



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE,
TREDOMEN, ON WEDNESDAY, 7TH MARCH 2007 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

G.G. Hibbert, S. Kent, and M.H. Newman

Also Present:

Mrs S. Cooper (Caerphilly Access Group), J. Couzens (Centre Manager – Castle Court), R. Gough (GAVO), K. Robottom (CRA), J. Stephens (CADW), L. Shattock (CIRP) K. Williams (Caerphilly Town Council) and Insp. B. Williams (Gwent Police).

Together with:

P. Mears (Chief Planning Officer), I. MacVicar (Business Development Officer), A. Dallimore (Urban Renewal Manager), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), P. Hudson (Tourism Assistant), J. Elliot (Research Officer), T. White (Refuse and Cleansing Officer) C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager) and D. Phillips (Committee Services Officer).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Prew and Mrs C. Forehead and J. Ridgewell (Business Manager – Development Parks).

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed back John Couzens and also welcomed Ken Williams who was attending the first meeting of the Group as the acting Town Clerk for Caerphilly Town Council

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED that subject to the correction of the reference to the key fund, which should have reported that funding from the joint fund of GAVO/Council's Key Fund gave a contribution to the Tommy Copper Statue (Minute 14) the following minutes be approved as a correct record.

Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group held on 6th December 2006.

MATTERS ARISING

2. Overgrown Shrubs at Roundabout (minute no 5)

It was reported that the overgrown shrubs at the crossways roundabout had been removed on the 28th February 2007.

3. Top of Town Development – Update (minute no 8)

Mr Mears, Chief Planning Officer, reported that the top of town planning application would possibly be submitted in late April/early May. A 3-day public exhibition had been held in February and the majority of visitors to the exhibition had seemed to be in favour of the scheme. A number of objections had been received and would be reported to committee when the application is presented for determination. The officers recommendation will however be to grant planning permission as there are no sound planning reasons to refuse the application.

Concern was expressed regarding the future of the present retailers and it was suggested that more information/consultation/support should be given to them. Mr Macvicar indicated that he would contact the developer and propose a meeting be held with the Caerphilly Independent Retailers Association to discuss the implications of the development on the smaller traders in the town and future opportunities.

Mr Shattock referred to the condition of some of retail premises in Cardiff Road and if any financial assistance could be given to fund minor improvements to their appearance. Mr Dallimore replied that funding is normally granted for major renovation works although he would discuss this issue with the appropriate funding body (DEIN) and contact Mr Shattock.

4. Memorial Garden

It was reported that the costings for the memorial garden are estimated at £16,000. The Park Service will contribute £4,000 and there is a need to find £12,000 from other sources. Mr Dallimore indicated that a number of funding commitments had been verbally given from various sources and it was agreed that the item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting with a full financial breakdown.

5. Bollards to the Front of Crescent Road Playing Fields (minute 12)

Mr Dallimore reported that a wider scheme was now being considered in this area which would incorporate the old gateway on the site. Historical records are being checked and a report will be presented to a future meeting.

6. Bench Seat – Adjacent to Morrison Car Park (minute no 13)

It was noted that the bench had been delivered and is presently in storage. The Town Clerk reported that he would be meeting officers on site next Monday to finalise the location.

7. Caerphilly TCIG – Audit – Pleasure Boats on the Moat (minute no 15)

Mr Highway reported that there are issues regarding the capital and revenue financing of the project .A meeting would be convened shortly with CADW to discuss the possibility of a private sector operator providing pleasure boats.

8. PARK LANE DEVELOPMENT

Mr Mears was attending the meeting to give an update on the Park Lane development. He reported that approximately £1million had been the cost of acquiring property at the Park Lane site. An agreement had now been reached with St Martin's church on the relocation of the church hall and when all properties are acquired, a partner will be sought to develop a high quality development scheme at the location. The prime location, directly opposite the castle, would lend itself to restaurants, bars etc. As it would need to be commercially viable there may also be residential flats incorporated in a scheme. A member of the group raised a concern regarding a possible right of way across the location or if there were any covenants on the area. Mr Mears responded that he noted the comments but to date no evidence had been found from legal searches on the site.

9. CAERPHILLY FLOWER FESTIVAL FUNDING

Mr Highway introduced a report seeking approval for funding of £3,000 from the Community Forum Budget towards the 2007 Caerphilly Flower Festival. The event will aim to attract more visitors to the town and will be held on the 6th and 7th July. Mr Highway outlined details of the event and reported that Caerphilly Town Council had made a commitment of £4,000 to the event. A member of the Group expressed concern regarding the allocation of the Community Forum funding to the Festival and considered that direct core funding from the Council would be more appropriate and that this Particular budget should be allocated to visual impact schemes. Mr Dallimore clarified that the Town Centre Improvement Group budget would cover repairs to street furniture etc. and that the Community Forum Budget could therefore allocate funds to the Flower Festival as the town would benefit from generating visitors and hopefully repeat visits.

It was agreed that an allocation of £3,000 be given from the Community Forum Budget towards the cost of staging the Flower Festival for this year. Consideration would however be giving to funding the festival from core budgets in future years.

10. UPDATE ON CAERPHILLY VISITOR CENTRE – GROUND FLOOR LEASE

Mr Hudson reported that a new tenancy for the ground floor of the Caerphilly Visitor Centre had been offered to the company Coffee 1. The company have indicated that they will be refitting the premises and will open 7 days a week.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM CAERPHILLY TOWN COUNCIL

11. Timing of Refuse Collection

The Town Clerk reported that there were problems with the collection of rubbish in the town centre as many householders put their bin out the evening before the early morning collection resulting in many of the bins being knocked or pushed over before they are emptied. Mr White reported that the timings of collections had been discussed on a number of occasions and the early morning collection was the best solution. If they collected later there would be a problem with the large vehicles avoiding shoppers parked cars. In addition they also go through Cardiff Road twice before 9 and 10am at the police request to avoid traffic being held up for long periods.

12. Graffiti in the Town Centre

The concerns regarding graffiti in the town centre were outlined. Inspector Williams reported that the Police had arrested a number of youths in connection with this growing problem. Mr White reported that the Probation Services are very helpful in providing a service to deal with the cleaning and that graffiti in the side streets of the town is usually removed within a week. Mr White indicated that he would provide photographs to the Police as some of the graffiti has a distinctive signature. Mr White also indicated that the Town Clerk could contact him direct to report any new areas of graffiti.

13. CORRESPONDENCE FROM CADW

Mr Stephens outlined a suggestion for an existing single lighting unit to be replaced with a double unit to provide additional lighting along the path that connects Castle Street and the main entrance to the castle. The Chairman reported that an officer had notified him that the cost of changing the column to support a twin arm bracket with two lanterns would be approximately £1500 and take 8-10 weeks for delivery. The Group supported the suggestion in principle and Mr Stephens indicated that he was grateful for the information and would contact the appropriate officer to discuss the matter further.

14. CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE AUDIT

The Town Centre Audit for January was received and noted.

Matters Arising

15. Wooden Bench Tops – David Williams Park (Page 2)

It was reported that the replacement bench tops had warped. The appropriate officer will be contacted to investigate.

16. Appearance of Building – Cardiff Road (page 4)

Concern was expressed that this issue had been classed as 'closed' having receiving no reply from the store. It was agreed that Mr Highway would write again to Tesco's to ascertain a reply to a request to consider including Caerphilly in their new fascias initiative.

17. Additional Weed Treatment Town Centre (Page 6)

It was reported that Salop Street and Bradford Street had not received the weed treatment. The appropriate officer will be contacted.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting – Wednesday, 6th June 2007 2.00 p.m. at the Business and Technology Centre, Tredomen.

The meeting closed at 3.20 p.m.

CHAIRMAN