

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2020

PRESENT:	Councillors:	Carl Powling (Mayor) John Akker Julie Baker Peter Banks David Bragg Robert Jenkins Sylvia Wargent Sophie Weaver Chris Wood
IN ATTENDANCE:	Town Clerk:	Petra Palfreyman
	Borough Councillors:	Robert Davidson Patricia Moore
	Asst to Town Clerk:	Carol Fountain
	Neighbourhood Services CBC:	Stephen Collis (re item 20/088)

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL (CORONAVIRUS ACT Part 2020 1 Section 78 Regulations 2 – 17)

20/077 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

20/078 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Akker declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 20/086 as a member of Mersea Island Society and item 20/088 as a member of STOP 350.

20/079 PUBLIC SESSION

1 member of the public in attendance. No comment made.

Borough Councillor Robert Davidson.

All 3 Borough Councillors have donated £300 to the Community Fund from the Locality Budget. They are very impressed with how the community are being helped by the Council.

Confirmed that any planning application from Colchester Borough Council will not come before the planning committee, either virtually or physically, if contentious. This could include Dawes Lane and Colchester Road. Borough Councillor Robert Davidson will be pushing for contentious issues to be delayed until the public have access and this has the support of Andrew Weavers and Ian Vipond.

Part 1 – imminent but no one has heard anything yet.

Neighbourhood Plan referendums (along with any other elections) cannot be held until May 2021 but appeals and inspections will be allowed regardless.

Twice per week the group leaders in Colchester and the cabinet are having a Zoom meeting to discuss the virus situation.

Categories eligible for help are:

A – for food parcels and shopping services. 380 in Colchester.

B – over 70s or eligible for flu jab. 36000 in Colchester.

Borough Councillor Patricia Moore.

Thanks was given to the Council for the social emergency help and stepping up to the mark incredibly well and more notice should be taken at a national level of how well the council have done.

James Ryan has advised that the Colchester Road application will not be supported or be offered at committee as it is against the current and emerging Local Plan. It will go to appeal but Colchester Borough Council believe they have the necessary 5 year supply of houses to successfully fight the application. However, the doctors have been offered a site and supported it so it would be seen as a community benefit.

Dawes Lane application has been called in – should not be handled by just 4 or 5 councillors and should be delayed until the public can see it is being handled properly and not behind closed doors.

Councillors response – should not take developers for granted. All applications go to appeal and only 1 lost in 6 years.

Surprised by James Ryan response in view of Tiptree application. This application will have implications for the future regarding the coastal protection belt and village boundary. Councillor Jenkins asked to see James Ryan's report before it is submitted, and Council should give him all the information and objections for him to include in the refusal.

Colchester Borough Council are not going to appeal Tiptree decision because they have 5.4 years of supply to 31 March 2025 and because many of the comments were referring to Part 1 inspectors concerns that many of the sites in Part 2 were undeliverable. Karen Syrett already has permission for a lot of the sites that the part 1 Inspector thought were undeliverable and the Tiptree inspector did not take them in to account. It is critical to ensure we have a 5 year supply. Once we get the Inspectors letter if the Garden Communities are turned down Part 2 falls as well and Colchester Borough Council will be without a plan from 2021–2023, for about 18 months until redone.

20/080 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 30 JANUARY 2020 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Akker that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 30 January 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

Item 20/021: CCTV camera will not be installed overlooking West Mersea Park as Proud of Mersea were unable to obtain permission from Essex County Council Highways.

Item 20/026: No update regarding local traffic orders.

20/081 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF 18 FEBRUARY 2020 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Banks that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 18 February 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising: There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

20/082 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 20 FEBRUARY 2020 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Jenkins that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 20 February 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

Item 20/045: Village Green signage on hold as non-essential during this time.

20/083 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF 6 MARCH 2020 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Jenkins that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 6 March 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

Item 20/055: Devolution budget will be carried forward to 2020/21. Councillor Powling to complete forms. Essex County Council are extending the pilot scheme.

20/084 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 12 MARCH 2020 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Weaver that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 12 March 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising: There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

20/085 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF 20 MARCH 2020 – MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Baker, SECONDED by Councillor Weaver that the MINUTES of the Meeting held on 20 March 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising: There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

20/086 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

(a) 20 0728

Change of use from car sales (Sui Generis) to Charity Shop (A1 retail) with ancillary café and parking.
47 Kingsland Road, West Mersea – Mr Kevin McGill

Consideration was given to a proposal by Councillor Akker to reject the application. After discussion, Councillor Akker was authorised to contact the planning officer to discuss the Borough's planning policies and provide further information to Councillors before a response was agreed.

The decision can be seen in the reports.

(b) 20 0736

Proposed renovation of existing property including partial removal of roof, new second storey extension to side and balcony to front.
7 Victoria Esplanade, West Mersea – Mr Taylor

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

(c) 20 0719

Single storey rear extension and loft conversion (amended drawings).
10 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea – Mr P Reed

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

(d) 20 0757

External staircase to first floor flat to allow internal renovation works.
14 Church Road, West Mersea – Cook

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

(e) 20 0756

Amendment to extension application approved under 18 1692 to allow the demolition and rebuilding of existing bungalow with amended roof.

Tides Reach, 92 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea – Mr J Harrison

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

20/087 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

(a) 20 0402

Side extension to replace existing garage structure. Internal alterations and renovation. External renovation including new weather boarding, render and windows.

1 Estuary Park Road, West Mersea – Mr R Fletcher

(b) 20 0138

New detached garage to the front of the existing house.

79 Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Mrs M Filtness

(c) 20 0248

Proposed single and two storey side extensions.

91 East Road, West Mersea – Mr Halls

(d) 20 0198

Single storey side extension.

67 High Street, West Mersea – Mr P Rudlin

(e) 20 0474

Single storey extension. Removal of chimney. New side facing windows. Addition of Velux roof window to rear face of existing roof.

9 Brierley Avenue, West Mersea – Mr L Sainsbury

(f) 20 0206

Demolition of existing single storey dwelling. Construction of new two storey detached dwelling for private and domestic use. Construction of paved drive, footpaths etc.

90 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea – Mr R Pickles

20/088 TO DISCUSS THE DAWES LANE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS PROPOSALS AND AGREE A RESPONSE

Following discussions in which some of the Council objected to the requests for S106 projects as the application has not been approved, it was agreed that a request would be made to Colchester Borough Council to have a meeting in two weeks time with Colchester Borough Council Planning Officers. Stephen Collis explained this is the usual process to get information to be submitted to the development team at this stage but he would support a request to defer it.

Councillor Banks confirmed there had been a number of meetings with the developers over the last 3 years. There was always a 3rd party in the meeting as well as the Council. This is a standard practice the Councils follow.

The Clerk will arrange a meeting with Colchester Borough Council planners for two weeks time.

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

20/089 TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF JAN STOBART AS THE INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2020/21 COSTING UP TO £400

Following discussion, the appointment of the Internal Auditor was confirmed.

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

20/090 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE WHETHER ALL OR SOME OF THE PUBLIC TOILETS SHOULD REMAIN CLOSED

Following discussion it was agreed that the public toilets will remain closed for the foreseeable future.

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

20/091 TO HAVE A GENERAL DISCUSSION ABOUT RECENT ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR INCIDENTS IN WEST MERSEA

Concerns have been raised about the graffiti in FP 20 and that it should be drawn to the attention of the Council. Other incidents include the beach huts fires and drug use. Graffiti can be cleaned by the Colchester Borough Council Zone team through an agreement we have with them. As the graffiti isn't offensive and has been there some time, it may take time to clean up or will be referred to Essex County Council.

The Clerk reported from the Neighbourhood Watch that antisocial behaviour and drug use was down and there hadn't been any gatherings in the band stand. Some untaxed vehicles driven by known drug users have been reported but not yet apprehended. This appears to have been supported by the figures supplied by the Police. Councillor Jenkins also stated the Peter Rudlin and the Neighbourhood Watch team do a great job.

20/092 MAYOR 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

20/093 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE

- i) A new contractor for the grass cutting
- ii) Employing a new Groundsperson

Following discussion it was agreed to contract Skippers Ground Maintenance for a period of 1 year with a 3 month trial basis to carry out the grass cutting and strimming.

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

Following discussion it was agreed to appoint a new full time groundsman as soon as the lockdown is lifted.

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

Grateful thanks was also given to our groundsman for carrying on working and keeping everything ticking over as well as he has.

20/094 TO DISCUSS THE PROGRESS ON THE MISA LEASE AND AGREE THE NEXT STEPS

As Chairman of the Sport & Recreation Committee, Councillor Wood, along with Councillor Jenkins will write to MISA ahead of a meeting proposed in May with an alternative proposal for the lease.

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

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 1.05pm.