



TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 3rd August 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. P. Moore (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr. C. Powling	Cllr. B. Holmes
Cllr. S. Jarvis	Members of the public
Karen Kuderovitch, CILCA – Locum Town Clerk	

Opening statement from the Chair:

I would like to thank the Clerk & Councillors for their attention to the large amount of information to have been sent in preparation for tonight's meeting. WMTC are committed to making progress on many various topics for the benefit of the community and we now have an Action Plan on the agenda which will be shared with members of the public so they can also monitor our progress.

May I remind Councillors, in line with our Standing Orders to ensure that all discussions to come through the Chair.

23/170.	RECORDING OF MEETING Chairman requested anyone present to identify their intention to record the meeting. 1 MOP identified as recording.
23/171.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST 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. C. Powling identified himself as a Colchester City Councillor.
23/172.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 🖱️ Cllr. J. Jowers (Mayor of Colchester), Cllr. R. Davidson (Colchester City Councillor)
23/173.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION Chair reminded MOPS that is it business on the agenda only. 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. STANDING ORDERS REFERENCE (ITEM 3): e) Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

	<p>f) The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chair of the meeting.</p> <p>g) Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.</p> <p>h) In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.</p> <p>Please note that once the public session is closes members of the public cannot participate, unless in exceptional circumstances, approved by the Chairman.</p> <p>Member of the Public (MOP):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MOP 1 - Standing Orders in relation to MOPs reporting any issues in public session and not limited to business on the Agenda. The Clerk responded that the MOP would receive contact as soon as possible. 2. MOP 2 - Glebe/MISA Lease – concerns over transparency and lack of available information & consultation with residents. The MOP also asked a question in relation to funds received (ref. 14th April 2023). The Clerk responded that the MOP would receive contact as soon as possible. The Chair allowed Cllr. Jarvis to also respond that he was working in this as well and offered a discussion with the MOP. 3. MOP 3 – raised concerns over double yellow lines (opposite sign of St. Peters Road) and outside their property. The Clerk asked the resident to make contact with her. 4. MOP 4 – Agenda – raised concerns no Waterfront Committee & would non-Councillors be invited. Cllr. Powling suggested he was going to start the Committee again. The Clerk asked for clarification of the set up. Planning application b & f were referenced & opinion given. 5. MOP 5 – Waterside Committee- no meeting for 3 years. Asked how to communicate with the Council. The Clerk responded various ways to make contact and Community Engagement was to be improved. Car park @ the Glebe – surface, signage & cycle racks. Cllr. Moore stated contact details for all Councillors were on the web site. 6. MOP 6 – The Follys – issue with cutting back vegetation. The Clerk responded that she would take it up with the people responsible for it. Cllr. Holmes added he has tried before to get action. Cross Lane/Seaview Avenue was also mentioned
23/174.	<p>COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS REPORTS</p> <p>To receive reports from our County and City Councillors – not present Cllr. Powling advised of an extension to the Rural Business & Community Fund have extended application date.</p>
23/175.	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES 🖐️</p> <p>The minutes of the Council meeting of 12th July 2023 were approved and signed. Proposed: Cllr.Holmes, Seconded Cllr. Moore, all in favour.</p>
23/176.	<p>COUNCILLOR VACANCIES/CO-OPTION 🖐️</p> <p>The Clerk requested the Mayor to defer this item, which was agreed due to unforeseen circumstances. Closing date 16th August 2023. The Clerk advised the Co-option Policy needs amending.</p> <p>Motion received by Cllr. Weaver: <i>To consider the voting process of candidates takes place as a secret ballot.</i></p> <p>Council to review applications/hear from applicants for the vacant positions and a vote to be taken. Co-opted Councillors to join the meeting and sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p>
23/177.	<p>CLERKS/MAYORS REPORT 🖐️</p> <p>Karen Kuderovitch – Locum Town Clerk</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors were being well informed – going forward, unless urgent, Clerk will update weekly. • Enjoying the new challenge and thanked Councillors & Staff for their support. • Town Clerk reported she would be undertaking a full review of West Mersea Town Council and making recommendations for improvements where necessary. • Community Engagement – needs improvements – new Communications Policy being developed so that all information is easily available. September Newsletter through all doors (to include new Councillors, Finance, contact details, etc.) • Increase visibility in local publications (i.e. Mersea Courier, Weekly etc). • Policies – further new ones for adoption in September 2023. • Finance – training completed and time allocated to review all Finance, i.e. review allocations and how long for. September 2023. • Web site should be .gov & email addresses – will become compulsory – September agenda and staff named on email addresses. • Health & Safety – reviewing, progress made, revised policy to be approved. • Planning Training – for all Councillors 26th September 2023 @ 6pm, for any Councillor to attend via Zoom. • In-house training – Essex Association of Local Councils – planned for September 2023 for all Councillors. • Boardwalk – Clerk suggested a site meeting with 2 Councillors. <p>Mayor</p> <p>Thanks for the hard work of the Town Clerk, Councillors & Staff – all working hard and to be the best Council procedures have to be followed and hopefully improvements made.</p> <p>Compactor Bins – recently installed – press release on Colchester web site.</p> <p>Co-option – full Council will be in place by September 2023.</p> <p>Action Plan – will allow members of the public to review progress.</p>
23/178.	<p>COMMITTEES 🇬🇧</p> <p>A brief discussion took place and <i>it was resolved</i> unanimously to defer to September 2023 with the exception of Personnel Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Members to review Committees, Terms of Reference & appoint members :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Assets Committee (formerly Community Facilities) • Environment & Community Services Committee • Legal & Finance (formerly Finance & Strategy Committee) • Personnel Committee – draft Terms of Reference - Proposed Cllr. Jarvis, Seconded Cllr. Moore – all in favour. • Planning & Highways Committee (formerly Planning Committee)
23/179.	<p>POLICIES & PROCEDURES 🇬🇧</p> <p>Clerk asked the Mayor to defer some</p> <p>Members reviewed and accept the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors Register of Interests – advice given that Councillors give attention to Section 4 (Land). • Standing Orders (revision) – changes explained by the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk gave advice that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Model was being followed and she did not recommend allowing members of the public to speak on matters not on the agenda. Members discussed the Standing Orders. The Town Clerk advised that members of the public have many options to raise concerns to Council (visiting the office, e-mailing, sending a letter & meeting with the Town Clerk by appointment). The Clerk

	<p>advised Cllr. Jarvis to send in any motion suggestion for the next Agenda for any amendments to Standing Orders. A vote was taken and all in favour of adopting the revised Standing Orders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media (new) – deferred. • Communications (new) – deferred. • Information & Data Protection (new) – reviewed and approved unanimously. • Recording at Meetings (new) - reviewed and approved unanimously. • Health & Safety (revision) - reviewed and approved unanimously. • Equality & Diversity (new) - reviewed and approved unanimously.
23/180.	<p>TRAINING 📄 £</p> <p>Clerk reported on in-house training provided by the Essex Association of Local Councils for all Councillors and a budget allocated of £550. Dates & content to be advised in due course. The Mayor requested all Councillors attend the training (evening September 2023). The Clerk reported she would make contact with neighbouring Councils to offer a joint training session.</p>
23/181.	<p>PLANNING APPLICATIONS 📄</p> <p>I. To consider planning applications received (see attachment).</p> <p>(a) 231503 Proposed two storey extension over existing garage. 9 Empress Drive, West Mersea – TC Comment: No objections</p> <p>(b) (b) 231573 Conversion and extension of existing garage to annex. 1 Queensbury Close, West Mersea – TC Comment: No objections</p> <p>(c) 231680 Application for variation of condition 2 following grant of planning permission of application 190198. 21 Prince Albert Road, West Mersea TC Comment: No objections</p> <p>(d) 231598 Demolish existing 3-bed bungalow and construct 4-bed chalet bungalow with associated facilities. 46 Victory Road, West Mersea TC Comment: WMTC recommend refusal on the following grounds:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">It is contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan Policy WM7 regarding loss of bungalows and chalets.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">It is in conflict with Neighbourhood Plan Policy WM29 regarding design considerations.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">It does not conform to Highways requirements and has been recommended for refusal by Highways.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that Councillors must not submit comments as a member of the public on planning applications.</p> <p>Cllr. Powling requested returning to 231680 – the Clerk advised the decision/comments had been agreed and advised Cllr. Powling to make contact with the Monitoring Officer re a Declaration of Interest within 28 days.</p> <p>(e) 231613 Application for variation of condition 2 & 3 following grant of planning permission of application F/COL/06/1621 Hengrove House, 1A Grove Avenue, West Mersea TC Comment: No objections</p> <p>(f) 231665 Proposed 3 bedroom house. 9 Brickhouse Close, West Mersea TC Comment: WMTC recommend refusal as it is considered to overdevelopment of the site. Infilling is only supported if in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is contrary to policy WM27 as it is not in keeping with the area</p> <p>(g) 231703 Proposed alterations to front porch, side and rear single storey extension. 43 Firs Road, West Mersea TC Comment: No objections</p> <p>(h) 231695 Proposed new 3m deep rear extension with monopitch roof. 29 Chatsworth Road, West Mersea TC Comment: No objections</p>

	<p>Cllr. Jarvis asked in relation to formation of a Planning Committee/Delegation of Planning responses. September 2023 Agenda</p> <p>II. Applications passed</p> <p>(a) 231190 Proposed first floor extension to front elevation, including balcony. 7 Shears Crescent, West Mersea – Plan link 231190</p> <p>(b) 230900 Two storey rear extension with additional dormers. 49 Mill Road, West Mersea - Decision link 230900</p> <p>(c) 231208 Single storey rear extension. 4 Strood Close, West Mersea - Decision link 231208</p> <p>(d) 230750 Demolition of existing rear extension, rebuild new extension. Alter and extending existing dormer. Cladding the gables and inserting new windows. New windows to utility room. 7 Strood Close, West Mersea - Decision link 230750</p> <p>(e) 231339 First floor side extension to existing detached house (resubmission of 222465) 6 Kingsland Beach, West Mersea - Decision link 231339</p>
23/182.	<p>COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL – CONSULTATIONS</p> <p>a) TRAFFIC ORDER 202 🖱️</p> <p>To introduce ‘No Waiting At Any Time’ restrictions (double yellow lines) at the High Street North and Mersea Avenue junction and the area on the opposite side of the junction; at the St Peters Road and New Captains Road junction and the area on the opposite side of the junction; at the St Peters Road and Mersea Avenue junction and the area on the opposite side of the junction, at the Kingsland Road and Kingsland Beach junction and the area on the opposite side of the junction, at the Kingsland Road and Kingsland Close junction and the area on the opposite side of the junction and the Kingsland Road and Goings Lane junction and the area on the opposite side of the junction.</p> <p>2. To revoke ‘No Waiting 8am to 6pm’ (single yellow line) restriction and replace with ‘No Waiting At Any Time’ restrictions (double yellow lines) at the High Street North and Firs Chase junction and the area on the opposite side of the junction</p> <p>Council to review and submit comments by 25th August 2023.</p> <p>Cllr. Powling reported WMTC put the proposals to NEPP – quoted rule 243 of the Highway Code. The Mayor confirmed errors had been identified on the order. After discussion, it was resolved, no further comments.</p> <p>b) DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS APPLICATION – DAWES LANE (REF: 231696)</p> <p>relates to the public open space element of the landscaping.</p> <p>The meeting was suspended by the Mayor to allow a MOP to share information.</p> <p>Changes were highlighted CL2 increased in size CL1 reduced in size. Transferred in bare earth condition and no fences.</p> <p>Cllr. Powling advised the area could be given to WMTC. Community Orchards suggested. Councillors considered the changes. Cllr. Jarvis suggested appointing a Councillor to monitor this. It was resolved unanimously to continually review the plans and agree responses. Cllr. Holmes was appointed to monitor and report to Council.</p>
23/183.	<p>FINANCE 🖱️ £</p> <p>a) To approve payments to be made (separate schedule). Cllr. Moore & Cllr. Jarvis checked and signed the schedule. All in favour.</p> <p>b) Clerk reported on further finance information (including VAT, quote from Full Power Utilities - OPUS Energy – Electric for 4 toilet blocks – contract ends 18/09/23, EVERFLOW water – water for all our sites – contract ends 04/09/23. Proposed Cllr. Powling, Seconded Cllr. Jarvis All in favour. Clerk to review other areas where costs could be saved (Town Council Office).</p> <p>c) Clerk reported some additional information was requested by PKF Littlejohn which has been supplied. Awaiting further contact.</p> <p>d) Clerk to report emergency expenditure (approved by the Mayor & Town Clerk/RFO – Financial</p>

	<p>Regulations 3.12).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smoke Alarms – Office £685 & VAT - Dangerous manhole lid coast road £375 & VAT - Staff Meeting expenses £43.80 x 6 staff - Water Meter Changing places - £749 - Wallgate electric shock - £689.49 & Vat <p>e) Review of bank signatories & appointment of additional signatories (Barclays Bank, Unity Trust Bank, NS&I, Barclaycard) – deferred.</p> <p>f) <i>It was resolved</i> unanimously to proceed with the following expenditure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Office – Emergency Lighting in all areas - £1,250.00 & VAT - Maintenance Office – Emergency Lighting in 3 areas £950.00 & VAT
23/184.	<p>ACTION PLAN</p> <p>The Clerk reported that an Action Plan was required to enable Councillors and residents to continually review progress. Cllr. Jarvis asked for additional time to review & suggested a package allowing access to add information. <i>It was resolved</i>, unanimously, to allow time for Cllr. Jarvis to review. September Agenda. The Clerk reported progress had already been made and explained the Local Council Accreditation Scheme and the intention to apply for the Foundation level.</p>
23/185.	<p>CONTACT FROM RESIDENTS</p> <p>Clerk reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of anti-social behaviour (cars) in Victoria Esplanade car park. A discussion took place on the history of closing the gate. NEPP had previously reviewed and the statistics had been low on reported incidents. Situation to be monitored. The Chairman permitted a MOP to add information about people camping, ANPRs & public space protection orders (PSPO). Cllr. Powling added information from CCC on use of ANPR cameras & PSPO orders on the Beach & Wiloughby were being progressed. • FOI Request received – Clerk reported she would be reviewing all requests and reporting to Council. • Hedges – suggestion not been done for some time. Some requests received for cutting at Cemetery & Allotments. Quotations have been received. September Agenda.
23/186.	<p>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC 🇬🇧</p> <p><i>It was resolved</i> 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.</p> <p>Members discussed and agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel Committee recommendations – a report was given on the meeting held at 6pm. • Coast Road Toilet Contract – <i>it was resolved</i>, unanimously to appoint a member of staff to commence on 1st September 2023. Budget allocation of £3,500 for provisions. • Glebe Car Park resurfacing – <i>It was resolved</i> unanimously to approve the car park resurfacing quotation from Centaur construction (£17,576.25 & VAT) with a lead time of 3 or 4 weeks and public closure for 5 or 6 days. • Land at Coast Road – meeting scheduled for 10th August for sign off. • MISA Lease – meeting to be arranged asap with MISA Committee, to include Cllr. Powling. Cllr. Jarvis & Town Clerk. • Legal Services – Clerk approved to obtain quotes for specialist services from Essex County Council Legal Department. • Consider lease Wallgate Maintenance – deferred - more information required.

DRAFT