

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL
ON MONDAY 23RD JUNE 2025 AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllr S. Sayes, Cllr D. Anderson, Cllr A. Acott, Cllr S. Sach, Cllr J. Anderson, Cllr R. Langley, Cllr P. May, Cllr S. Brooke, and Cllr B. Botham

Also present: Mrs E. De Can – Town Clerk
Mrs L. Gould – Deputy Clerk
Mrs A. Wakenell – Community Officer
12 members of the public.

The Town Mayor welcomed Cllr Reece Langley and congratulated him on being elected as a Town Councillor in the recent by-election.

CO/036/25 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Written apologies received and reason given by Cllr D. Blackwell. Verbal apologies received and reason given by Cllr E. Harvey.

CO/037/25 - TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declaration of interests was received.

CO/038/25 - 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

Questions to the Leader of the Council
From Felicity Macdonald.

Question 1:

I'm writing to express my concerns regarding the deterioration of the lake and the vulnerability of all wildlife who use this area as their habitat and consequently, their breeding ground. I would like to put my questions to the Leader of the Town Council, Councillor Steven Sach to be read out and subsequently answered at the next scheduled Council meeting. I would also be grateful if I could have his response to me via an email so that we can confirm such correspondence has passed between us. Firstly, I think it only manners if I introduce myself to you Councillor Sach my name is Felicity MacDonald and I reside in the Republic Ireland, County Cork. I am aware that you have seen many threads on the FOCL page from me voicing my concerns about the ongoing deterioration of the lake so before you express any contrary views about me not being a resident of Canvey, I would like to put the record straight. I attended both Primary and Secondary Education in schools on Canvey and later in life I was a resident with my late husband and child, so I think that qualifies me for my interest and dissatisfaction regarding the lake. Firstly, could you please tell me what you describe the lake as, is it a holding site for surface water or is it a lake, or does it serve the purpose of both uses but is called a Lake. Your signage describes it as a lake, as do your benches and it is commonly known as 'the Lake.' If it is only a holding site for run-off from the roads and a flood preventative does this mean that this stretch of water is solely for that purpose and none other and if so, that being the case, why does all your signage address it as a lake? The wildlife who use this stretch of water for their habitat and breeding give people great pleasure, it is also a place where one can escape roads and relax while watching the wildlife, but the health of the birds has to be taken seriously which comes at a cost, people are involved in their welfare, the surrounds in which they live become hazardous to their lives when reeds are let to rampantly grow, and the rubbish thrown into the lake along with the natural build-up of silt is a toxic killer. I understand the byelaw prohibits any one from helping out in areas such as rubbish collection (in and out of water) the cutting back of reeds, and general sympathetic maintenance to ensure that all life on the lake stays happy and healthy. That being the case, wouldn't it make sense to have the out-of-date byelaw revoked, what are your views on this please?

Response: Provided by Email from the Leader of the Council on the 10th June 2025.

It is unknown by the Town Council as to why the open space is called Canvey Lake as this appears to be due to historical reasons and everybody knows it as a lake, however, over time the function of the lake has changed and it is now utilised by the Environment Agency as part of Canvey Island flood defence system which the Town Council has no control over. The pumps and weirs are controlled by the Environment Agency, and it is my understanding that when there is heavy rainfall and the lake hits a certain water level these pumps will activate and feed the water out of the lake into the tidal system. The reeds are cut annually around the edges of the lake; however, the Town Council can investigate cutting back the reeds as part of a larger project.

The bye law has been in place for various reasons and one of those is to prevent actions on the lake which the Town Council has not authorised. If any registered group approaches the Town Council to help to litter pick and do other general clean-up operations it would be considered by the Council. Any changes to the byelaw would be a Council decision.

Question 2:
From Alan Tibbit.

Since the Lease for Canvey Lake was signed in 2010, will the Leader please let the residents know what requests for funding have been made to any organisation at all, including businesses and Charities that can assist, such as RSPB etc. Of the requests for help for financial assistance made, to ensure the terms of the Lease could be fulfilled, as clearly stated in the Lease to be the responsibility of the Town Council, how many were successful, and on what areas of the Lease has any funding achieved, been spent.

Response: Provided by Email from the Leader of the Council on the 16th June 2025.

As I was not a member of the Town Council back in 2010, I am unable to comment, however, I will be discussing the question with the Town Clerk, and we will get back to you with the answers.

Question 3:
From Hayley Cockayne.

During the question/answer session held at the War Memorial Hall with Roger Hirst on Monday 2nd June regarding problems residents wanted to ask questions about, two things were left unanswered. My questions are as follows: 1. In January this year the Town Council adopted and agreed a "vision of the future of Canvey Lake" as the way forward. Can you confirm that this is still the Town Councils position and that dredging of the lake to bring it back as it was in 2010 is not now an option and the lake in 5 years will be a virtual marsh. If it is still the Town Councils view would Mr Sach agree that a referendum of the future of the lake would be a better idea, to ensure the will of the people is addressed. Giving the option to reset it to 2010 condition as an alternative to the Town Councillors view. 2. At the meeting it was stated that the residents were unable to volunteer with the cleaning up of the lake due to the Byelaw. It is obvious the Byelaw does not serve any useful purpose and even Roger Hirst was dismissive of its usefulness. Given the answer received by the Chairman of friends of Canvey Lake from the Town clerk that the Byelaw cannot be properly administrated due mainly to lack of finance to employ staff to do the necessary duties and secure any prosecutions, will the Town Council revoke the Byelaw and work with the residents to formulate a new more friendly version. Not so draconian and more user friendly. In addition will Mr Sach inform us of the number of successful prosecutions using the Bylaw to date.

Response: Provided by Email from the Leader of the Council on the 16th June 2025.

The approved vision for Canvey Lake is still the Councils current position, however, it was agreed at a meeting in the 24th February 2025 that although desilting the lake was not part of the Councils vision for immediate action, investigations would be made into obtaining funding to desilt the lake and reduce silt levels. The bye law has been in place for various reasons and one of those is to prevent actions on the lake which the Town Council has not authorised. If any registered group approaches the Town Council to

help to litter pick or other general clean-up operations it would be considered by the Council. The existing byelaw is a model version provided by the government and any changes would be a Council decision.

Questions to the Councillors
From Tim Searle

Question 1:

This letter was received in the post and can be obtained from the Councils records.

Mr Searle was not present, and the Town Mayors response will be provided in writing. The Town Mayor advised that Cllr Blackwell is no longer the Leader of the Town Council and did not take this post until April 2018. Cllr Blackwell as an individual does not need to provide an explanation for Council decisions. The Town Council has used its funds where it was felt it was needed at the time, and the Environment Agency has always maintained that dredging the lake is a recommendation, but it is not a necessity for the function of the lake. The Town Council is in the process of applying for funding to assist with the costs of reducing the silt levels as requested by residents. This has been in progress following a meeting in February. The Town Council cannot comment on the funding allocation of the town fund as it has not been given any information on how this application process will proceed, and it is being administered by the Borough Council. The Town Mayor suggested that the public should resist going over the old ground and past decisions and concentrate on what the Council is doing now.

CO/039/25 - TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 19TH MAY 2025.

Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on the 19th May 2025 be confirmed as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Town Mayor.

CO/040/25 – TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE TOWN MAYOR ON ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

No activities were discussed.

CO/041/25 – TO NOTE THE REPORT OF OFFICERS DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

Members noted the report detailing expenditure for additional legal costs of £600.00 for the office lease and the installation of an additional CCTV camera in the hallway of the office at a cost of £200.00.

CO/042/25 – TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT OF ONGOING PROJECTS AND NOT ON THE AGENDA.

Members noted the report.

CO/043/25 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE AMENDING STANDING ORDER SECTION 3(E).

Members considered the amendments to standing order section 3(e) and **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept these amendments regarding public participation.

CO/044/25 – TO CONSIDER A PROCESS OF RESPONDING TO QUERIES REGARDING CANVEY LAKE DUE TO THE IMPACT ON RESOURCES AND THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL IN GENERAL

Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** unanimously that due to the increasing number of queries coming through regarding Canvey Lake which are impacting on the current staff's ability to progress the needs of the Council and preventing the time allowed to keep the lake website updated and provide regular updates for residents that all future queries regarding Canvey Lake will be referred to the Councils website which will be updated with information on the councils full expenditure on Canvey Lake, information of funding applied for and obtained, Frequently Asked Questions and regular updates on current progress.

Members considered the impact of this open space and the complex issues affecting the area such as climate change, extreme heat, and the shallow nature of the lake, and **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Town Clerk would write to the Borough Council to formally request that it considers taking back the

management of the lake as it is felt that the Borough Council has the resources and access to greater funding opportunities to manage and maintain this diverse area.

CO/045/25 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE TOWN MAYOR’S CHARITY FOR THE YEAR 2025/26.

Members **RESOLVED** that St Vincent De Paul Society Canvey Island charter will be the Town Mayors charity recipient for the year 2025/26.

CO/046/25 – RISK MANAGEMENT

TO REVIEW THE RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

The Town Clerk advised that the Council has several documents and controls in place as part of its strategy of internal control and risk management. However, an annual review must be undertaken to ensure that these procedures continue to be relevant and effective. Members noted the documents provided by the Town Clerk and confirmed that during the year the council has carried out various assessments of the risks facing it and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks.

CO/047/25 – TO CONSIDER AND AGREE ALLOWING ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY GROUPS TO UTILISE THE OFFICE MEETING SPACE ON THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS.

Members considered the report provided and **RESOLVED** unanimously to work with Open Road to facilitate weekly booked appointment sessions utilising the Councils meeting room on a Friday afternoon.

CO/048/25 - TO CONFIRM ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT PREVIOUSLY AGREED.

23rd June 2025 NO 1 ACCOUNT

Company	Reference	Amount	Description
SFB Solutions	BACS846	£240.00	CCTV Camera - hallway
Viking Office	BACS847	£638.01	Cupboards x 2 / Stationery
Pinnacle Housing Ltd	BACS848	£300.00	ROSPA Inspection – Play Area
NALC	BACS849	£60.00	LCAS Registration Fee
Aspect Maintenance Ltd	BACS850	£2,280.00	Annual Tree Maintenance -
E De Can	BACS851	£19.80	Mileage – SLCC Training Day
DP Media	BACS852	£93.00	AFD Brochures
MB Fire Risk Limited	BACS853	£330.00	Fire Training – all staff
TOTAL		£3,960.81	

CO/049/25 – TO NOTE A REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY OFFICER ON MATTERS RELATING TO CANVEY ISLAND.

Members noted the report. The Community Officer advised that there had been a number of fly tipping incidents at Canvey Lake and the dyke area, new or replacement litter bins have been ordered, the Denham Road notice board has been vandalised causing permanent damage, BT have confirmed that they will not remove the post in the car park to assist with the prevention of future fire damage, inspections are taking place with CPBC and it has been agreed that tree stump signs have been erected and any future tree removal will leave a higher stump in place to prevent any trip hazards, the bins were discussed and concerns were raised regarding the amount of bird faeces left by the increasing numbers of wild fowl. The revetment works are due to complete, and the Tidal Pool will be open by the end of June.

CO/050/25 – TO NOTE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORTS DETAILING INCIDENTS AND ACTIONS COMPLETED IN RELATION TO OPEN SPACES.

Members noted the reports.

CO/051/25 – REPORTS FROM CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO CANVEY ISLAND.

Cllr Brooke advised that Anglian Water is conducting a campaign to inform residents of the impact of putting wet wipes down toilets which blocks the drains and have asked CPBC to assist with distributing leaflets. Cllr May advised that meetings are due to start shortly to discuss the town funding.

CO/052/25 – REPORTS FROM ESSEX COUNTY COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO CANVEY ISLAND

Cllr May advised that works were underway to repair footpaths and plans are underway to widen the Thorney Bay roundabout.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

TOWN MAYOR

1st September 2025