



**Minutes of the meeting of Darran Valley Community Council on:
Wednesday 14th June 2023 at 6.30 pm (Fochriw Community Centre)**

Present

Cllr. D Johnson (Chair)
Cllr. D. Nicholas
Cllr. M. Gibbings
Cllr. E. Blanche
Cllr. J. Gibbings

Absent and Apologies

Cllr. D. Hardacre
Cllr. R. Chapman

In Attendance

Ms. A Pallister (Clerk)
Representatives from Gwent Police

28 Members of the public

No members of the public attended.

29 Declaration of interest

There were none.

**30 To approve and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd May 2023
(this as the annual general meeting)**

The minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting. Cllr D Nicholas noted one error – councillors also thanked him for his hard work and commitment as Chair.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The Clerk will correct this error.

31 Matters Arising from the meeting of Council on 3rd May 2023 not already included on this agenda.

Item 009 - Councillor attendance at meetings

The community council is concerned about so many meetings being missed by Cllrs B Edwards and D Hardacre. Although there is an understanding that meetings sometimes must be missed due to ill health, family and work commitments, there is a concern when several meetings are not attended. Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 states that when a Councillor does not attend any council meeting for six consecutive months, (s)he ceases to be a member of the council. It was also noted that attendance at council meetings is an official summons.



RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The Clerk to contact Cllrs B Edwards and D Hardacre to express the concerns raised by the Chair and to find out if they are still able to commit to representing the local community as Councillors.

Update from the May 2023 meeting – The Clerk informed Councillors that Cllr B Edwards decided to stand down as a Councillor due to other commitments. The Clerk thanked Cllr Edwards for his contribution and service as Councillor for the Darran Valley.

Update from the June 2023 meeting – The Clerk to send a letter to Cllr D Hardacre.

Item 007.01 – The Chair (Cllr D Nicholas) received a letter from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) regarding the potential closing of Meddygfa Cwm Rhymni surgery at Riverside Walk in Deri. Cllr Nicholas was deeply concerned about this. The local community has praised the great care they receive from the surgery and a number of patients are elderly and would struggle to access the care they need if they have to find transport. The transport links in the area are unreliable and this is likely to put some residents off travelling to get the care they need, likely having a catastrophic effect on any underlying illness if not diagnosed. There are also concerns about the consultation questionnaire, as it's been designed in a way that is loaded with questions that will not evidence the cause and effect of the closure.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The Clerk will write to ABUHB raising concerns about the potential closure, and Emily Janes will write an article in the Caerphilly Observer.

Update from the May 2023 meeting – The Clerk wrote to ABUHB raising the concerns outlined above and received the following reply:

'Hi Amanda

Thank you for informing ABUHB and the surgery of the concerns raised at the April 2023 Councillors meeting. Your concerns will be included in the report that will be presented to the Branch closure panel due to be held in June.

Kind Regards
Joanna Norman
Service Development Manager'

Update from the June 2023 meeting – The clerk has received no update regarding the closure yet.

Item 025 - Summer Scheme 2023

The Clerk has been planning with Sports Caerphilly. A budget of £5000 has been allocated.



RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: Cllr J Gibbings passed on concerns that in a previous year, there was a shortage of staff, and therefore members of Deri Community Centre had to assist. The Clerk will raise this with Sports Caerphilly.

Update from the June 2023 meeting – The clerk spoke to Sports Caerphilly and they provided assurance that there will be enough staff and that they've never had a problem in the past with the summer scheme being oversubscribed, in fact the numbers have been low to adequate.

Item 026 - Councillor Vacancies

Council voted to advertise by co-option.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The Clerk will organise, design, and advertise the posters.

Update from the June 2023 meeting – this was actioned but there are still no applicants.

Item 024 Community Council Budget and Financial Reconciliation 2023-24

Update from the June 2023 – deferred budget entry (Section 137 OAP trip).

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: Both villages (Deri and Fochriw) were authorised a budget of £700 per bus. The clerk was authorised to pay as long as £700 or under.

32 Crime Update

- Representatives from Gwent Police attended in person. There has been a slight decrease in crime through all wards, but a small increase (six calls) for anti-social behaviour compared to the previous month. The Darran Valley May 2023 figures include:
Crime – 6
Anti-social behaviour - 1
- There have also been operations to target drug supply across the Rhymney Valley.
- Operation Harley has continued – this has involved dealing with the anti-social use of bikes and quad bikes. Gwent Police have been working with partners and other agencies to collectively target this issue. Funding requests have been declined for some additional target hardening as CCBC advise they do not have funding; however, Gwent Police continue to explore all viable options to tackle this. They are asking for additional support with providing names and addresses and footage identifying persons using the bikes / quads in an anti-social manner.



- Gwent Police visited Fochriw Primary School to engage with Heddlu Bach children. This was an opportunity to have input on their neighbourhood policing teams, play games and dress up in policing uniforms.
- Cllr M Gibbings noted there was a callout to Ambulance Services for an injured bike scrambler.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The barrier was cut by the perpetrator so the police will investigate this as a potential aggravated trespass.

- Cllr D Nicholas noted there was a fire on the mountain in which a helicopter was deployed to distribute water. The police are working with the fire service to establish whether or not it was arson.
- Police surgeries – the police noted low attendance at the local surgeries.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: Cllr J Gibbings to advertise in local notice boards and the clerk will put on the council website.

- Lighting and shelter in the parks for local youth – there was also a discussion around the need for lighting and shelter in suitable areas for the youth to meet. All agreed this would help reduce anti-social behaviour, but the lighting in the MUGA has not been switched on which needs resolving.
 - Cllr D Johnson noted issues with fly tipping in recent weeks, however this is a county council issue rather than the police.
 - There have been problems with parking near the zig zag lines outside Fochriw Primary School. Traffic cones were used but were removed by some individuals. There was an idea to ask the Heddlu Bach to issue parking tickets as this is a health and safety hazard and potential danger to the children. Cllr D Nicholas added that Deri Primary School no longer has issues with this as the school was on board in tackling it.
- RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:** Cllr D Johnson confirmed they already have the uniform and will co-ordinate this with Mrs Pascoe.

33 Planning Applications

There were no planning applications.

34 To receive Community Council Correspondence

None to report.

35 Approval of Community Council Payments

The following payments were approved.

BACS	£375.00	Clerks Salary June 2023
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BACS	£2200.00	GAVO Grant Applications
Total	£1,575.00	

36 Moving the meeting back to a Thursday

The Clerk raised the issue of moving the meeting back to Parc Cwm Darran as per the standing orders.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The Clerk will contact Caerphilly CBC to see if we are able to use the meeting room again. In the meantime, Councillors voted to go back to Thursday meetings at Fochriw Community Centre until Parc Cwm Darran is available.

37 2022-23 – Audit sign-off

The Clerk shared and discussed the accounts for the financial year 2022-23. The Councillors and Chair approved the accounts and agreed to submit to Audit Wales. The Chair and Clerk signed the report at the meeting.

38 Date and time of the next meeting:

The next meeting is to be held at Fochriw Community Centre – Thursday 13th July 2023 at 6.30 pm.