



**Minutes of the meeting of Darran Valley Community Council on:
Thursday 7th September 2023 at 6.30 pm (Fochriw Community Centre)**

Present

Cllr. D Johnson (Chair)
Cllr. R Chapman
Cllr. D Nicholas
Cllr. R Freemantle
Cllr. M Gibbings
Cllr. J Gibbings
Cllr. D Roberts

Absent and Apologies

Cllr. P Challenger
Cllr. E Blanche

In Attendance

Ms. A Pallister (Clerk)
Representatives from Gwent Police

49 Members of the public

No members of the public attended.

50 Declaration of interest

There were none.

51 To approve and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 23.

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

52 Co-option for the Deri and Fochriw Councillor vacancies.

Following the advertisement of the Councillor vacancies; Darran Valley Community Council were delighted to welcome and appoint the following:

- Cllrs. R Freemantle and P Challenger (Fochriw and Pentwyn Ward).
- Cllr. D Roberts (Deri and Groesfaen Ward).

53 Matters Arising from the meeting of Council on 13th July 23.

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.



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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.

Update from the July 2023 meeting – The clerk was informed that the closure panel was held on 7th June 2023, and the outcome would be presented to the board on 19th July 2023. The full decision will be discussed at the September 2023 meeting.

Update from the September 2023 meeting – Council received a letter from the Interim Divisional Director of Primary Care and Networks. Following a panel held on 7th June 2023, the recommendation was to support the application to close Deri Branch Surgery. The surgery will officially close from Friday 20th October 2023. Patients who currently access services at Deri will be able to continue to access the General Medical Services from the main site in Rhymney, Tredegar after this time.

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.

Update from the July 2023 meeting – Councillor D Nicholas thanked Councillor J Gibbings for organising the Deri trip.

Update from the September 2023 meeting – Updates on the Deri and Fochriw trips to Weston Super Mare and Herefordshire were provided by Councillors J Gibbings and D Johnson. The trips were well attended even though some didn't turn up on the day. There was a surplus un-spent amount totaling £50, which Cllr J Gibbings gave to the Clerk to pay into the council bank account.

There was also a general discussion regarding the planning, time of year etc. for the trip next year.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The Clerk offered to design a questionnaire to distribute to gather ideas on the best time to hold the 2024 trip i.e. Summer or Christmas etc. The Clerk will bring copies to the October 2023 meeting.



Item 032 Crime Update

- Cllr M Gibbings noted there was a callout to Ambulance Services or 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.

Update from the July 2023 meeting – PCO Leon Jenkins was looking into this, but was not able to attend the July 2023 meeting.

- 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.

Update from the July 2023 meeting – PCO Leon Jenkins was looking into this, but was not able to attend the July 2023 meeting.

- There have been problems with parking near the zig zag lines outside Fochriw Primary School. There was an idea regarding asking 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.

Update from the July 2023 meeting – Councillor D Johnson will update at the September 2023 meeting (not sure if the school has organised / made contact to arrange).

Update from the September 2023 meeting – No update will be checked at the October 2023 meeting.

- Lighting for the youth to gather in the MUGA

Update from the July 2023 meeting – Councillor J Gibbings said there could be funding available through Sports Wales and offered to look into it.

Update from the September 2023 meeting – Deri MUGA is being refurbished to include lights that will have sensors, and therefore automatically turn on when someone enters.

54 Planning Applications

There were two as follows:

Status: delegated

Location: 68 Heol-y-bryn, Fochriw.

Obtain a lawful development certificate for a proposed 1.8m high composite fence in the front garden bordering No.66 with no part of the proposal to cross the boundary.

Status: delegated

Location: 70 Bailey Street, Deri.

Demolish existing extensions and erect a two-storey extension to the south elevation.



RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: No objections or comments were noted.

55 Darran Valley Community Council Crime Update

Members of Gwent Police attended the meeting and provided the following update.

During the month of August, there was a spike of Crime & ASB throughout all wards, compared with July. However, this is more likely related to the summer holidays.

Therefore, crimes recorded for all Rhymney Wards are as follows. (Twyn Carno, Moriah, Pontlottyn, Darren Valley & New Tredegar)

July 23'	149
August 23'	179

Break down per ward for the month of August:

Ward	Total Crimes
Total	179
CH81 Moriah	78
CH82 Twyn Carno	24
CH83 Pontlottyn	18
CH84 Darren Valley	13
CH85 New Tredegar	46

Anti-Social Behaviour calls received for all Rhymney Wards (Twyn Carno, Moriah, Pontlottyn, Darren Valley & New Tredegar)

July 23'	28
August 23'	43

Break down per ward for the month of August:

Ward	Total Incidents
Total	43
CH81 Moriah	27
CH82 Twyn Carno	6
CH83 Pontlottyn	3
CH84 Darren Valley	1
CH85 New Tredegar	6

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) & Off-road vehicles- (Twyn Carno, Moriah, Pontlottyn, Darren Valley & New Tredegar)

Throughout August there was a significant increase in calls relating to ASB, particularly in Rhymney High Street, War Memorial Park and surrounding areas.

In order to tackle and prevent existing and any further incidents an ASB Operation was put in place for this area. The main focus of this operation was to



keep streets and the community safe by implementing numerous dispersal orders during times where levels of ASB were at the highest. The dispersal orders gave us the power to issue Direction to Leave Forms (section 35 of Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014) to any groups or persons congregating or acting in an anti-social manner on the High Street and surrounding area.

During the operation Gwent Police deployed additional resources to the area, including, Community Support Officers, Neighbourhood and Response Police Officers, as well as Roads Policing Specialist Operations when required.

The outcome of the operation was positive and resulted in identifying further offenders. ASB referrals were submitted, a number of offenders were arrested and interviewed.

A number of the youths involved remain under investigation for the offences disclosed with 3 to date referred to the Youth Offending Services.

There was a discussion about the law and e-bikes as it's becoming a huge problem not only in Darran Valley, but throughout South Wales.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The PCO's will find out about the law in regards to e-bikes and report back at the next meeting.

It was also noted that fences are being cut in Parc Cwm Darran and sheep are escaping into the park and villages. The offenders seem to be aware of the shift patterns of the park rangers and other staff. Extra patrols were recommended.

56 **To receive Community Council Correspondence**

The Clerk received a letter from the Caerphilly CBC community cleansing team. The team will be working in the area week commencing 18th September 2023.

They wanted to know if the community council could identify any areas that require additional cleaning. If there are any particular areas Cllr. R Chapman will inform the team directly.

57 **Approval of Community Council Payments**

The following payments were approved.

BACS	£375.00 x 2	Clerks Salary September & October 2023
BACS	£432.00	One Voice Wales membership (includes yearly increase based on dwelling figures).
Total	£1,182.00	

During the payment discussion there was a discussion around the Christmas lighting contractor. All agreed to carry on using Elsbury Platforms and would like the lights to be switched on around the same time as last year, which was the end of November (this year will be around Friday 24th November 2023).

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: The clerk will inform the contractor.

58 **Moving the meeting back to a Thursday**

The Clerk raised the issue of moving the meeting back to Parc Cwm Darran



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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.

Update from the July 2023 meeting – The Clerk was asked to write a formal complaint to the head of Caerphilly CBC, as the meeting room at Parc Cwm Darran is still not available for evening meetings.

Update from the September 2023 meeting – Cllr R Chapman has arranged a meeting with the key stakeholders to try and resolve the issues with resuming meetings at Parc Cwm Darran. In the meantime, meetings will be rotated between Fochriw and Deri community centres', depending on availability.

59 Date and time of the next meeting:

The next meeting is to be held at Fochriw Community Centre on Wednesday 4th October 2023 at 6.30 pm.