

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 31ST JULY 2025

In attendance:

Cllr T Webster (Mayor)	Cllr J Akker	Cllr D Baker
Cllr D Boylan	Cllr N Hinderwell	Cllr R Jenkins
Cllr S Weaver	Cllr M Williams	Kirsty Wadsworth (Town Clerk)

25/226 Apologies for absence

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Powling and Cllr Robert Davidson.

25/227 Declarations of interest

None received.

25/228 Public participation

MOP-1 A local resident mentioned a previous vexatious complaint to bar him from WMTC after he called for some information on the Glebe to be made public and criticised WMTC's failure to follow their own Standing Orders. Stated that he had withdrawn his FOI request because of the unacceptable cost to the Council. Pleased about the prospect of a proper consultation concerning the Glebe Pavillion and requested some councillor resignations.

MOP-2 Raised complaints and asked for some action on the illegal local raves/parties at beach at Shingle Point. Concerned about the damage to boats and properties, the noise pollution, litter, disposal of waste, smashed bottles, evidence of drug use and general disturbance. Complaints have been made to the police seeking PCSO attendance. Mentioned that the raves are advertised on Instagram and across the wider Essex area. West Mersea Town Council to write to Sergeant Mark Thrower to reiterate these concerns.

25/229 To receive County and City Councillors reports

None received.

25/230 To confirm minutes of the Council meeting of 10th July 2025

It was resolved by majority to accept the minutes of the 10th July 2025 with the amendment below:
25/207 Cllr Akker and Cllr Webster to be added to the list of signatories.
Proposed: Cllr Akker, Seconded: Cllr Williams. Abstain: Cllr Boylan.

25/231 To confirm minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting of 25th July 2025

It was resolved unanimously to accept the minutes of the 25th July 2025 with the following comment added to MOP1 – The local resident would like it noted that he feels victimised by the Council.
Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Akker. All in favour.

Agenda 25/234 was moved. All in favour.

25/234 To discuss and agree each of the Mersea drain invoices:

- High pressure water jetted clearing blockage- all tested flowing and clear at a cost of £180 including VAT- 11/12/2023

- High pressure water jetted clearing blockage- all tested flowing and clear at a cost of £180 including VAT- 12/12/2023
- High pressure water jetted clearing blockage- carry out repair to inspection chamber benching at a cost of £240 including VAT -03/01/2024

It was resolved by majority to pay each of the Mersea drain invoices.

Proposed: Cllr Jenkins, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. Abstained Cllr Hinderwell, Cllr Williams and Cllr Webster.

25/232 To agree and approve:

- (a) A list of regular payments
- (b) A list of payments

- (a) None received.
- (b) A list of payments was agreed – future payment schedules to be discussed with the RFO.

25/233 To provide an update from the following committees:

- (a) Community Assets/Facilities
- (b) Environment and Community Services
- (c) Finance and Strategy
- (d) Personnel

The following updates were provided:

- (a) Community Assets/Facilities
 - Currently there are no updates other than the broken paving slabs will be on the agenda for the 12th August Finance and Strategy Committee meeting.
- (b) Environment and Community Services
 - The Government has approved money for the go ahead at Sizewell in terms of a new nuclear project there. There is a consultation document that will need considering in relation to developments at Bradwell. More nuclear reactors are being favoured by the Government. In contact with BANNG and the Local authority group to see what can be done in terms of protecting West Mersea's position.
 - Important to keep the existing Bradwell- old nuclear station on the agenda as there is a large amount of nuclear waste which is stored there. An enquiry has been submitted to the Environment Agency about the accuracy of the sea water and the flooding.
 - Local Plan- no news – Councillors are saying that the plan can't be finalised without updates to the infrastructure.
- (c) Finance and Strategy
 - There will be a Finance and Strategy meeting on the 18th August. The meeting will be attended by the RFO.
- (d) Personnel
 - A Personnel meeting is pending and will be arranged as soon as is practicable.

25/235 To receive the Town Clerk's report:

The following report was given by the Town Clerk:

- Job descriptions are being reviewed
- Ash tree has been removed in School Field West Mersea Park and stress cracked branches have been tidied up in Barfield Road Cemetery
- Manhole covers have been repaired/replaced
- A quote for a CCTV survey of all the drains is in progress
- Town Clerk attended Martyn's Law webinar
- Panther Security at the yard – some areas need further investigative work
- Drains cleared St Georges square
- Fairhaven urinal flusher has been installed and signed off

- Library men's toilet- removed and repaired door and fitted new temporary lock
- Ladies' toilet seat at Willoughby – toilet seat replaced
- Broomhills Greensward- solicitor contacted regarding registering the land to West Mersea Town Council
- Coast Road path- waiting to hear back from DM team at highways to see if the scheme is permitted development
- Tree survey – asked 6 companies – one refusal to date

25/236 To approve and agree a donation of £200 for the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Services which will include the cost of the poppy wreath

A donation of £200 for the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Services which will include the cost of the poppy wreath **was agreed unanimously** under the General Power of Competence.

Proposed: Cllr Akker, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. All in favour.

25/237 The decision was made by the Town Clerk and the Chair of the Assets and Community Facilities Committee under the delegated spending power of less than £1000 to pay to:

- (a) Take down and remove the Ash tree in School Field West Mersea Park at a cost of £750 + VAT
- (b) To remove the stress cracked branches and tidy up old cuts in Barfield Road Cemetery at a cost of £550 + VAT

This decision was noted in the council meeting.

25/238 To review and agree the following policies and documents:

- (a) IT Policy

It was resolved unanimously to approve the IT policy with the following amendments:

All employees and councillors will at the beginning of each 4-year term receive training on email security and best practices in accordance with section 13 of the IT policy. This will include any new councillors as they join.

Section 16- The Town Clerk is to be the appointed name for IT related enquiries or assistance.

Proposed: Cllr Jenkins, Seconded: Cllr Akker. All in favour.

25/239 To consider and note the Desktop Building Reinstatement Assessment

The Desktop Building Reinstatement Assessment was noted by the councillors and is to be discussed at the next council meeting once further information has been received.

25/240 To note the ROSPA annual play park inspection report and agree next steps

After discussion **it was resolved** unanimously for Cllr Webster and the Town Clerk as health and safety representatives and Cllr Baker and Cllr Webster as Play Park representatives to meet with the two groundsmen to discuss the ROSPA report.

Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Baker. All in favour.

25/241 To agree to pay for the Town Clerk to attend the online Nimble training course at a cost of £17 + VAT

It was resolved unanimously to pay for the Town Clerk to attend the online Nimble training course at a cost of £17 + VAT. Proposed: Cllr Hinderwell, Seconded: Cllr Webster. All in favour.

25/242 To decide and approve who will be duly authorised to make the declaration on behalf of the council with the Changing Places lease

It was resolved unanimously to approve for the Town Clerk to make the declaration on behalf of the council with the Changing Places lease.

Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Hinderwell. All in favour.

25/243 To review and agree next steps for the vegetation clearance in the Youth Field, West Mersea Park at a cost of £1,860 +VAT as requested by Colchester Borough Homes Policy/Document Reviews

It was resolved unanimously to defer this item until further updates have been received. It will then be added as an agenda item.

Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Baker. All in favour.

25/244 To receive an update regarding the Local Plan

Update was received under 25/233.

25/245 To receive an update about the Anglian Water meeting

- Been invited through Sir Bernard Jenkin to undertake a visit to the water treatment centre. Said that the 2.3 million pounds which was announced in last August has been spent on the water treatment centre.
- Water supply on to the island – stated there was enough capacity for future houses and water pressure.
- Quality of bathing water and the impact on the oyster industry was raised.
- Hopeful that the Town Council and Colchester City Council can raise a complete set of questions for Anglian Water which should address any concerns.
- Anglian water advised that the money they have spent on the site was to increase what they are treating by 9 metres a second.
- Confirmed there is no raw sewage that goes off the island in tankers to be treated elsewhere.
- Funding cycle- 2 reports have been issued. One details a decline in the water and the second refers to the first report and notes a further decline. If there is a further decline -all the funding has already been allocated.
- Mentioned CCC may be in breach of the Food Standard Agency requirements in terms of pollution of the soil.

25/246 To discuss and agree for the Town Clerk to write to ECC and CCC requesting a meeting with respect to transferring assets to West Mersea Town Council

Following discussion, ***it was resolved*** unanimously for the Town Clerk to write to ECC and CCC to request a meeting with respect to transferring assets to West Mersea Town Council.

Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Akker. All in favour.

25/247 To agree to make enquiries to engage a consultant with regards to the Glebe community building concept

It was resolved unanimously for the Town Clerk to make enquiries to engage a consultant with regards to the Glebe community building concept.

Proposed: Cllr Williams, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. All in favour.

25/248 To discuss and agree to appoint a working group to create a Terms of Reference for a consultant for the Glebe community building concept

It was resolved unanimously to appoint a working group comprising all councillors to create a Terms of Reference for a consultant for the Glebe community building concept.

Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Williams. 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

25/249 To request for the Town Clerk to reduce her lunch break from one hour to half an hour with a corresponding adjustment to the end time, finishing 30 minutes earlier than currently scheduled

Following discussion, ***it was resolved*** unanimously for the Town Clerk to reduce her lunch break from one hour to half an hour and finish half hour earlier from Monday-Friday, with Friday's working day commencing half hour later than scheduled and finishing at the scheduled time.

Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Williams. All in favour.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.