

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 9th November 2022 at 6-30pm, online via the Zoom videoconferencing platform

Present: Cllrs. John Cole, Alison Palmer, Kate Bevan, Craig Reeves, Jan Morgan, Michelle Lewis; Peter Horton (Clerk).

Apologies: C'llrs Veronica James, Mike Dare, Ian Lewis.

Declaration of known interests

C'llrs Kate Bevan and John Cole declared a potential conflict of interest in any discussion concerning the Welfare Committee.

Approval of minutes of October 2022 monthly meeting

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

Matters arising

V.C. Gallery. C'llr John Cole had been in discussion with them, and it was hoped that a visit to a M.B.C.C. meeting could be arranged for the New Year.

Councillor vacancies. Members were informed that no responses had been received to date.

Remembrance Day. C'llr Alison Palmer confirmed that arrangements were in place, with the bugler arranged, and the service organised. C'llr John Cole mentioned that the wreaths had not been delivered, but that he was confident that they would be ready for the service on Sunday 13th November.

Plans

There were no plans for discussion this month.

Correspondence

01) Mary Owen – Message of resignation from the Council – noted. Clerk to send a message of thanks to her for her valuable contribution towards community affairs during her time as a member.

02) P.C.C. – Information on dog-fouling protocols – C'llr Michelle Lewis had been in touch with P.C.C. about the issue of dog-fouling, and had received some useful information. It had been mentioned that there were only 2 dog wardens in Pembrokeshire now, and no formal dedicated budget for their activities. P.C.C. was currently in the process of assessing how to set up a dedicated team for this, but this was currently unresolved. It had been suggested that any specific initiatives required by the community council would need to be set up and funded directly by the community council. One thing that had been suggested was placing laminated signs around the community. P.C.C. had indicated in the conversation with C'llr Michelle Lewis that this would be acceptable to do. Members asked C'llr Michelle Lewis to obtain written confirmation of this before proceeding. C'llr John Cole suggested that if signs were to be purchased, then they should be proper aluminium ones, which would be durable. It was suggested that this might be an item for inclusion in the budget for 2023/24.

03) Tour of Pembrokeshire – Invitation to volunteer for event – noted.

- 04) Woodland Trust – Confirmation of acceptance of application for tree-pack, for delivery in March 2023 – noted.
- 05) Royal Mail – Rejection of request for additional postbox in or around Greenhill Park Crescent – noted. Members were disappointed with the response. C’Ilr Michelle Lewis felt that questions should be asked of Royal Mail regarding what provisions were in place for the elderly residents who might be unable to get to a post box, or be housebound. Clerk to make enquiries about this.
- 06) P.C.C. – Indicative costings for formation and planting of flower beds for 2023 season – dealt with in agenda item below.

Accounts

Payments

Mary Owen (Member allowance from April – mid-October 2022) : £ 81-25
A.T.M. Installations (installation of happy to chat bench) : £144-00
The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C’Ilr Alison Palmer, seconder C’Ilr Craig Reeves).

Updated budget statement effective 31st October 2022

Members had been circulated an updated accounting statement. This was noted.

Projects for possible inclusion in 2023/24 budget.

Members were encouraged to give thought to any projects they may wish to be included in the budget for 2023/24, for any necessary discussion in advance of the budget being finally set in January. Discussion of Fasthosts contract to be placed on December agenda for discussion.

County Councillor’s report

Vehicle-activated sign outside Rugby Club. C’Ilr John Cole had been in discussion with P.C.C. about placing the new sign on the pole already in position there. P.C.C. had agreed to this, but only on condition that M.B.C.C. should assume ownership, including arranging for its own electricity supply.

Clerk to seek updated figures for the unmetered supply, ready for the December meeting. Clerk also to seek a view from P.C.C. on whether a sign being placed there would jeopardise the prospect for a grant approval for a solar powered sign if one were to be submitted at a future date. Matter to be placed on December agenda for discussion. Depending on the information received prior to the December meeting, Members were minded to await the community works grant window, apply for a solar powered sign, and consider putting up the mains powered sign if the grant application should fail.

Magdalene St. Members were informed that P.C.C. was considering Council forming some parking bays near the cenotaph, which would involve some portions of the double yellow lines currently there.

Seminar on new school curriculum. C’Ilr John Cole had attended this seminar in P.C.C. There had been a heated debate over aspects of the new curriculum covering sex and relationships. Some parents were very unhappy about the classes being mandatory, and had lodged complaints.

Discussion of co-option of new councillors

No new applications had been received. Matter to be kept on agenda for review each month. It was confirmed that a post advertising the vacancies would again be placed on the Facebook page. C’Ilr Jan Morgan suggested making reference to the

vacancies in the leaflet planned to be circulated in the community to advertise the various Christmas events being planned.

Discussion of progress on possible flower bed initiative

Members decided to request that P.C.C. should form the three flower beds, at an indicative cost of £500, with flowers to cost £376-80 in addition (proposer C'llr John Cole, seconder C'llr Jan Morgan). Beds to be situated at the junction of Greenhill Park Crescent, the junction of Woodlands Park, and at Glen View. The previous suggestion of placing one of the beds on the verge area fronting the Welfare Hall was dropped. Clerk to make arrangements with P.C.C. accordingly.

Discussion / adoption of Biodiversity Enhancement Report

C'llr Michelle Lewis had prepared and circulated a draft report for consideration. She proceeded to outline the main elements of the 'actions' section of the report. Members were in agreement with the actions being proposed. It was left for C'llr Michelle Lewis to arrange to prepare a final report incorporating these elements, ready for circulation and adoption in December meeting.

Discussion of possible arrangements to celebrate forthcoming coronation of King Charles III

Deferred for discussion in December, by which time it was anticipated that the Welfare Committee would have had a meeting to discuss possible proposals.

Discussion of arrangements for Spring 2023 newsletter

Deferred for discussion in January 2023.

Discussion of arrangements for Christmas season (including Christmas including Christmas cards / children's competition, selection boxes, Christmas trees / lighting, Carol service, etc.)

Christmas cards for community. C'llr Jan Morgan had obtained a price of £295 + VAT for this to be done at Cleddau Press. C'llr John Cole offered to arrange selection boxes for the schoolchildren as for last year. These initiatives were approved by Members (proposer C'llr John Cole, seconder C'llr Alison Palmer). C'llr Jan Morgan confirmed that she would be calling into the school to arrange for the card picture competition to be arranged, and to convey the successful pictures to Cleddau Press. Members asked C'llr Jan Morgan to enquire whether or not the materials used for the cards would be recycled.

Carol concert. C'llr John Cole had been in discussion with the Emmanuel Mission Church, regarding the possibility of them hosting the carol concert at the church. Members were divided in opinion as to whether or not this should replace the usual community carol concert at the Welfare Hall. Some Members were not in favour, feeling it could put off residents of a non-religious background, or those from non-Christian backgrounds. After extensive discussion, it was agreed that a carol service would be arranged in the Welfare Hall, to be held on the evening of 7th December, at 7pm. This to be combined with the switching on of the Christmas tree lights. C'llr Kate Bevan undertook to coordinate the arrangements for the event, and this was agreed by Members (proposer C'llr John Cole, seconder C'llr Craig Reeves). It was anticipated that mince pies, tea, coffee, squash, mulled wine, would be available. No specific sum was approved for the necessary expenditure on the event, though it was accepted that the community council would bear the cost of this. However,

Members did pre-approve expenditure of up to £50 for a banner to advertise the event, with this preferably to be re-usable on future occasions. C'llr Jan Morgan undertook to arrange for leaflets to be prepared advertising the event. Regarding the separate arrangement to be held at the Church on 18th December, it was left for anyone who wished to attend, as this was effectively an open invitation.

Christmas tree and lighting. Members agreed for these to be sourced and obtained by C'llr John Cole, as for previous years (proposer C'llr Alison Palmer, seconder C'llr Jan Morgan).

[NOTE – C'llr John Cole left the meeting at this point with apologies]

New Year's Eve event. Members were in favour in principle to support a New Year's Eve party in the Welfare Hall. It was left for Members to exchange ideas on this by Whatsapp / email, in advance of a further discussion in December. C'llr Craig Reeves offered to arrange refreshments if needed.

Discussion of possible placement of 'No Dog-Fouling' signage around Community area

Covered in 'Correspondence' above.

Any Other business

Welfare Committee. C'llrs Jan Morgan and Kate Bevan had attended the meeting, and found it very productive. Dog fouling was a subject for concern with them as well as the community council. Members were informed that C'llr Kate Bevan was now secretary to the Welfare Committee. Agenda item to be tabled for December to discuss possible appointments to be made by the community council to the Welfare Committee.

Next meeting

Wednesday 14th December 2022 at 6-30pm, in person at the Pembrokeshire College, and online using the Zoom platform.

The meeting was closed at 8-35pm.