

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Severnside Area Committee held
at Innovation House Magor - Room 8 Innovation House Magor on Wednesday, 27th
April, 2016 at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: County Councillors: D. Evans (Chair), A. Easson, L. Guppy,
J. Higginson and J. Marshall

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Aaron Weeks	Caldicot Town Team
Leigh Gripton	Super-Fast Business Wales
Councillor Phillip Stevens	Caldicot Town Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Judith Langdon	Whole Place Officer
Debbie McCarty	Whole Place Manager
Deb Hill-Howells	Head of Community Led Delivery
Michael Richardson	Specialist Environmental Health Officer
Paula Harris	Democratic Services

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Councillors J. Crook and F. Taylor.

2. Declaration of Interest

None received.

3. Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

We signed and confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 15th March 2016.

5. Whole Place Update

Officers provided updates on the activities that supported the Whole Place Plan in Severnside.

These were:

Activities relating to Caldicot Town Team, noting that two business cases would be going to Cabinet for approval on 4th May.

An update relating to the development of the 21st Century School. The school remained on course to be open in September 2017 as originally planned. There had been meeting with the contractor and SEWSCAP (Building framework provider) around community benefits this week. There were a number of opportunities for apprentices, work experience etc. on site over the

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next 2 years and also a pot of money for community projects and schemes that can be accessed.

The Sustainable Transport Group was in the process of being established, led by Mr Paul Turner who had been involved in the Magor Station group. Paul had been supported in a stakeholder mapping exercise to support the development of the group.

The Caldicot Hub has now been remodelled internally to make the space more user friendly and the customer service points more accessible. Very positive feedback had been received from the public so far.

6. Town Team Update with Aaron Weeks

The Committee received a Town Team update from Aaron Weeks, these included:

Linkage Update

Caldicot Town Team recently called a meeting between Monmouthshire County Council, London & Cambridge and Waitrose, when it became clear that the project had no intentions of moving to the next stage of building works in January, which we were assured in the months before Christmas. It became evident that during the meeting, figures from each side were considerably different, varying from £30+K overspend to £100+K overspend. During the meeting Waitrose and London & Cambridge both agreed to cover the cost of the resurfacing works of the Waitrose car park, which would reduce the cost. L&C made it clear they were investing in the project, and committed but would not put any further income into the project. Waitrose also stated they were committed, but would not put any further income into the project. MCC also stated they were committed.

The meeting finished with all parties agreeing to go away and come back within a week with;

- The exact costings and overspend of the project
- Whether it was viable for Waitrose to raise any further income for the project.
- Whether there was any other funding options that were able to be explored, such as vvp, match-funding etc.
- Costings have come back, which shows the overspend to be in or around £90K. Waitrose are unable to raise any further income, but have agreed to cover half of the costs of the resurfacing project.

An update will follow.

Markets Project

Following on from our pilot project in 2015, Caldicot Town Team are running a further 10 markets in 2016 and submitted a business case to the last program board meeting, which was recommended to be approved. This included an extensive marketing campaign to promote Caldicot market and our specialised markets. It also includes purchasing market stalls, which are branded with the Caldicot town team logo, and will help reduce costs and time substantially when carrying out markets. These will also be available for hire from just £4 a day.

Our first Market this year was a welsh market in aid of Eisteddfod, during the event we raised £250 for the Eisteddfod, which includes pitch fees. We also raised around £50 from selling raffle tickets to win the car.

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Caldicot Goes Pop!

We are currently working on a project to open a pop up shop within the town centre (unit next door to Morgan travel) Businesses will be able to rent the shop from us at a cost of £10 a day or £50 a week, up to a maximum of two weeks. This will give them a chance to test –trade within the town, without the risk of high overheads or lengthy leases. If, after this time the business wants to stay for longer, we have already put agreements in place to offer 3,6,9 or 12 month tenancies for other empty units within the town.

The aim is to provide vibrancy and vitality within the town centre, whilst providing shoppers with an extra reason to revisit the town, as businesses will be changing regularly. Committee Groups will also be able to utilise the shop unit, for free to enable them to put on a show or activity as a one off within the town. The unit and project will be up and running by the middle of May (although official opening is likely to be early June, due to bookings already in place.) We have been really lucky to be able to take the lease for a period of 12 months totally rent free. With our eligible for rate discounts as well means the entire project is costing less than £5,000. The designs for the project were drawn up by a year 10 art student from Caldicot school, and Webber Design will be making all of our marketing and design material free of charge, which will be unveiled within the next couple of weeks.

Wi-Fi

Since the project was shelved last year due to lack of commitment by Spectrum Internet we have now found another provider Solvings UK who have found a much cheaper alternative to provide free Wi-Fi to Caldicot town centre. Connections will be made within the CCTV columns, which will emit the Wi-Fi signal, and will cover the whole town centre, without the need for installing cabling along buildings, hard access points within business premises etc. The project is currently awaiting approval from Roger Joy and Andrew Mason at MCC, and installation should take less than a couple of weeks after this has been agreed.

Urban Design Project

The final report has been produced by Roberts Limbrick, which has been circulated to Town Council and stakeholders. Unfortunately our deadline has slipped to provide an outline report into the next phase, due to the large number of projects we are currently heavily involved in, but work has been taking place behind the scenes with the new landlords in the town, and speaking to key stakeholders about the project in more detail.

7. Super Fast Business Wales

The Committee received a presentation from Leigh Gripton from Super-Fast Business Wales.

Mr Gripton is in regular contact with MCC and lead Officer on this matter, James Woodcock.

He was keen for the Committee to use their local knowledge and contacts to encourage local businesses take advantage of the new scheme, which started in April 2016 designed to provide free digital advice and support. He is happy to attend meetings at the convenience of local businesses and left his contact details with all members of the committee.

8. Pigeons

An Officer from Environmental Health updated the committee regarding the issue of pigeons in Caldicot town.

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15 complaints had been received regarding the pigeons and a complaint made regarding a person persistently feeding the birds.

We were told that Town Council had approved a cull, subject to approval by the Police, and the committee will be updated on this matter in due course.

9. To confirm date and time of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is 27th June 2016 at 10am.

The meeting ended at 11.25 am