



# Todmorden Town Deal Board

9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 via Zoom

## Meeting Notes

### In Attendance:

- Pam Warhurst (Chair)
- Tony Lawson (Vice Chair)
- Cllr S Press
- Cllr S Dacre
- Cllr M Carrigan
- Stephen Curry
- Frankie Mullen
- Tim Benjamin
- James Duffy

### CMBC Officers:

- Kate McNicholas (Assistant Director of Economy, Housing, and Investment)
- Mark Dowson (Programme Manager)
- Nathan Canavan (Assistant Project Manager) – Minutes
- Sarah Richardson (Assistant Director of Customer Service)
- Dianna Greenwood (Tourism and Visitor Economy Manager)
- Andrew Rollins (Place Development Officer)

### Apologies:

Andrew Kim, Craig Whittaker MP, Cllr Denis Skelton, Shelagh O'Neill, Cllr Jane Scullion, Jess Thompson (Turner & Townsend)

## Welcome:

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and the apologies above were noted. The Board agreed that the meeting was quorate.

## Minutes from the last Meeting:

The minutes from the previous Board meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were discussed and agreed as an accurate record.

## Declaration of Interests (relating to agenda Items):

None Identified.

## **Terms Of Reference:**

Discussion took place regarding the quorum of the Board, to avoid being in a position where key decisions cannot be made. It was noted that on occasions reduced attendance compounded by a recent Board member departure resulted in the Board being only just quorate. It was suggested that as an interim measure, amendments were made to the Terms of Reference to reduce the number of Board members required to be quorate.

MD advised that changes to the Terms of Reference would need to comply with clause 10.1, which indicated that 14 days' notice must be given to any proposed changes, as such any amendment would come into effect well before the next scheduled Board meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

The Board agreed to the proposal to make a temporary amendment to clause 7.2 in the Terms of Reference until such time that the Board has a full complement of members following recruitment. The Board agreed to the amendment "A quorum will be 50% of current board members plus one, with a minimum of 5 members and must include the chair or vice chair."

## **Assurance Framework:**

MD provided an update to the amendments made to the Assurance Framework document, following discussion at the last Board meeting. These amendments now satisfied the concerns of the Council's Finance team (as Accountable Body) and were presented to Board for approval.

The Board discussed The Vision at paragraph 2.5 and debated the extent to which it was useful to be independent or aligned to the Council's Vision 2024 as Accountable Body with the potential to lever in future funding streams.

The Board agreed some minor amendments and approved the Assurance Framework document, subject to a suitable form of words within the Vision section, which the Board delegated to PW and MD to agree upon.

## **Support Roles- Accountable Body / Consultants:**

KM updated the Board regarding support activities, confirming that Turner & Townsend were now in place to assist project sponsors/leads to assess support requirements, along with providing clarity on roles, responsibilities and reporting structures. This will provide continuity as well as key preparation leading up to the business case development. Preliminary discussions have also been held with Marc Watterson at ARUP regarding additional support.

KM is also seeking approval for the full business case development, putting in the resource to help with the development of the business cases and ensure they are HM Treasury green book compliant, so this is ready for the new year.

The Board queried whether the business case development comes from the 5% payment that is issued when the Grant Offer letter is awarded. MD confirmed that the 5% is an 'Advanced Payment' and would come off the individual projects.

The Board discussed the need for more financial information and were concerned over the lack of clarity on the capacity funding received to date. MD confirmed he was keen to provide additional transparency on budgets and spend areas, which the Board welcomed. PW requested that this financial information was included as an agenda item for the following Board meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

## **Chairs Report:**

The Chair began by recognising the work of the Comms group.

PW advised that she had attended a meeting with other Town Deal Chairs and that there are considerable differences across the Leeds City Region regarding what the various different authorities are doing, what is in play and what isn't.

For example, the question was raised as to whether the Accountable Body be an observer or a voting member? This differs across the various Boards. The extent to which local authorities had bank rolled projects within their area prior to grant being forthcoming was also discussed. It was noted that the Todmorden projects were community driven, rather than council-led schemes, which is unusual in the region. The message of seeking key areas for support across the towns from the region and Combined Authority was generally supported.

As a Town Board, there is a need for Board members to take a lead on exploring important areas of work including digital and energy to help us understand some of those areas better and how they can support the TIP. These conversations to be held outside of the Board meeting as per the Chairs request.

The Chair intends to also set up meetings in the new year to look at bringing in additional funding streams. These meetings to include the Council as Accountable Body and others potential partners, such as West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

PW noted that the Board is currently thin on the ground in terms of diversity, a conversation to be had with Board members on how to tackle this issue, along with Youth engagement.

## **Comms Sub Group:**

SC discussed the draft advert which had been circulated with the agenda papers, the idea was to make the advertisement more exciting and engaging. 200+ people already on the database.

SC advised of recent meeting with headteachers from the locality who are willing to put the advertisement in their school's newsletter to get a better outreach to attract and recruit new Board members.

The Board discussed whether to add in that the position is an unpaid/volunteer role? Also, discussion of whether to specifically add people with disabilities, and the balance of people from the private and community sectors.

The chair to ask all Board members if they are happy with the general tone and for the Board to agree on this before the weekend.

All Board members to liaise directly with SC if they have more specific feedback regarding the advertisement for the recruitment of Board members.

SC advised there would be a formal presentation to Board on the Comms strategy, at the January Board meeting, including discussion on governance and reach. The expectation would be that any project leads would report back to the Comms team to get comms developed on the back of the project progression.

FM provided an update on recent press coverage from the local paper, as they have had a change in their editorial team, leading to a few issues. FM had been contacted by the paper as a press release came was issued from central government that mentioned Todmorden. The paper was requested to hold back on publishing the story as it incorrectly implied that the decision had already been made on the Todmorden Investment Plan. Unfortunately, the paper chose to run with the story and asked "What would you like to see the money used for?"

MD advised that the Heads of Terms had finally been signed by the Minister, which should have been done months ago, and this generated the tweet from government. MD had similarly advised the Council's Comms team to hold back the story until the formal Grant Offer was received and to speak to FM for an aligned Comms approach. FM thanked the Council for the joined-up approach on this.

KM will raise this issue with the Cities and Local Growth (CLG) team.

## **Board panels update Youth/ Sustainability:**

AL provided an update regarding the Youth Panel. Shannon Jackson has submitted a proposal to continue the support for the Collective, including revenue support. This support is 6 months in length to take us up to the end of the business cases (around £10,000 ask) but need clarifying / changing. This is to be discussed with Shannon via AL.

The Board queried whether the £10k funding for the proposal had already been agreed? It was confirmed that the Board had previously agreed to the funding in principle, but wanted a proposal from her with more details. This has taken a considerable time to produce. If AL is unable to contact Shannon, he will modify this himself. In addition, we also we need broader Youth engagement. The funding is not a given, and a paper will be brought back to the Board for further consideration.

Date of 18<sup>th</sup> December penciled in to have 3 or 4 market stalls at the Todmorden market with young entrepreneurs on them.

## **Highlight Report / Submission:**

MD provided an updated Highlight report to the Board and pointed out that the overall risk had been changed to Amber, to highlight the tight timescales for full business case preparation by the June 2022 deadline. However, MD indicated that Turner & Townsend will be retained to provide continuity and support, in addition to identification of project leads, assessment of in-house skills, clarify roles & responsibilities and support requirements.

MD referred to the re-prioritisation report that was previously produced by Turner & Townsend, which was circulated at the previous Board meeting. MD advised that he had amended the figures to reflect advice from Cities and Local Growth (CLG) regarding presentation of Fees/Contingency funding, as the risk contingency should be contained in the individual projects themselves rather than a separate figure. This has resulted in an additional £601,856 which has been moved back into the projects that had been cut in the previous re-prioritisation work, on a pro-rata basis. MD advised that subject to Board approval and sign off by the Council's S151 Officer, the revised bid would be submitted the following day, 10<sup>th</sup> December.

The Chair indicated that this appeared to be a very pragmatic approach to the resubmitted investment plan figures and recommended the Board approve the amendments. The Board approved the amended submission proposal.

MD provided an update to the Accelerator Project, along with a financial breakdown. MD advised that the majority of the Accelerator works had now been completed, however the Unitarian Church had experienced a number of delays and setbacks due to the pandemic, contractors, etc. and they required a further £8,000 to be able to start and complete the project. MD confirmed there is around £21,000 left in the Accelerator budget, although the bike racks and water filling stations have not yet progressed.

The Board welcomed clarity on what has been spent and would like to keep this well communicated. The Board queried the deadline for the Church funding which had been July 2021, MD advised that the Grant Funding agreement with Church could be extended. The Board discussed the Church proposal, particularly the merits of supporting the community management of the Church and its grounds and referenced the previous support to light up the façade of this landmark building. Supporting the additional funding was considered low risk, particularly as this could generate an ongoing sustainable revenue stream for the Church. The Board approved an additional £8,000 funding to the Church. MD to progress the necessary amendments to the Funding Agreement.

The Board recalled issues with the water refilling stations that had been raised by the Council's Public Health team and agreed not to progress with this item. The Board were still keen on bike racks and MC indicated that the Climate emergency group had provided some funding to encourage people to use their bikes more. Todmorden Town Council to progress the bike racks. The Board agreed that any spare Accelerator funding should go towards the shelters at Centre Vale Park.

## **Any Other Business:**

Diana Greenwood, the Council's Tourism and Visitor Economy Manager, introduced the Welcome Back Fund, totalling £372,000 for the whole of Calderdale. This fund allows the Council to work with local delivery partners to put in place additional measures to create and promote a safe environment for local trade and tourism, particularly in high streets as economies reopen. The team have already been speaking with business regarding what is needed, skills and support, beautification of the area, events, etc. Funding available until the end of March 2022 with various criteria.

Andrew Rollins introduced himself as the new Place Development Officer covering the Todmorden area. The place development team is designed to be a link between the Council and both businesses and community in and around the Borough. The team aims to ensure a Covid-19 safe response to re-opening of places, identify ways to improve green spaces on high streets and in towns and promote a safe environment for local businesses and visitors. They will also support digital and skills activity, develop ways to enhance the visitor offer and encourage more community and cultural activities.

The Board discussed how best to tap into the funding opportunity and DG noted that the funding can be used for procurement as long as it complies with the procurement rules, could support marketing related events, and additional or temporary items, rather than permanent fixtures. PW stressed the investment must tie in with the vision of the TIP if we are to optimise the investment.

Board members to contact Place Development Team with any funding proposals from the Welcome Back Fund.

Landscape Competition – PW briefed the Board on the potential to run a landscape design competition for the Public Places element of the Town Deal. MD leading discussions with the Landscape Institute and local landscape architects as to the benefits of such an approach, as may be a non-starter given time requirements, etc. MD to feedback at next Board meeting.

The Board discussed concerns over yet another design for town centre. MD made clear that this was design of the public realm, not revisiting the numerous versions of a town centre masterplan.

## **Date of Next Meeting:**

The next Board meeting is due to take place on **20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 4pm to 6pm.**

MD circulated a list of future meeting dates throughout 2022. PW advised that the aspiration was to hold the Todmorden Town Deal Board meetings in person, but subject to changes in the Covid-19 guidance. The possibility of hybrid meeting arrangements to be investigated further. NC to confirm venue or circulate virtual meeting invitation as appropriate for the January meeting.

## **Decision Log:**

- Minutes from previous Town Deal Board meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 approved.
- Temporary amendment approved to clause 7.2 in the Terms of Reference until such time that the Board has a full complement of members. Amended wording to read - "A quorum will be 50% of current board members plus one, with a minimum of 5 members and must include the chair or vice chair."
- Assurance Framework document approved, subject to minor wording variation to be agreed between PW and MD.
- Revised Project Prioritisation funding schedule approved for re-submission to Government.
- Additional £8,000 funding approved to Todmorden Unitary Church from remaining Accelerator Funding.