

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 7 JANUARY 2021

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 Councillor: Robert Davidson
John Jowers

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

21/001 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Borough Councillor Patricia Moore.

21/002 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Akker declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 21/005, 21/009, 21/010 and 21/011 as a member of Stop 350 and Mersea Island Society.

Councillors Baker and Wood declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 21/005, 21/010 and 21/011 as members of Stop 350.

21/003 PUBLIC SESSION

4 members of the public in attendance.

Rugby club floodlights – a member of the public asked some questions about the installation of the lights.

Breakwaters – a request was made for Colchester Borough Council to make a formal complaint about the condition of the breakwaters.

Coopers Beach Caravan Park – the Council was asked if anything is being done about the permanent residents at this site.

21/004 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Borough Councillor John Jowers

St Helena Hospice in Turner Road will be an inoculation centre for COVID-19 injections. Colchester has the lowest infection rate in Essex at 754 cases per 100,000.

5,000 computers have been sent to schools to give to pupils for home schooling.

There is an assisted living fund for which the Council can make suggestions for grants.

There has been a request for the May elections to be postponed until September 2021.

Borough Councillor Jowers will speak to the planners about the Rugby club lights back lighting and seasonal light management.

There was a shoreline management plan for the breakwaters. Some of the coastline is being allowed to naturally reclaim the land. Borough Councillor Jowers will ask about the dangerous bolts sticking out.

The Strood railings need repairing again and Essex County Council are going to see if insurance companies will pay out where vehicles have damaged the railings.

£1,000 has been pledged to the Community Association for wheelchair storage.

£2,000 has been pledged to Freedom Boats.

£4.6 billion lockdown grant in which Colchester Borough Council are participating.

£9,000 business grants from Colchester Borough Council are available.

There is a meeting on 1 February 2021 which will be about 96% in favour of Part 1 of the Local Plan being agreed. The allocation of 350 houses down to 200 is the only allocation that has been reduced and has been promised by senior planners.

There are concerns about COVID-19 injections not being carried out on the island. They might bring pharmacies in to help.

Borough Councillor Robert Davidson

Confirmed that Part 1 of the Local Plan will be supported as it limits the building to 912 houses per year for the next 15 years. Other windfall sites such as The Ranges are available which will cover any shortfalls.

The COVID injections are being managed by the NHS and NHS Trust and there is no Council involvement.

The COVID rate is the lowest in the area but it has doubled in the last week.

Colchester Borough Council rubbish collections are being impacted as some staff are ill, isolating or deployed to other services.

The licencing department and committee are looking at Coopers Beach and they have been shown evidence from some pictures from East Mersea Parish Council. During lockdown it is unlikely anyone would be moved on.

Business grants are based on business rates valuation and some business' will be eligible for a rebate.

21/005 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Following discussion, it was proposed to set up a working group for major developments so that applications can be considered in detail and proposal brought to the Full Council for consideration. The working group will be Councillors Akker, Banks, Weaver and Wood.

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

(a) 20 2492

Application for variation of condition 2 of planning permission 20 0960. Revisions to layout design and appearance of a selection of the proposed house types.

Land at Brierley Paddocks, West Mersea – Mr D Poole

Deferred, working group to consider.

(b) 20 2682

Extension and alterations to existing dwelling, including the erection of a detached garage. Reconfiguration of proposed access to neighbouring site as an alternative to that approved as part of application 19 2136 and 20 0960.

43 Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Agent, D Poole

Deferred, working group to consider.

(c) 20 2196

Ground and first floor side and rear extension and internal alterations.
20 Victory Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Daniels

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal in respect of this application on the grounds of overdevelopment.

(d) 20 2751

Resubmission for amendment to previous application 20 2200 to amend opening hours.
27 Chatsworth Road, West Mersea – Ms H Cornish

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

(e) 20 2731

Construction of an extension to the existing clubhouse, a children's play area and associated facilities.
Resubmission of scheme as approved by 20 1005 to incorporate minor changes to the roof form and external envelope.
West Mersea Holiday Park, Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Park Holidays UK Ltd

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

(f) 20 2765

Reserved matters. Application to vary condition 3 following grant of planning permission 14 4585. The caravans/chalets shall be occupied for holiday purposes only and shall only be occupied between 1 March to 31 January the following year and between 1 February and the end of February 2021 and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence.
West Mersea Holiday Park, Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Park Holidays UK Ltd

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal in respect of this reserved matters application.

(g) 20 2766

Removal/variation of a condition. Application to vary condition 3 following grant of planning permission 14 4591. The caravans/chalets shall be occupied for holiday purposes only and shall only be occupied between 1 March to 31 January the following year and between 1 February and the end of February 2021 and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence.
West Mersea Holiday Park, Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Park Holidays UK Ltd

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal in respect of this application.

(h) 20 2767

Removal/variation of a condition. Application to vary condition 2 following grant of planning permission 13 0327 to allow the touring caravans and tents to be stationed from the 15 March in any one year until the 14 January the following year and 15 January 2021 to 14 March 2021 unless otherwise subsequently agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. All other conditions on application COL/99/85 remain in force and are not affected by this consent.
West Mersea Holiday Park, Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Park Holidays UK Ltd

Following discussion it was agreed to recommend refusal in respect of this application.

(i) 20 2736

Proposed swimming pool outbuilding.
5 East Road, West Mersea – Mr J Revell

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

(j) 20 2787

Proposed single storey rear/side extension and timber pergola.
62 High Street, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Mason

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

21/006 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

(a) 20 2092

Various extensions and alterations, including the provision of first floor habitable accommodation (amended description).

34 Strood Close, West Mersea – Mr N Purdie

(b) 20 1846

Single storey rear extension.

43 Mersea Avenue, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs M Banks

(c) 20 2067

Extension to entertainments complex arcade area to provide additional 210m² of space, including new takeaway kitchen.

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

(d) 20 2290

Proposed first floor extension.

17 Melrose Road, West Mersea – Chatterton

(e) 20 2343

Single storey side extension.

33 Churchfields, West Mersea – Mr S Springett

(f) 20 2200

Single storey side extension for use as a treatment room.

27 Chatsworth Road, West Mersea – Ms H Cornish

(g) 20 2486

Removal of conservatory and single storey lean-to with the erection of single storey flat roof rear extension.

88 Oakwood Avenue, West Mersea – Mr R Crane

Appeal decision

(a) 20 1193

Proposed extension and alterations. Changes to approved scheme reference 19 1659

Kansu, 53 Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs S Ramsay

21/007 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 19 NOVEMBER 2020 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Weaver that the MINUTES of the meeting held on 19 November 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

Councillor Akker asked for an update on the Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Banks confirmed the consultation is closed and there was a good response of 35 from the public which were all on line and also a dozen from the statutory consultees. There was also one comment from the developer City & Country geared towards the Frontier Trust.

Councillor Jenkins asked if E-Scooters were road legal. Councillor Powling confirmed they were not but can be used as part of Colchester Borough Council scheme that is being introduced.

Councillor Jenkins asked if the office roof has been renewed yet and the Clerk confirmed that agreement to the cost of the loft insulation is awaited.

21/008 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 10 DECEMBER 2020 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Baker that the MINUTES of the meeting held on 10 December 2020, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

Councillor Jenkins advised a primer coat has been put on the Rugby container.

Colchester Borough Council gave the wrong Band D rate which means the precept figure will now be £320,581.

21/009 TO CONSIDER FURTHER ACTION AND REPRESENTATIONS TO COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE DISREPAIR OF BREAKWATERS AND EROSION ON VICTORIA ESPLANADE BEACH

The material for the repairs have been ordered by Colchester Borough Council but are delayed. £1,700 has been allocated by Colchester Borough Council for labour and repairs. Also some work is needed in the hammerhead area in Coast Road. Colchester Borough Council have advised that a contractor has checked the breakwaters recently. A Waterside meeting will be arranged and it will be discussed who will chair the meeting as this is currently chaired by Colchester Borough Council.

21/010 TO DISCUSS A RESPONSE TO COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING IN RESPECT OF FURTHER EXTENSIONS FOR EAST ROAD PLANNING APPLICATION

Following discussion, Councillor Wood proposed that as three extensions have already allowed on this application that West Mersea Town Council recommend to the planner that the application is determined and no further extensions beyond March 2021 are allowed.

Proposed: Councillor Wood, Seconded: Councillor Weaver. Councillor Banks against.

21/011 TO DISCUSS THE WALDEGRAVES HOLIDAY PARK PLANNING APPLICATION (20 1048) AND CONSIDER WHETHER THERE ARE FURTHER ADDITIONS TO THE OBJECTION BY THE COUNCIL

Following discussion it was agreed that Councillor Akker would formulate a modified objection for approval by the Council, to send to the Local Planning Inspector.

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

21/012 TO CONSIDER THE IMPACT OF RECENT GUIDANCE ISSUED BY HM GOVT IN RESPECT OF HOLIDAY CARAVAN PARKS AND WINTER OPENING AND TO CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS

Councillor Akker advised that although it seemed the Government put policies in place, during the pandemic, the policies appear to have been waived without thought to the impact of the local communities and services. For example, where owners can travel from high risk areas in to the community and use the caravan as their main residence.

The caravans are being used as second homes so other members of the family can use the main home. Councillor Akker recommended a watching brief on the situation and that we should work closely with our colleagues in Colchester Borough Council, East Mersea Parish Council and Borough Councillor Patricia Moore.

21/013 TO DISCUSS INSTALLATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT OF PROPOSED MERSEA ISLAND RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB FLOODLIGHTS FOLLOWING COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING DECISION (20 1531)

The Clerk advised that a RAMS report and programme and description of works, cable route and proof of insurance from the lighting company had been received. Also that the installation will be delayed until at last April 2021.

Councillor Wood stated that the background lighting plan appears to be a change from the consent and may have an impact on residents. Councillor Wood proposed that he defers to MIRFC for further details in time for the next council meeting at the end of January 2021.

21/014 TO DISCUSS THE BRADWELL B TEAM'S RECENT INTERACTION WITH WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL AND DECIDE FUTURE POLICY

Councillor Powling suggested that the Bradwell committee meet to agree a policy to put to the Council. Councillor Banks mentioned the poor interaction from BRB at the meeting BRB requested was mainly a show of slides from the Stage One consultation that the Council had already responded to in depth. Should the Council see if people felt that we should be more proactive in asking them to change the way they interact with us or leave it to their community forum? Councillor Wood said we need to decide the policy and help make the community aware of the impact of Bradwell in term of size, impact on the community, tourism and fishing and that the artists views are misleading and is engaging with them giving it credibility? The Council should be challenging this and Maldon support to the project. Councillor Akker said we should promote local interest in what is happening to make them aware of the impact of the construction side of the project as well as the nuclear element. The Bradwell Committee will meet on 12 January 2021 and report back to the next full Council meeting.

21/015 MAYOR'S NOTES

Councillor Powling wished everyone a happy and safe New Year and gave thanks to all the Colchester Borough Council operatives and carers in the community and all the amazing volunteers.

Mersea Outdoors is shut for January so will not be doing the meals service but Kim Proctor has agreed to take it over for January.

The Lions delivered 78 meals on Christmas Day free of charge which was a great effort from the Lions, the Community and Kim Proctor.

The pharmacies will let the First Responders know if they cannot cope with the prescription deliveries. The Helpline is running and there may be a call for further volunteers for shopping and support.

There is COVID-19 on the island and the Police are taking it very seriously with stop and check and making sure people are out on essential journeys only. There has also been contact with the school to discuss help for the families facing hardship.

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