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(Tel: 01443 866213 Email: highway@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 26th October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Risca Town Centre Management Group** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Monday, 2nd November, 2015** at **5.00 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 Appointment of Chair.	
2 Appointment of 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: -

A greener place Man gwyrddach



5	Minutes of previous meeting held on the 30th June 2015.	1 - 4
To receive and note the following updates: -		
6	'Choose the High Street Christmas Campaign'.	5 - 10
7	Risca Canal Overview.	
8	'Choose the High Street Past & Present'.	11 - 16
9	South East Wales Town Centre Vacancy Report.	17 - 20
10	Town Centre Promotional Spaces.	21 - 24
11	Risca Town Centre Audit - October 2015.	25 - 28

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, D.T. Davies, N. George (Chair), Mrs P. A. Griffiths, K. James, Ms P. Leonard, R. Passmore (Vice Chair) and D. Rees

Town Councillors C. Edwards (Risca East), B. Hancock (Risca Town Council), D. Hobbs (Risca East), M. Parker (Risca Town Council), Robert Campbell (Clerk - Risca Town Council) and Mr G. James (Clerk Risca East)

Other Organisations

Inspector Carl Williams, Gwent Police



RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON TUESDAY, 30TH JUNE 2015 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

N. George, K. James

Together with:

C. Edwards (Risca East), Mr R Campbell (Clerk Risca Town Council), Insp C Williams (Gwent Police)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), A. Jones (Clerk)

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

This item was deferred to the next meeting as there were insufficient members to elect the Chair. Councillor George as existing chair was asked to proceed with the meeting.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

This item was deferred to the next meeting as there were insufficient members to elect the Vice Chair.

3. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: D. T Davies (Consultee), P. Griffiths, R. Passmore, D. Rees, H. Dupre (Risca Town Council), B. Hancock (Risca Town Council), Mr A Dallimore (Team Leader Urban Renewal)

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE PREVIOUS MINUTES OF MEETING 23RD JUNE 2015

Mrs Hazel Dupre should have been noted as present in previous meeting.

The minutes were taken as read.

6. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET UPDATE

Mr Highway presented a Power Point presentation to the group on the progress of the "Choose the High Street Past & Present Campaign."

Members were advised that Mr Wilcox has been working with the local schools to participate in the artwork displays.

The 'street galleries' have been well received, since the photo boards were displayed in local shop windows people have expressed an interest in purchasing them.

The photos in the street galleries are available on the CCBC website, Flickr Page and exhibitions will take place in libraries in each town.

Mr Highway thanked Mr Wilcox for all of his hard work.

Cotton bags have been handed out in libraries to promote the campaign and a competition to win shopping vouchers has been launched.

7. PARKING ISSUES ENFORCING 30 MINUTES PARKING & BUS STOP BAYS

Inspector Williams provided the group with an overview of the restructuring within the police authority, the changes of duties and responsibilities and explained how his area now covers Bargoed and Risca.

Inspector Williams informed the group that with regards to illegal parking there is zero tolerance, whilst a number of tickets issued there is not enough resources to monitor the 30 minute parking in the bays.

Officers have been told that they must take action if they see cars parked on zig-zag lines or in bus stops or parked illegally.

The group discussed that there are a number of vehicles parked in the bays all day by retailers. Inspector Williams confirmed that he can provide support by sending out letters to retailers stating that they are not to park in these spaces.

Inspector Williams was thanked and advised any help would be appreciated.

Mr Highway informed the group that he will arrange for a notice to be placed in the Town Centre Gazette to reinforce the 30 minute bay.

8. CUCKOO STATUE UPDATE

Mr Dallimore sent his apologies for the meeting. Mr Highway advised that the area has not been cleaned up and this will be raised with Mr Dallimore.

9. RISCA TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – APRIL 2015

The new footbridge rear of Lidl – Mr Highway advised that there has been active dialogue with legal representatives of all parties, but this is ongoing.

The chair advised that there has been positive comments on the toilet block mural but has noticed that the ladies & gents signs have been covered. Mr Wilcox advised that he will look into it.

The group discussed the installation of Christmas illuminations and Mr Highway advised that Ceri Mortimer, former Clerk, used to arrange the installation of the lights. Mr Campbell was not aware of this and would need to check the budget.

There were no further issues raised on the audit.

The group discussed the attendance at these meetings and agreed that there is a need to encourage members to attend and also look to see if there are any constituted groups that could join the group.

Mr Highway advised members that if they could see if any groups were interested in attending to pass his details on to them.

The meeting closed at 2.45 p.m.

CHAIR

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RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 2 NOVEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET' CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides information on the 'Choose the High Street' Christmas campaign, which will be run in the County Borough's five principal town centres in the weeks leading up to Christmas 2015.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In 2015, the 'Choose the High Street' initiative will once again feature a Christmas campaign directed towards encouraging people to spend in their local town centres over the festive period. Retailers across the five managed town centres will have the opportunity to submit an offer to be included in a printed voucher booklet. The scheme is designed to support local businesses by offering them the opportunity to participate in a coordinated campaign under the 'Choose the High Street' banner.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Business and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 'A Prosperous Caerphilly' is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's 'Single Integrated Plan'. The Implementation of the Unique Places model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Over the last three years, in the lead up to Christmas the Council's Town Centre Management Team has run a discount scheme in various formats as a way to assist local retailers generate sales in the lead up to Christmas. Last year, a printed voucher booklet was introduced under the 'Choose the High Street' banner. This booklet proved very popular with the public and retailers alike and so will be replicated again this year. The overall aim of the scheme is to help local businesses capture consumer spend during this crucial trading period. Retailers in the five managed town centres will have the chance to submit an offer for inclusion in the booklet with the level of discount being set by the retailer at their discretion. However, the onus remains on the retailer to participate and ensure that their offer is strong enough to incentivise customers. The scheme is free for all retailers and as in previous years any retailer in the County Borough who expresses a wish to participate will also be included.

To support the campaign a number of different marketing platforms will be utilised these include:

- Newspaper adverts
- Social media engagement on the Council's *Facebook / Twitter* accounts;
- A *YouTube* video will be produced by Council's Communications Team;
- Article in the Council's *Newsline* which is delivered to every household in the County Borough;
- Dedicated web page on the CCBC corporate website.

The voucher booklets will be give out in a number of locations in each of the five town centres including:

- Caerphilly: Library / Customer First Centre / Visitor Centre / Whetherspoons - The Malcolm Uphill;
- Blackwood: Library / Customer First Centre / Blackwood Miners Institute / Tidal Stores / Maxime Cinema;
- Bargoed: Library / Customer First Centre
- Risca: Library / Customer First Centre;
- Ystrad Mynach: Library.

4.2 In addition, every school in the County Borough will be offered a supply of Voucher booklets.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the council's EqIa process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The campaign is funded through the Town Centre Management core budget.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 This report is for information only.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Andrew Highway, Town Centre Development Manager
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration & Planning
Cllr. K. James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable
Development
Allan Dallimore, Team Leader Urban Renewal
Paul Hudson, Marketing & Events Manager
Hayley Lancaster, Senior Communications Officer
Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager

Appendices:
Appendix 1 'Choose the High Street' Christmas Voucher Booklet Cover

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CHRISTMAS

Retail Vouchers

Talebau Manwerthu

Y NADOLIG



Choose the
HIGH STREET
Town Centres • Unique Places

Dewiswch y
STRYD FAWR
Canol Trefi • Mannau Unigryw

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RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 2ND NOVEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET 'PAST & PRESENT' – ANALYSIS REPORT

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides an overview of the 'Past & Present' initiative which was run over the summer months by the Council's Town Centre Management team.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This summer, a new element to the successful 'Choose the High Street' campaign was launched. 'Past & Present' focused on re-establishing people's connection with their local town centre. The initiative consisted of library exhibitions in each of the five managed town centres, street galleries of historic photos displayed in shop windows and online *Flickr* galleries of archive photos.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 "Prosperous Caerphilly" is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's "Single Integrated Plan". The Implementation of the *Unique Places* model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The 'Choose the High Street' - Past & Present campaign ran for five months from April – August inclusive and focused on two areas. Firstly, the past element used archive photographs to evoke memories and re-established people's connection to a particular place. Secondly, through asking people to think about why they choose the high street, people were encouraged to appreciate and value their town centre in the present day. The overall objective of the initiative was to encourage people to invest economically, socially and emotionally in the future of their town centres.
- 4.2 The aims of the scheme were:
- (a) To maintain town centre footfall over the summer period;
 - (b) Improve people's sense of connection with their local town;

- (c) Generate renewed interest in town centres as a location for business;
- (d) Encourage retailers to participate in the life of the town centre;
- (e) Increase footfall in town centre libraries;
- (f) Engage with local schools.

4.3 Library Exhibitions

4.3.1 As part of the initiative five exhibitions were held in town centre libraries, these featured historic photos of the town centre, artwork by local schools, car sticker and shopping bag giveaways, as well as the chance for local people to win high street shopping vouchers. The entry form for the competition included three questions:

1. "I choose the high street because..."
2. If someone wants to start a new business in xxx town centre what should it be?
3. In addition to shops what other facilities would you like to see located in the town centres?

4.3.2 Question 1 - Some of the reasons people gave for choosing the high street were:

- "It's central to where I live"
- "To meet friends have a chat & get out of the house"
- "It's convenient"
- "I like the personal touch"
- "Diverse range of small shops"
- "Easy bus routes"
- "Sense of community"
- "Less stressful than travelling into the city"
- "I like to shop in actual shops"
- "Close to home and I like the personal touch and friendliness"
- "Supports local business and is accessible"
- "Feel the quality of potential purchases"
- "Park easily, access local amenities & chat to old friends"
- "Its historical"
- "Parking is easier"
- "I haven't got a car"
- "It promotes small independent business"
- "I value meeting and talking to people"
- "Atmosphere / Good vibe"
- "Local people need jobs"
- "Staff are very polite"
- "Walking distance from my home"
- "Its familiar and I meet people I know"
- "It's the best"
- "I can walk into town"
- "More friendly and has the personal touch"

4.3.3 Question 2 - Businesses that respondents felt were missing from the various town centres were:

- **Ystrad Mynach** – Clothes shop, shoe shop, antiques/second hand shop, electrical shop, child-friendly restaurant.
- **Bargoed** – Sports shop, fashion shop, hardware – store, newsagent, stationer, shoe shop, indoor market, children's clothing shop, bakery, mobile phone shop, book/DVD shop, more national retailers, veterinary surgery.
- **Risca** – Gym, clothing shop, baby shop, drycleaners, gardening/hardware/DIY store, coffee lounge, toy shop, internet café, cocktail bar, family pub restaurant with children's play area, knitting wool shop, haberdashery, Jewellery/make up store, craft shop, fish mongers, national frozen food retailers.

- **Blackwood** – butchers, men’s & women’s clothing shop, specialist food shop, electronic recycling shop, children’s play centre, homeware/kitchen shop, arts & crafts shop, bakers and greengrocers.
- **Caerphilly** – bookshop, ladies & men’s clothing shop, small supermarket, DIY store, butchers/delicatessen, toy shop, vegetarian café, Welsh organic food shop, holistic therapist, cinema and baby shop.

4.3.4 Question 3 - The final question was included at the request of the Council’s Strategic Planning Team and forms part of the wider consultation process on the new Local Development Plan.

Number of Entry Forms for the High Street Voucher Competitions				
Ystrad Mynach	Bargoed	Risca	Blackwood	Caerphilly
6	15	35	17	62

4.3.5 The five exhibitions took place as follows:

- Ystrad Mynach - April (two weeks)
- Bargoed - May (four weeks)
- Risca - June (four weeks)
- Blackwood - July (four weeks)
- Caerphilly – August/September (eight weeks)

4.4 **Canvas Shopping Bags**

4.4.1 The Council supports Welsh Government’s long term commitment to reduce the amount of single use carrier bags. A total of 5000 ‘Choose the High Street’ - Past & Present canvas bags were given out free across the five town centres and also in the Urdd Eisteddfod. The provision of these canvas shopping bags encourages shoppers to use a reusable bag, rather than buy a new plastic one.

4.5 **Street Galleries**

4.5.1 ‘Street Galleries’ were set up in each of the five town centres prior to the exhibitions. Each Street Gallery comprised of a series of black and white photos from the Council’s Winding House archive, these were displayed in shop windows throughout each town centre. The images were printed on Foamex board in an A3 format and set in a picture frame design.

4.6 **Social Media**

4.6.1 The Council’s Social media platforms *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Flickr* and *YouTube* were all utilised in various ways to raise awareness of the scheme and in particular to generate interest in the library exhibitions.

4.7 **Web Site**

4.7.1 A dedicated page for the Past & Present initiative was created on the Councils web site. The page attracted 1,753 views over a five month period (Data correct 22nd September 2015).

4.8 **Flickr**

4.8.1 The increasingly popular social media portal Flickr was used to show whole albums of historic photographs.

Flickr Gallery Data					
	Ystrad Mynach	Risca	Caerphilly	Blackwood	Bargoed
Photo with Highest No: of Views	Merged Photo – Bedwlyn Road	Merged Photo – Palace Cinema	Merged Photo – Cardiff Road	Merged Photo - Zaks	Merged Photo – Hanbury Square
	719	718	705	858	685
<i>Data correct 1st September 2015</i>					

4.9 Schools Involvement

- 4.9.1 Local Primary Schools were encouraged to get involved in the exhibitions by submitting children's artwork. The number of schools who actually took part was disappointing, with only artwork from Ty Sign Primary School in Risca being displayed.
- 4.9.2 At Blackwood Comprehensive School, as part of their Business Studies Course, students entered a 'Dragons Den' style competition to find the best new business idea. Many of these ideas related to businesses that could potentially be started up on Blackwood High Street. A short YouTube film was made by the Council's Communications Team in which a number of the students and their teacher explained how the potential new businesses could work in Blackwood town centre.

4.10 Urdd Eisteddfod

- 4.10.1 During the Urdd Eisteddfod, Town Centre Management took space within the Council's corporate marquee to promote the 'Choose the High Street' brand and explain the 'Past & Present' initiative. The event was seen as an important opportunity to highlight to visitors the individual character of each of the five principal towns and encourage them to visit the town centres whilst staying in the area for the Urdd Eisteddfod.

4.11 Conclusion

- 4.11.1 The 'Past & Present' initiative succeeded over a five month period in helping to re-establishing many peoples sense of connection with their local town centre. The library exhibitions were visited by large numbers of people and very well received; with a number of local residents requesting to buy the photos and maps displayed (these were provided on request at no cost).
- 4.11.2 The questionnaires which were completed provided a number of important pieces of information. It was particularly encouraging to read the positive reasons why people choose to shop on their local high street. Some of the key themes which emerged were: the desire to support local businesses, the convenience of the town to where people live and the importance of the social aspect of visiting a town centres. The businesses that people indicated they would like to see return to the high street showed that there is a still an appetite for more traditional retail outlets which have been lost as the retail sector has evolved. These responses identified some potential gaps in the retail offer in the town centres, which will assist officers as they work with new start-up businesses.
- 4.11.3 The Street Galleries proved to be extremely popular with retailers who enthusiastically engaged with the initiative and displayed photos prominently in their shop windows. Many commented on the positive responses that the photo had drawn from their customers.

4.11.4 The only disappointing aspect to the initiative was the lack of participation by local Primary Schools despite strenuous efforts by officers to encourage schools to become involved. However, the work with pupils at Blackwood Comprehensive as part of a Business Studies course offered an unexpected opportunity to engage pupils in the debate about how high street evolve in the future.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the council's Eqla process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The campaign is funded through the Town Centre Management core budget.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 No there are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 This report is for information only.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Andrew Highway, Town Centre Development Manager
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration & Planning
Cllr. K. James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development
Allan Dallimore, Team Leader Urban Renewal
Rhian Kyte, Team Leader Strategic Development & Planning
Hayley Lancaster, Senior Communications Officer
Nick Rutter, Website Editor
Paul Cook, Team Leader Sustainable Development & Planning
Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager
John Poyner, Connecting Communities Manager

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RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP - 2ND NOVEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: SOUTH EAST WALES TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides information on the property vacancy rates within principal town centres across South East Wales, compared with Caerphilly County Borough's figures.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report gives details of the percentage of vacant units within principal town centres across South East Wales, including Caerphilly County Borough's principal towns. The report also provides information on the proactive steps that the Council's Town Centre Management Team takes to keep the number of vacant units low.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 "Prosperous Caerphilly" is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's "Single Integrated Plan". The implementation of the *Unique Places* model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Model of Town Centre Management

- 4.1.1 The Council's model of Town Centre Management – "Unique Places" – aims to enhance and maintain the principal town centres by focusing existing Council and partner organisations budgets and resources on issues affecting the town centres. These resources are redirected by using the Environmental Audit process, which is considered by the Town Centre Improvement Group. The results are town centres that look and feel well-maintained for visitors and businesses alike.
- 4.1.2 Unique Places also utilises a variety of platforms to actively market and promote the principal town centres. Examples of this marketing include lamp column banners, business window stickers and investment portfolios.

4.2 Vacancy Rates Across South East Wales

4.2.1 Vacancy rates within Caerphilly County Borough's town centres are collated and monitored by the Council's Strategic Planning department. Data from neighbouring Authorities is also collected (when available) for comparison analysis purposes.

4.2.2 The current vacancy rate data for Caerphilly County Borough's towns and comparable town centres in other Local Authority areas are outlined in the table below:

Town	Local Authority Area	Vacant Units (%)	Survey Date
Abergavenny	Monmouthshire	5	October 2014
Porthcawl	Bridgend	8	2013
Cowbridge	Vale of Glamorgan	8	2014
Caerphilly	Caerphilly	9	October 2014
Risca	Caerphilly	9	October 2014
Chepstow	Monmouthshire	9	October 2014
Aberdare	Rhondda Cynon Taf	9	January-March 2015
Pontypridd	Rhondda Cynon Taf	9	January-March 2015
Ystrad Mynach	Caerphilly	10	October 2014
Ebbw Vale	Blaenau Gwent	11	April 2015
Barry	Vale of Glamorgan	11	2014
Maesteg	Bridgend	12	2013
Blackwood	Caerphilly	14	October 2014
Bridgend	Bridgend	14	2014
Porth	Rhondda Cynon Taf	14	January-March 2015
Merthyr Tydfil	Merthyr Tydfil	16	April 2014
Mountain Ash	Rhondda Cynon Taf	18	January-March 2015
Tredegar	Blaenau Gwent	19	April 2015
Tonypany	Rhondda Cynon Taf	19	January-March 2015
Bargoed	Caerphilly	22	October 2014
Abertillery	Blaenau Gwent	23	April 2015

4.2.3 Based on the data above, it can be seen that three of Caerphilly's town centres (Caerphilly, Risca and Ystrad Mynach) are in the 10 lowest ranking towns for vacancies. These three towns also have vacancy rates below the regional average of 13%, with Blackwood only slightly above at 14%.

4.2.4 In an attempt to keep vacancy rates as low as possible, a variety of methods are utilised as part of the Town Centre Management function.

4.3 Retail Property Directory

4.3.1 One aspect of the Town Centre Management process is the Retail Property Directory, which is an online directory that lists all of the properties for sale or to let in the managed town centres. This resource is used to direct potential new businesses to Caerphilly County Borough's town centres and allow existing businesses to look at additional or larger premises in which to expand. The overall aim of the Directory is not only to attract new businesses, but to keep vacancy rates within our town centres as low as possible by filling units quickly.

4.4 Town Centre Improvement Group & Environmental Audit

4.4.1 The Town Centre Improvement Group (TCIG) is an Officer-based working group, which meets every eight weeks, with a primary objective to act as a mechanism of action. The TCIG comprises of representatives from various departments including: Highways, Planning, Cleansing, Environmental Health, Parks and Regeneration. Managers who attend the TCIG have staff and budgetary responsibility enabling them to make key decisions within the meetings.

4.4.2 The town centre Police Inspectors and the Town Centre Management Group Chairs attend the TCIG. The TCIG meetings revolve around an Environmental Audit for each town, which is compiled by Town Centre Management. The audit contains problems and issues within each town centre for which the Council and partner organisations have responsibility. The Audit process ensures that the Council's commitment to maintain, enhance and develop each town centre is conducted in an accountable and transparent way. The Environmental Audit also provides a record for town centre stakeholders.

4.5 **Investment Data**

4.5.1 The Town Centre Management Team has paid for a variety of investment data for each of the managed towns to support potential businesses. The data includes Drivetime Maps (which show the population figures within a 10, 20 and 30 minute journey radius), CACI Market Summary Reports (these show each town's demographic and its place in the "retail hierarchy") and the Experian FootFall electronic pedestrian counting system data.

4.5.2 In addition to the detailed investment information, each town centre has been given its own brand, giving the town centres and the businesses therein a sense of place and identity. The branding assists in identifying each town as a unique place within the County Borough, making it stand out to potential business investors.

4.6 **Lamp Column Banners**

4.6.1 In each of the managed town centres, lamp column banners are placed on street lighting columns within the principal town centre boundary. The banners are not only to look attractive and add to the vibrancy of our town centres, but serve to make drivers and pedestrians aware that something has changed along their route – they are now in the heart of one of our town centres.

4.6.2 The lamp column banners are primarily generic welcome designs, but each town centre has a bespoke set of banners that bear its individual branding. Banners are also produced for regular events (such as The BIG Cheese in Caerphilly) and for long-term campaigns such as "Choose the High Street" (see below). A large stockpile of designs has been established over time, which allows for each banner design to be displayed in each town centre just once every few years, adding to the vitality that they bring. At present, the banners are displayed for 9-months of the year, with three changeovers per annum. The banners are removed during the winter months to protect them from inclement weather and allow for the Christmas illuminations to be erected.

4.7 **"Choose the High Street" Campaign**

4.7.1 In 2014, the "Choose the High Street" campaign was launched by Town Centre Management. Intended to be a long-term campaign, the initiative aims to encourage shoppers to "choose the high street" for at least part of their weekly shop and for businesses to "choose the high street" rather than opening in out-of-town locations.

4.7.2 As part of "Choose the High Street", a "Pop-up Shop Guide" was created. This short and simple guide provides advice on how to open a short-term business in a vacant commercial unit. The intention behind the guide is to support businesses or community schemes that want to test the market before making a long-term commitment to a shop unit. Whilst it is hoped that a short-term use would prove successful and become long-term, even a short-term use adds vibrancy to a town centre. A pop-up shop is also beneficial to landlords as it provides a tenant and highlights their property to potential long-term tenants.

4.7.3 During Christmas 2014, another element to the campaign was added with the "Choose the High Street @ Christmas" voucher booklet. This customer loyalty scheme attempted to encourage local spend in the vital Christmas period, with retailers invited to participate. The voucher booklet was given out free to the public in the weeks leading up to Christmas and tried to support local businesses during the busy Christmas trading period to reduce potential business closures and increase footfall in the town centres.

4.8 Town Centre Events

- 4.8.1 Each year, the Council's Events & Marketing Team stages summer and winter events in each of the town centres. Not only do the events add an element of diversity and vibrancy to the town centres, but they also promote the towns to people who may not otherwise visit. This promotion is invaluable in increasing footfall to support existing businesses, but also to highlight Caerphilly County Borough's town centres to potential new businesses.

4.9 Conclusion

- 4.9.1 The economic climate continues to prove very challenging for businesses within our town centres. Although the Local Authority cannot prevent businesses from closing, by taking the proactive steps outlined above to look after our town centres, support existing businesses and attract inward investment from new businesses, Caerphilly County Borough Council will strive to keep its town centre vacancy rates as low as possible.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report as the activities outlined are incorporated into existing budgets.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personal implications associated with this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been incorporated into this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

10. STATUTORY POWER

- 10.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration & Planning
Cllr. K. James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development
Allan Dallimore, Team Leader Urban Renewal
Andrew Highway, Town Centre Development Manager
Rhian Kyte, Team Leader Strategic & Development Planning



RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP - 2ND NOVEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: TOWN CENTRE PROMOTIONAL SPACES

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides details on the promotional spaces within the managed town centres, which are commercially rented by Town Centre Management.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following consultation with several internal departments, Town Centre Management has had approval to create promotional spaces within each of the managed town centres. The spaces are hired commercially to companies, charities and community groups for the promotion of events, causes or services. All income generated is used to offset the cost of the Town Centre Management function as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 "Prosperous Caerphilly" is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's "Single Integrated Plan". The implementation of the *Unique Places* model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 In 2011, an internal working group called the "Streetscene Inception Group" (SIG) was established to look at several factors across our town centres, including creating a café culture and introducing dedicated promotional/event spaces within each of the town centres. The group consisted of Officers from Urban Renewal, Town Centre Management, Licensing, Legal, Highways and Transportation.
- 4.2 Upon agreement to introduce promotional spaces within the town centres, the following locations were agreed as suitable sites:
- Blackwood – "The Dragon Circle" area between ASDA supermarket and Blackwood Retail Park;

- Caerphilly – The area at the foot of the steps to The Twyn Community Centre, adjacent to The Twyn Car Park;
- Risca – The newly created event space within Tredegar Grounds Park.

4.3 Since the initial three locations, two additional sites have been incorporated:

- Bargoed – Hanbury Square on the new public realm;
- Ystrad Mynach – Siloh Square on Bedwlwyn Road.

4.4 In order to make the sites fit for purpose, some adaptations needed to be made. These works included the installation of removable bollards in Blackwood and the installation of a pop-up feeder pillar (electricity supply) in Blackwood and Caerphilly. Feeder pillars and bollards were also included in the works schedule for the schemes in Bargoed and Risca. At present, there is no feeder pillar in Ystrad Mynach. The cost of these works was covered by the central Urban Renewal department's budget.

4.5 Once the site locations were agreed, a set of terms and conditions was drafted by the SIG. The purpose of these terms was to control the use of the sites and to protect the Authority against any damage or personal injury caused by the site users. The terms have been revised as needed and a copy of the current terms and conditions is attached as Appendix One.

4.6 Following approval by the SIG, control and management of the sites was passed to Town Centre Management and Urban Renewal. A booking process was then developed by Town Centre Management. The booking process consists of users completing a booking form, signing the aforementioned terms and conditions and sending a copy of their Public Liability Insurance and a risk assessment for the proposed activity.

4.7 The promotion of the sites, availability queries and all aspects of the booking process are currently carried out by the Assistant Town Centre Manager post-holder and form part of the overall Town Centre Management function.

4.8 To date, a wide variety of users have booked the site. These have included local companies promoting their business, charities raising awareness of current causes, national companies (such as Talk Talk) advertising their products and services and community groups running family-friendly activities. The sites are also used by internal CCBC departments; for example, the St. David's Day concerts take place on the sites, Cleansing has utilised the sites to encourage recycling and Social Services have promoted their Volunteering Service.

4.9 At present, there is a charge of £50 per day to use the site, which is reduced to £25 if the user is a registered charity. This fee is extremely competitive compared to neighbouring town and city centre promotional sites, which has made CCBC's sites very popular, particularly with national companies. The cost of hire is reviewed at the start of each financial year and may need to be increased in line with reduced budgets as part of the Council's MTFP.

4.10 During the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years, income generated by hiring the sites was used to complement the existing Town Centre Management function by paying for items such as lamp column banners or the Christmas discount voucher booklet scheme, once the costs of maintaining the sites had been covered. However, since April 2015, the income generated has been used to offset the cost of the Town Centre Management department in line with the MTFP.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Since April 2015, the revenue generated from renting the promotional spaces in the town centres has been used to make a saving against the cost of running Town Centre Management as part of the Council's MTFP.
- 6.2 The cost of maintaining the sites is covered by the Town Centre Maintenance Budget, which is held by the Urban Renewal department. All costs associated with the in-built power supplies are paid by the core Town Centre Management budget.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personal implications associated with this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been incorporated into this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

10. STATUTORY POWER

- 10.1 Local Government Act 2000.

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RISCA TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – OCTOBER 2015

DATE	ISSUE	DEPARTMENT	PROGRESS UPDATE
28/11/11	<p><u>New Footbridge</u> <u>Rear of Lidl</u> It was agreed to use Section 106 monies from the Tesco superstore development in order to build a footbridge across the river linking the store with the existing town centre.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>16/6 Discussions have stalled and other options need to be considered by Senior Officers. Either the money for the bridge is used elsewhere in the town centre or CCBC builds a cheaper bridge itself. Reports will be produced in due course. 30/6 An update was provided to the TCMG. 18/8 Options for the S.106 monies are being considered internally at present.</p>
26/11/13	<p><u>Banners alongside Highway</u> <u>Tesco Extra, Pontymister Industrial Estate</u> At the TCMG, Members expressed concern about the number of advertising banners that have been attached to railings on the access road to the Tesco Extra store & KFC restaurant.</p>	<p>Regulatory Planning <i>Tim Stephens</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>16/6 Officers continue to carry out enforcement wherever possible. 18/8 Any banners that could be enforced have been removed. Officers continue to monitor.</p>

26/11/13	<p><u>Condition of Land around Cuckoo Artwork Pontymister Industrial Estate</u> Concern was expressed by local Members at the TCMG in relation to the condition of the land surrounding the cuckoo artwork, which is in an unkempt condition.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> <p>Cleansing <i>Tony White</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>16/6 Cleansing is ongoing and Officers are looking at whether the landowner's legal obligations to cleanse the site can become more regular. 18/8 A Keep Wales Tidy project will shortly be taking place to improve the appearance of the area.</p>
23/01/15	<p><u>Choose the High Street – Past & Present 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>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>16/6 This element of the campaign will continue over the summer. The Library exhibitions have been well-received to date. 30/6 An update was provided to the TCMG 18/8 The scheme has been well-received by the public. Reports will be presented to the TCMGs in due course.</p>
10/02/15	<p><u>Parking Enforcement O/S Spar, Tredegar Street</u> At the TCIG, Cllr. George reported that there are a lot of instances of people parking in the bus stop outside the Spar store. This is leading the buses not being able to pull in, which is causing traffic congestion.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Williams</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>16/6 Police Officers continue to monitor the situation and enforce when possible. 30/6 An update was provided to the TCMG. 18/8 No update could be provided.</p>

02/06/15	<p><u>Uneven Pavement</u> <u>Park Road O/S Terry Howells Builders Merchants</u> A resident has complained that the surface of the footpath is uneven and in need of repair.</p>	<p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	<p>16/6 An inspection took place and no defects that met the intervention criteria were identified. However, the condition of the footway will be closely monitored. 18/8 No update could be provided.</p>
02/06/15	<p><u>Illegal Parking</u> <u>Park Road O/S Moriah Church</u> Cllr. George has noted that vehicles are illegally parking along Park Road, which is making it difficult for large vehicles to drive along the road.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Williams</i></p>	<p>16/6 Enforcement action is ongoing. 18/8 No update could be provided.</p>
02/06/15	<p><u>Weekend Opening of Toilet Block</u> <u>Tredegar Grounds, Tredegar Street</u> The Town Council has agreed to fund the opening of the facility at weekends to enable users of the park to have access outside the core opening hours provided by the Council's Cleansing section.</p>	<p>Cleansing <i>Tony White</i></p>	<p>16/6 Cleansing Officers are working with the Town Council. 18/8 Officers continue to work with the Town Council.</p>
27/07/15	<p><u>Possible Collapse of Footway</u> <u>O/S Risca House Inn, Commercial Street</u> The footway alongside the former Risca House Inn appears to have dropped and may be linked to the structural works taking place on the building.</p>	<p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> <p>Regulatory Planning <i>Tim Stephens</i></p>	<p>18/8 An instruction to adjust the existing level of the footway has been issued.</p>
03/08/15	<p><u>Banner Changeover</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The banners on the street lighting columns will be installed during August throughout the town centre.</p>	<p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	<p>18/8 A brief has been sent to the contractor, with the changeover scheduled to be completed by the beginning of September.</p>

02/10/15	<p><u>Temporary Grit Bins</u> <u>Town Centre</u> Temporary grit bins will be installed in various locations throughout the town centre in readiness for the winter weather.</p>	<p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	
05/10/15	<p><u>Christmas Event</u> <u>Town Centre</u> Planning is underway for the Christmas event, which is scheduled to take place on 5th December.</p>	<p>Business Enterprise Support Team <i>Paul Hudson</i></p>	