

Todmorden Town Deal Board

24th September 2020

Meeting notes (edited for sensitivity)

In attendance:

Members

- Cllr Dacre (Co-Chair)
- Tim Benjamin (Co-Chair)
- Cllr Press
- Cllr Fenton-Glynn
- Craig Whittaker MP
- Cllr Carrigan (Town Council Substitute)
- Tony Lawson
- Stephen Curry
- 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
- Daisy Wilde, Neighbourhood Coordinator

In Attendance

- Cllr Scullion, CMBC Member (Deputy Leader and, Cabinet member and Portfolio holder for Regeneration and Strategy)

Apologies:

- Cllr Skelton
- Pam Warhurst

Welcome:

Cllr Dacre chaired the meeting and welcomed all and Cllr Fenton-Glynn, Councillor for Calder Ward

Minutes of last meetings – 10th September and 17th September 2020

The minutes were approved.

Proposal to extend deadline for submission of TIP

Cllr Dacre informed that the Board would decide what to include in the TIP, and that outside agencies would pull the TIP together in line with the guidance, and in consultation with the Board. Consultation with the people of Todmorden would need to take place also. Therefore, the aim is to submit the TIP in January rather than October as initially planned. It was noted that any additional projects would not be considered as part of this.

CLlr Press welcomed the decision to submit the TIP in January.

CLlr Scullion supports a January submission, although noted that the Board may want reassurances that the money would still be available. A January submission would allow time for the Board to re-establish a vision. Consulting with the people of Todmorden is also crucial before presenting a bid, particularly for the democratic process.

Civil Servants have said that the money is ringfenced and added that they would like to see an impressive bid rather than a bid that had been rushed.

Description of process

CLlr Dacre outlined that Karen had collated the information from the forms sent out to Board Members asking them to rank and/or make comments on each project proposal.

Karen shared an overview of the responses received.

The two areas where views were polarised include the competing projects on TLC (Todmorden Learning College) and the education provision, and whether housing should or should not be a function of the Rose Street proposals.

CLlr Dacre asked Karen to provide specific feedback on the People's History Museum Todmorden proposal and the cookery school.

People's History Museum Todmorden – the response was that not everyone liked the idea, but those that did felt it was too ambitious and too big.

Cookery School – there was support, but questions were raised about the ask and whether it could be accommodated in one of the other buildings.

Q – Was the updated proposal from Music for the Many included?

A – Yes, everyone has received and voted on that proposal.

Q – Are we clear about the capital and revenue question? Has the Accessing Natural Todmorden (Living Bridge CIC) wheelchair project been excluded because it was revenue? Were any other projects included that may be revenue? We need to be clear about how things were categorised.

A – Active Calderdale to consider the wheelchair project.

CLlr Dacre reminded the Board Members of the two polarised views. The Co-Chairs view is that discussions should now focus on these two points, and all the other projects will be included in the TIP if agreed by the Board.

Tim Benjamin summarised that the competing projects on TLC and the education provision, and whether housing should or should not be a function of the Rose Street proposal would be subject to a stop/go vote. 'Go' would mean an agreed plan. 'Stop' would mean the Board would have to come back to review.

There were no objections raised regarding the other projects being included in the TIP.

Presentation of projects

Discussion relating Housing vs No Housing for Town Centre Masterplan

Cllr Dacre informed that the Board would be voting on whether they want to include housing in the Town Centre Masterplan.

Cllr Dacre informed she would not vote due to the interest noted in the minutes last week.

Some Board Members expressed their concerns about being asked to vote on housing.

Cllr Dacre summarised that the view of the Board was not to vote on this matter today.

Karen informed that in terms of Rose Street, there is a very clear ranking. Open space, riverside park and the market at the top, followed by retail, hotels, car parks and housing at the bottom. We could ask the consultants to relook at the scheme – spatial masterplan on this specific area.

Tim Benjamin suggested that the Board could ask the consultants to look at both plans, with housing and without housing This would then be brought back to the full Board for discussion.

There was agreement from the Board for the consultants to do an initial draft with and without housing included.

Q – Will we have a subgroup or not?

A – Cllr Dacre stated that this will be brought back to the full Board.

Q – Who will be putting together the brief for consultants?

A – Karen will write the brief.

The importance of the Board Members being able to input into the brief for consultants for the masterplan was raised.

Cllr Dacre suggested that Karen could circulate the brief to Board Members for comment.

Cllr Dacre and Tim Benjamin agreed that no votes were needed pending further information i.e. Masterplan The issue of housing will be reviewed at a later stage.

Discussion relating to the TLC proposal and the Education Provision proposal

Cllr Dacre summarised the TLC project including the asset transfer in process. She gave a brief overview of what this may mean for the education provision proposal.

Note: Barbara cannot vote on the TLC due a pecuniary interest.

Cllr Press summarised historical context of the College site and the current situation regarding the asset transfer to the TLC. She said that the people of Todmorden supported this plan. Cllr Press would be disappointed if the Board vote against the TLC proposal.

Cllr Scullion provided an update on the asset transfer. Cllr Scullion stated final decision on TLC would be made in early November.

It was noted that the Board should only consider whether to support funding the projects that relate to the TLC as the education provision proposal cannot go forward as they have no agreement to use the college.

There was discussion about whether the Board were subjecting the TLC's business plan to an unfair level of scrutiny given that they had not done the same for the other projects. It was stated that detailed scrutiny was in general to be expected eventually if not immediately, and that we would have scrutinised the other projects' plans more closely if they were able to provide greater detail.

Tim Benjamin raised a concern about the viability of the arts projects which had earlier been agreed for inclusion in the TIP without discussion should the TLC go ahead, given the claims made by the TLC that the TLC would offer the same functions as those other projects. Therefore, certainty about the status of the TLC project is required before the other arts projects can be included in the TIP.

There was a discussion about whether a decision should be made by the Board today or whether a decision could be deferred.

Some Board Members felt that the education provision proposal could not be considered due to the asset transfer process underway for TLC. Others disagreed.

No vote required at this stage pending final decision by CMBC on TLC asset transfer.

It was agreed that the TLC proposal would be considered by the Board after a decision has been made by Cabinet regarding the asset transfer. The Co-Chairs and Karen will not ask the consultants to include anything for the TLC site at this stage.

Other

There was a brief discussion regarding the accelerator funding and projects.

Suggestion that progress reports on the delivery of accelerator fund projects should be a standing item on the agenda moving forward.

Date of next meeting: - TBC

The Board will next meet once a draft TIP has been drawn up.

Board agreed that the TIP could not be drawn up until the consultants had done work on Bramsche Square (so that we could decide about housing), and when the status of the TLC was known. Therefore, the Board decided that they will next meet once the latter is known, and progress had been made on the former.

Names of some contributors were not recorded; all contributors will be noted in future meetings.