

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 31 JANUARY 2019

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

IN ATTENDANCE:	Town Clerk:	Petra Palfreyman
	RFO:	Valerie Henry
	Borough Councillor:	Patricia Moore

19/024 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Powling, Borough Councillors Davidson and Jowers.

19/025 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Banks, Clements, Moore and Weaver declared a non-pecuniary interest as they are members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

19/026 PUBLIC SESSION

10 members of the public in attendance.

The following comments were made:

It was hoped that more members of the public would be at the meeting regarding the Brierley Paddocks development. Many comments have already been added to the Colchester Borough Council portal about this. STOP 350 had a public meeting recently with over 110 people attending. The meeting brought together councillors from West Mersea and outside and was a thorough information exchange which has informed the process.

STOP 350 want to make clear representations;

- The application is premature and pre emps the Colchester Borough Council draft Local Plan which is still in examination.
- Part 1 is to be completed next year.
- It is a large Local Plan as they need to plan the whole of North Essex.
- It breaks the existing Local Plan which still has many years to come.
- This will set a dangerous precedent for further speculative planning applications in West Mersea.
- It doesn't take account of the second site which was identified in the plan.
- There is still huge amounts of infilling.
- There are more appropriate brown field site which are more suited to affordable homes.
- The proposal does nothing to address the local community needs for affordable housing.
- The traffic problems will be exasperated with a likely 800 additional vehicle movements per day.
- All the traffic will have to come over The Strood and down Dawes Lane and East Road which is already saturated.
- It takes no account of the fact that we are an island.

- There are technical points which the Council must consider;
- We have always followed what the Borough Council has said about the Local Plan so why now would you break from that when the Local Plan is still under consideration.
- It is thought the Planning Officer will recommend refusal when it goes to committee.
- Councillor Mark Cory has also implied that he will oppose this development.
- An issue from the existing Local Plan and what the proposal from City & Country is breaking which is the Coastal Protection belt. Brierley Paddocks and the Dawes Lane area are in the coastal protection belt that Essex and Colchester Borough Council reaffirmed in 2016. Sustainability is a key point for community as it maintains social cohesion and it requires 3 elements of social, economic and environmental benefit. The erosion of the coastal belt is only permitted where there are demonstrable social and economic benefits. The existing and emerging Local Plan does not address this issue.
- The Tennis Club would like to know when there will be a sign on the road identifying where the club is.
- Neighbourhood Watch advised there had been a lot of anti-social behaviour lately, but the Police have patrolled recently and Neighbourhood Watch have spoken to parents.

Borough Councillor Patricia Moore

Confirmed that all were aware of the application for outline planning for 201 houses and commercial space. The application is premature and not in accordance with the Local Plan (existing or draft) and it has been called in. Borough Councillor Moore believes it will be turned down by the officers as it is so outside anything that has been thought of approved so far. If it does go to committee, Borough Councillor Moore will fight it but it is unlikely to be passed. If the appeal is granted then the 2nd site will be taken out of the Local Plan when it comes back from the Inspector by the Planning Officers.

Attended a planning committee meeting regarding the old Langenhoe Lion pub being demolished and rebuilt in to 4 terraced properties. The local community are not happy as it has been designated as community asset value but various interested parties have pulled out. The community would like it as a village shop in ¼ of the ground floor. The decision will be deferred for 1 month for the community to engage with the developer and put forward a plan.

There will be no further action with the library until the consultation has finished and then the community can start putting pressure on again. Sir Bernard Jenkin has told the Chief Executive at Chelmsford that the process has inaccuracies in the assessment. The Cabinet Minister in Westminster in charge of the libraries has sent a letter and when Essex County Council decide what they are going to do, if deemed incorrect, there will be an enquiry which will be put forward by central government. The portfolio holder said the objectives are to save £2M but also to make the library service better.

19/027 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

a) 19 0010

Proposed 2no. 1.5 storey dwellings following demolition of existing bungalow.
95 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea – Chatterton

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal on the grounds of gross over-development of the plot.

b) 19 0011

1.5 storey extension on existing bungalow.
5a Victory Road, West Mersea – Bowman

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application. Councillor Hart voted against, Councillor Clements abstained.

c) 19 0054

Rear and side extensions.
2 Chandlers Close, West Mersea – Mr S Wright

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

- d) 19 0107
Erection of two new sheds.
56 Kingsland Road, West Mersea – Mr P Smith

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

- e) 19 0130
Proposed single storey rear extension and porch to front elevation with proposed detached annex.
Land adjacent to 27 Prince Albert Road, West Mersea – Mr M Wilson

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application.
Councillors Clements and Moore abstained.

- f) 19 0146
Proposed two storey rear extension.
74 Empress Avenue, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Watkins

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

- g) 19 0152
Proposed single storey rear extension, garage conversion, driveway extended with permeable paving, weather boarding to 1st floor level of property beneath painted brickwork and erection of bike store.
17 City Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Shipton

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

- h) 18 2544
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. (Revised description).
11 Churchfields, West Mersea – Miss S Prop

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

19/028 TO DISCUSS OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR LAND AT BRIERLEY PADDOCKS, WEST MERSEA

West Mersea Town Council recommends that consent is NOT granted to this planning application.

Prematurity:

In the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 paragraphs 49 - 50 premature applications are specifically discussed.

The Colchester Borough Council (CBC) Emerging Local Plan is at an advanced stage, it has already been submitted, therefore the justification to refuse is clearly given in paragraph 49 as both sub items a) "...to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process..." and b) "the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area" are fulfilled.

The Councillors agreed the precise wording for the objection would be agreed after the meeting.

19/029 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

- a) 18 2666
Demolition of existing garage for proposed garage with half storey above.
29 Victory Road, West Mersea – French

- b) 18 2507
Front and rear extensions to existing dwelling and internal alterations. New garage/storage building to replace 2no. existing outbuildings.
5 Victory Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs G Petley
- c) 18 2833
Proposed roof conversion and formation of new gable end to front elevation, entrance porch extension, changes to external finishes, site landscaping, internal reconfiguration and alteration.
8 Beach Road, West Mersea – Mr C Brown
- d) 18 2877
Two storey rear extension and extension to side dormer and pitched roof to existing section of dormer.
83 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea – Mr P Healey
- e) 18 2895
The proposal is to 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
- f) 18 2881
Proposed single storey rear extension and new garage and home office.
46 Churchfields, West Mersea – S Cullum
- g) 18 2821
Single storey extension to rear and integral garage to side.
Beach House, 13a New Captains Road, West Mersea – Taylor
- h) 18 2949
Single storey extension to reception.
Waldegraves Farm Holiday Park, Waldegraves Lane, West Mersea – Ark Homes Builders & Developers Ltd

19/030 TO NOTE THE CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION

The RFO confirmed the current account balance as of mid December was £114,415.22 and it now stands at about £98,000, with a balance of just over £5000 in the Barclays Premium account and just over £70,000 in the NS & I account. Payment sheets for December 2018 and January 2019 were presented and no queries raised. The RFO stated that the precept requirement for 2019/20 is £304,041 (which is an increase of 19.83%, equivalent to £3,145.90 on a band D property). A grant of £5,800 was received from CIF for the replacement basket swing in West Mersea Park, the December quarter VAT payment and the NEPP 2nd quarter parking payments were also received.

19/031 TO AGREE AN UPDATE TO 6.4 OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REGARDING BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

Following discussion it was agreed to amend the Financial Regulations to state that the Clerk and RFO cannot sign cheques or release payments.

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

19/032 TO AGREE EMERGENCY ARBORICULTURAL WORK REQUIRED ON HOLM OAK, WEST MERSEA PARK, COSTING £600

Following discussion it was agreed the necessary work on the Holm Oak could be carried out.

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

19/033 TO AGREE A REVISED PLAN FOR A PATH AT WEST MERSEA TENNIS CLUB. WORK WILL BE PAID FOR AND ORGANISED BY THE TENNIS CLUB

Following discussion it was agreed that the Tennis Club could carry out the work on their new path in accordance with the plan submitted.

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

19/034 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE PUTTING UP A DIVIDING WALL IN THE KITCHEN TO MAKE AN OFFICE FOR THE CEMETERY CLERK, COSTING £1580 + VAT

Following discussion it was agreed to erect a dividing wall to make a new office for the cemetery clerk.

Proposed: Councillor Jenkins, Seconded: Councillor Hart. Councillor Bragg against.

19/035 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF FAIRHAVEN TOILETS, THE REFURBISHMENT OF COAST ROAD TOILET AND TO AGREE A COURSE OF ACTION

Councillor Jenkins advised that the plan is to close Fairhaven, sell the land and spend the proceeds on Coast Road toilets. A quote for a complete refurbishment of Coast Road is £150,000. The gents would be stripped out and become a pop up shop and the ladies side would be stripped out and installed with unisex semi automatic toilets and a baby change unit.

In order to build on Fairhaven toilets site we would need a small strip of land from the Rose Garden. Councillors Powling and Jenkins met with Councillor Tim Young and Councillor David King from Colchester Borough Council to discuss this and they were very receptive to the idea and will let us know whether we can have the land and if so we can apply for outline planning permission. They are keen to ensure that the Council are all behind this decision.

The land with outline planning permission can be difficult to sell so need to get actual planning permission. With planning permission the land would be worth £250,000, taking in to account what a high spec 2/3 bedroom house would sell for (£650,000) and the cost of demolition and construction (£420,000).

At the moment, 50% of any gain on that land would be passed to Colchester Borough Council so they would have to grant their share to make this project viable.

Councillor Jenkins proposed to continue to investigate with a view to closing Fairhaven and selling the land and using any revenue to develop Coast Road.

Proposed: Councillor Jenkins, Seconded: Councillor Clements. Councillors Bragg and Wargent abstained.

19/036 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE FIXED WIRING TESTING AT THE GLEBE AND PAT TESTING FOR WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL APPLIANCES

Following discussion and a review of 3 quotes it was agreed to ask EFS to undertake this work as their price was the most competitive.

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

19/037 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

19/038 TO INCREASE THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS HOURS TO INCLUDE MONDAY 8.30AM TO 11.30AM

Following discussion it was agreed to increase the administrative assistants hours to include 3 hours on a Monday morning.

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

19/039 MAYOR'S NOTES

Councillor Moore gave thanks to the Councillors and staff working on the big projects such as the budget and toilets. Next year is an election year and if anyone knows someone who would like to put themselves up for election, please ask them to contact the Council for more information.

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 9.20 pm.