

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE OF THE CANVEY ISLAND TOWN
COUNCIL HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, 13 HIGH STREET, CANVEY ISLAND ON
MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY 2016 AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT: Cllr J. Anderson (Chairman), Cllr D. Anderson (Vice Chairman), Cllr C. Letchford,
Cllr B. Campagna, Cllr P. May, Cllr D. Blackwell

NON COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Cllr P Greig, Cllr M. Tucker

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs E Hunt – Deputy Clerk.
Mrs L Windley – Community and Events Officer
3 members of the public.

E&OS/058/15 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Cllr P. May provided Cllr N. Harvey's apologies.

E&OS/059/16 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Cllr C. Letchford declared an interest as Chairman of Friends of Concord Beach.

**E&OS/060/16 – 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.

**E&OS/061/16 – TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 1ST DECEMBER 2015.**

The minutes of the committee meeting held on the 1st December were **CONFIRMED** and signed as a true record.

**E&OS/062/16 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ONGOING PROJECTS AND NOT ON THE
AGENDA**

Cllr P. Greig enquired about the fishing swims that had been installed at Canvey Lake. Cllr M. Tucker advised that swims had been installed on the North bank but consideration could be given to installing further swims along the south bank where the bank has been graded to the water edge suggesting that sponsorship could be sought for this. Cllr J. Anderson explained that this item had been discussed at the Common Liaison Committee and that it had been communicated by both Cllr D. Blackwell and Essex County Councillor R. Howard that Canvey Lake is being examined with multi-agency involvement as a priority site in flood defence and that this could impact on the management of the lake. Cllr D. Blackwell advised members that until they are sure of the future use of Canvey Lake, it is not recommended the Town Council invest further funds in enhancing the area. Cllr J. Anderson communicated that it was agreed that an Officer of the Town Council would be invited to all multi-agency meetings to discuss the future of Canvey Lake and information would be communicated back to Council.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired about the progress of the revamp of the Labworth Memorial Gardens, concerns were expressed about the suitability of the use of metal structures as was previously recommended. Members discussed the possibility of using different materials and agreed that this should be investigated further. Cllr B. Campagna enquired about utilising the previously discussed fencing from the Waterside Farm allotment site. The Deputy Clerk advised that there would not be enough fencing from this to cover the length required for the Labworth Memorial Gardens. Cllr M. Tucker suggested to members that a site visit would allow them to envisage any potential designs. Deputy Clerk advised that this would be a good opportunity to agree a design which would enable her to obtain competitive quotes for this work and that it would also be an opportunity to agree the location of the previously agreed signage. Cllr J. Anderson asked for members to put their ideas forward to the Deputy Clerk, following a site visit in order for her to seek costs and designs.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired about the progress regarding the pathway to link Bumblebee Park and the Labworth Memorial Gardens. The Deputy Clerk advised that the Council had received agreement in principle from Castle Point Borough Council in 2014 dependent upon the design and construction of the path. Members discussed the installation allowing for ongoing grass cutting of that field. Cllr D. Blackwell communicated that now the use of the field has changed and is used as an overflow car park it would be essential to get permission in writing from Castle Point Borough Council, and look at the potential need for planning permission. Cllr J. Anderson confirmed that he has liaised with the Acting Town Clerk who is seeking confirmation, in writing, including any terms and conditions associated with the use of the land. Members discussed possible construction materials for the path. Cllr P. Greig expressed concern that during the summer, the field also caters for events that involve heavier vehicles and that any path may be potentially damaged by these. Cllr. C Letchford expressed that consideration must also be taken for disabled access. Cllr. D Blackwell enquired about the potential to Lease the area between both gardens and create more gardens. Cllr J. Anderson advised that this has been previously discussed and a request sought from Castle Point Borough Council. Cllr D. Blackwell expressed that if the land was Leased to the Town Council there could be potential to plant memorial trees between them, which had been requested by residents.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired about the replacement slats for the benches at the memorial gardens. The Deputy Clerk explained that she had sought quotations for Plaswood material to replace the deteriorated slats which could be provided either pre-drilled or plain, yet these were material costs only and did not include for installation. Members discussed the possibility of replacing all of the benches with new. Cllr J. Anderson reminded members that there are a lot of benches in the memorial gardens and that it would be more cost effective to repair the damaged ones rather than replace all of them. Cllr C. Letchford commented that volunteers could be utilised to install them. Cllr P. May recommended that the Town Council approach the probation services for volunteers. Members discussed this but felt that a professional company would be the preferred option.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired about whether the signed Lease for the Bumblebee Park and Labworth Memorial Gardens had been received from Castle Point Borough Council. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the Town Council had received confirmation in writing of the agreed Lease but the physical Lease had yet to be received. She explained that she would make further enquiries.

Members noted that the survey to the Concord Beach Tidal pool had been completed by Jackson Engineering on 18th January 2016 and that the Deputy Clerk was awaiting the Engineers Report of this.

Cllr C. Letchford commented that the works recently completed to the abutments of the steps leading down to the tidal pool were done to a very good standard.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired about the foreshore erosion study that was to be undertaken by Southend Borough Council. The Deputy Clerk advised that this was still to be completed and that the Town Council have been advised that they would be invited to round table discussions when this is to commence.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired about the progress of the proposed ramp at the Smallgains allotment site. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that she was obtaining quotes to complete this work and that these would be available for the next meeting of the Environment and Open Spaces committee on 25th April 2016.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired about the progress of replacing the bow top fencing at the Waterside Farm allotment site. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the three quotes previously sought for this work were in the process of being reaffirmed. Cllr D. Blackwell suggested that funding could be sought through Essex County Council's Community Initiative Fund, when this becomes active again in September. Cllr J. Anderson suggested that the Town Council could also approach North Thames Veolia Trust as a potential source of funding.

E&OS/063/16 – TO NOTE THE REPORT OF THE TIDAL POOL STRUCTURAL SURVEY AND DISCUSS POSSIBLE ACTIONS.

The Deputy Clerk informed members that the structural survey of the tidal pool had been completed by Jackson Engineering and whilst she had not received the formal report, she had received a summary which she provided for members to review. The summary detailed that the pool was considered to be in reasonable condition and to have been reasonably maintained. There were no obvious defects associated with the concrete surround to the pool or the hand railings which were noted to have been painted. An inspection of the external areas of the pool identified settlement of rock/concrete surround such that the underside of the concrete slab was exposed. The concrete slab was not showing any signs of distress currently though it was suggested that the void should be filled to provide support to the slab but also to remove the space that exists between the underside of the slab for health and safety reasons.

Cllr C. Letchford presented members with a document showing recent photographs of the tidal pool commenting that the steels within the concrete pilings at the pool were robust and of good quality. Cllr C. Letchford expressed concern that the inspector did not appreciate that the back wall of the pool is moving and that the surrounding mud has decreased by 240mm, due to erosion, over a period of two years becoming more substantial in the past year.

Cllr J. Anderson enquired as to whether the beached area surrounding the tidal pool was under the responsibility of the Town Council. The Deputy Clerk explained that the Town Council is responsible for the area directly in front of the two ramps leading down to the sea wall revetment. Cllr C. Letchford suggested that further investigations be sought into the structure and erosion in this area. The Deputy Clerk informed members that an annual risk assessment is carried out by the Town Council and that monthly defect inspections were also undertaken by the Community Warden. Cllr J. Anderson suggested that the concerns expressed by Cllr C. Letchford be taken to the Jackson Engineering. The Deputy Clerk advised that it would be beneficial for the Town Council to wait for the results of the foreshore erosion study, and that the Town Council would be advised, in advance, when this is due to take place.

Cllr J. Anderson communicated that residents continue to utilise the tidal pool and that any health and safety issues must be addressed.

Members **RECOMMENDED** that the Deputy Clerk contact Jackson Engineering with the concerns raised in relation to the foreshore erosion and its affect on the pool structure.

E&OS/064/16 – TO NOTE A REPORT PROVIDING AN UPDATE ON THE WILDLIFE DAY PREPARATIONS

The Community and Events Officer informed members that Mike Dilger had been booked to attend the event as with previous years.

She communicated details of the proposed photography competition and expressed that the intention was to also display all the entries in the Town Council's meeting space as well as Wat Tyler Visitor Centre. The Community and Events Officer suggested that the Town Council organise a photography competition limiting the entries to photographs of the Town Council's open spaces. She asked that if members were agreeable to this, it could be launched at Wildlife Day. She added that she has tentatively approached local businesses for donation of a prize.

The Community and Events Officer informed members that the mobile farm had been booked and the cost kept the same as in previous years. She advised that the RSPB contribution would remain the same as last year.

The Community and Events Officer gave details of new attractions for this year's event which included a den building competition. She advised members that she had discussed this with the RSPB and that they had expressed that they had a volunteer with strong links to youth groups who could roll out this activity.

The Community and Events Officer advised members that more hands on craft and conservation stalls were beginning to be booked in. She communicated that she had also been in discussion with the Big Local £1Million committee about utilising the climbing wall again and was informed that they were intending bring this again and potentially some other activities.

The Community and Events Officer informed members that she had ordered a branded gazebo for use at events. She communicated to members that she had been investigating more hands on activities that the Town Council could organise at the Wildlife Day event which would promote the Council. She explained to members that by branding items with a Town Council branded stamp, which the visitors could take away with them, it would be another cost effective way of raising the profile of the Council. She recommended that the craft activity could be pebble painting, which could take place inside the Town Council's branded gazebo. The Community and Events Officer informed members that it was also intended to offer visitors bird nest boxes and bug hotel buildings as another take away activity.

Cllr D. Blackwell enquired about the representation of marine conservation organisations at the event and suggested the Port of London Authority be asked to attend with their Riverside Trailer. Cllr D. Blackwell also recommended that the Community and Events Officer contact Thames Talk who were an organisation that work on conservation within the Thames.

The Community and Events officer informed members of the intention to purchase Town Council branded balloons for use at events and recommended that they organise a balloon release competition at the Wildlife Day event offering a prize for the balloon that travelled furthest. Cllr D. Blackwell recommended that the Community and Events Officer check with the RSPB regarding their policy on balloons as these could pose a potential hazard to wildlife. Cllr C. Letchford suggested that if balloons were restricted by the RSPB, that branded kites could be investigated. The Community and Events Officer concurred that this would also encourage outdoor pursuits.

Cllr P. May communicated to members a suggestion of a small stage that could be utilised for the speeches and presentations at the event. The Community and Events Officer recommended placing this alongside the Town Council branded gazebo giving a noticeable presence at Wildlife Day, located in the middle of the event field.

Cllr P. Greig suggested that the Community and Events Officer contact the local junior and infant schools to run painting or photography competitions with presentations made at the event.

Cllr D. Blackwell enquired whether there were any more free microchipping for dogs events planned. The Community and Events Officer advised that a Responsible Pet Ownership Day was being planned for Saturday 9th April and that the free micro-chipping would be available there. Cllr D. Blackwell recommended that as it will be mandatory for all dogs to be microchipped, as of 6th April 2016, this should be well advertised.

E&OS/065/16 – TO NOTE THE FOUR YEAR PLAN AND PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

Members noted the four year plan and projects in process.

E&OS/066/16 – TO NOTE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT DETAILING INCIDENTS AND ACTIONS COMPLETED

Members noted the health and safety report detailing incidents and actions completed at the tidal pool.

E&OS/067/16 – ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

Accounts **APPROVED** and cheques 202395 to 202416 inclusive were signed.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.00 P.M.

CHAIRMAN
1st February 2016