

Kendal Futures Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 23rd March 2022

3.30 – 5.00 pm

Brewery Arts Centre



Present:

Mark Cropper, Chair

Paula Scott, Kendal Futures

Susanne Long, Kendal Town Council

Cath Purdy, Housing

Graham Booth, Board Observer for Cumbria LEP

Miriam Randall, Creative Industries & Innovation

Jamie Allison, SL Professionals Group

Rhian Harris, Culture & Festivals (via TEAMS)

Jim Bland, NFU

Nick Taylor, Kendal Futures

Geoff Cook, South Lakeland Local Committee

Tina Dulson, Kendal BID

Apologies:

Noel Farrer, Delivery Advice & Govt Liaison

Matt Williams, SLDC

John Haley, Professional Services

Robin Ashcroft, South Lakeland District Council

Kelvin Nash, Kendal College

1. Apologies and membership

As above. The KFB welcomed Tina Dulson to the Board who is replacing Nick Pitt as Kendal BID's representative. Both KF and Kendal BID want to be better connected to support the development of the Vision.

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made for the meeting agenda.

ACTION: ALL to check the annual register of interests and send any changes to Paula asap.

3. Minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th January were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

Jamie shared the dates of the next South Lakes Professionals Networking events: 26th May, 22nd September and 8th December at The Venue at The Factory. **ACTION: Nick and Noel to contact Jamie about speaking at an event about the Vision and Action Groups.**

4. Updated Terms of Reference

The Board discussed the updated Terms of Reference circulated ahead of the meeting. The KFB Terms of Reference are being updated to better reflect KF's role in developing the Vision and ensure the Board can be dynamic and represent their wider constituents and the Vision's themes.

The Board agreed and accepted the new Terms of Reference subject to the following amendments:

- Addition that Board members will be elected for a term of 3 years and must be re-elected every 3 years. Appointments will then be reviewed annually after 6 years.
- Change the Chair's length of term wording to match the above.
- Replace any references to 'chairman' with 'chair'.

ACTION: Paula to make the changes and recirculate the Terms of Reference to the Board.

The Conflict of Interest policy was also shared prior to the meeting as a reminder to Board members. A register of interests is kept and updated annually. Board members should declare interests in meetings against agenda items. Mark discussed the need for the Board and CIC to be honest and open to internal and external scrutiny. However, private sector board members should be able to apply for future work or contract opportunities. It would be vital to evidence value for money in such cases and manage future working or board relationships appropriately on a case-by-case basis.

The KF CIC would benefit from one or two additional private sector directors. **ACTION: CIC Directors to discuss what expertise is most needed on the CIC, and feedback to the Board requesting suitable volunteer appointments. Paula to discuss the role further with Tina who expressed an interest.**

5. Commissioning expertise to support the Local Plan process

Project development funds

Paula met with Gareth Candlin at SLDC about the developing the legal agreement to allow KF to receive the £135k project development funding. Paula will work with officers to draft a suitable agreement which allows for flexibility and agile delivery. It is likely to take 6 weeks to process with SLDCs legal team, however. **ACTION: Paula to request that we receive any feedback or changes quickly so that the process can be completed within 6 weeks.**

The KFB discussed the need to influence the Local Plan process quickly. The Plan does carry more weight in law if it's better progressed which will be helpful ahead of the development of the new Unitary authority. The CIC Directors have agreed to commission some support with Lichfields to help KF and the Vision engage with the Local Plan process. The briefing note was shared ahead of the meeting. It was important that the work is developed in conjunction with the Local Plans team to understand what support they need to better embed the Vision and Town Centre Strategy in the next Plan. **ACTION: Paula to ask the Local Plans team for an update about timescales and for feedback on the Lichfield's briefing note.**

Noel Farrer, via email, proposed inviting Homes England to Kendal to discuss whether they can provide funding and support to stimulate residential development in Kendal town centre, particularly on brownfield sites where there is some local authority control. Cath discussed the need to understand net housing numbers, and related Homes England criteria which is changing. There is likely to already be a dialogue between SLDC and Homes England but possibly not for Kendal. A more detailed plan and discussion, involving SLDC, with firmer proposals will be needed to attract and involve Homes England.

A wider discussion followed about the need for affordable homes and how to provide them if town centre sites are not available. How can Kendal deliver the capacity needed without going on to greenfield sites and in what timescales?

The Vision focuses on getting more people living in the town, in a range of housing which could be higher density. The policy is better for everyone - greener and more sustainable as it will also help to regenerate the town centre and keep more money in the local economy. Affordable homes can prevent private sector development taking place and the KFB agreed it needs to define 'affordable housing' for the purposes of the Vision.

ACTIONS:

- **Paula to ask Lichfields for support with creating a definition of affordable homes for the Vision, an understanding of what this means in planning policy, and advice about how to get the right type of house in the right place and what tools can influence this.**
- **Cath to share information, when known, about what funds are available from Homes England.**
- **Paula to discuss Homes England involvement with SLDC officers, and whether a strategic housing work group, to include housing organisations and developers, could help to define Kendal's ask to Homes England.**

6. Project updates

Levelling Up Fund

Matt provided an email update in his absence which was verbally shared with the KFB. An announcement is expected in the budget about the timeframes for Round 2 bidding round.

- Efforts are being concentrated over the next 4 weeks on working with key stakeholders to develop detailed designs for the bid components and detail a cost plan.
- The officer group will meet again in mid-April to discuss progress, bid make-up, narrative/strategic case, approach to comms etc.
- There could still be a need for further prioritisation to ensure the strongest possible, deliverable bid with a clear narrative which is exceptional.
- Work is progressing to develop the three workstreams:
 - Regeneration - considering the indoor market, Market Place and town centre public realm.
 - Transport - led by CCC who have appointed Sustrans to draw up initial designs for walking and cycling routes on the river corridor connecting cultural assets and the town centre. The need for quality materials/placemaking approach will be highlighted.
 - Cultural project - Positive discussions have taken place with Lakeland Arts and Brewery Arts Centre to align and agree a complementary project, which focusses on the Mintworks, Abbot Hall and the connectivity between them. Miriam expanded the update to say a cultural innovation hub was planned to connect the two sites and create a centre of excellence for creative industries talent.

S106 Monies

An update from Matt was also shared in his absence.

- Preferred design for Stramongate public realm improvements was agreed by the Town Team on 9 March.
- Within the modest budget there is an emphasis on quality materials and setting the benchmark for future improvements.
- The consultation has been shared with the KFB and all were encouraged to comment (closed midnight on 27 March).
- CCC will be managing and procuring the works, which need to be completed by November 2022.

The KFB agreed that the s106 plans were very positive and set the tone and ambition for future public realm developments. Paula reported that some positive feedback had also been received by SLDC from businesses on Stramongate but there was a recognition that more needs to be done. The Town Team must continue to lobby CCC for additional budget for resurfacing or maintenance works to further improve the area.

Geoff reported that the LCWIP plan was adopted by CCC's Local Committee but no funds to deliver any of the plans were yet secured.

Vision Manager

Nick reported that the Placemaking and Transport Action Groups are continuing to meet monthly. New dates have been set with more groups meeting during the day to enable more people to attend. Paula and Nick presented to KTC about progress and work to date. Nick is developing some community housing group work, with a member of the South Lakes Housing team, to engage people in the Vision and related initiatives in their local area.

He is also meeting business and land owners in the town to discuss the aims of the Vision, understand their issues and gain their support.

The placemaking group has suggested a carbon footprint calculator project, and a meeting has been with KTC to discuss links to the Zero Carbon Kendal work and website. The KFB questioned the purpose and output of smaller projects, and the need to be clear on what value they offer.

Kendal BID have grants for shop fronts and staff training, and there are also solar panel initiatives available. Better management of the Conservation Area is important for delivering the Vision. **ACTION: Nick to consider how to integrate all the differing initiatives with the Action Groups and avoid duplication.**

EA and flood scheme

Following several emails and comments about the design detail of the scheme, Noel and Paula felt no significant changes were being accommodated and so a complaint was raised with the senior team. The EA have now suggested a walkaround meeting to discuss the issues in more detail, which KF has accepted (date to be confirmed).

Miriam and Rhian reported that meetings to develop the public art strategy have felt positive to date.

Comments are now being sought by the EA about the proposals for Stock Beck Pumping Station and the landscaping plans for Gooseholme ahead of the EA submitting a planning application in May. **ACTION: Noel and Paula to continue to press the EA for a walkabout meeting to discuss the outstanding design details and issues, including landscaping plans.**

8. Partner and project updates

Jamie attended the Northern Access Route Reference Group session held with CCC and their consultants. There were lots of questions and details discussed at a high, strategic level.

9. Any other business

Paula has received details about United Utilities proposals for construction traffic access to the north of the town for repairs to the Haweswater Aquaduct. The KFB agreed a formal response wasn't needed but information should be circulated. See more details at www.harpconsultation.co.uk/docker

10. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 25th May, 3.00 pm – 4.30 pm

Bridge Mills - tbc