

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2 MARCH 2023

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

Colchester City Councillor: Robert Davidson
County & City Councillor: John Jowers

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk
9 members of the public

23/051 **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 Jarvis has advised he had been delayed and would be late. No vote was taken.

23/052 **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.

23/053 **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 on their concerns regarding the new planning application on Dawes Lane development and the 25 years lease to the Sports Clubs, to endorse the request for the Waterside Committee to meet, Village Green 185 and bathing rafts.

Councillor Sam Jarvis and City Councillor Robert Davidson arrived.

Signature _____

Date _____

23/054

COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS REPORTS

To receive reports from our County and City Councillors

Councillor John Jowers reported that the changes at the tip have been flagged as overkill as commercial vehicles aren't permitted and inert waste isn't able to be left. The railings on the Strood have been repaired and Dawes Lane will be raised at the meeting with Cllr Lee Scott, Portfolio Holder for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport. Colchester City Council are taking the grounds maintenance contract back in house. The City Council are debating whether to move from annual elections to four yearly, which will save £600,000. King Charles and the Queen Consort are visiting Colchester on Tuesday 7th March.

Councillor Robert Davidson reported that there will be a full Council meeting on 23rd March to approve the Tendring Garden Community and link road. Colchester City Council are reluctant to give permission as there is a £20m shortfall on the link road. Pressure is being put on Councillor Kevin Bentley, that the 9 month trail at the tip is not needed on Mersea. Amendments have been made so that residents can now apply and visit the tip the same day. There will be a garden waste charge from next year of £40 per household per year, and the bulky freight service for white goods has been withdrawn.

23/055

CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

- To confirm minutes of the Council meeting of 9th February 2023
- To confirm minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting of 17th February 2023

The Council RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Council meeting of 9th February 2023.

The Council RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting of 17th February 2023.

23/056

APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

To approve payments to be made

The Council RESOLVED to approve payments.

23/057

BOARDWALK

Following advice that a planning application is required for the boardwalk the Clerk advised the Boardwalk Working Group to meet.

- To receive MMO Licence application
- To receive MMO Decision letter
- To receive Natural England agree method statement
- To approve Environmental consultant fees for Boardwalk MMO self service licence
- To approve architectural consultant fees for Boardwalk Planning Application along with Planning Application fees
- To confirm the Council will receive recommendations from Boardwalk Working Group on the next steps of the project; including;
 - Project dates and key stages
 - Project budget and costings
 - Planning Application
 - Tender process, document, design drawings, selection criteria, key dates, selection process
 - Project Management including risk assessments, project completion and sign off, maintenance
 - Funding application, submission, contingency strategy for alternative funding

Signature _____

Date _____

The Council RESOLVED to approve the environmental consultant fees for the Boardwalk MMO self service licence.

The Council RESOLVED to approve the architectural consultant fees for the Boardwalk Planning Application along with Planning application fees.

Councillor Jarvis advised that approval to use the design images, but not any detailed information around this had been received. A date for the Boardwalk working group will be set.

23/058 BIN EMPTYING CONTRACT & QUARTERLY PARK INSPECTIONS

- I. To consider the bin emptying contract with Colchester City Council for 1st April 2023 to 31st March
- II. To consider the quarterly park inspection contract with Colchester City Council for 1st April 2023 to 31st March

The bin collection costs have increased considerably; 2022/23 £9392.16, 2023/24 £12,642.73.

The Council RESOLVED to approve the bin emptying and quarterly park inspection contracts with Colchester City Council for 2023/2024.

23/059 KING'S CORONATION WORKING GROUP

- To receive King's Coronation Working Group plan
- To consider and agree expenditure for planned events to enable orders to be placed
- To consider and agree extra hours for the Administrative Assistant to specifically work on the event orders and organising

Councillor Weaver advised that a family fun day event has been planned for Sunday 7th May with an afternoon fete on the School (Legion) field, including a classic car show, music and entertainment, with the opportunity for clubs and societies to promote their activities to the Community.

The Working Group are looking at mugs for school children and a grant application to the National Lottery Community Fund was submitted on 12th February. The Council were advised that costs are within budget if the grant application is not supported.

Councillor Powling declared a pecuniary interest to agenda item 23/059 regarding extra hours for the Administrative Assistant.

The Council RESOLVED to approve £300 in the budget for extra administration hours.

23/060 VILLAGE GREEN 241

Village Green 241 – To receive any further update

Councillor Jarvis has arranged a meeting with local residents for 23rd March.

23/061 GARDENING CONTRACT

To consider and approve recommended gardening plan

To consider increasing Litter Pickers hours to include weeding and gardening of Council flower beds

There is £6000 in the budget for gardening to look after Council gardens; Broomhills Greensward, Changing Places toilet, Fairhaven and Willoughby toilets, West Mersea Park, office planters, Fountain garden and Sensory garden.

The Council RESOLVED to go ahead with the planting scheme recommended by Refresh Mersea and to consider the work inhouse, spending £3000 on plants and £3000 on labour.

Signature _____

Date _____

23/062 **BOWSER**
To consider and agree purchase of a bowser

There is £5000 in the budget for a bowser. **The Council RESOLVED to approve the purchase of a bowser and to ask Grounds staff to decide on make/model.**

23/063 **OFFICE LEASE**
To discuss and agree lease on 10 Melrose Road and agree next steps

Item deferred.

23/064 **BROOMHILLS GREENSWARD**
Councillor Bragg requested agenda item to discuss gate licences

There was discussion of gate licences on Council owned land.

23/065 **WATERSIDE COMMITTEE**
Councillor Akker requested agenda item. "In view of the approaching Summer season Council calls upon the Mayor to write urgently to Colchester City Council to call an early meeting of the Waterside Committee.

It was requested that the Mayor write to the Chief Executive to reiterate the importance of the Waterside Committee and request that a meeting is convened.

23/066 **CLERKS REPORT**

The Clerk reported that;

- School garden maintenance and improvement works commenced Monday 20th February
- At the Planning committee a member of public made comment that the Skate Park on VG246 is unlawful development and a retrospective application with consultation to the Planning Inspectorate is required for development on a Village Green.
- 21/02/23 £40,000 received from CCC Dept Levelling up Housing and Communities re CPT
- Town Clerk, Cemetery Clerk and Cllr Jarvis signed up for elections training
- Cricket have paid for the White Lining machine – not yet collected
- Have received several comments and one objection to proposed 25 year leases on Glebe 1 & 2
- Gate Licences – Administration Assistant has sent letters to residents for outstanding payments. Councillors are aware two letters were received in early January from Broomhills residents querying their gate Licence that following advice from the Solicitor regarding their claims the solicitor sent a report advising that the residents claims do not preclude them from paying their gate licence. A response letter was sent last week to that affect.
- Receipts- MISA haven't paid any funds towards their lease rent 01/07/23 to 30/06/23 since October 2022. £4500 + £300 for 3 x containers. Balance of £3932 outstanding.
- CCC Planning and Colchester Amphora are chasing regarding the containers on Glebe 2 being outside of planning and advertising boards that need to be tidied up. A meeting with MISA been requested. Letter to be sent to MISA giving deadline for planning application to be made or container needs to be removed.
- Budget amendment for £9000 King's Coronation from £5000 – agenda item to be added to next months meeting for virement decision on where funds to be moved from.

Signature _____

Date _____

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

- Natural England advised that tractors cannot be taken onto the beach to remove broken concrete benches at Monkey Beach as the tractor destructive on beach and increase erosion. Slats will be removed.
- Fairhaven Toilets – cisterns replaced. Not happy with quality of work, opportunity to correct was given to contractor.
- Annual Town Meeting – to be moved until after elections, suggested date of 25th May.

23/067 **MAYORS NOTES**

Councillor Powling thanked everyone for their hard work, thanking Councillor Weaver for her work on the Coronation. Councillor Powling advised that he had been chasing Colchester City Council for a Waterfront Committee meeting.

23/068 **AGENDA ITEMS**

Items for inclusion on the next Council agenda

There being no other business the Mayor closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

Signature _____

Date _____