

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 8 AUGUST 2019

PRESENT: Councillors: Carl Powling (Mayor)
John Akker
Peter Banks
David Bragg
Paula Moore
Sylvia Wargent
Chris Wood

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Councillor: John Jowers
Patricia Moore

19/169 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Petra Palfreyman (Town Clerk), Councillor Jenkins, Councillor Weaver. Borough Councillor Robert Davidson.

19/170 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Akker declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 19 1841 as member of the Mersea Island Society. Councillor Akker declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 19/177 as a member of Stop350 and item 19/182 as a member of the Mersea Island Library Enthusiasts.

Councillor Banks declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 19 1950. Councillor Banks declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 19/182 as a member of Mersea Island Library Enthusiasts.

19/171 PUBLIC SESSION

5 members of the public in attendance.

The following comments were made:

Concern was expressed re S106 submission, since 'the goalposts have moved' and latest Government guidelines on 'Health, Safety & Communities' requires more detail on proposed site at Brierley Paddocks for a new Medical Centre which will help the community. Suggested that West Mersea Town Council should 'press' Colchester Borough Council on allocation of S106 monies to enable Doctors to build on the said site, which gives the community what it needs, not items to benefit solely tourists.

On behalf of Mersea Island Library Enthusiasts comment was made that MILE wants to retain paid staff and a dedicated building with access to library stock as part of ongoing discussions at Essex County Council as to the future of Mersea and other Essex libraries. Concern was expressed as to the future of West Mersea Library as Essex County Council plans remain unclear, with just £18,000 to be made available over three years.

It was agreed that item 19/182 would be moved up the agenda in order to respond to this comment.

19/172 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUR COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Borough Councillor John Jowers

Whilst commenting that MILE recommendations were sensible, believes that without increased use Mersea Library remains in jeopardy. Elsewhere in the County, libraries have extensive use for other purposes – including as Council Chambers. The Demographic of West Mersea means that the library has greater usage but proposes that there will have to be changes to opening hours or use and a mix of volunteer and professional staff for the future of the library to be secure.

Also discussed recent announcement that Maldon has applied for ‘Heritage Harbour’ status and believes it likely that Brightlingsea and Tollesbury might also apply and this should be considered for West Mersea. Colchester Borough Council is also considering broader plans for future of Blackwater, and that Colchester Borough Council will consult with West Mersea Town Council on this topic.

Borough Councillor Patricia Moore

Borough Councillor Patricia Moore has spoken to Colchester Borough Council Planning Enforcement re. approach on Mersea advertising restrictions. Advice is that a ‘softly, softly’ approach will be taken on non-commercial advertising unless a complaint is received.

Borough Councillor Moore wants to open debate as to options for all-weather netting to be installed at Victoria Esplanade car park in order to extend usage and therefore revenues.

Also wishes to raise proposals for a covered cycle store at Library car park to encourage a park and ride approach for commuters using bus service.

19/173 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 27 JUNE 2019 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Akker, SECONDED by Councillor Wood that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 27 June 2019, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising: No matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

19/174 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 18 JULY 2019 – MATTERS ARISING

Matters arising:

Item 19/158: Councillor Akker commented that the minutes should state that the financial report was not up to date.

Item 19/167: Councillor Akker had asked what contact there had been in relation to the application at Brierley Paddocks and West Mersea Town Council. Councillor Akker requested to confirm that the minutes state the question was not limited to Strutt and Parker’s letter to Colchester Borough Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Powling that the minutes of 18 July 2019 are deferred for amendment before confirming at the next Council meeting.

19/175 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

(a) 19 1598

Demolition of existing property and erection of a replacement dwelling.
9 Broomhills Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Rickman

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application.

(b) 19 1802

Proposed 2 bed eco bungalow part underground. Resubmission of 19 0637.
Land adjacent to 10 Beverley Avenue, West Mersea – Mr Boyd

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal as per previous objection that the HRA (Habitat Regulation Assessment) has still not been completed.

(c) 19 1443

Addition to first floor to existing bungalow and external redesigns to include a first floor balcony. Revised description.
5a Victory Road, West Mersea – Bowman

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application.
Councillor Banks abstained.

(d) 19 1956

Proposed extension of previously granted balcony (ref 17 2552) with access and additional doors on front elevation.
19 Shears Crescent, West Mersea – D Cook

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application.

(e) 19 1841

Application to vary conditions 2 and 3 of planning permission 17 2044 to allow sales of ice cream, ice lollies, cakes and associated confectionery and to alter opening hours.
The Dukes, Land adjacent The Oyster Bar, Coast Road, West Mersea – Mr Whiting

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application.
Councillor Akker abstained.

(f) 19 1950

Demolition of the existing carport (including the existing lean to roof) and the erection of a new carport with a new continuous pitched roof and brick parapet wall over the existing shed and workshop.
18 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea – Mr N Pritchard

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application.
Councillor Banks abstained.

19/176 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

(a) 19 1268

Rear extension
Old City Hall, 13 The Lane, West Mersea – Mr French

(b) 19 1102

Retrospective: Construction of coastal defence works and protection of surface water outlet.
Mersea Caravan Centre, Waldegraves Farm Holiday Park, Waldegraves Lane, West Mersea – Mr I Butter (agent)

(c) 19 1416

1st floor extension above existing ground floor side extension, external finish changes.
67 Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Mr Humm

- (d) 19 0939
Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and erection of new 1 ½ storey dwelling and garage. Revised drawings.
7 Prince Albert Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Harris
- (e) 19 1659
Proposed extension and alterations.
Kansu, 53 Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs S Ramsay
- (f) 19 1624
Erection of single storey rear conservatory extension.
3 Acorn Mews, West Mersea – Mrs Conway

19/182 TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF WEST MERSEA LIBRARY

Essex County Council met on 8 August 2019 and a revised strategy – including the removal of Tiers of Classification for Essex Libraries was discussed. The future of the Library accordingly still appears at risk. Councillor Akker proposes a letter from West Mersea Town Council reaffirming position and that it should ask for an undertaking of money and facilities re. the future of the library. It was felt that West Mersea Town Council should not give Essex County Council an ‘Expression of Interest’ in respect of changes to the running of West Mersea Library which might jeopardise its’ future.

19/177 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE A RESPONSE TO THE COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL S106 OFFICER REGARDING THE REQUEST FOR REVISED S106 PROPOSALS IN RELATION TO THE PLANNING APPLICATION AT BRIERLEY PADDOCKS

It was agreed that a response in relation to Brierley Paddocks should be postponed pending a visit by a Colchester Borough Council officer to provide further information on the S106 process, further debate and consultation.

Proposed: Councillor Wood, Seconded: Councillor Moore.
Councillors Akker, Banks and Powling abstained.

19/178 TO DELEGATE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO THE TOWN CLERK TO SUBMIT A RESPONSE FOR ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS THAT CANNOT BE DISCUSSED IN A PUBLIC COUNCIL MEETING

Following discussion it was agreed to delegate the responsibility to the Town Clerk to submit a response for any planning applications that cannot be discussed in a public Council meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Moore, Seconded: Councillor Bragg. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/179 TO CONFIRM THE RESIGNATION OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO) WITH EFFECT FROM 5 AUGUST 2019 AND TO TEMPORARILY APPOINT THE CLERK TO THE POSITION OF RFO FROM 6 AUGUST 2019

This item was withdrawn.

19/180 TO DISCUSS THE NEXT STEP WITH NON PAYMENT OF GATE LICENCES

Deferred to next Council meeting.

19/181 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM THE RESERVES INTO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BUDGET IN ORDER TO ENGAGE A CONSULTANT

It was reported that monies were held-back from prior year budget for this purpose – circa £7.3k – proposal is that £5k be transferred at this stage.

Proposed: Councillor Powling, Seconded: Councillor Banks. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/183 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE TO SUPPORT COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL IN THEIR CAMPAIGN FOR INCREASED SCHOOL FUNDING

It was discussed that Government cutbacks are impacting local schools, and proposed that, through improved dialogue with the school West Mersea Town Council could better express its' support for the school and Colchester Borough Council in their campaign to improve funding.

Proposed: Councillor Akker, Seconded: Councillor Banks. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/184 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It was reported that progress is being made, in particular with the Policy Editing Group. However that to make further progress additional funding would be required in order to engage the appropriate consultants. It was reported that Peter Clements is now the Chairman on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

19/185 MAYOR'S NOTES

There were no Mayor's notes to report.

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 8.34pm.