



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE INNOVATION CENTRE, TREDOMEN
ON WEDNESDAY, 17TH MAY 2006 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor P.J. Bevan - Chairman
Councillor J. Fussell - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

G.G. Hibbert, and M.J. Prew

Cabinet Member for Regeneration: Councillor D.T. Davies

Together with:

I. MacVicar (Business Development Officer), A. Dallimore (Urban Renewal Manager), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), D. Earey (Principal Manager), P. Hudson (Assistant Tourism Officer), A. Dicks (Assistant Licensing Officer), J. Elliott (Research Officer) and D. Phillips (Committee Services Officer).

Also Present:

Inspector B. Williams (Gwent Police), M.L. Evans (Town Clerk, Caerphilly Town Council), Mrs S. Cooper (Caerphilly Access Group), R. Gough (GAVO) and K. Rowbottom (CRDA)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Kent, M.H. Newman and Mrs C. Forehead, J. Stephens (CADW) and J. Couzens (Centre Manager, Castle Court) and J. Ridgewell (Business Manager – Development Parks).

1. MINUTES

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

Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group held on 26th September 2005.

MATTERS ARISING

2. Blue Tarpaulin on Top of Town Building (minute no 15)

Members of the group expressed concern that a prominent building in the town was still covered in blue tarpaulin despite the matter being raised at a previous meeting of the

management group. The group had been informed at that meeting that a planning application for re-development at that site was imminent and that it did not seem prudent to issue a Section 215 notice.

Mr Dallimore, Urban Renewal Manager, indicated that the proposed development was still being discussed although a planning application had not yet been submitted.

Mr MacVicar, Business Development Officer, assured the group that he would discuss any possibilities of improving the appearance of the building should the proposed development be delayed even further.

3. Licensed Premises Hours – Caerphilly

Mrs Dicks, Assistant Licensing Officer, referred to agenda item 5 detailing the Licensing Premises Hours granted to a number of establishments within the Caerphilly Town Centre area. Mrs Dicks explained that the information gave a present 'snapshot' of the situation and reminded members that the information is constantly changing as more new and applications to vary the existing licensing hours are processed.

Inspector Williams raised a question on the availability of the information to his staff and the public and Mrs Dicks responded that all Takeaways and Restaurants must display their opening times within the premises.

Inspector Williams considered that there had been an improvement in incidents, since the introduction of the Premises Licence had given a more staged effect on customers leaving the licensed premises at the end of the evening.

4. Top of Town Development

Mr Dallimore, Urban Renewal Manager, reported that the pre-application discussions for the Top of Town Development at Cardiff Road, Caerphilly had recently been finalised. The submission of a planning application is imminent and the inclusion of a public library and Customer First Centre within the development a possibility.

It was confirmed that the scheme would be similar to the booklet distributed at a previous meeting which included an element of residential dwelling.

Members discussed the possibility of an entertainment centre within the development and Mr Dallimore reminded members that the development was at a very early stage and he could not therefore discuss any specific details of the scheme.

Mr MacVicar, Business Development Manager, suggested that in view of the importance of the development it should be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

5. Big Cheese Update

Mr Hudson, Assistant Tourism Officer, circulated a briefing paper and outlined a number of important developments in the preparation of this years Big Cheese event which will be held on the 28th to 30th July 2006.

Mr Hudson made reference to:

- **Visitors** – Over 20 coach companies have already made contact to visit the event and the expected number of visitors for the week-end is approximately 80,000.

- **Stalls** - There has been an increase in demand for stall space and a waiting list prepared for charities and voluntary organisations.
- **Marketing and Sponsorship** – Information on the event has been requested from the Independent, Mirror, Express and London Metro newspapers. In addition 80,000 leaflets will be distributed during May and June. A new sponsor for the event is Tesco.
- **Town Centre Retailers** - A small number of town centre retailers have reported that they fail to see direct benefits in the town centre on the Big Cheese week-end.

A number of proposals are being considered to connect the town centre to the event and these include:-

- (i) Utilising town centre venues for activities (eg the possibility of using Pentrebane Street for fun fair rides).
 - (ii) Promoting the town centre more with an events guide map and public address announcements.
 - (iii) Allocate resources to encourage retailers to dress in period costume.
 - (iv) Encourage CADW to prioritise a work scheme to allow the re-opening of the south entrance.
- **Traffic** – the Caerphilly Independent Retailers Association have requested consideration to closing part of Cardiff Road to traffic although as Crescent Road will be closed an alternative diversionary route would be required.

Members discussed the need to involve the town centre retailers in the success of the Big Cheese week-end but recognised the need for them to give their full co-operation to any schemes proposed.

Mr Hudson reported that the weather during the week-end would possibly determine if visitors walked around the town centre as good weather would probably encourage them to go further than the event site.

A member enquired if the possibility of a land train had been considered and Mr Hudson responded that although the attraction is being considered, the cost and availability of safe routes would probably prevent it from being used.

Finally Mr Hudson confirmed that CADW had again granted free entry to the castle during the week-end.

Members thanked Mr Hudson for the information and for all his hard work in preparing for the Big Cheese week-end.

6. The Flower Festival

Mr Ridgewell, Business Manager – Development Parks, had tendered his apologies for the meeting and a briefing paper was circulated giving details of the festival. Mr Hudson indicated that he would respond to members questions and comments on this item.

The flower festival is scheduled to take place on 1st and 2nd July and is a collaborative effort, led by CCBC Park's Department with the support of the Economic Development and Tourism together with an input from the Caerphilly Independent Retailers Association.

Five churches have agreed to take part in the event:

St Martins
Tonyfelin
Wesley Methodist

St Helens
United Reformed

The Twyn Community Centre will also be the focus of floral entertainment and the Tourist Information Centre a venue for plant potting.

A continental market supported by a craft fair has been booked and a week-end of entertainment will take place at the Castle Court bandstand, outside the Twyn Community Centre and a top of town location (possibly Pentrebane Street).

CADW will be offering a 2 for the price of 1 entry to the castle and a town trail map will list all shops known to be open on the days of the event.

Arriva trains will have a floral display at the station and will be promoting the event with posters.

Press releases have been distributed to specialist publications such as Gardeners Monthly, Floral Arranger and Country Wales.

Mr Hudson reported that concerns had been raised by the Caerphilly Taxi Association regarding disruption caused by the market held in the Twyn car park and the road closures around the Twyn area.

A member of the group reported that he had attended every market held at the Twyn and considered them an enormous success. Members considered that as only one objection had been received, the temporary closure of the road should be supported to encourage more pedestrians to use the area safely.

Mr Highway, Town Centre Development Manager, reported that the Town would once again be competing in the Wales in Bloom competition and reminded members of the town's previous successes.

7. Skateboarding Park at Caerphilly Leisure Centre

The Chairman referred to the planning report attached to the agenda and read out a short progress report prepared by Mr Powell, Parks Development Officer.

It was reported that the company who had originally installed the skate equipment at the Caerphilly Indoor Market were engaged to dismantle the timber ramps and transport them to the newly prepared site at the rear of Caerphilly Leisure Centre and then re-assemble them. The ramps have been treated for outdoor use and completion is anticipated around the 24th May.

The project manager, Mr Andy Pearless, has described the facility as a 'flagship' park and one of the best he has built. The location is ideal as it is alongside the Leisure Centre with a newly constructed car park.

Inspector Williams reported that there had been less incidents of damage caused by skateboarding in the town centre and welcomed the new facility.

8. Street Colour Furniture Scheme

Mr Highway referred to the Wales in Bloom competition and the need to also improve the appearance of the town centre environment. In preparation for the competition all street furniture (litter bins, benches, railings etc.) within the town centre will be re-painted.

Mr Dallimore outlined three colour schemes for consideration and members chose a burgundy shade.

It was noted that the DDA officer had been involved in earlier consultations and that the gold banding on top of the colour would help partially sighted pedestrians.

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. Town Centre Management Group – Proposed Terms of Reference Caerphilly TCIG Audit

Members noted the revised Terms of Reference which would be applied to all town centre groups.

Concern was expressed however on the proposed membership and focus on the groups as it was felt that previous meetings had been very beneficial in agreeing and solving many issues facing the town centre over many years with the current membership.

Mr MacVicar noted the concerns but referred to a number of significant changes which had affected the Town Centre Management Groups and a need to re-focus their role on wider development issues and the promotion of the town centres. The Town Centre Improvement Group attended by officers of the council would deal with day to day issues and produce a progress audit to keep the management groups informed.

Members also discussed the possibility of a Community Partnership for the town and it was confirmed that should this be established there would still be a role for the town centre group.

The group were reminded that applications to join would still be considered on merit and the relevant contributions to the group and it was suggested that consideration also be given to the provisions in the new Compact Agreement Mr Macvicar indicated that he would investigate the implications of the new Compact Agreement and Terms of Reference. Mr Elliott, Research Officer, indicated that copies of the Compact were available if any member contacted him.

The TCIG audit was noted and Mr Highway reported that he would welcome and address any questions on individual items outside the meeting.

10. Future Meeting Dates

It was agreed that the following dates be agreed for the future Caerphilly Town Centre meetings:-

Wednesday 6th September 2006 (at the Innovation Centre, Tredomen)

Wednesday 6th December 2006

Wednesday 7th March 2007

CHAIRMAN