



**MORECAMBE**

**WEST END MILLION  
[REVIEW 2017-2018]**

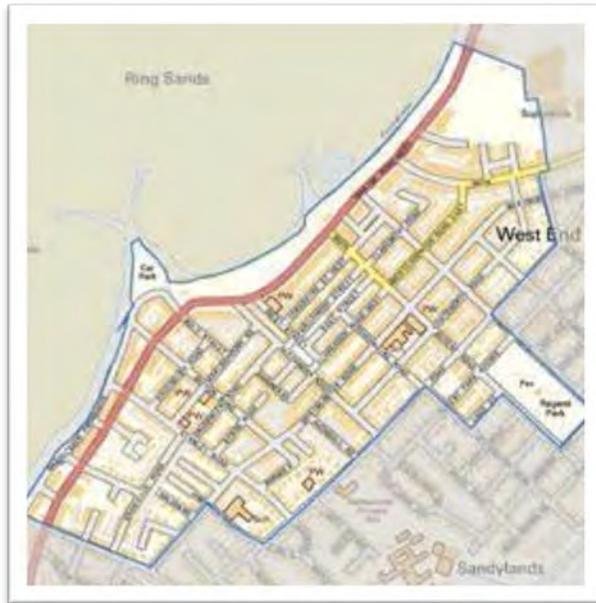
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## WEST END MILLION BIG LOCAL

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Morecambe is a seaside resort in the district of Lancaster in North West England. The West End of Morecambe lies to the south west of Morecambe town centre and to the north of Heysham. It is bounded on the west by Morecambe Bay and on the east by the Morecambe to Heysham railway line. The West End is part of the Harbour Ward.

Once a popular place to holiday, the West End still has the Morecambe five mile promenade and some guest houses but its tourist attractions have all but disappeared. The promenade runs along the western edge of the West End - along with the beach and the beautiful views across Morecambe Bay, this is possibly the West End's greatest asset and a source of great pride and enjoyment for West Enders. It's only other remaining tourist attractions are the West End Gardens, Play areas & Breeze Café created beside the Promenade.

In 2012, West End Million (WEM) became one of 150 Big Local areas across England and was awarded £1m to spend over 10 years. This funding comes from the Big Lottery and is administered through Local Trust. The WEM partnership launched its first plan in April 2016 – this is a review of its second plan that ran from July 2017 to June 2018. This second plan was an interim proposal that allowed the partnership an opportunity to regroup and focus on a renewed vision and goals – WEM had learned a lot during the delivery of its first plan and needed time to reflect on this. Its third plan will launch in July 2018 and will run for a three year period.

The WEM Big Local area includes 2 500 households with a population of 5 660. WEM is made up of local residents with support from Lancaster CVS as its Local Trusted Organisation – this means that it looks after the funding and any obligations the partnership might have like employing staff. Whilst help and advice from partners is valued, all the decisions about how the £1m is allocated are made by residents alone.

Before writing its first plan, at WEM we worked hard talking to local people and organisations. We brought together evidence, views and opinion on what the West End needed to become an even better place to live. You can find a report on this work on our website – [WEM Community Profile](#).

This current review of our second plan explains what we delivered and what we have learned – in reflecting on our learning we also went back to our first plan and looked again at what had worked and what hadn't achieved what we had hoped. You can find information about our new plan, and previous ones, on our website [www.westendmillion.co.uk](http://www.westendmillion.co.uk).

We have put this document together by considering information we have gathered since November 2017 including:

1000 HOURS OF COMMITMENT FROM WEM MEMBERS OVER A SERIES OF REFLECTION MEETINGS IN EARLY 2018

THE CONCLUSIONS DRAWN BY THE COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE MEETINGS HELD SINCE DECEMBER

OUR OWN CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AT OUR AGM IN SEPTEMBER 2017

A SERIES OF ENGAGEMENT EXERCISES CARRIED OUT BY OUR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER IN EARLY 2018

FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH AN E MAIL CONSULTATION WITH MIG (MORECAMBE INFORMATION GROUP)

COMMUNITY INFORMATION RECORDED IN OUR ORIGINAL PROFILE

DATA SPECIFIC TO THE WEST END PROVIDED ON A RANGE OF INDICATORS BY LOCAL INSIGHT

ANALYSIS OF SPEND, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES GENERATED BY THE PROGRAMME FROM ITS INCEPTION IN 2016



## HOW WE PUT THIS REPORT TOGETHER

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Local Trust asks all Big Locals to carry out a review before submitting a new plan. They ask Partnerships to answer eight questions:

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WHAT HAVE YOU DONE AGAINST WHAT IS IN THE PLAN?

WHAT MONEY HAVE YOU SPENT?

WHAT IMPACT HAVE YOU HAD?

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?

HAVE YOU PROGRESSED WITH YOUR VISION AND PRIORITIES?

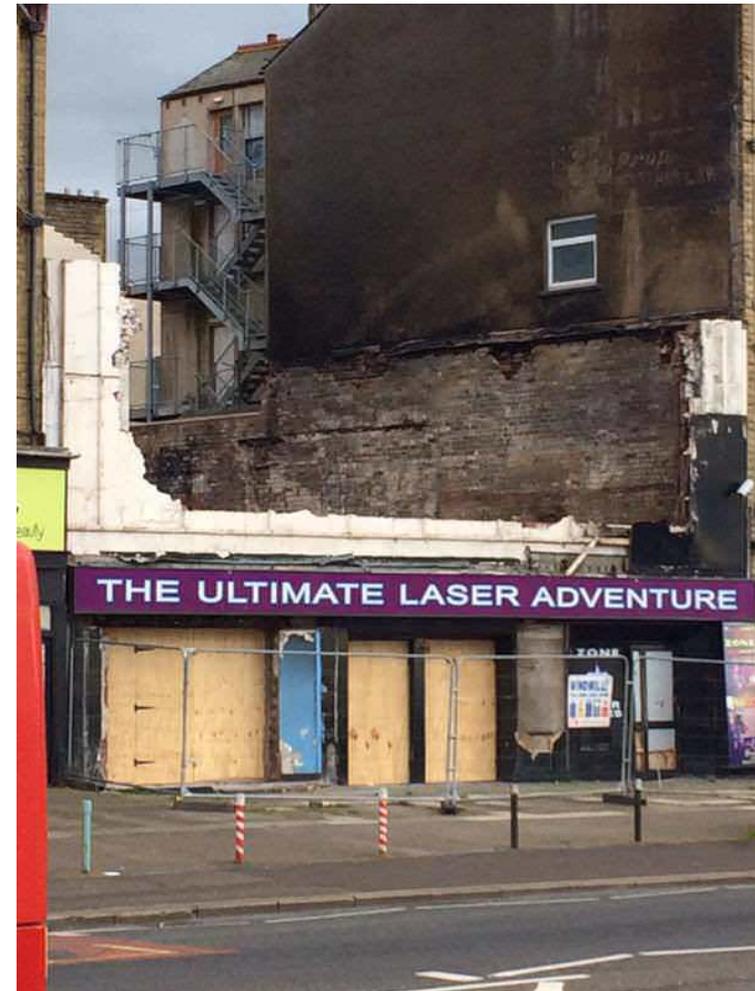
DO YOU NEED TO REFRESH THESE?

HOW DOES YOUR PROGRESS RELATE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT  
OF THE BIG LOCAL OUTCOMES?

HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS IS WHAT YOUR COMMUNITY  
WANTS?

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West End Million decided to look at these questions in lots of different ways and the detail can be found in the rest of this review



## Q1 WHAT HAVE WE DONE AGAINST WHAT WAS IN OUR PLAN?

This table shows how we've done against our original targets in both of our plans so far:

Priority	Medium Term Goal	Outcomes	Outputs	How did we do?
<b>Housing</b>	To upgrade some of the derelict properties in the area  Landlords and neighbourhoods to work together with the City Council	Feasibility of a West End housing renovation scheme understood Feasibility of a West End community wardens scheme understood Understanding of VCS community housing projects in other coastal communities	Research report  Research report  Research report	We visited Goldthorpe Big Local and learned about their approach to community housing. We commissioned and received a feasibility study into community wardens. We ran 'Brighten up your House Front' and 'Clear out for Christmas' as pilot projects. We worked with partners on raising the profile of litter and fly tipping in the area and held an alley clean-up day.
<b>Young People</b>	To extend the provision of youth services in the West End  To improve the quality of youth services in the West End	West End Young People's Organisation Network established Improved understanding of young people's needs Good practice identified	Meetings with organisations  Research group established  Examples of good practice	Worked with organisations that support young people and established a network. YoYo group established to feed into planning. Established Charter Mark to evaluate young peoples' services.
<b>Festivals</b>	To create a programme of festivals  West End businesses and groups to organise community events	Better understanding of what is required for a year round programme	Feasibility study Pilot project	We funded and got involved in running eight festivals, including the new West End Weekend and Morecambe Fringe, with voluntary and public sector partners. As part of our High Impact Project we provided creative workshops in flag making and created a set of reusable flags alongside a set of specially produced festival lights.
<b>Enterprise</b>	To develop a strong and vibrant brand for the West End  To develop ways to make West End's shopping streets more appealing  Create more opportunities for West Enders to learn enterprise skills	Identified ways to promote West End Identified ways to improve the appearance of shopping streets Better understanding of enterprise opportunities in the West End	Research report  Business plan(s)  Feasibility report Report on other examples in coastal communities	We produced a Business Directory on our website, liaised with the Coastal Communities Team, supported The Exchange in their new premises and provided grants for 5 shopfronts and 7 house.

We also made some commitments about the way in which we would work and communicate. The table below provides an update on these issues – there is more detail about our learning around these issues in **Q4 What we have learned** on page 16.

THEME	ACTIONS WE COMMITTED TO	PROGRESS WE MADE
<b>Communication</b>	Press release of positive news stories Website and social media Coverage in the More Together community magazine which is delivered to every household in the West End	We have employed a press officer who has issued 39 press releases resulting in 51 press articles We have increased our Facebook and Twitter followers to 260 and 248. Updated our website adding more content and improving navigation Partly funded the More Together magazine to ensure coverage, taking part in 8 editions
<b>Community Engagement (including small grants)</b>	Creative workshops Public meetings WEM presence at others' events Consultation exercises Community Grants	Held workshop on vlogging Held two open AGM meetings Members of Partnership attended local meetings of Morecambe Information Group and the Community Collective Members attended national Big Local events Networking at local events such as the West End Weekend More than 200 consultation questionnaires completed 31 community grants awarded across 24 organisations
<b>Capacity</b>	Fundraising training Training for partnership members Networking with policy and decision makers	Members of Partnership had Art of Hosting and Thinking Environment training Project Worker and Community Development Worker appointed

## Q2 WHAT MONEY HAVE WE SPENT?

The table below summarises what we expect to have spent by the end of June 2018. We estimated that we would need **£30 500** for this plan and we estimate our actual spend by the end of June will be **£20 750**.

THEME	BUDGET IN PLAN £	ESTIMATED SPEND TO END OF PLAN £	REASONS FOR VARIANCE
<b>Community Grants</b>	9 000	3 850	Partnership suspended its grant programme while it reviewed its goals and aims and while it developed new decision making processes
<b>Young People</b>	1 000	0	We had intended to maintain the networking and forum but decided to review take up from young people. This was negligible and we have changed our approach in our new plan.
<b>Communication</b>	10 000	3 489	More Together magazine has had capacity issues. Website under review.
<b>Management</b>	10 500	13 411	Appointment of community development worker and contingency involved
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41 300</b>	<b>20 750</b>	

Our 17/18 plan has provided us with an opportunity to reflect, to invest a lot of time in thinking through what we have learned and how we want to apply this learning. We had intended to 'do' more this year but took the decision to suspend our grant programme and some of our communication work while we absorbed this.

### Q3 WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD?

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This section of the report includes a description of each of our themes and what we have achieved to complement the table at Q1.

#### HOUSING

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We had planned to do some research into housing renovation schemes but rather than commissioning a study we decided to visit another Big Local area running a similar scheme. This proved useful and gave the group a better understanding of the compliance and governance implications and how a scheme might work in our area.

We did commission a feasibility study into a community wardens scheme and learned a lot through this process. As with housing renovation, our key learning is how complex this area is – we need to work more closely with housing partners in order that we can understand the role we might usefully play. However, we did get involved in other associated activities where we feel we made a real impact. These included 'Brighten up your House Front' and 'Clear out For Christmas' both of which were delivered in partnership with Adactus, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services and Lancaster City Council. Both of these schemes helped us to engage with local residents and encourage them to take action to improve their environment. It is this learning, and the opportunity to work with partners in improving housing in the West End, that we are taking forward to our next plan. The poor state of the physical environment features highly in our most recent consultation with adults and children.



ABOVE: BRIGHTENING OUR STREETS

## YOUNG PEOPLE

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We made some good progress with this area of the plan. We established the YoYo group – young people researching things that are important to them. The first area the group wanted to address was the mapping of all existing services available to young people which we linked to the Five Ways of Wellbeing and how they could be achieved in the West End.

The group went on to look at the areas identified in the West End Million first year plan and it researched successful youth projects and examples of good practice. It developed a Charter Mark to enable young people to identify venues that have been approved by other young people. The plan

was to advertise this and to promote assessed projects via our website – we decided to review the continuing commitment of the young people we had worked with and have adjusted our approach in our new plan.

## FESTIVALS PROGRAMME

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The aims of the festival group were achieved: the group identified the need for an additional festival scheduled to complement the existing programme of seasonal events. In fact two new festivals were funded; Seaside Sculpture Day (also supported by ACE and Morecambe Town Council) and West End Weekend which was produced by a local partnership of residents and More Music, an established community arts organisation.

The events all provided opportunities for skills development, learning and employment for local people, attracted visitors to the area, contributed to the economy, an enhanced profile for the area and as sense of achievement and pride for traders and residents. Our 'high impact' project saw us involved in creative workshops to produce new street festival decorations. These will be a lasting resource for the West End.

Despite this, we are planning to shift our focus in our next plan – we remain committed to providing opportunities for our community to celebrate together but our most recent consultation showed us that twice as many people feel that festivals are not important as those who value them.

## ENTERPRISE

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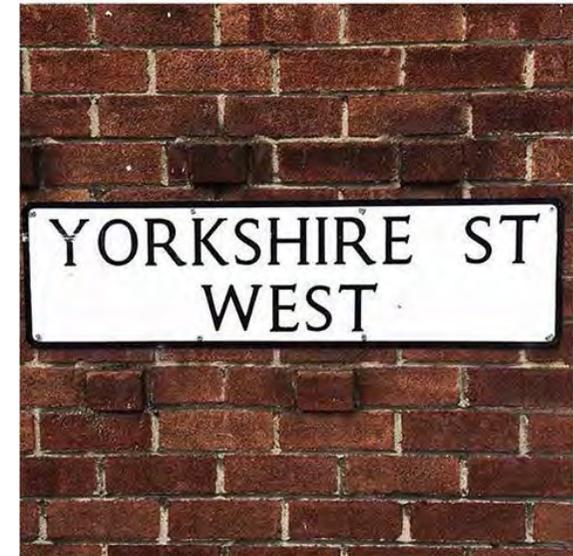
We had a mini action plan for enterprise that was extremely wide ranging and ambitious. In practice, we were only able to react to

applications that came forward from a range of local organisations.

We did produce a business directory that remains on our website but this has not been actively implemented. We have been a passive member of our Coastal Communities Team and we intend to be an active partner in the future.

We also funded shopfronts and building works at five local creative enterprises.

Enterprise remains a key theme for us in our new plan but we intend to start by understanding the support that is already available in the West End that we can add value to. Our impression is that this is likely to focus on skills development and pathways to employment.



ABOVE: YORKSHIRE ST HAS A LONG HISTORY OF BUSINESS.

## COMMUNITY GRANTS

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This was the most successful part of our programme in terms of outputs – we have provided 31 grants to 23 local organisations delivering services and support to the residents of the West End. In terms of measuring impact however this has been something that we have only recently worked at.

The report at Annex A provides a description of 7 of these organisations that received 12 grants between them. It's clear that the funding we provided delivered essential support and was able to lever in considerable match funding – more than £50k from this sample alone.

We will continue to offer community grants as part of our next plan but will put in evaluation processes from the beginning. We have reviewed our decision making processes and will focus on grants that will help us deliver our outcomes.

## IMPACT MADE BY THE PARTNERSHIP

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We recruited 4 new members at our AGM this year and they have brought new skills and experiences to our partnership

Our community grants scheme has supported a range of activities in the West End and different groups of people including older people, people with disabilities, children and young people and an LGBT group.

We ran festivals and events that brought people together to celebrate and to support each other

Our young peoples' projects and the work we did with partners on alleyways and house fronts worked well and we think made a lasting difference

We've started to make connection with and between local organisations and services

We've been able to post positive stories in our local press and on social media.

We 'scored' the development work in our second plan using a traffic light system:

**Green** – we are really happy with our level of community engagement. We have appointed a community development worker who has been really active, interviewing local organisations and talking to local organisations. We have used this information to inform our new plan and we have learned things as a partnership from his work (see **Q4**).

### **Amber:**

We have continued to issue press releases to promote what we are doing but perhaps not in an organized way

We have supported the More Together magazine but there have been distribution issues

We have delivered some community grants but we want to review the process

### **Red**

We need to work on our website and social media

We feel there is some change in the perception people have of the West End but we haven't had the impact we wanted by this stage

We want to be better at raising the profile of WEM and of our projects

## WHAT OUR LTO THINKS

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We have a new LTO in place – Lancaster CVS. But they were with us in the early stages – they worked on our community profile for example – and are well placed to consider the progress we have made.

Yak Patel Chief Executive at Lancaster CVS spoke to us about their new role and about the impact they have seen:

“There is so much to admire about the West End Million Partnership and what they have achieved over past four years. Having helped them to complete the Community Profile and Action plan in 2016, it has been incredible to see this resident-led partnership focus on making lasting positive change in their community. Some have been pessimistic about what can be achieved at local level, citing controlling cultures but this partnership has proved through research and community engagement that they can bring people together to improve their local neighbourhood. And this has been demonstrated through their grit and determination over the past few years. I have been amazed how this partnership have brought people together to collectively discuss strengths and issues in the

community and come up with jointly produced solutions. Furthermore, I have much respect for the partnership testing new ideas and activities and taking certain risks when they have needed too. It would also be remiss of me not to mention the structure and support provided by Local Trust and the Big Local programme to help this partnership get started and maintain momentum.

We are delighted to be appointed as the LTO and we are very much looking forward to working with the partnership as they embark on their new vision. Lancaster District CVS has a long history of developing of the third sector and work collaboratively across the public, private, charity and higher education sector, with the aim of creating and developing opportunities for the benefit of our voluntary and community organisations. We are a ‘neutral’ organisation that campaigns for small and large charitable organisations; educating commissioners and funders to understand, believe in and fund the sector so that positive outcomes can be achieved in our communities.” Yak Patel, LDCVS



## Q4 WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

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We have reflected on what we have learned and how we want to build on this in our next plan. We have divided our thoughts into three sections. Engaging our community Developing our partnership Developing our ideas

### ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

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- Children and adults want largely the same thing
- Residents are concerned about the big stuff like crime, poverty and mental health
- Residents want to see better infrastructure like parks and housing, more support for vulnerable people like drug and alcohol recovery and improved services such as education and health.
- The visual appearance of the West End is of overwhelming concern to residents
- Some residents are impatient with other locals who they feel are not respecting their shared environment
- The benefit that comes from partnership members being visible, communicating directly
- Where we choose to engage is important – school based very successful
- We need to use our website and social media better
- We want to develop a range of ways to get involved – not everyone wants to join a committee
- We'd like to do some 'you said/we did' reporting and also sharing people's stories as an example of what is possible

### DEVELOPING OUR PARTNERSHIP

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- We've made a lot of progress lately and we're proud of our perseverance and our commitment.
- We want our grant awards to reflect the diversity of our area and our outcomes
- We want our partnership to be more reflective of the West End community – we need more new members
- We want clearer processes and more transparent decision making – the allocation of tasks to informal groups hadn't worked well
- We want to work more closely with our LTO and look at management accounts on a quarterly basis
- We want a monitoring process that allows us to track the progress of projects
- We understand better what is involved in getting projects up and running
- We might develop a new 'brand' that explains our vision better
- We believe that leadership is a shared responsibility and that we all have to play our part in developing our approach
- We want to make sure that all of our partnership members have access to IT
- We want to develop a communication and engagement strategy so that we have an organised plan to follow – we've missed the opportunity to share success

## DEVELOPING OUR IDEAS

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We want to look at other sources of funding to match with ours wherever possible and to help organisations with fundraising skills

We want to concentrate on the things we can get done or where we can have an influence on bigger issues

We want to help the community, and others outside of the West End, be more positive about the area and its residents

We want to get the balance right between early wins and long term thinking

Others have promised to make changes in West End but haven't delivered – we want to make sure that we can follow through on our commitments

We have the opportunity to look at what others are doing including other big locals

We are going to change the way we fund projects so that we achieve more by working with partners

We want to be careful that we are not duplicating what others do but rather we add value to existing work and services



## **Q5 HOW HAVE WE PROGRESSED WITH OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES?**

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During this plan we have worked against our vision:

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**TO HELP MAKE THE WEST END A BETTER PLACE TO  
LIVE, WORK, VISIT, SHOP AND DO BUSINESS**

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And our goals and priorities have been:

**TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HOUSING IN THE WEST END**

**TO RAISE THE ASPIRATIONS OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**TO BOOST THE WEST END COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ECONOMY WITH FESTIVALS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**TO DEVELOP AN ENTERPRISE CULTURE WITHIN THE WEST END**

During our reflection meetings we thought about the progress we had made against these:

Goal	Progress made
To improve the quality of housing in the West End	We made some progress in working with partners to address litter and fly tipping and in helping residents to brighten up their house fronts. But our plans to tackle the wider, more significant issues proved more difficult to achieve. We have renewed our efforts in our third plan with an emphasis on absentee landlords.
To raise the aspirations of our young people	We did a lot of work with young people in our first plan that was really valuable and we learned a lot. But we didn't follow through – we may revisit this. In our next plan we have identified support for young people in terms of Enterprise and Economy but have broadened our community support to all ages.
To boost the West End community and local economy with festivals and community events	We worked hard and invested considerably in festivals and community events. There is no doubt that some members of our community benefited considerably from the work we did. We want to continue to provide opportunities for our community to celebrate and we have broadened our community theme to have an emphasis on social cohesion.
To develop an enterprise culture within the West End	We've made little progress with this goal. In our new plan we want to concentrate on pathways to employment which may include supporting local enterprises.

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## Q6 DO WE NEED TO REFRESH OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES?

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The considerable time we spent reflecting on what we had learned and what we had delivered during the first two years of WEM led us to fundamentally changing our vision for the programme. We both wanted to broaden our idea of what success might look like and at the same time focus more clearly on the outcomes that we feel we should and can deliver. The vision for our third plan will be:

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# OUR COMMUNITY. TAKING ACTION AND BEING HEARD.

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We feel that this more closely follows the Big Local outcomes and shows that we understand that these principles need to be at the heart of any projects or activity that we launch. Following on from this, we also agreed more focused goals and outcomes for the new plan too – this is not because we feel that we had this wrong before but that we need to respond to how circumstances and our own understanding has changed.

In developing our goals and outcomes this we looked at a range of evidence including:

THE CONCLUSIONS DRAWN BY THE  
COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE MEETINGS  
HELD IN SINCE DECEMBER

FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC AND  
VOLUNTARY SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS  
THROUGH AN EMAIL CONSULTATION  
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ANALYSIS OF SPEND, OUTPUTS AND  
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OUR OWN CONSULTATION CARRIED  
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IN EARLY 2018

DATA SPECIFIC TO THE WEST END  
PROVIDED ON A RANGE OF  
INDICATORS BY LOCAL INSIGHT

During our reflection meetings, we compared these sources with our own experiences and some clear themes began to emerge. We then looked at what actions we might consider and the outcomes we would expect these to generate. There is more detail on this in our new plan – the themes, goals and outcomes we agreed are shown overleaf.

Theme	Goal	Outcomes
<b>Enterprise and Economy</b>	Supporting the creation of more and better pathways to work for WEM residents	<b>Identifying what support local organisations, both social and private, need to thrive</b> <b>A greater opportunity for residents to access employment outside of the West End</b> <b>Existing skills development support for adults mapped and promoted in the West End with projects developed to fill any gaps in provision</b>
<b>Place</b>	Encouraging West End residents to have a stake in their environment	<b>Improved green spaces – more people using them and in different ways</b> <b>Better understanding of the issues around absentee landlords and effective relationships developed with partners who are able to improve the built environment of the West End</b> <b>Residents feeling that their immediate environment looks and feels better</b>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	Residents able to take action to improve their own health and wellbeing	<b>Residents telling WEM that they feel positive about their community</b> <b>Existing work around affordable quality food and fuel supported and gaps in provision identified with partners</b> <b>Residents supported to influence decisions made around them</b>
<b>Community</b>	<b>To have a shared vision and values across the community of West End</b>	<b>An engagement strategy that understands and takes account of diversity in the West End</b> <b>More networking with and between the range of residents in the West End</b> <b>Greater understanding of need that WEM can, at least in part, address</b> <b>Providing opportunities for the community of West End to celebrate</b>

## Q7 HOW DOES OUR PROGRESS RELATE TO THE BIG LOCAL OUTCOMES?

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The Big Local national outcomes are:

COMMUNITIES WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO IDENTIFY LOCAL NEEDS AND TAKE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO THEM.

PEOPLE WILL HAVE INCREASED SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE, SO THAT THEY CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO LOCAL NEEDS IN THE FUTURE.

THE COMMUNITY WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE NEEDS IT PRIORITISES.

PEOPLE WILL FEEL THAT THEIR AREA IS AN EVEN BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

Our review evidences that we have made some progress against each of the outcomes but it is limited. We understand that we need to provide more opportunities for our partnership, and the wider community, to understand local need and to consider what action is needed. We have carried out some important engagement and taken part in the consultation and action planning organised by the Community Collective – our next plan describes how we will build on this. We have used the data from Local Insight too in developing

the outcomes for our new plan. We definitely feel as a partnership that we have increased skills and confidence and we want to find more ways for residents to benefit from being involved with us – we understand that not everyone wants to be involved in ‘committees’. We’ve started to make a difference but we’ve a long way to go on this.

It’s a key aim for us that people feel that their area is an even better place to live – our physical environment and the struggles many people face are barriers to this that we are learning how to address.

We have begun to discuss the different ways in which we can make sure that the investment of £1m in the West End makes a lasting difference. Our thoughts include:

Although we are still in the earlier half of our ten-year WEM project, we are already looking at ways we can make a sustainable change to the West End and ensure that WEM has an enduring legacy. We are still very much engaged in the planning and doing phases of WEM but even here we want to look at the potential long-term impact our actions can have. As we progress with our vision we have already identified key ways in which we can create a legacy.

The most central foundation of our legacy is dependent on the people of the West End. The people in the community *are* our legacy. **Building skills** feeds back into the community in

continuous and long-term ways. This especially applies to the **young people and children** in our community. As they develop their existing skills, and also add new ones, these can then be utilized for both their own and the community's benefits. Expansion of learning and skills is therefore crucial to our legacy. We know that investment in the area's young people will bring exponential benefits as they grow. We have ideas about how we can work with partner organisations to develop such skills. For example, one idea is to work with a local primary school to found a Youth Partnership Board. This would allow young people to have a direct influence on the issues that most concern them, whilst also developing useful skills and confidence in areas such as decision making, finance management, debate and discussion etc. Another idea is to identify an organisation running a job club, to assist with CV writing, job application writing, interview techniques etc. Building skills can then **change people's thinking** about what is possible; generating increased confidence and self-esteem. In turn building skills and changing thinking can help the community access better pathways to work which can then build **individual and community wealth**.

We know that in the West End we are lucky to have a wealth of **voluntary and community** organisations but we also know that some are currently struggling. We are committed to supporting these organisations in their current and future work. This could not only be with financial support but also, where possible, helping them to take collective action to access other funds and avoid duplication of effort.

We know that in the West End, as is the case nationally, many residents depend on benefits both in and out of work. However, we also know that across the UK working age families and pensioners

are failing to claim more than £10bn a year in benefits. It has also been suggested that, nationally, low-income households are missing out on £15bn in benefits and tax credits. We want to make sure that people of the West End **know their entitlements** and have the confidence and self-respect to claim state benefits as appropriate. This will also assist in improving individual and community wealth. Outside of the benefits system there are other support services; for example, such as disability adaptations delivered through local and county councils. We want to assist our community to **connect to services** they need.

As we support projects and ideas we will consider their plans for **sustainability** and, if necessary, work with them on this issue so that they can become self-sustaining. We will also seek to support those that **address social isolation** and **create community cohesion**. We are forging relationships, with and between others. These **social networks**, with a **wide range of stakeholders**, will be nurtured and are likely to continue long after the ten-year Big Local project has ended.

We recognise that the Big Local funding has an end date. However, that doesn't necessarily have to mean that WEM itself does. As we progress towards the end of the Big Local funding we intend to look into **identifying other funds** that can be used to **make WEM self-sustaining** and allow it to continue for the community's benefit. This will be helped by our continued development of an evidence base of the impact of our work, as this will provide justificatory evidence for future funding bids. We will also be exploring whether we want to **invest in community assets** that can continue to benefit the community long after Big Local's ten years of WEM.

## Q8 HOW DO WE KNOW WE'RE DOING WHAT OUR COMMUNITY WANTS?

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We are getting better at this. During our second plan we took a number of steps to improve our understanding of local need and opportunity:

We continued to offer community grants – there are examples in Annex A of how organisations are using these to deliver what they feel is needed.

We worked with Morecambe's Community Collective which has brought more than 300 of our residents together to identify need and plan action

We ran our own consultation at our AGM and attracted more partnership members

We revisited the consultation we carried out as part of our profile and used it as one of our sources in developing outcomes for our new plan

We have employed a Community Development Worker who has interviewed local organisations and run drop ins in our area – more detail of this is in our third plan including our plans to build on this

**WEST END MILLION**  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Health & Wellbeing

Environment

Economy

Community

Young People

The West End  
Your Views and Opinions

**DROP IN FOR 5 MINUTES OR STAY AND CHAT**

RESIDENTS  
**DROP IN SESSION**

**WEDNESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> APRIL**  
**WEST END PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Anytime between **2.30pm - 8.00pm**

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN WEST END MILLION

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IF THIS PLAN INSPIRES YOU TO FIND OUT MORE OR, EVEN BETTER, TO GET INVOLVED WITH WEM THEN THERE ARE A RANGE OF WAYS YOU CAN GET IN TOUCH. YOU CAN CONTACT US THROUGH OUR WEBSITE, OUR FACEBOOK PAGE, OR BY EMAILING US.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM ANYONE WHO LIVES OR WORKS IN THE WEST END AND HAS AN IDEA, AN OPINION OR A QUESTION FOR THE BIG LOCAL PARTNERSHIP. THE PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTS YOUR COMMUNITY – JOIN WITH US AND MAKE US EVEN BETTER 😊 THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

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### JOIN THE PARTNERSHIP

Consider joining the Partnership Board. Or if we are working on a specific issue you are passionate about then let us know so that you can join in with that work. We are always looking for people to help us out with our activities.

#### START A CONVERSATION

If there's a subject you are interested in and you'd like to get people talking about it then we'd love to work with you.

#### APPLY FOR A GRANT

Tell us about your idea for a large scale event or activity in the West End, using our projects application form, and let us help to make it a reality. Or have your group apply for a Community Grant for amounts up to £500. Or if you're not part of a group, but still have a great idea, then tell us about it using our Big Ideas form. We can then work with you to make that idea happen.

### KEEP IN TOUCH

Have a look at our website – we put all our plans, reviews, minutes etc. there so it's an easy way to find out about anything and everything we're doing. As well as updating it regularly we also review it regularly to see if we can make it work even better for you.

<https://westendmillion.co.uk/>



Follow us on Facebook. Like our page to ensure you get regular updates about what is happening locally.



We have an Instagram account where you can see what we've been up to: [@westendmillion](https://www.instagram.com/westendmillion)



Tweet us [@westend\\_million](https://twitter.com/westend_million)

### EMAIL

You can reach our secretary at: [wemprojectworker@gmail.com](mailto:wemprojectworker@gmail.com)

# WEST END MILLION

## FUNDED ORGANISATIONS & SECTOR FEEDBACK

APRIL 2018

Task: to gain broad feedback on WEM and previously funded projects and to seek information on learning, future plans, opinions on WEM and any links with Big Local goals. This document is part of WEM's internal review.

Process: carried out through interviews and discussions with previously funded projects, individual residents, third sector, public sector and business sector partners with some follow up research.

### Content

1. Xeed
2. Fringe
3. Make My Day
4. Northern Angelz
5. Regent Park Studios
6. Stanley's Youth & Community Centre
7. Wise Up Workshops
8. Other
9. Public Sector
10. Business Sector
11. Opinions on West End Million
12. Summary on issues WEM

## 1. Xeed

Peer support group for people with chronic illness and health conditions (including 'some quite rare illnesses') and their carers. Utilising peer support, information, training and social activity to address issues of social exclusion, mental health and accessing services. Group has 30-40 members and meets informally once a week and formally once a month for more engaged sessions. Approximately 60% living in West End with a further 20% having lived there prior to health necessitating move to housing elsewhere. Ages range from 20 to 80 years. Group was a CIC (see below).

Funding supported £1000 toward a Managing Life Changes course. The course ran with 12 people for 6 weeks helping people better self-manage conditions, positive psychology, eating, addressing issues of isolation and self-evaluation. The funding and support has 'literally helped to transform people's lives'. Some people referred only to the course have now continued on with the group and the activity has provided an impetus for the group to sustain itself, develop social media networking, and provide significant capacity building of all those taking part. The activity has been running measures to evidence these benefits.

Future; Exceed has now dissolved its CIC and become a free association called 'Enable'. It has also become self-sustaining at a most basic level but relies on own / external generosity to sustain room hire and deliver anything else. Looking for room hire funding, would like to run Life Change course again (potentially twice a year) and seek support toward enabling activity and health courses.

Big Local aims: whilst small this may have been the most significant project in term of a community identifying and taking action on its own needs.

## **2. Fringe**

A new initiative set up by two professionals the theatre / performance event festival had multiple shows programmed into the West End with 50% local and 50% national/international performers, along with workshops and a symposium. The Fringe was granted £10,000 which was matched by £15,000 Arts Council and £8,000 from venues.

Organisers felt it was a great success and an overwhelmingly a positive experience for all involved. 15 shows programmed in the West End of Morecambe with free entry. Target was an audience of 4000 and total achieved was attendance figure of 1050 (organisers estimated that 95% be from West End) plus an additional figure of 200 attending opening and wrap party. Associated workshops were run but organisers felt relative lateness of WEM funding impacted on turnout so some were postponed and banked for a future date.

The project created some significant profile, locally and nationally with press and high results on social media spread. The activities also helped enabled the Fringe to be appointed as the UK Centre for the International Theatre Institute, offering significant potential for drawing in activity and attention to Morecambe both nationally and internationally. A Board has already been established for the International Theatre Institute. Town Council has agreed support for 2nd year Fringe events with £16,500 (a third of the Town's festival budget).

Future: Organisers have now set up a Fringe private limited company for some of their work but not festivals. Aim to build four festivals, education side, a theatre company including participation opportunities. Also to build Alhambra into a world class venue, a writers / performers retreat in the West End and develop a 'community communique' (newsletter). There will be an opportunity for West end million to be involved in these through financial support.

Big Local aims: broadly making area a better place through some local engagement, benefits of economic ripple effect and through raising profile of Morecambe.

## **3. Make my day**

Funded self-employed professional to support 'Make My Day' Festival; one day event with pre-event sessions and post event display at Arndale. Primary focus is West End but to

delivery high quality works that will draw in visitors to area. Organisers state initial event attracted approximately 3000+ people and second year about 2500 people (more were expected but bad weather reduced potential). Of these around 70% were local and 30% from further away, which matched the original aim.

The WEM funding was cited as being key in leveraging other funding; both small scale from Town Council and large scale from Arts Council - £1000 help draw down £10,000+ and second event £2000 helping attract £20,000+. Events' went very well and second was featured on top ten Creative Tourist website for North West UK.

Initiated by local resident / business (also forming part of personal development) the project has taken on learning and to seek sustainability has been advised to consolidate project for potential longer term sustainable plan. As such they have linked with The Exchange as a longer term delivery organisation. Plan is also to include shadow work to transfer previous learning and skills over to new people involved.

Future: based on this the project is now part of The Exchange and a grant form has been submitted to WEM to flag up need even whilst accepting that no grants currently being delivered. Potential that this might be last year WEM funding needed prior to developing more sustainability.

Big Local aims: broadly making area a better place to live but potentially significant identifying and transferring skills.

## **4. Northern Angelz**

A wellbeing venture 'club' who encourage vulnerable isolated people across North Lancashire to become more active. £1000 to deliver wellbeing walks and fitness activator classes in the area which supported adult learning and physical health training delivered a two hour a week, ten week course working with an estimated 50 people, plus additional walking sessions involving hundred's from wider area. Ages ranged from 18 to 50 years and many had social, mental or substance abuse issues.

The work is very person centred providing both guidance and role models. They have what they feel is a 90% success rate in terms of helping people with many still linking in to the service and some notable individual success stories; one young man was kicked out of college but the sessions helped him find a new direction and he now has a full time job.

This was part of setting up Northern Angelz and provided a move from theory to practice and the support of what has become a sustained low level project. Organisers also benefitted from self-learning on the project and through gaining new management skills. The £1000 WEM grant was paralleled with around £5000 of other support, and help from Red Rose Recovery over two years.

Future: largely facilitated by a single individual the current focus is delivering a basic service and the ability to expand what Northern Angelz does, and the vision to become a CIC, is limited by resources to do that – including real basics such as gaining a driving licence.

Big Local aims: evidence of notable small scale community empowerment, skills transfer, client and organisational development.

## 5. Regent Park Studios

Supported Regent Park Studios (CIC) with a grant of £3479 for work with young people including weekly two hour full activity sessions over twelve months; with team building, discipline, communication skills and building confidence of young people aged 11 to 18 years. The activities went very well with triple the expected capacity. The Studios doubled staff on project from own resources and worked with fifty young people from area. The organisation has confidence that the work they do makes a significant impact on both increased capacity of young people and in reducing local anti-social behaviour.

Future: Finding funding for this activity is difficult so when they deliver activity they always get inundated. Current needs are updating equipment and training staff but sustainability activity is the greatest issue. They are adapting their status and setting up new CIC 'Bouncing Back' and looking for funding toward large scale work with young people; real world hospitality work and film projects.

Big Local aims: broadly made a difference in developing skills within young people.

## 6. Stanley's Youth & Community Centre

A community development facility run by charity CEEP (Connect, Empower, Engage, Participate) with several smaller partners based there and delivering targeted community activity (Melting Pot, NRG Dance). Various accessed funding; computer lessons £960, youth club £2000, Melting pot, £3050.

Prior to funding had to regretfully add a £1 charge to youth club sessions. Numbers dropped by 80% as stark choice between going to a youth session or eating. Grant brought back free access but numbers have only come back to 50% so far. Computer activity provided vital skills to people excluded from opportunities at job centre due to lack of IT skills. Melting pot funding supported work with adults, men, building connections against loneliness. Funding has supported them and created some sustainable activities that have continued after funding. Supported activity has also helped those running service in developing their skills.

Funding is providing fundamental essential elements of community need, only scratching the surface and constant challenge between time resources for delivery and same invested in organisation.

Future: Challenge of bringing diverse community together during limited hours that service is currently able to provide. Have made attempts to link with others but there is a dichotomy between the capacity of different organisation's in the area. There is a recognition of need to improve organisational capacity that sustains their work, however priority always being given to delivery. Vision would be an integrated multi-service one stop shop. Current cost are £12,000 rent but inward investment would support buying building to avoid this - but strong recognition that projects success is not primarily about a particular building. Huge issues around face-to-face food poverty so keen to sustain food club which reaches around 70 families. NRG dance looking toward becoming a CIC but currently no capacity to do it.

Big Local aims: WEM support and organisations work has impacted on residents social needs at a core level.

## 7. Wise up workshops

A locally based well-being community CIC that offers workshops using art forms for confidence building for all ages & all abilities. Accessed funding for confidence building with young people (£800) and a Good Old Days Christmas event (£850). Conversations workshops (£950). They work across Morecambe and wider district but 50% of their work is in West End.

Projects funded 'went really well'. Confidence building was summer long working with over 150 children. The energy created has led to two sustained groups of young people continuing to meet. Good Old Days involved cross generational interviews to produce a performance involving 30 young people which was so popular they had to open the dress rehearsal to the public. From that start over 45 families are now engaged in a voluntary run West End Theatre Group which Wise Up supports. Trying to do research in to evidencing how the success of this has worked.

Recent workshops on 'understanding conversations' has led to some outstanding personal development examples. One example; helping an individual from a third generation unemployed family 'find a career and change the course of their life'.

Future. The business side of Wise Up is substantially subsidising the CIC element of their activity. They have accessed some funding and begun addressing their needs when it comes to better communicating success to agencies and large scale funders. Also to addressing the way their business model functions to be sustainable. Also in addressing perception that they are arts work when primary aim is deeper capacity building of individuals and community.

Would like to look at strategic support to help develop sustainable long term rather than single grants for separate activity. They are also keen to offer their Stake Holder meeting and consultation skills more broadly. They are very thankful of WEM as funded activity has spun out into far wider and longer term initiatives.

Big Local aims: Focussed and potentially significant individual capacity building with regard to skills and empowerment.

## 8. Other

A brief email questionnaire was sent out to a number of contacts through the communications officer at LCVS. It inquired about experience of WEM, work done and planned in the West End, and how WEM might add future value to it. Two responses were received with fairly expansive answers but with future plans which may be worth noting.

Out in the Bay; LGBT support. Support to run inclusion events, funding to deliver LGBT awareness training to services in the Morecambe area and funding a 'Morecambe Pride' event.

More Together Magazine; West End community newsletter. Continue producing several issues each year and explore online potential. Would like to develop more involved relationship with WEM and clarity on the partnership's long-term support.

## 9. Public sector

Some broad issues from agencies covering the West End area.

- Desire to work with third sector to exchange support, better use stretched resources and enable agencies to better link into community.
- That groups and activity must strive towards self-sufficiency / credible sustainability.
- That start-ups / new projects must be based on credible business plans.
- Concern over groups in area and issues in West End regarding duplication of services, not communicating, not evidencing quality or effectiveness of provision, not accountable to users, reinventing the wheel.
- Discussion about drawing together, coordinating outcomes, data in order to argue for bigger money. Some feel this has been consistently raised and disregarded.
- Concern over 'reactive' activity (such as food poverty) which follows a familiar pattern of 'making those involved feel better but not necessarily helping those in need much'.
- Previous desire, attempts and investments in linking organisations on most basic level (directories etc.) have not maintained sustained engagement.
- Anecdotal evidence that public sector in area struggle themselves when trying to encourage change within their own internal hierarchies.

The majority of public sector focus appears to be how to deliver services within limited resources, also how to engage with a very complex 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. A recent public sector / 3<sup>rd</sup> sector conference on health and wellbeing raised some familiar issues on joined up working; clarity, sharing resources and improving communication. Points included...

- Vital to work together more.
- Need clear expectations of each other and connecting people to the right people.
- Better networking, building friendship across sectors, more multi-disciplinary events.
- More engagement events with public sector, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and resident service users.
- Sharing venues, single points of contact to ease public access to multiple services.
- Improving communications and information.
- Using databases, information technology, web and apps to aid access.

## 10. Business sector

Some discussion with shops and small traders in area.

- Scores of issues with Yorkshire Street redevelopment; fundamentally about top down decision making, poor engagement and consultation, causing fractures between businesses and community.
- Footfall markedly dropping and vicious circle of shops reduced / unpredictable hours.
- Any potential for Yorkshire Street needs to strive toward variety and niche but fundamentally be about attracting footfall and regular trade. Charity, art etc. okay but if too much it tips balance of how a shopper sees value in visiting.
- Well intentioned initiatives should be meaningfully discussed with those affected prior to 'just doing things'.
- Some older or more established traders feel patronised (even insulted) by some individuals / organisations who enthusiasm for local renewal they regard as naïve.
- Cut and run merchants who stay for grants, etc. but have no long term commitment.
- Experience of some who see grants as 'easy money' with no concern for outcomes achieved or sustained locally. Suggestion that 'loans' might address that.

- Raised expectations (previous consultations, etc.) which have frequently gone unmet.
- Littering and dog mess has major impact. Some have tried to individually tackle this.
- Many traders and shops in area currently on knife edge.

## 11. Opinions on West End Million

Drawn from all the conversations and includes a few none WEM points.

1. Some sensed a potential lack of experience and understanding (and pressure of decision making) on the WEM committee.
2. Some very appreciative of WEM funding and what it helped them do.
3. A lack of follow up support or any apparent interest in what funded project did.
4. Feeling that WEM has not done much.
5. Not knowing that WEM existed or if known very confused by it.
6. Organisation gone downhill with obvious public conflicts of interest with the More Music which has been unfair and damaged wider trust across the community.
7. Completely disillusioned by WEM and how it worked internally, people and organisations taking advantage of fragmented nature of group.
8. That the previous Big Local representative was partisan and their practice contributed to the dysfunction of WEM.
9. Fear of / withdrawal from joint activity because ideas have been appropriated or activity delivery so badly that potentially good ideas are ruined.
10. That some of the festivals, fringe, arts activity was far more hype than reality.
11. Some experience of accessing small grant was fine; phone call, basic paperwork and quite quick.
12. Suggestion that key partners may have used undue influence to hinder others from accessing funding.
13. One quote 'we asked for more funding and were treated quite badly by a panel that passed many other funding applications for many other projects, the feeling I got was that those with their hands in the pot i.e. members kind of made sure their own projects all got funded and others were not. It seemed to be like an old boys club giving each other money and ignoring the actual needs in the area' and 'you seem to have issues with your own governance and issues around the fact many of your board members seem to have been recipients of the cash'.
14. Quote 'Our experience of working with the partnership has been a positive one - they have supported us financially, made clear that our work in the area is appreciated'.
15. Feeling threatened over questioning WEM or projects practice.
16. Belief that if there wasn't some open recognition of bad practice that had contributed to previous problems the same behaviour would continue to threaten WEM or never really be closed.
17. Limited recognition of the funding source, perhaps 'something to do with Lottery'.
18. No real recognition or understanding of Big Local at all.

Noteworthy

19. After many open conversations and some explanations about the current changes and WEMs future the majority were happy over what might be happening and many of those with concerns said they may consider re-engaging.

## Other none specific points

20. Lack of meaningful partnerships in area and organisations competing with and ill-using each other.
21. Food poverty inspired activity. Some positives; network, partnering, conversations but considerable frustration; not building on existing work, questions of where attendees / agendas coming from, not consulting with people actually effected / accountability, empire building and 'just talk' meetings.
22. Organisations with high capacity dominating agenda, hoovering up funding, not acknowledging dichotomy between monetised and voluntary 3<sup>rd</sup> sector activity.
23. Some feelings that arts and cultural professionals are detached from majority of West End community / residents and their behaviour is disenfranchising them.

## 12. Summary for WEM

Feedback raise a number of common threads that WEM may want to address.

### The West End

- There is a strong feeling that all activity in the area should be based on credible plans in terms of evidence, sustainability, finance and real outcomes but also recognition that some organisations (who potentially deliver significant impact) struggle with the capacity to pull this together and need more support in doing so.
- Creative enterprise in the area points to lots of potential but real evidence of benefits to the West End beyond immediate interests is limited. Much of the potential is aspirational, may lack objectivity and fails to link together or offer any strategic plan.
- There is a lack of clarity for some between work in the West End and work in Morecambe as a whole, especially in terms of evidence, outputs and actual benefits.

### West End Million

- There is little concept of the competing pressures on WEM or that its real financial resource is limited. There is almost no recognition that WEM may have any obligation to seek strategic benefits rather than just fund projects that regard themselves as needed.
- There have been some small but meaningful successes through elements of the small grants funding but WEMs activity has been largely overshadowed by potential conflicts of interest which may have encouraged bad practice but which certainly has left a legacy of mistrust in WEM and the immediate local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. The problems may also have encouraged a culture which was fearful of being open, honest or challenging of bad practice.

- WEM could benefit from providing better clarity over its aims, objectives and role beyond just the funding alone. With regard to resources it may also benefit from better clarity on its own capacity, what its' funding can actually achieve, and the obligations attached to its' work.
- There is evidence to suggest that trust can be rebuilt so WEM may wish to carefully build on this. In future it may wish to consider using its' influence to; disincentivise bad practice whenever possible, constructively challenge as much as support new work, incentivise new partnerships and strategic approaches.
- WEM may need to urgently address how it supports meaningful activity which has evidence based outcomes and also how it support local organisations where necessary in building the capacity to achieve this.
- Some partners struggle to define their status or blur broad 'community' activity with practice which highly targeted or which primarily is / conducts itself like a business. WEM may wish to address this when it comes to matters of funding.

## Notes

(i) Some of the information on funded projects is based only on first conversations and with limited time to verify or confirm in more detail. Positivity bias may have influenced some feedback.

(ii) The 'opinions on WEM' section has included everything to ensure that those outside the partnership are properly recorded; a few people questioned how sincerely they would be listened to or issues acknowledged.

(iii) It is clear from recent discussions in the partnership that some were aware of many of the points raised but felt powerless to affect change until recently. This review and the 'summary for WEM' is written at a point when significant internal changes have now begun in order to address some of the concerns raised.

May 2018