

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
5 MAY 2021

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE
TOWN COUNCIL held via ZOOM on WEDNESDAY 5 MAY 2021 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor Lesley Howes – Town Mayor
Councillor Lorna Cross – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Linda Hall
Councillor Dr Jo Harman
Councillor Peter Harman
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor John Hayes
Councillor Maurice Weet

ABSENT: Councillor Jay Shah

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO

1/21-22. 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.

2/21-22. MINUTES SILENCE.

The Town Mayor called on the meeting to observe a minutes silence in respect and memory of HRH Prince Philip, former Town Councillor Mr Bryan Read and also for all those that had sadly passed during the pandemic.

3/21-22. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR.

The Town Mayor requested nominations for the position of Town Mayor for the forthcoming year.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Emma Ben Moussa.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Lesley Howes be duly elected as Town Mayor for the ensuing year 2021- 2022.

4/21-22. TOWN MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.

Following her election, Councillor Lesley Howes made her Declaration of Office and it was agreed that the Acceptance of Office form be signed outside of the meeting.

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5/21-22. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR.**

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Emma Ben Moussa.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Lorna Cross be the Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year 2021 - 2022.

6/21-22. **DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.**

Following her election, Councillor Lorna Cross made her Declaration of Office and it was agreed that the Acceptance of Office form be signed outside of the meeting.

7/21-22. **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 lateness was received from Councillor Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

That the reasons for absence, for all the Councillors' listed, be formally accepted and approved.

8/21-22. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON 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.

9/21-22 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 23 e).**

As per Standing Order 41 a) Members agreed to suspend Standing Order 23 e) for the following item to enable the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees and Sub-Committees to be elected at the same time as the appointment of the Committees and Sub-Committees.

RESOLVED:

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That Standing Order 23 e) be suspended to enable the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees and Sub-Committees to be elected at the same time as the appointment of the Committees and Sub-Committee memberships.

10/21-22. **TO APPOINT COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES.**

- a) Allotments & Cemeteries Sub-Committee.
- b) Community Safety Committee.
- c) Executive & Emergency Committee.
- d) Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- e) Heritage Sub-Committee.
- f) Leases & Legal Sub-Committee.
- g) Personnel Committee.
- h) Planning, Major Developments, Transport & Environment Committee.
- i) Regeneration & Quality Sub-Committee.
- j) Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee.

Councillor Peter Harman advised the meeting that there was one amendment, to the Allotment & Cemeteries Sub-Committee with Councillor Lesley Howes replacing Councillor Lorna Cross.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Dr Jo Harman.

RESOLVED:

That the Appointment and Constitution of the Standing and Other Committees be adopted as per the annexed list, and to include the amendment detailed above.

11/21-22. **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND INTERNAL AUDIT.**

Members were provided with the Terms of Reference of the Committees, Sub-Committees, and Internal Audit to be approved.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harris and seconded by Councillor Lorna Cross.

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference of the Committees, Sub-Committees and Internal Audit be approved, as per the annexed list.

12/21-22. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 23 e).**

As per Standing Order 41 a) Members agreed to suspend Standing Order 23 e) for the following item to enable the date of the Committees to be set at the same time as the dates of full Council meetings.

RESOLVED:

That Standing Order 23 e) be suspended to enable the date of the Committees to be set at the same time as the dates of full Council meetings.

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13/21-22. **DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS.**

- a) The Council
- b) Standing Committees

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harris and seconded by Councillor Emma Ben Moussa.

RESOLVED:

That the dates and times of the above Meetings be approved as per the annexed list.

14/21-22. **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES.**

- a) Town Mayor or agreed substitute to serve on the Bluewater Forum.
- b) One Representative to serve on the Borough and Parish Forum, to be the Town Mayor (plus the Town Clerk).
- c) One Representative to serve on the Diocese of Rochester Youth Worker Steering Group.
- d) One Representative to serve on the Ebbsfleet Water Management Group.
- e) One Representative to serve on the Elderly Forum (Dartford Borough Council).
- f) Two Representatives to serve on the Greenhithe Community Association.
- g) Two Representatives to sit on the Board of Directors of the Ingress Park Management (Greenhithe) Limited.
- h) Two Representatives to serve on the County Area Committee of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC).
- i) Two Representatives to serve on the Dartford Area Committee of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC).
- j) One Representative to serve on the Committee of the North West Kent Volunteer Centre (formerly the Dartford Volunteer Bureau).
- k) One Representative to serve on London Resort Company Holding Ltd. Community Liaison Group.
- l) One Representative to serve on The Children's Partnership Conversation.
- m) Three Representatives to serve on the Pavilion Community Sports & Social Club Committee (observers only, not part of decision making).
- n) One Representative to serve on the Whitecliffe Community Liaison Committee.
- o) One Representative to serve on the Young People's Partnership Conversation (formerly Youth Advisory Group).

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harris and seconded by Councillor John Hayes.

RESOLVED:

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That the appointment of representatives to outside bodies be approved as per the annexed list.

15/21-22 **BANK SIGNATORIES**

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Linda Hall.

RESOLVED:

That the following Members be appointed as signatories to authorise the payment of cheques.

Current Account	Town Mayor's Charity Account
1 Cllr Anita Barham	1 Town Clerk
2. Cllr Sue Butterfill	2. ATC/RFO
3. Cllr Lorna Cross	
4. Cllr Peter Harman	
5 Cllr Peter Harris	
6 Cllr Lesley Howes	

16/21-22 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 APRIL 2021**

MOVED by Councillor John Hayes and seconded by Councillor Lorna Cross.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2021 be confirmed as a true record and signed outside of the meeting.

17/21-22. **REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN FOR 2021 - 2022.**

Members reviewed the Action Plan for 2021 - 2022.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Peter Harris.

RESOLVED:

That the Action Plan 2021 – 2022 be confirmed.

18/21-22. **REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.**

Members reviewed the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

MOVED by Councillor Lorna Cross and seconded by Councillor Peter Harris.

RESOLVED:

That Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be approved.

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19/21-22. **ANNUAL RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY.**

Members reviewed the Risk Management Policy.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Peter Harris.

RESOLVED:

That the Risk Management Policy be approved.

20-21-22. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**

Members reviewed the current policies and procedures of the Town Council.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Peter Harris.

RESOLVED:

That the Policies and Procedures, as listed, be endorsed.

21/21-22. **SUBSCRIPTIONS / MEMBERSHIPS.**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.6 members were provided with the list of subscriptions - memberships held by the Town Council.

MOVED by Councillor Lorna Cross and seconded by Councillor Linda Hall.

RESOLVED:

That the continued subscriptions - memberships, as detailed, be approved.

22/21-22. **REGULAR PAYMENTS – DIRECT DEBITS AND BACS PAYMENTS.**

In accordance with Financial Regulations 5.6 and 6.9 members considered the list of organisations paid, on a regular basis, via Direct Debit or the BACS system.

MOVED by Councillor John Hayes and seconded by Councillor Lorna Cross.

RESOLVED:

That the continued regular payments, as listed, be approved.

23/21-22. **REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT.**

Members reviewed the internal audit and confirmed they were satisfied the regulatory requirements were being met.

Regulation 6 requires that a council “*shall have maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council’s accounting records and control systems*”

Members reviewed the legal requirements, regarding control objectives, which included an assessment of each of the following: the scope of internal audit, independence, competence, relationships, audit planning and reporting the council had to achieve throughout the financial year and agreed that the council had an adequate and effective system of internal audit.

RESOLVED:

To endorse the council’s internal controls and the scope of the internal audit.

24/21-22. **RE-APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDITOR 2021 - 2022.**

Members were asked to agree to the re-appointment of Mr Lionel Robbins as internal auditor for the year 2021 – 2022.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harris and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Lionel Robins be re-appointed as internal auditor for the year 2021 – 2022.

25/21-22. **ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020 – 2021.**

Members received the internal auditors report for 2020 - 2021.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

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26/21-22. **ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2021 – GOVERNANCE STATEMENT.**

Members considered Section 1 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement and supporting documents requested by the External Auditor, for the year end 31 March 2021.

MOVED by Councillor Emma Ben Moussa and seconded by Councillor Lorna Cross.

RESOLVED:

That Section 1 of the Annual Return – Governance Statement, for the year end 31 March 2021 be approved, and that a vote of thanks, for the hard work of Officer's involved in completing this, be given.

27/21-22. **ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2019 – ACCOUNTING STATEMENT.**

Members considered Section 2 of the Annual Return, the Accounting Statement and supporting documents requested by the External Auditor, for the year end 31 March 2021.

MOVED by Councillor John Hayes and seconded by Councillor Peter Harris.

RESOLVED:

That Section 2 of the Annual Return – Accounting Statement, for the year end 31 March 2021 be approved.

28/21-22. **BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2021.**

Members considered the balance sheet for the year end 31 March 2021.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Emma Ben Moussa.

RESOLVED:

That the balance sheet for the year end 31 March 2021 be approved.

29/21-22. **PROGRESS REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA STREAMS.**

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Members discussed the report which included statistics for the previous 12 months.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

30/21-22. **SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL – RECOGNITION AWARD SCHEME PANEL 2021 – 2022.**

Further to minute 444/14-15 Members discussed, and agreed, the three Town Councillors to make up the Panel along with the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor (ensuring this resulted in one Member from each of the three wards).

It was agreed that the Panel for 2021 – 2022 be made up of the following Councillors:-

1. Councillor Lesley Howes (Town Mayor) – Knockhall Ward
2. Councillor Lorna Cross (Deputy Town Mayor) – Swanscombe Ward
3. Councillor Emma Ben Moussa - Swanscombe Ward
4. Councillor Linda Hall - Swanscombe Ward
5. Councillor Peter Harman - Greenhithe Ward

RESOLVED:

That the Panel for 2021 - 2022 be made up of the Councillors as detailed above.

31/21-22. **MONTHLY BANK RECONCILIATION.**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2, a member of the council other than the Town Mayor or a cheque signatory needs to be appointed to verify the bank reconciliations produced by the RFO for all the council's accounts on a regular basis.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Jay Shah be appointed to undertake the verification of bank reconciliations.

32/21-22. **MEMBERSHIPS OF WORKING GROUPS.**

Further to minute 288/20-21 where a recent review of the Working Groups was undertaken Members were asked to confirm the Memberships of the Working Groups. As per Standing Order 25 (a) each working group should have a membership of between 3 – 5 members with the quorum for a meeting to take place being 3.

- a. Community Event Working Group
- b. Environmental Action Plan Working Group
- c. Financial Risk Assessment Working Group
- d. Grove Car Park Working Group
- e. Ingress Park Community Centre Working Group

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- f. Pavilion Working Group
- g. Strategic Building Portfolio Review Working Group

RESOLVED:

That the memberships of the Working Groups be confirmed.

33/21-22. **MEMBERS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.**

As part of the training schedule for the coming year, officers proposed to deliver a series of in-house training courses for members to increase awareness in the following key area's:

- The Planning Process
- Standing Orders / Financial Regulations
- The Budget Setting Process
- Data Protection

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

34/21-22. **DECISIONS & RESPONSES.**

Members were provided with the decision and planning responses using the previously approved delegated authority, under Section 101 (10) 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 approved.

35/21-22. **SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT 2021.**

Members had been provided with a calendar of activities that officers were currently preparing to deliver over the summer 2021 period. These included:

- Children's Summer Entertainment
- Summer of Sports – Taster Classes
- x 2 Outdoor Cinema Events

All events would be subject to Government guidelines / social distancing restrictions enabling them to be put on.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

36/21-22. **ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN WORKING GROUP UPDATE / COMMUNITY ORCHARD.**

The Working Group had met on 22 April 2021, at a site meeting in Swanscombe Park, and the notes from this meeting had been provided to Members for information.

The Working Group had made recommendations, contained within the notes, for members to consider. Also attached to support the recommendations were designs for the x 2 new community areas within Swanscombe Park and an additional area for consideration as a community orchard.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the Working Group meeting be agreed and the x4 'Actions to be taken' contained be endorsed.

37/21-22. **REVIEW OF CURRENT COMMUNITY SEATING / BINS**

Further to minute 273/20-21 which included:-

3. *That an item be placed on the agenda for the next Town Council meeting to discuss other locations for benches that could be dedicated in this manner.*

Members requested an inventory of the Town Councils community seating across its public and open spaces.

A further request had been received regarding the possible installation of an additional litter bin at the Heritage Park.

Members discussed the current stock and locations of benches and bins and were informed of the costs for any additional purchases. After discussion it was agreed that the following additions be purchased and installed and that this be paid for from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

- x1 bench – Eagles Road Children's Play Area, Greenhithe
- x1 litter bin – Heritage Park (pitch area), Swanscombe
- x1 bench – Saxon Court Children's Play Area, Greenhithe
- x1 bench – Valley View Children's Play Area, Greenhithe

RESOLVED:

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That additional benchers and bin, as detailed above, be purchased and installed and that this be paid for from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

38/21-22. SEATING AREA ON PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY DS6.

Members were provided with photos were attached showing the location of the x3 seating areas along with photographs of the seating area located at the Knockhall end of DS6 and were asked to consider what, if any, action should be taken regarding the seating area at the Knockhall Park end of DS6.

Members were shown the correspondence received from a member of the public regarding anti-social behaviour occurring in the seating area on DS6. Members were also provided with images showing the bench area in question and the other x2 seating areas along this public right of way.

After lengthy discussion members agreed that:

That the Town Clerk contact both the local Police and KCC Community Warden to request increased foot patrols in this area;

That members and the member of the public provide details of any incidents they witness in this area and that these be collated by the Town Clerk;

That the feasibility of moving bench 2 of 3 on DS6 be investigated;

That this item be placed on the next full Council meeting for further consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the actions, as detailed above, be agreed.

39/21-22 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.

There are none

40/21-22 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS.

That she had recently placed a Pride in our Town survey on social media. The results had been discussed and work being undertaken to put on some events / activities this year.

41/21-22 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor John Hayes.

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 press and public leave the meeting during consideration of the following item.

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

42/21-22 **INGRESS PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE - UPDATE.**

Members were supplied with a confidential report for this item. After consideration it was agreed:

RESOLVED:

1. That Officers contact Dartford Borough Council to seek advice as to whether enforcement of the Section 1 Agreement could be implemented.
2. That no further action be taken at this time via the Town Councils Solicitors.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Signed: _____

(Chairman)

Date:- _____