

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF THE
POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL**

**HELD AT THE METHODIST CHURCH, WAARDEN ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND ON
MONDAY 13TH OCTOBER 2008 AT 7.40PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors (Committee Members): R. Bishop R. Howard(from 7.40pm) N. Harvey

Non- Committee Members: D. Anderson J. Anderson B. Dixie P. Greig

Also present: Mrs J. Abel – Town Clerk

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. P. Davies, Cllr. R. Bishop was elected by the committee to chair the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr. D. Blackwell who was at a training course and Cllr. P. Davies who had a work commitment.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 18TH AUGUST 2008

Item 5. Grants – Castle Point Challenge

The Clerk reported that the applicant had advised that no children from the Island had attended this year. The Clerk had discussed the information required with the applicant if a grant application were to be submitted in future years.

Item 7. Bank Mandate

Councillors noted that the amended bank mandate had not been sent to the Council's bankers as the Clerk was still awaiting one councillor's signature.

Item 8. Chairman's Chain of Office

The Clerk advised that this had been ordered and should be delivered in time for the next Council meeting.

Item 9. Council Policies

The Committee was advised that progress had been made with sourcing model documents and it was hoped that these would be available for the Committee to consider at the next meeting.

Item 11. Development Officer – Outstanding Invoices

Members noted that payment had been made and that no response had been received to the Clerk's letter. It was felt that the matter was now closed.

5. GRANTS

i) GRANT APPLICATION

An application was considered from the Island Boys and Girls Football Club for the refurbishment of the kitchen facility in its premises:

RECOMMEND that the Council grants a payment of £1500 towards the kitchen refurbishment project.

6. VIREMENT

The committee considered a proposal that a virement was made from the unspent councillor allowances budget of £5,500 to the budget for Christmas festivities.

RECOMMEND that the budget of £5,500 for councillor allowances is vired to the budget for Christmas festivities.

7. COUNCIL MEETING VENUE

The Clerk reported the cost of the current meeting facilities at the Methodist Church at £12 per hour. Councillors were advised that the Clerk had recently visited The Paddocks which had been redecorated. CPBC had offered Hall 3 to the Council at a reduced cost as a regular user together with the use of a small kitchen facility, storage area and a caretaker. The cost would be £12.20 per hour.

RECOMMEND that the Council transfers its future meetings to Hall 3 at The Paddocks with effect from 17th November 2008.

Members considered the purchase of replacement furniture for use in Hall 3 and the Clerk was asked to provide an indication of costs to the next Council meeting.

8. PUBLIC FORUM

Members discussed at length the procedure for receiving public representations in the section of the meeting known as the Public Forum. The current procedure was to accept questions and representations from the public on any local issue. The Clerk suggested that the item could be restricted to questions and representations on items on the agenda only.

Members considered that this would be appropriate for the Council's Committee meetings but that the community of Canvey Island should have the opportunity to approach its Council on any matter concerning the Island at the Council meeting.

It was suggested that councillors should endeavour to make the Clerk aware of any forthcoming questions in advance of the meeting.

RECOMMEND that the Council's Standing Orders and procedures are amended to enable members of the public to make representations and ask questions as follows:

Committee Meetings

'To receive contributions from members of the community of Canvey Island on items on the agenda for a period not exceeding ten minutes'

Council Meetings

'To receive contributions from members of the community of Canvey Island on items relating to Canvey Island for a period not exceeding ten minutes'

9. STAFF CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

The Clerk advised that the Council was required to form a grievance and appeals panel in line with its staffs terms and conditions of employment. The Committee felt that the panels should be constituted with three members.

RECOMMEND that these panels are formed and that members are appointed to them at the next Council meeting.

10. COUNCILLOR TRAINING

The Clerk reported on a meeting held with Mrs Sheppard from the County Association the previous week which Cllr. Blackwell, the Chairman, had attended. The Council's procedures had been discussed and it had been suggested by Mrs Sheppard that the Council undertakes a Peer Review and Role Training. Members on the Committee and other councillors present viewed this suggestion positively. Two dates were suggested for Mrs Sheppard to meet with the Council to deliver training on roles and responsibilities. Councillors agreed that they would like to receive training on 21st October. The cost of undertaking a peer review would be reported to the next Council meeting.

*In accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960, the Committee **RESOLVED** 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.*

11. CLERK'S TRAINING

The Clerk advised that the second semester of the University of Gloucestershire Certificate in Local Policy course had just commenced. This committed the Clerk to study time estimated at 25 hours per week until April 2009. The Clerk requested that the Committee gave consideration to supporting her in her studies by providing study leave equating to four hours per week during term time. Members discussed the proposal positively but raised concerns about the impact of a loss of staff hours on the Council's work. It was suggested that the Assistant to the Clerk may be willing to increase her working hours to accommodate the shortfall created by the Clerk's study leave. The Clerk was asked to discuss this further with Mrs De Can and report the implications to the next Council meeting.

RECOMMEND that the Council supports the Clerk in her studies by permitting a weekly equivalent of four hours study leave. The Clerk to discuss directly with the Chairman of the Council any ad hoc additional study leave requirement if necessary.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

CHAIRMAN