

MINUTES of the MEETING of the COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 5 JULY 2023 at 7.00 PM

**PRESENT:** Councillor Peter Harris - Chairman  
Councillor Peter Harman - Vice-Chairman  
Councillor Lorna Cross  
Councillor Dawn Johnston  
Councillor Hazel Stephens (substituting for Councillor Lesley Howes)  
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham

**ALSO PRESENT:** Graham Blew – Town Clerk  
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer  
PC Tori Massey – Kent Police  
PC Royston Griffiths – Kent Police  
Billy Unsworth – Kent County Council Community Warden  
Paul Parsons – Swanscombe & Greenhithe representative on the Dartford Borough Council Tenants & Leaseholders Forum  
x9 Members of the public

**ABSENT:** Councillor Anita Barham

85/23-24. **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.

86/23-24. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ann Duke, 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.

87/23-24. **SUBSTITUTES.**

Councillor Hazel Stephens substituted for Councillor Lesley Howes.

88/23-24. **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.***

A resident raised concerns over a group of youths threatening the safety of people walking dogs in the area. The Chairman reminded those in attendance that incidents of threatening behaviour should be report via 999. PC Massey agreed to discuss the specific case with the resident outside of the meeting.

89/23-24. **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.

90/23-24. **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 2023**

**Recommended:** That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 April 2023 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

91/23-24. **POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSO) REPORT.**

PC Massey briefly introduced herself and explained that she was the temporary beat officer for Swanscombe, Greenhithe and Ebbsfleet.

PC Massey outlined the current crime statistics and cases of note within the Town over the last few months.

*At this point several members of the public left the meeting when the Chairman advised that the public participation section of the meeting had already been held.*

*On leaving the meeting one member of the public explained that there was frustration that they had not been given the chance to directly ask questions to the officers from Kent Police.*

*With the Chairmans consent the meeting was briefly adjourned whilst those members of the public who had left the meeting were spoken to outside the chamber and invited back to raise their concerns.*

*When members of the public returned the Chairman apologised and accepted responsibility for the confusion regarding members of the public speaking / participating during council meetings.*

Residents then raised concerns regarding the increase in anti-social vehicle crime in the area, namely off-road bikes being driven in an unsafe manner. This included threatening behaviour towards anyone who challenged those participating in anti-social vehicle crime and issues with the reporting processes to Kent Police.

PC Massey explained some of the activities being undertaken currently to address the issue included a number of Section 59 notices being issued. PC Massey explained that patrols were occurring within the Town both in marked and un-marked vehicles and work was occurring behind the scenes to tackle those involved, but unfortunately more detail could not be provided due to the nature of the investigations.

PC Massey explained that an alternative, and more user friendly, route of contacting her with intelligence was via the My Community Voice App, details of which were handed out to members of public at this point.

PC Massey advised that whilst Kent Police would always welcome any evidence that the public could provide i.e., photos, videos etc, she would not ask anyone to undertake this if they felt in any way uncomfortable doing so and the public should not put themselves in any danger.

**Recommended:** That the report be noted and both PC's Massey and Griffiths be thanked for their attendance.

92/23-24. **KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC) COMMUNITY WARDENS REPORT.**

KCC Warden Unsworth gave an update on matters he had been involved with in the area, including dog fouling, welfare support, beggars, and a disturbance at Swanscombe Library.

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

93/23-24. **COMMUNITY SAFETY LIAISON.**

Local Schools – Members briefly discussed how the enforcement cameras placed at Manor Community Primary School were reducing incidents of parking on the zig-zag lines but pointed out that some of the indiscriminate parking had moved onto neighbouring roads.

Kent Fire Service – The Chairman outlined the recent fire that had occurred in Ingress Park and the procedure for fire safety associated with the blocks of flats. Councillor Peter Harman confirmed that he had recently attended the Kent Fire & Rescue Service AGM which had included a video on the dangers of charging e-bikes and e-scooters within properties.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) – The Chairman advised that he was still chasing issues raised with the construction exit onto Mounts Road. He confirmed that he had now taken this to the management team within Planning Enforcement.

Neighbourhood Watch – The Chairman updated that membership at the Ingress Park Neighbourhood Watch had exceeded 1,500. A member of the public confirmed that the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Watch now had a membership of over 1,000 and a first watch meeting was hoped to be arranged shortly.



Community Speed Watch – The Chairman confirmed that a recent session had been undertaken and that funding was being considered for the purchase of a speed gun to replace the existing speed indication device currently used.

Kent County Council – Councillor Peter Harman confirmed that investigative work was still ongoing regarding the land slide at Galley Hill. A recent public meeting had been held with over 80 members of the public in attendance. Councillor Harman also advised that Pepper Hill Household Recycling Centre was currently closed due to a water leak. Kent County Council were still considering options for the potential closure or other changes to Dartford Heath Household Recycling Centre.

KCC Warden Unsworth updated the meeting that a consultation on staffing reductions / restructure within the warden service was planned to begin on 12 July 2023 and it was hoped that as many people would respond as possible.

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

94/23-24. **DETAILED ANALYSIS OF CRIME STATISTICS FOR SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE.**

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

**Recommended:** That the information be noted.

95/23-24. **DELEGATION TO CONDUCT NORMAL BUSINESS DURING RECESS PERIOD.**

Members were requested to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in accordance with section 101 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972, to conduct the normal business of the Council during the recess period. The Town Clerk will consult with the Town Mayor, if appropriate, before any business is transacted. If any emergencies do occur during this time the Executive & Emergency Committee would be convened.

It was agreed that in the event of any issues being raised that related to crime within the Town, that these would also be discussed with the Chairman of this committee.

**Recommended:**

That, in accordance with section 101 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Town Clerk be delegated authority to conduct the normal business of the Council during the recess period.

There were no confidential items for discussion.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman

Date \_\_\_\_\_