



## **BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 20TH MARCH 2019**

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO BARGOED TOWN**

**REPORT BY: TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

---

### **1. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

In October 2018, Welsh Government announced its provisional budget settlement; under the settlement Caerphilly County Borough Councils faced a funding reduction of 0.3%, this coupled with inescapable pressures that the Council has to fund, meant that the Council needed to find savings of over £15.6 million for the next year alone.

As part of the draft budget proposals for 2019/20, the closure of all 5 Public Conveniences was presented as a saving proposal (£74, 0000).

The draft budget which included this saving underwent a comprehensive consultation process held over a period of six weeks from the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019, with the views expressed to be fed back to and considered by elected members at a Special meeting of full Council in February 2019.

The consultation included officer representation at the Community Council Liaison Committee (21<sup>st</sup> November 2018), Newslines, Council's website, Special Scrutiny Committee meetings, Town Centre Engagement and Public Drop in Centres. Drop in sessions were held in 9 venues across the county borough between the 26<sup>th</sup> November and 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (Rhymney Library, Bargoed Library, Caerphilly Library, New Tredegar White Rose Centre, Risca Palace, Newbridge Tabernacle, Nelson Library and Blackwood Library).

Town and Community Councils also received this information via their Community Council Liaison Officer – Caerphilly Conversation engagement email (22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018) and a copy of the final budget proposals circulated to all clerks on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

At the meeting of Special Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019, elected members approved the final budget proposals including the closure of the 5 public conveniences (recommendation 10.1.2 – Appendix 2 – page 16). Following the decision of Council, notices were placed in each of the public conveniences and the closure will come into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

### **2. STREET SCENE IMPROVEMENT UPDATE – VERBAL UPDATE**

### **3. UNIT SHOPS – VERBAL UPDATE**

#### 4. REDEVELOPMENT RETAIL PLATEAU PHASE 2 – VERBAL UPDATE

#### 5. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

- Traffic Regulation Order remedial works have been substantially completed.
- The Traffic Regulation Order consolidation order has been advertised and will be concluded by the 8<sup>th</sup> April.
- A Service Level Agreement has been signed with Rhondda Cynnon Taf County Borough Council to provide back office support for the civil parking enforcement process within Caerphilly County Borough Council.
- All Civil Enforcement Officers have been recruited and trained. During March the officers have been undertaking an extensive exercise across the county borough to issue warning notices to drivers advising them of parking restrictions.

#### 6. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – VERBAL UPDATE

#### 7. BARGOED RETAIL OVERVIEW 2018

##### **Bargoed Retail Overview 2018**

The year proved to be a difficult one for Bargoed. At the northern end of the town, the relocation of the Job Centre onto Lowry Plaza resulted in a drop in footfall which was exacerbated by the closure of the *Original Factory Shop*. The retailer had entered into a CVA (Company Voluntary Arrangement) with its creditors which led to store closures including Bargoed. Other business that also closed in 2018 included: *Aubrey's Bakery* and *Thomas Cook*. Whilst each one of these closures had a different set of circumstances behind it, the cumulative affect was that the town was left with a high vacancy rate. The lettings strategy for *Lowry Plaza* suffered a set back when *Poundworld* closed in August as a result of the retailer entering into administration. Following the stores closure there was interest from a number of national retailers in taking up the lease. After a protracted negotiation period lease was successfully reassigned to *Iceland*. The relocation of the new *Job Centre (Department of Work and Pensions)* into units 3-4 means that as the end of the year only Unit 6A remains vacant.

The centre of the towns retail offer has firmly shifted to *Lowry Plaza* which has resulted in a contraction of the footfall numbers in the north and to a lesser extent the south of the town centre. Although many businesses did close in 2018, there were some openings which included: *Bourton's Music School*, *MiTan Studio*, *Paiges Piercings*, *John James Clothing* and *Little Things*.

##### **UK Retail Overview 2018**

The fabric of the UK's high streets fundamentally changed in 2018. Well established household names such as *Toys r Us*, *Maplin*, *Poundworld*, *The Original Factor Shop* and even *House of Fraser* have either disappeared or fallen into administration. This has left gaps in many prime town and city centre locations and seen nervous retailers dramatically reducing the number of stores within their property portfolio. Smaller town centres have been particularly hard hit with the likes of *Dorothy Perkins*, *New Look* and *Carpetright* all closing stores in prominent town centre locations. There is no single reason for the current downturn on the high street, rather it is a case of a number of different factors combining together. These include a squeeze on household budgets, the continued shift to experiential and online shopping, rising household overheads and an over capacity in many retail sectors. During 2018 more high street banks were lost and this is expected to continue in 2019 with banks realigning their service into a district centre model which locally means directing customers to Blackwood and Caerphilly.

<b>Bargoed Business Comparison</b>			
	2018	2017	LFL Comparison
Businesses Opened	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3 more businesses opened</b>
Businesses Closed	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2 more businesses closed</b>

### Footfall Figures

2018

Q1	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 01	Mon 1-Jan-2018	8,344	8,344
Week 02	Mon 8-Jan-2018	9,524	17,868
Week 03	Mon 15-Jan-2018	8,780	26,648
Week 04	Mon 22-Jan-2018	9,342	35,990
Week 05	Mon 29-Jan-2018	9,678	45,668
Week 06	Mon 5-Feb-2018	9,017	54,685
Week 07	Mon 12-Feb-2018	9,985	64,670
Week 08	Mon 19-Feb-2018	11,129	75,799

Q2	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 14	Mon 2-Apr-2018	10,889	136,433
Week 15	Mon 9-Apr-2018	10,941	147,374
Week 16	Mon 16-Apr-2018	10,842	158,216
Week 17	Mon 23-Apr-2018	9,948	168,164
Week 18	Mon 30-Apr-2018	11,178	179,342
Week 19	Mon 7-May-2018	9,713	189,055
Week 20	Mon 14-May-2018	11,206	200,261
Week 21	Mon 21-May-2018	10,693	210,954

Week 09	Mon 26-Feb-2018	7,430	83,229
Week 10	Mon 5-Mar-2018	12,198	95,427
Week 11	Mon 12-Mar-2018	9,977	105,404
Week 12	Mon 19-Mar-2018	10,464	115,868
Week 13	Mon 26-Mar-2018	9,676	125,544

Quarter 125,544

Week 22	Mon 28-May-2018	10,788	221,742
Week 23	Mon 4-Jun-2018	11,005	232,747
Week 24	Mon 11-Jun-2018	10,850	243,597
Week 25	Mon 18-Jun-2018	11,274	254,871
Week 26	Mon 25-Jun-2018	11,399	266,270

Quarter 140,726

Q3	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 27	Mon 2-Jul-2018	11,553	277,823
Week 28	Mon 9-Jul-2018	11,011	288,834
Week 29	Mon 16-Jul-2018	11,038	299,872
Week 30	Mon 23-Jul-2018	10,898	310,770
Week 31	Mon 30-Jul-2018	11,439	322,209
Week 32	Mon 6-Aug-2018	10,202	332,411
Week 33	Mon 13-Aug-2018	10,564	342,975
Week 34	Mon 20-Aug-2018	11,614	354,589
Week 35	Mon 27-Aug-2018	12,146	366,735
Week 36	Mon 3-Sep-2018	10,677	377,412
Week 37	Mon 10-Sep-2018	10,207	387,619
Week 38	Mon 17-Sep-2018	8,418	396,037
Week 39	Mon 24-Sep-2018	10,300	406,337

Quarter 140,067

Q4	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 40	Mon 1-Oct-2018	10,030	416,367
Week 41	Mon 8-Oct-2018	8,451	424,818
Week 42	Mon 15-Oct-2018	10,029	434,847
Week 43	Mon 21-Oct-2019	9,771	444,618
Week 44	Mon 28-Oct-2019	9,485	454,103
Week 45	Mon 4-Nov-2019	11,524	465,627
Week 46	Mon 11-Nov-2019	9,244	474,871
Week 47	Mon 18-Nov-2019	10,763	485,634
Week 48	Mon 25-Nov-2019	7,351	492,985
Week 49	Mon 2-Dec-2019	8,284	501,269
Week 50	Mon 9-Dec-2019	9,423	510,692
Week 51	Mon 16-Dec-2019	9,781	520,473
Week 52	Mon 23-Dec-2019	7,091	527,564

Quarter 121,227

Author: Andrew Highway – Town Centre Development Manager  
Allan Dallimore – Team Leader Urban Renewal  
Clive Campbell - Transportation Engineering Manager  
Councillor S Morgan – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability