



Aber Valley
Communities First Partnership
Moving Forward Together



Gaerphilly County Borough Council
Chief Executive's Directorate
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Dear Ms Harrhy

Aber Valley CCTV Future proposals

I am writing on behalf of the Aber Valley Communities Partnership (Senghenydd and Abertridwr) to bring to your attention some concerns raised at our recent meetings. In September, most of the meeting was taken up with discussions about the increase of vandalism and antisocial behaviour in the Valley. Various clubs reported theft, fire and vandalism on their premises, Eglwysilan church reported acts of vandalism during the summer holidays, and residents report a lack of police presence or response to reports of damage to cars and property. We are in touch with our local CPSO who urged people to report all incidents on 111. However the overwhelming feeling is that the Valley is slipping back into the bad old days of the 1990s before Communities First money transformed the environment and provided opportunities to keep young people off the streets for much of their out of school/college/work life.

At the November meeting, one of our ward Councillors updated the meeting on the budget proposals the Council released recently. We already knew we would be losing funding for our under 11s Splash Park, and that there would be changes affecting the Community Centres' budgets and plans are being formulated to combat these changes. However we were horrified to hear that all CCTV provision for the Valley (6 cameras in total) could be withdrawn. During the year ending August 2019, the Valley was the subject of 369 police reported incidents, of which 77 were within range of the cameras. A number of these reports were the direct result of camera surveillance. There were also a number of police requests for CCTV footage after incidents had occurred. We also understand plans are in place to switch off street lighting between 12 midnight and 5.00 am, which although a necessary "green" action cannot improve our situation.

The members of the Partnership (representatives of volunteer organisations and residents) are appalled that, at a time when they are suffering from cuts to police presence, loss of youth facilities partially funded by the Council and the general increase in antisocial behaviour, there is a proposal on the table to cut the provision of this proven anti-crime facility. I trust this concern can be added to the consultation process, but more than that, we felt we should bring our concerns directly to you as you were kind enough to come and meet with us in the past. Perhaps we could repeat that exercise, with yourself or a designated officer to explain how we can work for the continued improvement of the fabric and life of the Valley and the residents, in the face of annual cuts which undermine the structure and safety of our community.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Turton

Secretary to the Aber Valley Communities Partnership

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