

TOWN COUNCIL
21 JULY 2022

MINUTES of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 21 JULY 2022 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Lorna Cross – Town Mayor
Councillor Peter Harman – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Linda Hall
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes

ALSO PRESENT:

Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/ RFO
x1 member of the public

ABSENT:

Councillor Maurice Weet.

107/22-23. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The Town Mayor explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

108/22-23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Anita Barham, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sue Butterfill, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor John Hayes, due to medical reasons.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dr Jo Harman, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Jay Shah, due to medical reasons.

RESOLVED:

That the reason for absence, for the above Town Councillors, be formally accepted and approved.

109/22-23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

The member of the public present addressed the meeting and advised that, in their role on the Dartford Tenants and Leaseholders Forum, they were working on lots of things with Dartford Borough Council regarding issues such as inclusion and loneliness and were happy to support the project outlined in item 13 on the agenda.

110/22-23. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2022.

The Town Clerk advised Members that Minute 30/22-23 (Annual General Meeting 19 May 2022) had been amended as it should have read Councillor Lorna Cross (Swanscombe Ward) and not Knockhall Ward.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 19 May 2022 be confirmed as a true record and be signed.

111/22-23. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

112/22-23. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 20 APRIL 2022, 25 MAY 2022, 22 JUNE 2022, AND 13 JULY 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & Environment Committee Meetings held on 20 April 2022, 25 May 2022, 22 June 2022, and 13 July 2022 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

113/22-23. MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 30 June 2022 confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

114/22-23. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 23 June 2022 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

115/22-23. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Community Safety Committee Meeting held on 6 July 2022 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

116/22-23. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 19 May 2022 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

117/22-23. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS IN RESPECT OF COUNCILLOR JAY SHAH.

Further to minutes 48/21-22 and 351/21-22 a request had been submitted for Members to consider extending the previously granted dispensation for possible non-attendance at Town Council meetings, due to continued medical health treatment, that may give rise to disqualification without prior approval.

RESOLVED:

That the request to extend the previously granted dispensation for Councillor Jay Shah from attending meetings of the Town Council due to continued medical health treatment, be approved for a further six-month period, to avoid ceasing being a member of the authority under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

118/22-23. DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC) – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW (CGR).

Members were provided with a letter from DBC which had been received on 21 June 2022 and advised that DBC were proposing for the Electoral Provisions Sub-Committee to consider if a CGR should be conducted before referring its recommendations to General Assembly of Council (GAC) on 25 July 2022. If approved the public consultation of the CGR would commence and DBC would contact the Town Council again for their comments.

To assist, members were provided with the following documents:

- A. Letter from DBC to the Town Council, received by email on 21 June 2022
- B. DBC Electoral Provisions Sub-Committee – 30 June 2022, report, and appendices
- C. Letter from DBC to the Town Council, received 11 July 2022

After discussion members agreed that when the Town Council were consulted, the response should be Alkerden Farm has very strong links to Swanscombe and Greenhithe and the Town Council would like to retain this history therefore the proposed boundary change should follow the road that joins Alkerden Lane leaving the Alkerden Farm area within the Swanscombe boundary.

RESOLVED:

That, when consulted, the Town Council should respond as detailed above.

119/22-23. AGENDA PRODUCTION/DISTRIBUTION - HARD COPY AGENDAS.

Councillor Lesley Howes had requested that consideration be given to the way the Town Council produced and delivers agendas to members.

It was suggested that printed agendas are available, on demand, at or before meetings and that electronic agendas only be delivered to members (email).

The Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) had confirmed that:

Service of summonses and agendas by email has long been accepted practice for many councils. However, service by electronic methods (such as email) did not comply with legislation. Only service by postal delivery or delivery by hand complied with the 1972 Act. The Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015 ("the 2015 Order") changed the legal (if not the practical) position in England. It amended paragraph 10(2) (b) of schedule 12 to the 1972 Act to permit email service of the summons and agenda. Councils must obtain a councillor's consent to email service. A councillor can withdraw consent to service by email at any time.

Providing members with agendas by email (to their Town Council email addresses) would be possible but, this would be something that required each member to opt in. However, the 1972 LGA is still the default so any member not wishing to have agendas delivered only by email, or that withdraws their permission to only have agendas delivered by email, would be supported by this legislation.

RESOLVED:

That Members be contacted individually and asked if they would like to opt in to having their agendas provided to them electronically or whether they wished to continue to receive them as a hardcopy.

120/22-23. PRESERVATION ORDER (TPO) – ACCESS ROAD, SWANSCOMBE CENTRE, CRAYLANDS LANE.

Further to the Town Council's request to DBC to have a TPO put in place for the trees running alongside the current car sales business in Craylands Lane (access road on the left-hand side of The Swanscombe Centre, Craylands Lane) the Development Control Board minutes from the 19 May 2022 had detailed that this has been successfully undertaken and that TPO No.2 2022 – Swanscombe Centre, Craylands Lane, Swanscombe, Kent has been confirmed.

The following information had been provided to Members:

- Extract of Development Control Board, 19 May 2022, report and minutes
- Minute 155/20-21 Town Council 10 December 2020

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

121/22-23. PUBLIC TOILET WORKING GROUP – UPDATE.

Further to minute 472/21-22 (RLA 16 March 2022) Members considered the notes from the 23 June 2022 Working Group meeting:

RESOLVED:

1. That the issue of Public Toilet provision in parks and open spaces be deferred until such time as the new Community Hub at the Pavilion Site is completed.
2. That, in the interim, officers continue to investigate any possible funding options that may facilitate this project being moved forward.

122/22-23. COMMUNITY EVENT WORKING GROUP – UPDATE.

Further to minute 321/21-22 (full Council 9 December 2021) Members considered the notes, and recommendation, provided from the 13 July 2022 Working Group meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the current budget and resources allocated to the Outdoor Cinema Events be shared with future Community Day Events to enable them to be delivered in alternate years. This would result in the first Community Day Event being delivered in the 2023 – 2024 financial year, with the next Outdoor Cinema Events to follow in 2024 – 2025.

123/22-23. HAPPY TO CHAT / CONTACT BENCH – UPDATE

Further to minute 57/21-22 the Northfleet, Ebbsfleet & Swanscombe Lions Club had confirmed that they were no longer progressing with this project, and a Happy to Chat / Contact Bench would not be installed within Swanscombe.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

124/22-23. CHATTY CAFÉ SCHEME.

The Town Council had been contacted by an organisation called "Involve Kent" who worked with supporting residents over 55 with a variety of projects. This included the administration of the Chatty Café Scheme. This project involved placing material on a table, within the Old Fire Station Community Café, that promoted and encouraged discussion. The aim of this was to get the community engaged and help to tackle loneliness and social isolation. Officers had registered with the Scheme and posters etc have been placed in the café.

The Old Fire Station Community Café was now registered as the first, and currently only, Chatty Café in Dartford.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted and the decision of registration of the Old Fire Station Community Café as part of the Chatty Café Scheme be endorsed.

125/22-23. REQUEST TO USE SWANSCOMBE & KNOCKHALL PARK.

A request to use Swanscombe Park on Wednesday 3 August 2022 and Knockhall Park on Wednesday 24 August had been received and members considered the Event Notification Form, a copy of the Policy for Use of Town Council Parks/Open Spaces by external organisations and the organisers responses to enquiries put to them.

RESOLVED:

That the request be approved, as detailed.

126/22-23. REQUEST TO USE BROOMFIELD PARK.

A request to use Broomfield Park on Sunday 28 August and Monday 29 August 2022 had been received and members considered the Event Notification Form, a copy of the Policy for Use of Town Council Parks/open Spaces by external organisations and the organisers responses to enquiries put to them.

RESOLVED:

That the request be approved, as detailed, free of charge and under the condition that the organisers promotional materials for the events include that there are no parking facilities provided for the events.

127/22-23. SURVEY ON DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES 2022 (NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC)).

NALC had published a new survey on dementia-friendly councils which was due to close at 23:45 on Friday 22 July 2022.

Members were provided with the following which had previously been emailed to members on 14 July 2022:

- A. A copy of the survey
- B. A copy of the Dementia Friendly Communities Guide

RESOLVED:

That the responses, as detailed, be submitted.

128/22-23. SUGGESTIONS FOR 2023 - 2024 ESTIMATES.

Members had been asked to provide any suggestions for projects/items to be considered for the 2023 - 2024 Estimates. These were required to be submitted, prior to the agreed 31 August 2022 deadline, to enable them to be included in the Draft Estimate 2023 – 2024 for consideration at the Full Council meeting on 20 October 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

129/22-23. AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members were provided with amendments to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations suggested to unify with the updated NALC model Standing Orders and Finance Regulations and in line with suggestions that had been made by the Town Councils Internal Auditor as part of the 2021 – 2022 audit.

As per Standing Order 41 (b) the suggested amendments were proposed, seconded and agreed to be adjourned, without discussion, until the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with Standing Order 41 (b) the suggested amendments to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be proposed, seconded and stand adjourned without discussion until the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

130/22-23 **STAFF / MEMBER TRAINING – UPDATE**

The Town Clerk advised Members that this agenda item 19 Staff/Member Training – Update should have also included Cllr Lesley Howes Councillors Conference KALC – Lenham Community Centre.

The following training had been scheduled / undertaken: -

Cllr Lesley Howes	Councillors Conference – 30 June 2022	KALC – Lenham Community Centre
Cllr Lesley Howes	Chairmanship Conference – 28 July 2022	KALC – Lenham Community Centre
ATC/ Responsible Financial Officer	"Helping Parishes and Community Groups take climate emergency action" – 16 June 2022	KALC Online Webinar

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

131/22-23. **REPORTS OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES.**

Members were advised that this item provided an opportunity for Members appointed as representatives on outside bodies to provide a report at the meeting.

London Resort Company Holdings Ltd Community Liaison Group (LRCHCLG).
Councillor Peter Harman is the Town Councils representative on the LRCHCLG. There had been no further meetings of the LRCHCLG.

NB. In response to an enquiry, LRCHCLG have confirmed that they are happy to accept a substitute representative, if the current cannot attend, but this must be done in advance, with the substitute members contact details being provided.

North West Kent Volunteer Centre (NWKVC).

Councillor Sue Butterfill is the Town Councils representatives on the NWKVC but having submitted her apologies for the meeting no update was available.

Ingress Park (Greenhithe) Management Limited (IPGM).

IPGM had indicated that, although unable to provide documentation, they would like to submit verbal updates to the Town Council.

Councillors' Peter Harman and Peter Harris are the Council's representatives on IPGM.

Councillor Peter Harris gave an update which included:

A meeting had been held on 18 July where x1 representative from Crest had been present. The follies/bridge had still not been handed over to IPGM and the EDC Had met with Crest on 22 June 2022 to try to agree a way forward with this.

A meeting had taken place with the Director of SE Environment Agency and the MP Gareth Johnson to look at the flood defences of Ingress Park as these were eroding.

Dartford Children's Partnership Conversation (DCPC).

Councillor Peter Harman is the Town Council's representatives on the DCPC. As previously agreed, 25 January 2022 meeting and 23 February 2022 meeting, and the Agenda and minutes for the meeting held on 21 June 2022, were available for inspection.

Borough and Parish Forum (BPF).

The Town Mayor and Town Clerk are the Town Council representatives on the BPF. As previously agreed, the agenda for the 5 July 2022 was available for inspection.

Whitecliffe Community Liaison Group (WCLG).

Councillor Peter Harman is the Town Council's representatives on the WCLG. As previously agreed, the minutes for the meetings held on 26 April 2022 and 28 June 2022 were available for inspection.

DBC Elders Forum (EF).

Councillor Lesley Howes is the Town Council representatives on the EF. As previously agreed, the agenda for the 30 May 2022 was available for inspection.

132/22-23. REPORT FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

Kent County Councillor Mr Peter M Harman gave an update which included:

He had attended a meeting of the Planning Committee on 20 July 2022 where applications from x2 schools had been considered.

Full Council had met on 14 July 2022 and the main topic had been the finances from the previous year.

Although not strictly a KCC issue there had been a lot of communication with Thames Water regarding the number of issues and leaks experienced in the area.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

133/22-23. REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

The Dartford Borough Councillors reported on the following matters:

General Assembly of Council (GAC) were due to meet on 25 July 2022.

The first meeting of the Equality Group had taken place last week and would now be held monthly with the aim of addressing Dartford being more inclusive.

Parking at Gilbert Close had been an issue and letters had gone out to residents.

The Dartford Big Day out had been held on 16 July 2022 in Central Park.

The Scrutiny Committee Chairman had changed and was now Councillor Laura Edie.

The Audit Board had appointed a new outside Independent Member

The Development Control Board had considered the fast-food drive thru application at Asda, Greenhithe and this had been adjourned/deferred whilst more traffic surveys were obtained.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

134/22-23. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.

There were none.

135/22-23. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor advised that she had been attended various engagements around the Town.

136/22-23. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following items of business.

137/22-23. INGRESS PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE (IPCC).

Members considered the confidential report provided and the Town Clerk read out the latest email from Alex Stark, Managing Director Crest Nicholson Eastern.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

138/22-23. PAVILION PROJECT - UPDATE.

Further to minutes 253/21-22 (28 October 2021 Special Town Council) and 230/21-22 (7 October 2021 Town Council), where it was agreed that a standing item be included on future Town Council agendas. Members were provided with a confidential update so that all members were aware of how the project was proceeding.

The latest update contained all the responses received from the online consultation and the x4 public consultation events the Town Council had held.

Members agreed that they were happy with what the Town Council had undertaken to date and where they were on the project timeline.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

139/22-23. PAVILION COMMUNITY SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB – REQUEST.

Members considered the confidential report for this item.

RESOLVED:

That the request be agreed, under the same terms as previously, for a period of 14 months (until August 2023).

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed: _____

(Chairman)

Date:- _____

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor John Hayes – Chairman
Councillor Peter Harris – Vice-Chairman
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Peter Harman
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Maurice Weet

ALSO PRESENT:

Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO
Sandra Kelleher – Administration Assistant

ABSENT:

There were none.

10/22-23. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The Chairman explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

141/22-23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Linda Hall, due to other commitments.

Recommended:

That the reasons for absence, for the Councillor(s) listed, be formally accepted, and approved.

142/22-23. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

143/22-23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

144/22-23. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

145/22-23. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2022.

Recommended:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 were confirmed and signed.

146/22-23. DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC) – JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD (JTB) – NOMINATIONS FOR PARISH REPRESENTATIVE.

DBC had received resignations from both of the current Parish Representatives to the JTB. Democratic Services at DBC had asked for nominations from any Councillors wishing to be considered for the roles.

After discussion it was agreed:

Recommended: That Councillor Lesley Howes be forwarded as the Town Councils nomination.

147/22-23. TRANSPORT FOR SOUTH EAST (TFSE) – STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN CONSULTATION (p).

TFSE was undertaking a consultation on its strategic investment plan for transport in the South East of England.

The deadline for responses is 12 September 2022 with Members having previously been provided with the details on 8 July 2022.

Recommended: That the response, as detailed, be submitted.

TOWN PLANNING:

148/22-23. Please find below the planning applications received and responded to by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, during the Recess period (as per minute 106/22-23).

DA/22/00809/COU	<p>Change of use of 64 Stanhope Road & land & outbuildings along Harmer Road into offices & storage space. Change of use to include outbuildings for storage purposes & including provision of vehicle parking.</p> <p>Ground Floor of Former A E Frost Builders Merchant 64 Stanhope Road Swanscombe Kent DA10 0AS</p>
OBSERVATIONS	<p>The Town Council have considered this application and would like to submit the following observations/ comments:</p> <p>The Town Council object to this planning application due to over development of the site and issues regarding parking. The Town Council would like to see confirmation that the proposed parking is of a sufficient standard and that the required pedestrian visibility splay between the parking and the pavement is achievable as well as the required turning space being adequate.</p> <p>The Planning Authority are asked to consider whether the disbenefits of the proposal outweigh any benefits</p> <p>The Town Council strongly urge that the applicant must consider, and include mitigating provisions regarding the environmental</p>

	<p>impact on, and the needs of, the community for their development and, where possible, include the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points.</p> <p>Please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.</p>
DA/22/00767/FUL	<p>Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of a two-storey side/rear extension with external steps to rear. Alteration of external wall finish from facing brickwork to render.</p> <p>13 Mounts Road, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS	<p>The Town Council are concerned that the proposal could result in increased parking requirements which would give rise to an increase in on street parking in an area where there is very limited capacity.</p> <p>Please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of this application.</p>
DA/22/00836/TPO	<p>Application to fell 3 No. Horse Chestnut trees in the car park adjacent 21 St. Peters Close subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991.</p> <p>21/ 23 and 24 St. Peters Close, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS	<p>The Town Council object to the application as it is felt that felling the healthy trees is not appropriate and would have an adverse effect of the amenity of the area. Alternative maintenance possible reduction/pollarding of the trees should be undertaken.</p> <p>Any permission granted for works on the healthy trees should include a condition that a tree maintenance scheme is put in place by the applicant.</p> <p>The Town Council would seek clarification as to who owns the trees and have they been consulted?</p>
DA/ 22/00906/TDA	<p>Application of determination pursuant to Schedule 2 Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as to whether prior approval is required for the proposed 5G telecoms installation: H3G 15m street pole with additional equipment cabinets.</p> <p>Outside British Legion, London Road, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS	<p>The Town Council have concerns regarding the proposed location of the large mast. It appears that it is proposed to place the large mast on the footpath area adjacent to the public entrance to the Greenhithe British Legion, this seems inappropriate and is</p>

	<p>compounded by the fact that this is a short distance away from the British Legions War Memorial.</p> <p>The Planning Authority Officers are urged to consult with Kent Highway Services over this proposal and the effect it would have on the users of the footpaths, London Road, and the Greenhithe British Legion.</p> <p>The Town Council would ask the applicant to consider siting the mast at alternative locations where there would be far less detrimental impact for the users of the footpaths and of London Road</p>
DA/22/00897/FUL	<p>Installation of 2 no. steel containers to create shop extension, to be internally accessed via existing sales building and erection of 1 no. timber compound.</p> <p>Greenhithe Service Station, London Road, Greenhithe</p>
OBSERVATIONS	No observations
DA/22/00959/S106	<p>Application for modification of a Section 106 agreement in respect of DA/12/01325/OUT, to allow the removal of an area of land from the approved open space obligations should the appeal be allowed for six houses that was refused under ref 21/01308/FUL.</p> <p>Former Empire Paper Mills Sports Ground Rear of 25 Knockhall Road, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS	The Town Council are concerned that the removal/loss of this approved public open space to facilitate additional housing will be detrimental to the local amenity and could cause an unnecessary burden on local infrastructure.
DA/22/00982/OBB	<p>Request for Scoping Opinion pursuant to Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 in respect of a proposed outline planning application with all matters reserved, except for means of access, for a mixed-use redevelopment involving the demolition of existing buildings and structures including site preparation/remediation works, and the development of up to 3,500 residential units (Use Class C3), up to 55,000 sq.m (GEA) of Use Class E including up to 32,000 sq.m (GEA) floorspace for retail, food, and beverages and up to 18,000 sqm (GEA) office floorspace, up to 15,000 sq.m (GEA) floorspace for a new 8,000-seater football stadium with associated business and leisure facilities, up to 20,000 sq.m (GEA) floorspace for a hotel (Use Class C1), up to 4,000 sq.m (GEA) floorspace for community uses (Use Class F), delivery of circa 3.8 hectares of open space and the realignment of the A226 Galley Hill Road / Stonebridge Road. Redevelopment of the site will also include some sui generis uses, with hard/soft landscaping, car and cycle</p>

	<p>parking, highways work, infrastructure provisions with ancillary works.</p> <p>Land surrounding Ebbsfleet United Football Club bounded by Lower Road, Railway Line, and the River Thames Northfleet.</p>
OBSERVATIONS	<p>The Town Council objects to this application as the proposal would constitute an over intensive development of the site and would result in an undesirable intensification of use to the detriment of the amenities of the surrounding area, whilst adding an unnecessary burden on local infrastructure/services.</p> <p>The proposal would also add to the overcrowding of the local roads which already suffer severe issues with traffic movements/congestion and parking, and it would also increase the air and light pollution.</p> <p>The proposal would require construction traffic to use the local roads, and this would increase the noise and traffic pollution with a huge detrimental effect/impact to the local community which already suffers from these issues. We would ask that should the application be granted that conditions be set regarding the hours of construction and movement of vehicles to mitigate the impact.</p> <p>The Town Council strongly urge that the applicant must take into account, and include mitigating provisions regarding the environmental impact on, and the needs of, the community for their development and, where possible, include the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points.</p>
DA/22/00921/FUL	<p>Installation of 9 solar panels on south facing roof.</p> <p>28 Ingress Park Avenue, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS	<p>No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.</p>

Recommended:

That the responses submitted during the recess period be endorsed.

149/22-23. The following planning applications have been received from Dartford Borough Council / Ebbsfleet Development Corporation for Members observations (full details of these applications can be viewed via the Town Council, DBC and the EDC websites).

DA/22/00992/FUL	Installation of solar panels on the east and south faces of the roof. 19 Watermans Way, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties and consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/22/00996/FUL	Demolition of existing rear conservatory and erection of a two-storey side and rear 'wrap around' extension. 2 Park Road, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties and consulted prior to the decision of the application. The Town Council strongly urge that the applicant must take into account, and include mitigating provisions regarding the environmental impact on, and the needs of, the community for their development and, where possible, include the provision of EVCP's.
DA/22/00975/FUL	Replacement of the conservatory roof and facade alterations to the existing extension. 11 The Dell, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties and consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/22/00879/FUL	Erection of outbuilding in rear garden. 34A Valley View, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties and consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/22/01037/FUL	Installation of 4no. EVC bays under an open canopy and associated infrastructure as well as the erection of 2no. jet wash bays and a new access to London Road. Greenhithe Service Station, London Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council object to this application on the grounds of: Overdevelopment of the site, the layout and density of the proposal is not appropriate on such a busy road especially with the footpaths used by adults and children attending Knockhall Primary School; Parking, this area within the proposal is not appropriate for additional vehicles either parking or idling;

	<p>Highway Safety, the addition of a further x2 access/egress points on this stretch of busy road will increase the danger to road, footpath and crossing users;</p> <p>Traffic, the area within the proposal already suffers from a huge amount of traffic use and is not able to safely absorb an increase that would result from the proposal;</p> <p>Noise. The proposal would increase the noise in an area that already suffers from constant traffic movements and heavy road usage;</p> <p>Layout and density, the proposal is not appropriate for the site;</p> <p>Nature conservation, the proposal would result in a loss of valuable amenity including trees.</p>
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150/22-23. **The following Granted Decision Notices have been submitted by Dartford Borough Council / Ebbsfleet Development Corporation for Members information.**

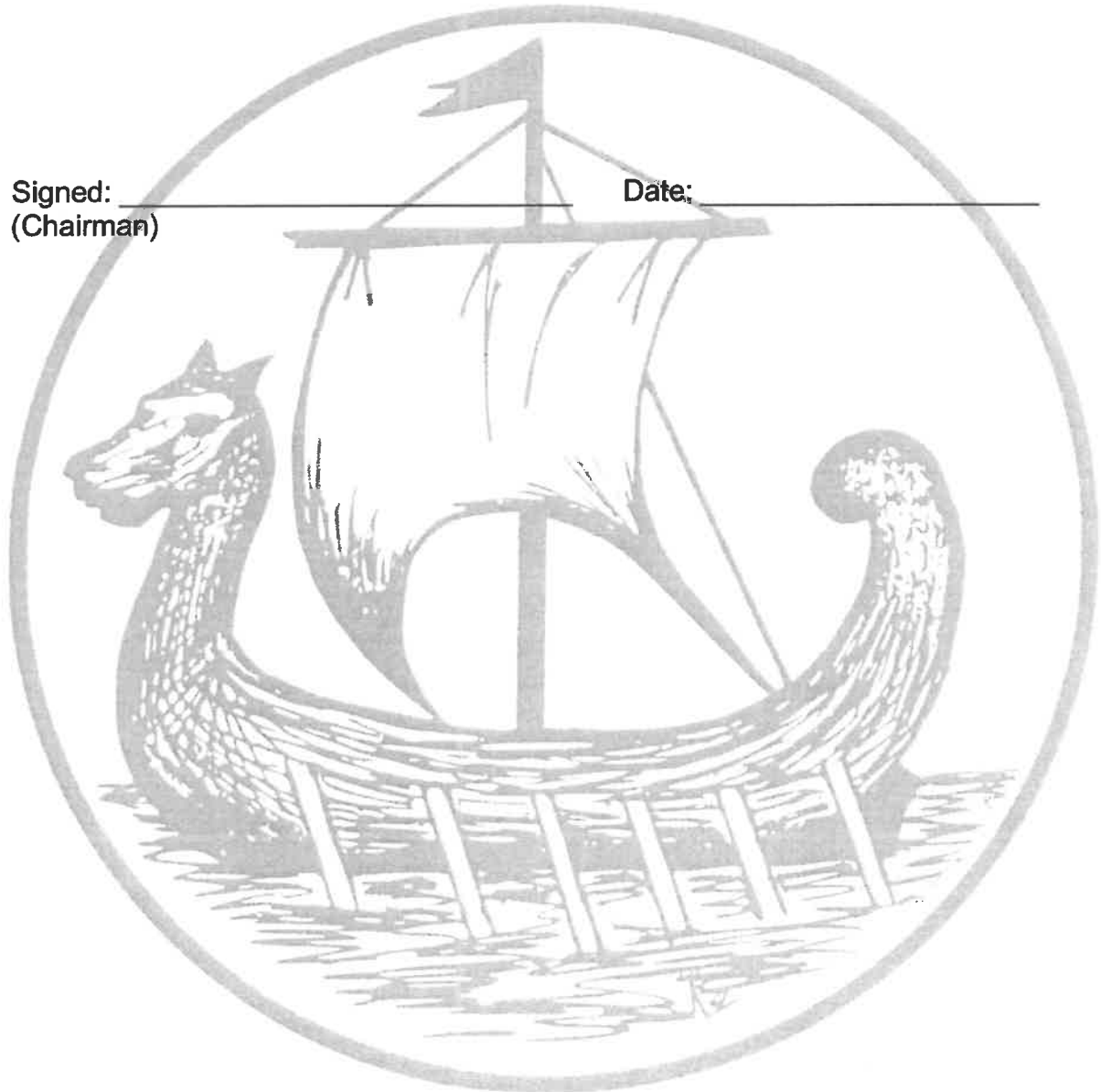
DA/22/00634/TPO	<p>Application to give 2m clearance from house of 2 No. Sycamore trees subject to Tree Preservation Order no.11 1990.</p> <p>19 Watermans Way, Greenhithe, Kent.</p>
DA/22/00602/FUL	<p>Demolition of existing rear conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension.</p> <p>10 Fiddlers Close, Greenhithe.</p>
DA/22/00745/TPO	<p>Application for G1. 19 Hornbeam, 6 Beech, 1 Lime, 1 Whitebeam - To reduce all overhanging tree to the boundary line subject to Tree Preservation Order No.2 2022.</p> <p>Adjacent SWCS Car Sales Craylands Lane, Swanscombe, Kent.</p>
DA/22/00361/LBC	<p>Application for listed building consent for structural repair and like-for-like restoration of Lovers Arch, Monk's Well and The Cave of the Seven Heads.</p> <p>The cave of the Seven Heads, Lovers Arch and Monks Well, Ingress Park, Greenhithe.</p>
DA/22/00363/LBC	<p>Application for listed building consent for repair, investigation and reinstatement of flint, brick and stone follies at Ingress Park.</p> <p>Grange Tunnels and Lime Kiln Brick Tunnel at Ingress Abbey, Ingress Park, Greenhithe.</p>
DA/22/00362/LBC	<p>Application for listed building consent for repair and restoration of listed flint structures around Ingress Abbey.</p> <p>The Grange Gatehouse and Georgian Garden Tunnel, Ingress Park, Greenhithe.</p>

DA/22/00814/TPO	Application to remove leaving stump 1 No. Silver Birch tree subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 11 1990. 9 The Dell, Greenhithe.
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There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 7.30 pm.

Signed: _____
(Chairman)

Date: _____



MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Harris – Vice-Chairman in the Chair
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Maurice Weet

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk

ABSENT: There were none.

The Chairman called on the meeting to observe a minutes silence in respect, and memory, of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

151/22-23. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The Chairman explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

152/22-23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Linda Hall, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Peter Harman, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor John Hayes, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lesley Howes, due to other commitments.

Recommended: That the reasons for absence, for the Councillors listed, be formally accepted, and approved.

153/22-23. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

154/22-23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

155/22-23. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

156/22-23. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2022.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2022 were confirmed and signed.

157/22-23. DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC) – AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN.

DBC were carrying out a consultation on a new Air Quality Action Plan which outlined what actions they would take, with their partners, to improve air quality in the borough between 2022 and 2027.

Members were provided with the information on 25 August 2022 with the consultation closing on 30 September 2022.

The Chairman advised that members were able to respond individually.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

TOWN PLANNING:

158/22-23. The following planning applications have been received from Dartford Borough Council / Ebbsfleet Development Corporation for Members observations (full details of these applications can be viewed via the Town Council, DBC and the EDC websites).

DA/22/01080/FUL	Erection of a single storey side and rear extension with garage conversion. 8 Eagles Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council are concerned that the proposal could result in increased parking requirements which would give rise to an increase in on street parking in an area where there is very limited capacity. Please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of this application.
DA/22/01093/TPO	Application for 3 No. Horse Chestnut Trees (in the car park next to 21 St. Peters Close) reduce all by 50% in height and 70% in spread (current height 20 metres spread 14 metres-estimated dimensions after works 11 metres height and 5 metres spread same as photos Council Trees 1 and 2) subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991 Car Park adjacent 21 St Peters Close, Swanscombe

OBSERVATIONS:	<p>The Town Council object to this application as the proposed reduction is too severe and would detract from the visual amenity of the area.</p> <p>The trees are healthy and are not causing any risk therefore only the removal of any major dead wood and ivy growth from around the main stems/trunks should be undertaken.</p>
DA/22/01092/TPO	<p>Application for 3 No. Horse Chestnut Trees (in the car park next to 21 St. Peters Close) reduce all by 33% (current height 20 metres spread 14 metres-estimated dimensions after works 13 metres height and 9 metres spread), thin crowns by 30/40%, removal of dead or dangerous (see clarification of works) branches, crown lift to give ground clearance of around 5 metres subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991</p> <p>Car Park adjacent 21 St Peters Close, Swanscombe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>The Town Council object to this application as the proposed reduction is too severe and would detract from the visual amenity of the area.</p> <p>The trees are healthy and are not causing any risk therefore only the removal of any major dead wood and ivy growth from around the main stems/trunks should be undertaken.</p>

159/22-23. The following Granted Decision Notices have been submitted by Dartford Borough Council / Ebbsfleet Development Corporation for Members information.

DA/22/00751/ FUL	<p>Erection of a single storey front extension and work to the rear of removing the existing support post and replacing with new support posts.</p> <p>32 Spring Vale, Greenhithe</p>
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160/22-23. **The following Refused Decision Notices have been submitted by Dartford Borough Council / Ebbsfleet Development Corporation for Members information.**

DA/22/00836/TPO	Application to fell 3 No. Horse Chestnut trees in the car park adjacent 21 St. Peters Close subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991. 21/ 23 and 24 St. Peters Close, Swanscombe.
DA/22/00906/TDA	Application of determination pursuant to Schedule 2 Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as to whether prior approval is required for the proposed 5G telecoms installation: H3G 15m street pole with additional equipment cabinets. Outside British Legion, London Road, Greenhithe.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

Signed: _____
(Chairman)

Date: _____

MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 6 OCTOBER 2022 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Harman - Chairman
Councillor Anita Barham
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO

ABSENT: There were none

190/22-23. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting were explained.

191/22-23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Emma Ben Moussa due to medical reasons.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Linda Hall due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor John Hayes due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lesley Howes due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from the Town Clerk, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from the Senior Groundsman Gardener, due to medical reasons.

RESOLVED:

That the reasons for absence, for the above Town Councillors, be formally accepted and approved.

192/22-23. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

193/22-23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

194/22-23. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

195/22-23. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2022

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 June 2022 were approved and signed as a true record.

196/22-23. SENIOR GROUNDSMAN /GARDENER'S REPORT.

Members were provided with a copy of the report which updated members on the work undertaken, by the Parks Department and the work planned which included:

Broomfield Park, Heritage Park, Knockhall Park, Manor Park, Swanscombe Park, Saxon Court and Equipment.

Members were also provided with a tabled report which outlined the need to replace one of the Parks vehicles following the results of a recent service being undertaken.

Recommended:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to source and purchase the most appropriate, best value, low carbon vehicle suitable for the task, within the available budget indicated within the FRA's.

TOWN CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

197/22-23. HANDRAIL AT ST PETER & ST PAULS CHURCH.

Further to minute 390/21-22 where the Town Clerk was delegated authority to arrange the installation of a metal handrail. This had been undertaken by, by Kent Highway Services (KHS), on 30 August 2022.

Recommended: That the information be noted.

198/22-23. "MEMORIAL" IN HERITAGE PARK.

At the previous meeting, minute 84/22-23, Members were informed that someone had placed a "memorial" in the Swanscombe Heritage Park which the Town Council had not received any prior requests or been contacted about.

Members considered how to deal with this issue, and after discussion, it was agreed that Councillors Lorna Cross, Ann Duke and Peter Harman would contact the local churches and Kent Registrars in an attempt to identify the family concerned and request that they apply for a Memorial as per the Town Council Memorial Policy.

Recommended: That the item be deferred to the next meeting of the committee, and the memorial left in situ, until a final attempt had been made to identify the family concerned and request that they apply for a Memorial as per the Town Council Memorial Policy.

199/22-23. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN WORKING GROUP - UPDATE.

The Environmental Action Plan Working Group had met on the 30 June and 7 September 2022 to discuss the results of the Town Council undertaking the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Carbon Footprint Calculator and to create a draft Environmental Action Plan.

Members had previously been supplied with the information and notes from the meetings and the Carbon Footprint Calculator.

A minor amendment was proposed, and agreed, to the draft Environmental Action Plan to add ... 'and any other initiatives that the Town Council ever become aware of, and deem appropriate, to use for publicity purposes', to the second bullet point under Education.

Recommended: That the information be noted and that the minor amendment to the draft Environmental Action Plan, as detailed, be made.

200/22-23. JUNIOR PARK RUN.

Members had previously agreed a request for a weekly (Sunday) Junior Park Run to be held in the Heritage Park.

Due to Covid 19 this had been delayed but, the organisers had now been back in touch and hoped to begin shortly.

Members considered a revised course proposed by the organisers.

Recommended: That the revised course for the Junior Park Run be agreed.

201/22-23. YOUTH HUB OUTREACH PROJECT (KENT COUNTY COUNCIL).

Further to minute 82/22-23 x3 Youth Services provision had been confirmed by Kent County Council and Play Place.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

202/22-23. THE SWANSCOMBE CENTRE.

Members were previously informed (email on 5 April 2022) that the Managing Director (MD) of GCLL was retiring and that their last day of service would be 1 July 2022.

GCLL had since advised that the newly appointed MD was Mr Stephen Wren and the Town Clerk, and Assistant Town Clerk, attended an informal welcoming meeting with Mr Wren and the Head of Operations, Mr Wayne Pedrick on 14 September 2022.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

203/22-23. CORPORATE HEDGE PLANTING – BROOMFIELD PARK.

Members were asked to consider whether a company, in conjunction with North West Kent Countryside Partnership (NWKCP), could plant a further section of trees to continue the Town Council's hedging project around the boundary of Broomfield Park.

The company, MSK Waste Management & Recycling Ltd, would purchase and plant approximately 1500 small trees on Thursday 24 November 2022.

Recommended: That consent be granted for Broomfield Park to be used as a site for a corporate hedge planting event, as detailed, on 24 November 2022.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

MINUTES of the MEETING of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2022 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Lorna Cross – Vice-Chairman in the Chair
Councillor Sue Butterfill
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Peter Harris (substituting for Councillor Lesley Howes)

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk / RFO

ABSENT: There were none.

161/22-23. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The Chairman explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

162/22-23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Emma Ben-Moussa, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Peter Harman, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Lesley Howes, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Maurice Weet, due to other commitments.

Councillor Jay Shah had previously received dispensation from attending meetings for a six-month period commencing 21 July 2022 (minutes 117/22-23).

An apology for absence was received from the Town Clerk, due to other commitments.

Recommended: That the reasons for absence, for the Councillors listed, be formally accepted, and approved.

163/22-23. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor Peter Harris substituted for Councillor Lesley Howes.

164/22-23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

165/22-23. TO RECEIVE ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

166/22-23. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2022.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2022 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

167/22-23. MONTHLY BANK RECONCILIATIONS.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2 a member of the council other than the Town Mayor or a cheque signatory is required to be appointed to verify the bank reconciliations produced by the RFO for all the council's accounts on a regular basis. Councillor Ann Duke was appointed (minute 33/33-23).

Recommended: That the bank reconciliations for August 2022 be noted.

168/22-23. BANK TRANSFERS.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (c) Members were provided with a list of bank transfers undertaken for June, July, and August 2022.

Recommended: That the bank transfers undertaken for June, July and August 2022 be approved.

169/22-23. TO RECEIVE FINANCE STATEMENTS AND PASS ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5.(a) Members were provided with details of all receipts and payments for authorisation for June, July, and August 2022.

Recommended: That the receipts and payments for June, July, and August 2022, as per the annexed list, be approved.

170/22-23. SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.

Members were provided with details of the Flex-Budget Report balanced to 31 August 2022.

Recommended: That the summary of accounts to 31 August 2022 be noted.

TOWN CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S (RFO) REPORT.

17/1/22-23. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL

Members considered the application and, after discussion, it was agreed that, to enable an invitation to be extended for the applicant to attend so that members could find out more about the organisation and the support given locally, the We Are Beams application should be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of this Committee.

Recommended:

That We Are Beams be invited to attend the next meeting of this Committee to enable members to discuss the application with the applicant further.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

Signed: _____

(Chairman)

Date: _____

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 5 OCTOBER 2022 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Harris - Chairman
Councillor Peter Harman - Vice-Chairman
Councillor Anita Barham
Councillor Lorna Cross

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer
Billy Unsworth – Kent County Council Community Warden

ABSENT: There were none.

180/22-23. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The Chairman explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

181/22-23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Emma Ben-Moussa, due to medical reasons.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sue Butterfill, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lesley Howes, due to other commitments

Councillor Jay Shah had previously received dispensation from attending meetings for a six-month period commencing 21 July 2022 (minute 117/22-23).

Recommended: That the reasons for absence, for the Councillors listed, be formally accepted, and approved.

182/22-23. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

183/22-23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

184/22-23. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The ATC/RFO reminded those present that no case specific detail, names, and addresses, should be discussed during the public section of the meeting.

185/22-23. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2022

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 July 2022 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

186/22-23. POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSO) REPORT.

PCSO Mitchell was absent but had provided the monthly update reports for June, July and August on recent activity and investigations undertaken in the areas of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Recommended: That the reports be noted.

187/22-23. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC) COMMUNITY WARDENS REPORT.

KCC Warden Unsworth gave an update on matters he had been involved with in the area, including furniture donations, lost wallets, dog attacks, a recent community day and his involvement with an unexpected sudden death.

Recommended: That the report be noted and KCC Warden Unsworth be thanked for his attendance.

188/22-23. COMMUNITY SAFETY LIAISON.

Kent Fire Service – Councillor Peter Harman updated that the fire service had been incredibly busy over the summer months and that he was due to attend a Kent Fire Liaison Meeting next week.

Neighbourhood Watch – The Chairman updated that a recent meeting of the Ingress Park Neighbourhood Watch had taken place, and that the group had reported problems with using the online reporting service from Kent Police.

Community Speed Watch – The Chairman updated that a session had been undertaken in the last month where x3 people had been caught exceeding the speed limit.

Recommended: That those who provided reports be thanked and the information be noted.

189/22-23. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF CRIME STATISTICS FOR SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE.

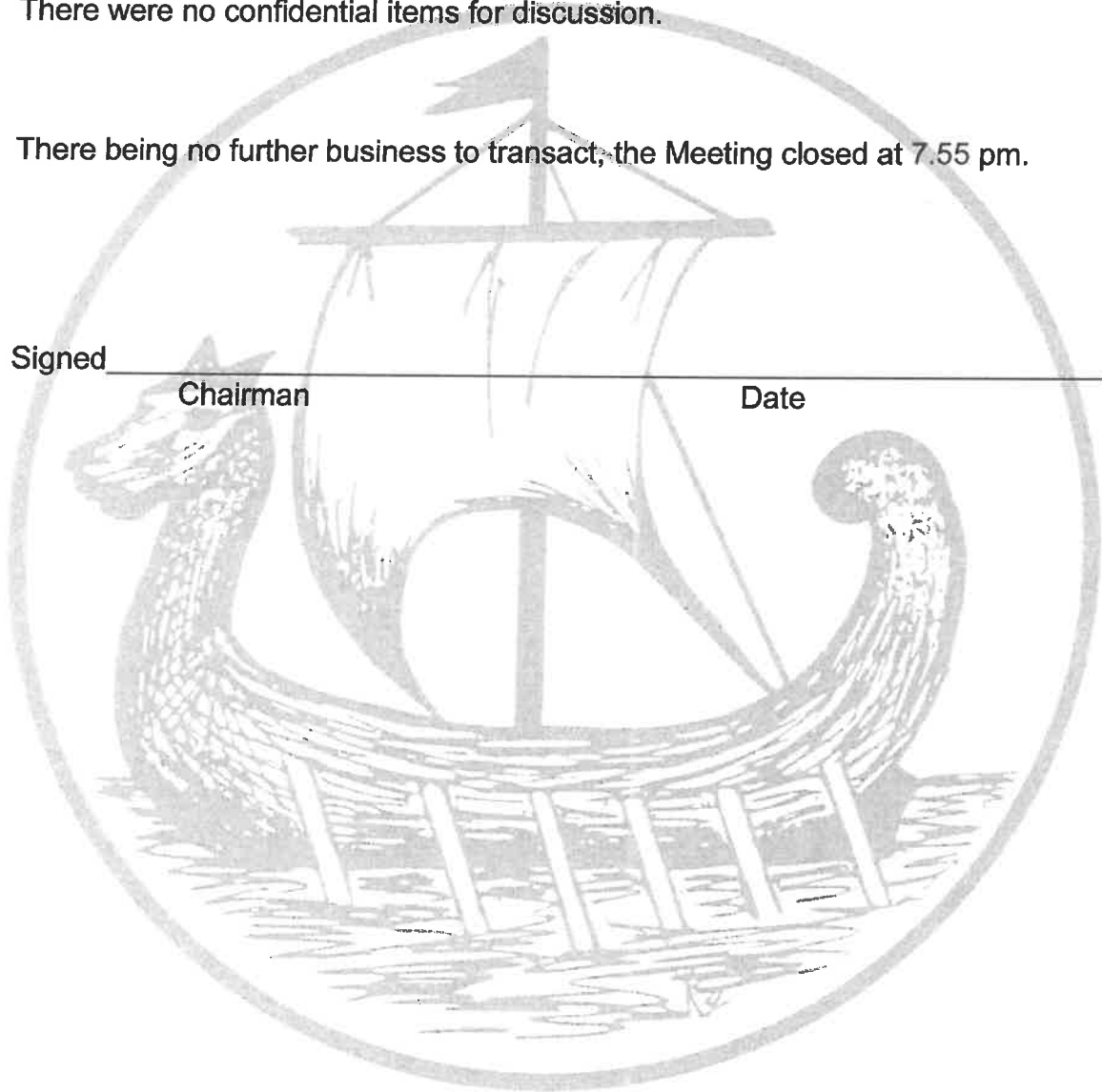
Members were provided and discussed the up-to-date detailed analysis of crime figures for Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Recommended: That the information be noted.

There were no confidential items for discussion.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed _____
Chairman Date



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MINUTES of the MEETING of the ALLOTMENTS & CEMETERIES SUB-COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2022 at 11.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Maurice Weet (Chairman)
Councillor Dr Jo Harman (substituting for Councillor Lesley Howes)
Councillor Peter Harman

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/ RFO

ABSENT: There were none.

172/22-23. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The Chairman explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

173/22-23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Emma Ben Moussa, due to medical reasons.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Linda Hall, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor John Hayes, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lesley Howes, due to other commitments.

Recommended: That the reasons for absence, for the Councillors listed, be formally accepted, and approved.

174/22-23. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor Dr Jo Harman substituted for Councillor Lesley Howes.

175/22-23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

176/22-23. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

177/22-23. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH 2018.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 March 2018 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

178/22-23. FELLING OF TREES NOT ON ALLOTMENT PLOTS.

The Town Council had received a report that trees had been felled on New Burial Ground Allotments on 25 May 2022. No request had been received by the Town Council in relation to these tree works. Correspondence was sent to the Association requesting an explanation, the site was attended, and photos taken.

Members discussed the actions taken and it was unanimously agreed:

Recommended: That correspondence be sent to the Allotment Association stating:

1. That the Town Council were disappointed that the tree works had been undertaken without a request having been submitted, and subsequently agreed, by the Town Council in advance.
2. That any future requests be mindful of avoiding the nesting season for birds (March to September).
3. That any future request should be accompanied by a report, including pictures, indicating the need for the works along with the health of the trees involved.
4. That the Association should consider offering to plant a tree in lieu of all future requests to fell trees.

179/22-23. ANNUAL ALLOTMENT SITE INSPECTION.

Members considered the report from the visit to each allotment site by the ATC/RFO, Councillor Ben Moussa (Vice-Chairman of this Committee) and Linda Hall (Chairman of the Allotment Association) undertaken on 16 August 2022.

Recommended: That the contents of the report be noted and that a letter be sent to the Allotment Association thanking them for their continued work within the community in effectively managing the x 4 sites.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 11.20 am.

Signed _____
Chairman Date

T/C 20/10/22

SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

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STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

PREFACE

Some of the Standing Orders are compulsory as they are laid down in Acts of Parliament. These are printed in **bold type**. These Standing Orders cannot be altered.

TOWN MAYOR

The Chairman of a Town Council is entitled to use the title "Town Mayor". The title confers no additional powers on the chairman, and in particular, has no implications for his conduct in meetings.

1. **MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.**

- a) Meetings of the Town Council shall be held at the Council's offices in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct. **Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b) Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council. All Council properties are No Smoking Areas.
- c) Mobile phones must be switched to silent, during all Meetings of the Council, committees and sub-committees.
- d) **Three clear days before a Meeting of the Town Council (not including the day of issue, the meeting day, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas Break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning):**
 - i) **Notice of the time and place of the Meeting shall be published at the Council's offices, which is signed by the Town Clerk, specifying the business proposed to be transacted thereat (usually in the form of an Agenda);**
 - ii) **Where a meeting is called by councillors', the Notice will be signed by those members, specifying the business proposed to be transacted thereat;**
 - iii) **The summons to attend a Meeting specifying the business to be transacted at the meeting and certified by the proper officer of the Council, shall be sent to every member of the council by an appropriate method.**
- e) Except in the case of business required by or under the Local Government Act 1972 or any other Act to be transacted at the Annual Meeting and other business brought before that Meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders, no business shall be transacted at the Meeting other than that specified in the summons relating thereto.
- f) The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.

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These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

- g) All members are required to submit apologies, and the reason, for absence prior to the beginning of the meeting they refer to.

2. THE STATUTORY ANNUAL MEETING.

- a) In an election year the Annual General Council Meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office and;
- b) In a year, which is not an election year, the Annual General Council Meeting shall be held on any such day in May as the Council may direct (decided at the previous Annual Meeting).
- c) In an election year, if a Member(s) are unable to return their Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the Annual General Council Meeting then the Council will need to accept that it/they can be submitted at a later date.
- d) In addition to the Statutory Annual Town Council Meeting, at least three other statutory meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct.

3. CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.

- a) The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- b) Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorized or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may, in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice – Chairman (if any).

4. PROPER OFFICER.

Where a statute, regulation or order confers function or duties on the Proper Officer of the Council in the following cases, he shall be the clerk or nominated officer: -

- a) To receive declarations of acceptance of office;
- b) To receive and record notices disclosing interests at meetings;
- c) To receive and retain plans and documents;
- d) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council;
- e) **To receive copies of by-laws made by another local authority;**
- f) To certify copies of by-laws made by the Council;
- g) **To sign and issue the summons to attend meetings of the Council;**
- h) To keep proper records for all Council meetings;
- i) **To facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors.**

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5. QUORUM OF THE COUNCIL.

Three Members or one-third of the total membership, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council.

- a) If a quorum is not present when the Council meets, a maximum period of 10 minutes, from the advertised start time of the meeting, can be allowed in an effort to obtain a quorum.
- b) **If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the required quorum no business shall be transacted, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may fix.**
- c) The quorum of a sub-committee shall be one half of its members.

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6. VOTING.

- a) **All questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**
- b) **Voting on any question shall be by a show of hands, or, if at least two Members so request, by signed ballot. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.**
- c) **Subject to (i) and (ii) below the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in any case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**
 - (i) **If the person presiding at the Annual Meeting would have ceased to be a Member of the Council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the Membership of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman until the end of their term of office he may not give an original vote in an election for Chairman.**
 - (ii) **The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.**

7. ORDER OF BUSINESS.

- a) **At each Annual Town Council Meeting the first business shall be:**
 - i) **To elect a Town Mayor of the Council;**
 - ii) **To receive the Town Mayor's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received;**
 - iii) **In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations;**
 - iv) **To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received;**

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- v) To elect a Deputy Town Mayor of the Council;
- vi) To receive the Deputy Town Mayor's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received;
- (vii) To appoint memberships of committees and sub-committees;
- viii) To appoint representatives to outside bodies;
- ix) To inspect any deeds and trust investments in the custody of the Council as required;

and shall thereafter follow the order set out in para (c) below;

- b) **At every meeting other than the Annual Town Council Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and undertaking to observe the Council's code of conduct as are required by law to be made or, if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.**
- c) After the first business has been completed, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:
 - i) To read and consider the Minutes; provided that if a copy has been circulated to each Member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read;
 - ii) After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record;
 - iii) **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done;**
 - iv) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - v) If necessary, to authorise the signing of orders for payment.
 - vi) To receive and consider reports and minutes of committees.
 - vii) To receive and consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
 - viii) To consider correspondence received by Council.
 - ix) To authorise the sealing of documents.
 - x) To answer questions from councillors.

8. URGENT BUSINESS.

A motion to vary the order of business on the grounds of urgency:

- a) May be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
- b) Shall be put to the vote without discussion.

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9. RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE.

- a) Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the Agenda by the Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least five clear working days before the next meeting of the Council.
- b) The Clerk shall date every notice of resolution or recommendation when received by him, shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and shall enter it in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every member of the Council.
- c) The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the Member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move at some later meeting or that he withdraws it.
- d) If a resolution or recommendation specified in the summons is not moved either by the member who gave notice of it or by any other Member, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
- e) If the subject matter of a resolution comes within the province of a committee of the Council, it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee or to such other committee as the Council may determine for report; provided that the Chairman, if he considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.
- f) Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or duties, which affects its area.

10. RESOLUTIONS MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE.

Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:

- a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
- b) To approve the absences of councillors.
- c) To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- d) To correct an inaccuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- e) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- f) To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
- e) To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
- f) To close or adjourn debate.
- g) To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
- h) To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors thereto.
- i) To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
- j) To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- k) To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.

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- l) To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee..
- m) To extend the time limit for speeches.
- n) To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
- o) To silence or eject from the meeting a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- p) To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- q) **To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.**
- r) To adjourn the meeting.
- s) To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
- t) To answer questions from councillors.

11. QUESTIONS.

- a) A member may ask the Chairman of the Council or the Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council, provided five clear working days' notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed.
- b) No questions not connected with the business under discussion shall be asked except during the part of the meeting set aside for questions.
- c) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.
- d) A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

12. RULES OF DEBATE.

- a) No discussion of the Minutes shall take place except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.
- b) A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and, unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to him before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
- c) A member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he then declares his intention to do so, reserve his speech until a later period of the debate.
- d) A member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
- e) The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have the right of reply, not exceeding five minutes and no other speech shall exceed five minutes except by consent of the Council.
- f) An amendment to a motion shall be either:
 - i) To leave out words.

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- ii) To leave out words and add other words
- iii) To add words.

- g) A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration..

- h) If an amendment be carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

- i) A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.

- j) The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding five minutes.

- k) A Member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council, speak more than once on any resolution except to move an amendment or further amendment, or on an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move a closure.

- l) A Member may speak on a point of order or a personal explanation. A Member speaking for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him, which may have been misunderstood.

- m) A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal unless such permission has been refused.

- n) When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:
 - i) To amend the resolution.
 - ii) To proceed to the next business.
 - iii) To adjourn the debate.
 - iv) That the question be now put.
 - v) That a Member named be not further heard.
 - vi) That a Member named leave the meeting.
 - vii) That the resolution be referred to a committee.
 - viii) To exclude the public and press.
 - ix) To adjourn the meeting.
 - ex) ~~A Member shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the Chairman~~ To suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

- o) A Member shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the Chairman.

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- p) The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- q) Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide whom to call upon.
- r) Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other Members shall be silent.

13. CLOSURE.

At the end of any speech a Member may, without comment, move "*that the question be now put*", "*that the debate be now adjourned*" or "*that the Council do now adjourn*". If such motion is seconded, the Chairman shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion "*that the question be now put*", only if he is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion "*that the question be now put*" is carried, he shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

14. CODE OF CONDUCT.

- a) All Members must observe the Code of Conduct, adopted by the Council.
- b) No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.
- c) If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a member has broken the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Order, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any member may move that the member named be no longer heard or that the member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forth with and without discussion. If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the code of conduct, that member is under a duty to report the breach to the Town Clerk.
- d) If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph c is disobeyed, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.
- e) Breaches of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall be dealt with by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Dartford Borough Council.

15. RIGHT OF REPLY.

The mover of a resolution shall have a right to reply immediately before the resolution is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. A member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce a new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.

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These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022.

16. RESCISSION / ALTERATION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTION.

- a) A Member may, with the consent of his seconder, move amendments to his own resolution.
- b) A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least three members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- c) When a special resolution or any other resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Order has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

17. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS.

Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

18. DISCUSSIONS AND RESOLUTIONS AFFECTING EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNCIL.

If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council or committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded. (See Standing Order No. 34(a)).

19. RESOLUTIONS ON EXPENDITURE.

Any resolution (which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee or of another Committee after recommendation by the Finance Committee) and which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Chairman, substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of the Council or reduce the revenue at the disposal of any committee, or which would involve capital expenditure, shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, and any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon (and the Finance & General Purposes Committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matters).

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20. **EXPENDITURE.**

Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council in accordance with Financial Regulations.

21. **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.**

- a) A document shall not be sealed on behalf of the Council unless its sealing has been authorised by a resolution.
- b) **The Council's Common Seal shall alone be used for sealing documents. It shall be applied and signed by the Town Mayor if present, or the Deputy Town Mayor, and Proper Officer in the presence of another member.**

22. **SPECIAL MEETING.**

- a) **The Chairman of the Council may convene a Special meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b) **If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call a Special meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene a Special meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**
- c) The Chairman of a committee may summon an additional meeting of that committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than a quarter of the members of the committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

23. **COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES.**

The Council may at its Annual Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:

- a) Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
- b) **May appoint persons other than Members of the Council to any committee except for the Finance & General Purposes Committee; and**
- c) May subject to the provisions of Standing Order 23 above at any time dissolve or alter the membership of committee.
- d) The Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, ex-officio, shall be voting members of every Committee and therefore unable to substitute for members of Committees.

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These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

- e) Every Committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and may elect a Vice-Chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Council, and shall settle its programme of meetings for the year.
- f) Members of the Council shall be allowed to attend any Meeting of the Town Council's Committee's or sub-committee's as Substitute for an absent Member of such committee or sub-committee (substitutes have to be nominated by the member that cannot attend) except for the Personnel Committee where no substitutes be allowed.
- g) An ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member shall not be permitted to participate in debate or vote on business at that meeting and may only speak during any public participation session during the meeting.

24. SUB-COMMITTEES.

- a) **Every committee may appoint sub-committees for purposes to be specified by the committee.**
- b) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee shall be Members of every sub-committee appointed by it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.
- c) Except where ordered by the Council in the case of a committee, or by the Council or by the appropriate committee in the case of a sub-committee, the quorum of a committee shall be one-third of its Members and a sub-committee shall be one-half of its Members.
- d) The Standing Orders on rules of debate (except those parts relating to standing and to speaking more than once) and the Standing Order on interests of Members in contracts and other matters shall apply to committee and sub-committee meetings.

25. ADVISORY COMMITTEES – WORKING GROUPS.

- a) The Council may create advisory committees, whose name, and number of members (5) and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.
- b) The Clerk shall inform the members of each advisory committee of the terms of reference of the committee.
- c) An advisory committee may make recommendations and give notice thereof to the Council.
- d) **An advisory committee may consist wholly of persons who are not members of the Council.**
- e) That quorum for a Working Group to meet is 3 members.
- f) That substitutes be permitted and have to be nominated by the Working Group member that cannot attend.

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These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

- g) That at the creation of any Working Group it should be specified whether or not the Working Group is expected to act as a delegation to discuss matters and gather information on behalf of the Town Council.

26. VOTING IN COMMITTEES.

- a) Members of committees and sub-committees entitled to vote, shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.
- b) **Chairmen of committees and sub-committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.**

7. PRESENCE OF NON-MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

A member who has proposed a resolution, which has been referred to any committee of which he is not a member, may explain his resolution to the committee but shall not vote.

28. ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

- a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this Standing Order or by statute, all accounts for payment and claims upon the Council shall be laid before the Council.
- b) Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Council, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the appropriate officer. Such payment shall be authorised by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, or by the Proper Officer for payment with the approval of the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor or Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- c) All payments ratified under sub-paragraph (b) of this Standing Order shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments before the Council.
- d) The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each member as soon as practicable after 31 March in each year a statement of the receipts and payments of the Council for the completed financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each member before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit) shall be presented to Council for formal approval before the end of the following month of May.

29. ESTIMATES / PRECEPTS

- a) **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of the month of January.**
- b) Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Clerk a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than 30 November.

STANDING ORDERS

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30. INTERESTS (ENGLAND).

- a) **If a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Prejudicial Interest as defined by the Code of Conduct and Standing Order 43 adopted by the Council on 6 September 2012, then they shall declare such interest as per Standing Order 43. All such declarations shall be recorded in the minutes.**
- b) **The Clerk may be required to compile and hold a register of member's interests in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.**
- c) If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, he and the person to whom he is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails to do so shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where a relationship to a member is disclosed, Standing Orders 30 (a), (b) (c) and (d) shall apply as appropriate.
- d) The Clerk shall make known the purpose of Standing Order 30 (c) to every candidate.

31. CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS.

- a) Canvassing of members of the Council or of any committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Clerk shall make known the purport of this subparagraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- b) A member of the Council or of any committee shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- c) Standing Order Nos. 30 (b) and 31 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

32. INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS.

- a) A member may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a committee, and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.
- b) **All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.**

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33. UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES.

No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:-

- a) Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- b) Issue orders, instructions or directions.

Unless authorised to do so by the Council or the relevant committee or subcommittee.

34. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS.

- a) **The press and public shall be admitted to all Meetings of the Council and its committees and sub-committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the press and public which must be done by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- b) The Council shall state the special reason for exclusion.
- c) At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may, at his discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting. Members of the public are allowed to (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted. Public speaking shall be limited to three minutes per person / organisation, this may be extended (if appropriate) at the Chairman's discretion.
- d) A question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate. The Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a councillor for an oral response or to an officer for a written response.
- e) **The Clerk shall afford to the press and public reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present.**
- f) If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that they be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.
- g) Any person who records, films, photographs, broadcasts or uses other communication methods in such a way as to be disruptive to the conduct of the meeting or the decision making process, will be asked by the Mayor or the Chairman to desist from such behaviour with immediate effect. Standing Order 34 (f) will be applied where the person fails to comply with the Mayor or Chairman's instruction.
- h) A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**

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35. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS.

- a) No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall disclose to any person not a Member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee or the sub-committee as the case may be.
- b) Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Standing Order may be removed from any committee or sub-committee of the Council by the Council, subject to any decision made as per Standing Order 14 (e).

36. LIAISON WITH COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

- a) A list of the scheduled meetings, as agreed at the AGM shall be sent, as way of an invitation to attend, to the County, Borough, Unitary or District Councillor for the appropriate division or ward.
- b) At the discretion of the Clerk a copy of each letter ordered to be sent to the County or District Council shall be transmitted to the County Councillor for the division or to the District Councillor for the ward as the case may require.

37. PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, keep a records of the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council:

- i) the date on which it was received
- ii) the name of the applicant
- iii) the place to which it relates;

38. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

- a) The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer. Such Regulations shall include detailed arrangements for the following:
 - i) the accounting records and systems of internal control;
 - ii) the assessment and management of risks faced by the Council;
 - iii) the work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv) the financial reporting requirements of members and local electors and
 - v) procurement policies (subject to (b) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value less than £25,000.
- b) **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other**

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).

- c) Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
- i) a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper;
 - ii) a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - iii) a copy of the specification of works shall be added to the 'Contracts Finder' website.
 - iv) tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Responsible Financial Officer by a stated date and time;
 - v) tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Clerk and/or Responsible Financial Officer and at least one Member of Council;
 - vi) tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or committee.
- d) The Council, nor any committee, is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote. Any tender notice shall contain a reference to the Standing Orders 30 (e), 31 regarding improper activity.
- e) The Financial Regulations of the Council shall be subject to an annual review
- f) **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.**
- g) **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

39. CODE OF CONDUCT ON COMPLAINTS.

The Council shall deal with complaints of misadministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any Officer or Member in such manner as adopted by the Council.

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

40. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE (GPC)

- a) Before exercising the GPC, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.
- b) The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution above was made and the council is then required to revisit that decision and make a new resolution at every annual meeting of the council after the ordinary election that normally takes place every four years (the confirmation does NOT have to take place every year).

41. VARIATION, REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- a) Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in bold type may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
- b) A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

42. STANDING ORDERS

- a) A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Clerk upon delivery to him of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- b) The Chairman's decision as to the application of Standing Orders at meetings shall be final.
- c) A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

43. INTERESTS OF MEMBERS

- (1) **A member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or Prejudicial Interest in a matter to be considered, or being considered at a meeting must:**
 - a) **disclose the interest; and**
 - b) **explain the nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration or when the interest becomes apparent; unless he/she has been granted a dispensation:**
 - c) **not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, the matter at the meeting; and**
 - d) **withdraw from the meeting room whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered; and**
 - e) **not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.**

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

- (2) **Unless a dispensation has been granted where a Member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest in a matter under discussion, chooses to participate in the discussion and vote, the Town Mayor / Chairman may refuse to count the “vote” of the member concerned, for the “vote” will have been cast illegally and cannot be considered to be a vote at all.**
- (3) **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 43(2) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
- i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council’s area; or**
 - iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**
- (4) The Town Mayor / Chairman may request that a member declare a DPI or Prejudicial Interest in a matter under discussion, and, leave the room, should he/she have reason to believe that the provisions of the Code of Conduct and / or this Standing Order are being breached. The Town Mayor / Chairman may apply the rules in Standing Order 14 relating to “code of conduct”.
- (5) Where a DPI has been agreed by the Town Clerk as being a Sensitive Interest, the member need only to disclose the existence of the interest but not its nature.
- (6) Notification of Interests
- The Town Clerk must be notified of any DPI before the end of 28 days beginning with the day a member becomes a member or voting co-opted member of the Town Council, or before the end of 28 days beginning with the day on which the Code of Conduct takes effect (whichever is the later). In addition, a member must, before the end of 28 days beginning with the day they become aware of any DPI or change to any interest already registered, register details of that new interest or change, by providing written notification to the Town Clerk.
- (7) Requests for Dispensations (Interests)
- A member’s request for a dispensation must be made using the “Dispensation Request Form” and submitted to the Town Clerk not less than 1 clear working day before the meeting it is needed for. All requests for dispensation must include :
- The name of the applicant;
 - The description (e.g. Disclosable pecuniary interest or other) and the nature of the interest;
 - Whether the dispensation is for the member to participate in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

- The date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding 4 years) for which the dispensation is sought and
- An explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

(8) Members are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office as Councillors / Co-opted members. Interests must be recorded and capable of audit.

(9) Members attending meetings to present petitions will declare any interests in a manner specified in this Standing Order.

44. REGISTRATION AND DECLARATION OF A GIFT, BENEFIT OR HOSPITALITY.

Any member receiving a gift, benefit or hospitality in the course of their duties as a Town Councillor, with a value of £100.00 or more should notify the full details as soon as is possible to the Town Clerk, in writing. Each gift, benefit or hospitality with a value of £100.00 or more will be reported to the next full council meeting.

45. RECORDING, FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHING, BROADCASTING AND/OR ORAL COMMENTARY BY THE PRESS AND/OR PUBLIC.

(i) **The press and public may, during the whole or part of a meeting of the Council, Committees, Sub-committees, that is open to the public:**

- (a) **film, photograph, record and broadcast the proceedings;**
- (b) **use other means for enabling persons not present at the meeting, to see or hear proceedings, as it takes place or later;**
- (c) **in writing only, report or provide commentary on the proceedings, so that the written report or written commentary is available, as the meeting takes place or later, to persons not present at the meeting.**

(ii) **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**

(iii) If it is resolved to exclude the press and public in accordance with Standing Order 34 (a) (b), all rights to film, photograph, record and broadcast the meeting will be rescinded and recording equipment used for the purpose of reporting the meeting, removed from the meeting room.

(iv) Where a member of the public is permitted to address a meeting, the Mayor (in the case of a meeting of the Council) or Chairman (in the case of a meeting of a Committee, Sub-committee), will ask the individual to give their express permission to being filmed, recorded, photographed or appear in a broadcast. Where permission is refused, the Mayor or Chairman will instruct that, whilst the person is addressing the meeting, any recording, filming, photographing, broadcast or the use of other communication methods, cease with immediate effect. Failure of any person to comply with this instruction will be deemed to constitute disruptive behaviour in accordance

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

with para.5 of the Policy on Recording, Filming, Photographing and Broadcasting Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council Meetings.

- (v) In the event that the activity is carried out in a manner that disrupts and/or interferes with the proper conduct of the meeting, the Mayor or the Chairman may at any time withdraw consent to film, record, photograph, broadcast or to the use of other communication methods. The Mayor or Chairman's ruling is final.

46. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION & DATA PROTECTION

a) The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.

b) The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).

c) The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

d) Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

e) In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.

f) The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

g) The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.

h) The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.

i) The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.

j) The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.

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SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted by the Town Council at its meeting on 10 Feb 2022..

- j) The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.
- k) The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.
- l) The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.





**SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

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These Financial Regulations were reviewed by the full Council at its Annual General Meeting held on 5 May 2021, minute 18/ 21-22.

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
 - for the timely production of accounts;
 - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
 - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
 - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council.
- 1.9. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;

- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
 - assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations¹.
- 1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
 - a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
 - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
 - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
 - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
 - procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
 - measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (Council Tax Requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the ~~power of well-being~~ General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors,

shall be a matter for the full council only.

1.14. In addition the council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £5,000; and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 234) the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils– a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC) or *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales - A Practitioners' Guide*, available from the websites of One Voice Wales (OVW) and SLCC as appropriate.

2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate Guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Town Mayor or a cheque signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 234) the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING

- 3.1. Each committee (if any) shall review its three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than December, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the council.
- 3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over £5,000;
- a duly delegated committee of the council for items between over £25,000 and £5,000; or
- the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £2,000.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a Minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

- 4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').
- 4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in November for the following financial year by the Personnel Committee and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

- 4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of £1,000 or 15% of the budget.
- 4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The council / committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council or the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting.
- 5.5. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee;

- b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or the Finance and General Purposes Committee; or
 - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £35,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 5.6. For each financial year the Clerk and RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively, Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council, or a duly authorised committee, may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.
- 5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any Policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.
- 5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

- 6.3. All payments shall be effected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committees shall be signed by two member(s) of council, and countersigned by the Town Clerk or ATC/RFO in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and the RFO or the Clerk and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable Direct Debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally Salaries) may be made by Banker's Standing Order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a Banker's Standing Order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two members of council and countersigned by the RFO, the Clerk, or the Administration Assistant are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than

in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

- 6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.
- 6.14. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall, software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The Bank Mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by two members of council and by the RFO, or the Clerk. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.19. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and the RFO and shall be subject to automatic

payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

- 6.21. The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
- a) The RFO shall maintain as petty cash float of £250 for administration, £250 for the parks department and £350 for the Old Fire Station Cafe for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.
 - b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
 - c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to council under 5.2 above.

7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or other relevant committee.
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record ~~(confidential cash book)~~. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
 - b) by the internal auditor;
 - c) by the external auditor; or

- d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission-Act-1998 the Accounts and Audit Regulations, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.
- 7.8. Before employing interim staff the council must consider a full business case.

8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for Borrowing Approval, and subsequent arrangements for the Loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal Borrowing Approval from the Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. The council will arrange with the council's Banks and Investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairman of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk or RFO.
- 8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.5. The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 8.6. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.8. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in

accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. INCOME

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

- 10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3. All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any *de minimis* provisions in Regulation 11 (I) below.
- 10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

11. CONTRACTS

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
 - a. Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
 - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.

- b. Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk shall invite tenders from at least three firms to be taken from the appropriate approved list.
- c. Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations².
- d. When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
- e. Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- f. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- g. If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £50,000 or if all the tenders are identical the council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- h. Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 39.
- i. When it is to enter into a contract of less than £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply) taking into account paragraph c above; where the value is below £5,000 and above £1,000 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.
- j. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- k. Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall

² The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken.

- I. The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive [2014/24/EU](#) [2015](#) (which may change from time to time)³.

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council.
- 12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.]

13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2. Delivery Notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

³ Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a. For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£164,176)
- b. For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,104,394)

14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Reg. 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.
- 14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. INSURANCE

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.
- 15.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

- 15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

16. CHARITIES

- 16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 17.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk and RFO shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.

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Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

T/C 20/10/22

In respect of Swanscombe And Greenhithe Town Council – KE0278

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a limited assurance review is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is not a full statutory audit, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/ .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with Proper Practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor report 2021/22

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The AGAR had to be sent back for amendment.

3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

22/09/2022

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance	
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £		
1. Balances brought forward	614,766	550,357	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.	
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	423,496	420,052 420,053	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	
3. (+) Total other receipts	153,153	340,148 340,147	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.	
4. (-) Staff costs	293,559	294,774	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.	
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).	
6. (-) All other payments	347,498	437,432	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).	
7. (=) Balances carried forward	550,357	578,350	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).	
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	536,576	562,841	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.	
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	5,211,319	5,221,141	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.	
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	N/A	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
			✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

AMENDED
7/9/22
[Signature]

AMENDED
7/9/22
[Signature]

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

[Signature]

Date

14/04/2022

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

19/05/2022

as recorded in minute reference:

27/22-23

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

[Signature]

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AGENDA ITEM

T/C 20/10/22

Definition of Civility and Respect

Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word.

Examples of ways in which you can show respect are by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and One Voice Wales (OVW), believe now is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

By our council signing up to the civility and respect pledge we are demonstrating that our council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.

Signing up is a simple process, which requires councils to register and agree to the following statements:

Statement	Tick to agree
Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.	
Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff	
Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors	
Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.	
Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.	
Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it and when it happens.	
Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme	
Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.	

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LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME – FOUNDATION AWARD ACHIEVEMENT

August 2022

Dear Martin

As chair of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), it is with great pleasure that I confirm that Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council has achieved the Foundation Award.

Receiving the Foundation Award is an excellent achievement showing that your local (parish and town) council achieves good practices in governance, community engagement and council improvement. Furthermore, this award shows that your council has gone above and beyond the legal obligations; you lead your community and continuously seek opportunities to improve and develop even further. Therefore, the council is to be congratulated immensely.

I want to express my sincere thanks to you, Martin Harding for your hard work submitting the Foundation Award application and the additional work throughout the assessment process.

My expression of thanks is also given to Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council. Your service to your community and supporting your Local Council Award Scheme application are recognised and reflected in your achievement.

As your council has shown its commitment to continuous improvement and development, I very much look forward to Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council applying for the Quality Award and celebrating more achievements.

Yours sincerely,



NALC Chair



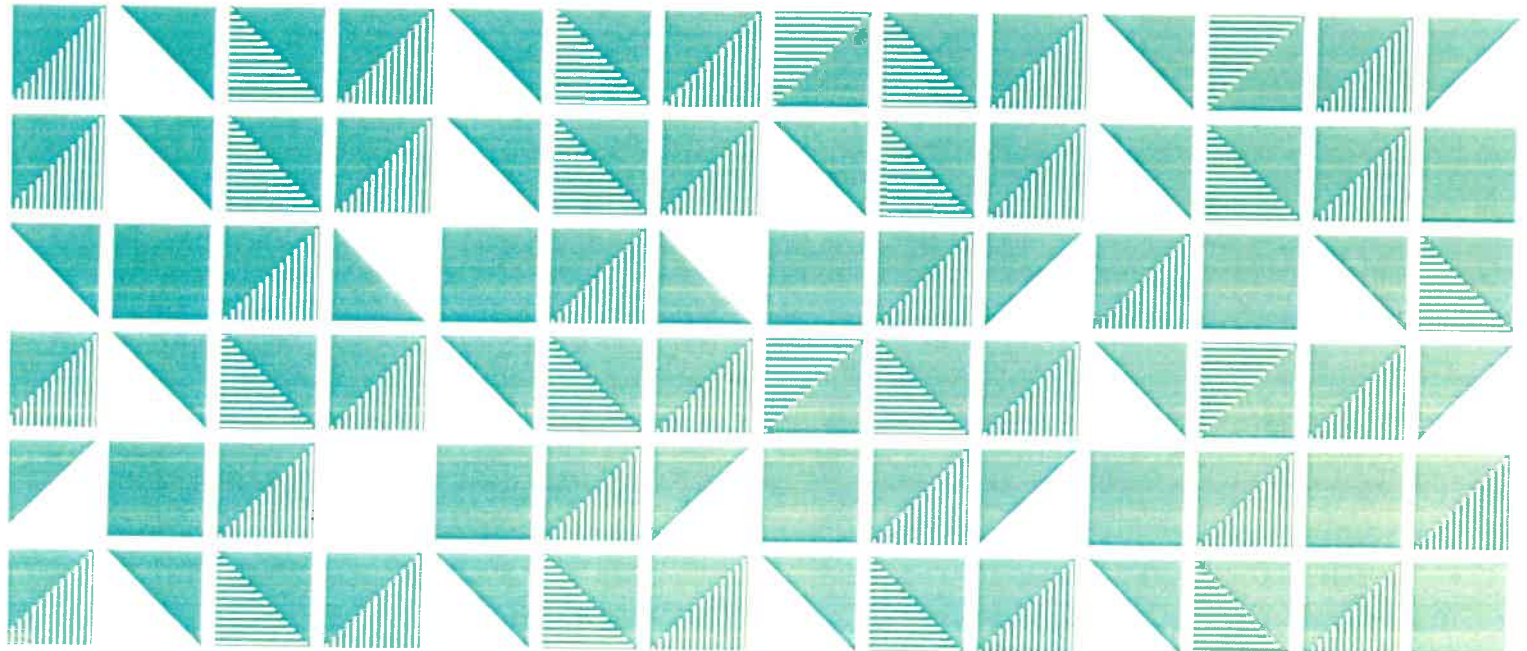
Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Keith Stewart". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

NALC Chair

07/2022
start date
07/2026
valid until

The **Foundation Award** demonstrates that a council meets the minimum requirements for operating lawfully and according to standard practice.



Introduction

Members will be aware that the standard budget setting procedures are as follows:

1. July – Members are asked for suggestions for the forthcoming year
2. October – Costed suggestions are considered by members
3. October – FRA Working Group meet to review Financial Risks
4. November – FGP are asked to endorse the work of the FRA Working Group and recommend to Full Council
5. December – Full Town Council are asked to agree the FRA's and are provided draft Estimates for the following year
6. January – The final Estimates are reviewed, and the precept set

In 2018 the Town Council faced unprecedented financial demands due to the Community Governance Review and, again in 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

On both occasions the standard budget setting procedure, as detailed above, was adapted to mitigate the demands at the time.

The nation currently faces a 'Cost of Living Crisis' with extraordinary increases seen in both the costs of utilities, stock and services.

Whilst support is trickling through from Central Government the Town Council now need to react to this current position.

Current Position

Utilities – The Town Council's bills for both Gas & Electricity have increased by around 80% above forecasts during the 2022 – 2023 financial year. The Government have proposed a cap on business energy between October 2022 and March 2023 that will aid costs but not reduce the levels currently being paid. In addition to the increase in Gas & Electricity bills the Water Rates paid by the Town Council have increased by approximately 6% this year.

Procurement – The increase level of around 6% is also reflective on the cost of stock and supplies across all areas of procurement within the Town Council from stationary, grounds maintenance equipment through to food supplies. In addition, the fuel bills for the Town Council has increased by 10%.

Services – The national effect of increases in the supply chain have caused most services the Town Council uses to increase contract costs. So far these range from 2% through to 5% with an average of 3%.

In monetary terms the following chart indicates the financial impact:

Cost Area:	Current Exp:	% Increase	Additional Exp:
Gas & Electricity	£15,000	80%	£12,000
Water Rates	£7,000	6%	£420
Stock & Consumables	£45,000	6%	£2,700
Services / Contracts	£100,000	3%	£3,000
Total:	£167,000		£18,120

The chart above shows that the Town Council will need to find approximately £18,000 in additional expenditure to mitigate the impact of the financial position for the current financial year.

Options

1. Reducing Costs

When considering ways in which this could be mitigated the first step is to look at each expenditure area and see whether costs can be reduced.

The current energy market and leading analysts advise against changing suppliers at the current time as both the overall costs can rise, and you may lose eligibility for the Governments energy support.

Our stock and consumables are under constant review to ensure best value is obtained and whilst every effort will be taken to investigate the cheapest option for procurement the overall saving would likely be minimal given the supply chain costs affecting every business.

Most of our services are under contract and best value was obtained at the point they were entered. The likely saving gained from re-tendering at the point of renewal would be minimal given the supply chain costs affecting every business.

2. Reducing Provision

Ultimately, we could provide less services to the residents of the Town. This would involve not investing in events or activities in the community, but as most have already occurred in the 2022 – 2023 financial year, this could only be mitigated in the forthcoming 2023 – 2024 Estimates.

3. Increasing Fees & Charges

The Town Council could take the decision to pass this additional expenditure onto those who hire the Councils facilities.

The Town Council currently generates approximately £80,000 per year from the hire of both its community and sporting facilities.

To support increases in a normal financial year the Town Council would look to increase hire charges by approximately 2.5%. This equates to an additional revenue amount of £2,000. Each additional 1% increase would generate £800 in additional revenue.

4. Increasing Council Tax

Subject to any changes to the number of Council Tax paying properties the Town Councils expected revenue from its precept is approximately £94.50 per household, this is shared across 4,500 properties.

In simple terms for each £4,500 in expenditure you need to mitigate for this would require an increase in Council Tax of £1 per household.

5. Utilising Reserves

This is a method that the Town Council adopted both during the Community Governance Review and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Each year, as part of its budgeting, the Town Council contributes approximately £25,000 per year towards long-term projects and expenditure items that are budgeted within the Financial Risk Assessments. Most items are saved for over a progressive period, the exception to this is the money contributed towards the works needed from the 5 yearly tree survey (this contribution is £5,000 per year).

Rather than using the actual reserves the Town Council have previously suspended contributions to the reserves to free up revenue.

This method would push back the date when future expenditure can be made on the items highlighted within the Financial Risk Assessments, such as the replacement of vehicles and investment in building improvements.

Deferring these contributions does constitute a risk as the items budgeted for could fail and insufficient funds would be available to replace or repair them.

Conclusion & Recommendation

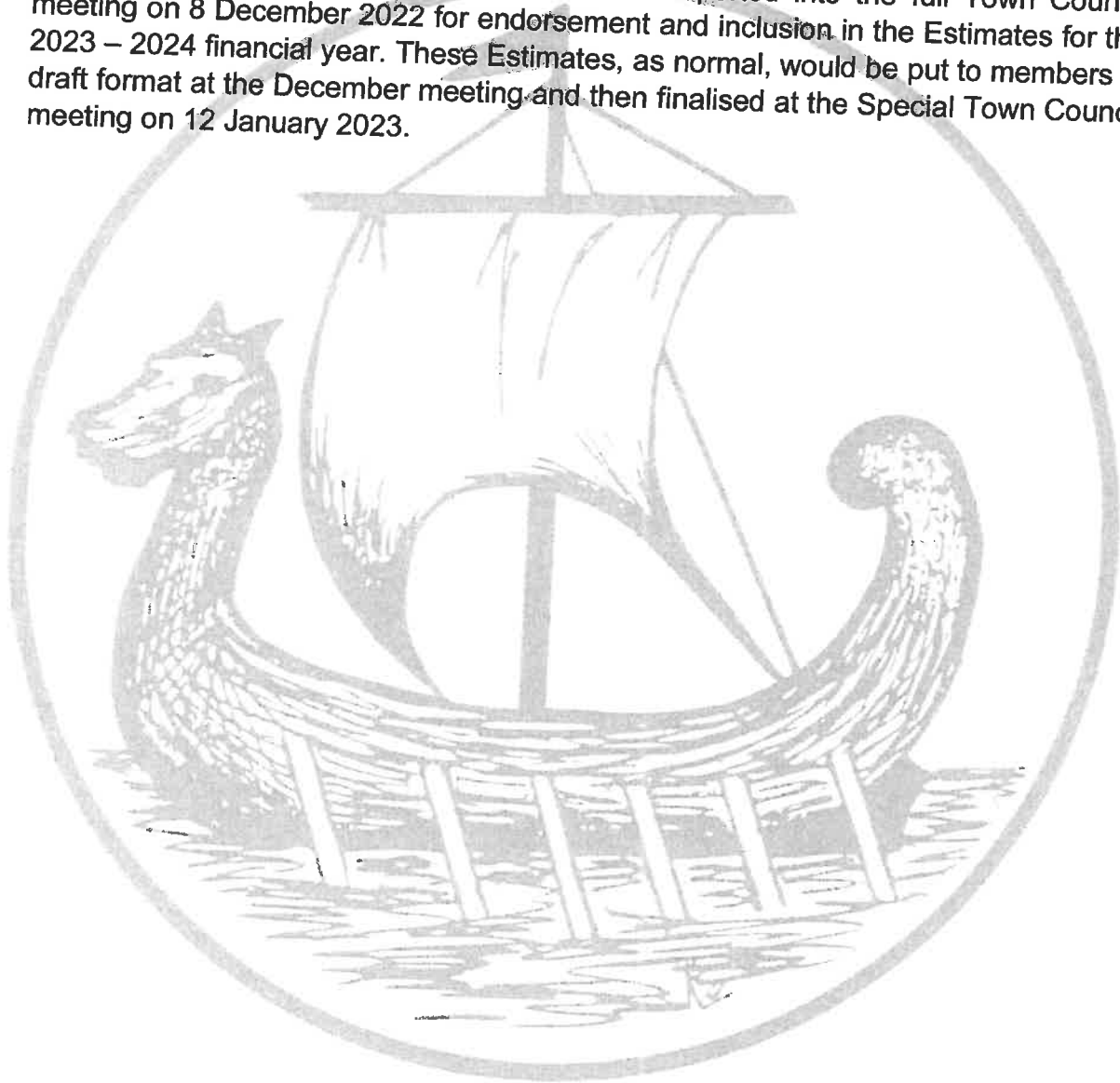
Whilst each option has the possibility to assist with the mitigation of the additional expenditure faced by the Town Council, the following tables sets out the impact of each.

Option:	Impact:
Reducing Costs	This option is something that would be undertaken in relation to stock and consumables but is unlikely to generate sufficient revenue to mitigate the additional expenditure.
Reducing Provision	Most activities provided by the Town Council have already been paid for during the 2022 – 2023 financial year. Cutting provision could only support any ongoing impact into the 2023 – 2024 financial year.
Increasing Fees & Charges	Given the amount of expenditure needed the fees and charges would have to be increased by 23% to mitigate.
Increasing Council Tax	To cover the increased expenditure the Council Tax bill for each household would have to be increased by approximately £4. But, like increasing provision, this would only mitigate the costs for the 2023 – 2024 financial year.
Utilising Reserves	In the same manner as during the Governance Review and COVID-19 Pandemic, members could be minded to suspend contributions to the FRA's, with the exception to funds allocated for necessary tree works, for both the 2022 – 2023 and 2023 – 2024 financial years. This would generate approximately £20,000 in available expenditure to cover the expected impact of the 'Cost of Living Crisis' on the Town Council for the next 18 months. The risk to long term investment in infrastructure can be mitigated by undertaking a review of the FRA's in early 2023 and looking to increase flexibility to utilise funds when needed.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to agree a decision to waive the review of the FRA's during 2022 – 2023 and suspend contributions to the FRA's in both the 2022 – 2023 and 2023 – 2024 financial years, with the exception of money required for works resulting from the next 5 yearly tree survey.

If agreed the amended FRA's would then be reported into the full Town Council meeting on 8 December 2022 for endorsement and inclusion in the Estimates for the 2023 – 2024 financial year. These Estimates, as normal, would be put to members in draft format at the December meeting and then finalised at the Special Town Council meeting on 12 January 2023.



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