

LLANTWIT MAJOR TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FROM REMOTE TOWN STUDY STEERING GROUP MEETING HELD AT 7.00PM, ON TUESDAY, 13th JULY, 2021

Present;	Councillor	Mr G Morgan (Chairperson)
	Councillors	Dr D Ellis
		Mr G Thomas
		Mr R Gant
		Mrs G Hughes
		Mr D Powell

Mr Christopher Edwards - Vale of Glamorgan Council Town Centre Development Officer
Mrs H March - Llantwit Major History Society
Mr John Deakin -
Mr J Durrant - Bethel Baptist Church
Ms Toni Marley – Llantwit Major Christmas Committee
Mrs Patricia Lancaster – Llanilltud Fawr in Flower
Canon Edwin Counsell – St Illtyds Church
Mr Ian Hunt – Filco Food Stores / Llantwit Major Chamber of Trade
Mrs Sally Hanks – Vale of Glamorgan Councillor
Mr M Neate

Apologies were tendered on behalf of;

Councillor Dr P Dickson
Mr W Norman
Mr Jay Jones - Publican White Hart / Tudor Tavern
Mr Gwyneth Price – informed Committee she will no longer wished to sit as a representative on the Town Study Steering Group

Councillor G Morgan welcomed everyone to the Town Study Steering Group Meeting, the second meeting to be held in 2021.

Declaration of Interest Forms.

There were no Declaration of Interest Forms received.

Report of last Meeting held on 30th March 2021, ratified at the Full Town Council Meeting on the 29th April 2021

Committee members had previously been circulated with a copy of the Report of the Town Study Meeting held on 30th March 2021, ratified at the Full Town Council Meeting on the 29th April 2021.

Councillor Dr Ellis queried if there were any further plans to install more ‘Love Llantwit Major’ flags around the town following the installations of banners in the Railway Station Car Park

and outside the Town Hall. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that at present there was no funding available for purchasing new flags and posts, but the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town Council would work together if additional grants became available. Noted.

To note new representative to sit on Town Study Steering Group

Committee members had previously been circulated with an email from Mr Mike Neate reference joining the Town Study Steering Group. Councillors Morgan stated that following the Full Town Council Meeting in June 2021 he was delighted to welcome Mike Neate as a new representative to sit on the Town Study Steering Group. Mr Neate thanked members and confirmed his background and eagerness to be more actively involved in the community.

Update from Town Centres Development Officer

Mr Christopher Edwards introduced himself to Committee Members.

Mr Edwards shared copies of the latest occupancy rates in the Vale of Glamorgan Town Centres. He stated in the United Kingdom the average vacancy rate was 14.1%, in Wales this stood at 19.2 %. Mr Edwards confirmed that Llantwit Major had a vacancy rate of 2.9%, 93 commercial units and only 3 vacant premises within the town centre. Members queried this figure. Mr Hunt confirmed the one unit was being redeveloped and would be fully let out and an additional pop-up unit was planned to be situated next to the Toy Shop in the Precinct.

Members stated that the travel agents by The Strand although not open to the general public was still used daily as an office for a taxi business. Members noted that in Llantwit Major there was only 1 vacant unit within the town. Mr Edwards confirmed he would clarify and adjust figures accordingly.

Mr Edwards confirmed the completion of the work at the Railway Station Car Park (i.e., new Benches, planters, banners, flags, refurbishing fencing, repainting the car park lines etc) had been completed as part of the Welsh Government funding to redevelop town centres following the covid 19 pandemic. Members agreed it was a great improvement to the area.

Councillor Gant asked if the bridge and steps/path leading to it could also be refurbished and repaired. Mr Edward stated that the bridge was under the ownership of Network Rail. Mr Edwards stated that there should be funding available still to complete the repainting the railings along Llanmaes Road leading into the Railway Station.

Mrs March stated that the new Planters were excellent however had concern re who and how often they were being watered.

Mr Edwards informed members that marketing consultants Jam Jar had been contracted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council to look at ways to encourage visitors to the Vale town centres. One of the projects being initiated is a flower festival in the four towns during the month of August 2021. This will incorporate a Flower trail and would need 16 retailers in each town to take part. He stated a prize of £100 would be awarded to each town if retailers participate and decorate their shop frontages.

Mr Edwards confirmed that the Vale of Glamorgan Council have outlaid over 48 million pounds to local businesses in the last 18 months since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

Recommended: That Mr Edwards liaise with Vale of Glamorgan Council re who is responsible and how often the new planters are watered in the Railway Station Car Park. Bring finding back to next meeting.

Further

Recommended: That the Deputy Town Clerk write to Network Rail. Ask if they have any planned work for the maintenance of the footpath bridge at Llantwit Major Station. If not, would they be prepared to repaint the bridge and repair the path over the bridge. State that the bridge is now looking in a poor state off repair following the refurbishment of the rest of the surrounding area.

Update on Llantwit Major Chamber of Trade

Mr Hunt stated that due to Covid 19 the Chamber of Trade had been inactive over the last year and a half. Mr Hunt stated that he and other members were now looking at restarting the group in some format. He wanted to establish a collective organisation and look at a name change as he felt the 'Chamber' was outdated and wanted the organisation to evolve incorporating businesses as well as retailers. Mr Hunt stated he will start to initiate interest in the next few months.

To further discuss conditions of pavements in Llantwit Major

Committee members had previously been circulated with correspondence from the Town Study Steering Group and the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Members noted that the Vale of Council had confirmed receipt of the Town Study Groups letter on the 5th May 2021 re the state of the condition of some pavements in the town. Since this date no further correspondence had been received.

Mr Deakin raised concerns re the state of the pavements in certain areas around Llantwit and considered some paths to be a serious hazard to the general public. Members were very disappointed that a more detailed response to their letter had not been received from the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Councillor Gant noted some work had started along Boverton Road of repairs to paths, however it seemed to be on a very adhoc basis and was disappointed that a programme of works, as requested in the letter dated 6th April 2021 to the Vale of Glamorgan Council had still not been responded to. Councillor Morgan stated adhoc repairs had also been undertaken along Ham Lane East and Illtyd Avenue. Mike Neate noted that some paving slabs that had been replaced along Llanmaes Road had already cracked again.

Councillor Mrs Hanks stated that it would be useful to reinform the Vale Council of the areas of paving that are in urgent need of repair.

Toni Marley raised concerns that parents dropping of and picking up their children from the schools running along Ham Lane East, park on the pavements along Boverton Road. Concerns were raised re the damage to the paths and the safety of pedestrians.

Recommended: That Mr Deakin complete a revised survey of the pavements in Llantwit Major and pass findings back to the Deputy Town Clerk.

Further

Recommended: That a letter then be written again to the Vale of Glamorgan Council including the revised survey of pavements and request for clarification of the works program to be undertaken within the town.

Further

Recommended: That Councillors bring up with the Community Constable at the next Full Town Council Meeting, at the end of July 2021, concerns re the safety of pedestrians from parents parking along Boverton Road during drop of and pick up times from the schools.

To further discuss litter bins in the town centre

Committee members had previously been circulated with correspondence from the Town Study Steering Group and the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Members noted that the Vale of Council had confirmed receipt of the Town Study Groups letter on the 5th May 2021 re request for additional litter bins in the town centre and confirmation of the weekly rota of when they are emptied. Since this date no further correspondence had been received.

Members rediscussed particular areas of concern:

- Church Lane
- West Hill Street
- Bedford Rise
- Fairfield Rise
- Stradling Park
- Eagleswell Road junction onto Llanmaes Road

Councillor Morgan stated that the Recreation Bin designed and paid for by Llantwit Youth Council had been vandalised twice in the last two months. He confirmed that the Town Council had paid £60 to get the bin repaired and reinstated on the site.

Mr Edwards asked members to inform him of any anti-social behaviour within the town centre as he attends a monthly Community Safety Meetings which looks at all behaviour within the Vale towns.

Recommended: That a further letter be written to Mr Colin Smith of the Vale of Glamorgan Council requesting additional litter bins within the above areas and a clarification of the weekly rota of when then bins are emptied.

To discuss Agenda Brief re canvas 'Love Llantwit Major' bags

Committee Members were previously circulated with an Agenda Brief re canvas 'Love Llantwit Major' bags. Councillor Morgan stated that due to the coronavirus pandemic there had been no canvas bags sold from the Town Hall. There was still over 30 bags and 100 stickers in stock.

At a Town Study Steering Group Meeting prior to the pandemic, it was agreed to purchase an additional 50 bags at a cost of £110.00. Councillor Morgan asked members if they wished to proceed with buying bags or defer until existing stocks are sold.

Recommended: That the purchase of 50 canvas 'Love Llantwit Major' bags be deferred until existing stocks have been sold.

To discuss update on Covid Memory Book

Committee Members were updated that the Covid Memory Books were now on sale at £5.00 at various locations throughout the town. The book depicts residents of all age's experiences during the coronavirus pandemic. Members thanked Mr Hunt for funding the publication of the 200 books.

Members noted that a new newspaper the Glamorgan Star for local news around the Vale has just had its first publication. Copies were available from Filco and Boverton Post Office.

Recommended: That an Agenda Item be placed in the next Town Study Steering Group Meeting to further discuss the Glamorgan Star.

To note information and further discuss Electric Charge points for the town

Committee Members were previously circulated with an Agenda Brief and information re exploring options for putting an electric vehicle charging point in the town. Mr Ian Hunt stated from a commercial aspect it was not going to be easy to achieve. He stated it would be a major investment with a variety of areas for concern including space, multiple charging plugs and time it takes to charge a vehicle.

Mike Neate stated that he had an interest in this topic and from initial investigation he had concerns re reliability, location of the charging points, cost of electrical charging, ease of payment and disabled access for charging points.

Mr Durrant stated he had concerns re the infrastructure with reference to the increase supply/usage re Western Power.

Members felt it would be useful to have a presentation from a specialised company on Electric Charge Points.

Recommended: That members bring any findings re electric charging points back to future Meetings.

Further

Recommended: That the Deputy Town Clerk liaise with Companies re organising a presentation for the Town Study Steering Group on Electric Charge Points.

To note letter sent re Finger post sign for Lorna Hughes Park

Committee members had previously been circulated with a letter sent to Transport for Wales re putting a finger post in Lorna Hughes Park directing the general public to the Train/Bus Station. Permission had been granted for a sign at a Full Town Council Meeting on the 27th February 2020.

Members noted that the initial idea was from Councillor Dr Dickson and as he was not able to be present at this Meeting.

Recommended: That a decision re installing a Finger Post Sign for Lorna Hughes Park be deferred to the next Town Study Steering Group Meeting when Councillor Dr Dickson present to discuss this Agenda Item.

To discuss Action Tracker detailing all projects undertaken and outstanding within the Town Study Steering Group

Committee Members had previously been circulated with an Action Tracker detailing all projects undertaken and outstanding within the Town Study Steering Group.

Councillor Morgan reviewed with members each item on the Action Tracker.

Recommended: That the following items be removed from the Action Tracker:

Llantwit Major Dementia Friendly Town

Issues re parking around Cenotaph

Issued re paths in East Street

To discuss Town Council projects being undertaken and planned for 2021

Committee members had previously been circulated with a list of projects being undertaken and planned for 2021. Members reviewed the list. Councillor Powell requested that an additional item be added to the list. This being the project to gain Llantwit Beach Bathing Beach Status. Noted.

To further discuss Committee Members ideas for improving Llantwit Major Town and Community

Councillor Morgan and the Deputy Town Clerk asked members their thoughts on a Digital Notice Board for the town centre. They were shown an example sited in the town of Tregaron in West Wales. Members felt it was a good way of promoting news, events, bus/train timetables, birth/marriages/deaths especially with the demise of the Gem Newspaper. Deputy Town Clerk to investigate further logistics and costings of Digital Notice Boards.

Patricia Lancaster stated that Tina Benfield was working with Phil Chappel from the Vale of Glamorgan Council re funding opportunities for various planting projects in the town including:

New Planters in the Precinct

Flowers planted around the area behind the Public Toilets, off Boverton Road

A new bench near the library

A irrigated water system for the town centre

Ian Hunt stated that he had funding available for planting trees in Llantwit Major and if the group knew of any organisations that would like some trees donated. Members agreed to contact the Schools. Canon Edwin Counsell stated St Illtuds Church would be interested in trees for replacing those that had to be removed from the church yard.

Mr Durrant asked who to approach if resident's hedges were encroaching on Council pavements. Councillor Mrs Hanks informed him to report the matter via the Vale of Glamorgan Council email cv1@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk who can enforce action to be taken to resolve these matters.

Mike Neate stated he would like to see more wildflower spaces throughout the town. Members informed Mr Neate of the wildflower's areas in Llantwit Major and the difficulties and costs of creating wildflower beds. Councillor Mrs Hanks stated that once adopted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council the new Persimmon roundabout along the High Street was planned to be developed into a wildflower area.

Date of Next Meeting.

The date of the next Town Study Steering Group Meeting will be held on 2nd November 2021 at 7pm, venue to be confirmed dependent upon latest Coronavirus Legislation.