

TODMORDEN PRIDE PARTNERSHIP BOARD
Minutes of Meeting 6th July 2004
The Old Hall, Todmorden

Attended by:

James Gregory (Chair)
Cllr Myra Townley
Cllr Dorothy Jordan
Cllr Clare Townley
David Storah
Francis Boocock
Chris Edwards
Mary Clear
Cynthia Murray
Anne Lee
Jack Taylor
Ed Collins
Jennifer Jackson
Gareth Brookes

In attendance:

Hilary Brooke
Anne Holdsworth
Clare Madders

Apologies:

Wendy Brough
Sheila Tordoff
Linda Young
Chris McCafferty MP

1. Welcome and Apologies

The chair welcomed all to the meeting and gave congratulations to the Councillors on their re election.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th May 2004

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

Item 3.1 – A contract has now been verbally agreed with British Waterways in regard to their maintenance of Fielden Wharf Amenity Station; subject to CMBC receiving a site plan from British Waterways.

There was a brief discussion about some recent negative publicity and it was agreed that people are starting to physically see what has been achieved and there should continue to be positive publicity to promote this.

Item 4 – Anne Lee gave a brief summary of the meeting that had taken place with Todmorden Town Council in regard to the funding for the marketplace redevelopment.

The Town Council had stated that they had passed a resolution to fund certain features which had not been provided and that they were therefore not in a position to release the funds.

However, all felt that it was important to move forward and work together on future projects.

Cllr Myra Townley was thanked for her efforts to find a way forward.

4. Upper Calder Valley Rural Renaissance

Hilary Brooke gave a detailed outline of likely 'transformational' projects coming forward out of the UCVR initiative.

4.1 Walsden – Redevelopment of Hollins Mill.

The mill consists of the main building and the weaving sheds (Northern lights), both in different ownership.

A developer has bought the main mill and is currently in talks with Calderdale Council about upgrading its appearance, with cleaner commercial elements on the ground and possibly 1st floor – perhaps including the post office and library and a community facility.

Plans for the 2nd and 3rd floor (and possibly 1st) would be conversion to residential.

Calderdale Council, in partnership with the Environment Agency, need to be able to get under the weaving sheds to access the culverts. If not, the alternative could be that Rochdale Road is closed for 6 months.

The ideal proposal would be for the weaving sheds to be demolished to enable the Environment Agency to undertake their works and regeneration to continue. The sheds have been recently Listed, but it is unlikely there will be much opposition to de-listing.

The current owner has previously applied for housing on this land, but this would be unlikely due to the Environment Agency flood alleviation programme. Calderdale Council would make use of this area for a central focus for Walsden, incorporating car parking facilities (of which there is currently a severe lack) and an environmental improvement scheme to provide a 'gateway' to Walsden.

There would also be a need, due to movement of the existing companies out of the mill, to find an area upon which to create a small business park.

The Environment Agency timescale is not until 2007/08, but they are willing to work with developers. Changes could therefore take place in 2006/07.

4.2 Todmorden – Bramsche Square.

There will be a bid to Yorkshire Forward for a feasibility study of the area first, including how to best utilise the town hall, the Methodist church and supermarket.

Anne Holdsworth will be drawing up some sketches of ideas for the area. The Neighbourhood Renewal Area programme of £4.5m will contribute.

The keenness of the health centre to redevelop should help provide the energy and impetus for redevelopment of the whole area. It is the potential to integrate key buildings and improve a substantial part of the centre of the town.

4.3 The remainder of the Valley.

Hebden Bridge – no one big idea has been progressed.

Garden Street car park is currently up for sale – with a view to the development of a multi-storey car park with residential above.

With the advent of property rationalisation here, some major buildings may come up for sale.

Mytholmroyd – The Ted Hughes Centre scheme has been ongoing for over five years and still has a long way to go to delivery.

The Parish Church & Sunday School are currently developing plans to redevelop through removal of car parking and opening up of green space, etc; integrating church land into a wider scheme. They are looking towards Yorkshire Forward and the Lottery for funding.

Sowerby Bridge – The transformational project here centres around Sterne Mills and the movement of industrial properties from the centre to this area. Yorkshire Forward purchased Sterne Mills and are keen to see a major economic use in this area. Lots of surrounding green space has, however, been bought by residential developers and the focus may have to therefore be much more mixed-use.

Under the banner of the UCVR initiative, individual towns will need to develop schemes that fit in with the Yorkshire Forward criteria of job creation, and find funding from other agencies.

5. Action Plan 2005 - 2010

5.1 Remaining MTI projects update - Hilary Brooke thanked the Mayor of Todmorden, Cllr Myra Townley, for her speech and opening of the steps at White Hart Fold and the sculpture and landscaping works at Princess Mary Way last week.

All those involved were also thanked for their contribution and of helping to show the success of working in partnership.

The Birdcage walk railings (in front of St. Marys church) will be replaced 'like for like' in a few months time, after the judging for Todmorden in Bloom.

5.2 New Action Plan – A sub-committee of the Todmorden Pride Partnership Board has been established to formulate this. Such an action plan is needed to interest potential funders.

It is necessary to detail overall objectives at a strategic level, before moving on to develop individual projects. These are classed under six headings:

- ◆ Physical Regeneration\Heritage - Hilary/Clare
- ◆ Community Capacity Building - Mary
- ◆ The Environment & Public Realm - Hilary/Clare/Anne H
- ◆ Tourism - Anne Lee
- ◆ Arts & Local Culture - Anne H
- ◆ Business Development - Hilary

To access Yorkshire Forward funding job creation and business development will always be key. The action plan objectives and ideas need to be under the

umbrella of Yorkshire Forwards Regional Economic Strategy (RES), the John Thompson UCVR report and the Countryside Exchange report.

The sub-committee have been designated specific areas, from the above list, and will feed their ideas asap to Hilary and Clare, who will then create a matrix of programmes and projects alongside identification of potential sources of funding. This will then be integrated into an action plan for the next five years.

It is hoped that the draft action plan can be presented, and be the basis of the main discussion, at the next Board meeting.

Members of the sub-committee are: James Gregory (chair), Mary Clear, Myra Townley, Chris Edwards, David Storah & Anne Lee. With officer support from Hilary Brooke, Anne Holdsworth and Clare Madders.

6. The Branding of Todmorden

6.1 Anne Holdsworth handed out a grid of ideas entitled 'Themes for Todmorden Branding' (a copy is attached at the end of these minutes).

The idea of this initiative is to raise Todmordens profile by capitalising on its strong identity and focusing on positive aspects. Key stakeholders need to work together to promote the town.

An artist will be employed to work on projects in the town to reinforce the brand. An artist has been selected (Alan Pergusy, from Leeds) who has a lot of experience of similar work and in particular of consultation with the community. Appointment is subject to Arts Council funding, which it is hoped will be approved by the end of July.

This grid of ideas is a starting point detailing four distinct areas and possible directions. Much more exploration of these areas will take place once the artist is on board; in consultation with the local community. This may be via exhibitions, open days, newspaper articles, talking with established groups, etc. This will culminate in the production of some artwork for the town along two strands – town brand/logo and a specific piece of public art.

There was some discussion about adverse comments that had been received about previous ideas and the need to ensure all are heard during this branding process, to create an atmosphere of healthy, friendly controversy.

6.2 Cllr Jordan added that all the town councillors had brought forward ideas to the Town Council and Myra had encapsulated these into a letter which she has forwarded to Anne in regard to this branding process. In particular the town council felt strongly about the co-ordination of street furniture and of trying to make use of Stoodley Pike, the red & white roses and general co-ordination of colours.

7. Staffing

Hilary informed the Board that, due to health & safety regulations, the Todmorden Regeneration Office may have to move and therefore the Board were asked to prepare for that eventuality. Revenue would be needed from CMBC.

Clare Madders was also welcomed to the team and the importance of having someone in Todmorden was reiterated. Janet Waggott has assured the chair that CMBC is committed to a Todmorden Regeneration Office and that it be staffed by a full time officer supported by 50% time of the Principal Officer, Partnership Liaison.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Patmos – it was noted that an update was given at the last meeting (item 3.2). 50 % of the cost is the liability of the owners/occupiers and 50 % the owner of the highway (which is CMBC). CMBC has set aside funds from the engineering/highways budget and are working in partnership with the Environment Agency, who want to open up the culverts in this area. It is possible that there may be the need for additional funding, at which point a formal approach may be made to the Town council.

8.2 Mary Clear gave the Board an update on various projects - Walsden Youth Club – the youth service have now put in a part-time officer.
Unitarian Church - an invitation was extended to any of the board to contact Mary if they have any visitors they would like to show around the Church.
Calder College - is going to house the first purpose built children's centre in Calderdale.

8.3 The Board all agreed that Todmorden in Bloom looks fantastic.

8.4 Business Development Grant – Hilary informed the Board that this funding, which had initially been promised by Yorkshire Forward over 3 years ago, has now been agreed and a formal contract received. It is £150,000 and must be spent in a very short timescale - by March '05.

The emphasis is upon large scale projects, with a criteria focused on job creation, training and visible improvements. As such concentration will be on the main corridors into the town.

Some ideas have already been worked up within these aims. Rochdale Metal Works are looking to externally improve their building and grounds and additionally bring back into productive, economic use the top floor of their building.

Some of the funding may be used to enhance another scheme, of limited funds, within the Todmorden area. This is the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme around Fielden Square.

Public Realm is also of importance, and so it may be possible to utilise some of the funds towards a CPO of the Sonagar Restaurant and further redevelopment of Fielden Wharf.

8.5 The chair put to the Board that he would like one or two additional members, who have been involved in redevelopment in the town, to be invited to join the Board. This was agreed.

The chair thanked Nick and Madeleine Hoyle for the use of the conference facilities at The Old Hall, Todmorden.

9. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 7th September 2004 at 6.30pm at The Old Hall, Todmorden