



## **RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 16TH APRIL 2019**

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

**REPORT BY: TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

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### **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 (£74,000).

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), Newline, 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. 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.

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### 3. S106 MONIES – VERBAL UPDATE

### 4. PLASTIC FREE TOWNS

There is a growing global movement to reduce the amount of plastics which are used, with a particular focus on preventing millions of plastic bottles from entering our rivers and seas. In response, many UK towns are taking positive steps to cut the amount of plastics which businesses use and actively supporting the water bottle Refill Scheme. Town Centre Management is engaging with local retailers to encourage them to participate in the Refill Scheme. Participating businesses agree to refill a reusable water bottle for free and are given a blue Refill sticker to put in their window and included on the Refill App so people can find them. To support this and other elements of Plastics Free Towns a special version of the successful 'Choose the High Street' logo has been designed.

### 5. RISCA OVERVIEW 2018

The focus of Risca town centre continues to shift towards core service provision which was reflected in the new businesses which opened during 2018. These included: *Gypsy Jane Tattoo Studio, Tango Creations Studio & Boutique, Chocolate Dragon* and *Risca Properties*. In spite of a very tough trading environment Risca still attracted a new clothing business *El Unico* which opened in Commercial Street. Although the town has a few vacant properties the market in the core town street is fluid with a number of vacant units let during the year including the former *HSBC* bank which was taken over by *Risca Chiropractic*. However, the primary concern going into 2019 remains the retention of *Barclays* the town's last remaining bank.

<b>Risca Business Comparison</b>			
	2018	2017	LFL Comparison
Businesses Opened	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0 more businesses opened</b>
Businesses Closed	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4 more businesses closed</b>

### 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

## Footfall Figures

2018

Q1	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 01	Mon 1-Jan-2018	5,944	5,944
Week 02	Mon 8-Jan-2018	7,806	13,750
Week 03	Mon 15-Jan-2018	7,108	20,858
Week 04	Mon 22-Jan-2018	7,154	28,012
Week 05	Mon 29-Jan-2018	7,704	35,716
Week 06	Mon 5-Feb-2018	7,377	43,093
Week 07	Mon 12-Feb-2018	7,644	50,737
Week 08	Mon 19-Feb-2018	7,869	58,606
Week 09	Mon 26-Feb-2018	7,735	66,341
Week 10	Mon 5-Mar-2018	8,338	74,679
Week 11	Mon 12-Mar-2018	7,939	82,618
Week 12	Mon 19-Mar-2018	8,033	90,651
Week 13	Mon 26-Mar-2018	7,507	98,158

Quarter 98,158

Q2	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 14	Mon 2-Apr-2018	7,434	105,592
Week 15	Mon 9-Apr-2018	7,712	113,304
Week 16	Mon 16-Apr-2018	8,771	122,075
Week 17	Mon 23-Apr-2018	7,256	129,331
Week 18	Mon 30-Apr-2018	8,929	138,260
Week 19	Mon 7-May-2018	7,609	145,869
Week 20	Mon 14-May-2018	9,110	154,979
Week 21	Mon 21-May-2018	8,370	163,349
Week 22	Mon 28-May-2018	8,294	171,643
Week 23	Mon 4-Jun-2018	8,462	180,105
Week 24	Mon 11-Jun-2018	8,377	188,482
Week 25	Mon 18-Jun-2018	8,380	196,862
Week 26	Mon 25-Jun-2018	8,570	205,432

Quarter 107,274

Q3	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 27	Mon 2-Jul-2018	8,786	214,218
Week 28	Mon 9-Jul-2018	8,524	222,742
Week 29	Mon 16-Jul-2018	8,564	231,306
Week 30	Mon 23-Jul-2018	7,819	239,125
Week 31	Mon 30-Jul-2018	8,364	247,489
Week 32	Mon 6-Aug-2018	7,617	255,106
Week 33	Mon 13-Aug-2018	7,781	262,887
Week 34	Mon 20-Aug-2018	7,838	270,725
Week 35	Mon 27-Aug-2018	7,897	278,622

Q4	Commencing	Week Total	Year Total
Week 40	Mon 1-Oct-2018	8,073	318,173
Week 41	Mon 8-Oct-2018	7,620	325,793
Week 42	Mon 15-Oct-2018	8,373	334,166
Week 43	Mon 21-Oct-2019	8,090	342,256
Week 44	Mon 28-Oct-2019	7,502	349,758
Week 45	Mon 4-Nov-2019	7,662	357,420
Week 46	Mon 11-Nov-2019	8,168	365,588
Week 47	Mon 18-Nov-2019	7,374	372,962
Week 48	Mon 25-Nov-2019	7,194	380,156

<b>Week 36</b>	<b>Mon 3-Sep-2018</b>	8,531	287,153
<b>Week 37</b>	<b>Mon 10-Sep-2018</b>	7,557	294,710
<b>Week 38</b>	<b>Mon 17-Sep-2018</b>	6,751	301,461
<b>Week 39</b>	<b>Mon 24-Sep-2018</b>	8,639	310,100

Quarter 104,668

<b>Week 49</b>	<b>Mon 2-Dec-2019</b>	7,717	387,873
<b>Week 50</b>	<b>Mon 9-Dec-2019</b>	8,133	396,006
<b>Week 51</b>	<b>Mon 16-Dec-2019</b>	8,862	404,868
<b>Week 52</b>	<b>Mon 23-Dec-2019</b>	5,047	409,915

Quarter 99,815

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