



TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Dear Councillors,

I hereby summon you to attend a **MEETING** of **CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL** to be held in the **DELLAWAY ROOM** at the **PADDOCKS COMMUNITY CENTRE, LONG ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND, SS8 0JA** on **MONDAY 28TH APRIL 2025** commencing at **7.00pm** for the transaction of business as set out below.

Any member who is unable to attend the meeting should send their apologies before the meeting.

Yours faithfully,

Elaine De Can

Mrs E. De Can
Town Clerk

23rd April 2025

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 allows the filming, recording, photographing, or otherwise reporting of those participating in a meeting. Should any member of the public be present and does not wish to participate but who objects to being filmed, recorded, photographed, or otherwise reported about please make yourself known to the Town Clerk.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda
3. Public forum – to receive questions from members of the community of Canvey Island of which notice has been received for a period not exceeding ten minutes.
4. To confirm and sign as a true record the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24th February 2025.
5. To confirm and sign as a true record the minutes of the Policy & Finance Meeting held on the 10th February 2025.
6. To note the report of Officer Decisions under delegated powers and background papers since the last meeting.
7. Policies – to note the annual review of all policies is underway.
 - To consider and agree the new Procurement Policy (Appendix A)
 - Grant Policy (Appendix B)
 - Biodiversity Policy (Appendix C)
 - Crime & Disorder Policy (Appendix D)
 - Accessibility Statement (Appendix E)
8. To consider and agree a response to the External Auditors complaint (Appendix F).



9. To consider and agree landowners' consent to charge the leasehold interest on funding received by Trust Links from the Community Ownership Fund of £250,000.
10. To consider the Local Council Award Scheme and confirm that the Council conforms to the requirement for the Gold Status level inclusive of prepared statements (Appendix G).
11. To consider and agree conducting a Public Consultation on the activities of the Council.
12. To verify the Council Finances up to 31st March 2025.
13. To confirm accounts for payment as previously agreed.

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF
CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL
ON MONDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllr P. May, Cllr S. Sayes, Cllr E. Harvey, Cllr A. Acott, Cllr D. Blackwell, Cllr S. Sach, Cllr B. Botham, Cllr J. Anderson, and Cllr D. Anderson.

Also present: Mrs E. De Can – Town Clerk
Mrs L. Gould – Deputy Clerk
Mrs K. Bali – Community & Events Officer
Mrs A. Wakenell – Community Officer

CO/161/24 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence approved for Cllr P. Greig. Verbal apologies received and reason given by Cllr Brooke.

CO/162/24 - TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

CO/163/24 - PUBLIC FORUM - TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF CANVEY ISLAND OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN RECEIVED FOR A PERIOD NOT EXCEEDING TEN MINUTES

No questions were received.

CO/164/24 - TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 20TH JANUARY 2025.

Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 20th January 2025 be confirmed as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Town Mayor.

CO/165/24 - TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 10TH FEBRUARY 2025.

Members noted the minutes of the Policy & Finance meeting held on the 10th February 2025 and **RESOLVED** that the minutes are adopted by the Council and recommendations made were agreed and the minutes are to be signed by the Chairman of the committee at the next Policy & Finance meeting.

CO/166/24 – TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE TOWN MAYOR ON ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

Members noted the activities since the last meeting and the booked activities such as attending the ECC Chairmans Civic Service, EPUT Intensive Outreach Mental Health Team visit, CPBC Mayors Civic County Ball and the 100th Anniversary of the RBL on Canvey Island event.

CO/167/24 – TO NOTE THERE HAVE BEEN NO OFFICER DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

Noted.

CO/168/24 – TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT OF ONGOING PROJECTS AND NOT ON THE AGENDA.

Members noted the report and updates provided by the Town Clerk.

CO/169/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE A REPORT AND QUOTES OBTAINED FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF BARLEY STRAW AND CHALK IN CANVEY LAKE.

Members noted the report provided by the Community Officer and the issues relating to the distribution of barley straw and chalk and **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve a budget of £10,000 for the distribution of Barley Straw in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Town Mayor to establish the volume of

straw required and distribution method. It was noted that members did not feel it necessary at this time to obtain testing of the silt as it is known that the lake is contaminated with run-off from the surrounding roads.

Members **AGREED** unanimously that although desilting the lake was not part of the Councils vision for immediate action, investigations should be made into obtaining funding to desilt the lake and reduce silt levels.

Members noted that concerns had been raised regarding the lease and riparian ownership and **RESOLVED** that legal advice should be sought to clarify these concerns.

CO/170/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE COSTS FOR THE REPAIR OF THE FENCING AT DENHAM ROAD CAR PARK.

Members considered the costs provided and **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint Jenson Fencing to repair the fence at a cost of £1,550.00.

CO/171/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE COSTS FOR A BACKDROP BANNER FOR THE COMMUNITY AWARDS.

Members considered the costs provided and **RESOLVED** unanimously to purchase the banner from Design 4 Print at a cost of £225.00.

CO/172/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE USE OF THE COUNCILS COMMON SEAL FOR THE LEASE AT THE PADDOCKS COMMUNITY CENTRE, APPROVE THE SIGNING OF THE LEASE AND RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE MOVE.

Members considered the report provided and **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the use of the Councils Common Seal and that the lease should be signed without further consultation with the Council on the assumption that no issues are raised outside of the terms already approved and that it is confirmed that the devolution of local councils would not affect the long-term lease.

Members noted that planning permission was required for the storage container at a cost to the Council.

Members noted the report provided detailing potential costs for dilapidations and office move and **RESOLVED** to delegate power to the Town Clerk to proceed with the required dilapidations and new office requirements not already approved by the Council as detailed in the report within budget restraints, however, noted that the dilapidations required may go over budget in the financial year 2024/25 which will be offset with costs savings in 2025/26. Members approved the removal of the air conditioning units at a cost of £500.00.

CO/173/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE CANCELLING THE SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING ON THE 31ST MARCH 2025 DUE TO THE PROPOSED OFFICE MOVE.

Members considered the request and **RESOLVED** unanimously to cancel the meeting on the 31st March 2025.

CO/174/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE AMENDED PROPOSALS FOR CHRISTMAS 2025 AND APPROVE QUOTES OBTAINED.

Members considered the report provided and the quotes obtained and **RESOLVED** unanimously that as the Bavarian slide was no longer available the Astro Slide should be booked at a cost of £1,500.00 and approved the attraction package inclusive of Santas Grotto, soft play bus, gaming bus, Trailer Stage, and chair ride at a cost of £2,045.00, totalling £3,454.00 for the Christmas attractions.

CO/175/24 - TO CONFIRM ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT PREVIOUSLY AGREED.

24th February 2025 NO 1 ACCOUNT

Company	Reference	Amount	Description
Mr J Dellow	BACS796	£70.00	Refund of Insurance payout
D. Trower	BACS797	£20.00	Window Cleaner 04/02 & 18/02

Amazon	BACS798	£40.95	ATM Supplies
Blasford Hill Fishery Ltd	BACS799	£1,300.00	Fish Removal – Year 3
Trophy Store	BACS800	£155.20	Community Awards Trophies
EDF Energy Customers Ltd	BACS801	£156.00	Annual Meter Charge – Denham Road
James Hallam	BACS802	£653.60	Vehicle Insurance Mar25-Mar26
TOTAL		£2,395.75	

CO/176/24 – TO NOTE A REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY OFFICER ON MATTERS RELATING TO CANVEY ISLAND.

Members noted the report. The Community Officer advised that all of the bridges at the lake have been painted, the band stand has been painted and new nets installed, quotes have been obtained for the repair of the fencing at Denham Road, the ROSPA inspection for the play area is due, there has been constant fly tipping at the Labworth Memorial Gardens which is under investigation and the pagoda was damaged but has been repaired.

CO/177/24 – TO NOTE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORTS DETAILING INCIDENTS AND ACTIONS COMPLETED IN RELATION TO OPEN SPACES.

Members noted the reports. The Community Officer advised that the contractor has reported an invasive weed spreading through the large planter in the Labworth Memorial Gardens and has requested that the plants are removed and appropriate weed killer applied. Cllr Blackwell advised he would investigate and liaise with the Community Officer.

CO/178/24 - REPORTS FROM CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO CANVEY ISLAND

Cllr Blackwell advised that the Paddocks is due to open on the 31st March 2025, the Knightswick Centres refurbishment is underway and the CCTV project for the island has been approved and 36 new cameras will be installed around Canvey Island.

CO/179/24 - REPORTS FROM ESSEX COUNTY COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO CANVEY ISLAND

Cllr Blackwell and Cllr May held a meeting with ECC regarding the issues surrounding roadworks around the Island. Cllr Blackwell confirmed that the large potholes along Eastern Esplanade were being investigated and yellow lines will be installed on every corner and halfway along Norden Avenue.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

TOWN MAYOR

28th April 2025

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF THE
POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL OFFICE, 13 HIGH STREET, CANVEY ISLAND ON
MONDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllr. P May, Cllr D. Anderson, Cllr S. Sach, and Cllr J. Anderson.

Also, present: Mrs E. De Can – Town Clerk

P&F/020/24 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Written apologies received and reason given by Cllr D. Blackwell for Cllr Acott.

P&F/021/24 - TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

P&F/022/24 - PUBLIC FORUM – TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF CANVEY ISLAND OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN RECEIVED FOR A PERIOD NOT EXCEEDING TEN MINUTES.

No questions were received.

P&F/023/24 – TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 11TH NOVEMBER 2024.

The minutes of the committee meeting held on the 11th November were **CONFIRMED** as a true record and signed by the chairman.

P&F/024/24 – TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK FROM THE ONGOING PROJECTS AND NOT ON THE AGENDA

Members noted the Clerks report of completed projects.

P&F/025/24 - TO CONSIDER AND AGREE TO RE-APPLYING FOR THE GOLD STATUS AWARD AT A COST OF £300.00.

Members considered re-applying for the award and **RECOMMENDED** this proceed at a cost of £300.00.

P&F/026/24 – POLICIES - TO NOTE THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF ALL POLICIES IS UNDERWAY. NOTE THE AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING POLICIES:

i) SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY.

Members approved and **RECOMMENDED** the amendments to the policy by the Council.

ii) CIVIC REGALIA POLICY.

Members approved and **RECOMMENDED** the amendments to the policy by the Council.

P&F/027/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE COSTS FOR THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING COURSES

i) ILCA AT A COST OF £120.00.

Members approved and **RECOMMENDED** the Deputy Clerk undertake the ILCA qualification at a cost of £120.00.

ii) FILCA AT A COST OF £120.00.

Members approved and **RECOMMENDED** the Town Clerk undertake the FILCA qualification at a cost of £120.00.

iii) FIRE SAFETY TRAINING FOR ALL STAFF AT A COST OF £330.00.

Members approved and **RECOMMENDED** the fire safety training for all staff at a cost of £330.00 with MB Fire Training.

iv) FIRST AID TRAINING FOR THE DEPUTY CLERK AND COMMUNITY & EVENTS OFFICER AT A COST OF £200.00.

Members approved and **RECOMMENDED** first aid training at a cost of £200.00 with ATH Training, subject to investigations with Canvey Island First Responders to see if they are able to provide the same service at a cheaper price.

P&F/028/24 – FINANCE

i) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE 1 YEAR FIXED BOND ACCOUNT AND THE REINVESTMENT OF £85,000.

Members considered the costs obtained and **RECOMMENDED** the reinvestment of the £85,000 inclusive of interest received in 2024 with the Hampshire Trust Bank with a 1 year business loyalty bond account at an AER of 4.55%.

ii) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE QUOTES OBTAINED FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNCILS INTERNAL AUDITOR.

Members considered the review undertaken of local internal auditors and the quotes obtained and **RECOMMENDED** appointing Heelis & Lodge at a cost of £430.00 to conduct the annual audit and to continue to use them until 2028.

iii) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE QUOTES OBTAINED FOR THE COUNCILS VEHICLE INSURANCE.

Members considered the quotes obtained and noted that the current provider would not provide a cost until 30 days before expiry and **RECOMMENDED** continuing with James Hallam on the condition that the insurance does not increase by more than last year's percentage rate as this is still the most cost-effective quote and delegated the power to the Town Clerk to approve the expenditure.

iv) TO VERIFY THE COUNCIL FINANCES AS OF 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Members **NOTED** the Council Finances as of 31st December 2024 inclusive of the bank reconciliation, statements and payments issued from 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024 and no questions were raised. Members confirmed that Cllr J. Anderson can sign the reconciliation documents and original bank statements as evidence of verification in accordance with Financial Regulations 2.2.

v) TO CONFIRM ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENTS AS PREVIOUSLY AGREED.

10th February 2025 NO 1 ACCOUNT

Company	Reference	Amount	Description
Aspect Maintenance Ltd	BACS789	£6,335.08	Maintenance – Jan
Top of the Mops	BACS790	£66.00	Cleaner 23/01 & 06/2
SFB Solutions	BACS791	£698.49	Annual Alarm/CCTV Maintenance
Bond Fire Service	BACS792	£263.40	Fire Extinguisher Service/ Replacement Water & Co2
D4Media	BACS793	£278.82	Allotment Number Signs
JAF Graphics Ltd	BACS794	£444.20	Wildlife Crossing Signs
TOTAL		£8,085.99	

The meeting closed at 7.35pm

CHAIRMAN

28th April 2025

Subject: Officer Report

Speaker: Town Clerk

Reason for Report

Report of officer decisions under the Openness and Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

Date: 6th March 2025

Decision taken: To appoint Heale Building Company Ltd to conduct additional internal building works to those already approved by the Council to ensure that the Licence to Alter for No 11 & 13 High Street were compliant at an additional cost of £700.00.

Reason: The original quote for building works did not include the correct brick work required to repair the door between the two offices and for additional work for replacing the ceiling frame following the removal of the air conditioning units.

Alternative Options: Existing building contractor used.

Date: 2nd April 2025

Decision taken: To appoint Hometech Ltd to replace data cabling in the new Paddocks office facility at an additional cost of £600.00 as these were required for the new IT and VOIP system.

Reason: The original quote for IT works did not include this cost as it was to be provided as part of the renovation work to the new offices, however, this had not been included in this work which was not confirmed until the initial IT installation had been started.

Alternative Options: Existing IT supplier was used.

Date: 6th March 2025

Decision taken: To appoint Essex Air Conditioning Ltd to conduct additional work to remove pipe work at the request of the landlord of No 11 High Street following the removal of the air conditioning units at a cost of £160.00.

Reason: Request of the landlord of No 11 High Street following the removal of the air conditioning units.

Alternative Options: Existing air conditioning contractor used.

Date: 13th March 2025

Decision taken: To appoint Trident Safes Ltd to relocate the safe to the new office premises at a cost of £425.00.

Reason: The cost of a new safe was investigated and it was more cost effective to relocate the existing safe to the new premises.

Alternative Options: Three quotes were obtained.

Canvey Island Town Council

Procurement Policy

Introduction

On 24 February 2025, the Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024 came into effect across the United Kingdom. This policy document corresponds to this Act and these Regulations and will need to be updated in light of any superseding legislation.

In May 2024, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) published updated model financial regulations, and this policy was developed in conjunction with that most recent national model document. The Council needs to undertake any public procurement exercise in accordance with up-to-date Standing Orders and up-to-date Financial Regulations; otherwise an exercise may not be valid and present a risk of challenge to the Council.

This document sets out Canvey Island Town Council's approach to public procurement in accordance with current and superseding legislation.

Procurement Principles

The National Association of Local Councils articulates a number of principles in its national model financial regulations as follows which this Council will adhere to:

Councillors and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.

Every contract shall comply with the Council's up-to-date Standing Orders and up-to-date Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency. Both documents, together with the Council's Code of Conduct, should be reviewed at least annually or when changes in e.g. legislation occur.

For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by central government, the full requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 or any superseding legislation must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.

Where the estimated value is below the government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed below) obtain prices as follows:

- For contracts estimated to exceed **£214,904**¹ including VAT in value, the Council must comply with any requirements of current or superseding legislation regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts. The Procurement Act 2023 makes provision for these opportunities to be published on the government's "central digital platform" i.e. the Find a Tender platform.
- A "regulated below-threshold contract" under the Procurement Act 2023, Part 6 refers to a public procurement contract which falls below the higher-value procurement threshold above but still requires transparency and compliance due to its value exceeding a specific lower limit, typically set at **£30,000**² including VAT for non-central government authorities. Again, the Council must comply with any requirements of current or superseding legislation regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts. The Procurement Act 2023 requires the publication of below-threshold tender notices and contract details notice on the central digital platform i.e. the Find a Tender platform.
- For contracts greater than **£5,000** excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least three fixed-price quotes.
- Where the value is between **£1,000 and £5,000** excluding VAT, the Clerk shall try to obtain three estimates which may include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- For smaller purchases, the clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.

Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.

The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes
- ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment
- iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract
- iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price

When applications are made to waive these principles to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the Council or relevant, duly delegated Committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

¹ Threshold values are published by the Cabinet Office <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-act-2023-guidance-documents-define-phase/guidance-thresholds.html>, downloaded on 25 February 2025

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-act-2023-guidance-documents-define-phase/guidance-below-threshold-contracts.html>, downloaded on 25 February 2025

An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

No individual councillor, or informal group of councillors may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.

Procurement Processes

Appended to this policy is a flowchart which identifies the process to be followed depending on the anticipated value of a procurement opportunity.

The Procurement Regulations 2024 set out the information which must be included in invitation to tender notices for publication as follows:

- a) the contracting authority (i.e. the Council's) information
- b) the title of the procurement
- c) the unique identifier for the procurement
- d) the contract subject matter
- e) the estimated value of the contract
- f) how tenders may be submitted and the date by when they must be submitted
- g) whether the notice is being used to invite tenders for a special regime contract
- h) whether the contracting authority (i.e. the Council) considers that the contract or any lot forming part of the contract may be particularly suitable to be awarded to:
 - a small and medium-sized enterprise, or
 - a non-governmental organisation which is value-driven and which principally reinvests its surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives
- i) an explanation of the criteria against which the award of the contract will be assessed, and
- j) a description of any conditions of participation in relation to the award of the contract.

Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk may obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.

Where an electronic tendering process is used, the Council shall use a specific email address which will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.

Where the Council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the Council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

The basic procurement process for opportunities above a value of £30,000 is as follows:

1. Publication of the contract notice and publication of tender documents
2. Deadline for submission of tenders
3. Evaluation of tenders (including any clarification questions to tenders)
4. Notification to shortlisted applicants and invitation to presentation
5. Presentations by shortlisted tenderers

6. Evaluation Panel's recommendation to full Council
7. Full Council meeting
8. Notification to applicants & contract award
9. Contract commencing

Evaluation of Submissions

The Council will appoint a tender administrator (usually the Clerk) and a tender evaluation panel. The administrator will administer the process and the panel will evaluate each received tender submission. It is recommended that the tender administrator does not serve on the panel.

It is further recommended to invite an uneven number of members to each panel (i.e. three or five) so that majority recommendations can be made to full Council. A mixture of councillors and officers can serve on the panel and the Council can also invite external experts who bring particular technical or other knowledge.

The tender evaluation panel does not need to be formally appointed by the full Council because it acts as an informal working group which reports back to the full Council. It is suggested that a new panel is appointed for each tender evaluation and that members are selected based on their knowledge and experience in relation to the particular tender, e.g. manufacturing experience for play equipment, experience in the construction industry for construction works etc.

Evaluation Methodology

The Council's appointed tender administrator will check the tender submissions for completeness and ensures they are fully compliant with the Council's requirements, including inclusion of the evidence required in relation to the evaluation criteria.

- The tender evaluation panel will then evaluate every valid tender submission in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and based on the most economically advantageous proposal using the evaluation criteria specified in the invitation to tender document.
- Each criterion has been assigned a weighting to reflect the relative importance of such criterion to the Council.
- Each member of the evaluation panel will assess each bid separately.

The tender evaluation panel will evaluate the tenders based solely on the information provided in the tender submissions and the panel members will evaluate tenders in accordance with the process described below with the aim to establish a preferred supplier for the Council's requirements and, if appropriate, submitting a recommendation to the Council to award a contract to the preferred supplier.

Only following approval from the Council will the bidders be notified of the decision, and confidentiality restrictions lifted from the contract details. **Information relating to the evaluation during the live process must not be divulged to anyone as to do so may undermine the integrity of the contract award process.**

The evaluation panel members will decide which score as defined in the scoring scale below most accurately describes the response in relation to each criterion. The evaluation panel members will

record the scores they award. The points scored will then be weighed according to the percentage weighting. For example:

- if a bid scores “4” for the criterion “price” which is weighted at 50%, the final score for this criterion will be 2 because 50% of 4 equals 2.
- If a bid scores “3” for the criterion “compliance” which is weighted at 10%, the final score for this criterion will be 0.3 because 10% of 3 equals 0.3 and so on.
- Scores will be rounded to one decimal place.

Each panel member will submit their scores to the tender administrator **only** (i.e. not copying to the other panel members so as to not prejudice their scores) who will calculate the average score relating to each bid from all the scores received.

Each criterion will be scored in application of the following scoring scale:

SCORING SCALE	
Score Awarded	Score Definition
0	Very poor or no response The response provides no confidence.
1	Poor The response provides very little confidence.
2	Unsatisfactory The response provides some confidence but not to an acceptable degree.
3	Satisfactory The response provides an acceptable degree of confidence.
4	Good The response provides a good degree of confidence.
5	Excellent The response provides an exceptional degree of confidence.

Presentations

After each panel member has submitted their scores to the tender administrator, the tender administrator will:

1. calculate the average score relating to each bid from all the scores received
2. shortlist the three highest scoring bids for the tender presentations
3. issue the invites to the tender presentations

The tender presentations are similar to a job interview in that they provide an opportunity for the Council to meet with prospective contractors ahead of a contract award.

The shortlisted bidders will be invited to prepare for a conversation with the panel members according to the following structure:

1. Overview of your organisation and project team (5 minutes)
2. Challenges of this particular job and how you propose to overcome them (10 minutes)
3. Questions and answers (25 minutes)

The scoring of each bid provides the quantitative evaluation of tenders, whereas the tender presentations provide an opportunity for qualitative evaluation.

Following the presentations, each panel member will submit a ranking of bidders in order of preference to the tender administrator **only** (i.e. not copying to the other panel members so as to not prejudice their rankings).

Report to Full Council

The quantitative and qualitative information gathered during the scoring and presentation stages will then form the basis for a report and recommendation(s) which the tender administrator will prepare for the evaluation panel's consideration and approval, before submission to full Council.

DRAFT

Procurement Processes Based on Value of Opportunity

Step	Anticipated Value between £1,000 and £5,000 Excluding VAT	Anticipated Value Between £5,000 Excluding VAT and £30,000 Including VAT	Anticipated Value Between £30,000 and £214,904 Including VAT	Anticipated Value More Than £214,904 Including VAT
1	Try to obtain three estimates which may include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers	Seek at least three fixed-price quotes	Complete template invitation to tender document and tender submission form and collate supporting documents (e.g. service specifications, location/floor/site plans, surveys [topographical, condition, asbestos, trees etc.])	Complete template invitation to tender document and tender submission form and collate supporting documents (e.g. service specifications, location/floor/site plans, surveys [topographical, condition, asbestos, trees etc.])
2	Complete report template and submit to Clerk, committee or full Council for approval	Complete report template and submit to Clerk, committee or full Council for approval	Full Council agrees to tender documents by resolution	Full Council agrees to tender documents by resolution
3	Authorise expenditure in accordance with the Council's relevant up-to-date Financial Regulation governing expenditure which may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget either by the full Council, a duly delegated committee or the Clerk	Authorise expenditure in accordance with the Council's relevant up-to-date Financial Regulation governing expenditure which may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget either by the full Council, a duly delegated committee or the Clerk	Publish the opportunity on the government's Find a Tender platform	Publish the opportunity on the government's Find a Tender platform
4			Publish any clarification questions and the Council's responses on Find a Tender	Publish any clarification questions and the Council's responses on Find a Tender
5			Tender evaluation: Score returns (quantitative evaluation) – see template evaluation methodology	Tender evaluation: Score returns (quantitative evaluation) – see template evaluation methodology
6			Tender evaluation: Presentations by shortlisted bidders (qualitative evaluation)	Tender evaluation: Presentations by shortlisted bidders (qualitative evaluation)
7			Evaluation panel's report to full Council with recommendation to e.g. award contract	Evaluation panel's report to full Council with recommendation to e.g. award contract
8			Publish award notice on Find a Tender	Publish award notice on Find a Tender

Canvey Island Town Council

Grant Application Policy

The Town Councils grant policy exists to support local activities and causes which benefit Canvey Island and its residents. A grant will be made for the specific purpose for which it is claimed and the Council must ensure that grants (which are all funded by the local taxpayer) provide value for money.

Financial assistance will only be made to small-scale local projects, not national or county appeals or appeals that benefit only a single individual. The Council will only give grants to properly constituted bodies and charities. This means that, at a minimum, the organisation should have clear officers or points of contact and produce annual accounts. All grants will be paid by cheque or bank transfer payable to the organisation's accounts. Payments will not be made to any individual's personal bank account.

Retrospective applications where an event or activity has already taken place will not be considered. Organisations with a business or profit making remit are not eligible nor are religious or political activities.

Applicants are required to complete the Council's application form to apply for financial assistance, and to provide all the information requested.

Application Criteria:

1. Applications should only be made for capital expenditure.
2. The Council will not normally consider applications for the running/ongoing costs of organisations, however, (at its discretion and only as a one off award) may consider applications for financial assistance for a local group/event which can prove upon providing sufficient evidence that it provides an invaluable service to the community of Canvey Island. Funding will not be considered for the employment of staff or salaries.
3. The Council will require either one written quote or a breakdown of project costs as part of the application form to support the funding request. Any application submitted without the required information will not be considered.
4. Applicants must provide the organisation's annual accounts, any application submitted without the accounts will not be considered.
5. Applicants must provide a full explanation of the grant required and how it will benefit the residents of Canvey Island.
6. Applicants must provide details of other bodies to which applications for financial assistance have been made, and any other supporting information that will assist the Council in making its decision.
7. The maximum figure set for grants awarded is £500. A budget for grants will be set annually by the Council and you are advised to check the budget available before submitting your application.
8. Organisations are restricted to one application within a 24 month period. The Council has limited funds and the history of previous applications may be considered in the decision making process.
9. The Council is prevented by statute from giving financial assistance to individuals, charities operating overseas or to a fund established to help persons outside the UK.

10. The annual deadline for receipt of grant applications is (31st December). Applications received after this date will not be considered in the current financial year. (The financial year is from 1st April to 31st March)
11. As a condition of receiving a grant, organisations will be required to acknowledge the Town Council's support in their publicity material.
12. The Town Council will publicise a grant with a photo opportunity and press release. No funds will be provided to the recipient until this has been completed.
13. The application form, accounts and other information may be copied and placed on the public agenda for the meeting, so please ensure the information is clear and legible. No personal data will be disclosed.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Council's website www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk or by contacting the Town Clerk at the below address:

Canvey Island Town Council, The Paddocks Community Centre, Long Road, Canvey Island, SS8 0JA or via email at admin@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk

Please return the completed application form and supporting documents to the above address.

All applications will be considered fairly and on individual merit at a meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee and applicants will be informed of the outcome after that meeting.

APPLICATION FOR A GRANT

A completed form should be submitted to the Town Clerk at the address shown below. You are advised to read the Councils grant policy before completing the application form.

The maximum granted to any organisation will be £500.

1. **Name of organisation**

2. **What is the grant required for?**

Please give a brief outline of your project.....

.....

.....

.....

3. **Please provide the following information:**

Total cost of the project

Funds currently available for the project

(List all grants already agreed from other sources)

.....

Proposed sources of other funds for the project

.....

Amount of grant requested (maximum of £500)

Have you received any previous grants from Canvey Island Town Council? Yes/no

If yes, please indicate when and the amounts

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Amended Apr 25 – next review date Jan 2027.

4. Please attach a copy of the latest audited accounts and balance sheet.

5. Total number of members in your organisation

Number of residents within the parish of Canvey Island who will benefit from the service you provide

6. Please give brief details of methods employed by your organisation to increase membership.

.....
.....

7. Please complete the following details:

- I, (name in capitals), being authorised by the organisation to make this application, certify that the above information is correct.
- I agree to acknowledge any assistance given by the council in any publicity associated with the project. (If your application is successful, evidence of this should be provided with relevant paid invoices when the claim for grant payment is made).

Signature Position Date.....

Full address and telephone number for future correspondence

.....
.....

If your application is successful, please provide full bank details to which the payment should be made (N.B. Bank transfers can only be made payable to the name of the organisations bank account and not an individual)

Bank / Building Society Name:

Account Name:

Sort Code:

Account Number:

Please complete the following checklist to ensure all additional information has been supplied:

Explanation of grant funding required:

One written quote or breakdown of project costs for capital expenditure:

Copy of latest audited accounts:

Explanation of how the grant will benefit residents on Canvey Island:

Confirmation of other bodies to which applications have been made:

Please tick the required box if you are VAT registered:

Please return the application form with any additional information to:

Canvey Island Town Council, The Paddocks Community Centre, Long Road, Canvey Island,
SS8 0JA

Canvey Island Town Council

Biodiversity Statement

Parish and Town councils have a strengthened duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, stemming from the Environment Act 2021, requiring them to consider biodiversity in their policies and decision-making, and to act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

As a public authority the Town Council has a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to in exercising its functions have regard so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions for the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

Canvey Island is a densely built-up area, however, supports a diverse number of open spaces, plants, and animals in a range of habitats. These include SSI sites such as Canvey Wick and the rare shrill carder bumblebee. There are two other nature reserves RSPB West Canvey Marsh and Canvey Lake including the Salt Marshes and Canvey Heights. It also supports a vast area of coastline which has a range of marine life and insects.

Canvey Island Town Council aims to enhance and protect biodiversity in its actions and decision making. The Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- The practising and promotion of recycling
- The conservation of energy through careful electrical use
- The preservation of trees and wildlife
- Careful use of water through the promotion of water butts
- The promotion of composting
- Environmental and tree protection in its role as a Planning Consultee
- Supporting community partners in their work to improve biodiversity such as the RSPB, Natural England etc.

The Council will consider and respect biodiversity in its activities, particularly when managing its open spaces. Many ways that the council do achieve, and support biodiversity is to:

- Managing and encouraging a diverse range of wildlife and wildfowl at Canvey Lake Nature Reserve including encouraging diverse vegetation such as reeds and water plants as well as an abundance of trees.
- Manage and maintain a thriving Wildflower Meadow to encourage the vital feeding and nesting habitats for insects, butterflies, birds, small animals', and other wildlife.
- Supports and encourages the planting of trees to help with global warming and has an abundance of trees at Canvey Lake, 47 trees surrounding the Wildflower Meadow and newly planted trees at Tewkes Creek.
- Signing up to the Tree Charter and becoming a registered branch.
- Management and maintenance of its Tidal Pool providing a vital resource for marine life.
- Encourages biodiversity through its Memorial Gardens and the provision of hanging baskets and planters through the town centre, seafront, and entrances to the island.
- Encourage the creation of community gardens such as Sycamore Close to enhance the islands green spaces.
- Working in partnership with the development of environmentally friendly areas created by residents, local organisations and businesses and help raise awareness of environmental

issues and promote conservation projects, where appropriate, in conjunction with appropriate bodies.

- Managing two allotment sites and encouraging residents to enhance and provide self-sustainability.
- Promoting and conducting regular litter picking events and supporting the annual Great British Beach cleans.
- The removal of plastic bottle provision at its events.
- Reporting works of environmental issues or maintenance of the Environment Agency or local partners through its website or newsletters.
- Considering sustainability, environmental impacts and biodiversity when commenting on planning applications through its Planning Committee.
- Encouraging gardening and plant preservation through its annual Garden Trail event.
- The production of a Wildlife Walk leaflet around Canvey Island to provide visitors and residents with information on the diverse number of different species that can be found on and around the island.
- Working with Environmental/Wildlife Groups such as the RSPB to promote their activities and open spaces through community engagement and social media, other organisations through environmental projects such as Natural England, Woodlands Trust, and the Essex Wildlife Trust.
- Supporting the Canvey Island Wildlife and Conservation group with an annual £500 grant to assist with the management and maintenance of the Don Downes nature reserve.
- Installation of four bee posts in the Town Council's open spaces in order to encourage pollinators and increase biodiversity to the area.
- Running a "Save the Bees" campaign with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, handing out sunflower seeds to residents, schools and promoting planting to encourage pollinators.
- Running wildlife picnics working with local conservation organisations such as BugLife to educate and inform residents about wildlife in their local area.

Canvey Island Town Council

Crime and Disorder Policy

Canvey Island Town Council has a duty to consider the impact of its functions and decisions on crime and disorder in its area under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Council is committed to protecting its town from Crime and Disorder and work with community partners, including Castle Point Borough Council, Essex Police, local schools, residents, and youth groups, to achieve this aim.

The Town Council had committed to funding the recruitment of five Community Special Constables to patrol the streets of Canvey Island and assist with anti-social behaviour. It launched the scheme in June 2019 with 1 Special Constable but due to the lack of interest discontinued the project in 2021.

The Council are committed to administering the volunteer led Community Speed Watch Group to help tackle speeding in problem areas across Canvey Island.

The Council is committed to working with Essex Police and holds regular Beat Surgeries in its office, invites representatives to its Community Days or events and supports the Police with pop up stalls at its office location to provide information and support to residents when required.

The Town Council successfully obtained funding to deliver a road safety project aiming to improve safety for pedestrians and road users during the darker hours. This project is due to be launched Autumn 2025.

The Council will continue to work with community groups and the Police to support the learning in schools about the impact of crime, anti-social behaviour, fire, first aid, cyber bullying, stranger danger, how to make 999 calls, drugs issues etc.

The Town Council provides a Community Officer who reports incidents of anti-social behaviour, crime, drug taking etc to the local police and is also a trained Hate Crime Ambassador.

All council staff have been trained under the J9 Domestic Abuse Initiative and the council office is a J9 hub.

Canvey Island Town Council recognise the importance of reducing and detecting crime, reporting crime, working to reduce antisocial behaviour and the fear of crime, working to strengthen community involvement and offer reassurance.

The Town Council will represent the views and concerns of its community and local crime reduction strategies should reflect those views.

Accessibility statement for Canvey Island Town Council

This website is run by Canvey Island Town Council, developed, and provided by Phuse Media.

These statements are made in good faith and we accept that there may still be areas that will require further work.

We are not responsible for making external content accessible which has been provided to us by a third party. We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website. For example, that means you should be able to:

- change colours, contrast levels and fonts
- zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen
- navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
- navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
- listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)

We have made the website text as simple as possible to understand. Any links to external websites will open in another window.

AbilityNet has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.

How accessible this website is?

The Town Council have ensured its website is compliant with WCAG 2 AA. Improvements were made to ensure accessibility with the update required in October 2024.

These updates were undertaken by the Town Council's website provider, Phuse Media.

What to do if you cannot access parts of this website

If you need information on this website in a different format like accessible PDF, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille:

- email: clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk
- call: 01268 683965

The Town Council will consider your request and get back to you within 28 working days.

Reporting accessibility problems with this website

The Town Council is always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed on this page or think we're not meeting accessibility requirements, contact the Town Clerk on clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk or call the office on 01268 683965.

Please note some problems can only be resolved by the website provider Phuse Media and will take longer.

Enforcement Procedure

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the 'accessibility

regulations'). If you're not happy with how we respond to your complaint, contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS).

Contacting us by phone or visiting us in person

If it is not possible to make contact as set out above arrangements may be made to meet you in person. The Town Councils contacts page <https://canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/contact-us/> provides details of how to contact the office.

Technical information about this website's accessibility

Canvey Island Town Council is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

This website is compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.2 AA standard.

Non accessible content

The content listed below is non-accessible for the following reasons. Archive material is exempt from the regulations.

Non-compliance with the accessibility regulations

No issues found.

Disproportionate burden

If any changes are required that are found to be too costly it would be a disproportionate burden within the meaning of the accessibility regulations. All assessments will be made and reviewed annually.

Navigation and accessing information

No issues found.

Interactive tools and transactions

No issues found.

Content that is not within the scope of the accessibility regulations

PDFs and other documents

Some of our PDFs and Word documents are essential to providing our services. For example, we have PDFs providing minutes of meetings, and forms published as Word documents. These have either been fixed or replaced with accessible HTML pages.

Any new PDFs or Word documents we publish will meet, as fully as possible at this time, accessibility standards.

The exemptions

- Older documents (pre-Sept 2018) that are not in active admin use are exempt for ever.

- Disproportionate burden can be used to explain non-compliance, but this needs to be audited, costed and justified. Lack of time due to lack of priority is not considered a reason. See additional guidance on disproportionate burden claims (Part 2 section 7)

Many of our older PDFs and Word documents do not meet accessibility standards - for example, they may not be structured so they are accessible to a screen reader. These are exempt as they were prior to the September 2019 implementation date. There are no videos on the site.

How we tested this website

A new site was launched in September 2020 and additional compliance amendments were made in October 2024 in order to be compliant with WCAG 2.2 AA Standard, tested by Phuse Media.

What we are doing to improve accessibility

The Town Council will review accessibility on a regular basis with the intention of making the website available to as many people as possible.

This statement was prepared in January 2020 and updated on 9th April 2025.

Town Clerk

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 August 2024 13:12
To: SBA
Cc: clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk
Subject: RE: Canvey Island TC - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR

Dear Rebecca,

I just wanted to conclude by adding this to the context that the main areas of concern with all the evidence submitted are as below, just for clarification:

- Improper use of procurement policy
- Failure to legally comply to procurement policy
- Failure score and award as per contract regs
- Use of discriminatory language
- Discrimination towards a bidder
- Use of bias/pre-determined voting methods
- Failure to monitor public funds appropriately
- Failure to monitor contractors appropriately

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 8:36:18 PM
To: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Cc: clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk <clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Canvey Island TC - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR

Dear Rebecca,

Many thanks, I'll await your conclusion. If you need anything in between, please let me know.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 8:31:40 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk <clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Canvey Island TC - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR

ITEM 1

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Canvey Island

Essex, [REDACTED]

12/08/2024

Dear Rebecca,

I have been drafting my response more conclusively and constructively following your request to do so on the 29/7/2024. I have drafted it all into this letter for you now, which I will send via email, and have detailed as much as I can to evidence my case. You do also have all the information previously sent.

I have attached a raft of pictures, and files, each one, if required, can be titled, dated and the location given upon request, as evidence as a breach in the contractor's compliance to the required specification. They also serve as evidence of the councils flawed processes, lack of monitoring, poor contract management and prove a reckless use and poor safeguarding of public funds.

For your reference, I requested information via a Freedom of Information Request from the Town Clerk on the 20th of June 2024, which the clerk argues her response was on time and I argue it was late, but that's neither here nor there.

The government guidance however on the timeline allowed states a prompt response is required and no more than 20 days should pass, not 20 days should be taken. Again, more deliberate delay tactics being used simply to slow the process down. I will forward you all the email(s) chain, so you are up to date with all correspondence!

The clerk also failed to provide the information I had requested using the excuse they (the town council) keep no information for longer than a year. I therefore don't understand why I could not have received copies of this year's monthly safety and defect reports/monitoring reports? But again, not transparent or open and almost deliberately being evasive with information pursuant to my concerns.

This lack of record keeping, and frankly poor practice, creates issues when complaints arise, such as this one, where complaints could be ultimately linked to any financial outgoings and wrongdoings and go hand in hand with each other to prove or disprove any discrepancies. I honestly cannot comprehend why a public body would engage in such poor practices. The government requirement is that any information that could or would be linked to public finances should be kept for 6+1 year(s). I believe this is another breach?

I was only provided with blank templates and a list of several complaints, excluding my own which should have made the list. It does seem the clerk is selective in what information is given and I find

that the information provided was inadequate and did not follow the lawful process of an FOI request. I was informed that instead of written instructions, formal action plans, reactive to do lists etc being given to the contractor, a verbal handover is given to the contractors via the Lake Warden, which is a publicly paid post, but who is never/seldom seen on the lake. One would ask how viable and beneficial this post actually is?

I know the list of complaints is somewhat fabricated/selective as I have spoken to and met with several members of public/social groups who support the lake and its wildlife and of which 4 members have made several complaints each. I also know residents who have complained about the poor management of flora which supports rat colonies, again these are missing and not included.

I have attempted to work with the council on resolving this matter but have not had the same back. I was insulted by the leader of the council who I know also has several other complaints against him currently. It would appear the power has gone to some heads and the autonomy they believe they have deemed them untouchable. They are showing a complete disregard to protecting the public purse and natural environment and it needs to stop.

On a separate note, a public petition to remove the town council from authority has now begun and you need to be made aware of that as it has been submitted for debate and a referendum, some 4000 people signed the petition, so it is not just me who has concerns.

I would now like to ask you to confirm the authenticity of all the bidders who provided quotes for this tender process to ensure they are all real and legitimate companies.

I am also questioning the competence and integrity of the contractor who is incumbent and ask that you also look into this. They regularly recharge the council for issues such as fly tipping, a recurring one is black bin bags left by the bins, I dispute this as I have witnessed myself only this week, the man who empties the bins, ride along on his bike, empty a bin and change the bag, he then rides that bag to the next bin, empties that bin, and then places two full bags by that bin. How is it determined that those bags are not what they are classing as fly tipping?

To further demonstrate the contractors and councils' incompetence, no epicormic growth pruning had been undertaken by this contractor in the last 5 years. Only when I brought it to the councils' attention in May/June 24 with my complaint (further proof of a lack of monitoring which is paramount to protecting the public purse ensuring fulfilment of contracts) was there a hurried reaction by the council and contractor to start pruning this.

They proceeded to remove epicormic growth throughout June and July, which causes the trees undue stress and is detrimental to the trees health as it is the wrong time of year, it was also far too hot, this action continues to this day with the contractor still pruning this as of the (08/08/24). This is the "able" contractor chosen to complete works as per the spec and is thus far failing. Who also whilst undertaking these works parks his large flet bed caged van on the public pathway obstructing the right of way. Access for anyone disabled, with a buggy or on a bike is totally restricted/removed. I do believe it is illegal to obstruct a public right of way/public pathway!

Image 7155 in folder Item 4 was taken on the 20th May 2024, it shows 2 large trees with a lot of epicormic growth, which is clearly stated in the spec as a removal requirement (at the correct time of year). All the trees in this locality are as badly kept as these 2 trees and all are not managed as per the spec. This amount of growth is not put on in 1 season, this is several seasons worth of growth proving the contractor has not undertaken the works in the spec for several years and the council have not suitably managed/monitored the contractor accordingly.

Also more than a dozen dead tree stumps are left in the ground to rot, and present a real trip hazard and danger to the public – see pictures attached!

Grass cutting debris is allowed to fall into the waterways and cause blockages, restrictions to the natural flow of water and turns it stagnant. The specification (also attached) clearly states all water ways should be cleared from all clippings and debris. It also states the reeds should be cut to 1 meter each year using appropriate equipment. This is done using a hedge cutter and the debris falls into the lake and is left. This should be completed using a collecting flail ensuring all debris is removed. Two of the lakes sluice/run offs/dyke entrances are also completely overgrown with reeds preventing natural flow, another section of the specification ignored by the contractor and unmonitored by the council.

I do find the contractor and the council grossly incompetent in the arrangement, management and delivery of this contract and use of public funds!

Moving on to further evidence my complaint and using the Government Guidance to Light Touch Contracts, I find Canvey Town Council in breach of the following regulation guidelines therefore making their procurement process flawed, unlawful and in need to be totally renewed with all current Grounds Maintenance Contracts being cancelled, revoked and relaunched.

Please see my comments in red below the guidance regulations. I would also further suggest they are carried out by the Mainland Authority, Castle Point or at the very least overseen and adjudicated by yourselves or persons not associated with Canvey Island Town Council:

Please use this link to confirm the below as accurate and correct:

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=e33408173739a42eJmItldHM9MTcyMzQyMDgwMCZpZ3VpZD0wZiMzOTU5Yy1iMzlmLT9wNzQtMTI2My04NjQ1YjI3ZjYxYTamaW5zaWQ9NTlwNQ&pfn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=0f33959c-b39f-6074-1263-8645b27f61a0&psq=public+procurement+light+touch+regime&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ292LnVrL2dvdMvYybm1lbnQvcHVibGJlYXRpb25zL3Byb2N1cmVtZW50LWFiZC0yMDIzLWd1aWRhbmNILWRvY3VtZW50cy1wbGFuLXB0YXNlL2d1aWRhbmNILWxpZ2h0LXRvdWNoLWNvbnRyYWN0cy1odG1s&ntb=1>

17. The Act integrates light touch contracts into the broader procurement regime and includes special rules and exemptions where greater flexibility is justified. This makes it clear how such procurements should be carried out and ensures that probity and transparency are built into the process, while respecting these contracts' unique characteristics.

The process undertaken by Canvey Town Council does not promote transparency, there cannot be a vote by chamber members on the provider they "prefer" which is transparent as predetermination cannot be proven to NOT have taken place. A clear, transparent and fair scoring process needs to be used, based on price, ability and quality alone to determine the public contract award.

18. Light touch contracts must be advertised using a tender notice unless a direct award justification applies. Contracting authorities are required to determine whether suppliers are excluded or excludable suppliers and consider conflicts of interest before awarding the contract. Transparency will be maintained through publication requirements, including requirements for a contract award notice, a contract details notice and, when the contract is over £5 million, publication of the contract.

There were no justifications to award a direct tender here, so the contract went to tender as it should, however, the bid from Manor Oaks was rejected based on the fact the chamber members voted (all evidenced by the town clerks emails already provided), that despite being able and passing the PQQ stage, the price was too cheap, and the Town Clerk deemed it, in her own words "abnormal". This alone is a complete disregard for the use of public funding when ultimately the town council have a duty of care to protect the public purse and not make excuses not to use a contractor that isn't their "preferred incumbent". It further proves the process is not transparent and that the council failed the public. The use of the word "abnormal" is also an act of discrimination, which is unlawful and is also detrimental to Manor Oaks Ltd and the claim that we could not undertake the work at the price submitted is unfounded and unproven and somewhat concerning that chamber members feel they have the right to simply decide this with no evidence.

19. Procurement of a light touch contract that is a public contract is covered procurement and therefore will be subject to the procurement objectives in section 12 (Covered procurement: objectives). Namely, a contracting authority must have regard to:

a. the importance of delivering value for money;

They failed in this element by choosing a more expensive contractor, who has a history of complaints and a tradition of adding lots of extras (£'s) during each year of the contract. For example, circa £7,500.00 has just been charged for the planting of 50 tress by the incumbent provider. Not only is this a complete waste of taxpayers' money when 250 trees could have been provided free of charge by the forestry commission, but they have been planted in July/Aug, during a heatwave. My last count was 4 trees have been stolen due to improper staking, 3 have snapped due to improper staking and 4 have died due to no watering. Again, further wasting public funds and showing a complete disregard for financial obligations to the public purse.

b. the importance of maximising public benefit;

Again, as above, there is no public benefit if the process simply leads to the same contractor being "voted" in again and again. This particular contractor has every ground maintenance contract on Canvey Island and every project is flawed, from a lack of visits, the lake had no maintenance visits this year until the 17th of May so March and April were totally missed, a minimum of 5 visits, an approximate cost of £7,500.00 paid to the contractor for non-attendance. Other projects that include the Town Planters, Planters around the Island in multiple locations and The Labworth Memorial Gardens are all full of weeds and dead plants (see attached pictures) due to poor maintenance and minimal attendance. The council have also provided evidence that no formal monitoring is undertaken for any of its contracts when copies of monitoring were asked for via an FOI request. Therefore no effective monitoring undertaken by the Council leads to the contractor having free range and no assurance to contract compliance can be proven. This dramatically reduces public benefit.

c. the importance of sharing information for the purpose of allowing suppliers and others to understand the contracting authority's procurement policies and decisions; and

d. the importance of acting, and being seen to act, with integrity.

There appears to have been a pool of mistruths, miscommunications and/or total forgetfulness throughout the process and communications. Policies were not provided, pricing was incorrect at the point of advert, communications show the Town Clerk saying one thing in one email, another in meeting minutes and another in further emails followed by denial. This can be seen in the May

24 minutes (attached) where volunteers are approved to prune/remove brambles and hedges along the lake despite this being a contractors remit and in the specification. It also was not then advised to other bidders who would need to consider volunteers working alongside them for H&S and insurance reasons. It also breaches the bylaws (confirmation from Natural England incoming) of the lake, which is a nature reserve and has been since 1998, where no other workers, other than those contracted by the authority may work on the lake and its surrounding areas/no person shall remove any fauna/flora etc without being approved and contracted to do so etc. Volunteers do not fit this description.

20. Section 12 also provides that, when carrying out covered procurement, contracting authorities must:

a. treat suppliers the same unless a different treatment is justified; and

Rhetorically using the word abnormal to describe the price submitted, and suggesting we could not undertake the works for the price submitted is treating us differently to other bidders, is discriminatory and is not justified.

b. have regard to the fact that small and medium-sized enterprises may face barriers to participation and consider whether such barriers can be removed or reduced.

21. These procurement objectives provide overall parameters within which the contracting authority has freedom to design the procedure for light touch contracts. See the guidance on covered procurement objectives for more information.

If the process complies to and follows framework agreements set either by the Crown Commercial Services and Or the Public Procurement Process, which it does not, and the vetting/award process falls outside the requirements where voting for the preferred supplier is not a regulated option, it is therefore not transparent, against guidance and ultimately unlawful.

The Lake and its surrounding area is and has been a local nature reserve since 1998. The Town Council seems to have forgotten or ignored this fact. The grounds maintenance specification does not meet the requirements for the management of an LNR as below evidences further, it is a snippet from a Facebook post, on the friends of Canvey lake post:

Good evening Members. We are all now aware that Canvey Lake is a registered Local Nature Reserve, but I thought you might like to see the definition taken from the 1949 Act which covers what a Nature Reserve is and the reasons for making an area a Nature reserve.

You can see from the definition below why we are confident CITC had and still has no idea at all what they took on in 2010 when they signed the Lease, and the Lake as it stands now does not deserve the title of a Nature Reserve as what is below definitely does not match what we now have, compared to when the Lake was managed under CPBC. You decide.

Selection of an LNR Defining a Local Nature Reserve

A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is a protected area of land designated by a local authority because of its local special natural interest and, where possible, educational and community value.

Legislative requirements Schedule 11 (12) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, which replaced Section 15 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, describes a 'nature reserve as:

*Land managed solely for a conservation purpose, or
land managed not only for a conservation purpose but also for a recreational purpose, if the management of the
land for the recreational purpose does not compromise its management for the conservation purpose.*

Land is managed for a conservation purpose if it is

*Providing, under suitable conditions and control, special opportunities for the study of, and research into, matters
relating to the fauna and flora of Great Britain and the physical conditions in which they live, and for the study of
geological and physiographical features of special interest in the area;
Or*

*Preserving flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features of special interest in the area or for both these
purposes.*

*Land is managed for a recreational purpose if it is managed for the purpose of providing opportunities for the
enjoyment of nature or for open-air recreation.*

*In addition we now have grave doubts as to the validity of the Lease agreement as there is no mention in the
Lease at all that the Lake is a Nature Reserve and advice from Natural England is as follows.*

A copy of the nature reserve agreement between Castle Point and Canvey Town Council. -

*Under the 1949 Act, the Local Authority must first have or acquire a legal interest in the land through ownership,
lease or an agreement with the owner and occupiers. Section 16 of the Act sets out the basis for agreements
needed to ensure management of the land as a nature reserve. Any agreements need to make it clear what is
agreed and who is responsible for doing what.*

*In the Lease CPBC produced and CITC signed there is no such agreement, the fact that The Lake was a
registered LNR not mentioned at all. This clearly does not conform to the Act.*

The above I hope is enough for you to work with and to evidence my points of concern/complaint
etc. Please also note the attachments are as follows and further prove, backup, evidence my
complaint the councils/contractor incompetence:

- 1) The Lake Maintenance Specification
- 2) Proof of tender advert falsely/incorrectly priced from the start
- 3) Poor tree management/epicormic growth
- 4) Tree stumps left in situ/trip hazards
- 5) Bin bag by side of bin
- 6) Blocked/uncleared waterways
- 7) Light Touch Reg Pics
- 8) Tree Planting/Dead Trees/Poorly tied trees
- 9) Othe project pics

Please note that the attachment 9 is pictures of planters managed by the council via services
provided by the same contractor!

Yours Sincerely,



Value of contract

£17,000

Procurement reference

CITC08

Published date

15 May 2024

Closing date

3 May 2024

Closing time

5pm

Contract start date

1 June 2024

Contract end date

Canvey Island Town Council

Published date: 15 May 2024

Awarded contract - This means that the contract has been awarded to a supplier.

[Watch this notice](#)

[Print this notice](#)

Closing: 3 May 2024, 5pm

Contract summary

Industry

- Recreational, cultural and sporting services - 92000000
- Other community, social and personal services - 98000000

Significant Flexibilities

Authorities have the flexibility to use any process or procedure they choose to run the procurement, as long as it respects the other obligations above. There is no requirement to use the standard EU procurement procedures (open, restricted and so on) that are available for other (non-LTR) contracts. Authorities can use those procedures if helpful, or tailor those procedures according to their own needs, or design their own procedures altogether.

The LTR rules are flexible on the types of award criteria that may be used, but make clear that certain considerations can be taken into account, including (this is not an exhaustive list):

- the need to ensure quality, continuity, accessibility, affordability availability and comprehensiveness of the services;
- the specific needs of different categories of users¹, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups;
- the involvement and empowerment of users; and
- innovation.

Reserved contracts for certain services in the light-touch regime. The new rules permit for certain LTR contracts to be "reserved" for organisations meeting certain criteria e.g. public service mutuals and social enterprises. These provisions are covered separately in Part 2 of this guidance.

¹ The rules refer to "users" in the context of services provided "to the person" ie where the contracted services are delivered to members of the public. Examples of such users might include the parents of children receiving education services, patients receiving certain health services, and those in receipt of social care services.

the end of each quarter.

Isn't it safer just to use the standard procedures in the main rules, rather than design our own process, to avoid the risk of legal challenge?

The new LTR rules are deliberately designed to give as much flexibility to contracting authorities as possible, and so do not lay down detailed procedural rules. Routinely using similar procedures to those in the main rules would deprive the contracting authority of the many flexibilities that the LTR rules provide.

CCS recommends that authorities take advantage of the various flexibilities where possible, to maximise the possible benefits from the lighter rules regime, such as reduced process burdens on procurers and suppliers. The key things are to be clear about what your process will involve, making sure the process ensures transparency and equal treatment of suppliers, and sticking to the process that you decide to run.

How much flexibility do authorities really have? For instance, presumably we would still have to seek a tender, even though the rules don't say so explicitly?

There is a considerable amount of flexibility to design the procurement process in the way the authority chooses, though some of the basics of any well run procurement exercise would of course need to be respected. Generally, the "permissive" aspects of the main rules (i.e. where the rules permit authorities to do certain things, by stating that "contracting authorities may...") are also permitted in LTR without the LTR rules needing to repeat the same details. So there should be no concern that things are ever *less* flexible in LTR. Whilst most of the mandatory and permissive provisions in the main rules do not have any binding effect on LTR contracts (except for those exceptions that are explained in this guidance), as discussed below some provisions are obviously necessary in any significant procurement exercise.

For instance, it would normally be necessary to at the very least acquire tenders before awarding the contract, in order to ensure that a transparent and competitive procurement has been undertaken, despite the absence of a specific LTR regulation requiring that. It would also be necessary to be transparent about any award criteria to be used, and the weightings for the criteria and sub-criteria, to comply with the general transparency obligations.

But following the initial OJEU advertisement, there is significant flexibility to decide how to get to the contract award stage. For example, authorities wanting to run a straightforward process and go straight to the final tenders stage, could use a "pseudo"² Open

² At various points in this guidance note we use the term "pseudo" before referring to a provision that is available in the main rules. This is to make clear that we are describing a practice in the LTR that inevitably looks and feels similar to the provision prescribed in the main rules, but is not actually a defined provision in the UK's LTR regulations, and so actually none of the formal procedural rules have any direct application when this is practiced in LTR contracts. It is important to make this distinction by the seemingly laborious repeat references to "pseudo" to avoid implying that we are talking about the actual provision prescribed in the main rules

Procedure. The Open Procedure has very few prescriptive rules anyway, which mainly cover time periods for responding to adverts and which do not apply in the LTR. So authorities could simply seek tenders from all interested parties by a date of the

the end of each quarter.

Isn't it safer just to use the standard procedures in the main rules, rather than design our own process, to avoid the risk of legal challenge?

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CCS recommends that authorities take advantage of the various flexibilities where possible, to maximise the possible benefits from the lighter rules regime, such as reduced process burdens on procurers and suppliers. The key things are to be clear about what your process will involve, making sure the process ensures transparency and equal treatment of suppliers, and sticking to the process that you decide to run.

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Town Clerk

From: Town Clerk <clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk>
Sent: 27 August 2024 13:52
To: 'SBA'
Subject: RE: Canvey Island TC - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR
Attachments: Quotes for Ground Maintenance Canvey Lake Nature Reserve.docx

Dear Rebecca,

Considering [REDACTED]'s complaint, I thought it prudent to respond with facts.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] original complaint was made through Manor Oaks following an unsuccessful bid; however, this is no longer being pursued by the company as far as I am aware. It now seems to have escalated significantly into a personal campaign against the Council and its contractor. Obviously, any resident has the right to challenge Council decisions, however this is made extremely difficult when there are clear vexatious motives.

The Council has followed its standing orders and the procurement regulations as it understands them. It has a proven record of transparency, best value, and best practice. It has been awarded the Quality Gold Level of the Local Council Award Scheme. This means that the Council meets all requirements of the Foundation and Quality Standards and is at the forefront of best practice by achieving an excellent standard in community governance, community leadership and performance management. Moreover, the Town Council goes above and beyond their legal obligations, leading its community and continuously seeking opportunities to improve and develop even further.

Please find attached the confidential report provided to the Council following receipt of all bids in relation to the tender in question with the resolution added after the meeting which provides some context to the information being considered. All bids were opened at the same time and the information collated and reported to the Council with all the supporting documents for each bid as per its standing orders under confidential business. As you can see there are a variety of differing bids. The Council is not obliged to accept the lowest bid and must consider each bid independently which it did on this occasion. Aspect Maintenance Ltd provided a comprehensive bid.

Following the initial complaint the Council held the award of the contract for 1 month to investigate its processes and seek advice. The Council resolved that it had followed its standing orders, NALC guidance, agenda preparation legislation and the appropriate procurement regulations. The Council has also commissioned support from Local Council Consultancy to assist with the formation of a comprehensive procurement policy to alleviate any future misunderstandings.

I will endeavour to answer [REDACTED] claims and the points of relevance through his many accusations and provide factual information:

- Freedom of Information Request - [REDACTED] requested information about the contractor's performance and complaints received in relation to the Canvey Lake open space not complaints regarding the Town Council and its management of the lake. The council's Retention & Disposal policy states that complaints are only kept for 1 year, therefore, from the records available I

provided a list of the complaints received in relation to the grounds maintenance of the Canvey Lake open space between July 2023 and July 2024. The Council does not have a monitoring form to provide in relation to its open spaces as there has been to date no reason to utilise one. I provided copies of a template service agreement that is used as part of the council's contracts which shows the KPI's should the Council have need to follow this process. The lake open space is inspected monthly as are all open spaces for insurance and health and safety purposes and any issues that arise from these inspections are reported to the contractor for action. The Community Warden is in constant contact with all contractors and reports any issues verbally should she come across any during her patrols outside of the monthly inspections. I attached a blank copy of the inspection form for information. These issues are reported to the Council as an appendix as part of its agendas and can be found on the council's website either in the public notices or agendas section going back to 2020. There have been no failures/penalties applied to the contractor maintaining the grounds maintenance at the Canvey Lake open space.

- The one complaint made against the Leader of the Council has been investigated by the Monitoring Officer and been found to have no case to answer. I have not been made aware of any other complaints.
- Contractors Performance - The Council commissions an annual independent tree audit and any issues raised are actioned by the contractor in addition to the requirements of the contract. Recent grass cutting issues were due to the Environment Agency cutting the grass banks along the dyke and allowing the cuttings to enter the dykes. This was reported and actioned by the Environment Agency. The EA are also responsible for the sluices and dyke entrances and have raised no concerns regarding the management of the surrounding areas. As previously confirmed there have been no failures/penalties applied to the contractor maintaining the grounds maintenance at the Canvey Lake open space.
- I am unsure where [REDACTED] has obtained the figure of £7,500 for the planting of 50 trees. The trees were planted as part of a scheme funded by the ECC Forestry Commission at no cost to the Council. The cost of maintenance is £2,280 per year for a 3-year term which is again being funded by ECC and an annual grant of £4,725 has been provided under a 3-year term.

The Council is open and transparent where possible and has not acted inappropriately. All relevant information can be found on the Council's website, and it has demonstrated that it complies with the Annual Governance Statement Sections 1, 2 & 3.

I hope this information assists with your understanding of the complaint and the objections made in relation to the 2023/24 AGAR.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Elaine De Can PSLCC
Town Clerk
Canvey Island Town Council

11 High Street, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 7RB
Tel: 01268 683965
DL: 01268 952252
Web: www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk

Town Clerk

From: Town Clerk <clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk>
Sent: 29 October 2024 16:21
To: 'SBA'
Subject: RE: CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR - ELIGIBILITY DECISIONS
Attachments: SERVICE AGREEMENT - TEMPLATE.docx; Monthly Defect Report Template.doc; Monthly Site Safety Checklist Template.doc; Lake Ground Maintenance Complaints.pdf

Dear Rebecca,

I can confirm that [REDACTED] (the objector) is on the Castle Point electoral register and resides on Canvey Island.

1. the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was advertised on 19 March 2024 on the gov.uk Contracts Finder website at £17,000, which you contend was an incorrect value (Assertions 2 and 3);

Contract Finder allows you to enter an expected lowest and highest value range or zero. If you are not able to provide a highest value, a lowest value is sufficient and the guidance states that at least a minimum contract value is entered. No bid inclusive of the one provided by Manor Oaks offered a price at this cost. There is no obligation to accept the lowest bid, and it is reasonable for the Council to consider that a bid so much lower than all the other bids would not be manageable at such a low cost taking into consideration the four other bids received for the same specification. The council is reviewing its procurement processes to ensure that it is providing a comprehensive procedure and adequate measuring policy following the amendments to the Procurement Act 2023 which will be published in February 2025.

4. the quality of contract monitoring of the incumbent service provider by the Council during 2023/24 and prior years leading to poor value for money (Assertion 2 and Box 6); and

The Council has adequate monitoring processes that in place. We complete monthly inspections of all our open spaces and are in constant contact with our contractors to deal with any issues that may arise. We have KPI's written into all our contracts, although have never had to sanction any of our contractors for bad service provision. I have attached a copy of these KPI's. A contractor monitoring form has not been required; however, default notices are part of the service agreement and will be implemented if the need arose. We have reviewed our processes against other local councils such as Rayleigh Town Council, Mayland Parish Council and South Woodham Ferrers Town Council and our monitoring processes are equal to those of our peers.

I have also provided a copy of the complaints received for Canvey Lake which were sent to [REDACTED] July following another FOI. [REDACTED] has provided no tangible evidence of bad performance apart from photos with no dates or locations and old photos which are impossible to investigate adequately such as grass cutting which can be affected by many factors. [REDACTED] latest FOI requested the date that certain areas had been cut which was provided. What we didn't appreciate until querying these complaints was that due to the size of the open space it is not possible to cut the grass in one day and is therefore covered over a period of days which then starts the process again once completed. Also, other factors must be taken into consideration such as weather conditions which is not possible to ascertain months later.

I hope this information helps, however, if you require anything else please let me know.

Kind Regards

Elaine De Can PSLCC
Town Clerk
Canvey Island Town Council

11 High Street, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 7RB
Tel: 01268 683965
DL: 01268 952252
Web: www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk
(Working hours Monday to Wednesday 9.00am to 5.00pm)

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-----Original Message-----

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>

Sent: 23 October 2024 15:38

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Town Clerk <clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk>

Subject: CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR - ELIGIBILITY DECISIONS

Copied to the Council for information and as a request for confirmation of objector's electoral status Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your emails of objection which were received by us as appointed auditors to the Council on 11 July 2024 and for the subsequent clarification of your objections, received via emails on 12 August.

Requirements for an eligible objection

Town Clerk

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Sent: 23 October 2024 15:38
To: [REDACTED] SBA
Cc: Town Clerk
Subject: CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR - ELIGIBILITY DECISIONS

Copied to the Council for information and as a request for confirmation of objector's electoral status Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your emails of objection which were received by us as appointed auditors to the Council on 11 July 2024 and for the subsequent clarification of your objections, received via emails on 12 August.

Requirements for an eligible objection

Section 27 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) provides that local government electors for an area may object to the Council's accounts concerning a matter in respect of which the auditor could:

- * make a public interest report under paragraph 1 of Schedule 7 of the 2014 Act. Paragraph 1 of Schedule 7 of the 2014 Act provides that auditor must consider whether, in the public interest, they should make a report on any matter coming to their notice during the audit and relating to the Council or an entity connected with the Council, so it can be considered in accordance with Schedule 7 of the 2014 Act or brought to the public's attention; and/or

- * make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under section 28 of the 2014 Act.

Section 27 requires that objections must be made in writing and copied to the Council.

Regulation 14 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (the 2015 Regulations) provides that objections may only be made in a single 30-day period of which notice has been given under Regulation 15 of the 2015 Regulations.

Regulation 17 of the 2015 Regulations provides that a notice of objection under Section 27 of the 2014 Act must specify:

- * the facts on which the local government elector relies;
- * the grounds on which the objection is being made; and
- * so far as is possible, particulars of any item of account which is alleged to be contrary to law; and any matter in respect of which it is proposed that the auditor could make a public interest report under section 24 of and paragraph 1 of Schedule 7 to the 2014 Act.

Furthermore in March 2023, in exercise of the power in paragraph 9 of Schedule 6 of the 2014 Act, the National Audit Office, on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General, issued Auditor Guidance Note 4: Auditors' Additional Powers and Duties<<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/auditor-guidance-note-04-auditors-additional-powers-and-duties.pdf>> (AGN 04). Paragraphs 19 to 28 of AGN 04 provide guidance on determining whether an objection is eligible. We must have regard to that guidance.

Thus in order for your objections to be categorised as 'eligible' under Step 1 of the guidance issued by the National Audit Office, we must:

- * Confirm that the objections were received by us during the Council's public rights period;
- * Confirm that you have sent a copy of your objections and any attachments to the Council;

- * Confirm that each objection contains the facts relating it to an item of account and/or a governance assertion on the 2023/24 AGAR;
- * Confirm that each objection contains the grounds explaining why an item of account on the 2023/24 AGAR is alleged to be unlawful and/or why a governance assertion on the 2023/24 AGAR is alleged not to have been complied with by the Council; and
- * Receive confirmation from the Council that you were a registered elector of the parish on the date that we received your objections.

Your objections

You have objected to:

1. the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was advertised on 19 March 2024 on the gov.uk Contracts Finder website at £17,000, which you contend was an incorrect value (Assertions 2 and 3);
2. the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was carried out by the Council during April and May and awarded on 15 May 2024 to the incumbent service provider;
3. the quality of service provided by the incumbent service provider during 2023/24 and prior years;
4. the quality of contract monitoring of the incumbent service provider by the Council during 2023/24 and prior years leading to poor value for money (Assertion 2 and Box 6); and
5. the attitude and conduct of the Chair during May 2024.

Our eligibility decisions

Your objections were received by us during the Council's public rights period and have been copied to the Council. The items in Objections 1 and 4 are linked to governance assertions or items of account in the 2023/24 AGAR and the grounds for the objections have been explained; they would therefore be considered to be eligible in those respects. We will be in touch in due course with our decision regarding the acceptance of any eligible objections for further consideration.

We have assessed Objections 2, 3 and 5 as ineligible since they do not relate to a governance assertion or item of account on the 2023/24 AGAR. We will consider whether in our view the ineligible objections have an impact on the 2023/24 AGAR or on our report on the AGAR before completing our limited assurance review of the AGAR.

At this early stage, we would like to remind both you and the Council of the need to ensure compliance with relevant data protection legislation (including the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)). This could include, for example, redacting personal information (such as the objector's name, address or other identifying information) from any subsequent publication or sharing of the objections and related correspondence.

Overview of the objection process, timescales and costs Please see below a brief explanation of the objection process for your information:

- * Step 1 - eligibility:
 - * Receipt of objections;
 - * Assessment of objections against eligibility criteria;
 - * Notification of eligibility decisions (copied to Council - i.e. this email); and
 - * Confirmation of objector's electoral status.

- * Step 2 - acceptance:
 - * Assessment of eligible objections against acceptance criteria; and
 - * Notification of acceptance decisions (copied to Council).
- * Step 3 - consideration & decision:
 - * Request for information including formal response from Council in respect of accepted objections (copied to objector);
 - * Analysis of accepted objections and information received from Council;
 - * Request for further clarification/information from objector and/or Council if required (copied to objector/Council);
 - * Collation and redaction of material documents as appropriate;
 - * Sharing of material documents if not previously shared with objector;
 - * Analysis of comments received on material documents;
 - * Determination of accepted objections;
 - * Decision letter including statement of reasons issued to objector (copied to Council);
 - * Statutory reporting issued to Council if appropriate (copied to objector); and
 - * Appeal period if our decision is not to apply to the Courts regarding an alleged unlawful item of account (21 days).
- * Following completion of the challenge work:
 - * Completion of our limited assurance review of the AGAR
 - * External auditor report, including any challenge related reporting matters, and certificate on 2023/24 AGAR issued to Council along with invoice for the limited assurance review and the additional work as a result of challenge correspondence received

We are required to make our best endeavours to complete Step 1 within a week of receipt, then Step 2 within a further month, then Step 3 within a further six months. Where we are not able to decide the objection within six months, we will inform the objector and the authority. If we have not been able to conclude in the meantime, we will provide further updates on progress every three months until the objection is decided.

Please note that all the costs of any additional work that we carry out as a result of challenge correspondence received are met by the Council (and therefore the local taxpayers through increased council tax). The costs are set by Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA) and such work is carried out by an engagement lead at a cost to the authority of £355 per hour plus VAT, i.e. £2,485 per day plus VAT. If you wish to withdraw any or all of your objections to the AGAR, this can be done at any point in the process. We will still consider whether in our view the withdrawn objections have an impact on the 2023/24 AGAR or on our report on the AGAR before completing our limited assurance review of the AGAR; however, the additional reporting stages of the process will be avoided and so the costs to the Council will be lower.

Kind regards

Rebecca

Rebecca Plane | Head of Challenge | Engagement Lead PKF For and on behalf of PKF Littlejohn LLP T +44 (0) 20 7516 2200 sba@pkf-l.com<<mailto:sba@pkf-l.com>>
<https://www.pkf-l.com/services/limited-assurance-regime>

Please note that my usual working days are Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday

For and on behalf of
 PKF Littlejohn LLP

15 Westferry Circus
London E14 4HD
United Kingdom
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Tel:

+44(0)20 7516 2200

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Town Clerk

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Sent: 27 August 2024 18:00
To: Town Clerk; SBA
Subject: RE: Canvey Island TC - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR

Dear Elaine

Thank you for your email and attachment. The background information is helpful and the information provided will be useful if any of the objections are decided to be eligible and accepted.

Kind regards

Rebecca

Rebecca Plane | Head of Challenge | Engagement Lead
PKF

For and on behalf of PKF Littlejohn LLP

T +44 (0) 20 7516 2200

sba@pkf-l.com

<https://www.pkf-l.com/services/limited-assurance-regime>

Please note that my usual working days are Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday

For and on behalf of

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PKF Littlejohn LLP, Chartered Accountants

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From: Town Clerk <clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2024 1:52 PM

To: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>

Subject: RE: Canvey Island TC - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR

WARNING!! - This message has originated from an external sender - clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk. Please check the validity of the sender and contents.

Dear Rebecca,

Considering [REDACTED] complaint, I thought it prudent to respond with facts.

Response
25.11.24

Dear Rebecca,

ITEM 4

I can confirm that [REDACTED] (the objector) is on the Castle Point electoral register and resides on Canvey Island.

1. the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was advertised on 19 March 2024 on the gov.uk <<https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fgov.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7C%7C0d2bc3e03bb74bb9ded308dcf8f4c70d%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638658977412541233%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=rUHyaTTnNgtZGjVnCr9OFnNh4GMP%2F9DSem0jP001%2F9Y%3D&reserved=0>> Contracts Finder website at £17,000, which you contend was an incorrect value (Assertions 2 and 3);

Contract Finder allows you to enter an expected lowest and highest value range or zero. If you are not able to provide a highest value, a lowest value is sufficient and the guidance states that at least a minimum contract value is entered. No bid inclusive of the one provided by Manor Oaks offered a price at this cost. There is no obligation to accept the lowest bid, and it is reasonable for the Council to consider that a bid so much lower than all the other bids would not be manageable at such a low cost taking into consideration the four other bids received for the same specification. The council is reviewing its procurement processes to ensure that it is providing a comprehensive procedure and adequate measuring policy following the amendments to the Procurement Act 2023 which will be published in February 2025.

I do not understand why the council/clerk chose to advertise at such a low price, when they have run this contract for the past 5-10 years at a much higher price than £17k, (the last 5 with the same contractor) why would you choose to advertise a contract at a price some £8k lower than what you had been paying or was expecting to pay. To advertise this contract at £17k is misleading, untruthful, unrealistic and does not promote transparency, which is the crux of public procurement.

The Procurement Act 2023 does not fully come into effect until Feb 2025, and I do not feel it can be used as justification in this matter. I strongly feel the falsely advertised price is deliberately misleading and despite the suggestion that no other contractor supplied a price near it, shows the reckless and careless behaviour of the council. How are any contractors meant to submit a competitive quote if the baseline price advertised is incorrect and misleading? Also, in the best interests of protecting the public purse, a public authority is responsible for sourcing best service for the best price. The council had no reasons and no evidence that Manor Oaks were unable to provide the service at the price submitted and the authority is ethically duty bound to accept the lower cost to the public purse. To not have a clear and robust voting system in place, and to simply not choose Manor Oaks based on the fact "the authority thought manor oaks couldn't do it" is unjust, discriminatory and plain unfair. To also state the other reason for Manor Oaks being unsuccessful was that the incumbent had a unique knowledge of the area was ludicrous and offensive. All involved with Manor Oaks have lived on Canvey all our lives, we all have a unique understanding of the lake, especially the director who helped lead on the regeneration and replanting projects for the millennium project. I will heavily uphold and pursue my stance based on the language used in the councils (clerks) responses for not choosing Manor Oaks to be discriminatory and offensive. I strongly believe the process of choosing was flawed and the council simply went with what they know! Manor Oaks provided a price that

covered the work involved and kept the best interests and finances of the people of Canvey at the very heart of their quote. We wish the council portrayed the same ethic!

It was also asked that the Council allow the Auditors the opportunity to ascertain the authenticity of all the 5 contractors who applied for this contract, I have not seen this confirmation to date?

4. the quality of contract monitoring of the incumbent service provider by the Council during 2023/24 and prior years leading to poor value for money (Assertion 2 and Box 6); and

Poor value for money has been proven with pictures and dates beyond doubt and it is only the council itself not accepting this. The public are so fed up with the contractor and with this council that they have held a petition and received more than 4000 signatures for the councils dissolution. That's more than 10% of the Island, that's a very large group of unhappy residents.

The Council has adequate monitoring processes that in place. We complete monthly inspections of all our open spaces and are in constant contact with our contractors to deal with any issues that may arise. We have KPI's written into all our contracts, although have never had to sanction any of our contractors for bad service provision. I have attached a copy of these KPI's. A contractor monitoring form has not been required; however, default notices are part of the service agreement and will be implemented if the need arose. We have reviewed our processes against other local councils such as Rayleigh Town Council, Mayland Parish Council and South Woodham Ferrers Town Council and our monitoring processes are equal to those of our peers.

Having now seen copies of these monitoring forms, they are basic, inadequate and not robust, they lack detail and have no real sanctions in place for the contractor. In my 20 years of FM management, they are amongst the most basic I have seen. To suggest a contractor monitoring form is not needed is further evidence that this set up is flawed. To not monitor how and where public funds are spent is reckless and grossly inadequate.

The process of the monitoring officer (qualifications for the post and its requirements are questionable, perhaps the qualifications to perform this duty could be shared, such as a horticultural degree? A background in contractor/FM management?) (a lady named Adelle I believe) attending the lake and deciding what they feel should or shouldn't be put on a monitoring list is unprofessional.

I walk the lake daily and I still note numerous issues, which have been shared and ignored, from banks not cut, grass not cut, bins not emptied, strimming not complete/undertaken at all, broken/defunct items, entire weeks of grass cutting missed (contractor has lied to the council with dates cuts took place as previously proven with pics and dates with GPS locations). Respectfully, the other parish and town councils listed do not and have not experienced the level of public dissatisfaction that Canvey Town Council is over the lake and therefore I feel it is an unfair comparison.

I have also provided a copy of the complaints received for Canvey Lake which were sent to Mr [REDACTED] in July following another FOI. [REDACTED] as provided no tangible evidence of bad

performance apart from photos with no dates or locations and old photos which are impossible to investigate adequately such as grass cutting which can be affected by many factors. [REDACTED] latest FOI requested the date that certain areas had been cut which was provided. What we didn't appreciate until querying these complaints was that due to the size of the open space it is not possible to cut the grass in one day and is therefore covered over a period of days which then starts the process again once completed. Also, other factors must be taken into consideration such as weather conditions which is not possible to ascertain months later.

Respectfully, I find this response somewhat idiotic to be honest. Every picture provided was advised that it had a date and GPS location tag with it that could be provided upon request. The weather conditions can be seen in all the photos provided and I do not feel that is an appropriate argument. Unless grounds are waterlogged, the flail mowers the contractor use are designed to go over uneven grounds in wet conditions. I agree it is a large area to cut, and should take no more than 3 days to cut all areas adequately, however, the issue being raised was the contractors lack of attendance overall, not at all for several weeks throughout August and September, as proven by the pictures and dates with GPS locations provided, so the council response here should simply be dismissed. The crux is the council have selected a contractor who clearly engage in practices of dishonesty and charge the public handsomely for it whilst the council allow it.

It also needs to be noted that the list of complaints received is questionable, none of my own were on it, none from the group of friends of Canvey lake were present on it either and I know for a fact there have been at least 30 complaints this year alone between just us!

Lastly, please note, that throughout this process, I have offered to meet with the council and its members, at the lake, to show them first hand the issues and lack of work being undertaken by the contractor and each offer has been rejected.

I hope this information helps, however, if you require anything else please let me know.

Kind Regards

Elaine De Can PSLCC
Town Clerk
Canvey Island Town Council

11 High Street, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 7RB
Tel: 01268 683965
DL: 01268 952252

Town Clerk

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Sent: 21 January 2025 16:25
To: [REDACTED] Town Clerk; SBA
Subject: RE: Canvey Lake Grounds Maintenance FOI request

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email. The two eligible objections are shown below – these are the only issues that we will be considering in respect of the 2023/24 AGAR:

Your eligible objections

You have objected to:

1. the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was advertised on 19 March 2024 on the gov.uk Contracts Finder website at £17,000, which you contend was an incorrect value (Assertions 2 and 3); and
4. the quality of contract monitoring of the incumbent service provider by the Council during 2023/24 and prior years leading to poor value for money (Assertion 2 and Box 6).

Your eligible objections are awaiting consideration at Step 2 for the decision as to whether or not we will accept them for further investigation at Step 3. They are currently 14th in line, so I would hope to have contacted you by the end of the first full week in February.

Kind regards

Rebecca

Rebecca Plane | Head of Challenge | Engagement Lead
PKF

For and on behalf of PKF Littlejohn LLP

T +44 (0) 20 7516 2200

sba@pkf-l.com

<https://www.pkf-l.com/services/limited-assurance-regime>

Please note that my usual working days are Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday

For and on behalf of

PKF Littlejohn LLP

15 Westferry Circus

London E14 4HD

United Kingdom

www.pkf-l.com

Tel: +44(0)20 7516 2200



Town Clerk

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 January 2025 13:13
To: SBA; Town Clerk
Subject: Re: Canvey Lake Grounds Maintenance FOI request

Dear Rebecca,

Thank you for responding, apologies for the delay my end but we as a family have been very busy over the last few weeks.

Can I please point out that 1 factor remains outstanding, it was asked that the authenticity of all contractors who applied for the lake works is checked! Can this please be done?

Also, as previously stated, I would like to reinforce that I stand by all what I have said and have proven with photographic, dated and location-based evidence.

As stated previously, to base the decision not to award Manor Oaks Ltd the contract on unfounded claims of ability is not only unfair, but also in fact discriminatory. And I am also personally offended by the clerks last accusation that this is all vexatious. I am very worried that this term is used, simply because questions cannot be answered! I am also concerned that this response pattern has been used to other parties who have made complaints to this council.

I look forward to your conclusions, if there is any more information you require, please do contact me.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from Outlook for iOS

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:37:53 PM
To: [REDACTED] Town Clerk <clerk@canveyisland-tc.gov.uk>; SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Subject: RE: Canvey Lake Grounds Maintenance FOI request

Dear [REDACTED] and Elaine

Thank you for copying us in on your emails; we acknowledge receipt.

Kind regards

Rebecca

Rebecca Plane | Head of Challenge | Engagement Lead
PKF
For and on behalf of PKF Littlejohn LLP
T +44 (0) 20 7516 2200
sba@pkf-l.com
<https://www.pkf-l.com/services/limited-assurance-regime>

Town Clerk

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Sent: 28 February 2025 17:02
To: Town Clerk
Cc: [REDACTED] SBA
Subject: RE: CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR - REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FROM COUNCIL

Copied to the objector for information

Dear Ms De Can

Further to our email below, please could you collate and take to a full Council meeting for approval the Council's formal response to the accepted objection along with relevant supporting documentation (or links to it). The accepted objection is as follows:

Objection 1: You object to the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was advertised on 19 March 2024 on the gov.uk Contracts Finder website at £17,000, which you contend was an incorrect value

Comments: We note that this objection relates to the response given in Assertions 2 and 3 of the Annual Governance Statement

Conclusion: We accept this objection for further consideration.

Within the response, and in respect of the accepted objection only, please address the detailed concerns raised by the objector in their original objections. Please note that if approval of the formal response is carried out in a public session, the objector's identity must be protected in discussion and redacted in the agenda papers. I acknowledge that you have provided further information in respect of this objection in your email of 29 October 2024, however we need evidence that this is the Council's formal response as a result of the acceptance of this objection for further consideration.

Please submit this response and supporting evidence to us (copied to the objector) by email by **11 April 2025**; this date can be flexed if necessary to fit in with the Council's meeting schedule.

Kind regards

Kerry

Kerry Cutting | Director | Engagement Lead
PKF
sba@pkf-l.com

For and on behalf of

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Town Clerk

From: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>
Sent: 27 February 2025 14:20
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Town Clerk; SBA
Subject: RE: CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL - OBJECTIONS TO 2023/24 AGAR - ACCEPTANCE DECISIONS - STEP 2

Copied to the Council for information

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to our previous correspondence regarding your objections to the 2023/24 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), we are writing to you in accordance with our responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice as issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) to inform you which of the objections that we deemed to be eligible we have decided to accept for further consideration.

Factors taken into account in deciding whether to consider objections

Section 27(3) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) requires that we decide whether to consider an objection. Section 27(4) of the 2014 Act provides that we may decide not to consider an objection if, in particular, we think that:

- the objection is frivolous or vexatious;
- the cost of the auditor considering the objection would be disproportionate to the sums to which the objection relates, or;
- the objection repeats an objection already considered by an auditor of the Council's accounts.

By virtue of section 27(5) of the 2014 Act, we are not entitled to refuse to consider an objection which we think might disclose serious concerns about how the relevant authority is managed or led.

By virtue of section 27(6) of the 2014 Act, if we decide not to consider an objection, we may recommend that the Council should instead take action in response to the objection.

Section 28 of the 2014 Act gives a person who has objected to the Council's accounts asking that the auditor make an application for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law and who is aggrieved that the auditor decides not to do so:

- the right to receive written reasons for that decision; and
- the right to appeal against that decision to the court.

Paragraphs 33 to 44 of the NAO Auditor Guidance Note 04 (AGN 04) provide guidance on deciding whether to consider objections at Step 2 of the objection process. Paragraph 37 emphasises that the grounds set out in section 27(3) of the 2014 Act do not constitute an exhaustive list. Please note that there is no right of appeal against a decision not to issue a public interest report in respect of any of the objections.

We have carefully considered the objections you have made and decided which objections we will consider, in particular by reference to the matters detailed in section 27(4) of the 2014 Act. We would emphasise that in so doing we have:

- considered both the likely individual and aggregate cost of consideration of objections and the sums to which the objections relate in the context of the scale of the Council's activities; and
- had regard to the fact that, under section 27(7) of the 2014 Act, our reasonable costs of considering objections fall on the Council.

In this email we:

- set out the objections that we have decided to consider; and
- set out any objection that we have decided not to consider and the reasons for that decision; and
- request that the Council provides us with its formal response to each accepted objection including supporting evidence as appropriate. (NB: if approval of the formal response is carried out in a public session, the objector's identity must be protected)

Your eligible objections

You have raised two matters in respect of the 2023/24 AGAR that we have previously deemed to be eligible objections. You have objected to:

1. the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was advertised on 19 March 2024 on the gov.uk Contracts Finder website at £17,000, which you contend was an incorrect value (Assertions 2 and 3)
4. the quality of contract monitoring of the incumbent service provider by the Council during 2023/24 and prior years leading to poor value for money (Assertion 2 and Box 6)

Step 2 – acceptance decisions

One of your eligible objections has been accepted for further consideration:

Objection 1: You object to the tender process for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract; which was advertised on 19 March 2024 on the gov.uk Contracts Finder website at £17,000, which you contend was an incorrect value

Comments: We note that this objection relates to the response given in Assertions 2 and 3 of the Annual Governance Statement

Conclusion: We accept this objection for further consideration.

One of the objections raised has been accepted as eligible; however, it has not been accepted under Step 2 of AGN 04 for the reasons set out below:

Objections 4: You object to the quality of contract monitoring of the incumbent service provider by the Council during 2023/24 and prior years leading to poor value for money

Findings: We note that contract monitoring is not a requirement of the Financial Regulations . We also do not accept this objection on the basis of it being a Box 6 expenditure, as there is no evidence of unlawful spending; councils have the power to make this type of expenditure.

Conclusion: We do not accept this objection for further consideration.

In due course, we will allocate the challenge file to an engagement lead who may contact you for clarification of the accepted objections. Thank you for your patience with the challenge process.

We are required to make our best endeavours to complete Step 1 within a week of receipt, then Step 2 within a further month, then Step 3 within a further six months; we apologise for the delays in carrying out Steps 1 and 2 this year. Where we are not able to decide the objection at Step 3 within six months, we will inform the objector and the authority. If we have not been able to conclude in the meantime, we will provide further updates on progress every three months until the objection is decided.

Kind regards

Kerry

Kerry Cutting | Director | Engagement Lead

PKF

sba@pkf-l.com

Subject: Quality Gold Status

Speaker: Town Mayor

Reason for Report

To consider the Local Council Award Scheme and confirm that the Council conform to the requirements of the Gold Level.

Information

Council Resolution for Gold Award.

The Council confirms by resolution at a full Council meeting that it meets all requirements for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards as follows:

BRONZE AWARD

The Council demonstrates that it has the documentation and information in place for operating lawfully and according to standard practice. The Council also has policies for training councillors and officers and is building a foundation for improvement and development.

SILVER AWARD

The Council demonstrates that it meets all requirements of the bronze award and has additional documentation and information in place for good governance, effective community engagement and Council improvement.

GOLD AWARD

The Council demonstrates that it meets all requirements of the bronze and silver awards and is at the forefront of best practice by achieving an excellent standard in community governance, community leadership and performance management.

The Council confirms by resolution that all the required documents, information and conditions are in place for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Award, as detailed in the attached application form and that these are published on the council's website, where applicable

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council confirm that it conforms to the above requirements to submit the application for the Local Council Gold Award.

COUNCIL NAME	Canvey Island Town Council
DATE OF APPLICATION	02.05.25
AWARD LEVEL	Gold

Please read through the scheme guide before completing this form as it includes essential information in support of the evidence required. If you are unsure of the criteria requirements or need further information, then please check with your local county association or contact NALC at LocalCouncilAwardScheme@nalc.gov.uk

Completed sections required for each award level:

- If you are applying for Bronze level complete the Bronze criteria section
- If you are applying for Silver complete the Bronze and Silver criteria sections
- If you are applying for Gold complete the Bronze, Silver and Gold criteria sections

The exception to the above is if you have achieved an award within the last 12 months, then the section for that level award (and the preceding one) need not be completed.

All relevant sections of the form must be completed with evidence provided for the level that you are applying for. Otherwise, this could result in a delay to your application.

Application Tips

- Check all relevant documents are attached with your submission and hyperlinks provided are working correctly.
- Hyperlinks to the council's website must be to the exact evidence required. If this is not possible then include details of how the evidence can be found (i.e. menu, sub-menu etc).
- All published policies and documents must be tailored/personalised to the council.
- Check policies and procedures are not overdue for review. It is best practice to include a review date on all relevant documents and for Silver/Gold award levels the next review date must be included.
- If you are providing minutes as evidence, it is important you include the specific minute reference.
- For the Silver and Gold award levels, a more in-depth assessment will be undertaken of the evidence provided for the preceding award levels. For Gold in particular, the assessment panel will be looking for evidence of best practise throughout the application.
- A column has been provided on this form for any supporting comments you may have.

Local Council Award Scheme Application Form



BRONZE RESOLUTION

Please provide hyperlink to minutes:

The Council must confirm by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for the Bronze award (See Guide for wording)

Please provide a direct hyperlink for evidence that is published on the council's website. For all other evidence please specify attachment provided.

Criteria	Hyperlink or Attachment	Supporting Comments (if any)
1. Standing Orders	Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Standing Orders https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures	
2. Financial Regulations	Council Website / Council / Finances / Financial Regulations https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/finances	The Council will be amending its current financial regulations to the Model 2024 version at its ACM on the 19 th May 2025.
3. Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests	Council Website / Council / Register of Interests https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/registers-of-interest	
4. Accessibility statement	Council Website / Accessibility Statement https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/accessibility	
5. Publication scheme	Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Publication Scheme	

Local Council Award Scheme Application Form

	https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures	
6. Complaints procedure	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Complaints Procedure</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
7. Privacy notice	<p>Council Website / Privacy Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/privacy-policy</p>	
8. Last annual return	<p>Council Website / Council / Finances / Annual Returns</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/annual-returns</p>	
9. Transparent information about council payments	<p>Council Website / Council / Finances / Expenditure</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/expenditure</p>	
10. Calendar of all meetings <u>including</u> the next annual meeting of electors	<p>Council Website / Meetings / Timetable of Meetings 2024/25</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/meetings</p>	
11. Minutes for at least <u>one year</u> of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee/sub-committee meetings	<p>Council Website / Meetings / Full Council / 2024/25</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/202425</p> <p>Council Website / Meetings / Policy & Finance Committee / 2024/25</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/202324--copy</p> <p>Council Website / Meetings / Planning Committee / 2024/25</p>	

Local Council Award Scheme Application Form

	https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/202425--copy	
12. Current agendas	<p>Council Website / Meetings / Full Council / 2024/25</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/202425</p> <p>Council Website / Meetings / Policy & Finance Committee / 2024/25</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/202324--copy</p> <p>Council Website / Meetings / Planning Committee / 2024/25</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/202425--copy</p>	
13. The Budget and Precept information for the current or next financial year	<p>Council Website / Council / Finances / Budget</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/budget</p>	
14. Biodiversity policy	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Biodiversity Statement</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
15. Council contact details and councillor information in line with the Transparency Code	<p>Council Website / Council / Councillors</p> <p>Council Contact details - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/contact-us</p> <p>Council Website / Council / Councillors</p> <p>Councillor Information - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/councillors</p>	

Local Council Award Scheme Application Form

16. Action plan for the current year	<p>Council Website / Council / About the Council / Council Activities / Business and Action Plan 2022 -2026</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/council-activities</p>	
17. Evidence of consulting the community	<p>Council Website / Council / Consultations</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/consultations</p>	
18. Publicity advertising council activities	<p>Council Website / News</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/news</p> <p>Council Website / Events</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/events</p>	
19. Evidence of participating in town and country planning	<p>Planning Committee - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/planning-committee</p> <p>Planning Policy - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	<p>Canvey Island is a large town, and the Council have adopted a Planning Policy to be able to commit it's time to effectively respond to planning issues of significant local interest such as major change of use (if considered to affect residential housing or quality of life), large scale new developments, new properties/structures or controversial builds or new development on green open spaces.</p>
20. Evidence of publicising elections and vacancies on the council	<p>Elections - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/elections</p> <p>Vacancies - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/casual-vacancy</p>	<p>The Town Council publishes election information through its's website and all vacancies are advertised on the Town Council's website and in its' seven noticeboards within Canvey Island.</p>
21. Risk management policy	<p>Council Website / Council / Finances / Risk Management Plan</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/risk-management-plan</p>	

Local Council Award Scheme Application Form

	tc.gov.uk/finances	
22. Register of assets	<p>Annual Council Meeting 13th May 2024.</p> <p>Minute Ref: CO/019/24</p>	<p>Members note the Council's Asset Register annually at the Annual Council Meeting.</p> <p>The Asset Register is also reviewed as part of the Annual Return.</p>
23. Up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money	<p>Council Website / Council / Finances / Statement of Internal Controls</p> <p>Statement of Internal Controls https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/finances</p> <p>Council Website / Council / Finances / Risk Management Plan</p> <p>Risk Management Plan - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/finances</p>	
24. Evidence of considering the impact of the council's functions and decisions on crime and disorder in local area	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Crime and Disorder Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
25. Disciplinary and Grievance procedures	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Disciplinary Procedure</p> <p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Grievance Procedure</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
26. A policy for training and development of staff and councillors	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Training Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	

Local Council Award Scheme Application Form

27. A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year	This is in place.	Records of all training of staff and councillors are held in the council offices.
28. A current clerk who has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year	This is in place.	A record of the Clerks CPD points achieved within the last year is held in the council offices. The Town Clerk is a Principal Member of the SLCC.
29. Signed up to the Civility & Respect Pledge and a Dignity at Work policy	Council Meeting 5 th September 2022 – Minute Ref: CO/068/22 Attached Dignity at Work Policy	The Town Council signed up to the Civility and Respect Pledge on 5 th September 2022



SILVER RESOLUTION

Please provide hyperlink to minutes:

The Council must confirm by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for the Silver award (See Guide for wording)

Please provide a direct hyperlink for evidence that is published on the council's website. For all other evidence please specify attachment provided.

Criteria	Hyperlink or Attachment	Supporting Comments (if any)
1. Health and Safety policy	Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Health & Safety Policy https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures	
2. Policy on Equality	Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Equality & Diversity Policy https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures	

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3. Co-option policy	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Casual Vacancy Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
4. Community engagement policy involving two-way communication between council and community	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Community Engagement Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
5. Councillor profiles	<p>Council Website / Council / Councillors</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/councillors</p>	
6. Grant awarding policy	<p>Council Website / Council / Finances / Grants</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/grants</p>	
7. Evidence showing how electors contribute to the Annual Parish or Town Meeting	<p>Attached Annual Town Meeting Agenda for 10.03.25.</p> <p>The Town Council advertises and invites electors to contribute to the Annual Town Meeting by having a specific agenda item for members of the electorate to ask questions. Members of the electorate are actively encouraged to engage with Town Councillors at the parish meeting through informal discussions should they not wish to raise questions in a public setting. Members of the electorate are asked to contact the Town Clerk with questions they wish to discuss in order for the Town Council to ensure appropriate information is available on the night.</p>	
8. Action plan and related Budget responding to community engagement and setting out a timetable for action and review	<p>The Council reviews its activities each year and discusses and agrees new projects which would be beneficial to the community. These plans cover a rolling 3-4 year period and are monitored by the Council and its relevant committees.</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/council-activities</p>	
9. Evidence of community engagement, council activities and the promotion of democratic	<p>Council Website / Council / Publications / Annual Reports</p> <p>Annual Reports –</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/annual-reports</p>	

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processes in an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins	<p>Council Website / Council / Publications / Newsletters</p> <p>Newsletters – https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/newsletter</p> <p>Facebook – https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100078871941266</p> <p>Instagram – https://www.instagram.com/canveyislandtowncouncil</p>	
10. Evidence of helping the community plan for its future	<p>Council Website / Council / Consultations</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/consultations</p>	The Council is in the process of reviewing a public consultation to review the Councils activities and to prepare for any devolution opportunities.
11. Evidence of encouraging public engagement in local democracy	<p>Council Website / Council / Elections</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/elections</p> <p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Casual Vacancy Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p> <p>Council Website / Meetings / Full Council / 2020/21 / 19th October 2020 Minute Ref:</p> <p>CO/053/20 - To receive presentations from candidates for co-option for a period not exceeding 5 minutes each.</p> <p>CO/054/20 – To co-opt a candidate as town councillor for Canvey Island South Ward</p>	
12. Scheme of Delegation (where relevant)	<p>Council Website / Meetings / Organisation Structure for 2024/25</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/meetings</p> <p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Scheme of Delegation Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	

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13. At least two-thirds of its councillors who stood for election, <u>or</u> significant evidence of the council advertising vacancies	<p>Council Website / Council / Elections / Statement of Persons Nominated 2023</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/elections</p>	
14. Evidence of customer service with examples of managing/handling correspondence with the public	<p>The Town Council acts as a point of contact for all Canvey residents. Residents can contact the Town Council who will then advise, and liaise with the relevant and necessary authority. The Town Council keep enquiry forms for the recording of this information for enquiries via the phone and through visiting the office.</p> <p>Residents can also contact the Town Council through its' website enquiry form https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/contact-us and these are responded to in a timely manner. Records of the enquiry are kept for the purpose of ensuring customer service.</p> <p>The Town Council employs a Community Officer who attends community groups to ensure that more of the community is reached especially the older community who are not online, and this ensures that they can voice their concerns. The Community Officer then reports any issues to the relevant authority.</p>	<p>Example of an enquiry form</p> <p>Example of website enquiry</p>
15. A current qualified clerk	Clerk's CILCA Certificate Attached – Qualified on 1 st August 2013	
16. A formal appraisal process for all staff	Standing Order 19 Handling Staff Matters (C). The Town Clerk undertakes an appraisal of all council staff which is reviewed by the Personnel Committee.	

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GOLD RESOLUTION

Please provide hyperlink to minutes:

The Council must confirm by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for the Gold award (See Guide for wording)

Please provide a direct hyperlink for evidence that is published on the council's website. For all other evidence please specify attachment provided.

Criteria	Hyperlink or Attachment	Supporting Comments (if any)
1. A business plan covering a financial forecast for at least <u>three</u> years linked to revenue and capital plans for the council and its community	Council Website / Council / About The Council / Council Activities / Business and Action Plan 2022 -2026 https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/council-activities	
2. An annual report, online material, news bulletins and other council communications with evidence of:	Council Website / Council / Publications / Annual Reports Annual Reports – https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/annual-reports Council Website / Council / Publications / Newsletters Newsletters – https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/newsletter Facebook – https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100078871941266 Instagram – https://www.instagram.com/canveyislandtowncouncil	
a) engaging with diverse groups in the community using a variety of methods	Council Website / Council / About The Council / Council Activities / Engaging with Diverse Groups in the Community https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/council-activities	

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<p>b) community engagement influencing council activity and priorities</p>	<p>Council Website / Council / About the Council / Council Activities / Community Engagement Leading to Positive Outcomes</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/council-activities</p> <p>The Council follows its objectives in its Mission statement and engages with the community through its Annual Town Meetings, regular contact with residents and community groups and engaging with local organisations or committees to establish where the council can best serve its community.</p> <p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Mission Statement</p> <p>Mission Statement - https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
<p>c) A wide range of council activities, including innovative projects, that produce positive outcomes for the community</p>	<p>Council Website / Council / About the Council / Council Activities / Community Engagement Leading to Positive Outcomes</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/council-activities</p>	
<p>d) co-operating constructively with other organisations</p>	<p>Council Website / Council / About The Council / Council Activities / Co-Operating With Other Organisations</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/council-activities</p>	
<p>e) Active promotion of elections, including that at least two-thirds of its councillors stood for election</p>	<p>Council Website / Council / Elections</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/elections</p>	
<p>The following criteria require <u>statements</u> only (of no more than 1 page). Statements must include a narrative and where applicable, contain document references or hyperlinks as evidence to support the narrative.</p>		
<p>3. Ensures that the council delivers value for money</p>	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Delivering Value for Money</p>	

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	<p>The Town Council has adopted a policy on delivering value for money https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures This policy is the Town Council's statement on how it delivers value for money.</p> <p>The Council and its employees seek to always achieve best value as indicated in its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and committee terms of reference.</p> <p>Council reviews its Asset Register annually – 13.05.24</p> <p>CO/019/24 - FINANCE: TO NOTE THE COUNCILS ASSET REGISTER</p> <p>Members noted the Council's Asset register, and no questions were raised.</p> <p>The Asset Register was reviewed as part of the 2024 Annual Return.</p>	
4. Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Planning Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/planning-committee</p> <p>Planning Policy</p> <p>https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p> <p>Canvey Island is a large town and the Council have adopted a Planning Policy to be able to commit it's time to effectively respond to planning issues of significant local interest such as major change of use (if considered to affect residential housing or quality of life), large scale new developments, new properties/structures or controversial builds or new development on green open spaces.</p> <p>The Council have representatives on various committees such as CPBC development committee, Parish Transport, Wyvern Community Transport to be a voice for the community on important issues.</p>	
5. Engages with the community on issues related to the environment and climate change	<p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Biodiversity Statement</p> <p>The Council consider and respect climate change and environmental issues in its activities, particularly when managing its open spaces. The Council currently encourage a diverse range of wildlife and wildfowl at Canvey Lake. It manages and maintain a thriving Wildflower Meadow to encourage the vital feeding and nesting habitats for insects, butterflies, birds, small animals', and</p>	

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	<p>other wildlife. The council fully encourage and support volunteer litter picks and the planting trees to help with global warming and has an abundance of trees at Canvey Lake and 47 trees surrounding the Wildflower Meadow. It is also a registered Tree Charter Branch. The Town Council has committed to a pilot scheme of community gardens and has created one at Sycamore Close in consultation with local residents who now maintain the garden. The intention is to create more gardens across the community, having a positive impact on climate change. The Town Council installed four bee posts in its open spaces to encourage pollinators and increase biodiversity within the areas.</p> <p>Biodiversity Statement https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p> <p>The Town Council considers and engages with the community on issues related to the environment and climate change within its' capacity as a consultee on planning applications made on Canvey Island.</p> <p>Council Website / Council / Policies & Procedures / Planning Policy</p> <p>Planning Policy https://www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures</p>	
<p>6. Manages the performance of staff and the council as a corporate body to achieve its business plan</p>	<p>The Council have adopted the Borough Councils code of conduct as it has many dual-hatted members. This code was updated in 2022.</p> <p>NALC Model Employment Contract is used for all staff – any new members of staff will be on the new NALC Model Contract which was updated in 2023.</p> <p>Records of all training of staff and councillors are held in the council offices. All new employees and councillors are provided with an induction pack and the Town Clerk provides this induction discussing the council, its responsibilities and objectives and giving an opportunity to discuss any queries or potential training requirements. All new councillors are expected to attend relevant training courses and will complete the New Councillor training provided by the EALC.</p> <p>Standing Order 19c Handling Staff Matters. The chairman of the Personnel Committee or in his absence, the vice-chairman shall conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Town Clerk. The reviews and appraisal of all staff are conducted by the Town Clerk and reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Personnel committee. All appraisals have objectives for each employee that are considered</p>	

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	<p>and reviewed in line with the Councils own objectives.</p> <p>The Council has adopted over 50 policies covering council activities and staff matters such as training, code of conduct, complaints, grievances, dignity at work/bullying and harassment, recruitment, social media etc.</p> <p>Canvey Island is a large town and a fairly young council of 16 years. Although the Council only has 4 part time members of staff and 11 councillors it is dedicated to its performance as not only a council but as an employer. All staff and members work closely through working parties and regular meetings to achieve its goals and strive to gain additional knowledge and enhance individual's skills by learning from each other and training where possible. All officers and councillors strive and are encouraged to improve their knowledge and skills where possible and within budget restraints and are continually developing through others experience and training provisions. Not only do the council offer performance development through its annual appraisal system, it allows councillors and officers the opportunity to grow and develop through their own personal development goals through communication with the Town Clerk and the Personnel Committee. Many councillors are dual hatted and have many years of experience with both the Town and Borough Council which is valuable to both new councillors and officers. The council regularly reviews its practices with guidance from the Town Clerk and strives to improve and enhance its services to the community annually. Canvey Island has an excellent team of officers and councillors who communicate well to achieve its goals which is evidenced by its excellent track record over the last 16 years.</p>	
<p>7. Supports a culture of civility and respect in the council</p>	<p>The Town Council signed up to the Civility and Respect Pledge on 5th September 2022.</p> <p>CO/068/22 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE TO SIGNING UP TO THE CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE. Members considered the report provided and the proposed pledge and RESOLVED unanimously to formally sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge.</p> <p>The Town Council implements a dignity at work policy that is relevant to both employees and members. The council supports a culture of civility and respect by maintaining these policies and ensuring pledges are adhered to and both members and employees have the full support of the Town Clerk.</p> <p>Dignity at work policy attached.</p>	

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