



TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE BARGOED TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY 7TH NOVEMBER 2018 AT 4:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

C Andrews, A Collis, D T Davies, A Higgs, S Morgan

Together with:

Community Councillors V Stephens, H Llewellyn, Inspector O'Keefe (Gwent Police)

Also:

A Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), C Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), S Wolf-Williams (Health Challenge Wales Co-ordinator), T Evans (Policy Officer), A. Jones (Clerk)

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Mr Highway opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Chair. Councillor Morgan nominated Councillor D T Davies. Councillors voted and the vote was 4 in favour 0 against. Councillor Davies accepted the position of Chair.

Councillor D T Davies asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Councillor Morgan nominated Councillor Collis, Councillors voted and the vote was 4 in favour 0 against. Councillor Collis accepted the position.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Harding, D Price, R Kyte (Head of Regeneration & Planning), P Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 14TH MARCH 2018

The Chair wished to congratulate the Town Council on the excellent firework display which was well organised and a great success without any issues.

The minutes were taken as read.

5. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO TOWN

Mr Highway introduced the report which provided an update on matters relating to Bargoed town centre.

The first item to be presented was Civil Parking. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Mr Campbell introduced himself to the group and presented a detailed report on Civil Parking.

The group were advised that the Council will be taking over parking enforcement from Gwent Police on the 8th April 2019.

Councillor Collis expressed concern about there being no enforcement for the months up until the Council takes up the role

Mr Campbell advised that these concerns have been raised with the Chief Constable & Police Commissioner and they will have further discussions to renegotiate possibly extending the deadline.

Mr Campbell confirmed that enforcement will be primarily focused on the town centres, schools and then other areas. The group were informed that there will be 10 Civil Parking Enforcement Officers who will cover the whole of the Borough on a rota which has not been developed yet. Therefore, there is no guarantee that an officer will be in a particular area on a daily basis as the whole Borough needs to be covered.

Councillor Morgan reiterated what Mr Campbell had advised and assured the group that the officers will enforce parking in the town centres and across the County Borough.

The group discussed dangerous parking within the town centre and clarified what the Council will be able to enforce and what the Police will still need to enforce.

Inspector O'Keefe advised that at present enforcement is difficult, particularly where lines are not complete, once the signage has been checked and upgraded where necessary enforcement will prove to be much easier for officers. The Inspector advised the group to report any offences that the Police will still have responsibility for directly to the Police.

Councillor Stephens raised the issue of charging for residents permits and highlighted how in some areas there are more houses than parking spaces available.

Mr Campbell advised that the resident's parking is on a 'first come' basis and he could not advise motorists/residents where to park. The group were told that none of the restrictions will be changed, but in the future there may be an opportunity to review the Traffic Regulation Orders after the Council begins enforcement action.

The Chair thanked Mr Campbell for his report.

The second item to be presented was Electric Vehicle Charging. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms Evans introduced herself to the group and presented her report.

The group discussed the introduction of Electric Vehicle Charging points within the car parks in Bargoed.

Councillor Llewellyn expressed his concerns about the introduction of electric vehicles and how this would result in job losses across the car industry.

The Chair requested that Ms Jones note the concerns raised and thanked Councillor Llewellyn for his contribution.

Mr Dallimore pointed out to that the PowerPoint contained a reference to funding and advised that the Council can submit a bid for regional funding from Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Ms Evans for her update.

The third item to be presented was Local Toilet Strategy. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms S Wolf-Williams introduced herself to the group and presented her report. The group were advised that the Council has a statutory duty under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 to prepare and publish a local toilet strategy.

The group discussed the report in detail and expressed their concerns over the proposed closure of the toilets in town centres under the medium term financial plan. The group were advised by Ms S Wolf-Williams that all Council owned buildings would be making their toilets accessible to the public and were told that a draft strategy report would be going out for consultation shortly (ending 8th of March 2019).

Ms Wolf-Williams urged members of the group to view the draft strategy report and to provide comments and feedback.

The Chair thanked Ms Wolf-Williams.

The fourth item to be presented was Lowry Plaza Shops. Mr Dallimore advised the group that Units 3 and 4 are now operational with the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) taking residency. DWP now employ 30 plus staff from these offices which has led to a rise in footfall in the area around Lowry Plaza.

The DWP fit-out was carried out by Shaylor Group contractors over a 6 month period.

Units 1 and 2 - once Poundworld went into administration a frozen food retailer identified 19 former Poundworld stores as potential new stores, Bargoed being one of them.

The retailer has requested that the Poundworld lease be assigned to them and are working with the Council's solicitors to agree this and obtain senior landlords consent

The retailer has submitted their fit out drawings prior to senior landlords approval. To accommodate the retailer, additional plant machinery will need to be sited on the roof and planning consent obtained for a new shop front.

Unit 6a is still empty and the Council will be looking for the retail agents and its in-house property surveyor to market this once Units 1 & 2 are occupied.

The fifth item to be presented was street scene changes. Mr Dallimore advised that the failure of the channel blocks is evident throughout the town centre. NCS are reacting to failures when they occur, but this has led to a patchwork of tarmacadam infills.

These failures have also affected the metal 'Arco' grill drain covers which now rattle in several parts of the town. In trying to establish responsibility for this failure the Council have examined design and the construction materials used. The design has been investigated by the Council's Engineering Structures (EPG) section and found to be sound. Contractors have recently taken core samples of the bedding concrete/cement mix and had it tested to establish if it is as per the specification drawings. The results indicate that the bedding material of several samples was not up to strength.

The Council's legal section have been asked to check the contract documents to establish if the Council can make a claim against the contractor who installed the channel blocks.

Mr Dallimore informed the group that following a walk through the town attended by the Cabinet member, the AM's representative, local members, the Town Council, and officers of the Council. It was agreed that the Council would explore re-introducing car parking bays.

The Council's EPG team have produced a report with a number of options for retro fitting additional car parking spaces into the street scene through the town centre. These have been costed in the report and officers and the Cabinet member are currently trying to establish funding to take these forward. In addition the costs of taking out the granite channel blocks and replacing with tarmac has been investigated and costed. Councillor Morgan confirmed plans have been drawn up and he is looking to see how this is to be funded including the issues with granite blocks.

The Chair thanked Mr Dallimore and Councillor Morgan.

The sixth item to be presented was Retail Plateau residual lands. Mr Dallimore advised that he had previously reported to the group that officers from the Council have entered into a dialogue with a pub/restaurant chain that are looking at opportunities to expand their business interest at suitable locations. The Companies Managing Director has given approval for them to pursue the site purchase.

Heads of Terms have been presented to the Council including an initial purchase figure. These have formed the basis of a Cabinet report seeking approval to negotiate solely with this company over the sale of the site to them.

As reported to the group in March, this Cabinet report was approved on 31st January and officers have been in regular dialogue with the company over the sales terms.

The pub restaurant company have spent the last few months undertaking their due diligence, site investigation and ecology surveys and have put together a detailed design. This design has been the basis of pre application discussions with the council. As the land was formed using Welsh Government (WG) Land Reclamation Grant, WG have clawback on the site. At present the pub restaurant company have reduced their original offer based on a number of adnormals they have found through their site investigations and design. WG's land surveyors have been asked to agree to this reduction.

The pub/restaurant chain has opened a dialogue with Bargoed Estates over the use of space in the Morrison's car park. Legally the council have secured the right for the developers of the land to use the car park and this legal document now needs to be used as the basis of an agreement between Bargoed Estates and the pub/restaurant chain.

Councillor Llewellyn asked how much the claw back was. Mr Dallimore confirmed that circa 80% of capital receipts will go back to WG.

The Seventh item to be presented was High Street Heroes.

Mr Highway advised the group that Mr Wilcox has moved on to a new post with Business Support and would like to record thanks for his work in Town Centre Management.

Mr Highway advised that the voucher booklet will not be offered this year and introduced his presentation on High Street Heroes and explained how this will help to support retailers on the High Street.

In respect of Business Rates, Mr Highway confirmed that he has met with the retailers in Blackwood town centre together with Councillor Morgan and the local AM's representative. Following this meeting Councillor Morgan has written to the Cabinet Secretary expressing his concern over business rates on behalf of retailers

The group were also advised that the Leader of the Council has supported a reduction in business rates for small businesses and sent a letter to Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Mr Highway.

6. BARGOED TOWN CENTRE AUDIT

Mr Highway presented the report and the following items were raised.

Insecure carriageway grills. Mr Dallimore confirmed that he will take this up with the contractor to see how defects can be fixed and determine who will be responsible.

Cleansing Issues at Bargoed bus station. Mr Highway confirmed power washing has been added to the works programme.

Anti-social behaviour Morrison's. Mr Highway has met with the Police and store manager and agreed an 11 point plan on how to prevent the anti-social behaviour including closing barrier, turning the lights off, Police patrols and recruiting a security guard.

Inspector O'Keefe confirmed that the Police have offered Morrison's staff training.

The Chair thanked officers and Inspector O'Keefe.

The group discussed the damage to figurines and understood that 4 individuals have been identified and have accepted responsibility for the damage. The group expressed the anger in the town and understood that the identification of the individuals would be best kept anonymous.

The Chair thanked officers and police.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed at 17:30

CHAIR



TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2018 AT 2:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

T. Williams, K. Etheridge, N. Dix, A. Farina-Childs, S. Morgan

Together with:

Mr J Hold (Blackwood Town Council Clerk), Mr H Edwards (Chamber of trade), Mr L Pask (Pontllanfraith & District Local History Society), Mr John Steven (FCFM)

Also:

A Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), D Smith (Principal Engineer), S Wolf-Williams (Health Challenge Wales Co-ordinator), T Evans (Policy Officer), A. Jones (Clerk)

1. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO BLACKWOOD TOWN – BLACKWOOD MARKET PLACE SHOPPING CENTRE

With the approval of the Town Centre Management Group it was agreed that this item on the agenda be brought forward. Mr Highway introduced Mr Stevens to the group. Mr Highway advised the group that Mr Stevens had been invited to provide an update on the Artisan Market which will be subject to a future Planning Application.

Councillor Morgan reminded members of the group that if they wanted to declare an interest they should leave the meeting.

Mr Highway and Mr Dallimore both declared an interest and left the meeting.

Mr Stevens introduced himself to the group and provided a presentation on the proposed plans for the Artisan Market which was also included in the agenda pack and advised the group that this would be subject to planning consent being granted by the Council.

The group discussed the proposals and Mr Stevens answered questions.

Councillor Morgan thanked Mr Stevens.

2. TO APPOINT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Mr Highway opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Chair. Councillor Dix nominated Councillor Williams. Councillors voted and the vote was 3 in favour 1 against. Councillor Williams accepted the position of Chair.

Councillor Williams asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Councillor Dix nominated Councillor Farina-Childs, Councillors voted and the vote was 3 in favour 1 against. Councillor Farina-Childs accepted the position.

3. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D T Davies, Mr D Davies (Moose Fraternity), R Kyte (Head of Regeneration & Planning), P Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager), C Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made other than those at the beginning there were no further declarations during the course of the meeting.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 20TH MARCH 2018

The minutes were taken as read.

6. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO TOWN

Mr Highway introduced the report which provided an update on matters relating to Blackwood town centre.

The first item to be presented was Civil Parking. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Mr Smith introduced himself to the group and presented a detailed report on Civil Parking.

The group were advised that the Council will be taking over parking enforcement from Gwent Police on the 8th April 2019.

Councillors expressed concern about there being no enforcement for the months up until the Council takes up the role.

Mr Smith advised that these concerns have been raised with the Chief Constable & Police Commissioner and they will have further discussions to renegotiate possibly extending the deadline.

Councillor Dix asked if there would be an officer in the town every day.

Mr Smith confirmed that enforcement will be primarily focused on the town centres, schools and then other areas. The group were informed that there will be 10 Civil Parking Enforcement Officers who will cover the whole of the Borough on a rota which has not been developed yet. Therefore, there is no guarantee that an officer will be in a particular area on a daily basis as the whole Borough needs to be covered.

Councillor Morgan reiterated what Mr Smith had advised and assured the group that the officers will enforce parking in the town centres and across the County Borough.

The group discussed dangerous parking within the town centre and clarified what the Council will be able to enforce and what the Police will still need to enforce.

The Chair thanked Mr Smith for his report.

The second item to be presented was Local Toilet Strategy. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms S Wolf-Williams introduced herself to the group and presented her report. The group were advised that the Council has a statutory duty under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 to prepare and publish a local toilet strategy.

The group discussed the report in detail and expressed their concerns over the proposed closure of the toilets in town centres under the medium term financial plan. The group were advised by Ms S Wolf-Williams that all Council owned buildings would be making their toilets accessible to the public and were told that a draft strategy report would be going out for consultation shortly (ending 8th of March 2019).

Ms Wolf-Williams urged members of the group to view the draft strategy report and to provide comments and feedback.

The Chair thanked Ms Wolf-Williams.

The third item to be presented was Electric Vehicle Charging. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms Evans introduced herself to the group and presented her report.

The group discussed the introduction of Electric Vehicle Charging points within the car parks in Blackwood.

Mr Dallimore pointed out to that the PowerPoint contained a reference to funding and advised that the Council can submit a bid for regional funding from Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Ms Evans for her update.

The fourth item to be presented was Bicentenary Event.

Mr Pask had provided a written update and this was circulated to the group with the agenda pack.

Mr Pask briefed the group on his background within the Pontllanfraith & District Local History Society. The group discussed the objectives and the current position. Mr Pask advised that he has been trying to gather interest from a number of groups including schools to embrace the history of Blackwood Town particularly the Chartist movement.

Councillor Etheridge requested that Councillor Morgan and Allan Dallimore speak with tourism to drive the project forward.

Councillor Morgan said he would be happy to support this and Mr Dallimore confirmed that he would speak with communications and Paul Hudson.

Mr Pask advised that a number of people would like to get involved but at this time there are no firm plans in place. Mr Hold confirmed that the Town Council will be meeting in the New Year and he will raise it at the meeting.

Mr Dallimore asked Mr Hold to communicate with Granville Hague who was also working to commemorate the bicentenary of the town.

Mr Hold advised that the event will be either Jun or July 2020 but will confirm as soon as possible. The group were in support of the event.

The Chair thanked Mr Pask.

The Fifth item to be presented was High Street Heroes.

Mr Highway advised the group that Mr Wilcox has moved on to a new post with Business Support and would like to record thanks for his work in Town Centre Management.

Mr Highway advised that the voucher booklet will not be offered this year due to resources constraints and introduced his presentation on High Street Heroes and explained how this will help to support retailers on the High Street.

Mr Highway advised the group that retailers are nominated by the public and was pleased to confirm that Tidal Stores will be awarded their certificate today.

Councillors congratulated Mr Edwards on receiving the nomination.

In respect of Business Rates, Mr Highway confirmed that he has met with the retailers in Blackwood town centre together with Councillor Morgan and the local AM's representative. Following this meeting Councillor Morgan has written to the Cabinet Secretary at Welsh Government expressing his concern over business rates on behalf of retailers

The group were also advised that the Leader of the Council has supported a reduction in business rates for small businesses and sent a letter to Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Mr Highway.

7. BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE AUDIT

Mr Highway presented the report and the following items were raised.

Poundstretcher site – The group were advised that the site has been marketed as a clean site for full redevelopment.

Red Lion site – The demolition is complete, there were issues with drainage which have been resolved therefore works will restart soon.

Street name plate at Gravel Lane – The name plate has now been installed.

Travelling circus posters – It has been requested that these are removed.

Preachers Bar – Mr Highway confirmed that suitable advice has been given to the owners.

Artwork maintenance – Mr Dallimore confirmed that he has instructed Parks to clean areas and the stolen artwork is to be replaced. There will be periodic checking of the site.

Councillor Etheridge thanked Mr Highway for relocating the benches by ASDA.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed at 13:42

CHAIR



TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 27TH NOVEMBER 2018 AT 3:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

P. Bevan, S. Cook, C. Elsbury, J. Fussell, S. Morgan

Together with:

Town Councillors: L Williams, J. Hibbert, Mrs M Jones (Castle Court Centre Manager), Mr Tidridge (Heol Trecastell Residents Association)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), C Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), D Smith (Principal Engineer), S Wolf-Williams (Health Challenge Wales Co-ordinator), T Evans (Policy Officer), M Godfrey (Team Leader – Environmental Health), P Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager), A. Jones (Clerk)

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Mr Highway opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Chair. Councillor Bevan nominated Councillor Elsbury. Councillors voted and the vote was 4 in favour 0 against. Councillor Elsbury accepted the position of Chair.

Councillor Elsbury asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Councillor Cook & Councillor Fussell were nominated, Councillors voted and the vote was 2 in favour of Councillor Fussell and 1 in favour of Councillor Cook. Councillor Fussell accepted the position.

3. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D T Davies, C Forehead, B Jones, Mr K Robottom (Caerphilly Residents Association, Mr T Jones (Tommy Cooper Society, R Kyte (Head of Regeneration & Planning), P Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager), M Godfrey (Team Leader – Environmental Health)

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 6TH MARCH 2018

The minutes were taken as read.

6. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO TOWN

Mr Highway introduced the report which provided an update on matters relating to Caerphilly town centre.

The first item to be presented was Civil Parking. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Mr Campbell & Mr Smith introduced themselves to the group and presented a detailed report on Civil Parking.

The group were advised that the Council will be taking over parking enforcement from Gwent Police on the 8th April 2019.

Councillors expressed concern about there being no enforcement for the months up until the Council takes up the role.

Mr Smith advised that these concerns have been raised with the Chief Constable & Police Commissioner and they will have further discussions to renegotiate possibly extending the deadline.

Councillor Bevan asked how often would the officers be in town enforcing.

Mr Campbell confirmed that enforcement will be primarily focused on the town centres, schools and then other areas. The group were informed that there will be 10 Civil Parking Enforcement Officers who will cover the whole of the Borough on a rota which has not been developed yet. Therefore, there is no guarantee that an officer will be in a particular area on a daily basis as the whole Borough needs to be covered.

Councillor Morgan reiterated what Mr Campbell had advised and assured the group that the officers will enforce parking in the town centres and across the County Borough.

Mr Tidridge raised concerns over parking in Heol Trecastell and asked if this area would also be enforced.

Mr Smith advised that it would depend on the ownership of an area as to whether or not it is enforceable. Mr Campbell advised that it would be up to the relevant service area to enforce if land is not on the highway.

The group discussed dangerous parking within the town centre and clarified what the Council will be able to enforce and what the Police will still need to enforce.

The Chair thanked Mr Campbell & Mr Smith for their report.

Mr Highway requested that item seven be discussed next which the group agreed. Councillor Morgan confirmed that Cadw study has not been formalised yet and there are a number of items that still need to be considered in detail by Cadw including upgraded signage, coach parking, greater integration between the castle and town centre, better connections with the local community, upgraded the catering offer, summer concerts, offering a premium wedding product and working on the potential to make greater use of the moat. .

Mr Hudson advised that further discussions are to take place with the Minister in Welsh Government. Infrastructure needs to be looked at with Cadw in respect of staging events such as the ice rink.

Mr Hudson confirmed that he welcomes the opportunity to renew the focus on the town and is looking at the event programme in conjunction with Cadw.

Mr Dallimore confirmed there are two meetings planned in December with Cadw to discuss the ARAD study.

Councillor Elsbury asked when the report would be available. Mr Dallimore confirmed that after the meeting further information would be brought back to the group.

The group discussed options of additional entrances and exits to and from the castle.

The group discussed the success of the Christmas lights switch on event on Friday and thanks were passed to Ms Jones the Castle Court Centre Manager, the craft fair organiser, retailers and Council officers.

The third item to be presented was Local Toilet Strategy. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms S Wolf-Williams introduced herself to the group and presented her report. The group were advised that the Council has a statutory duty under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 to prepare and publish a local toilet strategy.

The group discussed the report in detail and expressed their concerns over the proposed closure of the toilets in town centres under the medium term financial plan. The group were advised by Ms S Wolf-Williams that all Council owned buildings would be making their toilets accessible to the public and were told that a draft strategy report would be going out for consultation shortly (ending 8th of March 2019).

The group discussed how the Tourist Information Centre has taken on the toilets at The Twyn.

Ms Wolf-Williams urged members of the group to view the draft strategy report and to provide comments and feedback.

The Chair thanked Ms Wolf-Williams.

The fourth item to be presented was Electric Vehicle Charging. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms Evans introduced herself to the group and presented her report.

The group discussed the introduction of Electric Vehicle Charging points within the car parks in Caerphilly.

Ms Jones suggested that this would be an idea worth exploring in Morrison's car park

Mr Dallimore pointed out to that the PowerPoint contained a reference to funding and advised that the Council can submit a bid for regional funding from Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Ms Evans for her update.

The fifth item to be presented was Air Quality. Mr Highway passed on apologies from Ms Godfrey and read out the update in the report and requested if there were any queries to contact Ms Godfrey direct.

The sixth item to be presented was Area Forum Budget. Mr Highway advised that the group had previously agreed that £3,500 could be used for the Working Men's Club and has not been used. The group were asked to agree that the monies be reallocated to fund the appointment of a Conservation Architect as part of a wider heritage Lottery Fund bid.

The motion was put to the group and the members voted there 6 in favour and 1 against.

It was agreed to reallocate the monies.

Mr Highway asked members to consider allocating the sum of £4,222 which remains in the Area Forum Budget as a contribution towards a new piece of artwork to commemorate Evan Williams, which will be commissioned by Caerphilly Town Council.

The Chair confirmed that the Town Council is working with officers and the proposed artwork is to be a representation of the National Anthem.

The motion was put to the group and the members voted there were 7 in favour and 0 against.

. The Chair requested that thanks be passed to Mr Llewellyn from the Urban Renewal team for his valuable work guiding the Town Council through the process of commissioning the artwork installation.

Councillor Fussell confirmed that the Town Council will be meeting in January and will be looking to consolidate the monies for the artwork.

The Seventh item to be presented was Strategic project. Mr Dallimore informed the group the 'Caerphilly Masterplan' identified the town as a hub for Welsh Government funding over the next three years.

Funding has already been approved in principal for new offices/businesses at Caerphilly Business Park. A sum of £3 million, which includes £1.8 million from Welsh Government, has been secured.

Caerphilly bus station/train station is being targeted for redevelopment and consultants have worked up some viability proposals which have been met with broad support within Welsh Government.

A developer is currently exploring options in respect of a Park Lane hotel project and is in early discussions with Visit Wales. The developer is currently looking into to take control of the site for an initial period of 12 mths to undertake the initial investigations and due diligence to inform their design principals.

Link Housing Association have targeted Pentrebanne Street for a regeneration project consisting of flats with some commercial premises on ground floor. The freeholders are at present in dialogue with Welsh Government.

The Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRI) aims to bring properties back into a beneficial use. The Council is working regionally to deliver this programme which is led by Rhondda Cynon Taff.

The group were advised the Council is working closely with Cadw to ensure synergy with their plans.

The eighth item to be presented was High Street Heroes.

Mr Highway advised the group that Mr Wilcox has moved on to a new post with Business Support and would like to record thanks for his work in Town Centre Management.

Mr Highway advised that the Voucher Booklet will not be offered this year due to resource constraints and introduced his presentation on 'High Street Heroes' He explained how this will help to support retailers on the High Street.

Mr Highway advised the group that retailers are nominated by the public and was pleased to confirm that Holland & Barret and The Works have already been nominated which has been extremely well received by the national retailers.

Councillors congratulated both stores on receiving the nomination.

In respect of Business Rates, Mr Highway confirmed that he has met with the retailers in Blackwood town centre together with Councillor Morgan and the local AM's representative. Following this meeting Councillor Morgan has written to the Cabinet Secretary at Welsh Government expressing his concern over business rates on behalf of retailers

The group were also advised that the Leader of the Council has supported a reduction in business rates for small businesses and sent a letter to Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Mr Highway.

7. CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE AUDIT

Mr Highway presented the report and the following items were raised.

Cleansing of steps. Councillor Elsbury advised that the area is flooded and not clearing. Mr Dallimore confirmed he will arrange for Gavin Barry to visit the area.

Street lighting column failure Cardiff Road. Mr Highway confirmed two new lighting columns were on order

Condition of vacant land opposite Vets for Pets. Mr Highway is liaising with colleagues in Planning Enforcement regarding the condition of the land.

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed at 16:32

CHAIR



TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE RISCA TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2018 AT 2:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

N George, P Leonard, B Owen, R Whiting, S Morgan

Together with:

Community Councillors H Dupree

Also:

A Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), C Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), S Wolf-Williams (Health Challenge Wales Co-ordinator), T Evans (Policy Officer), A. Jones (Clerk)

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Mr Highway opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Chair. Councillor Morgan nominated Councillor R Whiting. Councillors voted and the vote was 3 in favour 0 against. Councillor Whiting accepted the position of Chair and took over the meeting

Councillor Whiting asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Councillor Morgan nominated Councillor N George, Councillors voted and the vote was 3 in favour 0 against. Councillor George accepted the position.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Leonard, Community Councillors B Hancock, J Parsons, Mr Campbell (Clerk Risca Town Council) R Kyte (Head of Regeneration & Planning), P Hudson (Marketing & Events Manager).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 14TH MARCH 2018

Councillor Owen wished to explain that in relation to comments on banners that he felt that the name Risca Town should be on the banners.

Mr Highway advised that there were banners with 'Risca' on them with the 'Discover More' branding, but when they were displayed there were complaints from individuals in Pontymister as they reference the name of Risca.

The Group were advised that comments will be taken on board, however there will be less banner changes next year.

Mr Dallimore advised that on page 2 paragraph 7 mentions using the former caretakers building at Brooklands. He advised the group that this building is still being used so the town Council would not be able to use it.

The minutes were taken as read.

5. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO TOWN

Mr Highway introduced the report which provided an update on matters relating to Risca town centre.

The first item to be presented was Civil Parking. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Mr Smith introduced himself to the group and presented a detailed report on Civil Parking.

The group were advised that the Council will be taking over parking enforcement from Gwent Police on the 8th April 2019.

Councillors expressed concern about there being no enforcement for the months up until the Council takes up the role

Mr Smith advised that these concerns have been raised with the Chief Constable & Police Commissioner and they will have further discussions to renegotiate possibly extending the deadline.

Mr Smith confirmed that enforcement will be primarily focused on the town centres, schools and then other areas. The group were informed that there will be 10 Civil Parking Enforcement Officers who will cover the whole of the Borough on a rota which has not been developed yet. Therefore, there is no guarantee that an officer will be in a particular area on a daily basis as the whole Borough needs to be covered.

Councillor Morgan reiterated what Mr Smith had advised and assured the group that the officers will enforce parking in the town centres and across the County Borough.

The group discussed dangerous parking within the town centre and clarified what the Council will be able to enforce and what the Police will still need to enforce.

The Chair thanked Mr Smith for his report.

The second item to be presented was Local Toilet Strategy. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms S Wolf-Williams introduced herself to the group and presented her report. The group were advised that the Council has a statutory duty under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 to prepare and publish a local toilet strategy.

The group discussed the report in detail and expressed their concerns over the proposed closure of the toilets in town centres under the medium term financial plan. The group were advised by Ms S Wolf-Williams that all Council owned buildings would be making their toilets accessible to the public and were told that a draft strategy report would be going out for consultation shortly (ending 8th of March 2019).

Ms Wolf-Williams urged members of the group to view the draft strategy report and to provide comments and feedback.

The Chair thanked Ms Wolf-Williams.

The third item to be presented was Electric Vehicle Charging. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms Evans introduced herself to the group and presented her report.

The group discussed the introduction of Electric Vehicle Charging points within the car parks in Bargoed.

Mr Dallimore pointed out to that the PowerPoint contained a reference to funding and advised that the Council can submit a bid for regional funding from Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Ms Evans for her update.

The fourth item to be presented was Cwmcarn Update. Mr Highway presented the report to the group in the officers absence.

Mr Dallimore confirmed that the money is available and the key projects such as the glamping accommodation are designed to improve the experience and encourage people to stay longer, more family facilities such as play area & more parking areas are also been considered.

The group were advised that there has been a delay in works to re open Forest Drive due to fire damage. NRW are hoping to re-open the Forest Drive by Spring 2020.

The group discussed sculptures and whether they are to be reinstated. Mr Hudson advised that this would be up to NRW to determine.

Councillor Owen advised that there are 3 pods in the Crosskeys area which have opened up and the owners are working hard to bring tourists into the town and also looking at possibly opening a hotel.

The group recognised the advantages of Risca being close to the M4 and forming potential linking with hotels outside of the town.

The fifth item to be presented was S106 Monies. Mr Dallimore confirmed that the Cabinet decision is that the buildings at Brooklands are to be demolished. The project has been passed to the Councils Building Consultancy and will go through the tender process.

Councillor Owen asked for clarification on the order of demolition. Mr Dallimore advised that he was not sure but it would depend on further discussions with Building Consultancy colleagues.

The sixth item to be presented was Cuckoo statue. Mr Dallimore advised the group that the relocation of the cuckoo statue is subject to there being monies left over. A possible site by the embankment & rugby pitch was suggested and Mr Dallimore confirmed he would visit the location.

Mr Highway advised that issue with signage by the artwork / Tesco has been referred to Planning Enforcement who will be monitoring the area, he requested that if any new notices go up Cllrs are let him know.

The Chair thanked Mr Dallimore

The seventh item to be presented was High Street Heroes.

Mr Highway advised the group that Mr Wilcox has moved on to a new post with Business Support and would like to record thanks for his work in Town Centre Management.

Mr Highway advised that the voucher booklet will not be offered this year and introduced his presentation on High Street Heroes and explained how this will help to support retailers on the High Street.

Mr Highway informed the group that Dance Fusion Play Centre at the north end of town was nominated and received their certificate.

In respect of Business Rates, Mr Highway confirmed that he has met with the retailers in Blackwood town centre together with Councillor Morgan and the local AM's representative. Following this meeting Councillor Morgan has written to the Cabinet Secretary expressing his concern over business rates on behalf of retailers

The group were also advised that the Leader of the Council has supported a reduction in business rates for small businesses and sent a letter to Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Mr Highway.

6. RISCA TOWN CENTRE AUDIT

Mr Highway presented the report and the following items were raised.

Accumulation of litter at lane linking Commercial Street to Tesco. Mr Dallimore will make enquiries to see who owns the land and look to have discussions with the owner to tidy the area and ask them to remove the cabin.

Bus stop extension. The group discussed the health and safety issues. Mr Highway suggested to the group that any concerns be emailed to Dean Smith in Traffic Management for him to raise at the next Engineering meeting.

Poor footway surface opposite the former Rolling Mill pub. The group discussed the issues which remain unresolved. Mr Dallimore confirmed that he would contact The Birds Group on the groups behalf.

Legality of signage at Pontymister Industrial Estate. The group were advised that the owners have be written to by Planning Enforcement officers.

Virgin Media Installation. Councillor George requested that the various locations be inspected and Mr Highway confirmed he would request an officer carry out a site visits. Councillor Owen confirmed that he will also raise this with the Head of Highways.

Zebra Crossing by Tesco – Mr Highway confirmed he is liaising with Planning Enforcement colleagues with a view to having it repainted.

The Chair thanked officers

There were no further issues raised.

The meeting closed at 15:41

CHAIR



TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH

ON TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2018 AT 2:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

A Angel, M James, D Cushing, T Parry, S Morgan

Together with:

J A Pritchard (Community Councillor), C Mortimer (Clerk), Inspector Andrew O'Keefe (Gwent Police), Mr Lewis & Mr I Price (Ystrad Mynach Town Centre Traders & Business Group)

Also:

A Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal), D Smith (Principal Engineer), S Wolf-Williams (Health Challenge Wales Co-ordinator), T Evans (Policy Officer), L James (Senior Planner), A Beaumont (Assistant Engineer), L Raposo (Senior Assistant Engineer), D Lucas (Team Leader Strategic and Development Planning), C Bugler (Engineer), L Gibby (Senior Assistant Engineer) & A. Jones (Clerk)

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Mr Highway opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Chair. Councillor Parry nominated Councillor Angel. Councillor Cushing seconded the nomination. Councillor Angel was unable to attend the first part of the meeting. In his absence Councillor James confirmed that Councillor Angel had indicated that should he be nominated he would accept the position of Chair.

Mr Highway asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Councillor Cushing nominated Councillor James, Councillor Parry seconded the nomination. Councillor James was asked to Chair the meeting until Councillor Angel arrived.

Councillor James welcomed Mr Lewis and Mr Price as new members of the group representing the Ystrad Mynach Town Centre Traders and Business Group.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Community Councillor Osborne

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 8TH MARCH 2018

Community Councillor Pritchard confirmed that she was present at the previous meeting but was not listed. Mr Highway apologised for the omission and asked that this meeting's minute record that Community Councillor Pritchard was at the meeting on 8th March 2018.

The minutes were taken as read

5. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO TOWN

Mr Highway introduced the report which provided an update on matters relating to Ystrad Mynach town centre and sought the Chair's permission to change the order of the reports due to officers having to leave the meeting early.

The first item to be presented was Local Toilet Strategy. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms S Wolf-Williams introduced herself to the group and presented her report. The group were advised that the Council has a statutory duty under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 to prepare and publish a local toilet strategy.

The group discussed the report in detail and expressed their concerns over the proposed closure of the toilets in Ystrad Mynach town centre under the medium term financial plan. The group were advised by Ms S Wolf-Williams that all Council owned buildings would be making their toilets accessible to the public and were told that a draft strategy report would be going out for consultation shortly (ending 8th of March 2019).

Ms Wolf-Williams urged members of the group to view the draft strategy report and to provide comments and feedback.

The Chair thanked Ms Wolf-Williams.

The second item to be presented was Electric Vehicle Charging. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Ms Evans introduced herself to the group and presented her report.

The group discussed the introduction of Electric Vehicle Charging points within the car parks in Ystrad Mynach. Ms Evans was advised that one of the sites identified in the report for Ystrad Mynach is not Council owned. Ms Evans thanked the group and confirmed that she would update her records.

Mr Dallimore pointed out to that the PowerPoint contained a reference to funding and advised that the Council can submit a bid for regional funding from Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked Ms Evans for her update.

The third item to be presented was Civil Parking. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Mr Smith introduced himself to the group and presented a detailed report on Civil Parking.

The group were advised that the Council will be taking over parking enforcement from Gwent Police on the 8th April 2019.

Councillor Parry asked how far along the Council were in reinstating the double yellow lines and would this only be undertaken in the town centres?

Mr Smith confirmed that all lines and signs will need to be checked across the whole of the Borough and where necessary repainted. To date the Council is approximately 60% through completing this work.

Councillor James raised concern over the residents parking and insufficient parking spaces within the town. He asked where people can park if they can't get a space in their street and could the resident's permits be lifted?

Mr Smith advised that the resident's parking is on a 'first come' basis and he could not advise motorists/residents where to park. The group were told that none of the restrictions will be changed, but in the future there may be an opportunity to review the Traffic Regulation Orders after the Council begins enforcement action.

The group raised questions about who would enforce parking and how often it would be within the town context?

Mr Smith confirmed that enforcement will be primarily focused on the town centres, schools and then other areas. The group were informed that there will be 10 Civil Parking Enforcement Officers who will cover the whole of the Borough on a rota which has not been developed yet. Therefore, there is no guarantee that an officer will be in a particular area on a daily basis as the whole Borough needs to be covered.

Councillor Morgan reiterated what Mr Smith had advised and assured the group that the officers will enforce parking in the town centres and across the County Borough.

The group discussed dangerous parking within the town centre and clarified what the Council will be able to enforce and what the Police will still need to enforce.

Inspector O'Keefe advised that at present enforcement is difficult, particularly where lines are not complete, once the signage has been checked and upgraded where necessary enforcement will prove to be much easier for officers. The Inspector advised the group to report any offences that the police will still have responsibility for directly to the police.

The Chair thanked Mr Smith for his report.

The fourth item to be presented was Culvert Works. A paper copy of a PowerPoint Presentation by the officer was provided to members as part of the minutes pack.

Mr Raposo & Mr Bugler introduced themselves and presented their report on the Commercial Street Culvert works.

The group were advised that it has been confirmed that the culvert needs to be replaced rather than repaired, which means that the road will have to be closed for approximately 10 weeks to enable the works to be carried out. Mr Raposo brought with him a 3D computer model which he was happy to show the group after the meeting.

The group discussed the works and expressed their concerns and dissatisfaction on the length of time that the road would need to be closed, particularly at that time of year.

Mr Lewis informed the group that businesses are already suffering with job losses and this would have a devastating impact on local businesses. The group requested that the works be undertaken during the school holidays as there would be fewer people around, especially school children, and that the weather and daylight conditions could speed up the works.

Officers explained to the group that the work would be over a period of approximately 10 weeks and that this would not change if the works were to be carried out at a different time in the year.

Councillor Morgan stated that he appreciated the position of businesses and requested clarity on the dates of the work: If there are any restrictions on funding? Whether night work and weekend work have been considered? What plans will be put in place to minimise disruption for access?

Mr Bugler confirmed that the works were due to start in Mid-January but will need to be pushed back to Mid-February. Funding is being provided from Welsh Government and this will expire by the end of March and with the work programmed for Mid-February it means that 85% of the funds will be used from Welsh Government.

The group were advised that there will be a relaxation on the one way system up until the removal of the culvert and there will be a shuttle service to allow smaller vehicles to deliver goods under supervision of the contractors.

Weekend work has been considered but officers will need to find out more details. Footpaths will be maintained but vehicular access will not be available.

Councillor James requested confirmation as to whether a risk assessment had been carried out due to the volume of traffic that will be diverted via Lewis Street. Mr Bugler confirmed he would need to check.

Councillor James asked if Welsh Government have been asked to extend the funding? Mr Bugler advised that Michelle Johnson has been in contact with Welsh Government and they have advised that the funding cannot be extended. Councillor James requested a copy of the reply from Welsh Government. Mr Bugler confirmed he would speak with Michelle Johnson. Councillor James stated that he would speak with Welsh Government directly.

The Chair asked for confirmation on the total costs. Mr Raposo advised that this would be down to the tender and the timescale in case it goes over 10 weeks, but the figures can be provided. The group were advised that the tender process will be completed in January.

Councillor James delivered a petition to the Cabinet Member Councillor Morgan with over 100 signatures. Councillor Morgan responded that he would consult with engineering colleagues regarding the works. The group were advised that the footfall data had been checked and confirmed that there was not a huge difference in the figures for February compared to August onwards.

In view of the groups dissatisfaction with the works timing Mr Highway advised the Chair Councillor Angel that he may wish to consider a motion from the Town Centre Management Group asking for the time of the contract works to be reconsidered. The Cabinet member Cllr Morgan would then discuss this with officers.

The following motion was proposed by the Chair.

The Ystrad Mynach Town Centre Management Group wishes to ask the Council to consider the time of the culvert works be moved to a date later in the year.

The group voted in total 7 in favour 0 against.

The Cabinet member confirmed he would take this matter up the Engineering Department.

Mr Highway advised the group that the meeting would have to end at 4pm due to another meeting requiring the room and requested that the group briefly hear the fifth item.

The fifth item to be presented was Cycle Racks

Ms Anouska Beaumont summarised her presentation by advising that the Council are looking to introduce cycle racks in the towns around the Borough and that the Ystrad Mynach Masterplan has already been sent to County Councillors, the item will be going to Scrutiny Committee in January.

The group were advised there will be a public consultation of the Masterplan for 6 weeks from the 28th January to the 8th March

Lisa James confirmed that local schools had been involved and work had been done with the Environmental Health department who are undertaking air pollution studies

Liz Gibby explained that the idea is to support the installation of the cycle racks and the group were briefed on this. Mr Highway asked if the Chair could request a vote on installation of the cycle racks.

The group voted in total 7 in favour 0 against.

The group were advised that a copy of the report would be emailed to them by the clerk following the meeting.

Mr Highway briefly introduced his presentation on High Street Heroes and congratulated D Emlyn Lloyd on being awarded High Street Hero Status, as well as a number of other businesses in Ystrad Mynach town centre.

6. YSTRAD MYNACH TOWN CENTRE AUDIT

Due to the meeting over running this item was not discussed.

There were no further issues raised

The meeting closed at 16:10

CHAIR