



BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE ON THURSDAY, 13TH OCTOBER 2011 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs D. Price - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

H.A. Andrews, D.T. Davies, K.V. Reynolds.

Together with:

B. Jarrett (Chamber of Trade), Dave Collins (Bargoed Chamber of Trade), Huw Jones (Gwent Police), Claire Young (Gwent Police), Mrs Pat Cooper (Resident), Mr Keith Jones (Resident).

Also with:

H. Llewellyn (Town Councillor), K. Halvey (Town Councillor), D. Collins (Bargoed Chamber of Trade), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), J. Dix (Policy & Research Manager), P. Hudson (Marketing and Events Manager), J. Lee (Operations Manager) B. Morgan (Senior Planner), T. McMahon (Community Regeneration Manager), J. Elliott (Research Officer), Gareth Howell (Capita Symonds), J. Coles (Business Manager, Alun Griffiths Contractors Ltd).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D. Carter (Chair), Councillor A.G. Higgs, Councillor R. Davies, J. Morgan (Town Councillor) and Jan Bennett (Group Manager).

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group held on 15th June 2011 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Update on Bargoed Library (minute no 4)

It was noted that the committee was promised an invitation to the opening of the new library but none had been received. Jayne Lee, the library representative, said Rosemary Mathews (Communications Manager) was working on an invitation list. The opening date for the library is 26th October 2011. Chair to contact Rosemary Mathews over the invitation list.

Public Conveniences (minute no 8)

Businesses have been sent information on how they could open up their toilets for the community in return for a financial incentive, but there have been no takers. Steve Wilcox exploring with the two hotels in the area, with a possibility of some interest.

4. PLANS FOR HANBURY SQUARE

Gareth Howell, of Capita Symonds, the contractors for the works, gave an update on the works undertaken so far. Talks had taken place with the local access group over stairs in the development. Design features include large steps to sit on. Hanbury Square is to be linked with the High Street South redevelopment. A one-way traffic system is to be introduced with maximum space for pedestrians to access shops. The design seeks to encourage people to use the space. The commencement of the next phase of the development is March 2012.

Bollards will be in place in the scheme but are demountable to allow for events in the square. A spot has been allocated for a Christmas tree. A power supply will be included in the square for the Christmas tree and the running of events.

5. LIBRARY UPDATE

Jayne Lee (Operations Manager) gave an update on the new Bargoed library. She reported the scheme was on schedule, with the finishing touches now been made on site, and staff receiving training on the new equipment. The library located at St. Gwladys Church Hall is now closed. The library launch will take place on 25th October, the day before opening. The hours of opening are 9am to 6pm, with Wednesday being 9.30am to 6pm.

6. BARGOED TT DEBRIEF

The Rhymney Valley TT (Town centre Takeover) was organised by Vicky Button, owner of 'Dippy Hippy', along with the Chamber of Trade, and took place on Saturday 24th September 2011. The event was in support of local charity CLURV, and saw around 200 motorcyclists ride in procession through the High Street, ushered by a band before joining on a ride out through Blackwood, Caerphilly and Ystrad Mynach. The main event took place in the Park & Ride car park. Entertainment included live music, children's assault course, hog roast and a variety of stalls.

CLURV received £700 in donations from the day, and £200 for Ty Hafan. This is the first time that such an event has been run. It was noted that unfortunately one of the donation buckets has appeared to have gone missing. Huw Jones (Police) asked for a debriefing to be held on the event, which would be useful to improve planning further for next year, and security. It was noted by the Chamber of Trade that the traders did not benefit much in increased trade, and a lesson for next year is to focus the event more in the town, rather than on the outskirts. Steve Wilcox to organise the debriefing meeting.

It was agreed that a letter from the group would be sent to Vicky Button thanking her for her hard work in making the event such a success.

7. BIG SCREEN DEBRIEF/CHRISTMAS EVENT

Paul Hudson (Marketing and Events Manager) reported that 150 people turned up for event. This was a disappointing number. It was thought that this might be because the event was held on a Saturday, and suggested that next year the event should take place on a Friday night.

Mr Hudson circulated a paper on Bargoed Christmas market and ice rink 2011. Looking at having a four-day period for the ice rink, with local schools being invited on Thursday and Friday. Provisional operating times for the Ice Rink are 10am to 7pm from 15th to 18th December allowing twelve 30-minute slots per day. There is no longer Heads of Valleys funding for the Ice Rink with funding coming direct from the Council.

It was noted that Bargoed's Christmas market was cancelled last year because of the weather. This year a wet weather contingency plan is being put in place at St Gwladys Church Hall, which will be the venue for the Santa's Grotto and church service workshop.

Discussion took place on whether a lantern parade will take place. It was noted that if it took place there would be the need for a traffic management plan to be put in place with the police, and they could be a charge for that.

8. STREET WORKS UPDATE

John Coles (Business Manager Alun Griffiths Contractors Ltd) gave a presentation on progress with Bargoed High Street, North. Work commence mid July 2011. Phase 1 was the bus station and Punch Through. Phase 2 works include: High Street Barclays Bank to the Pierhead Building; Upper High Street to the junction with Francis Street and Lower High Street to the junction with Bristol Terrace. Works comprise: complex traffic management; upgrade/replacement of the existing storm water system; new kerbs/linear drainage/natural stone paving/carriageway reconstruction/new street furniture and mature trees. The street works have involved complex work in restricted areas. There have also been problems with rocks in the trenches. The original planned completion date was 10th December 2011, but this has been revised to 27th January 2012.

Mr Cole reported that liaison with the community has been positive. The company was a sponsor of the Rhymney Valley Town Take Over. Mr Highway thanked Mr Cole for his community liaison work, and consultations with traders.

The contractor is currently consulting over road closure over a weekend, which is needed because of the restricted access in area for the works to take place. The views of the group were sought with a consensus agreement that if closure was necessary, a Saturday afternoon would preferable leaving Saturday morning trade unaffected. In reaching this recommendation, the views of the Chamber of Trade representative were considered and also those of the towns major retailers, some of whom had been spoken to by Mr Highway prior to the meeting. Proposes road closure at Barclays Bank to work in High Street. Cable Street will remain open. Weekend likely to be late October/early November. Mr Cole will discuss more in depth with the Police.

9. MORRISON'S UPDATE

Bryan Morgan informed that negotiations are on going. While the planning meeting has approved the scheme, there is currently a three-month challenge period. Presently meeting the developers, Simons, on a monthly basis. Negotiations with gas and electric companies unlikely to happen before Christmas.

10. BARGOED TOWN CENTRE AUDIT SEPTEMBER 11

No concerns raised.

11. AOB

Jackie Dix (Policy & Research Manager) asked members to send her any items for the agenda of the next meeting 8th December 2011.

It was requested for the next meeting to be held at the library. It was commented that the meeting could only take place on a Wednesday when the library has half day close. This would therefore change the date of the next meeting to 7th December at 2pm.

The meeting closed at 3:30pm.