TODMORDEN PRIDE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Minutes of Meeting 7th June 2005
The Old Hall, Todmorden

Attended by:	**Apologies:**	**In Attendance:**
James Gregory (Chair)	Cllr Clare Townley	Adrian Rose
Cllr Myra Townley	Cllr Michael Taylor	Clare Madders
Cllr Margareta Holmstedt	David Storah	Anne Holdsworth
Alan Darwin	Mary Clear	
Francis Boocock	Peter Cockcroft	
Anne Lee	John Bates	
Christine Holley	Gareth Brooks	
Chris Edwards	Malcolm Birkett	
Jack Taylor	Cynthia Murray	
Ed Collins	Kelsang Tsalden	
Nick Green (Harley Bank Community Association)	New MD, Weir Warman	
	Jennifer Jackson	
	Sheila Tordoff	

1. Welcome and Apologies
The chair welcomed Nick Green from Harley Bank Community Association.
Welcome also given to the Councillors re-appointed to the Todmorden Pride board for the year 2005/2006 (Calderdale Council – Cllrs Clare Townley, Michael Taylor & Ruth Goldthorpe. Todmorden Town Council – Cllrs Myra Townley & Margareta Holmstedt).
Jack Taylor stated that Anne Lee is now the Chair of the Todmorden TIC and that he will be continuing in the capacity of honorary president.

2. Minutes of last meeting
The minutes from the previous meeting (28.4.05) were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising
3.1 Item 5.2 from the minutes of 8.3.05 had requested that CMBC be contacted in regard to state of Abraham Ormerod. The relevant CMBC officer has now sent a letter to the PCT, as owners of the building asking that works be carried out to remedy the poor external condition of the building and land.
It was noted that the Town Council have also sent their own correspondence on this matter direct to the PCT and that some of the fly posting has now been removed. The PCT have however still made no decision regarding the buildings future.

4. Update from Harley Bank Community Association

Nick Green gave the board a general update on the NRA (Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment) from the viewpoint of the local community. There is a general fear around Harley Bank of potential for demolition of properties as although there are concerns and problems in the area, none of the residents want to leave.

Demolition on a mass scale is unlikely to occur though due the prohibitive cost.

An interim report back from the NRA consultants has just been given to residents of the Harley Bank area. Emerging results include:

- the possibility of some demolition
- the possibility of knocking through some of the back to back terraces. There are approx. 80 houses in this situation and therefore if done to all this would leave only 40 homes. Some of these are currently empty Pennine Housing properties, but only about 15 of them.
- spending funding on housing improvements in isolation will not lead to improvement of the area as a whole. A major issue is the conflict between residential and industrial use, particularly from forklift trucks and lorries.

Major structural change would be needed to make things radically different for the area. The buildings that are used by these businesses are also not ideal from a business point of view either e.g. one company has to take their fork lift trucks into the road to get from one side of their building to the other.

If the land currently occupied by these businesses were made available it would create a completely different scenario for improvement to the housing stock in Harley Bank.

The whole area needs to be raised/improved to a level that leads to people being prepared to invest in their own houses.

£750,000 per annum for five years is not adequate to address all the problems; particularly as the structural housing problems are not just confined to the Harley Bank area of the NRA study boundary. Additionally all the sewerage pipes in Harley Bank need upgrading, which will be very costly.

Adrian Rose stated that one of the reasons that the Halifax Road employment area is being progressed is to potentially aid relocation of businesses from the Harley Bank area. This transfer of industry is the main link/cross-over between the aspirations of Todmorden Pride and the aspirations of the Harley Bank residents.

Nick concluded by stating that the consultants proposals would be ready in a few months time and that it would be interesting to meet again at that point to discuss what is being proposed.

5. West Yorkshire Investment Plan scheme updates:

5.1 Halifax Road

Clare provided the board with an update from John Hodgson, Economic Development Manger for Calderdale.

Hope Street Mill - Owner currently having site cleared to improve chances of marketing site. The current mixed use planning application on the site is not yet decided as the submission of a flood risk assessment is still awaited. After resolution of the current mixed-use planning application further attempts to discuss CMBC purchase of the site for employment use will be made based on District Valuer site valuation.

Hammer Mill – Owner declined to progress discussions with Council as seeking higher values. District Valuer to visit building and provide an "open market" valuation for the Council to continue negotiations with site owner.

DV also providing valuation of Petrol Filling Station on Halifax Road frontage.

Poli Hi Solidur site – Council has commissioned its own Retail Impact Study which concludes that the supermarket (Lidl) application on this site has unacceptable implications for Todmorden Town Centre. Further discussions with Poli Hi will follow resolution of the planning application and Council will maintain its position that the site should remain in use by Poli Hi or in employment use.

Poli Hi are currently relocating and integrating another business into this site and therefore need additional space.

Openshaws – two companies have expressed an interest in occupying part of the site. Therefore trying to facilitate a joint bid by them for the whole site. One of these would be a new business to Todmorden.

In terms of the Halifax Road sites, funding will be available from Yorkshire Forward to purchase and via CPO (compulsory purchase order) if negotiations fail.

There may be potential/scope to encourage some of the Harley Bank businesses to relocate to this area. A project officer, jointly funded by housing and regeneration sections of the Council, will be appointed to partly look at this possibility.

5.1.2 Ed Collins informed the board that Todmorden High and two other schools in the upper valley have got funding to set up a construction academy for about 40 students. They are therefore looking for suitable space to rent for the academy. The board provided some potential contacts. Any other suggestions re suitable buildings should be forwarded direct to Ed.

5.2 37-39 Rochdale Road (Sonarga)

The board were shown the latest concept design for landscaping the site. It has been estimated that the cost of restoring the building fabric would be very high. This information is of use to aid the case for demolition within conservation area. The board discussed the current design. The main points were:

- paving – need more than just an engineering solution. Attractive and imaginative design will aid the application for conservation area consent.

- John Fielden statue of some merit to be located here, or at least back in the town centre, but statue is very fragile and could be at further risk of vandalism if not located in an area to be covered by the new CCTV.
- The canal itself is a piece of heritage and opening up the views to it, via this demolition, is a benefit in itself.
- An entrance staircase/steps instead may be a more dramatic effect and draw people onto the wharf (as well as disguising the retaining wall).

Agreed that final design to be presented to next board meeting for approval.

Agreed that this will be available for viewing, via the Todmorden News, one week prior to the board meeting (to allow members who can't attend the meeting to see the design, as well as the wider public).

5.3 Walsden

Further to the April meeting with English Heritage and the Environment Agency (see previous minutes), a further meeting is to be held with the Environment Agency in a couple of weeks to hear decision on their chosen option for undertaking the Walsden culvert works.

At the meeting in April it was advised, by English Heritage, to undertake a survey/appraisal of the mill. How this can be done is currently being investigated.

5.4 Todmorden Business Development Grants

Clare gave a brief update on the grants scheme. The majority of the £150,000 has now been committed, with nearly two-thirds of this now defrayed.

The businesses/premises that have benefited include:

The Old Fire Station, Rochdale Road – many external improvements to the buildings have been grant assisted. The building houses a number of small manufacturing and retail businesses and both the bed company and carpet company are expanding into areas of the building improved by the grant.

Rochdale Metal Units, Burnley Road – the building has benefited from grant assistance towards stone cleaning, roof repairs and the installation of 158 new windows. It was noted that local residents near the building are pleased with these improvements.

The Clock tower on the Old Fire Station was additionally mentioned as something that had once been of more prominence and had originally had a cupola. *Agreed* that Clare should investigate, via English Heritage, if there would be any grant funding towards its restoration or how to sponsor.

7. Town Artist Update

The fish and planter sculptures for the gabion wall at Fielden wharf are currently being fabricated. This has been a joint venture with Todmorden in Bloom.

Plaque Trail – 36 plaques are currently being cast. Photographs of the proposed locations for the plaques were shown to the board – these range geographically from Weir Warmans on Halifax Road down to Centre Vale Park on Burnley Road,

with a concentration in the town centre. Currently arranging consent with building owners and listed building consent where applicable, for the siting of the plaques. There will be an accompanying trail leaflet.

The town artist is also working with the Environment Agency on the creation of some decorative panels for the footbridges over the river, near to the market. The Environment Agency is also going to commission art works on the new flood retaining wall at Safeway/Morrisons.

Funding applications for extension of this work to the whole of the Valley, with a strategic artist, have been submitted. Currently awaiting outcome of these applications.

It was additionally noted that Eastwood Community Centre is now open and planning permission has also been granted for a playground.

8. Meeting Dates
Todmorden Pride meetings have historically been held on a Tuesday, but the last meeting was held on a Thursday and was well attended.
Todmorden Town Council representatives noted that Thursdays are suitable for them to attend. It was agreed that it would only work if also suitable for Calderdale Councillors too.

Sheila Tordoff, editor of the Todmorden News, would also be able to attend more regularly if meetings were held on a Thursday and this would greatly assist with publicity (see item 9).
Agreed for next two meetings to be held on a Thursday.
Agreed to review at the Thursday 8th September meeting as to whether to continue on a Thursday or revert to Tuesdays.

6. Todmorden Pride Publicity
Further to item 5 of the previous minutes, there is the need for more promotion and publicity of the work of Tod Pride, with regular report backs on emerging initiatives in Todmorden and Walsden.
The Todmorden News should be able to attend more meetings if held on a Thursday. This should improve communication issues and aid publicity and feedback, but it is also important not to report on projects prematurely.
Agreed to see how attendance of Todmorden News at meetings improves publicity; and to then consider appointing a board member as press officer, if necessary.

Next Meeting to be Thursday 28th July at 6.30pm, at The Old Hall