**MOLD TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of Mold Town Council Tourism Committee held on Tuesday 29 July 2014 at Mold Town Hall.

**PRESENT**: Councillors: Chris Bithell, Richard Brookes, Geoff Collett, Carol Heycocks, Andrea Mearns and Anthony Parry and the Town Centre Manager.

**IN ATTENDANCE**: Jerry Spencer Conservation and Design Officer from Flintshire County Council, Jessica Jones Modern Apprentice and Tourism Trainee from Flintshire County Council.

**9. APOLOGIES:** None **10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None declared.

**11. NEW TOURISM INFORMATION POINTS (TIP’s) FOR MOLD**

Following the previous Tourism Committee meeting on 30th June 2014, when Councillors unanimously approved the ‘Toblerone’ style TIP’s, the Town Centre Manager went around the town with Lorna Jenner a consultant for Heritage Countryside and Jerry Spencer and Jessica Jones from Flintshire County Council, to look at potential sites for eight TIP’s in Town. Jerry Spencer had concerns about the “Toblerone” style design which had previously been approved by the Tourism Committee.

At the Mold Town Council meeting on 23rd July 2014 it was agreed to invite Jerry Spencer, who would be putting in the planning application for Mold’s TIP’s, to a meeting of the Tourism Committee to discuss his concerns regarding the Tourism Information Points (TIP’s).

The Town Centre Manager introduced Jerry Spencer and Jessica Jones.

Jerry Spencer informed members his concerns regarding the TIP’s were as follows :-

1. There is currently a lot of unauthorised development in Mold’s conservation area, particularly unauthorised signs, for example some estate agents in Chester Street have vertical signs. These do not fit in with a small scale market town. Jerry Spencer feels that the proposed design of the TIP’s would have the same look.
2. The Kendal style TIP’s are good because they are human sized and unobtrusive and they fit in with the scale of a market town. They are not as tall as the Toblerone style TIP’s.
3. He would be happy with anything a third smaller. In the context of Mold, the Toblerone style would be at the top of shop facia level, protruding into first floor level. They are the size of a sign outside a petrol station. In a finely scaled conservation area they would be too dominant and would become the focal point of the street, detracting from key buildings that they were near such as St Mary’s Church.
4. The Toblerone style looked more like a piece of public art or a cash machine, they had a lot more presence than a sign.
5. In relation to the other street furniture they would be more like a public phone box, than a directional sign.
6. The Kendal design is elegant and slender, it has four sides for graphics rather than the three sides which are on the Toblerone style.
7. The narrow base of the Kendal signs would be easy to clean around without damaging the sign as it tapers at the bottom. The Toblerone style would be scraped by Streetscene brushes and urinated on by dogs.
8. Kendal’s TIP’s are in natural shades of greens and yellows so they blend with the surrounding buildings. The proposed designs for the Toblerone style in Mold were in bright colours and black, which had no relationship with the buildings, and could add to the visual clutter in the street.

Jerry Spencer said the decision would be ultimately be with County Councillors to decide as he was just a consultee.

Town Centre Manager thought that Jerry Spencer’s comments would hold weight in the planning process. Councillor Chris Bithell summed up Jerry Spencer’s objections as height, size, colour and overall dimensions.

A discussion took place on whether the Toblerone design could be on a stalk like the Kendal design and which took up the most space. One of the reasons that the Tourism Committee had chosen the Toblerone design was because it appeared to take up less pavement space than Kendal’s. Councillor Andrea Mearns said that the bottom of the TIP’s could be made of metal to reflect the new screens going behind Daniel Owen’s statue, which would make them more durable. The similar ones in Chester were made of sandstone. Councillor Richard Brookes thought that people might go between the two wings of the Kendal design and urinate there.

Councillor Andrea Mearns had previously supplied photographs from Stratford and Chester, showing modern tall elegant TIP’s which are the same width from top to bottom and are quality structures sited in these world famous historic towns. Jerry Spencer thought that these two-sided ‘flat’ examples would be fine for Mold if they were not as tall as those used in Stratford and Chester, as those two towns had bigger open spaces than Mold and he liked the Stratford and Chester designs.

Jessica Jones left the meeting.

The maximum height Jerry Spencer wanted for the TIP’s is 2.3m, Councillor Geoff Collett suggested it should be 2.4m (8’) standard height.

All members agreed.

 Width of the TIP to be in proportion to 2.4m high so that the aesthetics of the slender modern design were not lost. It was agreed to go back to the designer and ask them to look at the optimum width.

Content of the signs was discussed and it was agreed they must be bilingual, include a map, include place information if a relevant site, include a programme of events in Mold if a relevant site, include directional arrows to other key places. Councillor Geoff Collett said that the full Mold map should be on display in visitor arrival points such as car parks.

Each site was unique and as such a one-size fits all approach was not the best solution. In the 122 page Chester Interpretation Master Plan which Councillor Andrea Mearns had circulated to the committee there were a range of sign structures made of similar materials with a consistent graphic style.

Councillor Richard Brookes thought that Mold should have a mixture of styles like Chester, which would solve how to add signage:-

* For a narrow pavement site – a two sided ‘flat’ TIP
* For sites with plenty of space to walk round and linger – a four sided TIP made of two ‘flat’ structures in an ‘L’ shape at 90° to each other (a modern take on the Kendal design)
* For a wall, like outside New Street toilets - a one sided ‘flat’ TIP fixed directly to the wall horizontally.

It was agreed by members to proceed on this basis. Jerry Spencer said he was fully in support and thought that the TIP’s would give Mold a special standing in line with the forward-looking approach we were taking.

It was agreed the Town Centre Manager, Cadwyn Clwyd and Flintshire County Council will accept an invoice from IS Group before the end of September as certain sites, like Daniel Owen Square would not be ready to have a TIP installed by then with the present refurbishment works.

Councillor Chirs Bithell asked whether local council members who had TIP’s in their wards should ask for planning approval to go through as delegated powers? Jerry Spencer said yes and informed members this would speed the process up.

Jerry Spencer said there was Cadwyn Clwyd approval for the new railings, lighting behind the columns, water blasted stone work, mesh removed from the windows and re-painting at Bethesda Chapel on New Street and that Bethesda Chapel was the second most important building in Mold (after St Marys Church). It was also discussed whether to have bi-lingual signs in the grounds of Bethesda Chapel.

Jerry Spencer left the meeting

**To summarise TIP’s design for project:**

Mold should have a mixture of styles like Chester, which would solve how to add signage to:

* For a narrow pavement site – a two sided ‘flat’ TIP
* For sites with plenty of space to walk round and linger – a four sided TIP made of two ‘flat’ structures in an ‘L’ shape at 90° to each other (a modern take on the Kendal design)
* For a wall, like outside New Street toilets - a one sided ‘flat’ TIP fixed directly to the wall horizontally.

Dimensions

* Maximum of 2.4m height.
* Width proportionally to reflect height with objective of appearing.
* Slender and contemporary.
* Easy to read font sizes etc.

Content

* Must be bilingual.
* Include a map.
* Include place information if a relevant site.
* Include a programme of events in Mold if a relevant site.
* Include directional arrows to other key places.
* Include Cittaslow logo and short strapline.
* Include the full Mold map if in visitor arrival points such as car parks.

Construction

* Base of TIP’s could be made of metal to reflect the new screens going behind Daniel Owen’s statue.
* Consider needs of street cleaning machines to ensure durability.
* Need to change the “What’s On” section.

Design and Colour

* Reflect the theme agreed from the gateway signs with silhouette’s of the town’s key features.
* Choice of colour should not be too bold so that they can blend into surroundings. Useful if followed the gateway principles again.

**12. New maps for TIP’s**

Councillor Andrea Mearns informed members she had sent pictures of the Stratford maps on their TIP’s to Lorna Jenner to show Bill Smutts as a possible style for Mold. They are black roads with a white background and Lorna Jenner and Bill Smutts agreed with AM that they were more legible and looked more contemporary than the initial visuals that she had presented to the Committee on 30 June. Bill had produced a draft in this style which AM and DH had seen, it looked good and he was now working up the rest of the map in this style.

All approved of Stratford style and agreed Bill should carry on with Mold map on this basis.

**13. Entrance signs for Mold**

Town Centre Manager had asked the consultant involved with the overall Mold signage project, who is an expert on road signs, whether he thought that the proposed entrance signs for Mold would be approved with:-

* ‘Brown sign’ tourism symbols e.g. a mask to represent Theatr Clwyd, a knife and fork for places to eat. The consultant thought three symbols would be allowed on each entrance sign.
* The Cittaslow logo and the Fairtrade logo. The consultant said the Cittaslow and Fairtrade logos, should only be used if the entrance signs were classed as advertising signs rather than road signs
* Include the names of the roads, eg Ruthin Road. The consultant informed members entrance signs were not supposed to have road names on

Discussion took place about whether the Cittaslow logo should be included on the entrance signs as there was little recognition amongst many in Mold that the town has Cittaslow accreditation, this is due insufficient funds to market Cittaslow widely as a brand within the town, it had also not been possible to put the Cittaslow logo on signs and TIP’s, therefore it has been difficult to raise the level of general recognition.

All members thought it was important to include the Cittaslow logo on signage. Councillor Richard Brooked suggested having the words ‘A Cittaslow town’ without the logo. Councillor Andrea Mearns suggested that the Cittaslow snail could be incorporated into the large blue ‘sky’ area of the design without it looking like an add-on logo. Councillors Richard Brookes and Geoff Collett suggested adding the logo after the signs have been made.

Councillor Chris Bithell said it was time to have a meeting with the relevant high-level people at Flintshire County Council and Welsh Assembly Members Sandi Mewies and Carl Sargeant. The Welsh Government was keen that towns took measures to be more sustainable and fit in with the thinking of Welsh Governments Future and well-being agenda, Mold was doing just that but was being hampered by bureaucracy around signs. All members agreed.

Councillor Andrea Mearns suggested visuals should be prepared for the meeting with Flintshire County Council and Welsh Assembly. The Town Centre Manager said there was no budget for more input from Harrison Design. Councillor Andrea Mearns suggested for a small fee a designer like Andy Garside could produce ideas to take the process forward. All members agreed.

**SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH MOLD TOWN COUNCIL’S**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

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| **TOURISM COMMITTEE** | **DATE: 29th July 2014**  |

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| **MEMBER** | **ITEM** | **MINUTE NO. REFERS** |
|  | None |  |