



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE ON TUESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER 2013 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

P. J. Bevan, C. Elsbury, C. Forehead, J. Fussell, K. James, B. Jones, S. Kent, M. Prew,
J. Pritchard

Together with:

Professor R Deacon (Community Councillor), Mr J Dilworth (Van Community Clerk),
Mr. K (Williams - Caerphilly Town Council Clerk), Mr K. Robottom (Caerphilly Residents
Association), Mr T Payne (Cadw), CSC141 Mcdonnell & PC1345 Ramsay (Gwent Police),
Mr. Tudor Jones (Tommy Cooper Society), Mr Tidridge (Heol Trecastell Residents
Association)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban
Renewal), M. Godfrey (Environmental Health Officer), P. Hudson (Marketing A. Jones
(Complaints Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: E. Forehead, D.T. Davies (Consultee), Mr J Couzens (Centre Manager Castle
Court, Mr E Talbot (Federation of Small Businesses), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre
Manager)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest

3. TO NOTE THE PREVIOUS MINUTES ON 10TH JULY 2013

Point 4 of the minutes, stated that Allan Dallimore was arranging for the Caerphilly Access
Group to have a visit to the library. The question was asked as to whether this has been
arranged. Allan Dallimore will check.

The rest of the minutes were taken as read.

4. AIR QUALITY

Maria Godfrey advised that the area being monitored for air quality would now be extended.

The draft action plan is currently under consultation. The team will be including Nantgarw Road and Tonyfelin Street as of 22nd November 2013.

An advert will be in the Caerphilly Campaign next Wednesday advising residents of this. In addition letters have already been sent to residents, members and businesses.

The draft action plan is to be circulated to members next week for comments to be provided within 14 days. There will be an opportunity for any additional comments to be provided over the next 12 weeks.

The Caerphilly Action Plan is going back to the steering group in February 2014; any feedback will be discussed at this group before the final report is submitted to the Welsh Government to put into action.

Some schemes that have been suggested will be part of the action plan.

A question was raised as to whether or not there is a budget for Air Quality Management. The group was advised that there is no Air Quality budget, application for a grant was made to Welsh Government but the application was not successful.

The action plan will be taken forward when funding is available.

Councillor Bevan thanked the officer for the update and asked for clarification as to what the correct levels should be.

It was stated that the correct levels should be 40mg per metre cubed. The last reading for White Street was 42mg.

Councillor Bevan asked if there are any penalties enforced by the Welsh Government if Councils do not reduce the levels.

It was advised that Welsh Government can take over if the Local Authority are not making any progress, however CCBC is making every effort possible to reduce levels.

5. LIBRARY UPDATE

Allan Dallimore confirmed that the library is scheduled to open on the 6th January 2014. The handover took place in early October for the fit out of furniture and fittings. This should be completed by the end of November and then there will be a programme of setting up and organising the IT systems.

It is anticipated that there is a VIP visit to the site on the 16th December 2013. Allan requested that people advise him as to whether or not they would like to attend.

A question was then raised as to what is happening with the old library site at Morgan Jones.

The group were advised that no decision has yet been made.

Councillor Pritchard requested that the Morgan Jones ward would like to see the building restored and kept for community use. Councillor Pritchard has liaised with Council Officers and the local Residents Association with a view to utilising the building for the Community and also enquired about applying for lottery funding.

Councillor Bevan stated that he was very supportive of this building to be kept for the community. There have been some discussions and interest has been expressed by the private sector. However pending budget allocations for next year no decision can be made.

Councillor Prew raised concerns regarding the safety of the building and protecting the building from being vandalised.

Andrew Highway confirmed that the issue had already been raised with colleagues.

6. FLOWER FESTIVAL

Andrew updated the group on the awards presentation, which was another successful event.

Councillor Ken James confirmed that due to financial restraints the Council would not be able to financially support this event any longer.

The Town Council stated that they are looking into other ways of raising the finances. Councillor Bevan advised that the churches are prepared to keep the event going with help.

Councillor James wished to praise the Council for the flower displays throughout the town, in addition to those that have been done for the festival. He has enjoyed the event that has been held over the last few years.

Councillor Pritchard enquired as to what the contribution to the event from the Council was.

Andrew Highway advised that the Town Council contribute £3,000 and the Town Centre Management Group allocate £3,000. Around £4,000 comes from other budgets.

7. ADVERTS ON THE HIGHWAY

Gareth Richards explained to the group that a policy now in place to control the number of A framed boards that are placed on Highway.

The objective is to remove street clutter and to improve the appearance on the street. The Council has a duty to keep the Highway clear by removing these items.

All businesses have been sent a copy of the policy and asked if they have any views to notify the Council; to date only 5 responses have been received.

All retailers are asked to sign and agree to this policy and pay £25 to obtain a licence for their business.

The end of the consultation period is the end of December and will then be going to Cabinet once all the comments are in.

Councillor Fussell confirmed that he was disappointed in the lack of response and asked how many in total were contacted.

Andrew Highway confirmed that there are over 700 retailers between the five towns and all of these retailers were sent the policy and all were asked to raise any queries to contact the relevant officers.

The only queries raised were in relation to grammar.

Gareth advised the group that having this policy in place will enable the Council to keep the streets clear and make it easier to enforce penalties on individuals obstructing the Highway,

those who are in breach will face a penalty of up to £1,000 plus recharges, including any court costs.

8. RETAIL SURVEY

Andrew Highway presented the group with a PowerPoint presentation showing the results of this year's retail survey which was sent out to retailers across the 5 managed town centres.

The general consensus was that the results were quite positive and that retailers feel that community spirit is very good and their services are appreciated.

One negative point raised was parking. Whilst there is free parking in Morrison's car park there is still an issue in trying to find parking spaces.

It was also highlighted that some businesses are still hesitant to sell their services/products online. Andrew advised that the Go2 team are continuing to work with retailers to assist with setting up online services.

Andrew passed his thanks to Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager, for putting together the summary from the surveys returned.

Councillor Kent advised that the Town Council are in the middle of setting up their own website which should be available soon and they can then liaise with the Council to assist with grants and links to local businesses.

9. DEFIBRILLATORS

Councillor Forehead introduced Mr Tudor Jones to the group to discuss the installation of defibrillators.

Mr Jones thanked the Chair for the invite to the meeting and explained to the group that he was a member of the Tommy Cooper Society who are championing the installation of the defibrillators under the title 'Tommy's Ticker Fund'. They are raising funds to buy a defibrillator to mark the 30-year anniversary of Tommy Cooper's death.

The Tommy Cooper Society has been working with the Ambulance Service with a view to installing 2 defibrillators in the town and is actively working to heighten the profile of the defibrillator machines and promote training for those who may need to use them.

It has been suggested that staff within the tourist information centre be asked if anyone there would want to have the training.

Mr Jones explained that the sign to indicate the defibrillators within the town is a green heart with a yellow flash symbol through the middle.

The Society is currently in talks with businesses in Caerphilly and also the Llanishen Ladies Hockey Team who are considering purchasing their own defibrillator machine.

In order to raise funds the Society are selling lapel badges with the slogan 'Tommy's Ticker Team' on them and other fundraising ideas. As well as funding the defibrillators the funds will also enable a plaque to be placed on the statue currently in Caerphilly to commemorate the 30th Anniversary.

Whilst discussing the statue Mr Jones wished to raise concerns over the maintenance of the statue as paint is coming off the plaque. He asked if the Council have been using jet wash equipment as this could cause problems and the paving needs to be cleansed.

Allan Dallimore advised that he would look into this and arrange for the area to be cleaned and ensure that no high power jet wash is used.

Councillor Kent stated that he was very pleased to hear of the installation of the defibrillators and agreed that they were a good idea. He asked if there are any qualified first responders in the town.

The police confirmed that they have received training on how to operate the defibrillators, however the instructions are clearly marked on the machines and easy to follow so it could not be used incorrectly.

Councillor Kent asked if it would be worth asking all local businesses to see if anyone would want to be trained. Andrew Highway agreed that this would be a possible.

Mr Jones asked the group if there was a possibility that an area could be set up within the new library with a display of memorabilia and personal belongings of Tommy Cooper. Mr. Jones has received confirmation from Tommy Cooper's daughter that she is happy to provide personal belongings for a display. There are paintings of Tommy Cooper that the Society has and the old library also had various documents and paintings.

Allan Dallimore will make further enquiries to see if this can be provided.

Councillor Forehead reported that she has been in a meeting with Gareth Evans regarding the tower part of the library and confirmed that this area is going to be used as a museum that will also include Tommy Cooper memorabilia.

A portrait of Tommy Cooper, presented to the Rhymney Valley District Council from Tommy Cooper's wife, could also go on display.

Bedwas Junior School won an award for an animation sketch on Tommy Cooper. It was suggested that they come to the next Town Centre Management Group meeting to show the group their DVD.

Thanks were passed to Tudor Jones for coming to the meeting

10. UNIQUE PLACES DISCOUNT CARD

Andrew Highway advised the group about the Unique Places Christmas Discount Card and issued the group with discount cards. The leaflets and posters will be displayed in shop windows.

The discounts and offers will from shops within the five managed towns. Interest has already been received from businesses.

Cards will be given out free-of-charge from designated places throughout the towns such as libraries. There is a website, which will display all the offers.

The aim of the discount card is to keep spend locally and increase footfall within our towns.

Councillor Bevan asked for clarification as to whether this card can only be used once or can it be used in a number of shops.

It was advised that it is up to the individual retailers to stipulate if there are any restrictions that they have on usage in their individual stores.

Councillor Kent stated that take up was not very good last year so have we learned from that.

Andrew agreed that take up was poor last year but there is a lot more interest this year and the advertising of this scheme has been better prepared than in previous years.

Councillor Elsbury wanted to thank Andrew and his team for organising this scheme it is a very good idea and does bring people into the town.

Councillor Deacon asked if there would be an advantage in advertising this discount offer to villages outside of the town such as Thornhill as he is aware that people come from there to shop in Caerphilly and without hearing about the offers they might be missing out. Could it be advertised in the South Wales Echo.

This will be noted, but due to budgetary constraints this was not possible this year.

11. PROPOSED CHANGES TO DISABLED PARKING IN CAERPHILLY TOWN

Andrew Highway advised the group that there was no-one available from the Highways Department to provide any answers today and if the group had any questions they would be conveyed to the relevant officer for a response.

Councillor Pritchard wanted it to be noted that he was very disappointed that there were no officers from the Highways Department as the report asked for members to provide their views.

Councillor Ken James informed the group that he would be taking this matter up and reminded them the TCMG was a consultation group only.

Councillor Fussell confirmed that he had met with Highways officers on this matter and that anyone wishing to make representations should direct them to Highway officers.

Cllr Pritchard wished it noted that the Access Group had concerns.

The Van Community Council Clerk advised that RCT is reverting to civilian traffic wardens and asked if this could this be considered.

Police confirmed that there was a need to raise awareness of the Blue Badge scheme and how it can be used. He also stated that the reduction of 30-minute bays would affect retailers.

Mr Robottom advised of a useful booklet on parking and asked if the Council could publish it again. The Police advised that Bob Campbell would probably be the best person to speak to in relation to it.

The group were asked to move the report on recommendations and the votes were 6 in favour of carrying the report forward and 5 against. Councillor Pritchard stated that he was unable to vote due to lack of officers in attendance and a lack of debate.

Cllr James stated that he would raise the matter with the appropriate Cabinet Member and Head of Service.

12. CAERPHILLY MEDIEVAL MARKET 2013

Paul updated the group on last year's event and how successful it was. This year the event will tie in with the launch of the discount card and should increase the footfall figures.

Paul ran through the report he provided in relation to the stalls available and the events available within the castle as well.

In addition to local residents attending there are also coach operators travelling to the event with at least 500 people onboard. The discount card has been made available to the coach operators for the visitors to use also.

There will be some disruption throughout this period and signs will be in position diverting traffic. Mr Robottom stated that last year there were problems where staff from Tesco could not access the car park due to the event. Mr Robottom asked if the staff could be made aware that they would need to be there before the event opens or use alternative parking that is available at the school.

Councillor Barbara Jones raised an issue with regards to the number of coaches visiting the area and asked if there were going to be toilet facilities within the parking area for the visitors.

The group were advised that there would not be toilets available as there are businesses in the town that open their toilets to the public and the coach operators have been provided with a list of these businesses to pass on to the visitors.

Councillor Bevan asked if we could confirm with the coach operators to see if toilets were available on the coaches and Councillor Jones asked if 'portaloo' toilets could be provided in future events.

It was advised that this could be looked into for any future events.

Mr Tidridge from Trecastell Residents Association asked for confirmation as to what would be happening with parking at Heol Trecastell as this is always a problem area at all of the events held in the town. Will a pass be given for residents of the street?

Paul advised that if a pass system were introduced, passes would need to be given out to other streets as well. There has been no feedback with regards to major problems previously so this will be monitored at this event. Signs will be positioned diverting traffic to try and deter drivers from going through the town unnecessarily.

Mr Tidridge wished to express his concerns and those of the street, as parking issues is always a problem for them.

Mr Robottom asked if the Police could monitor the streets and enforce no parking in the residential areas.

Police advised that they will try their best to control any issues however if tickets were to be issued it would not remove the vehicle.

Mr Payne from Cadw introduced himself to the group and informed the group of the activities that will be held within the castle grounds, including a medieval re-enactment group and local crafters returning and many other attractions. There will be toilet facilities available inside the castle.

Mr Payne was asked whether there would be a charge to enter the castle for these attractions and he confirmed that there is a charge, which is £4.75 for adults, £3.60 concession and £14.20 for a family ticket. Under 5's go free.

Confirmation was sought that if you were a local resident would the entry be free. Mr Payne would need to check on the current pricing structure.

Both Councillors Prew and Councillor Bevan sympathised with the residents of Heol Trecastell and urged that vehicles should be redirected to avoid going through town if they did not need

to.

Councillor Bevan stated that more consideration is needed for Heol Trecastell and more policing needed possibly by residents also.

Paul confirmed that he would arrange to meet with residents to see what issues there are for any future events.

Councillor Prew requested that Paul meet with residents of Heol Trecastell, Dol y Felin and Brynccenydd as all are affected by the events.

The Chairman has asked for this matter to be raised on the next agenda.

Paul requested funds of £1,500 to be made from the area forum budget to enable a radio campaign to take place.

The group were asked to vote on the requested funds for the radio campaign.

The votes were:-

12 voted yes 0 against and no abstaining

Councillor Bevan wanted to compliment Paul and his team for their hard work for these events and the group's appreciation of their work. The Chairman seconded this and wanted to also thank Mr Payne from Cadw for attending the meeting and look forward to see him at future meetings.

13. AUDIT

The report was agreed other than the Chairman asked if the power washing could be extended to the bus stop outside Tesco. Councillor Elsbury raised the issue of the steps at the Twyn Car Park and asked if the edges of the steps can be painted yellow. Andrew confirmed he would look into both of these requests

The meeting closed at 4.02 p.m.

CHAIRMAN