

**Board Meeting 30**  
**Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> April**  
**5:30pm, The Business Community @Glan Afan**

**Attendees**

Richard Jones, Selections Gift Shop (RJ)  
Jo Morgan, Peacocks (JM)  
Elliot Carpenter, Coastal Housing Association (EC)  
Melanie Cole, Barista's (MC)  
Nia Hall, Aberavon Wizards (NH)  
Sally Jones, Resident (SJ)

Mandy Jenkins, The means (MJ)  
Jade Evans, The means (JE)

**Delegation – Arrived at 18:28**

Billy, Afan Carpets  
Richard, Hideout  
Louise, Hideout  
Sarah, Ferraris  
Tracey, Ferraris  
Justin, Wanna Thai  
Melissa, Selections  
Latife, Selections  
Amy, Baristas  
Will, Family Value  
Matthew, the Old Olive Kart  
Cassius, Portablo Coffee  
Debbie, Baristas,  
Helen/Lynn, Baristas  
Simon, Café Fresco (arrived late)

**Apologies**

Aaron Lloyd-Thorne, Viva Port Talbot (ALT)  
Julia Harries, Aberafan Shopping Centre (JH)  
Julian Williams, Accountancy Solutions (JW)

| Item | Detail   | Action |
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| 1.0  | <b>Welcome and apologies</b><br><br>RJ welcomed everyone to the meeting.<br><br>Apologies given as above.<br><br>RJ acknowledged email resignation received from JW. |        |

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| <p><b>2.0</b></p> | <p><b>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</b></p> <p><b>2.1 Confirmation of approval</b></p> <p>Those present agreed the minutes were a true reflection of the meeting.</p> <p><b>2.2 Matters arising</b></p> <p><b>2.2.1 Fire inspection</b></p> <p>Inspection has been done, minor changes needed to comply with regulations but confusion on some points. ALT to provide full clarity on what needs to be done following the report.</p> <p><b>2.2.2 Coastal and Glan Afan</b></p> <p>EC to carry out action from last meeting to speak to Coastal Housing about leasing the space for staff and a potential reduction in rent for the rest of the BID term.</p>   | <p><b>ALT: Summarise report and actions needed</b></p> <p><b>EC: To speak to Coastal Housing</b></p> |
| <p><b>3.0</b></p> | <p><b>The Business Community @ Glan Afan update</b></p> <p>The final report for the Glan Afan project had been submitted to the Coastal Communities Fund. There is some underspend so the project will go on until money has officially been spent – predicted December. Once the money has been spent the Coastal Communities Fund will officially consider the project closed on their end. MJ assured that Glan Afan will be sustained after then with the income raised from the two current rentals, potential third rental, and board room hire.</p> <p>Lots of interest in current VPT office unit for rent but not many follow-ups. RJ raised concern that the term for that rental will now be less than a year for whoever takes it up.</p> <p>ALT is trying to get more clients to book meetings and classes in board room.</p> <p>MJ and RJ updated on meeting with independent auditor from NPTCBC on the Transforming Towns grant. The main issue discussed was the length leases and the definition of a ‘pop-up’. The auditor would produce her final report within two weeks – this deadline had passed but MJ acknowledged that the Easter break probably caused a delay. If the report concludes that the terms and conditions of the grant were breached then NPTBC will attempt to draw back some funds. MJ and RJ thought this was very unlikely as the auditor had stated in the meeting that the terms and conditions did not define the length of a popup.</p> |  |
| <p><b>4.0</b></p> | <p><b>Programme</b></p>   |  |

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|            | <p><b>4.1 Food Festival</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 57 businesses attending, taking up 66 pitches</li> <li>• Craft market in Aberafan, currently 6 pitches but applications still open</li> <li>• Activity in Glan Afan board room TBC</li> <li>• Road closure confirmed by NPTCBC in previous week</li> <li>• Road closure notice letters given out to affected businesses and flats today – JE noted that businesses which are closed on Saturdays acknowledged notice and returned the letters to be given to other affected businesses.</li> <li>• Posters given out around town</li> <li>• Video uploaded today, 2.1k views in 5 hours since upload</li> <li>• Bollard operation training in process of being arranged for MJ, JE, ALT and RJ who will act as emergency contacts on event date to allow opening and closure in emergency situations. Training date pending.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>5.0</b> | <p><b>Renewal ballot</b></p> <p>A ballot date of Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 was being considered – this date would see the ballot open on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024. Working to these dates, the deadline for VPT to submit the Notice of Intention to request ballot of BID proposals to NPTCBC and the Secretary of State is 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2024.</p> <p>MJ noted concern that conversations with council about the renewal ballot proposals and planned date might be muddled by other issues.</p>  |  |

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| <p><b>6.0</b></p> | <p><b>Marketing</b></p> <p>MJ presented the following figures:</p> <div data-bbox="284 371 1023 456"> <h3>Social media</h3> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Viva Port Talbot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Facebook: 5665 followers up to 5812 followers (+147)</li> <li>○ Instagram: 992 followers up to 1002 followers (+10)</li> <li>○ Twitter: 449 followers up to 450 followers (+1)</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Glan Afan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Facebook: 639 followers up to 654 followers (+15)</li> <li>○ Instagram: 215 followers down to 212 followers (-3)</li> <li>○ Twitter: 50 followers (same)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <div data-bbox="997 745 1042 770"> <p>#VIVA<br/>Port Talbot</p> </div> <div data-bbox="284 835 1023 920"> <h3>VivaPT Food Festival 2024</h3> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Received 80 applications</li> <li>■ 57 businesses booked to attend (66 pitches)</li> <li>■ Posters and road closure notices delivered around town</li> <li>■ Event page has 760 responses</li> <li>■ Promo video with Di Botcher posted on social media today (10/4)</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="785 929 1011 1245"> </div> <p>EC requested posters that advertise the board room hire to be put up around Glan Afan and on front board.</p> | <p>ALT and JE: Discuss creating posters or ordering from graphic designer.</p> |
| <p><b>7.0</b></p> | <p><b>Finance</b></p> <p><b>7.1 Income Report</b></p> <p><b>7.1.1 Update on levy collection from NPTBC</b></p> <p>No update from NPTCBC yet as bills went out less than a month ago. MJ had received some phone calls from levy payers regarding bills.</p> <p><b>7.1.2 Expenditure Report</b></p> <p>£3,866.61 in the bank account.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>8.0</b></p> | <p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>248 entries were received in total for the Easter Egg Hunt. The winner was drawn, contacted, and picked up their prize this afternoon. The board were</p>  |  |

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|             | <p>happy with the take-up of the trail this year.</p> <p>SJ proposed a 'know your town' trail over the summer holidays with questions for children linking in with the Canol Afan history project. The board liked this idea – SJ to put together a list of facts, MJ and JE to work on creating trail.</p> <p>SJ informed board that the Rich History Group are working on getting the Richard Burton exhibition displayed in the top floor of Wilko. An Historical Festival is being considered by the Rich History Group/its partners to potentially take place in town centre next year. Also updated on regeneration/renovation plans in Margam – the board acknowledged that the tourism plans should help footfall in town.</p>  | <p><b>SJ: Create draft fact sheet for trail. MJ and JE: Work on creating trail.</b></p>  |
| <b>9.0</b>  | <p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>Wednesday, 15th May. MC on jury service so may not be able to attend.</p>   |  |
| <b>10.0</b> | <p><b>Delegation from Ferrari's and Selections to attend – 18:28</b></p> <p>Brief introductions from all board members and delegates.</p> <p>RJ gave brief background on the Business Community @ Glan Afan project and the current coffee shop pop-up in place at the front of the centre. Matthew questioned whether building had been empty for 3 years before VPT took up the lease. RJ confirmed that the building being vacant for 3 or more years was an eligibility criterion for the Coastal Communities Fund.</p> <p>Tracey questioned if any money from VPT had gone into the fixtures and fittings of the building. MJ and RJ confirmed that VPT had not contributed to the cost of fixtures and fittings and explained that the Glan Afan project was funded by the Coastal Communities Fund and the Transforming Towns Fund.</p> <p>Tracey and Richard questioned the previous year's accounts and how the different funding streams are used and split up. MJ confirmed that VPT has two bank accounts, one for the majority of VPT's project which contains the BID levy income, and a separate account for Glan Afan which contains the project's funding income and any income from rent and board room hire. MJ to ask accountants for split accounts that clearly show the difference between the incomes and expenditures of the two accounts.</p> <p>Tracey questioned who Laura Jenkins had worked for. MJ confirmed that Laura Jenkins had worked for VPT on the Glan Afan project and that the post was wholly funded by the Coastal Communities Fund.</p> <p>Tracey questioned why the board didn't implement the break clause in board meeting 25. RJ explained that board agreed that it was better to keep Glan Afan open than to have another empty unit in town.</p> | <p><b>MJ: Request clearer accounts from Accountancy Solutions for previous years and going forward. Send new version of accounts to delegates when received.</b></p> |

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|  | <p>Multiple people spoke at once in response. JM called the meeting to order.</p> <p>Will raised concerns about the extent of activities on Forge Road during events. MJ explained the safety concerns that had affected the Forge Road activities at the event that Will referenced (2021 Christmas Parade when there had been a storm). Will raised concerns about the Forge Road bollards installed by NPTCBC circa 2020 and felt they aren't used.</p> <p>Tracey questioned the decisions made in regard to the coffee shop pop-up cooking onsite in board meeting 25. RJ and JM explained that the board were aware of and agreed to the level of cooking that is currently being undertaken.</p> <p>Richard asked the board to explain the reasons why the board decided to keep Glan Afan open. JM explained the background of the Coastal Communities Fund, the timeline of the project and that the changes put in place following board meeting 25 have made the centre more sustainable.</p> <p>Tracey questioned if any structural changes had been made in the setting up of the coffee shop pop-up, and if so, how had the changes been funded. RJ confirmed that access to water supply was plumbed in and that this was funded by the coffee shop pop-up business owner.</p> <p>Tracey questioned what the BID and the pop-up businesses currently in-residence plan to do if the BID does not secure a second term in its renewal ballot. RJ confirmed that, in this case, the BID would cease to exist as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and would enter discussions with Coastal Housing regarding the lease, and that the pop-up businesses would have to make decisions regarding their future business plans then.</p> <p>NH expressed her feelings about the annual Christmas lights donation campaigns and the level of work done in the background by volunteers on behalf of the town. NH reiterated that the board want people to be 'on board' with the BID and want to hear their feedback.</p> <p>NH questioned what the delegation feels the core problem is. Melissa and Latife raised concerns that fees for hospitality businesses are high and felt it is unfair for the coffee shop pop-up, as another hospitality business, to be paying a lower rate of rent and bills. Melissa raised concerns of a conflict of interest between RJ and the coffee shop pop-up owner.</p> <p>Tracey questioned whether the board's decisions to not implement the Glan Afan break clause and to accept the proposed coffee shop pop-up during board meeting 25 were made in panic. JM explained that the decisions were fully discussed and considered by the board.</p> <p>Tracey questioned how much Glan Afan costs were and reiterated that the accounts were confusing. RJ and MJ confirmed again that MJ will ask</p> |  |
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|  | <p>accountants for split accounts showing the difference between the VPT and Glan Afan costs. MJ explained that VPT contributed £2,000 to Glan Afan in its first year as a form of rent. Richard reiterated the confusion around the accounts and the difference between VPT and Glan Afan. MJ and JE explained that VPT is a company and Glan Afan is a project run by VPT.</p> <p>Sarah and Tracey asked about the Glan Afan project costs and the annual rent paid to Coastal Housing. RJ responded. JM explained in more depth about how overheads had been cut in recent months.</p> <p>Tracey raised concerns that the Glan Afan project hasn't done what it intended and asked that the entire board resign.</p> <p>Matthew and Cassius raised concerns about flooding the hospitality market and leeching trade. MC refuted this.</p> <p>Billy explained that the BID currently has no benefit to his business and questioned if it can be removed or exempted from the BID. MJ explained the BID regulations and noted that the renewal ballot will take place in December 2024. Billy explained that he is happy with the BID's benefits on the town centre and noted that his business doesn't benefit. Billy raised concerns about parking – RJ and MJ explained that VPT has previously explored a cheaper parking initiative but that the cost to cover were beyond the VPT budget.</p> <p>Tracey asked how the BID and the delegation can move forward. Matthew asked for more transparency and more newsletters. JE passed around newsletter sign-up sheet. Matthew requested a petition to Tesco to reopen its Station Road entrance. RJ explained that VPT has previously questioned the planning permission of this but have been refuted.</p> <p>MJ and JM explained that the board's decisions were made with good intentions. Tracey expressed that she appreciated this but that trust has been lost in the process.</p> <p>Matthew expressed feelings that the front pop-up space wasn't advertised openly. MJ and JM refuted this.</p> <p>Richard asked what the plans are for Glan Afan after the Coastal Communities Fund money has been fully spent. MJ explained that this would depend on the outcome of the BID ballot.</p> <p>JM explained her view of the various offerings from the hospitality businesses in the town centre and expressed feelings that these businesses won't be affected as a result of the coffee shop pop-up opening.</p> <p>Multiple people spoke at once in response.</p> | <p><b>JE: Add emails from sign-up sheet to newsletter subscriber list.</b></p> |
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|  | <p>Tracey left at 19:25.</p> <p>Sarah raised concerns that the coffee shop pop-up can undercut the permanent hospitality businesses in the town centre without financial loss. Melissa expressed feeling that the decision-making process regarding the coffee shop pop-up seemed to have been done incorrectly.</p> <p>Sarah and Louise left at 19:27.</p> <p>Melissa explained that she does not want to join the board and does not feel that would be a solution. Melissa expressed feeling let down and feels that, as the Chair, RJ is allowing other businesses to be undercut by his son as the coffee shop pop-up owner. Melissa explained that if the coffee shop pop-up doesn't undercut, it has the chance to make more of a profit margin. Melissa expressed feeling that a rent of £720 for a coffee shop is not reasonable and that RJ presenting the coffee shop pop-up proposal on behalf of son was not fair and created a benefit for son. She felt that that RJ is benefitting indirectly.</p> <p>Matthew expressed feeling that no result that anyone wanted had been achieved and requested the board to justify the reasons behind its decisions.</p> <p>Multiple conversations began at once. JE called order.</p> <p>SJ suggested that businesses from the delegation need to find a way to get their opinions formerly expressed to the board in the future without heated discussions being brought to the board meetings. Explained that this would not require the delegation members to join the board but that there needed to be a system in place.</p> <p>NH clarified the issues arising:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clarity required on the breakdown of accounts.</li> <li>2. Glan Afan as a project is not viewed as a problem. The rent agreement with the coffee shop pop-up is viewed as a problem.</li> <li>3. The retail businesses present don't feel the benefits of the BID's activities.</li> </ol> <p>NH asked the remaining delegates if they really did want the whole board to resign, to which they replied no. NH questioned if the delegation see what VPT's aims are. Unanimous yes response. NH explained that VPT has budget limitations and that businesses often don't see how much time and money is put into discussions with the council that sometimes go nowhere. NH asked delegation to consider what VPT adds to the town centre when casting their votes in the renewal ballot and explained that, in the case of a no result, all activities done by VPT would cease to continue. NH suggested that a nominated representative from the group of delegates could come to the</p> |  |
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|  | <p>board – not necessarily in meetings – to give feedback.</p> <p>Richard expressed feeling that the coffee shop pop-up had been subsidised and that it has undermined VPT's work.</p> <p>Cassius left 19:41.</p> <p>NH asked for clarity on what the delegation wanted from the meeting. Will requested to see more activity on Forge Road. Richard expressed feeling that the coffee shop pop-up had an unfair advantage and felt that the decision-making process was flawed. Melissa requested for the coffee shop pop-up to pay more rent.</p> <p>Melissa requested RJ stand down as chair. RJ confirmed that this would be discussed at the next board meeting. Latife expressed feeling that running a hospitality business is more expensive than a retail business and that therefore rent for a pop-up hospitality business should be more than what rent would be for a pop-up retail business in the same space.</p> <p>Debbie questioned when the coffee shop pop-up lease comes to an end. RJ confirmed 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and that the owner is already looking for premises to move into on a permanent basis.</p> <p>Billy questioned whether the front space could be filled by another coffee shop pop-up upon the current coffee shop pop-up's departure. MJ, JM and NH confirmed that this would be considered by the board if proposed. Melissa reiterated Latife's feeling that any other coffee shop pop-up in the same space should pay a higher rent than what a retail business would.</p> <p>Richard concluded his thoughts that the accounts weren't clear but was happy that they will have separation; is unhappy with coffee shop pop-up's cooking and his view that there is a conflict of interest and subsidisation; businesses are generally happy with BID and don't want this to tarnish the BID.</p> <p>Matthew expressed feeling that nothing had been resolved in the meeting.</p> <p>MJ thanked the delegation for attending and for expressing their concerns. Noted that this is the greatest amount of feedback the board have received before.</p> <p>NH and JM reiterated their feelings around being volunteers.</p> <p>Melissa and Latife questioned why the coffee shop pop-up owner chose the Glan Afan space. RJ explained that the business is a start-up and is using the pop-up to test the market before committing to a permanent premises. Melissa expressed feeling that the coffee shop pop-up adds nothing new to the town centre off. Discussion around the definition of cooking again.</p> | <p><b>Board: To discuss the matter of Chairperson at next board meeting.</b></p> |
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|  | <p>NH reiterated the open offer to join the board and expressed appreciation of having had feedback.</p> <p>All delegates left 19:58. JE collected newsletter sign-up list.</p> |  |
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