

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting 14th April 2021 at 6pm held online using the Zoom platform

Present: Cllrs. John Cole, Alison Palmer, Nick Stamp, Mary Owen, Paul Davies, Lisa O'Sullivan; Peter Horton (Clerk).

1. **Apologies for absence**

None.

2. **Approval of minutes of March 2021 monthly meeting**

The minutes were approved as written (proposer C'llr Alison Palmer, seconder C'llr Nick Stamp).

3. **Matters arising from Minutes**

None

4. **Discussion of Clerk's Vacancy / Councillor vacancies**

Members noted that the new Clerk had been appointed.

Regarding advertising the open councillor vacancies, Members discussed a number of options. It was agreed for the Clerk to prepare a draft letter advertising the vacancies, and circulate this to Members for comment.

5. **Correspondence**

- a) P.C.C. – consultation on rail services – noted.
- b) P.C.C. – Crime and disorder survey – noted.
- c) One Voice Wales – Notification of training sessions for April – noted.
- d) W.G. – Information on new Local Government Act – It was agreed unanimously that, to comply with the requirements of the legislation, the Clerk would arrange to publish the meeting minutes in draft form on the webpage (but not in the noticeboards) as soon as possible following the meeting in question (proposer C'llr Paul Davies, seconder C'llr Nick Stamp). The minutes would continue to be formally approved at the following meeting in the normal way, and published on the webpage and in the community noticeboards thereafter.

Regarding the requirement to re-introduce public to the meetings from May 2021, it was agreed that the agendas published in the noticeboards and on the webpage should henceforth include login details to enable members of the public to gain admission to the meetings (proposer C'llr Mary Owen, seconder C'llr Alison Palmer).

Regarding the noticeboards, it was agreed that a sign on the rear of the noticeboard outside the Village Hall would be a good idea, to make the noticeboard more visible to passersby on the road. C'llr Nick Stamp agreed to try and get one made up. Also, Clerk to make up a notice with basic information about the meetings, to be placed in the noticeboards. C'llr John Cole undertook to get keys for the noticeboards made up for the Clerk, to facilitate access to these.

- e) W.G. – Consultation on new trading powers in connection with general power of competence – noted.
- f) W.G. – Notification of new Compulsory Purchase Protocol – noted.
- g) Michael Ritchie (copy of letter to Police & Crime Commissioner) – concerns over incidents in Old Hakin Road area – Members were sympathetic to the concerns expressed. C'llr John Cole commented that similar problems had been experienced previously, but that getting any action to deal with them from the authorities was difficult. He undertook to contact Mr. Ritchie to offer further advice on this matter.

6. County Councillors Report

Members were informed that P.C.C. was currently painting and maintaining properties in Merlins Bridge.

There was no information on when the pedestrian crossing was going to be re-painted. C'llr Mary Owen was concerned at that, feeling it was a safety issue. C'llr John Cole undertook to pass this on to P.C.C. as a safety concern. It was also commented that the crossing lights needed looking at.

C'llr Nick Stamp mentioned that the traffic calming device just before the Rugby Club was not working properly. Clerk to send a message to Highways to raise this as a concern.

In connection with speed-activated signage, Members had a brief discussion about the possibility of putting up further such signage on the main road. Matter to be tabled for discussion in May. In the meantime, Clerk to contact Highways to seek their advice on how to proceed with such a project.

7. Accounts

Payments

None

Account balances

Deposit account : £ 8074-69

Treasurer's account : £19092-67

Documentation of expenditure to Members.

Members were informed of the requirement for a schedule of all payments made to Members during the financial year to be published on the webpage, and sent to the Welsh Government, annually.

Member allowances.

It was arranged that the annual members' allowance would be paid following the May meeting to any Members who had not notified the Clerk in writing that they wished to waive the payment. The Clerk explained that this could be done by email or any other convenient method. Regarding the 2020/21 allowances for last year, it was arranged that any Members who had not received this allowance at the time, but wished to do so, should notify the Clerk accordingly.

Internal audit

The Clerk's recommendation to use the same internal auditor as that used by the other councils he was involved with for the audit of the 2020/21 accounts (Ms. Denise Mayr) was accepted by Members, subject to an agreed limit of £60 in the fee (proposer C'llr Alison Palmer, seconder C'llr Mary Owen). If the fee requested by her should exceed this, the matter would be brought back to Members for further consideration.

Clerk's pay and incidental expenses.

It was agreed at the Clerk's request for his pay to be processed quarterly instead of monthly. Members also requested that any claims for incidental expenses (i.e. mileage, stamps, etc., should be submitted at the same time).

Accounts book

The Clerk's request for a proper Accounts book was deferred for further consideration in May, as Members felt generally that the current arrangement was working well.

8. **Planning**

Applications

None this month.

Decisions (for information)

20/0878/PA - Change of use from Residential house to a Children's home. In addition Conversion of the existing Garage to a bedroom and Disabled access wet room; Site Address: 31, St Issells Avenue, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1JU.

9. **Report of councillors representing M.B.C.C.**

Nothing to report this month.

10. **Update on roof survey**

C'llr Paul Davies informed Members that he was still awaiting the report. Matter to be placed on May agenda for discussion.

12. **Matters for Next meeting agenda.**

Bus shelter maintenance. C'llr Mary Owen was concerned at the condition of the bus shelter back wall. C'llr John Cole undertook to have a look at this, and also to find out if Emmanuel Mission was still looking after the maintenance of the bus shelters. Matter to be tabled for discussion in May.

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Clerk to check these over in advance of the May meeting, and prepare any recommendations for updating / amending them as necessary.

Grievance procedure / disciplinary procedure. Clerk to locate these documents prior to the May meeting.

Other agenda items to be listed as per the approved minutes from the March meeting.

John Welsby. Members were informed that John Welsby was retiring. C'llr Alison Palmer undertook to get a card and send it to him from Members.

13. **Date of Next Meeting**

12th May 2021 at 6pm (if online), or 7pm (if in the Village Hall), to commence with the 2021 A.G.M.

The meeting concluded at 7-20pm.