

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 9th April 2025 at 6-30pm, online via the Zoom platform.

Present: Cllrs. Chris Lawler, Michelle Lewis, Mike Dare, Ian Lewis (Chairman), Alison Palmer, Rita Lawler, Veronica James, John Cole; Peter Horton (Clerk).

Apologies: None

Declaration of known interests

C’Ilr John Cole declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Welfare Committee-related discussion on a possible donation.

Approval of minutes of minutes of March 2025 monthly meeting

These were approved by Members, and retained by the Clerk for signature following the meeting (proposer C’Ilr Rita Lawler, seconder C’Ilr Alison Palmer).

Matters arising

For sale signage. The Clerk had again contacted estate agents. John Francis and RK Lucas had indicated that they would remove their signage. FBM had not yet responded. Members felt the situation was much improved.

Bus shelter, Upper Pembroke Road. Members noted that the missing panel had now been replaced.

Bus shelter Milford Road. C’Ilr John Cole had sought advice on the matter of the insecure / leaning bus shelter, and had been advised that it would need completely re-seating. He undertook to speak to officers in P.C.C. Streetcare, in case they might be in a position to arrange the work. In the event that this was not possible, Members asked him to obtain a quotation for the work to be done. Clerk to research ownership of the electronic signage in the bus shelter.

Plans

Planning consents notified

24/0967/PA - Use of part of builders’ yard / lorry parking to car wash facility with canopy, waiting area/store and drainage mitigation system; Site Address: Builders Yard / Lorry Park, Lower Dredgeman’s Hill, Merlin’s Bridge, Haverfordwest, SA61 1XJ.

Correspondence

- 1) Local resident – parking concerns in Magdalene Street – discussed in agenda item below.
- 2) Merlin’s Bridge Welfare Committee – Request for financial assistance towards VE-80 commemorative events and provision of picnic benches – dealt with in agenda item on commemorative events below.

Accounts

Payments

Easy Websites (website direct debit)	:	£ 36-96
Lloyds Bank (bank charges, March 2025)	:	£ 4-25
Clerk (ratification of payment for SSD data drive)	:	£ 60-97
Celtic Windows (bus shelter repairs)	:	£ 207-60
P.C.C. Streetworks license application	:	
Merlin's Bridge Welfare Committee (donation)	:	£1700-00
The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C'llr Ian Lewis, seconder C'llr Michelle Lewis).		

Interim end of year financial report.

This had been circulated to all Members, and was noted.

County Councillor's report

There was nothing of note to report, apart from ongoing concerns over speeding in the community, and some parking issues in isolated areas.

Discussion of any applications received for co-option of new councillors

No applications had been received since the March monthly meeting.

Adoption of 2024-25 annual report

Members adopted the annual report as drafted (proposer C'llr John Cole, seconder C'llr Veronica James). Clerk to publish on the community council website.

Discussion of traffic speeds around railway bridge on Pembroke Road

The underground speed-monitoring station at the Lower Pembroke Road was understood to be non-functional. Clerk to make enquiries with P.C.C. to ask if the station was likely to be repaired, and if so when.

C'llr Veronica James mentioned that she had seen a Police speed van outside the cheese factory recently.

C'llr Veronica James raised the possibility of obtaining warning 'Children at play' signs for the St. Issell's Avenue area. However, the Clerk explained that P.C.C. had previously refused similar requests elsewhere, on the basis that (a) these were not classed as standard highway signs, and (b) providing such signage might send the message that it was alright for children to play in the highway, which was not the case. Possible traffic-calming measures were discussed briefly, but without any specific proposals being made. Clerk to make enquiries with P.C.C. about any thresholds / triggers for introducing such measures.

Issue of speeding generally to be placed on May agenda for further discussion.

Discussion of community meals

C'Ilr Michelle Lewis had been approached by a local resident asking about the perceived lack of events in the community to promote community cohesion and support.

C'Ilr Mike Dare commented that various initiatives had been tried, but not been very successful due to lack of engagement by the community. Past events had typically had a low take-up. C'Ilr John Cole mentioned that he thought there was a regular event of this sort at the Emmanuel Centre on Fridays. Members to check this, and if confirmed, C'Ilr Michelle Lewis undertook to place a post on the community council Facebook page to publicise it.

Discussion of possible siting of public bench to mark VE-80 commemorations

Members discussed various possible locations for a bench to commemorate the occasion. A bench sited on the grass area on the corner of Greenhill Park Drive and Greenhill Park Crescent was felt to be the most suitable. Members resolved to pursue the siting of a bench at this location (proposer C'Ilr John Cole, seconder C'Ilr Michelle Lewis). C'Illrs John Cole and Michelle Lewis to carry out a brief site visit to establish the best location, and forward this to the Clerk for circulation to all Members.

Clerk to seek a quotation for placing a slab and siting a bench. Clerk to contact P.C.C. to commence process of obtaining the necessary consent / Streetworks license to site a bench. Query to be made about whether any license fee paid could be recouped if the application was rejected. Members to research possible designs of bench to be used.

Discussion of problems with ATEB-owned boundary fence and land use at Rose Avenue

Members reported a fallen section of fence alongside ATEB properties in Rose Avenue. Clerk to report this to ATEB.

Members were concerned about ongoing dumping on the private area of land adjacent to the above fence. Clerk to report this to the P.C.C. Planning Enforcement team, with a request for action to address the problem.

Any necessary discussion of environmental / dog-fouling issues in community

Dog-fouling. No change, with the problem ongoing. C'Ilr Ian Lewis had asked a colleague about whether or not a law existed requiring dog-walkers to carry dog waste bags, and had been told that there was no such law that they knew of.

Planting. C'Illrs Michelle Lewis and Rita Lawler had carried out a reconnaissance of the area. They recommended replacing the planting in all the barrels, and also replacing the barrel on the Upper Pembroke Road, which was in poor condition. Members were in agreement with this.

C'Ilr Rita Lawler had obtained some wild flower seeds for planting around the community. Members discussed various locations, including around the cenotaph, and outside the Welfare Hall.

[NOTE – C'Ilr Mike Dare left the meeting at this point with apologies for having lost the remote connection to the meeting]

Any necessary discussion of future community events

Easter Egg hunt to be held on Saturday 19th April, between 12 Noon and 1pm, at the Welfare Field. ML to post information on Facebook. 6pm

Easter Bingo (being organized by C'llr Mike Dare), to be held on Saturday 19th April from 6pm, at the Welfare Hall.

Party in the Park. Arrangements undecided at present, and under discussion by the Welfare Committee.

Welfare Committee funding request. Members approved a £200 donation towards a planned VE-80 commemorative event being considered by the Welfare Committee, and a £1500 donation towards purchase and siting of four picnic benches in the Welfare Field (proposer C'llr Veronica James, seconder C'llr Michelle Lewis). [NOTE – C'llr John Cole declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the discussion of this donation, as a member of the Welfare Committee, and left the room during discussion of the donation request].

Discussion of parking problems in Magdalene Street

C'llrs John Cole and Michele Lewis had both been contacted by a local resident concerned about various parking issues in Magdalene Street. These included concerns over perceived misuse of parking bays, including by the adjacent commercial garage, obstruction of his driveway by parked vehicles, and vehicles being worked on in the street, allegedly by employees of the nearby garage.

Members discussed the matter in detail. However, ultimately, it became clear that none of the issues involved fell within the remit of the community council to deal with. Obstruction of his driveway would be a Police matter. Misuse of the parking bays and / or working on vehicles in the highway by employees of the adjacent garage would be a matter for P.C.C. to address. Clerk to respond to the resident concerned, to explain to them that the community council was unable to take any action in these matters, and to explain to them the steps they could take, including contacting the Police in cases of obstruction of their driveway, and P.C.C. in the case of alleged misuse of the parking bays or alleged unauthorized commercial activities in the highway. Message to suggest that they may also wish to consider making direct contact with the garage management to discuss their concerns directly with them. Clerk to also write to the garage owner to make him aware of the complaints received.

Any other business

Welfare Committee. C'llr John Cole mentioned that the committee was currently lacking a Chairman and Secretary, and was actively seeking new members. The building project was now substantially complete, and the committee was looking actively at further developments, such as pathways, etc. The local football club was due to return there in September.

Safety issues. C'llr Michelle Lewis had been spoken to by a local resident who had been affected by someone knocking on their window late at night. Members were reminded of the need to take normal sensible precautions such as locking doors in the evenings, and checking the identities of callers before opening the door.

The meeting was closed at 8-30pm. Next scheduled meeting - Wednesday 14th May 2025.