

# Todmorden Town Centre Development Board

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014

## Attendees:-

Councillor B Collins (Chair)	Claire Butler ( <i>Project Manager, Corporate Projects</i> )
Councillor J Battye	Joanne Gott ( <i>Programme Manager, Corporate Projects</i> )
Councillor J Booth	Ian Gray ( <i>Director – Economy &amp; Environment</i> )
Councillor D O’Neill	Andrew Pitts ( <i>Head of Neighbourhoods</i> )
Councillor S Press	Robin Tuddenham ( <i>Director for Communities</i> )
Councillor J Rez	
Councillor S Sweeney	

## Apologies:-

Councillor M Hatfield, Councillor A Hartley

## Welcome and Introductions

It was noted that there had been some changes to Board membership following the recent elections, and Councillor Press and Councillor Rez were welcomed to the Board (replacing Councillor Ruth Goldthorpe and Councillor Andrew Hartley respectively). As a consequence, it was noted that a new Deputy Chair was required and after discussion Councillor O’Neill was nominated to the position.

**Action : CB to update and circulate Board TORs.**

Cllr O’Neill advised that the Todmorden Development Board page on Calderdale Council’s website was out of date and needed to be updated.

**Action : CB to update Board webpage.**

## Agreement of minutes – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014

Agreed.

## Matters Arising

### Hope Street

IG reported that the Clean & Green clean-up has been completed but that the area now needs an overall tidy and grass cutting. **Action : IG to follow up.**

### Todmorden Market Futures

The Chair reported that the indoor and outdoor market traders have set up a group which has met twice to start to look at options and also activities for the Tour de France. It was agreed that it was important for the group to be representative of all parties. It was suggested that the group would probably need officer support.

**Action : Officers (JG/CB) to obtain details for the market trader group and to liaise and provide support from the Corporate Projects and Communities teams as required.**

## Town Centre Development Options

As agreed at the last meeting, CB explained that she had put together a series of slides (which had been circulated prior to the meeting) incorporating various images and statements which it was hoped would help to focus discussion around the Board’s vision for the town centre [*a copy of the slides is attached below*].



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The Board considered the slides and made the following points:

- The town centre ideally needs a mix of independent as well as high street stores
- Todmorden is a good market town, locally-focussed. Suggested that if there were more for families to do this could act as a draw
- Some members felt that town centre development should be retail- and commerce-focussed, rather than residential
- The town should be focusing on the people who live in Todmorden plus attractions for tourism. This is a good, safe, beautiful place to live, well connected and with lots of growth potential. Tourism is important, but should not be allowed to detract from this focus. Consensus that it is important to maintain the individual character of the town and agreed that any development should avoid Todmorden feeling and looking “just like everywhere else”
- Important to deal with derelict sites and fill in the gaps as urgently as is practicable
- Any development in the town centre needs to take account of the market focus
- Todmorden should be seen as a service centre, with key services based in the town
- Development of the town centre needs to be linked to Calderdale’s core strategy.

Following on from this, the Board also discussed and identified a number of key development opportunities:

- Tourism
  - Opportunities created through the extension of the East Lancashire railway line to Todmorden.
  - Could make more of the “Todmorden Triangle” as a tourist attraction (i.e. the place where 3 railway lines and 3 valleys meet)
  - Tourist offer could be linked to “Welcome to Yorkshire”.
  - Cllr Booth suggested it would be a good idea to have a “Welcome to Todmorden” stall as part of the Tour de France activities, which could provide information about what’s on in Todmorden and also invite people to sign up to a mailing list.
  - It was agreed that strong and iconic images are needed to promote Todmorden. The images used should be distinctive images that are unique to Todmorden, for example the Town Hall, Stoodley Pike and the Bridestones.
- Self-supporting community
  - Incredible Edible is part of this, but goes much wider. Thriving U3A, Todmorden In Bloom, Tod Agricultural Show, and many other local traders and community groups. It was noted that the Central Methodist Church is used for a number of community events in the town centre.
- Outdoor sport and leisure activities
  - Beautiful countryside walks and facilities for cycling and mountain biking, geology trail, Mary Towneley Loop, cycle cross and triathlon.
  - Suggested that Todmorden could be marketed as an unspoilt hidden gem, offering “a better way to live”.
  - It was acknowledged that if the intent is to attract a greater number of tourists, there would need to be more accommodation provision within the town to support this.
- Arts and culture
  - Todmorden has a thriving arts and music scene, with open studios, a vibrant theatre, orchestra, choral society, brass band and other music events.

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- Historic centre
  - Fielden Centre / Society, iconic buildings.

CB advised that she had also reviewed the available development options for the town centre and presented four main options for the Board to consider:

1. Adopt a developer-led scheme
2. Create a new development brief and procure a development partner to deliver
3. Create a coordinated programme of works around a number of identified standalone projects
4. Do nothing

It was noted that a developer-led scheme would be self-funding, but would leave the Board with little control over the final development outcomes. This would be addressed by option 2 (developing a revised brief) which gives the opportunity to revitalize the ambition for the Development Board, although it was acknowledged that this would involve the time and cost of a full procurement process. It was also acknowledged that there had been a poor market response to the previous tender process. Option 3 (to develop a coordinated programme of standalone projects) was felt to offer a better solution, by giving the Board greater control over which projects were brought forward and in which order of priority. It was unanimously agreed that option 4 (do nothing) is not an option. This will not address existing building condition issues and does not reflect the Board's ambitions for Todmorden.

After consideration of the 4 options, the Board confirmed Option 3 (to develop a coordinated programme of standalone projects) as their preferred option.

There was a further discussion around the projects that would need to be included within Option 3. As a priority, it was agreed these should include the derelict sites at Hope Street, the former health centre site (Rose Street) and Albert Royds Street. The Board also expressed interest in pursuing the extra care accommodation option that had been presented to the April Board meeting.

It was suggested that officers should also speak to Todmorden Pride with regard to the Hope Street site.

**Actions :**

**Officers (JG/CB) to draw up a list of standalone project options for the Board to consider**

**Officers (CB) to get an update with regard to the planning application for the Cinderhill Mill site, Halifax Road**

**Officers (JG/CB) to check the legal position for the Rose Street site**

**Officers (JG/IG) to speak to Todmorden Pride with regard to the Hope Street site**

**Water Street pedestrianisation – update**

CB reported that the temporary closure for the Tour de France events had been arranged. The Board thanked the officers involved for this good news.

CB advised that there would be a cost of up to £20,000 to progress the permanent road closure which had been discussed at the previous meeting and asked the Board for direction. The Board confirmed that officers should progress the permanent closure of the whole of Water Street and request Cabinet approval for the costs.

**Action: Officers (CB) to confirm costs and request Cabinet approval.**

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## **Town Hall – update**

AP provided the following updates:

- The lift installation works are planned to take place during August. Final costs have come in below budget, which is excellent news.
- A meeting is being held next week to finalise the HLF bid application, which will then be circulated to the Board for approval. Feedback on the bid is expected to be received within 8 weeks of submission.

### **Action : AP to issue HLF bid application to Board for approval**

- Incredible Edible are putting on a series of children's events and running a café in the Town Hall as part of the Tour de France events programme.
- 10,000 new marketing leaflets have been printed and distributed to the Tourist Information Centre. The Town Hall webpage on the Calderdale Council website is being refreshed and updated.
- WREN funding has been secured towards essential maintenance work on the Town Hall statues and windows. The works are currently out to tender. A communications plan will be put in place for the works, which will require temporary scaffolding to be erected.

## **AOB**

The Chair suggested that Todmorden Community College should be included as one of the standalone projects. The Board agreed, and it was further suggested that options should be considered as to how to use surplus space within the College.

**Action : Officers (CB) to incorporate Todmorden Community College within the options for standalone projects**

## **Date of next meeting:-**

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014, 5-7pm Committee Room A, Todmorden Town Hall