

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
19 MAY 2022

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 19 MAY 2022 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor Lorna Cross – Town Mayor
Councillor Peter Harman – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Anita Barham
Councillor Sue Butterfill
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Linda Hall
Councillor Dr Jo Harman
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor John Hayes
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Maurice Weet

ABSENT: There were none

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO
Sandra Kelleher – Administration Assistant
Rebecca Rawlings – Administration Assistant
x19 Members of the Public

1/22-23. 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.

2/22-23. 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 Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Lorna Cross be duly elected as Town Mayor for the ensuing year 2022- 2023.

3/22-23. TOWN MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.

Following her election, Councillor Lorna Cross made her Declaration of Office and signed the Acceptance of Office form.

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4/22-23. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR.**

MOVED by Councillor Lesley Howes and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Peter Harman be duly elected as Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year 2022 - 2023.

5/22-23. **DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.**

Following his election, Councillor Peter Harman made his Declaration of Office and signed the Acceptance of Office form.

6/22-23. **VOTE OF THANKS.**

Councillor Lorna Cross gave a vote of thanks to the outgoing Town Mayor, Councillor Lesley Howes.

7/22-23. **PAST MAYOR'S BADGE / GIFT.**

Councillor Lorna Cross presented the past Town Mayor, Councillor Lesley Howes with a past mayor's badge / gift.

8/22-23. **RESPONSE BY COUNCILLOR LESLEY HOWES.**

Councillor Lesley Howes advised it had been a memorable and enjoyable term of office despite the obvious effects of the Covid pandemic. She had set a theme of "Pride in our Town" and had run several competitions for the community including photographic, window boxes, a flower and produce show etc.

There had also been a Christmas Fair, a showing of the film "Where the Wild Orchid Grows" and x2 tours of the Town hosted by Christoph Bull. Visits to Ebbsfleet Academy (twice), Knockhall and Craylands School and the opening of the x3 Community Areas within Swanscombe Park as well as the Civic Night which had been a very successful evening.

Through the funds raised by the Mayor's Charity Fund Councillor Howes had been able to assist/support many local charities/organisations as well as the Hearing Dogs organisation.

It had been an enjoyable 18 months and thanks were passed onto the Admin Staff for all the assistance they had provided.

Councillor Lesley Howes thanked her Deputy Mayor for a wonderful year and congratulated the new Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.

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9/22-22. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

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

Councillor Jay Shah had previously received dispensation from attending meetings for a six-month period commencing 9 December 2021 (minute 315/21-22).

RESOLVED:

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

10/22-23. **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.

11/22-23. **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.

The Town Clerk highlighted that there was a vacancy on the Personnel Committee as Councillor Lorna Cross was Chairman by virtue of her position as Town Mayor.

It was proposed, duly seconded, and agreed that Councillor Lesley Howes be appointed to the Personnel Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harman and seconded by Councillor Anita Barham.

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.

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12/22-23. **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 Harman and seconded by Councillor Peter Harris.

RESOLVED:

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

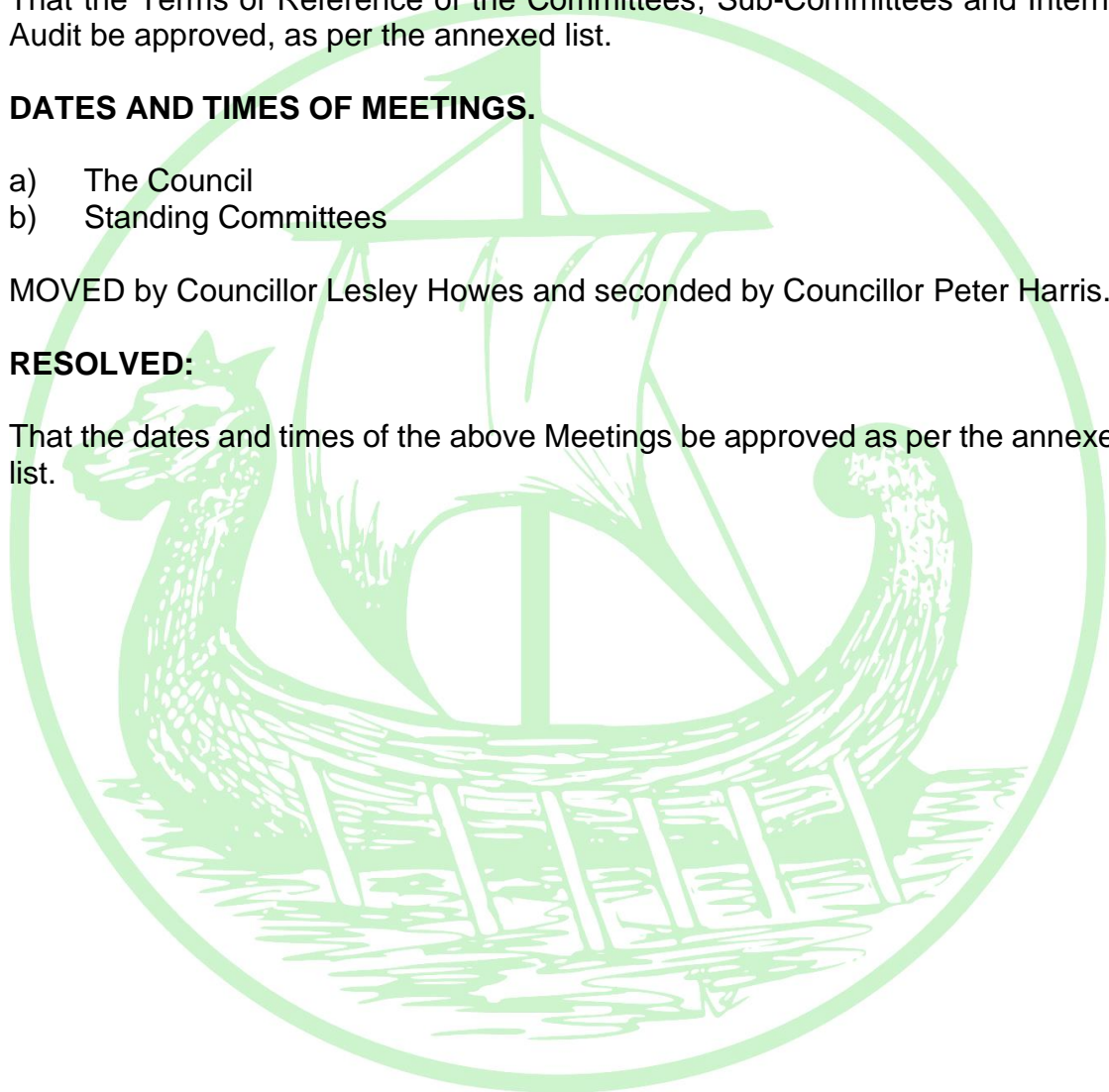
13/22-23. **DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS.**

- a) The Council
- b) Standing Committees

MOVED by Councillor Lesley Howes and seconded by Councillor Peter Harris.

RESOLVED:

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



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14/22-23. **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 Children's Partnership Conversation.
- d) One Representative to serve on the Diocese of Rochester Youth Worker Steering Group.
- e) One Representative to serve on the Ebbsfleet Water Management Group.
- f) One Representative to serve on the Elderly Forum (Dartford Borough Council).
- g) Two Representatives to serve on the Greenhithe Community Association.
- h) Two Representatives to sit on the Board of Directors of the Ingress Park Management (Greenhithe) Limited.
- i) Two Representatives to serve on the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) County Area Committee.
- j) Two Representatives to serve on the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Dartford Area Committee.
- k) One Representative to serve on London Resort Company Holding Ltd. Community Liaison Group.
- l) One Representative to serve on the Committee of the North West Kent Volunteer Centre (formerly the Dartford Volunteer Bureau).
- 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 Sue Butterfill and seconded by Councillor Peter Harman.

RESOLVED:

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

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15/22-23. **BANK SIGNATORIES.**

MOVED by Councillor Sue Butterfill and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

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. Assistant Town Clerk/RFO |
| 3. Cllr Lorna Cross | |
| 4. Cllr Peter Harman | |
| 5. Cllr Peter Harris | |
| 6. Cllr Lesley Howes | |

16/22-23. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 APRIL 2022.**

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

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2022 be confirmed as a true record and signed outside of the meeting.

17/22-23. **REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN FOR 2022 - 2023.**

Members reviewed the Action Plan for 2022 - 2023.

MOVED by Councillor John Hayes and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

That the Action Plan 2022 – 2023 be confirmed.

18/22-23. **REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.**

Members reviewed the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

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

RESOLVED:

That Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be approved.

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19/22-23. **ANNUAL RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY.**

Members reviewed the Risk Management Policy.

MOVED by Councillor Peter Harris and seconded by Councillor Anita Barham.

RESOLVED:

That the Risk Management Policy be approved.

20/22-23. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**

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

MOVED by Councillor Linda Hall and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

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

21/22-23. **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 Ann Duke and seconded by Councillor Linda Hall.

RESOLVED:

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

22/22-23. **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 Peter Harris and seconded by Councillor John Hayes.

RESOLVED:

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

23/22-23. 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.

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

RESOLVED:

That, after assessing the process for the internal audit, specifically: the scope of internal audit, independence, competence, relationships, audit planning and reporting; the effectiveness of the council’s internal controls were deemed adequate and that these ensured the regulatory requirements regarding control objectives were being met.

24/22-23. RE-APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDITOR 2022 - 2023.

Members were asked to agree to the re-appointment of Mr Lionel Robbins as internal auditor for the year 2022 – 2023.

MOVED by Councillor Ann Duke and seconded by Councillor Sue Butterfill.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Lionel Robins be re-appointed as internal auditor for the year 2022 – 2023.

25/22-23. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2021 – 2022.

Members received the internal auditors report for 2021 - 2022.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

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26/22-23. **ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2022 – GOVERNANCE STATEMENT.**

Members considered Section 1 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement requested by the External Auditor (PKF Littlejohn LLP), for the year end 31 March 2022.

MOVED by Councillor Anita Barham and seconded by Councillor Sue Butterfill.

RESOLVED:

That Section 1 of the Annual Return – Governance Statement, for the year end 31 March 2022 be approved, and that a vote of thanks, for the hard work of Officer's involved in completing this, be given.

27/22-23. **ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2022 – ACCOUNTING STATEMENT.**

Members considered Section 2 of the Annual Return, the Accounting Statement requested by the External Auditor, for the year end 31 March 2022.

MOVED by Councillor John Hayes and seconded by Councillor Anita Barham.

RESOLVED:

That Section 2 of the Annual Return – Accounting Statement, for the year end 31 March 2022 be approved.

28/22-23. **BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2022.**

Members considered the balance sheet for the year end 31 March 2022 (as indicated this has been signed off by the Independent Internal Auditor, 26 April 2022).

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

RESOLVED:

That the balance sheet for the year end 31 March 2022 be approved.

29/22-23. **PROGRESS REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA STREAMS.**

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

MOVED by Councillor Ann Duke and seconded by Councillor Dr Jo Harman.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

30/22-23. **SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL – RECOGNITION AWARD SCHEME PANEL 2022 – 2023.**

Further to minute 444/14-15 Members discussed, and agreed, with x1 abstention, 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).

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

1. Councillor Lorna Cross (Town Mayor) – Knockhall Ward
2. Councillor Peter Harman (Deputy Town Mayor) – Greenhithe Ward
3. Councillor Ann Duke - Swanscombe Ward
4. Councillor Dr Jo Harman - Greenhithe Ward
5. Councillor Peter Harris - Knockhall Ward

RESOLVED:

That the Panel for 2022 - 2023 be made up of the Councillors as detailed above.

31/22-23. **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.

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

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ann Duke be appointed to undertake the verification of bank reconciliations.

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32/22-23. **MEMBERSHIPS OF 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
- f. Pavilion Working Group
- g. Public Toilets Working Group
- h. Strategic Building Portfolio Review Working Group

MOVED by Councillor John Hayes and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

It was agreed, with x2 abstentions:

RESOLVED:

That the memberships of the Working Groups, as detailed, be confirmed.

33/22-23. **SECTION 137 EXPENDITURE: LIMIT FOR 2022 – 2023.**

Members were informed that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had confirmed that the appropriate sum for the purposes of Section 137 (4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for local (parish and town) councils in England for 2022 – 2023 was £8.82.

This is the amount as a result of increasing the amount of £8.41 for 2021 – 2022 by the percentage increase in the retail index between September 2020 and September 2021, in accordance with Schedule 12B to the 1972 Act.

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

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

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34/22-23. **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CiL), DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC).**

Further to minutes 51/21-22 (*full Council 24 June 2021*) and 323/21-22 (*full Council 9 December 2021*) the Senior Infrastructure Planner (DBC) had written to advise that a proportion of the CiL receipts received from development/s within the Town Council area, for period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022, had been received and apportioned accordingly.

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

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

35/22-23. **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.**

There are none

36/22-23. **TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

Councillor Lorna Cross informed the meeting that she would not have a specific charity during her term but would be concentrating on loneliness, of all ages, within the Town.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Members were invited to join the Mayor Elect for refreshments after the Meeting.

Signed: _____ Date:- _____
(Chairman)