



Minutes of the meeting of Darran Valley Community Council on Thursday, 3rd April 2025, at 6.30 pm (Microsoft Teams)

Attendance

Present

Cllr E Blanche
Cllr D Johnson
Cllr T Johnson
Cllr D Roberts
Cllr T Roberts

Absent and Apologies

Cllr M Gibbings (Chair)
Cllr J Gibbings
Cllr D Nicholas
Cllr R Chapman

In Attendance

Ms. A Pallister (Clerk)

01 - Members of the public

No members of the public attended.

02 - Declarations of interest

There were none.

03 - To approve and confirm the March 2025 minutes of the meeting

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

04 - Matters arising from the March 2024 meeting

81.00 – Planning for Christmas events.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

- Cllr J Gibbings would like four large posters for both events next year.
- Councillors would like the Clerk and Cllr R Chapman to investigate the possibility of installing additional lights in Deri for 2024. The council has previously investigated adding further lights, 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 about ensuring the posters had been signed off on before being advertised to the general public.

UPDATE FROM THE JANUARY 2024 MEETING:

The Clerk has contacted the relevant agencies, requesting that they investigate the possibility of adding extra decorations in Deri for 2024. The Clerk will report back once there is news. Councillors 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 exceptionally well-attended, and numbers were up from the previous 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. Upgrading street lampposts may be the only route to adding additional lighting, but it's doubtful Caerphilly CBC will have the budget to undertake this work. Cllr M Gibbings suggested planting a Christmas tree in Groesfaen and offered to look into where it could be placed. 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 will look into putting up 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).
- Council would like to purchase some new, longer LED lights for the tree in Deri.
The Council is also planning to put up a Christmas tree in Groesfaen and would like to request a site visit with Elsbury and Cllr Mark Gibbings to plan the location of the tree. The lights in Deri, which LED is replacing, 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 the 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 contacted 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 regarding 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 the 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 Sleigh events was exceptional. The Aberbargoed Fire Station and Police did an excellent job, as did 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 thank Aberbargoed Fire Station formally.
- Councillor Eddy Blanche informed the Clerk that one of the lights in Fochriw, located 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, as he was informed that nothing could be fixed until after the adverse weather, and they are still erecting lights in other areas. Councillor Dennis Roberts believes this issue has been resolved, but Councillor Gibbings stated that a fault remains.
- Councillor Robert Chapman also reported an issue with the lights in Pentwyn (Fochriw end). ACTION: The Clerk will report to Elsbury.
- The clerk has designed the poster and tickets for the pantomimes. These were approved at the meeting: two large posters for both villages, as Cllr Duncan Johnson kindly offered to print for the schools, and most advertising is now done via social media.
- 180 tickets for Fochriw
- 120 tickets for Deri due to room size and fire regulations.
- There were issues with residents having tickets but not attending the previous year due to unforeseen circumstances, such as illness and weather.
- Councillor Chapman suggested asking for a £1 deposit, which 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.
(December 14th and 15th at Deri Community Centre).
- Cllrs Robert Chapman and Eddy Blanche will distribute tickets in Fochriw on Saturday.
- Cllrs Duncan and Tracey Johnson will distribute tickets in Fochriw on Sunday.
- There was a suggestion of distributing the tickets at the beginning of December next year.

UPDATE FROM THE JANUARY 2025 MEETING:

Pantomimes

- Cllr Robert Chapman recommended adding a warning re: strobe lighting to the pantomime tickets and posters.
- The pantomimes were a phenomenal success again. Community members commented on how expensive pantomimes are, and they wouldn't be able to afford to go without the free events provided by the community council.
- Cllr Dennis Roberts updated the Clerk on the number of tickets in line with fire regulations (100).

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

- The Clerk is to book the pantomimes for 2025 and ensure a warning re: strobe lighting is added to tickets and posters.
- Lights - Disappointment was expressed regarding the lights – WD24 wasn't working and requires a repair or replacement. The light by Groesfaen was also faulty.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

The Clerk is to contact the contractor, asking them to test and repair the item before returning it to storage. Ask them to advise regarding repair or replacement.

ACTIONS FROM THE FEBRUARY 2025 MEETING

Cllrs M Gibbings and R Chapman will contact Elsbury and arrange a site visit to discuss the above.

UPDATE FROM THE MARCH 2025 MEETING

Cllrs M Gibbings and R Chapman are in the process of arranging.

71.2 Potential closure of Deri Library

Councillors are highly 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 Councillors expressing concern and objection to the proposal.

UPDATE FROM THE DECEMBER 2024 MEETING:

As mentioned above, Councillor Rob Chapman stated that the consultation on the potential closure of the Deri Library has now concluded, and a decision is expected sometime in January or February 2025.

UPDATE FROM THE JANUARY 2025 MEETING:

Cllr Chapman informed the council that there is no decision or update yet, as the consultation period has only just finished.

UPDATE FROM THE FEBRUARY 2025 MEETING

Cllr R Chapman noted it's in the second stage of the consultation period.

UPDATE FROM THE MARCH 2025 MEETING

Still no update.

05 - To receive Community Council Correspondence

There were none to discuss.

06 – Planning Applications

There were none.

07 – Darran Valley Community Council Crime Update

No officers could attend, but the following written report was submitted.

Recorded Crime

Ward	February 25'	March 25'	+/-
Moriah	45	44	-1
New Tredegar	24	40	+16
Twyn Carno	28	33	+5
Pontlottyn	13	22	+9
Darran Valley	11	10	-1
Total	121	149	+28

- Noted pockets of vehicle crime in Fochriw. Reinforce key messages for vehicle security
- The number of crimes relates to Isolated incidents within the home (DV). There is no wider community threat, risk, or harm.
- Criminal damage and Disorder crimes linked to protests we had earlier in the Month, following details posted on the Protect Your Children Facebook page—we are aware of and continue monitoring these tensions.
- Current tensions in Fochriw are being monitored.

Recorded ASB (Nuisance)

Ward	February 25'	March 25'	+/-
Moriah	6	6	-
New Tredegar	8	5	-3
Twyn Carno	9	3	-6
Pontlottyn	3	4	+1
Darran Valley	1	0	-0
Total	27	18	-9

Targeted Activity

- On Friday 21st March officers carried out a drug warrant at an address in the Pontlottyn area, where a 32-year-old male was arrested on suspicion of being concerned in the supply of class A drugs. Officers also seized cash, mobile devices and drug paraphernalia linked to suspected drug supply from the property. The male has since been re-called to prison.
- On Sunday 23rd March officers executed a warrant at an address in the Fochriw area, a small quantity of drugs was seized from the property and the investigation is on-going at this time.
- Officers are continuing to target ongoing issues of antisocial behaviour linked to off-road bikes and quads in the area. This month the team have received extra support to tackle the problem from our Roads Policing and Specialist Operations (RPSO) colleagues, who have conducted increased high visibility patrols and deployed the drone, gathering further intelligence, on several occasions.

Engaged Communities

- Attended the primary school & youth club in Fochriw to discuss the importance of respecting school property and provide information on the consequences of trespassing & criminal damage, following reports of damage to drainage & equipment in the school yard.

08 – Community Council Payments

BACS	£500	Fochriw Community Centre VE Day celebrations
BACS	£500	Deri Community Centre VE Day Celebrations
BACS	£1,100	GAVO – wind turbine grant for Darran Valley history group
BACS	£1,100	GAVO – wind turbine grant for Deri regeneration group
BACS	£55.80	Newton Newton Flags – VE Day flags x 2
BACS	£23.00	One Voice Wales extra membership fee as they undercalculated previous invoice.
TOTAL	£3,278.80	

09 – Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday, 8th May 2025, at 6.30 pm (Deri Library). This is the Annual General Meeting (AGM)