring sites forward, however, and this can be difficult to fund, but an allocation in the Local Plan will be beneficial. More thought is needed about how to develop the aspirations and potential for each site within the Vision, with identified responsibilities. **P SCOTT shared the information about the Call for Sites during the meeting. ACTION: P SCOTT to discuss with SLDC how to best include the Kendal Vision aspirational sites within the Local Plan.**

The KFB agreed that responsible development is needed in Kendal, and KF can play a role as a mediator, facilitator or provide quality assurance or governance. M Cropper suggested holding a workshop with Board members to further focus their role and purpose. **ACTION: M CROPPER and P SCOTT to plan another KFB role/purpose workshop.**

J Rayner said he again sought clarification from SLDC and CCC about how the Northern Access Route will be detailed in the next Local Plan. SLDC responded that the new Local Plan and associated Infrastructure Delivery Plan will reflect the current situation in relation to the Northern Access Route, but this doesn't make it clear that it will be included. M Williams said SLDC do support CCC in seeking investment for the building of a Northern Access Route. It is in the Transport for the North Strategic Investment Plan and has been identified as a Strategic Infrastructure Project and the road will be included in the Local Plan if it gets the necessary investment. However, previously, CCC has said the road must be in the Local Plan to attract the necessary investment. The KFB expressed concern that the investment may not arrive before the next Local Plan is published. **ACTION: M Williams to seek further clarification from SLDC's Local Plan team.**

Other options for improving traffic management with interventions within the town centre must also continue in parallel with plans for the road. The KFB transport study might help inform this work too.

4. Abbot Hall Art Gallery (linking to the Brewery Arts Centre and wider area)

'Shovel ready' infrastructure projects to help reboot the local economy are key to Government plans currently and the KFB were reminded that Abbot Hall Art Gallery has planning permission for a refurbished and reimagined site. Major arts and culture investment can be transformational for the town and the high street in attracting large numbers of people. R Harris said that Abbot Hall's existing funding is just the start and if more funding can be attracted, with the town working together, to create a vibrant cultural quarter offer embedded in the local community to improve health and wellbeing. Kendal's economy will improve as we make the town a better place overall. The Vision demonstrates the level of ambition, and SLDC's Town Centre Strategy also identifies a heritage quarter in Kirkland. Funding applications want to see existing investment identified and additional match funding still needs to be found.

The Vision was published only a couple of weeks before lockdown for COVID-19. Lots of copies were given out follows the publication of the media release and newsletter and it is now available digitally on kendalfutures.co.uk. It

may be necessary to stimulate efforts around the Vision when the impact of COVID-19 has lessened. **ACTION: P SCOTT to remind partners that hard copies of the Vision are available and organise copies for CLEP.**

5.2 Action Groups

P Scott and N Taylor shared a proposed Action Group structure and explained that it aimed to reduce the reporting layers and bureaucracy seen in an earlier version. The number of action groups has also been reduced to make them more manageable. Cross-cutting themes have been introduced, including sustainability which, in its widest form, should inform all work. The Action Groups feed into a Vision Delivery Group formed with the action group leads where regular communication and information sharing will be vital. KF CIC provides oversight as a separate board of directors and the KFB provides overall governance. P Scott will be letting the contract for, and overseeing, the Vision manager role and the new structure identifies that clearly, with the ability to build more capacity below that.

The KFB were asked to consider which Action Groups they might like to be involved in and how that could be managed productively. Leadership from members on the main KFB will be useful throughout. **ACTION: ALL to consider which, if any, Action Groups they would like to be involved in.**

The discussions included:

- The need to manage natural overlaps between the groups, such as with housing and placemaking and the need for quality.
- Adding quality of life and wellbeing to the cross-cutting themes.
- Whether young people be included as a cross cutting theme? They must be represented on each of the Action Groups.
- Whether to call sustainability the 'green economy' to encompass opportunities. This was felt to be an output but it could be included in the Placemaking Action Group.

The additional funding resource for the Vision Manager is needed before the Action Groups can be progressed but the KFB will then be needed to encourage local people to join the groups, and the involvement of the College to attract young people will be vital.

6. Organisation of future meetings

A paper was shared with suggestions about how to organise future meetings and M Cropper requested feedback on what Board members would find useful and how best to use meeting time. **ACTION: ALL to feedback to M Cropper and P Scott about how they would like meetings to be structured.**

M Williams suggested providing written SLDC updates ahead of the meeting, and M Cropper agreed that partner updates could be provided in advance via email. Meeting time should focus on the future objectives and visioning rather than operational activities.

The KFB agreed to hold meetings every two months in future, with six meetings a year. Information will be circulated by email where needed in the meantime to maintain communication. **ACTION: P SCOTT to reschedule 2020 meeting dates.**

7. Partner and project updates

Dealt with by exception and nothing further to the meeting was reported.

8. Any other business

B Harrison asked for an update about Kendal WIFI. M Williams said the new preferred supplier contract was on hold due to the impact of COVID-19 but the existing WIFI service is still operating and will continue on a monthly basis for the foreseeable future. The new supplier will offer a better, cost neutral solution and M Williams will arrange for them to present and discuss their plans with the BID as business recovers.

9. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 9th September 2020 – 3 pm

According to social distancing rules – likely to be a video conference.