



## CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 24TH MARCH 2015

**SUBJECT: BUSINESS REPORT CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE 2014 - FOR  
INFORMATION**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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

- 1.1 This report provides information on the number of businesses opened and closed in Caerphilly town centre throughout 2014.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report gives a retail overview of Caerphilly town centre over the past year and details every retail business opening and closing within the town during 2014. In addition, it also provides an assessment of the annual footfall data collated in the town centre using the Experian Footfall electronic pedestrian counting system. Finally, the report sets out details of a number of initiatives that were developed to support and promote existing businesses and attract new ones to the town centre.

### **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 Caerphilly Retail Overview 2014**

- 4.1.1 Castle Court Shopping Centre experienced a year of stability, which given the current economic climate was a huge achievement. The centre continues to host a number of key multiple retailers including: *WH Smith, Boots, Argos, Poundland, Costa Coffee, Brighthouse, Shoe Zone, Greggs, Store 21, EE, Game and Bonmarche*. This year it succeeded in attracting *Cadwaladers*, a much sought after brand in Wales. Considering the size of the town and its proximity to Cardiff, this remains a strong tenant mix in a busy shopping centre.

- 4.1.2 Over the last few years, officers have sought to define usage and cultivate an identity for both Clive Street and Pentrebane Street. Clive Street initially had a high number of vacant properties, but the creation of 30 minute waiting bays has enabled more people to 'stop & shop' and assisted in the regeneration of the street, which now has very few vacant units. The purchase of hanging baskets by the retailers this summer has helped the street define a character of its own and shown their commitment to act as a collective. The aspiration for Pentrebane Street was that it would over time evolve into a café quarter, the completion of the outside seating areas and opening of two new cafes *Gills Café & Coffee House* and *The Vape Place*, means that the elements to create a successful café quarter are now in place.
- 4.1.3 Cardiff Road has had a mixed year losing some independent shops but still attracting some new businesses. A number of key properties are now vacant on the street and whilst this is disappointing, it also presents an opportunity for new businesses to locate alongside multiple retailers *Peacocks*, *New Look* and *Select* and the many established independent business.
- 4.1.4 Looking ahead to 2015, the concern remains that multiple retailers and service providers, such as banks, will continue to cut operating costs by rationalising their assets in town centre locations across the UK. The susceptibility of town centres to strategic decisions by national businesses reinforces the importance to the local economy of independent retailers. However, many small businesses are now finding the high street a difficult place in which to trade with the continued fall in consumer spending.

## **4.2 Retail Property Directory**

- 4.2.1 The *Retail Property Directory*, provided through Town Centre Management, enables people to start looking online for retail properties to rent or buy across the five managed town centres. This initiative actively encourages people to open a business in one of the County Borough's town centres.

## **4.3 Choose the High Street**

- 4.3.1 During the summer period a new promotional campaign was unveiled, which aimed to raise awareness of the importance of shopping locally. Using the strap line 'Choose the High Street' it encouraged people to favour using their local high street for at least part of their weekly shop and highlighted that customers have a choice in where they shop. To convey the message a variety of marketing platforms were utilised. The initiative also encouraged new businesses to open in the town centres by proactively engaging with local banks, enterprise agencies and grant providers.

## **4.4 Choose the High Street @ Christmas**

- 4.4.1 Over the last two years, in the lead up to Christmas the 'Unique Places Discount Card' scheme has run as a way to help retailers generate sales. In 2012 a total of 60 offers were submitted and in 2013 that number rose to 80. After assessing the feedback provided by retailers, it was decided to take a different approach for Christmas 2014. Instead of using a discount card, a printed voucher booklet was produced. Retailers in the five managed town centres were invited to submit an offer for inclusion in the booklet with the level of discount being set by the retailer. In total 92 offers were received, a total of 30 of these were from retailers in Caerphilly town centre.

## **4.5 Pop Up Shops**

- 4.5.1 In October 2014, a 'Pop-Up Shop Guide' was launched to encourage people to explore opening a Pop-Up shop or community project on the high street. The guide provides an explanation of what a Pop-Up shop is and explains the process for setting one up.

## **4.6 Events**

- 4.6.1 The town centre events staged by the Council's Events Team provide a chance for retailers to engage with a wider customer base due to the increase in footfall numbers they attract.

## 4.7 Business Comparison

- 4.7.1 The Town Centre Management Team compiled these figures during weekly town centre visits over the course of a 12-month period. It should be noted that they are as accurate as possible given the method of data collection.

<b>Caerphilly Business Comparison</b>			
	2014	2013	LFL Comparison
Businesses Opened	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1 fewer business opened</b>
Businesses Closed	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1 fewer business closed</b>

## 4.8 Caerphilly Footfall

- 4.8.1 Footfall in the town centre is measured outside *Health With Herbs* in Cardiff Road.

<b>Caerphilly Town Centre Footfall Comparison</b>			
	2014	2013	Difference
Highest Number	<b>45,052 (21/07/14)</b>	<b>43,305 (22/07/13)</b>	<b>+1,747</b>
Lowest Number	<b>30,050 (22/12/14)</b>	<b>31,308 (14/01/13)</b>	<b>-1,258</b>
Average Footfall	<b>31,180</b>	<b>27,671</b>	<b>+3,509</b>

- 4.8.2 The Town Centre Management Team continues to support retailers by producing regular *Town Centre Gazettes*, which are bespoke to each town centre. In addition, a summary of FootFall data is made available electronically on a weekly basis.

## 5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no potential equalities implications of this report and its recommendations on groups or individuals who fall under the categories identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan. As such, there is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment Questionnaire to be completed for this report.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications.

## 7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personal implications.

## 8. CONSULTATIONS

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

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report for information.

## 10. STATUTORY POWER

- 10.1 Local Government Act 2000.

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