



BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY 15TH MARCH 2017 AT 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillors: D. T Davies, A. Higgs, K. James

Together with:

Town Councillors: V. Stephens, H. Llewellyn, D Morgan, A. Collis

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), P. Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager),
S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), D. Smith (Principal Engineer), A. Jones (Clerk)

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors L. Harding, K. Reynolds, D. Price
A. Dallimore (Team leader – Urban Renewal & Conservation)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chair wished to thank officers for their support over the last five years on behalf of the group.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 5TH OCTOBER 2016

The minutes were taken as read.

The Chair advised that the issue with the carriageway drainage grids throughout the town centre is still a problem as they need to be tightened. Mr. Highway read out an update from Mr. Dallimore regarding the Channel Blocks and drain covers:

“More and more blocks are failing and it has been determined that this could be down to the quality of the initial design by Capita Symonds. In order to establish if the problems relate only to the design or also the quality of workmanship it will be necessary to take some core samples from the concrete beds that the blocks are laid on. This work will cost in the region of £5k and is likely to be funded from the core budget allocation for 17/18.

NCS have been instructed to go through the town to tighten up on the bolts holding down the drainage grids where possible.”

4. BUSINESS REPORT

Mr. Highway presented his report to the group.

The group discussed footfall data and a request was made for the data to be sent to Ms. Tamms (Bargoed Town Council Clerk). Mr. Wilcox confirmed he would arrange to pass on the data.

Mr. Highway advised that the footfall cameras would be reduced to one and that Mr. Wilcox would be providing an update further on the agenda.

Mr. Highway advised the group that there was a change with regards to the Go2MyTown Website and read out the following statement from his Head of Service:

“The Division is currently working towards migrating the content and information on the GO2MyTown website onto the Council’s corporate website.

This change results from concerns over how the Council’s corporate Business Support and Town Centre pages are hosted on the corporate website. It is assumed that an individual or company seeking business information would in the first instance search the Council’s corporate website rather than search for GO2MyTown. In this respect it should be noted that there are no links from the corporate site to GO2MyTown.

Whilst the service provided via GO2MyTown up to November 2016 has been free of charge, in the external provider’s aspiration that GO2MyTown would become a commercial site, in recent months the external provider for the GO2MyTown has started to levy ongoing monthly charges that are considered to be unsustainable.

The outcome of the review of GO2MyTown is that the Division’s business support and town centre website service will revert to being hosted on the Council’s corporate website. In the months ahead Regeneration and Corporate Services IT officers will migrate the existing content of GO2MyTown onto the corporate website resulting in the pages for business support and town centre to be updated, refreshed and aligned to associate content across the Division, Directorate and the Council.”

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for his report.

5. ‘CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET’ CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET ANALYSIS

Mr. Highway noted that the scheme has now been in operation for several years and 2016 was the most successful to date with a total of 112 offers received.

Mr. Highway extended special thanks to the Graphic Design team for their work designing the booklet and to the Community Safety Wardens for distributing the booklets to the various collection points.

The booklet not only marketed the five managed town centres, but also contained adverts for the various Christmas events across the County Borough as well as various CCBC services.

30,000 booklets were produced, which were available from a number of places including local libraries, tourist attractions and supermarkets. The participation of the supermarkets has assisted greatly in the dissemination of the booklets, particularly as Tesco in Risca and Ystrad Mynach took part for the first time in 2016.

A survey was sent out to participating businesses after the Christmas period. Although the response rate was quite poor, it did highlight that feelings towards the scheme are generally positive. However, the bus advertising – used for the first time this year – was not deemed to be successful and this is something to consider for future years.

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for the report and the hard work of the team.

6. PROCUREMENT OF FOOTFALL COUNTER PROVIDER

Mr. Wilcox informed the group that the contract for the footfall counter provision has recently expired. Following a tender process, a new supplier has been appointed – PFM Footfall Intelligence. There will be a period of transition where the old supplier's service and equipment is removed and the new supplier installs its equipment. This is likely to take place in early July, but Officers will work with the companies to ensure that any downtime is kept to a minimum.

As noted earlier in the meeting, the number of Bargoed footfall cameras will be reduced from two to one so that it is consistent with the other town centres that have footfall counters. This reduction will also contribute to the savings required in the Medium Term Financial Plan. The Bargoed North camera will be removed, leaving only the Bargoed South system (located in *Bargoed Sight Centre*).

The Chair thanked Mr. Wilcox for the update.

7. LOWRY SHOPS UPDATE

Mr. Highway read out the following statement from Mr. Dallimore:

“Unit 7 is now operating as a traditional fish and chip restaurant. The owner – Mr. Nur – is tied into the long lease and is currently trading well.

A draft licence has been forwarded to the owner's solicitors for establishing seating outside the restaurant on the plaza.”

The Chair welcomed the business and confirmed that feedback is that the quality of the food is very good. Members of the group also confirmed that they have all had good feedback.

In relation to units 3&4, the lease is in an advanced stage and should be signed shortly. Once all parties have signed the lease, publicity on the new tenant will be released.

Unit 6a – There is currently interest from three high street names, however initial discussions with each party have established that they would each require a substantial incentive package to locate to Bargoed. Therefore, officers have agreed that the best way forward will be to remarket the unit once units 3&4 have been let. It is hoped that this news will help stimulate the market.

8. PHASE 2 UPDATE

Mr. Highway read out the following update from Mr. Dallimore:

“All soft landscaping works to the cinema site have been completed at a cost of £20,000 and a maintenance regime is currently in place.

DTZ was commissioned to investigate alternative uses for the site. They have finalised their report, which does show some interest for the largest site. This report is currently with the Communities Director.

9. FINANCIAL TABLE SHOWING THE TOWN COUNCILS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO EVENTS IN THEIR OWN TOWN

The group was provided with a table setting out the Town Councils' expenditure for events. This was requested to be added as an appendix to the minutes (APPENDIX 1 attached) following the meeting.

The group discussed the table and requested that this should be made public so that other Town Councils can see how the event contributions vary across the County Borough.

Mr. Highway advised that this table will provide Mr. Hudson with a good benchmark to take to all other groups for future events.

Mr. Highway commends Paul and his team for all of their hard work.

Mr. Highway thanked the Town Council on behalf of the retailers who really appreciate the events and have commented on how they serve the community, which is very important for the town.

10. ICE RINK 2017

Mr. Hudson advised the group that discussions are ongoing with Morrisons with regards to dates. The group was advised that the funding will be the same as previous year.

Mr. Hudson confirmed that discussions are taking place with the provider regarding the size of the ice rink and other attractions for the event.

Mr. Highway thanked the Town Council for the tickets for Ice Rink.

11. UPDATE ON CHANNEL BLOCKS & GRIDS

Mr. Highway provided the group with the update earlier in the agenda.

12. BOLLARDS OUTSIDE FRISKY FOX

Mr. Highway advised that there are parking issues that the Authority is trying to manage and read out the following update from Mr. Dallimore:

“After requests from local Members about particular pinch points for pedestrians on the pavement running parallel to Lowry Plaza, two bollards have been installed to prevent vehicles parking up on the pavement. Another bollard will be added by NCS early next week at the location.”

Mr. Smith passed around photographs of the area outside the Frisky Fox demonstrating how people are parking on the wide pavement area and on the area parallel to Lowry Plaza.

Mr. Smith advised the group that a solution, in addition to placing the bollards on the pinch point, would be to allow parking on the wide area outside Greggs, which could accommodate parking for around six vehicles. In addition, the bay outside the Frisky Fox could also be used for parking. Both of these bays would be limited waiting for 30 minutes.

Mr. Smith read out views from PC Clark Evans from Gwent Police:

“In respect of the parking restriction changes we discussed this morning outside Greggs in the High Street, Bargoed police have no issues with the proposed changes by making the low level pavement in front of Greggs into a 30 minute limited waiting bay and moving the barriers back to prevent injury or damage to pedestrians and property, we also recognise the need that the barriers need to be lifted outside the Frisky Fox, to allow persons to park in that parking bay also.

This has been a very difficult area to police and enforce the parking restriction, because of the wide drop kerb that is in place as it looked like a parking bay from the very start. Every member of the public we try to enforce this issue with states that they believe it was a parking bay with no restrictions.”

The group discussed the proposals and were asked if anyone objected to these proposals. The group were advised that if parking was agreed then there would be a need for signs to be placed and lines drawn to delineate the parking areas.

The Chair invited the group to vote on converting the pavement area outside Greggs to 30 minute waiting. The vote was 7 in favour and 0 against.

The group discussed the issue of the filming for Stella outside the Frisky Fox and would that be an issue. Mr. Smith advised that whenever events are on, an order can be put in place to allow film crew to be there. The traffic arrangements can be reviewed if it does not work.

The chair invited the group to vote on taking away the bollards and restricting parking to 30 minutes waiting outside the Frisky Fox. The vote was 7 in favour and 0 against.

The group discussed that parking throughout the town is an issue. Mr. Highway advised that enforcement is problem in all towns and is a matter for the police.

Cllr. Higgs raised concern from an incident that he witnessed outside Peacocks whereby a child ran out of the shop and somebody had mounted the kerb to park illegally. As they pulled onto the kerb, they nearly hit the child as he exited the shop. Mr. Highway requested that Cllr. Higgs send an email to him with specific information and he would refer the matter to Inspector Muirhead.

13 CAR PARKING TASK & FINISH REPORT

Cllr. Llewellyn informed the group that he attended the Task & Finish Group meeting and it was discussed about imposing charges where there is currently free parking within the towns.

The group discussed that as regeneration works have not yet been completed, they feel the free parking should remain.

The report stated that Hanbury Road Car Park is always busy. The group were advised by Mr. Smith that officers carry out regular surveys of the number of spaces in use, but he is unsure if they are ever conducted on the weekend.

Cllr. James advised that the task and finish group have been asked to raise recommendations but the final decision will be made by full Council.

Mr. Smith advised the group that he is on the Task & Finish Group and a number of issues will be looked at including park & ride, residential areas, maintenance, business rates on car parks and CCTV. The findings of the group will be passed to the relevant Scrutiny Committee

and then Cabinet and Council in due course, but this will now be after the Local Government elections.

14. AUDIT

Mr. Highway presented the Audit and the following items were raised:

Hanbury Steps – Mr. Highway read out the following update from Mr. Dallimore:

“Although these steps are unsightly they are not considered dangerous. They are part of the regular Highway Inspector’s inspection regime and will continue to be monitored on a regular basis.

As outlined before at the TCMG, a full investigatory report has been commissioned for the steps, which has now been completed. The conclusions of the report identify a budget requirement of circa £75 - £80k in order to undertake a comprehensive package of works to bring them back to their original state. Officers have made several internal bids for resources to pay for these works, but with no success to date. Another round of bidding against the capital reserve budget is to be opened shortly and officers will again submit this project for consideration.

The Chair raised the issue of rubbish being thrown down the banking alongside the railway and the footpath linking Bargoed Gateway and Eastview Terrace, which looks very unsightly. Mr. Highway advised that he would contact colleagues in Cleansing and ask for the area to be looked at.

Mr. Highway advised the group that he met with the Police two weeks ago and discussed weekend Dispersal Orders after eight bins were set on fire in Morrisons loading yard. The Community Safety Wardens and Police are dealing with the situation and the Morrisons store manager has stated that he will close the gates at 6 o’clock to prevent anti-social behaviour.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed 17:53.

CHAIR



BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON TUESDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2017 AT 2:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillors: P. Cook, N. Dix, C. Hawker, K. James, T. Williams

Together with:

Town Councillors: Z. Hammond, J. Hold (Clerk)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal & Conservation), P. Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), G. Richards (Highways Maintenance Manager), Ins. J. White (Gwent Police) & H. Edwards (Blackwood Retail Partnership)

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: A. Rees

C. Erasmus (Blackwood Town Council), Andrea Jones (Clerk).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 9TH SEPTEMBER 2016

The minutes were taken as read.

4. BUSINESS REPORT

Mr Highway presented his report to the group, which summarised the number of businesses that opened and closed throughout 2016, along with the footfall information and initiatives carried out by the Town Centre Management Team.

During the beginning of 2016, a large number of businesses closed in the town. However, the opening of Costa bucked the trend and saw a lot of new businesses open throughout the town and on Pentwyn Road.

The largest retail space in the town centre – Store 21 – recently closed and is currently a pop-

up charity shop. Work is being undertaken with the owner and agents to actively promote the store.

A number of initiatives were carried out throughout the year to promote the town centres and maintain footfall. These included the “Choose the High Street” Stories & Christmas Voucher Booklet, the new Go2MyTown website, introduction of the GovDelivery e-mail marketing system and production of the Town Centre Gazette.

Mr. Highway thanked Mr. Hudson and his team for the summer and Christmas events in the town, which were highly regarded by retailers and visitors alike.

It was noted that Blackwood is now the top performing town in terms of footfall figures.

2017 is likely to present several challenges for businesses including the Business Rates Review and Brexit, which is leading to uncertainty amongst consumers and businesses.

Cllr. James noted that the footfall in Blackwood is doing very well and this is a positive sign for the future of the town.

Cllr. Cook asked what effect the Rates Review will have on small businesses. Mr. Highway explained that a brief assessment of the changes in business rates had been undertaken by checking sample addresses in both High Street and the Market Place, although not definitive it appears that many business rateable values on High Street have fallen whilst in the Market Place they appear to have risen. There are several rate relief schemes available to small businesses, many of which will be applied automatically more details are available through the Council’s NNDR section.

Mr. Hold asked if a Business Rates briefing paper could be produced for circulation to Town Councillors. Mr. Highway agreed to send information via e-mail.

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for his report.

5. ‘CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET’ CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET ANALYSIS

Mr. Highway noted that the scheme has now been in operation for several years and 2016 was the most successful to date with a total of 112 offers received.

Mr. Highway extended special thanks to the Graphic Design team for their work designing the booklet and to the Community Safety Wardens for distributing the booklets to the various collection points.

The booklet not only marketed the five managed town centres, but also contained adverts for the various Christmas events across the Borough as well as various CCBC services.

30,000 booklets were produced, which were available in Blackwood Library, The Maxime Cinema, Tidal’s Store, ASDA and Blackwood Miners’ Institute. The supermarkets agreeing to stock the booklets has greatly assisted the distribution of the booklets and Tesco stocked them in other town centres for the first time this year.

A survey was sent out to participating businesses after the Christmas period. Although the response rate was quite poor, it did highlight that feelings towards the scheme are generally positive. However, the bus advertising – used for the first time this year – was not deemed to be successful and this is something to consider for future years.

Mr. Edwards thanked the Council for its support. Independent retailers are keen to make use of all available marketing platforms and a widespread, free opportunity such as the Christmas Voucher Booklet is very much appreciated.

The Chair thanked Mr Highway for the report and the hard work of the team.

6. COBBLED LANE, HIGH STREET (SIDE OF FLOUR MILL)

Mr. Richards informed the group that £10k has been secured internally to carry out work on the lane. Contractors have been on site for 3-weeks. The cobbles are being removed, cleaned and repointed. The work is due to be finished in the next few weeks, with any budgetary shortfall being looked at in the next financial year.

Mr. Dallimore explained that there was a strong local feeling on the historical value of these cobbled sites, which is why Officers persevered to secure internal funding for the scheme.

The Chair thanked Mr. Richards and all other Officers involved.

7. SUMMER EVENTS

Mr. Hudson is currently in the process of planning the 2017 events programme. Blackwood Beach Party is due to return on 1st & 2nd July. There was a welcome addition to the event last year with the Town Council musical event coinciding with it. Mr. Hudson and his team are keen to work with the Town Council this year too.

The beach theme of the event will be extended into the High Street this year with activities such as Punch & Judy and donkey rides. The entertainment programme will also be enhanced this year.

To date, 20 stallholder applications have been received.

Mr. Hold thanked Mr. Hudson and his team on behalf of the Town Council. Blackwood carnival is scheduled to take place on the Sunday of the Beach Party and the activities will be focused in The Market Place so that it links nicely with the town centre event.

8. PROCUREMENT OF FOOTFALL COUNTER PROVIDER

Mr. Wilcox informed the group that the contract for the footfall counter provision has recently expired. Following a tender process, a new supplier has been appointed – PFM Footfall Intelligence. There will be a period of transition where the old supplier's service and equipment is removed and the new supplier installs its equipment. This is likely to take place in early July, but Officers will work with the companies to ensure that any downtime is kept to a minimum.

The Chair thanked Mr. Wilcox for the update.

9. THE MARKET PLACE REDEVELOPMENT

Mr. Highway read out an e-mail from The Market Place Manager on work that will be taking place in the coming months:

“A programme of refurbishment is underway including: cleaning of the canopies and jet washing of the market square itself. During the summer there will be painting works carried out and repairs to the steps.

The former Somerfield unit was subject to a planning application in November last year. Consent was given to subdivide the existing A1 unit into three units with one unit going from

A1 retail to D2 gym. The planning application was subjected to a number of conditions relating to: noise, installation of plant equipment and opening times.”

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for obtaining the update and noted that since the old Somerfield has been vacant for so long, it's encouraging that somebody is finally investing in it.

10. ALDI REDEVELOPMENT

Mr. Highway noted that the site was subject to a planning application in November last year, permission was granted for a change of use to A2 (Financial Professional Service) Employment Centre.

Mr. Dallimore pointed out that just because planning permission has been granted, it doesn't necessarily mean that a tenant has been secured.

Mr. Hold expressed concern and the incidents of vandalism on the neighbouring St. Margaret's Church and hopes that a new tenant will reduce such occurrences. Ins. White responded by noting that some information has been received on the recent graffiti on the building and an arrest will be made shortly.

11. RED LION UPDATE

Mr. Dallimore has been working with colleagues in Planning Enforcement who are due to serve a S.215 notice on the owner of the site, which means that they must take steps to improve its appearance. In the meantime, there has been a dialogue with Pobl Housing Association for a proposed housing scheme on the site. Some drawings have been produced and these will be brought to a future meeting of the group for information. The scheme will involve all existing buildings being demolished.

Mr. Hold has received copy of the drawings, which were circulated to Town Councillors. The façade of the new buildings is in keeping with Blackwood Miners' Institute and would be as asset for the town. As such, the Town Council is very supportive of the proposal.

10. AUDIT

Mr. Highway presented the Audit and the following items were raised:

Poundstretcher site – No update has been received from the owner or agent. However, the owner has been provided with details of the Town Centre Loan Fund, which could be used to redevelop the building.

Toilet Block Enhancement – Mr. Highway read an e-mail from Mr. Mike Jones in Planning Enforcement:

“Concerning the Former Public Toilets, High Street, Blackwood, I have sought authority to issue a notice under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended, in respect of land in a poor state of amenity. That authority has been granted under delegated powers.

I have written to the joint owners again giving them the opportunity to tidy the site, and asking them to: cut back all the overgrowth present on the land, including grass, weeds and brambles; remove from the land any materials resulting from those works, together with any debris, rubbish or litter that is present on the land; secure shut any doors or windows in the building.

The informal period allowed to carry out the works expires on 8th March 2017. (I checked the site on Friday of last week and nothing appeared to have been done up to that point).

If our request has not been complied with by that date then formal action will be taken.

The owners have a right of appeal against a Sec. 215 Notice, such an appeal would be made to the Welsh Ministers.”

The Chair wished to thank Mr. Jones.

Wesley Road Steps – Parks Services have been leading on the project. The work on the steps is complete and another project will be carried out on the footpath before the end of March.

Antisocial behaviour – Ins. White noted that very low levels of antisocial behaviour have been reported recently. However, the issue does now seem to be concentrated around KFC and McDonald's. A problem-solving group looking at antisocial behaviour throughout the town centre will be set up in due course. Plain-clothed officers have been doing patrols in and around the bus station and Market Place, which seems to have improved problems in that area.

Repainting of parking bays – the work is due to be completed by April.

Proposed amendment of Traffic Order – this is currently out to advert.

Demolition of former Guide Hall – disconnection of one utility is still pending. Demolition can progress rapidly once all utilities are decommissioned.

Letting of former Store 21 – the unit is currently being used as a pop-up charity shop while a long-term tenant is sought.

Spitting on cash machines – all banks in the town centre have been made aware of the issue and agreed to clean their ATMs.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed 15:25.

CHAIR



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON TUESDAY 7TH MARCH 2017 AT 2:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillors: P J Bevan, C Elsbury, J Fussell, K James, B Jones

Together with:

Town Councillors: Professor Deacon, Mr K Williams (Clerk Caerphilly Town Council),
Mr J Dilworth (Clerk Van Community)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal & Conservation), P. Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), M Godfrey (Team Leader Environmental Health), Mrs S Cooper (Caerphilly Residents Association), Mr Tidridge (Heol Trecastell Residents Association), Mr K Robottom (Caerphilly Residents Association), Mrs D Stephens (Caerphilly Pub Watch), Mt T Jones (The Tommy Cooper Society), Mrs A Jones (Clerk) & Miss J Tyler (Admin Assistant)

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: D T Davies, C Forehead, S Kent, M Prew, J Pritchard, J. Hibbert (Town Councillor), R Bidgood (Town Councillor).

As the Chair and Vice Chair had sent apologies for the meeting the group agreed that Councillor B Jones would chair the meeting in their absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016

The minutes were taken as read.

4. PARKING

Mr. Highway informed the group that there is a task & Finish Group meeting scheduled for the 13th March 2017. Members of the group had been invited previously; Mr. Tidridge and Mr. Robottom confirmed that they would be attending.

The group was advised that if they wanted to attend they would need to contact Committee Services.

5. SUMMER EVENT

Mr. Hudson informed the group that previously concerns were raised as to parking on the east side of the town centre when events were staged. He pointed out that additional parking is available at the Park & Ride located at Pontygwindy School as well the other Park & Ride sites. Promotional material directs drivers to these sites and there has been an increase over the years in their usage.

Mr. Hudson advised that he had met with the Police to get their perspective on potential issues, particularly with reference to the complaints about parking on Brynau Road. An assurance was given that there would be an increase in police presence.

Police have not received feedback on calls from residents and have advised that if there are any issues individuals can contact the Police on 101. It was agreed that Community Safety Wardens will be used in addition to police officers.

Mr. Hudson confirmed that there will be a continued focus on communicating with local residents.

The Chair thanked Mr. Hudson

6. AIR QUALITY

Ms Godfrey provided a verbal update on air quality. Ms Godfrey commented that the Action plan for Caerphilly had become quite stagnant and was in need of a review, Ms Godfrey will discuss this further with the Council's consultants, Ricardo.

Ms Godfrey discussed that the pollution team were about to embark on some work around emissions from buses within the town centre, working in partnership with the Council's Passenger Transport Team and the bus companies.

A school's project is also in the planning stage, which aims to raise awareness of air quality issues within schools, this will include the school undertaking their own monitoring in and around the school grounds. Welsh Government are currently working with their air quality consultants and it is hoped that the teaching and learning packs for the schools, will be launched in October. It is anticipated that the pollution team will begin engaging with the chosen schools during October and will deliver the project as a rolling programme over the next 2 years.

Ms Godfrey mentioned that the pollution team were also working very closely with the Council's Planning service in relation to any proposed developments in and around the Caerphilly Basin and would be involved in any subsequent revisions of the Authority's Local development Plan.

The Chair thanked Ms Godfrey.

7. BUSINESS REPORT

Mr. Highway presented his report to the group.

Mr Highway advised that there was a change with regards to the Go2MyTown Website and read out the following statement from his Head of Service:

“The Division is currently working towards migrating the content and information on the GO2MyTown website onto the Council’s corporate website.

This change results from concerns over how the Council’s corporate Business Support and Town Centre pages are hosted on the corporate website. It is assumed that an individual or company seeking business information would in the first instance search the Council’s corporate website rather than search for GO2MyTown. In this respect it should be noted that there are no links from the corporate site to GO2MyTown.

Whilst the service provided via GO2MyTown up to November 2016 has been free of charge, in the external provider’s aspiration that GO2MyTown would become a commercial site, in recent months the external provider for the GO2MyTown has started to levy ongoing monthly charges that are considered to be unsustainable.

The outcome of the review of GO2MyTown is that the Division’s business support and town centre website service will revert to being hosted on the Council’s corporate website. In the months ahead Regeneration and Corporate Services IT officers will migrate the existing content of GO2MyTown onto the corporate website resulting in the pages for business support and town centre to be updated, refreshed and aligned to associate content across the Division, Directorate and the Council.”

The Chair requested clarification on why the group were not consulted about the decision. Following a discussion. The Chair agreed to raise the group’s concerns directly with the appropriate Head of Service.

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for his report.

8. ‘CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET’ CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET ANALYSIS

Mr. Highway noted that the scheme has now been in operation for several years and 2016 was the most successful to date with a total of 112 offers received.

Mr. Highway extended special thanks to the Graphic Design team for their work designing the booklet and to the Community Safety Wardens for distributing the booklets to the various collection points.

The booklet not only marketed the five managed town centres, but also contained adverts for the various Christmas events across the Borough as well as various CCBC services.

30,000 booklets were produced, which were available from a number of places including local libraries, tourist attractions and supermarkets. The participation of the supermarkets has assisted greatly in the dissemination of the booklets, particularly as Tesco in Risca and Ystrad Mynach took part for the first time in 2016.

A survey was sent out to participating businesses after the Christmas period. Although the response rate was quite poor, it did highlight that feelings towards the scheme are generally positive. However, the bus advertising – used for the first time this year – was not deemed to be successful and this is something to consider for future years.

Councillor Bevan and the Chair thanked Mr. Highway for the report.

9. PROCUREMENT OF FOOTFALL COUNTER PROVIDER

Mr. Wilcox informed the group that the contract for the footfall counter provision has recently expired. Following a tender process, a new supplier has been appointed – PFM Footfall Intelligence. There will be a period of transition where the old supplier's service and equipment is removed and the new supplier installs its equipment. This is likely to take place in early July, but Officers will work with the companies to ensure that any downtime is kept to a minimum.

The Chair thanked Mr. Wilcox for the update.

10. CADW EVENTS PROGRAMME

Mr. Highway advised that he had not received an update from Cadw.

Mr. Hudson confirmed that he is working with Cadw and that a new dragon sculpture will be touring Wales and Caerphilly Castle will be included in the schedule.

There are a number of events planned including: a festival, magic & comedy shows, re-enactments, Christmas events and Mr. Hudson will continue to work with Cadw to assist in publicising it through the Council's Events Team.

Mr. Hudson thanked Cllr. James for supporting the programme with Ken Skates and Cadw.

Mr. Tudor Jones from The Tommy Cooper Society advised the group that he had met with Cadw to discuss the year of the legends and had asked whether there should be a Tommy Cooper Festival.

The thirty-third anniversary of Tommy Cooper's death is approaching and the Society has had talks with the library with a view to having a Tommy Cooper display and inviting The Magic Circle's 'Young Magician of the Year' to perform and hold a workshop for aspiring magicians.

Mr. Jones discussed an event being organised to gather as many Tommy Cooper impersonators as possible with a view to gaining an entry into The Guinness Book of Records. Special lapel badges have been designed with proceeds going to Tommy's Ticker Fund

Mr. Hudson confirmed that the Council has not as yet received an invitation to be involved in these events.

The Chair thanked Mr. Jones and passed on best wishes to the Tommy Cooper Society.

Mr. Dilworth raised a point for note as to whether Cadw would have an interest in the history of the 'Van Mansion'. The Chair asked Mr. Dilworth to write to Cadw and feedback.

11. PARK LANE UPDATE

Mr. Dallimore advised the group that the site has been identified for future use and the Council is looking at all options to see what would be viable on the site and for possible match funding to assist any future development.

12. AUDIT

Mr. Highway presented the Audit and the following items were raised:

Cllr. Elsbury wished to thank Mr. Highway and the Parks team for the work carried out to add the names of those killed since WWI & WWII in conflict to the Cenotaph.

Mr. Highway confirmed that works were still ongoing with regards to access of the vacant property at 73 Cardiff Road and officers continue to monitor the site.

Mr. Highway advised that there were extremely positive comments on the art exhibition and the remembrance garden on the moat banking in the lead up to Remembrance Sunday. Cllr. Fussell confirmed that permission to use the area on an annual basis was being sought as it was hoped to make the wave of poppies larger.

Mr. Highway reported that with regards to the retail thefts there is a meeting with the Police on Thursday and was grateful to Pub Watch for their support.

Cllr. Bevan raised concern over the cleaning of York Stone around the Visitor Centre. Mr. Dallimore advised that he will be meeting representatives to look at products that may be suitable for algae treatment.

Mr. Highway advised that the Dafydd Williams Park & Crescent Road will have a programme of painting over the summer with litter bins and railings being repainted by the Council's Community Assets Team.

Cadw has agreed on work to the banking and draining of the moat over the summer period too. Mr. Highway has asked for Cadw to confirm dates so that it can be noted in the Town Centre Gazette. Cllr. Elsbury thanked Mr Highway.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed 15:29

CHAIR



RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON MONDAY 20TH MARCH 2017 AT 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillors: N George, P Leonard, A Leonard, K James

Together with:

Town Councillors: M Parker, B Hancock, B Campbell (Clerk Risca Town Council)

Also:

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

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: D T Davies, P Griffiths

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 21ST OCTOBER 2016

The minutes were taken as read.

4. BUSINESS REPORT

Mr. Highway presented his report to the group.

Mr. Highway advised the group that there was a change with regards to the Go2MyTown Website and read out the following statement from his Head of Service:

“The Division is currently working towards migrating the content and information on the GO2MyTown website onto the Council’s corporate website.

This change results from concerns over how the Council’s corporate Business Support and Town Centre pages are hosted on the corporate website. It is assumed that an individual or company seeking business information would in the first instance search the Council’s corporate website rather than search for GO2MyTown. In this respect it should be noted that there are no links from the corporate site to GO2MyTown.

Whilst the service provided via GO2MyTown up to November 2016 has been free of charge, in the external provider's aspiration that GO2MyTown would become a commercial site, in recent months the external provider for the GO2MyTown has started to levy ongoing monthly charges that are considered to be unsustainable.

The outcome of the review of GO2MyTown is that the Division's business support and town centre website service will revert to being hosted on the Council's corporate website. In the months ahead Regeneration and Corporate Services IT officers will migrate the existing content of GO2MyTown onto the corporate website resulting in the pages for business support and town centre to be updated, refreshed and aligned to associate content across the Division, Directorate and the Council."

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for his report.

5. 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET' CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET ANALYSIS

Mr. Highway noted that the scheme has now been in operation for several years and 2016 was the most successful to date with a total of 112 offers received.

Mr. Highway extended special thanks to the Graphic Design team for their work designing the booklet and to the Community Safety Wardens for distributing the booklets to the various collection points.

The booklet not only marketed the five managed town centres, but also contained adverts for the various Christmas events across the County Borough as well as various CCBC services.

30,000 booklets were produced, which were available from a number of places including local libraries, tourist attractions and supermarkets. The participation of the supermarkets has assisted greatly in the dissemination of the booklets, particularly as Tesco in Risca and Ystrad Mynach took part for the first time in 2016.

A survey was sent out to participating businesses after the Christmas period. Although the response rate was quite poor, it did highlight that feelings towards the scheme are generally positive. However, the bus advertising – used for the first time this year – was not deemed to be successful and this is something to consider for future years.

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for the report and the hard work of the team.

6. PROCUREMENT OF FOOTFALL COUNTER PROVIDER

Mr. Wilcox informed the group that the contract for the footfall counter provision has recently expired. Following a tender process, a new supplier has been appointed – PFM Footfall Intelligence. There will be a period of transition where the old supplier's service and equipment is removed and the new supplier installs its equipment. This is likely to take place in early July, but Officers will work with the companies to ensure that any downtime is kept to a minimum.

The Chair thanked Mr. Wilcox for the update.

7. RISCA TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

Mr. Dallimore informed the group that a development site masterplan is being produced. The document looks at how the S.106 monies that haven't been spent on a footbridge to Tesco could be used to unlock development sites around the town. Recent flood alleviation schemes

have unlocked sites that were previously deemed unfeasible. A community centre provision for the town will also be looked at as part of the plan.

The masterplan is in draft at the moment while the feasibility of each potential site is investigated. Once the document has been finalised, it will go to Cabinet for initial approval prior to wider consultation. The consultation process will utilise a variety of methods to engage with the public and stakeholders, including being presented to the Town Centre Management Group at a future meeting.

8. **AUDIT**

Mr. Highway presented the Audit and the following items were raised:

Condition of land around Cuckoo Artwork – Mr. Dallimore advised that Keep Wales Tidy & staff from Tesco have been working to tidy up the site and are now in dialogue with enforcement officers to keep posters and banners to a minimum.

Mr. Dallimore asks the group to report any issues to him and he will look to re-engage with Tesco.

Councillor Parker advised that in a meeting that he attended regarding what would be going in the area around the cuckoo statue, it was advised that benches would be installed and area planted. Mr Dallimore did not recall benches being mentioned but he would double check and report back

Damage to wall Bethany Baptist Chapel – The group were advised that One Stop have been liaising with contractor and conservation officer to prevent any further damages. One Stop will rebuild the wall and seek to claim the monies back from third party.

Mr. Highway advised that Mr. Wilcox has been acting as a go between all parties and Mr. Dallimore confirmed that they have looked at several options for the area and liaised with Highways.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed 15:25.

CHAIR



YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON TUESDAY 21ST MARCH 2017 AT 1:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Councillors: A Angel, M James, J A Pritchard,

Together with:

C Mortimer (Clerk)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal & Conservation), P. Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager, A Jones (clerk) & J Tyler (Administrative Assistant)

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: D Bolter, K James & D Jorro

The Chair wished to thank Mr Highway and other officers for all of their hard work throughout the last five years.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 22ND NOVEMBER 2016

The minutes were taken as read.

Councillor M James raised matters arising from previous minutes and asked when the events budget is set.

The group were advised that in the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group a breakdown of the events budget was requested and the Town Council also provided a breakdown of their figures and will be available with the minutes.

Mr Hudson confirmed that he is in the process of setting the budget and confirmed that Ystrad Mynach will be allocated the £2,000 towards the Christmas Event

Councillor M James requested that the information be forwarded to members of the group by emailing it to C Mortimer (Clerk)

Councillor M James thanked Mr Hudson and C Mortimer for funding towards Christmas event and appreciated the officer's work.

Councillor Angel asked if assistance could be provided to help the Royal British Legion to hold a seven a side tournament. Mr Hudson confirmed that he is always available to help along with colleagues in leisure and advised the Chair to contact him to provide details.

4. BUSINESS REPORT

Mr Highway presented his report to the group, which summarised the number of businesses that opened and closed throughout 2016, along with the footfall information and initiatives carried out by the Town Centre Management Team.

The Chair thanked Mr. Highway for his report.

5. 'CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET' CHRISTMAS VOUCHER BOOKLET ANALYSIS

Mr. Highway noted that the scheme has now been in operation for several years and 2016 was the most successful to date with a total of 112 offers received.

Mr. Highway extended special thanks to the Graphic Design team for their work designing the booklet and to the Community Safety Wardens for distributing the booklets to the various collection points.

The booklet was not only marketed to the five managed town centres, but also contained adverts for the various Christmas events across the Borough as well as various Council services.

30,000 booklets were produced and were available from a number of places including local libraries, tourist attractions and supermarkets. The participation of the supermarkets has assisted greatly in the dissemination of the booklets, particularly as Tesco in Risca and Ystrad Mynach took part for the first time in 2016.

A survey was sent out to participating businesses after the Christmas period. Although the response rate was poor, it did highlight that the scheme is generally viewed positively. However, the bus advertising – used for the first time this year – was not deemed to be successful and this is something to consider for future years.

Councillors questioned whether the voucher booklet was worth doing in Ystrad Mynach as there does not seem to be much of a take up and asked whether the money could be used towards events in the town.

Mr Highway advised that the voucher booklet is offered across all towns and the budget is not broken down to individual towns, if Ystrad Mynach did not want to join the promotion then they could be left out next year if the group were to request this.

The group discussed the promotion and all agreed that it is really down to the offers made by businesses and members should try to encourage businesses to join in and increase their offers.

The Chair thanked Mr Highway for the report and the hard work of the team.

6. PROCUREMENT OF FOOTFALL COUNTER PROVIDER

Mr. Wilcox informed the group that the contract for the footfall counter provision has recently expired. Following a tender process, a new supplier has been appointed – PFM Footfall Intelligence. There will be a period of transition where the old supplier's service and equipment is removed and the new supplier installs its equipment. This is likely to take place in early July, but Officers will work with the companies to ensure that any downtime is kept to a minimum.

The Chair thanked Mr. Wilcox for the update.

7. AUDIT

Mr. Highway presented the Audit and the following items were raised:

The group were advised that the repaint on the Post Box will be done by the end of next week and will continue into late spring.

Repainting of double yellow lines. Councillor M James raised concerns over the length of time taken. Councillor James advised that he had walked around the town with the Police and identified areas where lines are faded or broken. The Police have advised that they are unable to enforce where lines are broken or faded.

Councillor M James advised that there is a public meeting to discuss parking and Inspector Muirhead will be present.

Mr Highway suggested that Councillor M James contact colleagues in Highways to enquire about the repainting schedule. Officer details were supplied to the member..

Mr Highway advised that costs and planning approval was needed for the installation of the monolith. Councillor M James raised concern over the length of time taken for the installation.

The group were advised that Mr D Smith from traffic management would be arranging for the steps to be painted in the car park. Councillor Pritchard thanked Mr Highway for the update.

Litter pick at Siloh Square - Councillor M James advised that he litter is still in the raised beds. Mr Highway confirmed that he will arrange for the area to be cleaned

Ms C Mortimer advised that pavements in Siloh Square are still unsafe and shabby looking. Mr Dallimore confirmed that he would send officers to take a look and raise it on the audit.

Mr Wilcox informed the group that the Community Defibrillator by the library has been repaired and is now secure. Mr Wilcox confirmed that the feeder pillar in Siloh Square has now been installed and community events can use.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed 14:18

CHAIR