

Kendal Futures Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 19th January 2022

3.00 – 4.30 pm

TEAMS



Present:

Mark Cropper, Chair
Paula Scott, Kendal Futures
Susanne Long, Kendal Town Council
Cath Purdy, Housing
Robin Ashcroft, South Lakeland District Council
Graham Booth, Board Observer for Cumbria LEP
Miriam Randall, Creative Industries & Innovation
Jamie Allison, Young Professionals Group
Kelvin Nash, Kendal College
Noel Farrer, Delivery Advice & Govt Liaison

Nick Taylor, Kendal Futures
John Haley, Professional Services
Geoff Cook, South Lakeland Local Committee
Nick Pitt, Kendal BID
Matt Williams, SLDC

Apologies:

Rhian Harris, Culture & Festivals
Jim Bland, NFU

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 10th November were agreed as a true record with one clarification from Robin about the reference to the new Shadow Authority which will operate in parallel to the existing councils under Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). **ACTION: P SCOTT to amend the minutes and recirculate.**

There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

4. Updated Terms of Reference

The KFB agreed to update their Terms of Reference to better reflect the focus on the Vision and placemaking, rather than the previous economic agenda. The Terms were agreed as broadly correct with updates needed to reflect the role of the Vision, the need to be future focused, innovative and ideas driven and have a broaden outlook. A strong collaborative role continues to be is vital. **ACTION: P SCOTT and M CROPPER to make further amends and share ahead of the next meeting.**

The group also discussed possible new Board appointments to bring in additional expertise and views aligned to the aims and ambitions of the Vision. There is a need for the Board membership to include younger people and be more diverse as well as appoint expertise in environment, transport and urban design which are key areas of the Vision.

ACTION: Kelvin and Miriam to consider and discuss suitable younger candidates.

Geoff reminded the Board to keep LGR in mind as the local authority representatives may change in the upcoming elections and a shadow board member could also be considered. Graham reminded everyone that the Government is reviewing the role of LEPs and the future of Cumbria LEP remains unknown.

The KFB is an oversight board so it can be larger in size if everyone feels they can make a meaningful contribution.

ACTION: ALL to send suggestions for future Board members to Paula.

5. Levelling Up Fund update

The next LuF funding round and application deadline is still to be announced by Government. The Town Team working with the consultants are continuing to develop the bid, informed by the Vision. The first round of project evaluation has been completed with a focus on making the most of Kendal's cultural assets, improving connectivity through walking and cycling and the riverside corridor links and better connecting the links to the Market Place, Westmorland Shopping Centre and new Kendal College campus. Public realm will form a large part of the bid to support the more transformational projects.

There are sensitivities to manage and the KFB were asked to keep the details of the proposed activities confidential until further discussions with partners, asset owners and tenants can be held.

Miriam shared a link to a Levelling Up Inquiry report - The Case for Culture - What Northern Culture Needs to Rebuild, Rebalance and Recover which will be useful to inform the bid development.

<https://northernculture.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/NCAPPG-The-Case-for-Culture-Report.pdf>

Noel highlighted the need to embrace public consultation to help inform and embed the projects and show the public how the schemes link towards developing Kendal. Matt confirmed that positive communications will follow and the communications messages will be embedded in the Vision. The work of the Town Team has demonstrated what can be achieved with positive collaboration among three tiers of council and KF.

S106 update

The LuF consultants are also developing a s106 scheme for Kendal and the funds must be spent by November-22. The Longpool junction/station gateway improvements have been discounted as they can't be delivered within the timescale and the funding of £246k is insufficient. The consultants suggested a small scheme to resurface the shared footway and cycleway on Stramongate Bridge, along with some enhanced lighting, but the Town Team felt this was already a well-used route which worked well and further improvements at this time wouldn't make a significant difference to local people or businesses.

The team is now considering options for upper Stramongate including resurfacing, creating a shared surface, footway widening and greening and costed options are awaited. A walkabout is planned to investigate further and KF representatives will be invited to attend.

The use of high-quality materials will be essential and the area could be viewed as a pilot project for the wider LuF work and wider public realm schemes as identified in the Vision. The KFB stressed that it was essential to keep in mind other areas which need investment, including Lower Stramongate.

The KFB discussed possible issues with delays created by sourcing contractors and materials and the risk of clawback if the money isn't spent. Having been reassured by CCC colleagues that the work is achievable, Matt was confident that the money could be expended before the deadline and asked KF to help positively influence the work.

6. Project development funding

Matt and Paula have finalised a paper requesting payment of the £135k project development funds from SLDC in one lump sum and Matt will progress with colleagues. The KFB stressed that they were keen to progress studies and expert support quickly, particularly those that can assist with the Local Plan review process.

7. Northern Access Route

Michael Barry from CCC joined the meeting to update on the NAR progress and showed a presentation. The new road is still in the early stages of development. The next phase is to develop the Outline Business Case which will test and consider in more detail some of the assumptions and scenarios identified in the Strategic Outline Business Case.

The Vision is about growing the town from the inside out and creating positive change for the town centre. The KFB expressed concern that the earlier justification for the new road was focused on large scale housing development on the outskirts off the town. Michael said Government policy on road building is shifting with sustainable transport, modal shift and wider town centre benefits becoming much more important. Part of the case for the road will include funding to make improvements in the town centre, focused on increasing walking and cycling and creating a modal shift. The detail of these opportunities still needs to be discussed with DfT. Holistic thinking is needed to improve the town centre and make additional interventions more quickly but that doesn't fit with current Government funding models.

Recognising that the NAR is likely to be several years away, the KFB want to ensure that other town centre interventions are also investigated and developed in the meantime.

Jamie is representing the KFB on the Northern Access Route Reference Group to steer the Outline Business Case development.

8. Partner and project updates

- Nick updated the KFB about progress with the Action Groups with the Placemaking and Transport groups now meeting monthly. Dates and details can be found on the website www.kendalfutures.co.uk/vision/action-groups
- Jamie announced that the Young Professionals Group is now called South Lakes Professionals.
- John said some positive changes were being seen in the Town Centre with the take up of new shop leases.
- Nick Pitt gave a Kendal BID update via the online chat:
 - Shop front refurbishment - in association with SLDC
 - Teenage market – promoting young entrepreneurs
 - Group buying discount for retailers
 - Northern rail advertising
 - Access to Kendal Market – Looking to enable better access
 - Simon Thomas has left his role as BID Manager.

9. Any other business

There was no other business.

10. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 23rd March, 3.30 pm – 5.00 pm (Note change in time)

Brewery Arts Centre.