

MERLINS BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 14th January 2026 at 6-30pm, online via the Zoom platform.

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

Apologies: Cllr Veronica James

Declaration of known interests

None

Approval of minutes of minutes of December 2025 monthly meeting

These were approved by Members, and retained by the Clerk for signature following the meeting (proposer Cllr Rita Lawler, seconder Cllr John Cole).

Matters arising

Grit bins. Cllr John Cole had obtained some clips which could be used to keep the grit bin lids closed, and prevent them from blowing open.

Plans

Planning application consultations received

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 – No comments.

25/0769/PA - Raised patio and creation of Juliet balcony (partly in retrospect), Site Address: Spinneyside, 12, Merlin's Avenue, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1JS – No comments.

Correspondence

- 01) P.C.C. – Notification of changes to some scheduled bus services – Cllr John Cole noted the welcome reinstatement of the 308 bus service through Merlin's Bridge to Burton.
- 02) P.C.C. – Acknowledgement of request for re-filling of some grit bins – noted.
- 03) P.C.C. – Response to message about parking outside chip shop, Pembroke Road – Members were agreed that they would not wish to see double yellow lines placed at this location, as this would create further parking problems elsewhere. Members felt that the problem was significant, and that the reply from P.C.C. was somewhat dismissive. Clerk to reply thanking them, saying that double yellow lines were not being requested, and stating that the problem is not 'occasional', but regular and ongoing.

Accounts (to include quarterly budget review)

Payments

Easy Websites (website direct debit)	:	£ 36-96
Lloyds Bank (monthly bank charges)	:	£ 4-25
Cleddau Press (Ratification, INV-19939)	:	£360-00

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer Cllr John Cole, seconder Cllr Michelle Lewis).

Discussion / approval of 2026/27 budget and precept

Members approved the 2026/27 budget as drafted (proposer C’llyr Ian Lewis, seconder C’llyr Michelle Lewis).

Members voted to set the 2026/27 precept at £17,500, this being unchanged from the current year (proposer C’llyr John Cole, seconder C’llyr Michelle Lewis).

County Councillor’s report

P.C.C. budget modelling. C’llyr John Cole mentioned that this process was well in hand. It was hoped that the increase in council tax for 2026/27 might be somewhat lower than in recent years.

Potholes. C’llyr John Cole mentioned that he planned to ask questions about the relative costs of repeated temporary pothole repairs, compared with the cost of permanent repairs. Members were concerned about the current situation, with vehicles swerving round the potholes outside the Welfare Hall, with consequent risk of collision.

Streetlights. Members were informed that P.C.C. had a serious backlog in repairing these. Clerk to contact P.C.C. to ask about the current situation in Merlin’s Bridge.

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

No applications had been received. C’llyr John Cole undertook to speak further to the person who had previously expressed an interest in joining the community council.

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

The Clerk had eventually received a response from P.C.C. Streetcare to the message sent in asking for their view on siting a memorial bench adjacent to the cenotaph. However, the message had merely recommended forwarding the request to the P.C.C. Memorial Bench team. This had been done, and a response was awaited.

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

Christmas trees by St Issell’s Avenue. C’llyr Rita Lawler mentioned that the tree stumps had been left in the ground when the trees had been removed. C’llyr John Cole explained that this was normal practice, to avoid leaving holes that could present a hazard. The stumps would be removed at a later date.

Community flower beds. The Clerk confirmed that the order had already been placed for flowers for the 2026 season. C’llyr Michelle Lewis raised the possibility of additional flower-planting around the cenotaph. C’llyr John Cole suggested trying again to achieve success with wild flower seed-sowing, or possibly some bulb-planting. C’llrs Rita Lawler, Chris Lawler and Michelle Lewis to consider possibilities for this. In addition, C’llyr Rita Lawler mentioned that the bulbs were starting to come up in the community planting barrels.

[NOTE – C’llyr Mike Dare entered the meeting at this point]

Any necessary discussion of future community events

C’llyr John Cole mentioned the regular Easter, Halloween and Christmas events that were expected to be planned as usual. In addition, C’llyr Mike Dare confirmed that the community bingo would be re-starting in the Welfare Hall the following Sunday 18th January, between 10-20am and 11am, to be followed by the wellbeing cafe.

Discussion of any arrangements / support for litter-picking in community

C'llr John Cole had been informed that arrangements for litter-picking bags, etc., could be arranged via Haverfordwest Town Council. C'llr Mike Dare mentioned that volunteers from Emmanuel Mission Church had previously carried out litter picking on a monthly basis, and might be willing to do so again. C'llr John Cole mentioned that some local residents were involved in litter-picking around the community on a volunteer basis.

Any other business

Bus shelters. Agenda item to be tabled for February, to discuss arrangements for cleaning of the bus shelters, and also arrangements to fix the leaning shelter at Milford Road. In the meantime, C'llr John Cole undertook to seek a quotation for the work to be carried out.

Possible siting of new community defibrillator at St. Mark's School. Agenda item to be tabled for February, to re-open discussion on the matter.

Cenotaph. Agenda item to be tabled for February, to discuss needed repairs and maintenance to the cenotaph.

The meeting was closed at 7-20pm. Next meeting - Wednesday 11th February 2026.