

West End Morecambe Big Local Partnership Meeting 28th February 2020 at 6pm

Minutes

Attended by: Chris (Chair), Dan, Viv, Ali, Lee, Siân (note taker)

Apologies: Johnny, Joe, Nat

1.0 Chair's Introduction

Chris explained that this was intended to be a strategic meeting with any urgent 'business' issues covered quickly under matters arising. He also introduced Niamh Goggin from Small Change who is a Big Local partner who supports partnerships around funding and investment. Niamh participated during the whole meeting.

2. Matters Arising

- **Chris** would proof read the final draft of the newsletter, off to press Mon/Tues,
- Open meeting - 2nd April at St Barnabus **everybody** to attend
- Application pack - extra meeting for forms and processes, agree with **Yak**, before 2nd April.
- **Chris** to finalise values
- Meetings on Thursdays, two weekly cycle next 5th March and then 19th, reconsider after that

2.0 Niamh Coggin from Small Change

Niamh gave a summary of her experience which was very impressive! The partnership then discussed how they might best use her support. They agreed:

- Niamh would look at putting on a workshop (perhaps a MIG?) to look at longer term funding strategies for West End voluntary sector partners
- She would facilitate a collaboration between some key local organisations and the partnership on a plan for working together as partners
- WEM could offer her support to Stanleys
- She could provide a paper on housing options, places to visit etc (see below)
- She would advise other Kent based activity to complement a visit to Dover's high street (similar model to the Exchange plans – see below)
- She would review the Co-op business plan (see below)

ACTION: Siân to introduce Niamh to Yak

3.0 Housing and WEM

Chris explained that following on from the Academy of Urbanism work, he had been invited to a meeting at LCC with the Chief Executive and the housing portfolio holder. Exploratory discussions looked at WEM possibly being a partner in future plans and would it be prepared to invest a significant proportion of its funds. As no returns would be likely before 2026 it would be a legacy project. The partnership discussion included:

Housing and WEM

- Any project improving housing might lead to gentrification and while it might benefit individuals was there likely to be a collective benefit from a large investment.
- We've not dug deep into our pot so far so a legacy project might be desirable
- Would the council listen and play fair? If they are happy to involve others in discussions, perhaps we would be better in than out?
- People afraid of complaining and being thrown out – invest in tenant empowerment
- Would social housing owners or developers like Place First be involved?
- Could we grow to be a full partner
- Niamh can provide examples of other community based housing initiatives
- Can we influence the design of properties?
- Working as a Community Land Trust – could visit Barrow Island?

AGREED: We will keep door open and Chris should keep talking.

4.0 Approach from The Exchange

The Exchange had submitted a proposal for £100k grant support for the Co-op project. The discussion included:

- We really want to be involved in this project
- £412k needed with £50k awarded (could make a viable start with £320k) – other funding needed but WEM investment would make it easier for that to happen.
- Is there a viable and detailed business plan?
- What will the governance be – can WEM have a decision-making stake?

AGREED: WEM will ring fence £100k for two years for this project – if plan not viable at that point the funding may be withdrawn. It is subject to the raising of the other £170k. Want to talk through governance and decision-making – a minimum might be to meet jointly with trustees twice a year? Niamh to review the business plan on behalf of WEM.

5.0 Clarification on the decision to award £50k to Creative West End

Chris asked for more debate and clarification on the decision. The key points of the discussion are:

- The funding was not intended as a 'grant' to Creative West End – it was for working in partnership on good projects that came forward under the CWE banner that didn't meet their criteria.
- CWE might want to put forward a detailed proposal on how they would like this partnership to work
- Dan asked if £10k could be used to fund learning visits and opportunities (with WEM where appropriate)

6.0 Next Meeting

Thursday 5th March at The Venue (Sandylands)

