



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON THURSDAY 16TH DECEMBER 2010 AT 2.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor J. E. Fussell – Vice Chairman (Presiding)

Councillors:

S. Kent and M. Newman

Also Present:

Messrs K. Robottom (CRA) ,R. Williams (CIRP) and Ms J. Perkins (Cadw)

Together with:

A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), J. Bennett (Group Manager – Advisory Services), S. Beacham (Senior Parks Officer), R. Lloyd (Special Projects Officer), D. Smith(Principal Engineer, Traffic Management) and J. Elliott (Research Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from R. Davies – Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Countryside, Councillors P. Bevan and C. Elsbury, K. Williams (Clerk, Caerphilly Town Council), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), Mr E. Talbot (CIRP), Mr J. Couzens (Centre Manager, Castle Court) and Ms M. Godfrey (Environmental Health Officer).

1. MINUTES

Subject to the inclusion of a Royal Horticultural Society Discretionary Award this has also been given to the town (minute no 5), the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2010 were received as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

2. Malcolm Uphill Memorial (minute no 3)

Noted that fundraising is continuing and £600 had been raised to date. A donation is imminent from the Caerphilly Round Table. If funding is secured the plaque should be in place by Autumn 2011.

3. Christmas Market (minute no 6)

It was reported that the Medieval Christmas Market week-end had been very successful. The traders in the town were very pleased with the event and it was felt that a number of new visitors would now return to the town. It was also reported that the traffic flow had been improved and that signage on the Mountain Road warning of road closures may have helped this. Thanks were recorded to the Highways department for all their work on the week-end.

Mr Hudson (Senior Events and Marketing Officer) will present a report on the event to the next meeting of the Management Group.

4. Town Centre Management Retail Survey (minute no 8)

Noted that businesses in the town could now be supported with website advice from Advisory Services.

5. UPDATE ON FREE ACCESS TO CASTLE DURING MEDIEVAL MARKET

It was reported that visitor numbers were down from the previous year – 7,968 in 2009 and 4,504 in 2010. The reduction in visitor numbers may be attributed to a number of reasons e.g. weather or the recession. A concession for children to enter free had been given this year from Cadw and visitors attending the castle seemed to enjoy the experience. It was suggested that a joint report on the event could be given by Cadw and Tourism at the next meeting.

6. AIR QUALITY IN THE TOWN CENTRE

Mrs Maria Godfrey (Environmental Health Officer) was unable to attend the meeting for this item and had sent an update to be read at the meeting.

The Action Plan for Caerphilly Town Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) still remains at the option appraisal stage and as such no formal document has been written to date. This does not mean that an Action Plan for Caerphilly Town Centre AQMA is not required. So long as the AQMA remains, the authority has a statutory duty to produce an Air Quality Action Plan.

Since the Further Assessment report has been written, the authority has seen slight improvements in air quality in and around the Caerphilly area and because of this have purposely not proceeded with the Action Plan. The air quality modelling exercise within the Further Assessment report suggested that the authority should extend the AQMA to encompass an area near Ton-Y-Felin Road, which, when modelled, failed the air quality standard for nitrogen dioxide. However, the actual monitoring results for the Ton-Y-Felin Road area for 2009 did not fail the air quality standard. For action planning purposes there will be a need to know whether this was just a 'one off' result or whether the air quality in this area was actually improving. When the results are collated for 2010, the department will be in a position to move forward. These results will be expected in February 2011.

In addition to the Ton-Y-Felin Road situation, there is also a small area of Nantgarw Road that is failing the air quality standard so consideration of any actions will need to be carefully examined if included in the Action Plan so the problem here is not exacerbated. This department is currently in the process of procuring some continuous air quality monitoring equipment to be situated at Nantgarw Road so they can fully understand patterns and trends within this area before proceeding to a Detailed Assessment.

Environmental Health will meet with their air quality consultants following the results for 2010 to discuss how best to proceed. A Steering Group meeting will be convened when they are in a position to advise further on the Action Plan.

Members were advised that if they have any questions/queries relating to this information, they can contact Maria on 01495 235279.

7. TAXI RANK NEAR CASTLE COURT BANDSTAND – UPDATE

Mr Dean Smith (Principal Engineer) was attending the meeting for this item. He reported that he was awaiting costs for moving underground services from Welsh Water and Telecom in order to progress the work.

8. IMPROVEMENTS TO PENTREBANE STREET

It is reported that the temporary arrangements for planters had constantly been vandalised during the evenings by revellers in the town. A permanent solution and other improvements would however cost approximately £20,000 although the work could be co-ordinated with the re-surfacing of the street if funding is identified.

The Indoor market has re-opened in the street and it is hoped that a café culture will be also be created in the street after the improvements.

During discussions it was suggested that Cadw open the South Gate so that pedestrians would flow back into the town. The representative from Cadw indicated that this would be raised with the management.

9. ARTWORK IN PENTREBANE STREET

Mr Rhodri Lloyd reported that there had been a delay in the high level artwork for Pentrebane Street although it is now scheduled for Sunday. Publicity photographs will be taken by communications the following day. He is seeking new items for the west side of the street, possibly a shallow mural to deter graffiti.

10. UPDATE ON EISTEDDFOD PLAQUE

The plaque has been refurbished and will be fitted in a recess made in the dressed stone. A.D. is looking at the possibility of providing a brief bi-lingual description of what the plaque represents, to be inserted into the void area, within the plaque.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

Caerphilly Tcig Audit – November 2010

The Caerphilly Town Centre Audit for November 2010 was received and the following items discussed:-

Condition of Co Co's Building (Page 1) – Asbestos investigations at the building – planning process from J. D. Wetherspoon ongoing.

Improvement of Retail Area (Page 4) – **Andrew Highway to develop a marketing strategy with local traders**

Request for Litter Bin (Page 5)

Bins replaced and cycle racks installed.

New Town Centre Action Plan Exhibition (Page 5)

40 people had attended the exhibition and 30 completed the comment sheets.

Cleansing and Refurbishment of Cheese Model, Castle Street (Page 6)

Cleaned and modification to planters.

Any Other Business

It was reported that an officer would be conducting a report on water recreation and facilities. As this report would include the moat it was agreed that the report be presented to the Group when completed.

Cadw will also be investigating better use of water based, recreational facilities.

12. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 17th February 2011 at 2.00pm (Sirhowy Room).

The meeting closed at 2.45pm