

KING'S LYNN TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM & REPURPOSING WORKING GROUP

Meeting Minutes

Date	27 th May 2021	Location	Via MS Teams
Time	9.30am	Chair	Vicky Etheridge

Attendees	Apologies
<p>Vicky Etheridge – BID Manager (Business Improvement District)</p> <p>Jemma Curtis – Regeneration Programmes Manager BCKLWN</p> <p>Cllr Miss Lesley Bambridge – Ward Member</p> <p>Jake Smith – Dukes Head Hotel General Manager</p> <p>Andrew Stevenson – Partner with Hawkins Ryan</p> <p>Rick Morrish – King’s Lynn Civic Society</p> <p>Charlie Roughton – Co Founder Maze Group</p> <p>Helen Payne – Co-owner Soul Food Café</p> <p>Neil Gromett – Managing Director Alive West Norfolk</p> <p>Alistair Cox – Centre Manager</p> <p>Veronica Sekules – Groundworks Gallery</p>	<p>Kathy Ennis, Business Support representative</p> <p>Andy Lightfoot, M&S Store Manager</p>

Minutes	Actions
<p>1. Introductions</p> <p>1.1 Vicky Etheridge welcomed everybody to the meeting</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>Jemma Curtis apologized to Neil Gromett for errors with his job title and organization name.</p>	
<p>3. Town Deal Update</p> <p>3.1 Jemma Curtis stated that she was expecting an announcement on the Town Deal last week, however this had been delayed and it is now hoped that a Deal will be offered within the next two weeks. She stated that dependant on the funding offer there may be a need to reprioritise projects, however if everything was in place for the project we would be able to commence. We would then sign a Heads of terms, have 2 months in which to confirm the projects and another 12 months in which to submit a detailed business case and that the purpose of the group would be to assist with informing the business case. She also stated that an external consultant would be employed to support development of the detailed business cases required for sign off of funding.. Once the business case was submitted the funding would be released and several projects could be completed up to 2025.</p>	

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<p>3.2 Vicky Etheridge explained that she would like the group to firm up ideas discussed at the last meeting and identify a small number of actions to take forward.</p>	
<p>4. Welcome Back Fund</p> <p>3.1 Vicky Etheridge stated that there was funding available at the moment and asked Jemma to outline the Welcome Back Fund.</p> <p>3.2 Jemma Curtis explained that the Welcome Back fund was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funded by the ERDF and HM Government • Was quite restrictive and not an open chequebook • An extension to the 'Reopening the High Street Safely Fund' • District wide, £199,654 available in total, £65k is ringfenced for coastal areas • There is a wider scope than the RHSS Fund • The money has to be spent at risk and claimed back afterwards • Included temporary public realm changes and promoting a safer environment • Funding needs to be spent by 31 March 2022 <p>Jemma Curtis was checking with the Contract Manager if the funding could support the idea of a gift card scheme for the borough. She stated that there were some 'quick wins, pop-ups and supports for markets and that it would be used to build up to bigger interventions. She asked the group if they could think about where the funding should be targeted.</p> <p>3.3 Cllr Lesley Bambridge asked if the funding could be used for a 'Changing Places' toilet on the Tuesday Market Place which would be big enough for hoists etc so that people with disabilities could utilise it when here for events/shopping etc. She requested that Jemma Curtis look at the proposition.</p> <p>3.4 Vicky Etheridge asked whether the funding could be used for celebration events, Jemma Curtis explained that the fund could cover the promotion of events and marketing including banners, bunting etc and making events Covid secure, this is a key strand of the Welcome Back Fund.</p> <p>3.5 Helen Payne asked if the fund could be used to fund extra capacity in marketing and promotion, if so, how the group could influence that.</p>	<p>JC</p>

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<p>3.6 A question was raised regarding the term 'temporary' and what this meant. Jemma explained that EDRF funding is revenue, not capital expenditure and therefore was for anything which could be removed, she explained that benches were movable and therefore could be covered, however reiterated that she wished to see longevity of items in the town.</p>	
<p>4. Night-time Economy</p> <p>4.1 Helen Payne discussed whether festoon lighting would be seen as temporary as she believes that something similar to the Christmas Lighting all year around would be more inviting to visitors and encourage a sense of safety. She stated that it would increase visitors sense of enjoyment and encourage photograph taking which would then be shared on social media platforms, possibly encouraging more to visit the area and that this would be positive for businesses. She developed the idea of lighting stating that lights around trees such as those at the end of Tower Street and Norfolk Street would also be an option. Vicky Etheridge asked if they could be switched on outside of the Christmas season. She stated that she has a contractor visiting next week with a view to festoon lighting and seeing if there are currently fixings in place and if not, whether they would require the building owners permission to put these in place.</p> <p>4.2 Alistair Cox explained that fittings on walls do require permission and a lot of the buildings in town are old which causes problems with the fixings. He suggested the option of planters with trees and lights could be explored. Vicky wanted something more long term but stated that temporary planters with lights would be great in the meantime. Alistair Cox mentioned that if catenary wires could be erected this would open up a lot of possibilities.</p> <p>4.3 Rick Morrish stated that he was dubious about spending money on temporary things, he said that if you wished to up-light trees, you need spectacular trees to up-light, however rather than wrapping lights around trees which can damage them, it is better to light them from beneath. He said the Civic Society would support more permanent structures.</p> <p>4.4 Vicky Etheridge also stated that she didn't want to see a pop-up for three months for it to go and not be seen again, however she will look at the lighting and see if it is feasible.</p> <p>4.5 Jake Smith stated that any lighting would need to be matched to the whole town to bring the businesses together and create a coherent scheme.</p>	VE

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<p>4.6 Rick Morrish stated that the Graeme Massie Public Realm Action Plan report emphasised specific corridors through the town.</p> <p>4.6 Vicky Etheridge stated the need to trial in a smaller location which could then increase with funding from the Town Deal. She asked the best way of taking the idea forward, whether it was a walk-around or getting an advisor, Jemma Curtis mentioned getting a contractor to check what was in place already and then conducting a walk-about, she also asked how this could then be combined with other proposed projects and would any specific locations be better than others, she mentioned the lower end of the High Street saying that it may encourage more use, however Vicky stated that it might be better to in an area of already high footfall to get feedback.</p>	
<p>5. Pop-ups</p> <p>5.1 Jemma Curtis asked what type of pop-up should be explored, whether it should be a street food element or a normal market/farmers market, which might fit the night-time economy better? She stated that whatever option was explored, it shouldn't take away trade from existing businesses and that it would need to be complementary.</p> <p>5.2 Rick Morrish stated that a street food market with live music might encourage people into the town. Vicky Etheridge mentioned the Ffolkes Arms 'Street Feast' and Norwich's street food Junk Market both appear to be very popular and the addition of music would draw people to the town.</p> <p>5.3 Veronica Sekules agreed that any offering should not compete, but suggested that it should be considered that a group which is currently not supported be given the opportunity, young people enterprises, craft markets for local makers, she mentioned a Wayne Hemingway presentation she had attended where a group of young people were allowed to organise and control a district in Berlin which involved risk taking but proved very successful.</p> <p>5.4 Rick Morrish suggested that there were lots of dance schools in King's Lynn and Martial Arts companies which might be pleased to be offered the chance to display.</p> <p>5.5 Jemma Curtis stated that there were some good local music artists and that there was a possibility of marking off an area of floor for local buskers to use without the need for a licence, Rick Morish mentioned that his former neighbour from 'Twisted Melon' might be able to organise this.</p> <p>5.6 Vicky Etheridge said that if the road map went to plan, it would be great to be able to utilise some funding for areas which have greatly suffered during the last 18 months and that these activities might help bridge the gap from daytime into the night-time economy. She said that the group had some</p>	

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<p>really good ideas and she and Jemma would talk outside of the group to see how the ideas could move forward.</p> <p>5.7 Indoor pop-ups were discussed buildings were being looked at on the High Street that could be repurposed, they had been approached by a local community supermarket and wondered if the ground floor could be used for a leisure activity.</p> <p>5.8 Neil Gromett said that a short-term solution wasn't too difficult to set up, he had capacity to help with programming a variety of daytime classes and activities. The issue would be sustained economic viability.</p> <p>5.9 Rick Morrish said he had been looking at recent planning applications and they had received applications for around 200 flats within King's Lynn town centre in the last few months. Rick suggested that public money should be spent on creating a nice environment for new town centre residents in this accommodation. He said to make the new properties more sustainable, pocket parks and open space should be created to make social meeting places and support well-being and good mental health.</p> <p>5.12 Jemma Curtis mentioned that locations were still being examined but that the former bed shop near Wimpy was a possibility, she said that the housing association would need to look at it from a conversion point but that they were keen to assist and appeared supportive of the initiative.</p> <p>5.13 Vicky Etheridge asked if there was currently a shortlist of properties which could be explored / considered.</p> <p>5.14 Jemma mentioned that Jake Smith was sure to have a lot of business clients who would utilise a local gym. Jake stated that if it was a 24/7 gym, this would be more commercially viable and having gym accessibility would be very popular. Neil Gromett suggested that it would need to be a 'wellness' offer which could become commercially viable.</p> <p>5.15 Jemma stated there was a need to make the space flexible for a gym type offer which could also be used for the creative industries for both yoga and dance classes as well as an arts and crafts offering. Neil Gromett offered resources to programming. Jemma and Neil to discuss.</p>	JC/NG
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6. Outdoor Seating

- 6.1 Jemma Curtis explained that the Council have invested recently in seating within King's Lynn mentioning that picnic benches were purchased for the Tuesday Market Place and that new planters and benches for the High Street, she states that there is funding to build on that work. The route from the rail station to New Conduit Street was discussed as was the area around St James Swimming Pool. Jemma asked if anybody had any further ideas and if they had a view on which location to prioritise although permission would be required as some areas would fall on Norfolk County Council highways land.
- 6.2 Rick Morrish stated that he would like to see the Council take control of the roads and highways and these are currently owned by Norfolk County Council, he enquired whether this was possible. Cllr Bambridge responded that it was not currently on the Councils agenda but she would seek more clarity. Rick gave the example of Norwich City Council who support their own 'in-house' urban design team and as they also controlled the roads, they were able to think more holistically regarding paving and street furniture. Vicky Etheridge stated that it was too big a project for the group and it should be left with Cllr Bambridge.
- 6.3 Veronica Sekules stated that the gateways into the town required work, Cllr Bambridge agreed stating that she had received a complaint that some of the buildings at the Southgates looked poor and the hoardings and weeds surrounding them were not inviting, she asked whether money could be allocated to look at the area. Rick Morrish stated that the Civic Society had been campaigning for a better gateway into the town for years and that Planning should take a better look at it. He enquired whether there was any allocation in the Towns Fund which could be utilised to improve the area.
- 6.4 Jemma Curtis advised that there was no allocation in the Towns Fund but that a report was due to go to cabinet which looks at the Southgates and that there was some funding approved for that, she continued that the Council were looking at a contractor to sort out the weeds etc but stated that some of the buildings surrounding were not owned by the Council. She suggested that Cllr Bambridge forward the complaint to Planning Enforcement as they may be able to intervene.
- 6.5 Vicky Etheridge asked whether the Welcome Back Fund could be used to improve the hoardings and Jemma stated that it could, however it would need to promote King's Lynn and we would need to liaise with Norfolk County Council. Vicky mentioned that 'shop jacket hoardings' could be used to improve the look of the garage and said that with the lack of public transport usage currently and more people driving due to the pandemic,

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<p>people would need to be encouraged into the town rather than passing on their way to the coast.</p> <p>6.6 Rick Morrish stated that he believed there were options such as planters with flowers which could be used as a temporary enhancement to a setting awaiting development, Jemma will explore options.</p> <p>6.7 Vicky Etheridge asked about timescales for the report going to cabinet regarding the Southgates, Jemma explained that the Masterplan would be developed this year, site clearance would take 1-2 years and depending on the Masterplan, the best route to develop the scheme would need to be explored. She said it would require external funding and is a longer-term project.</p> <p>6.8 Helen Payne mentioned the website 'Visit West Norfolk' and said that there could be a lot more information on the site and more advertising of local businesses etc.</p> <p>6.9 Rick Morrish on the subject of outdoor seating asked whether the group needed to agree a standard style of seating as the Public Realm Action Plan by Graeme Massie Architects was not specific. Jemma Curtis replied that the planters that have been purchased for the High Street could be rolled out across town and that would be the most sensible approach, however the most suitable locations would need to be identified. Jemma will circulate the design.</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>JC</p>
<p>7. Any other business</p> <p>7.1 Vicky Etheridge felt that the meeting had been useful and asked if there was any other business.</p> <p>7.2 Rick Morrish asked whether there was any funding for signage. Jemma replied that signage and fingerposts were on the agenda. Vicky asked if Philip Eke could share examples, Jemma agreed.</p> <p>7.2 Jemma explained that there were other Towns which were looking at using artwork instead of fingerposts and Jemma is to share some examples, however Rick Morrish shared concerns that different designs for the artwork could lead to confusion and that it becomes more difficult to maintain.</p> <p>7.3 Vicky Etheridge thanked members of the group for attending and for their contributions. She hoped for confirmation on the Towns Fund prior to the next meeting.</p>	<p>PE</p>

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8. Date of next meeting To be arranged.	

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