

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF
CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL
ON MONDAY 28TH APRIL 2025 AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT:

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

Also present: Mrs E. De Can – Town Clerk
Mrs L. Gould – Deputy Clerk

Cllr May acknowledged the sad loss of Cllr Peter Greig as this is the first meeting since he passed in March 2025. Cllr Greig had been with the Council since 2008 and will be sadly missed.

CO/180/24 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Verbal apologies received and reason given by Cllr Brooke, Cllr B. Botham and Cllr D. Blackwell.

CO/181/24 - TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

CO/182/24 - 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/183/24 - TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24TH FEBRUARY 2025.

Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 24th February 2025 be confirmed as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Town Mayor.

CO/184/24 - TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE MEETING HELD ON THE 10TH FEBRUARY 2025.

Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on the 10th February 2025 be confirmed as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Town Mayor.

CO/185/24 – TO NOTE THE REPORT OF OFFICER DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

Members noted the officer's decisions under delegated powers for additional expenditure and 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, 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, 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, to appoint Trident Safes Ltd to relocate the safe to the new office premises at a cost of £425.00 and confirmation following a meeting with the Town Mayor and Leader of the Council following approval by the Council on the 24th February 2025 to agree the appointment of Digger Boat to supply and install barley straw in Canvey Lake at a cost of £4,760.00.

CO/186/24 – POLICIES – TO NOTE THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF ALL POLICIES IS UNDERWAY.

TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE NEW PROCUREMENT POLICY

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the new Procurement Policy.

GRANT POLICY

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amendments to the Grant Policy.

BIODIVERSITY POLICY

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amendments to the Biodiversity Policy.

CRIME & DISORDER POLICY

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amendments to the Crime & Disorder Policy.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amendments to the Accessibility Statement.

CO/187/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE A RESPONSE TO THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS' COMPLAINT.

Members considered the complaint received and the documents provided and **RESOLVED** unanimously to formally respond as follows:

The Council notes and approves the Clerks response and information provided on the 29 October 2024. The Council has followed its standing orders and the procurement regulations as it understands them in relation to the tender for the Canvey Lake Ground Maintenance and Litter Clearance Service contract. 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. There were a variety of differing bids, each considered independently and there has been no act of discrimination, predetermination, or bias against any applicant. The initial usage of the word 'abnormally low' in relation to the bid received is a general term commonly used and in no way meant to be discriminative towards any contractor.

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 or it will default to zero, this information can be found in the Contracts Finder User Guide for Buyers (Mar 18) - Page 19. No bid inclusive of the one provided by Manor Oaks offered a price at the cost advertised and the Council is of the opinion that the amount entered on this occasion would not have changed the outcome of the decision as all applicants provided bids that exceeded this value. 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 have been manageable at such a low cost taking into consideration the significantly higher bids received by the four other applicants for the same specification.

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 as it understood them.

The Council has reviewed its procurement processes to ensure that it is providing a comprehensive procedure and adequate measuring policy following the updated Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024 and formulated a comprehensive procurement policy with support from Local Council Consultancy to alleviate any future misunderstandings and any claims of bias or predetermination.

The Council 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.

In addition to the initial complaint a further complaint was received on the 19th March 2025 accusing both the Council and Officers of going outside of the tender process and deliberately discrediting Manor Oaks. Both Cllr Sayes and Cllr Brooke deny that a conversation took place regarding the Council receiving a bad reference from a school and the Town Clerk confirms that no such reference was sent to or received from a school in relation to the Manor Oaks tender.

The Council is open and transparent where possible and has not acted inappropriately and has demonstrated that it complies with the Annual Governance Statement Assertions 2 & 3 having proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding public money and resources in its charge and has done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.

CO/188/24 – 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.

Members considered the documents provided and **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the use of the Councils Common Seal and that landowners consent will be given without further consultation with the Council on the assumption that the Councils legal advice is in order and advice given to proceed. Members noted the estimated cost of legal advice of £550 to £800.

CO/189/24 – 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.

Members were provided with the completed documentation to consider the Bronze, Silver and Gold Standard level of the Local Council Award Scheme and that confirmation is required that the Council conforms to the requirements for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Standard. Members reviewed the documentation provided and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council conforms to the requirements for Bronze, Silver and Gold Standard level and confirms that items 1-29 for Bronze Standard level, 1-16 for Silver Standard level and 1-7 for Gold Standard level have been achieved and are on the Town Council’s website.

CO/190/24 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE CONDUCTING A PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL.

Members considered the investigations provided and **RESOLVED** 7 votes with 1 abstaining to appoint Local Government East to assist the Council with a public consultation on its activities at a cost of £18,172.00.

CO/191/24 – TO VERIFY THE COUNCIL FINANCES UP TO 31ST MARCH 2025.

Members **NOTED** the Council Finances as of 31st March 2025 inclusive of the bank reconciliation, statements and payments issued from 1st January 2025 to 31st March 2025 and no questions were raised. Members confirmed that as the council have verified the accounts, the Town Mayor Cllr P. May can sign the reconciliation documents and original bank statements as evidence of verification.

CO/192/24 - TO CONFIRM ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT PREVIOUSLY AGREED.

28th April 2025 NO 1 ACCOUNT

Company	Reference	Amount	Description
Homotech Centre	BACS819	£4,250.21	IT Transfer / VOIP / Cat 6 Data
Rialtas Business Solutions	BACS820	£706.80	Omega Accounts Package 2025/26
Living Things	BACS821	£240.00	50% deposit – animal experience
Trident Safes Ltd	BACS822	£510.00	Safe relocation
Francesca Clarke	BACS823	£217.39	Final rent payment – No 11 High Street
Aspect Maintenance Ltd	BACS824	£6,479.08	March Maintenance / Xmas Litter Pick
Heale Building Co. Ltd	BACS825	£2,340.00	Office Renovations
CB Landscapes	BACS826	£150.00	Covid Gardens Checks / Weeding
Office Needs	BACS827	£111.29	Shredding / Stationery
Design4Print	BACS828	£129.60	CITC Sign / Parcel Sign / Tree Stumps Signs
SFB Solutions	BACS829	£1,526.40	CCTV Relocation / Fire Alarm split No 11 & 13 High Street
E De Can	BACS830	£39.99	HP Printer

Cllr Peter May	BACS831	£59.95	CPBC Mayor's Ball
SLCC Essex	BACS832	£27.00	SLCC Training Day / AGM
Amazon	BACS833	£161.91	AFD Bunting
Design4Print	BACS834	£42.00	CITC Logo Door Frosting
TOTAL		£16,991.62	

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

TOWN MAYOR

19th May 2025