

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2021

PRESENT: Councillors: Carl Powling (Mayor)
John Akker
Julie Baker
David Bragg
Samuel Jarvis
Robert Jenkins (Deputy Mayor)
Sophie Weaver
Chris Wood

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: Vanessa Allen

Borough Councillors Patricia Moore
John Jowers

4 members of the public

21/269 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sylvia Wargent and Borough Councillor Robert Davidson. No vote was taken.

21/270 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** To receive declarations of personal, prejudicial and pecuniary interests from members relevant to items under discussion at the meeting

Councillor Akker declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda items 21/274 and 21/279 due to membership of Stop 350 and Mersea Island Society.

Councillor Powling declared an interest in planning application 21 2894 for discussion under item 21/274 and advised that it is his application he would be leaving the meeting for this item.

Councillor Jenkins declared a family interest in planning application 21 3096 for discussion under item 21/274.

Councillor Baker declared an interest as a member of Stop 350.

21/271 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** A period of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments

A member of the public spoke to state that the Dabchicks have stated that the Village Green does not extend onto the concrete apron and that flood barrier works fencing blocked access, with two residents only being able to use and all other residents having to walk over the barrier.

They stated that it is not West Mersea Town Council's role to interpret or draw maps of the Village Green and that the Council have formally been served notice that residents have been denied access across the Village Green. They requested that the sign is put up and to advise the Dabchicks Sailing Club that any queries regarding the map need to be raised with ECC Legal Services.

Councillor Powling responded to advise that residents have full access, the gate is unlocked, that the up and over walkway is for the general public when the seawall is open to use whilst construction is taking place. Once works to the flood barrier are complete the walkway and temporary structure on the Village Green will be removed. A meeting is to be arranged with the Dabchicks Sailing Club Commodore and the Old City Floodgate Group to resolve the Village Green issues.

A member of the public spoke on the flood prevention scheme and the locked gates and signs erected on the Village Green. ECC Legal department has written to advise that the project will be shelved unless resident complaints cease.

A member of the public spoke on the Rugby Club's new application on the planning portal which does not address the breaches to the original application. They questioned the Council's understanding of the application and what the Rugby Club have stated. They enquired whether the sports clubs have been given a deadline to remove advertising boards, as it is a year since this was last raised. The member of the public also thanked Councillor Jenkins for arranging the planting of the trees on the Glebe.

Councillor Wood responded to advise that the Council had met Mersea Island Sports Association, where the Council advised that it did not support the revised application. The advertising signs are addressed under the new lease, this cannot be enforced until the lease is signed.

A member of the public advised that they were commissioned by the Council in 2019 to make a sign for the village green, that they want payment for it and that they want the sign to be put up. Two signs, posts and fixings cost £470. The Council are the Statutory authority of the Village Green, Essex County Council are the register of Village Greens and Colchester Borough Council estates department have a conflict of interest.

Councillor Powling responded stating that West Mersea Town Council did not commission the sign and that Colchester Borough Council has refused permission for the sign.

21/272 COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS. To receive reports from our County and Borough Councillors

Councillor John Jowers

Essex County Council have the definitive map of the Village Green and asked that the disagreement over the Village Green does not affect the Flood Defence Project. Councillor Jowers and Moore can provide for the sign from their allowance.

Councillor Jowers has spoken to the Highways buddy and has put in an urgent request to rebuild the kerbs on the grass verges on Victoria Esplanade and for Lawns Close which has water running off Mill Road. The angled junction with Firs Road and High Street North has been raised with NEPP as it is a boundary road taking circular traffic off the Island.

Councillors Jowers and Moore had a Zoom meeting with Brierley Paddocks developers, who advised that ECC have re done the designs and drawings for the pedestrian crossing. They are upgrading the cut through from the site into Cross Lane so that a pavement is not needed on south side of East Road.

They will block pave and include low level lighting and bollards to the south side of East Road. They have advised their contractors that there is no access to site from Cross Lane. They are also going back to the original scheme with gardens to gardens.

Councillor Jowers is chasing replacement light for Beach Road that has hasn't been working for several years.

The Local Plan is vital for Mersea, Part 2 with inspectors modifications need to be approved and will be put to the Borough Council to vote. If it does not go through it will cost CBC £1.5m and reopens issue of site allocation, witness the appeal for 52 houses in East Road.

Works to Strood railings and pavement are being completed.

Councillor Jowers has allocated £2000 to the Women's Institute and Strood Charity has given £1000 towards the renovations.

Mersea Museum has requested £1000 to put glass over the Bronze Age walkway.

Harbour Protection Project vital to save the harbour is underway. Mark Dixon and Richard Taylor have worked brilliantly for 3-4 years to get this work done.

Councillor Patricia Moore

Councillor Moore gave a report;

- Brierley Paddocks developer has agreed low level lighting for the walkway between development and Seaview Avenue. Would welcome input regarding type of bollards and planting. Developers have assured that the access is for sales and construction and not for traffic.
- Councillor Moore attended the Remembrance Day Parade in Colchester.
- Full Council meeting where Councillors traditionally donate gifts to the food bank.
- CBC is choosing its new Chief Executive and they will be ratified in January.
- CBC is trialling an electric recycling truck.
- A Covid Memorial of blossom circles will be planted in Lower Castle Park.
- 19/12/21 Enchanted Christmas at the Castle, ticketed event.
- Trialling of parking sensor technology in Crouch Street.
- Click and collect recycling roll out, collect from West Mersea Town Council.
- Offer on compost bins at £10.
- Age Concern new initiatives for Alzheimer's sufferers, offering a therapeutic automaton pet.
- Cycle security register at www.imobilize.com
- A12/A120 widening consultation, Hatfield Peverel to Marks Tey, consultation runs until 19/12/21.
- Next caravan forum meeting to be held on 30 November in the Moot Hall, with subsequent meetings to be with local representatives.

21/273 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- I. To confirm Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 1st November 2021
- II. To confirm Minutes of the Council Meeting of 4th November 2021

It was RESOLVED that the MINUTES of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 1st November 2021, be confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

Councillor Jenkins commented that the Council were going to contact CBC lawyer, rather than ECC.

It was RESOLVED that the MINUTES of the Council meeting held on 4th November 2021, be confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

Councillor Jenkins commented that gravel, rather than stone was coming from Harwich.

Councillor Powling left the meeting at 7.55pm and handed the Chair to Councillor Jenkins.

21/274 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS.** To consider Planning Applications received

(a) 21 2894

Proposed storage/distribution unit(s) (B8 use)

Land adjacent to, Telecommunications Station, Rushmere Close, West Mersea – Mr C Powling

Following discussion the Council RESOLVED to submit the following comment ‘The Council wishes to draw attention that it is believed there is a badger set at this property in the vicinity of the proposed units and that it should firstly be considered for investigation.’

Councillor Powling returned to the meeting at 8.05pm, Councillor Jenkins handed back the Chair.

(b) 21 2995

Proposed siting of 1 additional static holiday caravan on the northern element of West Mersea Holiday Park.

West Mersea Holiday Park, Seaview Avenue, West Mersea – Park Holidays (UK) Ltd

Following discussion it was RESOLVED that CONSENT be granted in respect of this application.

(c) 21 3072

Proposed new first floor side facing window.

100 Coast Road, West Mersea – Mr P Plumtree

Following discussion it was RESOLVED that CONSENT be granted in respect of this application.

(d) 21 3096

The demolition and replacement of no. 34 through the erection of a new two storey dwelling.

34 Yorick Road, West Mersea – Mr & Mrs Tridini

Following discussion it was RESOLVED that CONSENT be granted in respect of this application.

21/275 **PLANNING DECISIONS.** To receive notification of Planning Decisions

Applications passed

(a) 21 2489

Proposed garage conversion and first floor extension to form annexe.

106 Oakwood Avenue, West Mersea – Mr G Strange

(b) 21 2782

Agricultural Determination. Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed building for agricultural or forestry use.

Wellhouse Barn, Colchester Road, West Mersea – Mr D & Mrs Sanders-Smith

Application refused

(a) 21 2608

Two existing commercial/storage buildings to be demolished. Erection of new U shaped building incorporating 9 small E(g)/B1 office/workshop units.

Haycocks Farm, Haycocks Lane, West Mersea – Mr S Barker

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

21/276 **APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS.** To approve payments made between 28 October and 17 November 2021, report circulated

It was RESOLVED to approve payments made between 28 October and 17 November.

21/277 **POLICY REVIEWS.** To review policies

- I. Data Breach
- II. Lone Working
- III. Privacy
- IV. Public Relations

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to accept all policies with amendments to the Public Relations policy to reflect that e-newsletters and non-news content will be produced as and when and to remove the statement that press releases will be made within 24 hours of the meeting.

21/278 **CHAMBERS SOUND.** To consider options for improvement of sound in Chambers

Marks Tey Radio have serviced the Hearing Loop and will forward quotations for wireless microphones. Councillors will consider changing the layout of the Chambers.

21/279 **LOCAL PLAN.** To receive a report on the local plan and consider action

Councillor Akker reported that the Council had responded to the Schedule of Proposed Additional Minor Modifications to the Publication Draft Colchester Local Plan: Section Two;

1. Climate Control. AM19 Clause 13.2 Amend sentence first line, add after particularly, "significant and established" sea level rise....

Reason; Data earlier this year about projected rise in sea levels. Confirmed by UN. "Between 2013 and 2021 sea levels have doubled compared with the rise from 1993 to 2002 There have been 4.4mm rises every year in the last eight years due to loss of ice mass from glaciers and ice sheets - and it continues to rise." Source COP26 the World Meteorological Organisation's (WMO).

2. Coastal Protection Belt. AM21 Clause 13.19

Word "irreplaceable" should be retained. It should read "The Coastal Protection Belt has a unique and irreplaceable character, which should be strongly protected and enhanced."

Reason; No reason has been shown for its removal. Main Matter 3 - Environmental Assets Policies (ENV2) in particular 3.61 (April 2021) and related policies. The word "irreplaceable" is an important and key word referred to. It is integral to the policies referred to at the Examination.

21/280 **ESSEX PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION.** To consider membership of Essex Playing Fields Association

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to join Essex Playing Fields Association.

21/281 **SLCC MEMBERSHIP.** To consider membership for the Clerk to the SLCC – Society of Local Council Clerks

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to pay the Clerks membership of the SLCC.

21/282 **NEXT AGENDA.** Items to be added to next agenda

No items were raised.

21/283 MAYOR'S NOTES

- The Mayor thanked Councillor Jowers, Mark Dixon and Richard Taylor for their work on the Recharge Project.
- The Remembrance Day Parade was well attended.
- There is £3500 in the Covid fund, £1500 has been donated to the Lions for the Christmas Lunch which is free of charge for the elderly and vulnerable, with £1000 to be donated to the school to support hampers for those in need.
- Jubilee Working Group has not met. Queen tribute band has been booked and CBC have requested an update to publicise events in the area.

21/284 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC. To RESOLVE that due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the public and press be excluded pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

It was RESOLVED to exclude the press and public due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The public left the meeting at 8.30pm.

21/285 SENSORY GARDEN SEAT. To consider Sensory garden seat quotations

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to accept AFIP Commercial Ltd quotation.

21/286 BATHING RAFT ANCHORS. To consider quotations for Bathing raft concrete sinker anchor removal and replacement with helix anchors

It was RESOLVED to look into the removal of the concrete sinker anchors.

Clerk to obtain revised quotations.

21/287 PAT TESTING. To consider PAT testing quotations

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to accept MEE quotation.

21/288 CHANGING PLACES.

- I. To receive an update
- II. To agree contract terms and conditions and payment schedules
- III. Update on consultation
- IV. Update on Certificate of Lawfulness application
- V. To review proposed Victoria Esplanade Lease
- VI. To consider contracting Solicitors in regard to the lease

Councillor Weaver thanked the Town Clerk and Councillors Powling and Jenkins for their input.

The asbestos survey is being completed next week and will determine whether ground works will start pre or after Christmas. Councillor Weaver has received an image of the unit built in the factory.

CIF Grant awarding panel met in mid November, expecting decision imminently. ECC Shortbreaks Grant Agreement has been signed by Councillor Powling and returned to Essex Legal Services.

- I. **It was RESOLVED to accept the contract terms and conditions and the payment schedules.**
- II. Councillor Powling had signed the order form after re-negotiated payment terms. The contract needs to be signed and returned.
- III. Details of the project were added to the Council website under latest news and an e-newsletter was sent on 17 November. Councillor Weaver has been responding to queries, the project has been well supported.

Draft minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Council

- IV. The Certificate of Lawfulness application has been submitted to CBC planning.
- V.
- VI. The Clerk recommended that the lease be reviewed by Solicitors before signing. **It was RESOLVED for Councillor Jarvis to pass the lease to his company's solicitors to review.**

21/289 **COLLABORATION AGREEMENT.** To consider solicitors to review Collaboration Agreement with ECC and Old City Floodgate Group

The Clerk recommended that the Collaboration Agreement be reviewed by Solicitors. Concerns were raised that the agreement is not clear in its undertakings and does not address deployment. The Clerk to refer the agreement back to ECC to request clarity of undertakings and to ensure that the Council will not be liable financially or for deployment.

21/290 **FORMAL COMPLAINT.** To receive an update of the formal complaint received 12/11/21

The complainant has agreed to suspend their complaint on the grounds that a meeting is arranged with Dabchicks Sailing Club and the Council.

21/291 **HEALTH AND SAFETY.** To agree and appoint Health and Safety Consultants

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to accept Chestnut Associates quotation.

21/292 **LEASE 10 MELROSE ROAD.** To agree and sign lease for Council Offices

Clerk to contact the Asset Manager at Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd regarding the structural repairs.

21/293 **COAST ROAD TOILETS.** To consider quotation for refurbishment of disabled toilet

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to accept DANFO quotation.

There being no other business, the public meeting closed at 9.40pm.