

# Todmorden Town Deal Board

17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## Meeting notes

### In attendance:

#### Members

- Cllr Dacre (Co-Chair)
- Cllr Press
- Cllr Skelton
- Tony Lawson
- Stephen Curry
- Pam Warhurst
- Frankie Mullen
- James Duffy
- Andrew Kim
- Barbara Jones

#### CMBC Officers

- Karen Houghton, Programme Manager
- Sarah Richardson, Assistant Director of Customer Services
- Marc Cole, Interim Director - Regeneration and Strategy
- Daisy Wilde, Neighbourhood Coordinator

#### In Attendance

- Cllr Scullion, CMBC Member (Deputy Leader and, Cabinet member and Portfolio holder for Regeneration and Strategy)
- Atam Verdi
- Josh Wedge
- Irena Bauman
- Choon Yuan Wang
- Maria Curran
- Martin Higgitt

## Apologies:

- Tim Benjamin (Co-Chair)
- Cllr Fenton-Glynn
- Cllr Courtney
- Craig Whittaker MP
- Mr Leigh MBE (MP Substitute)
- Rebecca Greenwood (WYCA Representative)

## Welcome:

Cllr Dacre chaired the meeting and welcomed all.

Councillor Dacre introduced Marc Cole (Interim Director for Regeneration and Strategy CMBC), Choon Yuan Wang (Bauman Lyons) and Maria Curran.

Karen recorded the meeting. This was consented by all in attendance.

Councillor Dacre said the meeting must focus on finalising and approving the TIP (Towns Investment Plan). Consensus rather than voting is preferable.

Board Members were reminded to allow the consultants to present initially, and that questions could follow. Board Members were asked to use the chat function to indicate if they wanted to speak.

## **Proposed projects for the Town Investment Plan and projects to omit**

Josh Wedge and Irena Bauman presented.

Irena shared a slide on the Heart of the Town plans.

Key points:

- Refurbishment to Town Hall

- Refurbish outdoor Market stalls

- New outdoor space resurfaced

- Infrastructure for staging

- Paving

- Social Enterprise Centre – includes several key projects – atrium and winter garden space, civic space

- Pollination garden – bigger space and opening onto the river

- Live/work Units – on ground floor workspace and first floor living space

- Apartments raised and affordable

- Hotel – building up to three storeys, 500 m2 – ground floor with a café, kitchen, meeting rooms for hire – 20-24 studio apartments (Liver Street, George Street, Union Street area)

Atam discussed the One Stop block.

Dependencies – issue to make case to Towns Fund to secure the money to buy the property – they will be interested in why need to secure such a large amount of money and second point is that property itself is subject to long leases (well beyond the Towns Fund funding period) – would need to compensate them to loss of income – summarised the difficulties

Summary is that there is a significant cost and a significant risk – would carefully have to think about what end uses we would have to put on that site to make effective case not only for Towns Fund but for compulsory purchase order. Not strongest case using site for open space. Pollination Street and Bramsche Square offer open space in the plans.

If we had to erect another building it would defeat the object of opening the sightlines to the Town Hall.

Josh informed that the Heart of Town Centre total costs is an ask of 11.61 million of Towns Funding. Costs are a working progress and further refinement is needed.

Projects have been assessed against Towns Fund Criteria. Consideration has been given to whether projects are capital or revenue. The Town Fund will provide capital funding only. The projects have been categorised (see below). Qualitative assessment in terms of land ownership has been secured, co-funding potential and delivery mechanism considered. Quantitative assessment (1-3 scoring) on fit for the Towns Fund and how deliverable projects are has been completed.

Josh presented draft TIP – shortlisted projects and total cost, Towns Fund requirement and co-funding.

- Arts, Culture and Heritage – Town Hall, Hippodrome Theatre, Centre Vale Park & Fielden Hall
- Regeneration, Planning and Land Use – The Heart of the Town Centre projects Irena discussed
- Skills & Enterprise Infrastructure – Todmorden Learning Centre (TLC), Murmuration Workshops and Riverside Sports Centre
- Local Transport and movement – Enabling Active Travel, legibility, signage and welcome, highways improvements, Walsden gateway cycle hub, all ability cycle centre

Totals £32,135

Towns Fund ask £24,502

2% additional contingency and risk.

Atam suggested that the figures are based on those that have been presented to them in the project proposals submitted. He said that he would like to get approval from the Board to go back to projects to fine tune and develop projects.

For the Towns Fund we need to articulate the need, the projects, and how they will be delivered (mechanism, other funding sources) – building a case and evidence base.

Cllr Dacre – Have all the projects been scored in your assessment?

Atam – We have scored 1-3 against various criteria. A lot of detailed work has been done to rank projects.

Cllr Dacre – Were there any projects that scored equally as high that have not made this list?

Josh – Not all have made the list.

Karen – Some of the projects are included but have been amalgamated. However, there are also some noticeable omissions.

Josh gave a summary of projects that have been omitted:

- The Art House has not been included (no property identified, no clear delivery strategy)
- The Border Music Centre (reliant upon land acquisition – not a strong project on its own, but could accommodate end use somewhere)
- Grumpy Mill (does not meet Towns Fund criteria – more suitable alternative funds)
- Harley Mill (questions around land acquisition and deliverability)
- People History Museum (building identified in another ownership – regarding the neighbouring property, the lease would not be affordable and could conflict with the Town Hall offer. The Town Hall could develop this idea as part of their offer)
- Unitarian (lack clarity on cost and has already received some funding)
- Click and Go and Accessible E-Bus (revenue projects or would require revenue funding but good ideas – elements of Towns Fund that could support progressing projects in some way, we are looking at that)
- Futuro House (demand and need not as strong as competing projects – good attraction but would need alternative location – CMBC could look to support in another way. Also does not fit the Towns Fund criteria as well as other projects)
- River Wetlands (does not have strongest fit to the Towns Fund on location and may be challenged on why the University cannot contribute – but idea good and strong)
- Education Provision (cost is high – not the strongest fit to the Towns Fund – there are more suitable funding streams for education projects)

### **Questions**

Jim – The Walsden Gateway Hub and Active Outdoor projects. How do they relate to each other? Initial idea was for a large-scale centre. This was then modified and replaced by Walsden gateway with a smaller hub in the centre of Todmorden. Has that been understood in the plan?

Martin – The proposal we have seen is for the hub to be in the centre of Todmorden.

Jim – Can we see your list of projects on Excel? The shortlist? I am not clear if one project has been superseded or combined.

Cllr Dacre – The ‘diner’ in Centre Vale Park – might it be possible for this to be relocated into the bowling pavilion? Has this been considered?

Irena – In terms of youth engagement, the ‘diner’ project may be a good way of engaging young people. It may help the engagement process.

Jim – Are we saying the ‘diner’ is included in the bid?

Irena – Yes

Cllr Dacre – Static or mobile?

Irena – Needs development.

Jim – With regards to the Peoples History Museum, I am not sure you have had the right information. They were looking at the Yorkshire Bank building, and in the final proposal they were suggesting a new build.

Josh – We were not aware of a new build. We would still hold a similar view that the Town Hall would be a better place to incorporate something like this project.

Atam – We need to consider ongoing sustainability and maintaining projects. This will be a fundamental question in the business cases we present to the Towns Fund

Jim – It sounds like maybe you have not seen the right document.

Cllr Dacre – The view of the Board when they discussed this previously was that the cost figure of a new build would take up too much of the total fund.

Andrew – What is covered in active travel and highways improvement? You have let go of one of the bus proposals and I am just wondering about transportation. I am also sad to see the Border Music Centre has not made it into proposal. There is very little ‘arts’ in town centre. I wonder if this could be incorporated into the social enterprise building mentioned. I felt it was a strong proposal, young people were considered; we could do with something in the town centre for young people.

Martin – Active travel and highways includes proposal for comprehensive cycling and walking network, improving the canal, the north and south connection between the heart of town up to the Calder and Bus Station, walking enhancement on key corridors into the town centre with particular focus on small scale actions to make accessible to all. I have spoken to CMBC cycling officer and the Canal and River Trust. 4.5 million a broad cost for that network – enabling active travel can be used to lever in further funds.

Karen said that she would like to see The Border Music Centre project in the proposal. Maybe an end use in one of the buildings.

Josh – We were omitting as an individual project but will try to accommodate as an end use. In the proposal it was mentioned that the TLC may work. Equally, it could go in social enterprise hub. The Border Music Centre is a strong project and well developed.

Cllr Skelton – Has the illumination scheme, a late submission with rough costings, been included as part of other schemes?

Josh – Good project idea. It would be simpler to do on the Town Hall as the building is in CMBC ownership. We would have to obtain Network Rails approval for the arches. Maintenance and the upkeep costs need to be considered.

Cllr Skelton – I have seen earlier versions of proposed works at the Town Hall. When will there be further detail?

Cllr Press – We have a detailed masterplan in place for the Town Hall. We still have a Town Hall Working Group. Renovation work is being done to the ballroom. In terms of further works, we have a plan in place that went to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This will be used as the template.

Tony – Have you dismissed the Welcoming/Train Station approach to the town centre?

Martin – The legibility project has been included.

Josh – I am not sure what the itemised breakdown is for the legibility and welcoming project. We do want to improve connectivity between the town centre and the station.

Barbara – Is it an issue that half of the projects are CMBC projects?

Cllr Dacre – No, it is not an issue. It enhances deliverability.

Atam – It is fundamentally about deliverability - how success will be measured and how quick the money can be spent.

Stephen – With regards to the station proposal, there was an alternative to a route down to the town centre which was in the Tod Civic Pride document - has this been considered? Some of the projects that have been rejected – have there been any conversations with the people proposing these projects? Regarding the illumination scheme, the reason they did not give set costings was because it can vary based on the type of lighting etc.

## **Summary**

Karen, Atam and Marc summarised that the Board have received many project submissions. There needs to be agreement from the Board about the priority projects to develop a narrative to present to the ministry at beginning of the new year. A series of short-listed projects that meet the criteria. The key now is to progress further with the writing of the bid.

Cllr Dacre asked whether Board Members accepted that the TIP be drafted based on the presentations.

Outcome:

A proposal was unanimously made and passed for the TIP to be drafted based on what had been presented in the Board Meeting. No objections were made.

## **Next steps**

Karen to circulate update about next steps via email to all Board Members.

Karen briefly updated that all the Accelerator Projects were on track with the single exception of the Wheels Park; however, they are still working to complete it under the accelerator projects scheme.

## **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 4-6pm.