

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER 2000 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor P.J. Bevan - Chairman
Councillor K. Gwynne - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

J.E. Fussell, M.H. Newman, K.R. Snell

Together with:

D. Earey (Principal Engineer Management and Regulations), A. Jones (Community Safety Officer), T. Peppin (Policy and Research Manager), J. Elliott (Research Officer), P. Hudson (Tourism), M. Howland (Team Leader - Urban Renewal), P. Gomer (Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure), G. George (Committee Services Manager).

Also present:

M. Rawlins (Caerphilly and District Civic Society), Inspector S. Powell-Jones (Police), Ms. S. Jones (Centre Manager), M. Evans (Clerk to Caerphilly Town Council).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Hood (CADW), N. Jones (Fruit and Flowers) and Councillor H. Price.

1. TRUANCY ENFORCEMENT IN THE TOWN CENTRE

Mr. V. Norris, Principal Education Welfare Officer was welcomed to the meeting to give a presentation on the procedures and practices to tackle truancy in the county borough but with particular reference to the town centre of Caerphilly. The legislative framework was provided by the Crime and Disorder Act, which give specific powers to the police, but in liaison with a local education authority. A protocol was in place throughout Gwent and adopted by the police and local authorities.

The first truancy initiative had taken place in the Caerphilly Basin on 3rd, 6th and 11th October 2000 and covered Senghenydd, Graig-y-Rhacca and the Draethen area. Despite some initial teething troubles this first initiative was a relative success with a low number of pupils recorded as being absent from school without permission. Letters had been sent to the parents of pupils of schools within the area, which appeared to have had a significant impact judging, by the positive feedback. The local press had reported the initiative. There would be a rota of truancy enforcement measures operating throughout the county borough with areas being targeted every three to four months. Following a number of questions, Mr. Norris was thanked for his presentation. Members of the management group were asked that if they had any suggestions for a neutral venue where truants could be taken they were asked to let Mr. Norris know.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 3rd April 2000 were received and noted. The chairman apologised for the time lapse between meetings and stated that meetings would be held at least four times per annum.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Land at Crescent Road

Officers reported that measures were in hand to bring this area back into public use with it being opened up for use by the local school. The problem of dog fouling was noted and letters would be sent to parents via the pupils asking them to act responsibly when exercising their dogs in the area. The lack of an adequate fencing was also noted and remedial patching works would be carried out to existing fences to effect some improvements. Access to the playing fields would be looked into. Views were sought on suggestion from the National Playing Fields Association to name this area the "Owen Glyndwr" playing field. These should be passed to the Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure.

(b) Cardiff Railway Company

It was agreed to invite the company to consider appointing a representative to join the management group and attend meetings as and when necessary.

(c) Artwork at Bedwas Road and Bridge at Old Bedwas Road

It was reported that the bridge was not yet repaired with coping stones missing. Groundwork Trust was cutting back the vegetation in the area to open it up to public gaze and improve visibility.

(d) Supermarket Trolleys

Officers were asked to contact local supermarkets to gauge their opinions on having a £1.00 trolley return system in an attempt to reduce the number of abandoned trolleys in the area.

4. MATTERS RAISED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL and THE CAERPHILLY CIVIC SOCIETY

(a) Condition of the Footpath Adjacent to the Generate Café, Cardiff Road through the Underpass to the Railway Station

Conditions had improved although litter was still a problem here.

(b) Access to the Town Centre by Heavy Goods Vehicles - Restriction on Size and Delivery Times

This was an ongoing complaint with delivery vehicles parking in the layby which, coupled with the bus bay on the opposite side of the road, served to block traffic flows along Cardiff Road.

(c) Progress on the Proposed Scheme to Redesignate Road Signs

Tender documents had been sent out and work was anticipated to start soon after Christmas. One hundred signs would be erected but the Watford Junction would be omitted until the junction priority had been finalised.

(d) **Reversal of Traffic Flow - Park Lane, Caerphilly**

It was stated that with the volume of traffic there was a potential for the town to become grid locked at certain times of the day. If that were the case was there a possibility of reversing the traffic flow in some streets e.g. Park Lane, to unblock the town. Whilst noting the potential problems of this measure and the current traffic management powers of the police it was agreed to discuss the matter with them and report to the next meeting.

(e) **Heavy Vehicles Using School Street and East View - Delivery Vehicles from Castle Court Centre**

No more information was available at the moment. The matter would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

(f) **Southgate Square**

A view was expressed that the bus lay-by should be repositioned and some road widening measures carried out. The lighting columns would be completed soon and trees planted. The steps to the castle were difficult to see especially in poor light.

(g) **Proposed Retail Development - Top of Town**

No firm proposals had been received as yet. The Cabinet was being kept informed of developments.

(h) **Maintenance of Street Furniture**

The railings at the cenotaph would be painted soon. The areas paved with Yorkshire stone would be pressure washed. The centre manager was looking at options and, subject to budgets, was hoping to arrange cleaning of street furniture three times per annum.

(i) **Road Traffic Order Caerphilly Town Centre**

Some discussion ensued on proposed variations from the original order and the effect this would have on on-street parking and the speed of traffic coming down the mountain road. The outcome was likely to be a compromise between the two and should not affect the flow of traffic through the town.

(j) **Objective 1 - Town Centre**

Some proposals were in the pipeline and eligibility and funding were being investigated along with match funding proposals. Church building renovation proposals and a housing association resource centre needed to be worked up to being eligible. Others were being looked at for European funding. Urban initiatives and tourism schemes were under consideration.

5. **CADW - CORRESPONDENCE**

CADW had given their apologies for the meeting but wished to report on three items.

(a) **Visitor Centre**

Architects had been appointed to design a new visitor centre and toilet block to replace the current inadequate facilities. Outline proposals would be notified to the Council after internal consultations had been completed.

(b) **Car Parking**

CADW received a small number of written complaints each year from visitors, especially from the elderly and the disabled, who found the walk from the official car park too far and too taxing. Whilst having sympathy with the visitors they recognised that the matter should be brought to the attention of this management group and would be happy to discuss any proposals that could ease the situation for visitors to the castle.

Members of the group were aware of the problems but were mindful of the fact that if an alternative bus pull-in were provided it could create a potential traffic management problem.

It was agreed to remind coach operators of the dropping off and pick up facilities that were available in the town. An example of the leaflet that had been sent to coach operators was circulated to the group.

(c) **Performance**

Up to the end of September visitor numbers to the castle were down by just under three percent. The average fall at all CADW sites was two percent.

6. **FLOODING AT CASTLE COURT CENTRE**

The centre manager stated that on 30th October 2000, following a period of continuous heavy rain, eight units had been flooded out in Castle Court. The flooding had also affected domestic properties in Brynau Road. The culvert in the south service yard was unable to take the water and some shops were flooded. Various reasons for this were advanced, although it was acknowledged that this was the first time this had happened to such a degree. It appeared that there were no apparent blockages to the system although the capacity of the drainage system to cope with the volume of water was debated. There were alarm systems to give warnings of blockages, but not of higher than usual water levels.

The matter would be discussed with appropriate technical officers and any relevant information forwarded to the centre manager.

Officers would investigate the delay in dealing with a letter from the Castle View Residents Association about the flooding in Brynau Road and inform the Clerk to the Caerphilly Town Council of the outcome.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Monday 5th March 2001 and quarterly thereafter.

The meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

