

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD IN HALL 2 AT THE PADDOCKS, LONG ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND
MONDAY 14th MARCH 2016 AT 7.00 PM.**

PRESENT:-

Cllr P. Greig (Chairman), Cllr M. Tucker (Vice Chairman), Cllr J. Anderson (Chairman of Environment & Open Spaces) and Cllr P. May (Vice Chairman of Policy & Finance), Cllr T. Belford, Cllr J. Blissett, Cllr D. Anderson & Cllr B. Campagna

ALSO PRESENT:-

Ann Horgan (Head of Governance - CPBC) & Cllr A. Sheldon (Mayor - CPBC)

APOLOGIES:-

Cllr N. Harvey provided his apologies as is on holiday. Cllr D. Blackwell provided his apologies due to another

85 members of the public

Ellea Hunt – Town Clerk

Mike Letch – Locum

Laura Windley – Community & Events Officer

Adele Ruskin – Community Warden

The evening started at 6.30pm offering light refreshments and offering the public the opportunity to visit the community group stalls that were on display.

The community stalls present were the Alzheimers Society, Essex Police, CAVS / Anglian Water, CISCA House, Bay Watch, Canvey Island Swimming Club, Canvey Community Archive.

1. 'A review of the Town Council's year, its achievements and its aspirations for the future'

COUNCILLOR PETER GREIG, CHAIRMAN, CANVEY ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr P. Greig welcomed all residents, guests and all the community groups who came along and supplied information stalls for the evening.

Cllr P. Greig provided an overview of the Council's main achievements for 2015/16.

The Town Council had celebrated the opening of the new offices and at the same time received a prestigious award as part of the Local Council Award Scheme. The Foundation Level award recognises that the council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement and demonstrates that the Town Council goes above and beyond its legal obligations, leading its community and continuously seeking opportunities to improve and develop even further.

Cllr Greig took the opportunity to pay tribute to the office staff who work extremely hard adding that the Town Council were in the process of working toward the award schemes next level of achievement the Quality Level.

Cllr P. Greig explained that early this year the Town Council had employed a new Community Warden, Adele Ruskin, who together with her targeted patrolling of the islands wards, she also regularly meets with local community groups and has been working hard on various projects that highlight the effects of litter and dog fouling on the environment. Cllr P. Greig explained that the Community Warden is currently in the process of organising two new community events, one is a community engagement event at Canvey Lake in partnership with Thames21, who work on a wide range of inclusive and community-focused projects across the capital and work on any river, stream, canal, lake or pond. The

other event that the Community Warden is organising is an older persons event working with local authorities and organisations to promote community safety, which will be held at CISCA House in May.

The Town Council had formed new working partnerships with Canvey Island Swimming Club, Canvey Island Bay Watch and Canvey Community Archive.

Cllr P. Greig explained that the Town Council had celebrated great success with its event program this year adding that this morning he had represented the people of Canvey Island at a flag raising ceremony to Fly A Flag for the Commonwealth and that it was the second year that the Council had been involved in this ceremony. On the news this evening the Queen and Prince Phillip were at Westminster celebrating the same thing. The Wildlife Day event had seen the most visitors that it has ever seen and Armed Forces Day was another resounding success with over 2000 visitors in attendance, some coming from as far away as Southend, Rayleigh and Basildon.

The Charity Garden Trail raised over £900.00 and the monies raised was split equally between two local charities, Breathe Easy and Canvey Island First Responders. Cllr Greig explained that he had the honour of presenting the charities with their cheques.

A number of educational events were arranged this year including free micro-chipping for dogs in partnership with the Dogs Trust, allowing residents to have their dogs microchipped free of charge and to find out helpful information out responsible dog ownership. Cllr P. Greig reminded all dog owners that all dogs will need to be microchipped by 6th April 2016.

The Christmas event was very well received. The Town Council installed Christmas lights throughout the Town Centre and at Jones Corner as well as installing Christmas trees at the Library, opposite the Haystack Public House and as well as Jones Corner.

The Town Council sponsored the festive lighting competition for residents again this year and as the competition was so good this year it also extended the prize giving to a second award for outstanding community spirit as well as to the winner.

Cllr P. Greig explained that the Town Council's grant funding scheme has been able to offer a total of £2,860.00 to local organisations including Canvey Island Swimming Club, Canvey Island First Responders, Canvey Community Archive, Canvey Island Bay Watch, Friends of St Katherine's Church and Girl Guiding Canvey 1st East Guides who were in need of its assistance.

Cllr Greig added that the Town Council had received funding from the Ministry of Defence towards the Armed Forces Day Event and Essex Heritage Trust toward projects to enhance Canvey Lake.

The Town Council has not raised its precept in the past few years and the Town Council continues to publish quarterly newsletters which were well received by the public and also annually produces a Town Guide which shall be distributed to residents from 1st April 2016.

Cllr P. Greig finished by thanking the staff in the Town Council, because without their help and hard work the Council could not have achieved any of the above and adding that the Town Council is looking forward to continuing its hard work for the benefit of the residents of Canvey Island.

2. To confirm and sign as a true record the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on the 16th March 2015

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on the 16th March 2015 were **CONFIRMED** and signed as a true record.

3. A review of the activities of the Council's Committees:

Environment & Open Spaces:

COUNCILLOR JOHN ANDERSON, CHAIRMAN, ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
Cllr J. Anderson, advised that the Town Council aims to make Canvey Island an environment that can be enjoyed by all of its residents and also for the pleasure of visitors to the island.

Cllr J Anderson explained that the biggest project the Town Council had committed to, was Canvey Lake. Cllr J Anderson explained the Town Council approached Castle Point Borough Council, and a company called Groundworks to undertake a feasibility study for all the proposed improvements at Canvey Lake. Cllr J Anderson provided a summary of costs that had been investigated as part of the feasibility study completed by Groundworks in 2008.

Cllr J Anderson explained that Canvey Lake was one of the Councils larger projects and that it was committed to a five year reed maintenance programme. The Town Council has installed more litter and dog fouling bins and installed a picnic area to the rear of Cedar Road on the South West bank of the lake in partnership with the Big Local Lottery Committee. Cllr J. Anderson added that the Town Council had also installed a new pathway which runs along the South East bank of the lake from Denham Road bridge toward the Oysterfleet Hotel.

Cllr J Anderson explained that the Town Council had resurfaced the car park and installed new fencing around its perimeter.

Cllr J. Anderson explained that the Town Council had applied for new byelaws for Canvey Lake advising that these had been confirmed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and that these came into effect on the 21st February 2016. Cllr J. Anderson added that the Town Councils Community Warden has the authority to issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and litter offences and commended her for her targeted patrols of the lake, all wards and also along the seafront.

Cllr J. Anderson explained that another large project that the Council is responsible for is Bumble Bee Park, Labworth Memorial Gardens and seafront beds. The Town Council are in the process of obtaining quotations for the renovation of the gardens to revitalise and renew areas that need attention.

Cllr J. Anderson explained that Concord Beach is another important area for local residents to enjoy during the summer months and the Town Council are responsible for managing and maintaining the tidal pool. Cllr J. Anderson made the distinction between the two tidal pools at the seafront confirming that the new pool was under the responsibility of Castle Point borough Council and that old pool was under the responsibility of the Town Council. Cllr J. Anderson added that the Community Warden undertakes regular health and safety checks and an annual risk assessment is also completed of the area under its responsibility.

Cllr J. Anderson commended Canvey Bay Watch on the great work that they are doing at the other end of the beach.

Cllr J. Anderson explained that the Council is working with local youth groups such as Legacy a church outreach group. Cllr J. Anderson explained that the concrete hard standing on First Avenue had now been completed and is being used by the Legacy Youth Bus to carry out youth outreach work. The Youth workers are very approachable. The Town Council want to continue working with Legacy on other parts of the island as well.

Cllr J. Anderson finished by adding that the Town council had great success with its programme of events this year organised by the Community and Events Officer with its Wildlife Day Event seeing the most visitors it has ever seen and also the Armed Forces Day, Garden Trail and the Christmas Festival

already mentioned by the Chairman. He added that the Council continue to grow on the success of their events each year.

Cllr J Anderson advised that there are investigations under way by a multi agency team on the future management of Canvey Lake due to all the flooding looking at how the lake can be utilised for storage of water and Cllr R Howard and Cllr D Blackwell, on the lake committee, along with other councillors have been involved in discussions with the Environment Agency and Water Authorities. This may change the outlook of the lake but they will be working closely with the Town Council on this to make sure that the Lake is still able to be enjoyed by residents and visitors to the area.

4. 'DEMENTIA FRIENDS' – presentation from Valerie Mathewson, Information Worker, The Alzheimers Society

Valerie Mathewson introduced herself and provided a presentation to the public on Dementia Friends and how they can aim to make a difference. Valerie explained that the society was leading support and research on Alzheimer Services to help recognise the disease and combat fears and the impact on the individual as they get older. The Alzheimers Society want to try to create Dementia Friendly communities and have total cross party support to achieve this.

Valerie explained that 1 in 14 people over 65 have dementia and more than 850,000 people in England are living with it. Valerie added that 40% of people with dementia felt lonely and 44% did not feel that they were part of the community.

As a society, we are mindful that a person living with dementia is still a person and people can tend to treat them differently because they are living with this disease. Dementia friends are there to give support, provide help and understand the challenges that they face. There are 1.4 million dementia friends across the country now. We are asking people to donate 1 hour of their time to find out key messages and help raise awareness of dementia.

People with dementia want to carry on going about their daily lives and feeling included in their local community but they sometimes need a helping hand to do so, from helping someone to find the right bus to spreading the word about dementia on social media.

A dementia friend is someone who understands a bit more about what its like to live with dementia and the little ways they can help. Dementia champions are volunteers who are passionate about raising awareness of dementia running information sessions in their community either in their workplace, to family and friends, to clubs they are part of or in public sessions within the community.

The Alzheimers Society currently run sessions in the Canvey Library helping people come together to meet others, tell their stories and capture information. We facilitate programmes which help improve hand eye co-ordination and other stimulating activities.

Valerie explained that there are various online tools that can be utilised to help understand a little more about dementia directing the public to register to engage with online videos by visiting www.dementiafriends.org.uk/register-admin.

Valerie explained that they prefer the term living with dementia as opposed to suffering from dementia. She added it is important to be patient and to spend more time with friends or relatives affected by dementia. Where possible to volunteer or fundraise for dementia related causes and to help your workplace to become more dementia friendly.

Valerie finished by thanking everyone for listening and asked them to visit www.dementiafriends.org.uk to find out more about living with dementia.

Cllr P. Greig thanked Valerie for the important information that she provided and invited people to speak with her afterward.

5. QUESTION AND ANSWER FORUM – Questions will be invited from members of the public relating to the parish of Canvey Island

Members of the public were invited to address questions to the Chairman in relation to the Town Council business or Valerie Mathewson from the Alzheimers Society following her presentation.

Q: On the poster for the family fun event there is no date, do you have a date for this?

A: The event at Canvey Lake will be held on 30th March 2016.

Q: Can the Town Council shed any light on when they intend to make any improvements to the East ward of the island?

A: Cllr J. Anderson advised that Cllr N. Harvey has continually asked for flowerbeds to be put in the East ward. Cllr J. Anderson advised that there has been difficulty in obtaining suitable locations for planters to be placed in this area of Canvey due to the narrow pathways.

Q: Would other improvements be able to be made, such as putting things on the lamp posts, or fixing the lamp posts? There is also kerb defects and mud puddles.

A: Cllr P. Greig advised that this would come under the remit of Essex Highways and not Canvey Island Town Council, and that before anything can be hung from lamp columns, permission would need to be sought from Essex County Council and would be subject to weight testing. This is the process that was followed for the decorated columns in the High Street and was the reason why some needed replacement.

Q: Is there any plans to change the lamp posts in the East ward?

A: Cllr P. Greig advised that this would be the responsibility of the energy companies and Essex County Council Highways. Cllr M. Tucker advised that the Town Council is taking on projects one at a time to see how budgets can be used to and encouraged the community to contact their Ward councillors to see what can be done.

Statement: So if I could get permission from the Jellicoe to install planters then this would be under your jurisdiction to put them here is that correct.

A: Cllr P. Greig advised that this is something that can be done.

Q: The noticeboard at the junction High Street and Seaview Road is covered by the bus shelter and is not able to be updated. Is anything going to be done about relocating the bus shelter?

A: Cllr B. Palmer advised that the shelter covering the noticeboard is due to be relocated.

Statement: Cllr A. Sheldon thanked the Town Council for inviting him along to the Town Meeting, explaining that this had been the first meeting of the Town council that he had attended, he said it had been a pleasure to sit there and watch.

Cllr A. Sheldon commented - In the words of Churchill democracy is the worst form of government apart from all the others. It is easy to take for granted that we are able to hold discussions with our councils when there are so many other places in the world that are not able to do so.

In order for democracy to work you need a group of people who give up their time in order to be the voice of their community and secondly you need a sense of identity. This is certainly incorporated into the Town Council and Canvey Island certainly has a fantastic sense of identity. I would like to congratulate the Town Council for a successful year and for ensuring democracy works for the residents of Canvey Island and would like to extend a personal thank you for having been invited to so many of your events.

Q: When are the Town Council going to take over the flowerbeds at the War Memorial?

A: Cllr J. Anderson advised that the Town Council had not been approached about this, however, councillors voluntarily plant these beds each year. Cllr J. Anderson commented that the Town Council are very proud of the war memorial and would be happy to consider looking after these beds. The Town Council would need to look at a budget for this but was sure that a budget could be secured for this.

Q: Can the Town Council shed any light on the regeneration of the Town Centre?

A: Cllr M. Tucker advised that there is no present plans for regeneration, this does not come under the Town Council. He advised that it is Mark Evershed at Castle Point Borough Council that is responsible for regeneration and falls under the remit of Castle Point Borough Council not the Town Council.

Q: Most Town Councillors are also Borough Councillors, can you explain why they Borough Council has spent all that money on a shop in the Knightswick Centre that gives out pink sacks.

A: Cllr M. Tucker advised this is not Town Council money and the question would have to be referred back to Castle Point Borough Council.

Cllr P. May commented that he had been to many meetings to discuss regeneration and said "I'll be honest there is no money left". The shops lease has already been paid for so no further money will be spent on this. Cllr P. May advised that the Borough Council will be looking at how they can make smaller improvements to enhance the area. He added that Mark Evershed has been asked to go out and look at organising a regular market and other ideas but things take time. Cllr P. May said that the Borough Council have gone back to the drawing board with this and Mark Evershed and Steve Rogers were working hard to start making aesthetic improvements to try to increase the footfall which in turn will improve trade.

Q: Who owns the Regeneration shop?

A: Cllr M Tucker advised that the Borough Council lease this off of the Knightswick Centre?

Q: Could clubs not use this to promote themselves?

A: Cllr R Howard commented that as plans have not come to fruition because of the economic issues the shop will be closing within the next couple of weeks.

Statement: S Durrant advised that it's the Queens 90th Birthday this year and the Carnival Committee and War Memorial Committee have organised a free entry picnic event at the Labworth Park called "Canvey Unite for the Queens 90th Birthday" where there will be fun activities including egg and spoon races. The event will be held on Sunday 8th May 2016 from 2:00 – 5:00pm, you can bring your own picnic, its completely free, being held the weekend after bank holiday weekend.

Q: Is there an update on the pumps that pump the water over the sea wall?

A: Cllr P. Greig explained that there were a lot of problems with the pumps overheating. Cllr R. Howard advised that they overheated due to no ventilation in the pump house itself but the Environment Agency had now carried out works on the main pump houses by installing ventilation and fans together with generators which will be on standby and fixed to the main pump houses should there be a power outage.

Q: We won't have a repeat of the flooding problems will we:

A: Cllr M. Tucker commented that it was not the pumps that overheated but the switchgear and that they should now be working to their capacity fine.

Q: We won't have the situation we had last year:

A: Cllr M. Tucker advised that they had been assured by the Environment Agency that the problems have been rectified now. Cllr P. Greig we obviously cannot guarantee this but hopefully not.

6. CHAIRMANS AWARDS

Cllr Greig advised that the Town Council Chairman's Awards is an initiative to recognise those individuals and organisations who selflessly give up their time in the community to help others without expecting any recognition, making a significant contribution to the quality of life for residents of Canvey Island. There are three award categories which are:

- Citizen of the Year (over 18 years)
- Young Person of the Year (18 years or under)
- Community/Charity Group of the Year.

Cllr Greig presented the award for Community Group of the Year to the Rotarian President Sue Hampton of the Canvey Island Rotary Club who have organised a number of community events raising approximately £10,000 which was distributed to worthwhile causes on Canvey Island.

Cllr Greig present the award for Citizen of the Year to Mr Anthony Smith in recognition of his charity work.

The award for Young Person of the Year was communicated as being awarded to Luke Halsey for his volunteering efforts. Cllr P. Greig explained that Luke was unfortunately unable to be present to accept the award this evening adding that the award would be presented to him at the Council offices on Tuesday.

Cllr Greig congratulated Anthony Smith, Canvey Island Rotary Club and Luke Halsey for their contribution to the community of Canvey Island and pictures were taken of the winners.

To close the meeting Cllr Greig thanked the Alzheimers Society, all the organisations who attended with an information stand and all residents for attending and supporting the Town Council.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Chairman