

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting 11th December 2019 held at the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs John Cole, Alison Palmer, Nick Stamp, Queenie Thomas, Lisa O'Sullivan, Janice Morgan, Louise Lambert (Clerk)

The Chair Cllr John Cole Opened the meeting

Apologies: Cllrs Paul Davies, Hilliard Studley, Mary Owen

- 1. Minutes of November Meeting – Cllr Thomas asked for it to be a matter of record that she had not simply abstained from the vote regarding the new clerk but because she was not aware of the time or date of the meeting to discuss and therefore wasn't present she felt she could not vote on this matter.**

Otherwise no further issues and the minutes present a true and accurate record.

Proposed by Cllr Thomas and seconded by Cllr Stamp

- 2. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Cllr O'Sullivan highlighted that we paid the trumpeter too little this year in relation to last year and she feels we should remedy this so that we don't lose his services in future. It was suggested that unless we are approached to remedy the problem immediately we should simply pay extra next time.

Proposed by Cllr Stamp and seconded by Cllr Janice Morgan

- 3. Clerks Vacancy**

An appointment has been made and Louise Lambert is the new clerk. Contract signed by chairman and clerk and copies kept for records.

- 4. Correspondence**

- We have received an email regarding section 137a of Expenditure Act and the maximum expenditure per elector for 2020-2021 has been set at £8.32. Some discussion regarding exactly what it means by elector and how many we have in our jurisdiction. Cllr O'Sullivan is going to speak to PCC and try to find out how many electors we have.
- Bus Passes are changing, old passes are still valid but we have been sent posters which have details of the website people can use to find out more about the changes and when they come into force one which needs to be displayed on notice board and one in local shop in St Issells Avenue.
- All councils have been advised they need to complete remuneration records and sent to Welsh Government, it is a legal requirement. Cllr O'Sullivan said she was confident ours had been sent off within the audit

papers but she will double check, it does need to be submitted even though no-one has taken any allowances.

- Bulletin sent in from OVW, this was an 18 page document which was passed round but not discussed. To be emailed to all Cllrs. on email.
- More equal Wales (One Voice) a consultation is taking place and they want our views. To be emailed to all Cllrs. on email.
- Some newsletters received regarding play areas and ageism, agreement made to read at the end of the meeting.

5. Donations

- Request made for financial support for next years Eisteddfod.
Proposed as accepted by Cllr Thomas and seconded by Cllr Palmer
- Request from St Mark's School for contribution towards Christmas dinner event for the children. Discussion regarding a suitable amount and a decision made to contribute £300.
Proposed as accepted by Cllr Thomas and seconded by Cllr Morgan

6. County Councillor Report

- Ferry Way's road was relayed with new tarmac except for one third of it, which Cllr Janice Morgan was rather bewildered by, as were other of the residence of Ferry Way.
- Proposed 5% council tax increase this year as opposed to the original suggestion of 28%
- Street lights have been repaired, the ones on St Marks Close and Pembroke Road have had LED's installed and the remainder are orange.
- Maintenance of drains, the annual issue of blocked drains with lots of debris from foliage and gravel, drains need to be rodded. There is still a big problem with the large puddle that appears close to the bottom of Pembroke Road. Cause for concern regarding safety as lots of children unnecessarily cross the road to avoid or end up with wet feet.
- Cheese factory entrance, Cllr Morgan recalled recently seeing two HGV's trying to negotiate the entrance at the same time recently and the traffic chaos that ensued. It is felt that the entrance size and method of entry is inadequate for a factory of it's size and causes safety concerns.

7. Financial Accounts/Payments required

- £1.40 (2x first class stamps)
- £22.65 (Bookers carol concert)
- £645 (Christmas Trees)
- 32 (selection packs)

- Financial position, currently £8,071.29 in ringfenced account for elections. £11,398.98 in regular income and expenditure account including VAT rebate of £2,592.35. This year we have only spent £1,109.31 of £10,000 precept, Discussions centred upon giving more donations locally, Cllr Stamp is going to speak to John Welsby to see if there is anything specific the church needs as they are pivotal to the community and do much to assist the community council and help the community.
- There was discussion regarding the allowances for councillors going forwards and whether it's a requirement to take the allowance or simply best practice. Moreover what are the qualifying criteria and when is the payment made. Ascertained we need further guidance from OVW, the allowance made for Cllrs allowance within the accounts will be carried forward if not spent.
- Financial projections for 2020/2021, salary and expenses for new clerk have been included since an appointment has now been made, training figure has been increased to reflect this new appointment also. The finance committee had left blank the figures for community projects, grounds maintenance and bus shelters as they wanted further input from everyone regarding this. After discussion it was suggested to allocate as follows:-

- £1,500 for community projects
- £1,500 for grounds maintenance
- £1,000 for upkeep of bus shelters

Proposed by Cllr Stamp and Seconded by Cllr Morgan

Votes in favour Cllrs O'Sullivan, Palmer, Cole

Abstention Cllr Thomas

8.45pm Chairman Cllr Cole makes his apologies and leaves the meeting, Vice Chair Cllr O'Sullivan takes over.

- Discussion of budgeting procedures, Christine Lewis has donated one to be updated for the use of the council. Discussion of any amendments suggested, Cllr Morgan noted there was no date for review of the clerks salary and suggested this should be added.

Agreement of use of new budget procedure.

Proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Stamp

Votes in favour Cllrs O'Sullivan, Palmer

Abstention Cllr Thomas

8. Representative for OVW

- No report this month.

9. Planning - Cllr Nick Stamp said the JUDP was ongoing and the JUDP will soon to be set however the meeting has to be changed due to the general election, new date is 19th December and we can anticipate something in writing in the new year.

- No other planning matters in last 2 weeks other than an extension to 16 Walters Avenue.

10.Cllrs representing MBCC

- Nothing from St Marks School or welfare committee at this time.

11.Other urgent matters

- Donation to the chapel, it was suggested we should make a donation to the chapel as a thankyou for letting us use their facilities to conduct interviews for the clerk position. £50 suggested figure.

*Proposed by Cllr Palmer and seconded by Cllr Morgan
Votes in favour Cllrs O’Sullivan, Stamp, Thomas*

- Cllr O’Sullivan suggested we get a small gift for Sarah the clerk at Pembroke Dock as a thank you for doing out accounts £25 suggested in the form of a voucher.

*Proposed by Cllr Thomas and seconded by Cllr Morgan
Votes in favour Cllrs O’Sullivan, Palmer, Stamp*

Discussion regarding Christmas Cards/Calendar and the consensus was that it was too late for this year and perhaps we would do best to focus on a newsletter to go out with an Easter Card instead.

*Proposed by Cllr O’Sullivan and seconded by Cllr Morgan
Votes in favour Cllrs Thomas, Stamp, Palmer*

Meeting finished 9.00

Next Meeting 8th January 2020

Signed..... Dated