



BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PONTLLANFRAITH
ON THURSDAY, 30TH JUNE 2005 AT 5.45 PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor L. Gardiner - Chairman
Councillor K. Etheridge - Vice-Chairman

Resident Representatives

C. Sharp and J.E. Organ

Heddlu Gwent Police

PC L. Williamson and PC D. Harris

Blackwood Town Council

Town Councillors Mrs. C. Dix, A. Wilkins and Mr. I.L. Palmer (Clerk)

Together with:

Councillor N. Dix (Caerphilly CBC), Councillor D.T. Davies (Caerphilly CBC), I MacVicar (Business Development Officer), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), J. Kelly (Urban Renewal), E. Gibbs (Principal Engineer – Traffic Management), Ms. L. Williams (Assistant Engineer – Traffic Management), R. Campbell (Senior Assistant Engineer), R. Llewellyn (Senior Planner – Urban Renewal), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), J. Rogers (Principal Solicitor), J. Elliot (Research Officer – Policy Unit), Ms. K. Richards (GAVO) G. George (Committee Services Manager) and C. Cook (Caerphilly Access Group).

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Inspector M. Fleming (Gwent Police).

1. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that one of the residents' representatives, Mr. D. Vaughan, had now moved out of the area and would no longer be attending meetings of the Town Centre Management Group.

It was agreed to send a letter on behalf of the group to Mr. Vaughan thanking him for his contributions to the meetings.

In discussing a replacement member it was agreed that the Blackwood Town Council would forward a name(s) for consideration by the management group at its next meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as a correct record.

Minutes of the Blackwood Town Centre Management Group held on 28th April 2005.

4. ALLOCATION OF COMMUNITY FORUM FUNDING

Members considered the proposal to allocate funding from the Community Forum budget to the Blackwood Town Centre Management Group, to assist with the cost of erecting 30 banners in High Street Blackwood to promote and enhance the town centre.

Members noted that the introduction of banners was a relatively cost effective way to change the feel of the High Street without altering its core character. The nature of a banner as a temporary display gives an opportunity to change the design, colour and message at regular intervals, giving the town a vibrant new look. There was a possibility to use banners not only to theme the street but also to promote a specific local event, such as the 'Big Balloon'.

The banners required a 'Bannerflex' system of brackets and buckles to fix them to the lamp post columns. The cost of purchasing 30 sets of bracket and buckles is estimated at £1,850, this cost will be met from the Town Centre Management marketing budget.

The cost of designing and producing 30 sets of double-sided banners on the required material was estimated to be £2,100. The installation cost of each individual banner is estimated to be £1,450. The existing allocation of funding for the Town Centre Management marketing budget did not have provision within it to meet these costs.

The current Community Forum budget allocation for the Blackwood Town Centre Management Group is £8,185. It was agreed that £3,550 from this fund to be used toward the cost of producing and installing 30 banners for display in High Street, Blackwood. The content of the banner will contain a message to promote the Town Centre, the design will use colour to visually enhance the Town Centre.

Blackwood Town Council welcomed the proposals and indicated that they would discuss this matter at their next meeting and they would wish to use the system to promote their annual carnival to be held in August and possibly other forthcoming events.

5. PROPOSED PUBLIC NOTICE BOARD

The Senior Assistant Engineer stated that the notice board had been ordered and would be erected in a few weeks in the Blackwood Shopping Precinct adjacent to the Town Council notice board. The cost of approximately £200 would be met from the Community Forum Budget. The Board would give public notice of highways and traffic management matters.

There was a remaining balance of £4,400 in this fund and the group were asked to consider how this could be spent in Blackwood. The Town Council and the residents' representatives were asked to forward any suggestions on how this money could be spent to officers.

6. URBAN RENEWAL SCHEME – METHODIST CHURCH SITE

The group were given details of the proposals for the Methodist Church site. Tenders were due for return by mid July with an anticipated commencement date of mid August. The works were valued at approximately £200k and the contract was for twelve weeks duration.

There would be some traffic disruption with a mixture of road closure, temporary traffic orders and lights in adjoining streets of Cefn Road and Wesley Road. Residents and retailers would be kept informed throughout.

7. PUBLIC ARTWORK SCHEMES

The group received details of the proposed artwork scheme for the northern gateway to the town. This should be in place by Autumn 2005. The “Singing Tree” would be in place by Spring 2006 in Hall Street and the “Tower of Hands” at the junction of Hall Street and High Street also in place by Spring 2006. Funding for these came from Arts Lottery with contributions from the County Borough Council, Town Council and Rotary Club.

There would be an opportunity to meet the artist at an event in the foyer of Asda Stores on 15th October 2005. The artist would also be arranging workshops in local schools working with children in the material that will make up the artwork.

8. PUBLIC TOILETS

It was reported that the public toilets at the northern end of the town had been redecorated, cleaned and improved lighting installed. Shrubs and vegetation had been cut back. This was a short term solution pending the outcome of the decision on a focal building in the town centre that would have toilets, including accessible ones, on the ground floor.

The meeting closed at 6.15 pm.