

**WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026**

In attendance:

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

26/08 Apologies for absence

No apologies received.

26/09 Declarations of interest

Cllr Powling declared he was a Colchester City Councillor, and a First Responder on duty.

26/10 Public participation

No members present.

26/11 To receive County and City Councillors reports:

Report received from Cllr Jowers:

- Stated that he would persist in asking Essex County Council for a traffic survey to be completed on the island.
- Noted that the structure of the parishes may change with the local area committees.
- Councillor Webster raised a health and safety concern with Cllr Jowers over the condition of a path outside the local school, where a child was witnessed hurting themselves.

Report received from Cllr Davidson:

- Gave his apologies for not attending West Mersea Town Council meetings regularly.
- Colchester has opted for 5 unitaries which could mean one local committee for the whole of Colchester borough. In turn this would mean that the money in the pot would be less likely to go to rural areas.
- Clear plastic bags have been ordered for recycling for the coming year.
- Concerns that Colchester City Council are rushing the Local Plan through.

Report received from Cllr Parsons:

- There has been a change in planning law which removes Sport England from being a statutory consultee for planning applications involving playing fields.
- Noted that the Local Plan leaflet contains a sentence stating that the Colchester City Council has decided to plan for 20,800 new houses, 1,300 each year where it should state that it is a government decision. A correction is to be added on West Mersea's website noting this error.
- The government has cancelled Mayoral elections for next year and there is press speculation about cancelling Local Council elections. CCC and ECC do not want to postpone.
- Planning is now in favour of the developers.

Report received from Cllr Powling:

- Stated that all matters had been addressed already.

26/12 To confirm minutes of the Council meeting of 9th January 2026

***It was resolved*** unanimously to accept the minutes of 9th January 2026.

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

26/13 To agree and approve a list of payments

A list of payments was approved.

26/14 To provide an update from:

- (a) Committees
- (b) Working Groups
- (c) Representatives

An update was received.

26/15 To receive the Town Clerk's report

- Office boiler annual service completed on 2nd December.
- Permissive footpath posts installed on 10th December.
- England Coast Path - Way marker post installed at Monkey Beach on 12th December.
- Tree stumps - work completed 16th December.
- Toilets - Wallgate fascias installed on 22nd December.
- New photocopier installed 22nd December.
- Glebe fencing installed 5th January. Reflectors to be added by the groundsman.
- School Gardens metal benches - the metal slats have been taken away, and the benches have been fenced off.
- SSSI maintenance - work started 12th January - Phase 1 and Phase 2.
- Infrared heater for Rushmere to be installed on 19th January.
- Hedge cutting - all completed except for Feldy View Woodland Cemetery hedge which is scheduled for February.
- Panther Security annual maintenance - office alarm booked for 13th February.
- Fairhaven toilet roof - Pending paperwork.
- School Gardens recycled plastic picnic bench will be ordered next month ready to be installed in March.
- Toilets - deep cleaning booked for 2nd/3rd March.
- Toilets - Wallgate systems repaired at Coast Road.
- Tree survey completed - quotes pending.
- Beacon- Basket has been straightened - brackets to make next.

26/16 To consider and approve the Grounds Maintenance Tender

***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve the first option for the Grounds Maintenance Tender.

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

26/17 To agree the Council's Budget for 2026/27 and to agree for the precept proposal to be submitted to Colchester City Council on 16th January 2027

Cllr Hinderwell raised a point of order for Agenda item 26/17 and 26/28.

Following discussion Cllr Webster raised point 1q from the Standing Orders.

Agenda item 26/17 - To agree the Council's Budget for 2026/27 and to agree for the precept proposal to be submitted to Colchester City Council on 16th January 2027 was deferred. An Extraordinary Finance & Strategy Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 20th January.

Agenda item 26/28 - To discuss and agree the wage structure for 2026/27 was deferred. An Extraordinary Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 21st January.

- 26/18 To approve the quotation to install a new footpath using a compacted gravel finish at Coast Road:  
Option A - £9,638.50 + VAT  
Option B - £7,761.00 + VAT  
Option C - £20,145.00 + VAT

***It was resolved*** unanimously to defer installing a new footpath using a compacted gravel finish at Coast Road until a like for like quote can be sourced for installing a 250mm type 1 sub-base.  
Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. All in favour.

- 26/19 To review and agree the quotation for the repair of the skatepark: Option A - £1,940.50 + VAT  
Option B - £7,101.00 + VAT  
Option C - £10,295.32 + VAT

***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve Option C for the repair of the skatepark.  
Proposed: Cllr Powling, Seconded: Cllr Weaver. All in favour.

- 26/20 To agree the quotation for the supply and installation of the gate at Wellhouse park at a cost of £1,195.00 + VAT

***It was resolved*** unanimously to agree the quotation for the supply and installation of the gate at Wellhouse park at a cost of £1,195.00 + VAT.  
Proposed: Cllr Boylan, Seconded: Cllr Powling. All in favour.

- 26/21 To approve for the Town Clerk to renew her annual SLCC subscription at a cost of £379.00

***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve for the Town Clerk to renew her annual SLCC subscription at a cost of £379.00.  
Proposed: Cllr Akker, Seconded: Cllr Webster. All in favour.

- 26/22 To agree the CiLCA Learning and Confidentiality Agreement and for the Town Clerk to complete the CiLCA training at a cost of £1,350.00 (£860.00 payable to the EALC and £490.00 payable to the SLCC) subject to an annual price increase

***It was resolved*** unanimously to agree the CiLCA Learning and Confidentiality Agreement and for the Town Clerk to complete the CiLCA training at a cost of £1,350.00 (£860.00 payable to the EALC and £490.00 payable to the SLCC) subject to an annual price increase.  
Proposed: Cllr Powling, Seconded: Cllr Boylan. All in favour.

- 26/23 To approve for the Town Clerk to attend the Co-option, Casual Vacancy and Election course (cost is yet to be confirmed)

***It was resolved*** unanimously to defer approving for the Town Clerk to attend the Co-option, Casual Vacancy and Election course. Proposed: Cllr Webster, Seconded: Cllr Akker. All in favour.

- 26/24 The decision was made by the Town Clerk using her delegated powers and the Chair of the Environment Community Services Committee and Local Plan for the payment of the Local Plan leaflets - 5000x copies A4 folded at a cost of £192.50 (due to a change of content)

The decision was noted.

- 26/25 The decision was made by the Town Clerk using her delegated powers to replace the breaker and wire a supply for a daylight sensor on the lime tree Christmas tree lights on the Church Green at a cost of £265.00 + VAT

The decision was noted.

26/26 To agree to review and where necessary carry out Health and Safety Risk Assessments for all public open spaces under the Council's control

***It was resolved*** unanimously to review and where necessary carry out Health and Safety Risk Assessments for all public open spaces under the Council's control.

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

26/27 To approve the quotation to install an emergency cord in the High Street disabled toilet at a cost of £380.00 + VAT

***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve the quotation to install an emergency cord in the High Street disabled toilet at a cost of £380.00 + VAT.

Proposed: Cllr Jenkins, 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.

26/28 To discuss and agree the wage structure for 2026/27

This item was addressed under agenda item 26/17.

Meeting ended at 8.40pm.