

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting 9th February 2022 at 7pm, online via the Zoom
videoconferencing platform

Present: Cllrs. John Cole, Mary Owen, Nick Stamp, Alison Palmer, Janice Morgan, Paul Davies, Ian Lewis, Michelle Lewis; Peter Horton (Clerk).

The Chairman welcomed C'llr Ian Lewis to his first meeting.

Apologies

C'llrs Veronica James, Hilliard Studley, Queenie Thomas

Declaration of known interests

None

Approval of minutes of January 2022 monthly meeting

These were approved by Members, and retained by the Clerk for signature by the Chairman following the meeting (proposer C'llr Mary Owen, seconder C'llr Michelle Lewis).

Matters arising

Roadworks on road outside Haylett Grange. These were still pending.

Plans

Planning application consultations received

21/0970/PA - Removal of Condition 2 (Biodiversity Enhancement) and variation of Condition 4 (Opening Hours) of planning permission 21/0625/PA (Use of distillery to allow for ancillary sales / tasting area (partly in retrospect)); Site Address: Cinnamon Grove Gin Distillery, Cinnamon Grove Farm, Old Hakin Road, Merlin's Bridge, SA61 1XG – No comments.

Correspondence

01) V.C. Gallery – Thanks for donation received – noted. The letter had also included an invitation for members to go and visit the gallery at some point. Various members were interested in taking up the offer. C'llr John Cole offered to make the necessary arrangement. Interested Members to let C'llr John Cole know.

02) P.C.C. – Consultation on supplementary Planning guidance – noted.

03) Wales Air Ambulance – Request for financial assistance – Members approved a £300 donation (proposer C'llr Mary Owen, seconder C'llr John Cole).

Accounts

Payments

Clerk (repayment of annual Fasthosts subscription paid)	: £ 66-00
C'llr Michelle Lewis (Member allowance December 2021 – March 2022)	: £ 50-00
C'llr Ian Lewis (Member allowance January – March 2022)	: £ 37-50
Wales Air Ambulance donation, (as per Correspondence item 03 above)	: £300-00

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C'llr John Cole, seconder C'llr Janice Morgan).

[NOTE : additional item of expenditure for donation to Welfare Committee noted and approved in agenda item 'Discussion of request for financial assistance for Welfare Committee' below]

Monthly accounts statement (effective January 31st 2022)

Total expenditure in financial year to January 31 st	: £13,548-45
Total income in financial year to January 31 st	: £10,259-91
Funds on hand on January 31 st (current account)	: £17,020-34
Funds on hand on January 31 st (deposit account)	: £ 8,075-38

Bank signatories

Members voted to add C'llr John Cole as a signatory (proposer C'llr Michelle Lewis, seconder C'llr Janice Morgan). Clerk to make necessary arrangements.

Zoom account

Members agreed that the current arrangement for using the paid account should continue, on the basis that the shared cost would amount to £3-00 + VAT for Merlin's Bridge Community Council at current subscription rates.

Discussion / vote on the following motion, proposed by C'llr John Cole : "That Council, when voting on any matters that require a vote, have such votes recorded"

Members did not approve the resolution, but agreed to review the arrangement in connection with any discussion on amending the Standing Orders at the 2022 Annual General Meeting. In the meantime, Members could request that individual Members' votes be recorded at the beginning of the meeting.

County Councillor's report

Roadworks to install fibre-optics. Members were informed that the work was likely to be ongoing for quite some time, with inevitable disruption.

Signage, Clay Lane. C'llr John Cole informed Members that he had cleaned the signage, which was now greatly improved.

LED lights on zebra crossing. These had been replaced by P.C.C., and were now fully functional.

Repair of non-functioning streetlights. C'llr John Cole had confirmed that the repairs were on the P.C.C. schedule of work, but no date had been provided as to exactly when the repairs would be undertaken.

Discussion of request for financial assistance for Welfare Committee

[NOTE – In accordance with the dispensation granted by the Standards Committee, C’lr John Cole did not participate in the vote on this agenda item].

After receiving details of the forthcoming costs facing the Welfare Committee in connection with maintenance and inspection costs for the playground, Members approved a donation of £2119-80 to the Welfare Committee (proposer C’lr Paul Davies, seconder C’lr Janice Morgan).

C’lr John Cole assured Members that the donation would be acknowledged on his Facebook page.

Discussion of possible purchase of new speed-activated sign

Members approved the purchase of an Evolis mains-powered Speed-activated sign, to be placed on the same pole as the non-functioning one near the Rugby Club, at a cost of £1650-00 + VAT (proposer C’lr Paul Davies, seconder C’lr John Cole). Clerk to place the order accordingly.

Discussion of future meeting arrangements in the light of recent / updated Welsh Government guidance on multi-location meeting requirement

The Chairman and Clerk had visited the Pembrokeshire College, which had offered the use of a room there free of charge. It had been confirmed that the facilities would meet the requirements for multi-locational meetings. Members agreed to commence holding meetings there in March, at an earlier start time of 6-30pm, to meet the requirements of the College (proposer C’lr Paul Davies, seconder C’lr Mary Owen). As the College had indicated that they would not charge the Community Council for use of the facilities, Members thought it would be good at a future date to consider making a donation to a charitable cause supported by the College.

[NOTE – C’lr Nick Stamp left the meeting at this point with apologies].

Discussion of social media presence for Community Council

Members were generally in favour of considering some kind of social media presence for the Community Council, possibly using Facebook.

C’lr Michelle Lewis commented that while social media is excellent in general terms, careful consideration would need to be given to its administration, how it would be controlled, and what the objectives would be. She suggested considering how other groups’ social media accounts were run, in order to get suggestions to inform the Council.

It was left for C’lrs Janice Morgan and Michelle Lewis to discuss possibilities, and for the matter to be tabled for discussion again in the March meeting.

Discussion of supporting of events in connection with Queen's Platinum Jubilee

C'llr John Cole was planning for the Welfare Committee to have a meeting towards the end of February to discuss proposed arrangements for a community event expected to be scheduled for 5th June 2022, to run from 2pm – 10pm. It was anticipated that the event would cost around £3000 to host. It was mentioned that physical assistance and support, as well as financial support, would be important. All Members interested in lending support were invited to attend the Welfare Committee meeting when arranged. It was left for Members to notify C'llr Cole of their interest, and to be notified of the date and time of the meeting in due course.

Matter of contacting DeClare Court, Emmanuel Mission Church, and St. Mark's School, regarding possible joint initiatives to celebrate the Jubilee were in hand with C'llrs Janice Morgan (DeClare Court) and Alison Palmer (Emmanuel Mission and School).

C'llr Mary Owen referred to the Queen's Canopy Initiative, which was encouraging tree-planting in connection with the Platinum Jubilee. It was possible to apply for trees from the Woodland Trust. These could potentially be planted in any green area, and include shrubs, etc., as well as trees.

Matter to be tabled for any necessary further discussion in the March meeting.

Discussion of how to meet 'public participation' requirements of Local Government and Elections (Wales) 2021 legal requirements due to become effective in April 2022

It was agreed that the facility to allow public representation on tabled agenda items would be arranged for the beginning of each agenda item (proposer C'llr Mary Owen, seconder C'llr Janice Morgan), commencing in April 2022. Clerk to make changes to Standing Orders to put to Members in the March meeting.

[NOTE – C'llr Paul Davies left the meeting with apologies at this point].

Discussion of possible tree-planting initiative

The Queen's Canopy tree-planting initiative to be looked at by C'llrs Michelle Lewis and Mary Owen. Members were aware of the opportunity to request tree packs from the Woodland Trust, and were interested in the possibility of carrying out planting on public land around the community. Clerk to contact P.C.C. to ask about permission to plant trees and shrubs on P.C.C.-owned land. Members to identify suitable sites, and pass details of these to the Clerk, for inclusion in the request to P.C.C.

Any other business

There was no other business to record this month.

Next meeting

Wednesday 9th March 2022 at 6-30pm, in person at the Pembrokeshire College, and online using the Zoom platform.

The meeting was closed at 8-50pm.