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Date: 4th March 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Bargoed Town Centre Management Group** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Wednesday, 11th March, 2015** at **4.00 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

AGENDA

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of Interest.	
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 Bargoed Town Centre Management Group held on 15th October 2014	1 - 4

A greener place Man gwyrddach



To receive and note the following updates: -

4	Cinema Update.	
5	Choose the High Street @ Christmas Analysis Report.	5 - 10
6	Choose the High Street Past & Present.	11 - 14
7	Bargoed Town Centre Business Report.	15 - 18
8	Unit Shops.	
9	Pocket Park Scheme Update.	
10	HJJJ Building.	
11	Business Improvement Grants.	
12	Update Bargoed Ice Rink.	
13	Bargoed Town Centre Audit - February 2015.	19 - 26

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, H.A. Andrews, D.G. Carter, D.T. Davies (Chair), A.G. Higgs, K. James, Mrs D. Price (Vice Chair) and K.V. Reynolds

Town Councillors A. Collis, H. Llewellyn, Mr D. Morgan, V. Stephens and Mrs L. Tams (Clerk)

Other Organisations

Mr P. Collins, Bargoed Chamber of Trade

Sgt N. Mancino, Gwent Police

Inspector Muirhead



BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK
ON WEDNESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER 2014 AT 4.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:

H.A. Andrews, D.T. Davies, A. Higgs, K. James, D. Price, K. Reynolds

Together with:

V. Stephens (Town Councillor), H. Llewellyn (Town Councillor), D. Morgan (Town Councillor),
A. Collis (Town Councillor)

Also:

Inspector J. Hill, Mr. Peter Collins (Bargoed Chamber of Trade), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader - Urban Renewal & Conservation), C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), P. Hudson (Marketing Events Manager), A. Jones (Complaints Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors: D. Carter
G. Barry, G. Richards

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (21ST MAY 2014)

Previous minutes were taken as read

4. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Mr. Dallimore informed the group that there have been a number of expression interest forms received in relation to the grants; however smaller traders may struggle to pay up front up to £10,000, which would then be claimed retrospectively. This is a European funded scheme and balance of around £20,000 is left based on estimates submitted.

There are 7 retailers currently having their applications processed, with the cut off date for applications to be received in late November.

5. CINEMA UPDATE

Mr Dallimore confirmed that the tender process has been given the go ahead for the 2-stage process of warm shell (external) and fit out (internal).

There is an issue with gap funding and the council is in dialogue with Welsh Government. A report will go to Cabinet in due course.

Mr Dallimore advised that the key date is December 2016 to commence operating however members were concerned that this would not happen as previous dates have not been met.

Members were advised that once the tender process has gone through, officers would have a better idea of an operational date and any additional funding required.

Members questioned as to whether Odeon would see cinema in Blackwood as a reason not to go ahead. Mr. Dallimore confirmed that Odeon do not see Blackwood Cinema as direct competition and are confident that the market has not been effected.

The Chair confirmed that this is positive and hopeful news and thanked Mr. Dallimore for the update.

6. HJJJ BUILDING

Mr. Dallimore informed the group that tenders went out 6th October 2014 and the proposed start date is November 2014, with the anticipated end date of February 2015.

This was considered by Planning Committee on the 8th October 2014.

7. FORMER WOOLWORTHS BUILDING

Mr. Highway read out the following statement from Mr. Dave Titley

'We are in the process of moving the CCBC contact centre from Dyffryn House to the former Woolworths building in Bargoed. This will see the transfer of about 20 staff from Dyffryn House to the new Contact Centre. The move will be complete by November 7th. The Contact Centre handles phone calls and emails for several services within CCBC including Highways, Waste Management, Environmental Health, Licensing, Registrars and Job Applications.'

8. POCKET PARK

Mr. Dallimore confirmed that the commencement of the works is to take place in early January 2015 and the anticipated completion date is April 2015.

The daffodils artwork is currently under construction by the artist and the issue with regards to the entrance junction in the car park being very tight will be resolved as part of the works.

9. BUS STOP AT ROYAL SQUARE

The report was presented to the group and Mr. Dallimore advised that the results within the report are consistent with previous reports.

Mr. Dallimore advised that a working group has been established to investigate Members' concerns and officers will periodically review the impact of the bus stop and consider whether an alternative should be considered.

Mr. Highway advised that a survey carried with retailers adjacent to the bus stop on Royal Square and they would not like to see the bus stop moved.

10. ALL NEW TRAFFIC REGULATIONS IN BARGOED TOWN CENTRE

Mr. Campbell advised that the parking thorough the town has been reviewed periodically. The Council will look to review parking orders to suit as the regeneration work continues and all parking restrictions amended accordingly.

The group discussed the issues on parking within the town and it was agreed that it is an enforcement issue and a behaviour change is needed by motorists. Hopefully the situation will improve once all of the regeneration works are completed

11. TOWN CENTRE PARKING STRATEGY FOR BARGOED

Mr. Campbell summarised the report that was circulated prior to the meeting and advised the group that once all the public realm works and regeneration works are completed the proposals contained within the report will be implemented.

12. 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET' CAMPAIGN PROGRESS UPDATE

Mr. Highway informed the group that the Portas Review (2011) identified several threats to town centres. The "Choose the High Street" (CTHS) campaign aimed to promote the County Borough's principal town centres to the public and businesses alike. Starting in the summer of 2014, the CTHS initiative used several platforms to highlight the brand and town centres; these included: free cotton shopping bags bearing the logo, billboards in the town centres, balloons and leaflets distributed at summer events and a series of YouTube videos.

The number of new businesses and potential business enquiries were summarised in the report, along with feedback from business and public surveys, which gave differing perceptions of the campaign. However, it was noted that there was a very small number of business surveys received.

The campaign is intended to be long-term, aiming to make people change their attitudes and shopping habits to support local businesses. Mr. Highway stated that it would continue as long as budgetary commitments allowed, bearing in mind the Medium Term Financial Plan for the Authority.

13. 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET @ CHRISTMAS'

Mr. Highway provided an overview of the "Choose the High Street @ Christmas" campaign, which aims to link in with the existing, ongoing campaign, but also continue the Christmas discount scheme that has been run since 2012.

Following feedback from previous years, it was decided that the format for 2014 would be slightly different. During the last two years, any offers submitted by businesses were listed on a Website. To redeem the relevant offer, the consumer would present a discount card at the time of sale. This was deemed to be too complicated by businesses and was supported by the fact that transactional use of the card was low, despite 30,000 cards being distributed across the County Borough.

The Christmas 2014 format is based around a voucher booklet. To redeem an offer, the relevant voucher is cut out from the booklet and presented at the time of sale. Businesses were sent a letter, sign-up form and prepaid return envelope with the Town Centre Gazette and this simpler format has proved popular, resulting in 92 offers being received – the highest to date.

Voucher booklets will be available in Libraries and Customer First centres in the town centres, as well as at some of the visitor attractions. Publicity of the scheme, which goes live on 1st December 2014, will be via Heart FM, The South Wales Advertiser, Caerphilly Observer, Newline, CCBC's Website and social media.

A second element of the Christmas campaign is the launch of a "Pop-Up Shop Guide" that outlines the steps that need to be undertaken in order to establish a short-term use of a property. This is particularly useful for budding entrepreneurs who want to try a business model during the key pre-Christmas trading period. The guide is available in both hard and electronic copy.

Members thanked Mr Highway and Mr Wilcox for their report.

14. BARGOED CHRISTMAS MARKET 2014

Mr. Hudson discussed the previous success of the Christmas Market, but wanted to add more vibrancy to this year's event.

The group were advised that although the event is now well known, an extensive promotional campaign would be used again this year. To this end, a request for funding of £2,000 from the Area Forum Budget was made to pay for a regional radio campaign specifically for the event.

Members unanimously agreed to the £2,000 of funding, all were in favour. There were no abstentions.

The Chairman advised the group that Mr. Collins who was present today would be closing his shop within the next two weeks. Mr. Collins' family have had their shop in Bargoed for 64 years and they will be a sad loss to the town and wanted to wish Mr. Collins and his family all the best in his retirement on behalf of the group.

Mr. Collins thanked the Chair for his kind comments and stated that he had mixed feelings about retirement.

15. PROPOSAL FOR THE RETENTION OF COMMUNITY RESPONSE TEAM (CRT) SERVICES

Mr Highway confirmed that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

16. BARGOED TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – OCTOBER 2014

The report was presented to the group and members were asked to raise any concerns.

Councillor Price pointed out that the Railway Station fencing on Station Road is still an ongoing matter.

There were no further issues raised on the audit.

The meeting closed at 17.32 p.m.

CHAIRMAN



BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 11TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET @ CHRISTMAS – ANALYSIS REPORT

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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 three weeks leading up to Christmas 2014.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides details of the 'Choose the High Street @ Christmas' Voucher Booklet Scheme, which the Town Centre Management Team ran over Christmas 2014. Included in the report are details of how the scheme was operated, the numbers of retailers participating, marketing platforms used, along with feedback from questionnaires sent out to participating businesses and an online public survey.

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 Over the last two years, in the lead up to Christmas the 'Unique Places Discount Card' scheme has been run in the principal town centres with the aim of assisting retailers to generate sales. In 2012, a total of 60 offers were submitted and in 2013 that number rose to 80. After assessing the feedback provided by retailers, it was decided that a different approach would be taken for Christmas 2014. Instead of using a discount card and website which retailers said was too complicated, a printed voucher booklet was produced. Retailers in the five managed town centres were invited to submit an offer for inclusion in the booklet, with the level of discount being set at their discretion. Participation in the voucher booklet scheme generated greater interest from retailers than the discount card, with a total of 90 offers being received.

4.2 The booklet was designed by the Council's Graphic Design Team, originally in a raffle ticket style book. However, as the volume of offers submitted by retailers was higher than expected, it was necessary to change the design into a booklet format to accommodate them all. A total of 40,000 Voucher Booklets were produced and distributed by the Community Safety Wardens to the following locations:

- Caerphilly: Library / Customer First Centre / Visitor Centre / Cadwaladers / Grazing Ground / Whetherspoons - The Malcolm Uphill;
- Blackwood: Library / Customer First Centre / Blackwood Miners Institute / Tidal Stores / Maxime Cinema;
- Bargoed: Library / Customer First Centre / Comfort Zone;
- Risca: Library / Customer First Centre;
- Ystrad Mynach: Library.

4.3 In addition, every school in the County Borough was offered a supply of Voucher booklets. In total, 28 schools requested booklets for their pupils and staff, these were delivered using the Council's courier service.

Marketing Platforms

4.4 A number of different marketing platforms were used to promote the scheme, including:

- Newspaper adverts – *Cardiff & South Wales Advertiser / Caerphilly Observer / The Campaign*;
- *Heart FM* radio advertisement;
- Social media engagement on the Council's *Facebook / Twitter* accounts;
- A *YouTube* video was produced by Council's Communications Team;
- Article in the Council's *Newsline* which was delivered to every household in the County Borough;
- Inclusion on the CCBC corporate website.

Retailer Participation

4.5 The table shows the number of retailers taking part in the scheme compared to those in the previous two years.

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

Retail Engagement

4.6 The Town Centre Management team made visits to retailers in 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.

Retailer Survey

4.7 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 90 surveys were sent out and 44 returned, giving a

response rate of 49%, which was the highest number of returns from retailers in the three years that a Christmas scheme has been run. A summary of the responses can be found below:

Question			
1. Was the Choose the High Street @ Christmas voucher booklet beneficial to your business?	Yes 43%	No 57%	
2. Did the voucher booklet bring new customers?	Yes 38%	No 62%	
3. Did the voucher booklet work better than the discount card used in 2012/13	Yes 47%	No 53%	
4. Did you feel that the scheme was well-publicised?	Yes 63%	No 57%	
5. Would you consider taking part in a discount scheme in the future?	Yes 91%	No 9%	
6. Would you prefer a summer or Christmas discount scheme?	Summer 5%	Christmas 33%	Both 62%

- 4.8 The take up of offers in individual businesses varied considerably. Although 41% of participants had no vouchers redeemed, those businesses where customers did use the vouchers reported that they had seen between 1-150 vouchers redeemed. The huge disparity in the number of vouchers redeemed suggests that strength of the offer was a key factor in whether customers used a voucher or not.
- 4.9 It is positive to note that despite the varying success of the offers amongst participating businesses, 91% 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.

Public Survey

- 4.10 To supplement the retailers' survey, an online survey was also conducted asking members of the public for their views on the Voucher Booklet and the campaign to promote it.
- 4.11 The responses were gained through a combination of electronic media (social media and email), and despite a low number of responses (39), the survey did provide a useful insight into any possible emerging trends in terms of the public's perception of the scheme.
- 4.12 Encouragingly, 69% of respondents were aware of the scheme, with all avenues of publicity and promotion (newspaper, CCBC Newslines, CCBC social media, CCBC website, radio advert and event stewards) being acknowledged. 35% of respondents felt that the voucher booklet encouraged them to shop locally last Christmas, with 28% saying that they spent money in the County Borough that they would otherwise have spent elsewhere, which would have boosted the local economy and assisted local businesses in the crucial pre-Christmas trading period.
- 4.13 An open question was included at the end of the survey that asked people how they felt the scheme could be improved in the future, which provided some very useful comments – generally, people felt that the offers needed to be better for them to participate and that the booklets should be distributed to every household in the Borough. A full list of the comments can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Conclusion

- 4.14 This year's scheme took a different approach than previous years with a move away from website based offers to vouchers printed in a booklet. However, this presented substantial design and logistical challenges which were overcome showing the strength of corporate working across divisions and the commitment of staff at libraries and Customer First centres to enthusiastically promote the initiative to customers.

- 4.15 The take up from the retailers was key to the success of this year's scheme and the number of offers and positive response show that a physical offer contained in a booklet, rather than one on a web site is more effective in driving sales. Therefore, future campaigns will concentrate on evolving and refining the voucher booklet approach.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the council's EqIa 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 No 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
Hayley Lancaster, Senior Communications Officer
Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager
Dave Titley, Customer Service Manager
Gareth Evans, Senior Libraries Manager
Hayley Lancaster, Senior Communications Manager
Paul Wallon, Community Safety Warden Supervisor
Gareth Chapman, Web Designer

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Public Survey Comments

Appendix 1

Public survey comments on how the scheme could be improved

- “I think the offers could be a lot more enticing. Didn’t use any if them. Didn’t seem worth it”
- “Better offers”
- “Never heard of it”
- “More shops participating”
- “Include Newbridge”
- “Yes send it out to every house. We didn’t get one! Could of saved loads”
- “Being advertised better would help”
- “I was not aware of this”
- “Give out more booklets!! I had to go hunting for mine, but it was a brilliant idea. Also loved the Christmas market in Caerphilly – spent a fortune, well done”
- “Longer expiry dates”
- “Big improvements needed because in Bargoed we were never made aware of it”
- “Let people know about it”
- “I think it was a great idea. Disappointed that I forgot about it. Hope you do it again next year – or maybe have offers through the year, not just at Christmas”
- “The actual offers in the voucher scheme could be improved I believe, but I think that it is an excellent scheme in principle”
- “Better offers from the companies next time but the booklet is a good idea”
- “Better offers – more related to gifts”
- “Definitely, in part by the lousy offers in the booklet by the company’s e.g. spectators offered a free eye test which most are entitled to anyway but those who are not could get a free eye test without the booklet as the offer runs quite frequently without need of a voucher”
- “Better advertised, maybe put one in the Newslines? Better and more offers”
- “Wider variety of shops, not so many cafes”
- “More publicity”
- “Increased offers maybe a higher percentage on discounts to make it worthwhile to visit the town”
- “Perhaps better offers although the offers this Christmas were better than the offers last time round”

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BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 11TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET – PAST & PRESENT

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information on the latest element of the 'Choose the High Street' campaign run by the Council's Town Centre Management Team.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This year, the Council's Town Centre Management Team will launch a new initiative, which will once again utilise the 'Choose the High Street' brand. Entitled 'Choose the High Street - Past & Present' the campaign will aim to reconnect people with their local town centres.

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 The 'Choose the High Street Past & Present' campaign is scheduled to begin in April and will focus on two parts. Firstly, the 'past' element will use old photographs to evoke memories and re-establish people's connection to a particular place. Secondly, through asking people to think about why they choose the high street, it is hoped that they will appreciate and value their town centre. Ultimately, the aim is to encourage people to invest economically, socially and emotionally in the future of their town centres.
- 4.2 In addition, it is hoped that the initiative may inspire people to start new businesses by looking back at what has been lost from the high street. An example of this is the opening of the *Maxime Cinema* in Blackwood, which has demonstrated that a business from the past can successfully be adapted for the present.

PAST

- 4.3 The first part of 'Choose the High Street Past & Present' will begin in April and involves showing old photos of each of the County Borough's five principal town centres using the Council's social media platforms. The photographs will be sourced from the Council archive at the Winding House Museum in New Tredegar. During the summer road shows will be held in each town centre library, these will comprise of archive photos, schools' artwork and retailer stories and pictures of their business history.

PRESENT

- 4.4 The second part of the initiative will begin in June and will focus on the 'present' and take the form of a competition run through local libraries to win shopping vouchers. Shoppers will be invited to call into their local library and fill out an entry form, each entrant will receive a free car sticker, which they are asked to display on their vehicle in order to promote local high streets. The winners of the shopping vouchers will drawn from the entry boxes at random. One winner will be chosen for each town centre in July and another in August.
- 4.5 On the entry form people will also be asked to complete the sentence – "I choose the high street because...". The final part of the 'Choose the High Street Past & Present' initiative in September will see some of these sentences to used to further promote the town centres.

OBJECTIVES

- 4.6 The overall aims of the scheme are:
- a. To maintain town centre footfall over the summer period;
 - b. Improve people's sense of connection with their local town;
 - c. Generate renewed interest in town centres as a location for business;
 - d. Encourage retailers to participate in the life of the town centre;
 - e. Increase footfall in town centre libraries;
 - f. Engage with local schools.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 No 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.

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Steve Wilcox, Assistant Town Centre Manager

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BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP - 11TH MARCH 2015

**SUBJECT: BUSINESS REPORT BARGOED TOWN CENTRE 2014 - FOR
INFORMATION**

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides information on the number of businesses opened and closed in Bargoed town centre throughout 2014.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report gives a retail overview of Bargoed town centre over the past year and details every retail business opening and closing within the town during 2014. 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 Bargoed Retail Overview 2014

- 4.1.1 Following on from years of change, Bargoed town centre was able to enjoy a period of relative stability during 2014. The completion of the new unit shops provides an opportunity to expand the town's retail offer and throughout the year officers have worked with the Council's appointed property agents Cook & Arkwright and Ian Metcalfe & Co. to secure tenants for the new shop units. The new *Morrisons* store continued to perform well and the grocers shift in its pricing strategy to focus on a lower price point led to the store increasing its customer numbers. Elsewhere in the town centre, a number of new businesses opened; these included: *Simply at Home*, *Beauty by Emma*, *Scruffy to Fluffy Pets Parlour* and *Laurels Florist*.

4.1.2 The introduction of the Building Improvement Grant, funded through WEFO (Welsh European Funding Office), allowed retailers in Bargoed town centre to apply for a 75% grant towards internal or external works which would improve their property. The scheme, administered through the Urban Renewal Team and promoted by Town Centre Management, was positively received with 49 expressions of interest submitted. Bargoed's allocation of £180,000 through the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) programme is now fully allocated.

4.1.3 Looking ahead to 2015, the concern remains that multiple retailers and service providers, such as banks, will continue to cut operating costs by rationalising their assets in town centre locations across the UK. The susceptibility of town centres to strategic decisions by national businesses reinforces the importance to the local economy of independent retailers. However, many small businesses are now finding the high street a difficult place in which to trade with the continued fall in consumer spending.

4.2 Retail Property Directory

4.2.1 The *Retail Property Directory*, provided through Town Centre Management, enables people to start looking online for retail properties to rent or buy across the five managed town centres. This initiative actively encourages people to open a business in one of the County Borough's town centres.

4.3 Choose the High Street

4.3.1 During the summer period a new promotional campaign was unveiled, which aimed to raise awareness of the importance of shopping locally. Using the strap line 'Choose the High Street' it encouraged people to favour using their local high street for at least part of their weekly shop and highlighted that customers have a choice in where they shop. To convey the message a variety of marketing platforms were utilised. The initiative also encouraged new businesses to open in the town centres by proactively engaging with local banks, enterprise agencies and grant providers.

4.4 Choose the High Street @ Christmas

4.4.1 Over the last two years, in the lead up to Christmas the 'Unique Places Discount Card' scheme has run as a way to help retailers generate sales. In 2012 a total of 60 offers were submitted and in 2013 that number rose to 80. After assessing the feedback provided by retailers, it was decided to take a different approach for Christmas 2014. Instead of using a discount card, a printed voucher booklet was produced. Retailers in the five managed town centres were invited to submit an offer for inclusion in the booklet with the level of discount being set by the retailer. In total 92 offers were received, a total of 23 of these were from retailers in Bargoed town centre.

4.5 Pop Up Shops

4.5.1 In October 2014, a 'Pop-Up Shop Guide' was launched to encourage people to explore opening a Pop-Up shop or community project on the high street. The guide provides an explanation of what a Pop-Up shop is and explains the process for setting one up.

4.6 Events

4.6.1 The town centre events staged by the Council's Events Team provide a chance for retailers to engage with a wider customer base due to the increase in footfall numbers they attract.

4.7 Business Comparison

4.7.1 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.

Bargoed Business Comparison			
	2014	2013	LFL Comparison
Businesses Opened	9	13	4 fewer businesses opened
Businesses Closed	8	8	Level

4.8 Bargoed Footfall

- 4.8.1 Footfall in the town centre is measured at two points, 'Bargoed North' outside Peacocks and 'Bargoed South' outside Bargoed Sight Centre.

Bargoed North Footfall Comparison			
	2014	2013	Difference
Highest Number	12,412 (22/09/14)	13,776 (02/12/13)	-1,364
Lowest Number	5,856 (26/05/14)	6,203 (23/12/13)	-347
Average Footfall	7,469	11,093	-3,624

Bargoed South Footfall Comparison			
	2014	2013	Difference
Highest Number	16,125 (24/11/14)	N/A	N/A
Lowest Number	7,749 (30/12/13)	N/A	N/A
Average Footfall	9,765	N/A	N/A
Note: Due to refurbishment works in the host premises, the Bargoed South system was offline for a significant part of 2013, so no comparison is available.			

- 4.8.2 The Town Centre Management Team continues to support retailers by producing regular *Town Centre Gazettes*, which are bespoke to each town centre. 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 No 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
Allan Dallimore, Urban Renewal Team Leader
Paul Hudson, Marketing and Events Manager

BARGOED TOWN CENTRE AUDIT – FEBRUARY 2015

DATE	ISSUE	DEPARTMENT	PROGRESS UPDATE
23/01/08	<p><u>Morrisons Store Construction Bargoed</u> The construction of a new retail site as part of the Greater Bargoed Regeneration Scheme will allow a new food store to locate in the town.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>4/8 There have been issues with the fire alarms in the unit shops. Engineers have been called to investigate and remedy the fault. 6/10 Issues with the fire alarm system are ongoing, but engineers are currently looking at the problem. 8/12 The snagging list has been passed to Rockspring as owners of the site. Issue Closed 8/12</p>
05/03/12	<p><u>Cinema Development Bargoed</u> The scheme will include a cinema and new retail units.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>6/10 The re-tendering process has started. Current timescales suggest that the tender will go out in Spring 2015, with the cinema ready for opening in 2016. 15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 The Council's architect is currently producing a revised design, which will then go out to tender. Negotiations with Odeon continue.</p>

28/06/11	<p><u>Steps</u> <u>Hanbury Road</u> A complaint has been received regarding the condition of the repairs on Hanbury Road steps.</p>	<p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p> <p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>6/10 Will be looked at providing there is funding available following completion of the pocket park. 8/12 The pocket park scheme needs to be completed prior to this issue being considered.</p>
08/03/12	<p><u>Railway Station Fencing</u> <u>Station Road</u> Concern was raised by Cllrs at the TCMG about the condition of the chain-link fencing surround Bargoed Railway Station.</p>	<p>Transportation <i>Clive Campbell</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 Welsh Government did not support the scheme and there is nothing further that CCBC can do as the landowner is Network Rail. Issue Closed 8/12</p>
25/04/12	<p><u>Illegal Parking</u> <u>Town Centre</u> A complaint was received from the Chamber of Trade regarding illegal parking in the Town Centre, which is causing problems for retailer deliveries and public transport.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p> <p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>6/10 Enforcement is ongoing, which has been assisted by the reinstatement of the double yellow lines throughout the town. 15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. At the meeting, members requested that the Police undertake enforcement action against drivers who are parking illegally. 8/12 Education and enforcement is ongoing.</p>

05/10/12	<p><u>Parking Issues</u> <u>Lower High Street</u> There is a consistent problem of motorists parking on the pavement opposite the Original Factory Shop.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p> <p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>6/10 Bollards will be installed as part of the phase 4 public realm works, which should help. 15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 A tender process is underway for the supply of the bollards. Local Members will be invited to a site meeting in due course.</p>
18/03/13	<p><u>Unit Shops</u> <u>Lowry Plaza</u> The unit shops planned for the new Lowry Plaza will be actively promoted during construction to ensure that maximum occupancy is obtained in readiness for their opening.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>4/8 Discussions continue with potential tenants. 6/10 Positive discussions are ongoing for units 1&2, which are reaching Heads of Terms stage. 8/12 Negotiations are underway on units 1&2 for a national, single price retailer. Unit 4 is at Heads of Terms stage with a multiple retailer and unit 6b will be fitted out for Subway in the New Year.</p>
23/01/14	<p><u>New Notice Board</u> <u>Lowry Plaza</u> A request has been made by the Town Council to investigate the installation of a notice board on the new Lowry Plaza.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>6/10 A preferred location has been identified but it needs to be agreed as part of the lease of units 1&2. 8/12 The board has been agreed in principle, but needs to link with the lease of units 1&2.</p>

03/02/14	<p><u>Pocket Park Consultation Hanbury Road</u> Officers in Urban Renewal are currently carrying out a public consultation into proposals for a “pocket park”, which will occupy part of the current Hanbury Road car park.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THE ISSUE</p> <p>4/8 The final design is currently being costed. 6/10 Work is due to begin in early 2015, with the tender process due to start shortly. 8/12 The scheme is currently out to tender.</p>
08/05/14	<p><u>Choose the High Street Campaign Town Centre</u> Town Centre Management will be launching a summer campaign across the five managed towns, encouraging consumers to “Choose the High Street”. The scheme will run over the summer period and use several forms of media.</p>	<p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>6/10 Initial feedback to the scheme has been positive, with the Christmas campaign element of the scheme starting shortly. 15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 Updates to the TCMG are ongoing. The project is aimed to be long-term, with more initiatives launching in 2015.</p>
21/05/14	<p><u>Assessment of Access Junction Hanbury Road Car Park</u> At the TCMG, a complaint was received from the Town Council in relation to the access junction of Hanbury Road Car Park. The junction is very tight and does not provide enough room for two vehicles to enter/exit the car park at the same time.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p> <p>Transportation <i>Clive Campbell</i></p>	<p>PLEASE SEE PREVIOUS AUDITS FOR A FULL HISTORY OF THIS ISSUE</p> <p>6/10 Costs have been received, but no budget is available at present. Will be looked at following tender submissions for pocket park scheme. 15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 This will be looked at as part of the pocket park scheme</p>

20/08/14	<p><u>Glutton Litter Sucker Trial</u> <u>Morrisons Store, Lowry Plaza</u> Officers in Cleansing would like to trial a new, rechargeable “Glutton Litter Sucker” device in Bargoed to keep the town clean. They are working with Morrisons management with a view to storing the equipment in the store’s warehouse.</p>	<p>Cleansing <i>Rhodri Lloyd</i></p>	<p>6/10 Cleansing officers have met with the store’s management and initial discussions around storing the unit in the store have been positive. 8/12 The store manager has identified a location to store the device. Colleagues in Cleansing will liaise with the store.</p>
03/09/14	<p><u>Damage to Bench</u> <u>O/S Barclays Bank, Hanbury Road</u> One of the newly installed wooden-topped benches has been damaged and requires a new wooden slat.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>6/10 The contractor has been asked to provide details of the supplier in order to source a replacement. 8/12 A replacement is being procured.</p>
03/09/14	<p><u>Christmas Event</u> <u>Town Centre</u> Planning is underway for a Christmas event in the town centre, which is scheduled to take place on 29th November 2014.</p>	<p>Business Enterprise Support Team <i>Paul Hudson</i></p>	<p>6/10 Planning is ongoing. 15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG, where the group allocated £2k towards the event from the Area Forum Budget. 8/12 The event was well-received and feedback will be provided to the TCMG.</p>
03/09/14	<p><u>“Choose The High Street @ Christmas” Campaign</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The “Choose the High Street” campaign is being extended to the Christmas period to encourage people to shop locally this Christmas. The scheme will involve a voucher scheme that all retailers will have the opportunity to sign up to.</p>	<p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	<p>6/10 A Christmas voucher booklet is being produced for the five managed towns. Retailers are currently being invited to submit offers. 15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 40,000 voucher booklets have been distributed across the Borough. A supporting YouTube video is launching on 8/12.</p>

16/09/14	<p><u>Deep Clean of Public Realm</u> <u>Royal Square</u> Cllr. Davies has asked for a deep clean of Royal Square to address the floor staining, litter and cigarette ends in the area.</p>	<p>Cleansing <i>Tony White</i></p>	<p>6/10 The probation team is scheduled to undertake the work shortly. 8/12 The work has been completed. Issue Closed 8/12</p>
06/10/14	<p><u>Additional Parking Provision</u> <u>Lowry Plaza</u> At the TCIG, Cllr. Davies asked if Officers could look at the possibility of part of Lowry Plaza being converted into parking bays to provide more car parking within the town centre.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>15/10 An update was provided to the TCMG. 8/12 An assessment has been carried out and only one additional parking space would be created, which does not make it financially viable. Issue Closed 8/12</p>
06/10/14	<p><u>Flooding in Ricci's Café</u> <u>Hanbury Square</u> The drainage on Hanbury Square has been overflowing during heavy rain, which has led to flooding within Ricci's Café on several occasions.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>8/12 Monitoring is ongoing.</p>
10/10/14	<p><u>Remedial Works</u> <u>Hanbury Square</u> A complaint has been received from a retailer in relation to the mess being caused by the contractors carrying out remedial works on Hanbury Square.</p>	<p>Urban Renewal <i>Allan Dallimore</i></p>	<p>8/12 The work has been completed. Issue Closed 8/12</p>
13/10/14	<p><u>Organised Shoplifting</u> <u>Morrisons, Bargoed Gateway</u> A gang of 7 shoplifters, who are using mobile phones to co-ordinate thefts from retailers, has targeted the Morrisons store.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p>	<p>8/12 This item was for information only and no update could be provided by the Police. Issue Closed 8/12</p>

16/10/14	<p><u>Installation of Christmas Illuminations</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The lamp post banners are due to be removed for the Christmas period to make way for the festive illuminations that will be placed on lighting columns throughout the town centre.</p>	<p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	8/12 The illuminations have been installed and no issues have been raised.
17/10/14	<p><u>Graffiti Removal</u> <u>Lower High Street</u> The area connecting Lower High Street to the bus station has a large amount of graffiti on the pavements, which requires removal.</p>	<p>Cleansing <i>Tony White</i></p>	8/12 The graffiti has been removed. Issue Closed 8/12
17/10/14	<p><u>Parking Enforcement Event</u> <u>Town Centre</u> At the TCMG, concern was expressed in relation to the amount of illegal parking within the town centre. The local Police will be arranging a parking enforcement day where officers concentrate on education and enforcement.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p>	8/12 Enforcement continues.
12/12/14	<p><u>Parking Complaint</u> <u>Hanbury Road</u> A complaint has been received from a business on Hanbury Road. Vehicles are parking outside their property for long periods, which is making their stock deliveries difficult.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p>	
16/01/15	<p><u>Limited Waiting Bays</u> <u>Cardiff Road</u> A business on Cardiff Road has complained that the new 30-minute waiting bays are being used by vehicles for long periods of time.</p>	<p>Police <i>Ins Muirhead</i></p>	

23/01/15	<p><u>Choose the High Street – Past & Present</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The next phase of the Choose the High Street campaign will start in 2015. Entitled ‘Choose the High Street - Past & Present’ the campaign will aim to reconnect people with their local town centre.</p>	<p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	
23/01/15	<p><u>Banner Changeovers</u> <u>Town Centre</u> The banners on the street lighting columns will be installed during February throughout the town centre.</p>	<p>Town Centre Management <i>Andrew Highway</i></p>	
30/01/15	<p><u>Partially Collapsed Drain Cover</u> <u>O/S Shoe Zone, High Street</u> A drain cover and the surrounding carriageway have partially collapsed, causing a deviation in the surface.</p>	<p>Highways <i>Gavin Barry</i></p>	