

Todmorden Pride Partnership Board

Minutes of Meeting 8th September 2005 The Old Hall, Todmorden

Present:

James Gregory (chair)
Cllr Myra Townley
Cllr Clare Townley
Mary Clear
Gareth Brooks
David Storah
Alan Darwin
Malcolm Birkett
Peter Cockcroft
Sheila Tordoff
John Bates
Anne Lee
Ed Collins
Jennifer Jackson
Christine Holley

Chris Edwards
Sheila Greenwood
Cynthia Murray

In Attendance:

Clare Madders
Anne Holdsworth
Hilary Brooke

Apologies:

Cllr Michael Taylor
Kelsang Tsalden
Kevin Spencer
Jack Taylor
Francis Boocock

1. Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting (28th July)

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

3. Matters Arising (from previous minutes)

3.1 Item 6.4 of the previous meeting had discussed the matter of the Todmorden grinding stone now in Bacup and understood to be looking for a new home. As was agreed at that meeting, the Town Council has written to the Bacup Natural History Society and a response has been received. The response states that the initial information received may have been incomplete and that the Society has already unanimously agreed that the grindstone should stay where it is and any redevelopment of the area is to take account of this.

4. Town Artist Review

A written report was distributed by Anne Holdsworth (see Appendix 1). This includes a short review of the Ashenurst Doorstep Green project and the Eastwood Community Centre as well as the town artist projects. It was noted that the plaque trail opening ceremony will be held soon. In terms of future work, various funding applications have been submitted to extend the town artist project throughout the Upper Calder Valley. Anne's contract in Todmorden has now finished and so a bouquet of flowers was presented and she was thanked for all her work on these projects and the wider regeneration of Todmorden. Anne is now working on an environmental improvement scheme in Halifax.

5. West Yorkshire Investment Plan scheme updates:

- ◆ Yorkshire Forward funding
- ◆ Halifax Road
- ◆ 37-39 Rochdale Road (Sonarga)
- ◆ Walsden

A written report was distributed (see Appendix 2) and verbally reported by Hilary & Clare.

A discussion followed with particular focus on the Board's aspirations for the Halifax Road site and the need to maintain the area for employment (but not necessarily industrial) use, due to the growing demand for smaller units and the particular growth in the Upper Valley of arts/creative industries.

This would need to be balanced with the needs of wider economic use, including space for lighter manufacturing. The need for good quality design was also reiterated, as was the need also for appropriate housing for those working in these types of areas.

It was agreed that the Chair would contact CMBC Regeneration Manager to request better assurance as to the plans for the site – including firm details in regard to interested businesses and to request a timetable for action.

6. Discussion re Todmorden Pride Partnership Board

6.1 Office Accommodation / Staffing

Hilary reiterated to the Board that her role is now a strategic liaison role for all the partnerships in Calderdale and that Clare is the main regeneration officer providing support to Todmorden Pride as well as the wider UCVR.

The Todmorden regeneration office will have to be vacated soon whilst works to the roof are undertaken (as part of the HERS grant scheme). Unfortunately this office space is also not compliant with some health & safety standards and is not linked in to the Council's staff computer network.

Hilary added that the MTI success was shown to be, in part, due to the officer and office space being within Todmorden and particularly with the close physical proximity to the Todmorden News.

It was agreed that the Board press for the retention of a regeneration office/base somewhere in Todmorden in the longer-term.

6.2 Constitution & Membership

Copies of the Todmorden Pride 'terms of reference' and constitution were distributed in advance of the meeting and all Board members requested to read them prior to the meeting.

The Chair led the discussion by stating that he would not be asking the Board to make any firm decisions now but that he hoped the discussion would lead to a number of proposals for decision at the next meeting.

The main points in the Chair's introduction and to lead the discussion were:

- Todmorden Pride has no legal status.
- Major changes/developments are planned over the next few years (a map of potential development areas was displayed).

- The UCVR (Upper Calder Valley Renaissance) is the umbrella for the whole of the Upper Calder Valley, particularly in terms of access to Yorkshire Forward and other major funding streams.
- Todmorden Pride is one of the five 'town teams' within the UCVR.
- The UCVR also has a number of themed 'action groups' looking at tourism, transport, business, farming, etc. Todmorden Pride members are welcome and encouraged to join any of these action groups (contact details can be obtained from Clare Madders).
- As the UCVR continues to develop this has increasingly led to a number of approaches from people involved in the UCVR also wanting to get involved with the 'town teams'.
- There is also some confusion within the wider community. It is important that people can feel included in the work of Todmorden Pride i.e. not to be a 'closed shop'.
- There is a need to reiterate the role of all Board members to disseminate information back out to the groups they represent, and to also feed in appropriate information /requests from these groups into the Board.
- The original constitution of the Board stated a max. of 24 members, including 6 Private Sector, 3 CMBC Cllrs, 2 TTC Cllrs, 6 Community Sector and 6 Public Sector members. The focus, in terms of the constitution, is for a Board of people who are interested in wider physical regeneration not individual or single agendas.

During the discussion a number of suggestions and ideas were discussed, including:

- Additional members to strengthen the Board, particularly in light of the aforementioned upcoming major changes/developments. Invited by current Board members and/or people who have asked to join.
- An annual public meeting – to inform the wider public of Todmorden about the work and viewpoints of Todmorden Pride. This might also help to alleviate some of the feelings of resentment and of a 'closed shop'.
- The creation of a smaller executive Board (say 8 Board members) to meet on a more regular basis and act as the decision making body; with a wider Board meeting on a quarterly basis.
- Smaller project/action groups to be set up instead to look at specific areas/issues e.g. Bramsche Square.

It was agreed that all Board members would think about these and any other ideas for changes to the constitution and bring firm ideas to the next meeting for resolutions to be made at that meeting.

7. Todmorden & Walsden Action Plan

It was noted that it is in both Clare & Hilary's work programmes to develop an action plan but that it is the Board's document and therefore vital for the Board to input into and take ownership of the plan.

Officer work on this has been delayed due to other work commitments, in particular the actual project work on the UCVR projects as well as preparing additional information required by Yorkshire Forward (see agenda item 5).

The action plan is vital to aid Todmorden Pride to tap into other opportunities for funding and to be able to react quickly when new funding opportunities come along.

It was requested that if possible copies of both the 'draft' Hebden Bridge Action Plan and the former Todmorden MTI Action Plan be distributed to the board for information.

8. Future meeting dates

It was agreed by general consensus that all Todmorden Pride meetings would now be held on Thursdays.

This can be reviewed on a regular basis.

All meetings will still start at 6.30pm and be at The Old Hall, Todmorden.

9. A.O.B.

9.1 It was noted that at the recent AGM of the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Company it was suggested that a member of Todmorden Pride may wish to become a director of the UCVR Company.

There is no requirement to become a director but, as mentioned in detail at item 6.2, there is also always the opportunity for all members of Todmorden Pride to become involved and more directly represented in the UCVR.

9.2 It was agreed to invite Duncan Hartley, the new Head of Regeneration & Planning at Calderdale to the next meeting of the Board and to therefore arrange a suitable date accordingly.

9.3 It was agreed that the Todmorden Pride minutes could be made available on the UCVR website and therefore any confidential items must be minuted as such to ensure confidentiality is maintained when required.

9.4 Copies of the 'Housing Strategy for Calderdale 2005 – 2010' were made available for Board members. The report has a questionnaire attached upon which individual responses can be made.

9.5 Mary informed the Board that on Friday 23rd September from 2 – 4 pm there would be a preview at the Unitarian Church of a prisoners art exhibition. Anyone wishing to attend must RSVP to Mary. The exhibition is also open to all between 12pm – 4pm on Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th September.

Meeting Dates for the remainder of 2005 are:

Thursday 27th October 2005

Thursday 8th December 2005.

2006 meeting dates will be distributed at the 8th December meeting.

Appendix 1

Ashenhurst Doorstep Green

Community-based scheme, aiming to create neighbourhood green space from derelict land to rear of Ashenhurst social housing estate. Countryside Agency Doorstep Greens funding secured, along with match funding from Living Spaces, Barclays Bank, Todmorden Together and Calderdale Community Grant. Total project funding approx £70,000.

Ashenhurst Doorstep Green Action Group have been brought together to progress the project and maintain part of the site following completion. A variety of community events have been organised to involve and motivate local people.

Project has been awaiting a start on site for over 12 months, but was delayed due to legal procedures relating to transfer of land ownership. This is now completed and contractors are due to commence work within next few weeks. This will be followed by programme of volunteer activity involving people from the estate, young people from the High School and Conservation volunteers.

Local landscape architect Penny Bennett has been closely involved with the project's development and will be overseeing the contract and co-ordinating volunteer activity.

Eastwood Community Centre

Eastwood has long suffered lack of community facilities and Residents Association had formed to address these issues. Vital Villages grant obtained from Countryside Agency to transform new cricket pavilion into multi-use community building. Match funding obtained from Co-op and Calderdale's Community Grant, total project funding approx £18,000.

Project was complicated by Environment Agency's objection to change of use planning application, due to concerns over flooding. Environment Agency changed policy following preparation of flood risk management plan.

Project involved provision of fixtures, fittings and furnishings for community building. Residents Association carried out much of the work themselves, and have gone on to plan and fund raise for children's play facility outside the building. Building is now well used by various groups.

Walsden

Project developed in association with Friends of St Peters Church, aiming to improve area of land between canal and church, providing seating / garden area. Outline funding approval received from Living Spaces. Project shelved due to Church needing to concentrate resources on structure of building and school.

Todmorden Town Artist

The initiative was developed with the aim of complementing the regeneration works undertaken under MTI, further enhancing the town centre and attracting attention to Todmorden from outside.

Total project funding of approx £62,000 was secured from Arts Council (England), Countryside Agency, Awards for All, Environment Agency and Calderdale's cultural grant. Artist Alan Pergusey was appointed following procedures recommended by Arts Council.

Community consultation was carried out via a stall on the market place, and over 100 completed questionnaires were received. Following analysis of consultation, Alan prepared several initial design ideas, which were exhibited in the town.

Projects

Textures of Todmorden

Alan held several workshops with HND Arts students of Calderdale College, and developed the idea of a light projection art work. Images of Todmorden were prepared by the students, and projected during hours of darkness on to the front of the Kwiksave building, an Art Deco former cinema. The projections were held in January, after the Christmas lights were taken down and the town is at its darkest. Good press coverage received including brief feature on local TV news.

Fielden Wharf Fish Sculpture

Concept developed in partnership with Todmorden in Bloom, who were keen to enhance the Wharf area. Design originated as fish-shaped planters, and evolved to fish sculptures with associated planters. Local metal worker / artisan Nick Green commissioned to produce Art work, and has progressed design of sculpture. Todmorden in Bloom contributed £1500 towards sculpture.

Planters are in place and first batch of fish installed. Installation delayed due to complexity of individual pieces, but will be completed by end December 2005. Launch event planned for January 2006.

Todmorden Plaque Trail

Concept developed with aim of involving a wide cross section of the community in town centre Art work.

Existing community groups, businesses and other organisations were invited to participate in the design and development of a plaque trail. A series of workshops were held and participants invited to create their own design for a plaque representing their organisation. Workshops proved very successful, with over 30 representatives of 20 different groups and organisations attending. Total of 37 plaques eventually produced, cast in bronze with stainless steel frame. Frames manufactured free of charge by Weir Warman.

Plaques currently being installed around the town, to make up trail that can be followed using trail leaflet, available free from Tourist info Centres in Todmorden and further afield. Interpretation board on market hall building.

Launch event planned for September 05.

Environment Agency Projects

Alan has been commissioned separately by Environment Agency to work with several key community groups on design of panels for new bridges installed in town centre as part of flood alleviation programme.

A further commission is to develop design ideas for new artwork on the raised river wall outside Morrisons on Rochdale Road.

Appendix 2

West Yorkshire Investment Plan scheme updates:

◆ Yorkshire Forward Funding

YF requested (in early August) substantial amounts of additional information in regard to all the projects for the Upper Calder Valley. This follows the initial submission of the bids in late 2004.

YF then cancelled a meeting due for 6 September due to their staff sickness, leave and the fact that they wish to hold a broad discussion to include both Rural and Urban teams.

There is now a request to meet with the Director of Regeneration and the Chief Officer for Planning and Regeneration and team members. YF will be represented by the Director, West Yorkshire and the heads of their Urban and Rural Teams.

YF have 21.5 million pounds to spend this year, of which 1.5m has been committed to date. Their funding is split 65:35 in favour of capital projects as they have an overspend of revenue from previous years.

The result is that staff have been formally offered posts within the UCVR, but funding is being delayed to actually appoint. One post is to work with a number of action groups to bring their proposals to business planning and funding stage. One post is to carry out a Feasibility Study and bring together firm proposals for work within the Bramsche Square area; and .5 post is to integrate the works in Harley Bank with economic development schemes in the town centre.

Match funding is not an issue.

YF have concerns that CMBC will be unable to spend the amounts bid for within the 5 year programme.

The sites for which finance has been requested are being progressed vigorously by CMBC.

◆ Halifax Road

Hope St Mill - planning application for mixed use refused planning permission at Cttee 30 Aug 05. The District Valuer has been asked to make an offer to the site owner to purchase for employment use, subject to valuation and site investigations.

Hammer Mill - we are making enquiries with the owner's commercial agent as to whether the site is available for sale following the DVs recent valuation. We will proceed to make an offer to purchase subject to valuation and site investigations.

Site investigations CMBC Engineers (David Turner) has been asked to prepare a cost estimate for site investigations, service investigations and flood risk study for the Hope St site and the Hammer Mill site. This information will

be used to progress discussions with the Council Project team, prepare Capital Appraisal (as required by Finance prior to purchase) and to support an Outline Planning application for employment use.

Poli Hi Solidur - no new information although various rumors as to other party interests in site.

Openshaw site - wrote to Receivers 19 Aug to ask what progress there had been in site disposal and to outline position for resistance of development other than for employment use. Received call from Sanderson Weatherall who confirmed they are to re-market the site. Requested copies of agents details to circulate to businesses seeking employment space.

◆ **37-39 Rochdale Road (former Sonarga)**

Still working on justification statements needed to accompany conservation area consent and planning applications.

A 'condition' survey is to be undertaken very soon. This is required to assist the case for demolition, by showing the high cost of restoring the building fabric.

The submission of the planning applications has been delayed due to officer's time being redirected to additional information required for the whole of the WYIP. It is hoped that these can be submitted before the end of September.

◆ **Walsden**

CMBC to undertake a conservation character appraisal of the whole of Walsden, but with a particular focus on its mill buildings (and in particular the significance of Hollins Mill). As well as being of merit to assist this project (as advised by English Heritage), this appraisal can also form the basis of considering the possible future designation of a conservation area in Walsden.

It had been hoped by now to have significantly progressed discussions re acquisition of the weaving sheds.

However, the Environment Agency are currently undertaking a variety of appraisals and unfortunately they will therefore not give a firm decision until early next year (Feb/March'06) as to the final chosen option/route for their required works in Walsden.

On this basis the owner of the weaving sheds has declined to discuss potential acquisition further until the EA position is made clear.

The EA & CMBC would still like to ascertain true valuation & disbursement cost of the site; as this information is vital to aid the EA decision process to reach a chosen/preferred option.