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Date: 29th May 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Blackwood Town Centre Management Group** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Friday, 5th June, 2015** at **2.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

Chris Burns
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

| | Pages |
|---|-------|
| 1 To Appoint Chair. | |
| 2 To Appoint Vice Chair. | |
| 3 To receive apologies for absence. | |
| 4 Declarations of interest. Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers. | |

To receive and note the following minutes: -

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5 Minutes of meeting held on 20th March 2015.

1 - 4

To receive and note the following updates: -

6 Steps Blackwood Gate Retail Park Update.

7 Beach Party Update.

8 Red Lion Update.

9 Toilet Block Update.

10 Cleaning of Artwork.

11 Road Closure Update.

12 Choose the High Street Past & Present.

13 Blackwood Town Centre Audit - April 2015.

5 - 10

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, Mrs P. Cook, D.T. Davies, N. Dix (Chair), C. Hawker, K. James, A. Rees (Vice Chair) and T.J. Williams

Town Councillors Ms C. Erasmus, Ms Z. Hammond and Mr J. Hold (Clerk)

Other Organisations

Mr C. Cook, (Caerphilly Access Group)

Mr H.T. Edwards, (Blackwood Retail Partnership)

Mr A. Oldman, (Blackwood Shopping Precinct)

Inspector M. Smith, (Gwent Police)

Inspector M. Thomas, Gwent Police

The Manager, (Asda Blackwood)

The Manager, (Blackwood Library)



BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, 20TH MARCH 2015 AT 1.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillors: N. Dix, K. James, T. Williams

Together with:

Councillor C. Erasmus (Town Councillor), Z. Hammond (Town Councillor), Mr J Hold (Clerk),
Inspector M Thomas (Gwent Police)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager),
A. Dallimore (Team Leader - Urban Renewal & Conservation), A. Jones (Complaints Officer -
Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors: D.T. Davies, C. Hawker.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES OF MEETING (17TH OCTOBER 2014)

Mr. J. Hold was present but not noted in the minutes as attendee.

The previous minutes were taken as read, subject to the amendment above.

4. PAKING IN TOWN ENFORCEMENT UPDATE FROM GWENT POLICE

This item was moved up the agenda. Inspector Thomas confirmed that he has increased the number of CSOs in the town centre over the last three months and 60 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued on the High Street and immediate streets off High Street. In addition to this a number of drivers were given advice and requested to move on.

CSOs are out daily but it was noted that this is only one of their responsibilities.

The group were advised that there are two long-term options for parking issues. Firstly, the Council could take on enforcement & issuing of tickets and secondly, physical changes to the High Street, which is unlikely due to a lack of funding schemes.

Inspector Thomas confirmed that there have been very few complaints received in relation to parking and can only confirm two, which were not in relation to the High Street.

The group discussed parking on “zigzag” lines and Inspector Thomas confirmed that anyone parked on these “zigzags” would receive a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Mr Highway discussed with the group that it should be recognised the improvements that Traffic Orders have made to improve parking in the town. He thanked the Inspector and his CSOs for their work.

Inspector Thomas discussed the Thursday night road closure and wished to consult with the group as to whether or not the road closure was still required.

The group discussed whether or not to stop the road closure and all agreed that there was concern over stopping it fully in case there is a re-occurrence of cruisers and they may need to close it again.

Cllr. Dix and Cllr. James both expressed concerns in relation to ending the road closure and questioned whether it could be reinstated easily if the problem of car cruisers started again. Inspector Thomas noted that the Traffic Regulation Order is now in place, which means that the closures can commence again immediately if required. The situation will be monitored if the road closure ceases and will be reinstated if problems arise.

The group were advised that there is a meeting on the 14th April at 2pm in Blackwood Police Station where a number of people have been invited including Bob Campbell from Traffic Management, this matter will be discussed at that meeting.

5. UPDATE ON FOOTPATH FROM BLACKWOOD GATE RETAIL PARK

Mr Dallimore updated the group on the steps to the Blackwood Gate Retail Park and confirmed that the works are due to start on the 23rd March 2015 and will take approximately 5 weeks to complete.

There will be new concrete kerbs and galvanised painted handrails installed and a red brick wall built. The group were advised that there will be some disturbance but this will be kept as minimal as possible.

The Chair thanked Mr Dallimore for the update and also those involved in the project.

6. UPDATE ON FLORAL PROVISION FROM TOWN COUNCIL

It was agreed to continue with floral baskets throughout the town. The Town Council is waiting to receive revised figures from Parks Services in relation to the costs of using plastic baskets instead of the wired baskets and the costs of watering the plants.

The Group agreed that once the revised figures were received it would be discussed further.

7. BUSINESS REPORT – BLACKWOOD 2014

Mr Highway presented the report to the group and provided an overview on how the town has performed during 2014. Mr Highway wished to thank Mr Hudson and his team for the events staged in the town. Football figures were discussed and all agreed that there has been a large increase since the Maxime Cinema opened in July.

The Chair confirmed that there is a change in the town since the cinema and will see more changes once Costa coffee opens giving more of a family feel to the town. The Chair thanked Mr Highway, Mr Wilcox and Mr Dallimore for all of their hard work.

8. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET @ CHRISTMAS ANALYSIS REPORT

Mr Highway presented the report to the group and discussed how the voucher scheme was a success for both retailers and the public.

The group were advised that throughout the five towns 90 offers were made and hopefully this will increase in future. Looking through the survey carried out, 91% of retailers stated that they would consider taking part in a future scheme.

From the feedback provided by the public, it is apparent that the key to a retailer's voucher being used was in the strength of the offer. Members were advised of comments listed in the appendix of the report.

Mr Highway and Mr Wilcox were thanked for the report and all their hard work.

9. CHOOSE THE HIG STREET PAST & PRESENT

Mr Highway presented the report to the group and advised that this new initiative aims to re-connect people with their local town centre.

This new scheme was discussed with the group and members were asked if they had any old photographs, which could be used in a library exhibition.

The initiative will include an exhibition of archive photos held at the library in each town centre, as part of this there will be a competition where people will have the opportunity to win two £50 "Love to Shopping" vouchers. On the entry form people will be asked to complete the sentence – "I choose the high street because..." It is hoped to use some of these sentences in the future to further promote the town centres.

10. BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE AUDIT FEBRUARY 2015

Mr Highway confirmed that with regards to the former Poundstretchers building the Council is in talks with the agent to establish another use for the site as Poundstretchers do not wish to return to the site.

The group discussed the toilet block and Mr Dallimore confirmed that there is no further news other than the area is being monitored to ensure safety and tidiness.

Mr Highway informed the group that the issue of rat problem at ASDA has been resolved and the ASDA Manager wished to pass his gratitude to Mr Lyndon Ross and his team for dealing with the issue.

Mr Highway confirmed that antisocial behaviour in the bus station is being monitored and the café owner is working with the Council. The Chair confirmed action will be taken and hopefully we can continue to work well with the café owner.

Mr Dallimore confirmed that the damaged artwork railings have been repaired by NCS and has been paid for by Urban Renewal budgets.

There were no further issues raised on the audit.

The meeting closed 14:52 p.m.

CHAIR

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BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – APRIL 2015

| DATE | ISSUE | DEPARTMENT | PROGRESS UPDATE |
|----------|---|--|---|
| 02/10/13 | <p><u>Poundstretcher Site High Street</u> Officers continue to work with Poundstretchers in an attempt to rebuild the store and enable the retailer to return to the town centre.</p> | <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | <p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>10/2 The property's agent is querying whether the lease with Poundstretcher has expired. If it has, a new tenant will need to be secured before the building is rebuilt. 20/3 An update was provided to the TCMG.</p> |
| 17/04/14 | <p><u>Car Cruisers ASDA Car Park, Cliff Road</u> ASDA management has noticed an increase in the number of car cruisers congregating in the car park during the evenings. This is leading to an increase in litter and anti social behaviour.</p> | <p>Police <i>Ins Thomas</i></p> | <p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>8/12 The road closure could not be enforced for 3-4 weeks due to problems with the signage. However, no increase was seen. Police Officers have offered to assist ASDA in issuing Banning Orders. 10/2 An improvement has been noticed. 20/3 An update was provided to the TCMG.</p> |
| 16/05/14 | <p><u>Toilet Block Enhancement High Street</u> At the TCMG, it was agreed that proposals would be developed to try and improve the appearance of the disused toilet block on High Street. Should the proposals be approved, the Area Forum Budget may fund the scheme.</p> | <p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> | <p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>8/12 As the toilet block is on private land, works are hindered. However, a funding bid will be looked at. 10/2 Funding is still being sought. 20/3 An update was provided to the TCMG.</p> |

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| 19/05/14 | <p><u>Choose the High Street Campaign</u> <u>Town Centre</u> Town Centre Management will be launching a summer campaign across the five managed towns, encouraging consumers to “Choose the High Street”. The scheme will run over the summer period and use several forms of media.</p> | <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | <p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>17/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 Updates to the TCMG are ongoing. The project is aimed to be long-term, with more initiatives launching in 2015. 10/2 This aspect of the campaign has now finished. Issue Closed 10/2</p> |
| 03/09/14 | <p><u>Christmas Event</u> <u>Town Centre</u> Planning is underway for a Christmas event in the town centre, which is scheduled to take place on 6th & 7th December 2014.</p> | <p>Business Enterprise Support Team <i>Paul Hudson</i></p> | <p>6/10 Planning for the event continues. 17/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 The event was well-received and an update will be provided to the TCMG. 10/2 The event was successful and well-received. Issue Closed 10/2</p> |
| 03/09/14 | <p><u>“Choose The High Street @ Christmas” Campaign</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The “Choose the High Street” campaign is being extended to the Christmas period to encourage people to shop locally this Christmas. The scheme will involve a voucher scheme that all retailers will have the opportunity to sign up to.</p> | <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | <p>6/10 A Christmas voucher booklet is being produced for the five managed towns. Retailers are currently being invited to submit offers. 17/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 40,000 voucher booklets have been distributed across the Borough. A supporting YouTube video is launching on 8/12. 10/2 The scheme was successfully completed. Issue Closed 10/2</p> |

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| 04/09/14 | <p><u>Rat Problem</u> <u>ASDA, Cliff Road</u> The ASDA store manager has complained of a rat infestation on the Council-owned steps leading from the Miners' Institute to the retail park.</p> | <p>Environmental Health <i>Lyndon Ross</i></p> <p>Parks Services <i>Derek Price</i></p> | <p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>8/12 Monitoring and baiting is ongoing. 10/2 The area has been baited. Additional complaints have also been received from Aldi. Sewer baiting will be taking place over the next few months. 20/3 An update was provided to the TCMG.</p> |
| 16/10/14 | <p><u>Installation of Christmas Illuminations</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The lamp post banners are due to be removed for the Christmas period to make way for the festive illuminations that will be placed on lighting columns throughout the town centre.</p> | <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | <p>8/12 The illuminations have been installed and no issues have been raised 10/2 Complete. Issue Closed 10/2</p> |
| 17/10/14 | <p><u>Road Closed Signage</u> <u>High Street/Pentwyn Road</u> The "road closed" signage that activates on a Thursday night appears to be malfunctioning and is remaining illuminated when the road closure is no longer in force.</p> | <p>Transportation <i>Clive Campbell</i></p> | <p>8/12 A new radio unit is required, which has been ordered via the signage manufacturer. 10/2 The signage is now fully operational. Issue Closed 10/2</p> |
| 17/10/14 | <p><u>Antisocial Behaviour</u> <u>Interchange Bus Station</u> A number of instances of antisocial behaviour have been recorded in and around the bus station. The Community Safety Unit runs a multi-agency group, which includes the Police, and will monitor the situation as part of its ongoing work.</p> | <p>Community Safety <i>Kath Peters</i></p> <p>Police <i>Ins Thomas</i></p> | <p>8/12 The next problem-solving group meeting is being held on 10/12. The toilets will be swabbed to confirm reports of drug use. 10/2 The problem-solving group continues to meet. The issue of homeless people is being dealt with separately. 20/3 An update was provided to the TCMG.</p> |

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| 05/12/14 | <p><u>Paving Repairs</u> <u>Hall Street</u> Repairs are required to the paving in the area where the recycling unit was once housed. The pavements were damaged during the unit's removal.</p> | <p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> | <p>10/2 The works have been carried out. Issue Closed 10/2</p> |
| 05/12/14 | <p><u>Reinstatement of Bollard</u> <u>Hall Street</u> A vehicle has struck a bollard in Hall Street, which now requires re-setting.</p> | <p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> | <p>10/2 The bollard has been reinstated. Issue Closed 10/2</p> |
| 23/01/15 | <p><u>Choose the High Street – Past & Present</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The next phase of the Choose the High Street campaign will start in 2015. Entitled 'Choose the High Street - Past & Present' the campaign will aim to reconnect people with their local town centre.</p> | <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | <p>10/2 This is a new initiative for 2015. Archive photographs are currently being sourced and a public prize draw is being arranged. 20/3 An update was provided to the TCMG.</p> |
| 23/01/15 | <p><u>Banner Changeovers</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The banners on the street lighting columns will be installed during February throughout the town centre.</p> | <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | <p>10/2 The brief has been sent to the contractors and the banners are due to be in place by 26/2.</p> |
| 28/01/15 | <p><u>Broken Artwork</u> <u>Gordon Road / High Street</u> Following a road traffic accident the artwork railing at the location has been severely damaged in the impact of the crash.</p> | <p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> | <p>10/2 A replacement is being sourced. 20/3 An update was provided to the TCMG.</p> |
| 04/02/15 | <p><u>Street Sign Resetting</u> <u>Gordon Road</u> A street sign on Gordon Road is damaged and one of its legs requires resetting.</p> | <p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> | |

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| 04/02/15 | <p><u>Cleaning of Artwork</u> <u>Gordon Road</u> The artwork outside the Library has mould forming on the glass panels and the surrounding area requires cleansing.</p> | <p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> | |
| 04/02/15 | <p><u>Repainting of Benches and Bollards</u> <u>Woodbine Road</u> The paintwork on the benches and bollards on Woodbine Road is worn and damaged, which requires repainting.</p> | <p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> | |
| 19/02/15 | <p><u>Faded Road Marking</u> <u>Wesley Road</u> A give way marking on the highway near Argos is worn and requires repainting.</p> | <p>Transportation <i>Clive Campbell</i></p> | |
| 19/02/15 | <p><u>Broken Window</u> <u>113 High Street</u> The Town Council has reported a broken front window on the vacant property. Entry to the building does not appear to have been gained.</p> | <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | |
| 20/03/15 | <p><u>Retailer Security Briefing</u> <u>Maxime Cinema, High Street</u> Gwent Police Officers are arranging a security briefing for retailers on 14th April. The briefing is being delivered by Special Branch and will make retailers aware of potential terrorist activities.</p> | <p>Gwent Police <i>Ins Thomas</i></p> <p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p> | |
| 24/03/15 | <p><u>Cleaning of Toilets</u> <u>Interchange Bus Station</u> A complaint was posted on the Council's Facebook page that the public toilets at the Interchange Bus Station are in need of an urgent clean.</p> | <p>Cleansing <i>Tony White</i></p> | |

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| 31/03/15 | <p><u>Companies Canvassing for Business</u> <u>O/S The Market Place, High Street</u></p> <p>The Chair of Blackwood Retail Partnership has complained that companies are using High Street at the entrance to the Market Place without consent to canvas for business. Mr. Edwards has received numerous complaints from shoppers who are unhappy about this activity.</p> | <p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> | |
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