



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 3RD OCTOBER 2017

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO CAERPHILLY TOWN

REPORT BY: TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

1. NEW UNIQUE PLACES

A new version of the 'Unique Places' document has been produced. The latest version for the first time includes details of Ystrad Mynach town centre and also features a revised text in respect of Bargoed town centre reflecting the changes in the town due to the BIG Idea regeneration scheme.

The document is predominately used as an inward investment tool to respond to enquires relating to the five managed town centres. It is also a key element in Town Centre Managements proactive engagement with multiple retailers in respect of town centre vacancies and forms the basis of the 'Welcome Pack' supplied to new town centre business

2. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET

The 'Choose the High Street' Christmas Voucher Booklet has proved very popular with the public and retailers and will again be produced in 2017. The aims of the scheme are twofold:

1. Provide local businesses with an opportunity to capture consumer spend during the Christmas period
2. Market the diverse retail offer contained in the town centres.

Retailers in the five managed town centres will have the opportunity to be included in the booklet. The booklets will be given out in local supermarkets, libraries and at other key locations.

3. PWLL Y PANT ROUNDABOUT UPDATE

The Council has awarded the A468/9 Pwll-y-pant Roundabout Improvement Scheme Contract to Walters UK Ltd, it is anticipated that works will start on 9th October 2017 and last 12 months.

During the construction works there will be a need for substantial traffic management on both the roundabout and approaches to the roundabout which will inevitably lead to

significant delays and major disruption to the travelling public (albeit that CCBC and the contractors will attempt to minimise this as much as possible through communications and co-ordination of the works).

There is a dedicated link on CCBC's website link for this highway improvement scheme, which has previously been widely advertised to residents and businesses.

The address of the link is: <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/pwllypant>.

Walters UK Ltd have organised the three upcoming "meet the Project Team" events below, to be held within the local community. The events are drop in sessions and project team members are available throughout the times stated at each venue. During the events, you will have the opportunity to discuss the improvement works with members of the Project Team.

Pwll-y-Pant Village Hall, CF83 2NJ. Wednesday 4 October 2017, 1.30pm to 5.30pm

Trecenydd Community Centre, CF82 2SP. Friday 6 October, 1pm to 4pm

Caerphilly Library, The Twyn, Caerphilly, CF82 1JL. Saturday 7 October, 10am to 2pm

Please be aware that there is limited disabled parking at all locations. If you have any specific requirements such as access, hearing loop, require translation facilities or wish to use the Welsh language at the event please contact engineering@caerphilly.gov.uk by 27th September 2017.

Contractors will be attending the meeting and a presentation will be provided for the group.

4. PARK LANE UPDATE

Following the soft market testing, the Council have conducted further internal marketing to establish any interest from boutique hoteliers. Officers from Property Services were tasked with contacting small to medium sized hotel operators in the South Wales area to establish if they had any desire to invest in Caerphilly

Feedback from this exercise reinforced the conclusions set out in the consultants report: that there is currently minimal interest in the site for a small/medium sized boutique hotel.

Officers are now concentrating their efforts on establishing if there is demand for a policy compliant use on the site. The Local Development Plan (LDP) identifies the site for 'Commercial/Leisure use'. The LDP narrative for the site is as follows:

"...Because of the prime location it is considered that this area would be an ideal place for commercial leisure development, such as restaurants and wine bars, the provision of which would enhance the town's tourism potential"

Officers have taken the opportunity to place an advert in the Estates Gazette seeking expressions of interest from Developers for a scheme that complies with the LDP.

A good response has been received and following further dialogue between potential developers and the Council, at least one party is continuing with their interest in the site.

5. PUBLIC REALM WORKS BY THE VISITOR CENTRE

Urban Renewal Project Officers, working with Town Centre Management and Highways Operations, have recently undertaken an enhancement scheme by the Visitor Centre to address the following concerns;

- Badly worn and damaged paving flagstones (Castle Road footway and Public Area at the base of the steps to the Visitor Centre)
- Regular instances of vehicles mounting the footway and parking on the Public Area

The Scheme carried out the following construction works:

- Replacement of all damaged paving flagstones
- Relocation of 2 no. bollards nearer the kerb-line and installation of 2 additional bollards



Further works to extend the boundary railings, and also repair the damaged section of railings in this Area, is planned within the next 4-6 weeks.

The Urban Renewal Team is also undertaking an enhancement scheme to the Seating Area on Mountain Rd near the public conveniences, to include repair/repainting of the benches and replacement of the damaged paving stones.

6. WORKINGMENS HALL UPDATE

Urban Renewal Project Officer and the Council's Principal Design & Conservation Officer met recently with members of the Workingmen's Hall Managing Committee to discuss their restoration plans for the building.

The Grade II listed building requires urgent repair and restoration work and the Committee are investigating sources of grant funding to help them realise their long term plans, which are to fully restore the building stock and reaffirm the Hall as a centre for community, cultural and social activity with modern and enhanced facilities.

The Urban Renewal Team previously worked with the Trustees of the Newbridge Memorial Hall & Institute to secure EU funding to complete the restoration of the Newbridge “Memo”.

The Team has signposted the Committee to various grant funders, including Heritage Lottery Fund, with an offer to assist with the Project Business Plan and grant applications as required.

7. SUMMER AND CHRISTMAS EVENTS UPDATE

The number of visitors attending this year’s Big Cheese event were marginally down on previous years as a consequence of the weather which fortunately held off long enough to get people out to the event but did have an impact on the programme of entertainment. It was noticeable that there were significant numbers of people travelling from across the UK and beyond to attend the event either to coincide their trip with a visit to friends and family or as an intended destination in its own right.

Stall applications have been sent out with respect to the Caerphilly Christmas Market and following a busy summer of events, staff are now going through the process of allocating stall pitches which takes place over a two day period in December. The Christmas Market in Caerphilly is one of the biggest Christmas Markets in this region and will have over 100 individual stall holders present within the market, farmers market, craft fair in the heart of the town centre.

8. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET PROPERTY INDEX

Following the closure of the Go2 My Town website earlier this year a new version of the ‘Retail Property Index’ has been developed and is available to view online via the Council’s website. The Property Index lists every property for sale or let in Caerphilly, Blackwood, Bargoed, Risca and Ystrad Mynach town centres.

9. PROCUREMENT OF FOOTFALL COUNTER

The new footfall counters were installed in mid-August by our new provider – *PFM Footfall Intelligence*. The systems have been successfully calibrated and validated and are sending back data.

To ensure continuity with all historical footfall data, the new equipment has been installed in the same location as the existing counters. The only exception to this is the Bargoed (North) counter, which has been decommissioned as part of the department’s Medium Term Financial Plan savings. This change also provides consistency throughout the town centres as they all now have one counter.

10. AIR QUALITY

The pollution team have held an initial meeting with the Council's Passenger Transport team regarding a previously mentioned project around emissions from buses in Caerphilly Town Centre and are currently in liaison with our consultants to decide what information is required to model the effects of the emissions from buses.

A meeting has also been held with the Council's air quality consultants to discuss revising and updating the Air Quality Action plan for Caerphilly. This work will be programmed in over the coming year and will be undertaken in partnership with the Air Quality Steering Group.

The pollution team have also been working on the air quality in schools project and will shortly be engaging with the chosen pilot schools, two of which are in the Caerphilly Basin.

The team have also been consulted on a few large residential developments within the Caerphilly area and are working with our consultants to ensure air quality is properly considered.

11. PARKING ENFORCEMENT

The issue of Civil Parking Enforcement is currently being considered by the Council. As part of this process officers are working alongside colleagues in neighbouring authorities and Gwent Police to explore the various options available. The matter is included on the draft forward work programme of the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee will consider and confirm its forward work programme at it's next meeting on 20th September 2017. At present the Authority's future proposals are being developed and still remain to be finalised. It is anticipated that the proposals will be subject to a wider consultation with Members prior to seeking Cabinet confirmation and Council approval.

Author: Andrew Highway – Town Centre Development Manager
Consultees: Andrew Highway – Town Centre Development Manager
Steve Wilcox – Assistant Town Centre Manager
Allan Dallimore – Team Leader Urban Renewal and Conservation
Marcus Lloyd – Deputy Head of Programmes
Mike Jones – Principal Enforcement Officer
Paul Hudson – Marketing and Events Manager
Maria Godfrey – Team Leader Environmental Health
Glenn Cooper – Convergence Project Manager
Kate Dowdall - Senior Engineer