



BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY 16TH MARCH 2016 AT 2:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillors: D. T Davies, D. Carter, D. Price

Together with:

Town Councillors: H. Llewellyn, A. Collis, D. Morgan, Insp Muirhead, Mr P Collins (Bargoed Chamber of Trade)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal & Conservation), P. Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager), A. Dicks (Assistant Registration\Licensing Officer), T. Keohane (Senior Trading Standards Officer) & A. Jones (Complaints Officer - Clerk)

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors H. A. Andrews, A. Higgs, K. James, K. Reynolds.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 7TH OCTOBER 2015

It was requested that the figure provided on agenda item number 10 should read £72,000 not £27,000 as stated in previous minutes.

The previous minutes were taken as read.

4. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Mr Highway passed on apologies from Clive Campbell and read out the following statement on behalf of Traffic Management:

There has been no change in the Council's position on CPE for some years so there is nothing new to report. The issue may be discussed at the next Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 29 March (as part of the car parking review) but it remains to be seen what will be discussed and where this might go.

The group discussed bringing this matter back to a future meeting.

5. UNLICENSED TAXIS IN TOWN CENTRE EVENING ECONOMY

Mr Keohane & Miss Dicks introduced themselves to the group. Mr Keohane confirmed that there is a huge problem with unlicensed lifts being organised via social media.

Licensing and trading standards are aware and are looking to tackle the problem. Joint Surveillance operation with the police took place over a three-week period. This was to try and address the problem and to obtain evidence to stop these drivers. Individuals have been stopped and given warnings and informed that they were providing a taxi service illegally. The group were advised that they did seize a vehicle which had no insurance.

Officers advised that hopefully the message will get out that this situation is being monitored and will stop drivers picking people up.

Inspector Muirhead confirmed that the operation was very successful, but monitoring will continue.

Councillor Davies asked what has happened since the operation.

Mr Keohane advised that they are working with CCTV operators who have advised that the numbers of lifts have fallen over the last two weeks and they will continue to monitor over the next 6–8 weeks. If numbers increase the operation will be repeated.

The Chair thanked Officers and Police for investigating and trying to resolve the problem.

6. BUSINESS REPORT BARGOED TOWN CENTRE

Mr Highway presented the report to the group.

The group discussed footfall figures and compared how the data is higher in the south of the town and how having Morrisons and Poundworld have seen an increase in footfall figures.

Councillor Davies stated that whilst it is good having Morrisons and Poundworld there is now a need to attract other businesses to the town.

Mr Highway was thanked for the report.

7. 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET' CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET 2015 – ANALYSIS REPORT

Mr Highway presented the report to the group.

Mr Highway wished to note thanks to the council's Graphics Design team for all of their work designing this year's voucher booklet, the Maxime Cinema for holding the event to launch the scheme, the Community Safety Wardens for helping to deliver the booklets and to Steve Wilcox for his work on the scheme.

The group discussed the report and how slow the uptake of the scheme has been. Mr Highway advised that they work with the supermarkets and businesses and hopefully more will get on board next year with good offers to attract people to the town.

The group suggested that possibly the Town Council could get involved more by writing to the local businesses to take part in the scheme and also arrange for prizes to be given via a prize draw for participating businesses.

Mr Highway was thanked for the report.

8. GO2 MY TOWN WEBSITE REPORT

Mr Wilcox presented the report to the group.

The report was discussed and Mr Wilcox advised the group as to how they could access the website and view the hosted information.

Mr Wilcox was thanked for the report.

9. UNIT SHOPS UPDATE

Mr Dallimore informed the group that Poundworld has doubled sales within 3 weeks and is doing well. Officers are trying a new marketing campaign and brochures will be going out to agents and retailers shortly.

The group were advised that there is interest in units 3, 4 & 7 and it appears that traders are keen to come to the town since Poundworld has opened there.

The group discussed the positive impact of having Poundworld in the town as the anchor and look forward to seeing what businesses are interested in coming to the town.

Mr Dallimore confirmed that by the next meeting he should be in a position to update the group further on the progress of the units.

Mr Dallimore was thanked for providing the update.

10. PHASE 2 UPDATE

Mr Dallimore stated that in the last meeting consultants had not been appointed, the group were informed that Savills had now been successfully appointed and they were commissioned to undertake soft market testing to establish if there is any interest in leisure, retail or residential uses on the site.

Mr Dallimore advised that more information would be available after April.

Councillor Davies stated that entertainment would be a major draw for people and that the message should get out that Bargoed regeneration is still continuing.

Mr Dallimore confirmed that officers are still actively pursuing those goals but more time is needed. The group were advised that soft landscaping is the best interim solution for the main site in the interim.

Mr Dallimore was thanked for providing the update.

11. CINEMA SITE AND LAND RESTORATION SCHEME

Mr Dallimore advised the group that Parks Services have sub-contracted the works out to improve the site. These works include the removal of the existing earth bund, and the introduction of timber bollards around the perimeter. The site will be finished with a wildflower mix in the middle of the site and laid to grass around the perimeter. There will be a gate by colliers walk and gravel path from Morrison's.

It has been noted that there is a problem with drainage and this will be resolved through the works programme.

12. BARGOED TOWN CENTRE AUDIT

Mr Highway presented the audit to the group. The following issues were raised.

Councillor Davies raised concern over the steps in Hanbury Road. Work has been carried out but has not worked and the steps are very dangerous. Mr Dallimore confirmed that he will arrange to have inspected for safety.

Inspector Muirhead updated the group on the illegal parking. The group were advised that the police continue to enforce and will look into the parking outside Greggs and report back.

Councillor Davies advised that he is currently waiting for a report from Dean Smith in relation to cars parking on the wide pavements.

Councillor Davies thanked Paul and his team for the Christmas event and has requested that a report be provided for the next meeting showing how much Bargoed Town Council has invested in events in the Town.

Mr Dallimore informed the group that the kerb stones are now in and work will be carried out as soon as possible.

Members raised concern over the eyesore of clothes being thrown over the banking and the overgrowth. Mr Dallimore advised that he would speak with the Parks team and arrange for the brambles to be cut back and the clothes collected during this work.

Members discussed the location of the ice rink in Morrisons' under-croft car park and how successful it had been. The group raised the question as to whether the Christmas market could be held there so that they would not be affected by the bad weather.

It was suggested that the Town Council submit a report at the next meeting.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed 17:31.

CHAIR