



TODMORDEN TOWN DEAL BOARD

Thursday 8th February 2024, 6.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams

Attendance

Pam Warhurst (Chair)
Councillor Silvia Dacre
Councillor Helen Brundell
Rupert Corbett
Gareth Marshall
Ester Ferry-Kennington
Amna Nisah
Kerry Wheelwright
Tony Lawson

Others in Attendance

Councillor Sarah Courtney
Kate McNicholas
Rob Shipway
Zakariya Ali

1. Welcome and introductions

The chair welcomed Board members and colleagues.

2. Apologies

Apologies were given from: Councillor Denis Skelton, Keith Brealey, and Craig Whittaker MP.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no interests declared.

4. Minutes of the meeting held 14th December 2023

The Board accept the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record.

a. Matters arising

RS reported that an officer has been invited to present a report on the Climate Change Action Plan to the next Board meeting.

Regarding partner proposals for community engagement, RS reported that he has met with project partners and agreed a deadline for the end of March, and for their proposals to be brought to the Board for review.

KM confirmed she had discussed proposals for a business forum with the Council's Business Engagement. She noted that the team could work with partners to help explore the appetite for such a forum but resource issues mean a longer-term solution to managing a forum would be needed.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Silvia Dacre's suggestion to engage members in these proposals.

Action: RS to liaise with the Chair and Tod connect to explore options to move forward on a Business Forum.

5. Panel feedback

a. Youth (Tony Lawson)

TL provided the Board with an update about the Youth Panel.

Currently focusing on two main areas: project work and defining community priorities, particularly from the perspective of young people. One emerging priority is the provision of accessible spaces for youth activities. Following discussions with Cllr Skelton and Catherine Bann, Neighbourhood Coordinator, TL reported the panel is exploring the possibility of replicating successful youth club models such as those in Hebden Bridge.

TL arranged a working group, including representatives from Todmorden Together, the Youth Panel, and others, to develop a plan under the umbrella of the college for a youth club.

TL reported interest and support from Calderdale, and the panel considered various avenues for funding, including potential events or outreach to local businesses. The goal is to establish a lasting legacy that connects with Town Deal projects and addresses community needs. TL committed to finding the time to finalise plan and move forward with securing funding.

GM suggested contacting schools and do surveys about youth provision.

b. Communications (Frankie Mullen)

Since the last Board meeting, the communications group gathered for a creative workshop focused on raising visibility of the Town Deal across the community. The communications team is now developing materials for the launch of the delivery phase by the end of March, aiming to clarify the purpose of the Town Deal and engage residents. Plans include banners, a digital screen at the TIC, website updates, and a new e-newsletter. The group is considering a print piece for autumn and will seek input from the communications group on design and wording options.

There is an increase in press coverage, and partnership working with the projects is running smoothly. Looking ahead, the communications team are exploring wider regional communications strategies. Additionally, PW and FM met with Alan from Tod Connect to discuss revitalising business engagement efforts.

The Chair asked FM if communications get effected by pre-election restrictions on publicity or is the Board able to remain independent with communications and release external material when requested? FM responded that whilst we cannot platform members of the Board who are also elected members, we should be able to refer to the Board, and quote other community and private sector members. FM said she will be seeking further advice, to ensure that this approach is acceptable.

The Chair proposed to bring together KB, Alan Rogers from Tod connect, and FM to look at how we can further engage local businesses and invite small businesses to stay updated, and positive. Some successful approaches have been used in other towns led by RS, including a breakfast event, to bring businesses together and develop some town wide activity.

Councillor Helen Brundell asked about the communications strategy and if there is also engagement with Tod Chat, as the Town Board's own current social media account is mainly positive, whereas in Tod Chat there will be more feedback. FM said the strategy is to control and consolidate our own communications and profiles across all platforms, and not to proactively engage in other interactions, at this stage. However, FM and her team stay fully aware of the chats and correct any inaccuracies through responses on our own profiles, and on the website, and this works well.

GM highlighted the overlap in the sustainability panel and the community energy company and then asked if the communications strategy for the panels could encompass outcomes like the community energy company. FM responded that as a bi-product of the Sustainability Panel, this could potentially be covered within content developed to promote the work of the panels. The work of the panels, FM said, presents a really interesting story for Todmorden, and will play into the communication around the legacy of community/partnership infrastructure seeded in the town. However, we need to be mindful of limited capacity and resource for communications.

Councillor Sarah Courtney highlighted how there are only a small number of negative comments which is positive.

ACTION: FM to return to the Board confirming any communication restrictions required due to local elections.

c. Sustainability (Gareth Marshall)

GM updated the Board on progress, including a useful workshop on public spaces at the Hippodrome and a garden design workshop. Feedback from these will be brought back to the Board.

The Sustainability Panel conducted site visits to the projects, and subsequently, the projects provided their feedback, now waiting on an update from the Project Leads.

GM also found that not all project sponsors have engaged with the work put forward by the Sustainability Panel.

The Chair asked if there is any monitoring of any engagement, GM responded currently have a semi formal report but no responses from this and GM will pick up with project leads.

Community energy project set up and registered with the FCA as a community benefit organisation. Bid placed with CEE fund to do feasibility studies around Todmorden. Engagement with Pennine Energy to gain feedback and lessons learned. Lastly event planning in the summer for climate action and were looking at funding from Culturdale also found Todmorden Town Council are doing something similar and have now worked together.

GM currently in talks with many places in Todmorden with some interested. Solar and retrofitting is the most cost-effective method.

The Chair asked GM if he would like to engage with project partners, GM has spoken with Hippodrome and looking at other projects to engage with if feasibility funds are attained.

ACTION: RS to liaise with GM and project partners to facilitate engagement between projects and the sustainability panel.

d. Events Panel (Esther Ferry-Kennington)

EFK reported that the panel is meeting to agree its role and understand what it can and cannot achieve. This includes considering the crossover between capital investment and town development to maximise the potential of event spaces. EFK and the panel are examining existing event offerings, audience demographics, and fundraising strategies.

The panel will focus on arts, culture, and destination marketing, particularly in making Todmorden an attractive place to live, work, and visit. The team are also planning to reconvene Andrew Kim's event delivery partners group to discuss event mapping, audience engagement, funding, and youth involvement. The aim is to foster collaboration and trust among event organisers to enhance the appeal of the town. Further details on the next steps will be developed with Andrew Kim.

Board members suggested to reach out to other Towns hosting events such as Hebden Bridge and Halifax.

6. Board development (Pam Warhurst, Chair)

The Chair introduced a summary of work with ARUP from a previous Board meeting, highlighting opportunities for Board development.

The Chair asked the Board if they would be interested in creating a programme from this and list some action points from feedback received from the Board. Councillor

Silva Dacre suggested that councillors get involved with businesses and create a relationship with stakeholders.

GM previously wrote about strengthening the relationship with Todmorden Town Council and Calderdale Council. The chair responded about the issue has been picked up and is being worked on.

KW recently learned that the community maybe does not know the purpose of the Board and the community could believe the Board is an extension of the council from her experience at a recent event.

7. Programme update (Rob Shipway)

a. Overview of programme and projects (report attached)

Rob Shipway informed the Board that every two months progress reports are received from all projects. As of January, the main programme wide issues include concerns over slow spending and match funding shortfalls. The National Audit Office has highlighted slow spending nationally, partly due to delayed project starts, funding and cost inflation. RS reported the Programme team has asked projects to provide full details of match funding by March 14th. A further issue highlighted was the need to defray expenditure by 31st March 2026, noting that the programme's two highest-profile projects are forecast to end in March 2026, posing potential risks.

Detailed spending projections are unavailable due to ongoing project development. Project updates indicate mixed progress.

- Active Todmorden is progressing well but faces match funding challenges.
- Todmorden Town Hall is progressing well.
- Todmorden Community Learning Hub is on track to deliver on time and within budget.
- Riverside requires further detail on match funding requirements.
- Public Places is progressing but is 'red-flagged' as it is projected to complete March 2026.
- Hippodrome faces significant match funding gaps.
- The bandstand elements of Centre Vale Park is progressing well having secured £250,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Work is progressing on the MUGA, tennis courts and bowling pavilion. Options for developing the conservatory and war memorial area are still being explored. The Chair asked about if the MUGA is going ahead and RS confirmed this.
- Provisional costs for the Enterprise Centre indicate a shortfall in grant against costs. The design team are working to refine and reduce costs.

8. Any other business

RS informed the Board that consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan will commence on February 12th and run until March 25th. The details will be shared once the link is

published. Although the results won't be available for our next board meeting on March 29th, we can invite the team leading the consultation to provide updates.

Action: ZA to share the link for consultation.

9. Date and venue of the next meeting

The date and venue of the next meeting will be the 11th of April 2024, at Todmorden Community College.