



**Minutes of the meeting of Darran Valley Community Council on:  
Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 6.30 pm (Fochriw Community Centre)  
Annual General Meeting**

**Present**

Cllr D Johnson (Chair)  
Cllr E Blanche  
Cllr J Gibbings  
Cllr M Gibbings  
Cllr D Roberts  
Cllr R Chapman  
Cllr T Johnson

**Absent and Apologies**

Cllr D Nicholas.

**In Attendance**

Ms. A Pallister (Clerk)  
CSO from Gwent Police

**1 Members of the public**

No members of the public attended.

**2 Declaration of interest**

There were none.

**3 To approve and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 24.**

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

**4 Matters arising from the meeting of Council on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

81.00 – Planning for Christmas events.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

- Cllr J Gibbings would like 4 large posters for both events next year.
- Councillors' would like the Clerk and Cllr R Chapman to look into the possibility of adding more lights in Deri for 2024. The council have investigated adding further lights previously, but the lampposts have been deemed unsuitable. It was noted that other community councils with similar lampposts have added extra lighting.
- At the December 2023 meeting there was also a discussion around ensuring the posters have been signed off before advertising to the general public.

**UPDATE FROM THE JANUARY 2024 MEETING:**

The Clerk has contacted the relevant agencies asking them to investigate the possibility of adding extra decorations in Deri for 2024. The Clerk will report back once there is news.

Councillor's reported the events were a big success yet again. The Santa on a Fire Engine event in Fochriw was not as well attended as last year, but this was due to a clash with another local event. The Deri events were extremely well attended and numbers were up from last year – the engagement and response were magnificent.



**UPDATE FROM THE FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING:**

Keep on matters arising until resolved.

**UPDATE FROM THE MARCH 2024 MEETING:**

This was discussed again. The upgrade of street lampposts maybe the only route to adding additional lighting, but it's highly unlikely Caerphilly CBC will have the budget to undertake this work at this point in time. Cllr M Gibbings suggested potting a Christmas tree in Groesfaen, and offered to look into where it could go. Cllr E Blanche suggested upgrading to LED lighting.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:** The Clerk will investigate the upgrade to LED lights in Deri. Cllr M Gibbings to look into the possibility of potting a Christmas Tree in Groesfaen. Cllr M Gibbings will send the Clerk the GPS location of the lamppost needing LED lights.

82 – Questionnaires for the OAP trip. Deri and Fochriw are both happy to attend a joint event. This means there could potentially be a Summer and Christmas trip, and ideas shared included a Christmas market, seaside trip or a shopping trip to Cwmbran. It was also noted that disabled access from the bus must be taken into consideration.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

This will be discussed again and a decision made at the January 2024 meeting.

**UPDATE FROM THE JANUARY 2024 MEETING:**

Agreed there would be two joint trips instead of separate events for the villages including:

- A summer trip to Tenby and Carmarthenshire (two drop off points).
- A Christmas trip to the market in Bristol. Cllr D Johnson confirmed there is a drop off point next to the market for those with extra mobility needs.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

The Clerk to obtain quotes from Sixty Six Coaches and Bradfords Coaches and report back at the next meeting. The Clerk to check there are toilets onboard.

**UPDATE FROM THE FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING:**

The Clerk confirmed that Sixty-Six Coaches have toilets on-board. The location of the trips were agreed and the Clerk to go ahead and arrange / pay deposits.

Council also voted to increase the budget to **£1,500**.

**UPDATE FROM THE MARCH 2024 MEETING:** Cllr J Gibbings informed Council that some of the over 55's raised issues with the dates and venues of the trips. Council discussed and agreed that the dates and locations were agreed at a previous meeting, following the results of the questionnaires. The deposits have already been paid, and therefore the dates / locations cannot be changed.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

The Clerk will design a poster and bring to the April 2024 meeting for approval.

**UPDATE FROM THE APRIL 2024 MEETING**

Cllr J Gibbings already has 17 names and deposits, therefore its unlikely a poster will be needed.

84 – Summer Scheme – Cllr. E Blanche shared details of [Mobile Activity Hire — The Outdoor Education Company](#). All councillors were interested and asked the Clerk to investigate prices.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

The Clerk to investigate and report back at the January 2024 meeting.

**UPDATE FROM THE JANUARY 2024 MEETING:**

The Clerk to report back at the February meeting as the company mentioned above may not be suitable as they cater for around 150 child per day. Cllr E Blanche recommended another company for the Clerk to investigate and obtain prices.



There was also a good suggestion of asking the Police to turn up with the game's bus.

**UPDATE FROM THE FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING:**

The Clerk contacted InHouse Entertainment who were extremely helpful and provided various options and prices. The Councillors' spent a considerable amount of time looking at the options and prices. They decided to go with the following:

**Ultimate Assault Course 75ft - Supervised**

**Mobile Laser Tag - Supervised**

**Children's Playzone - Unisex Colours – supervised**

Cost below was approved by Council, as the yearly budget for the summer scheme is 5k, and 'One Voice Wales' confirmed 1k from the wind turbine scheme can be used.

Darran Valley Community Council can also claim the VAT back.

Subtotal 5,780.00

VAT 20% 1,156.00

Total GBP including VAT £6,936.00

**UPDATE FROM THE MARCH 2024 MEETING:** The following dates and venues were agreed:

Deri Community Centre: 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024 times 12 until 4 pm.

Drinks and snacks will be available to purchase.

Fochriw Football pitch: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and 13<sup>th</sup> August 2023 times 12 until 4 pm.

Drinks and snacks will be available to purchase.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:** The Clerk to secure dates with the Football pitch and design the posters. The Clerk will also book the police games van.

91.5 Cllr M Gibbings suggested the purchase of a memorial bench depicting a fallen soldier at the cenotaph in Deri.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:** This will be discussed at the January 2024 meeting under matters arising.

**UPDATE FROM THE JANUARY 2024 MEETING:**

Cllr M Gibbings was unable to attend due to being unwell. This will be picked up at the next meeting.

**UPDATE FROM THE FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING:**

This will be moved to the March 2024 meeting as Cllr M Gibbings needs time to look at options and prices. Cllr Gibbings is interested in obtaining prices for the Newbridge memorial bench depicting the fallen soldier. This would also help address the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings.

**UPDATE FROM THE MARCH 2024 MEETING:** Cllr R Chapman advised that Howe Engineering can build a bench at a lower price.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:** Cllr M Gibbings and R Chapman to discuss and investigate before the next meeting.

**UPDATE FROM THE APRIL 2024 MEETING:** This will be moved to the May 2024 meeting.

## 5 Planning Applications

There were none to report.

## 6 Darran Valley Community Council Crime Update

There has been a small increase in the number of calls for Darran Valley during the month of March. There have been no crime trends or patterns to note and nothing of significance to report. Police continue to patrol the area at various times of the day, and they urge members of the public to report any concerns they feel the police can help with.



There was a break in at Parc Cwm Darran over half term, and a shed was broken into and tools were stolen in Deri.

Operation Harley continues and is run to combat the use of off-road bikes on Darran Valley road, fields and mountains. The Police undertake this operation on a Sunday due to the number of calls received.

Cllr R Chapman has been in contact with the Chief Inspector regarding the the installation of speed camera's in hot spot areas.

## **7 To receive Community Council Correspondence**

**7.1 Darran Valley Community Council has won the 'One Voice Wales Community Engagement Award'.** The Council funded some key activities over the Christmas periods of 2022, 2023 and 2024 to bring together the local community centres and local families of the Darran Valley. These activities included Pantomimes in both villages as well as inviting the Fire Service to visit the local communities as a 'Santa on a Fire Engine event'. Free selection boxes were handed out, and the community centres organised a disco, buffet and other activities all free of charge. The Council used the distribution of the free pantomime tickets to engage with the community and this provided an opportunity for the local residents to get to know their Councillors and vice versa. The spirit of these events brought organisations, the council and the local community centres together. Darran Valley Community Council is a small council with a small budget, and these events made such a huge difference to the community increasing engagement and a sense of belonging to all.

## **8. Approval of Community Council Payments**

BACS	£150	Grant for Deri Dementia Care and Support Group – to help with the day to day running of the group.
BACS	£1,053.49	GAVO run Wind Turbine Grant – Darran Valley History Group for the installation of new interpretative signage.
BACS	£3,468	In House Entertainments – half payment deposit for the Children's Summer Scheme.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,671.49</b>	

## **9 Declarations of interest (register of members' interests 2024-25 – review and refresh.**

The following were noted:

Cllr Mark Gibbings – member of the National Search and Rescue Dog Association (NSARDA).

Cllr Jan Gibbings – Booking Officer for Deri Community Centre, Equipment Officer for (NSARDA) and a member of the Darran Valley History Group.



Cllr Duncan Johnson – Treasurer of Fochriw Community Centre and Fochriw Primary School Caretaker.

Cllr Tracey Johnson – member of the 'Fruity Fridays' Club.

Cllr Rob Chapman, Governor of Fochriw and Deri Primary Schools, Chairperson For Fochriw Community Centre and Vice Chair for Fochriw Primary Parents Association. Cllr Chapman is also the County Councillor for Darran Valley.

Cllr Dennis Roberts – Chairperson for Deri Community Centre and a member of Darran Valley History Group.

Cllr David Nicholas was unable to attend the meeting so this will be checked at the May 2024 meeting.

**10 Appointment of a Chairperson for the ensuing year.**

Cllr Mark Gibbings was unanimously voted as the Chairperson for the 2024-25 financial year.

**11. Appointment of a Vice-Chairperson for the ensuing year.**

Cllr Rob Chapman was unanimously voted as the Vice-Chairperson for the 2024-25 financial year.

**12. To determine Council's representatives to the various bodies including:**

- Caerphilly CBC & CC Liaison Sub-Committee x1 – Cllr M Gibbings will continue attending with Cllr R Chapman as seconder.
- Town & Community Councils Liaison Committee x2 – Cllr R Chapman will continue representing this Council.

**13. To consider the appointment of the Council's Internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2024.**

Voted to carry on using Harris Bassett Accountants in Bridgend.



**14. Community Council Budget & Financial Reconciliation 2024-25.**

This has been discussed previously and before the precept was agreed. However, there was one additional entry for election costs as a precaution:

<b>Expenditure Heading</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Clerks Salary & on costs	4,500
<i>*Election Costs</i>	<i>3,000</i>
Chairpersons allowance	300
Out of office	250
Telephone & broadband	200
Room hire	200
Insurance & subscriptions	600
One Voice Wales membership	190
Stationery & postage	100
Website hosting & maintenance	840
Section 19 - 137 grants	2,000
Wind Turbine Grants	3,777 – 1,000 earmarked towards summer scheme
Section 137 – OAP trip	1,500 – increased by 100
Christmas lighting / panto / Santa on a fire engine	6,000
Audit	600
Cllr expenses / allowance	1,350
Town & Community Councils Meeting	100
Summer scheme	6,000 – 1,000 increase funded from wind turbine
ICO Data protection	35
Remembrance Sunday	150
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,192</b>

Income:  
 Precept: 12,980  
 Balance from 2023/24: 14,739.24  
 Wind Turbine: 4,700  
 Tax Refund: 1,400



Total: 33,819.24

33,819.24 (incoming) – 27,192 (outgoing budget) = 6,627.24 as contingency funds.

**15 Chairperson Independent Remuneration Panel Recommendations  
23/24.**

Cllr M Gibbings will be paid £300 via BACS.

**16. Councillors Independent Remuneration Panel Recommendations  
23/24.**

The Councillors below will receive £150 via BACS,

Cllr J Gibbings

Cllr E Blanche

Cllr T Johnson

Cllr D Johnson

Cllr D Roberts

Cllr D Nicholas

Cllr R Chapman decided not to take expenses for the ensuing year.

**17. Cllr E Blanche – closure of the A469 between Pontlottyn and Brithdir.**

Due to lack of time this will be moved to the May 2024 meeting.

**18. Date and time of the next meeting:**

The next meeting will be via MS Teams on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 6.30 pm.