



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK
ON WEDNESDAY 19TH MAY 2011 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

C. Elsbury, S. Kent, M. Newman, M. Prew
R. Davies – Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning

Also Present:

Ms J. Perkins (Cadw), Mr J. Couzens (Centre Manager, Castle Court), Mrs S. Cooper (Caerphilly Access Group), Mr K. Robottom (CRA) and Mr K. Williams (Clerk – Caerphilly Town Council), Mr Williams (CIRP)

Together with:

A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), P. Hudson (Senior Events & Marketing Officer), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), A. Cole (Community Regeneration Co-ordinator), S. Hodges (Network Management Engineer) and J. Elliott (Senior Research Officer).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C. Elsbury declared an interest in agenda item 5(f) – request for funding from the Area Forum Budget – Caerphilly Skate project Group, and took no part in the discussion.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from J. Bennett (Group Manager – Advisory Services) A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), Mr E. Talbot (CIRP), and D. Phillips (Committee Services Officer)

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group meeting held on 2nd March 2011 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Malcolm Uphill Memorial

It was pointed out that the previous minutes indicate a donation from the Town Council of £500, this should read £200.

Although a design has been prepared there appears to be little progress in fundraising. Caerphilly Town Council have allocated a donation of £200 but this may need to be withdrawn if further funding is not found. At this point the donation was returned to the Clerk of the Town Council, by Mr. Williams (CIRP)

New Library Development In The Town Centre

The Chair had requested that this item be placed on the agenda. At this point an update was given. Exact requirements for the layout of the building are still being assessed, in particular the Customer First area on the ground floor. Also there is now no allocation of space for the original police station concept. There will be a single desk space for the police, which would provide basic information. This is awaiting approval from Superintendent Jon Burley. Questions were asked as to why there needs to be a desk / police presence in the library at all?

Update on the new library development to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Caerphilly Workman's Hall

The hall requires funding for internal restructure works. The funding granted in January 2009 was for £5,000 and came from the council's Technical Assistance Fund. This was for the provision of a building condition survey of the hall and to determine; the electrical, mechanical and structural conditions; and capital works for preservation of the building. There has been a change in the committee, which has made the operation of the hall easier. The committee will debate how they envisage, the longer term usage of the hall, as at present there are a number of limitations on the current usage.

Any other business

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to CADW for their co-operation in allowing a junior choir from Lannion (the twin town of Caerphilly) free access to the Castle on their visit, and also the free entry to the castle for children, with each paying adult, for the Flower Festival in June.

5. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS:

(a) Planning Application from Wetherspoons at Lawrence House, Cardiff Road.

Mr. A. Dallimore provided an update on the present situation. Wetherspoons are vague in providing a start date for the project, but he sees the development starting in weeks rather than months. An architectural brochure was circulated to the Management Group which illustrated the outside décor of the building together with scaled plans. Wetherspoons have researched the history of the area and have come up with a brand name for the building 'The Billingsley Rose'. The name refers to a famous designer who worked at the Nantgarw Pottery.

The Group discussed this branding, and alternative names were put forward. A.D. said that he was not sure whether the Management Group could alter the proposed name, put forward by a private company, but he would look into it.

(b) Street Scene at Cardiff Road

Mr. A. Dallimore described what was proposed in Blackwood Town Centre, as part of an effort to 'declutter' the town, and was seeking views upon doing the same in parts of Caerphilly Town Centre. In Blackwood pedestrian barriers have been removed giving shoppers more room to move around. Where pedestrian barriers still need to be in position, it is the intention to replace these, old style galvanised steel barriers with a more modern and attractive, open style, suitable for 21st Century shopping areas.

He handed out photographs featuring several locations in Caerphilly Town, which illustrated what some areas look like with the current barriers, and the views after the barriers have been removed. It is also the intention to remove little used waste bins and those which have suffered damage. The Group discussed the illustrated locations, together with parking issues, pedestrian barriers incorporating seating, and barriers which may be used for the Flower Festival. It was felt that in some locations it would enhance the look of the Town, and free up more pedestrian access. It was suggested by A.D. that he could come back with further proposals to the next meeting, perhaps concentrating on Cardiff Road initially. Also to check on the change of pedestrian controlled traffic lights on Cardiff Road, to an alternative.

(c) Update on Caerphilly Tourism Events – Annual Flower Festival, Big Cheese, Tour of Britain Cycle Race, and Proms in the Park

The Flower Festival - This year's event will be wholly organised by the Council. It will focus more on the town centre rather than the churches taking part. This was partly due to not being able to let all places of worship, which normally took part in the festival, being given the dates soon enough, with the consequence that some venues have already taken bookings e.g. wedding ceremonies etc. The dates for the Flower Festival will be 25th & 26th June. It is intended that there will be entertainment in the Twyn area, and the Craft Market is to be re-introduced. There will be more on offer to visitors and residents on the days concerned, including open top bus tours of the Town Centre visiting those churches taking part. The Saturday is a 'Day of Dance' with the 'Ffillfest 2011' located on the 'Hornwork' area of the castle grounds. There will also be a web presence for the event on Caerphilly C B Council's website, and many publicity posters/ flyers have been distributed.

Big Cheese 29th 30th 31st July - Mr P. Hudson reported that although attendance at this event is very good, and the number of food producers registered is 65, an increase of 12% from last year, it was felt that there was a need to re-invigorate the event, and to focus more on food. It is planned to have a Food Kitchen - The Saddleworth Food Company, to provide demonstrations, led by Sean Wilson (Coronation Street's Martin Platt)

Work is underway on developing a unique Big Cheese – show cheese.

The plan is also to emphasise the family nature of the funfair attractions, and the Community Marquee will be relocated.

It is intended that the whole of the Gwent Dragons squad will be present at the event.

Tourism is working to enable a bigger presence at the event in particular to focus on the County borough of Caerphilly, working with the private sector, to promote the wider attractions of the county borough.

Withdrawal of the Welsh Government (WG) funding for food markets may impact on 2012 attendance.

Closure of Cardiff Road – P.H. replied that this had been assessed but there was seen to be a problem with traffic management, which would require significant increased resources, so this idea has not been taken forward.

BBC Proms in the Park, 10th September. The theme for this event is Magic and Wizardry. The BBC is producing the tickets for this event. The two BBC presenters for this event have not yet been revealed, but this expected in June. Tourism will work with CADW for the display of banners and illuminations. The marketing budget for this event is predominantly held by BBC Wales.

There will be a park and ride operation to and from the site, gates open at 4.30pm. The main event will start at 7.45 pm and end at 10.30 pm. Discussions are being held with Arriva Trains Wales on the provision of extra trains from Caerphilly, to Rhymney and to Cardiff, as the performance ends after the timetabled regular train service.

There will be an opportunity for Community Participation, on stage, between 5.30 pm and 7.00 pm.

It was felt that the stage facilities would not be available for a secondary concert on the Sunday, because of the close occurrence of the Tour of Britain Cycle Race, scheduled for the Wednesday of that week.

Tour of Britain, 14th September - The Tour of Britain is the UK's biggest professional cycle race, attracting some of the world's best riders, including Olympic and World champions. Out of the eight stages of the race, the Welsh stage attracted the largest TV audience viewing figures in 2010. Leading cycling press journalists from UK national newspapers will be reporting on this, final stage of the event.

The route is likely to be through Nelson, Ystrad Mynach, Llanbradach and Caerphilly. The route through Caerphilly town centre will be Castle Street, Cardiff Road, Mountain Road, Watford Road, Heol Cae Barrau, Nantgarw Road, to finish in Crescent Road. The finale is expected in Caerphilly Town Centre around 3.00pm. Barriers will be in place running 1Km prior to the finish. There will be opportunities for schools to watch, and support the ride on route. There will be a partner cycle race, in support of the Prostate Cancer Charity, which will follow the route on the 21st August.

Highways will check out the route e.g. road works, road sweeping etc., prior to the event.

(d) Timetable for Utilities Work in the Town Centre Verbal Update

There are plans for utilities companies to renew water pipe work under the road surface in Mountain Road in June. Concern was expressed at the many events occurring in Caerphilly town over the next few months, and what effect the possible road closures and trenching would have on these events. Members expressed an urgency to discuss the situation, with Welsh Water, to discuss the impact of their proposals. Mr. Steve Hodges to look into this.

(e) Air Quality in the Town Centre

It was noted that additional air quality monitoring units have been installed in the relevant areas in the town.

However, again there was no information available on this item. The Chair would like to see some feedback on this item at the next meeting whether it is presented verbally by the officer concerned, or by the submission of a written report circulated to members of the CTCMG, before the next meeting.

(f) Request for Funding from the Area Forum Budget

The Caerphilly Skate Group wishes to request an amount of £1,000 of funding from the Area forum Budget allocation for Caerphilly. This will contribute towards the cost of purchasing new skate equipment for the Caerphilly Skate Park, as described in the attached report.

£5,000 has recently been secured from the Caerphilly CBC's Enhanced Maintenance Budget for the project. The addition of the £1,000 would be extremely beneficial when applying for funding to external sources (match funding).

Members agreed that providing the group is properly constituted, in all aspects, then the application be approved.

6. CAERPHILLY TCIG AUDIT – MARCH 2011

The Caerphilly Town Centre Audit for March 2011 was received and noted.

Regarding the Bus Stop Kerb – Castle Street. An update was given in that Mr Clive Campbell may have reached an agreement to progress this issue with Welsh Water.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 15th September 2011 at 2.00pm (Rhymney Room).

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.