

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF THE
CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL**

HELD IN HALL 2, THE PADDOCKS, LONG ROAD AT 7.30PM

ON THURSDAY 22ND MAY 2008

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Blackwell(Chairman)

Councillors: D. Anderson J. Anderson C. Andrews R. Bishop
P. Davis B. Dixie P. Greig N. Harvey (Vice –Chairman)
R. Howard J. Liddiard

Mrs J. Abel – Town Clerk Mrs E. De Can– Assistant to the Clerk

Also present 120 members of the public.

1.‘A review of the Town Council’s year, its achievements and its aspirations for the future’ –COUNCILLOR DAVID BLACKWELL, CHAIRMAN, CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr. Blackwell welcomed those present and thanked the Town Council’s guests, Mr David Marchant, Chief Executive Officer, Castle Point Borough Council and Chief Inspector Paul Eveleigh, Essex Police District Commander for Castle Point for attending. All Town Councillors were introduced to the meeting. Cllr. Blackwell outlined the Council’s achievements in its first year which included sourcing and refitting a Council Office, employing a Town Clerk, a tree planting scheme at Tewkes Creek which had been well supported by the community and had attracted a grant of £5000 from Essex County Council, the erection of a Christmas Tree in the Town Centre, and grants to organizations including Coastwatch, the Castle Point Sports Club and Castle Point Sports Club for the Disabled.

The meeting was advised that the Council was working in partnership with the Borough Council to bring about improvements in the Town Centre and at Canvey Lake.

It was reported that the Town Council was also proud to be working in partnership with Thames Ambulance Service and Castle View School to deliver extra curricular first aid training to all year 7 pupils. If this was successful it was hoped to extend the training to year 7 children at Furtherwick Park and Cornelius Vermuyden schools.

Cllr. Blackwell went on to mention some of the other areas the Council hoped to become involved in during the following year which included tackling dog fouling in partnership with the Borough Council, improved festive lighting, improvements to Canvey Lake, installation of a further phase of equipment at the skateboard park, more bus shelters and seating, improvements to the seaside gardens, securing the use of the Canvey Urban District Council coat of arms, greater partnership working with other authorities, investigating the provision of a farmers market, and more community forums to enable greater community involvement.

Cllr. Blackwell concluded his report stating that the Town Council was dedicated to improving Canvey Island for the community.

Members of the public were invited to address questions to the Chairman. Questions received were as follows:

Question: Could the Town Council give assurances that land on the island will not be sold off for development?

Answer: The Town Council is able to make strong representations to the Borough Council about planning issues and can speak at Planning meetings at borough level.

Question: How do members of the public contact the Clerk and Councillors?

Answer: Contact details have been circulated to every household.

Question: What can be done about dog fouling/litter?

Answer: There are a number of options being considered including employing patrolling wardens, penalty notices. The Town Council is working with the Borough Council.

Question: What services does the Town Council provide in addition to those provided by the Borough Council?

Answer: The Town Council can provide a great many additional services. (Rayleigh Town Council was cited as an example of a Town Council which had made great improvements to its town centre).

Question: Why has the Town Council rented a shop front in the High Street rather than space in The Paddocks?

Answer: The Paddocks is owned by the Borough Council and would not have provided a cheaper or better space than that in the High Street.

Question: Will the Town Council ever be able to have full control of services on Canvey Island?

Answer: Not in the foreseeable future unless there is a reorganization of local government.

Question: When will the community forums meet?

Answer: They have not met for some time as the Council did not have an officer in post. It is intended that they will meet again over the summer.

Question: Is the Town Council the same organization as the Canvey Island Independent Party?

Answer: No. The current Town Councillors were elected in the 2007 Town Council elections. Ten councillors are members of the Independent Party and one member is a member of the Conservative party currently. At the next elections the constitution of the council could change.

Question: Can the Town Council influence the quality of the grass cutting on the Island?

Answer: Borough Councillors have made representations to the Borough Council about this. Cllr. Howard has met with the contractors to address this issue.

Question: What can be done about grass cutters blowing grass cuttings into the gulleys?

Answer: A suggestion was made by a resident that this was dealt with by using a Johnson broom.

Question: Is the Town Council going to engage with young people?

Answer: Yes, it intends to.

Borough Cllr. N. Watson addressed the meeting stating that resident's should give the Town Council a chance to make a difference.

2. Announcement of the winner of the Town Council's balloon race

Cllr. Blackwell advised that two tickets had been returned to the Council Office, one from Spykenisse in Holland, the other from Raydon Airfield, Suffolk. The Council would be sending books about the Island to the people who had returned the tickets and awarding a £20 Sainsbury voucher to the corresponding winning tickets.

3. 'Canvey Island – Regeneration of the Seafront and Town Centre'- DAVID MARCHANT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Marchant opened his presentation with a précis of his positive past experience of working with Town and Parish Councils in other areas. He explained some of the reasons for the regeneration works in the Borough and that Thames Gateway, EEDA and the Department for Communities and Local Government were involved in the programme of works and funding. Mr Marchant advised that the CPBC regeneration document was available to the public. The proposals within this would impact greatly on future generations. The meeting was informed of the huge competition for funding that existed and the need for CPBC, Essex County Council, the Town Council and the community to have a collective and unified voice in presenting the case for phases of regeneration.

Members of the public were invited to address questions to Mr Marchant. Questions received were as follows:

Question: When Furtherwick School is closed will the land be developed into flats?

Answer: There is no plan to do this currently. Huge investment has been made in a vocational centre to improve the local skills base.

Question: What is being done to improve recycling rates – particularly that of tins and plastic bottles?

Answer: CPBC intends to roll out extended recycling schemes shortly.

Question: Why does Canvey Island have to be developed further? More housing will compound the existing problems associated which relate to poor infrastructure.

Answer: The Government is responsible for setting the requirements for housing development on the Island.

4. 'Neighbourhood Policing, Community Policing and Neighbourhood Action Panels on Canvey Island' -CHIEF INSPECTOR PAUL EVELEIGH, ESSEX POLICE DISTRICT COMMANDER FOR CASTLE POINT

CI Eveleigh advised the meeting that he had been in post since October 2007. He was a local man who had started his career on the Island.

He went on to outline the successful efforts of the local Police in achieving a reduction in crime figures of 8.9% over the previous year and bringing the incidence of anti-social behaviour down by 15%. A lot of work had been done in the Winter Gardens area where high visibility patrols had been increased temporarily.

He summarised the Police priorities as follows:

- To reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour;

- To reduce dwelling burglaries;
- To reduce violent crime;
- To reduce alcohol misuse;
- To improve resident's perception of the level of incidence of crime;
- To provide a good quality service.

The meeting was advised that a scheme was about to be introduced which would see locally based named specialist officers deployed in the same ward on a regular basis. This would enable the community to build a relationship with an individual officer and enable a greater understanding of individual areas to be gained.

Members of the public were invited to address questions to CI Eveleigh. Questions received were as follows:

Question: The local police station is currently closed from 5pm. Could it be open until later to enable residents to contact officers about incidents or other matters?

Answer: If officers are manning the station they are not able to respond to incidents as well.

Question: Why are the Police apprehending people for minor driving incidents such as having fog lights on rather than tackling real crime?

Answer: In this instance, the team were on an operation to apprehend drug dealers/burglars coming on to the Island using ANPR.

A resident presented letters and information about a long standing issue with nuisance youths in an alley adjacent to her home which the Police had failed to respond to.

CI Eveleigh advised that from 1st June the Police would have an option to negotiate an Acceptable Behaviour Contract with nuisance youths. They could also issue an Anti-Social Behaviour order. CI Eveleigh undertook to send an officer to speak with the resident at a later date.

Question: Why does it take so long to clear the road after an accident? The accidents on Canvey Way which led to its closure for a long period impacted significantly on people's lives and business.

Answer: Serious accidents require specialist staff to attend who may have to travel some distance from other sites. A great deal of information must be recorded particularly if the accident involves a fatality.

Question: What is happening at Thorney Bay caravan site?

Answer: There have been some recent police drugs raids.

Question: What are the police doing about graffiti on the Island? When the people responsible are identified are they asked to clean it off?

Answer: Yes, this has happened. The Police are monitoring the graffiti on the Island and are aware of the damage it causes.

Cllr. Blackwell thanked Mr David Marchant, CI Paul Eveleigh and the community for attending.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Chairman