

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WATERSIDE COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 MARCH 2017 AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT Mr Stephen Collis (Chairman & CBC)
 Councillor David Bragg
 Councillor Sylvia Wargent
 Councillor Peter Clements
 Councillor Robert Jenkins
 Councillor Sophie Weaver
 Councillor Paula Moore
 Mr S Belbin – Coast Guard and Angling Boats rep
 Mr P Clarke - Waterfront
 Ms J Elmer – Beach Hut Committee
 Mr R Haward - Oysterman
 Mr S Vince
 Mr B Turner – Beach Hut Committee
 Mr D Jarvis
 Mr R Moffett – West Mersea Marine
 Mrs M Phillips (Houseboats)
 Mrs F French (Fishermen arrived 5:45pm)

Also in attendance – Mr Russell Everard, Maldon District Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Powling, and Ms B Perkins.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2016 AND MATTERS ARISING

Steve Vince questioned progress on the village signs. Clerk not present to update.

Steve Vince questioned changing parking restriction times near beach huts. Cllr Wargent and Cllr Moore advised that this had been discussed in the Car Parking Strategy meeting and was not felt to be beneficial, but that beach hut owners could load and unload as there were not loading restrictions in place.

Ian Clarke questioned signs about parking on verges and whether the grass verge alongside the car park was a footway. Steve Collis advised that the verge between the road and fence between Broomhills and Seaview belongs to Essex County Council.

Minutes proposed as correct by Cllr Clements, seconded by Stuart Belbin.

3. WATERFRONT ISSUES: PLANNING (PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT), COMMUNAL AREAS INCLUDING THE 'HARD', JETTY AND VILLAGE GREEN

Mersea Recharge Project - There was nothing to report.

Crime and Security - There was nothing to report.

Toilets - Cllr Clements informed the committee that quotes were in and a local company would be doing the refurbishment on the toilets at Coast Road, to be completed by mid-July, coinciding with installation of coin-operated doors on the ladies and gent's toilets, charging 20p a time. The other toilets would be looked at after completion and evaluation of success of the Coast Road ones. Stuart Belbin asked if they could be open from 7am throughout the year.

Parking Restrictions/Costs – The following was raised again about Motor homes have been spotted staying overnight in the Coast Road near the houseboats. On occasions, they have blocked the path, West Mersea Town Council were asked if they could speak to North Essex Parking Partnership about undertaking some later evening patrols in the area. In addition there is an area of land which is believed to belong to Mr S Cutts where they also park. West Mersea Town Council have been asked to write to Mr Cutts to see if this is the case and ask if he block the entrance preventing them from getting on the site.

Car park – Ian Clarke brought up the cost of parking permits to beach hut owners. Cllr Clements advised that an increase in charge had been requested from 2018 to gradually bring them in line with other permit holders.

Stephen Collis advised of the new car park charges from April in Coast Road, Seaview and High Street, the over 2 hrs stay increasing from £2.50 to £3.

Platform/buoyage – ready to go out. Requested they are put out before 2nd May bank holiday. Clerk to ring Allan Bird to arrange.

Lines on Hard – Carl not present to update. West Mersea Town Council to contact Christine Belgrove to enquire about ways of enforcing the parking restrictions.

4. BRADWELL TO MERSEA FERRY SERVICE

Report from Russell Everard, Maldon District Council. Ferry service idea is in the very early stages. Looking for thoughts and potentially volunteers to help develop the scheme from Mersea. Overall there was interest but sceptical it would work and maybe to try it during the 6-week summer holiday. Concerns over congestion on hammerhead, weather turning and not being able to get back. Long journey making it unlikely to be a beneficial commuter route. Small enough boat for low tide, but big enough for bad weather.

Mr Everard indicated that there may be a boat available for a trial period. He was going to undertake to find out some more information and update West Mersea Town Council.

5. REPORTS FROM COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL OFFICERS AND MEETING

Pontoon - Planning Application has been submitted for widening the pontoon to put in additional crabbing area. Natural England and the Environment Agency have no problem with the proposed extension. The Marine Management Organisation wants a full application sent in regarding the works. Finances for the project are still to be confirmed. Time scale for the installation is not known at present.

Water Bailiff - The role of Water Bailiff has been split up in two areas. Tim Pickard, Zone Warden is undertaking inspections of the pontoon and beach huts. At weekends and school holidays they will be visiting the pontoon either side of the low tide sort any problems. The role will include other works like bin emptying and litter picking.

Concerns were raised about when there is High Tide the pontoon can be full and people cannot get up and down the pontoon. Could Colchester Borough Council have a rethink.

Proposed New Gate for Pontoon - Under the football goal as you go onto the hammerhead it is proposed to put a new gate in to stop members of the public going onto it which are not going onto the water. The proposal is to bring the risk of anyone getting hurt. Members of the Committee thought that it would not work and the money spent better elsewhere.

CCTV Pontoon - A number of local business said they would pay for the revenue payments for the first number of years for upkeep and maintenance.

Fishermen's barrier – Mrs French gave an update on how the existing barrier was going to be motorised to have a self-closing and opening gate to stop non-fisherman vehicles from parking there.

Essex Marine Police Update - The Council had a number of meetings with the Essex Marine Police and Brightlingsea Harbour regarding days of Actions.

- Day of Action weekend of 29 and 30 April
- Day of Action weekend of 28 and 29 May

These are Bank Holiday weekends

The Police will be land based and on the water and will be looking for people speeding and anti-social behaviour on the water. They will be looking to prosecute people and the Council Solicitor is lined up to take the offences to court. These cases will be publicised.

The Marine police will have Special Constables in place by mid-April and there will designated officers. We believe that from Brightlingsea and Mersea there will be the same officer, with I believe mobile telephone and email address.

The office will be concentrating on the problem that raised on the Police Survey to see how they can look to resolve them.

BHC and Colchester Borough Council are looking to produce a new leaflet regarding speeding. This will be on line and the Essex Marine Police and Colchester Borough Council are looking to send it out as an attachment and hyperlink to the Holiday Parks on the island.

The Police Officer and the Zone Wardens will be visiting the parks in the coming months as well to back up the works.

The Eurobins at Coast Road

The Euro bins were intended for boat users and they are being used by non-waterside users. In some cases oil has been left in the bins and this has gone over the operatives of the refuse truck. The proposal was to remove the bins and put smaller ones that would be emptied more frequently.

There was a mixed response. Since the meeting, Mr Collis has written to the Committee for further clarification.

6. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.15pm.