

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 6-30pm, online via the Zoom platform, and in person at Pembrokeshire College

Present: Cllrs. Chris Lawler, Rita Lawler, Veronica James, Michelle Lewis, Mike Dare; Peter Horton (Clerk).

Apologies: C'llrs Ian Lewis, John Cole, Alison Palmer

The meeting was chaired by C'lr Veronica James.

Declaration of known interests

None.

Approval of minutes of minutes of December 2024 monthly meeting

These were approved by Members, and retained by the Clerk for signature following the meeting (proposer C'lr Michelle Lewis, seconder C'lr Rita Lawler).

Matters arising

None.

Plans

Planning application consultations received

24/0901/PA – Alterations and extension; Site Address: 38, Woodlands Park, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1LR – No comments.

Planning consents notified

24/0721/PA - Change of use from domestic garage to a holiday let; Site Address: Meadow Croft, Pembroke Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 4LA

Correspondence

- 01) P.C.C. – Acknowledgement of message sent about lighting on pedestrian crossing on Lower Pembroke Road – Clerk to chase up the needed maintenance.
- 02) P.C.C. – Rejection of application for tree-planting at various locations around community area – Members disappointed, but accepted this as final.

Accounts

Payments

Easy Websites (direct debit for website provision)	:	£ 36-96
Wales Audit Office (audit fee for 2023/24 accounts)	:	£200-00

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C'lr Veronica James, seconder C'lr Michelle Lewis).

Discussion of budget and precept for 2025/26

Members agreed an overall budget for 2025/26 of £29210. The precept for 2025/26 was kept unchanged at £17500 (proposer C'lr Veronica James, seconder C'lr Rita Lawler). The figure for the Clerk was amended to take account of the below agreed change in Clerk's hours. The donation figure was altered to £7000, and the remaining difference removed from the administration budget, so as to maintain the overall budget at £29210.

Discussion of Clerk's conditions of employment

Due to One Voice Wales recommendations, and increases in levels of work over recent years, Members agreed to increase the hours of work for the Clerk to 24 hours

per month, effective April 2025. It was also agreed that the Clerk should henceforth be paid mileage at the normal rate for travelling to and from normal monthly meetings (proposer C'llr Veronica James, seconder C'llr Michelle Lewis). Clerk to prepare a revised contract document for signature.

County Councillor's report

As C'llr John Cole was not present, there was no official report. However, Members mentioned that some work was planned on Freeman's Way in the near future, which would involve traffic control and likely consequent delays lasting around a month.

Discussion of any applications received for co-option of new councillors

None received.

Any necessary discussion of environmental / dog-fouling issues in community (including discussion of community tree-planting)

Dog fouling. Members noted that the problem seemed to be as bad as ever. Posters had gone up in the community drawing attention to the problem, and encouraging a responsible approach by dog-owners.

Bin collections. Members had noticed problems with the bin collections over the Christmas period, with household waste being uncollected for several days beyond the scheduled dates. This had happened on quite a number of recent occasions. Clerk to raise this with C'llr John Cole as County Councillor.

Signing of amended Standing Orders

The revised Standing Orders as agreed at the November 2024 meeting were signed by the vice-Chairman.

Any necessary discussion of future community events

None.

Any other business

Flower planting. Given the rejection by P.C.C. of the request for tree-planting, C'llr Rita Lawler raised the possibility of flower troughs or additional flower beds in the community to introduce more colour into the area. Agenda item to be tabled for February to discuss this.

Distinction between Community Council and Welfare Committee areas of responsibility. C'llr Michelle Lewis commented on the apparent confusion in the community over this matter, which she felt was not always helped by postings placed on both the Community Council and Welfare Committee social media pages. Agenda item to be tabled for February to discuss how to promote clarity on this issue.

For Sale signage. P.C.C. had indicated that removal of this signage would be a low priority for them, as there was no interference with traffic visibility sightlines. They had said, however, that the signage was illegal, and that the community council was free to remove the signage directly if it wished to do so. The Clerk undertook to write to the estate agents concerned, on receipt of photographs of the signage from Members.

Telephone cabinet in Greenhill Park Drive. C'llr Rita Lawler mentioned that someone had placed unsightly business advertisements on the cabinet. The Clerk undertook to report this to Openreach.

The meeting was closed at 7-45pm. Next scheduled meeting - Wednesday 12th February 2025.