



## TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**Meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>TH</sup> October 2023 at 7pm in the Council Chambers,  
10 Melrose Road, West Mersea, Colchester CO5 8JD**

£ = Expenditure decision    🗑️ Resolution made

In attendance:

Cllr. S. Weaver (Mayor)	Cllr. B. Hart
Cllr. C. Powling	Cllr. M. Parsons
Cllr. R. Jenkins	Cllr. R. Davidson – Colchester City Council (CCC)
Karen Kuderovitch, CILCA – Locum Town Clerk	15 Members of the public

23/211.	<p><b>RECORDING OF MEETING</b></p> <p>Chairman requested anyone present to identify their intention to record the meeting. The Town Clerk and a member of the public identified themselves as recording.</p>
23/212.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></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.</p>
23/213.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> 🗑️</p> <p>Clerk reported and Councillors voted unanimously to accept the apologies and the reasons given. Cllr. Gibbons – unwell, Cllr. Jarvis – work commitment, Cllr. Holmes – unwell, Cllr. Jowers</p>
23/214.	<p><b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b></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. <b>Priority will be given to those members of the public wishing to share information relating to items on the agenda.</b></p> <p><b>The Chairman reminded 3 minutes per person and priority given to items on the agenda.</b></p> <p><b>MOP1</b> – Flood prevention – disappointed at lack of action. Waterside committee meeting – who will represent CCC and Chair and when will MOPs be invited to join the Committee?. Cllr. Powling responded that he would be chairing the Waterside Forum, has been in contact with various organisations and awaiting to issue the first Agenda shortly. Cllr. Powling suggested one representative from each group and the focus will be on making progress.</p> <p><b>MOP2</b> – read a letter addressed to the Town Clerk re obstruction of village green 241 North. The Clerk advised she had been on holiday and would respond. Another letter re 7 bathing rafts and suggested they need covering up as agreed previously and asked for an update on the plans for 2024. The Town Clerk responded she would be raising the letters under residents contact.</p> <p><b>MOP3</b> – applauded the Town Council on its intention to issue regular newsletters. Section 106 – requested information on future payments (over £300,000). Suggested the community needed more information on the current position. Cllr. Powling was thanked for attending the Mersea Island Society and gave an interim report. What is the mechanism for this to be signed off. The Town Clerk responded that finance was being focussed on and that the comments made at the last meeting had been recognised and this was for Councillors to debate. A suggestion was made for call for sites in the Local Plan and the Council should have a position on that.</p>

	<p><b>MOP 4</b> – Asked in terms of protocol for the future Waterside Forum. The right of people to attend (not to speak) and to distinguish the two. It was suggested that stakeholders of Coast Road and The Esplanade should be represented. Cllr. Powling advised they would be represented, and the initial setting up was in process with principal organisations.</p> <p><b>MOP 5</b> – Christmas – representing Mersea Lights Up. Gave some information and asked that the Town Council would do for the group. A budget was referred to. The Town Council was asked for assistance for Christmas 2023 as they rely on donations. Christmas 2023 would involve different organisations, presenting Christmas Island. The Mayor responded it was an agenda item.</p> <p>MOP 6 – referred to Section 106 monies and was there a risk to lose it? Cllr. Powling explained Section 106 was laid out in a legal agreement. Once the funds are released there was a timeframe and projects listed on the agreement. Allocations could be used on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Glebe (multi-use sports pavilion)</li> <li>a Doctors Surgery or</li> <li>the MICA centre</li> </ol> <p>Variations to this could pose a risk. Cllr. Davidson gave further explanation that a list of projects that they wish to invest in. CCC recommend where the monies should be sent and signed off by CCC.</p>
23/215.	<p><b>CITY COUNCILLORS REPORT</b></p> <p>Cllr. Powling reported on behalf of Cllr. Jowers that CCC have offered the prioritisation of up to 20 potholes for action and suggested Council send these to Cllr. Jowers.</p> <p>Cllr. R. Davidson reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarified the 20 potholes were per division and 3/4 should be put forward to CCC.</li> <li>Local Plan – compulsory all Councils review at five and ten years. The five year is an assessment of whether CCC are providing and building enough houses. CCC has enough land allocated until 2033. West Mersea has had its 200 houses and no need for any housing sites at this stage. Suggested Neighbourhood Plan will need refreshing in time.</li> <li>CCC will continue with the booking system for Mersea recycling centre. A consultation is open on the Essex County Council web site: <a href="http://www.essexcc.gov.uk">www.essexcc.gov.uk</a> until 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023.</li> <li>Boundary review – in 2029 estimated population of Colchester District could be 230,000. Certain areas are being developed and are above the 10% limit of variation between wards. In January 2024 CCC will submit their proposals and consultation will be in July &amp; November 2024 for decision December 2024. All wards will have more residents to look after.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr. Powling shared information on the garden waste collection – current service stops in December 2023. In November, residents are able to purchase a wheely bin @ £35 and £55 for the service. Residents can have up to four bins but each bin has to be paid for. January – April 2024 is free. The Avenues – trees overhanging garden and the street – advice from CCC if it lands in a residents garden it is their responsibility, if it lands on the street and residents kindly sweep them – CCC should be responsible for this. The bins are allocated a permit for identification purposes.</p>
23/216.	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b> 🙌</p> <p>Cllr. Hart – requested an amendment to apologies (were sent)</p> <p>Cllr. Jenkins – PCSO changed to Community Special Constable</p> <p>The amendments were accepted.</p> <p>The minutes of the Town Council meeting of 14th September 2023 were approved and signed. <b>Proposed: Cllr. Powling, Seconded: Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour.</b></p>
23/217.	<p><b>JOANNE HUNT – H&amp;S ADVISOR/HEALTH &amp; SAFETY REVIEW</b></p> <p>Joanne introduced herself as the H&amp;S Advisor for two and a half years. A list of actions are pending were being progressed after an audit a month ago. Cllr. Jenkins asked some questions in relation to the Rospa reports and the difference of opinion in the two reports. A future agenda item for the Community Assets/Facilities Committee for review.</p>
23/218.	<p><b>MERSEA LIGHTS UP</b> 🙌</p> <p>Representative reported to Council and a discussion took place on plans for 2023. The Mayor declared the meeting suspended for an explanation from the representative on the history of the lights/events. Clarification was sought on who was coordinating this project and any future ideas/events. The Mayor</p>



	<p>declared the meeting back in session. The Town Clerk asked about lights in storage needing attention. Cllr. Parsons proposed a good size tree for the MICA. <b>It was resolved unanimously</b> to donate a Christmas Tree for the MICA (up to £300). Cllr. Powling offered to source the tree.</p>
23/219.	<p><b>POLICIES</b> 🖱</p> <p>a) <b>Financial Regulations</b> Members reviewed and adopted the revised policy: Financial Regulations (item 11.1 h) <b>Proposed: Cllr. Powling, Seconded: Cllr. Parsons. All in favour.</b></p> <p>b) <b>Grant/Donations Policy</b> Members reviewed and adopted the revised policy <b>Proposed: Cllr. Powling, Seconded: Cllr. Hart. All in favour.</b></p> <p>c) <b>Vexatious Policy</b> Members reviewed and adopted the revised policy <b>Proposed: Cllr. Parsons, Seconded: Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour.</b></p> <p>d) <b>Press &amp; Media Policy</b> Members reviewed and adopted the revised policy <b>Proposed: Cllr. Powling, Seconded: Cllr. Parsons. All in favour.</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk was thanked for her work on the policies.</p>
23/220.	<p><b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</b> 🖱</p> <p>a) To consider planning applications received (separate document). 232145 - 7 Strood Close – No objections <b>Proposed: Cllr. Jenkins, Seconded: Cllr. Weaver. All in favour</b> 232201 – 21 Prince Albert Road - No comments. All in favour 232161 – 62b Firs Chase - No objections <b>Proposed Cllr. Weaver, Seconded Cllr. Hart. All in favour.</b> 232183 – 9 Mersea Avenue - No objection <b>Proposed: Cllr. Jenkins, Seconded: Cllr. Hart. All in favour.</b></p> <p>b) Received notification of planning decisions (separate document).</p>
23/221.	<p><b>MAYOR'S REPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow/white lines progress</li> <li>• Mayor has arranged a school visit to WMTC Offices on 16<sup>th</sup> October – offer extended to Councillors. A competition being run for what they would like compactor bins to say. Involvement in D-Day 80 celebrations.</li> <li>• Met new Vicar – enthusiastic about getting involved in the community</li> <li>• Election – notification of nominees due on 13<sup>th</sup> October and look forward to a full Council</li> <li>• Thanks to Councillors and staff all working hard</li> </ul>
23/222.	<p><b>CLERK'S REPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will continue to meet people in the Community (Special Constable, PCSO, Proud of Mersea etc.)</li> <li>• Finance – Edge up to date end of August, second Edge training completed, will work with Cllr. Jenkins and new web page for Finance being developed</li> <li>• Newsletter – has been approved</li> <li>• EALC Annual Conference – attended by Town Clerk &amp; Assistant – good day lots of information/potential people for Annual Town Meeting – ambition to make it bigger &amp; better</li> <li>• Town Clerk &amp; Gary Petley met with a rep from British Legion. A clean to be done to the war memorial before Remembrance Sunday. Detailed works for next agenda.</li> <li>• Town Clerk a member of the panel for the Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October.</li> <li>• New signage for the office and toilets.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr. Powling, Cllr. Jarvis &amp; Town Clerk attending a MISA meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.</li> <li>• Councillor in-house training once Council has all seats filled.</li> </ul>
23/223.	<p><b>COMMUNITY PROJECTS/EVENTS</b> 🖱</p> <p>a) Report from the Glebe surveys – Town Clerk asked if Councillors had reviewed the document. A brief discussion took place on the report, its findings and whether to repair or replace. The Town Clerk mentioned community consultation would be required as potential use would be for the wider community. <b>It was resolved</b> to consider investigations to ascertain potential costs and to review at a Facilities Committee (before 31<sup>st</sup> October). The architect to be invited to the 31<sup>st</sup> October meeting.</p> <p>b) Report on Granny’s Garden – Cllr. Jarvis and the Town Clerk had met onsite with the owners. Fencing works to be scheduled and the area to be cut back to allow these works. Additional quote for painting being sought. Town Clerk reported this would be a staged project.</p> <p>c) D-Day Working Party – members appointed (British Legion making contact with residents for an initial meeting): Cllr. Weaver, Cllr. Hart, Cllr. Powling, Town Clerk. Town Clerk will seek guidance on marking the event from the EALC.</p>
23/224.	<p><b>FINANCE</b> 🖱</p> <p>a) Approval of payments to be made (separate document). One payment to be challenged (Wallgate). One invoice (Fowlers) figures to be checked. Cllr. Jenkins reviewed and verified the bank reconciliations/bank statements from April – August 2023. Cllr. Jenkins/Cllr. Hart signed off. All in favour.</p> <p>b) Town Clerk reported on External Audit. Finalised and on the web site. Notice of conclusion of audit issued on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023.</p> <p>c) Members reviewed and considered the following expenditure: - Colchester Finger Post @ £2,580 &amp; VAT – approved. All in favour. - Compactor Bin @ Esplanade @ £4,105.00 &amp; VAT - approved. (an additional 1 to be purchased by CCC and install both bins). <b>Proposed Cllr. Jenkins, Seconded Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour</b> - Defibrillator for Town Council Office @ £350 &amp; VAT – <b>Proposed Cllr. Powling, Seconded Cllr. Weaver - approved. All in favour.</b> - Erection of Christmas Lights on Lyme Tree (210 metres) @ £850 &amp; VAT – <b>Proposed Cllr Jenkins ., Seconded Cllr. Parsons - approved. All in favour.</b></p> <p>d) Hedge Cutting Tender Document – ready for issue on Contracts Finder. Councillors debated the content of the document and some additional works highlighted and queries raised. The Mayor came out of session for a member of the public to make comments. The Mayor declared the meeting back in session. <b>Proposed: Cllr. Weaver - to defer a decision and review at the Environment &amp; Community Services Committee., Seconded: Cllr. Jenkins. All in favour.</b> <b>The Town Clerk advised the Mayor that the meeting was approaching 2 hours.</b> Emergency expenditure – risk to public safety - white/yellow road lining (NEPP)- up to £1,500. Essex County Council Highways had declined any financial support. <b>Proposed: Cllr. Powling, Seconded: Cllr.Hart approved. All in favour.</b></p> <p>e) Heelis &amp; Lodge were appointed as the Internal Auditor for 23/24. Town Clerk to arrange a 6 month and end of financial year 23/24 audit. Expenditure approved £510 plus mileage. The Town Clerk recommended for a Town Council of WMTc size a 6 month audit was required. <b>Proposed: Cllr. Jenkins Seconded: Cllr. Hart. All in favour.</b></p> <p>f) Councillor Weaver, Jenkins &amp; Powling signed banking mandates for Unity. The Town Clerk was also added to enable her to load payments onto Unity for release by Councillors (3 tier authentication).</p> <p>g) Clerk to reported the end of September 2023 bank statements: Barclays Current - £426, 886.37 , Barclays Savings £6,694.70 , Barclays Premium £305.49, Unity – £7,230.96, NS&amp;I -£172,080.06 . The Town Clerk advised once signatories set up to move all banking to Unity (previously agreed). Clerk to review the FSCS status. Emergency expenditure – cutting back of Footpath 20 as risk to public safety (£725 &amp; VAT), £181.44 – Civic Service refreshments The Town Clerk reported the meeting had reached 2 hours. The Mayor suggested a 30 minute extension to complete the agenda items.</p>
23/225.	<b>CONTACT FROM RESIDENTS/FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS</b>



West Mersea  
Town Council

	<p>Town Clerk reported the following items raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obstruction of access to Village Green 241</li><li>• Bradwell – information received on sea defence walls</li><li>• Repainting of lines on junctions</li><li>• Encouraging Brierly Paddocks to complete access to stop Seaview Avenue being used</li><li>• Concerns over dangerous junction at Peldon – action from Essex County Council.</li><li>• The Glebe – parking and pitch capacity</li><li>• Concerns on cutting pitches at The Glebe (resolved)</li><li>• A huge thank you for great service. Cllr. Powling &amp; the Town Clerk visited residents and stated that going forward this Council would be proactive on addressing residents concerns.</li></ul>
<p><b>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</b> 🖱</p> <p><b><i>It was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY 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></b></p>	
23/226.	<p><b>VEXATIOUS POLICY</b> 🖱</p> <p>Report from the Town Clerk. <b><i>It was resolved unanimously</i></b> to hold a separate meeting to decide whether any action would be recommended to full Council be taken.</p>
23/227.	<p><b>GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT</b> 🖱</p> <p>Clerk reported. <b><i>It was resolved unanimously</i></b> for Cllr. Powling &amp; the Town Clerk to arrange a meeting.</p>
23/228.	<p><b>PERSONNEL</b> 🖱£</p> <p>The Mayor reported on the appointment of the Town Clerk. A discussion took place. All in favour. Mayor to action.</p>