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**Date: 6th March 2018**

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 **Tuesday, 13th March, 2018** at **2.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy', enclosed in a large, loopy oval shape.

**Christina Harrhy**  
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: -

**A greener place Man gwyrddach**



|  |  |        |
|--|--|--------|
| 3  | Minutes of previous meeting 17th October 2017. | 1 - 4  |
| To receive and note the following updates: - |  |        |
| 4  | Updates on matters relating to Risca Town.     | 5 - 8  |
| 5  | Audit.   | 9 - 12 |

**Circulation:**

Councillors N. George (Chair), Ms P. Leonard, B. Owen, Mrs A. Leonard, R. Whiting, S. Morgan, D.T. Davies and Mrs C. Forehead

Town Councillors

Other Organisations



## **RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2017 AT 2:00PM**

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PRESENT:

Councillors:

N George, S Morgan, B Owen, R Whiting

Together with:

Town & Community Councillor B Hancock, B Campbell (Clerk Risca Town Council)

Also:

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

#### **1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Mr Highway opened the meeting and requested nominations for Chair.

Councillor Morgan nominated Councillor R Whiting and was seconded by Councillor N George.

Councillor Whiting accepted the post and took over the meeting as Chair. Councillor Whiting invited members to nominate for Vice Chair.

Councillor S Morgan nominated Councillor N George this was seconded by Councillor Whiting. Councillor George accepted the role

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D T Davies, A. Leonard, P. Leonard and Mr P Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager)

#### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

#### **4. MINUTES – 17TH OCTOBER 2017**

The minutes were taken as read.

#### **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

#### **5. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO RISCATOWN**

Mr Highway introduced the report which provided an update on matters relating to Risca town centre

Members were referred to update 1 in the report relating to a new 'Unique Places' document. Mr Highway provided information on the document and advised that a hard copy would be available and that the document would also be included in welcome packs to new businesses.

Councillor Owen advised that the booklet states that the train services are from Risca to Newport but this is incorrect as it should state from Risca to Cardiff.

Mr Highway thanked Councillor Owen and agreed to have this amended.

Members were referred to update 2 in the report on 'Choose the High Street' Christmas Voucher Booklet. Mr Highway informed the group that there were already 30 offers which is a good response.

Mr Hancock confirmed that if the scheme is run next year he would be willing to encourage more retailers to join in.

Mr Highway thanked Mr Wilcox for all his work. The Chair thanked Mr Highway

Members were referred to update 3 in the report on the Section 106 Monies.

Mr Dallimore provided the group with a background to the Section 106 monies. The group were advised that Mr Dallimore is going to be setting up a meeting with local members to discuss how the money is to be spent and any views from this Town Centre Management Group would be brought to Cabinet.

Mr Hancock raised the possible relocation of the cuckoo statue to Risca not Pontymister.

Mr Dallimore advised that a sub group will be set up with an objective to identify a new location for the statue.

Councillor Owens advised that he has been looking at possible sites and has identified an area of land that is owned by a local businessman who is willing to give the land to the people of Risca as a garden with a covenant that the Town Council would take on the responsibilities of maintaining the site.

Mr Dallimore advised that there is an unkempt site which has also been identified, which is a triangular area to the North of the town centre and he would be seeking to involve local community groups.

Councillor Owen confirmed that this would be a good location as it is on the main road so people would see the statute.

Mr Dallimore confirmed that he has engaged with Parks Services in November to tidy the present location.

The group discussed the advertisements on the railings by Tesco. Mr Highway advised that officers have looked at powers under the planning process to remove them in the past

Mr Dallimore advised that he would arrange for inspectors to go onsite and check. The group were advised that Tesco are allowed a certain amount of advertisement but others cannot place adverts on the railings.

It was raised that the reptiles and wild orchids have never been seen on the site, the group were advised that officers will speak to ecologists concerning this.

The group discussed whether the residual monies could be used towards a more permanent location for the Town Council, a bungalow has provisionally being identified on the Brooklands site in Commercial Street.

Mr Dallimore requested further information from the Town Council which he would pass to Mr Broadhurst in the Councils Property Services section for consideration.

Mr Dallimore confirmed that he would liaise with Property Services on building availability and lease terms. The group were advised to discuss any issues reference leasing premises with Bargoed Town Council as they have experience of this.

The group discussed the demolition of the Brooklands site and the possibility of reusing and reclaiming the bricks for local projects within the area.

Members were referred to update 4 in the report on Monmouthshire and Brecon canal adventure triangle.

Mr Dallimore presented the update in the report and advised that discussions are ongoing and should have more news in the next few months.

Members were referred to update 5 in the report on Summer and Christmas Events.

Mr Highway passed on apologies from Mr Hudson and read out the update provided in the report. Mr Highway passed on a message of thanks to the Town Council for their support with the event.

Mr Campbell raised concern over the Christmas tree as it looked like it is dying. Mr Highway advised that he will discuss this with officers.

Members were referred to update 6 in the report on 'Choose the High Street' Property Index.

Mr Highway confirmed that this information is available as a PDF document on Caerphilly Council Website.

Mr Highway advised if the Town Council wanted any further information to contact Mr Wilcox.

Members were referred to update 7 in the report on Procurement of a new Footfall Counter.

Mr Wilcox confirmed that feedback on the figures generated would be available once the new system is verified and calibrated. The Chair thanked Mr Wilcox the update.

Members were referred to update 8 in the report on Parking Enforcement.

Mr Highway read out the update in the report.

Members were referred to update 11 Parking Enforcement. Mr Highways advised that this is an issue that has been raised in other meetings and reassured the group that it was currently being considered by the Council and that Officers would be working alongside colleagues in

neighbouring authorities and Gwent Police to explore the various options available. The matter had been placed on the forward work programme for the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee and would be subject to full consultation processes before its consideration by Cabinet and approval by Council.

Members discussed current parking issues, the pressures on Gwent Police resources and its impact on illegal parking on the town. It was clarified that Gwent Police would still have obligations under the Road Traffic Act for some parking offences but that the majority of illegal parking would be subject to Civil Parking Enforcement in whichever way the council determined. It was noted that there was a statutory process to be followed which must be approved by Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked the Officers for the update.

## **6. RISCA TOWN CENTRE AUDIT**

Mr Highway presented the audit and the following items were raised

Mr Highway confirmed that the repainting of the bollard outside bay leaf has not been completed and will ask Highways to review this.

Mr Wilcox will discuss with Highways the bollard that has been flattened outside the One Stop shop. Mr Highway advised that the Church Elders may look to install CCTV camera.

Mr Highway confirmed that the damaged bench outside Brooklands centre has been reported to Parks and officer will be repairing it.

The group discussed the possibility of the Town Council taking over the responsibility of the flowerbeds. Mr Hancock will discuss with the Town Council.

Mr Campbell advised that the cigarette bin outside Betfred is missing. Mr Wilcox will look into this.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed at 15:27pm

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CHAIR



## RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 13TH MARCH 2018

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO RISCA TOWN**

**REPORT BY: TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

### 1. BUSINESS REPORT

1.1 The strength of Risca town centre lies in its ability to successfully service the local community by combining a retail offer which caters for essential shopping needs, with a strong service provision in the form of Pharmacies, Opticians and Estate Agents. A number of new businesses opened in Risca during 2017 these included: *Howlers and Growlers, Risca Wills & Estate Planning* and *Return2Chic*. Of great concern going into 2018 is the continued rationalisation of property portfolios by national banks. As part of these programmes the town has already lost its branch of *HSBC* which closed in 2016 and now has only has one bank remaining in the town centre *Barclays* located in Tredegar Street.

#### Overview 2017

1.2 In the next year it is expected that the current vogue for more experiential shopping will continue to grow. In the County Borough's town centres there remains a strong emphasis on core retail and service provision which may lessen the impact of any consumer migration towards the leisure sector. Looking ahead, there are some wider issues, such as the rise in interest rates and the implications of Brexit, which are expected to have an impact on consumer's ability to maintain their present levels of spending in 2018. Any reduction in consumer confidence will impact directly on the retail sector both independents and multiples. The concern is that these economic factors will begin to influence the long-term commitment of some multiple retailers and banks as they reassess their need to retain a presence in smaller town centres. The other challenge which makes town centres vulnerable in 2018 is the continued growth in online shopping and its focus on low price points.

| <b>Risca Business Comparison</b> |           |          |                                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------|----------|---------------------------------|
|                                  | 2017      | 2016     | LFL Comparison                  |
| Businesses Opened                | <b>12</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>6 more businesses opened</b> |
| Businesses Closed                | <b>7</b>  | <b>5</b> | <b>2 more businesses closed</b> |

| <b>Risca Footfall Comparison</b> |  |                          |               |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------|
|                                  | 2017   | 2016                     | Difference    |
| Highest Number                   | <b>10,501 (03/04/17)</b>   | <b>10,504 (23/05/16)</b> | <b>-3</b>     |
| Lowest Number                    | <b>4,294 (25/12/17)</b>  | <b>6,395 (28/12/15)</b>  | <b>-2,101</b> |
| Average Footfall                 | <b>8,572</b>   | <b>9,326</b>             | <b>-754</b>   |
| Note:                            | <b>Footfall data was unavailable for 11 weeks during 2017 due to the changeover in provider and equipment.</b> |                          |               |

## 2. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET

- 2.1 The 2017 “Choose the High Street Christmas Voucher Booklet” saw a total of 105 offers being presented from retailers across the five managed town centres and beyond. An initial print run of 25,000 was distributed across the County Borough with the generous aid of the Council’s Community Safety Wardens. Following the positive reception of the booklet and a larger number of Caerphilly retailers wishing to distribute the booklets during the Pwll-y-Pant roundabout works, an additional 5,000 booklets were printed.
- 2.2 A feedback survey was sent to all participating businesses in January 2018. 96% of respondents feel that schemes such as this highlight the importance of shopping locally and 83% would consider taking part in this (or a similar discount scheme) in the future. One new business added “As a struggling new business, we found the booklet brought customers to us didn’t know we were here”.
- 2.3 During previous years, a variety of publicity methods have been utilised to promote the scheme. These have included bus advertising, billboard posters, adverts in local press and posters for participating retailers. In light of budgetary pressures across the Authority and the departments MTFP savings, publicity of the scheme was done primarily by social media, some online advertising and the Council’s Newslite publication during 2017. As a result, 52% of businesses didn’t feel the scheme was well-publicised, with six businesses specifically commenting that they didn’t see any publicity this year and feel the scheme needs better promotion.
- 2.4 Should the scheme be run again in 2018, a balance between budgetary constraints and the need for publicity and promotion of the scheme will need to be carefully balanced in order to address the concerns of last year’s participants. In general, the scheme is growing year-on-year and continues to be positively received by businesses and residents of the County Borough alike.

## 3. S106 MONIES

- 3.1 When Tesco was built, monies were set aside for the development of a pedestrian footbridge to link the new store with Risca town centre.
- 3.2 Due to a myriad of problems encountered over the actual dynamics of building the structure, it was decided by Cabinet to take the monies, circa £425,000 allocated for the bridge and use them for other beneficial projects in the town.
- 3.3 Officers have been tasked with using the S106 monies to prioritise unlocking development sites in the town and this has been reflected in the draft working action plan that has seen certain sites prioritised for intervention.
- 3.4 The S106 agreement states that the monies need to be ‘**committed**’ by March 2018. The Council’s interpretation of ‘committed’ has been that the Council need to have entered in to a binding /contractual agreement for a project’s implementation.
- 3.5 A draft Cabinet report has been written which advocates selective demolition of vacant buildings at the Council owned Brooklands Road site and also the partial demolition and recladding of the eyesore which is the former swimming pool building at Longbridge Baths.
- 3.6 The views of Risca Town Council and Risca Community Council were sought and it has become apparent that they do not unanimously support the proposed activities presented in the report.
- 3.7 Officers have been tasked with liaising with Tesco to establish if the S106 deadline could be extended in order to buy time to resolve these conflicts.



- 3.8 During these discussions, officers presented Tesco's with an opinion that the Council had already committed the monies - in that the S106 resources had been earmarked for a programme of selective demolition and for the implementation of a number of community environmental projects.
- 3.9 This opinion has been accepted by Tesco. This means that the deadline of March 2018 is no longer applicable and officers have more time to develop the programme of works to be funded by the S106 monies.

#### **4. MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON ADVENTURE TRIANGLE UPDATE**

- 4.1 CCBC have been working collaboratively with Torfaen Borough Council to develop a suite of projects centred along the existing canal corridor for submission to Visit Wales for external European funding. The CCBC projects cluster around the northern part of the canal at Cwmcarn scenic drive.
- 4.2 The business plan, which is basically the bid submission document, has been forwarded to Visit Wales for approval. Match funding for the CCBC projects comes in the shape of core CCBC capital being used to undertake improvement works to the canal infrastructure.
- 4.3 Overall the project activities (Canal Restoration / Cwmcarn Forest/ Mynydd Maen and Twmbarlwm projects) remain the same as reported to Cabinet in July.
- 4.4 Planning permission for most of the Cwmcarn Forest elements has now been conditionally received, the only outstanding planning approval relates to the expansion of the Twrch Trail (Cross Country Cycle Trails).
- 4.5 The collaborative suite of projects requires an element of funding from Welsh Government to make them stack up financially. In the past European projects have been supported by Targeted Match Funding (TMF) from Welsh Government and CCBC and Torfaen are again looking for this funding to allow the projects to be implemented.
- 4.6 In early February 2018 the Council was informed verbally that the TMF funding will now be unlocked for the suite of projects.

#### **5. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

- 5.1 A Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) 'Stage 1' report was presented to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 12<sup>th</sup> December. Members provided recommendations to be reported to Cabinet that they were in favour of adopting CPE and that the authority should retain in-house enforcement and collaborate with one or more other local authorities (LA's) to provide the back office support. The report and recommendations are being presented to Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> February.
- 5.2 A meeting took place with Gwent Police prior to Christmas to discuss the current situation with regard to parking enforcement. Gwent Police confirmed that they would continue to provide the service until December 2018 and that they hoped LA's would be in a position to transfer powers at that point in time. They also stated that they would work with any LA's who could not meet this date.
- 5.3 If Cabinet grant approval to proceed with transfer of powers, officers will undertake the relevant procurement exercises needed to try and meet the January 2019 deadline. There are many aspects that need to be taken forward but the two main requirements will be a full review of the existing Traffic Regulation Orders along with putting together an application to Welsh Government to request a transfer of the relevant powers to the authority.

## **6. CAPITAL REGION UPDATE**

- 6.1 There are a number of separate regeneration initiatives that the Council is playing an active role in progressing. The highest profile of which is the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal which involves £1.2 billion worth of investment. The City Deal aims to deliver up to 25,000 new jobs and secure £4 billion of private sector investment. Whilst not every town or village may benefit directly, the region itself will benefit from more jobs, better transport, increased skill levels and more assistance towards businesses growth.
- 6.2 Central to the Cardiff Capital Region is the METRO scheme led by City Region Transport Authority. METRO will bring a more efficient rail service to the South Wales valleys with trains running at fifteen minute intervals and linking with an improved bus service as ticketing and timetables are integrated.
- 6.3 The 'Our Valleys Our Future' project, led by a Welsh Government Ministerial Taskforce, aims to empower people in communities throughout the South Wales Valleys.
- 6.4 Finally, a Foundation for Success, currently in draft form, is the Council's new regeneration strategy (2018-2023) setting out how the County Borough can economically transform over the next five years.

Author: Andrew Highway – Town Centre Development Manager  
Steve Wilcox – Assistant Town centre Manager  
Allan Dallimore – Team Leader Urban Renewal  
Councillor S Morgan – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy,  
Infrastructure and Sustainability

## RISCA TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – FEBRUARY 2018

| DATE     | ISSUE  | DEPARTMENT   | PROGRESS UPDATE   |
|----------|--|--|---|
| 26/11/13 | <p><b><u>Condition of Land around Cuckoo Artwork Pontymister Industrial Estate</u></b><br/>                     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><br/> <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> <p><b>Cleansing</b><br/> <i>Tony White</i></p> | <p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>26/9 An alternative location for the statue is being investigated.<br/>                     17/10 An update was provided to the TCMG.<br/>                     21/11 The statue itself will be cleaned over the coming weeks and Parks will be carrying out some general tidying on the site. An alternative location for the artwork is being considered.</p> |
| 10/02/15 | <p><b><u>Parking Enforcement O/S Spar, Tredegar Street</u></b><br/>                     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><br/> <i>Ins Drayton</i></p>   | <p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>26/9 Monitoring and enforcement continues.<br/>                     21/11 Enforcement is carried out when resources allow. Operations over the Christmas period will focus on shoplifting and parking enforcement.</p>   |

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|----------|--|---|--|
| 02/06/15 | <p><b><u>Illegal Parking</u></b><br/> <b><u>Park Road O/S Moriah Church</u></b><br/> 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><br/> <i>Ins Drayton</i></p>            | <p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>26/9 Monitoring and enforcement continues.<br/> 21/11 Enforcement is carried out when resources allow. Operations over the Christmas period will focus on shoplifting and parking enforcement.</p>  |
| 07/12/15 | <p><b><u>Repainting of Bollard O/S Bay Leaf Commercial Street</u></b><br/> 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><br/> <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>          | <p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>26/9 The bollard has not yet been replaced.<br/> 21/11 A replacement has been ordered and delivered. Installation should be carried out with 28 days.</p>   |
| 14/06/16 | <p><b><u>Utilisation of Section 106 Funding Town Centre</u></b><br/> Following the decision by Tesco not to install a footbridge linking the store to the Northern end of Commercial Street, Officers are now considering options for the Section 106 funding that has become available.</p> | <p><b>Urban Renewal</b><br/> <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> | <p><b>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</b></p> <p>26/9 A Cabinet report is being prepared for use of the funds to carry out selective demolition on some of the development sites.<br/> 17/10 An update was provided to the TCMG.<br/> 21/11 The Cabinet report is still being drafted. Officers are working with Tesco in an attempt to extend the deadline for commitment of the S.106 money.</p> |

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|----------|---|--|--|
| 17/10/17 | <p><b><u>Civil Parking Enforcement Town Centre</u></b></p> <p>Following the decision by Gwent Police to transfer on-street parking enforcement duties to the local authorities across the Gwent area, Council officers are working alongside colleagues in neighbouring authorities and Gwent Police to explore the various options available. Any proposals will be subject to a wider consultation with Members prior to seeking Cabinet confirmation and Council approval.</p> | <p><b>Transportation</b><br/><i>Dean Smith</i></p> | <p>11/10 An update was provided to the TCMG.<br/>21/11 A briefing note will be going to Cabinet and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee in December.</p> |
| 12/10/17 | <p><b><u>Grubbing Out Central Circle, Tredegar Grounds Park</u></b></p> <p>The pavements in the central circle of Tredegar Grounds require grubbing out to improve the area's appearance.</p>   | <p><b>Parks</b><br/><i>Mike Headington</i></p>     | <p>21/11 The work has been completed.<br/><b>Issue Closed 21/11</b></p>  |
| 12/10/17 | <p><b><u>Broken Benches Tredegar Grounds Park</u></b></p> <p>Two benches have been damaged in Tredegar Grounds Park and require new slats installed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One bench in the central circle area;</li> <li>• On the corner of the events space.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Parks</b><br/><i>Mike Headington</i></p>     | <p>21/11 The benches have been placed on a forward work programme for repair.</p>  |
| 12/10/17 | <p><b><u>Accumulation of Litter Lane Linking Commercial Street to Tesco</u></b></p> <p>A number of complaints have been received in relation to the accumulation of litter in the lane linking Tesco with Commercial Street.</p>  | <p><b>Cleansing</b><br/><i>Tony White</i></p>      | <p>21/11 The work has been passed to a cleansing team for completion.</p>  |

|          |   |  |   |
|----------|---|--|---|
| 17/10/17 | <p><b><u>Illegal Signage</u></b><br/> <b><u>Entrance to Pontymister Industrial Estate</u></b><br/>         At the TCMG members expressed concern about the number of banners that have been installed on railings and fencing at the entrance to Pontymister Industrial Estate.</p> | <p><b>Highways</b><br/> <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>   | <p>21/11 Some of the signage in the area is illegal and the offending businesses have been spoken to and sent enforcement letters. Highways will remove any signage that is not removed within 21 days.</p> |
| 04/12/17 | <p><b><u>Damage to Statue</u></b><br/> <b><u>Tredegar Grounds Park</u></b><br/>         The statue in the centre of Tredegar Grounds was defaced with paint. Some of the bins in the area were also damaged during the incident.</p>  | <p><b>Parks</b><br/> <i>Mike Headington</i></p> <p><b>Police</b><br/> <i>Ins Drayton</i></p> |   |