

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2019

PRESENT: Councillors: Carl Powling (Mayor)
Peter Banks
David Bragg
Peter Clements
Bernard Hart
Robert Jenkins
Paula Moore
Sylvia Wargent
Sophie Weaver

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: Petra Palfreyman
Borough Councillor: Robert Davidson
Patricia Moore

19/040 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Borough Councillor John Jowers.

19/041 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Powling declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 19 0198.

19/042 PUBLIC SESSION

7 members of the public in attendance.

The following comments were made:

Concern was expressed about the article in The Courier regarding the RAMS. The MCZ (Marine Conservation Zone) was omitted although Mersea is the biggest zone. The Oyster Fisheries are regenerating this year.

The behaviour of the Waldegraves planner was disgraceful. The Council should consider whether there was a case for maladministration.

A comment was made that the lease for the sports club could have just been rental and that the price could be put up.

There have been unanimous objections to the Brierley Paddocks from West Mersea Town Council and approximately 100 objections still to be entered on to the website. At the last Council meeting there was an extensive summary of the Councils position, but the comment put on the planning site does not reflect what was discussed at the meeting and the consultation with the Neighbourhood Plan group about that statement and how the conclusion was reached was questioned.

Previously the Council and Colchester Borough Council planning department checked on at least two occasions that there was a community tax on another address for tenants at Waldegraves.

19/043 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUR COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Borough Councillor Robert Davidson

The Library consultation closes at midnight on 21 February and will be sent out to an outside body to analyse. The Council Tax was agreed by a majority of 1.

Band D £1823 allocated as follows: Colchester Borough Council £190, Fire Authority £72, Police Authority £192, Essex County Council £1270, West Mersea Town Council £98.

Borough Councillor Patricia Moore

The Library consultation is now closed. A response is due in June and the Borough Councillors will keep the pressure on with the portfolio holder.

There is a meeting of the Licencing Committee on 27 March 2019 regarding licencing of the caravan parks. The Decoy Pond was mentioned to the Planning Officer for Waldegraves but no joy.

Members of the public have requested that the Victoria Esplanade car park is opened in the winter to get the cars off the road.

The Essex Bus Users consultation is on the Colchester Borough Council website and is looking at subsidised services.

The Council Tax will increase by approximately 5%. The Tommy soldiers at Fingringhoe and Layer have been stolen.

The Local Plan actively promotes the notion of alms-houses as their occupancy can be decided.

The potholes have been repaired by the Church and there will be a campaign on the island for pot holes and the zebra crossing.

19/044 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 10 JANUARY 2019 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Jenkins, SECONDED by Councillor Hart that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 10 January 2019, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

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

19/045 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 31 JANUARY 2019 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Clements, SECONDED by Councillor Weaver that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 31 January 2019, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising: Item 19/0011 – application withdrawn – see minutes.

19/046 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

a) 19 0078

Proposed garden room and store, outdoor fireplace, chimney and timber pergola. (Revised description).
7 Empress Avenue, West Mersea – Mr D Murrell

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal on grounds of proximity to neighbouring property and height of chimney and building.

b) 19 0241

Side garden room extension.
67 Churchfields, West Mersea – J Woodhead

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

c) 19 0198

Demolition of 1no. building and erection of 2no. dwellings. Demolition of existing building and site preparation permitted under approval reference 15 1500.
21 Prince Albert Road, West Mersea – Mr S Downes

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal on grounds of overdevelopment.
Councillor Powling confirmed a non-pecuniary interest.

- d) 19 0140
4x new 2 bed houses with associated highway access and parking area, landscaping, bin stores and cycle sheds.
2-4 High Street North, West Mersea – Mr P Whiting

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

- e) 19 0333
Demolition of existing detached garage/outbuilding and erection of replacement detached garage/outbuilding.
30 Victory Road, West Mersea – Mr S Priestley

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

- f) 18 2544 (revised drawing)
New first floor bedroom over existing kitchen/utility and workroom. External wall materials to be brick slips to match the existing dwelling as close as possible.
11 Churchfields, West Mersea – Miss S Prop

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

19/047 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

- a) 18 2813
Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for i) the stationing of 264 static caravans (in some instances, in breach of condition) for more than 10 years; ii) residential occupation of 8 static caravans for members of staff, 4 for year-round occupation.
Waldegraves Farm Holiday Park, Waldegraves Lane, West Mersea – Mr D Lord

WMTC Recommendation:

West Mersea Town Council are greatly concerned with this request for a Lawful Development Certificate and its necessity due to an apparent lack of existing planning approvals exceeding and within the 10 year milestone.

Additionally the requirements and recommendations of statutory consultee Natural England that an environmental and habitats assessment have not been submitted by the developer. To quote 'our initial screening of this consultation indicates that one or more Impact Risk Zones have been triggered by the proposed development indicating that impacts to SSSIs are likely and may be significant'.

Furthermore the decoy pond, classed as a historic monument, must be protected (we are aware of current concerns of infilling with hardcore – which has been communicated to West Mersea Town Council).

This site is also subject to outstanding Caravan Site licencing.

- b) 18 2450
Demolition of existing bungalow for proposed dwelling.
21 Victory Road, West Mersea – Mr R Frost
- c) 18 2672
Erection of new carport and annex within the front garden.
Backwater Lodge, 20B Firs Chase, West Mersea – Mr D Cope
- d) 18 2058
Proposed timber cladding to external elevations of the building and replacement of deteriorated windows with timber windows (revised description).
Cornerways, 138 Coast Road, West Mersea – Mr M & Ms P Long

19/048 TO DISCUSS THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS DEVOLUTION PILOT

Meetings have been attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The scheme will be rolled out as follows:

Phase 1 – 12 months voluntary scheme to all that opted in

Phase 2 – All parishes and towns

Phase 3 – Total devolution

Essex County Council are still the Highway Authority so we cannot mend the roads. Essex County Council will only carry out major repairs and routine maintenance. The Council can pick and choose what we want to do. West Mersea Town Council will not receive any more than 68p per head of population but there may be scope to have a conversation about payment for the number of tourists. Also the precept can be raised to cover the costs needed. A working group will be setting up to discuss the management issues, priorities, costs and work load.

Councillor Jenkins proposed that we run with the pilot.

Proposed: Councillor Jenkins, Seconded: Councillor Hart. Councillor Banks voted against.

19/049 TO DECIDE A BUDGET FIGURE OF UP TO £1158 TO COVER ADVERTISING FOR COMMUNITY SPECIAL CONSTABLES

Following discussion it was agreed to put an advert (8 insertions) in the Colchester Gazette costing up to £868.50. East Mersea Parish Council have agreed to contribute 25% of the cost of the advert.

Proposed: Councillor Jenkins, Seconded: Councillor Clements. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/050 TO DISCUSS THE PURCHASE OF A FRAME TO ATTACH THE FLAIL TO THE TRACTOR AT A COST OF £575.23

Following discussion it was agreed to purchase the flail costing £575.23

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

19/051 TO DISCUSS AND ACTION THE NEW MISA LEASES

Following discussion it was agreed to sign the new 7 year lease. This will be signed by the 4 MISA club chairmen and Councillor Carl Powling, as Mayor on behalf of West Mersea Town Council.

Proposed: Councillor Clements, Seconded: Councillor Hart. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/052 TO DISCUSS OBTAINING A CORPORATE CREDIT CARD AND AMENDING THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS TO ALLOW FOR IT

Following discussion it was proposed to obtain a corporate credit card and amend the Financial Regulations.

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

19/053 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS:

Assets, Facilities & Environment – Report by Councillor Jenkins (Chairman)

Crime and Safety

Community Special Constables - 1 officer is to be attested on the 25th February, Peter Rudlin (Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator) and Councillor Jenkins will attend, and a second officer will be attested end July. Both officers will need a period of working with regular offices and will then be “on the beat” in Mersea.

Facilities

- Willoughby toilets - work is expected to start in March, ready for 1 April.
- A new basket swing has been installed in West Mersea Park by Sutcliffe.
- Work to the safety surfaces in Wellhouse Park children’s area expected to start within 3 weeks.
- New basket swing for Wellhouse Park is awaiting the fixings which are expected by mid March.
- Work on new partition in offices to be completed w/e 1 March.

Bradwell – Nothing to report. Next meeting to be held in March 2019.

Cemetery Committee – Nothing to report.

Communications – Report by Councillor Weaver (Chairman)

It was confirmed that by the end of the financial year (2018/19), the committee spending is likely to be just £30 over budget.

A summary of the Council's achievements over the last 4 years was discussed and it was agreed that an abridged version would be written for local publication with a link to the full summary on the West Mersea Town Council website.

Councillor Moore agreed to write a short article to be published in the Courier, with further details also being added to the West Mersea Town Council Facebook page and website.

The budget for 2019/20 as already agreed at the Council meeting on 10/01/19 was discussed to confirm the meaning of the entries.

Following discussion it was agreed to add a statement to the top of the agenda for the chairman to say that comments and statements made during public Have your Say will be noted but may not be responded to immediately. It was agreed that Councillors should not respond unless invited to do so by the chairman.

Following discussion it was agreed to wait for the new Council to decide the regularity of the meetings after 2 May 2019.

It was agreed to propose that the Communications Committee becomes a working group after 2 May 2019. The matter will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Personnel – Nothing to report.

Sports & Recreation – Nothing to report.

Transport – Nothing to report. Next meeting to be held on 4 February 2019.

Waterside – Nothing to report. Next meeting to be arranged for May 2019.

19/054 MAYOR'S NOTES

The Mayor confirmed that the British Legion has been booked for the Town Meeting on 25 April 2019. The Mayor thanked staff and councillors for their continued hard work.

19/055 Chairman to MOVE that the press and public be excluded during the transaction of the following items on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

19/056 TO DISCUSS OFFICE ALARM CALL OUTS AND RUSHMERE CLOSE CALL OUTS AND ALARM SYSTEM

Following discussion a proposal was made for office alarm calls outs and Rushmere Close call outs and alarm system.

Proposed: Councillor Clements, Seconded: Councillor Hart. ALL IN FAVOUR

19/057 TO DISCUSS ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES AT RUSHMERE CLOSE AT A COST OF UP TO £2650

Following discussion it was agreed to obtain three quotes for additional security.

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 8.50pm.