

MINUTES of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 24 JULY 2025 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Councillor Dawn Johnston – Town Mayor
Councillor Paul Parsons – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Alan Reach
Councillor Hazel Stephens
Councillor Graham Taylor
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham

ALSO PRESENT:

Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – ATC/Responsible Financial Officer
Indigo Allred – Administration Officer
Councillor Michael Brown – Dartford Borough Council
x5 Member of the public

ABSENT:

There were none

124/25-26. 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.

125/25-26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Emma Ben Moussa, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Richard Lees, due to other commitments.

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

An apology for absence was received from Dartford Borough Councillor Cally Gale due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Dartford Borough Councillor David Mote due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Kent County Councillor Matthew Fraser - Moat (deputising for Thomas Mallon) due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Reverend Charlie Lloyd-Evans due to other commitments.

RESOLVED:

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

126/25-26. 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.

127/25-26. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 14 MAY 2025 AND THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 JULY 2025

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14 May 2025 and the Special Town Council Meeting held on 2 July 2025 be confirmed as a true record and be signed.

128/25-26. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE TOWN MAYOR / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

Members were introduced to Ms Indigo Allred who had started her role as the new Administration Officer on 21 July 2025.

129/25-26. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 23 APRIL 2025, 21 MAY 2025, 11 JUNE 2025 AND 9 JULY 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation and Environment Committee Meetings held on 23 April 2025, 21 May 2025, 11 June 2025 and 9 July 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

130/25-26. MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 JUNE 2025

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee – 26 June 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

131/25-26. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 JUNE 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Meeting held on 19 June 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

132/25-26. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 9 APRIL 2025 AND 2 JULY 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Community Safety Committee Meetings held on 9 April 2025 and 2 July 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

133/25-26. MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE & EMERGENCY COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 10 APRIL 2025 AND 24 JUNE 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Executive & Emergency Committee Meetings held on 10 April 2025 and 24 June 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

134/25-26. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 MAY 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 12 May 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

135/25-26. MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 10 APRIL 2025 AND 3 JULY 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Heritage Sub-Committee Meetings held on 10 April 2025 and 3 July 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

136/25-26. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDER AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.

Further to minute 464/25-26 (full council 27 March 2025) an amendment was proposed for Standing Order 38(b) and Financial Regulation 11(c).

This amendment would update the sections on procurement and contracts to refer to the updated Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed amendment be endorsed and adopted.

137/25-26. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLAN.

The Executive & Emergency Committee had been investigating the possibility of setting up a Community Resilience Plan and had been promoting the need for volunteers to come forward to enable this to happen.

Despite this being promoted heavily on social media etc. to date only one volunteer had come forward.

As requested, contact had been made with the Emergency Planning Officer, Dartford Borough Council and members had been provided with the response, which was discussed at the meeting.

Members agreed to continue investigating the possibility of producing a Community Resilience Plan and that a meeting of the Executive & Emergency Committee would be convened and the Emergency Planning Officer, Dartford Borough Council, and a representative of the Kent & Medway Community Resilience Forum be invited to attend and discuss a way forward.

RESOLVED:

That a meeting of the Executive & Emergency Committee be convened and the Emergency Planning Officer, Dartford Borough Council, and a representative of the Kent & Medway Community Resilience Forum be invited to attend

138/25-26. FLAG SCHEDULE – REVIEW

Members reviewed the current flag schedule.

RESOLVED:

That the flag schedule be agreed.

139/25-26. RELOCATION OF MANOR PARK HGV TRANSPORT HUB – WORKING GROUP UPDATE.

Further to minutes 399/24-25 (PTE Meeting 5 February 2025) and 466/24-25 (full council 27 March 2025) the Lorry Park Working Group had met twice (10 April 2025 and 24 June 2025) and recently held an informal Teams meeting with the Dartford MP and the Transport Strategy Manager Kent Highway Services (15 July 2025), the notes from this informal meeting were sent to members.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

140/25-26. COMMUNITY EVENT WORKING GROUP - UPDATE.

Members considered the notes from the Working Group meeting held on 3 July 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted and that both Members and Officers be thanked for the work undertaken to deliver both the St Augustine's Day and Summer Fair Events.

141/25-26. FESTIVE LIGHTS CONTRACT 2025 – GREENHITHE AND SWANSCOMBE HIGH STREETS.

Members considered the report on options for festive lighting for 2025 and the ATC/RFO updated members regarding the change in costings for the use of powered lighting in both Swanscombe and Greenhithe High Streets.

The RFO detailed merits and environmental / financial impacts of each option and after discussion it was proposed, duly seconded and agreed:

RESOLVED:

That option C be selected for festive lighting 2025.

142/25-26. DEVOLUTION WORKING GROUP - UPDATE.

At the AGM, on 14 May 2025, the Devolution Working Group was formed (minute 36/25-26). The Working Group held its first meeting on 26 June 2025 and the notes from this meeting had been provided for members information

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

143/25-26. GENERAL PROJECTS UPDATE.

Officers provided members with the following updates.

Work was being undertaken to finalise the design brief for the scaled down option for the Pavilion Project. Once received this would be provided to potential funders to seek support.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

144/25-26. STAFF / MEMBER TRAINING – UPDATE.

The following training had been scheduled / undertaken: -

Cllr Dawn Johnston Town Clerk	KALC Extraordinary General Meeting – 19 June 2025.	KALC - Ashford
Cllr Dawn Johnston ATC/RFO	Planning Conference – 20 June 2025.	KALC - Luddesdown
Town Clerk ATC/RFO	Transfer of Assets – 26 June 2025	KALC – Online.
Cllr Lorna Cross Cllr Dawn Johnston Cllr Paul Parsons	Local Government Reorganisation – Transfer of Assets – 16 July 2025	KALC – online.
Town Clerk ATC/RFO	Contract Management for Asset Transfers – 31 July 2025.	KALC - online.
Town Clerk	Local Govt. Reorganisation Package – Procurement. – 8 September 2025.	KALC - online.
ATC/RFO	Planning for the Future: Navigating the new planning framework – 29 October 2025.	NALC – online.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

145/25-26. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES

Members were advised that this item provided an opportunity for Members appointed as representatives on outside bodies to provide a report at the meeting.

Ingress Park (Greenhithe) Management Limited (IPGM).

Councillor Peter Harris and Councillor Dawn Johnston are the Town Councils representatives on IPGM. IPGM have indicated that, although unable to supply any documentation, they would like a verbal update to be submitted to the Council.

Councillor Harris confirmed that the representative to the board from Dartford Borough Council had recently changed. That the vegetated (green) wall to support the flood defences on the riverfront was currently being constructed. These works had been subject to a recent theft of equipment, but new security measures were in place.

Issues with staff harassment were being addressed through Kent Police and issues had been raised regarding the Senior Management Team at Firstport.

Bluewater Forum (BF)

Councillor Dawn Johnston is the Town Councils representatives on the BF. The last meeting had been scheduled to take place on 29 May 2025.

Whitecliffe Community Liaison Group (WCLG)

Councillor Dawn Johnston is the Town Councils representatives on the WCLG. As previously agreed, the agenda for the 18 March 2025 meeting, the agenda and Minutes from the meeting on 20 May 2025 and the agenda for the 22 July 2025 meeting were available for inspection.

Joint Transportation Board, Dartford Borough council (JTB)

Councillor Lesley Howes is one of the x2 Parish Representatives on the JTB. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 2 September 2025.

146/25-26. REPORT FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

This item gave the Kent County Councillor for Swanscombe and Greenhithe, Mr Thomas Mallon, the opportunity to submit a verbal report on relevant news or issues from Kent County Council.

Unfortunately, Councillor Thomas Mallon and Councillor Matthew Fraser - Moat (deputising for Thomas Mallon) were unable to attend and no report had been submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

147/25-26. REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

This item gave the x5 Dartford Borough Councillors representing Swanscombe and Greenhithe the opportunity to submit a verbal report on any relevant news or developments at Dartford Borough Council (DBC).

Dartford Borough Councillor Michael Brown updated members on various issues/topics which included that the waste collection contract for 2026 – 2034 was currently being discussed for approval. The borough wide issue of HMO's was being raised cross party. Two recent by-elections had been held in other parts of Dartford with both being won by the Reform party. Councillor Brown had been undertaking casework in relation to challenging management companies, parking and buses.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

148/25-26. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.

There were none

149/25-26. TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor wished that the Councils thanks and best wishes be passed onto Natalie Shoulder who was leaving the Admin Team after 2 years' service, and Sandra Kelleher who was retiring from the Council after 9 years of also working within the Admin Team.

The Town Mayor reminded the meeting of the upcoming activities the Town Council were hosting over the summer.

The Town Mayor also provided details of her dog show being held on the 14 September 2025 in Ingress Park and invited all to attend.

150/25-26. 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 would consult with the Chairman and Town Mayor, if appropriate, before any business was transacted. If any emergencies do occur during this time the Executive & Emergency Committee would be convened.

RESOLVED:

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

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

Signed: _____

(Chairman)

Date: _____