

Town Development Boards - Progress and Future Direction

Joint report of the Director, Economy & Environment and the Acting Director, Communities & Service Support

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 In 2013 Cabinet agreed to establish a Town Board in Todmorden in order to coordinate regeneration activity in the town by developing a clear strategic vision, and then to deliver key projects to support the identified objectives.
- 1.2 This approach achieved some success and so, in November 2015, Cabinet resolved to establish further Development Boards in all the main towns in the Borough.
- 1.3 Since the report to Cabinet in November 2015, a significant amount of work has been carried out to progress the Town Development Board initiative.
- 1.4 Therefore, this report sets out:
 - (a) the current status and priorities of each of the six Boards and their activities over the last nine months;
 - (b) Board membership, showing how this brings together elected Members and local business and community representatives;
 - (c) the budgets available to each Board and what they have currently spent or committed;
 - (d) the decision-making processes and delegated responsibility of the Boards;
 - (e) the lead officer and support arrangements currently in place for each of the Boards

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 Development Boards are a key element of the Council's commitment to locally-driven regeneration, underpinned by the support of public, private and voluntary sector organisations and recognising the distinctiveness of each of the main towns and neighbourhoods which make up the Borough of Calderdale.
- 2.2 It is important that Members are updated and continue to endorse this approach.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended:

3.1 That members note and comment upon:

- Progress generally to date
- The potential for cross fertilisation of ideas and activities amongst Boards
- The finance available for further works and the need to encourage deployment of funds

3.2 That Boards be asked to consider funding of any additional local activity to increase footfall and activity prior to Christmas.

4. Background

- 4.1 A number of developments in the wider economy, regeneration agenda and in community involvement / civic society have combined to put a renewed spotlight on the best means to take forward regeneration activity and involve community organisations in service delivery in Calderdale's principal town centres.

Calderdale has always had an ambition to improve its town centres and has achieved success in many respects, but there has not always been a consistent and coherent mechanism to involve all interested parties.

In 2013, a pilot project in Todmorden saw the establishment of a Town Development Board which continues to make good progress, bringing a strong local voice to regeneration activity, asset management, community involvement and deployment of funds. The model was seen to be sufficiently robust to merit roll out in Calderdale's other principal town centres.

- 4.2 The main focus of the Boards has been around:

- Place-shaping and developing shared visions for town centre and local neighbourhoods.
- Consideration of asset management issues including the decommissioning of buildings which come to the end of their useful life and the planning of new facilities for the delivery of public services in support of a 'community hub' type approach.
- The greater involvement of local community organisations in public service delivery.
- Improvements to the public realm, street furniture and the wider environment.
- Consideration of traffic management and road safety issues.
- The planning of events and promotional campaigns in town centres.
- The improvement and management of local markets.
- The involvement of local people in planning and shaping their future.
- The development of community capacity to deliver future regeneration and community aspirations.

- 4.3 Progress from July 2016 is detailed below, across each of the Town Boards:

- Todmorden Development Board
- Sowerby Bridge Development Board
- Elland Town Centre Development Board
- Halifax Town Board
- Brighouse Development Board
- Hebden Bridge & Mytholmroyd Town Development Board

Todmorden Development Board - Officer Lead: Robin Tuddenham

The Board continues to meet bi-monthly with representation from local business and community groups. Members of the public regularly attend the meeting and are able to comment on specific issues where appropriate.

The Board have been consulted on proposed station access improvements via highways strategy officers and representatives from Network Rail. Plans to pedestrianize Water Street considered by the Board in previous years, will now not be followed through as consultation revealed that this was not strongly supported by local businesses and residents.

A specific focus on the board has been the future of Todmorden College and the Rose Street/Bramche Square area. Following direction from the Board, officers have created a Development Brief for the Rose Street site which was then used to facilitate a soft market testing exercise. This exercise was co-ordinated by officers in conjunction with a prominent regional agent to ascertain market interest in investment and redevelopment of the area. The Board recently agreed to commission a masterplan and redevelopment proposition for the site. With some frustration over limited private sector appetite for development at Rose Street, there is currently interest in a public sector led development.

The Board held a special meeting to consider the future of the Todmorden College building following the approval in principle of site disposal. A community interest group is currently developing a business case for an alternative proposal which the Board and Council will consider in due course.

The Todmorden Town Hall is also a key area of focus for the Todmorden Board. £121k was recently identified to fund improvements to the main hall, including acoustic work and redecoration, bringing the area back to its original colour scheme.

Finally, the Board has agreed to fund a 'diagnostics visit' from the Academy of Urbanism in order to help identify strengths and threats to the Town and to develop a wider, shared vision for the work of the Board.

Sowerby Bridge Development Board - Officer Lead:- Paul Butcher

The Sowerby Bridge Development Board has now held four meetings. The Board has established three sub-groups to take forward three key priorities:-

Old Cawsey: developing a new Town Square;

Budget has been assigned to enable the Highways team to carry out interim re-surfacing and produce a plan for short/medium run use of the site (parking/events). Following this work, the board will consider options regarding the long term future of the site and expects to commission concept definition/design option work from the market.

Transportation: looking at ways to ease congestion and support investment;

Officers are gathering local views/evidence in preparation for future bids to West Yorkshire Combined Authority for transport improvements within the area.

Vision: - to establish how a definite place identity and community can come together.

Priorities identified by this group include: improved signage/way finding and the creation of a stronger local identity/place. The Board have requested that tourism and retail focused Officers consult the group to better scope this work. This will enable detailed proposals to be submitted to later Board meetings.

Sub-groups for the above priorities are currently led and organised by Board members.

The Board has taken two decisions as regards spend against their budget. Firstly; they have awarded £23k to the 'Fire & Water' group to support building and roofing works at the old fire station site. Secondly; they have voted to allow up to £5k to be spent via CMBC Highways team on short term works to improve the surface of the Old Cawsey site and plan out, at a basic level, how it may be possible to mark off some public space whilst maintaining the majority of car parking.

Further work plan items include: installing new signs and public information points, improving public space adjacent to Town Hall Street, improving Christmas lighting displays and working to encourage Friends Groups at Copley Valley.

Elland Town Centre Development Board - Officer Lead:- Andrew Pitts

The Board held its first meeting on the 5th of July and now meets bi-monthly. It has established a small working group to coordinate a year of celebratory activity to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the awarding of a Royal Charter to the town.

Board members were actively involved in the reopening of Elland Bridge and an updated Heritage Trail booklet has been produced, with future plans including a concert at Brooksbank School, cycling activity for local schools (culminating in 700 laps of the track at Brooksbank) and a 'picnic in the park' during summer.

The other main focus of activity has been the site of the former swimming pool, where a licence has been obtained from the Council to carry out landscaping works, including benches, planters and the re-siting of the Boer War Memorial. The Board has been examining ways to brighten up the public realm with a bulb-planting scheme about to start around key gateways to the town, and a project to pedestrianize part of Southgate is being investigated as a key component in the vision of a vibrant town centre built around events, markets and independent businesses.

The Board has taken a keen interest in the Council's asset review process and the initial results for Elland are due to be reported back to the Board in June.

Halifax Town Board - Officer Lead:- Mark Thompson

Elected Members have been working through a significant number of applications from the business and community sector for involvement in the Board. To ensure maximum opportunity was given to the community to be involved in the Board, two recruitment rounds have been held. Representatives have now been selected and the first full meeting will be held shortly.

Members have given some consideration to their priorities for the forthcoming year and have considered how the Town Board fits with the newly established Halifax Business Improvement District (BID), who are represented on the Board by the BID Manager. The full agenda programme will be finalised once the Board is quorate.

Brighouse Development Board - Officer Lead:- Steven Lee

The Membership of the Brighouse Board is now finalised. The first meeting was held on the 21st of March which agreed the terms of reference including Board objectives.

Presentations were provided to the Board by the Council's Corporate Projects team regarding the Clifton Enterprise Zone, Halifax Business Improvement District (BID) and West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund (A641). The Board considered the benefits of the Halifax BID and whether this model can be applied to Brighouse.

In future, the Board is in a good position to provide feedback and a forum for shaping / consultation on the projects described above within the context of the Council's wider strategic aspirations for South East Calderdale. In common with the other Boards there is also a local budget available for deployment and an opportunity for joint working with the local entrepreneurs who have undertaken a vigorous programme of highly successful local events in recent times.

Hebden Bridge & Mytholmroyd Town Development Board - Officer Lead:- Robin Tuddenham

The Hebden Bridge & Mytholmroyd Town Development Board held its first meeting in January of this year. In addition to Elected Members, the Board also contains representatives from the Hebden Bridge Partnership, Hebden Bridge Community Association and Royd Regeneration.

The Board have agreed terms of reference and have begun to select key priorities for the forthcoming year.

5. Festive Funding

- 5.1 In recent years, wards have received a small allocation of funding from EIP to deliver additional activity at Christmas designed to stimulate increased trade and footfall. Appendix 3 details the historic allocations which total £41k.
- 5.2 Resource to continue this mode of funding is now very limited so it is suggested that Town Boards be requested to fund this activity if they wish to see it continue. This would allow more flexible deployment of funds according to local priorities.

6. Organisational and Capacity Issues

- 6.1 The instigation of the new Boards, most of which meet the evening, has put a considerable additional servicing requirement on a stretched and diminishing Officer corps. This can be mitigated by careful planning, flexible use of staff and good advance programming of meetings and agenda items. Board members and Chairs in particular are asked for their thoughts and co-operation on this score. A separate

item on this agenda is also linked to securing some additional capacity to assist with effective meetings and follow up action.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no new financial implications from this report and the current position regarding budget and spend for each of the Town Boards is set out in the table below:

Town Board	Budget Assignment (£000's)	Total Spend to Date (£000's)	Budget Remaining (£000's)
Brighouse	123	0	123
Elland	123	12	111
Halifax	123	0	123
Hebden Bridge	45	0	45
Sowerby Bridge	123	35	88
Todmorden	123	121	2
	660	168	492

- 7.2 The lower budget assignment for Hebden Bridge reflected a sister allocation for relocation of the Hebden Bridge market.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 It is important that the Boards have clear and transparent governance arrangements, including decision-making and budget allocation. These are set out in the terms of reference of each Board.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 Boards provide a valuable new mechanism for local consultation and involvement.

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

- 10.1 Boards are well placed to consider how town centres facilitate achievement of wider goals such as air pollution reduction, active travel and development of Calderdale's visitor and retail offers.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 Boards can consider subjects as such as disabled access to town centres, and use of town centres by different ethnic or other groups. It would be helpful for Boards to think about issues like this when considering Board membership.

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 Town Boards around Calderdale are at different stages of development but all are up and running or on the cusp of first full meeting. Some interesting initial deployment of funds has commenced, a total resource of some £500k remains available for deployment as illustrated at Paragraph 7.1.

For further information on this report, contact:

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The documents used in the preparation of this report are:

N/a

The documents are available for inspection at:

Appendix 1

Current Board Membership:-			
Todmorden Development Board	Councillor Susan Press (Chair) Councillor Steph Booth (Deputy Chair) Councillor Steve Sweeney Councillor Jayne Booth Councillor Andrew Hollis Councillor Christine Potter Councillor Barry Collins Councillor Dave Young Simon Brearley Pam Warhurst Cynthia Murray Jayne Shackleton	Sowerby Bridge Development Board	Councillor Barry Collins Councillor Dot Foster Councillor Michael Payne Councillor Adam Wilkinson Andrea Karabel Angela Keenan Bob Galtry Chris Hasling Isolde Davey Lauren Brundell Phil Hawdon Sam Irvine Sarah Fanthorpe
Elland Town Centre Development Board	Councillor John Ford (Chair) Councillor Barry Collins Councillor Susan Press Councillor Angie Gallagher Councillor Patricia Allen Councillor Chris Pearson David Wilkinson Joe Braithwaite Brain Mansfield Janette Pearce David Hardy Helen Moles Raj Beadle Jayne Spencer James / Luke Smith Gary Scott	Halifax Town Board	Councillor Tim Swift (Chair) Councillor Andrew Tagg Councillor Barry Collins Councillor Bob Metcalfe Councillor Megan Swift Councillor Stephen Baines
Hebden Bridge & Mytholmroyd Town Development Board	Councillors J Scullion Councillor B Collins Councillor S Press Councillor D Young Councillor A Miles Councillor C Stow Andrew Bibby Anthony Rae Austen Warne Iain Bairstow	Brighouse Development Board	Councillor Scott Benton Councillor Howard Blagbrough Councillor Colin Peel Councillor Barry Collins Councillor Susan Press Councillor David Kirton Councillor Christine Beal Anne Colley Lesley Adams Malcolm Silkstone Richard Mitchell

Appendix 2 - Decision Making Process for Development Board Funding

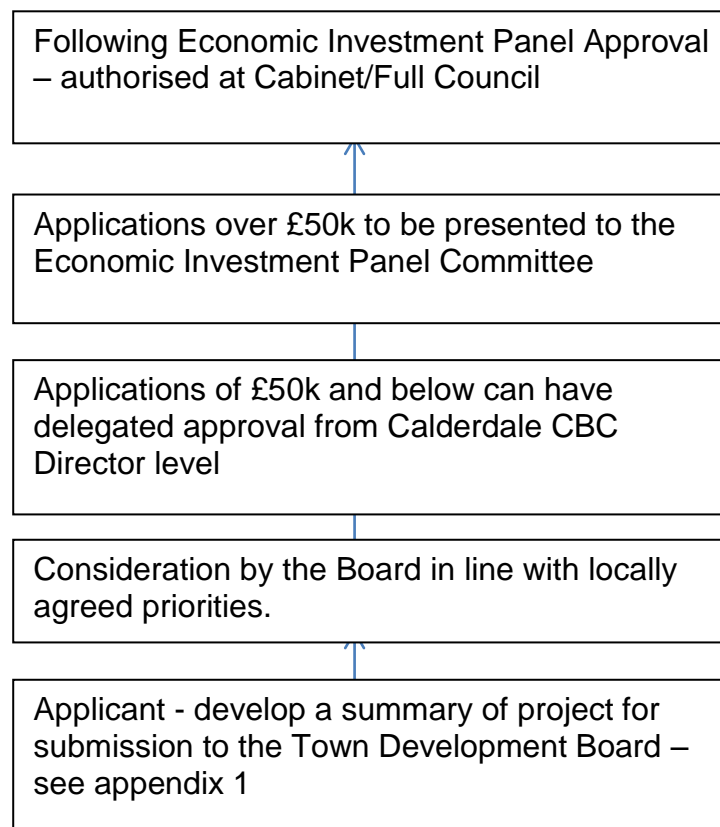
In order for the Town Development Boards to be successful the following guiding principles should be followed.

- What? – The Board would agree and establish priorities and have these clearly defined and documented.
- Agree whether the priorities have other governance structures and therefore, is the Town Development Board an influencer in the decision or a 'driving force'?
- Who? – The Board is an overarching body, created in order to effect change; specific sub groups are effective in developing action plans under the priority headings.
- When? – Agree a clear timescale for reporting back to the Board in relation to decisions - this would ensure activity is communicated appropriately and complementary to other schemes in the locality.

Funding

- Town Development Board had some limited resources but that funding for large scale projects needs to be sought separately. The Boards can provide vital catalyst funding for projects but should not be regarded as the main funding body for projects.
- Large scale activity, for example flood resilience works need to be linked into other local planning activity.
- All Town Development Boards are evolving and there could be many ideas and projects, but it was important to focus on a small number of key initiatives and outputs.

Decision Making Process



Appendix 3

CMBC Festive Fund

Over the past 4 years the Economic Investment Fund has been used to fund 17 wards for activity which brings economic growth to a place during the festive season. The funding for this activity is now no longer available and with the establishment of the Town Boards the following proposal has been suggested.

The 6 Town Boards are asked to consider continuing with the fund from within their resources which allows Community / Business groups to present proposals which can enhance any festive activity which will encourage shopping local and links to local businesses.

Below a table shows which wards were historically allocated a budget, and proposed alignment to one of the 6 Town Boards. Through the Board funding they would decide the process, any impact measures and the marketing process to advertise the fund and attract local applications.

Past Award Values:

WARD	Amount	Town Board	Proposed value
Brighouse	£5,000	Brighouse	
Rastrick	£1,000	Brighouse	
Hipperholme & Lightcliffe	£1,000	Brighouse	
Northowram & Shelf	£1,000	Brighouse	
			£8,000
Elland	£5,000	Elland	
Greetland & Stainland	£1,000	Elland	
			£6,000
Sowerby Bridge	£5,000	Sowerby Bridge	
Ryburn	£1,000	Sowerby Bridge	
			£6,000
Town	£5,000	Halifax	
Ovenden	£1,000	Halifax	
Park Ward	£1,000	Halifax	
Illingworth & Mixenden	£1,000	Halifax	
Skircoat	£1,000	Halifax	
Warley	£1,000	Halifax	
			10,000
Calder	£5,000	Hebden Bridge	
Luddendenfoot	£1,000	Hebden bridge	
			£6,000
Todmorden	£5,000	Todmorden	
			£5,000

The kinds of projects that traditional have been delivered using the funds fall under the following categories:

Christmas Markets

These kinds of events are highly involved and take a lot of co-ordination from the chosen applicant, the Markets typically include everything from stalls, animal hire, marketing, promotion, traffic management arrangements, coordination, planning and will realistically require an increased focus on security compared to previous years. These events are usually arranged and co-ordinated through local business networks.

Christmas Light Switch on Event

This kind of event is aimed at driving a large volume of traffic into a specific area to provide a sharp boost to footfall to local shops and pubs. These can tend to be coincided with a Christmas Market and can be equally involved for those arranging them.

Christmas Promotional Items

Promotional Items such as hessian bags that have local branding are promoted in some wards, these would be given to shop owners in the area to distribute to customers with the aim to encourage residents to shop locally.

Christmas Raffle / Loyalty Card Scheme

This kind of promotion would usually start weeks if not months before Christmas, it would involve the creation of shopping vouchers/ loyalty card which would be passed to local shop owners to provide to customers. Typically when a customer hits a predetermined spend limit they would receive a voucher/card and be entered into a raffle and in some areas that promoted a loyalty card scheme the customer may receive discounts within the shop.

Evaluation of past funds

This proves difficult to gain from the Wards, the results gathered from 2016 events are shown below.

Sowerby Bridge

Sowerby Bridge used its funds towards a Community Event to encourage local and home based businesses to showcase their products on stalls in the market and drive traffic through the main street.

From a survey conducted it was reported that no one had received reduced trade and of the traditional shops in the town saw at least a small increase than if trading on a usual day. There are reports from a number of traders, pubs and sandwich shop seeing a large increase in trade compared to a usual day and some traders and designers have reported an increase in turnover and traffic since some saying as much as 30% - 40%.

Less tangibly there seems to have been a bringing together of the business community with organisations working together whereas typically this may not have been the case.

Hebden Bridge

Hebden Bridge used its funding to go towards a loyalty card scheme, the customer had to spend at least £25 then they would receive a card which was stamped and when full was entered into a raffle. It was estimated that there was a growth in spend over the duration of around £61,000 from the businesses who took part in the scheme. Repeat business was not measured.

Todmorden

Todmorden uses its funding to go towards its lamplighter festival which is a yearly event run in the early run up to Christmas, the event attracted over 4500 people with 350 community participants.

80 businesses were asked to complete a survey with 45 businesses returning.

- 32% reported income levels were more than 50% of an average day
- 14% reported that they traded on a day and time they do not usually do.
- The main increases were seen in food & drink
- 15% reported their trade was above that of the previous year's event.

There are numerous quotes from both businesses and the public stating how important the community aspect of this event was to them and the area.