

**Merlin's Bridge Community Council**  
**Annual Report 2023/24**

Merlin's Bridge Community Council incorporates the areas surrounding the Pembroke Road and Old Hakin Road areas on the outskirts of Haverfordwest. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August).

Merlin's Bridge has twelve council positions. Six were filled at the end of 23/24, as follows :

Ian Lewis (Chairman)  
Veronica James (vice-Chairman)  
Alison Palmer  
John Cole  
Mike Dare  
Michelle Lewis

Peter Horton is Clerk to Merlin's Bridge Community Council and the initial point of contact.

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**Financial Information**

**Income**

The Community Council's income is from precept collected via local Council tax. This was £17500 for the 2023/24 financial year.

**Expenditure**

The Community Council's budget for the 2023/24 financial year was £26106. The following report on anticipated expenditure for the year, and projected expenditure for the 2024/25 financial year, was presented to the January 2024 monthly meeting :

## Merlin's Bridge Community Council approved budget 2024/25

### EXPENDITURE

	<u>Precepted</u> <u>sum for</u> <u>current year</u> <u>2023/24</u>	<u>Expenditure</u> <u>To 31<sup>st</sup></u> <u>December</u> <u>2023</u>	<u>Further</u> <u>anticipated</u> <u>Expenditure</u> <u>to March 2023</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>projected</u> <u>for year</u> <u>2023/24</u>	<u>PROJECTED</u> <u>EXPENDITURE</u> <u>for year</u> <u>2024/25</u>
Clerk	£ 4336	£ 3460	£ 1132	£ 4592	£ 4843 <sup>(1)</sup>
Insurance	£ 600	£ 556	£ -	£ 556	£ 600
External audit fee	£ 300	£ -	£ 300	£ 300	£ 325
Internal audit fee	£ 70	£ 70	£ -	£ 70	£ 75
Christmas trees / selection boxes	£ 750	£ 919	£ -	£ 919	£ 1000
Donations	£ 7500	£ 5900	£ 1600	£ 7500	£ 7500 <sup>(2)</sup>
Events	£ 4000	£ 2885	£ -	£ 2885	£ 2000
Councillor allowances	£ 1800	£ 1248	£ -	£ 1248	£ 2496 <sup>(3)</sup>
Bus shelter maintenance	£ 500	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 500 <sup>(4)</sup>
Speed activated signage	£ 1000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 1000 <sup>(5)</sup>
Training	£ 500	£ -	£ -	£ -	3 500 <sup>(6)</sup>
Admin expenses (inc. printing)	£ 800	£ 520	£ 280	£ 800	£ 850
I.T.	£ 200	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 200
Hall hire if College unavailable	£ 250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 250 <sup>(7)</sup>
Election cost	£ 2000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 2000
Environmental projects	£ 400	£ 360	£ -	£ 360	£ 1100
Defibrillator spares / maintenance	£ 100	£ 590	£ 100	£ 690	£ 100
Contingency fund	£ 1000	£ -	£ 1000	£ 1000	£ 1000
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Totals	£26106	£16508	£ 4412	£20920	£26339

**NOTES FROM 2024/25 PROJECTED OUTGOINGS COLUMNS**

- 1) Based on current year, plus assumed 5% NJC pay increase for 2024/25
- 2) Based on current year's donations, and to be considered in light of request from Welfare Committee for ongoing support towards cost of running community playpark in Welfare Field
- 3) Based on anticipated 12 member allowances @ £208
- 4) Nominal sum for potential maintenance / repair costs
- 5) Provisional sum for contribution towards one sign, assuming majority of expenditure covered by PCC
- 6) Provisional sum for £25 each for 12 members, plus £200 for Clerk's training.
- 7) Based on assumed cost in the region of £25/month

**SUMMARY OF PROJECTED STANDING OF ACCOUNTS ON 31/03/2023**

Balance brought forward to April 1st 2023		: £12512
Total precept income due	: £17500	
Other income received (bank interest / payments)	: £ 34	
Other income received (VAT refund)	: £ 326	
Total anticipated income for year to March 31st 2023	: £17860	: £17860
Deduct anticipated expenditure for year		:(£20920)
Therefore, projected available funds on March 31 <sup>st</sup> 2023		: £ 9452
Precept set for 2024/25	:	£17500
Deduct projected expenditures for 2024/25	:	(£26339)
Projected balance on hand at end of 2024/25	:	£ 613

### **Relationship with the principal council**

The Community Council has no ongoing formal charters with Pembrokeshire County Council (the Principal Authority).

### **Audit**

**Audit of 2021/22 accounts.** These accounts represent the most recently externally audited accounts, and were given unqualified approval by the Wales Audit Office auditors.

### **Achievements during the past year**

- Events to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III as an all-inclusive community event were supported by the community council.
- The council has continued proactive steps to try and reduce the level of dog-fouling in the community, by seeking to raise awareness, and improve reporting of incidences to Pembrokeshire County Council.
- Two community newsletters were published and distributed throughout the community area.
- Maintenance and repair, and regular monitoring of the community defibrillator has been arranged as necessary.
- Organisation of a community Christmas carol concert, publication, printing and distribution of Christmas cards in the community have been carried out and supported by the community council.
- A total of £8585 was donated by the community council to local good causes, including notably the development of community sporting facilities.
- Co-operative partnership working arrangements with the school and police over social issues have been fostered during the year.

### **Priorities for the coming year**

- Continue efforts to reduce dog-fouling throughout the community area.
- Bring to fruition the formation of further community flower beds.
- Carry out further tree-planting in community public spaces for their visual appeal and environmental benefits.

PETER HORTON

**CLERK TO MERLIN'S BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

APRIL 2024