

## **MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 6-30pm, at the Pembrokeshire College, Haverfordwest, and online via the Zoom videoconferencing platform

**Present:** Cllrs. Ian Lewis (Chairman), Mike Dare, Alison Palmer, Veronica James, John Cole, Michelle Lewis; Peter Horton (Clerk).

**Apologies:** None.

### **Declaration of known interests**

Cllrs John Cole noted a personal and prejudicial interest in any discussion concerning the Welfare Committee, as a sitting member of the Welfare Committee. This included the discussion concerning the donation request for work on the land and buildings owned by the Welfare Committee.

### **Approval of minutes of 2023 A.G.M.**

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

### **Approval of minutes of May 2023 monthly meeting**

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

### **Matters arising**

**Speed-activated signage.** C'llr John Cole had been in discussion with his son at the cheese factory about potentially siting a sign near the railway bridge, on land adjoining the factory site.

### **Presentation by P.A.V.S.**

Item deferred, as the P.A.V.S. officer due to attend was unavailable. Item to be rescheduled for consideration in the September 2023 meeting.

### **Plans**

#### **Consents granted (for information)**

**22/1122/PA** - Raised decking with balustrade; Site Address: 4, St Issell's Avenue, MERLINS BRIDGE, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1JU

### **Correspondence**

1) Merlin's Bridge Juniors – Request for financial assistance – Prior to the discussion on this item, C'llr John Cole made a brief statement to Members. He was aware that generous donations had previously been given. He felt that what was being proposed would be a valuable community asset. A home for the Merlin's Bridge F.A. had long been sought. Long term, he felt that the benefit to the community would be huge.

[NOTE – after making an address to the council, JC left the room during discussion of the donation request].

C'llr Mike Dare commented that the project under way would be a positive thing to encourage the youth of the community, and also across the age ranges. C'llr Ian Lewis expressed concern that any project carried out should not prevent use of the land by local residents generally.

Reference was made to the previous donation in September 2022 of £5000, which was at the time considered to be a final donation. Members understood the motive and aims of the project, but were concerned at the amount of money being requested, proportionate to the overall community council budget. They also noted that, though popular, football was not something that would appeal to all members of the community. However, it was recognised that this would be true of any area of activity. The Clerk provided information on the current standing of accounts / budget. Members decided to request an explanation in detail of what the money was needed for, costings, underlying accounts figures to show the standing of the Football Club accounts, information about what other funding sources had been explored by the Football Club, and the extent to which the facilities would be openly available to the community at large, and on what basis. Clerk to respond accordingly. Response to also point out to the Football Club that it was early in the year to commit most of the budget held by the community council for donations.

[NOTE – C’Ilr John Cole rejoined the meeting at this point]

- 2) P.C.C. – Invitation for nominations to join Standards Committee – noted.
- 3) Paul Sartori – Request for financial assistance – deferred for consideration in September. Agenda item to be tabled for September to discuss charitable donations in general.
- 4) P.C.C. – Notification of intention to replace speed-activated sign outside Rugby Club – noted.
- 5) P.C.C. – Consultation on proposal to federate Mary Immaculate & St. Teilo’s Schools – noted.
- 6) P.C.C. – Consultation on plan to replace No. 308 bus service with a flexi-bus service – noted.

## **Accounts**

### **Payments**

Clerk (salary and fixed expenses, April – June 2023)	: As per contract
H.M.R.C. (P.A.Y.E. tax on above)	: As per contract
Clerk (incidental expenses, March – May 2023)	: £28-13
C’Ilr Ian Lewis (Member and consumables allowances 23/24)	: £208-00
C’Ilr Michelle Lewis (Member and consumables allowances 23/24)	: £208-00
C’Ilr Alison Palmer (Member and consumables allowances 23/24)	: £208-00
C’Ilr John Cole (Member and consumables allowances 23/24)	: £208-00
C’Ilr Mike Dare (Member and consumables allowances 23/24)	: £208-00
C’Ilr Veronica James (Member and consumables allowances 23/24)	: £208-00

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C’Ilr Ian Lewis, seconder C’Ilr Veronica James).

### **County Councillor's report**

**Welsh Water / B.T. excavations.** C'llr John Cole reported that there had been some recent excavation works by the utilities in connection with repair work and / or ongoing fibre cable installation. These had caused some disruption in the community, much of which was inevitable.

**Car park charging, County Hall car park.** This had now been implemented. In C'llr John Cole's view this was affecting the level of usage of the car park, and was potentially detrimental to town centre businesses.

**Council purchased property in Merlin's Bridge for assisted housing.** Some disturbing incidents with some residents had been reported, with some residents being moved out as a result.

**Streetlights, Catherine's Gate.** It was reported that the streetlight opposite No. 1 Catherine's Gate was still misaligned.

### **Discussion of co-option of new councillors**

The Clerk reported that one informal expression of interest had been received, seeking information about the role of a community councillor. This information had been provided by the Clerk, but no further contact had been received to date.

### **Any necessary discussion of environmental / dog-fouling issues in community**

**Tree-planting.** Members were informed that the trees received from the Woodland Trust had now been planted on the Welfare Field, and were doing well so far.

**Flower beds.** Members noted that four flower beds had now been planted, and were doing well, providing an attractive and colourful display.

**Dog fouling.** This was noted as an ongoing issue. C'llr Michelle Lewis undertook to place a reminder on the community Facebook page to draw attention to this.

**Road drains, Pembroke Road.** This was noted as an ongoing issue, and still awaiting resolution.

### **Any other business**

**Council activities.** C'llr Mike Dare commented on the positive effects in the community of having such a proactive council, and wanted to express his appreciation for all the other members' efforts in this regard. Members reciprocated the compliment.

**Community priorities.** C'llr Michelle Lewis proposed an exercise to sound out the local community regarding their priorities, and what people would like to see done in the community; to 'check the community pulse'. Agenda item for September to consider how to achieve this.

**Autumn / winter newsletter.** Agenda item to be tabled for September to consider arrangements.

**Laser printer.** Clerk to investigate options / prices for purchasing a laser printer.

### **Next meeting**

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023, at 6-30pm, in person at the Pembrokeshire College, and online using the Zoom platform.

The meeting was closed at 7-30pm.