

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON THURSDAY, 5TH DECEMBER 2002 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

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

Together with:

M. Howland (Team Leader - Urban Renewal), R. Mathews (Communications Manager), A. Jones (Community Safety Officer), D. Price (Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer), D. Earey (Principal Engineer), G. Gordon (Senior Assistant Solicitor), P. Hudson (Tourism Officer), J. Elliott (Research Officer) and Mrs D. Phillips (Committee Services Officer)

Also Present:

M.L. Evans (Caerphilly Town Council), J. Walker (Caerphilly and District Civic Society), P.C. Wayne Roberts (Gwent Police), J. Couzens (Centre Manager - Castle Court), J. Wallis (CADW)

CT1 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the Group held on 8th May 2002 were received and noted.

Matters Arising

CT2 Cardiff Railway Company-Railway Bridge

Members of the group again expressed concern regarding the poor visible condition of the steel railway bridge at Cardiff Road, Caerphilly. The matter had previously been reported by letter and also Mr Howitt, (Business Development Manager of Valley Lines) had verbally agreed to investigate the matter when he was present at a previous meeting.

It was agreed that a letter be sent to Mr Howitt (with a copy to Wayne David MP) expressing concern at the appearance of the railway bridge and also consideration be given to seeking publicity to highlight the problem if no progress is made.

CT3 Skateboarding – Progress on the Bye – Law

Mr Geoff Gordon outlined to members the progress on the draft byelaws in relation to the prohibition of skateboarding in designated areas in Caerphilly Town Centre.

A draft copy of a report recommending the approval of draft bylaws in relation to skateboarding and a map outlining the designated areas was circulated to members. It was noted that the report will be presented to Cabinet on 14th January 2003 and Council on 23rd January 2003 and if agreed will be advertised and formally submitted to the National Assembly for Wales for confirmation.

Members discussed the possibility of including other town centre areas not identified in the plan and it was confirmed that amendments could be considered at Cabinet. It was agreed that any additional proposals from the group should be submitted in writing to Mr Geoff Gordon (Senior Assistant Solicitor).

A member referred to the indoor skateboarding facility at Pentrebane Street which appeared to have closed despite financial contributions from various organisations. It was agreed that the Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure be requested to investigate this matter and report back to the next meeting.

It was noted that a development of a multi use games area (MUGA) and skateboarding park at Lansbury Park was presently being constructed.

It was suggested that a one off free bus to the indoor skateboarding facility at Aberbargoed be considered when the byelaws are in force in Caerphilly.

CT4 Top of Town Development

Mr Howland, Team Manager- Urban Renewal, reminded members that the last meeting of the Management Group had been cancelled because a prospective developer for the top of town had been unable to attend a meeting to outline his proposals. This developer did not now seem to be progressing the matter and options to acquire various parcels of land were now expiring.

He reported however that another developer had expressed an interest in developing the top of town and had made enquiries with the appropriate officers.

Any further progress will be reported to the Management Group.

CT5 Correspondence From Caerphilly Town Council

The Chairman referred to the correspondence from Caerphilly Town Council.

It was noted that Item 1 had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

CT6 Toilet Facilities – Crescent Road Car Park

The Town Clerk outlined the problems of tourists being encouraged to use the Crescent Road Car Park and then discovering that no toilet facilities were available there. The nearest toilets are located at the tourist information centre.

It was agreed that officers investigate the capital and revenue costs of a small toilet facility and also the possibility of funding from other sources.

CT7 Phasing of Traffic Lights – Bartlett Street (Outside the Railway Hotel)

It was reported that the long phasing of traffic lights at the right hand lane at Barlett Street for cars travelling to Clive Street or Cardiff Road was causing problems. Parked cars outside the residential properties were preventing the lane from clearing and stopping cars filtering into the left hand lane. Mr Earey, Principal Engineer outlined the problems that may occur if the timing of lights in this area were changed as there is a lack of capacity for cars along Cardiff Road. He would however investigate the matter further.

CT8 Park Lane Development

Members expressed concern at relocation problems for some of the organisations presently occupying buildings identified in the proposed Park Lane development.

Mr Howland reported that a feasibility study had been completed and a report presented to Cabinet. It was noted that a local church might be considering expanding the community use of its premises and relocation of some of the organisations may be accommodated there. An officer meeting has been scheduled for 18th December and it was agreed that a special meeting of the Town Centre Management Group could be arranged when more progress has been made.

CT9 Caerphilly Castle – Condition on Northern Boundary Wall, Hangar Road.

Mr Wallis, a representative from CADW, reported that work to the northern boundary wall at Nantgarw Road had not been programmed for this financial year although he expected the work to take place during 2003. A feasibility study would be required and there would be disruption for approximately six weeks. He referred to the large investment of the new visitors centre in the castle grounds where recent building work had unfortunately affected the floodlights around the castle.

CT10 Dafydd Williams Park – Lighting Scheme

The possibility of a lighting scheme at Dafydd Williams Park was discussed and it was agreed that consideration be given to investigating a joint funding scheme. Officers would investigate the feasibility and cost of a scheme and report back to the next meeting of the Management Group.

CT11 Correspondence from Castle Court Shopping Centre

The Chairman referred to the correspondence received from the Manager of Castle Court Shopping Centre.

CT12 Frequency of Meetings

The Chairman reported that four dates had been agreed for meetings of the Management Group in 2003.

The meetings will be held at 2.00 p.m. at Tredomen and are arranged for the following dates:-

- Wednesday 19th March
- Thursday 19th June
- Wednesday 24th September
- Thursday 18th December

CT13 Mountain Road/Cardiff Road – Traffic Management

Mr Couzens expressed concern at the safety of pedestrians with regard to the parked cars along

Mountain Road and proposed that consideration be given to imposing parking restrictions near the Police Station and the entrance to St. Martins School.

An officer responded that this had been discussed previously at a number of meetings when it was outlined that vehicles tended to reduce their speed because of parked cars although he would investigate any accident records for this area and report back to the next meeting.

CT14 Public Relations in South Wales Echo & Western Mail

This was included in the items for discussion as it was considered that more publicity should be given to the success stories of Caerphilly.

Mrs Mathews, the Communications Manager considered that many of retail successes were commercial and not items for the local authority to publicise. It was suggested that the Chairman could however consider items for publicity following a Town Centre Management meeting.

CT15 Big Cheese Event

Mr Couzens expressed concern at the loss of trade to retail outlets at Castle Court Shopping Centre during the weekend of the Big Cheese event.

It was suggested however that the retail outlets should consider ways of working with the Council to use the event to their advantage.

Mr Hudson, Tourism Officer, reported on the success of the event and the increased number of visitors visiting the town. Many businesses had altered their opening hours to take advantage of the event and Cadw had temporarily changed the visitors entrance to the castle to be nearer the event and had successfully attracted more tourists.

The possibility of using the Twyn Car Park for a Christmas Victorian Craft Fair was discussed. Members of the Management Group supported the event in principle although it was reported by officers that the loss of income and the effect on local traders would need to be considered by the Council. It was noted that a charge is also made for parking at this car park on Sundays.

CT16 Membership of the Management Group

It was agreed that a representative from GAVO and the Caerphilly Access Group be invited to join the Management Group. A letter be sent to both organisations advising them and asking them to nominate a representative.

CT17 Any Other Business

Concern was also expressed on general grounds maintenance issues although it was agreed that the officer responsible would discuss any concerns following the meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.