

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 4 MAY 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
Patricia Moore

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

21/086 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR, AND MAYOR TO MAKE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE

Councillor Carl Powling was elected Town Mayor for the ensuing year.
Proposed: Councillor David Bragg, Seconded: Councillor Sylvia Wargent.
Councillor Powling signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

21/087 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR, AND DEPUTY MAYOR TO MAKE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE

Councillor Robert Jenkins was elected Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year.
Proposed: Councillor Chris Wood, Seconded: Councillor John Akker.
Councillor Jenkins signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

21/088 VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING MAYOR

This item was not required.

21/089 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Borough Councillor John Jowers.

21/090 TO RECORD DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

21/091 PUBLIC SESSION

2 members of the public.

A member of the public raised concern at the recent NHS decision that a new Doctors surgery is not needed, with a request that West Mersea Town Council respond to the proposal.

There was a suggestion that Mersea considers applying to become a Harbour Authority, which would take an Act of Parliament, felt that this is required to due to the number of visitors to the waterfront, need to control swimming, crabbers, jet skis etc. They have asked Mersea Haven to approach West Mersea Town Council.

A Water Bailiff was suggested, employed with collaboration with the sailing clubs.

21/092 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Borough Councillor Patricia Moore

NHS Digital Surgery is a North East Essex NHS incentive and Colchester Borough Council has not had any input. All Caravan parks/sites have agreed to take part in the Caravan Forum. A meeting venue needs to be organised, there is not any funding to hire a venue and it is hoped that Mersea Outdoors as a neutral place to meet will be agreeable. Where meeting venue needs to be hired, then contributions will be requested from West Mersea Town Council and East Mersea Parish Council.

Colchester Borough Council after announcing a climate emergency has purchased new diesel bin lorries as they are cheaper.

In response to a question by Councillor John Akker regarding Essex County Council Highways presentation to the Planning Inspector regarding Middlewick development Councillor Pat Moore stated that she is against the development, but roads are not a Borough issue. Essex County Council Highways have previously agreed to consider the effects on roads in the larger area and not just at the entrance/exit. This has not happened so will ensure that issues of single road on and off the Island are taken into account.

Borough Councillor Robert Davidson

Congratulations to David Cooper for his representations to the Planning Inspector, Mersea Island was well represented and made a strong case, with the Inspector agreeing that Mersea is a special place.

Councillor Robert Davidson advised that unless representations were made in 2017 then you could not be present at the Planning Hearing. Regarding Middlewick development, Colchester Borough Council does not need an extra 1000 houses and all political groups have stated that the area should be a Country Park or Nature Reserve, or possible a Park and Ride. Essex County Council Highways dismissed the development of a 1000+ houses out of hand, however Colchester Borough Council are still on the case and will try to minimise any impact.

21/093 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 1 APRIL 2021 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Wood, SECONDED by Councillor Bragg that the MINUTES of the meeting held on 1 April 2021, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

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

21/094 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 22 APRIL 2021 - MATTERS ARISING

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Weaver, SECONDED by Councillor Wood that the MINUTES of the meeting held on 22 April 2021, be CONFIRMED. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Matters arising:

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

21/095 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

(a) 21 0958

Remodelling of existing roof and replacement window.
24 St Peters Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Lord

No comment.

(b) 21 1021

Proposed part two-storey, part single storey rear extension.
36 Victory Road, West Mersea – Mr C Mills

No comment.

(c) 21 1024

Replacement of 1.8m (6ft) high timber close boarded fencing panels with 2.4m (8ft) high timber close boarded fencing panels to northern part of east boundary (22.3m in length). To give privacy to neighbouring property.
Dunoon, 3 Cross Way, West Mersea – Mr S Bloyce

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

(d) 21 1045

Remove existing external timber staircase and replace with metal for fire protection.
15 Wellhouse Avenue, West Mersea – Mr G Pamment

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

(e) 21 1046

Remove existing external timber staircase and replace with metal for fire protection.
19 Wellhouse Avenue, West Mersea – Mr G Pamment

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

(f) 21 1047

Remove existing external timber staircase and balcony, replace with metal for fire protection.
27 Wellhouse Avenue, West Mersea – Mr G Pamment

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

(g) 21 1048

Remove existing external timber staircase and balcony, replace with metal for fire protection.
24 Saltings Crescent, West Mersea – Mr G Pamment

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

(h) 21 1049

Remove existing external timber staircase and balcony, replace with metal for fire protection.
30 Saltings Crescent, West Mersea – Mr G Pamment

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

(i) 21 1050

Remove existing external timber staircase and balcony, replace with metal for fire protection.
40 Saltings Crescent, West Mersea – Mr G Pamment

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

(j) 21 1051

Remove existing external timber staircase and balcony, replace with metal for fire protection.
46 Saltings Crescent, West Mersea – Mr G Pamment

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

(k) 21 1094

Removal of three dilapidated 5ft x 7ft garden sheds and construction of a single new garden shed (approx. 16.5ft x 10ft) further from the listed building.
Gossip Cottage, 49 The Lane, West Mersea – Mr S Hurley

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

(l) 21 1095

Listed building - Removal of three dilapidated 5ft x 7ft garden sheds and construction of a single new garden shed (approx. 16.5ft x 10ft) further from the listed building.
Gossip Cottage, 49 The Lane, West Mersea – Mr S Hurley

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

(m) 21 1146

Retrospective planning permission for a fence over 1m on the southern boundary of 1 Kingsland Beach, which is adjacent to the public highway. This section is approx. 6m long. This is to provide security and privacy to garden which sits adjacent to public parking and public access to the beach.
1 Kingsland Beach, West Mersea – Mrs C James

No comment.

(n) 21 1166

Single storey front, side and rear extension.
4 Westwood Drive, West Mersea – Mr A Head

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

21/096 NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

Applications passed

(a) 21 0472

To carry out alterations to existing bungalow by raising the roof line and extending the habitable accommodation into the roof space. No increase in footprint of dwelling. Formation of free-standing timber balcony to rear elevation and lean to porch to front elevation.
Dunoon, 3 Cross Way, West Mersea – Mr S Bloyce

(b) 19 2269

Free-standing advance sign for the Glebe Recreation Ground.
Glebe Recreation Ground, Colchester Road, West Mersea – Mrs P Palfreyman

(c) 21 0484

Existing garage is proposed to be refurbished and converted into an ancillary accommodation (annex) to main dwelling.

Highview, 70 Colchester Road, West Mersea – Mr R Swinton

(d) 21 0625

Demolition of existing porch and conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension, first floor side extension and addition of pitched roof to garage and open porch area.

15 St Peters Road, West Mersea – Mr Dawson

Applications refused

(a) 20 0993

Two storey extension on the side of the property. See full description on application form.

12 Upland Crescent, West Mersea – Mr J Kingston

WMTC Recommendation:

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

(b) 21 0583

Permission in Principle for 2 to 3 dwellings. Revised location plan.

Land to the West of Bower Hall Lane, Ashlyn, 11 East Mersea Road, West Mersea – Mr C Sestak

(c) 20 1467

Outline application. Residential development of 56 dwellings including landscaping and access from East Road following demolition of existing dwelling. Revised planning statement and appendices.

Land at, 102 East Road, West Mersea – Mr P Johnson (agent)

21/097 TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER ANY AMENDMENTS NEEDED TO WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

- Complaints Procedure
- Customer Service Standard
- Fixed Asset Register document and list
- Freedom of Information

Following discussion it was agreed to confirm the policies for the coming year subject to the following amendments;

- An amendment will be made to the Freedom of Information Policy to confirm that West Mersea Town Council will respond not later than 20 working days of the request being made.
- To update the Fixed Assets Register to record the recovered Brushcutter.

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

21/098 TO REVIEW THE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Following discussion to reduce the number of committees and increase the number of working parties Councillor Jenkins proposed that decision on item 21/098 Review of committee terms of reference and item 21/099 to agree committee membership and appoint committee chairmen to be kept as they are and review at a later date.

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

21/099 TO AGREE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINT COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

Assets, Facilities & Environment Committee – Councillor Jenkins (Chairman), Councillors Akker, Baker, Banks, Bragg, Powling, Wargent and Weaver.

Bradwell Monitoring Committee – Councillor Banks (Chairman), Councillors Akker, Baker, Bragg, Wargent and Weaver.

Cemetery Committee – Councillor Jenkins (Chairman), Councillors Baker, Bragg, Powling, Wargent and Weaver.

Devolution Committee – Councillor Powling (Chairman), Councillors Akker, Baker, Bragg, Jenkins and Weaver.

Finance Committee – Councillor Powling (Chairman), Councillors Baker, Banks, Bragg, Jenkins and Wood.

Personnel Committee – Councillor Powling (Chairman), Councillors Akker, Baker, Bragg, Jenkins and Wood.

Sports & Recreation Committee – Councillor Wood (Chairman), Councillors Akker, Baker, Bragg, Jenkins, Powling and Weaver.

Transport Committee (joint with CBC) – Councillor Powling (Chairman), Councillors Akker, Baker, Banks, Bragg and Jenkins.

Waterside Forum (joint with CBC) – All Councillors.

Detailed in item 21/098 above.

21/100 TO AGREE WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES AND CHAIRMEN:

CALC representative – Councillor Akker.

Health & Safety representative –

ENORI – Councillor Banks (Chairman), Councillors Wargent and Weaver.

Loft reorganisation – Councillor Wargent (Chairman), all Councillors and David Cooper (Mersea Museum).

Old City Floodgate Group – Councillors Akker, Banks and Powling.

Planning applications – Councillors Akker, Banks, Weaver and Wood.

Public relations – Councillor Wood (Chairman), Councillors Akker and Weaver.

Red lines –

It was proposed to continue membership of the above until review of Committees.

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

21/101 TO RESOLVE TO ADOPT THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE UNTIL THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING, AS DEFINED IN THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 AND SI 965 THE PARISH COUNCILS (GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE) (PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS) ORDER 2012, HAVING MET ALL THE CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY, BEING;

- at least two thirds of the council must hold office as a result of being declared elected (i.e., not co-opted).
- the Clerk must hold a recognised professional qualification (e.g. Certificate in Local Council Administration, Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy) and have passed the 2012 CiLCA module relating to the general power of competence.

Following discussion it was resolved to adopt the General Power of Competence until the next relevant Annual Council Meeting.

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

21/102 TO NOTE THE FOLLOWING CONTRACTS:

- West Mersea Town Council bin collection contract from Colchester Borough Council
- Danfo toilet cleaning and maintenance

The Clerk reported that 35 West Mersea Council bins were emptied at a cost of £6961 this year, with the frequency of collections increasing.

Danfo toilet cleaning contract £30,000 renewed in September 2020, with increased service of midday and peak time cleans.

Councillor Powling thanked Councillor Jenkins and Town Clerk Petra for all their work in this area.

21/103 TO APPROVE THE REAPPOINTMENT OF JAN STOBART AS THE INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2020/21 COSTING UP TO £450

It was agreed to reappointment Jan Stobart as the independent Internal Auditor for 2021/21 costing up to £450.

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

21/104 TO REVIEW THE BATHING RAFTS AND CONSIDER HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND NEXT ACTIONS AND TO CONSIDER THE DONATION OF A NEW BATHING RAFT

The Council currently has six bathing rafts, which during the summer months are attached to concrete anchors and chains. Following review several of the concrete anchors have become exposed and are sitting proud of the mud. A digger and driver will be needed to re bury the anchors and permission needs to be sought from the MMO, with permission initially being sought from Natural England and included with the application to the MMO. The rafts once in situ will require regular Risk Assessments by the Grounds staff when the tide is out.

The Council has also been offered a new raft by a member of the public.

It was proposed by Councillor Powling that spend up to £500 to rebury two concrete anchors and put six bathing rafts out, subject to survey and approval by Natural England and MMO, to put the donated raft out and keep one of the existing rafts as a spare for replacement.

Proposed: Councillor Powling, Seconded: Councillor Wood. Councillor Bragg abstained.

21/105 MAYOR'S NOTES

Councillor Powling voiced appreciation for being elected as Chairman for another year and thanked all for their support over the last year.

There is a meeting next week, Tuesday at 5.30pm of the PPG which Councillor Powling will attend.

A letter will be sent to Jane Taylor, NEECCG to set a meeting with the Council.

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 8.35pm.