

TODMORDEN PRIDE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Minutes of Meeting 28th April 2005 The Old Hall, Todmorden

Attended by:

James Gregory (Chair)
Cllr Clare Townley
Cllr Myra Townley
Alan Darwin
Mary Clear
Francis Boocock
Gareth Brooks
Malcolm Birkett
Andy Sage (RDHS Consultants)
Anne Lee
Cynthia Murray
Kelsang Tsalden
Cllr Margareta Holmstedt
Linda Young
Christine Holley
David Storah
Chris Edwards

In Attendance:

Adrian Rose
Anne Holdsworth
Clare Madders

Apologies:

Chris McCafferty
Cllr Michael Taylor
Cllr Dorothy Jordan
Peter Cockcroft
John Bates

1. Welcome and Apologies

The chair welcomed Andy Sage from RDHS Consultants and Christine Holley, the new chair of Todmorden Business Association.

2. Minutes of last meeting

It was noted that apologies from Cllr Holmstedt had been omitted from the minutes. The minutes from the previous meeting (8.3.05) were then agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising

3.1 Item 8.3 of the previous minutes requested that the owners of the station car park be contacted to see if there was any provision for additional station car parking.

A response has been received from Northern Rail. The car park is due to be 'relined' soon which will aid users to park more considerably but will not increase the overall no of spaces available.

Metro has also previously looked into extending the car park, but this has not progressed as yet due to funding issues, in particular how to fund the ongoing maintenance of running an extended car park. Metro will probably undertake a pilot scheme along the Airdale line in regard to station car park charging; as this could be how ongoing maintenance funding could be attained.

3.2 There was also a brief discussion about inappropriate town centre signage, both on store frontages and on railings (particularly those to the front of St Mary's church). It was noted that advertisement consent is required for many of the shop signs and therefore the Board, and other groups its members represent, can add weight by submitting objections. Todmorden Town Council, as a consultative body, also comment on such applications.

It was believed that in the past a form had been submitted to CMBC (possibly highways) to request banners on the railings. Clare to investigate this procedure.

4. Todmorden Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA)

Andy Sage from RDHS consultants gave an overview and update on the independent study work being undertaken for this assessment. This is housing led and is therefore focusing on the housing stock to identify areas where investment is needed to improve the stock. Environmental factors and level & availability of local services are also assessed to some extent.

The work of the consultants is information gathering, a reality check, generation of options, appraisal of options and a preferred option containing a range of measures. Report back to CMBC will be in July 2005.

RDHS are currently still at the first stage of this process – information gathering. This has included questionnaires, community open days and both external & internal structural house surveys (stock condition survey).

£750,000 per annum is available for five years to help tackle some of the problems identified through this assessment. This may well include a number of group repair schemes.

Copies of the first and second NRA newsletters were distributed, including a map of the study boundary.

5. Upper Calder Valley Renaissance – update & role of Todmorden Pride

Adrian reported that Todmorden Pride needs to continue to be broadly representative of the people of Todmorden and board members should report back to other groups within the town to help maintain credibility and community involvement with the work of Todmorden Pride.

The Market Towns Initiative was a one-off programme for Todmorden. Now, to gain further access to Yorkshire Forward and other funding, Todmorden Pride needs to embrace and be an integral part of the Valley wide Upper Calder Valley Renaissance initiative.

UCVR, which is part of Yorkshire Forwards Renaissance Market Towns, is about the strength of Valley wide strategies to attract investment (including £3-4 million YF investment over the next few years).

The UCVR therefore consists of the 4 town teams (Todmorden Pride representing Todmorden & Walsden) and around 8 action groups, such as the Getting About Group and the Tourism Action Group.

A discussion followed about how to make sure all sections of the community are aware of the work done by Todmorden Pride and the wider UCVR initiative. It was noted that the UCVR are planning to have bi-monthly press articles and Todmorden Pride could do a similar article, expanding on the Todmorden & Walsden initiatives.

Agreed to have a report back in the Todmorden News after each Board meeting. The format of this still to be agreed, but there was some discussion that this could be done on a rotating basis by different members of the board.

6. West Yorkshire Investment Plan scheme updates

6.1 Walsden

Adrian reported that a meeting had been held today with representatives from the Environment Agency, English Heritage, CMBC Regeneration Section and the owner (and his agent) of the weaving sheds at Hollins Mill. The meeting was to try and move forward on a practical and feasible solution for all regarding the creation of a 'heart' for Walsden.

The Environment Agency need to improve the culvert which in part runs underneath the weaving sheds. How this is to be done will be mainly determined by engineering issues and cost. Their works in Walsden are due to begin in April 2007.

English Heritage has an involvement as the weaving sheds are a Listed Building. Their advice was, as a starting point, to have an 'area appraisal' undertaken looking at the building and its significance historically and in the context of the wider area.

There is a desire from all parties to work together to try and achieve something for Walsden and the way forward will start with this area appraisal.

6.2 Halifax Road

Adrian informed the Board that a report has now been to CMBC Cabinet requesting agreement to pursue purchase of the properties in this area, and to request CPO if reasonable purchase prices cannot be negotiated.

The two current planning applications on the site (Lidl and the mixed use scheme) are still outstanding and will be strongly objected to by the Regeneration Section, Todmorden Town Council and others.

Contact is also being maintained with potential end users for the site, although these may change by the time the project comes to fruition due to the immediate additional space requirements of some of these companies.

It may take a number of years to reach the stage of a completed scheme and as such the layout and style of the final scheme will in part be shaped by the end users at that time.

Funding for the purchase of sites has been approved by Yorkshire Forward based on industrial land value figures as provided by the District Valuer. However the current landowners may want housing value.

6.3 37-39 Rochdale Road (Sonarga)

Clare informed the Board that the purchase of the property was completed on 31.3.05, with Yorkshire Forward funding through the WYIP.

The next stage is to prepare the case for demolition, for submission with the conservation area consent application. The main guidance that development control will use in regard to this is PPG 15 (copies distributed) which contains the criteria they will use when looking at an application for the demolition of a building within a conservation area.

To prepare the case a survey is being undertaken to ascertain the current condition of the building and what the likely cost of restoring the building fabric would be. More detailed plans of an end-use landscaping scheme are also being drawn up, incorporating the previous points raised by Todmorden Pride.

It is intended that this information will be presented to the Board at the next meeting (7th June) for agreement and endorsement, including Board approval to submit the planning application in Todmorden Pride's name.

Clare also informed the Board that English Heritage had also seen the building today, whilst in the area, and felt that it did not necessarily merit demolition and should perhaps be redeveloped as a café or similar, so as to make use of its prominent canal side setting. Although English Heritage would not normally be consulted on this application, they may request to see it due to the potential conflict with their offer of HERS grant money for this area (see 7.1).

Although resolution at previous meetings to pursue demolition, there was some further discussion on the merits or not of demolition and it was agreed that it was important to open up the whole wharf area. **Resolved to** therefore continue pursuit of demolition of the building and the development of a landscaped area; and to submit the planning and conservation area consent applications after Board approval of the landscaping scheme.

7. A.O.B.

7.1. HERS scheme. The Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme is grant funding from English Heritage for a target area within Todmorden conservation area (a map of the HERS boundary was shown to the Board). It was originally to be £100,000 in total to be spent over a 3 year period. Unfortunately various issues have meant that the majority of the funding from the first two years has not been able to be spent. As such this is the final year and there is £33,000 which must be spent this financial year. £5000 of this is to be spent on a 'conservation area character appraisal'. It is not known yet how this will be undertaken but it could involve local groups and societies.

Such an appraisal can then be used when planning applications are submitted to assist the planners as to what does or doesn't fit in with the 'character' of this particular conservation area. This is therefore also in line with previous board discussions about control in the conservation area.

The remaining £28,000 is for grant assistance to 'priority' buildings within the HERS boundary. Grant would be available to assist with enhancement, repair and restoration to roofing, windows and shop frontages, for example – in line with original features and the character of the conservation area.

These grants can be up to 60 or 70% of the cost of the works. The key priority buildings identified are 18 – 24 Rochdale Road and 37/39 Rochdale Road, as well as some buildings on Water Street.

The conservation team are currently awaiting approval from English Heritage for the priority buildings identified for this spend.

7.2 Patmos Update. An update was requested at a previous board meeting.

CMBC legal and Environment Agency legal departments are currently negotiating an agreement over design and construction of the required works.

In terms of costs it is likely that CMBC will be paying half, with the remainder funded by the Environment Agency, Highways Agency and the property owners.

7.3 The Association of Civic Societies are holding their meeting in Todmorden Town Hall this Saturday.

7.4 Todmorden Pride plaque. Anne informed the Board that town artist Alan Pergussey has designed a Todmorden Pride plaque for approval. Drawings of the plaque were distributed and it was agreed for any comments to be forwarded to Anne Holdsworth as soon as possible. The likely location is to be Fielden Wharf, but any other suggestions are welcome and should be forwarded to Anne.

8. Dates of future meetings

Amended dates provisionally approved but to be an agenda item at the next meeting as to whether to hold some future meetings on a Thursday instead of a Tuesday, subject to room availability.

Next Meeting to be Tuesday 7th June at 6.30pm.