



Wivenhoe Town Council

MINUTES of the Full Town Council meeting held in the Council Chamber on Monday 17 October 2022 at 7.30pm **Chair Approved**

Present: Cllr Kane (Chair), Cllr Luxford-Vaughan, Cllr Burke, Cllr Andrew, Cllr Aldis, Cllr Multon, Cllr Wenaden, Cllr Read, Cllr Evans, Cllr Boughton, J Beighton-Emms (Town Clerk), Emma Buckley (RFO), Maurice Howard (Accountant) on Zoom, Peter Kay (Public Transport Representative) and one member of the public.

Public Questions: None

PART A

FC/10.22/01 Apologies for absence; Cllr Maltby, Cllr Henley, ECC Cory and CBC Cllr Burrows

FC/10.22/02 Declarations of interest: None.

FC/10.22/03 Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on 26 September 2022 were proposed by Cllr Multon, seconded by Cllr Burke and approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

FC/10.22/04 Reports from Members of County and Borough Councillors & Public Transport Representative;

- a. The councillors considered a previously circulated report from Cllr Cory which is attached as **Appendix A**.

Regarding point 6, Cllr Andrew suggested that an alternative route should be found. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan proposed that WTC does not support the installation of further signage. This was seconded by Cllr Multon and voted for by majority, with one abstention. The Town Clerk will inform Cllr Cory.

Cllr Evans reported that Wivenhoe Trail is being repaired but that the crushed granite being used is too loose and the work is inadequate. There is also further damage to the sea wall along by Ferry Marsh. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan responded that this should be a matter for the EA. Cllr Boughton agreed to contact them.

Cllr Wenaden reported that the workmanship by Lila Connect is poor particularly when relaying pavements. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan responded that CBC got the licence for this installation and that once the hardware is laid all other companies will be providers only. It was noted from the Town Clerk's report that another provider wished to speak to the council ahead of the next FTC meeting. It was agreed that Cllr Cory should be invited to attend.

- b. The councillors considered a previously circulated report from Cllr Burrows which is attached as **Appendix B**.

Cllr Multon requested that the Town Clerk once again asks the ECC/CBC councillors to provide reports in good time and not just ahead of a meeting.

The councillor considered a previously circulated report from Cllr Luxford-Vaughan which is attached as **Appendix C**.

Cllr Luxford-Vaughan reported that matters relate to her CBC work. The investment zones will affect this area and are contentious. These have not been voted on by CBC – there was not an enquiry just an expression of interest. It was agreed that the views of Sir Bernard Jenkin MP should be sought. Also, that his support is requested for the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan proposed that WTC write to Sir Bernard Jenkin on these matters. This was seconded by Cllr Andrew and agreed by majority, with one abstention.

- c. The council considered a previously circulated report from Peter Kay which is attached as **Appendix D**.

Mr Kay suggested that Sir Bernard Jenkin is also asked for an update on the letter to the Secretary of State regarding the Paget Road crossing.

FC/10.22/05 Update from Cllr Kane on the Office Redevelopment & Proposal that: 'WTC seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan for the purpose of redeveloping the council offices and yard'.

Maurice explained that the Financial Report (previously circulated) outlines the situation with figures currently available for the cost of the works. The total cost of the project will be £655k, with a loan of £500k and £103k already funded. He advised that there is no indication of how interest rates will change- the project has been costed based on an interest rate of 3.58%.

Three builders were approached earlier this year for indicative costs. They have now indicated that costs have risen by 11-15%.

Cllr Wenaden asked if reserves could be used. Cllr Kane explained that these have been earmarked and that it is prudent financial management to retain a certain level of reserves. It was agreed that Cllr Kane will draft an article about the reserves for the next WTC newsletter.

Following the debate the vote took place.

At the Wivenhoe Town Council meeting of 17 October 2022 it was RESOLVED to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £500,000 over the borrowing term of 25 years for the purpose of redeveloping the council offices at 77 High Street, Wivenhoe, Essex CO7 9AB. The annual loan repayments will come to around £30,000. It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

FC/10.22/06 Committees:

- a) Planning: Cllr Read reported that the most important current matter is the Taylor Wimpey Appeal. He advised that it had been agreed that WTC would not be taking up Rule 6

status, which means that CBC will make representations on WTC's behalf and WTC can not be found liable for costs. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan advised that WTC have asked to be formally invited to attend.

- b) Personnel: No update. The Town Clerk advised that the next Personnel Committee meeting will be combined with the Finance Committee.
- c) Environment: Cllr Evans reported that a meeting is being arranged to discuss the future of Ferry Marsh and a leaflet to be circulated ahead of the public consultation. In attendance will be Nick Christo, CBC, Dr Chris Gibson and representatives from Natural England and Essex Wildlife Trust. Cllr Multon asked if opposing views (ie not to close off the marsh to the public) would be heard at this meeting. Cllr Evans said that he expects so- this meeting is for the wording of the leaflet.

Cllr Evans has met with ECC for discussion on funding for a Biodiversity Action Plan following the green spaces project. Cllr Burke reported that she had a useful call with CBC regarding the review of the WNP. Officers at CBC are keen for the Biodiversity Action Plan to be included in the revised WNP. WTC will be allocated a dedicated CBC officer to work with us on the review.

- d) Estates: Cllr Aldis reported that the next Committee meeting will be 26 October. An alternative surveyor has been approached to look at the old cemetery wall. Cllr Aldis and Cllr Kane said that they would like to attend the site visit which is to be arranged by the Town Clerk..
- e) Finance & Administration: Cllr Kane reported that WTC is on target for the approved budget for the first half of this financial year.

The councillors considered a list of Community Fund applications which have been previously agreed by the Finance Committee. Cllr Burke declared an interest in Wiv Gigs as a member of this club.

The list was proposed by Cllr Kane, seconded by Cllr Multon will all in favour.

FC/10.22/07 RFO Update

- a. The council considered a previously circulated RFO Report, which is attached at **Appendix E**. Cllr Read said that there are a number of future projects which need to be considered for budgeting and ear marked reserves including the new cemetery, new allotments and new open spaces.
Cllr Kane agreed and said that all councillors will be contacted as a reminder to consider budgeting for future projects. Lots of work has already been done for next year's budget in preparation for the PWLB loan application. It is likely that the precept will be increased by 6% which Cllr Kane considers reasonable in the current economic climate.
- b. The council considered a previously circulated Bank Reconciliation which is attached as **Appendix F**. This was proposed for approval by Cllr Boughton, seconded by Cllr Kane, with all in favour.

- c. The council considered a previously circulated list of payments, which is attached as **Appendix G**. These were proposed for payment by Cllr Boughton, seconded by Cllr Kane, and approved by all.

FC/10.22/08 Working Group Reports:

- a. Youth Hub: Cllr Luxford-Vaughan reported that work continues on the container, such as installing electricity and windows. It is hoped that the Youth Hub will be open for mid November. The volunteers have received training. More funding is likely to be applied for, for items such as the outdoor canopy but lots of materials have been donated for free such as the decking. Running costs will also need to be funded.
Cllr Luxford-Vaughan requested that the lease agreement boundary diagram includes the outdoor space. The Town Clerk will re-circulate the draft agreement.
- b. Office & Yard: See above.
The tender documents will be published this week. A meeting will be arranged with the architect to consider all tender bids once the closing date has passed.
The funding officer will begin looking at funding opportunities for this project, such as for solar panels.
- c. Health & Wellbeing: Cllr Wenaden reported that a meeting to discuss 'warm spaces' has been planned for 19 October. Erwin Lammens has created a list of local groups and spaces. Cllr Wenaden would like more for families.
- d. Community Engagement: Cllr Multon reported that the final draft of the newsletter has been sent to all councillors today for comment. Next edition will be March 2023.
A further meeting has been held to discuss the updates to the website. Cllr Multon reminded everyone to send a photo of themselves for the new 'our councillors' page.
- e. Travel & Transport: Cllr Andrew was pleased that the Wivenhoe trail was been repaired and would like to see a works plan agreement in place. He has been looking at new cycle stands and would like WTC staff to install them. Cllr Kane said to get some costs and consider this formally through the working group. Cllr Andrew has identified some sites which he will circulate.
Cllr Andrew is waiting on an update from ECC on the 24 hour HGV ban. Cllr Aldis suggested that there may be an issue with this as access is needing for the quarries.

Cllr Andrew has been looking at the Vision for Colchester. Cllr Wenaden suggested working with the Health & Wellbeing WG to look at achievable ideas to promote less car travel. Cllr Kane agreed that he would like to see some practical proposals.

Cllr Andrew suggested installing more benches on the quay to stop parking. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan said that this would be creating an obstruction on a public highway. Cllr Aldis said that this area has always been an issue because of the matter of ownership of areas of land. ECC need to lead on this.

Cllr Kane suggested that Cllr Andrew carries out more reinvestigation work on this and comes back to the council with convincing conclusions and proposals. Permissions need to be sought to make any changes.

Mr Kay said that he has circulated an email with information on the work that has already been done on this matter. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan said that the area from the Rose & Crown towards the public pontoon is already a live project for the LHP- the idea is to tarmac the pathway.

- f. Mayoral Activities: Cllr Kane said that the Civic Service was a success and thanked the staff.

FC/10.22/09 Town Clerk Report: The council considered a previously circulated report from the Town Clerk, which is attached as **Appendix H**.

FC/10.22/10 Date and time of the next meeting: It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on Monday 21 November 2022 at 7.30pm.

FC/1K.22/11 Exclusion of press and public: In accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Council is invited to consider if the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item(s) owing to the confidential nature of the business.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.04.

PART B

None

Appendix A

Cllr Mark Cory – Wivenhoe Town Council Report: 17/10/2022

Essex County Council matters:

1. Road Repairs/Roadworks:

Pothole Repairs: Station Road has been investigated and will have repairs made, I am pushing for micro-resurfacing and not just patching.

Pavements: Manor Road is mid pavement repair. I had reported a number of problem areas there and ECC decide to do the whole road.

Highways Panel: No new updates on the Highways panel. I could schedule another meeting with the Highways Panel Officer early in the new year.

Completed works: The Clingoe Hill works are fully complete.

2. Wivenhoe Trail:

Work has started on the Wivenhoe Trail. Following a lack of signage and numerous complaints, I contacted officers and asked for more signage to be put in place and repeated that access to be

made available as much as possible. Weekends are kept free. I have re-shared the closure of the path information online.

3. HAF Activities:

An bid has been submitted to ECC for HAF provision over the Christmas Holidays, but Ben Gale, from the TinyRugbySchool has explained that the budgets at ECC were too limited to access it for Wivenhoe for the Half Term. I am taking this up with ECC politicians.

4. Locality Grant:

My ECC Locality Grant has been cut in half to £5,000 to cover two communities. I will soon outline how my £2,500 will be spent, but any final ideas are welcomed.

5. Youth Hub Project:

No new updates, the funding is being spent and the project is closer to completion.

6. Cycling on West Quay:

Cycling is not permitted along the narrow section of West Quay, from the western end to Dry Dock – I would like the support of WTC to install more signage. There remains a £500 budget that I allocated, held by WTC for measures to discouraged cycling on this section of the key..

Colchester Borough Report:

7. Cost of Living Support:

There is a significant amount of work underway supporting residents, but it is easier to share separately. I will send this information separately, including a link to the developing Map of Warm Spaces.

8. Ferry Marsh:

Frustratingly slow progress on this. Cllr Evans and I finally have a meeting next week to finalise the consultation plans on the future management of Ferry Marsh. We will share with WTC, key stakeholders and the public as soon as possible.

9. Tree Wardens:

I have helped support a conversation started by Lyndall Rosewarne and supported by Cllr Evans to re-introduce a Tree Warden Scheme. Wivenhoe could once again lead the way with a pilot. I will stay close to this and support but will leave Cllr Evans to lead the way.

10. Police Patrol – updates and action

We continue to work closely with PCSO Emma Wright, who updates us as borough councillors regularly. We are dealing with issues as they come up – e.g. currently a door to door visit in Barley Court.

Appendix B

Cllr Burrows Report

I am following up on some issues around residents not having had vx fibre cables laid in their road if they live in unadopted or private roads.

VX Fiber does not use BT ducts as it involves a 5-year leasing framework and is contractually risky. VXF builds its own physical infrastructure. However, even to lay fibre cables through BT ducts, a third party requires wayleaves if the land is not adopted. The legislation in this area is extremely onerous.

There are three types of land ownership that they are observing in Wivenhoe:

- 1 – Adopted highway, which is straightforward, with build conducted under Code Powers.
- 2 – Land strips or segments owned by the local residents (named on the Titles), which are relatively straightforward – we will require a signed Permission to Work document from each of the parties named on the Title(s). As long as they ALL sign the PtW documents, works can progress.
- 3 – Land strips or segments owned by the WTC and/or private entities, including Taylor Wimpey. These are much more complex and likely to involve wayleaves, which can be difficult and costly to secure. These locations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The vx fibre team are writing a communication to residents who have registered an interest in having vx fibre and I contacted them again today, as this communication was promised to do it last Friday. I will update as soon as I have more information.

I am also starting work on a new, small, community project with Mark and Andrea, involving the Royal Legion, Local Primary Schools, Wivenhoe Dementia Support Group and one other demographic, which, at the heart of it, aims to open directions with these groups about ways in which we might be able to support residents in whatever way is needed (maybe mental health and well being, help with cost of living etc).

At Wivenhoe Dementia Support Group we have started talking about how we could use some of our money to offer some kind of financial support for the lived ones of people living with dementia to help them access some level of respite care.

Appendix C

Cllr Luxford-Vaughan Report

Transport East's Annual Summit

I attended Transport East's Annual Summit where a new regional Transport Strategy was launched. The overall aim of the summit was to explore the strategic transport priorities for the region.

Topics covered were:-

Rural Mobility in the East: Understanding the challenges of sustainable rural journeys and the development of a Centre of Excellence on Rural Mobility.

Connecting Growing Places: Exploring the low-carbon transport solutions needed for thriving towns and cities.

Unlocking International Gateways: Discussing the opportunities to strengthen our role in the international movement of goods and people.

In addition, delegates had the opportunity to hear from the Department for Transport, National Highways and GBRTT about the future direction of transport policy and delivery from national bodies.

Planning Portfolio Holders Meeting

Agenda included;-

Sector Development across Essex (which in English means which employment sectors they believe are the fastest growing). Officers highlighted growth areas along with constraints to business to move here. An example was modular construction, where recently a business was keen to move to the area and needed a site for a factory. However, to date they have not found a suitable location.

Regional Water Resources Strategy & Essex Water Strategy. This presentation explored water quality, supply, and retreatment centres. There will soon be a consultation on future plans for the whole region.

The Gypsy and Traveller Assessment is National policy for traveller sites and is separate from NPPF. It outlines that local authorities need an evidence base to feed into site allocations for these.

There is a planning definition which defines if someone is a gypsy or traveller. However, a new assessment is needed. It is very likely that this assessment will see an increase in numbers as the gypsy and traveller community as they are now far less cynical about the process. Therefore they are more prepared to feed into the process. A Final report on the findings is due at the beginning of 2024.

Investment zones.

The government have released a paper on these and are asking county councils to sign up to show an interest in being part of an investment zone. The county needs us as a Borough to be complicit in pursuing them. David has agreed to the next stage of showing an interest. However, the timescales are alarmingly short and the level of detail about them is extremely limited.

My view as the relevant portfolio holder for planning is that Investment zones look very dangerous in terms of the legal planning framework and look to have no environmental protection within them.

This is a view shared by many who have already spoken out about them. For instance the RSPB have said 'make no mistake, we are angry. This government has today launched an attack on nature'. This statement was then supported by the national trust, wildlife trust and the woodland trust.

Currently there is no mention, or guarantee, of what they will bring forward in terms of additional funding for infrastructure. Other so-called benefits seem to centre around tax exemptions for businesses. The paper includes phases like...accelerate the housing, cut back unnecessary bureaucratic requirements – (presumably that means the democratic process)... Investment Zones will bring forward **additional** development.. a liberalised planning process...new faster and more streamlined consent to grant planning permission....remove burdensome EU requirements – (those being based around environmental protection and human rights) ... reduce lengthy consultation with statutory bodies...relax key national and local policy requirements... planning is not a barrier to the accelerated delivery of these sites...(and probably the most worrying) ...the planning system will **not** stand in the way of investment and development.

In conclusion it looks like the government are planning to dismantle the planning system and are testing the water with investment zones. If Cllrs voted for a local plan to protect us from speculative development we should now be extremely concerned as these zones have the potential to produce speculative development on a cocktail of steroids and cocaine.

I hope that David will be able to outline what the county believe the benefits of the zones could be and also open the decision as to whether to proceed with them up to all Cllrs, once more is known.

Appendix D

BUS

Last month I cleaned all the timetable perspexes and the metal frames at most of the Wiv and Uni bus stops. Also posting 'Information to New Students' at the Uni stops as usual.

RAIL

No less than 23 cars were observed in the station car park on Thursday, twice anything seen since March 2020! However the evening peak trains from Liv St still have only 15-30 people each getting off, probably half of whom are not London commuters.

Looking [belatedly] at the national station usage figs 2020/21, Wivenhoe showed a greater loss of usage than any of the Tendring stations (Wiv 18% of previous, Clacton only 36%). However this just reflects a general greater loss at major London commuter stations, it is the other local stations that were better than average rather than Wiv being worse than one would expect. The 2021/22 figs will be out shortly.

RAPID TRANSIT

Re the quasi-information given in the September presentation to CBC Councillors. This (surprise!) remains vague in vital areas, and is (as ever) devoid of any attempt to estimate likely usage based on the probability of people switching to the RT between each stop and each other stop of the dozen proposed. (Not difficult to do). Only a tiny number of existing residential areas are served (Forest Rd / Greenstead Rd, a few houses around Waitrose, and the new housing west of the NAR). Thus until there is a significant number of houses in the TCBGC itself there will obviously be a very big operating loss, but there is nothing as to who will pay that. Of course the local plan flannel claimed that it would cover its costs from day 1.....

The inclusion of the Knowledge Gateway stop only at the Uni seems to indicate that that is all they are going to get (until *manana* at least). But that is good from a Wiv perspective as, with Uni people being unkeen on walking, all the South Courts and most of the Valley Rd stops' business will remain on the s1 and 87, so no reason to reduce Wiv service levels because of the RT.

COLCHESTER FUTURE TRANSPORT STRATEGY July 2022 final report

This (seemingly a purely ECC production) does not seem to have generated much noise reaction! Like the draft, it is all policy talk, not a strategy on action. The special elephants in the Colchester room are as ever totally ignored – no mention of the 'planning failure' of the especially fast removal of 'destinations' here to places where car travel is assumed, no mention of the reasons why P&R has failed in Colchester (or even recognition that it has). (Indeed it proposes MORE P&R as a main plank in its 'solutions', along of course with RT). The ostrich's head just descends ever further into the hole.

WIVENHOE INFORMATION

Recent instances have shown the unsuitableness of the Wiv Community FB group format to provide information (that people will actually see) on such things as road closures, timetable changes, temporary alterations to other Wiv facilities, etc. The arrangement of the postings means that every posting has even by the next day drifted so far down the scroll, amongst the welter of lost cats found purses and desired plumbers, that it is 'out of sight'. This sort of information needs to be visible over several days or even weeks. The system also results in people starting new threads when there already is one, being unaware of the initial one.

The format needed with this type of information is that used by the old Forum, where (a) postings are grouped by subject headings that last weeks or even months', and (b) whenever someone adds a new

posting that subject goes back to the top of the list. Of course few would want a return of the *other* aspects of the old Forum!

Appendix E

RFO Finance Report Update 30.09.2022 for September FTC

The system has been closed for September 22. Thanks to Cllr Boughton who will be checking the September accounts on Monday.

We are still waiting on confirmation of NCJ Pay agreement. Maurice, Tom and I have been working on the budget for 23/24 as part of the loan application process. This will be taken to the next committee meeting, to be discussed. Please could you advise me of any budgets you will be needing for next year.

The second half of the precept has been received in October.

The Finance Committee would like to propose £300 from the Community Fund is awarded to Wivgigs Rowing Club. They have applied for this to enable them to purchase a second gig, which is required as the members of the group have increased. They have some funds already and will be fund raising in other ways. However, the finance committee has requested that the group is reminded that if the full amount is not raised and they are unable to purchase the gig, the £300 would have to be returned to the council.

We received applications from Making Arts Productions and The Spoken Word, the Finance Committee voted against these applications, due to the criteria not being met in full.

a) **Bank Reconciliations** –

31/08/2022	Confirmed Bank Balances	£567,341
30/09/2022	Confirmed Bank Balances	£743,517

b) **Payments** – That the circulated Schedule of payments be approved. **£37,187.39 updated 17.10.2022 (See attached draft schedule)**

c) **Budgetary Control Reports are available on the system up to 30/09/2022**

The council has received £429,434 (95%) of its budgeted income and spent £203,018 (46%) of its budgeted expenditure to date.

Appendix F- See attached

Appendix G- See attached

Appendix H

Town Clerk's Report- Full Town Council Meeting 17 October 2022

1. Staffing: No update.
2. Civic Service- A huge thank you to Mandy for her help in organising and setting up this event.
3. Mandy and I had a further meeting with David Bridle regarding our website. If you haven't done so, please provide your photo for the new 'our councillors' page.
4. Emma, Cllr Kane and I have had further meetings with Maurice to finalise the PWLB loan application. The proposal to agree to apply for the loan will be on tonight's agenda. The architects have drafted the tender documents which will be available on the government Contracts Finder website as per our Financial Regulations.
5. Our Funding Officer Graham Bennett started on 4 October. If you would like to speak to him about any suitable projects for grant funding, he works in the office on Tuesday and Friday mornings.
6. The H&W WG have a meeting on Wednesday 19 October at 12 on Zoom to discuss 'warm days'. The group have started work on finding suitable venues.
7. I am waiting on the skate park contractor for specifications to finalise the contract. I will provide an update when this has been agreed.
8. I am waiting on CBC to finalise the application to vary the S106 in respect of the Dinghy Park. I have requested further information on the notice to all parties required.
9. At 7pm on Monday 21 November, prior to our next FTC meeting, we have a presentation from Lightspeed Broadband.