



## **BLACKWOOD TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 20TH MARCH 2015**

**SUBJECT: CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET – PAST & PRESENT**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide information on the latest element of the 'Choose the High Street' campaign run by the Council's Town Centre Management Team.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 This year, the Council's Town Centre Management Team will launch a new initiative, which will once again utilise the 'Choose the High Street' brand. Entitled 'Choose the High Street - Past & Present' the campaign will aim to reconnect people with their local town centres.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a five-year regeneration programme entitled "People, Businesses and Places". The proposals within the strategy are based on a number of regeneration principles, one of which is "Strengthening Town Centres".
- 3.2 "Prosperous Caerphilly" is identified as one of the key outcomes in the Council's "Single Integrated Plan". The Implementation of the *Unique Places* model of Town Centre Management in the County Borough's principal town centres is one of the actions identified to achieve this outcome.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 The 'Choose the High Street Past & Present' campaign is scheduled to begin in April and will focus on two parts. Firstly, the 'past' element will use old photographs to evoke memories and re-establish people's connection to a particular place. Secondly, through asking people to think about why they choose the high street, it is hoped that they will appreciate and value their town centre. Ultimately, the aim is to encourage people to invest economically, socially and emotionally in the future of their town centres.
- 4.2 In addition, it is hoped that the initiative may inspire people to start new businesses by looking back at what has been lost from the high street. An example of this is the opening of the *Maxime Cinema* in Blackwood, which has demonstrated that a business from the past can successfully be adapted for the present.

## **PAST**

- 4.3 The first part of 'Choose the High Street Past & Present' will begin in April and involves showing old photos of each of the County Borough's five principal town centres using the Council's social media platforms. The photographs will be sourced from the Council archive at the Winding House Museum in New Tredegar. During the summer road shows will be held in each town centre library, these will comprise of archive photos, schools' artwork and retailer stories and pictures of their business history.

## **PRESENT**

- 4.4 The second part of the initiative will begin in June and will focus on the 'present' and take the form of a competition run through local libraries to win shopping vouchers. Shoppers will be invited to call into their local library and fill out an entry form, each entrant will receive a free car sticker, which they are asked to display on their vehicle in order to promote local high streets. The winners of the shopping vouchers will drawn from the entry boxes at random. One winner will be chosen for each town centre in July and another in August.
- 4.5 On the entry form people will also be asked to complete the sentence – "I choose the high street because...". The final part of the 'Choose the High Street Past & Present' initiative in September will see some of these sentences to used to further promote the town centres.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- 4.6 The overall aims of the scheme are:
- a. To maintain town centre footfall over the summer period;
  - b. Improve people's sense of connection with their local town;
  - c. Generate renewed interest in town centres as a location for business;
  - d. Encourage retailers to participate in the life of the town centre;
  - e. Increase footfall in town centre libraries;
  - f. Engage with local schools.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's EqIa process does not need to be applied.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The campaign is funded through the Town Centre Management core budget.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 No there are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 This report is for information only.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

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