



BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP - 16TH OCTOBER 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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