

The logo for Todmorden Town Deal is a green banner with a pointed bottom edge, containing the text 'TODMORDEN TOWN DEAL' in white, bold, uppercase letters.

TODMORDEN TOWN DEAL

TODMORDEN TOWN DEAL BOARD

Thursday 6th June 2024

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Pam Warhurst (Chair)
Councillor Denis Skelton
Councillor Silvia Dacre
Councillor Helen Brundell
Gareth Marshall
Kerry Wheelwright-Lee
Rupert Corbett
Esther Ferry-Kennington

Other in attendance

Councillor Sarah Courtney
Rosemary Grant-Muller (Climate Action Plan)
Amy Reddick (BNG)
Kate McNicholas
Rob Shipway
Zakariya Ali

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed Board members and others in attendance.

Apologies

Apologies received from Amna Nisah, Frankie Mullen, Catherine Bann.

Confirmation of Quorum

The meeting was declared quorate.

Declaration of interest

There were no interests declared.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th April 2024

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record by the Board.

3. Climate Action & Biodiversity Net Gain

Rosemary Grant-Muller from Calderdale Council presented on climate action. The target for achieving net zero is set for 2038, with the current Climate Action Plan extending until 2026.

RGM encouraged board members to suggest groups that might wish to engage with the Community Climate Action theme group. Gareth Marshall highlighted that current meeting timings are not convenient for those working office hours. RGM confirmed this will be reviewed. GM also suggested inviting an additional attendee to future meetings from the community energy company.

The Chair emphasised the need for clear communication regarding the Board's roles in supporting the climate action plan, suggesting there is a need for evidence of radical thinking within Calderdale Council to direct investments and visible actions. Sustainability insights and evidence were identified as essential.

Cllr Silvia Dacre noted the challenges in retrofitting and switching fuels, highlighting difficulties in securing funding. Kate McNicholas flagged the economic benefits of retrofitting and mentioned that models of Calderdale's housing stock are being tested to attract investors, responding to the need to retrofit 69,000 homes.

Cllr Sarah Courtney highlighted the importance of transport, including mass transit and active travel. GM raised concerns about the lack of an EV charging strategy, with Cllr SC explaining the budget constraints.

Cllr Helen Brundell emphasised the involvement of various groups, such as Friends of the Earth, local businesses, the youth council, and Together Housing, in the Climate Action Partnership, and recognised the track record of bidding for and winning funding.

Amy Reddick presented on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), clarifying the principles behind it and the relatively early stage of development of the work.

GM inquired if the land bank is open to private entities. AR confirmed it is available to farmers and other private individuals. GM discussed the conflict between renewable energy and biodiversity. AR stated that biodiversity is now higher in the hierarchy.

Cllr Denis Skelton asked how the loss of biodiversity is calculated, e.g., when demolishing a factory. AR explained that existing buildings are unlikely to have habitat to protect and therefore exempt from BNG legislation.

The Chair proposed a town-wide approach to biodiversity with a focus on wildlife corridors and river connectivity. She flagged the potential benefit of using BNG resources from one town deal project into another in the short term. AR mentioned that biodiversity efforts focus on habitats rather than species. Legal agreements for securing habitats over 30 years can be challenging, but regular reports help monitor progress. She welcomed future feedback from the Town Board on potential

locations. The Chair suggested that a future conversation on a place based approach to BNG would be useful.

Action: Zak Ali to circulate the presentation to the Board

Todmorden Town Board next steps

The Chair shared the key next steps distilled from previous Board discussions. She welcomed the Todmorden Town Council Neighbourhood Plan and suggested a focus on work in the conservation area would be helpful – via a conversation with Historic England. She asked for a small group to take forward this forward planning about the future role of the Town Board, and asked for views and additions to the suggested areas of focus.

Action: RS to share the slide presented.

Cllr DS mentioned that the Neighbourhood Plan is with the examiner, the final report will subsequently be received. There will be a referendum (possibly in October) for the residents of Todmorden to decide on its adoption.

Action: Cllr DS to share the Neighbourhood Plan and design guide.

GM suggested identifying “grot spots” and boarded-up buildings. Cllr SC noted some specific issues around the flood attenuation pond near Lidl.

Kerry Wheelwright-Lee raised the issue of promoting tourism and the visitor economy, including a strategy and vision for the town. Cllr HB added the importance of establishing the town's identity. RC suggested the importance of communication and positive messaging.

Cllr DS suggested reviewing the previous Town Development Board and its past actions. Cllr SD flagged the need for care in identifying goals that cannot be achieved.

Esther Ferry-Kennington emphasised that one of the things that makes the Town Board different in terms of what it can address is its longevity.

Action: PW / GM to work together in follow up – with others as appropriate.

4. Programme update

a. Overview of programme and projects

RS reported on programme level issues by exception, highlighting the need for match funding. He mentioned that all projects need to be completed by March 2026. Lease agreements and planning permissions are progressing well and projects are moving to the procurement stage.

There is a significant funding gap for the Hippodrome. Funding applications have been made, but targets are still unmet. The core project and associated outputs can still be delivered.

Riverside has a smaller funding gap but again will deliver core project outputs and meet Town Deal requirements.

The funding gap for the Enterprise Centre was discussed at a previous board meeting. CVLT have worked hard to be able to move confidently into procurement, with the sustainability features included, to test the market to see if they can all be delivered.

b. Programme risk log & opportunities

GM inquired if there is a stage at which projects are identified as not deliverable and whether the funds could be redistributed to other projects. RS confirmed that a case for reallocating funds would be permitted via the DLUHC pathfinder and would need to demonstrate value for money. The Chair emphasised that we are not at that stage and the importance of finding alternative funding streams.

GM asked for an update on market research for prospective Enterprise Centre tenants and their desire for sustainability features.

Action: RS to follow up on Enterprise Centre tenants market research

With regard to the Public Places project, the milestones were missing from the report.

Action: RS to share Public Places milestones

Action: RS to share a composite of project milestones to the August Town Board

The Chair welcomed the emerging designs for Public Places and the work on engagement to date. It was suggested that changes in design might allow for some flexibility with regard to carparking. Cllr SC noted that small compromises help build relationships. The importance of communicating further with businesses and market traders was stressed. Communication should be aligned with communication on the wider parking strategy, which should pick up use of non Council car parks.

Action: Jess Thompson / Mary Farrar to identify how parking communications can be aligned and progress accordingly

RS presented a risk and opportunities register for the projects.

Action: RS to circulate a reformatted risk and opportunities register

GM offered to connect and reconnect with the Enterprise Centre, Hippodrome and Riverside in terms of sustainability elements.

Action: GM to liaise with the Hippodrome and other projects for sustainability features

RS is progressing options to access Rural SPF funding for projects which can show delivery of an element of their project by March 2025, filling match funding gaps or freeing up Towns Fund resources for other essential delivery.

c. Wider delivery update

RS shared the wider delivery update as a starter for ten. KMN confirmed that it will be a regular agenda item for information, with the potential for follow up or invitation should more information be required.

Cllr SD confirmed that an accessible public toilet is going ahead at the station. The Chair expressed concern about the lack of information at the station. Understanding the links in terms of delivery, particularly with Active Todmorden, will be important.

Action: PW to write to request the provision of information at the station

Action: Ella King to consider how delivery timescales align

d. Business engagement

With regard to business engagement there are three distinct elements: supporting engagement with the wider vision, being aware of potential disruption while works are progressing, and maximising local supply chain impacts. KMN discussed council procurement requirements for council projects. A "Meet the Buyer" event is being scheduled for autumn to support the retention of wealth in local communities.

GM suggested the benefit of engaging with businesses that will potentially benefit from the new public realm. KMN noted efforts by the markets team to encourage new traders. Cllr SC suggested investing in small promotional items such as "I love Tod" badges.

Action: discuss further how Board members can be advocates at a future Town Board meeting

5. Communications Update

Frankie Mullen will present in August. There are screens and banners up. The Chair requested Board members to attend to a series of planned events.

Action: Board members to contact Frankie to confirm attendance

6. Panel Update

a. Youth Panel

Next meeting Amna Nisah will bring back her findings for a Youth Panel update. TL has stepped down from the panel.

b. Events Panel

KWL updated that their current focus is on funding a dedicated part time role to help achieve the economic and community benefits that events can bring. Cllr DS committed to clarifying regarding staffing within the Town Council.

Action: Cllr DS to follow up and share with the events panel.

EFK stressed that sustainability should be across all panels.

c. Sustainability Panel

GM updated that work inputting into the projects is ongoing, with the Bowling Pavilion next, and has reached out to Jess Thompson regarding the market. The Todmorden Tomorrow event on the 6th and 7th July will aim to attract a wide audience, with a focus on saving money and energy security. [Todmorden Tomorrow – Tod College \(tlchub.org.uk\)](https://www.todmorden.org.uk). KMN flagged that anti poverty information produced by Calderdale Council and the Anti Poverty Partnership might be useful to share.

KWL suggested we should be tracking our successes in terms of what the panels achieve.

7. AOB

There was no other business.

8. Date and venue of the next meeting

8th August 2024 at Todmorden Community College