

# DARRAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## CYNGOR GYMUNED CWM DARRAN

### Minutes of the meeting of the above Community Council on:

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 6.00 pm using Microsoft Teams

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#### **Present**

Cllr. D. Nicholas (In the Chair)

Cllr. R. Chapman

Cllr. H Hollifield

Cllr. A Vincent

Cllr. E Blanche

Cllr. D Johnson

Cllr. D Hardacre

#### **Absent and Apologies**

Cllr. G. Matthews

Cllr. P Roberts

#### **In Attendance**

Ms. A Pallister      Clerk

#### **058 Minutes and Apologies**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, previously circulated to members were accepted as an accurate record. They were not signed as the meeting was remote during the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### **059 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

#### **060 Matters Arising**

Matters Arising from the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 meeting of Council. There were no specific matters to update and report.

#### **061 Planning Applications**

The Clerk confirmed there were no applications in relation to the Darran Valley Community Council, however concern was raised that we have received no updates for some months. Council requested the Clerk write to planning and find out why none have been received.

#### **062 Correspondence**

062.01 The Clerk received a letter from PC Rhys Griffiths:

*'Dear Councillors, I would like express my apologies for my lack of presence in this evenings meeting. I am on rest days so therefore have compiled a brief report for the December 2020 period. I have attended meetings previously and I believe many of you already know me. However, I have more recently taken over the Darran Valley Ward from my previous Ward of New Tredegar. I will be your Point of Contact should you wish to speak to an officer. I will endeavour to deal with any ongoing incidents you wish to report slow-time. However, if you wish to report ongoing incidents which require an immediate*

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*response from an officer should be done via the Non – Emergency number 101 or Emergency number 999. When I am in work my mobile is switched on. However, if it's not drop me a text or leave me a Voicemail and I'll get back to you as soon as I am next on shift.*

*Firstly, I would like to personally thank you as a Community Council for supporting our Halloween Pumpkin Poster event which took place in October. We managed to give out over 100 bags of goodies to children throughout Fochriw & Deri. It was a massive success that I feel brought our communities together at such a difficult time for so many people.*

*We have seen no significant increase in crime within the Darran Valley over the December period. However, as you can appreciate, we do have isolated incidents within the villages which occur and do not pose any risk to other members of the community. We are continuing to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour which occurs within the area. Regular patrols of all areas are undertaken by officers from the Neighbourhood Policing Team and are supported by our colleagues from the Response Team. For your Information, patrols of Cwm Darran Parc are being conducted to deter people visiting by vehicle. Current Government Guidance is that Essential exercise should be undertaken from the home address. Another community concern across the board is that of the new Local Authority street lighting situation whereby significant parts of highway are now unlit after a certain time in the evening. I specifically noticed this along a section of Bailey Street which is particularly dark. However, we have not seen this as being linked to any increase in crime or ASB within the Darran Valley Ward areas.*

*Below are our 'Priority Areas' which we are continue to monitor closely.*

*Fochriw – Vehicle ASB within the carpark of Cae Glas & Community Centre.*

*Fochriw – Youth Annoyance around Rhodfa Ganol.*

*Fochriw – Off Road vehicles being driven on the green spaces within the village. (We are keen to identify riders – any info can be provided to myself & positive action will be taken.)*

*Deri – Speed Awareness - Bailey Street & New Road.*

*Deri – Off Road vehicles being driven on Mill Road leading to Moorland behind 'The Mill.' (We are keen to identify riders – any info can be provided to myself & positive action will be taken.)*

*Any further information, concerns or queries can be passed to me on my email or mobile and I will be happy to chat further.*

*Best wishes,*

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*Rhys'*

Councillors were grateful for the letter from PC Rhys Griffiths and asked the Clerk to write and thank him as well as inform him they are looking forward to meeting / working with him.

*062.02* A member of the public e-mailed the Clerk to report Fly tipping in the village of Fochriw. The Clerk wrote back to the individual asking them to report all issues with Fly tipping to Caerphilly CBC. It was also noted that one of the Darran Valley Community Councillors had already reported it, and it has now been cleared by the local authority.

*062.03* Councillor Helen Hollified provided the following update via e-mail:

*'1. Work in the forestry behind New Road- Work was carried out due to flooding issues over Christmas. Problems were caused by blockages caused by individuals blocking culverts whilst creating a bike jump/track in the forestry and a natural spring. Repair work should be underway to help with a natural waterway that needs diverting/managing in January. The bike jump was removed but if it returns in the same place will cause a similar problem. This information comes from Natural Resources Wales.*

*2. The decayed wooden fencing alongside the Bont Bren river area will be replaced with metal rails at a cost of £3000. I reported it before Christmas along with the state of the walkway and it is now in approval stages.*

*3. Nothing to report on the road crossing petition yet.'* Councillor David Hardacre was able to provide an update on this at the meeting – the petition was handed to Caerphilly CBC, but was rejected as it does not satisfy their conditions. Councillor David Hardacre is going to raise it again and see if they will re-consider. Councillor Hardacre has also informed the member of the public who instigated the petition of this decision.

#### **063 Approval of Community Council Cheques**

The list of payments below were approved by Council:

On-line BACS	£296.83	Clerk January 2021 salary
Total	£296.83	

#### **064 Gwent Police crime update**

The following crime update was received from Gwent Police:

*'We are still experiencing calls regarding anti-social behaviour around the Rhodfa Ganol area. Youths have been causing nuisance to residents in the area. If you hear of anything regarding issues that are ongoing, please contact your neighbourhood team.*

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### 065 Precept and budget 2021-22.

The Clerk shared an updated budget report with Council – see below:

DARRAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL BUDGET REPORT				
Expenditure Heading	Budget	Up to Qtr 4 Expenditure	% of budget	variance with budget (explanation)
Clerks Salary & on costs	£4,500.00	£3,708.30	82	On profile
Chairpersons allowance	£300.00	£300.00	100	On profile
Out of office	£250.00	£250.00	100	On profile
Telephone & broadband	£200.00	£137.68	68	Overspend £81 Broadband costs risen
Room hire	£200.00	£0.00	0	Underspend of £200 as room not being used during Covid
Insurance & subscriptions	£450.00	£444.23	98	On profile
Stationery & postage	£300.00	£42.00	12	Underspend posting less as on-line banking now set up
Website	£600.00	£600.00	100	On profile
Section 19 - 137 grants	£1,500.00	£600.00	40	Underspend of £900
Section 19 - 137 trip	£1,000.00	£0.00	0	Underspend of £1000 no trip due to Covid-19
Christmas lighting	£1,500.00	£4,320.00	288	Spent an extra £2,820 on extra lights in Fochriw / Deri
Audit	£600.00	£200.00	33.33	Internal paid, external due Qr 4 - on profile
Cllr expenses	£450.00	£150.00	33.33	Underspend only 1 Councillor took expense
Wind turbine	£4,777.46	£0.00	0	On profile and dependent on applicants
Summer scheme	£2,000.00	£0.00	0	Underspend of 2,000 no summer scheme due to Covid-19
Council IT	£500.00	£0.00	0	No new IT equipment needed / purchased
ICO Data protection	£40.00	£35.00	87.5	Underspend as Clerk saved £5 setting up as a DD
Donation for Halloween sweets	No budget	£50.00		
Remembrance Sunday	£51.00	£51.00	100	On profile
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£19,718.46</b>	<b>£10,838.21</b>		

Council voted to keep the precept the same (£12,980) with no increase for the next financial year. The Clerk will inform Caerphilly CBC of this decision.

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The Clerk asked all Councillors to consider budget items in time for the next meeting in February.

#### **066 A brief update on the Wind Turbine grants.**

The closing date for the Wind Turbine Grants was 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. The Clerk reported that two applications have been received and are currently being checked and processed.

#### **067 An item from Councillor Eddy Blanche – Dog fouling in Fochriw**

**(a proposal to approach CCBC and ask for the issue to be addressed with increased patrols of their wardens; and to leaflet the villagers pointing out the need to clear up after their dog and the consequences of not doing so).**

Councillor Eddy Blanche raised the issue of dog fouling in the village of Fochriw. Councillor David Hardacre will request a clean-up programme from Caerphilly CBC and will get back to Council with an update.

#### **068 An item from Councillor Paul Roberts – Parking at the bottom of Bailey Street in Deri.**

Councillor Paul Roberts was unable to attend the meeting, but the item was still discussed. All agreed they were concerned with the situation and were worried that an accident could happen. Councillor David Hardacre is going to raise the issue with the Traffic Division as a matter of urgency.

#### **069 – Item not included on the agenda – Councillor David Haradcre' issues with IT / broadband.**

Councillor Hardacre has had issues getting appropriate IT from Caerphilly CBC, meaning he has been unable to join the remote meetings during the lockdown. This has had a significant effect on us as a Town Council, as Councillor Hardacre is the main link to the Borough Council and his input is needed to serve the Darran Valley Community.

At this meeting Councillor Hardacre managed to join the meeting by using his daughter's IT and having him in attendance made a huge difference. The Clerk was asked to put in a formal complaint and to find out why it has taken so long to resolve these issues, and what is being done about it.