

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22 JULY 2024

In attendance:

Cllr S Weaver, Mayor	Cllr R Jenkins, Deputy Mayor	Cllr D Boylan
Cllr C Powling	Cllr T Webster	
Petra Palfreyman, Locum Clerk	5 members of the public	

24/152 RECORDING OF MEETING

Chairman requested anyone present to identify their intention to record the meeting.
Locum Town Clerk and Cllr Webster recording.

24/153 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Powling declared that he is a Colchester City Councillor.

24/154 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Hart and City Councillors Davidson and Jowers. No vote was taken.

24/155 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.

MOP 1 – concerns were raised over the amendments to Section 2 of the Annual Return, the fixed asset register and the accuracy of the figures. It was suggested that a further internal audit is sought when the new Town Clerk is appointed. The doctor's surgery has closed its list to new patients and the council was asked to contact the NHS, local MP and City Council with concerns about this. The clerk confirmed the amendments were as advised by the external auditor.

MOP 2 – queried the completeness of the last set of minutes. The clerk advised the minutes were amended after the last meeting. The Integrated Care Board have advised that the doctor's closure to their list is temporary but is as a result of new patients from the new housing developments. Reference was also made to a previous independent consultants report, in which it was recommended that the council was staffed with an RFO and a Town Clerk.

MOP 3 – suggested that the school is also under pressure from the new housing developments and this could be resolved by removing the residents of the holiday parks from those lists. Also believed the AGAR is in breach of the guidelines as the figures do not reconcile.

MOP 4 – the notice of election for 29 August 2024 has not been published on the West Mersea Town Council website yet and will we hold a meeting to agree whether or not to send out poll cards.

24/156 To agree the appointment of a locum Town Clerk, the hourly rate, and tenure
Deferred to the confidential section of the meeting

24/157 To approve the internal audit to 31 March 2024

Following discussion **it was resolved** by a majority vote to accept the Internal Audit report.
Proposed: Cllr Jenkins, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. Against: Cllr Webster.

24/158 To discuss and agree the amendments to AGAR Section Two – Accounting Statements 2023/24

Following discussion **it was resolved** by a majority vote to accept the amendments to the AGAR Section 2. Proposed: Cllr Jenkins, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. Against: Cllr Webster.

24/159 To discuss and agree a contractor for works to the boardwalk, Coast Road

Three quotes have been obtained for the works to the boardwalk, Coast Road. Cllr Powling advised that a grant for £25,000 has been awarded from Colchester City Council Levelling Up fund, and the appropriate permissions from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) will be sought. Natural England are in favour of the work and would like to see this completed in the near future. Following discussion, the quote for just under £50,000 excluding VAT, was accepted. **It was resolved** to accept Deck Safe Solutions quotation. Proposed: Cllr Weaver, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. All in favour.

24/160 To agree up to an additional £30,000 costs, in addition to the grant, for works to the boardwalk, Coast Road

Cllr Powling confirmed the additional spending of £30000 required to complete the boardwalk works, is already in the budget. **It was resolved** to go ahead with the additional spending. Proposed: Cllr Powling, Seconded: Cllr Weaver. All in favour.

24/161 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- To consider Planning Application received
 - (a) 241415
New boat store to replace existing garage. 10 Kingsland Close, West Mersea. This Council has no comment to make.
- To receive notification of Planning Decision (application passed)
 - (a) 240961
Side extension and raising of roof and front balcony.
Tinkerbell Cottage, 79 Fairhaven Avenue, West Mersea.

24/162 To discuss public toilets cleaning cover for 2024/25

Following discussion it was agreed that plans should be in place for the occasions when our toilet cleaning employee is on annual leave. Seven quotes were sought and two received. **It was resolved** to accept the GLC Cleaning quote for £2,160 for the cleans needed between August 2024 and March 2025. Proposed: Cllr Powling, Seconded: Cllr Webster. All in favour.

24/163 To discuss and agree the quote for a new office laptop and docking station

Two quotes were received for replacement of a new laptop and docking station. Following discussion **it was resolved** to accept the quote from the local provider, who will also transfer all the data and set the laptop up. Proposed: Cllr Jenkins, Seconded: Cllr Weaver. All in favour.

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.

24/164 To consider recruitment of a Town Clerk and other members of staff and agree the job specification and advertisement

Discussions were held regarding the Town Clerk vacancy and the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) position was considered. Adverts for the Town Clerk will be placed in the local paper this week. Cllr Weaver will review and circulate the job specification.

Chair of Personnel to report and any recommendations considered
Nothing to report.

24/156 To agree the appointment of a locum Town Clerk, the hourly rate, and tenure

The locum Town Clerk agreed to work until a new clerk was appointed or until she was no longer needed/unavailable. Hours up to 16 per week were approved at the agreed hourly rate. ***It was resolved*** to agree these terms. Proposed: Cllr Powling, Seconded: Cllr Weaver. All in favour.

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