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Report of Incomings and Outgoings of Bethania Community Cafe

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1. **Introduction and Purpose**
This report has been written to present the data from the Bethania Community Café and a wider look at the Bethania Community Centre. While the report does have elements of information about the Community Centre, it was written with the main focus being the Community Café.

In late November 2022, the Community Café started running with staff contracted for twenty hours per week. The opening times of the café are from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm each week day. There is provision for a total of 19 persons seated at tables and four persons seated at a smaller coffee table. This can, understandably change based on the types of visitors to the café and what seating arrangements need to be accommodated (ie, wheelchairs, scooters and prams). There are currently no high chairs available and all seating and tables were in situ at the time of opening.

The Community Café was inspected and rated by NPTCBC Food Hygiene and standards department upon opening and obtained a 5-star food rating. It has since been inspected by Trading Standards who were satisfied that it was compliant with current good practice. There are a total of seven food hygiene trained staff and volunteers who could attend or oversee the running of the café.

All paid staff are on Council Payroll. For the purposes of this report, wage payments have been condensed together over the two staff members to provide for GDPR compliance and have been rounded **up**.

Receipts and payments will be presented in a separate document (excel) for the café and the community centre. A breakdown of users will be provided for a two week period and a further extrapolated breakdown of users will be provided from months previous to this one.

2. Scope and Method

This report is focusing on the running of the Community Café but some reference to the Community Centre is also made in so far as figures are accurate to the 14th of June 2023. This is purely down to workload and reconciling figures within the software. These were the figures most recently reconciled and processed (with attending invoice slips etc).

In using the receipts and payments method in the excel spreadsheet, the costs of the Centre and the Café have been split as fairly as possible. Under the centre heading, cost centres such as waste and rates have been delegated to the Centre with no part payments for the café. These costs remain regardless of whether the café is running or not.

Waste – it should be noted that the Town Council pays NPTCBC for trade waste at this location and not at the Town Hall. This is similar in practice to the Welfare Park paying trade waste, but not Ynys y Nos or the Dynamic Park. These costs would be incurred regardless of which facility they are based in.

Rates – the Bethania Community Centre is the second lowest rate payment of the four assets that Glynneath Town Council provide. The lowest cost in terms of rates is the Cemetery.

Cleaning and maintenance items – these are things such as toilet rolls (which have been split from other asset provisions), and anything that has been bought centrally through the administrative team rather than specifically declared through Café payments.

Utilities – water is charged over each quarter and is paid for from meter rather than a standard charge. Therefore, the costs of the first quarter of water have been omitted from the costs of the Café and attributed entirely to the Centre (as Café wasn't open until November). In other sections, the utilities have been split with 70% allocated to the Café and 30% allocated to the Centre. This is only different in March where 85% was allocated to the Café and 15% was allocated to the Centre. This is an attempt to account for the energy that would be used as a place of work for the administrative team and the constant use of energy for provision of the phone line, internet, and CCTV.

It also needs to be noted that until very recently, all utility bills have been calculated as estimates and in the period immediately following March 2023, the energy bill of the Bethania Community Centre and Café have drastically reduced due to a combination of overpayments and the use of an air frier rather than the oven in the kitchen.

The main excel sheet that accompanies this document runs from April 2022 until March 2023 as per the FYE 2023. This is the most complete set of data as we are in our audit period and the accounts have been confirmed and reconciled. Further months from March 2023 are accurate but separate on the accounting software.

Prior to January 2023, the Café receipts and payments were kept in a paper format as the accounting wasn't anticipated to be necessary on a more than weekly basis. The practice changed when the receipts increased, and the staff moved to a daily takings and order practice along with the provision of more substantial food items.

Income – the hire of the Bethania (either upstairs or downstairs) is accounted for in the income section of the Community Centre. The receipts from the café are accounted for in the section of the Café, along with any donations that have been received separately (such as when customers have advised to 'keep the change' or have asked to donate money rather than accept a free refill). It should be noted that the provision of prepared food and drinks incurs VAT. The Café does not claim back the VAT from the payments (such as buying provisions) currently but does have to pay VAT on its takings. This is accounted for in the software package and is declared.

The wages of the staff members are rounded up to £200 per week prior to April 2023 and £210 per week thereafter.

For the demographics section, the staff have kept a log of users which spanned two weeks. Other data has been inferred from older receipt and order book slips. This older method will *not* be complete but is indicative enough where it has been included.

"Value for money" is not a term that this report is going to define. For businesses, this term varies enough, but for a local council provision, it's unclear how this should be interpreted. Instead, this report will provide some evidential basis should Members wish to consider their own terminology.

3. Results

The Community Café has been in receipt of two grants over the past year of operating – a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund, and a £1,200 grant from NPTCBC Warm Hub fund. Both grants have been accounted for in the income section of the first excel spreadsheet FYE 2023.

For Year End 2023, the Community Café made total payments of £5,368.54 including wages and utility contributions. It received a total of £12,184. The Café always receives more in Café takings than it pays in ordering the food and drinks.

Until 14th June 2023, the total payments (including wages and utility contribution) has been: £3,308.99. Of this, £2,310 is grant funded as per National Lottery and £230.00 is from the Warm Hub Grant. To break even the Community Café would need to have made £769.00 (rounded up).

To the 14th of June 2023, the Community café made £951 (rounded down).

In terms of demographics, over a two-week period, there were a total of 143 visitors to the Café. Over ten days, this averages 14 people per day and the busiest day saw 23 visitors to the premises.

The majority of people visiting are over 40 years of age with a good proportion over 60 years of age. The café sees a good split of men and women, but women tend to attend in groups together. The café has one day every two weeks, where it is visited by six or seven mothers with prams, pushchairs, and toddlers. The café also hosts a Welsh conversational class on a Wednesday where attendance is understood to be free, and the users purchase drinks.

There has been one day in the two weeks documented where workmen have visited for breakfast. These have been local people or people who have visited the café in years previous. There are regular elderly customers who have attended since they have known it was open. Occasionally, they will take food home with them, but they usually use the space to meet up with friends. One user, in particular, frequents different places through the week and has a routine of visiting on set days. About a third of the customers require assisted access and seating or further accommodations (such as smaller cups, easier to use condiments etc). There are around five or six regular users with walking aids and appreciate table service for their stay.

Along with a group for Welsh, the café also supports the local PCSO on occasion, NHS CMST groups (and as a touching base point), NPTCBC Safe and Well, and has had visitors from other NPTCBC groups along with NPTCVS.

The café supports the inclusion of well-behaved pets and is regularly attended by four dogs. There have been no users with guidance or assistance dogs to date.

4. Conclusion

To date, the Community Café does not cost the Town Council money to run and has provided income above its expenditure. The service provides a space for an average of 14 people per day, many of whom are regulars through the week on different days and continues to see new people throughout. Some of these customers then bring other new customers with them, and while the proliferation of numbers is slow, it is demonstrated in the data.

There have been no weeks where the cost of procuring the food and drink has not been met or exceeded by the takings in selling the items. The Café currently provides for two staff members on a part time basis with a combined total of 20 hours per week between them. Lessons have been learned regarding the accounting structure of the service and it has, to date, been run with minimal advertising efforts and an incomplete menu.

It is not for this report to consider ‘value for money’ in the public sector and this service isn’t operating in the private sector.

The budget for the 2023-2024 year for the Bethania Community Centre is £12,050[1].

This amounts to £8.68 per band D[2] *household* per year. This does not include staff wages.

If this report includes staff wages that aren’t currently grant funded, then that figure increases to cost the band D *household* £12.01 per year or £1 per month. That is then the cost of the *full* provision of the Community Centre **and** Community Café to the households of council tax payers.

5. Further Notes

a. The National Lottery Community Fund, which was used previously is open for applications with a six-to-twelve-week turnaround on their feedback. They support applications that cater for new projects within their scope or continue projects that they’ve funded previously up to a maximum of two applications per year of £10,000 each. The provision of the community café will fall within scope for funding again should Council wish to apply.

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[1] For reference, FYE 2020, the budget was £25,962, and FYE 2021, the budget was £21,304. In the FYE 2020, the Café income was £9,996. It is unclear how this was broken down in the spreadsheets that are able to be accessed at this time.

[2] 79% of the homes in Neath Port Talbot are in bands A, B, or C.