



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.**

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.

CHAIR