



Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008  
4.30pm, County Offices, Kendal

**Present:**

Peter Hensman, Lake District Estates (Chair)  
Derek Armstrong, Cumbria Chamber of Commerce  
Geoff Cook, Kendal Town Council  
Tom Powney, Federation of Small Businesses  
Mandy Dixon, South Lakeland LSP  
Graham Vincent, South Lakeland District Council  
Dave Clark, South Lakeland Local Area Committee  
Scott Burns, South Lakeland District Council  
Dianne Whitehead, Cumbria County Council

Joanne Golton, Programme Manager  
David Ingham, Cumbria County Council

Also present:  
Jonathan Smith, Cumbria County Council

Apologies  
Alun Lewis, CBI

**1. Minutes and Matters arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008 were accepted as a true record.

Transport Assessment

- Atkins consultants have been appointed and the report would be completed in January/ February 09. No further finance has been allocated to the assessment at this time.

Tourism

- MD will supply members with an up to date summary of the tourism action plan
- The Kendal Futures 'Fit for Tourism' Plan was recently presented to the Kendal Tourism Group.
- The Quaker Tapestry has set up a future and consultation group. Issues to be considered include the full repairing lease on the current building, which expires in 2015. The building is expensive to manage and footfall has been down for the last 5 years (except this year saw a 30% increase). Consultation on the subject is ongoing and a decision will be made in April 2009. KTC and SLDC have requested a meeting with Bridget Guest from the Tapestry to see where they can help (**ACTION: G. Cook** to report back)
- It was noted that the Quaker Tapestry exhibition had won a North West Tourism Award for Small Visitor Attraction of the Year 2008.

**Kendal Northern Development Route**

Jonathan Smith, Transport Policy Manager from Cumbria County Council was invited to address KFB on the relief road. JS outlined the long-standing traffic issues. He highlighted the importance of articulating Kendal's long-term vision and the appropriate scale of development to meet aspirations. The first round of Regional Funding Allocation had produced no new scheme in Cumbria. Progress within the programme indicated that there would be no new scheme before 2018 and if the Kendal Relief Route was to proceed before this time it would require alternative sources of funding such as European funds and the new Community Infrastructure Levy from new developments.

Discussion took place relating to the Local Development Framework allocation of land and the need for adequate infrastructure to enable access to employment and industrial sites to the North of the town. It was highlighted that the development of the route was important in terms quality of life and alleviating traffic congestion and journey times. The Kendal Transport Assessment was expected to recommend new routes and demand management would have to be addressed.

PH requested guidance on ensuring that the Kendal Northern Development Route was considered a priority proposal. JS raised the difficulties of addressing parochial issues and encouraged the need for a united Cumbrian front. There is strong competition for investment, and it is often skewed around the Mersey and Manchester area as they had larger populations. He advised that it was critical to clearly state the important issues and 'to make more regional noise' about Kendal. SB advised that LDF had allocated employment and development land sites and this information would be passed on to JS (**ACTION: S. Burns**).

### **New Road Common Land**

Graham Vincent explained that the principle driver behind the New Road project was the Kendal Regeneration Action Plan. At present the area was untidy and unsafe. There has been opposition to the proposal to remove common land status from the following organisations: Save Our Free Parking, Open Space Society, Friends of Lakeland, and the Civic Society.

The legal position regarding common land was explained; highlighting that it is illegal to tarmac common land and that car parking contravened bye-laws. In the past the council had turned a blind eye to the situation, however, the introduction of new Government regulation enables the public to take the Council to court. GV raised concern that if the situation was left too long this situation could arise. GV appealed to the committee for public support of the scheme.

The importance of communication/public information/ PR was raised. GV explained the Council intended to hold public exhibitions to explain the legal position and present photomontages of what the area may look like and invite public comment. Members agreed that the public needed more information on Common Land permissions. Tom Powney urged the board that any decisions on the future of New Road should be postponed until the recommendations of the Atkins report had been received. Joanne Golton advised that NWDA money might be available to fund a designed enhancement scheme.

It was agreed that a letter to the Westmoreland Gazette, supporting the moves to improve the area but stating clearly the Boards position, especially in relation to alternative car parking, should be sent on behalf of Kendal Futures (**ACTION: JG/P. Hensman**)

Tom Powney, Dave Clark, Mandy Dixon and Graham Vincent agreed to form a New Road sub group. Their terms of reference were to consider any plans for the future of the site and to make recommendations to the Board. Graham Vincent agreed to provide the board with updates at future meetings (**ACTION: G. Vincent**)

### **Programme Update**

- Public Realm - JG met with NWDA in September to discuss a public realm application for Kendal in light of underspends of NWDA rural affairs money. Initially money was available this financial year but after a subsequent mtg on 3/11 funds are being put towards research by consultants into a new programme for gap projects in public realm and local employment sites. NWDA have encouraged Kendal to continue their bid and act as pilot for the new programme. JG reported that she intended to submit a bid for £550,000 as per the proposals circulated at the last meeting..
- SLDC have recently completed their quarterly survey of empty shops. March 2007 – 42 out of 383 shops were reported empty, in October 2008, this number had fallen to – 35 out of 384. To qualify these figures SB explained that the survey was specific to a set number of streets and charity shops were included. GV reported that car park user figures were up, but that the length of stay was down. Due to the fragility of the current economic climate it was felt appropriate to put out a press release to reassure traders by highlighting empty shops down, parking visits up (**ACTION: JG**). The GOAD report will show comparisons between Cumbrian towns (**ACTION: D. Ingham** to supply report)

- Employment sites – the NWDA are funding a sub regional employment sites programme for Cumbria. The £10m programme has identified 5 sites which may be funded to bring forward after suffering market failure. 3

of the sites are in South Lakeland including Canal Head and Shenstone in Kendal. BE group have been appointed to work with the landowners and capita have been appointed to undertake land surveys. This will be complete by 2009 with work expected to start and finish by 2010.

- Kirkland – JG circulated a project plan to members.

### **Representative group updates**

- Mandy Dixon, LSP: Reported that the Local Strategic Partnership would be working closely with South Lakeland and Eden District Councils in the development of Vision Boards.
- Geoff Cook, Kendal Town Council: Kendal Christmas lights would be switched on is 15 November 2008.
- Graham Vincent, SLDC: South Lakeland Business to Business Exhibition would be taking place on Thursday 13 November at the Castle Green Hotel.
- Dave Clark, SLACC: Brian Simpson MEP (European Transport group) will be visiting the area shortly. The Urban Highways team is now operating in Kendal one week in three.
- Tom Powney, FSB: Reported that retail had been relatively strong during half term. A continental market will be taking place in Elephant Yard from 6 – 9 November 2008.
- Derek Armstrong, Chamber of Commerce: The Young Chamber project originally piloted with Kirbie Kendal School is now being rolled out to wider Cumbria. The NWDA would not be supporting the Business Improvement District proposal at this time. Due to the difficult economic climate, it was agreed to consult local business people and gauge feeling towards this idea, before any further action was taken. **ACTION: D. Armstrong**

### **Any Other Business**

- Early discussions were underway between Kendal Town Council, Wainwright Society and SLDC about the possibility of a Wainwright statue.

### **Date of next meeting:**

- 10 December 2008 – 5.00pm, County Hall, Kendal
- 28 January 2009 – 4.30pm, County Hall, Kendal
- 11 March 2009 – 4.30pm, County Hall, Kendal