



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE ON TUESDAY 24TH MARCH 2015 AT 2:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

P. J. Bevan, D. T. Davies (Consultee), C. Elsbury, C. Forehead, J. Fussell, B. Jones, S. Kent, M. Prew, J. Pritchard

Together with:

Professor Deacon, Mr K Williams (Caerphilly Town Council clerk), Mr J Dilworth (Van Community Clerk), Mr T Payne (Cadw), Mr J Couzens (Centre Manager), Mrs S Cooper & Mr Cooper (Caerphilly Access Group), Ms K Warrington (Vice Chair Caerphilly Workmans Hall), Inspector G Jones (Gwent Police), Mr Tidridge (Heol Trecastell Residents Association)

Also:

A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), S. Wilcox (Assistant Town Centre Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader - Urban Renewal), M. Godfrey (Environmental Health Officer), R. Lloyd (Special Projects Officer), K. Peters (Community Safety Manager), A. Jones (Complaints Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors: E. M. Aldworth, E. Forehead, K. James, M. Newman, Mr J Co

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (4TH NOVEMBER 2014)

Previous minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. AIR QUALITY UPDATE

Ms. Godfrey informed the group that Welsh Government has now officially adopted the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP); Procurement will be going through the tender process to award the contract. It is anticipated that this should be done within the next few months.

Softer measures have been undertaken where the Council have been educating pupils in year 3 & 4 in the Twyn School on air pollution. The aim is to roll this programme out to other primary schools in the future.

Ms Godfrey confirmed that she has been working with Mr Morgan in transport to see how to improve emissions.

Ms Godfrey advised the group that she would be keeping the group updated on any progress in the future.

5. UPDATE ON SKATEBOARD PARK

Mr Lloyd introduced himself to the group and informed members that he was attending to request possible locations and funding for a skateboard park, as there is a need for one in the town.

Councillor Prew confirmed that working with the young people in the youth forum there is a need for the skate board park. Councillor Pritchard expressed his supported for the idea.

Members discussed possible locations and one suggestion was to consider locating the skateboard park within a vacant unit, this would reduce instances of anti social behaviour.

Members requested clarification on the costs for a skateboard park. Mr Lloyd confirmed that the costs are estimated between £150,000 - £250,000 depending on the scale of the project.

Mr Dallimore advised that possible funding could be identified, by using a nation-funding database called 'Grant Finder', he offered officers time to assist with this

The Chair requested that Mr Lloyd return to a future meeting with the findings for funding and locations.

6. UPDATE ON FORMER LIBRARY MORGAN JONES PARK

Mr Dallimore informed the group that property services have gone through recommendations and a report was presented to Cabinet on the 18th March 2015 for a community café to operate from the former library.

Mr Pritchard wished to thank cabinet members for approving the report to enable the community café to open. He added that this would be good for the town and is what the public wanted the building to be used for.

Mr Dallimore confirmed that the owners were local and they have a good record of running businesses. As well as the café there will be a 'bring & borrow book service' available and a public notice board for the public to place advertisements. There will also be rooms available to let out to the community.

It is anticipated that the café will be up and running by late Summer/Autumn.

7. UPDATE ON TESCO

Mr Highway provided a verbal update on Tesco's in Cardiff Road and asked the group to understand the need to respect commercial confidentiality.

8. APPLICATION FOR AREA FORUM FUNDING WORKING MEN'S HALL

Ms K Warrington introduced herself as the vice chair of Caerphilly Working Men's Hall. A brief history of the Working Men's Hall was provided and then Ms Warrington informed the group that she was present to request funding for the installation of a disabled toilet.

The group were advised that funding has already been acquired for a portable ramp but additional funds were needed for the works to install the toilet.

Ms Warrington passed around a quote for the works and advised that they have been struggling to obtain further quotes. Mr Dallimore offered to assist the Working Men's Hall to obtain additional quotes and also to help with a grant application for funding.

Caerphilly Access Group confirmed that they are happy to provide advice or assistance with details regarding the accessible toilet.

Councillor Pritchard stated that he fully supported the request for funding.

Following discussion the group voted on providing £3,500 from the Area Forum Budget towards the costs of the work subject to officers looking at grant applications. The votes were 11 in favour, 0 against, & 1 abstention.

9. REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR FLOWER FESTIVAL

Mr K. Williams presented a request to the group for funding of £1,500 towards the costs of the Flower Festival. Members agreed that it was important to support the event and Councillor Bevan moved the request, which was seconded by Councillor Pritchard.

Members were invited to vote on the request of funding to be paid out from the area forum budget of £1,500.

The votes were 12 in favour, 0 against & 0 abstentions.

10. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET @ CHRISTMAS – ANALYSIS REPORT

Mr Highway presented the report to the group and discussed how the voucher scheme was a success for both retailers and the public.

The group were advised that throughout the five towns 90 offers were made and hopefully this will increase in future. Looking through the survey carried out, 91% of retailers stated that they would consider taking part in a future scheme.

From the feedback provided by the public, it is apparent that the key to a retailer's voucher being used was in the strength of the offer. Members were advised of comments listed in the appendix of the report.

Mr Highway and Mr Wilcox were thanked for the report and all their hard work.

11. CHOOSE THE HIGH STREET PAST & PRESENT

Mr Highway presented the report to the group and advised that this new initiative aims to re-connect people with their local town centre.

This new scheme was discussed with the group and members were asked if they had any old photographs, which could be used in a library exhibition.

The initiative will include an exhibition of archive photos held at the library in each town centre, as part of this there will be a competition where people will have the opportunity to win two £50 "Love to Shopping" vouchers. On the entry form people will be asked to complete the sentence – "I choose the high street because..." It is hoped to use some of these sentences in the future to further promote the town centres.

12. BUSINESS REPORT CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE 2014

Mr Highway presented the report to the group and thanks were passed to Mr Hudson and the Events team for all their work with the events in the town.

Councillor Elsbury thanked the team for the fantastic job that has been done and wanted it noted that the efforts are really appreciated.

Councillor Fussell confirmed that the report reinforces the need for independent retailers and there is currently no representative for the traders. He is in talks with retailers to see if a representative could be organised and will encourage them to contact Mr Highway.

Mr Highway wished to thank Mr Wilcox and Mr Dallimore for their support. The Chair thanked Mr Highway for the report.

The Chair read out a letter received from Mr Tudor Jones (The Tommy Cooper Society) regarding the installation of the defibrillator machines as discussed in previous meetings. The group were asked if they wished to see how the machines worked they could contact Mr Martin Cook at the Tourist Information Centre in the Twyn.

13. CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE AUDIT REPORT – FEBRUARY 2015

Mr Highway presented the report to the group and the following issues were discussed.

The community notice board. It was decided that the best location would be the side elevation on the Principality building, discussions are still ongoing with the library manager for the northern elevation.

Fire damaged property. Mr Highway advised that he has spoken with the agents who have confirmed that the premises will be occupied soon.

Rough Sleepers. Ms Peters introduced herself and confirmed that she is the leading a group tackling homelessness in the County Borough. This programme has been operating for 12 months and the group meet on a quarterly basis to discuss individual's cases and establish what support can be provided.

Mr Highway confirmed that an immense amount of support is provided to the individuals who find themselves homeless and that many have been helped move off the streets. Ms Peters advised that the Street Pastors are instrumental in offering the night shelters to individuals and all of these are volunteers.

Inspector Jones advised that in conjunction with the Community Safety Team a lot of Police time is given to help. He reiterated that the Street Pastors and other volunteers do a fantastic job.

Securing handrail outside the Twyn Community centre. Councillor Kent has advised that the job has not as yet been completed, this was noted by officers.

Hanging wire, outside Specsavers. Mr Highway wished to thank colleagues in Parks for removing this

Burglary to retail, premises. Inspector Jones advised the group that there has been a fall in burglaries and that officers have put a lot of time into reducing the number of incidents. Operation Tinsel resulted in Dispersal Notices being issued to groups of people over a 9-week period. Regular patrols have been carried out, CCTV used in conjunction with the council. Inspector Jones stressed the need to balance enforcement and engagement.

Ms Peters confirmed that there are 16 cameras in the town centre, these look towards the pubs but on request by the Police can be moved to whichever location they need to be directed in. The council will be changing the cameras to a new broadband system by April 2016. Inspector Jones confirmed that the quality of the images from the cameras is excellent.

Demolition of properties in Park Lane. Mr Dallimore confirmed that the demolition of the properties will continue but no decision has been made as to what the area will be used for. Reports will be prepared and provided to relevant committees.

There were no further matters raised on the audit.

The meeting closed at 15:42 pm

CHAIR