

Kendal Futures Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 10th November 2021

3.00 – 4.30 pm

Windermere Suite, Bridge Mills



Present:

Mark Cropper, Chair

Paula Scott, Kendal Futures

Susanne Long, Kendal Town Council

Cath Purdy, Housing

Rhian Harris, Culture & Festivals

Robin Ashcroft, South Lakeland District Council

Graham Booth, Board Observer for Cumbria LEP

Jim Bland, NFU

Miriam Randall, Creative Industries & Innovation

Jamie Allison, Young Professionals Group

Kelvin Nash, Kendal College

Noel Farrer, Delivery Advice & Govt Liaison

Nick Taylor, Kendal Futures

Apologies:

John Haley, Professional Services

Geoff Cook, South Lakeland Local Committee

Nick Pitt, Kendal BID

Matt Williams, SLDC

1. Apologies and membership

As above.

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made for the meeting agenda.

3. Minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th July were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising but a Northern Access Route agenda item is still to be organised for a future meeting. **(ACTION: P SCOTT)**.

An activity update was circulated to the Board following the cancellation of the September meeting.

4. Status updates

The following updates were discussed by the KFB:

SLDC Funding

The funding agreement with SLDC has been agreed, signed and the year 1 funding of £50k received. N Taylor's outstanding invoices were paid after SLDC agreed the work could be backdated, along with the annual insurance costs.

The £50k funding is for the provision of the Vision Manager and delivery of the Action Groups. The project development funds of £135,294 remain with SLDC and can be accessed by KF for agreed projects.

Local Plan and High Street Task Force

N Farrer, P Scott and N Taylor have met with the Local Plans team at SLDC. Officers are supportive of the Vision and recognise that the next Local Plan must look different to previous versions, including the need to reduce greenfield expansion on the town's outskirts. The team does not have the resources to produce SPDs, Area Action Plans or similar as part of the Local Plan development process. KF believes such tools could be useful to embed the Vision and Town Centre Strategy in the Local Plan, and support the future development of brownfield sites.

Through the High Street Task Force work, a session was held with an appointed expert, Roland Karthaus.

Recommendations and a report will follow but the expert facilitated a positive discussion about tools which could

support the Local Plan process, including SPDs and planning performance agreements. The LDNP has recently developed the Windermere Gateway SPD successfully into their Local Plan.

Roland Karthaus also hosted a useful session between the three councils and KF about place planning.

The CIC Directors are attempting to map potential brownfield sites and land ownerships which could be submitted to the brownfield sites register or the Call for Sites. The KFB discussed the difficulties surrounding brownfield development, which could deliver some of the town's housing need. C Purdy reminded the KFB that the large demand for housing required a long-term view, and other sites will also be needed. It was agreed that some greenfield sites are likely to be appropriate but assessment criteria is needed. KTC is considering these issues and KF should also take part in the discussions.

M Cropper reminded the KFB that it's important to continue to understand the specific needs of each board member, and others in the town, as the Vision is progressed and to link these needs into the Local Plan process. K Nash confirmed that Kendal College has 4000 students and only 20% are Kendal based. 80% travel in because there's no accommodation for them, and this lack of accommodation also prevents the college offering HE provision. Many college staff also travel considerable distances to work.

There is demand for housing in Kendal which is an economic driver for change and this should enable KF and partners to demand provision through the delivery of more complex sites. Development can also generate Community Infrastructure Levy and the town centre economy will benefit from more people living in the town centre.

ACTION: P SCOTT to co-ordinate a further discussion about potential brownfield sites with the CIC Working Group and discuss submission deadlines with the Local Plans team.

After discussion, the KFB agreed to commission some expert consultancy support to advise on how to further develop the Vision's aims within the Local Plan, address barriers and what tools (SPD or similar framework) within the context of National Planning Policy would be beneficial. The work was estimated at around £10k and could be funded via the SLDC project development money. **ACTION: P SCOTT to discuss how to procure consultancy services and how KF can best access the funding in the most efficient way with SLDC.**

ACTION: P SCOTT to add the challenge of effectively managing procurement and contracting to the Risk Register.

Action Groups

N Taylor reported that the first meeting of the Vision team was held earlier in the month and will now be followed by a regular cycle of monthly meetings of the individual action groups. The Transport and Placemaking groups are underway, and an arts and culture group will follow in the New Year. The housing group is being supported by a team member from South Lakes Housing and there will be two strands. A strategic level group may meet only as required and consist of developers, social housing providers and strategists while a public group will focus on activity in local communities and topics that help them improve their local area.

ACTION: ALL to encourage contacts to get involved in the Action Groups.

ACTION: N TAYLOR to continue to link the LCWIP plans into the Action Groups.

Levelling Up Fund

The project consultants are holding stakeholder discussions and workshops. The Government hasn't yet announced a second round of funding, but it is expected in early spring 22 and so it is important to keep up momentum and develop a bid. The consultants will develop a more detailed list of potential projects, and some evaluation criteria, before recommending a short list of projects to the Town Team by the end of the year.

Following a workshop, the consultants suggested that it is unlikely that the Vision's ambitious ideas for the Station Gateway area can be delivered within the tight timeframe of the LuF and the project list is more likely to focus on the town centre.

EA Flood Risk Management Scheme

N Farrer and P Scott have been involved in several meetings to discuss the detailed design of the scheme. The KFB agreed that it was important for the town to scrutinise the plans, and they thanked KTC and N Farrer for demanding better. KTC must be recognised for their work in securing the glass walls.

It was agreed to develop a planning application response for Reach G from KF and share with the EA to encourage them to address comments made in the meetings. It is vital to continue to work in partnership with the EA and others to get the best scheme possible for the town.

5. Next steps

M Cropper reminded the KFB that there are a couple of board vacancies, and two more private sector CIC Directors would also be valuable. Board members were asked to make suggestions for suitable representatives who can help address the Vision themes and bring expertise, interest and energy to the group.

ACTION: ALL to suggest possible new Board representatives to P Scott.

ACTION: P SCOTT to map out vacancies around the Vision's themes, eg, sustainability, transport and discuss again.

M Cropper also asked the KFB to consider how the town can best deliver larger, complex developments in future. Should the town consider having a Development Corporation or similar organisation, and should KF set this up, or is another organisation better placed? It may lead to opportunities for strategic acquisition, community share offers or a people's development company for example.

6. Partner and project updates

- R Ashcroft updated the KFB about progress with Local Government Reform which will see **SLDC**, CCC, Eden District Council and Barrow Borough Council become a new single unitary authority. From May-22, a shadow authority will operate in parallel with the existing councils. The KFB agreed that it was vital for KF to continue to champion the opportunities for Kendal which is well placed geographically in the centre of the new authority.
- J Allison said the **Young Professionals Group** is now planning events for 2022. **ACTION: J ALLISON to circulate dates to N Taylor with a view to delivering a future presentation about the Vision and encourage involvement in the Action Groups.**
- K Nash said construction is underway for **Kendal College's** new construction/engineering building and completion is due in 2022. Work is progressing to lease the first and second floor of the Westmorland Shopping Centre. Adult students will be hosted there from early in the New Year, with other students from September-22. Around 400 students will be based in the town centre location.

9. Any other business

- P Scott will set and share meeting dates for 2022 asap.

10. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 23rd March, 3 pm – 4.30 pm

TEAMS or in person to be confirmed.