



TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**Meeting held on Thursday 8th February 2024 at 7pm in the Council Chambers,
10 Melrose Road, West Mersea, Colchester CO5 8JD**

In attendance:

Cllr. S. Weaver (Mayor)	Cllr. C. Powling
Cllr. R. Jenkins	Cllr. M. Parsons
Cllr. B. Holmes	Cllr. D. Boylan
Karen Kuderovitch, Town Clerk & RFO	5 Members of the public

24/23	<p>RECORDING OF MEETING</p> <p>Chairman requested anyone present to identify their intention to record the meeting. The Town Clerk indicated she was recording.</p>
24/24.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>All Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests (pecuniary/nonpecuniary) they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda either at this point or during the agenda item. They are reminded that they will need to repeat their declaration at the appropriate point in the meeting and leave the room if the interest is a prejudicial one. Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time. If not already done so, they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting. Cllr. Powling – Colchester City Councillor, Cllr. Jenkins – works for Refresh Mersea. Cllr. Weaver – a member of BANG.</p>
24/25.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 🙏</p> <p>Clerk reported Cllr. Gibbons (personal commitment) and Cllr. Hart (personal commitment). Councillors voted to accept the absence and the reasons given.</p>
24/26.	<p>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Priority will be given to those members of the public wishing to share information relating to items on the agenda. Once the public session is closed, members of the public are not permitted to speak.</p> <p>The Mayor reminded the meeting that responses in the public session would be sent after the meeting, with no obligation to provide answers at the meeting.</p> <p>MOP1 – raised queries over the Minutes of 18th January 2024 and asked if Councillors have received training under Data Protection.</p> <p>MOP 2 – thoughts in our community are with the King. Action Plan- disappointed that the papers have not been issued and referred to process of the Action Plan/Precept. Suggested the Mayor promised a response which had not been received. Was the Action Plan to be issued to residents for comments and would residents have input e.g. Neighbourhood Plan, suggested appointing professional advisors and a budget allocation be set at £70,000, rising sea levels, sea wall defences, and car parking – Coast Road improvements and Victoria Esplanade.</p> <p>MOP 3 – Suggested that Cllr. Hart could have a conflict of interest being a previous Director of MISA. Suggested the timeframe of 7 working days relating to responses from emails are not adhered to in the persons personal experience.</p>

24/27.	<p>COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS REPORTS</p> <p>To receive reports from our County and City Councillors.</p> <p>Cllr. Powling – CCC garden waste not active and the uptake had beaten expectations. Call for sites being finalised, the results will be published in due course, with the aim of extending the current Local Plan to 2041. West Mersea has a strong neighbourhood plan and it does not need to be reviewed, but monitored ready for reaction from CCC Local Plan. CCC budget being finalised with a view to saving £5 million in next 2 years.</p>
24/28.	<p>RESIGNATION/APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR 🇮🇪</p> <p>The Mayor reported that Cllr. Jarvis had resigned. Very sad to see a valued member of the team leave, having made huge contributions in his time at WMTC, e.g. Boardwalk. Cllr. Jarvis will be missed. Cllr. Holmes expressed his disappointment in criticising Cllr. Jarvis and suggested this contributed to his departure.</p> <p>The Mayor asked for Councillors to consider the position. The Town Clerk to confirm if the position needs to be an elected member. Cllr. Parsons suggested the item be deferred to March 2024.</p> <p>The Town Clerk stated that although Cllr. Jarvis had not been present for some meetings, in general Councillors who are not present at meetings, can be heavily involved via e-mail, this being the case for Cllr. Jarvis. The Town Clerk concurred with Cllr. Holmes sentiments as the Town Clerk was working with Cllr. Jarvis on very important projects and this role needs to be filled. The Mayor agreed with the Town Clerk, re-iterating a lot of work is completed outside of the meetings.</p> <p>The Mayor announced that an election had been called. The Town Clerk advised that the costs for this could amount to approx.. £7,000 and the budget would need adjusting, likely to come from reserves. Cllr. Parsons suggested CCC may delay to May 2024. Town Clerk to check.</p> <p>Members considered appointment of a Councillor to the role, following the resignation of Cllr. Sam Jarvis</p>
24/29.	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES 🇮🇪</p> <p>Cllr. Jenkins asked for an amendment re Cllr. Jarvis. <i>It was resolved</i> to accept the minutes of the Town Council meeting of 18th January 2024. Cllr. Boyland asked if Council should consider the comments made by a member of the public. The Town Clerk advised that members of the public have no influence of Town Council minutes. The Town Clerk referred to an article published relating to the minutes, which she stated was factually incorrect. Proposed: Cllr. Holmes, seconded: Cllr. Jenkins (subject to the change). All in favour.</p>
24/32.	<p>SANDERLING REACH – COMMERCIAL AREA 🇮🇪</p> <p>Town Clerk reported that she had made contact with the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) for some preliminary advice, should the event the Town Council proceed with gifted houses and the way a trust could be formed. Town Clerk to share the information. The Mayor clarified that there could be a potential for gifted houses by Town & Country (6 x bungalows) but a planning application had not been received to date.</p>
24/33.	<p>MAYOR'S REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Been a very busy time and thanked everyone for their hard work in many different areas. • Office flood – staff worked hard to deal with. • Fencing at the office is erected. • Action Plan – not to be confused with the strategic aims document. • Coastguard Compound – work continuing and the Town Clerk has received lots of positive comments. • D-Day 80 – work starting, first meeting with The British Legion, WMTC focussing on Thursday 6th June evening (beacon lighting). Ideas were relayed and further details to follow after the D-Day Working Group had met. • The Mayor mentioned some areas of negativity of the Town Councils achievements, and relayed some achievements over the last six months:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New benches on Monkey Beach - Dangerous Dragons Teeth - Resurfaces Glebe car park - Installed several compactor bins (working with CCC) - Instigated a quarterly newsletter with a lot of positive feedback - Articles in the local press by Mayor/Town Clerk - Various junction road linings <p>The Mayor thanked Councillors and staff for their efforts to make the above happen.</p>
24/34.	<p>NUCLEAR POWER STATION SITING CONSULTATION 🖱</p> <p>The Mayor reported a consultation had been issued by the government (civil nuclear roadmap to 2050) and the new approach relies on market forces and willing communities to identify sites. The 8 original sites (included Bradwell) are no longer the only sites that could be used. Concerns about tidal surges. Important the Town Council continues to monitor. It was suggested Bradwell be continued to be opposed. <i>It was resolved</i> unanimously that Cllr. Weaver be delegated the responsibility to prepare a consultation response based on local issues (closing date 10 March 2024). Proposed: Cllr. Jenkins, seconded: Cllr. Powling. All in favour.</p>
24/35.	<p>CLERK'S REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committees – made progress on all Committees meetings. • Town Clerk office – insurance claim approved, delay on roof stack works. • Staff had been excellent supporting the Clerk • Office fencing completed – now have available storage space to be utilised, suggested staff table & chairs for breaks • Decision to close office on Tuesdays has proved a good decision, providing further office support. • Finance page on the web – ongoing being updated. • Local Plan – response date 21st March 24 – March agenda.
24/36.	<p>COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUP</p> <p>Environment & Community Services Committee Monday 12th February @ 7pm Community Assets & Facilities Committee – Monday 19th February @ 10am. Planning & Highways Committee – 6-7pm before full Town Council meeting. D-Day Working Party – Monday 12th February @ 6pm. Finance & Strategy Committee – 27th February @ 7pm.</p>
24/37.	<p>POLICIES & PROCEDURES 🖱</p> <p>Council to resolve to adopt the Civility & Respect pledge (attachment). Cllr. Parsons proposed that the item be moved to the confidential section, seconded by Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour.</p>
24/38.	<p>PLANNING APPLICATIONS 🖱</p> <p>a) To consider planning applications received (separate document). 240024 Resubmission of previously approved application 230960 to change the extension roof from a flat roof to a small pitched roof. No other alterations from the previously approved plans are proposed. 35 Whittaker Way, West Mersea – Plan link 240024 WMTC – No objections. Proposed: Cllr. Holmes, seconded Cllr. Parsons. All in favour.</p> <p>(b) 240027 Internal conversion of existing wardens 3 bed flat to 2no. 1 bed elderly care home flats. 27 Akhurst Court, Melrose Road, West Mersea – Plan link 240027 WMTC – No objections. Proposed: Cllr. Holmes, seconded Cllr. Parsons. All in favour.</p> <p>(c) 240043 Single storey rear extension. Alter and extending existing dormer. Inserting new windows in existing</p>

	<p>gables. 7 Strood Close, West Mersea – Plan link 240043 WMTC – No objections. Proposed: Cllr. Holmes, seconded Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour.</p> <p>(d) 240055 Full planning permission for a proposed 2bed family dwelling with associated parking, to replace existing dwelling. Consent for a replacement dwelling was granted on 16/02/23 (ref 200206), consent has now expired and the design has now been refreshed. 90 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea – Plan link 240055 WMTC – No objections. Proposed: Cllr. Holmes, seconded Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour.</p> <p>(e) 240077 Extension to form new living/dining room. Cavity walls faced in brick to match existing and a pitched roof covered with tiles, also to match existing. 22 Whittaker Way, West Mersea – Plan link 240077 WMTC – No objections. Proposed: Cllr. Parsons, seconded Holmes. All in favour.</p> <p>(f) 240106 Proposed open porch/veranda. 3 Beach Road, West Mersea – Plan link 240106 WMTC – No objections. Proposed: Cllr. Jenkins, seconded Cllr. Weaver. All in favour.</p> <p>(g) 240133 Proposed single storey rear and side extension including flat car port. 22 Melrose Road, West Mersea – Plan link 240133 WMTC – No objections. Proposed: Cllr. Holmes , seconded Cllr. Weaver . All in favour.</p> <p>(h) 240050 & 240054 Construction of open pool house ancillary to private swimming pool. Paving around pool with porcelain tiles (for hygiene and easier washdown). Replacement of existing granite sett to rear surround of Casa Pantis with natural sandstone paving to flower beds. Casa Pantis, 20 Yorick Road, West Mersea – Plan link 240050 & Plan link 240054 WMTC – No objections. Recommend any groundworks required archaeological sign off. Proposed: Cllr. Parsons, seconded Cllr. Holmes. All in favour.</p> <p>(i) 240156 Demolition of the existing garage. Proposed ground floor infiltrated and side extensions, with new first floor extension. External fenestration alterations. 7 Blackwater Drive, West Mersea – Plan link 240156 WMTC – Strong objections – contrary to Neighbourhood Plan Policy WM7. Proposed: Cllr. Powling , seconded Cllr. Boylan. All in favour.</p> <p>b) To receive notification of planning decisions. Application passed</p> <p>(a) 232607 Application to vary condition 1 (temporary permission) and 6 (scheme of restoration) following grant of planning permission 220023. Colchester Road, West Mersea - Decision link 232607</p> <p>(b) 231999 Single storey flat roofed extension to rear of property porch. Lingwood, 13 Kingsmere Close, West Mersea - Decision link 231999 Application refused</p> <p>(a) 232604 Application for prior approval for proposed extension beyond the rear wall by 5.50m. Max Height 5m. Eaves 2.25m. to form a new living dining room having cavity walls faced in brick to match existing and a pitched roof covered with tiles (amended drawings). 22 Whittaker Way, West Mersea - Decision link 232604 WMTC recommendation: It was resolved that consent be granted in respect of this application.</p> <p>(b) 232683 Construction of two storey extension to provide study storage space and enlargement of master bedroom. 8 Beach Road, West Mersea - Decision link 232683 WMTC recommendation: It was resolved that consent be granted in respect of this application. There is a need for an on-site archaeological survey before building works begin due to very close proximity to a Roman site of national importance (the Mersea Wheel tomb). It was discovered in 1896 – but has been covered up in the gardens nearby. There are only two known wheel tombs in Britain, this one and one in Kent. An investigative trench dug in 2003 in the garden at 20 Yorick Road i.e., much further away found the edge of a Roman wall – so it is important that any underlying Roman remains are discovered before building works begin.</p> <p>c) Town Clerk to issue a quick reference Planning document – deferred.</p>
24/39.	<p>COMMUNITY PROJECTS/ACTION PLAN 🖐</p> <p>a) Members reviewed the draft Action Plan for 2024 and suggested changes. The document was approved for publication. The document will be reviewed at each Town Council Meeting. Proposed: Cllr. Powling, seconded Cllr. Weaver. All in favour.</p> <p>b) It was agreed to put in an application to the portrait scheme to receive a free copy of the recent King Charles III official portrait. Proposed: Cllr. Powling, seconded Cllr. Parsons. All in favour.</p> <p>c) D-day 80 – Cllr. Weaver reported on plans to commemorate the event. Beacon lighting will take place on Thursday 6th June @ 9.15pm incorporated in an evening event. More details to be</p>



	discussed on Monday 129 th at the D-Day 80 Working Party. The Mayor offered any residents to join in.
24/40.	TRAINING/COUNCILLOR SURGERIES 🖱️ £ a) Members to approve the rota, commencing April 2024 – agreed for the Town Clerk to send via e-mail and then publicise.
24/41.	FINANCE 🖱️ £ a) To approve payments to be made - deferred. b) Emergency expenditure – Town Clerk reported on the roof works after office flood. c) Signatories to be appointed to Unity Trust Bank and Barclays Bank. Clerk reported loss of a signatory (Cllr. Jarvis) for Unity Trust Bank/Barclays (to be removed). Cllr. Jenkins was approved as a signatory for Barclays Bank. Cllr. Powling was approved as a signatory on Unity. d) Members considered engaging Breakthrough Communications (recommended by the Essex Association of Local Councils) for professional support relating to GDPR/FOI and public-facing communication matters. £750 +vat (used over 6 months). The Town Clerk advised members that she felt it was appropriate to take professional support in line with GDPR/FOI/Press etc.. Proposed: Cllr. Powling, seconded: Cllr. Holmes. All in favour. e) Members considered 2 proposals for the newsletter publication costs and approve the preferred company. The Town Clerk recommended remaining with the current provider, due to price, known reliability and turnaround time. Delivery will be an additional cost. Proposed: Cllr. Jenkins, seconded: Cllr. Powling. All in favour. f) Members approved membership to the Allotment Association @ £55 per annum. Proposed Cllr. Powling, seconded Cllr. Weaver. All in favour. g) Members approved the Hedge Cutting Tender document, ready for issue. Cllr. Jenkins reported a review had taken place with office staff. Proposed: Cllr. Powling, seconded, Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour. Cllr. Powling thanked the staff involved. h) Members approved an annual grant to Refresh Mersea of £500. Proposed: Cllr. Powling seconded Cllr. Weaver. All in favour (Cllr. Jenkins abstained) i) Clerk to report any further finance information: - 1 st and 2 nd quarter VAT returns have been submitted, Town Clerk to chase the refunds. - Internal Audit to be scheduled ready for the end of the finance year (31 st March 2024).
24/42.	ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 25TH APRIL 2024 – 7PM – THE BRITISH LEGION 🖱️ Members considered key speakers & theme for Annual Town Meeting 25 th April 2024. It was agreed to send postcard invitations 2 weeks before to residents. Local organisations would be invited to attend with stands. Doors open@ 6pm, meeting starts at 7pm.
24/43.	CONTACT FROM RESIDENTS/FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS Town Clerk reported good feedback on Coastguards Compound. Some contact from regular residents, an FOI request for an internal review was received which had taken place and the response sent to the resident. A request for a meeting with a resident – Monday 12 th Feb @5pm.
24/44.	COUNCILLORS UPDATES Councillors were offered the opportunity to share information. No information shared.
EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC 🖱️ <i>It was RESOLVED 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.</i>	

24/45.	LEASES/LAND 🖱️ £ a) Changing Places Lease – awaiting contact. b) Land at Coast Road – finalised.
24/46.	PERSONNEL 🖱️ £ Chair of Personnel/Town Clerk reported a recommendation in relation to ground staff levels. Recommendation accepted.
24/47.	VEXATIOUS POLICY 🖱️ Clerk reported. Civility and Respect Pledge (moved from item above 24/37. It was resolved not to adopt this.

DRAFT