

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 10th May 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.

The meeting was chaired by the incoming Chairman, C’llr Ian Lewis.

Declaration of known interests

C’llrs John Cole noted a personal and prejudicial interest in any discussion concerning the Welfare Committee, as a sitting member of the Welfare Committee.

Approval of minutes of April 2023 monthly meeting

These were approved by Members, and retained by the Clerk for signature following the meeting (proposer C’llr Ian Lewis, seconder C’llr Veronica James).

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 June 2023 meeting.

Matters arising

None.

Plans

Application consultations

22/1122/PA – Raised decking with balustrade; Site Address: 4, St Issell’s Avenue, MERLINS BRIDGE, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1JU – no comments.

23/0078/PA - First floor side extension; Site Address: 52, Pembroke Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1JT – no comments.

Correspondence

- 01) P.C.C. – Confirmation of ownership of bus shelters in community – noted.
- 02) P.C.C. – Acknowledgement of message expressing concerns over blocked road drains on Pembroke Road – Members reported that problems were ongoing.
- 03) Internal auditor – Internal audit report for 2022/23 accounts – dealt with in ‘Accounts’ below.
- 04) St. Mark’s School – consultation on proposals to move to an asymmetric week – Clerk reported on email advice received from the P.C.C. Monitoring Officer. This had been requested following questions raised about C’llr Alison Palmer having voted in favour of the proposed changes in a recent meeting of the School Board of Governors, and whether or not this would compromise her potential participation in any discussion on the matter in the community council. The advice from the Monitoring Officer was that this would not affect C’llr Palmer’s right to participate and vote in any discussion on the subject in the community council. C’llr Alison Palmer was concerned about what she should / could have done differently. C’llr John Cole felt that the proposals represented a significant change in the community, and that it would have been better for C’llr Palmer to have sought the views of the community

council before voting in the board of governor meeting. Members recognised, however, that this could have been difficult to arrange at short notice. It was left that C’lir Palmer would, as far as practicable, seek to ascertain the view of the council on future occasions if it was a matter concerning the entire community, seemed to warrant this, and there was time to do so. Also, C’lir Alison Palmer to send a copy of future board of governor meetings to the Clerk for circulation to other members. Regarding the proposals being made by St. Mark’s School, Members had no objections to them.

05) Kate Bevan – Email of resignation from community council on behalf of herself and Craig Reeves – dealt with in agenda item below.

06) Jan Morgan – email of resignation from community council – dealt with in agenda item below.

Accounts

Payments

Denise Mayr (internal audit fee) : £70-00

The above payment was approved by Members (proposer C’lir John Cole, seconder C’lir Michelle Lewis).

Income

Precept (first of three instalments) : £5834-00

VAT return for 2022/23 : £ 326-02

2022/23 internal audit.

An audit report had been received from the internal auditor, and raised no issues of concern. Members accepted the report.

Annual Governance Statement.

The annual governance statement for 2022/23 was completed and approved by Members (proposer C’lir Ian Lewis, seconder C’lir Veronica James). The statement was signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

County Councillor’s report

Nothing to report this month.

Discussion of co-option of new councillors

Clerk to place casual vacancy notices for 3 recent vacancies. Clerk to write to all 3 outgoing members to thank them for their work during their time on the community council.

Further necessary consideration of determinations from 2023 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales report

Members discussed the ‘consumables’ allowance mandated in the 2023 I.R.P. report, and decided that this should be paid to Members as a lump sum (£52 / member for the 2023/24 year). The allowance would be recovered proportionately in the case of any Members leaving part-way through the year.

This allowance, in conjunction with the basic member allowance, to be paid at the June meeting to all members who had not waived these in writing to the Clerk (proposer C’lir Alison Palmer, seconder C’lir Veronica James).

Discussion of arrangements to celebrate coronation of King Charles III

Members reported that the Coronation event held on the Welfare Field had been well attended, and was viewed as successful. Thanks were given to all who had contributed to the organisation of the event.

C'llrs Michelle Lewis and Ian Lewis had attended the Coronation event held at St. David's Cathedral, and had found it a very moving event.

Any necessary discussion of environmental / dog-fouling issues / planting of flower beds and trees in community

Flower beds. It was understood that the formation and planting of the new flower beds was in hand. Clerk to make an urgent enquiry about this with P.C.C., and check on the situation regarding planting in Johnston.

Dog fouling. Members reported that the streets seemed a lot cleaner as a result of the actions already taken, and publicity generated. Members recognised the need to keep up the momentum, including possibly replacing removed posters on an ongoing basis. The Clerk confirmed that all the posters were held electronically, and could be re-printed and laminated as required.

Tree planting – C'llr John Cole confirmed that they could arrange to plant the trees in the Welfare Field. Due to H&S considerations, relatively small numbers of trees involved, and complication regarding the need to provide tools and equipment, etc., it was not considered worthwhile to involve the college in the arrangements for planting.

Litter bins – It was confirmed that any new litter bins installed would likely have to be funded by the community council as far as emptying costs were concerned. Members to monitor the situation in connection with the possible need for additional provision.

Discussion of any necessary actions connected with community defibrillator, including possible purchase of new defibrillator cabinet

The Clerk was asked to obtain a new defibrillator cabinet, with a £550 spend limit (proposer C'llr Michelle Lewis, seconder C'llr Veronica James).

Regarding further defibrillator provision in the community, Members were left to consider the possibilities regarding location etc., but no decisions were made.

Any other business

Speed-activated sign outside Rugby Club. It was confirmed that it was in hand with P.C.C. to change the sign, and this was expected to be completed in time for the reduction of speed limit in the autumn.

Next meeting

Wednesday 14th June 2023, at 6-30pm, in person at the Pembrokeshire College, and online using the Zoom platform.

The meeting was closed at 8-10pm.