

Todmorden Town Centre Development Board

4th September 2014

Attendees:-

Councillor J Booth (Chair) Claire Butler (*Project Manager, Corporate Projects*)
Councillor J Battye Joanne Gott (*Programme Manager, Corporate Projects*)
Councillor M Hatfield Ian Gray (*Director – Economy & Environment*)
Councillor D O’Neill Robin Tuddenham (*Director for Communities*)
Councillor S Press
Councillor J Rez
Councillor M Thompson

Apologies:-

Councillor Caffrey, Councillor Sweeney, Andrew Pitts

Governance

1. Development Board

Board membership

CB advised that there had been some further changes to Board membership following the Cabinet meeting held on 18th August. Councillor Battye, Councillor Caffrey and Councillor Thompson were welcomed to the Board (replacing Councillor Collins and Councillor Miles). It was confirmed that Councillor Sweeney remains a Board member in his capacity as a Todmorden Ward Councillor.

Election of Chair

It was noted that a new Chair was to be elected. It was clarified that there was nothing within the terms of governance for the Board that required the Chair to be a Cabinet member : as such it was open for the Board to make nominations. There were 2 nominations and, following a vote, Councillor Booth was elected Chair by a majority of 4:3.

Terms of Reference

Updated Terms of Reference had been circulated prior to the meeting. After due consideration, the Board approved the Terms of Reference.

Action: CB to arrange for the Todmorden Development Board webpage to be updated.

2. Town Hall Working Group

The current membership was reviewed and confirmed with no changes proposed. The Town Hall Working Group therefore comprises:

Councillor Booth, Councillor Press and Councillor Rez (Todmorden Development Board representatives); Cynthia Murray (TIC), Peter Cockcroft (Todmorden Pride) and Darren Midgeley (Todmorden Civic Society)

Agreement of minutes – 22nd July 2014

Agreed.

Matters Arising

None (all actions covered by main agenda items).

Project Updates

1. Rose Street

Officers reported that they had met with a developer to discuss their interest in the Rose Street site. An offer had been made and an outline sketch submitted for the Board to consider. Officers advised that the Board had the option of instructing an independent valuation of the site, which would cost

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£1,200.

After discussion, the Board concluded that they were unable to accept the offer in principle without further information and discussion. The Board therefore asked officers to liaise with the developer and bring back more detailed proposals to the next meeting.

Action: Officers to seek updated proposals

The Board further agreed to instruct an independent valuation of the site, with the advised cost to be met from the Development Board's budget.

Action: Officers to commission independent valuation of the site

2. Todmorden Town Hall

Officers had been progressing the actions identified at the Development Board meeting held on 22nd July 2014, and explained that they had been looking at possible options for locating certain CMBC and Town Council services within the Town Hall.

A brief feasibility exercise had been carried out which had identified space within the Town Hall for approx. 9 workstations. It was acknowledged that there would need to be full consultation with staff and the Town Council before progressing any relocation proposals. It was also noted that any proposals related to the Town Hall would need to be developed in conjunction with the Conservation Officer. Further discussions were needed to determine if there were any services which it would be appropriate (and feasible) to locate within the Library.

Cllr Booth highlighted that a number of staff and services are currently located within Todmorden College, and asked if it would deliver value for money to move services from the College. IG explained that Todmorden College is one of the four most costly buildings for the Council to maintain and operate, and does not currently offer best value for money.

Cllr O'Neill advised that the Town Council has reservations about moving staff into the Town Hall, where they may be isolated and be required to support building custodian duties. If any relocation proposals were to be taken forward, the Town Council would prefer to have CMBC staff areas set up and running first, to make sure that there are appropriate building management protocols in place.

Councillor Battye expressed concerns that the proposals would further limit space within the Town Hall, and raised concerns about ensuring DDA compliant access throughout the building. The Board agreed that any proposals for the Town Hall need to be well planned, achievable and linked to the overall vision for the building acknowledging the constraints and DDA compliance where practicable.

Action: Town Hall Working Group to confirm their vision for the Town Hall and review DDA compliance with CMBC's Disability Liaison Officer

Action: Officers (CB/JG) to develop a phase plan for the Town Hall to achieve the vision for the building

Councillor Rez asked if there was any update on the Heritage Lottery bid for the Town Hall. RT advised that there had been no feedback to date.

3. Water Street pedestrianisation

Officers advised that a number of questions needed to be resolved before the pedestrianisation / road closure scheme could be progressed, including:

- Preliminary consultation to determine access requirements
- Surveys of existing traffic movements and volumes (including pedestrian and parking

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movements throughout the area)

- Assessment of the impact of revised access arrangements upon the surrounding road network
- Cost estimates for any associated works (e.g. signage, streetscape enhancements)

Officers therefore recommended an initial traffic study to address these questions, and to help to confirm the scope (and cost) of the formal closure process. It was noted that the initial traffic survey would take approx. 1 month to complete following the allocation of staff resource, and would cost £5,000 (max.).

Councillor Rez pointed out that a traffic survey had been carried out a couple of years ago and asked if this survey information could be used instead. Officers agreed to check with Highways colleagues.

Action: Officers to check if existing survey information is still valid

If it was found that the existing survey information could not be used, the Board agreed to instruct the initial traffic survey, with the advised cost to be met from the Development Board's budget.

Action: Subject to checking the validity of existing survey information, officers to instruct the initial traffic survey

4. Todmorden Markets

Officers reported that the market traders group had met on 2nd September. Key points from the meeting were:

- The trader group have established a committee and are reviewing a number of options jointly between the indoor and outdoor traders
- The trader group are keen to work with other local organisations, including the Todmorden Development Board
- Officers are arranging for the group to meet with the new Cabinet members and are providing support to the group with communications (e.g. a regular traders newsletter)

The Board thanked officers for the update, and were impressed with the progress reported. It was suggested that a representative from the group be invited to attend a future Board meeting, at an appropriate time, to talk to Board members about their plans

Action: Officers to invite a representative from the market traders group to attend a future Board meeting

5. Other updates

Officers reported that the Cinderhill Mill planning application is still progressing, however there are a number of site issues still to be worked through. ASDA are continuing to progress the discharge of planning conditions for the former Ormerod site as well as finalising technical details regarding the site and internal store layout.

Members of the Board noted there had been a lot of activity on the Cinderhill Mill and Ormerod site, but raised concerns about site security.

Action: Officers to raise site security concerns with the respective applicants

Officers reported that planners are in discussions with the owners of the Hope Street site regarding tidying up the site. It was noted that some fencing repairs had been carried out, however the Board were very disappointed that there had been no further improvement to the appearance of the site and asked what enforcement action the Council could take. IG advised that planners could take action under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, but this meant that the

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Council would need to fund the improvement works itself and then seek to recover the costs from the landowner. This is likely to prove costly and time consuming. After discussion, the Board agreed that tidying up the site was a priority and asked officers to take action to progress this swiftly.

Action: Officers to progress improving the appearance of the Hope Street site

Centre Vale Park

Officers provided the following updates:

- Planned Environment Agency works had been postponed until after the local agricultural show and the Tour de France, however the EA are hoping to start on site before the end of 2014, weather permitting. RT confirmed that the EA works would not affect the WWI event which will be taking place in October around the War Memorial.
- Officers are continuing to develop the HLF bid for the Park. The bid is to be submitted in February, with a decision due in May 2015. It was noted that this is a new funding stream. There had been 100 responses to consultation for the plans, showing that this is a very popular park. The only concerns raised related to anti-social behaviour and flood drainage. The final draft of the bid would be reviewed by the stakeholder group, and it was suggested that a representative from the Board should be invited to join the stakeholder group. After discussion, the Board nominated Councillor Thompson.
- Councillor Rez asked if there was any update regarding the bid for the skate park. RT advised that legal documents needed to be finalised before the bid could be submitted. It was confirmed that this is separate to the HLF bid. In light of the number of different bids that are being developed for the Todmorden area, the Board requested a status update for all of the current funding applications.

Action: Officers (AP) to produce a status update on all current Todmorden funding bids for the Board meeting on 14th October

Flood improvement works (Environment Agency)

Officers provided an update of the Environment Agency works completed and planned for 2014-15. These included:

- Todmorden flood alleviation scheme phase 3, which provides protection to 558 properties, completed in 2013/14
- Flood warning improvements implemented beginning July 2014
- Works in Centre Vale Park scheduled to commence before the end 2014
- Flood Risk Reduction Scheme (FRRS) phase 1 works programmed for 2014/15, with initial schemes planned for Shop Lock and Bacup Road.
- FRRS phase 1 is a £3m programme which is being funded by DEFRA's Flood Defence Grant in Aid, local levy and matched with CMBC funds. The programme will be delivered by the EA in partnership with CMBC, and will protect over 400 residential properties, around 150 businesses, transport routes and critical infrastructure. Works are due to commence winter 2014
- The Community Resilience pathfinder, which is also being rolled out, aims to increase the preparedness and resilience of local communities, involving local flood groups such as those in Todmorden, Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd

Councillor Press added that the Environment Agency are also working with local communities to get additional local information to inform the FRRS programme. For example, following a recent meeting with a resident of Little Holme Street the EA are looking at a number of points of concern in this area.

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IG noted that this is the start of a wider programme of flood improvement works, which will be £40m investment in total. Network Rail are engaged with this wider programme and are carrying out a catchment study with the Environment Agency and CMBC to look at problem areas. The Board noted that the joined up approach was good to see and should make the programme more effective overall.

It was suggested that it would be worth inviting the Environment Agency to attend a future meeting to talk through the detail of their planned schemes. Cllr Thompson advised that it would be best to do this once the EA have completed their hydrological surveys etc. and are at the optioneering stage.

Action: Officers to invite the EA to attend a future Board meeting to discuss the detail of the FRRS programme

AOB

None.

Date of next meeting:-

Tuesday 14th October 2014, 5 - 7pm Committee Room A, Todmorden Town Hall.