

Merlin's Bridge Community Council
Annual Report 2025/26

Merlin's Bridge Community Council incorporates the areas surrounding the Pembroke Road and Old Hakin Road areas on the outskirts of Haverfordwest. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August).

Merlin's Bridge has twelve council positions. Eight were filled at the end of 25/26, as follows :

Ian Lewis (Chairman)
Veronica James (vice-Chairman)
Alison Palmer
John Cole
Mike Dare
Chris Lawler
Rita Lawler
Michelle Lewis

Peter Horton is Clerk to Merlin's Bridge Community Council and the initial point of contact.

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Financial Information

Income

The Community Council's income is from precept collected via local Council tax. This was £17500 for the 2025/26 financial year.

Expenditure

The Community Council's budget for the 2025/26 financial year was £29210. The following report on anticipated expenditure for the year, and projected expenditure for the 2026/27 financial year, was presented to the January 2026 monthly meeting :

Merlin's Bridge Community Council approved budget 2026/27

EXPENDITURE

	<u>Precepted sum for current year 2025/26</u>	<u>Expenditure To 31st December 2025</u>	<u>Further anticipated Expenditure to March 2026</u>	<u>Total projected for year 2025/26</u>	<u>PROJECTED EXPENDITURE for year 2026/27</u>
Clerk	£ 5700	£ 4250	£ 1417	£ 5667	£ 5950 ⁽¹⁾
Insurance	£ 625	£ 398	£ -	£ 398	£ 438
External audit fee	£ 325	£ 474	£ 300	£ 774	£ 300
Internal audit fee	£ 85	£ 90	£ -	£ 90	£ 90
Christmas trees / selection boxes	£ 1000	£ 1040	£ -	£ 1040	£ 1144
Donations	£ 7000	£ 2700	£ 1000	£ 3700	£ 4000 ⁽²⁾
Events	£ 2000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 2000
Councillor allowances	£ 2496	£ 1248	£ -	£ 1248	£ 2496 ⁽³⁾
Bus shelter maintenance	£ 500	£ 208	£ -	£ 208	£ 2000 ⁽⁴⁾
Training	£ 500	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 500 ⁽⁵⁾
Admin expenses (inc. printing)	£ 583	£ 204	£ 460	£ 664	£ 700
I.T.	£ 200	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 200
Website costs	£ 446	£ 333	£ 111	£ 444	£ 488
Hall hire if College unavailable	£ 250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 250 ⁽⁶⁾
Election cost	£ 2000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 2000 ⁽⁷⁾
Environmental projects	£ 2500	£ 595	£ -	£ 595	£ 2500
Defibrillator purchase / maintenance	£ 2000	£ -	£ 2000	£ 2000	£ 300 ⁽⁸⁾
Contingency fund	£ 1000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 1000
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Totals	£29210	£11540	£ 5288	£16828	£26356

NOTES FROM 2026/27 PROJECTED OUTGOINGS COLUMNS

- 1) Based on current year, plus hypothetical 5% NJC pay increase for 2026/27
- 2) Based on current year's donations made / projected
- 3) Based on anticipated 12 member allowances @ £208
- 4) Nominal sum for potential maintenance / repair costs, plus provisional sum for re-setting of Milford Road bus shelter
- 5) Provisional sum for £25 each for 12 members, plus £200 for Clerk's training
- 6) Based on assumed cost of £25/month
- 7) Based on projected likely cost of election
- 8) Based on cost of 2 x pad replacements during year

SUMMARY OF PROJECTED STANDING OF ACCOUNTS ON 31/03/2025

Balance brought forward to April 1st 2025		: £13350
Total precept income due	: £17500	
Other income received (VAT refund)	: £ 467	
Other income received / due (bank interest)	: £ 30	
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Total anticipated income for year to March 31st 2026	: £17997	: £17997
Deduct projected expenditure for year		:(£16828)
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Therefore, projected available funds on March 31st 2026		: £14519
Precept set for 2025/26 (TO BE DECIDED IN COUNCIL)	:	£17500
Deduct projected expenditures for 2024/25	:	(£26356)
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Projected balance on hand at end of 2026/27	:	£ 5663

Relationship with the principal council

The Community Council has no ongoing formal charters with Pembrokeshire County Council (the Principal Authority).

Audit

Audit of 2024/25 accounts. These accounts represent the most recently externally audited accounts, and were given unqualified approval by the Wales Audit Office auditors.

Achievements during the past year

- The council has continued proactive steps to try and reduce the level of dog-fouling in the community, by seeking to raise awareness, and improve reporting of incidences to Pembrokeshire County Council.
- Maintenance and repair, and regular monitoring of the community defibrillator has been arranged as necessary.
- Organisation of a community Christmas carol concert, publication, printing and distribution of Christmas cards in the community have been carried out and supported by the community council.
- A total of £2700 was donated by the community council to local good causes, including notably the development of community sporting facilities, and donation to the local school.
- The six grit bins owned by the community council, and sited at strategic locations around the community, were monitored and re-filled as necessary.
- The community council website and Facebook page have been maintained and used to provide essential information to local residents. The website may be visited at www.merlinsbridgecommunitycouncil.gov.uk , and the Facebook page named as Merlin's Bridge Community Council.
- Three community council-owned bus shelters have been maintained as needed, for community use.

Priorities for the coming year

- Continue efforts to reduce dog-fouling throughout the community area.
- Consider the formation of further community flower beds and community bulb and flower planting.
- Continue efforts to get action to address the ongoing problem of potholes in the community.
- Continue caring for community assets such as seats, bus shelters, grit bins, etc.
- Continue to support the local school as opportunity presents itself.
- Maintain the public access defibrillator, and look to provide a second community public access defibrillator installed in the community.

PETER HORTON

CLERK TO MERLIN'S BRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

APRIL 2026