



BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, 16TH MARCH 2011 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Carter – Chairman
Councillor Mrs D. Price – Vice Chair

Councillors:

D.T. Davies, A.G. Higgs and K.V. Reynolds

Together with:

Ms K. Halvey and Mr D. Morgan (Bargoed Town Council), Messrs I. Hill and B. Jarrett (Bargoed Chamber of Trade) and Mr J. Cooper (Local Resident)

Also with:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), B. Morgan (Senior Planner), C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), G. Evans (Senior Manager – Libraries), P. Hudson (Senior Events and Marketing Officer), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager) and D. Phillips (Partnership Support Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from R. Tanner (Strategic Planner and Urban Renewal Manager), J. Bennett (Group Manager – Advisory Services), Councillors R. Davies (Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning), Councillor H.A. Andrews and Messrs D. Collins and P. Collins (Bargoed Chamber of Trade).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

2. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Mr Cooper back after his illness, Mr Steve Wilcox who had recently been appointed as the Assistant Town Centre Manager and Mr Brian Jarrett who was attending the meeting as a representative of the Bargoed Chamber of Trade.

3. MINUTES - 15TH DECEMBER 2010

The minutes of the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group held on 15th December 2010 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

4. Consultation on Proposals to meet Budget Costs (Minute no 3)

Although the consultation has now closed it was noted that over 3,300 signatures had been collected against any possible closure of Bargoed Cash Office.

5. Bargoed Christmas Market (Minute no 7)

Thanks were recorded to officers for all their hard work in organising the Ice Rink and the Christmas Market.

6. UPDATE ON BARGOED LIBRARY

Mr Gareth Evans gave a report on progress for the conversion of Hanbury Road Baptist Chapel to a new library.

He reported that building work was on course and that a mid September hand over was expected, with an open date for the public in the first week of December.

The Local History facility will be relocated back to the library and furniture, which has been purchased from a Welsh Assembly Government grant is currently in storage.

Interviews are currently being held for a social enterprise scheme to manage the cafeteria and discussion are being held with Customer First on the feasibility of providing a cash office within the building.

The Chapel members will be informed of the date they can return. Arrangements will also be made to minimise the disruption when the temporary library is closed and the new library open.

A member asked if the Management Group could preview the library prior to opening and Mr Morgan indicated that he would investigate the feasibility of a VIP preview evening nearer the date.

Thanks were recorded by the Management Group to all staff involved in this magnificent project.

7. MORRISONS RETAIL PLATEAU AND PUBLIC REALM – UPDATE

Mr Morgan reported that work was progressing well and on course for completion in April. The designs for the further phases are in the process of being drawn up and are taking into account comments from the recent consultation exercise.

Mr Hill (Chamber of Trade) reported that there had been a number of positive comments on the town centre developments and an increase in the Chamber of Trade membership.

Reference was made to the commercial improvement grant to improve retail properties, which Mr Morgan confirmed was still available.

8. UPDATE ON RETAIL PLATEAU

A Bargoed Big Idea booklet had been circulated during the meeting reporting that Morrisons had formally signed to build a new store on the prestigious development site. Mr Morgan reported that the planning application for the store would possibly now be submitted towards the end of the month and if approved the developer could be on site by December with a completion date of 2013. It is still hoped that the second development phase of the site will include a cinema.

Thanks were recorded to all the officers who had been involved in the complex negotiations for this site.

9. NEW BUS STATION / ROAD SYSTEMS IN THE TOWN CENTRE

It was reported that work on the construction of the new bus station is progressing well and that discussion will be held with the operators prior to the opening for information on the services to be publicised. Although the bus station will not be staffed information boards will be on display.

Future plans for the present bus station will be progressed under Phase 4 (June 2012) and a general parking facility may be considered on the site.

It was reported that the toilets at the present bus station are in a poor condition and it was agreed that the matter be included on the Town Centre Audit.

10. SPRING FAYRE, BIG SCREEN AND CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Mr Hudson was attending the meeting for this item. He reported that the Emporium Road car park would be the venue for the Big Screen on Friday 8th April screening Gulliver's Travels.

The Spring Fayre would be held on the following day (9th April) in the town centre and car park and to date 40 applications for stalls at the event had been received. The event would also have street entertainers, pottery demonstrations and free Easter eggs for the first 100 children to the event.

Thanks were recorded to Mr Campbell for arranging for the public car park to be available for these events.

It is hoped that the Winter Ice Rink would be available for a longer period this year and discussions are being held with the company. The possibility of sponsorship from new retail premises was discussed and the need to have a co-ordinated approach.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

11. Bargoed Town Centre Report 2010

Members noted the information report detailing jobs created and lost in Bargoed Town Centre throughout 2010.

12. Environmental Audit

The Environmental Audit for January 2011 was received and noted.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chamber of Trades representative asked to raise a number of items under Any Other Business, Mr Highway explained that Any Other Business was not an agenda item on the Town Centre Management Group meetings. He agreed however to investigate the items outside the context of the meeting and then include them on the next agenda if appropriate.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 15th June 2011 (Penallta House).

The developer of the retail plateau will also be meeting various groups during April. Mr Morgan will be notifying representatives the dates and times for these meetings.

The meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.