

MINUTES of the SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 9 JANUARY 2025 at 7.35pm

PRESENT: Councillor Ann Duke – Town Mayor
Councillor Dawn Johnston – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Richard Lees
Councillor Paul Parsons
Councillor Graham Taylor
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – ATC/Responsible Financial Officer
Rev. Charlie Lloyd-Evans
x11 Members of the public

ABSENT: Councillor Alan Reach.

340/24-25. 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.

341/24-25. REVD. CHARLIE LLOYD-EVANS, PRIEST IN CHARGE AT ST MARY GREENHITHE & ST PETER AND ST PAUL SWANSCOMBE.

The Town Mayor welcomed Revd. Charlie Lloyd-Evans to the meeting, Revd. Lloyd-Evans thanked the Town Council for the invitation and led the Council in prayer.

342/24-25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Claire Pearce, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hazel Stephens due to other commitments.

RESOLVED:

That the reason/s for absence, for the above Town Councillor(s), be formally accepted and approved.

343/24-25. 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.

A resident raised a question on the rationale behind putting a café unit onto Broomfield Park in the proposed Plan C option. It was confirmed that this would not be an additional café, but the relocation of the existing Old Fire Station Community Café provision.

Various points were raised regarding different funding routes that could be taken, including private funding, and the use of outside professionals for bid writing and project management. The points raised were acknowledged and the Chairman thanked the residents for their attendance and input to the meeting.

344/24-25. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 5 December 2024 be confirmed as a true record and be signed.

345/24-25. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE TOWN MAYOR / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

346/24-25. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2024

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 December 2024 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

347/24-25. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 DECEMBER 2024

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Community Safety Committee Meeting held on 4 December 2024 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

348/24-25. MINUTES OF THE LEASES & LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Leases & Legal Sub-Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2024 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

349/24-25. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 28 November 2024 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

350/24-25. ANNUAL ESTIMATES 2025 – 2026

Further to minute 299/24-25 (*full Council 5 December 2024*) and minute 339/24-25 (*Finance & General Purposes 9 January 2025*) members were advised of the proposed Annual Estimates for the 2025 - 2026 financial year (*Annual Estimates provided with the preceding Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting paperwork*).

Members acknowledged that whilst the Town Council did not want to increase the Council Tax for residents, it understood that the financial pressures it was currently experiencing made this decision a necessity.

MOVED BY Councillor Richard Lees, seconded by Councillor Peter Harris, and unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Annual Estimates for 2025 – 2026, and subsequent proposed Tax Base (Band D) be approved.

351/24-25. COUNCIL TAX BASE & PRECEPT 2025 – 2026.

To set the Council Tax Base for Band D properties and the precept figure for 2025 – 2026.

MOVED BY Councillor Richard Lees, seconded by Councillor Lesley Howes, and unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the Council Tax Base for Band D properties 2025 – 2026 be set and the precept figure be set at £470,622 for 2025 - 2026.

352/24-25. PAVILION WORKING GROUP

Members considered the report on the outcome of the bid for the Community Ownership Fund.

After Members had discussed the information supplied, including the timeline for the bid process, it was confirmed that a request had been made to the local MP, who had a meeting scheduled with the Minister responsible for the fund for Monday 13 January 2025, to ask for further detailed feedback on the bid itself.

A proposal was duly discussed, considered and it was agreed to formulate an approach to Dartford Borough Council (DBC) for support with the project. It was agreed that a meeting of the Pavilion Working Group be convened at the earliest convenience to confirm the manner and detail of the approach to DBC, which would subsequently be made.

RESOLVED:

1. That the outcome of the bid to the Community Ownership Fund be noted.
2. That the Pavilion Working Group meet to formulate an approach to DBC for support with the Pavilion Project.

353/24-25. VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS, BANK SIGNATORIES AND SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE RECOGNITION AWARD PANEL.

Further to minute 214/24-25 and following the co-option of x2 new members to the Town Council Members considered the vacancies and, after discussion the highlighted vacancies, as proposed, for the following were agreed:

- Committees
- Sub-Committees
- Working Groups
- Bank Signatories
- Swanscombe & Greenhithe Recognition Award Panel

RESOLVED:

That the highlighted vacancies be filled as detailed.

354/24-25. **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.**

Further to minute 317/24-25, the following document had been received from Dartford Borough Council and required signing and sealing:

- Renewal Management and Operational Agreement in reference to – The Grove Car Park, The Grove, Swanscombe, DA10 0AD

RESOLVED:

That the above document be signed and sealed in accordance with Standing Order 21, a) and b).

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)