

AGENDA ITEM

TC 29/1/26

3

SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL
8 JANUARY 2026

MINUTES of the SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 8 JANUARY 2026 at 7.15pm

PRESENT:

Councillor Dawn Johnston – Town Mayor
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Richard Lees
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
x2 Members of the public

ABSENT:

Councillor Alan Reach

371/25-26. 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.

372/25-26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

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

RESOLVED:

That the reason for absence, for the above Town Councillor, be formally accepted and approved.

373/25-26. 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.

374/25-26. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE TOWN MAYOR / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

375/25-26. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 December 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

376/25-26. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Community Safety Committee Meeting held on 3 December 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

377/25-26. MINUTES OF THE LEASES & LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Leases & Legal Sub-Committee Meeting held on 17 December 2025 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

378/25-26. ANNUAL ESTIMATES 2026 – 2027

Further to minute 331/25-26 (*full Council 11 December 2025*) and minute 370/25-26 (*Finance & General Purposes 8 January 2026*) members were advised of the proposed Annual Estimates for the 2026 - 2027 financial year (*Annual Estimates provided with the preceding Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting paperwork*).

Members discussed the implications of the draft estimates and 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 put to a vote with nine in favour, and one abstention.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Annual Estimates for 2026 – 2027 be approved.

379/25-26. COUNCIL TAX BASE & PRECEPT 2026 – 2027.

Further to the previous item Councillors discussed the level to set the Council Tax Base for Band D properties and the precept figure for 2026 – 2027.

In addition, members raised their dissatisfaction with the way in which the Council Tax Support Grant (CTSG) had been withdrawn by Dartford Borough Council (DBC) for the 2026 – 2027 financial year. Members agreed that a letter should be sent to the Head of Finance at DBC asking for consideration of whether a phased withdrawal could still be utilised and outlining the disproportionate impact this withdrawal would have on the Town Council and to express the dissatisfaction with the lack of prior consultation.

MOVED BY Councillor Richard Lees, seconded by Councillor Lesley Howes, and put to a vote with nine in favour, and one against.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council Tax Base for Band D properties, as detailed in the Annual Estimates, and the precept figure be set at £504,732 for 2026 - 2027.
2. That a letter be sent to the Head of Finance at DBC, as detailed above, regarding the withdrawal of the Council Tax Support Grant.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

Signed:

(Chairman)

Date:

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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 2026 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Dawn Johnston – Chair
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Hazel Stephens
Councillor Graham Taylor
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham

ALSO PRESENT:

Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Indigo Allred – Administration Officer

ABSENT:

There were none

380/25-26. 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.

381/25-26. 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 Richard Lees, due to other commitments.

Recommended:

That the reasons for absence, for the Councillor(s) listed, be formally accepted, and approved.

382/25-26. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

383/25-26. 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.

384/25-26. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

385/25-26. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2025.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 December 2025 were approved and signed as a true record.

386/25-26 PROPOSED DEPOSIT DOCUMENT AMENDMENT 1, INGRESS PARK AVENUE, GREENHITHE – KENT COUNTY COUNCIL.

Members considered the proposed documents for Amendment 1 a Waiting Restriction Order on Ingress Park Avenue, Greenhithe.

Whilst Members supported the Waiting Restriction Order, in principle, it was agreed that that the restrictions needed to be on both sides of the road and not just the proposed one side of the road.

Recommended: That the response as detailed be submitted.

387/25-26. The following planning applications had been received from Dartford Borough Council / Ebbsfleet Development Corporation / Kent County Council/ Gravesham Borough Council for Members observations (full details of these applications can be viewed via the Town Council, DBC, EDC GBC and the KCC websites).

DA/25/01458/COU	Change of use to a house in multiple occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis) for 10 people 1 The Orchard, Mounts Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>After discussion Members strongly objected to the application on the following grounds:</p> <p>By the size and scale of the proposal it would be out of character with the other properties in the area and is an over intensification of use.</p> <p>The provision of x2 parking spaces for x10 people is insufficient and would lead to further on road parking issues in an area that already suffers with limited on-street parking.</p> <p>There are no easily accessible public transport links nearby which would lead to the occupants using their own vehicles.</p> <p>The proposal would have huge implications on the local infrastructure and would negatively impact the residential amenity of residents.</p> <p>The access to the proposal for refuse collection, emergency services etc. would be very limited and difficult.</p>

388/25-26. The following Granted Decision Notices had been received from Dartford Borough Council / EDC for members information.

DA/25/01303/ADV	Replacement of existing double-sided internally illuminated 6 sheet Bus Shelter advertising displays with double-sided digital displays. Bus Shelter East of Knockhall Chase, London Road, Greenhithe.
DA/25/01398/TPO	Application for T1 - Oak tree - crown lift to 4.5m and cutting away from the building to give 2m clearance; G1 - 6 x Holm Oak - cut away from building to give clearance of 2m; T2 - Elm - cut back from building giving 2m clearance, subject to Tree Preservation Order No.1 2000 Rear of 26 To 35 Mount Nod, London Road, Greenhithe.

389/25-26. The following Refused Decision Notices had been received from Dartford Borough Council / EDC for members information.

DA/25/01179/FUL	Erection of a single storey extension to provide two additional dental surgery rooms. 23 High Street, Swanscombe.
DA/25/01268/FUL	Redevelopment of yard to create nine new apartments (consisting of eight one-bedroom and one two-bedroom dwellings) with parking. 600 Milton Road, Swanscombe.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

Signed: _____
(Chairman)

Date: _____

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 8 JANUARY 2026 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Lesley Howes – Chairman
Councillor Lorna Cross – Vice-Chairman
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Dawn Johnston
Councillor Richard Lees
Councillor Hazel Stephens
Councillor Graham Taylor

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk / RFO
Indigo Allred – Administration Officer
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham
x2 Members of the Public

ABSENT: There were none.

359/25-26. 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.

360/25-26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were none.

361/25-26. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

362/25-26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

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.

363/25-26. TO RECEIVE ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

364/25-26. **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2025.**

Recommended: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2025 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

365/25-26. **MONTHLY BANK RECONCILIATIONS.**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2 a member of the council other than the Town Mayor or a cheque signatory is required to be appointed to verify the bank reconciliations produced by the RFO for all the council's accounts on a regular basis, Councillor Richard Lees was appointed (minute 30/25-26).

Recommended: That the bank reconciliations for November 2025 be noted.

366/25-26. **BANK TRANSFERS.**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (c) Members were provided with a list of bank transfers undertaken between October and November 2025

Recommended: That the bank transfers undertaken between October and November 2025 be approved.

367/25-26. **TO RECEIVE FINANCE STATEMENTS AND PASS ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (a) Members were provided with details of all receipts and payments for authorisation between October and November 2025

Recommended: That the receipts and payments between October and November 2025, as per the annexed list, be approved.

368/25-26. **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.**

Members were provided with details of the Flex-Budget Report balanced to 30 November 2025.

Recommended: That the summary of accounts to 30 November 2025 be noted.

TOWN CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S (RFO) REPORT.

369/25-26. PLANNED PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT (3 YEARS).

In accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1 (iv), a 3-year contract renewal quotation had been supplied and agreed, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, for the planned preventative maintenance covering the heating, plumbing and ventilation in the Council Offices/Hall and Church Road Hall. The contract was comparable in price to the previous 3-year fixed contract and allowed for effective budgeting over this period.

Recommended:

That, in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1 (iv), the actions taken in the renewal of the contract for planned preventative maintenance be endorsed.

370/25-26 ANNUAL ESTIMATES FOR 2026 – 2027.

Further to minute 331/25-26 (*full Council 11 December 2025*) Members considered the Annual Estimates for 2026 – 2027.

After discussion it was proposed, duly seconded, and put to a vote with seven in favour, and one abstention.

Recommended:

That the Annual Estimates for 2026 – 2027, as detailed, be approved and submitted to the Special Town Council Meeting, proceeding this meeting, for endorsement and to set the precept for 2026 – 2027.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.15pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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Graham Blew

From: Charmaine Keatley <chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 September 2025 11:07
Subject: KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2026
Attachments: 2026 KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME - outline.docx; 2026 KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME - nomination form.docx; 2026 KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME - nomination form for residents.doc

[WARNING] This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Member Councils,

We are delighted to announce that we have now launched the 2026 KALC Community Awards Scheme, with support from Kent County Council, the High Sheriff of Kent, and the Mayor of Medway. This follows a very successful 2025 Awards Scheme, which was adopted by 90 member Councils.

The Award Winners receive a framed certificate. The Council can decide whether to present something extra to their winner.

Please find attached the following documents:

- An outline of the 2026 Awards Scheme.
- A nomination form for member Councils to complete and send to KALC.
- A nomination form for residents to send to the Council if the Council decides to seek nominations from the local community.

The first step is for the Council to agree to adopt the Scheme. The Council would then need to submit its nomination to manager@kentalc.gov.uk by **Friday 30th January 2026**. All the attached documents will be placed in the Members Area of the KALC website (www.kentalc.gov.uk).



Celebration Evening: For 2026, the High Sheriff of Kent has agreed to host an evening of celebration on **Wednesday 8th April 2026**. This will be held at the Shepherd Neame Brewery, in Faversham.

This will be a unique opportunity for nominees to be recognised among fellow nominees and to receive their award directly from the High Sheriff of Kent, KCC Chairman/Mayor of Medway. Further details are in the attached outline.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Laura.

Kind Regards,

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KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2026

**(SUPPORTED BY KENT COUNTY COUNCIL, THE HIGH SHERIFF OF KENT
and MAYOR OF MEDWAY)**

OUTLINE

Aim of the Scheme: To acknowledge and give recognition to individuals or groups who have made a significant contribution to their local community.

Implementation: The closing date for nominations will be **Friday 30th January 2026**, so that the presentation of the awards can take place at the 2026 Parish, Town, Community Council or Parish Meeting (Local Council) Annual Meetings, which take place between March and June 2026.

Where a local council already has its own Community Award Scheme, the KALC award may be presented as an additional recognition.

Where principal authorities operate their own awards scheme, the KALC scheme will work at a more local level to avoid duplication or overlap.

Eligibility - Who can be nominated for an Award?

Eligible: **One nomination** may be made from each member Council. This can be any individual or group who lives or works within the Local Council boundary and is considered to have made a significant contribution to the local community.

Not Eligible – Campaign Groups.

What is the nomination process?

Each local council will determine its own process for identifying nominees.

Approaches may include selection by Council based on their own knowledge, or public nomination where the winner could be chosen based on the number of nominations received.

What is the criteria for making an Award?

No fixed definition of a “significant contribution”. Councils set criteria relevant to their local priorities. However, suggested criteria are outlined below.

What does the winner receive?

This will be a Certificate signed by the Kent County Chairman/Mayor of Medway, the High Sheriff of Kent and the KALC Chairman.

The Local Council will provide a short citation (max 30 words) for the certificate.

Councils may choose to present additional tokens of recognition if they wish.

Presentation: The Award should be presented during the Annual Meeting. Councils may also choose to invite the Chairman of Kent County Council/ Mayor of Medway, the High Sheriff of Kent, or the KALC Chairman to participate in the presentation, subject to their availability. Please let KALC know as soon as possible if you would like to request this. However, there is the opportunity for the recipient to also attend an awards ceremony held by the High Sheriff on **8th April 2026** where you may choose to have your certificate presented. Please indicate your preference on the form attached.

Local Councils are encouraged to publicise the awards locally to promote both the Council and the achievements of the winner.

Celebration Evening: For 2026, the High Sheriff of Kent has agreed to host an evening of celebration on **Wednesday 8th April 2026**. This will be held at the Shepherd Neame Brewery, in Faversham.

This will be a unique opportunity for nominees to be recognised among fellow nominees and to receive their award directly from the High Sheriff of Kent, KCC Chairman/Mayor of Medway.

Councils who prefer to present their certificates at their own annual meeting may still do so, but this celebration evening provides an additional and prestigious occasion to honour nominees. Further details will be provided to members once the nominations are in.

Is there any funding available to support the Award?

The Award Scheme has been designed to avoid creating undue time or financial burdens on the Local Council. The cost of the Certificates and frames will be met by Kent County Council.

Examples of possible criteria

A significant contribution to the local community may include:

- a) Long and sustained service to the community or part of it.
- b) Inspiring achievements or actions benefitting the local community.
- c) Activities that have brought benefit, recognition, or credit to the area and its people.

In reaching its decision, the Council may consider:

- The level of commitment shown.
- Challenges or obstacles overcome.
- Scale of benefit to the community.
- Number of people positively affected.
- Duration of contribution.
- Any other factors promoting the purpose of the Award.

An example of wording: For excellent running of the local knit and knatter group which brings together many residents that would otherwise feel lonely.

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KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2026.

Supported by Kent County Council, the High Sheriff of Kent, and the Mayor of Medway

The KALC Community Awards Scheme is to provide recognition and acknowledgement to individuals or groups who have made a significant contribution to their local community.

The objective of the Scheme is to highlight and celebrate those whose actions have positively impacted their local area. By recognising these individuals or groups, local councils can demonstrate the value of their community service and encourage greater involvement.

Any individual or group may be nominated, provided they live or work within the boundary of the local councils. Only **ONE** nomination per member Council. Nominations cannot be accepted for campaign groups. The definition of a “significant contribution” is intentionally broad, allowing local councils the flexibility to recognise contributions most meaningful to their communities.

Each local council may determine how best to identify potential recipients of the Award. Options include:

- Direct selection by the Council, based on known contributions.
- Inviting nominations from residents, with the Council deciding on the recipient.

The winner will receive a framed certificate signed by the Chairman of Kent County Council/Mayor of Medway, the High Sheriff of Kent, and the KALC Chairman.

The Award should be presented during the Annual Meeting. Councils may also choose to invite the Chairman of Kent County Council/ Mayor of Medway, the High Sheriff of Kent, or the KALC Chairman to participate in the presentation, subject to their availability. However, there is the opportunity for the recipient to also attend an awards ceremony held by the High Sheriff on 8th April 2026 where you may choose to have your certificate presented. Please indicate your preference on the form.

To enable the preparation and signing of certificates, local councils must submit the following information to manager@kentalc.gov.uk by **Friday 30th January 2026**

The nomination form is overleaf and must contain the following information:

The name of the award recipient.

When providing a reason for the award in no more than 30 words, keep in mind the certificate will already include the word **“For”** before your text. Your wording should complete the sentence naturally.

Please also provide an address to return the framed certificate to.

KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2026 – LOCAL COUNCIL NOMINATION FORM

Local Council would like to nominate

..... (print name) for a KALC Community Award.

FOR: (no more than 30 words which will appear on the certificate):

.....
.....
.....
.....

SIGNED:

Date of the Council's 2026 Annual Meeting:

- We would like to put forward our nominee to attend the Celebration Evening at the Shepherd Neame Brewery on 8th April 2026

YES NO

- We would like the certificate to be presented at the Celebration Evening

YES NO

Address to return framed certificate to:

.....
.....
.....

HONORARY FREEMAN.

This report seeks members agreement to the convening of a Special Meeting of the Council to appoint Honorary Freeman title to Mr Christoph Bull, in accordance with section 249 (5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1972.

- National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Legal Topic Note 12.

From 12 January 2010, all local councils may exercise powers to confer the title of "honorary freeman" or "honorary freewoman" to persons of distinctions and those who, in the council's opinion, have rendered eminent services to the council's area.

The admission of an honorary freeman or honorary freewoman must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full council specially convened for such purpose and passed on by no less than two-thirds of the members of the council (section 249(8) of the 1972 Act.) That section also requires "notice of the object of the meeting" to be given. This confirms the need for the agenda with the public notice and summons to members in respect of the council meeting to itemise a motion to confer the title of honorary freeman or honorary freewoman.

A local council may spend a reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person on whom it has conferred the title of honorary freeman or honorary freewoman (section 249(9) of the 1972 Act).

Honorary Freemen or Freewomen are purely ceremonial titles which do not carry with them any special rights or privileges and they are not eligible to claim any expenses.

- Background for proposed award of Honorary Freeman.

The proposal of awarding this honour to Mr Christoph Bull is in recognition, over many years, of his valuable and devoted services rendered to the council and the promotion of the area of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

** The Town Council previously awarded the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council Recognition Award to Christoph Bull in 2019 for his work in promoting the area.

There are two options in relation to the timing of a Special meeting of Council. The first option would be to convene a standalone meeting; the second would be to hold such a meeting either immediately before or after a regular meeting. Therefore, a possible way forward would be to hold the Special meeting immediately after the 26 March 2026 meeting.

There would be a modest cost associated with holding a small celebratory buffet after the Special meeting which would be met from existing budgets.

Recommended :

1. To agree, for the reasons stated above, to the conferring of the title of Honorary Freeman to Mr Chrisop Bull for his eminent services to the council's area.
2. To agree to spending a reasonable sum to present an address or a casket containing an address.
3. To hold a Special meeting of the Council immediately after the 26 March 2026 meeting to confer the title of Honorary Freeman.

AGENDA ITEM 8

TC 29-1-26

From: Tim Sams <Tim.Sams@dartford.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 January 2026 16:05
To: Graham Blew <graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhitetowncouncil.gov.uk>
Cc: Catherine Bailey <Catherine.Bailey@dartford.gov.uk>; Martin Harding <rfo@swanscombeandgreenhitetowncouncil.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Enquiry: Council Tax Base

Graham,

Thank you for your letter. As you know Dartford Borough Council has supported Town and Parish Councils with direct grants far longer than most of our Kent neighbours.

Last year's funding report highlighted that this contribution was likely to be removed in time. Whilst the timing of the removal may have come quicker than you expected, this Council also receives late announcements from central government on funding as part of our budget plans and as such must plan according to the expected impact.

The Council remain committed to supporting Parish Councils where we practically can and as I understand we have been offering advice around a CIL application that the Town Council is making.

In terms of the ongoing grant funding that decision is now made and the Council is not looking to reconsider it.

I'd also be grateful if you could share your precept figures as soon as possible.

Kind Regards

Tim Sams
Head of Finance

379/25-26. COUNCIL TAX BASE & PRECEPT 2026 – 2027.

Further to the previous item Councillors discussed the level to set the Council Tax Base for Band D properties and the precept figure for 2026 – 2027.

In addition, members raised their dissatisfaction with the way in which the Council Tax Support Grant (CTSG) had been withdrawn by Dartford Borough Council (DBC) for the 2026 – 2027 financial year. Members agreed that a letter should be sent to the Head of Finance at DBC asking for consideration of whether a phased withdrawal could still be utilised and outlining the disproportionate impact this withdrawal would have on the Town Council and to express the dissatisfaction with the lack of prior consultation.

MOVED BY Councillor Richard Lees, seconded by Councillor Lesley Howes, and put to a vote with nine in favour, and one against.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council Tax Base for Band D properties, as detailed in the Annual Estimates, and the precept figure be set at £504,732 for 2026 - 2027.
2. That a letter be sent to the Head of Finance at DBC, as detailed above, regarding the withdrawal of the Council Tax Support Grant.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

Signed:

(Chairman)

Date:

SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL



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COUNCIL OFFICES
THE GROVE
SWANSCOMBE
KENT, DA10 0GA

Tel: 01322 385513

Tim Sams
Head of Finance
Dartford Borough Council
Home Gardens
Dartford
Kent, DA1 1DR

9 January 2026

Dear Tim

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council met yesterday evening to set its budget and precept for the forthcoming 2026 – 2027 financial year.

As part of the process, members had previously been made aware of the decision taken by Dartford Borough Council to remove the discretionary Council Tax Support Grant (CTSG) provided to support Parish and Town Councils.

Whilst members expressed their understanding for the challenges being faced by principal authorities, along with the need to ensure books are balanced to provide services, they wanted to ask why the decision was taken without any consideration of the following three points:

1. That whilst the average impact of the loss of this grant would be 2% of the total precept, it would be a greater loss to communities that have larger areas of depravity such as Swanscombe and Greenhithe where this loss has resulted in a 3.1% impact on the precept (50% of the total grant paid to all Parish and Town Councils came to Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council).

Paragraph 5, section 2 – Legal Implications of the report to Cabinet on 4 December 2025, it includes "*In making the decision the Council must act reasonably having regard to both its own (or anticipated) financial position, and that of the receiving parish councils. As part of the consideration the Council may have regard to the proportionate impact of the change and the alternative mechanisms for defraying the impact of the decision.*"

The Town Council feel that your analysis of the proportionate impact on Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council is not adequate as it is more than 2% of our precept and we are the most affected of all the parishes. The increase we, as a Town Council, will have to make in our precept to cover this loss in CTSG Grant will need to be

double what we would have implemented had the CTSG not been removed and therefore does have a major impact and is not proportionate which Dartford Borough Council should have considered.

2. That, in a similar manner to the former Section 136 contribution, why this decision could not have been phased over two years to reduce the initial impact on Parish and Town Councils.
3. Why the decision was taken without any prior consultation directly with Parish or Town Councils.

Again, the Town Council wish to stress that it understands the rationale behind the decision which DBC has made and the pressures that all levels of Local Authority are under but wanted to ensure we have raised these points with yourself, on behalf of the electorate that the Town Council serves, and ask whether consideration could be given to review whether a phased approach could still be implemented.

Yours sincerely,

**Graham Blew
Town Clerk**

Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council | Council Offices |
The Grove | Swanscombe | Kent | DA10 0GA.
Tel: 01322 385513 | Fax: 01322 385849

Present:

Cllr Emma Ben-Moussa
Cllr Lorna Cross
Cllr Ann Duke
Cllr Lesley Howes
Cllr Hazel Stephens
Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – ATC/RFO
Christoph Bull – Swanscombe & Greenhithe Local History Group

TC 29-1-26

Apologies for Absence:

There were none

Absent:

There were none

1. TO NOTE THE NOTES FROM THE WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON THE 3 JULY 2025.

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

2. 100th ANNIVERSARY – SWANSCOMBE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Christoph Bull began the discussion with a summary of the civic history of the Town over the last 100 years.

Christoph then put forward a list of potential ideas for activities that could be delivered:

1. A historic walk encompassing all of the locations within the Town that the Council have met in during its history. The walk would begin in Ingress Vale in Greenhithe, then stop at Swanscombe Cross, the Swanscombe Leisure Centre, Manor Park, The Grove and then finish at the Old Fire Station Building.
2. Two historic talks, one in Swanscombe and one in Greenhithe, commemorating the significance of each part of the Town and its history.
3. A short 10-minute presentation on historic civic figures as part of either the AGM or Annual Open Town Meeting.
4. The restoration of the headstones of both Reverend Stanley Morgan and Walter Ames who were considered two of the most significant figures in the early political history of the Town.
5. A Swanscombe & Greenhithe Local History Group Archive Open Day. This would involve the public having access to the documents and artifacts currently stored in the old Cashiers Office at the Council Offices.

COMMUNITY EVENT WORKING GROUP – NOTES FROM 10 DECEMBER 2025 at 11.00am

Members discussed and agreed that all the proposed ideas would be fitting ways to commemorate the event and bring in as much local history as possible.

It was mentioned that the possibility of recording the events would be beneficial as this could then be passed onto local schools to help educate young people on the history of the Town.

It was discussed that the events would be a mix of ticketed events and donations to cover the cost of Christoph Bull leading the walks and talks, and also to put the funds towards the restoration of the two headstones and / or the Town Mayors Charity Fund.

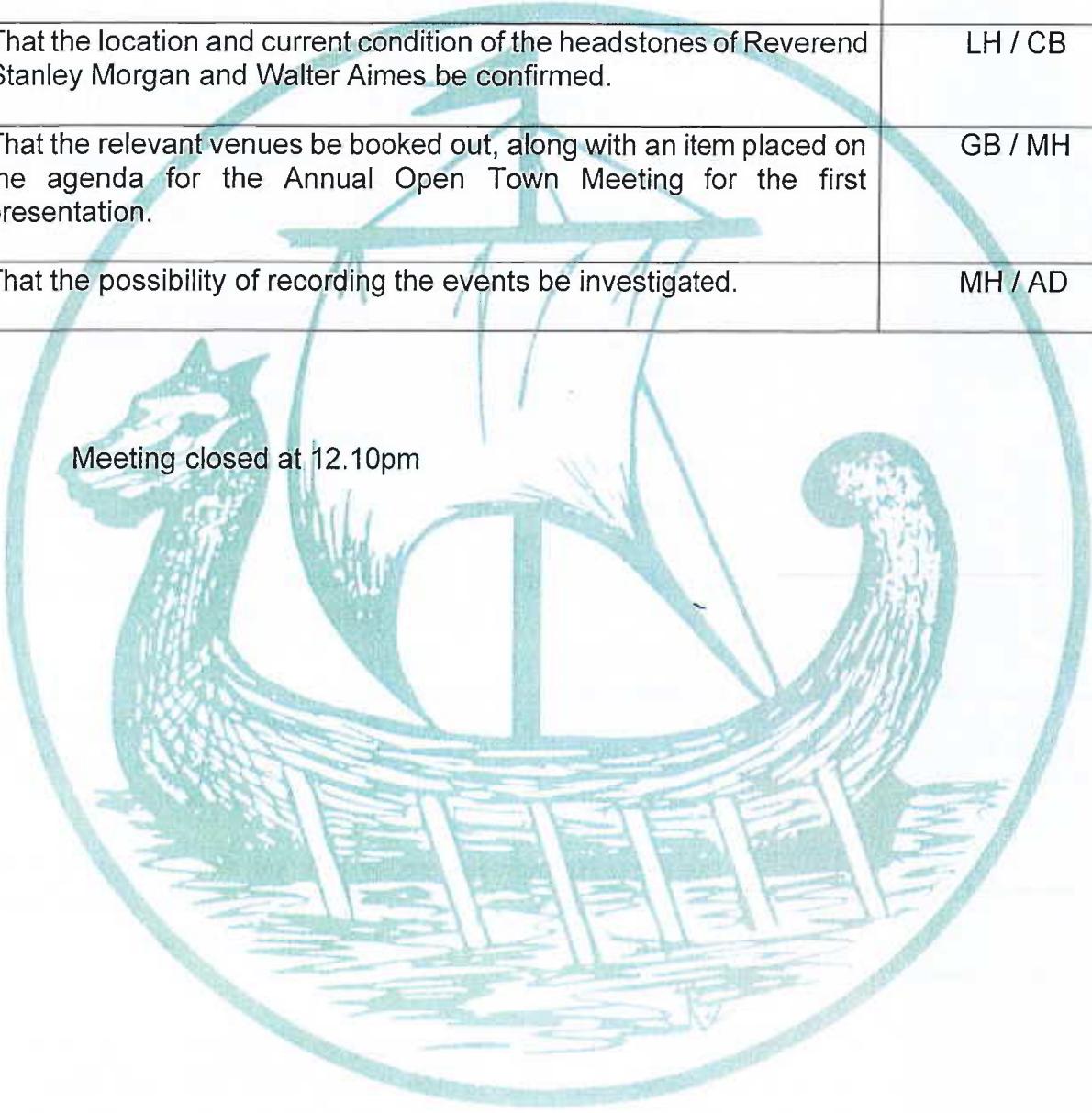
Members then laid out a possible programme that would fit around other activities including the proposed St Augustine's Day celebration in Greenhithe on Monday 25 May 2026:

Date:	Location:	Event:
Wednesday 29 April 2026 at 7.00pm	Annual Open Town Meeting – Town Council Offices	10-minute presentation on the life of a select group of significant political figures.
Thursday 25 June 2026 at 10.00am	Starting from Ingress Vale, Greenhithe and finishing at the Old Fire Station Café, Swanscombe, refreshments.	A guided walk as detailed incorporating the sites / locations when the Council have met over the last 10 years.
Tuesday 29 September 2026 at 7.00pm	Town Council Offices Community Hall, Swanscombe	A talk on the history of Swanscombe with refreshments provided by the Local History Group
Wednesday 21 October 2026 at 7.00pm	The Peter Harman Hall at the Ingress Park Community Centre, Greenhithe	A talk on the history of Greenhithe with refreshments provided by the Local History Group
Thursday 3 December 2026 between 12noon and 3pm	Local History Group Archive at the Town Council Offices, Swanscombe	An open event for the public to come along and see, and talk about, the documents are artifacts currently stored.

**COMMUNITY EVENT WORKING GROUP – NOTES FROM 10 DECEMBER 2025 at
11.00am**

Actions Agreed:	Tasked to:
That the draft programme, along with the notes from this meeting, would be put to the Town Council for endorsement at its meeting scheduled for the 29 January 2026.	GB / MH
That the location and current condition of the headstones of Reverend Stanley Morgan and Walter Aimes be confirmed.	LH / CB
That the relevant venues be booked out, along with an item placed on the agenda for the Annual Open Town Meeting for the first presentation.	GB / MH
That the possibility of recording the events be investigated.	MH / AD

Meeting closed at 12.10pm





JOIN US TO CELEBRATE HISTORY



We are commemorating the centenary of the formation of Swanscombe Urban District Council by hosting a series of events celebrating everything Swanscombe & Greenhithe over the last 100 years. Check out the schedule:

Date:	Location:	Event:
Wed 29 Apr 2026 at 7.00pm	Annual Open Town Meeting – Town Council Offices	10-minute presentation on the life of a select group of significant political figures.
Thu 25 Jun 2026 at 10.00am	Starting from Ingress Vale, Greenhithe and finishing at the Old Fire Station Swanscombe, for refreshments.	A guided walk as detailed incorporating the sites / locations when the Council have met over the last 10 years.
Tue 29 Sep 2026 at 7.00pm	Town Council Community Hall, Swanscombe	A talk on the history of Swanscombe with refreshments provided by the Local History Group
Wed 21 Oct 2026 at 7.00pm	The Peter Harman Hall at the Ingress Park Community Centre, Greenhithe	A talk on the history of Greenhithe with refreshments provided by the Local History Group
Thu 3 Dec 2026 12noon to 3pm	Local History Group Archive at the Town Council Offices, Swanscombe	An open event for the public to come along and see, and talk about, the documents are artifacts currently stored.



LORRY PARK WORKING GROUP MEETING –
NOTES FROM 21 OCTOBER 2025 AT 11.00 AM

Present: Cllr Ann Duke (Substituting for Cllr Peter Harris)
Cllr Dawn Johnston
Cllr Graham Taylor

Cllr Jessica McQueen STC
Cllr Stephanie Thredgile STC

Serge Lomakin – HU United
Istran Najdeva – HU United

Apologies: Cllr Peter Harris
Cllr Claire Pearce
Cllr Elizabeth Wickham

Absent: There were none

Also Present: Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk / RFO

Cllr Johnston welcomed everyone to the meeting including the guests from HU United and briefly laid out the history of the project and the challenges being faced with freight in the area.

Cllr McQueen outlined the issues being faced in Stone and updated all present that Dartford Borough Council had postponed the meeting regarding green corridors in Stone with no confirmed date for reconsideration.

Serge Lomakin provided members with a sheet of statistics on usage levels at the site, a list of the companies who have contracts to use the site and an outline of the costs and what is included for drivers. He also highlighted the work they had undertaken in liaising with the freight companies that use their site regarding routes and avoiding the residential areas of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Serge also clarified that they had been investigating some of the sites highlighted in the original proposal and had visited the Port of London Authority (PLA) site in Crossways Boulevard but had been informed that the site would not be available unless an operator intended to use the jetty.

Members expressed their thanks for the information supplied by HU United and the importance of what the company offered in regard to affordable and secure facilities for lorry drivers. All parties agreed that the location was perhaps not the most suitable.

Serge also confirmed that the new owners of the site, Land Logical, were yet to make contact with any of the companies in the Business Park to outline what their future plans were for the land. Serge also advised that a second lorry park was also located on Manor Way and operated by a company called Tovizi / Mervo.

Following discussion, it was agreed that more weight needed to be put through the MP, Jim Dickson, to engage with both the Roads Minister on the strategic importance

LORRY PARK WORKING GROUP MEETING –
NOTES FROM 21 OCTOBER 2025 AT 11.00 AM

of improving freight options in this part of Kent and also to engage with the PLA to consider the value of waiting for a site operator who will use the jetty. This would be done either by members attending the MP Surgery to discuss this, or if he was available, coming to a meeting at the Town Council offices.

Cllr McQueen suggested that the contacts that Stone Town Council already have be utilised to make an approach to Land Logical to discuss their future plans for Manor Way Business Park and what support they could offer on this issue.

An email would, as per the notes from the meeting on 16 September 2025, be sent to KCC Member Thomas Mallon to set up a meeting to discuss how KCC Highways could drive this initiative forward and discuss better signage to add freight in reaching the existing lorry park without disruption.

Contact would also be made with other lorry park located at the site to see if they were willing to engage on this proposal also.

Actions Agreed:	Tasked to:
To contact Jim Dickson MP to arrange for Councillors to either have a discussion with him via his regular surgery or to attend a meeting at the Town Council offices	MH Meeting on 23/11/26
To contact KCC Member for Swanscombe and Greenhithe, Thomas Mallon, to set up a meeting to engage on what support Kent Highways could bring to lobby to take this forward.	MH
That Stone Town Council would use its existing contacts with Land Logical to request some clarity on what future plans they have for the site and what support they could add to this proposal.	JM
To contact the other lorry park operator at Manor Business Park, Tovizi / Mervo to see if they were willing to engage on this proposal.	MH

Meeting Closed: 12.15pm

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

27 NOV 2025

Return to:

Mr Graham Blew, Town Clerk,
Council Offices
The Grove
Swanscombe, DA10 0GA

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Email: Info@swanscombeandgreenhitetowncouncil.gov.uk

Full name	Scott James Dunn PhD
Home address Inc. Postcode	[REDACTED], Dale Road, Southfleet, Kent, DA13 9NX
Telephone number	01474 [REDACTED]
Mobile number	07831 [REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED]@hotmail.co.uk

**LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A TOWN COUNCILLOR
QUALIFICATIONS****(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below)**

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes
Are you 18 or over?	Yes

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)

Are you on the electoral register for the ward of Swanscombe within Swanscombe and Greenhithe?	No
Have you lived either in the ward of Swanscombe, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the ward of Swanscombe for at least a year?	Yes
Have you had your only or main place of work in the ward of Swanscombe for at least a year?	No

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

(You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	No
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	No
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	No
Are you subject to any relevant notification requirements or a relevant order in relation to a sexual offence (as set out in the Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022)	No

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a Town Councillor.

Born, raised, educated and with long standing family roots in Swanscombe I have always held a deep sense of belonging with the Town and Community.

I grew up under the old Urban District Council and saw Swanscombe choosing to be taken under Dartford rather than Gravesend ultimately joining with Greenhithe to become the Town Council. I have witnessed first-hand the changes to the community over 50 years seeing the reduction of Community assets and the diminishing of loss of identity of the area. As a keen historian with the largest collection of memorabilia relating to the area, it is important that our history is available to future generations and not lost with the large developments in the area.

At 15 I was chosen to represent Dartford Scout District at the World Jamboree in Australia, and the Town Council were very supportive of me at the time, (perhaps the framed presentation I made at the time is still in the archives).

The opportunity to become a Town Councillor gives me the opportunity to repay that support in my formative years, to help preserve our rich heritage and to help shape our great community for generations to come.

Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Council, for example, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business, or trade union experience.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

My father sat as an independant councillor for many years on Stone Parish Council giving me a valuable insight into the workings of local government.

Educated at all 3 local schools, (Manor Road, Swayne, Swanscombe Secondary), I left school and entered a career in Logistics, a career I still enjoy today, (although now semi-retired).

During my time I have managed operations on every continent, budgets in excess of £250million per year and, over 5000 employees dealing with the shop floor through to the highest levels of management. I have negotiated with Unions from shop stewards through to the head of the TUC in the UK and Teamsters in the US.

I have worked with various Public Organisations such as Museums, Charities, and Civil Service Departments and worked with the Military here in the UK and US, understanding fully the red-tape and requirements to get things moving.

Rising to Director level in the two largest Shipping Companies in the world, I have owned and operated my own Company since 2006, with fully owned operations in the UK, US, Hong Kong and Europe - now sitting as Group Chairman.



Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

MSc in International Transport & Commerce, PhD in Business Administration

Fellow of the Institute of Directors, Chartered Fellow of the Institute of Transport, Life Fellow

of the Royal Society Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce, Chairman of a Multinational Company.

I bring operational, facility & real estate, accounting, budgeting, marketing, international relations, sales and development, project and change management and governmental experience at local and national level.

And most of all, a deep and long understanding of the area, its origins, history and community spirit.

Are there any questions you would like to ask the council?

I have no political affiliation and would sit as an independant to support the community.

Please use a separate sheet if required.

Signed 

Date: 26/11/25

Mr. Scott James Dunn PhD
[REDACTED], [REDACTED] Southfleet, Kent, DA13 9NX
Tel: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

By Email:

Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council

Members of the Chamber,

Firstly, may I apologise for not appearing before you in person. My wife, (Mandy), and I celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary this year and several trips have been scheduled by her to celebrate this event, (of which we are currently on one).

Given my absence, I do appreciate the opportunity to submit some further details to you regarding my application to join you on the Council.

Born in 1972, I grew up in Broad Road and attended the Harmer Road pre-school, the original Manor Road Infant School, Sweeney Primary and lastly Swanscombe Secondary, (as it was then known), before heading for employment in the shipping and logistics industry.

My father's side of the family hailed from Greenhithe with members living in Knockhall Chase, The Avenue and above the old Bakers Shop in the village, (sadly now gone), whilst others resided in Swanscombe. My Mother's family, (Gammon), were spread across Stone and Swanscombe and a number still reside there.

You could therefore say that I have both Swanscombe & Greenhithe running through my veins and certainly having grown up in the area and been a resident for some 53 years, (since 2004 in Southfleet with regular visits back to see family), I have seen the changes, both good and bad, that have happened during that time.

I am well acquainted with the History, Development and Challenges of the area and the residents within it. With family, friends and buddies from school living across both areas, I hear on a regular basis the problems the people of Swanscombe and Greenhithe face in terms of housing, transportation links, crime, vandalism and dumping of waste.

So, the question is what I can offer the Council to help resolve these issues:

On leaving school I entered the shipping and logistics industry working across the globe in a variety of roles and ultimately becoming a director within each of the 3 largest shipping companies in the world. In 2006, my wife and I started our own business, and this has grown with offices across the UK, Europe, Middle East, US and Hong Kong. During this time, I continued my education gaining my Diploma in Transport, MSc in Transport and Logistics and finally my PhD in Business Management. I now sit as Chairman of the Board giving me time to devote to philanthropic activities.

Mr. Scott James Dunn PhD

[REDACTED], Southfleet, Kent, DA13 9[REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED] Email: scott_dunn@outlook.com

In 2025 I raised £2000 for Mary's Child Kent to help fund the Foodbank in St. Peter and St Paul's Church Centre, I also assisted the 'Cement Fields' project providing materials and data, (displayed in Gravesend Library), helping to preserve the rich culture and heritage of Swanscombe and Greenhithe which, given the vast influx of new residents, risks being lost forever.

Over and above these and other charitable activities locally, my business knowledge and that of both public and commercial transport can assist in solving the greatest challenge to Swanscombe since William, Duke of Normandy, was stopped on the Watling Road at Swanscombe Woods – it is of course, Galley Hill.

As a past Deputy Chairman of the Road Haulage Association, I can directly negotiate with those local Haulage companies who seem to ignore the pleas of residents and the Council and continue to allow their trucks through our narrow streets. I understand better than anyone the legislation that can be used to bear down on these companies' Operator Licences, ultimately shutting them down if they do not comply.

Having worked with the Department of Trade and Industry and UK Export both in the UK and abroad, I have many high levels contacts in Parliament and the Civil Service which I can look to utilise not only for Galley Hill but other areas for the benefit of our community.

On a more local basis, I have Project Management Skills, Accountancy Skills, a knowledge of facilities management, raising funding, planning controls and much, much more. I work well as part of a team and can engage with stakeholders of all levels.

Ultimately, I have a genuine love of the area and, as we approach our documented 1,000-year anniversary, hope to help ensure we have a sustainable, accessible and beautiful Town to shout about.

Thank you for your time.

Scott Dunn.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

05 JAN 2026

Return to:
Mr Graham Blew, Town Clerk,
Council Offices
The Grove
Swanscombe, DA10 0GA

Email: Info@swanscombeandgreenhitethecouncil.gov.uk

B

Full name	PETER CRANE
Home address	[REDACTED]
Inc. Postcode	IRVING WALK SWANSOMBE KENT DA10 0ER
Telephone number	[REDACTED]
Mobile number	[REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED] @ hotmail.co.uk

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A TOWN COUNCILLOR QUALIFICATIONS

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both questions below)

Are you a British, Commonwealth or a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights?	Yes / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are you 18 or over?	Yes / No

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)

Are you on the electoral register for the ward of Greenhithe within Swanscombe and Greenhithe?	Yes / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have you lived either in the ward of Greenhithe, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have you been the owner or <u>tenant</u> of land in the ward of Greenhithe for at least a year?	Yes / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TENANT
Have you had your only or main place of work in the ward of Greenhithe for at least a year?	Yes / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

(You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No
Are you subject to any relevant notification requirements or a relevant order in relation to a sexual offence (as set out in the Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / No

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a Town Councillor.

live lived in Swanscombe half my life
and would like help.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Council, for example, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business, or trade union experience.

I've lived in Swanscombe for about 70 yrs, and I'm with the history club, and I have joined the Lion's club, I help out all round sometimes with Neighborhood Watch, I also help with trying to stop the big lorries coming thru Swanscombe.

Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

I don't have any skills to be on the council as such, but I go to all the meetings and help any way I can behind the scenes and would like to help more if I can.

Are there any questions you would like to ask the council?

I haven't at the moment, but Sue said she been going to meetings and now what's been said there, if I have any questions after they help me by explaining what's going on

Please use a separate sheet if required.

Signed..... 

Date: 30-12-25

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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

Return to:
Mr Graham Blew, Town Clerk,
Council Offices
The Grove
Swanscombe, DA10 0GA

(C)

Email: Info@swanscombeandgreenhitetowncouncil.gov.uk

Full name	Denise Butler
Home address Inc. Postcode	████████ Ames Road Swanscombe DA10 █████
Telephone number	
Mobile number	██████████
Email	Deedbutler@████████.uk

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A TOWN COUNCILLOR QUALIFICATIONS

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes
Are you 18 or over?	Yes

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)

Are you on the electoral register for the ward of Swanscombe within Swanscombe and Greenhithe?	Yes
Have you lived either in the ward of Swanscombe, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the ward of Swanscombe for at least a year?	Yes
Have you had your only or main place of work in the ward of Swanscombe for at least a year?	Yes

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

(You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	No
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	No
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	No
Are you subject to any relevant notification requirements or a relevant order in relation to a sexual offence (as set out in the Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022)	No

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a Town Councillor.

I am interested in being a town councillor because I care deeply about the place I live and the people who make up this community. I have spent a lot of time listening to residents, supporting local projects and created the hub, a space where people feel welcome and included. This feels like a natural step in supporting the community and an opportunity to help shape a positive future for the people who call this place home.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR.

Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Council, for example, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business, or trade union experience.

I am driven by my desire to make a difference in communities. My journey started some years ago with a project for Kensington and Chelsea council, in partnership with the BBC where I helped coordinate and run a local RSL broadcast. Later after a personal experience I found myself at Jo's cervical cancer trust where I combined working in the office with campaigning across the country, speaking at parliament to push for the HPV vaccine rollout, something which I am incredibly proud of.

I've also volunteered CAS Community Solutions, where I took up the opportunity to train to be a youth worker amongst other things and now I run Swanscombe And Greenhithe Community Hub

Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

I am organised, community focused with clear communication skills, I have a practical and inclusive approach to getting things done

Are there any questions you would like to ask the council?

Please use a separate sheet if required.

Denise Butler
Signed.....

Date:20/01/2026.....

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CO-OPTION POLICY

Vacancies:

A casual vacancy can occur for several reasons:

Resignations from the council must be made in writing to the Chairman. When the Chairman resigns, they serve the resignation in writing on the Clerk. Resignations are effective immediately on receipt by the Chairman / Clerk and cannot be post-dated or withdrawn. If a member fails to attend any meeting of the council for 6 months, without a reason for absence being formally accepted by the council, they automatically cease to be a member of the council. If a member dies, a casual vacancy occurs.

1. Following receipt of a resignation, or confirmation of a casual vacancy for any other reason, the Clerk must inform Dartford Borough Council as soon as practicable. (In accordance with s232 of the 1972 Local Government Act).
2. A notice of casual vacancy will then be issued by the Clerk on the instruction of Dartford Borough Council and will be displayed in a conspicuous place. A notice of casual vacancy allows for 10 people on the electoral register to request, in writing to the proper officer of the principal authority, that an election be held. Should this happen, a by-election must be held (unless an ordinary election is due within the next six months).
3. If no request to hold a by-election is forthcoming, the Town Council are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the council to fill a casual vacancy. Although seeking 'expressions of interest' is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that Councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.
4. Whenever the need for co-option arises, the Town Council will advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage 'expressions of interest' from anyone in the parish who is eligible to stand as a parish councillor. All potential candidates will be asked to complete an expression of interest form. (Attached as Appendix A of this policy).

Co-option procedure:

5. At the next available Full Council meeting following receipt of expressions of interest:
 - a. Members of the Council will have received copies of the expression of interest forms submitted.
 - b. Candidates will be asked to give a brief verbal supporting statement and Councillors will have opportunity to ask any additional questions. In the event a candidate cannot attend the meeting they will have the opportunity to submit an additional written supporting statement and they will be considered equally to any candidates in attendance.
 - c. Within the open session of the meeting members will vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39) (When there are more candidates than vacancies, the candidate with the least number of votes cast will be deleted and the vote taken again and again etc. until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies).

CO-OPTION POLICY

- d. One person will be chosen for each vacancy. However, where the Council believes it has sound reason to do so, due to the unsuitability of a candidate, it may choose not to appoint a candidate and to readvertise a vacancy. (Any decision not to appoint a candidate and leave a vacancy must be for reasons that would satisfy any future legal challenge.)
6. If present, the co-opted member/s may join the meeting after signing the acceptance of office form. However, it should be noted that their vote on any matter requiring prior notice will be discounted in the case of a tied vote for that meeting only.
7. The Clerk will notify Dartford Borough Council of the new Councillor appointment/s and advise the co-opted member/s of their obligations about registration of interests and acceptance of Code of Conduct.
8. The same process will be followed to co-opt members following an ordinary election after which vacancies remained.

