



TO MEMBERS OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr. A. Acott (Chairman), Cllr. D Anderson, Cllr. S. Sach, Cllr P. May, and Cllr. J. Anderson

Dear Councillors,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** to be held in the **COUNCIL OFFICE, 13 HIGH STREET, CANVEY ISLAND, SS8 7RB** on **MONDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 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

Town Clerk

5th February 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 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.

A G E N D A

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 committee meeting held on the 11th November 2024.
5. To receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk of the ongoing projects and not on the agenda.
6. To consider and agree to re-applying for the Gold Status Award at a cost of £300.00.
7. Policies – to note the annual review of all policies is underway. Note the amendments to the following policies:
 - Social Media Policy (Appendix A)
 - Civic Regalia Policy (Appendix B)
8. To consider and agree the costs for the following qualifications and training courses:
 - i) ILCA at a cost of £120.00 for the Deputy Clerk
 - ii) FILCA at a cost of £120.00 for the Town Clerk



- iii) Fire Safety training for all staff at a cost of £330.00.
- iv) First Aid Training for the Deputy Clerk and Community & Events Officer at a cost of £200.00.

9. Finance:

- i) To consider and agree the 1-year fixed bond accounts and the reinvestment of the £85,000 (Appendix C)
- ii) To consider and agree the quotes obtained for the appointment of the councils Internal Auditor (Appendix D)
- iii) To consider and agree the quotes obtained for the Councils Vehicle Insurance (Appendix E)
- iv) To verify the Council Finances up to 31st December 2024.
- v) To confirm accounts for payment as previously agreed.

**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 11TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT:

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

Also, present: Mrs E De Can – Town Clerk

P&F/010/24 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were required.

P&F/011/24 - TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr J. Anderson and Cllr D. Anderson declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10(i) on the agenda as they are members of the Canvey Community Choir. Cllr May declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10(i) of the agenda as a director of Yellow Door, Town Council representative of Wyvern Community Transport and a trustee of the Canvey Community Choir and Cllr Acott declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10(i) of the agenda as he was a mentor to the manager of Yellow Door.

P&F/012/24 - 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/013/24 – TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 15TH JULY 2024.

The minutes of the committee meeting held on the 15th July 2024 were **CONFIRMED** as a true record and signed by the chairman.

P&F/014/24 – 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/015/24 - TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUIREMENTS FOR 2025/26 AND AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL

Members received reports detailing the expected and anticipated expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2025, a draft budget including explanations for increases or decreases and a financial report providing details of the Councils accounts detailing the use of the budget and earmarked reserves and providing an anticipated figure for the General Reserves at the end of the financial year 2025/26 as well as forecasted figures for the year 2026/27.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the tax base calculation from Castle Point Borough Council is not yet known and may change the precept value slightly once confirmed.

Members discussed the proposed budget and **RECOMMENDED** that a budget of £445,894 is set for 2025/26 with a 4.17% increase in the precept based on the Band D equivalent equating to a 99p increase in the annual taxpayer cost.

P&F/016/24 – TO NOTE THE EXTERNAL FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE.

Members noted the report, and the recommendations made for electrical testing, fire training which was scheduled for early 2025 and the need for fire drills when members are present.

P&F/017/24 – POLICIES - TO NOTE THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF ALL POLICIES IS UNDERWAY. NOTE THE AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING POLICIES:

i) OUT OF HOURS POLICY.

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

ii) DIGNITY AT WORK/BULLY & HARRASSMENT POLICY.

Members approved and **RECOMMENDED** the amendments to the policy which includes the updated legislation relating to sexual harassment.

iii) PARENTAL LEAVE PROCEDURE.

Members noted the government regulation changes with effect from April 2024 and approved and **RECOMMENDED** the amendments to the policy by the Council.

iv) PATERNITY LEAVE PROCEDURE.

Members noted the government regulation changes with effect from April 2024 and approved and **RECOMMENDED** the amendments to the policy by the Council.

v) CARERS LEAVE POLICY.

Members noted the government regulation changes with effect from April 2024 and approved and **RECOMMENDED** the implementation of the new Carers Policy.

P&F/018/24 – TO NOTE THE TRAINING COURSES BOOKED / ATTENDED SINCE THE LAST MEETING.

Members noted the courses of Freedom of Information Request webinar at a cost of £50.00 for the Deputy Clerk, Communicating with your Community – Part 1 & 2 at a cost of £100.00 for the Deputy Clerk, Module 1 – The Employment Framework at a cost of £80.00 for the Town Clerk, Martyn's Law webinar – free of charge for the Deputy Clerk, Budget & Precept Webinar at a cost of £80.00 for the Deputy Clerk, Handling online abuse Webinar – free of charge for the Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk & Community Warden and Pension Webinar x 2 – Free of charge for the Town Clerk.

P&F/019/24 – FINANCE

i) GRANT APPLICATIONS:

a) TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FROM THE YELLOW DOOR

Members considered the grant application from Yellow Door towards the purchase of storage equipment and **RECOMMENDED** the award of a £500.00 grant with the condition that the storage boxes are located to the rear of the property and out of site to prevent vandalism.

b) TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FROM THE CANVEY COMMUNITY CHOIR

Members considered the grant application from the Canvey Community Choir towards the purchase of music folders and **RECOMMENDED** the award of a £500.00 grant.

c) TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FROM WYVERN COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Members considered the grant application from Wyvern Community Transport towards the purchase of leaflets and promotional materials and **RECOMMENDED** the award of a £500.00 grant.

i) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE COSTS FOR TEMPORARY OFFSITE STORAGE.

Members considered the quotes obtained and **RECOMMENDED** temporary storage at Southern Property Services Containers at a cost of £160.00 per month.

ii) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE COSTS FOR LEGAL REPRESENTATION.

Members considered the quotes obtained and **RECOMMENDED** appointing Hook & Partners to negotiate the Councils office lease requirements at a cost between £2,300 - £2,900.

iii) TO VERIFY THE COUNCIL FINANCES AS OF 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Members **NOTED** the Council Finances as of 30th September 2024 inclusive of the bank reconciliation, statements and payments issued from 1st July 2024 to 30th September 2024 and no questions were raised. Members confirmed that Cllr Acott can sign the reconciliation

documents and original bank statements as evidence of verification in accordance with Financial Regulations 2.2.

iv) TO CONFIRM ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENTS AS PREVIOUSLY AGREED.

11th November 2024 NO 1 ACCOUNT

Company	Reference	Amount	Description
Aspect Maintenance Ltd	BACS745	£6,695.08	Maintenance – Oct – Gunny grass cutting – Oct x 1 cuts
The Bungalow Nursery Ltd	BACS746	£209.40	Covid Garden Plants
EALC	BACS747	£96.00	Staff Training – LG Budget & Precept
Top of the Mops	BACS748	£33.00	Cleaning 17/10
Amazon	BACS749	£79.99	Body Camera
DP Media	BACS750	£50.40	Christmas Signage x 4
E. De Can	BACS751	£33.00	Travel & Parking Expenses
C B Landscapes	BACS752	£620.00	Wildflower Meadow tree maintenance and grass cutting
MB Fire Risk Limited	BACS753	£195.00	External Fire Risk Assessment
BB Grout Ltd	BACS754	£120.00	Gingerbread Men
Phuse Media	BACS755	£384.00	Update of Website Accessibility 2AA
TOTAL		£8,515.87	

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

CHAIRMAN

10th February 2025

Canvey Island Town Council

Social Media Policy

Definition

"Social Media" - For the purpose of this Policy, Social Media includes but is not limited to websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google Plus, Yammer, Instagram, TikTok and Pinterest, as well as all online public blogs.

"Personal Blog" – For the purpose of this Policy a Personal Blog includes any blog that is the sole or joint responsibility of a Councillor i.e. it is owned managed or maintained by a Councillor. This includes a Councillor's blog hosted by a third party website e.g. blog on Wordpress or Blogger.

"Media Devices" – Includes mobile phones, tablets, cameras and any other device capable of recording sound and image. For the purposes of this Policy, this definition will extend to both personally owned media devices as well as any media devices provided to a Councillor by the Council.

"Members of the Public" – Any person who is not a Member of the Council or Officer taking part in the Council meeting. This includes journalists.

Purpose

Canvey Island Town Council has a corporate presence on the web and the use of e-mail and will always try to use the most effective channel of communication with people who live in, work in or visit Canvey Island. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure transparency and consistency across all forms of online Social Media.

Social Media and Personal Blogs are effective methods for Councillors to interact with residents and support local democracy. Used effectively, they can engage those who would not normally have access to local policies. However, it is not always clear whether such activities are covered by the Member Code of Conduct. The main purpose of this Policy is to protect the Council and Councillors with particular regard to issues such as standards, libel, copyright, data protection, bias and pre-determination as well as encouraging good manners on line and in Council meetings.

Please note that issues relating to filming, videoing, photography and audio recording are not covered by this Policy, and can be found in the Recording of Meetings policy.

All Councillors and Members of Staff are expected to abide by this policy and any serious breaches of this policy will be dealt with by the Employee Disciplinary Procedure or Members Code of Conduct. Any breach could bring the Town Council into disrepute.

1. Use of Social Media by Councillors

Councillors are required to act in accordance with the Member Code of Conduct whilst conducting business of the Council or acting, claiming to act or giving the impression they are acting as a representative of the Council.

Councillors should be aware of anything they publish on a Social Media website can be accessed by anybody with an internet connection, and once it has been posted, it will be a permanent on line record. Information that is published should be factual, fair, thorough and transparent.

A common sense approach should be adopted by all Councillors. When using Social Media, Councillors should: -

- i) Have particular regard to Section 3 of the Member Code of Conduct and ensure that, even when online, they treat others with respect and conduct themselves in a manner that will not bring the Council into disrepute.
- ii) Think before they publish – even if a post is deleted hastily, it will probably have been read several times and may have been indexed and duplicated on line beyond reach.
- iii) Be aware of their blurred personality online. Even if posting online in a personal capacity it is likely that they will be seen as acting as a representative of the Council. **In order to ensure comments are not misconstrued as being from the council, it may be prudent to refrain from commenting on contentious ongoing matters. If councillors do wish to comment on such matters they should consider using their comment to direct the public to any official statement made by the Town Council.**
- iv) Consider whether there are appropriate privacy settings in place for their Social Media accounts.
- v) When setting up a Social Media account, consider posting a short statement disclosing their identity as a Councillor and the political party they represent.
- vi) Be aware that, by publishing information obtained from their position as a Councillor, they will be seen as acting as a representative of the Council.
- vii) Be aware of the irony – few writers are able to communicate sarcasm or irony through short online messages. Even if the intention was clear, the message may be misconstrued.
- viii) Not be drawn into an online argument with someone clearly trying to provoke them. Simply do not respond. If the content may be considered defamatory or illegal, a Councillor should consider reporting the post to the Social Media site administrators.
- ix) Be careful if publishing information regarding a forthcoming or on-going matter yet to be determined. Any indication of bias or pre-determination could result in a decision becoming void.
- x) Be aware that liking, sharing or retweeting someone else's post e.g. sharing on Facebook or re-tweeting on Twitter, may be interpreted as the Councillor agreeing or supporting its content.
- xi) Be particularly aware of their online presence during election periods. Councillors should note that legislation relating to electoral periods (e.g. the Representation of the People Act 1983) will also apply to the online publication of electoral material/statements relating to the election.
- xii) Councillors are not permitted to friend members of staff on social media as this could be perceived as having a personal connection to the staff member and could be deemed as bias for any personnel or disciplinary proceedings.

A failure to comply with Section 1 of this Policy may void any on-going decision and an offending Councillor may be subject to a standards complaint or personal liability.

2. Councillor's use of Personal Blogs

Councillors will be personally responsible for their Personal Blogs. The Council has no responsibility for the Councillor's Personal Blog content or maintenance.

If Councillors are using a third party website to host their Personal Blog, they should familiarise themselves with the website's terms of service. Most blogging websites make the content the responsibility of its owner. Additionally, most will also have a reporting and takedown procedure to flag up any potential issues with site administrators.

If a Councillor is exclusively in charge of a Personal Blog (i.e. it is not hosted by a third party blogging site) they should consider producing their own terms of use in order to reduce liability and establish procedures to deal with potential breaches.

Councillors need to be aware that they may be held personally liable for copyright and trade mark breaches, defamation, contempt of court and privacy infringements on the Personal Blogs. This may be the case even if a Councillor does not produce the offending content. A Councillor with a Personal Blog will have a duty to take reasonable care when dealing with the Personal Blog content.

Councillors should actively try to monitor their Personal Blogs to ensure that any breach or infringement is dealt with quickly and expediently. In addition, it may be worth directing blog/readers/contributors to an email or contact in order for users to flag up potential legal risks quickly to the Councillor or to the site administrators.

Where a Councillor is responsible for a Personal Blog which stores or holds personal information (e.g. email addresses), they should be aware that they may need to register with the Information Commissioners Officer under Data Protection legislation.

3. Councillor's use of Media Devices during Council meetings

This Policy applies to all the meetings of the Council, all Committee and Sub-Committee meetings and any other meetings held under the auspices of the Council at which Members are present.

The use of Social Media is not permitted during meetings, as it may distract from proceedings or demonstrate pre-determination or bias or give the impression of doing so.

If a Councillor does need to take or make an urgent phone call, text or email during a meeting they must leave the room quietly, returning to their seat at an appropriate juncture of the meeting. They must not distract proceedings and need to remember that any phone call made or text or email sent must not show any indication of bias or pre-determination.

The Chairman of a meeting may ask a Councillor who disregards any part of Section 3 of this Policy to refrain from using the Media Device and, where appropriate, to leave the meeting.

Councillors are reminded that publishing information regarding a forthcoming and on-going decision may void that decision and/or be subject to a complaint.

Similarly there may be matters of a private or confidential nature which should not be published. A failure to comply with any of Section 3 of this Policy may result in the Council being made subject to a standards complaint or personal liability or the decision being subject to challenge.

4. Members of the Public's use of Media Devices during Council meetings.

Members of the Public should conduct themselves in a way that does not disrupt or distract the course of the meeting.

Members of the Public are permitted to text, use email or Social Media discreetly during Council meetings provided this does not disturb the meeting.

If a member of the Public needs to take or make an urgent phone call during the meeting they should leave the room quietly returning to their seat at an appropriate juncture of the meeting.

The Chairman of a Council meeting may ask a Member of the Public who disregards Section 4 of this Policy to refrain from using the Media Device and where appropriate, to leave the meeting.

Facebook, Instagram and X

The Town Council does not respond to comments on its Facebook Page. If a member of the Public has a general enquiry, they should visit the Town Council's web page www.canveyisland-tc.gov.uk. Any posts made on the Town Council's Facebook, Instagram or X Pages will have commenting disabled and will be for the purpose of providing information only.

The views of participants commenting on Canvey Island Town Council's Facebook, Instagram or X pages do not necessarily represent the views of the Council.

Constructive discussions are welcome as part of a conversation, however, inappropriate, abusive, discriminatory, offensive or unlawful comments are prohibited and may be removed.

The use of the Town Council Facebook Instagram or X Pages and its content is at members of the Public's own risk. The content on the site should not be relied upon as legal or other professional advice. Canvey Island Town Council is not responsible for the security of the page or site.

Canvey Island Town Council will not be responsible for the use or misuse by third parties of items or information posted on or submitted to [these pages or sites](#).

The decision to display comments from, befriend or follow any organisations or individuals using social media does not constitute an endorsement by Canvey Island Town Council of any kind.

Council Use of Social Media Principles.

Canvey Island Town Council updates its Facebook Instagram and X Pages with links to the Town Council's website where Town Council documents can be found. The Facebook Instagram and X Pages are used to publish information about the work of the Town Council only.

Social Media must not be used in the recruitment process for employees or Councillors as this could lead to breaches of privacy, potential discrimination claims and data protection issues. Advertising a vacancy is permitted.

The only approved Social Media for the Town Council is the Official Canvey Island Town Council's Facebook Instagram and X Pages

Users of the Facebook Page

The Town Clerk of the Council or duly authorised members of staff are the only people authorised to post on the Town Council Facebook Instagram and X Pages. Councillors must not issue public statements on the Town Council's behalf. All posts are reviewed and published subject to the Town Clerks approval.

Canvey Island Town Council

Civic Regalia Policy

Canvey Island Town Council holds several items of civic regalia, full details of these are maintained on the Town Council's Asset Register. It is the Town Council's responsibility to ensure that all these items are properly maintained and kept safe. The following policy details the protocol for the Town Mayor/Deputy Town Mayor official chains of office.

Observing the correct protocol

From time-to-time organisers of events and groups may invite the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor to attend. To understand their expectations and ensure the correct protocol is always observed the Town Mayor's briefing form must be completed in all instances.

The form should be received by the office prior to the **Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor** attending any events or groups, **or before civic regalia is worn or attending an event in an official capacity**. Should the invitation be made direct to the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor when the office is closed a briefing form should still be completed to acknowledge the invitation and submitted to the office as the earliest opportunity.

The Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor should only attend suitable events that comply with the Town Council's civic invitation policy. The Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor are not to attend private events **wearing civic regalia or in an official capacity**, and the Town Clerk will be responsible for the interpretation of the correct protocol.

Office Responsibilities:

Town Council Office

When the civic regalia is kept in the Town Council office it will always be kept in its bespoke cases, kept in a secure location and included on the council's insurance policy.

Town Mayor/Deputy Town Mayor Responsibilities:

Should the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor wish to keep the civic regalia within their home premises the following should apply:

Insurance

The civic regalia which includes the chain, pendant, and bespoke cases must be included on the home contents insurance to the relevant value of the items which will be provided **by the Town Clerk and a copy of the policy should be kept in the Council office**.

Storage

The civic regalia must be kept in the bespoke cases provided and in a secure location. All civic regalia should be returned to the office for safe keeping during holiday periods when it is likely that the responsible person will be away from home for a significant period of time.

Public Attendances

The civic regalia must not be left unattended in a public place or left in an unattended vehicle.

1 Year Fixed Bond Accounts

Appendix C

Company	Specifications	Total Cost (excluding VAT)
Hampshire Trust Bank	1-Year Business Loyalty Bond	4.55%
Unity Trust Bank	12-month Fixed Term Deposit (deposit must be between £85,000 and £20,000,000)	4.25%
Nationwide	1 year Fixed Rate Online Bond	4.00%
Barclays	1-year Fixed-Rate Bond	3.90%
Shawbrook	1-year Fixed Rate Business Bond	4.56%
Aldermore	1 Year Fixed Rate Business Savings Account	4.15%

It is recommended that the Town Council re-invest with Hampshire Trust Bank at an AER of 4.55% for 1 year and decide whether to invest the whole amount of £88,612.50 (4.25% rate on maturity) or reduce this to £85,000 and transfer the remaining back into general reserves.

Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) protects up to £85,000

Internal Audit

Appendix D

Please see below 3 quotes for the annual Internal Audit service.

Company	Specifications	Total Cost (excluding VAT)
Heelis & Lodge	End of Year Audit	£430.00
Legra Internal Audit Service	End of Year Audit	£450.00
Ann Wood	End of Year Audit	£330.00
John Watson	End of Year Audit	£410.00
Stephanie Robinson	End of Year Audit	No response

Van Insurance Quotes

Please see below 3 quotes for vehicle insurance for the Town Council's van.

Company	Specifications	Total Cost (excluding VAT)
Aviva	Commercial Fully Comprehensive Cover for four named drivers Excess - £350.00	£762.93
Quote Line Direct	Commercial Fully Comprehensive Cover for four named drivers. Excess - £650.00	£838.26
James Hallam – ERS Insurance	Commercial Fully Comprehensive Cover Permission for any person who is driving on the order or with the permission of the policyholder. Excess - £250.00 Renewal Policy only issues 30days prior to end date.	2023 - £529 2024 - £628.60 18.8% increase 2025 - £741.74 (assuming similar increase)
Admiral Essential	Commercial Fully Comprehensive Cover Excess - £500.00	£858.76

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Town Council