

HEBDEN BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of General meeting held on 13th January 2014 at Hebden Bridge Town Hall

1. PRESENT:

Bob Deacon (chair)	
Andrew Bibby (Company Secretary)	
Cllr Janet Battye (minutes)	Calderdale MBC
Hilary Chadwick	SOS Hebden Bridge
Stephen Curry	HB Community Association
Cllr Mick Davies	Blackshaw PC
Cllr John Dunford	HeptonstallPC/HBWA
Myra James	Sustainable Transport/IEM
Gerard Liston	Hope Baptist
Maureen Ludlam	Walkers Action Group
Lesley Mackay	Sustainable Transport Gp UCVR
Cllr Richard Marshall/Julie Wilby	Mytholmroyd Cty Centre
Judith Milner	Calder and Colne Rivers Trust
Diana Monahan	HB Local History Society
Dave Nelson	HB Piano Festival etc etc
Ralph Nimman	SOS Hebden Bridge
Deborah Rolland	SOS/Soup Dragon
Susan Quick/Tony McGovern	Enabling Theatre
Anthony Rae	Friends of the Earth
Jenny Shepherd	Incredible Edible Mytholm
Nick Shields	Visitor Economy Strategy gp
Nina Smith	Sustainable Transport Group
Cllr Jonathan Timbers	Hebden Royd Town Council
Dr Michael Trobe	HBCA
Ian Vickridge	

2. APOLOGIES:

David Fletcher; Hannah (Handmade Parade)

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Cllr Janet Battye declared an interest as a member of the Shadow Combined Authority

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Agreed as accurate and no matters arising

5. COMMUNITY INVESTMENT: Mark Simmonds (Co-operative Business Consultants) reminded us of the history of Co-op heritage in Hebden Bridge from the early days of the Co-op movement and the importance of the alternative democratic arrangement with 1 member 1 vote. Industrial and Provident Societies have been the usual form of

governance. There has been increased interest in the co-op approach in recent years as a form of running a business or organisation which is exempt from some financial regulations in relation to raising investment capital. Two recent local examples are **Pennine Community Power** and **Fox and Goose pub**. Between them they've raised about £200k from local people to invest in these two community enterprises. There is growing interest in **community energy** with 30 hydroschemes and an upsurge in biomass. There's also interest in **community shops** like that in Midgley, and **farms** using community investment. The financial advantage for people to put their money into this type of community scheme is that it is profitable: up to 50% of the investment is tax-free and interest can be payable to the shareholders but with the usual warning that shares can go up and down. An advantage is that pure speculation is not possible as with shares available for anybody to buy. Capacity to do the preparatory work is a potential issue: the Fox and Goose has required fortnightly meetings.

In answer to questions raised: Friendly Societies (the original structure) pre-dates Industrial and Provident Societies. 3-C Co-op went into the Phone Co-op and some people have struggled to find what happened to their shares. There are other applications for this such as self-build housing. This form of community investment may be a way of plugging a gap left by the public sector no longer having funding and being able to do some things. An estimate is that there may be £1m available in Hebden Bridge from local residents to invest in community schemes. There is the potential for community benefit from this approach.

Mark was thanked for his presentation

It was AGREED that the Management group would discuss this at their next meeting to consider next steps

6. PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS FOR VISION 2020 PRIORITIES:

6a: Shared Space. Town Centre Improvements. Possible public meeting (incl discussion of Sustainable Transport). There have been visits to Poynton and questions about whether this could be tried out in Hebden Bridge. There are serious questions about the implications for sensory disabled people (for whom the presence of the kerb is useful: and it helps to stop the flow of water into buildings) but it seems that traffic can be slower and flow more easily. This could be an extension of pedestrianisation started with the Traffic Review although Council Highways Officers may have reservations. There is consideration of the best location for "shared space" – could this be the junction of Hope St/Commercial St etc ?

It is important to continue to press for the station to be an **integrated transport hub** with support from the WY Transport Plan (and funding). Ian Gray, the Director of Economy and Environment, is supportive of it and planning work needs to continue.

Next meeting of the group is on Feb 24th: Sally Jones (who lives locally and works for Bradford) has just joined: she is knowledgeable about Air Pollution and this will be discussed at this meeting – especially the section through the town centre from Machpelah to the Co-op.

6b. Housing: Community Land Trust ? This is an approach being developed in places like Stroud with development land being held in perpetuity in a community trust. Work is beginning on this, including the Self-Build Housing groups, identifying possible sites for community-led affordable housing. This could become a valley-wide initiative: there is a meeting shortly with representatives from Tod Pride to explore this further, possibly using land from public owners (eg Council, Health Service etc). Parish councils also want to be involved with this. There needs to be a link with the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure active community involvement in identifying potential building land.

6c. Valley Road Improvements (and planning applications): The intention has been to make more effective use of the old Fire Station site, possibly incorporating it with the Council's Valley Road car park. The planning permission (for retail/housing) expired on 24 Dec 2013 and it seems that another application will be made shortly given that Sainsburys have apparently taken a lease on it (see the noticeboard). Hilary Chadwick addressed the meeting: she is leading the work of the SOS group in opposing a supermarket on this site. There are a number of possible alternative uses: eg a combined development with the Council, including carparking; extension of the Health and Care services; housing, inclusion of public space. Again the future use/designation of this site needs to be considered by and included in the Neighbourhood Plan. The use of Neighbourhood Development Orders might be needed. It was suggested that the next meeting of the Management Group might examine the option of submitting an alternative plan for the site.

6d. Transport. Station Car park. See above

6e. Visitor Economy: Nick Shields reported back on this: there had been a useful report on the emerging strategy and discussion at the Management Board meeting. The working group is getting going and has talked to about 20 people so far. They are exploring ideas about what would make HB a better place for the future. They are identifying the assets and attractions of the Town: including its canal, walking, festivals, cycling and mountain biking, arts, accommodation, ecotourism, heritage and shopping. They have outlined a 6-month plan to pull this together with key objectives and targets, starting with collecting and analysing research, identifying key stakeholders, holding focus group meetings, and hosting a "brand" day to understand what it being projected,

6f. Market(s) Development: JB reported and circulated notes of an initial meeting with Calderdale Officers (a further one is planned for early April). The Portas money was based on developing the market: key practical aspects of this are with smaller "gazebo"

stalls for Bridge Gate, and improving the electricity supply (so that noisy generators aren't needed). A bid for this money is being put together.

The first approach being explored for developing the market, rather than a wholesale move into a different, more central base, is to develop the street markets and Sunday markets in Lees Yard, and monitor the success/impact of these. Noted that it is not possible to easily change the days of the current market because many stallholders have commitment elsewhere on other days.

6g. Calder Holmes Park and Memorial Gardens: Noted that Charlie and Kim are currently taking a break, so discussion of this is deferred to the next meeting.

6h. Accessibility Issues: The general approach to this is to mainstream the thinking about access for people with disabilities who SQ represents on this group. We do need to think about what the issues are for people who have disabilities – comprising at least 11% of the population but many more on a temporary basis. It is important to make the local environment safe for all to get about.

6i. Low Carbon (Community Energy Trust: There has not been a meeting recently but AR reported briefly on the work of Calderdale Energy Future, and JM (Rivers Trust) that the regulations for hydro schemes has now been reissued.

7. OTHER ITEMS:

7a. HRTC Neighbourhood Plan: JT reported that the Town Council has now got started on this, with the aim of linking it into Calderdale's Local Plan. Local Parish Councils have been contacted and invited to be part of it: the response has been very positive to date. The Town council will be contacting Calderdale Council to access the help available from them.

There has been a walk through the Town Centre. A priority is to prevent the loss of greenbelt with the challenge of finding sites for the expected additional housing. The Plan is not likely to be completed until 2016. There will be public consultation resulting in the required referendum as the plan is finally drafted. There is a question about whether some of the Community Infrastructure Levy would be allocated to Parish Councils with plans.

7b. Federation of Independent Businesses: AB reported on the desire of the Partnership to find a new way of linking and supporting businesses locally, with the intention of an initial meeting in March/April. JB anticipates that some help should be available from Calderdale Council using the DEFRA grant to help with community flood resilience.

7c. Incredible Edible Mytholm: JS reported that Calderdale Council have given planning permission for a supermarket and hotel on this site, but the work of IEM continues as they try to work with the site owners with a view to acquiring some/all of the site – possibly for an ecohotel. The site was valued before pp was granted and is now being revalued.

They are working on a "Plan B" because from their work they have identified the potential for 5 businesses which could cross-subsidise each other and may not need to be on the same site.

7d. Supermarkets: Noted that Mytholm Works and Valley Rd have already been discussed.

7e. Packhorse Cobbles: The application by the new owner of the Hole in the Wall to use this area has been turned down by the Town Council so should not now proceed.

7f. Hope Baptist: GL reported that the current renovation work on this important chapel is now complete and the interior is looking very good. There is to be a formal service on Jan 25th, followed by a community day in February.

Next meetings:

Management Board meetings Feb 3rd and March 3: 7.30pm

General meeting: April 7: 7pm

Both meetings to take place in the Town Hall