

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Martletwy Community Council
Monday 26th January 2026, 7:30pm Online

Note: With the agreement of all parties involved proceedings were recorded

Present: Cllr L Williams (Chair); Cllr V Evans (Vice Chair); Cllr B Carlisle, Cllr J Crowther, Cllr A Newman

Also in attendance: L Lesnianski (Clerk).

Declarations of Interest: None

Chairman's Welcome

25/072: Apologies Received & Declarations of Interest: Apologies Cllr P Eynon. Declarations of interest: None.

25/073: Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the November Ordinary meeting were unanimously approved by those who had been present and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

25/074: Finances:

a. Annual Budget & Precept 2026-2027:

The Clerk presented the draft budget (as attached), which had been circulated to all councillors in advance of the meeting. The Clerk then talked through each section:

Section A: Employment Costs – Monthly costs split across employee and HMRC.

Section B: Councillor Costs – As previously outlined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW), now managed by Boundary Commission Cymru, (formerly the LDBCW). These costs remain unchanged under Determination 7 and are divided into a Basic Costs Payment and a Consumables Allowance.

Section C: Other Costs – This section covers all remaining expenditure including non-variable items—subject only to inflation or market changes—such as annual insurance, meeting venue hire, subscription fees, the two play area service level agreements, and website management.

The Clerk highlighted several items requiring further discussion and approval: donations, capital expenditure, play area mowing, community events and enhancement, training fees, defibrillator maintenance, biodiversity projects, election costs/reserves, and leaflet/newsletter design and printing.

Councillors confirmed they were satisfied with Sections A and B and moved on to discuss Section C.

Section C: Other Costs: Councillors considered and approved the following items as listed in the draft budget: insurance, meeting venue costs, subscription fees, utilities, and office consumables. A donations budget of £150 was agreed for charitable approaches in exceptional circumstances, noting the recent support provided by Sandy Bear following the recent tragedy.

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The Chair led further discussion regarding the other matters as follows:

Capital Expenditure: The Clerk advised funds would most likely be required for ongoing play area maintenance. Cllr Williams proposed purchasing new noticeboards, as previously discussed. The Clerk confirmed sufficient funds remained in the 2025–2026 budget. After further discussion, Cllr Williams proposed purchasing two new noticeboards—one for Lawrenny and one for Martletwy—to replace the existing boards using the 2025 – 2026 budget. For 2026–2027, capital expenditure would include a new noticeboard for a site in Landshipping, to be agreed. Cllr Williams proposed setting the 2026–2027 capital expenditure budget at £2,000. Cllr Evans seconded the proposal, and all voted in favour.

Service Level Agreements (SLAs): The Chair moved discussion to SLAs. The Clerk noted that Cllr Eynon had sent comments regarding the budget late afternoon, along with his apologies. His comments included the SLA costs, citing East Williamston's lower contractor fees. Councillors agreed there was insufficient time to research this before finalising the 2026–2027 budget, but the matter could be explored for 2027–2028. All present approved the SLA costs as shown.

Play Area Mowing: The Chair invited comments on mowing costs. Cllr Carlisle noted mowing schedules should remain flexible due to varying growth conditions. Cllr Crowther agreed. It was unanimously agreed to budget for 12 cuts over the year at Martletwy play area, allowing for some months without mowing and others that may require two cuts during peak growth.

Community Events and Enhancement: Following discussion, councillors agreed to combine Community Events and Community Enhancement into a single budget. A total of £1,600 was approved to cover a Summer Event, a picnic bench for the Martletwy play area, Christmas events including a seasonal lunch, Christmas initiatives, and other local enhancements.

Audit Fees: The Clerk noted the uncertainty around the timing or amount of Welsh Audit invoices. Councillors agreed to retain the budgeted amount of £400.

Training Costs: The Clerk and Cllr Evans opened discussion on training. To meet the requirements of the Training Policy, all councillors must now complete a significant amount of training. The Clerk advised that costs should reduce in 2027–2028 if training is completed this year. The draft budget allows for three sessions per month (£90). Councillors agreed to this amount, noting that additional sessions may be needed but some funding may be available.

Defibrillator Maintenance: Councillors discussed the number of pads and batteries required. The battery for the Snooty Fox defibrillator has already been replaced in the current financial year. Cllr Crowther proposed budgeting for two sets of pads and two replacement batteries. Cllr Williams seconded the proposal, and all voted in favour.

Biodiversity: A budget of £400 was agreed, with councillors expressing a desire to expand biodiversity work within the ward.

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Election Costs and Reserves: The Clerk confirmed the local authority allows councils to repay election costs over five years. As the next local council elections are scheduled for May 2027, councillors can revisit this during the 2027–2028 budget setting process. It was unanimously agreed to set election costs and reserves at zero for this budget.

Leaflet and Newsletter Costs: A budget of £200 was approved for design and printing.

Reserves and Precept: The Clerk updated the budget figures to reflect the decisions made. Councillors then discussed the use of reserves. It was agreed some reserves should be used both to reduce the overall reserve level and to ease the precept burden on residents.

Following discussion, Cllr Crowther proposed allocating £4,647 from reserves towards the 2026–2027 budget and setting the Precept at £12,720. Cllr Evans seconded the proposal, and all voted unanimously in favour.

The Clerk to submit the local authority precept form to Revenue Services at Pembrokeshire County Council on Tuesday 27th January.

25/075: Date of Next Meeting: Monday 2nd February 2026, 7:30pm at Lawrenny Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 9:15pm