



BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY 28TH JANUARY 2009 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor D.G. Carter – Chairman
Councillor Mrs D.Price – Vice- Chairman

Councillors:

H.A.Andrews, D.T.Davies and A.G.Higgs

Councillor R.Davies – Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Countryside
Councillor L.Whittle – Leader of Council

Together with:

Messrs I. Hill and P. Collins (Bargoed Chamber of Trade), Mr. Cooper (Local Resident) K. Halvey and L. Harding (Bargoed Town Council), J. Coles (Hochtief Griffiths)

R. Tanner (Strategic Planning & Urban Renewal), I. MacVicar (Business Development Manager), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), D. Churchward (Network Management Engineer), C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), R. Murphy and R. Evans (Communities Regeneration), B. Morgan (Project Officer – Urban Renewal), G. Evans (Business Development Manager – Libraries), P. Hudson (Assistant Tourism Officer), J. Elliott (Policy Officer), B. Green (Events Officer) and D. Phillips (Partnership Support Officer).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from L.Tams (Clerk – Bargoed Town Council), Councillor K.V. Reynolds and D. Collins (Bargoed Chamber of Trade)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

2. MINUTES - 5TH NOVEMBER 2008

The minutes of the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group held on 5th November 2008 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

3. Communications and Information (minute no 12)

A local ward member expressed concern that a recent information document distributed to the traders and residents of Bargoed had apparently mis-led them to believe that a Sainsbury's store had been secured for the retail site. He considered that information documents should be agreed with the local ward members first as misleading statements could wrongly raise expectations.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Countryside replied that he was not aware that an incorrect statement had been released. When the news regarding the Sainsbury's store was conveyed to the public it was correct at that time as they had intended to come to Bargoed. Further events transpired however and unfortunately they later withdrew from the scheme.

Mr Tanner added that the semantics of this case were complicated as he had actually received a letter from Sainsbury's indicating that they were committed to the scheme. Accordingly there is sometimes a fine balance between informing the public and not releasing information but there does need to be an understanding on all sides to achieve the same objectives and to check that any statements were factually correct.

4. ANGEL WAY AND BARGOED REGENERATION

Mr. John Coles, Liaison Co-ordinator for Hochtief Griffiths, was attending the meeting to give a progress report.

Mr. Coles gave a power point presentation showing the early works to the site and then the completed works to date. The main road (Angel Way) had been officially opened on the 20th November and the whole works are expected to be finished ahead of time with the Bristol Terrace link expected to be completed by April and the retail development plateau by June.

Members placed on record their thanks to John Coles for the progress presentations he had provided and congratulations to Hochtief Griffiths on their excellent work.

Mr. Churchward reported that there is still a future programme of works and a time table of future works could be brought to the next meeting. The results of a funding bid for a new park and ride facility were expected in February, which if successful would provide 90 spaces for vehicles'.

A concern was raised on the appearance of the red brick near the railway station and Mr. Churchward indicated that he would investigate this concern although Network Rail normally stipulate red brick at their sites. Mr. Churchward also reported that following a meeting with Capita Symonds it had been agreed that Bristol Terrace remain two way at present and that public consultations will be held if there are any traffic flow changes proposed.

Another concern was raised on the Pengam Road spur and delay to the roundabout for Britannia. It was noted that there are a number of conflicts at this site and that the concern has been raised at a Scrutiny Committee.

5. ONE-WAY PROPOSAL FOR HANBURY ROAD/HIGH STREET

Mr. Tanner outlined the drawings for a proposed one-way system through Hanbury Road and High Street. He explained that the town centre needs to be more pedestrian friendly to encourage shoppers and that Angel Way was a pre requisite for this to be possible.

The proposals are for the pavements to be widened and a centrepiece created at Hanbury Square to incorporate terraces with seating and a viewing area at the top and an event space.

The side streets off High Street will remain two way. With regard to one-way proposals Mr. Campbell indicated that new traffic flows are difficult to predict and the one-way system will be implemented first.

The results of a Convergence funding bid will be announced in April and if successful a phased schedule of work is planned culminating in the work proposed for Hanbury Square (A local member requested that consideration be given to installing a town clock at this location should funding and the proposals be agreed).

A local resident expressed concern that seating would be available at the square as there are already a number of anti social behaviour problems at this location. Mr. Tanner responded that the seating areas would only be terraces and that not providing this facility would be allowing the disruptive element to dictate future improvements.

A number of concerns were also raised on the extent of the one-way system and the traffic flows though the side streets near the residential areas although members were assured that all these issues would be addressed through extensive public consultation (in March for 2/3 weeks- venue to be confirmed).

Finally a number of concerns were expressed on road markings and parking restrictions from the Giflach junction to Pengam lights and officers indicated that they are under review at the moment.

6. RETAIL PLATEAU AND TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

Mr. Tanner made reference to the earlier discussion on the retail plateau and the disappointing news that Sainsbury's were withdrawing from the development. He reminded members that the developer, Simons, were still committed to the scheme and presently trying to find an alternative retail developer. He suggested that when the developer is near the planning application stage they could be invited to the town centre meeting.

Mr. Tanner also reported that there was now a need to apply for a bat licence as they have been found in the derelict shops due for demolition. He confirmed that there was an urgency to remove them as the funding for the demolition was only applicable until the end of March and that the demolition would send out a positive message that the regeneration of the town was progressing.

7. UPDATE ON THE RELOCATION OF BARGOED LIBRARY

Gareth Evans, Business Development Manager – Libraries, was attending the meeting to discuss the present library arrangements at Bargoed.

Mr. Evans reported that the temporary relocation of the library to St Gwladys Church Hall was completed and was now open through the lunchtimes. Although there has been a decline in users, a series of marketing events were planned.

Design work on the permanent library is progressing with Cadw and a further update on progress will be provided at the next meeting in April.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

8. Environmental Audit

The Environmental Audit for September 2008 was received and noted.

A request to include a number of items on the Audit were reported –

- a) the untidy appearance of an area leading into Bargoed (near the viaduct).
- b) the poor visual appearance at Hanbury Square – It was confirmed that the new plastic cladding on the Chemist store was not funded by any grant aid.

9. Retail Job Creation, Bargoed 2008

The report on retail Job Creation, Bargoed for 2008 was noted.

10. Bargoed Events

Barbara Green (Events Officer – Bargoed) was attending the meeting for this item. Barbara reported that a number of events had been planned for the town and circulated details.

A Spring Fair on Saturday 28th March and two Big Screen events (24th April and 4th September) were reported.

It was agreed that the former Big Bed event be renamed the Bargoed Carnival and be held on 27th June at Heolddu playing fields.

A number of other events are proposed and Mr Hudson reported that he is working with the sports development team to hold a sporting event in July/August utilising Heads of the Valley funding.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 29th April 2009.

The meeting closed at 3.50 pm.

CHAIRMAN