

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE OF THE CANVEY ISLAND
TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICE, 11 HIGH STREET, CANVEY
ISLAND ON MONDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER 2008 AT 7.40PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors: J. Anderson (Chairman)
R. Bishop D. Blackwell R. Howard
Non-committee members: D. Anderson C. Andrews

Also present: One member of the public
Sallyanne Thallon – Essex County Council (until 8.30pm)
Mrs J. Abel – Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. P. Greig who was on holiday and Cllr. B. Dixie who had another engagement.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public raised a point about the quantity of cigarette butts around the front of the Knightswick Centre. The Clerk advised the Committee that this point had been made at the Canvey Town Centre Steering Group meeting for retailers, when it had been suggested that a street scene/street furniture audit was carried out.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF 2ND JUNE 2008

Item 13. Neighbourhood Forum – Civic Seating

It was reported that a meeting had taken place between Cllr. Blackwell and the Clerk, the Chairmen of the Canvey Neighbourhood Forums, CPBC officers and the cabinet member for partnerships and community engagement, Cllr. Mrs B. Egan. The meeting had considered ways in which the Town Council and Neighbourhood Forums could work more closely for the benefit of the local community.

AGREED that this matter is considered further by the Community Relations Committee.

5. SKATEBOARD PARK/BUNGALOW PROJECT

Cllr. J. Anderson welcomed Ms Sallyanne Thallon to the meeting. Ms Thallon proceeded to outline the proposals for the bungalow at the Waterside Farm skateboard park. The Committee noted that this was an opportunity for all three tiers of local government to work in partnership to deliver youth services. It was understood that Legacy XS, the charitable organization which runs a skate park and youth facilities in Benfleet, would be the lead body in this project. Ms Thallon outlined the funding initiatives which were to be put in place to meet the capital costs of the project and the staffing costs for the provision of youth workers. It was reported that the project would run for an initial two year period. The Committee was asked to consider a role for the Council in the scheme. Ms Thallon explained that it was hoped that ECC and CPBC would meet the capital costs of the scheme and the provision of the premises. It was requested that the Town Council gives consideration to meeting the cost of the utility bills and the cleaning of the premises for the duration of the project.

The Committee viewed the project proposals very positively and was keen to work in partnership with ECC and CPBC to deliver this scheme. Concerns were expressed about the term of the project. It was hoped that if the scheme was successful it might be possible to extend it.

RECOMMEND that:

- the Town Council works with ECC and CPBC to deliver a youth project at the Bungalow;
- a budget of £5000 per annum is set to meet the cost of the utility bills for the building for the duration of the project;
- the Town Council arranges and meets the cost of cleaning the building for the duration of the project.

AGREED that the Clerk writes to ECC to advise of the Committee's support for the proposal that it works in partnership with ECC and CPBC on this project and its recommendation to the Council in respect of expenditure.

Ms Thallon thanked the Committee for its support and left the meeting at 8.30pm.

6. TEWKES CREEK

i) Tree Planting – phase II

The Clerk reported the success of the Council's application to ECC for the supply of 1000 trees to extend the existing scheme at Tewkes Creek.

The Committee considered information provided by a regional Environment Agency conservation officer about the woodland planting.

Members felt that the trees supplied by ECC might be vulnerable on the site. It was suggested that the Council may be able to negotiate with the supplier over the trees provided and any additional cost could be met by the Council.

The Committee considered a process for planting the trees. It was felt that King & Co, who had planted the majority of the previous planting should be approached again and asked to provide a cost for this service.

AGREED that the Clerk:

- establishes through ECC and King & Co. whether they might be an opportunity to obtain larger trees than those supplied through ECC's scheme and if so, the cost of supply;
- requests a quote from King and Co. to plant the 1000 trees.

ii) 'Design a Sign'

The Clerk reported that five expressions of interest had been received from local schools about designing a sign for Creeky Woods. Councillors considered the schools remit and the budget for the project.

RECOMMEND that:

- the schools are advised that:
 - there is a £500 budget for the project;
 - one submission will be accepted from each school;
 - the Committee will judge design ideas at its next meeting on 17th November 2008;
 - the school providing the winning design will receive a contribution towards art materials of £200;
 - a contribution towards art materials of £100 will be provided for the runner up;

-the Council sets a budget of £1000 for the overall project.

iii) Environment Agency – Environmental Improvements

Members noted that the Clerk had attended a meeting at Tewkes Creek to receive information about EA proposals for the area. It was reported that repairs were to take place to the sluice which would prevent the ingress of sea water into the Creek leading, in time, to a change in the ecology from seawater to freshwater. Concerns were expressed about the proposals. Councillors were particularly concerned that the Creek could dry out and smell unpleasant.

AGREED that the Clerk writes to the EA to advise of the Council's concerns and seek reassurance. The EA's response to be reported to the next meeting in order that the Committee may consider whether the EA should be asked to attend a site meeting.

7. ALLOTMENTS

i) Transfer from CPBC

The Clerk reported that repair works agreed between councillors and the CPBC Clerk of Works had been completed. The amended transfer documents had been received from CPBC Legal Services which incorporated the suggestions made by the Council's solicitors. The Clerk was therefore now in a position to sign the documents to complete the transfer.

ii) Perimeter Hedging/Fencing

The Clerk advised that the CPBC Clerk of Works had obtained a quote for perimeter fencing similar to that on the western boundary. It was in excess of £7000.

Members noted that the Council's application to ECC for 1000 trees to plant a perimeter hedge had been successful. The Committee considered how the hedge would be planted.

AGREED that the Canvey Island Horticultural Society is approached to establish whether volunteers could be enlisted to plant the hedge.

8. HIGHWAYS – WEED GROWTH

It was reported that a meeting had taken place between Andy Hilsdon from ECC Highways, the Clerk and Cllr. R. Bishop. A number of roads on the Island were visited. Mr Hilsdon had agreed to deploy the ECC Highways Rangers to clear unsightly weed growth on the highways and pavements in a number of high profile areas including the town centre, Northwick Road, Somnes Avenue, Long Road and Link Road. Cllrs. Bishop and Howard had toured the Island again with Mr Hilsdon that day and reported that some improvements had been made but further works were still required.

9. CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005

The Clerk reported on the Town Council's powers under the Act and the guidance which was available for town councils to enforce their powers. Members noted that the Clerk had been in discussions with CPBC and Rochford District Council and would be meeting with Chief Inspector Paul Eveleigh to discuss the potential for Essex Police to assist.

AGREED to defer this matter to a future Council meeting for consideration by the whole Council.

10. ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION FORUM

Members noted a report of the inaugural meeting of the Forum group.

11. CANVEY LAKE

i) Transfer of administration from CPBC to CITC

Cllr. Blackwell advised the Committee that the Borough Council had agreed to transfer the administration of the Lake to the Town Council by the end of the year.

ii) Feasibility Study

Cllr. J. Anderson reported that the study had highlighted a number of issues and was expected to be completed at the next meeting of the Canvey Lake Group.

12. TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENTS**i) Lamp Column replacement**

The Clerk reported that ECC had advised that the columns had been ordered and it was hoped that all contractors party to the completion of the scheme would be in a position to complete the installation prior to the erection of the festive lighting in November.

ii) Hanging Basket Displays

The Clerk advised that the cost of hanging baskets and brackets to be erected on the ten new columns would be in the region of £900. Costs had been sought for the supply of plants, maintenance and watering of the baskets.

RECOMMEND that the Council purchases hanging baskets to erect on the ten replacement lamp columns in the town centre at a cost not exceeding £900 + VAT.

iii) Railing mounted mangers

Councillors considered a suggestion that the railings in the town centre were fitted with flower mangers.

AGREED that this scheme is considered following the installation of hanging baskets and the planting of the six large containers.

iv) Town Centre Planters

It was noted that the planters had now been delivered and installed in the town centre outside The Knightswick Centre. They were to be planted on 21st September 2008. The Council was grateful for the assistance Canvey Supply Co. had provided with the installation.

AGREED the Clerk to write to Canvey Supply Co. to thank staff for their help.

13. BUMBLEBEE PARK

CPBC had advised that this scheme was now ready to progress and a short report had been made to Cllrs Blackwell and Anderson at the recent Neighbourhood Forum meeting.

*In accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960, the Committee **AGREED** that the public and press be excluded from the remainder of this meeting because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted*

14. SEAFRONT GARDENS**i) Meeting with Pinnacle**

The Committee received a report of a meeting held with a representative from Pinnacle, Ian Burchill, CPBC, Cllr. Blackwell and the Clerk.

ii) Quotes for works to Seafrost Gardens

The Committee received three quotes from contractors for works to the gardens.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

CHAIRMAN