

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 8th April 2026 at 6-30pm, online via the Zoom platform.

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

Apologies: C'Ilrs Mike Dare, John Cole.

Declaration of known interests

None

Approval of minutes of minutes of March 2026 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 Veronica James).

Matters arising

St. Mark's School. The Clerk confirmed that nothing had been heard back from the school following the message sent after the March meeting concerning potential donations and defibrillator provision. Clerk to send further follow-up message.

Plans

Planning consents notified

25/1067/CL – Construction of new rear extension; Site Address: 36, Pembroke Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1JW

Planning applications withdrawn

25/0801/PA – Conversion of existing dormer Bungalow to two self-contained, one bedroom dwellings with all associated works; Site Address: 36, Pembroke Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1JW

Planning appeals lodged

25/0376/PA - Upper Sandy Wells, MERLINS BRIDGE, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1XL; Proposed Development: Replacement outbuilding to create welfare space as an extension for disabled son with new screening hedge bank and ecological enhancements; Planning Inspectorate Appeal Reference: CAS-04719-P6H0W2; Appeal Start Date: 27th March 2026.

Correspondence

- 01) Audit Wales – Audit information – noted. Members briefly discussed the new question inserted in the Annual Governance Statement, regarding establishing a 'vision' for the council. The consensus was that this could be answered in the affirmative when the Statement was formally completed in the May meeting, based on the community survey carried out in late 2023.
- 02) Internal auditor – Internal audit report for 2025/26 – dealt with in 'Accounts' below.
- 03) Zurich – Insurance renewal documentation – noted.
- 04) Local resident – concerns over alleged waste-dumping at builders' yard on Dredgemans' Hill – Clerk to report this to P.C.C.
- 05) Mike Dare – message of intention to leave the council in the near future, due to competing work demands – noted.

Accounts (to include quarterly budget review)

Payments

Easy Websites (website direct debit)	:	£ 36-96
Lloyds Bank (monthly bank charges)	:	£ 4-25
Denise Mayr (internal audit fee)	:	£ 90-00
Zurich (insurance renewal)	:	£481-23

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C’Ilr Ian Lewis, seconder C’Ilr Veronica James).

Internal audit.

Members accepted the report (proposer C’Ilr Ian Lewis, seconder C’Ilr Veronica James). Agenda item to be tabled for May to consider changes to the Community Council training plan.

Interim end of year report.

Members were content with the report. A question was raised regarding the level of reserves held by the council, at around £9,000. The Clerk commented that reserves of up to £10,000 would normally be considered reasonable, given the assets for which the council had responsibility, and the possibility of unforeseen events.

County Councillor’s report

Nothing to report this month.

Approval of updated annual community council asset and financial risk assessments

Members accepted the updated risk assessments (proposer C’Ilr Ian Lewis, seconder C’Ilr Veronica James).

Approval of 2026 annual report

The Clerk was asked to add in a reference to the Community Council Facebook page under achievements accomplished during the previous year. Subject to this amendment, the report was approved (proposer C’Ilr Ian Lewis, seconder C’Ilr Michelle Lewis). Clerk to arrange publication on the website.

Discussion of determinations for Member allowances for 2026/27

Members resolved to retain the same approach as for the previous year, with all optional allowances retained for possible payment during the year, dependent on circumstances (proposer C’Ilr Ian Lewis, seconder C’Ilr Veronica James).

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

None received.

Discussion of arrangements for siting of public bench to mark VE-80 commemorations

The Clerk confirmed that consent had been granted for the bench to be sited alongside the Cenotaph. An invoice for the work was currently awaited from P.C.C. Once received and paid, it was expected that work would proceed fairly promptly.

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

Dog-fouling. This was an ongoing problem, though possibly not quite so bad in recent weeks. C’Ilr Michelle Lewis undertook to place a further reminder about the issue on the Facebook page.

Bulb planting. Arrangements for this in hand with C'llrs Michelle Lewis and Rita Lawler. Some suitable way of marking off the planted areas to prevent mowing of the new plants was discussed. Marker spray was suggested as one possibility. It was felt important that P.C.C. should be fully informed of any arrangements made, as their contractors would be carrying out mowing of the area. Clerk to contact P.C.C. to discuss this.

Any necessary discussion of future community events

None to discuss this month.

Discussion of arrangements for cleaning of / repairs to community-owned bus shelters

Bus shelter cleaning. Clerk to chase up the window-cleaner for a progress report.

Milford Road bus shelter. Quotation currently awaited for repairs. Clerk to circulate this once received.

Discussion of possible arrangements for new community defibrillator at St. Mark's School

Covered in 'Matters Arising' above.

Any other business

Cenotaph. The Clerk confirmed that nothing had been heard back from P.C.C. following the request for repairs and maintenance to be carried out. Clerk to chase up P.C.C. about the matter, citing the importance of maintaining the structure in good condition, including mentioning reputational considerations.

Carriageway repairs, Greenhill Park Drive. Members reported that the repairs seemed to be holding up well. However, Members noted the ongoing barriering off of the pavement outside the bungalow where there had been a problem the previous year. Clerk to contact P.C.C. to seek information on the expected timescale for resolving and reinstating this, and restoring the pavement for normal usage. Agenda item to be tabled for further discussion in May.

The meeting was closed at 7-25pm. Next meeting - Wednesday 13th May 2026, to commence with the 2026 A.G.M.