



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON THURSDAY 4TH MARCH 2010 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor P. Bevan – Chairman

Councillors:

C. Elsbury and S. Kent.

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), D. Nutt (Tourism Officer), C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), M. Lloyd (Design & Construction Manager), C. Davies (Senior Environmental Health Officer), S. Beacham (Senior Parks Officer), R. Lloyd 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 K. Williams (Clerk, Caerphilly Town Council),

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.E. Fussell, M. Newman and M. Prew and Mrs. L. Williams,

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2009 were received as a correct record.

2. AIR QUALITY IN THE TOWN CENTRE

Mrs. Clare Davies explained that the 1995 Environmental Act had placed a duty on local authorities to produce an air quality strategy. In 2003 it was discovered that part of Caerphilly Town Centre (White Street / Bartlett Street) was failing in nitrogen dioxide levels (mainly from car fumes) and a monitor was purchased to record the air quality. An assessment has been completed and an Action Plan will be developed from the findings.

An Air Quality Steering Group has been established and a number of meetings held to discuss options available. Consultants have been appointed and an Action Plan developed in

conjunction with the Steering Group. This has recently been submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government and approval is awaited.

Mr Campbell (Transport Engineering Manager) reported that his section is working closely with environmental health to address the air quality issues. Moving traffic, the volume of traffic and queuing traffic contributed to the poor air quality and an aim is therefore to reduce the flow of vehicles and ease congestion.

Work to address this would be on-going and various options were discussed at the Steering Group workshops.

A traffic impact and options to potentially change the traffic patterns would need to be completed to determine the effect on air quality.

A meeting of the Steering Group (in late Summer) will be presented with proposals to improve air quality and a 12 week consultation held with residents.

3. UPDATE ON LIFE TRAIL/WELL BEING UNITS

Mr. Beacham (Senior Parks Officer) reported that the Life Trails/Well Being Units had been installed and an official launch would be arranged. All partners who had financially contributed would be invited to the event.

4. UPDATE ON THE CHRISTMAS MARKET AND THE LANTERN PARADE

Mr. Nutt (Tourism Officer) was attending the meeting for this item. A paper was circulated giving details of the Medieval market – visitor numbers, site layout, traffic management, promotion and number of stalls. Results from a market survey and footfall numbers were also included in the report and showed positive results in business and visitor numbers to the town over the week-end of the market.

5. CONFIRMATION ON FREE ACCESS TO CAERPHILLY CASTLE

Mr. Stephens (Cadw) reported that there had been some confusion regarding the areas of Caerphilly where residents can currently get free access to Caerphilly Castle.

The free access to Caerphilly Castle was originally given to residents of the former Caerphilly Urban District Council and has never been rescinded.

The scheme is currently operated by the Tourist Information Centre and Caerphilly Castle has the largest take up rate in Wales.

A map showing the current boundary was circulated to members of the Group. Members suggested that it may be opportune to rationalise and clarify the area for free access and that the Chairman of the Group, Cabinet Member and officers could meet with Cadw to discuss this matter and also to discuss the possibility of free access to all during the Medieval Market week-end later in the year.

6. MALCOLM UPHILL MEMORIAL

Mr. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal) reported that a design and location had now been agreed for the memorial (Station Square) and a photograph of the proposed memorial was circulated. The cost would be approximately £2,500 to be cast in bronze.

Mr. Talbot reported that a bank account had been opened and a web site set up to publicise the memorial and seek funding from interested groups.

Mr. Williams confirmed that a report seeking funding from Caerphilly Town Council would be discussed at a meeting on the 22nd March.

A report on progress will be presented to the next meeting of the Management Group.

7. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AT PENTREBANE STREET

Mr. M Lloyd (Design & Construction Manager) confirmed that 2 lighting columns had been installed at Pentrebane Street and that they would be suitable for Christmas lights (supplied from Caerphilly Town Council) to be attached to them.

Mr. R Lloyd (Special Projects Officer) was attending the meeting to suggest various ideas for improving the appearance of Pentrebane Street. He circulated a number of photographs illustrating various proposals and explained that the finance for the work would be from the Tidy Towns budget.

It was reported that the street does not at present have any vacant retail properties and that the occupiers of these premises are very enthusiastic towards any changes to improve the appearance of the street.

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. RETAIL JOB CREATION

Mr Highway outlined a report on the jobs created and lost in Caerphilly Town Centre during 2009. He explained that the year had been very difficult for retailers with a number of major stores going into administration. Also in anticipation of the large new shopping development in Cardiff opening, a new local strategy was launched in September called 'Unique Places' which aimed to show that the local town centre had its own individual identity and character.

The report gave details of jobs lost and created and then compared results to the previous year. It also gave details of the footfall for the two comparable years.

Members noted the report

9. CAERPHILLY TCIG AUDIT – NOVEMBER 2009

The following item was discussed:

- (a) New Development, Cardiff Road (Page 1) – Item Closed;
- (b) Flyposting, Town Centre (Page 1) A new policy will be presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet to endorse;
- (c) Access Issues, Morrisons – Access Group confirmed that a representative will be on site in the next few weeks;
- (d) Windows of Vacant Shops, Cardiff Road – Item Closed;
- (e) Potential Trip Hazard, Cardiff Road – OS Refresh – frost has made the situation worse – noted by officer;
- (f) Replacement of a Bollard, Windsor Street Lane – Mr. Dallimore to liaise with officers and local members on this issue – Access group requested colour contrasting to be put on the bollard.

10. LAST MEETING

The Chairman reported that this would be the last meeting attended by Mr. MacVicar. He thanked him for all his work and wished him well in his new post as Head of Operations, Asset Based Services.

He also reported that Mr. Nutt would shortly be leaving and wished him a long and happy retirement.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 10th June 2010 at 2.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 3.45 pm