

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 16 JULY 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
John Jowers
Patricia Moore

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

20/150 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

20/151 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Akker declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 20/153, 20/163 and 20/164 as a member of Stop 350 and Mersea Island Society.

Councillors Baker and Wood declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 20/153, 20/163 and 20/164 as a member of Stop 350.

20/152 PUBLIC SESSION

1 member of the public in attendance.

Concern was raised about the response by Colchester Borough Council to the Bradwell application.

Borough Councillor Robert Davidson

The Dawes Lane screening will need to be improved and the Council must ensure that the S106 money goes towards community buildings and not just one building. Borough Councillor Jowers will call in the East Road application only if the officers are minded to accept it. Bradwell B was called in at yesterday's meeting and will go to Scrutiny panel on 27 July 2020 at 6pm. The public can have their say.

Borough Councillor John Jowers

At the recent Bradwell meeting the cabinet member was not very accurate with his statements. Borough Councillor Moore made a good response and Borough Councillor Davidson has called it in. It is hoped they will take the original stance and oppose it. Maldon have reversed their decision and it will go to scrutiny committee which is not time limited. The yellow road lining will start tomorrow and consent for red lines is going through. St Peters Road yellow lines will be staggered. The library and Upland Road tip are now open. The bollards at the bottom of The Lane will be replaced.

The application for planning in East Road near The Fox is speculative and will be opposed and not get to committee as the allocation we already have fulfils the emerging Local Plan. Councillor Jowers is confident that Colchester Borough Council will stick to the 200 houses, but any other applications still must be opposed. There is a protocol in planning that the chairman votes with the officer recommendation and 95% of the applications need to be officer determined. Anyone can put in an application for anywhere. For Wellhouse Green the application was for 66 houses, but Colchester Borough Council insisted on 100.

Borough Councillor Patricia Moore

At the Local Plan meeting it was agreed to go with the Inspectors recommendation that two garden communities will not happen and they will progress the one east of Colchester with Tendring. There have been some issues with a tree in Empress Avenue which might be cut down. A TPO application will be made for it. The offer to pay for the Village Green sign still stands.

20/153 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

No planning applications received.

20/154 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

(a) 20 0529

Single storey side extension to main house, single storey extension to detached garage including extending the driveway, alteration to form pitch roof over single storey section of the main house and provide new fence to front and side boundary of the property.

Whitegates, Bower Hall Lane, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Holford

(b) 20 0736

Proposed renovation of existing property including particle removal of roof, new second storey extension to side and balcony to front. Amended plans received.

7 Victoria Esplanade, West Mersea – Nr Taylor

(c) 20 0973

Erection of time pre-fabricated single storey granny annexe for ancillary use to the main dwelling.

63 Queen Anne Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Ward

WMTC Recommendation: Following discussion it was agreed to recommend consent be granted in respect of this application. We note there is no disabled access for future use.

20/155 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 14 MAY 2020 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Akker, SECONDED by Councillor Wood that the MINUTES of the meeting held on 14 May 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

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

20/156 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 4 JUNE 2020 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wargent, SECONDED by Councillor Wood that the MINUTES of the meeting held on 4 June 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Councillor Powling abstained from confirming these minutes as he was not present.

Matters arising:

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

20/157 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 25 JUNE 2020 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Bragg that the MINUTES of the meeting held on 25 June 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

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

20/158 TO NOTE THE CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION

Please see the report attached.

The Internal Audit is completed and the Council were commended for the well organised presentation of the information.

20/159 TO CONSIDER THE FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Council discussed and reviewed the findings of the Annual Governance Statement.

The Clerk commented that the RFO had a good system in place and that regular reports were being run.

20/160 TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Following discussion the Council approved the Annual Governance Statement noting that all statements were ticked with a Yes to confirm the correct procedures had been followed.

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

20/161 TO CONSIDER, APPROVE AND SIGN THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

Following discussion the Council agreed to approve and sign the accounting statements.

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

20/162 TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL PROMOTING THE COVID SYMPTOM STUDY APP

Councillor Banks gave a demonstration of the symptom study app and following discussion the Council agree to promote the study.

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

20/163 TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM A RECENT MEETING BETWEEN RESIDENTS OF SEAVIEW AVENUE AND CITY & COUNTRY AND DISCUSS ANY FURTHER ACTIONS

Residents in Seaview Avenue and Farthings Chase are concerned about the impact of the development in terms of the proximity to their properties, lack of screening, and the overall design. Residents have met the planner and discussions have also taken place with the developer. As a result one of the housing blocks has been realigned but it has not resolved most of the issues. The application will be going to the planning committee on 30 July 2020 and residents have a very strong feeling are that West Mersea Town Council as a Council has not been concerned with the issues and wanted the Council to note their dissatisfaction. Overall there was concerns that the development was concentrated in one area of the site, there were security issues, that screening and fencing had not been resolved and were concerned if the other buildings planned did not get built. There has been little change between the 1st and 2nd set of plans.

Following discussion it was agreed that Councillors Akker and Jenkins would prepare a statement on behalf on the Council to submit to Colchester Borough Council.

20/164 TO DISCUSS THE COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE'S REALLOCATION OF S106 FUNDS IN RELATION TO DAWES LANE DEVELOPMENT AND HOW PLANNING WERE INFORMED THAT THIS WAS THE PREFERENCE OF WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

Councillor Davidson said he felt that he may have been responsible for the fund being allocated from the MICA to the Glebe as he felt it should be for any community buildings. It was misinterpreted that James Ryan said it was the view of West Mersea Town Council and not Borough Councillor Davidson.

20/165 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE WHETHER OR NOT TO HOLD THE ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF A MAYOR IN THE AUTUMN

Following discussion it was agreed not to hold the Annual Meeting this year. The next Annual Meeting will be in May 2021.

Proposed: Councillor Bragg, Seconded: Councillor Banks.

Councillors Jenkins, Wargent and Weaver in favour. Councillors Akker, Baker and Wood against.

20/166 TO CONSIDER FURTHER RESEARCH REGARDING ECONOMIC HARDSHIP WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Councillor Akker advised that he had spoken to Mersea Island School and Porch Pantry organisers. The Porch Pantry is well supported by the community and local shops and further details are awaited. The school head suggested that it might be more appropriate for Essex County Council to support them with uniform and IT funds. More information is awaited on this.

20/167 MAYOR'S NOTES

Councillor Powling confirmed the Helpline would end on 31 July 2020. The meals and prescription service would also finish but local community groups were stepping up to help in some areas. Thanks were given to Essex County Council and Essex Outdoors Mersea and all the volunteers. Through this arrangement new friendships have been forged and Mersea has shown a great resilience.

The Council have been given a grant for £30,000 from Colchester Borough Council for the Coast Road toilets refurbishment and thanks were given to Councillor Jenkins for his work with the contractors and tenders.

The yellow road lines have been approved and will start on 17 July 2020 – apart from The Lane and St Peters Road. The red lines are in the process of being approved.

The Council and staff were thanked for their continued hard work.

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 9.25pm.