

## **TODMORDEN PRIDE PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**Minutes of Meeting 30<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

**The Old Hall, Todmorden**

### **Attended by:**

James Gregory (Chair)  
Cllr John Ford (Leader of CMBC)  
Cllr Roger Taylor (Portfolio holder for regeneration)  
Cllr Michael Taylor  
Cllr Myra Townley  
Cllr Dorothy Jordan  
Janet Waggott  
Chris Edwards  
Mary Clear  
Jennifer Jackson  
Linda Young  
Kelsang Tsalden  
Alan Darwin  
David Storah  
Cynthia Murray  
Anne Lee  
Malcolm Birkett  
Gareth Brookes  
David Pitts (Todmorden News)  
Sheila Greenwood  
Jack Taylor  
Peter Cockcroft

### **In attendance:**

Hilary Brooke  
Adrian Rose  
Anne Holdsworth  
Clare Madders

### **Apologies:**

Cllr Clare Townley  
Ed Collins  
Cllr Margareta Holmstedt  
Francis Boocock  
Sheila Tordoff  
Chris McCafferty MP

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

The chair gave a special welcome to the Leader of Council – Cllr John Ford, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration – Cllr Roger Taylor and Director of Regeneration - Janet Waggott.

Everyone present also reintroduced themselves.

## **2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2004**

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

## **3. Matters Arising**

It was noted that there was an amendment to point 5 (at the last bullet point) of the PPG meeting notes (dated 30<sup>th</sup> September)– the name here is Martin Birkett not Malcolm Birkett (as had been shown on some of the distributed copies).

## **4. “Ringfencing” of funding for Todmorden**

Cllr Ford stated that the CMBC contribution to funding for the MTI scheme was from the sale of buildings in Todmorden. The selling of buildings in Todmorden released funds for the market and for Customer First.

This ringfencing ended with end of MTI scheme (31.3.04) and therefore sale of Hall Street and other buildings has not been part of this.

It was noted that the Town Council aspirations for the market were not realised and this was regretted.

Janet Waggott stated that MTI had only happened in Todmorden and therefore decision was made at that time to ringfence and thus a number of buildings were identified as being likely to be sold. Expenditure on some projects was higher than expected and conversely sale price of some buildings was more than anticipated. If sold a few years ago this higher value of buildings would not have been achieved.

It was noted that there was a feeling amongst the Board that CMBC has done well out of their investment (especially from the market – which generates £100k a year income for CMBC).

Cllr Ford informed the Board that a scrutiny report (from Yorkshire & Humber Assembly) noted that Todmorden had achieved a ‘much’ higher return than all the other MTI’s in Yorkshire and Humber and had attained match funding from a wide variety of other organisations including Metro and British Waterways. Todmorden was also ahead of other towns in terms of overall success.

Cllr Ford informed the meeting that CMBC has now put in 300k match funding for the whole of UCVR programme, to draw down Yorkshire Forward funding from the West Yorkshire Investment Plan. Projects from the UCVR vision document now need to be put forward for funding.

Concern was expressed that from next year there will be no one on YF board representing West Yorkshire, even though WY provides 50% of GDP economy in Yorkshire. It was noted that there had been applications from West Yorkshire to be on this board and it is wrong to exclude representation. The issue will be followed up.

The Chair acknowledged that other funds are now coming into the town, and thus the main issue now is to try and influence such development for the better.

Janet Waggott stated that the 10-fold return on investment in Todmorden is important and so is the track record of delivery.

Yorkshire Forward may be looking to help acquire sites in the area before the end of the financial year.

## **5. UCVR Update**

An update report, giving details of projects submitted for funding, was distributed (see appendix 1) and explained by Hilary.

The UCVR vision document is being used to help develop an Investment Plan with which to lever in finance. Key Projects have been identified and developed from the vision for each of the towns, as well as valley wide cross-cutting themes.

In brief:

Sowerby Bridge: Copley – Sowerby Bridge redevelopment

Mytholmroyd: Ted Hughes Centre

Hebden Bridge: New officer Ruth Hair now working here with local partnership – action planning in the first instance.

Todmorden & Walsden: focus is on three main areas, as discussed/agreed by Tod Pride Board – Canal Corridor (incl. Halifax Rd) and Bramsche Square in Todmorden and Hollins Mill/canal side area in Walsden.

UCVR Action Groups: resource assistance, in terms of an officer, being bid for to aid business planning and help further develop their ideas.

The Investment Plan will be submitted to Yorkshire Forward in December.

As mentioned, YF may be looking to acquire some sites this financial year, for future economic redevelopment.

The Todmorden and Walsden Action Plan needs to be aligned to the UCVR work and Investment Plan; as well as looking at resourcing funding from other sources, not just Yorkshire Forward. Consultation on this Action Plan will begin in January 2005.

## **6. Canal Corridor / Halifax Road Development**

Adrian Rose provided an overview:

- Already one scheme (Der Street site) with planning permission
- Other buildings within area are for sale
- Lidl wish to acquire a site
- A separate mixed-use scheme is currently in for planning permission.

The above scheme is likely to be recommended for refusal by planning officers, to try and keep for employment use, but the decision will be by the planning committee. If the committee does turn down this application this sends a much stronger message to developers that the Council is serious re maintaining employment use for the whole area. Refusal is also in line with UDP allocation.

It was noted that the Esso garage on Halifax Road is now also likely to be up for sale next year.

The main issue is that where businesses have closed the owners of those premises will get more value for their land if they can sell for residential development. Existing business can also see the potential value of their land for housing. If this whole area is lost for business use there is nowhere else in Todmorden for businesses to locate, except small site at Salford.

This area is also allocated for employment use in the UDP, and so there is a strong argument to refuse both current planning applications, but there also needs to be evidence of business demand because Government policy on brownfield is to allow housing if derelict. Therefore it needs to be shown that there are enough companies around who want to re-locate to that area.

CMBC's Economic Development Manager has been to see a number of businesses to see if they have a serious interest in wanting to develop the land for business use. This has resulted in 6 businesses expressing a strong interest; most of who want to build premises to their own specification.

Next step is to therefore progress a planning application to counter the two current applications on the site and also to negotiate (possibly CPO) with current owners of the site to sell to CMBC for employment use.

The Investment Plan bid also includes proposal to buy the two currently available properties in the area, and again this may require CPO.

Adrian stated that a design brief would be prepared for the site to achieve the quality of development required on this important gateway. This brief would ensure that even if different developers constructed buildings, some consistent design principles could be applied.

Questions were raised as to practicality and implementation, not to the principle of keeping as employment land, and whether YF would be equally supportive (in financial terms) in future years to buy the other two buildings/sites.

It was noted that private sector investment, jobs and development of brownfield sites are all areas that YF are interested in, so if they can be shown this then it is a good case for their investment. Additionally, as long as they receive outputs, the money spent can be higher than what receive back if put on market again.

It was agreed that it is important to retain current viable businesses but also to provide scope for new businesses.

It was commented that some of the current sites have been advertised for some time but with no apparent interest. This is because the existing buildings are not suitable for modern business/industry use.

Noted that the Town Council are fully supportive of this remaining an employment area and being redeveloped as a whole.

Adrian added that there is always an element of risk but feel there is enough evidence/interest from companies to pursue this course of action now. 6 firms have been shown/told costs etc and are definitely interested.

Agreed by the board to be fully supportive and for CMBC to move forward with due speed.

#### Bus Garage –

There is also the issue of the bus garage, which is not necessarily an easy use to accommodate. Their current building not suitable for their new buses, so they may consider relocating maintenance and running of buses to Halifax and Oldham if alternative can not be found close by; which could adversely impact on frequency of buses. They cannot accommodate their needs on this Halifax Road site.

It was suggested that perhaps the bus garage could go on the Salford site, but this is too small, as they need 1 acre.

Agreed by board to do all can to help them to stay in Todmorden.

### **7. MTI review and future planning for Todmorden**

Final draft of review document was distributed at the meeting and was asked for any final amendments/comments to be sent to Clare by 10.12.04.

### **8. AOB**

Anne informed the Board that currently an exhibition in TIC and Library showing results from consultation on town artist project. First piece of work will be a projection on to a building, which has been worked on with Todmorden students. There is also a joint project with Todmorden in Bloom at Fielden Wharf, which will see fish planters on the Gabian Wall. Mock up is currently being made.

The Chair stated that he understood the new railings outside St Mary's had been agreed to be green. Also noted that some members had seen rust on the new railings. Clare to check on this with CMBC engineers.

Noted that a working group of the Town Council had been set up to look at the future of the Town Hall. This had so far resulted in the following comments and ideas:

- Town Hall an amenity so there is no reason why should be self-supporting, although need best value.
- Meeting space too much in Town Hall therefore would like to see it subsidised. Town Council already does this for some group meetings.
- Listed Building, therefore are restraints.
- Ballroom – don't want to lose this facility it must remain a public room.
- Registrars (as now), TIC, Town Clerks, Voluntary Organisations to be housed there
- open a café.
- utilise the basement.
- heritage centre/museum.
- small conference centre.
- film club.
- music recitals.

- create a Todmorden Arts Trust (to draw in funds)

The working group will be exploring these ideas further and will be meeting soon with English Heritage.

**9. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

Addendum: next meeting to now be 1<sup>st</sup> March 2005.