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**Date: 27th October 2015**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Ystrad Mynach Town Centre Management Group** will be held in the **Ebbw Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Tuesday, 3rd November, 2015** at **3.15 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

## A G E N D A

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 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 200, the Council's Constitution, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.	
To receive and note the following minutes: -	
3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 14th July 2015.	1 - 4

To receive and note the following updates: -

A greener place Man gwyrddach



4	Choose the High Street Christmas Campaign.	5 - 10
5	Choose the High Street Past & Present - Analysis Report.	11 - 16
6	South East Wales Town Centre Vacancy Report	17 - 20
7	Town Centre Promotional Spaces.	21 - 24
8	Christmas Market Update.	
9	Ystrad Mynach Town Centre Audit - October 2015.	25 - 30

**Circulation:**

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, A. Angel (Chair), D. Bolter, D.T. Davies, K. James, M.P. James and J.A. Pritchard

Town Councillors Community Councillor D. Cushing, Councillor W. David (Gelligaer Community Council) and Ms C. Mortimer (Clerk)

**Other Organisations**

Mr W. Jeff, Tredomen Allotments Association

Mr K. Jones, Ystrad Mynach Partnership

Dr M. Jorro, Rhymney Valley Music Club

Sergeant N. Mancino, Gwent Police

Inspector I. Muirhead, Gwent Police



## YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE ON TUESDAY 14TH JULY 2015 AT 3:15PM

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PRESENT:

Councillors:

A. Angel, K. James, M. James, J. A. Pritchard, D. T. Davies

Together with:

W. David (Community Councillor), C. Mortimer (Gelligaer Community Council Clerk), Inspector Muirhead (Gwent Police), Dr M Jorro (Rhymney Valley Music Club), Mr K Jones (Ystrad Mynach Partnership)

Also:

Mr S Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), Mr A Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal & Conservation), A. Jones (Clerk)

#### 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Mr Dallimore opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Chair. Councillor Allan Angel was nominated and members voted 3 in favour.

Councillor Angel accepted the post and proceeded with the meeting.

#### 2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Councillor Angel asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Councillor Martyn James was nominated and members voted 3 in favour.

Councillor Angel accepted the post on behalf of Councillor James.

#### 3. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: D. Bolter, M. James, E. Aldworth (Consultee), D. Cushing (Community Councillor), Mr A. Highway (Town Centre Manager), Mr P. Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager)

#### 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**5. TO NOTE THE PREVIOUS MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7TH APRIL 2015**

The previous minutes were taken as read.

Mr Wilcox circulated to the group a list of off street parking, which had been requested by Councillor James in the previous meeting.

Mr Wilcox read out the following statement from Clive Campbell in transportation in relation to Siloh Square query raised by Councillor James

'The stop on Siloh Square was established in the late 90s to serve as a single stop for passengers catching buses to Caerphilly as part of a local regeneration scheme. This isn't possible from a stop on Pengam Road.

Urban Renewal has recently funded the installation of a new shelter to replace the previous one. The stop is popular and accessible for passengers travelling from the centre of Ystrad Mynach. If the problem with the location is congestion from illegal parking, then a revised bus stop location is not the answer.

If any member of the TCMG wants to discuss the issue, then I suggest they speak with my colleague Huw Morgan in the first instance. 01495 235089 or [MORGANH@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:MORGANH@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**6. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET PAST & PRESENT UPDATE**

Mr Wilcox 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.

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

The Chair confirmed that feedback in Ystrad Mynach is very positive.

Councillor Pritchard suggested that the campaign could possibly be promoted within the banks by displaying posters. Mr Dallimore confirmed that this could be an opportunity to promote the scheme and will look to pursue this.

Mr Wilcox confirmed that previously leaflets have been left in left in the banks when looking to promote new businesses and this would looked at in the future.

**7. CHRISTMAS MARKET UPDATE**

Mr Wilcox passed on apologies from Mr Hudson. Mr Hudson had provided the following details.

The provisional date for the Christmas Market is Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November. There are 30 stalls and entertainment interested in attending.

The group were advised that the event would cost approximately £4,000. Gelligaer Community Council has contributed £1,500 and there is £1,730 from the area forum budget. Mr Hudson has advised that there is a shortfall but does not think that this will be a problem it could just result in trimming the event down slightly.

Ceri Mortimer asked for clarification on the cost of hiring a stall. The Chair advised that he would check this with Mr Hudson.

Mr Dallimore stated that this was very positive for the town.

## **8. SILOH SQUARE CHAPEL COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATE FROM COUNCILLOR ANGEL**

The Chair advised the group that the work will be starting on Monday to the back of the chapel and passed plans around to the group showing what works will be undertaken.

The group were advised that the mosaic stones that were removed from the square would be used in the seating area.

Ceri Mortimer asked for details of what is planned for the front of the chapel. The chair advised that he would arrange for copies of the plans to be provided.

The Chair asked if the Urdd Eisteddfod bunting that has been removed from the town centre could be returned to the Chapel. Mr Dallimore advised the Chair that he would check with officers to see if they removed the bunting.

Ceri Mortimer raised concern over cigarette ends and chewing gum in the square. Mr Dallimore advised that he will chase this up and Mr Wilcox confirmed that this would be listed on the audit.

Mr Dallimore advised that now the dome has been removed to create more room the area can be utilised for events. The group discussed the possibility of a brass band playing in the square.

## **9. PARKING IN TOWN CENTRE**

Inspector Muirhead advised that the Police are continuing to issue tickets to those who park illegally but not seeing much improvement.

Tickets will continue to be issued but there is no long-term solution.

The Chair asked if there was a possibility for bollards to be placed outside the betting shop opposite the pier head as vehicles park on the pavement here. Inspector Muirhead advised that this would be a highways matter and should be requested direct to them.

The Chair raised an issue with the loading bays and Church Street lines require painting, as the lines are quite faint. This will be referred back to Highways. Inspector Muirhead advised that if tickets issued and goes to court where lines are not visible these tickets would be treated as not valid.

## **10. PENGAM ROAD SPEED ISSUES**

Mr Dallimore informed the group that there is a responsive illuminated sign in place to warn drivers to slow down and make them aware of the 30mph limit.

Inspector Muirhead has been requested to carry out a speed analysis but unfortunately the speed gun is currently being calibrated at HQ. Inspector Muirhead advised that he will carry out the survey and will report back to the group as soon as possible.

**11. YSTRAD MYNACH AUDIT – APRIL 2015**

Mr Wilcox presented the audit report to the group and the following item was raised.

Installation of Christmas Illuminations – Members discussed raising money for the lights. Ceri Mortimer advised that she had spoken to Tom Llewellyn in Street Lighting and had been given approximate costs. Mr Wilcox suggested obtaining a quote from Elsbury Access Platforms who currently install the lamp column banners.

There were no further issues on the audit.

Meeting closed at 16.03m

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CHAIR



## YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 3RD NOVEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET' CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **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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## YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2015

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

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **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.

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

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 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2015).

#### 4.8 **Flickr**

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

<b>Flickr Gallery Data</b>					
	<b>Ystrad Mynach</b>	<b>Risca</b>	<b>Caerphilly</b>	<b>Blackwood</b>	<b>Bargoed</b>
Photo with Highest No: of Views	Merged Photo – Bedwlwyn Road	Merged Photo – Palace Cinema	Merged Photo – Cardiff Road	Merged Photo - Zaks	Merged Photo – Hanbury Square
	<b>719</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>685</b>
<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 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 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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## YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP - 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: SOUTH EAST WALES TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **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
<b>Caerphilly</b>	<b>Caerphilly</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>October 2014</b>
<b>Risca</b>	<b>Caerphilly</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>October 2014</b>
Chepstow	Monmouthshire	9	October 2014
Aberdare	Rhondda Cynon Taf	9	January-March 2015
Pontypridd	Rhondda Cynon Taf	9	January-March 2015
<b>Ystrad Mynach</b>	<b>Caerphilly</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>October 2014</b>
Ebbw Vale	Blaenau Gwent	11	April 2015
Barry	Vale of Glamorgan	11	2014
Maesteg	Bridgend	12	2013
<b>Blackwood</b>	<b>Caerphilly</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>October 2014</b>
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
<b>Bargoed</b>	<b>Caerphilly</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>October 2014</b>
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



## YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP - 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: TOWN CENTRE PROMOTIONAL SPACES**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **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.

Author: Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager  
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Allan Dallimore, Team Leader Urban Renewal  
Andrew Highway, Town Centre Development Manager

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## YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – OCTOBER 2015

DATE	ISSUE	DEPARTMENT	PROGRESS UPDATE
01/07/13	<p><b><u>Repainting of Post Box</u></b>  <b><u>Pengam Road/Bedwlwyn Road</u></b>                      Paintwork on the post box in the town centre is flaking and worn.</p>	<p><b>Town Centre Management</b>  <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>16/6 The work is weather-dependant, but is on the summer schedule of works.                      14/7 An update was provided to the TCMG.                      18/8 Work remains on the summer schedule.</p>
01/07/13	<p><b><u>Repaint Postbox</u></b>  <b><u>O/S Post Office, Penallta Road</u></b>                      The postbox outside the Post Office is worn, requiring fresh paintwork.</p>	<p><b>Town Centre Management</b>  <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>16/6 The work is weather-dependant, but is on the summer schedule of works.                      14/7 An update was provided to the TCMG.                      18/8 Work remains on the summer schedule.</p>
02/06/14	<p><b><u>Illegal Parking</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>                      Cllr. Angel raised concerns with regards to the amount of illegal parking within the Town Centre and the disruption caused.</p>	<p><b>Police</b>  <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>16/6 Monitoring and enforcement is ongoing.                      14/7 An update was provided to the TCMG.                      18/8 Enforcement is ongoing.</p>

25/11/14	<p><b><u>Traffic Congestion Blocking Path of Emergency Vehicles</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b></p> <p>At the TCMG 25/11 members asked the Police examine if their vehicles when engaged in emergency calls, were impeded in their passage through the town centre beyond what was to be expected at such a location.</p>	<p><b>Police</b>  <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>16/6 Monitoring continues, but no issues have been identified to date.  14/7 An update was provided to the TCMG.  18/8 Monitoring and enforcement continues.</p>
23/01/15	<p><b><u>Choose the High Street – Past &amp; Present</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b></p> <p>The next phase of the Choose the High Street campaign will start in 2015. Entitled 'Choose the High Street - Past &amp; Present' the campaign will aim to reconnect people with their local town centre.</p>	<p><b>Town Centre Management</b>  <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>16/6 This element of the campaign will continue over the summer. The Library exhibitions have been well-received to date.  14/7 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>
15/04/15	<p><b><u>New Planters</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b></p> <p>Four large new flower planters have been identified by Officers in Parks Services for Ystrad Mynach town centre. These will be installed on Siloh Square and outside Educ8 where they will act as a barrier to deter illegal parking on the footway.</p>	<p><b>Parks Services</b>  <i>Derek Price</i></p>	<p>16/6 The planters are due to be installed within the next few weeks.  18/8 The new planters have now been installed.  <b>Issue Closed 18/8</b></p>

02/06/15	<p><b><u>Vehicle Speed</u></b> <b><u>Pengam Road</u></b> Residents have complained that the speed of vehicles travelling along Pengam Road is excessive.</p>	<p><b>Police</b> <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p> <p><b>Transportation</b> <i>Clive Campbell</i></p>	<p>16/6 Officers will monitor the speed of traffic on this road. 14/7 An update was provided to the TCMG. 18/8 Cllr. James has requested than a 20mph speed survey be undertaken.</p>
02/06/15	<p><b><u>Illegal Parking</u></b> <b><u>Church Street</u></b> Cllr. Angel has received complaints from local residents that vehicles are illegally parking in the street near the junction with Commercial Street.</p>	<p><b>Police</b> <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p>	<p>16/6 Enforcement will be carried out once the double yellow lines have been repainted. 18/8 No update could be provided.</p>
02/06/15	<p><b><u>Line Repainting</u></b> <b><u>Church Street</u></b> In order to enforce parking restrictions along Church Street, local Police Officers have requested that the double yellow lines be repainted.</p>	<p><b>Highways</b> <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	<p>16/6 The repainting has not yet been carried out, but is on the work programme. 18/8 No update could be provided.</p>
04/06/15	<p><b><u>Grubbing Out</u></b> <b><u>Siloh Square</u></b> There are weeds growing between the pavements on Siloh Square, which require grubbing out.</p>	<p><b>Parks</b> <i>Derek Price</i></p> <p><b>Urban Renewal</b> <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>16/6 This work has been placed on the summer work programme. 18/8 The weeds have been treated and grubbed out. The pavements require repointing sealing, for which a quote is being obtained.</p>
04/06/15	<p><b><u>Litter</u></b> <b><u>Siloh Square</u></b> Litter is accumulating under the benches and in the flower beds around Siloh Square.</p>	<p><b>Cleansing</b> <i>Tony White</i></p>	<p>16/6 Cleansing will be carried out. 18/8 Cleansing is ongoing.</p>

04/06/15	<p><b><u>Weeding of Flower Beds</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>  The flower beds on Siloh Square and outside the Library on Penallta Road require weeding in readiness for the summer period.</p>	<p><b>Parks</b>  <i>Derek Price</i></p>	<p>16/6 The work has been added to the summer work programme.  18/8 The work has been completed.  <b>Issue Closed 18/8</b></p>
04/06/15	<p><b><u>Additional Plants</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>  Gelligaer Community Council has requested that more colourful plants are added to the flower beds throughout the town centre to improve the overall appearance of the area.</p>	<p><b>Parks</b>  <i>Derek Price</i></p>	<p>16/6 Officers will consider the request in due course.  18/8 Additional plants will be purchased in September/October.</p>
04/06/15	<p><b><u>Removal of Chewing Gum</u></b>  <b><u>O/S Spar, Penallta Road &amp; Premier Stores,</u></b>  <b><u>Bedwlwyn Road</u></b>  There is an accumulation of chewing gum on the pavements outside the two convenience stores in the town centre, which requires removal.</p>	<p><b>Cleansing</b>  <i>Tony White</i></p>	<p>16/6 The cleansing has been added to the work programme.  18/8 The work has been carried out.  <b>Issue Closed 18/8</b></p>
25/06/15	<p><b><u>Repainting of Roundabout Markings</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>  Following reports of some “near misses” on the mini-roundabouts in the town centre, an assessment of whether the mini-roundabouts and associated markings required repainting was carried out.</p>	<p><b>Highways</b>  <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	<p>18/8 No update could be provided.</p>
03/08/15	<p><b><u>Banner Changeover</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>  The banners on the street lighting columns will be installed during August throughout the town centre.</p>	<p><b>Town Centre Management</b>  <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>

05/08/15	<p><b><u>Loose Paving Blocks</u></b>  <b><u>Siloh Square</u></b>  Some of the paving blocks on Siloh Square have worked loose and require resetting to secure them in place.</p>	<p><b>Urban Renewal</b>  <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	18/8 A quote for the work is being obtained.
18/08/15	<p><b><u>Tidying of Planters</u></b>  <b><u>Junction of Penallta Road/High Street</u></b>  At the TCIG, Cllr. Martyn James asked if Officers could look at the planters outside Lucas Estates. The planters require some tidying and trimming back.</p>	<p><b>Parks</b>  <i>Derek Price</i></p>	
18/08/15	<p><b><u>Traffic Flow Assessment</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>  At the TCIG, Cllr. Martyn James asked if a traffic flow assessment could be carried out on the mini roundabouts in the town centre.</p>	<p><b>Transportation</b>  <i>Clive Campbell</i></p>	
02/10/15	<p><b><u>Temporary Grit Bins</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>  Temporary grit bins will be installed in various locations throughout the town centre in readiness for the winter weather.</p>	<p><b>Highways</b>  <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	
05/10/15	<p><b><u>Christmas Event</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>  Planning is underway for the Christmas event, which is scheduled to take place on 21<sup>st</sup> November.</p>	<p><b>Business Enterprise Support Team</b>  <i>Paul Hudson</i></p>	

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