

MINUTES of the MEETING of the COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER 2024 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Harris – Chairman
Councillor Dawn Johnston – Vice Chairman
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa (substituting for Councillor Elizabeth Wickham)
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Hazel Stephens

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – ATC/RFO
Dartford Borough Councillor Richard Wells - Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Youth
PC Adam Rafter – Kent Police
Paul Parsons – Member of the Kent Police Independent Advisory Group
x1 member of the public

ABSENT: There were none

276/24-25. 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.

277/24-25. ELECTION OF VICE – CHAIRMAN.

It was proposed, duly seconded and agreed:

Recommended: That Councillor Dawn Johnston be elected Vice – Chairman for the remainder of the 2024 – 2025 year.

278/24-25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Elizabeth Wickham, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from the Kent County Council Community Warden, Angela Jarrett.

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

279/24-25. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor Emma Ben Moussa substituted for Councillor Elizabeth Wickham.

280/24-25. **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.

281/24-25. **ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.**

There were none.

282/24-25. **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 OCTOBER 2024**

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 October 2024 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

283/24-25. **KENT POLICE REPORT.**

PC Rafter gave a summary of the current policing levels in the Borough and also the work that was being undertaken in relation to enforcement of vehicles on the High Street, Swanscombe, obstructive vehicles around the town, enforcing lorries breaching the weight limits, burglaries and investigating schemes to improve community safety, including gated alleys.

PC Rafter also confirmed that Kent Police were moving back towards an intelligence led model for policing and requested that all correspondence and information is shared through 'My Community Voice'.

PC Rafter explained the current Police Cadets schemes operating in Dartford and agreed to send through material to the Town Council that could publicise these further.

Both PC Rafter and DBC Councillor Richard Wells talked through options for additional measures in relation to parking and traffic in the town, which included parking studies / surveys that would look at residents parking schemes, additional signage to promote the use of The Grove Car Park, discussions with Kent County Council on road schemes such as red routes and Councillor Wells clarified that additional levels of parking enforcement had taken place following the closure of Galley Hill.

Recommended: That both PC Rafter and Councillor Richard Wells be thanked for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

284/24-25. **KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC) COMMUNITY WARDENS REPORT.**

Unfortunately, the KCC Community Warden was unable to attend but, in her absence, Angela Jarrett had submitted a report which included:

An explanation of the handover arrangements within the changes to the Community Warden Team, obstructive vehicles and traffic problems, neighbour disputes, graffiti and anti-social behaviour.

Recommended: That the report be noted.

285/24-25. **COMMUNITY SAFETY LIAISON.**

Local Schools – Councillor Emma Ben Moussa confirmed that whilst the parking cameras at Manor Community Primary School had helped to reduce parking on the zig-zag lines, issues were still occurring on double yellow lines and with obstructive pavement parking.

Kent Fire Service – Councillor Lesley Howes advised the meeting that a recent survey had been issued by Kent Fire Service regarding safety in the home which provided useful information around steps that residents could take.

Neighbourhood Watch – The Chairman explained that the scheme was still in operation and sought clarity on the Neighbourhood Watch in Swanscombe. Officers confirmed that the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Watch had a standing invite to this meeting. The Chairman briefly explained regarding the Dartford Borough Council consultation on the Nuisance Vehicles Public Space Protection Order and promoted all members to take part.

Community Speed Watch – The Chairman confirmed that two sessions had taken place and that the group were still trying to source a speed gun as opposed to the speed indication device currently used.

Dartford Borough Council (CSU) – The Chairman advised the meeting of an event happening on Thursday 5 December at the Meeting Place at the Orchard Centre, Dartford for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls.

Lorry Watch - Lead Member, Councillor Elizabeth Wickham had provided a report which stated that the team were still receiving photos from residents which were being reported through both Kent Police and via the KCC Freight Team. The report confirmed that, due to availability, no watch events had taken place since 14 November but that, with the support of PC Rafter, further correspondence had been issued to Discordia and no reports had been received of their lorries in the last 2 weeks.

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

286/24-25. **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.

Members were pleased to see that the stats for Swanscombe and for Greenhithe seemed to indicate a decline in crime.

Recommended: That the information be noted.

There were no confidential items to be discussed.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed _____
Chairman Date