



**Minutes of the Meeting of Glynneath Town Council
held on a remote basis in accordance with the provisions of
The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020.
at 6.30pm on Tuesday 23rd June 2020**

Councillors Present: Cllr S Knoyle (Mayor)

Cllr G Reynolds	Cllr J Collins
Cllr C Edwards	Cllr J Roberts
Cllr H Morgan	Cllr S McMenamin
Cllr S Evans	Cllr R Knoyle
Cllr M Powell	Cllr R Simons
Cllr D Morgan	Cllr J Evans
Cllr J Gregory	

Clerk: Mrs A Thomas

1. Presiding

The Mayor, Cllr S Knoyle.

2. To receive item apologies for absence

None received.

3. To receive members declarations of interest in respect of the business to be transacted

Cllr C Edwards	Personal, NPTCBC Member
Cllr S Knoyle	Personal, NPTCBC Member
Cllr D Morgan	Personal, Secretary Glynneath RFC NPTCBC Member
Cllr J Evans	One Voice Wales – Potential Work Personal, Trustee Glynneath Silver Valley Brass Band
Cllr M Powell	Personal, Secretary Friends of the Town Hall

4. To receive item Clerk's Report on Public Questions

Four questions were received from two members of the public:

1. Would Councillors agree with me that, whatever decision is reached regarding the chapel, Glynneath Town Council should not underwrite those wanting to take on responsibility for the building and in effect become the bank of last resort?

The Mayor confirmed that this item was on later in the agenda and that this question would be taken into consideration at that point during the meeting.

2. Is it appropriate under the constraints of the present global pandemic, for the Council to rescind the permission for a survey to be carried out by Friends of Bethania particularly as funds have been granted, a consultant has been commissioned, some initial work has commenced and steps have been taken to formulate Terms of Reference as a starting point for discussion with the Council?

The Mayor confirmed that this question would be discussed later in the agenda under the appropriate agenda item.

3. What avenues did Glynneath Town Council explore to find alternative models for the running of the Community Café at Bethania and can evidence be provided that the Council made any investigations to acquire new operators for the Community Café?

The Mayor referred back the resolution of Council at it's special meeting on 2nd March 2020, at which it was agreed "To immediately look at alternative options for a service to support the current users of the community café." The focus of Council was to support the current users of the community café, however, this may not necessarily not have been in the format of keeping the café open. Therefore the Council was not under an obligation to acquire new operators of the Community Café.

4. Councillor Simon Knoyle's proposals are very detailed but appear to lack one fundamental point which is that none of them will contribute to the increased footfall on Glynneath's High Street; in fact, they reduce opportunities for increased use of shops and facilities on the High Street. In view of this fact, does Glynneath Town Council have plans for the regeneration of the High Street and the resulting enhanced experience for the inhabitants of the town and increased prosperity for local traders, whilst encouraging visitors and new trades people to the area?

The Mayor advised that the Town Council had unanimously agreed to the Community Plan which outlined the future plans that the Town Council were exploring and wished to achieve which would ultimately contribute to the regeneration of Glynneath.

The Clerk confirmed if members of the public were not satisfied with the response received, they could contact the Clerk following the meeting for further information.

5. **To consider item motion to rescind resolution "Glynneath Town Council grant permission for the Friends of Bethania to arrange for a feasibility**

study to be carried out on Bethania Community Centre, with Members of Glynneath Town Council to have input into the Terms of Reference for the study’ from the Full Council meeting held on 10th March 2020 in accordance with Standing Order 6(a) (Cllrs M Powell, J Roberts, S Evans)

Some Members expressed their concern that only the previous week documents had been sent in reference to the Terms of Reference for the study. It was queried why work had not progressed since the meeting held in March. Members were understanding that the current pandemic may have hindered progress initially however, it was suggested by some that more progress could have been made remotely on the study.

Cllr Evans advised that he had done some research with regards to the financial viability of the building, and at this time it would not be financially viable to maintain or continue to fund the building.

Not all Members were in agreement with the motion and suggested that it was unfair to the Friends of Bethania to consider this item in light of the current global pandemic.

Some Members expressed their concern that the Friends of Bethania have not been keeping the Town Council up to date with progress of the study, including the delays in the study taking place. It was acknowledged that the only update provided by the Friends of Bethania since 10th March, has been provided in response to the Clerk actively asking for an update.

The Clerk advised that if the resolution is rescinded then there could be some financial/legal liabilities arising out of the decision to rescind and Members should be aware of this before any decision is taken. Further legal advice would need to be sought to confirm the liabilities.

Members were again reminded that a pandemic would impact a lot of projects and also the consultant appointed to undertake the survey.

Following discussion

(A recorded vote was requested)

Resolved: To rescind the resolution Glynneath Town Council grant permission for the Friends of Bethania to arrange for a feasibility study to be carried out on Bethania Community Centre, with Members of Glynneath Town Council to have input into the Terms of Reference for the study’ from the Full Council meeting held on 10th March 2020.

For: Cllrs H Morgan, J Collins, J Evans, S McMenamin, J Roberts, M Powell, S Evans, R Simons

Against: Cllrs G Reynolds, R Knoyle, D Morgan, J Gregory, C Edwards

Abstain: Cllr S Knoyle

**6. To consider item Bethania Community Centre
a) Proposal received from Cllr Simon Knoyle**

Cllr S Knoyle went through the report and outlined the reasons for drafting the report.

Some Members expressed their concerns about the report and suggested that some things in the report were flawed. Some Members suggested that the Town Council were in the best position to secure the building and that they should continue to hold on to their assets for the benefit of the community.

Concerns were expressed with regards to where staff Members would work from if the building were disposed of. Reference was made to the closure of the café and noted that the rating had gone down during its last inspection. However, if some work had been done to the café, then this would probably have improved.

Members were reminded that the café could not be used to support the community during the pandemic as it was not suitable for the purpose.

Some Members pointed out that that asset adds value to the community in terms of its legacy, but it adds no monetary value to the community and Town Council. There is no breakeven points at which the asset does not cost the community money. It is not a viable long-term option

Members were asked to consider the community that the Town Council serves, and Members owe a duty to the community to deliver value.

Members were reminded that there is significant repair work required to the building. The Health & Safety work required and recently agreed would be commencing week beginning 6th July 2020.

Members were asked to be more risk averse and consider the longer-term use of the building. Reference was made to the project in Merthyr which was mentioned during the Friends of Bethania's presentation in March. It is noted the official accounts show that the project is struggling in terms of funding.

Following discussion

(A recorded vote was requested)

Resolved: To move the Town Council staff out of the building and close the building as soon as practicable. To dispose of the asset as soon as practicable.

For: Cllrs H Morgan, J Collins, G Reynolds, R Knoyle, J Evans, S McMenamin, J Roberts, M Powell, S Evans, R Simons, S Knoyle
Against: Cllrs D Morgan, J Gregory, C Edwards
Abstain: None

Members discussed giving the Friends of Bethania the first opportunity to take over the building. However, it was generally agreed that the Town Council, in the interests of the public, should generate the best market value for the

building that they could obtain. This was set out in guidance, however special dispensation to not do this could be given if there was a suitable argument for this.

In order to progress this item it was agreed

(A recorded vote was requested)

Resolved: To obtain three market valuations for the building as soon as possible. To allow community groups the opportunity to come forward to discuss the purchase of the building. To advise the Friends of Bethania they may continue with the feasibility study if they wish to do so but advise the friends that the Town Council are taking active steps to dispose of the building.

For: Cllrs H Morgan, J Collins, G Reynolds, R Knoyle, J Evans, S McMenamin, J Roberts, M Powell, S Evans, R Simons, S Knoyle
Against: Cllrs D Morgan, J Gregory, C Edwards
Abstain: None

7. To consider item Finance & Administration:

a) To approve item payment schedule as presented

Resolved: To approve item payment schedule as presented

b) To consider item report of the Internal Auditor for the Year End 31st March 2020

The Clerk went through the report. Whilst the report does outline the failings of Glynneath Town Council in certain aspects of its financial administration, the Clerk pointed out to Members that it also shows improvements in certain areas and that this would continue to improve over the coming financial year.

Some Members expressed their disappointment to read the contents of the report, given that they had been led to believe that improvements were being made during the last financial year.

Resolved: To note report for information and refer to the next Finance & Audit Committee for further consideration and an action plan to be developed to act upon items raised in report

c) To consider item quotes received for improvements to Tennis Courts

The Clerk expressed her concern in the disparity between quotes obtained. There was concern that as the quotations had been given using photographs of the site then perhaps the full extent of the works required was considered.

Members were advised that there was a budget in place for general maintenance of the parks.

Resolved: To refer this item to the Parks Committee for further consideration

d) To note for information decisions made under Emergency Delegated Powers

Resolved: To note for information

e) To consider item approval of Staff Training at a cost of £630

Members noted the importance of staff training and that it was up to date.

Resolved: To approve item staff training at a cost of £630

f) To approve item legionella testing in line with H&S requirements at a cost of £100/building

Resolved: To approve item legionella testing in line with H&S requirements

8. To consider item to reinstate committee meetings

The Clerk went through the report outlining the details for reinstating committee meetings. It included reinstating all committee meetings, except the HR Committee due to confidentiality issues.

Resolved: To reinstate all Committee meetings except the HR committee at this time

9. To approve item CCTV Policy

Members were in general agreement that it would be a good idea to seek advice from NPTCBC on this item and report back to a future meeting of the Town Council.

10. To approve item removal of conifer trees at Glynneath War Memorial

Resolved: To approve removal of conifer trees at Glynneath War Memorial

11. To consider item HR Support proposal

Members were provided with a report outlining the HR support proposal and the Clerk advised of the importance of the Town Council Employer role and ensuring that employees were dealt with and supported accordingly and in line with legislation.

Members were in agreement that this would benefit the Town Council.

Resolved: To support the HR proposal as outlined with the associated costs

12. To confirm date, time, venue for next meeting

Tuesday 28th July at 6.30pm, to be held remotely.

The meeting concluded at 8.30pm.