

Todmorden Pride



Thursday 4th February

Golden Lion, Todmorden

Present: James Gregory
Doug Blenkey
Peter Cockcroft
Chris Edwards
Cynthia Murray
Lynne Midwinter
Simon Brearley
Shaun Murray

Chair

In attendance: Ian Gray

Cllr Magareta Holmstedt
Cllr Anne James
Cllr Ian Cooper
Cllr Amanda Bryne
Cllr Hilary Myers
Lindsay Smales
Cllr Janet Battye
James Allison
Louise Harrison

*Head of CMBC Economy and Environment
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Todmorden Town Council
Todmorden Town Council
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Todmorden Town Council*

*Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Chair, Upper Calder Valley Renaissance
Upper Calder Valley Renaissance*

Apologies: Anne Lee
Anne Holdsworth
Louise Castro
Gillian Connolly
David Storah
Malcolm Birkett
Alan Fiddling
Sheila Greenwood
Mary Clear
Alan Darwin

Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

*Secretary
Vice Chair*

Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Chair: James Gregory

Note Taker: Louise Harrison

Minute	Discussion	Action
160/02/10	Welcome The chair welcomed all to the meeting and all present introduced themselves to Ian Gray, who, as the recently appointed head of Economy and Environment at Calderdale Council attended the meeting.	

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161/02/10	Minutes of the Last Meeting Minutes of the meeting, 17 th September 2009 Proposed: Chris Edwards Seconded: Doug Blenkey. There were no matters arising.	
162/02/10	<p>As the meeting was for the purpose of Todmorden Pride members discussing matters relating to Todmorden with Mr Gray, it was agreed that each person present would have the opportunity to question him about his remit within CMBC.</p> <p>Mr Gray spoke about his career to date and said that he had worked both in the private and public sector and had a passion for urban and rural renaissance. He worked at Yorkshire Forward as part of the Market Towns Initiative and realised the importance of Town Teams as partners with local authorities and Regional Development Agencies in investing in places.</p> <p>He stressed that regeneration and redevelopment are not the same thing and that the 'Total Place' holistic approach of places being important, rather than projects, is the way forward. He also said that he intends to be in post for five years. He stated that his areas of responsibility within his directorate are: Regeneration, Housing and Environment, Planning and Highways and Engineering.</p> <p>The chair said that Todmorden Pride was a regeneration body and that their impetus is to improve the town. His major concern was the progress of Bramsche Square and the possibility of more supermarkets in the town. The plans for a Netto supermarket opposite the bus station were, he hoped, the chance for the bar to be raised for the quality of the design of the building. The chair expressed concern that there was no general planning overview for the whole of Todmorden.</p> <p>He showed the meeting the John Thompson report along with a collection of development plans and said that another supermarket would kill the town.</p> <p>Cllr Holmstedt requested that Mr Gray speak to Todmorden Town Council and stressed that the market was crucial for the future of Todmorden. Mr Gray agreed that markets are economic drivers and very important for specialisation.</p> <p>Each person present then spoke to Mr Gray :</p> <p>Cllr Holmstedt who said that the marketing of Todmorden by CMBC's Tourism department needed improving to exploit its tourist potential. Mr Gray responded by saying that Todmorden needed to establish its Unique Selling Point and work towards a diversifying economy.</p>	

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Cllr Anne James had already expressed concerns regarding a particular site in Cornholme in a letter to Mr.Gray prior to this meeting. She said that Walsden and Cornholme were gateways to Todmorden town centre and suggested site visits be made to see what improvements could be carried out.

Cllr Janet Battye said that she had high hopes of architectural standards being raised and asked how Mr Gray could assist in this aim.

Mr Gray replied that there should not be a practice of grabbing developers for the sake of it and there needs to be a cultural change in planning within the Local Development Framework.

Simon Brearley observed that it appeared to him that staff at the council were often overwhelmed with work and there appeared to be a lack of cross agency working.

Mr Gray agreed that again, cultural change is necessary and that dynamic people are needed. This was he said, high on his agenda.

Shaun Murray spoke about the tourist agenda which he said was not visible and that opportunities had been missed, especially with regard to mountain biking. He also said that although Todmorden was closer to Manchester, many of the workers in the media industry relocating from there moved to Hebden Bridge.

Mr Gray said that work is progressing on the tourist agenda and said that priorities for visitors and types of visit needs focus; whether it is day trippers or overnight stays.

Lindsay Smales referred to the UCVR vision document and the UCVR Tourism Action plan and asked where the coordinated strategy and the funding and support were for the whole of Todmorden. He said there is no vision of what Todmorden is for and asked: are we at the mercy of change or in control of it? The Leeds City Region, of which Todmorden is part, is to be the next big thing he said, but Calderdale is described as being isolated or peripheral.

Mr Gray said he sits on the development board and sees city regions as important and said that a framework is needed and the involvement of partners.

Cllr Hilary Myers said that the jewel in Todmorden's crown is the town's market and that Incredible Edible Todmorden is the 'arrow in the bow.' If IET could be firmly linked to the market that might become a tourist product and the skills building projects being planned will eventually create employment.

Mr Gray spoke of his experience of how training and skills building can help to change the mentality of a place and suggested raising the profile of the market by making it an Incredible Edible Market.

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The chair interceded at this point to press again for a dedicated officer at CMBC to work in Todmorden. Mr Gary said that looking at Todmorden should be from a joined up perspective of Housing, Transport and Planning and that he could not afford to place one person in the town. was frustration in the town because of a lack of progress.

He again stressed the need for a culture change in the approach to regeneration. The chair said that with present planning needs in Todmorden coordination was needed. Lindsay Smales said that there was frustration in the town because of a lack of progress.

Lynne Midwinter said that there is need in the town for accommodation for businesses and that whilst the market and IET were a huge factor in drawing people to the town many of the shop fronts were in a poor and embarrassing condition. She said that the third Made in Tod event for which the Business Association had produced leaflets, would be on the 26th of February in the Town Hall.

Cllr Ian Cooper said that the Regeneration and Planning department at CMBC were speaking to each other and that a feasibility study for the Town Hall had been produced.

Cynthia Murray, on behalf of the Tourist Information Centre said that the TIC had for the last twenty years tried to promote the town and that she wanted it to look better than it does now.

Peter Cockcroft said Todmorden is the ultimate community town and that a Compulsory Purchase Order and demolition of the Night and Day building in the centre of the town is needed for improvement.

Lindsay Smales said that a community consultation was very important for the people of the town to have a say in future plans. Chris Edwards asked that good links with CMBC be forged with a joined up approach being taken.

Doug Blenkey said he was encouraged by Mr Gray's view of 'Places not Projects' and that this needs looking at as a whole. He said that he was concerned about commerciality and the impact of the results of redevelopment. He referred to the debate about the resurfacing of the canal towpath and pointed out that we don't care **how** it gets done, but that the job just gets done. He said that the success or failure of what Ian Gray oversees will be our heritage.

The chair thanked Mr Gray and all those attending and asked whether Thursdays continued to be the best evening for Todmorden Pride to meet. He said that he would arrange meetings dates for 2010.

The meeting ended at 9 pm.

163/02/10

Date and Time of Next Meeting - To Be Advised