

Todmorden Town Deal Board

14th January 2021

Meeting notes

In attendance:

Members

- Cllr Dacre (Co-Chair)
- Tim Benjamin (Co-Chair)
- Cllr Press
- Cllr Skelton
- Craig Whittaker MP
- Tony Lawson
- Stephen Curry
- Pam Warhurst
- Frankie Mullen
- James Duffy
- Andrew Kim
- Barbara Jones
- Rebecca Greenwood (WYCA Representative)

CMBC Officers

- Karen Houghton, Programme Manager
- Sarah Richardson, Assistant Director of Customer Services
- Maria Curran, Regeneration Project Manager
- Daisy Wilde, Neighbourhood Coordinator

In Attendance

- Cllr Scullion, CMBC Member (Deputy Leader and, Cabinet member and Portfolio holder for Regeneration and Strategy)
- Irena Bauman, Consultant, Bauman Lyons Architects
- Josh Wedge, Principal Consultant, AspinallVerdi
- Atam Verdi, Director, AspinallVerdi
- Lily Hall (Towns Fund Support Organisation)

Apologies:

- Cllr Fenton-Glynn
- Cllr Courtney
- Mr Leigh MBE (MP Substitute)

Welcome:

Cllr Dacre and Tim Benjamin both chaired the meeting and welcomed all.

Cllr Dacre: brief overview of points arising from Check and Challenge and Citizen Assemblies

Cllr Dacre gave an overview of the points raised during the 'check and challenge'. The golden thread, consultation and needs of Town need to be referenced back to at every point in the TIP (Town Investment Plan).

Citizen assemblies – overriding impression was that the presentation was received positively. Questions were asked about the projects not included, none of which sparked great controversy. Feedback included that the process felt inclusive and people are looking forward to seeing the projects develop.

Josh Wedge presented a short agenda for the next part of the meeting:

- Check and challenge feedback
- Comms group update
- Branding, images and editor
- Update on costs and Towns Fund budget
- Timeline for completion

Check and Challenge Feedback

Josh discussed some of the feedback from the check and challenge exercise.

Key considerations from TIP – based on earlier version of TIP.

Summary of changes:

- Brought vision into executive summary so that it sits at the beginning of the document
- Narrative is being developed – we will use editor when TIP at final draft stage to ensure reflects Tod community
- Visuals and graphics will be improved
- There was a point made about the number of projects included, but we have provided a good argument for this. We have been looking at how we can make the TIP look coherent and present projects in a different way (the new layout for the presentation of projects, for each theme was shared on screen)
- Mapped strategic objectives to challenges and needs

It was discussed that additional evidence to support projects was required i.e. visitor numbers, number of events, possible impact as a result of Brexit and Covid, start-ups and business survival rates etc. There was a request for people to contact Josh if they had useful information regarding this.

Comms Group Update

Stephen provided some figures and feedback from the Citizen Assemblies (held via Zoom):

- Lunchtime session - 73 logged on
- Evening session - 94 logged on

Poll of those wanting to be involved in more events:

- Lunchtime - 45 people voted. 93% of them said yes
- Evening - 34 people voted. 94% of them said yes

It was a very useful event. Pam presented the business proposals. 50 questions were received via the chat function and further questions were emailed to us. The questions, and answers to these questions, will be on the website by Monday.

People enjoyed the experience and were keen for more consultation.

Pam – this morning we had a fantastic presentation and discussion with students from Todmorden High – they were interested in being engaged.

Tim – thanks to Pam for presenting so well, and to Stephen and rest of the team for organising the Citizen Assemblies.

Branding, Images and Editor

Irena proposed the idea of using the 'There's MORE in TodMORden' branding (image shown on screen).

- Provides evidence on business engagement
- Can build on something which is already successful
- Future Proof

Comments:

Pam – love its inclusivity. Agree that it has been tested and it supports the range of projects.

Cllr Press – not keen in the imagery on that logo.

Cllr Skelton – what about Stoodley Pike (with reference to the image).

Craig Whittaker MP – looks great!

Sarah – I think the fact that local businesses are supportive will be helpful to us.

Barbara – I like it!

Tony – no big issue with it.

Frankie – it has gone down very well with the press when we have used it for press releases for businesses and the business network.

Stephen – well consulted on and professionally designed and is being used by people in the town.

No objections were made about using the ‘There’s MORE in TodMORden’ branding.

Update on Costs and Town Fund Budget

Costs and Town Fund budget briefly discussed.

Karen – a cost consultant has been involved to ‘work up’ some of figures, so we have overview of somebody with that industry expertise.

Timeline to Completion

- Board meeting today, completing delivery and engagement section, working through comments from check and challenge
- Feedback meeting
- Deadline for draft TIP Weds 20th January – Council review
- Formatting in final week
- Aiming for final submission 28th or 29th January

Cllr Dacre – is the feedback meeting for Board Members?

Maria – the feedback meeting is another opportunity for us to get advice from the delivery partners. We will be sharing the engagement section and obtaining feedback to see what changes may be necessary to include in the final version of the TIP.

Cllr Dacre – where is there an opportunity for the Board, or a subgroup of the Board, to have any input - to see the draft TIP before it is sent to Council?

Karen – next Thursday and in the few days following. I would endorse the suggestion of a subgroup.

Cllr Dacre: summary of structure of TIP

Cllr Dacre summarised Part 1 of the TIP.

The vision has moved in the plan from where it originally was. The Board will need to think about a Foreword.

The Foreword will need to represent the whole Board and inject our enthusiasm right at the beginning. Tim would like to work with the Comms Group to get that drafted.

Part 2 of the TIP – all the detail is being worked up.

Tim Benjamin: board review and contribution to TIP reference to strategy section, golden thread and project summaries

Tim summarised that what stood out from the check and challenge was the accusation that the plan was 'scattergun' due to many projects being presented. It would be good to present these projects in a way that someone outside of Todmorden really gets a sense of the town. The consultants are working on all the detail, but it would be good if the Board Members could assist in better communicating the community and spirit of Todmorden.

Tim said that knowing the Town as we all do, the projects all make complete sense, but we will have to communicate this through the TIP, for example, further consideration needs to be given to how we introduce the document from the first moment and how we describe each of the project.

Tim proposed two ideas:

- Here is how you pronounce Todmorden – as part of the introduction
- Each project to be introduced in the first person – perhaps have a champion for each project to describe them in a more personal way

Tim showed an example of another Towns TIP (Mablethorpe).

Comments:

Craig Whittaker MP – every project has come from people in Todmorden. I would not feel guilty about reference to a 'scattergun approach' as the projects fit the categories. This is a once in a generational opportunity and although you or I may not like a particular project, this is what the people of Todmorden have said they want. I think it is very inclusive.

Pam – Todmorden High students said some interesting things. Strong links to countryside. Great park but also lots of different things about it that they loved but that need more investment. They liked its diversity.

Lily – a map would be helpful to show how the projects hang together. Packaging the projects up to tell a story will bring it to life.

Rebecca – imagery and mapping work will help bring it to life.

Cllr Press – too much text (referring to other TIP) - infographics are an effective way of getting ideas across.

Rebecca – with the text, it's the balance of making sure there's the detail there for the assessors to assess the TIPs as a 'bid'.

Andrew – aware this is only a draft, but it does not convey the dynamic community we are all part of. There are so many difference voices wanting to participate. We need to capture this and convey enthusiasm of the community. This is missing.

Pam – I think showing the passion behind the project through a champion is great.

After discussion and comment it was agreed that individual Board Members would act as a 'champion' for each project. Providing a short quote to support each project.

Questions

Andrew – I am surprised by the Rose Street proposal in draft, it seems to have changed a bit from the one we agreed on.

Irena – it is not very different. We are working closely with sponsors to understand the viability of the site in terms of what will work financially and operationally.

Cllr Dacre – there is bound to be movement and changes in what it looks like – we will have to ensure as Board that we pick up on these things throughout the process.

Andrew – we should discuss it at some point.

Tim – these things will evolve assuming we get go ahead for it.

Summary

It was agreed that Pam would draft an introduction for the TIP. This will be circulated amongst Board Members for comment.

Action: Pam to draft introduction for the TIP and for this to be circulated amongst the Board Members.

Action: Board members to email a quote for the project they are 'championing' to Daisy Wilde.

The Co-Chairs agreed that the Full Board should be involved in the 'sign off' of the TIP.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 4th March 4-6pm.