

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 10 JANUARY 2019

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: Petra Palfreyman
RFO: Valerie Henry

Borough Councillor: Robert Davidson
John Jowers

19/001 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Weaver and Borough Councillor Moore.

19/002 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

19/003 PUBLIC SESSION

12 members of the public in attendance.

Members of the public raised the following points:

- Thanks were offered for taking over the toilets from Colchester Borough Council (CBC) several years ago. It was suggested that the savings from closing Fairhaven toilets would be small and that the Council was entitled to support from CBC. Beach Hut Watch would like to see both blocks stay open.
- A progress report for any additional parking on the Island. It was confirmed that the school opened their playground as a car park at peak times. A request was made for the white and yellow lines to be repainted and for regular road sweeping after high tides which leave a lot of seaweed.
- A comment was received from two members of the public that the minutes of 8 November 2018 do not reflect what was said and for the Neighbourhood Plan report to be struck from the records.
- The Waldegraves application (18 2813) needs careful consideration. The Decoy Pond is an ancient monument and must be protected.
- The Waterside Committee have not discussed the closure of Fairhaven toilets and one toilet block along the Esplanade will not be enough.

19/004 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUR COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Borough Councillor John Jowers

Some major road repairs will be taking place which Councillor Kevin Bentley and Councillor Carl Powling should be given credit for. The white lines at The Strood and at the bottom of Firs Road and a large gully in East Road need to be repainted and a missing sign at the bottom of Firs Road reinstated.

The Inspector of the Local Plan says it is unlikely that part 2 will come up before October/November 2019 which gives the Neighbourhood Plan group (NPG) more time but leaves Colchester open and vulnerable and puts the NPG in a difficult situation. The NPG and the Council should be liaising over the plan. The NPG must keep to the numbers and they can make recommendations in a number of ways and can ask the Inspector if two sites are still needed.

The public enquiry about the house boats in Coast Road has been delayed but if it fails to prohibit them, there could be a row of houseboats with no drainage and no sewage.

We did not get any housing in the last Local Plan.

Local Service Agreement - devolving back the powers to Councils. If this is the case, West Mersea Town Council could get repairs done and could try and negotiate so that the Council made some money from it.

At the next meeting with the Chief Constables the issue of drug dealing and drink driving will be mentioned.

Borough Councillor Robert Davidson

Councillor Davidson wished everyone a Happy New Year.

At the last Council Local Plan meeting an independent chairman was voted in so they can now have a casting vote. Part 2 of the Local Plan might not be ready until 2020.

The comments in the minutes about the Neighbourhood Plan should be removed.

Borough Councillors Pat Moore and Robert Davidson attended a meeting at County and spoke to the head of libraries and portfolio holders who were sympathetic to the incorrect grading as West Mersea library is only 2 points away from a safe grade. Individual concerns and responses to the consultation are also needed.

The Council should consider a plan B if it is not regraded and regarded as safe. There is a public meeting on Friday 18th about the Library from 7pm.

Devolution for Local Councils is good thing.

19/005 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 8 NOVEMBER 2018 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Clements, SECONDED by Councillor Jenkins that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 8 November 2018, be CONFIRMED. Proposed to accept the minutes subject to amendments. ALL IN FAVOUR.

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

19/006 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 29 NOVEMBER 2018 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Jenkins, SECONDED by Councillor Banks that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 29 November 2018, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

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

19/007 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

a) 18 2881

Proposed single storey rear extension and new garage and home office.
46 Churchfields, West Mersea – S Cullum

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

b) 18 2821

Single storey extension to rear and integral garage to side.
Beach House, 13a New Captains Road, West Mersea – Taylor

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

c) 18 2895

Demolish the existing commercial buildings deemed no longer fit for purpose and to build a new building on this space. In addition a new building will be built adjacent to serve the existing business, when its current buildings are demolished.

Colchester Fresh Fish, Colchester Fish Supplies, Haycocks Lane, West Mersea – Mr W Sunnucks

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

d) 18 1928

Proposed annexe building to Rose Cottage for the sale of fresh fish on the ground floor and artist studios at first floor level accessed by external stairs including enhanced access gateways, renovated boundary treatment and new hedge planting (revised drawing).

Rose Cottage, 126 Coast Road, West Mersea – Mr R Open

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application, with a condition that the application must follow regulations of highways, the Environment Agency and remain in keeping within the conservation area.

e) 18 2813 Certificate of Lawful Use - Existing

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 and 4 for seasonal occupation (15th March to 15th February) for more than 10 years;
- iii) use of the land as touring fields to accommodate 298 no. pitches for touring caravans and motorhomes;
- iv) use of land for camping and as an overspill area for tourers and motorhomes for more than 10 years;
- v) year-round use of the golf driving range and pitch and putt course in breach of planning condition for more than 10 years;
- vi) operational development comprising: the erection of the games room extension; extension to The Barn; restaurant extension; the construction of the swimming pool and sun deck; the construction of the crazy golf course; erection of shower block and laundry block; and construction of the ball games area, all of which occurred more than four years ago.

Mersea Caravan Centre, Waldegraves Farm Holiday Park, Waldegraves Lane, West Mersea – Mr D Lord

It was agreed that Councillors would compose an objection to the Lawful Development Certificate with the help of information provided by a member of the public.

f) 18 2949

Single storey extension to reception.

Waldegraves Farm Holiday Park, Waldegraves Lane, West Mersea – Mr Lord

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

g) 18 3112

Construction of two semi-detached two bedroom bungalows with associated facilities.

Police Station, East Road, West Mersea – Mr B Lord

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

19/008 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

- a) 18 2538
Creation of second floor by conversion of roof void and single storey rear extension.
17 Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Mr A London
- b) 18 2564
Retrospective application: installation of 4 wooden planters.
Dabchicks Sailing Club, 143 Coast Road, West Mersea – Miss C Powell
WMTC did not comment on the application.
- c) 18 2200
Single storey rear extension to plot 68. 2 storey rear extension to plot 70.
68 & 70 Firs Chase, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs R & A Ward
- d) 18 2241
Demolition of an existing bungalow. Erection of a detached two storey replacement dwelling with associated external works.
30 Victory Road, West Mersea – Mr S Priestley
- e) 18 2691
Proposed single storey front extension.
10 Beverley Avenue, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs D Duffy

Application refused

- a) 18 2304
First floor front extension, two storey rear extension and single storey side extension and general modernisation.
12 Kingsland Beach, West Mersea – Mr D King

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

Planning Appeal lodged

- a) 18 0847
Outline application for residential development of a single dwelling with access off Empress Avenue, including layout with all other matters reserved.
Land off 10 Beverley Avenue, West Mersea – Mr R Boulding

19/009 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE WHETHER OR NOT TO TAKE PART IN THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS DEVOLUTION PILOT

This pilot would involve West Mersea Town Council organising and paying for repairs to footpaths and kerb stones, weedkilling, repairing and cleaning but not replacing road signs, grass and verge cutting, trees, hedges, bus shelters and footpaths. Work which involved entering the Highway cannot be carried out. The amount paid by Essex County Council would be 68p per elector.

Following discussion it was agreed to accept the Highways Devolution pilot subject to obtaining more funds, as the payment of 68p per elector does not take in to account the number of visitors/tourists to the island.

Cllr Powling will make further enquiries.

Proposed: Councillor Powling, Seconded: Councillor Jenkins.

Councillor Moore abstained. Councillor Banks against.

19/010 TO DISCUSS THE PARKING ISSUES AT THE GLEBE/GARDEN FARM

There have been some issues with the overspill of cars from the Glebe on match days, parking in Garden Farm. The Police have been informed as there was some illegal parking on kerbs, opposite driveways and junctions and the North Essex Parking Partnership also had a look, although there are no parking restrictions in Garden Farm. MISA clubs were contacted and asked to ensure that local players walk or cycle and asked to encourage visiting teams to car share and to ask the parking marshals to make sure cars are parked economically in the car park to make the most of the space and if redirecting drivers to Garden Farm, to ask them to park responsibly and considerately. The office have also liaised with the local residents that contacted the Council about the issues. At present there is no additional parking but the area at the end of Oakwood Avenue North has been considered for overflow parking in the past and will be discussed again at the next Transport Committee meeting.

19/011 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE OPENING A SAVINGS BANK ACCOUNT WITH UNITY TRUST FOR EARMARKED RESERVES

Following discussion it was agreed to open a bank account with Unity Trust for earmarked reserves.
Proposed: Councillor Clements, Seconded: Councillor Banks. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/012 TO DISCUSS OFFICE ALARM CALL OUTS AND RUSHMERE CLOSE CALL OUTS AND ALARM SYSTEM

Postpone until another meeting.

19/013 TO DISCUSS ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES AT RUSHMERE CLOSE AT A COST OF UP TO £2650

Postpone until another meeting.

19/014 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE HOW LONG TO CLOSE WILLOUGHBY CAR PARK FOR

Following discussion it was agreed to keep Willoughby car park closed until 31 March 2019.
Proposed: Councillor Clements, Seconded: Councillor Bragg. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/015 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE DONATION OF A WWI TOMMY SILHOUETTE FOR BARFIELD ROAD CEMETERY AND ITS LOCATION AND FUTURE MAINTENANCE

Following discussion it was agreed that a WW1 Tommy silhouette could be donated to the Council and permanently sited in Barfield Road, subject to further discussions about the location and maintenance. Councillor Moore will discuss this with the donor.
Proposed: Councillor Powling, Seconded: Councillor Banks. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/016 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE 2019/20 BUDGET AND PRECEPT CALCULATIONS

Following discussion the budget and precept amounts were agreed as follows:
Precept - £304,041. Band D equivalent - £3145.90.
Proposed: Councillor Moore, Seconded: Councillor Banks. ALL IN FAVOUR.

19/017 TO DISCUSS A DONATION TO DUNCAN PITTOCK FOR THE STROOD WW1 TOMMY INSTALLATION

Following discussion it was agreed that a donation of £500 should be made to Duncan Pittock towards for cost of the WW1 Tommy installation at The Strood.
Proposed: Councillor Banks, Seconded: Councillor Clements. Councillor Bragg against.

19/018 TO AGREE A £50 DONATION TO THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION FOR THE POPPY WREATH SUPPLIED FOR NOVEMBER 2018 (IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS POWERS UNDER S.137 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972)

Following discussion, it was agreed that a donation of £50 should be made to the Royal British Legion for the Poppy Appeal.

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

19/019 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF FAIRHAVEN TOILETS, THE REFURBISHMENT OF COAST ROAD TOILETS AND TO AGREE A COURSE OF ACTION

Postpone until another meeting

19/020 TO AGREE TO UPDATE THE OFFICE PHONE SYSTEM AT A COST OF UP TO £120 + VAT

Following discussion it was agreed to update the office phone system at a cost of £120 + VAT.

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

19/021 TO AGREE A TOTAL PAYMENT OF £2130 TO RESURFACE THE WETPOUR PLAY AREA IN WELLHOUSE PARK

Following discussion it was agreed to resurface the wet pour play area in the Wellhouse Park.

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

19/022 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS:

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

Much of the today's update was heralded in the notes within the Council meeting 8 November 2018 and included within the Minutes of the Assets, Facilities & Environment meeting of 30 November 2018. To briefly summarise the main points -

1. The grant application to the Sport England for the adult play equipment and pathways within West Mersea Park was turned down.
2. The grant application to the Essex Initiatives Fund for a replacement basket swing for West Mersea Park was granted and the equipment has now been ordered from Sutcliffe.
3. The future of Fairhaven toilets was discussed and is covered within today's agenda.
4. Preferred supplier for Willoughby toilets was decided and we are currently working up the final specification, ready to place the order for completion before 1 April. Thoughts are that we should move to waterless urinals to stem the huge water bills at this site.
5. Supplier appointed to replace ceiling in Council chamber and lobby. Work now completed.
6. Repair of play surfaces in children's park on Glebe 2 agreed subject to cost approval by full Council (see today's agenda).
7. Agreed to replace the defective basket swing on Glebe 2 - order placed for delivery end January.

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

Cemetery Committee – Report by Paula Moore (Chairman)

A noticeboard has been ordered for Feldy View Woodland Cemetery. Next meeting to be held on 7 March 2019.

Communications – Nothing to report.

Personnel – Report by Councillor Carl Powling (Chairman).

Councillor Powling reported that a new Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) had started work for the Council from 7 January 2019.

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 March 2019

19/023 MAYOR'S NOTES

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 9.40pm.