

Hebden Bridge & Mytholmroyd Town Development Board Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held 15th August 2024

Hebden Bridge Town Hall 6pm till 8pm

Attendees

Councillor Katie Kimber
Councillor Sarah Courtney
Councillor Rebecca Boden
Councillor Israr Ahmed
Councillor Durrans
Councillor Scott Patient
Councillor Sue Slater
Carol Stow
Angie Mossman

Others in attendance

Darren Thomas
Rob Shipway
Zakariya Ali

1. Introductions and Apologies

Apologies were received from Adrian Gill.

a. Declarations of Quorum

The meeting was declared quorate.

b. Declarations of interest

Cllr Daniel made a declaration of interest as she sits on the national autistic society.

2. Matters arising

Councillor Courtney provided an update on the car parking concerns. Ward councillors police and others. WYCA and others invited to attend a public forum about the car parking after concerns. Contractor has caused the hold ups. Will go on all other Facebook channels and other advertising platforms 4th of September is the expected date.

Councillor Rebecca highlighted an issue with collaboration between teams it is about messaging and reassurance as currently does not feel like this. Councillor Courtney explained the lack of current resource available.

AM discussed finding who the key stakeholders are and if there are road maps we can look at also are they communicating such as the highways team in Calderdale Council, Environmental Agency and WYCA. She also suggested that projects that

have a direct impact on other projects that are also ongoing there is a need for communication. All the frustration online has come from people not being visible and communicated to. Bring roadmaps for SIP and the other together.

Councillor Patient highlighted that there are gaps in organisations and these can cause issues.

Councillor Courtney suggested to take the paper from AM to discuss with Kate McNicholas and get into contact.

Councillor Rebecca suggested that the town requires active management as she felt that the town is getting out of control. We need Calderdale talking to us and working alongside.

3. Business forum CIP discussion

4. Festive lighting

The festive lighting budget for Hebden Bridge has been cut due to Calderdale Council's financial reductions. Councillor Rebecca highlighted that £30,000 per year is spent on festive lights, and the council is locked into a three-year contract, which also includes Hebden Royd. Local business Viking Trees is donating a tree for the festive decorations, ensuring that there will still be a tree and that plans are proceeding as expected.

Last year, the total cost was £13,000, with Hebden Royd contributing £3,000 for decorations. Calderdale paid £15,000, and Hebden Royd paid an additional £5,000. CS requested a detailed review of the costs and noted that the lights belong to Hebden Royd.

Action: Councillor Rebecca will look at payments for festive lighting and come back to the Board.

Councillor Durrans informed the Board that the cost is the health and safety.

5. Board action plan/ future priorities

Councillor Boden suggested that the obstacles hindering progress towards these goals should be identified and addressed to facilitate forward movement. Councillor Ahmed noted that communities progress at their own pace and require time, with the Chair adding that managing expectations is key. Councillor Courtney emphasised that the council operates within a work schedule, but the lack of resources slows progress. Councillor Ahmed highlighted issues relating to funding and the availability of personnel.

AM informed the Board about MI Rewards, an app-based initiative designed to encourage local spending. A meeting with a presentation outlined its benefits, including financial advantages over the current gift card scheme. The system involves registering a gift card with the app, where points are automatically accrued. Gift cards can be purchased to support local businesses. Setting up the loyalty scheme costs £3,000, with an additional £5,000 for the gift card scheme and £400 per month for maintenance. Business owners are not charged to participate, and the estimated cost to set up and run the scheme for over a year is £25,000. The scheme offers insights into popular items and spending trends and provides discounts on

other services. Efforts are ongoing to identify a suitable funding source within grant criteria.

The Chair noted that Brighthouse BID had successfully sold many gift cards, particularly to teachers from outside the area, and thanked them for their support. Councillor Rebecca suggested utilising the gift card system without the app. AM clarified that a terminal is required for the system to function as intended. Councillor Patient inquired about forming a BID, but AM advised that a business forum would not be appropriate, recommending a town council as the owning body. Councillor Rebecca proposed contributions from businesses to cover the £400 monthly running cost. Councillor Ahmed queried the practicality of a loyalty scheme, suggesting a stamp card system might be simpler.

CS highlighted concerns about accessibility, noting that some people prefer using cash over electronic cards and requested information on whether a loyalty card could function without a phone. Representing the disability forum, CS also discussed the need for a Changing Places toilet in the town. The town council has committed to providing such facilities during events, and an accessibility map of the town centre, featuring details like drop kerbs, could attract more visitors. Councillor Rebecca mentioned discussions about repurposing derelict car park toilets, with potential funding from WYCA.

Action: The business forum will contact the National Autistic Society to discuss placing posters in business windows where disabled individuals can receive assistance.

AM noted that if the disability forum provides an estimated cost, CS will present it to the forum for consideration. Councillor Courtney recommended commissioning Visits Only Limited to address accessibility issues beyond the scope of the disability access forum, including better signage and clear pavement markings. Hanging signs outside shops were also suggested as a helpful measure.

Hebden Royd Town Council, which owns the town cinema, had aimed to improve disability access. However, the proposed changes, which involved entry through the fire exit, were deemed financially unfeasible and insufficient for full accessibility. CS mentioned that previous suggestions from the disability access forum had worsened access. Additionally, placing chairs outside the butcher's shop was suggested to provide seating for elderly visitors.

6. Car parking

Discussions focused on alleviating parking and accessibility issues, particularly utilising spaces that are underused during weekends. Organisations with facilities that close over the weekend were identified as potential resources. Councillor Courtney highlighted Calwreck as an example, noting it is a large car park with ample space that remains closed on weekends. As a high-end, globally recognised company, this presents an opportunity for them to add social value. Discussions are needed to determine whether they would charge for use or provide access free of charge.

CS referenced the Tour de France event, during which the car park was utilised when residents were required to move their cars. Other suggested spaces included Riverside School, Victoria Works, Calwreck, and GP surgeries, although some of these have added barriers limiting access. In towns hosting festivals, parks are sometimes used for parking, with proceeds going to charity. Councillor Courtney proposed engaging with private sector partners, citing Wickes in Halifax, which rents out parking spaces at a low cost. Councillor Scott suggested exploring the use of platforms like JustPark. Councillor Courtney noted that a system could be established to cover maintenance and insurance costs.

RS raised the possibility of using the station car park for a park-and-ride system, involving private bus operators. This could utilise £1,000 for community transport to assess whether it generates revenue or incurs a loss, which would provide data to inform operators about the viability of such a scheme. The station car park was specifically mentioned as a potential location for this initiative.

Councillor Scott cautioned against creating a car park system that overlooks Mytholmroyd. CS inquired whether Cargodale is still operational and suggested introducing a cycle rickshaw for transport along the route. RS requested that all projects under consideration be finalised, with any additional, deliverable projects submitted to RS for review. The Mytholmroyd masterplan will be discussed at the next meeting.

7. AOB

No other business was discussed.

8. Date of next meeting

22nd October 2024