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**Date: 22nd February 2016**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Risca Town Centre Management Group** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Monday, 29th February, 2016** at **5.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

**Chris Burns**  
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## A G E N D A

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of interest. Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.	
To receive and note the following minutes: -	
3 Risca Town Centre Management Minutes 2nd November 2015.	1 - 4

To receive and note the following updates: -

A greener place Man gwyrddach



4	Business Report Risca Town Centre.	5 - 8
5	Go2 My Town Website Report.	9 - 12
6	'Choose the High Street' Christmas Voucher Booklet 2015 - Analysis Report.	13 - 18
7	Canal update.	
8	Long Bridge Baths & Commercial Street Development Sites overview.	
9	Consideration of Cuckoo Statue relocation.	
10	Risca Town Centre Audit Report.	19 - 22

**Circulation:**

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, D.T. Davies, N. George (Chair), Mrs P. A. Griffiths, K. James, Ms P. Leonard, R. Passmore (Vice Chair) and D. Rees

Town Councillors C. Edwards (Risca East), B. Hancock (Risca Town Council), D. Hobbs (Risca East), M. Parker (Risca Town Council), Robert Campbell (Clerk - Risca Town Council) and Mr G. James (Clerk Risca East)

**Other Organisations**

Inspector Carl Williams, Gwent Police



## RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON MONDAY, 2ND NOVEMBER 2015 AT 5.00 P.M.

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PRESENT:

Councillors:

N. George, K. James, P. Leonard

Together with:

M. Parker (Risca Town Councillor), B. Hancock (Risca Town Councillor), Mr R Campbell (Clerk Risca Town Council), Insp C Williams (Gwent Police)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader Urban Renewal), A. Jones (Clerk)

#### 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Mr Highway opened the meeting and asked for nominations. Councillor George was nominated and seconded. Councillor George accepted the post.

#### 2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Councillor George nominated Councillor Leonard as Vice Chair. This was seconded and Councillor Leonard accepted the post.

#### 3. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors E. M. Aldworth (Consultee), D. T Davies (Consultee), P Griffiths, R. Passmore, D. Rees, C. Edwards (Risca East Community Councillor), Mr G James (Clerk Risca East).

#### 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**5. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE PREVIOUS MINUTES OF MEETING 30TH JUNE 2015**

On previous minutes under the Audit it stated that the clerk Ceri Mortimer used to arrange the installation of the Christmas Lights. Members of the Town Council informed the group that the finances have been checked and confirmed that no monies went out for Christmas Lights.

The minutes were taken as read.

**6. 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN'**

Mr Highway presented the report to the group.

Members were advised that this year there will be a 'Choose the High Street Christmas Voucher booklet with over 100 offers which is more than in 2014.

Mr Highway wished to thank the retailers for participating and also thank the Council's Graphics Team who designed the booklet and associated publicity material.

Councillor Hancock confirmed that if assistance to knock on doors is required he is more than happy to help to get support.

Councillor George thanked Mr Highway and Mr Wilcox for their hard work and the report.

**7. RISCA CANAL OVERVIEW**

Mr Dallimore informed the group that Caerphilly Council is working with Torfaen Council on a joint Tourism orientated bid which focuses in on the Mom and Brecon canal corridor. This bid is one of 9 nationally being submitted by Visit Wales to The Welsh European Funding Unit (WEFO).

The group were advised that Caerphilly could receive upwards of £2.6m for the upper section of the Crumlin Arm if the bid is successful.

The aim is to develop the canal as a regional tourism destination by developing attractions along its route such as Cwmcarn and by developing complementary uses such as cycle routes linking to the forest drive. If successful there would also be an outdoor play area, possible toboggan run. And it may help secure a privately run zip wire in the unused quarry.

Inspector Williams requested that consultation with Crime & Disorder Officer would be appreciated. Mr Dallimore agreed that this would be a good idea.

Mr Dallimore advised that the bid has been submitted to Visit Wales and officers are awaiting feedback from Visit Wales' discussions with WEFO - which could be as early as December. Mr Highway hoped that where possible the Town Councils could lend their support to the bid.

Members discussed issues with cyclists on the tow path. Mr Dallimore advised that as cyclist will be encouraged to use the path and will look at design process. Mr Highway suggested that the management of the tow path could be looked at in future meetings.

**8. 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET PAST & PRESENT'**

Mr Highway presented the report to the group.

Mr Highway informed the group that the exhibitions were very successful and thanked Mr Wilcox for all of his hard work.

The group were advised that the only disappointment was with the lack of interest from the schools. Only Blackwood Comprehensive participated and they were very enthusiastic in bringing forward ideas for what they would like to see in the town.

The Chair thanked Mr Highway and Mr Wilcox for their hard work and the report.

## **9. SOUTH EAST WALES TOWN CENTRE VACANCY REPORT**

Mr Wilcox presented the report to the group.

Members discussed the figures of vacant premises within the table and were advised that these may well have changed as the report was from October 2014. Mr Wilcox confirmed that he could bring updated figures to future meeting and forward data to members of the group.

The Chair thanked Mr Wilcox for the report. Councillor George leaves the meeting and Councillor Leonard replaces him to chair the meeting.

## **10. TOWN CENTRE PROMOTIONAL SPACES**

Mr Wilcox presented the report to the group.

Members discussed the report and Mr Highway informed the group that Mr Wilcox has worked hard to build a good working relationship with the promoters who use the site and is very grateful for all of his hard work.

Councillor Hancock asked for confirmation as to when would the lights be installed in the promotional space. Mr Dallimore will check with street lighting.

The Chair thanked Mr Wilcox for the report.

## **11. RISCA TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – OCTOBER 2015**

Mr Dallimore advised that the legal dialogue over the bridge has stopped.

Insp Williams confirmed that since June he has met with Councillor Rees, Councillor Dix and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner in relation to Parking Issues in Town Centres. It was suggested that a joint approach could be considered, where the Council and the Police could jointly issue tickets.

Insp Williams assured the Group that the police were enforcing parking as best they could given available resources. He also explained that officers had urged local businesses to park more considerately.

Councillor Parker advised that when Traffic Wardens were in Risca there was no problem with parking. Mr Highway will feed all information back to colleagues in Traffic Management.

Mr Dallimore informed the group that Keep Wales Tidy are taking lead for maintenance of the site around the cuckoo statue and confirmed that the project is progressing well, back in August they completed Phase 1 which involved a full ground clearance. Six new birch trees were planted and four tonnes of chippings laid down.

Mr Dallimore advised that Keep Wales Tidy are keen to work on this as a community project with Tesco. There will be a lot of activity over the winter as Tesco work with Keep Wales Tidy to periodically carry out litter picks to maintain the area and cut the grass.

Mr Dallimore advised that there is a new habitat for slow worms incorporated into the feature around the base which Countryside Officers have been helping with.

The Town Council wished to thank officers for the works undertaken on the collapse of footway outside the Risca Inn.

The group were advised that the grit bins are available for shop owners to use whenever necessary and if the bins need refilling if they could contact Mr Highway he will make arrangements for them to be filled.

Councillor Hancock requested that the toilets in the Park be open in the summer months. The Town Council has requested this previously and have offered to contribute to the reasonable costs of the toilets being open. Mr Dallimore advised that he will take this up with Tony White.

The meeting closed at 18:21 p.m.

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CHAIR



## RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP - 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

**SUBJECT: BUSINESS REPORT RISCA TOWN CENTRE 2015 - FOR INFORMATION**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides information on the number of businesses opened and closed in Risca town centre throughout 2015.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report gives a retail overview of Risca town centre over the past year and details every retail business opening and closing within the town during 2015. In addition, it also provides an assessment of the annual footfall data collated in the town centre using the Experian Footfall electronic pedestrian counting system. Finally, the report sets out details of a number of initiatives that were developed to support and promote existing businesses and attract new ones to the town centre.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 "Prosperous Caerphilly" is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's "Single Integrated Plan". The Implementation of the *Unique Places* model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

### **4. THE REPORT**

#### **4.1 Risca Retail Overview 2015**

- 4.1.1 The growth of the value retailer has brought greater fluidity to the UK's high streets resulting in many businesses opening and then closing within a short space of time. This transience of retailers is a marked departure from Risca's traditional history of long standing independent retailers. Despite a challenging economic picture which has seen retail overheads rise and sales decline, Risca has continued to welcome a number of new business including: *Prestige Memorials, Mucky Pups, Tousles* and *Sage & Co Property Agents*.

4.1.2 At present, the reason people visit the County Borough's town's centres is predominantly for shopping, as a consequence a particular town's success is largely dependent on the strength of its retail offer. Within the UK's retail sector there is an over capacity as too many retailers compete against each other for a falling consumer demand. Currently, this is leading to a polarisation, with some retailers particularly in the value sector doing well, whilst others are struggling. In 2016 this gap is expected to widen. The risk in the next twelve months is that poorly performing multiple retailers will continue to close stores, whilst independent retailers who are under pressure through price deflation and rising costs, will find it difficult to survive in an extremely challenging market place.

## 4.2 Retail Property Directory

4.2.1 The *Retail Property Directory* provided through Town Centre Management provides an online resource which shows all of the retail properties available to rent or buy across the five managed town centres. This initiative is designed to make it easier for businesses to open in one of the County Borough's town centres. In addition, Town Centre Management proactively engages with property agents both nationally and locally to secure new tenants to fill vacant town centre units.

## 4.3 Choose the High Street – Past & Present

4.3.1 Last summer, a new element to the successful 'Choose the High Street' campaign was launched. 'Past & Present' encouraged people to invest economically, socially and emotionally in the future of their town centres. The campaign ran for five months (April – August inclusive) and focused on two areas. Firstly, the past element used archive photographs to evoke memories and re-established the significance of place. Secondly, people were encouraged to appreciate and value their town centre in the present day. The initiative consisted of library exhibitions in each of the five managed town centres, street galleries of historic photos displayed in shop windows and online *Flickr* galleries of archive photos.

## 4.4 Choose the High Street Christmas Voucher Booklet

4.4.1 In 2015, the 'Choose the High Street' initiative once again featured a Christmas campaign directed towards encouraging people to spend in their local town centres over the festive period. Retailers across the five managed town centres had the opportunity to submit an offer which was included into a printed voucher booklet at no cost. The scheme is designed to support local businesses by offering them the opportunity to participate in a free coordinated campaign under the 'Choose the High Street' banner. In total 105 offers were received across the County Borough, which is an increase of 15 on 2014. A total of 8 of these were from Risca town centre.

## 4.5 Events

4.5.1 The town centre events staged by the Council's Events Team continue to provide an opportunity for retailers to engage with a wider customer base due to the increase in footfall numbers that the events attract.

## 4.6 Business Comparison

4.6.1 The Town Centre Management Team compiled these figures during weekly town centre visits over the course of a 12-month period. It should be noted that they are as accurate as possible given the method of data collection.

<b>Risca Business Comparison</b>			
	2015	2014	LFL Comparison
Businesses Opened	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6 fewer businesses opened</b>
Businesses Closed	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5 fewer businesses closed</b>



## 4.7 Risca Footfall

4.7.1 Footfall in the town centre is measured outside the library on Tredegar Street.

<b>Risca Footfall Comparison</b>			
	2015	2014	Difference
Highest Number	<b>11,589 (18/05/15)</b>	<b>12,903 (24/02/14)</b>	<b>-1,314</b>
Lowest Number	<b>8,090 (21/12/15)</b>	<b>8,589 (30/12/14)</b>	<b>-499</b>
Average Footfall	<b>9,851</b>	<b>10,443</b>	<b>-592</b>

## 4.8 Town Centre Gazette

4.8.1 The Town Centre Management Team supports retailers by producing regular *Town Centre Gazettes*, which are bespoke to each town centre. To save on costs five editions were produced in 2015 instead of six in 2014. In addition, a summary of FootFall data is made available electronically on a weekly basis.

## 5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no potential equalities implications of this report and its recommendations on groups or individuals who fall under the categories identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan. As such, there is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment Questionnaire to be completed for this report.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications.

## 7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personal implications.

## 8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report for information.

## 10. STATUTORY POWER

10.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Andrew Highway, Town Centre Development Manager  
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration and Planning  
Cllr. K. James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development  
Allan Dallimore, Urban Renewal Team Leader  
Paul Hudson, Marketing and Events Manager  
Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager

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## RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

**SUBJECT: GO2MYTOWN WEBSITE**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides information on the "Go2MyTown" website, which is in the process of being updated and refreshed.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report provides details of the new Caerphilly Business Portal website, which is being integrated into the Go2MyTown website. This report gives members an overview of the content that is being incorporated into the site.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 "Prosperous Caerphilly" is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's "Single Integrated Plan". The Implementation of the *Unique Places* model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 In 2010, the Council's Business Enterprise Support Team started to develop the Go2MyTown project, which aimed to give each town centre in the Borough a presence on the Internet and give businesses the opportunity to be listed on the site and advertise their products/services. Individual town centre sites were set up, such as Go2Bargoed & Go2Risca, which were housed and accessed via the central Go2MyTown site.
- 4.2 Running in parallel with this site was the Caerphilly Business Portal – [www.caerphillybusiness.info](http://www.caerphillybusiness.info) – that contained other business-orientated information such as Town Centre Management's Retail Property Directory.
- 4.3 Following changes in the Council's Business Enterprise Support Team and the need to re-profile the Go2MyTown website, in December 2015 it was decided that elements of the Business Portal and Go2MyTown would be merged into one site and a Content Management System (CMS) installed to enable easy and regular updating of the site. This would all be under the umbrella of Go2MyTown.

- 4.4 Work started on the content revision in January 2016 and is currently ongoing. There is a new “news” section, which is now regularly updated with stories relating to our town centres. Businesses have been invited via the Town Centre Gazette to send in stories to the Town Centre Management Team for inclusion on the site.
- 4.5 One of the major new additions to the site is Town Centre Management’s Retail Property Directory, which previously sat on the Caerphilly Business Portal site. This directory lists all of the vacant properties within the five managed town centres that are available to buy or let. Each listing contains a photograph of the property, the agent’s details and, for the first time, a map of where the property is.
- 4.6 In addition to the two new features, the site continues to host a business directory, available jobs (mainly CCBC vacancies at present), forthcoming events, special offers and information on the Council’s “Unique Places” model of town centre management along with PDF versions of the Town Centre Gazette, FootFall reports and the “Pop-up Shop Guide”.
- 4.7 The website is also being used to advertise the new “Smart Zone” service that the Business Support & Funding team offers. This service allows small companies and start-ups the opportunity to hire office and meeting space on Tredomen Business Park, along with support services such as business mailing, photocopying, telephony and internet access.
- 4.8 Previously, there was some duplication in the content found on Go2MyTown site and the Council’s corporate business page – [www.caerphilly.gov.uk/business](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/business). However, the new site will work to compliment the information found on CCBC’s site. Visitors will be signposted to the Council’s business site for additional information on business support such as grants, advice, promotion and business rates.
- 4.9 Between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016, there were 465 unique visitors to the site. This figure will be used as a benchmark to assess the impact that the revised content and regular updates will make to the site.
- 4.10 As content is still being populated, the site is changing on a regular basis and information being brought up-to-date. However, a demonstration of the site will be provided at a future Town Centre Management Group meeting. A link to the site will be provided to members once the new site is launched.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the council’s Eqla process does not need to be applied.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The campaign was funded through the Town Centre Management core budget.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 This report is for information only.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager  
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration & Planning  
Cllr. K. James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable  
Development  
Andrew Highway, Town Centre Development Manager  
Antony Bolter, Business Support & Funding Manager  
Allan Dallimore, Team Leader Urban Renewal  
Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager

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## **RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 29TH FEBRUARY 2016**

**SUBJECT: 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET' CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET  
2015– ANALYSIS REPORT**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides information on the 'Choose the High Street' Christmas Voucher Booklet scheme, which ran across the County Borough's five principal town centres in the period leading up to Christmas 2015.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report provides details of the 'Choose the High Street' Christmas Voucher Booklet scheme that was implemented by the Town Centre Management team over Christmas 2015. Included in the report is information as to how the scheme was operated, the numbers of retailers participating, marketing platforms used, along with feedback from questionnaires sent out to participating businesses.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 "Prosperous Caerphilly" is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's "Single Integrated Plan". The Implementation of the *Unique Places* model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 Each year in the lead up to Christmas, the Council's Town Centre Management team runs a scheme which provides local retailers with the opportunity to take part in a coordinated marketing campaign. This year's scheme once again comprised of a Christmas Voucher Booklet in a similar format to last year. The booklet contained 105 offers across the five managed town centres which was an increase of 15 on the previous year. The aim of the scheme is to help retain consumer spend within the County Borough's town centres during the festive trading period. In 2015, the length of the scheme was extended from three to six weeks in response to feedback from retailers and customers (16<sup>th</sup> November - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015).

4.2 This year's booklet was once again produced by the Council's Graphic Design team and was redesigned to accommodate the increased volume of offers received. The new style booklet incorporated a brief description of each town centre, a map showing the location of the five managed towns and adverts promoting different Council departments. These included the work of the Fostering Service and Community Safety Wardens, an advert for the campaign against the sale of illegal tobacco and highlighting the support offered to residents who are over 50 as part of Welsh Government's 'Aging Well in Wales' initiative. There were also pages listing the town centre Christmas events programme.

4.3 The scheme was officially launched on 5<sup>th</sup> November at The Maxime Cinema in Blackwood where local school children from Blackwood Primary School joined the Cabinet Member Cllr James, the cinema manager and Father Christmas for a launch photo followed by a special film screening.

#### 4.4 Marketing Platforms

4.4.1 To support the campaign a number of different marketing platforms were utilised including:

- Newspaper advert in Cardiff & South Wales Advertiser;
- Advertorial pages in the Caerphilly Observer;
- Social media engagement on the Council's Facebook / Twitter feeds;
- A YouTube video
- Articles in the Council's Newslines publication, which is delivered to every household in the County Borough;
- Dedicated web page on the CCBC corporate website including a PDF version of the booklet.

#### 4.5 Caerphilly Experience

4.5.1 In order to reach a wider audience an additional marketing promotion was run through Wales Online's social media platforms and website. The 'Caerphilly Experience' competition featured donated prizes and a PDF version of the booklet to promote the offers.

- Cadw – A family seven day Explorer pass;
- Llancaiach Fawr – Family tour of the manor house;
- Bargoed Ice Rink – Family ticket to skate;
- Blackwood Miners Institute – Family ticket to a performance;
- Caerphilly Visitor Centre - Hot drink and a pastry for a family;
- The Harp Inn - Three course meal for a family;
- A replica Miner's Lamp donated by The Winding House.

4.5.2 Data from the Wales Online social media channels and website was analysed at the end of the competition period. A summary can be found below. It is worth noting that the industry standard click-through rate is 0.07%, with anything between 1% and 3% being considered good, this campaign achieved an impressive 10.51% click-through rate.

Ad Impressions	12,190
Unique Browsers	5,714
Click-throughs	1,281
Click-through Rate	10.51%
Number of Entries	38

#### 4.6 Production and Distribution

4.6.1 A total of 35,000 Voucher Booklets were produced, with distribution being carried out by the Council's Community Safety Wardens.



The following locations displayed Voucher Booklets:

- Caerphilly: Library / Customer First Centre / Visitor Centre / Wetherspoons - The Malcolm Uphill;
- Blackwood: Library / Customer First Centre / Blackwood Miners' Institute / Tidal Stores / Maxime Cinema;
- Bargoed: Library / Customer First Centre;
- Risca: Library / Customer First Centre;
- Ystrad Mynach: Library;

In addition, primary schools in the County Borough were supplied with Voucher booklets. In total, 20 schools requested booklets for their pupils and staff, these were delivered using the Council's courier service.

#### 4.7 Supermarket Distribution

4.7.1 For the first time the Town Centre Management team reached an agreement with local supermarkets to distribute the booklets to their customers. Receptacles were used to display the booklets in the foyers of ASDA Blackwood and also Morrisons in Caerphilly & Bargoed.

#### 4.8 Retailer Participation

4.8.1 The table shows the number of retailers taking part in the scheme compared to those in the previous years. This evidences the year on year growth in retailers participation of the scheme.

Town Centre	Number of Offers in 2015	Number of Offers in 2014	Number of Offers in 2013	Number of Offers in 2012
Caerphilly	31	29	26	24
Blackwood	32	26	24	20
Bargoed	20	23	21	14
Risca	8	6	4	5
Ystrad Mynach	10	2	4	N/A
Offers in other towns	4	4	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>64</b>

#### 4.9 Retail Engagement

4.9.1 The Town Centre Management team made visits to numerous retailers across the five town centres explaining the scheme and encouraging participation. Once again a number of businesses from outside the managed town centres expressed an interest in joining the scheme and were accommodated in the 'Offers in Other Towns' section of the booklet.

#### 4.10 Retailer Survey

4.10.1 A survey was sent out to all retailers who participated in the scheme and the results are shown in the table below. A total of 86 surveys were sent out and 31 returned, giving a response rate of 36%.

4.10.2 A summary of the responses can be found below:

Question	Yes	No
1. Was the "Choose the High Street Christmas Voucher Booklet" beneficial to your business?	48%	52%
2. Did the voucher booklet bring new customers?	42%	58%

3. Do you think schemes such as this highlight the importance of shopping locally?	<b>Yes</b> 87%	<b>No</b> 13%
4. Did you feel that the scheme was well-publicised?	<b>Yes</b> 48%	<b>No</b> 52%
5. Would you consider taking part in a discount scheme in the future?	<b>Yes</b> 83%	<b>No</b> 17%
6. If yes, would you revise your offer in any way?	<b>Yes</b> 32%	<b>No</b> 68%

4.10.3 The take up of offers in individual businesses varied considerably, as has been the case in previous years. The number of vouchers redeemed varied from zero to 25 per day. It was apparent that the quality of the offers received was better than in previous years, which was reflected in the fact that only 36% of respondents reported having no vouchers redeemed compared to 41% last year. The average number of vouchers redeemed was around 5.

4.10.4 Generally, the responses were more positive than in previous years. However, the biggest change was to the responses in question 3. In 2014 only 47% of respondents felt that the scheme highlighted the importance of shopping locally, this year that figure dramatically rose to 87%.

4.10.5 It is positive to note that despite the varying success of the offers amongst participating businesses, 83% of respondents would consider taking part in the scheme if it were run again. This high volume suggests that retailers see not only the transactional value, but also the free promotional benefit of being part of the scheme. Those who said they would revise their offer in the future generally said that they would give a different/larger level of discount.

#### **4.11 Conclusion**

4.11.1 The 2015 version of the Christmas Voucher booklet was the most successful to date and continued to build on the success of previous years. Importantly, the scheme as a whole took some significant steps forward which improved it. The number of offers from local retailers increased for the fourth year in a row demonstrating how retailers are willing to participate in the scheme. Of note was the more competitive nature of many of the offers, showing that retailers have a growing appreciation of how savvy customers shop at Christmas.

4.11.2 The redesigned booklet was more visually appealing and included adverts to support other Council services enabling the booklet to support some of the wider 'Improvement Objectives' of the Council's Corporate Plan.

4.11.3 The extension of the scheme's duration in response to feedback from customers and retailers appeared to increase the number of vouchers which were used.

4.11.4 Perhaps the most important change to the scheme was the expansion of the voucher distribution network which was achieved by partnering with local supermarkets. The link up with the supermarkets enabled display stands containing hundreds of Voucher Booklets to be sited in the store foyers providing thousands of people each day with the opportunity to pick up a booklet.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the council's Eqla process does not need to be applied.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The campaign was funded through the Town Centre Management core budget.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 This report is for information only.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Andrew Highway, Town Centre Development Manager  
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration & Planning  
Cllr. K. James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable  
Development  
Ian MacVicar, Group Manager Operations  
Allan Dallimore, Team Leader Urban Renewal  
Paul Hudson, Marketing & Events Manager  
Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager  
Dave Titley, Customer Service Manager  
Gareth Evans, Senior Libraries Manager  
Hayley Lancaster, Senior Communications Officer  
Paul Wallen, Community Safety Warden Supervisor  
Gareth Chapman, Web Designer

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## RISCA TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – FEBRUARY 2016

DATE	ISSUE	DEPARTMENT	PROGRESS UPDATE
28/11/11	<p><b><u>New Footbridge</u></b>  <b><u>Rear of Lidl</u></b>                      It was agreed to use Section 106 monies from the Tesco superstore development in order to build a footbridge across the river linking the store with the existing town centre.</p>	<p><b>Urban Renewal</b>  <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>20/10 A report will be presented to CMT outlining the options for the money,                      2/11 An update was provided to the TCMG.                      15/12 £486k of S.106 money has been transferred back to the Authority as the bridge hasn't been built. Cabinet has agreed that this money can now be spent on other schemes in Risca, with consent of the local Members.</p>
26/11/13	<p><b><u>Banners alongside Highway</u></b>  <b><u>Tesco Extra, Pontymister Industrial Estate</u></b>                      At the TCMG, Members expressed concern about the number of advertising banners that have been attached to railings on the access road to the Tesco Extra store &amp; KFC restaurant.</p>	<p><b>Regulatory Planning</b>  <i>Tim Stephens</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>20/10 All of the banners that were subject to enforcement had been removed as of 16/10.                      2/11 An update was provided to the TCMG.                      15/12 All banners that were in breach of planning law have now been removed.  <b>Issue Closed 15/12</b></p>

26/11/13	<p><b><u>Condition of Land around Cuckoo Artwork Pontymister Industrial Estate</u></b> Concern was expressed by local Members at the TCMG in relation to the condition of the land surrounding the cuckoo artwork, which is in an unkempt condition.</p>	<p><b>Urban Renewal</b> <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> <p><b>Cleansing</b> <i>Tony White</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>20/10 Work on the area continues. A “living wall” has been constructed, a new habitat for the slow-worms is nearing completion and the fence has been repaired. The vegetation will be cut back over the winter. 2/11 An update was provided to the TCMG. 15/12 A programme of works has been carried out and further cutting back will be completed in Spring 2016.</p>
10/02/15	<p><b><u>Parking Enforcement O/S Spar, Tredegar Street</u></b> At the TCIG, Cllr. George reported that there are a lot of instances of people parking in the bus stop outside the Spar store. This is leading the buses not being able to pull in, which is causing traffic congestion.</p>	<p><b>Police</b> <i>Ins White</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>18/8 No update could be provided. 20/10 No update could be provided. 2/11 An update was provided to the TCMG. 15/12 Monitoring and enforcement is ongoing.</p>
02/06/15	<p><b><u>Illegal Parking Park Road O/S Moriah Church</u></b> Cllr. George has noted that vehicles are illegally parking along Park Road, which is making it difficult for large vehicles to drive along the road.</p>	<p><b>Police</b> <i>Ins White</i></p>	<p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>20/10 No update could be provided. 2/11 An update was provided to the TCMG. 15/12 Monitoring and enforcement is ongoing.</p>

02/10/15	<p><b><u>Temporary Grit Bins</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>          Temporary grit bins will be installed in various locations throughout the town centre in readiness for the winter weather.</p>	<p><b>Highways</b>  <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	<p>20/10 The grit bins are in the process of being installed.          2/11 An update was provided to the TCMG.          15/12 The bins have now been installed.  <b>Issue Closed 15/12</b></p>
05/10/15	<p><b><u>Christmas Event</u></b>  <b><u>Town Centre</u></b>          Planning is underway for the Christmas event, which is scheduled to take place on 5<sup>th</sup> December.</p>	<p><b>Business Enterprise Support Team</b>  <i>Paul Hudson</i></p>	<p>20/10 Planning continues for the event.          15/12 Unfortunately, the event had to be cancelled due to high winds.  <b>Issue Closed 15/12</b></p>
07/12/15	<p><b><u>Repainting of Benches O/S Library</u></b>  <b><u>Tredegar Street</u></b>          The benches on either side of the Library's entrance have worn and flaking paintwork, which requires repainting.</p>	<p><b>Highways</b>  <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	
07/12/15	<p><b><u>Repainting of Bollard O/S Bay Leaf</u></b>  <b><u>Commercial Street</u></b>          The bollard on the junction of Commercial Street and Commercial Lane next to the Bay Leaf Indian Takeaway is in a poor condition and requires repainting.</p>	<p><b>Highways</b>  <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	
07/12/15	<p><b><u>Removal of Chewing Gum</u></b>  <b><u>Tredegar Street</u></b>          There is a large accumulation of chewing gum on the pavement of Tredegar Street near the Library.</p>	<p><b>Cleansing</b>  <i>Tony White</i></p>	

10/12/15	<p><b><u>Damage to Wall</u></b> <b><u>Bethany Baptist Chapel, Tredegar Street</u></b></p> <p>Cllr. George reported that Bethany Baptist Church has had one of its exterior pillars struck by a vehicle. In order to try and prevent reoccurrences, the following will be put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Replacement of the broken bollard outside One Stop;</li><li>• Replace the current bollard near the pillar with a larger stainless steel bollard;</li><li>• Apply reflective banding to all bollards in the vicinity;</li><li>• Repainting of double yellow lines in the area;</li><li>• Repainting of junction white lining.</li></ul>	<p><b>Highways</b> <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> <p><b>Urban Renewal</b> <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	
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