



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON WEDNESDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2009 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

S. Kent, M.H. Newman and Mrs L. Williams.
R. Davies – Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Countryside

Together with:

I. MacVicar (Business Development Officer), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), P. Hudson (Tourism Officer), J. Elliott (Research Officer) and D. Phillips (Partnership Support Officer)

Also Present:

J. Stephens (Cadw), E. Talbot (CIRP), K. Robottom (CRA), Mrs. S. Cooper and J. Cooper (Caerphilly Access Group) and R. Gough (GAVO)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C. Elsbury and M. Prew, K. Williams (Clerk, Caerphilly Town Council), S. Beacham (Senior Parks Officer) and Mrs. C. Davies (Senior Environmental Health Officer).

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2009 were received as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

2. Eisteddfod Arch (Minute no 3) and Evan James Memorial (Minute no 8)

It was reported that the Evan James Memorial was near completion and it is hoped that the official opening of this and the Eisteddfod Arch could coincide with celebrations for St David's day next year.

3. Proposed Life Trail/Well Being Units at Dafydd Williams Park (Minute no 10)

Unfortunately Mr. Beacham was unable to attend the meeting but had sent a report on progress of the proposed Life Trail/Well Being Units.

It was noted that all the required funding was now in place for the 2 Life Trail units for Dafydd Williams Park. The Units had been ordered and all the funders artwork/logos have been sent to the company for inclusion on the information panels. The company will prepare the concrete bases shortly and installation programmed for late January, when a launch date will be arranged.

A question was raised on the exact location of the units and Mr Highway explained that they are slightly constrained as the units will need to be sited on level ground.

A member suggested that they be sited away from the overhanging trees as the leaves could be a slipping hazard when exercising.

4. Funding of Park Benches Within the Castle (Minute no 11)

It was reported that the benches had been ordered and installation expected in the next two weeks.

5. Retail Survey Results (Minute no 14)

A request was made for more information on the occupancy rates for retail premises in the town centre over the last 12 months.

Mr Highway reported that a number of independent businesses had recently opened in the town and that there had been very positive feed back from the newly opened Pound Land Store at Castle Court.

6. UPDATE ON THE CHRISTMAS MARKET AND LANTERN PARADE

Mr Hudson (Assistant Tourism Officer) circulated an update report on the Caerphilly's Medieval Christmas Fayre which is expected to attract over 100 stalls and it is hoped that it will become the biggest event of it's kind in Wales. He explained that this year Cardiff Road will be closed to traffic on Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th to allow the street to accommodate a number of stalls for the event. A letter was circulated by the Tourism Unit to local residents outlining these proposals and initially only 2 comments from residents and 3 from local traders were received (two of the comments were to request a presence at the event).

Special arrangements for Iceland to continue their home delivery arrangements have been proposed by loading their vans at Windsor Street with a qualified traffic steward directing the operation. A concern had been raised by local residents regarding this arrangement and a vote indicated that the arrangements proposed should remain.

Mr Hudson indicated however that he would arrange a meeting to re-assure any residents of the proposed loading operation.

A concern was also raised on the condition of a wall from the pedestrian walkway from Windsor Street to Cardiff Road and it was indicated that an officer from Building Control Services would be informed of this concern.

The access to the castle during the event was also discussed and disappointment again expressed that there would be only be free access to Caerphilly residents. Clarification was

sought on the boundary for residents enjoying free entry and if the former boundary of Caerphilly Urban District Council would still apply (i.e. residents from Nantgarw, Parc Nantgarw, Glan y Llyn and Taffs Well would be allowed free access). Mr Stephens indicated he would clarify this.

A vote was taken and a motion passed that all residents of Caerphilly County Borough Council be allowed free access to the castle.

Arrangements for the Lantern Parade are progressing well with over 260 lanterns made to date. It was suggested that the Mayor be presented with his own lantern.

Thanks were recorded to Mr Hudson and all staff for all their work with the Christmas events.

7. TOP OF TOWN DEVELOPMENT – LAWRENCE HOUSE

It was reported that a planning application for a mixed development (retail and residential) had recently been submitted for the Co-Co's building (Lawrence House) and would be subject to the usual planning process and an environmental survey would be required before the application could be determined.

A concern was raised by a member of the Group that it appeared that the owner was not liable for business rates as the building was now classed as derelict and therefore unable to let.

8. AIR QUALITY IN THE TOWN CENTRE

Mrs Clare Davies was unable to attend the meeting but had sent her update on Air Quality in the town centre of Caerphilly. It was noted that the Council are currently working with consultants (AEA) to produce an Air Quality Action Plan. A further assessment should be forwarded to the council at the end of the month and it is not therefore possible to provide any information regarding the conclusions at present. The Action Plan is expected around March 2010 and Mrs Davies indicated she would attend the next meeting of the Management Group in March to give an update.

9. MALCOLM UPHILL MEMORIAL

It was reported that a number of designs had now been considered and a location agreed at station square. The cost of the memorial at £3,500 (cast in bronze) had been lower than originally expected and Mr. Talbot indicated that he would now relay the cost and designs to interested parties and seek funding. It was suggested that Caerphilly Town Council be approached for a grant.

Mr. Dallimore indicated that he would bring the final designs to the next meeting.

10. INFORMATION ITEM

CAERPHILLY TCIG AUDIT – NOVEMBER 2009

The following item was discussed:

- a) Access Issues (Page 2)** – the secretary of Caerphilly Access Group reported that there had been an improvement in the access issues at Morrisons and the one remaining dropped kerb of concern would be inspected by one of her members in the New Year.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 4th March 2010 at 2.00 pm

The meeting closed at 3.45 pm