



**Minutes of the meeting of Darran Valley Community Council on:
Thursday 5th December 2024 at 6.30 pm (changed to Microsoft Teams due
to adverse weather)**

Present

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

Absent and Apologies

None.

In Attendance

Ms. A Pallister (Clerk)

76 Members of the public

No members of the public attended.

77 Declarations of interest

There were none.

78 To approve and confirm the November 2024 minutes of the meeting.

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

79 Matters arising from the November 2024 meeting.

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 lamp posts 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.

UPDATE FROM THE JUNE 2024 MEETING:

The Christmas 2024 Pantomimes have been booked as follows:

Saturday 28th December 2024 12:00 pm – Cinderella at Deri Community Centre.

Sunday 29th December 2024 1:00 pm – Rapunzel at Fochriw Community Centre

UPDATE FROM THE SEPTEMBER 2024 MEETING:

The Council voted to use the services of Elsbury Platforms again for the 2024

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

Christmas lighting. The Clerk was also asked to contact Elsbury as follows:

- Instruct them to switch the Christmas lights on at the end of November (Friday 29th November 2024) please.
- Council would like to purchase some new, longer LED lights for the tree in Deri.
- Council is also planning to put a Christmas tree up in Groesfaen and would like to request a site visit with Elsbury and Cllr Mark Gibbings, to plan where the tree will go. The lights in Deri *the ones being replaced by LED can be used on the new tree in Groesfaen.

UPDATE FROM THE OCTOBER 2024 MEETING:

- The Clerk is still waiting for a reply from Elsbury regarding the LED lights for the Groesfaen Christmas tree. Cllr Mark Gibbings has been looking at options for the tree in Groesfaen.
- The Clerk informed Council that Rhymney Fire Station is unable to do 'Santa on a fire engine' this year due to staff shortages.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

The Clerk to contact Aberbargoed Fire Station to find out if they would consider visiting Fochriw and Deri with their Santa Sleigh instead. Cllr Mark Gibbings said if that's not a viable alternative, the Mountain Rescue Team may be able to organise something instead.

UPDATE FROM THE NOVEMBER 2024 MEETING:

- The Clerk is waiting for confirmation from Aberbargoed Fire Station in regards to visits to the community centres in Deri and Fochriw on 3rd December (Santa on a sleigh). Once there is confirmation posters and other activities will be organised.
- There won't be time to arrange lights for another Christmas tree in Groesfaen. This will be discussed again at January 2025 meeting. The Clerk will obtain the costs for discussion and agreement thereafter.

UPDATE FROM THE DECEMBER 2024 MEETING:

- The feedback from the Santa on a Sleigh events was exceptional. The Aberbargoed Fire Station and Police did a wonderful job, as well as the local community centres and Councillors. There was a big turnout and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Councillor Jan Gibbings said it was one of the best events they've ever had in Deri.



ACTION: Councillors would like the clerk to formally thank Aberbargoed Fire Station.

- Councillor Eddy Blanche informed the Clerk that one of the lights in Fochriw (by the shop) is not working. **ACTION: The Clerk will inform Elsbury Platforms.**
- Councillor Jan Gibbings also reported an issue with the Christmas tree lights in Deri (was informed nothing can be fixed until after the adverse weather, and they are still erecting lights in other areas). Councillor Dennis Roberts thinks this has now been fixed, but Councillor Gibbings said there is still fault.
- Councillor Robert Chapman also reported an issue with the lights in Pentwyn (Fochriw end). **ACTION: Clerk will report to Elsbury.**
- Clerk has designed the poster and tickets for the pantomimes. These were approved at the meeting (2 large posters for both villages as Cllr Duncan Johnson kindly offered to print for the schools, and most advertising is done via social media now).
180 tickets for Fochriw
120 tickets for Deri (due to room size and fire regulations).
There were issues with residents having tickets and not turning up in the previous year due to unforeseen circumstances (illness and weather). Councillor Chapman suggested asking for a £1 deposit – will be returned at the pantomime. This will be discussed in January and considered for next year.
Cllrs Dennis Roberts and David Nicholas will distribute the tickets in Deri (14th and 15th December at Deri Community Centre).
Cllrs Robert Chapman and Eddy Blanche will distribute tickets in Fochriw on the Saturday.
Cllrs Duncan and Tracey Johnson will distribute tickets in Fochriw on the Sunday.
There was a suggestion of distributing the tickets at the beginning of December next year.

71.1 E-mail from member of the public raising the following concerns:

- Customer only parking sign at Deri library.
- Closure of Deri library.
- Request to get footpath labelled as right of way (Deri where children and adults going to and from the school and local area walk).

UPDATE FROM THE DECEMBER 2024 MEETING:

- Councillor Rob Chapman said the potential closure of Deri library consultation has now finished and a decision is expected sometime in January or February 2025.
- Councillor Robert Chapman has passed the library parking query to library services and estates who will respond to the resident.
- The resident will be advised to contact rights of way regarding the footpath.

. 71.2 Closure of Deri Library

Councillors are extremely concerned about the potential closure. The County Councillor (R Chapman) is in close discussions with Caerphilly CBC regarding this, and will provide an update as soon as there is news. In the meantime the other Councillors asked the Clerk to send a response from all Darran Valley Community Councillor expressing concern and objection to



the proposal.

UPDATE FROM THE DECEMBER 2024 MEETING:

As mentioned above Councillor Rob Chapman said the potential closure of Deri library consultation has now finished and a decision is expected sometime in January or February 2025.

71.2

E-mail from Caerphilly CBC control room regarding the proposal to remove the Following cameras:

Deri

Remove 1 4G camera due to low level of incidents - 1 specific CCBC incident in 23/24.

Fochriw

Remove 1 4G camera, 1 specific CCBC incident only 23/24, part of area covered by PSBA camera.

Councillors are concerned they are considering withdrawing the two CCTV cameras in our area. The lack of incident level is proof the deterrent effect is worthwhile. The area covered by the camera in Fochriw used to be a known area where drug dealing has taken place. The camera has moved the offenders from the area. This area was also used as a compound for works bring carried out in the village that suffered break-ins before the camera was installed.

In Deri there were incidents involving the memorial gardens being vandalised, and there has not been one incident since the CCTV has been installed - further evidence that they are acting as a deterrent.

UPDATE FROM THE DECEMBER 2024 MEETING

The Clerk sent the following to the Council and is waiting for a response.

Dear Jacqui

Important: can you acknowledge receipt of our official response below please?

I was waiting for our Community Council meeting before replying to your e- mail, in order to gather a comprehensive response from Councillors.

We are alarmed and extremely concerned that you are considering withdrawing the two CCTV cameras in our area.

In our opinion the lack of incident level is proof the deterrent effect is worthwhile. The area covered by the camera in Fochriw used to be a known area where drug dealing has taken place. The camera has moved the offenders from the area. This area was also used as a compound for works bring carried out in the village that suffered break-ins before the camera was installed.

In Deri we had many upsetting incidents where the memorial gardens were vandalised, and there has not been one incident since the CCTV have been installed - further evidence that they are acting as a deterrent. We feel the removal of the cameras would lead a to return of anti-social behaviour and crime levels to the area and strongly disagree with them being removed.

We await your response with re-assurances they will remain.

Regards,

Amanda Pallister

72.4

E-mail from 'One Voice Wales' regarding VE Day.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

Move to January 2025 meeting where budget will be discussed. Ideas include sponsoring 1940's themed disco's in the community centres.



72.5

‘Appropriate Sum under Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 - Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2025-26

This is to notify you that the appropriate sum for the purposes of section 37(4)(a) of the

Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for Community and Town Councils in Wales for the financial year 2025-26 is £11.10

Section 137(1) of the 1972 Act permits each Community or Town Council to incur expenditure for purposes for which it has no other specific powers if the Council considers that the expenditure is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, the area or any part of it, or all or some of its inhabitants, providing that the benefit is commensurate with the expenditure incurred. Community and Town Councils are also permitted under section

137(3) to incur expenditure for certain charitable and other purposes.

The maximum expenditure that can be incurred under both section 137(1) and (3) for the financial year 2025-26 will be £11.10 per elector.

For the financial year 2025-26, the appropriate sum for the purposes of section 137(4)(a) is calculated by applying the formula set out in Schedule 12B to the 1972 Act. The Retail Prices Index increased by 2.68% between September 2023 and September 2024. This means that, by application of the formula, the appropriate sum for the financial year 2025-26 increases from £10.81 to £11.10 per elector.

For clarity, the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes provision which enables ‘eligible community councils’ to exercise the General Power of Competence. The power for Community and Town Councils to exercise the General Power of Competence came into force on 5 May 2022.

Clerks of Community and Town Councils,
Directors of Finance,

County and County Borough Councils

4 November 2024

Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru

Cathays Park / Parc Cathays,

Cardiff / Caerdydd. CF10 3NQ

The relevant statutory guidance for community and town councils explains the interaction between the two powers (i.e. the general power of competence and the power under s.137 of the 1972 Act). Community and town councils exercising the General Power of Competence are not subject to an expenditure limit, but other conditions apply. For all other community and town councils, the limit set out in this letter will apply.

Yours sincerely

Martin Bull

Local Government Finance Policy & Sustainability Division’

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

Discuss at the January 2025 meeting when budget is discussed.



There were two planning applications. No issues or concerns were expressed.

Case Ref. 24/0748/HH Site Area: 162m² Location: 59 Bailey Street

Deri Bargoed

CF81 9HU (UPRN 000043002051).

Proposal: Erect rear first floor extension and off-road parking space
Case Officer: Joshua Burrows (01443 864427 : burroj1@caerphilly.gov.uk
Ward: Darran Valley Map Ref: 312488 (E) 202421 (N) Community Council: Darran Valley Community Council Expected Decision Level: Delegated

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 Erect rear first floor extension and off-road parking space 59 Bailey Street Deri Bargoed CF81 9HU GRID REFERENCE - 312488(E) 202421(N) The above application has been received under the provisions of the above Act and I shall be glad to know whether you wish to make any observations, in writing, on this proposal. The application can be viewed online at <https://planningonline.caerphilly.gov.uk> In accordance with statutory requirements, it is necessary to determine the application within a specific period and it is essential therefore that any observations should be received by me within 21 days from the date of this communication. If you require further extensive information such as a traffic impact assessment, noise survey or wildlife survey, or something that should be secured through a section 106 agreement such as affordable housing, play space, etc.

81 Darran Valley Community Council Crime Update

PC Leon Jenkins joined the meeting and provided the following update.

Recorded Crime

Ward	October 24'	November 24'	
Moriah	61	53	-8
New Tredegar	37	35	-2
Twyn Carno	20	18	-2
Pontlottyn	17	16	-1
Darren Valley	15	22	+7
Total	150	144	-6

Overall, Rhymney experienced a reduction in crime with Darran Valley Ward seeing the only increase in crime.

To note, a number of these crimes were domestic related with investigations ongoing.

Community concerns or patterns to note.

Burglary

- 1 x Report of a Non-Dwelling, (garden shed) Door forced open, shed at bottom of garden in Heol Y Bryn, Fochriw. Rotary line stolen from within. No suspects identified at this time.

Vehicle Crime

- 1x Vehicle damaged at Rhodfa Ganol, windows smashed and bodywork damaged. Investigation ongoing.
- 1 x vehicle damaged sometime between 9th and 15th November at Riverside Car Park in Deri.

No other Neighbourhood Crime pattern of note.



Councillor David Nicholas informed everyone about the machete attack in Deri (the person responsible went missing following the incident). The Armed Response Team were in attendance.

Resolved: PC Leon Jenkins said the perpetrator has now been arrested (handed himself in).

Councillor Eddy Blanche asked PC Leon Jenkins to thank the officers who attended the Santa event.

82 To receive Community Council Correspondence TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

One Voice Wales offers a wide range of training opportunities for councillors which are available in Welsh and English. Currently the focus is on the delivery of training webinars which for most councillors is a convenient way of accessing training in the comfort of their own home. We are also able to offer bespoke training sessions for individual councils on any of our training courses. These can be offered on a webinar basis and where possible one of our trainers can provide the training to a council at their own premises. In the case of the latter, it will depend on whether we have a trainer that lives within a reasonable distance of the council.

The sector is very fortunate to have the financial support of the Welsh Government who have allocated a fixed allocation to One Voice Wales enabling us to offer up to two free places to councils on selected modules these being:

Module 3 The Council as an Employer

Module 4 – Understanding the Law

Module 6 – Introduction to Local Government Finance

Module 9 – Code of Conduct

Module 21 – Advanced Local Government Finance

Module 24 – The Finance and Governance Self-Assessment Toolkit

The Welsh Government also provides a fixed allocation for councils with an annual budgeted income of £100k or less to apply for a 50% reduction in the cost of training places up to a £100 per council per annum.

Demand for our training courses remains high and we are delighted to play our part in helping councillors achieve the required learning to enable them to play an active and informed part in the work of their councils.

A particular issue that occasionally occurs is that councillors taking up free places funded by the Welsh Government fail to attend the scheduled training course which is highly disappointing and essentially a lost opportunity to gain vital learning. It needs to be remembered that the free places on offer are funded by the Welsh Government from public funds.



In the current year we have added several new training courses to our expanding programme of modules these being:

Module 25 – Biodiversity basics Part 1 and Module 26 Part 2

A 2-part course teaching Councils the basics of biodiversity, nature recovery and ecology need to make good decisions and effective Biodiversity Action plans (BAPS). It follows the same '5 pillars of biodiversity' as introduced in the guidance document. After attending this course Councils will be better placed to write robust BAPs and Section 6 Reports and meet that Section 6 duty of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

Module 27 – Nature Project Management

A course delivered over 1 session that demonstrates the basics of project management in the context of nature and environmental projects. Handouts will include a project checklist for Councils to help them manage projects in line with Biodiversity principles, on time and in budget. It is hoped that all Councils that attend this course will have already attended the Biodiversity Basics Course first.

We sincerely hope that Councils value the investment we are making in developing knowledge in the sector and that they are keeping a close eye on commitments made in their statutory training plan.

On a related matter, we are looking to recruit some additional training associates and associate consultants to join our team. We are particularly keen to engage an additional bilingual training associate and hear from individuals who have a professional background in human resources, financial accounting and health and safety. If you are interested in being considered for one of these roles, please contact Paul Egan, Deputy Chief Executive and Resources Manager who can furnish further details about these roles. He can be contacted on pegan@onevoicewales.wales.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: Move to January 2025 meeting

83. Approval of Community Council Payments

BACS	£485.73	Selection Boxes for Christmas Events.
BACS	£675	Bus for OAP Christmas trip to Bristol Christmas market. Cllr Jan Gibbings said 3 people could not make it due to illness, so the deposits lost were put into a raffle and there is £60 surplus cash to go back to the community council. Cllr Rob Chapman thanked Cllr Jan Gibbings and Linda from the OAP group for organising (they did a sterling job). Those in attendance were interested in Worcester and Bath next year.



BACS	£100	Town and Community Liaison Committee.
TOTAL	£1,260.73	

84. Date and time of the next meeting:

The next meeting will be on Thursday 2nd January 2025 at 6.30 pm (Deri Library).

Councillor David Nicholas instigated, and all in attendance wished everyone a Happy Christmas before the meeting formally ended.