

## **Minutes of the East Mersea Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall, East Road, East Mersea at 7.00 pm on Thursday 9th May 2024.**

**Present:** Councillors: Jeff Mason (chair), Margaret Lawford, David Sunnucks, Emma Green, Sandy Salmonese, Clerk: Sue Pullen, City Cllrs Robert Davidson, Martin Parsons, Carl Powling, representative for East Mersea PCC and Village Hall, Tony Clifton and 3 members of the public

- 1. To receive apologies:** County Cllr Kevin Bentley
- 2. To confirm the minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023:** the minutes were agreed by all and signed by the chairman

**3. To receive the report from the Chairman**

Cllr Mason gave the Chairman's report saying that the crumbling seawall has been a major matter of concern this last year. Essex County Council own the seawall and the Environmental Agency maintain it. We have engaged with both organisations, along with a resident, in a bid for the repair work to take place. EA is stretched for funding and work commitments but has given a time of late spring or early summer next year for the repair work.

The rough sleeper, who was using a bus shelter along East Road for his home for about two months, was being very well looked after by East Mersea residents. His flat in Tiptree was at risk of being given to someone else if he did not move back so with encouragement from everyone he has gone there and hopefully is settling in with the help of his care workers. Parish Council members cleared out the bus shelter and paid for a professional company to clear behind the shelter and sanitise appropriately. Quotations for a new bus shelter are now being sought as it is in a bad state of repair.

Speed signs have been installed along East Road but without speed gun checks from the police and a resident Speedwatch Group these signs are not so effective. Unfortunately, there has been very little take-up from East Mersea residents to carry out the necessary training for a Speedwatch Group enabling use of a speed gun.

Residency at caravan parks is an on-going issue and the parish council is frustrated by the lack of commitment from Colchester City Council to prevent this from happening.

Colchester City Council is preparing the next Local Plan and has sent out a call for sites for any potential development and there is just one site submitted for East Mersea. The whole process takes a long time. The parish council will not support any further development outside the village envelope as there is no infrastructure to support it.

Cudmore Grove is now quieter after the initial installation of the play equipment and we have not received complaints about congestion. It is a shame that the contact for the park has changed since the reliability of Dougal.

- 4. County Councillor Report:** County Cllr Bentley sent a report to say that pot holes are a constant matter and given the terrible weather we had this winter, the wettest for over a hundred years, causing major damage to

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2025

roads directly and through surface flooding. With the brighter weather coming additional crews will be out repairing faults. Any defects seen by the public should be reported on the ECC Highways website which is very easy to do. Locality Budgets scheme is now open for any suitable projects that parish councils have in mind.

5. **City Councillors Report** – New boundaries for 2025 elections are being determined. Congratulations to Martin Parsons for being voted in for Mersea and Pyefleet ward. They will follow up on caravan residency.
6. **Report from the Parochial Church Council** – The Rev Jo Parott was appointed in November. There are currently 68 people on the church electoral roll of whom 45 are non-resident in the parish. The Friends of St Edmund are a great support financially enabling repair work to guttering and roof tile to be completed. Other work is still to be dealt with. The two current churchwardens are both standing down at the end of next year.
7. **Report from Village Hall Committee** – The hall is in a good financial position, with an increase of hall letting income, is back to pre-covid levels
8. **Report from Cudmore Grove Park Ranger** – No report available
9. **Report from West Mersea Primary School** – There are currently 392 pupils and class sizes are small. They have received a good Ofsted report with particular emphasis on reading and phonics. There are numerous after school clubs and activities, with close links to the Rugby Club which has been very rewarding.
10. **Public Session** – It was suggested that the parish council resumes contributing to the churchyard upkeep which will be looked into for its legality.