



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY 6TH JUNE 2007 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor P.J. Bevan - Chairman

Councillors:

G.G. Hibbert, S. Kent and M. Prew

Together with:

I.G. MacVicar (Business Development Officer), A.Dallimore (Urban Renewal Manager), J. Ridgewell (Business Manager – Development Parks), D. Earey (Principal Engineer – South) J. Elliot (Research Officer) and D. Phillips (Committee Services Officer).

Also Present:

R. Gough (GAVO), K. Robottom (CRA), J. Stephens (CADW), K. Williams (Caerphilly Town Council) PC P. Stanforth (Gwent Police) and J. Couzens (Castle Court Shopping Centre).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.H. Newman and Mrs. C. Forehead, A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), P. Hudson (Tourist Officer), Inspector B. Williams (Gwent Police) and L. Shattock (CIRP) .

1. MINUTES

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

Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group held on 7th March 2007.

MATTERS ARISING

2. Mr K. Williams – Caerphilly Town Clerk

The Chairman congratulated Mr Ken Williams on his appointment as the permanent Caerphilly Town Clerk.

3. Top of Town Development (minute no 3)

It was reported that the Top of Town planning application had been agreed pending an Unilateral Agreement and no adverse comments from the Welsh Assembly Government.

Although the developer had followed the statutory process and held widespread consultation, a number of the small independent retailers were still concerned at the development. Mr Macvicar reported that he had recently held a meeting with the traders to elicit interest in taking a lease in the new development.

It was suggested that when the development commences a representative from the company be invited to give regular presentations and updates to the management group.

4. Memorial Garden (Minute No 4)

Mr Ridgewell, Business Manager - Parks, gave an update on a possible memorial to recognise the dedicated work of Malcolm Evans. He reported that a new proposal was for a bench and a wood carving to be positioned at Morgan Jones Park.

Funding has been identified from the Town Council and Twyn Community Centre.

Councillor Prew also reported that funds would be available from a charity rugby match between Caerphilly and Bedwas.

5. Park Lane Development (Minute No 8)

Although there was little progress to report on this scheme, the Chairman requested that any information be sent to him should any covenants/rights of way be discovered on the site.

6. Caerphilly Visitor Centre – Ground Floor Lease (Minute no 10)

It was reported that the preferred tenant may not now proceed with taking a lease on the ground floor for a coffee shop at the Tourist Information Centre.

Councillor Davies (Cabinet Member for Regeneration) reported that he and the Leader of Council would be meeting the selected tenant to discuss any issues and try to resolve the matter.

7. Correspondence from Cadw (Minute no 13)

It was agreed that Mr Stephens(Cadw) would contact Mr Denner (CCBC) to progress the scheme.

8. Additional Weed Treatment – Town Centre (Minute No 17)

Mr. Robottom confirmed that the weed treatment in the town centre was now showing results.

9. CADW RESTRICTIONS OF CHARITY FUNCTIONS

The Caerphilly Town Council had submitted a letter expressing concern that their concession to use the Great Hall at Caerphilly Castle would in future only be available only on certain week days.

Mr Stephens from Cadw confirmed that the decision had been taken for commercial reasons. The cost to a member of the public hiring the Great Hall could raise a substantial sum in comparison to charity functions and there were still more demand than available dates as castle venues for hire in South Wales are very limited.

The Chairman referred to the history of the concession and Mr Stephens replied he would convey the comments back to that Cadw and would also discuss the matter further if any relevant documents or correspondence were produced.

Mr Couzens reported that the Castle Court bandstand can be used for charity events and that also the Caerphilly Social Club will usually give their large hall free of charge for charity events.

10. CAERPHILLY FLOWER FESTIVAL – UPDATE

Mr Ridgewell, Business Manager – Parks, reported that arrangement for the Caerphilly Flower Festival on the 6th/7th July were progressing well. He thanked Arriva Trains, Castle Court and Caerphilly Town Council for their financial contributions to the event.

The Festival will this year be held on a Friday and Saturday.

11. BIG CHEESE UPDATE

Mr Hudson, Tourist Officer, had tendered an apology for the meeting but had sent an information report to be circulated at the meeting. The report outlined a number of new initiatives and explained that the full programme of events will be available on the website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/bigcheese .

A more traditional firework display on the Friday and a music entertainment programme plus other displays will hopefully create a much better and fuller evening than in previous years.

A concern was raised regarding possible parking of caravans again at the Virginia Park site. The area had recently been drained and levelled for a new sports pitch in the Autumn and would therefore be unsuitable for parking large vehicles during the event. Mr MacVicar indicated that he would contact Mr Hudson regarding this concern and notify Councillors Bevan and Prew of his response.

12. POST OFFICE CLOSURE

The report informed the Management Group of the closure of the main post office at the Twyn and the relocation of services to W.H Smith at Castle Court. A press release issued by the Post Office was attached as an appendix to the report.

It was reported that consultation referred to in the press release was only on the facility and not on the change of location.

However a petition with 4,000 signatures against the relocation had recently been presented to the Trade & Industry Secretary.

Concerns were also expressed on the facilities at the proposed location. In addition to the stairs, only one small lift is presently available to the first floor where the post office would be relocated.

It was agreed that Mr Highway, Town Centre Development Manager, be requested to write to Royal Mail expressing concern at the proposed relocation which appears to have inadequate facilities for elderly and disabled to access their services.

13. REQUEST FOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNING

The report requested views on the provision of replacement directional signs to Castle Court on Bedwas Road, Caerphilly.

A request had been made by the Manager of Castle Court Shopping Centre to replace the

directional signs at Bedwas Road. There will be no financial implication to the council as Castle Court are prepared to pay the full cost.

It was noted that the request had previously been refused as it was considered that the main shopping centre in Caerphilly was at the top of town on Cardiff Road.

The Management Group agreed in principle to replacement signs but that consideration be given to incorporating 'short stay' beneath the logo.

The Chairman indicated that he would consult the Independent Traders Association on the proposal and contact Mr Earey, Principle Engineer, with their response.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

14. Crescent Road Playing Fields Entrance Feature

Members noted an information report on the problems being experienced in trying to relocate old photographs of the Eisteddfod Arch at Crescent Road and the recovery of the memorial plaque.

It was reported that Caerphilly Golf Club had a number of old town photographs and Councillor Kent agreed to make inquiries. It was also suggested that the Welsh Assembly be contacted.

Further inquiries will be made to locate the memorial plaque.

15. Town Centre Audit – May 2007

Details of the May Audit were noted and it was reported that a number of items had been progressed / finalised since the report was prepared.

16. Matter raised from the Audit:-

Page 2 Wooden Bench Tops – David Williams Park – the condition of the benches will be monitored.

Page 3 Installation of a New Bench – The Town Council will now pay for a memorial bench at Morgan Jones Park (as discussed earlier in the meeting).

Page 4 Signs and Lines, Town Centre – Noted that a new traffic order will be signed tomorrow.

Page 6 Flooding TIC Steps – Issue now resolved.

Page 7 Graffiti – Town Centre – Reported that a number of arrests had been made and that the Police now have a dossier on the 'tagging' signs.

Page 8 Defective Artwork Lighting – Cardiff Road – Noted that repairs do not appear to have been successful – Contractor to be contacted.

17. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 5th September at 2.00 pm – Business & Technology Centre, Tredomen.

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm.

CHAIRMAN