



**Minutes of the meeting of Darran Valley Community Council on Thursday,
10th September 2026, at 6.30 pm
Deri Library**

Attendance

Present

Chair:

Cllr J Gibbings

Cllr D Roberts

Cllr D Nicholas

Cllr R Chapman

In Attendance

Ms. A Pallister (Clerk)

Apologies

Cllr T Johnson

Cllr D Johnson

Cllr M Gibbings

Absent

Cllr E Blanche

47 - Members of the public

No members of the public attended.

48- Declarations of interest

There were none.

49- To approve and confirm the July 2026 minutes of the meeting

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

50– Matters arising from the July 2026 meeting

52 – Library Closures

At the last meeting there was some uncertainty around the legal challenge of the Deri library closure. Cllr R Chapman clarified an appeal is in progress; and the library remains open. However, there are staffing shortages caused by staff moving to other roles.

December 2025 meeting – no update to report.

January 2026 meeting - no update yet on the library legal challenge

February 2026 meeting – no update.

March 2026 meeting – no update.

April 2026 meeting – no update

May 2026 meeting – no update

June 2026 meeting – no update

July 2026 meeting – no update

September 2026 meeting - It was noted that plans by **Caerphilly County Borough Council** to close ten libraries, including **Deri Library**, are set to proceed following the dismissal of a High Court legal challenge brought by local campaigners. The court ruled that the Council's decision-making process was rational and that it would continue to meet its statutory obligations for library provision.

The wider restructuring programme includes the closure of ten smaller libraries and the concentration of services within larger facilities, with several remaining libraries being developed into multi-service community hubs. The Council has stated that the changes are being driven by significant financial pressures, including a projected budget shortfall over the coming years.

Members noted that, following the High Court decision, the proposed closure of Deri Library remains part of the Council's approved restructuring plans, although campaigners were reported to be considering further options following the ruling.

32.3 Former Sheltered Housing Complex

A concern was raised regarding the proposed use of the former sheltered housing complex as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). Members expressed concerns about the proposal and requested further clarification on the intended use of the site, its management arrangements, and any potential impact on the local community.

Update (September 2026): Members received an update on the former sheltered housing complex. It was noted that the building has now been designated for use as accommodation for residents aged 55 and over. Cllr R. Chapman advised that he was not aware of any further developments or updates regarding the site at the present time. Members noted the position.

42.1 Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) Launch Invitation

Members were advised of an invitation from Caerphilly County Borough Council to attend the launch of the Caerphilly Local Nature Partnership Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) on 20 August 2026 at Bedwas Workmen's Hall & Institute. The event aimed to showcase local biodiversity and nature recovery initiatives across the county borough through presentations, information stalls and networking opportunities with a range of environmental organisations.

The Council noted the opportunity to learn more about local nature recovery projects and explore opportunities for partnership working and community involvement.

Resolved: That Cllr Duncan Johnson be nominated to attend the event on behalf of Darran Valley Community Council.

Update (September 2026): Members noted that Cllr D. Johnson was not in attendance and was therefore unable to provide an update on the event. It was agreed that the item be deferred to the next meeting to allow an update to be provided and any relevant information to be shared with Members.

42.3 Town and Community Councils Liaison Committee Representation on the Standards Committee

Members considered correspondence from Cllr Michael Parker, Chair of the Town and Community Councils Liaison Committee (TCCLC), regarding Caerphilly County Borough Council's arrangements for appointing a Town and Community Council representative to the Standards Committee.

The correspondence outlined concerns that the nomination process undertaken by the TCCLC in March 2025, which selected a representative through a secret ballot, had subsequently been described by CCBC's Head of Legal as "flawed". It was noted that the TCCLC considers its voting arrangements to be long established and believes that Town and Community Councils should retain the right to nominate their own representative to the Standards Committee.

Members further noted that the matter is scheduled for discussion at the next meeting of the TCCLC in October 2026.

Update (September 2026): Cllr R. Chapman advised that there was no further update available at this time. It was noted that the matter remains ongoing and is still under consideration by the relevant bodies. Members noted the position and agreed to await further developments.

51- To receive Community Council Correspondence

51.1 – Mrs Margaret Jones

Members considered correspondence received from Mrs Margaret Jones regarding Councillor Robert Chapman's social media post relating to the proposed Cae Glas Colliery development. The correspondence raised concerns about reliance on Facebook as a means of communication, particularly for residents who do not use social media, and suggested that alternative methods of communication should be considered. Mrs Jones also expressed views regarding the planning application and suggested that a public meeting organised by the Community Council may provide an opportunity for residents to discuss and raise concerns about the proposal.

Update (September 2026): Members noted the correspondence. As the majority of Fochriw Ward Councillors were not in attendance, it was agreed that consideration of the matter be deferred to the next meeting on 1 October 2026 to allow for full Fochriw Ward representation during discussions. Members present raised no objections to residents organising a public meeting to discuss local issues.

Clerk's Response

The Clerk informed Mrs Jones that her correspondence had been considered at the Community Council meeting held on 10 September 2026. Due to the absence of the majority of Fochriw Ward Councillors, Members agreed to defer the matter to the next meeting on 1 October 2026. The Clerk also advised that Councillors present had no objections to residents organising a public meeting regarding the matters raised. In relation to concerns about the notification of planning applications, Mrs Jones was advised that any formal complaint should be directed to Caerphilly County Borough Council Planning Department, as responsibility for planning application administration and publicity rests with the Local Planning Authority rather than the Community Council.

51.2 – Elsbury Platforms (Christmas lights 2026)

Members noted correspondence between the Clerk and Elsbury Access regarding arrangements for the 2026 Christmas Lights installation. The Clerk requested that the Christmas lights be installed and switched on during the last weekend of November, in line with previous years. Members also requested that the lights be inspected and tested well in advance of the switch-on date to ensure that any faults are identified and rectified beforehand, following issues experienced with some lights during the 2025 display.

Clerk's Action

The Clerk contacted Elsbury Access to request their services for the installation and operation of the Christmas lights for 2026. The request included a requirement for advance testing of the lights to ensure that all displays are fully operational prior to the official switch-on event. An automatic acknowledgement was received confirming that the enquiry would be considered upon the contractor's return to the office.

51.3 – Community Boundary Review

Members noted correspondence from **Caerphilly County Borough Council** regarding the implementation of the Community Boundary Review. It was noted that the revised community arrangements will come into effect at the ordinary local elections in May 2027. Members were advised that responsibility for managing any resulting changes rests with individual community and town councils, with support available from One Voice Wales where required.

Members further noted that the Community Boundary Review does **not affect Darran Valley Community Council**, and therefore no specific action is required at this time. The correspondence was received and noted.

52- Darran Valley Community Council Crime Update

Members received an update from officers of the **Caerphilly North Neighbourhood Policing Team**, who attended the meeting and provided an overview of current policing matters within the Darran Valley area. Officers outlined recent crime and anti-social behaviour figures, ongoing enforcement activity, community engagement initiatives and local policing priorities.

Members noted that recorded crime in the Darran Valley ward increased from 11 incidents in July 2026 to 13 incidents in August 2026, while anti-social behaviour incidents remained unchanged at 3. Officers also highlighted ongoing work to address speeding concerns through Operation Atal, investigations into local incidents, and continued partnership working to tackle environmental crime and community safety issues. The report was received and noted.

53- Darran Valley Community Council Payments

Payee	Details	Amount (£)
Audit Wales	Audit Invoice	368.10
BK Plus	Internal Audit	330
Fruity Fridays Craft Club	Grant Award	150.00
Total		848.10

Resolved: The above payments, totalling **£848.10**, were presented for approval. Following consideration, Councillors unanimously voted to authorise the payments and instructed the **Clerk** to arrange payment accordingly.

54- Planning Applications

26/0546/COU - Caeglas Colliery, Fochriw Road, Fochriw

Members considered an application for the change of use of Caeglas Colliery to a waste transfer facility with associated external storage. Whilst Members acknowledged that the application would be determined by Caerphilly County Borough Council, concerns were raised regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the local area. These included matters relating to increased vehicle movements, residential amenity, environmental impact, highway safety and the adequacy of supporting information submitted with the application.

26/0555/FULL - Land at Craig-y-felin, Bailey Street, Deri

Members considered an application for the erection of a new dwelling on land at Craig-y-felin, Bailey Street, Deri. No comments or concerns were raised in relation to the proposal.

55- Potential Closure of Deri Primary School

The matter of the potential closure of Deri Primary School was raised and discussed by Members. It was noted that Councillor R Chapman, is actively taking forward the concerns expressed by the community with Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Members expressed their concern regarding the potential impact of any closure on pupils, families, and the wider community. It was agreed that the Community Council will continue to monitor developments closely and remain engaged with the matter as further information becomes available.

Resolved: That the Community Council keeps a close watch on the situation and that the matter be placed on the agenda for further discussion at the October 2026 meeting.

56- Road Closure in New Tredegar (impact on the village of Deri)

Cllr D. Nicholas raised concerns regarding the planned long-term closure of the A469 between Pontlottyn and New Tredegar, which forms part of a major engineering scheme to address ongoing ground movement issues. The project is anticipated to require a road closure for approximately two years.

Members noted that a previous incident affecting the route had resulted in significant disruption within the Darran Valley, with satellite navigation systems diverting traffic, including heavy goods vehicles and articulated lorries, through local villages. Concerns were expressed that a prolonged closure could have a similar impact on local communities, road safety and traffic congestion.

Cllr D. Nicholas requested that Cllr R. Chapman raise these concerns with the relevant authorities and seek clarification on what mitigation measures could be implemented to minimise the impact on local villages. Cllr R. Chapman advised that he had requested a drop-in centre meeting to enable residents and stakeholders to receive further information and discuss the proposals and associated traffic management arrangements.

Resolved: That the concerns raised be noted and that Cllr R. Chapman seek further information regarding proposed mitigation measures and report back to the Council in due course.

57- Analysis of summer events in Deri and Fochriw

Councillors reported that the Summer Events programme had once again been well attended and successful across the Darran Valley. It was noted that children from across the villages had been highly engaged in the activities provided and that the events had been positively received by the local community.

Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to the volunteers who supported the events, particularly those who assisted with the provision of refreshments throughout the programme.

Cllr J. Gibbings advised that the Deri Regeneration Group would be unable to organise refreshments for the Summer Events in 2027. Members noted that alternative arrangements would therefore need to be considered and agreed in advance of next year's programme.

Resolved: That the successful delivery of the 2026 Summer Events be noted and that arrangements for the provision of refreshments for 2027 be considered at a future meeting.

58- Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday, 1st October 2026, at 6.30 pm (Deri Library)