

Todmorden Town Deal Board

17th February 2022 via Zoom

Meeting Notes

In Attendance:

- Pam Warhurst (Chair)
- Tony Lawson (Vice Chair)
- Cllr S Press
- Cllr S Dacre
- Cllr M Carrigan
- Craig Whittaker MP
- Stephen Curry
- Gareth Marshall
- Amanda Bloxsome
- Amna Nisah

CMBC Officers:

- Mark Dowson (Programme Manager)
- Nathan Canavan (Assistant Project Manager)
- Catherine Bann (Neighbourhood Co-ordinator)
- Andrew Rollins (Place Development Officer)
- Sarah Richardson (Assistant Director of Customer Service)
- Sandra Robertshaw (Minutes)

In Attendance:

- Cllr Scullion, CMBC Member (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Strategy)
- Jess Thompson & Jamie Catlow (Both from Turner & Townsend)
- Richard Thorpe (Cities & Local Growth)

Apologies:

Shelagh O'Neill, Kate McNicholas, Tim Benjamin, Frankie Mullen, Andrew Kim, James Duffy and Councillor Denis Skelton.

Welcome:

All welcomed to the meeting, including new members: Gareth Marshall, Amanda Bloxsome and Amna Nisah. Also welcomed Richard Thorpe from Cities and Local Government who is

the Town Coordinator for the Todmorden Town Deal. Noted that this would be MC's last meeting, Denis will be representing Todmorden Town Council going forward.

Minutes from the last Meeting:

Agreed the minutes were a correct record of the last meeting.

Declaration of Interests (relating to agenda Items):

CB declared an interest at the last meeting as she is on the Board of Todmorden Community College, although not noted previously as not making decisions as a Board member.

Chairs Report and Board Membership Update:

PW wanted the broadest engagement with what the Board are doing, wanted to make sure that contact was made with local residents about helping in key cross cutting themes: Youth, Sustainability and Inclusion. Panels opportunity was promoted through our website and a good response was received. PW has spoken to a number of interested individuals from a variety of backgrounds. This work is ongoing, at this point we have three people for each panel. Need to progress late March/early April. Will create challenge and a wider perspective and highlight other areas where we can deliver our aspirations for the town.

Open Day: Open Day being arranged for April, will require a small amount of funding, it will showcase all 10 projects and will highlight outcomes and inputs, it will be an opportunity to share information and engage with local residents. The Board were asked to agree and support the progression of an Open Day, all agreed.

Comms Update:

Board members discussed the breakdown of Comms expenditure provided, particularly around expenditure on Citizens Forum Facilitation x4, £600, and the fee for copyrighting and web content. SC responded stating that the initial engagement of consultants was paid direct by Calderdale Council and the Board Group were unaware initially of the costs involved.

Lots of positive press generated, although noted there has been some negative response on social media issue, specifically around Bellholme junior football club (Riverside project). The Comms group now have an established protocol and FAQ's for dealing with any social media issues and to help respond to enquiries. Website needs updating constantly, gone through various phases, developing pages for each of the projects. PW highlighted need to have a joint Comms approach with Calderdale Council as Accountable Body.

Plans around community engagement already highlighted, priority is now an open engagement with residents directly. Might have to fund pop up banners for each project or produce information boards, which could be part of a permanent exhibition. Lots of opportunities to reach out to a whole range of community organisations. Agreed we need to think about advocacy and engagement, suggested protocols for Sponsor Leads in the community, with support of the Comms Group to promote and celebrate their work.

Potential Funding Opportunities:

There are other funding streams coming on board, such as Shared Prosperity Fund, Community Energy, etc. PW stressed the need to ensure that the Board is in a strong position to attract funding and investment into Todmorden. Noted first webinar with Government next week in respect of the Shared Prosperity Fund, the funding will come through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA). It's important that we are able to influence and ensure the West Yorkshire Mayor understands Todmorden needs and aspirations, in respect of her support for these funding streams.

SC reminded the Board that there had been a discussion about having an Investment Panel, this might have been noted in the TIP as one of our ambitions. Looking at ways of being entrepreneurial, good to know what funding is coming out, although likely to require some form of organisational structure within the Town Board for applying for funding.

Full Business case approval process:

Noted the flow chart circulated with the agenda. As the Accountable Body, Calderdale Council are trying to ensure that timescales run as smoothly as possible by gaining delegated authority from Cabinet in March to approve the business cases.

Highlight Report and Programme Risk Register:

The Board noted the documents circulated with the agenda. The overall project status is currently RAG rated as amber due to timescales. Work is almost completed confirming all project sponsors. Significant progress has been progress made, particularly with thanks to Todmorden Town Council who have pulled several projects together for the Centre Vale Project.

SC commented that similar to the park projects, Riverside will also be acting as lead project sponsor on the All Accessibility Cycling centre, working closely with Empowered people.

Turner & Townsend assisted with a workshop on 1st February, aimed at project sponsors, to further detail their role and responsibilities. AK is working to progress the Murmuration Workshop, meeting with artists to set up an appropriate body to take this forward, also looking at a few buildings that would replace the building originally identified within the TIP.

GM asked if the sponsors are properly supported, do we have a method of identifying an early warning if project do slips? MD confirmed there is a dashboard system to manage this.

Cllr S: given the number and variety of projects that are part of the Town Board programme, support for peer to peer engagement between the project leads could one of the ways to support the cohort/body taking this forward , ensuring everyone on same page going forward.

Accelerator Funding Update - The additional £8k that was previously approved by the Board for Todmorden Unity Church, has gone through and signed off, with work now started on site. Electrics were in a much worse state than anticipated and budgeted for, which has a potential to leave a hole in their budget, although they are looking to omit other elements to ensure the works can be completed within budget.

The Board had previously agreed that the remaining accelerator balance of just under £14k would be spent on the Centre Vale Park shelters, MD has discussed an alternative funding route via the Welcome Back Fund (WBF) and will update on progress following quotations as the park shelters were in a worse condition than originally thought. AR confirmed around £30k of funding left in WBF, which needs to be spent by 31st March.

Looking to get all project sponsors in place by end of February. Community Land Trust have a Board Meeting on Monday evening, so will find out regarding that appetite to take on the project sponsor role for the Enterprise Centre. T&T have contacted project leads as to what support needed to get to full business case status, then we can appoint the right consultants and use economies of scales.

Risk Register - The Board noted the risk register and mitigations, suggesting that this should be updated to reflect opportunities in addition to risks. Any comments or feedback to go to MD.

Project Dashboards:

JT provided the latest position regarding project dashboards, and the following points were raised/discussed:

What would happen if we didn't get match funding for some of the projects? What is the mitigation on that risk? MD indicated that match funding was an important element of the Town Investment Plans success. Now that the £17.5m Grant Offer letter has been received, more detailed match funding proposals will form a key part of the business case development, along with identification of other funding sources across the programme or individual projects. MD advised there was also the opportunity to submit a Project Adjustment, where there were changes from the original project submission.

RT: Agreed. With regards to project adjustment requests, we are seeing examples of this across other town investment plans, especially those in West Yorkshire, so not alone with this concern. No core requirement for co-funding in town deal projects. Suggested the board considers the need for any adjustments as soon as possible. Some flexibility on a project-by-project basis.

GM: if a project fell away completely, would there be an option to bring another project in, if not what would happen to the funding, and how the money flows from Central Government to Calderdale and into the project. MD responded, yes would still get the rest of the funding, there is an option for putting in a completely different project to DLUHC but a much greater risk that will be rejected and funding lost, as opposed to a project adjustment where the majority of the original outputs and outcomes will still be achieved.

TL: just emphasising the need to explore investment and external funding and how we get that secured to get a safety net in this process. A lot of risk in this process.

JT explained further about the business case process and how it works.

The Board discussed how set in stone the individual project outcomes are? MD advised that changes to outcomes would require a project adjustment request from Government, as the various outputs and outcomes were included as part of the Heads of Terms and Grant Offer.

SC: reminded the Board that we are ahead of the game in terms of community consultations in bringing projects forwards, which can be evidenced.

JT: will now begin the strategic business case process, will start to pull together stakeholders for first workshops happening in next few weeks. Board Members are also welcome to attend, although not required.

Youth Panel update:

Good progress, first meeting due to take place in March with 6-7 panel members. Schools are keen to get involved. Agreed the need to progress with apprenticeships and TL will be arranging to meet with Project Sponsors.

Any Other Business:

Recruitment - Noted the recruitment of Karen Houghton's replacement as Programme Manager is still underway, the post was not filled through internal CMBC recruitment and the role has now been advertised externally. PW suggested the Town Deal Chair should be involved in an appropriate way.

Friends of Todmorden Town Hall - An event taking place for small/local businesses, 21 signed up, if Board Members are available, it would be helpful to have Board visibility at this event (11.00).

Hybrid Meetings - Cllr Press confirmed she has accessed Todmorden College recently for hybrid events and recommended the facilities (Stoodley Room, cost of £20 per hour)

Date of Next Meeting:

17th March 2022 5pm until 7pm – TBC whether Zoom or hybrid meeting.