

**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 18TH AUGUST 2008 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors: P. Davies (Chairman)
R. Bishop D. Blackwell R. Howard N. Harvey

Also present: One member of the public (until 8.05pm)
Mrs J. Abel – Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All members of the Committee were present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. R. Bishop and D. Blackwell declared a personal interest in item 5i). Grants; Canvey Island Wildlife Conservation Group as they are both members of the organization.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public requested information from the Council on its policy on future development on the Island.

4. STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members were provided with draft revised standing orders and financial regulations for consideration. The Clerk advised of the principle amendments which had been made.

RECOMMEND that the Council adopts the revised standing orders and financial regulations.

5. GRANTS

i) GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

The Committee considered the current process for the submission of grant applications and the process for consideration of submitted applications. Members discussed the merits of considering grant applications prior to the budget setting process in December. The promotion of the availability of grants was also discussed. The member of the public left the meeting at 8.05pm.

RECOMMEND that:

- the current grant process continues and that grants are received and considered on an ad hoc basis;
- the Council's grant programme is displayed on the Council website.

ii) GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applications were considered from the following organizations:

a) Canvey Island Wildlife Conservation Group

RECOMMEND that the Council grants a payment of £499 for the purchase of a new projector.

b) Castle Point Challenge

AGREED that more supportive information is sought particularly about the number of Canvey Island children who would benefit and the total cost per child.

c) Disability Essex

RECOMMEND that the application is refused as the Committee felt that the organization's application did not meet the criteria.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk reported briefly on the recent installation of a new Council accounts package in the Council Office.

Members noted the Clerk's report and supporting papers of the Council's income and expenditure from April to June 2008, its budget performance and its bank balances.

7. BANK MANDATE – CHANGE OF AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES

The Clerk advised that the Council should consider increasing the number of authorized signatories to ensure that the Council was not left financially impotent in the event of councilor holidays or sickness. It was suggested that the bank mandate should be amended and that authorized signatories should reflect the membership of the Policy and Finance Committee.

RECOMMEND that the Council's bank mandate is amended to reflect the membership of the Policy and Finance Committee.

8. CHAIRMAN'S CHAIN OF OFFICE

The Clerk presented a number of options and designs for the Chairman's Chain of Office from three recognized suppliers.

RECOMMEND that the Council authorizes expenditure of £957.40 + VAT for the purchase of the Chairman's Chain of Office from Thomas Fattorini Ltd.

9. COUNCIL POLICIES

The Clerk advised that Council policies relating to Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act were being drafted and would be presented to the next meeting.

10. RESIDENTS' SUGGESTIONS

Members considered residents' suggestions as follows:

a) To make Canvey a 'Fair Trade Town'

The Clerk advised that to gain Fairtrade Status the Council would need to pass a resolution supporting Fairtrade and serve Fairtrade coffee and tea at meetings and in offices.

In addition a range of products carrying the Fairtrade mark must be readily available in local shops and cafes and used in local workplaces.

RECOMMEND that the Council assesses retailers support at a future meeting.

b) To permit the Canvey Flower Arranging Society to site displays in the Council Office

Members noted that the Society wished to mount displays in the front of the Council Office.

RECOMMEND that the Society is permitted to mount displays in the front of the Council Office but that the Clerk monitors issues of Health and Safety.

c) To invite groups to advertise events at the Council Office

Members supported this suggestion in principle but recognized the possible need to regulate the type of organizations which made use of this facility.

RECOMMEND that organizations are permitted to advertise events at the Council Office at the Clerk's discretion.

*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. DEVELOPMENT OFFICER – OUTSTANDING INVOICES

Cllr R. Howard left the meeting at 9.05pm.

Members had been provided with a letter from EALC, copies of outstanding invoices relating to the services of the Development Officer and supporting information. Cllr. R. Howard rejoined the meeting at 9.10pm.

RECOMMEND that the Council approves the payment of the outstanding invoices totaling £5679.76 and writes to EALC to advise of the Council's views.

12. STAFFING

The Clerk reported that Mrs Elaine De Can had satisfactorily completed a three month probationary period in post. The Committee considered the proposal that Mrs De Can be awarded an incremental pay increase with effect from 21st July 2008. Mrs De Can had also requested that the Council permitted her to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

RECOMMEND that Mrs De Can:

- is awarded an incremental pay increase with effect from 21st July 2008;
- is permitted to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

13. COUNCILLOR TRAINING

The Clerk spoke with Members about Council issues related to training, meetings, relationships with other organizations and authorities and managing enquiries from the press.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

CHAIRMAN