

**WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2023**

PRESENT: Councillors: Carl Powling (Chair)  
Julie Baker  
David Bragg  
Sam Jarvis  
Robert Jenkins  
Sophie Weaver  
Chris Wood

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk  
5 members of the public

23/025 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for absence and a vote of acceptance to be taken

Apologies were received from Councillor Sylvia Wargent who was unable to attend due to ill health, Cllr Akker who was unable to attend as they are away, no vote was taken. Apologies were received from Colchester City Councillors Robert Davidson, John Jowers and Pat Moore as they were attending a meeting in Chelmsford.

23/026 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors will be reminded that they must declare in relation to this agenda any disclosable pecuniary interests which would prevent them from participating in any discussion or participating in any vote upon the item, or any other pecuniary interest, any other registerable interest or non-registerable interest which would prevent them from participating in any discussion or participating in any vote upon the item.

None received.

23/027 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A period of up to 15 minutes (maximum of 3 minutes per person) for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments about items on the agenda and any other matters they wish to bring to the Council's attention.

Members of the public spoke about Village Greens 241 and 185 and bathing rafts.

23/028 **COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS REPORTS**

To receive reports from our County and City Councillors

None present.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

23/029

**CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

To confirm minutes of the Council meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**The Council RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Council meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023.**

Councillor Wood left the meeting.

23/030

**APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS**

To approve payments to be made

**The Council RESOLVED to approve payments.**

23/031

**KING'S CORONATION WORKING GROUP**

- To receive a King's Coronation Working Group recommendations for events
- To consider and agree recommendations and confirm budget for the celebrations

Councillor Wood returned to the meeting.

Councillor Weaver, Chair of the King's Coronation Working Group advised that a Sunday Big Lunch event for Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May is planned to provide entertainment and music on the School (Legion) field and that a grant from the Community Fund can be applied for. The Working Group looking at options for providing a coin for school children. Anticipated spend on events of £7665, grant application for £3500, which would leave a Council spend of £4165. Costs still to be confirmed, with additional costs for bunting and installation.

**The Council RESOLVED to accept the King's Coronation Working Group recommendations of a Big Lunch Event on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May to be held on the School (Legion) field. The Council approved a £9000 budget, which includes a £4000 contingency in case the Community Grant application is unsuccessful.** 1 Councillor abstained from the vote.

23/032

**VILLAGE GREEN 241**

- I. Village Green 185 - To consider request received from resident in their letter of 9<sup>th</sup> January for rewilding of grass bank of St Peters Well Meadow
- II. Village Green 241 – To receive any further update

The Council advised that the grass bank on VG185 is cut to halt the growth and spread of alexanders.

Councillor Jarvis provided an update on VG241 to state that the Council is continuing to engage with Dabchicks Sailing Club and with Essex County Council Legal Services to reach a definitive answer. Dabchicks Sailing Club will continue to treat the concrete apron as though it is village green, although they dispute this.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

23/033      **BOARDWALK**

- To receive an update
- To consider and agree recommendations and confirm budget

The Boardwalk Working Group has not met. Councillor Jarvis advised that a Marine Management Organisation (MMO) Licence has been awarded and permission from Natural England has been received.

Councillor Jarvis advised that there are 3 items remaining on the project, the time frame is very tight.

1. Tender process to be completed,
2. Choose contractor, the design is set, to essentially mirror the bridge,
3. Apply grant funding, application for £45,000, with the Council contributing £5000

The Clerk requested costings of the consultant and MMO licence application fee, a copy of the licence, maintenance details and confirmation of approval to use the boardwalk design in the tender document.

**Following discussion the Council approved to proceed with the project and for a budget of up to £5000 to cover the cost of the consultant.**

23/034      **POLICIES**

To consider and agree Memorial Bench policy

**The Council RESOLVED to adopt the Memorial Bench policy, detailing a donation of £600 per bench.**

23/035      **ALLOTMENTS**

To receive an update on allotment meetings and actions taken

Councillor Wood advised that a meeting with the landlady had taken place to update on progress at the site and it was agreed to enforce plot boundaries. MIALGA have been informed of the plot holders who have items outside their plot boundary and they will be given notice. Awaiting confirmation from MIALGA of plot numbers before we proceed.

23/036      **ASSET DISPOSAL**

To agree sale of white line marking machine

**The Council RESOLVED to agree to the sale of the white line marking machine at a price of £500 including VAT.**

23/037      **CLERKS REPORT**

The Clerk reported that;

- Precept application made of £354,757, which for a Council Tax Band D Property £111.57 represents an increase of 3.92% on 2022/23.
- Rugby club installed meter for Floodlights at Glebe – being sponsored by Positive energy
- Cemeteries been cleared of Christmas wreaths
- Hand dryer installed at Changing Places Toilet
- New phone system and new staff mobile phones
- Sensor lights have been added to rear of Willoughby toilets
- West Mersea Park works to commence 20<sup>th</sup> February (after half term),
- Clerk completed Asset Management training on the finance software,
- Staff attended Pension and Your Retirement information webinar,

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

- Administrative Assistant attended First Aid at Work training,
- Colchester City Council receipt of £7419.26 for quarter 3 car parking
- Churchyard and Church Green, TPO decision received,
- Changing Places grant paperwork to be approved, signed and returned.

The Finance Committee approval received for the following;

- End of Year training on finance system £140
- Christmas Tree lights; library frontage, library tree, Church Green Lime tree £719.72
- Changing Places Toilet signs £56
- Fairhaven Toilets replacement cisterns £2000
- Hedge cutting works Feldy View Cemetery £400
- Hedge cutting works Allotments £400
- Soakaway test hole Firs Road Cemetery £30
- Tree guard for Queens Platinum Oak Tree £500
- Skip Fairhaven toilets ceiling removal £91.67 + plasterboard removal charge [max £60]
- Fire Risk Assessment £300
- School Gardens Seesaw repair £1,252.72

23/038 **MAYORS NOTES**

The Mayor reported that he and the Mayoress attended the Mersea Island Lions Awards Evening.

23/039 **AGENDA ITEMS**

Items for inclusion on the next Council agenda

Extraordinary meeting to approve Sports Club leases statutory notice.

23/040 **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

**The Council RESOLVED to exclude the public.** The public left the meeting at 8.05pm.

23/041 **FENCING**

- I. To consider quotations for fencing to Bike Ramps
- II. To consider quotations for fencing to Seaview car park and Church green
- III. To consider quotations for gates to Reymead Wood and Feldy View Cemetery

ROSPA Play Safety Information Sheet Number 20 on Fencing for Children's Play areas was provided to Councillors.

**The Council RESOLVED to remove the bike ramp fencing for this budget.**

**The Council RESOLVED to accept the BAA Groundcare quotation for fencing to Seaview car park, Church Green and gates for Reymead Wood and Feldy View Cemetery.**

23/042 **VEXATIOUS & PERSISTENT COMPLAINTS**

To consider and agree action under Persistent and Vexatious Complaints policy

**Item deferred to the next Council.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

23/043

**GLEBE PATH**

To consider and agree quotations to path works behind Tennis Pavilion from Glebe 1 to 2.

**The Council RESOLVED to accept the Comtrac Landscapes quotation for path works behind the Tennis Pavilion from Glebe 1 to 2.**

23/044

**ALLOTMENT WORKS**

To consider and agree quotations for works to the eastern boundary of the allotment site

**The Council RESOLVED to accept the Walton Tree Services quotation for allotment works.**

23/045

**COMPACTOR BIN**

To consider and agree purchase of Compactor bin for West Mersea Park

To consider location and agree installation costs

**The Council RESOLVED to accept the British Bin Ltd quotation for a solar compactor bin to be placed next to the recycling bins in West Mersea Park, and for the existing bin to be moved to the second bench in Reymead meadow.**

There being no other business the Mayor closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_