

DARRAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CYNGOR GYMUNED CWM DARRAN

Minutes of the meeting of the above Community Council on:

Thursday 4th March 2021 at 6.00 pm using Microsoft Teams

Present

Cllr. D. Nicholas (In the Chair)
Cllr. A Vincent
Cllr. D Johnson
Cllr. E Blanche
Cllr. H Hollifield
Cllr. R Chapman

Absent and Apologies

Cllr. G Matthews
Cllr. D Hardacre – unable to join due to on-going IT issues
Cllr. P Roberts

In Attendance

Ms. A Pallister (Clerk)

081 Members of the public

No requests to attend from members of the public.

082 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

083 To approve the minutes from the meeting on 4th February 2021

The minutes were approved as an accurate representation of the meeting.

084 Matters Arising from the meeting on 4th February 2021 not already included on the agenda.

Matters arising from previous meetings:

Item 067 - An item from Councillor Eddy Blanche – Dog fouling in

Fochriw. Councillor D Johnson organised a survey of dog bins in the village (there are currently 5), however the bin at Glan-Y-Nant was vandalised and needed replacing. Cllr Johnson has contacted Environmental Services and they will ask the dog warden to visit the area more often and replace the bin.

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

Councillor D Hardacre was unable to attend the meeting due to on-going issues accessing IT from home, but the Clerk spoke to him before the meeting. Caerphilly CBC are organising a survey of the area in collaboration with the Police – they will wait for the results of the survey before deciding if any action is needed.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: This needs to be closely monitored.

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Item 073 – Planning Applications. The Clerk contacted Caerphilly CBC as there were concerns that no information on planning applications relating to the Darran Valley had been received for some months. This has now been resolved (the planning department had an old e-mail address no longer being used and have now rectified this).

085 Planning Applications

There were no applications concerning the Darran Valley to report.

086 Correspondence

085.01 From Caerphilly CBC News online dated 28th February 2021

'Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly's Youth Offending Service (YOS) donated 25 colourful bird boxes to Parc Cwm Darren. The donation came in time for National Nestbox Week which ran from February 14-21 and encourages the public to create homes for nesting birds and promotes the conservation and diversity of wildlife. The 25 bird boxes were made and painted by children who carry out reparation activities with the YOS. The focus of reparation is to repair the harm which has been caused by a child's behaviour in the community. The time and effort spent in making and painting the bird boxes not only serves as an apology, but also teaches a child skills and patience while learning about the conservation of declining wildlife.

Cllr. Nigel George, Cabinet member for Waste and Public Protection said: "This is a lovely idea from the YOS for National Nestbox Week. The children will be pleased to know that their handy work is being seen and enjoyed by the local communities and helping declining wildlife by providing safe nesting sites for birds."

085.02 From Caerphilly CBC News online dated 25th February 2021

'The Council would like your views on the introduction of an appointment booking system at all Household Waste Recycling Centres.

This is an approach adopted by councils across the UK and aims to reduce queueing times, reduce congestion from queueing on the highway and provide more opportunities for residents to recycle in a safer and controlled manner.

Residents will be able to book online, by telephone and using other options.

This survey provides the chance for you to give us feedback on these proposals.'

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The Clerk to write to Caerphilly CBC objecting to this proposal. It will increase fly tipping issues in the Darran Valley considerably (there are already problems). The Chair asked the Clerk to let members of the public know this Council is proactively flagging up fly tipping issues with Caerphilly CBC.

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085.03 From Natural Resources Wales dated 3rd March 2021

'I am writing today as we have identified Darran Valley Community Council as a key stakeholder in relation to a project that Natural Resources Wales and the [Co-production Network for Wales](#) are undertaking with communities across what Natural Resources Wales calls the Southern Ebbw area. We would like to work with you to share understanding of some of the scheduled forestry operations Natural Resources Wales will be undertaking in 2021/22 and, more importantly, the challenges and opportunities that this work might have for our neighbours and the people who use these woodlands on a regular basis.

We are hosting some virtual workshops to explore the detail of the forest operations plan with you and to create the opportunity for your knowledge and expertise to help Natural Resources Wales. Our intention is that these sessions can be used not to just provide updates, but to forge meaningful partnerships with key stakeholders that enable us to work better together in a more connected way in the future.

The virtual workshops are aimed at those who are in touch with the needs and interests of those who access woodland in the Southern Ebbw and so we are inviting Local Councillors, Community Councillors and Town Councillors to attend these sessions and work with us.

A more detailed invitation with instructions on how to book a place will follow this email, but we just wanted to share the initial details with you at this stage, to give you the opportunity to think about who is best placed to attend and forward this email as appropriate.

The virtual workshops will take place via Microsoft Teams on:

- **Thursday 25/03/2021** **5:30pm-7:30pm**
- **Tuesday 30/03/2021** **1:30pm-3:30pm**

Both sessions are open to all Local Councillors, Community Councillors and Town Councillors who have a remit across the area. However, if you feel that a bespoke conversation in a smaller group would be more appropriate, please do contact us to discuss.

If you have anything, you'd like to discuss ahead of receiving the invitation to the workshops, please don't hesitate to contact us at your convenience.'

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: Councillors Hollified, Johnson and Blanche were interested – will report back following attendance.

085.04 From the Senior Committee services Officer at Caerphilly CBC

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A report from the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales – ‘Review of the electoral arrangements of the County Borough of Caerphilly Final Recommendations.’

Council noted that the changes do not affect the Darran Valley Boundary areas.

085.05 From the Senior Committee services Officer at Caerphilly CBC

‘I am happy to confirm that a Members Briefing from the Coal Authority in relation to Tip Safety will be held via Microsoft Teams at 5.00pm on Thursday 15th April 2021 and will be open to all Community Councillors to attend.

I will send a Teams meeting link to all Clerks about 3 weeks beforehand, please share with your Councillors.’

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: Councillor Eddy Blanche is interested in attending and will report back.

087 Approval of Community Council Cheques

The list of payments below were approved by Council:

On-line BACS	£296.83	March 2021 salary
On-line BACS	£222.00	HMRC Tax for Clerk’s salary
On-line BACS	£326.10	Audit (Welsh Audit Office) 2019-20
Total	£844.93	

088 Gwent Police crime update

‘We are pleased to say that our joint patrols with the Commons ranger have restarted. This is a great way for us to tackle issues such as off-road bikes and fly tipping across our common. We have received great results in the past so I’m sure we will have some results for you over the next few months!

We are actively patrolling the Fochriw areas for off road bikes, we have had a recent report of damage to the green due to persons riding motorbikes – we are doing all we can to try and identify these persons.

CCBC have agreed to work with us to install a barrier around the green area of the shop and the green space opposite the shop. Hopefully this will help with the reduction of off-road bike issues within the village.

Our neighbourhood team received a lovely ‘hug in the Mail’ from Fochriw and Bryn Awel mini police. This is such a thoughtful gift and our local team is looking forward to working with you once it is safe for us to do so! Keep up the hard work.’

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Councillor Chapman added that there has been a recent incident of 3 bikes riding on the grass areas at the front of the shop in Fochriw - the Police have checked the CCTV and the perpetrators are outside of the area. Following this incident funding has been sourced and a fence will be installed over the next few weeks.

Councillor Chapman also reported that the Police have issued warnings to those parking illegally and causing an obstruction by the bus stop in Fochriw.

089 Budget 2021 – 2022.

All ideas proposed by Councillors were discussed. The table below outlines the proposals and actions to progress for incorporation into the budget 2021/22:

Councillor Name	Budget Idea	Proposal Comments	Proposed by Council	Recommended
Helen Hollifield	Commitment to and investigation into the possibilities for provision for children and young adults during Easter or/and Summer if restrictions are lifted.	Ringfence budget (2020 and 2021 combined) - possibility of resource packs in collaboration with other Town Councils and Caerphilly CBC (if Covid restrictions not lifted). The Clerk and Cllr Hollifield to attend a remote meeting to find out what will be in the resource packs. Too short notice to organise anything for Easter and still unsure about restrictions. Possibly spend money at half term or Christmas 2021. Cllr Chapman would also like to earmark money for the youth club.	Yes	The Clerk to investigate costings to discuss / approve at the April 2021 meeting.
Helen Hollifield	Consider how we might provide online classes access using local fitness groups/trainers or 'artists' over Easter if restrictions aren't lifted.	No time will look again Easter 2022.	No	Deferred until Easter 2022.
Helen Hollifield	Litter picking equipment to be purchased by the council so that we can carry out our own picks in the Spring and join the Spring Pick.	Defer until the Covid restrictions are lifted, however, Cllr Helen Hollifield will contact Andrew King about borrowing the litter picking equipment.	Pending	Cllr Helen Hollifield will contact Andrew King about borrowing the litter picking equipment.
Helen Hollifield	Application for a Local Places for nature grant in the Wildlife category to hopefully develop the grassed areas around the Darran/Brook in Deri https://www.keepwalestidy.cymru/pages/category/nature	Grant for wildflower seeds and turf. The Clerk and Councillor Helen Hollifield will investigate / work on the completion of this grant. Only costs would be for advertising / refreshments and tools.	Yes	The Clerk and Councillor Helen Hollifield will investigate / work on the completion of this grant.
Helen Hollifield	Signage in areas that have a propensity for fly tipping that have the contact details for CCBC so that reporting can be quicker and details the fines imposed.	The Clerk to send a letter to Caerphilly CBC requesting this is actioned and it	Yes	The Clerk to send a letter to Caerphilly CBC requesting this is

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		would be beneficial to the local community as well as them (keep having to clear it).		actioned and it would be beneficial to the local community as well as them (keep having to clear it).
Ann Vincent	An event to help the over 55's with isolation / mental health issues relating to the Covid-19 pandemic	Cllr David Nicholas contacted Darran Valley Community Centre who would organise. Council proposed funding is given to the over 55 Clubs in Deri and Fochriw to organise something they want and will help them feel safe and welcomed. Also proposed funding for the Community Centres with a general event for all ages / mixed generation.	Yes	Clerk to investigate budget for April 2021 for approval. Cllr Ann Vincent investigated during the meeting and an event would be roughly £300, but will investigate what extra funding Council can provide for bingo prizes etc.
David Hardacre	Purchase of 20 more poppies	Unable to put them up in 2021 due to Covid 19. There may be some extra poppies at Parc Cwm Darran, but they are not in a good condition. The Clerk to get costings for new ones and report back.	Yes	The Clerk to investigate costings to discuss / approve at the April 2021 meeting.
Eddy Blanche	Summer activities with Parc Cwm Darran	The Clerk to investigate.	Pending	The Clerk to investigate costings to discuss / approve at the April 2021 meeting.

090 One Voice Wales Membership

The Clerk sent reports to Councillors preceding the meeting outlining the benefits of 'One Voice Wales' membership. One Voice Wales has a policy that membership for new member Councils is reduced by 50% for the first 12 months. This gives Councils an opportunity to test the benefits of membership. The reduced membership fee for Darran Valley Community Council for the first twelve months would be £190.

Membership of One Voice Wales is like membership of any other organisation and the member needs to take advantage of the services and opportunities on offer for the membership to be of benefit. In addition to providing an advice service to the Council via the Chair and/or Clerk complex issues requiring a legal view can be obtained free of charge. They also arrange Area Committee meetings quarterly where up to two Community Council representatives can attend and receive updates on current issues affecting the sector. There is always a guest speaker on a topic of interest to Community & Town Councils

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and member Councils always refer to the networking opportunities the Area Committees provide.

In addition to the above they provide training for Councillors which Clerks are welcome to attend (currently remote) and normally up to three conferences a year.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: Council voted to join One Voice Wales.
Will review again in 12 months.**

**091 Date and time of the next meeting:
Thursday 8th April at 6pm (using Microsoft Teams).**