

Kendal Futures Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 7th July 2021

3.00 – 5.00 pm

Video Meeting via Zoom



Present:

Mark Cropper, Chair

Paula Scott, Kendal Futures

Susanne Long, Kendal Town Council

Matt Williams, SLDC

Cath Purdy, Housing

Mandy Dixon, K Village and Tourism

Rhian Harris, Culture & Festivals

John Haley, Professional Services

Miriam Randall, Creative Industries & Innovation

Nick Pitt, Kendal BID

Jamie Allison, Young Professionals Group

Kelvin Nash, Kendal College

Noel Farrer, Delivery Advice & Govt Liaison

Nick Taylor, Kendal Futures

Geoff Cook, South Lakeland Local Committee

Apologies:

Robin Ashcroft, South Lakeland District Council

Graham Booth, Board Observer for Cumbria LEP

Jim Bland, NFU

1. Apologies and membership

As above. M Dixon announced her resignation from the KFB. The KFB thanked M Dixon for her commitment and support to the work of KF having been an active member since the board was formed in 2008.

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made for the meeting agenda.

3. Minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th May were agreed as a true record. Matters arising were covered on the agenda or will be picked up at a later date.

4. Funding agreement update

P Scott updated the KFB about progress with the SLDC funding agreement. An updated draft agreement was received which addressed only a few of the KF requested changes. These issues can be resolved, but there were also some fundamental changes to the required outputs which were no longer reporting/progress focused and instead required the development of specific business cases for several opportunity areas identified in the Vision, some of which are now part of other initiatives and all out of the direct control of KF. M Cropper, J Allison and P Scott will meet SLDC officers to resolve the outstanding issues. Everyone is now keen to resolve matters quickly.

Due to the delay in receiving the funding, the CIC Directors took the decision to temporarily stop working with Nick Taylor in his role as Vision Manager. The CIC is unable to pay his current invoices and it is unfair to ask him to continue to work on this basis. The planning work for the Action Groups is on hold until Nick is back in post. The KFB recorded their thanks to Nick Taylor for his patience and hoped he would be able to continue to offer his services once the funding is received.

5. Place Planning

CCC, SLDC, KTC and KF are working together to develop projects and enable the town to become better prepared for future funding application rounds. The Government is expected to announce round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund (LuF) in the autumn and the group is currently focused on this opportunity. South Lakeland is in the lowest tier of authority

for the LuF and any projects submitted will have to be exceptional. The joint working approach has progressed work quickly. A long/outline list of possible projects has been developed from existing strategies including the Vision and Town Centre Strategy around the themes of town centre regeneration, green travel and culture. Up to £20m is available and must be delivered by March 24. Consultants will be procured to assess and develop the projects to RIBA stage 2 design level and pull a LuF application together. £60k has been jointly raised to fund the contracting of consultants, with SLDC and CCC each contributing £25k, KTC £5k and P Scott recommended KF give £5k when the SLDC funding is received. The KFB agreed the funding contribution. A panel of the partners will assess the tenders and select the successful consultants. N Farrer will join the group to represent KF along with P Scott. **ACTION: P SCOTT to share the outline list of projects and the link to the tender opportunity and all to share with suitable consultants.**

6. Local Plan Review

N Farrer and P Scott met with Dan Hudson and Alastair McNeil and their team to discuss the Local Plan review process. They outlined some challenges facing town centres due to planned changes in Government planning regulations. The KFB discussed whether this could create more opportunities for town centre housing in line with the Vision but were concerned that the easing of planning controls could result in poor quality developments and an increase in ad-hoc developments without a wider strategy. The Local Plan team remain open to ideas and consultation is ongoing. A draft plan is likely to be produced in a year's time. N Farrer encouraged everyone to engage closely with the process.

The Local Plan is a regulatory framework and it is possible to designate opportunity areas in the Kendal. However, the team is constrained by planning rules which mean they must be able to guarantee that the designation is likely to come forward within 5 or 10 years or within the plan period. Brownfield sites are complex and more challenging due to multiple ownerships and higher development costs but they can be explored. The KFB discussed the possibility of using their future funding to support the strategic planning process, particularly around the opportunity areas identified in the Vision. The Local Plans team also reminded KF that the existing Local Plan framework still offers many opportunities to support the aims of the Vision.

KF can nominate possible sites through the SHELAA process (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment) to stimulate opportunities. **ACTION: N FARRER and P SCOTT to consider how to manage this in more detail.**

7. EA engagement & flood risk management scheme

Tim Farron MP called a meeting between the EA and KF to try to improve KF's engagement with the flood risk management scheme. N Farrer and P Scott attended this meeting and a more detailed follow up meeting with the EA and SLDC. N Farrer has offered to look more closely at the detailed plans for the flood scheme before final planning submissions are made. He explained that the full technical and detailed design work for each reach is now being carried out which provides an opportunity for SLDC, KTC and KF to scrutinise and influence the plans. There is an opportunity to ensure Kendal gets as much betterment as possible from the scheme, particularly in terms of cycling and walking opportunities, biodiversity, feeling safe and the look and feel of the scheme. The KFB agreed that N Farrer should represent them and use his technical knowledge to scrutinise the plans. **ACTION: N FARRER to continue to update the KFB about progress and plans.**

8. Partner and project updates

- P Scott had circulated an update about CCC's successful funding application to DfT for the **Northern Access Route**. They have been awarded funding to develop an Outline Business Case which will consider potential route options and environmental assessments, a scheme design and carry out public consultation.

M Cropper advised the KFB that as a landowner for the potential Northern Access Route he has a conflict of interest. M Cropper will remain absent from the discussions about the route, and he instructed the KFB to form an independent view.

ACTION: P SCOTT to organise a dedicated KFB meeting about the Northern Access Route and invite CCC officers, Citizen's Jury representatives and other stakeholders to discuss the issues. P SCOTT will also share wider views and letters of support previously submitted from the KFB.

- The KFB asked about the development of meanwhile projects alongside the larger strategic projects. Everyone agreed this was important and would be progressed once the Vision Manager was back in post.
- M Williams said SLDC now has a new Markets Officer in post, and the BID is keen to run more specialist markets. Kendal, through the High Street Task Force, also has access to an expert who is the joint founder of The Teenage Market who has offered support. A meeting is being organised with all partners to progress these ideas and address the highways and Market Charter issues. The Teenage Market will need the involvement of the Brewery Arts Centre, the College and others to attract young creatives. **ACTION: M WILLIAMS to ask the Markets Officer to find out why Lancaster has moved its market from the Market Square to Dalton Square.**
- M Randall said she is keen to collaborate with others and asked how she could access empty shops for short term projects. **ACTION: M RANDALL to discuss further J HALEY, and M WILLIAMS and S THOMAS. P SCOTT to share details of other organisations requesting temporary shop use with J HALEY.**
- K Nash gave an update about **Kendal College**. Application numbers for September are up by 300 for normal FE provision. They are short of space and are exploring additional options to accommodate the growth needed. The current animal rescue centre is due to be demolished and will be replaced by a new build construction centre to provide the T level qualifications in construction in September and potentially T level engineering the following year. Louise Shrapnel has retired after 16 years at the college and Graham Wilson is now in post as Finance Director. They are asking employers about skills needed to inform curriculum planning and the development of a new strategy. Work is also taking place with partners to ensure some of the learning opportunities remain in Cumbria following the closure of Newton Rigg. The KFB asked K Nash to continue to tell them what support the college needs to enable their continued growth.
- The KFB discussed **Beales** which is back on the market with an asking price of £800k. The KFB agreed to keep a watching brief on the site and discuss possible options with SLDC.
- **Kendal BID** is launching a small shop front improvement grant scheme.

9. Any other business

- P Scott reminded the KFB that she had shared the Citizen's Jury Panel notes which discussed progress against the recommendations.
- P Scott has paid the annual grants to participating venues in the Courtesy Toilet Scheme and produced temporary signage. There are still opportunities to get involved in the scheme as restrictions ease. **ACTION: P SCOTT to contact M Randall to discuss the Brewery's involvement and opening times.** P Scott has also presented to a community group in Dearham, Norfolk who wish to start their own scheme.

10. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 8th September, 3 pm – 4.30 pm

Brewery Arts Centre