Board Meeting 49
Wednesday, 2nd September
4pm, Barista's Café

Attendees
Richard Jones, Selections Gift Shop (RJ)
Melanie Cole, Barista's (MC)
Sally Jones, Resident (SJ)
Julia Harries, Aberafan Shopping Centre (JH)
Lucy Richards, Boots (LR) – observer

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

Item	Detail	Action
1.0	**Welcome and apologies** RJ welcomed everyone to the meeting at 16:09. RJ introduced the board to LR.	
2.0	**Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising** **2.1. Confirmation of minutes** Those present agreed the minutes were a true reflection of the meeting. **2.2. Matters arising** **2.2.1. Tesco manager** MC updated that there is now a new manager in post. MC to find out when they are starting and let MJ know to discuss the heritage trail. **2.2.2. Outstanding pitch fees** JE updated that she had not managed to phone the two traders with outstanding payments yet and no payments have been received in the meantime. RJ volunteered to phone the traders. **2.2.3. Christmas event** MJ and JE have spoken with JM Entertainment to give an idea of the new event plan and are setting a date to meet with them to discuss what they can provide. JH updated that the ASC Santa's grotto theme would feature a polar train set for a more classic Christmas theme. The board discussed the general event plan; there will be no parade but there will be other activities around town to try to increase dwell time. JH, MJ, and JE discussed how the grand entrance for Santa could work	**MC: Find out Tesco manager info.** **RJ: Phone outstanding traders.**

	this year. MC suggested booking singers she knows and asked JH for singer inside. LR asked about putting signs outside to point people to the grotto inside. RJ noted there will be roughly £2,000 extra that could be spent as there will be no Christmas lights scheme to donate to this year. The board discussed the event structure and agreed the following: • The event will run from 10:30am to 2pm. • The outside portion of the event will consist of children's activities from JM Entertainment on Station and Forge Road, including the inflatable snow globe, the trampoline trailer, and side show stalls. There will be roughly twenty market stall pitches available on Station Road. • The inside portion of the event will consist of musical entertainment on stage, and a sleigh photo opportunity from JM Entertainment. There will be a maximum of six market stall pitches in the downstairs mall area. • The focal point of the event will be Santa arriving in ASC at 12pm. Musical entertainment will take place from 11:15am before Santa's arrival and after until 2pm. • There will be no children's characters at the event (e.g. the Grinch, princesses, superheroes, mascots). • Inside stalls will cost £60, and outside stalls will cost £30. The money from inside stalls will go toward the musical entertainment in ASC. • If bad weather affects the event, all outdoor activities will be cancelled, and outside stalls will be offered a space upstairs in ASC. JH to enquire with Portablo Arts to borrow stage panels for the event. JH to also enquire with her contact at a tribute entertainment company about booking a main act to do two slots. The board discussed booking a steel band to roam outside; MJ to enquire about this. LR and JH discussed the Boxing Day bank holiday. The board discussed the free parking days in the run-up to Christmas. RJ suggested asking the NPTC regeneration manager directly about when this would be – MJ to do this. LR left at 16:47.	**JH: Enquire for stage panels and act.** **MJ: Enquire with steel band.** **MJ: Enquire about free parking days.**
3.0	**Programme**	

	3.1. Loyalty card RJ updated that 17 completed loyalty cards have been exchanged for vouchers; 8 of these have been spent already. MJ asked why the board think the scheme didn't work this time. RJ believes it is due to fewer businesses taking part, and businesses not pushing it as much. The board did not think raising the sticker threshold to £15 affected it. MC suggested it could be due to the affect of the hot weather, as this has badly affected indoor hospitality businesses. The board discussed how to make the scheme more effective if it is done again; RJ suggested a small flyer could be given with card to better explain to customers how it works. The board agreed to look at running the scheme again in two years' time. **3.2. Heritage trail** MJ updated that the application to the Heritage, Culture, Tourism, and Events (HCTE) Fund had been successful, and the trail would receive £10,800 from the fund. MJ is currently working on contacting building owners for relevant permissions. MJ and JE had met with SJ earlier today to discuss the trail content; SJ had previously written most of it, but some parts need to be tweaked. The project needs to be finished by the end of March. **3.3. Brag boards** RJ explained the idea for JH. MJ updated that she had not yet heard back on the application for funding, but should hear sometime this month. JH suggested using the working in the wheel silhouette as a custom shape for the boards. **3.4. Christmas event** Discussed in 2.2.3. **3.5. Summer festival** RJ explained that VPT should have enough money to host some sort of summer event in 2027. The previous Retro Fests were quite expensive, so RJ would like to host an event in Station Road car park with the aim of benefitting the businesses on the non-pedestrianised end of Station Road. The event would take place in the afternoon through to early evening to help the nighttime economy and encourage people to get takeaways from Station Road to event. MJ has looked into the cost of hiring the car park with the council; hire is £500 a day, plus an additional £300 to open height restriction barrier – this would be required if bringing in a stage. MJ asked the board if the event should take place before or during the summer school holidays;	

	the board had no preference. The board agreed to go ahead with looking into the feasibility and cost of the event. MJ asked if there should be a theme to it; RJ suggested a tribute act theme. MJ and JE to look at dates.	**MJ and JE: Look at date for summer event.**
4.0	**Marketing** JE updated the board with the following figures: • Facebook: 7170 followers down to 7160 (-10) • Instagram: 1348 followers down to 1347 (-1) RJ noted that the post for the loyalty card scheme didn't do as well as in previous year; JE explained that Facebook no longer allows mass tagging in a post, so all of the businesses taking part couldn't be tagged in. JH updated that the ASC Facebook page had reached 10,000 followers.	
5.0	**Finance** **5.1. Income/Expenditure Report** RJ updated that there is roughly £17,000 in the Viva Port Talbot bank account. MJ said there should be more levy money to draw down from the council soon; this should be enough for the Christmas event and to carry over into the 27/28 financial year.	
6.0	**AOB** JH updated that ASC will be hosting the Armed Forces Festival on Saturday 24th October. The board discussed antisocial behaviour in town over the summer holidays; this had affected businesses both inside and outside. RJ requested to JH that ASC create a positive social media post to remind people that there are plenty of businesses in the centre and that more are coming. JH updated that there has been interest in a few of the vacant ASC units. The board discussed upcoming closures. JH discussed ASC taking advantage of the vacant Pep&Co unit for pop-up and commercial opportunities while it remains vacant.	
7.0	**Date of next meeting** Wednesday, 14th October, 4:30pm. Meeting concluded at 17:21.	