

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE OF THE CANVEY ISLAND
TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE PADDOCKS, LONG ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND ON
MONDAY 19TH JANUARY 2009 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors: J. Anderson (Chairman)
D. Blackwell B. Dixie P. Greig N. Harvey

Non-committee members: D. Anderson

Also present: Three members of the public
Mrs J. Abel – Town Clerk
Mrs E. De Can – Assistant to the Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. R. Bishop who was representing the Council at a Highways Panel meeting and Cllr. R. Howard who was unwell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

A resident voiced strong concerns about the appearance of the sea front, beach and sea wall which he reported were in a poor condition due to dog fouling, broken glass, graffiti, litter and weeds. He felt that the issue of dog fouling should be addressed through a system of penalties and that dogs should not be allowed to be exercised off the lead. He also considered that there were insufficient dog bins. He went on to express frustration that the beach had been allowed to deteriorate by those responsible for its upkeep, speaking of weed growth, seaweed and tidal debris which were not being removed.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 17TH NOVEMBER 2008

Item 7 Creeky Woods – Design a Sign

The Clerk advised that a further letter had not yet been sent out to all the schools on the Island. The Clerk suggested that the Council might wish to consider working with one age group in order to ease the judging process on receipt of entries and reduce the risk of pupil disappointment. Councillors recalled that the schools had already been contacted twice and that Northwick Park Primary had been the only school to respond.

AGREED that the Clerk advises Northwick Park Primary school that the Council will be working with the designs submitted by its pupils to create a new sign for Creeky Woods.

Item 13i) Lamp Column Replacement

Councillors were frustrated that a date for installation of the ten replacement lamp columns had still not been received from ECC. The Clerk advised that the assistance of Essex County Councillor R. Howard had been sought in resolving this matter.

AGREED the Clerk to write to ECC urgently to request a firm date for installation. In the event a response is not forthcoming, the Clerk to write to the Cabinet Member to outline the Council's frustration at the continued delay in installation.

Item 13ii) Hanging Basket Displays

The Clerk advised that quotes for filling and maintaining the baskets had been received and would be put before the next Committee meeting.

Item 16 Probation Service Works in Canvey

Members noted that the Clerk and Cllr. Harvey had been in communication with the Castle Point Echo in relation to a negative article which the paper had recently printed relating to the non-collection of weed waste resulting from works carried out by the probation service on the Charfleets Industrial Estate. The Clerk advised that contact had been made with the probation service and Pinnacle, who had been assisting with the collection of waste, and that all concerned were disappointed that a business owner appeared to have contacted the local press in preference to the Town Clerk or a local councillor.

The Clerk advised that the probation service was now working on clearing debris from Smallgains Lake, weed clearance at the Charfleets Industrial Estate and railing painting in the town centre. A team was now on the Island for two days per week.

Costs in the region of £150 were reported for replacement paint brushes and 15 litres of paint.

AGREED that the probation service is asked to consider removing graffiti from the sea wall.

5. SKATEBOARD PARK

Cllr Anderson reported verbally on a meeting attended on 13th January 2009 by himself and the Clerk. Members noted that the project was progressing very positively. Funding had been secured by ECC and CPBC to meet the cost of capital works at the Bungalow to convert the building into a Drop-in Cafe and for the provision of two staff for a period of two years. Funding was also available to enable the final instalment of the Skateboard ramps to be completed. Legacy XS was playing a major role in the project. The Clerk advised that a request had been made that the project partners continued to meet after the project was completed to enable regular feedback to be given. The project was expected to be completed in April/May 2009.

6. TEWKES CREEK ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Members spoke of their continued concerns relating to proposed works by the Environment Agency to Tewkes Creek sluice. The Clerk advised that contact had been made with the EA via e-mail since Christmas.

AGREED the Clerk to continue to press the EA for a meeting in the near future and to involve Cllr. Howard, a member of the Regional Flood Defence Committee, if necessary.

7. TREE PLANTING SCHEMES

Members noted the success of applications to ECC via RCCE for approaching 3,600 trees for the Island. The Clerk advised that Kings would be planting 1000 trees at Creeky Woods in the next two weeks.

The Clerk had secured 730 trees to plant at the west end of Canvey Lake. It was noted that permission would need to be sought from CPBC prior to planting. Councillors agreed to advise the Clerk of the exact locations for planting at an early opportunity to enable the Clerk to progress the project.

Members noted that, due to a scheme alteration, there were a further 930 trees available to the Council. The Committee was asked to suggest appropriate areas for planting these. Canvey Heights and West Canvey Marsh were suggested. The Clerk advised that these suggestions would be put forward to the landowners.

8. DOG FOULING

Members noted a report of a meeting held with CPBC and Essex Police on 8th January 2009 to explore the possibility of partnership working to tackle this issue. Councillors discussed the matter at length. Cllr. Harvey presented information obtained from Eastbourne Council which had recently introduced dog control orders on its seafront and in some parks. Mrs De Can advised that further information had been sought from Eastbourne Council. Members requested that a further informal meeting be held to consider this information shortly.

Councillors recalled that the seaward side of the sea wall was the responsibility of the EA. It was felt that following the recent significant investment in this area, the EA should be taking greater responsibility for maintenance and upkeep. Cllr. Blackwell advised that the matter would be raised at the next Castle Point Regeneration Partnership meeting.

Members discussed the need to consult with the community prior to taking any action in respect of controlling dogs on the Island. The Clerk pointed out that there would be a significant cost implication related to the printing and distribution of this and that the office would endeavour to obtain costs to be reported to the next Council meeting.

AGREED that the Clerk organizes a meeting to further consider information received from Eastbourne Council and the process for consultation.

9. WAR MEMORIAL HALL GARDENS – REQUEST FOR FUNDING ASSISTANCE

The Clerk reported correspondence from a trustee of the War Memorial Hall requesting financial assistance with the upkeep of the garden area. Members were not in favour of committing the Council to regular payments for upkeep.

AGREED the Clerk to forward a grant form to the War Memorial Hall.

10. ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk advised that a meeting had taken place with Peter Harding, Canvey Island Horticultural Society, on 15th January 2009.

It was noted that there were seventy residents on the waiting list for plots and that the Clerk had written again to CPBC to request permission to extend the Waterside Farm site on to waste land to the west of the existing allotments.

AGREED that investigating further suitable sites for allotments is added to 2010 of the Committee's four year plan.

The CIHS had agreed to plant the perimeter hedge when plants arrived in late January.

The road access at Waterside Farm was considered to be in a poor state. The Clerk had investigated the possibility of improving the road with road planings. Concerns were expressed that contaminants could be a problem for crops on the plots and that the surface might not be suitable for horses using the bridleway. The Clerk was asked to seek further information on this.

Mrs De Can advised that a site visit to Smallgains allotments had taken place following a tenant's observation that CPBC's repairs to paving were inadequate. Councillors were provided with photographs of the area. It was noted that some tenants were using carpet off cuts as pathway and concerns were raised about this being a potential trip hazard.

AGREED the Clerk to:

- write to CPBC to request that repairs are made to the satisfaction of the Town Council;
- write to CIHS to voice concerns about the use of carpet on the site.

The Clerk reported that there had been a burst pipe over the Christmas period at Smallgains allotment site and that an emergency repair had been necessary. Mrs De Can was working with CPBC to establish the exact location of the stopcocks on both sites to enable the water supply to be isolated during the winter in future years.

The Clerk advised that water usage at Waterside Farm seemed high and that a recent half yearly bill had been for £238. Peter Harding had agreed to check the water meters over a period of time to monitor water usage.

Members considered a proposal to continue offering a plot to the Mental Health Trust free of charge.

AGREED that the Town Council continues to make no charge for this plot whilst it is being actively used by the Mental Health Trust.

i) Fees

Members considered the charges for plots in 2010-2011. The fees for a full plot were currently £16.

RECOMMEND that the Council raises fees by £1/year on a full plot and 50p/year on a half plot in forthcoming years.

11. ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION FORUM

Members **AGREED** to note the report of the meeting held on 8th December 2008.

12. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Members noted the report of the first meeting held on 14th January 2009.

AGREED the Clerk to progress the preparation of draft environmental and sustainability policies for purchasing/procurement and asset management.

13. CANVEY LAKE

i) FEASIBILITY STUDY

Councillors noted the feasibility study which had been circulated to all members.

ii) PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Clerk advised that public consultation would be starting on 26th January and would continue through February at a variety of venues including the Knightswick Centre, Canvey Library and the Town Council office.

iii) TRANSFER OF LAKE MANAGEMENT FROM CPBC TO THE TOWN COUNCIL

A report of a meeting held on 9th January 2009 was noted. Members were optimistic that the matter would be progressed at a CPBC Cabinet meeting on 20th January 2009. It was felt that further thought would need to be given to the fine detail of the arrangement prior to completion.

14. BUMBLEBEE PARK

The Clerk reported that CPBC had progressed this through Groundworks and a meeting was scheduled to take place on 23rd January 2009 to agree the proposals. Cllrs. Anderson and Blackwell confirmed that they would be attending. The Clerk reported that the Town Council would now not be required to take over the maintenance of the area for a period of one year following installation as CPBC had made alternative provision.

15. PART NIGHT OPERATION OF STREETLIGHTING

Members noted correspondence from the ECC Cabinet member for Highways and Transportation, Norman Hume, in reply to the Council's recent letter expressing concerns about the operation of

this scheme in Canvey. It was reported that ECC were collating the results of the trial in Uttlesford and Maldon and would be consulting further prior to rolling the scheme out to other areas.

16. HIGHWAYS PANEL

Councillors put forward three suggestions to be progressed through the Council's Panel representative, Cllr. R. Bishop as follows:

- Repainting of Zebra Crossing, High Street, outside National Westminster Bank
- Dovervelt Road, flooding near junction with Kellington Road
- Zebra Crossing, Central Wall Road near Harvest Road – vehicles failing to stop for pedestrians with two recent accidents resulting. Consider installing a controlled pedestrian crossing.

Cllr. N. Harvey left the meeting at 9.50pm.

17. SEAFRONT GARDENS

Members discussed plans for improvements at the Gardens. The Clerk advised that both Pinnacle and CPBC had been advised that the Council had resolved to appoint Pinnacle to carry out improvement works. Permission was now awaited from CPBC.

It was noted that a water supply was necessary for Pinnacle to be able to water the area.

AGREED the Clerk to obtain quotes for works.

18. FOUR YEAR PLAN

Members noted the four year plan.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE