

EAST MERSEA PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the East Mersea Parish Council meeting held at East Mersea Village Hall on Thursday 8th October 2026.

Present: Cllrs Jeff Mason (chair), Emma Green, David Sunnucks, Alex Richardson, Locum Clerk Petra Palfreyman, City Cllr Parsons, City Cllr Davidson, City Cllr Powling and ECC Cllr Perera and one member of the public

110.26 Apologies for absence: Cllr Lawford,

111.26 The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27th August 2026, were agreed with no matters arising.

112.26 Declarations of Interest: None

113.26 Public Participation Session: None

114.26 City Cllrs Report: Cllr Parsons – CCC have confirmed the Emergency Plan would need the Mersea Centre to be set up with trained volunteers. The response from CCC planners regarding Coopers Beach application for 10 caravans was disappointing and unnecessarily complicated, and Cllr Parsons stated he will recommend to the planners that the views of EMPC should be considered

Cllr Davidson – The right to 'Call In' a planning application by the Ward Councillors is being withdrawn from 31 October 2026. This is an unwelcome decision being driven by the governments housebuilding agenda and removes the role of the Planning Committee. The recycling bins have been delivered to some addresses in East Mersea today. The recycling bin is 240L and the general rubbish bin is 190L. Assisted collection will continue where needed. CCC grass cutting will be brought back in house from November 2026.

Cllr Powling – there is a meeting next Friday at 8.30am at the WMTC offices, regarding beach safety, following the recent incidents on local beaches. All councillors are invited to attend.

Cllr Perera – Confirmed he is no longer a Reform councillor and remains in post as an independent candidate. The issue of the GP surgery will be added to the Local Plan comments. ECC are working on potholes and as advised, the Local Government Review has been paused. Cllr Perera is looking at the school bus service and advised some Health & Wellbeing grants are available. Work is also taking place to try to improve waiting lists for Talking Therapies for mental health issues.

115.26 Finance:

- Budget to 30 September 2026 – the budget was discussed and it was acknowledged that expenditure in the first 6 months has been high due to some unexpected costs but should much less in the second half of the year. Expenditure is likely to exceed the precept but there are reserves which will cover this.
- Bank reconciliation to 30 September 2026 – noted and agreed.

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- Draft budget for 2027/28 – the first draft of the budget was discussed and the clerk advised that it is likely the precept will need to be significantly higher in 2027/28, to cover the budgeted costs. Further discussions will be held at the December meeting.
- Financial motions to be considered, as proposed by Cllr Richardson:
  Motion One – to consider that this Council continues to prepare and publish each year Annual Income and Expenditure Accounts and a Balance Sheet for the year most recently ended – following discussion it was resolved by a majority vote, that the most appropriate basis for accounting for a small council such as East Mersea Parish Council, is to prepare accounts on a Receipts and Payments basis, and for which a balance sheet is not required.
  Motion Two – to consider that this Council's objective is to prepare and maintain a balanced Budget each year i.e. for its annual operating expenses not to exceed its annual budgeted income – this motion was resolved unanimously, with the caveat that unexpected expenditure may require the budgeted income to be exceeded, in which case the reserves would be used.
  Motion Three – to consider that this Council treats Capital Expenditure separately from Annual/Operating Expenditure and that the former is capitalised depreciated and not written off as an expense when incurred – this motion was deferred until a new clerk is in post.
  Motion Four – to consider that this Council prepares an annual budget in advance each year including monthly expenditure by detailed category and reports each month both monthly and cumulative year to date income and expenditure by category and variances of the same from the budget – this motion was deferred until a new clerk is in post.

116.26 CCC Local Plan including WMTC Island Plan – Cllr Richardson shared the proposed comments written by WMTC and recommended that EMPC agreed with them, unless there were any further specific comments to make. All agreed.

117.26 RCCE Low-cost housing – Cllr Mason advised that CCC will provide a grant to cover the deficit to make the scheme viable. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the next steps, prior to the next Council meeting.

118.26 Caravan Parks – covered by Cllr Parsons

119.26 Planning Applications & Decisions

261541 Land off, Meeting Lane, East Mersea Colchester, Erection of a single-storey domestic storage outbuilding including hardstanding to front. Expiry date: 14/09/26 (extended to 9/10/26) - The Parish Council objects to the development due to the impact on nature, access/transport issues and lack of services

261600 Land adj. to, 2 Hillside Cottages, Meeting Lane, East Mersea Colchester CO5 8TE Outline application for the construction of 3no two bed bungalows with all matters reserved Expiry date: 25/09/26 (extended to 9/10/26) - The Parish Council objects to the development due to the site being outside the village boundary, overdevelopment of the site, the impact on nature and service issues

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120.26 Schedule of payments approved

October 2026	Locum clerk invoice and misc. purchases	1277.05

Following discussion it was agreed by a majority vote, to make this payment. Cllr Richardson abstained from the vote.

121.26 To consider adopting the General Power of Competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 – this power improves Councils spending powers – the clerk explained the benefits of adopting this power and following discussion it was agreed by a majority vote to adopt the General Power of Competence. Cllr Richardson abstained from the vote.

122.26 To consider the options for repairs to the speed signs. Estimated quote for a new unit £4000 - £7000. – Defer to next meeting

123.26 To discuss the introduction of E bikes in East Mersea and consider any issues that might arise – Defer to next meeting

124.26 To discuss annual verge cutting – Defer to next meeting

125.26 Clerks vacancy

- To agree councillors for interviews and dates for interviews – all councillors agreed to sift the applications and advise the clerk, who will collate the replies. Three councillors and the clerk were selected for the interview panel on a date to be agreed.
- To discuss the contract terms and conditions – Defer to next meeting.

126.26 To consider an annual subscription to CouncilWise, at a cost of £75.00 per year. Defer to next meeting

127.26 To consider any projects for S106 expenditure – Defer to next meeting

128.26 To consider a donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal for a wreath - following discussion it was agreed not to make a donation this year due to budget constraints

129.26 Correspondence – Defer to next meeting

130.26 Updates and information from the clerk

Gov.uk email addresses and website – the clerk and all councillors have been given their email address and committed to installing them before 10 December 2026. A website meeting has been held and is in the first stages of being set up

Beach safety – not discussed. The clerk is making further enquiries

Defibrillator – not discussed. The case has a small crack but will still function fully and does not need to be replaced.

131.26 Matters to be raised by members for the next agenda – items as shown above stated as deferred to the next meeting

132.26 Date of next meeting – 10th December 2026 at 7.30pm at East Mersea Village Hall

Bank balances – 30 September 2026

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Current account	£12898.06
Reserve account	£22110.92
Total funds on 30 September 2026	£35008.98

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.25 hrs

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