

MINUTES of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held via ZOOM on THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2021 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Lesley Howes – Town Mayor
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Linda Hall
Councillor Peter Harman
Councillor John Hayes
Councillor Jay Shah
Councillor Maurice Weet

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO
Revd Charlie Lloyd-Evans
Dartford Borough Councillor David Mote (Greenhithe)
x1 Member of the Public

ABSENT: There were none

177/20-21. 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.

178/20-21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' Anita Barham, due to medical reasons, Sue Butterfill, due to other commitments, Dr Jo Harman due to medical reasons and Peter Harris due to medical reasons.

RESOLVED:

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

179/20-21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillor Ann Duke declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 20, COVID-19 Financial Implications, as she is the Chief Executive Officer of Walk Tall.

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.

180/20-21. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meetings held on 10 December 2020 be confirmed as a true record and be signed outside of this meeting.

181/20-21. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Assistant Town Clerk/ RFO explained to members that, further to minute 155/20-21, Dartford Borough Council had confirmed they intended to apply the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to the trees to the south of the Swanscombe Centre in April of this year.

The Assistant Town Clerk/RFO also apologised that the paperwork for items 8 and 9 had both been labelled 9. It was confirmed that the paperwork for 'Application for Funding from the Town Council' should have been labelled as item 8.

180/20-21. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL MEETING HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Personnel Meeting held on 3 December 2020 be confirmed as a true record and be signed outside of this meeting.

181/20-21. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC) - THE CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION SURVEY FOR KENT AND MEDWAY

Members considered the Climate Change Adaptation Survey for Kent and Medway, sent through by KCC, with the responses provided being used to make a major contribution to the successful development of the Adaptation Programme and Implementation Plan and the future resilience of the region.

The deadline for responses was 15 January 2021 with members having previously been provided with the survey on 14 December 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the response, as detailed, be finalised and submitted.

182/20-21. LOCAL COUNCIL AWARDS SCHEME RENEWAL.

Further to minute 482/17-18, the Town Councils Local Council Award Scheme – Foundation Award is due to expire in December 2021.

Members were asked to agree to work being undertaken to renew the Foundation Award ahead of the expiry date. In addition members were also asked to agree that work begin as soon as possible, after the renewal of the Foundation Award, on attaining the Silver Award level.

RESOLVED:

That the work to re-new the Foundation Award be undertaken and, subsequently, the work to attain the Silver Award be undertaken.

183/20-21. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL.

Members considered the application and, after discussion, it was agreed that the following funding be awarded from the 2020 – 2021 budget:

- CAS - £500.00

RESOLVED:

That the funding, as detailed above, be awarded.

184/20-21. ANNUAL ESTIMATES 2021 – 2022.

Further to minute 159/20-21 (*full Council 10 December 2020*) members considered the previously provided proposed Annual Estimates for the 2021 - 2022 financial year.

After discussion it was proposed, duly seconded, and unanimously agreed:

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Estimates for the 2021 – 2022 financial year be approved and accepted.

185/20-21. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2021 – 2022.

To set the Council Tax Base for Band D properties and the precept figure for 2021 – 2022.

RESOLVED:

Members approved Council Tax Base for Band D as detailed in the Annual Estimates for the 2021 – 2022 financial year along with a precept figure of £420,053 for 2021 - 2022.

186/20-21. LOCAL POLICE – MONTHLY UPDATE.

Kent Police had provided the monthly updates for November.

Further to minute 161/20-21 the local PCSO has also provided a response to the request from members regarding the updates including positive feedback on crime resolution.

In addition PCSO Andrew Lewis had indicated his availability to attend the Town Council meetings scheduled for 11 February 2021, 11 March 2021 and the 8 April 2021

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

187/20-21. MONTHLY BANK RECONCILIATION.

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 Jay Shah was appointed under minute 32/19-20.

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliations up to and including December 2020 be noted.

188/20-21 BANK TRANSFERS.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (c) Members were provided with a list of bank transfers undertaken for December 2020 for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the bank transfers undertaken for December 2020 be approved.

189/20-21 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 December 2020 for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the receipts and payments for December 2020 be approved.

190//20-21 SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.

Members were provided with details of the Flex-Budget Report balanced to 31 December 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the summary of accounts up to 31 December 2021 be noted.

191//20-21. DECISIONS & RESPONSES.

Members were provided with the decisions and planning responses using the previously approved delegated authority, under Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, during the period of lockdown and since the previous meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the decisions and planning responses using the previously approved delegated authority, under Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, during the period of lockdown, and since the previous meeting, be noted and endorsed.

192//20-21. DARTFORD DRAFT LOCAL PLAN – SWANSCOMBE EXTRACT.

Dartford Borough Council (DBC) were proposing a specific policy within the Dartford Local Plan for Swanscombe and had requested the Town Council consider the draft extract with a view to submitting any comments by 15 January 2021.

Members considered the information provided from DBC and requested that the following comments be raised:

- That the Town Council feel that Greenhithe should be recognised within the extract as both share characteristics and a shared identity. Both parts of the Town border Ebbsfleet Development Corporation land and are impacted by development.
- That Members were pleased to see that the need for improvement to Swanscombe Railway Station had been recognised within the document.
- The Town Council would like to see the following changes / points of clarity considered for policy E3, paragraph 3 (a):
 - Clarity on what is meant by upgrades to, or a wholly new railway station, as this does not specify which station should be considered.
 - Within the statement regarding 'Access to better facilities and public transport' it should specify that this would include bus services with coverage throughout both Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

RESOLVED:

That the comments, as detailed, be submitted to Dartford Borough Council

193/20-21. 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.

Whitecliffe Community Liaison Group (WCLG)

Councillor Peter Harman is the Town Councils representative on the WCLG. As previously agreed the minutes from the 24 November 2020 meeting were available for inspection. Members were informed that the meeting previously scheduled for 19 January 2021 had been cancelled and was now due to take place on 23 February 2021.

North West Kent Volunteer Centre (NWKVC).

Councillor Sue Butterfill is the Town Councils representative on the NWKVC, and having previously submitted her apologies, no verbal update was provided.

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.

Although unable to attend Councillor Peter Harris submitted the following update:

The meeting due to be held on Thu 21 Jan has been postponed and further meetings will not be held until it is safe to do so. Nevertheless business is being conducted via email with major projects such as the repairing of the Follies, replacement of some Heritage Trail fencing being taken forward by the First Port staff. There has been no progress with the adoption of the remaining Crest areas.

194/20-21. REPORT FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR (KCC).

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

No items had come up on recent planning meetings affecting the Town, but that all meetings were being conducted via Microsoft Teams.

A further update was provided on the ongoing traffic light issues at the junction of Craylands Lane and London Road.

Councillor Mr P M Harman listed all the projects and organisations that were currently being considered for funding from his Combined Members Grant.

Both the new street lights project, between the Grove Car Park and Swanscombe High Street, and the one way system project at Mumford Drive were progressing.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

195//20-21 **REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.**

The Dartford Borough Councillors reported on the following matters:

The biggest ongoing project at Dartford Borough Council (DBC) at present was the Draft Local Plan.

Work was being undertaken to identify businesses for financial support as a result of the impact of Covid 19.

Waste collection and fly-tipping were busy at present, and although extra vehicles had been put on to support waste collection, delays had occurred at the Pepper Hill Recycling Centre. Meetings were being held to review current levels of recycling and proactive promotion of what residents should be putting in their bins.

The level of communal bins at blocks of flats within the Town was being reviewed to ensure sufficient levels were in place.

DBC were continuing to use its own staff to provide COVID support as opposed to volunteers.

Funding and support had continued for the Winter Shelter and Severe Weather Emergency Protocols (SWEP) had been put in place with the aim to ensure no person was sleeping on the streets within Dartford.

The Town Centre regeneration was moving at pace.

DBC had launched its budget consultation to gauge public opinion on spending choices.

Work was continuing on buildings works at the new Council housing at both Keary Road and Milton Road with DBC Policy being to build Council homes for Dartford people.

During the Covid 19 crisis DBC had financially supported food banks within the Town.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

Having already declared a prejudicial interest Councillor Ann Duke left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or decision of the following item.

196/20-21. COVID 19 – FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.

Members considered the report which detailed the financial implications for the Town Council as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained be noted.

197/20-21. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor John Hayes and seconded by Councillor Emma Ben Moussa;

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.

198/20-21. GRAVESHAM COMMUNITY LEISURE LIMITED (GCLL).

Members considered the confidential report for this item.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

199/20-21. PAVILION COMMUNITY SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB – UPDATE.

Members discussed the contents of the update.

RESOLVED:

That the level of assistance, currently in place, be extended for as long as the club were unable to operate, and generate income, as a result of COVID 19 restrictions.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Signed: _____

(Chairman)

Date:- _____