

**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 26TH SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllr N. Harvey, Cllr P. May, Cllr J. Anderson, Cllr M. Tucker, Cllr D Blackwell and Cllr T. Belford

Non committee members: Cllr D. Anderson

Also present: Mrs E. Hunt – Town Clerk
Mrs E De Can – Responsible Financial Officer
1 member of the public

P&F/012/16 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

P&F/013/16 - TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

P&F/014/16 - PUBLIC FORUM - TO RECEIVE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF CANVEY ISLAND ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA FOR A PERIOD NOT EXCEEDING TEN MINUTES

No members of the public wished to speak.

P&F/015/16 – TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 27TH JUNE 2016

Cllr J Anderson enquired about the progress of the investigations into the hire of the Town Councils meeting space.

The Town Clerk advised that the investigations are ongoing and that there are a number of restrictions on the hire that would also need to be taken into consideration including the situation of the Clerk's office to the rear of the meeting space which would be in use during normal office hours, staff availability in the evening and weekends for hire outside of normal working hours and suitable remuneration for this and also the noise disruption to adjoining office if hired during the day.

The minutes of the committee meeting held on the 27th June 2016 were **CONFIRMED** and signed as a true record.

P&F/016/16 – TO NOTE MATTERS OF REPORT FROM THE ONGOING PROJECTS AND NOT ON THE AGENDA

Cllr J Anderson enquired about the progress of the organisation of a Clean Up Canvey Event whereby the residents of Canvey Island for one day only could arrange for any unwanted items to be removed by the Council free of charge to the local recycling centre to help alleviate instances of fly-tipping and littering.

The Town Clerk advised that the Community Warden was in discussions with Castle Point Borough Council's street scene department about a potential event yet one had still to be organised.

Cllr D Blackwell explained that from 31st October there will be changes made to the recycling centres so the Town Council may need to consider the disposal of the waste items following an event.

Members noted matters of report from the ongoing projects and not on the agenda.

P&F/017/16 – TO NOTE THE TRAINING COURSES BOOKED / ATTENDED / CANCELLED SINCE THE LAST MEETING

- i) EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW COURSE (TOWN CLERK) AT A COST OF £75.00**
Members noted the Employment Overview Course booked for the Town Clerk at a cost of £75.00.
- ii) EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW COURSE (CLLR J BLISSETT) AT A COST OF £75.00**
Members noted the Employment Overview Course booked for Cllr J Blissett at a cost of £75.00.
- iii) EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW COURSE (CLLR J ANDERSON) AT A COST OF £75.00**
Members noted the Employment Overview Course booked for Cllr J Anderson at a cost of £75.00.
- iv) EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW COURSE (CLLR D ANDERSON) AT A COST OF £75.00**
Members noted the Employment Overview Course booked for Cllr D Anderson at a cost of £75.00.
- v) EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW COURSE (CLLR T BELFORD) AT A COST OF £75.00**
Members noted the Employment Overview Course booked for Cllr T Belford at a cost of £75.00.

P&F/018/16 – TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER ON INVESTIGATIONS MADE INTO BUSINESS RATE CHARGES

The Responsible Financial Officer provided members with a report detailing the investigations made into business rate changes for the Council offices at No 11 and No 13 High Street, Canvey Island. She advised members that the rateable value of the Council property was based on its annual rental value and explained that the property valuation should reflect open market value. She added that as the offices were situated in a row of shops that it must be valued as a rentable shop unit.

The Responsible Financial Officer explained that she had queried the assessment with the VOA as the Town Council is a non profit making organisation and was advised that precepting authorities are excluded from the discretionary relief normally applied to non profit making organisations. She added that the use of the premises as an office did not make a difference to the rentable value of the property should it become vacant and re-let.

The Responsible Financial Officer advised that the rates are reviewed every three years and that the next review was due in 2017. She explained that the VOA have a registration process for reviewing the rateable value of a property and that she had registered the Council and would be able review its draft rateable value in October to ensure that the details were correct ahead of the re-evaluation.

Members noted the report.

P&F/019/16 – TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER ON THE REVIEW OF THE COUNCILS INSURANCE POLICY

The Responsible Financial Officer provided members with a report detailing the review of the Councils insurance policy. She advised members that the Town Council had a three year Long Term Agreement with Zurich Municipal which is due to expire in August 2017. She explained that due to tax increases in Insurance Premium Tax and an uplift for index linking against the items listed under All Risk or Damage that there had been some changes and additions made to the policy resulting in an increase in the cost of the insurance.

The Responsible Financial Officer explained that she would carry out a competitive price review ahead of the policy expiration in August 2017.

Members noted the report.

P&F/020/16 – RISK MANAGEMENT:

i) TO REVIEW THE RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

The Responsible Financial Officer explained to members that the risk management assessment and internal controls are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date in accordance with current legislation.

The Responsible Financial Officer explained that as cheques are gradually being phased out, local councils have introduced the use of internet banking. She advised that as an internal control, authorised signatories have been registered with online business banking and once activated they could log in to approve the payments set up by the Responsible Financial Officer before they are processed. She added that a list of payments and invoices would be submitted to full council or the relevant committee for approval and two authorised signatories would sign the list of payments once approved as is currently done. The following day, once the Responsible Financial Officer has set up the payment agreed on line, one authorised signatory would then need to attend at the office to log in to on line business banking to approve those payments to be processed, which must be completed by 8.00pm the same day.

A discussion took place about the Town Council's off site storage facility. Cllr N Harvey enquired about the location of the offsite storage facility and asked if sites could be considered locally. The Town Clerk advised that she had investigated sites on Canvey Island and these were deemed unsuitable at that time due to the potential flood and fire risk at the sites. The Town Clerk explained that the current storage unit is within a secure facility subject to fire risk assessment, not in an area at risk of flooding and located within 5 miles of the Town Council offices.

Cllr J Anderson made enquiries about the number of key holders who have access to the storage facility. The Town Clerk explained that as there is quite a lot of expensive and irreplaceable items held at this facility there could be potential insurance liabilities in giving multiple key holders access to it. Cllr D Blackwell agreed and explained that there needs to be a level of control in place to ensure that the equipment is properly protected and that it is not normal practice in other local authorities to give councilors access to their off site storage facilities. He added that should a Town Councillor request an item be retrieved from storage for use in the undertaking of Town Council business, that an officer of the Council would make themselves available to retrieve it.

Members **RECOMMENDED** that the Council is satisfied that the system of internal control and risk management through various policies and activities of officers and this committee is both effective and relevant.

P&F/021/16 – POLICIES

i) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE AMENDMENTS MADE TO THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2016

The Responsible Financial Officer explained to members the changes to the Financial Regulations 2016 that are to be considered in line with its current processes.

Members reviewed the amendments made to the Financial Regulations 2016 and **RECOMMENDED** that the council approve and adopt the amendments made.

ii) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE ADOPTION OF THE STATEMENT OF CONTROL POLICY.

The Responsible Financial Officer explained to members that following the Internal Audit, the Auditor had reported that the Town Council was in the process of creating a Statement of Internal Control Policy to identify responsibilities of risk management and internal controls.

Members were asked to consider and agree the adoption of a Statement of Internal Control Policy.

Members considered the Statement of Internal Control Policy and **RECOMMENDED** that the council approve and adopt the policy.

iii) TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE AMENDMENTS MADE TO THE GRANT POLICY.

Members discussed the amendments to the Grant Policy. Cllr N Harvey **RECOMMENDED** that the Grant Policy be reviewed further to give clear definition of the application criteria. Members discussed the current policy wording and **AGREED** that the policy be reviewed further to clearly define the application criteria.

Members reviewed the current amendments made to the Grant Policy and **RECOMMENDED** that the council approve and adopt the amendments made and that a further review of the Policy be carried out for consideration at the next meeting.

P&F/022/16 - FINANCE:

i) GRANT APPLICATIONS:

i) TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FROM AMELIA BLACKWELL HOUSE SHELTERED HOUSING (APPENDIX B)

Members discussed the application and **AGREED** 5 members to 1 to decline the application as it did not meet the criteria of the Town Council's Grant Policy.

ii) TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FROM WILLALA HOUSE SHELTERED HOUSING (APPENDIX B)

Members discussed the application and **AGREED** 5 members to 1 to decline the application as it did not meet the criteria of the Town Council's Grant Policy.

iii) TO NOTE CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM 1ST CANVEY ISLAND EAST GUIDES IN RECOGNITION OF THE GRANT THEY RECEIVED.

Members noted the correspondence.

ii) TO VERIFY THE COUNCIL FINANCES AS AT 31ST AUGUST 2016

Members noted the Council Finances as at 31st August 2016 inclusive of the bank reconciliation, statements and cheques issued from 31st May 2016 to 31st August 2016 and no questions were raised.

Cllr N. Harvey duly signed the reconciliation documents and original bank statements as evidence of verification in accordance with Financial Regulations 2.2.

iii) TO NOTE THE COUNCILS ASSET REGISTER

Members noted the Council's Asset register and no questions were raised.

iv) TO CONFIRM ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT AS PREVIOUSLY AGREED

Accounts **APPROVED** and cheques 202683 to 202690 inclusive were signed for A/c No 1.

Date: 26/09/2016

Canvey Island Current Year

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Time: 13:32

Current Bank Account

List of Payments made between 26/09/2016 and 26/09/2016

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
26/09/2016	EE	DD	54.58		Mobile Bill - Sept
26/09/2016	Alert Alarms	202683	198.00		Lights/Smoke Inspection
26/09/2016	Office Needs	202684	22.68		Stationery
26/09/2016	Rayleigh Computer Shop	202685	54.00		Onsite Visit/Backup Issues
26/09/2016	Greenbarnes Ltd	202686	1,414.00		Honours Board
26/09/2016	G & K Groundworks Ltd	202687	110.00		Unit Rental - Oct
26/09/2016	Oakleigh Fairs	202688	657.00		Reindeer Hire - 50% deposit
26/09/2016	D Trower	202689	20.00		Window Cleaner - Sept
26/09/2016	A Ruskin	202690	102.06		A Ruskin - Mileage/Travel
Total Payments			<u>2,632.32</u>		

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

CHAIRMAN
28th November 2016