

MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE
held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 25
JUNE 2026 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Elizabeth Wickham (Chairman for the Meeting)
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Dawn Johnston
Councillor Hazel Stephens
VACANCY

ALSO PRESENT: Indigo Allred – Assistant Town Clerk
Dan Usher – Senior Groundsman/Gardener
x1 Member of the public

ABSENT: Councillor Lesley Howes.

95/26-27. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING.

As both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were unable to attend the meeting it was duly proposed, seconded, and agreed.

Recommended: That Councillor Elizabeth Wickham be elected as the Chairman for the meeting.

96/26-27. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting were explained.

97/26-27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Emma Ben – Moussa, due to illness.

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

98/26-27. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

99/26-27. 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.

100/26-27. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

101/26-27. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2026

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 March 2026 were approved and signed as a true record.

102/26-27. SENIOR GROUNDSMAN / GARDENER'S REPORT.

Members considered the report which updated on the work undertaken, by the Parks Department and the work planned which included:

Broomfield, Eagles Road, Heritage Park, Knockhall, Swanscombe Park, Valley View, Equipment / Staffing and Miscellaneous.

The Senior Groundsman / Gardener advised members that the gang mowing has begun, hard surfaces have been treated for moss removal/prevention.

Recommended: That the report be noted.

TOWN CLERK AND ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK'S REPORT.

103/26-27. SAXON COURT PLAY EQUIPMENT (p).

Members considered the correspondence received from a local resident regarding the play equipment at Saxon Court Play Area.

Recommended: That the item be noted and that the replacement ropes be purchased.

104/26-27. MUSIC LICENCE – COMMUNITY HALLS (p).

Members considered the annual renewal of the Music Licence for the Community Halls. A following discussion regarding the costs and responsibilities associated with the licences took place.

Recommended:

1. That the Music Licence renewal be paid for the current year, subject to ongoing review.
2. That the Committee consider whether the cost of the licences should be incorporated into the Community Halls hire charges when the 2027 – 2028 hiring fees are to be agreed.

105/26-27. CHILDRENS SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT.

Members considered the update to the Children's Summer Entertainment 2026.

Recommended: That the item be noted, the proposed use of funding be approved and that the Assistant Town Clerk be thanked for their work in securing children's entertainment for local families.

106/26-27. HERITAGE PARK – POND SITE.

Members considered the update on the Heritage Park regarding the development of audio trails and other improvements to the Heritage Park. Members discussed the idea of a lower maintenance redesign of the Pond Site but wanted a more defined project proposal to reference.

Recommended:

1. That the update be noted.
2. That a lower-maintenance redesign of the pond site be outlined further and reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

107/26-27. FLAG SCHEDULE – REVIEW (P).

Members considered the proposed amendments to the flag schedule. A member of public suggested that a British Red Ensign flag be flown for Merchant Marines Day in keeping with the area's unique maritime heritage. The member of public offered to donate the cost of the flag. Members proposed that D-Day on 6 June be included with the Union Flag to be flown. Members expressed their sincere thanks to a member of the public for their generous offer to fund the purchase of the British Red Ensign flag.

Recommended:

1. That the flag schedule be finalised with the above detailed amendments.
2. That officers source a British Red Ensign flag.

108/26-27. DARTFORD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE (DSTC) – COMMUNITY DAY 17 JULY 2026.

Members considered the item and update from the Parks Department regarding the activities to be provided.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

109/26-27. REQUEST TO USE TOWN COUNCIL PARKS.

Members considered the request from the Salvation Army to hold a Youth Summer Pop-Up event in Swanscombe Park. Members welcomed the event and expressed thanks to the Salvation Army for hosting the activity for local young people.

Recommended: That the request be approved.

110/26-27. REQUEST FROM SWANSCOMBE TIGERS FC – CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH

Members considered the request and agreed that permission be granted, subject to a suitable risk assessment being submitted no later than two weeks prior to the event.

Recommended: That the request be approved, subject to a suitable risk assessment being submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

111/26-27. THE SWANSCOMBE CENTRE – ANNUAL REPORT 2025 (P).

Members considered the provided the Annual Report and signed audited accounts for 2025 from Gravesham Community Leisure Limited.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

112/26-27. DELEGATION TO CONDUCT NORMAL BUSINESS DURING RECESS PERIOD.

Members are requested to delegate authority to the Town Clerk/RFO (if in post) or the Assistant 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/RFO (if in post) or the Assistant Town Clerk will consult with the Chairman and Town Mayor, if appropriate, before any business is transacted. If any emergencies do occur during this time the Executive & Emergency Committee would be convened.

Recommended: That, in accordance with section 101 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Town Clerk/RFO (if in post) or the Assistant Town Clerk be delegated authority to conduct the normal business of the council during the recess period.

113/26-27. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor Lorna Cross and seconded by Councillor Ann Duke.

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

107/26-27. THE SWANSCOMBE CENTRE – PERFORMANCE OF SERVICES UPDATE (p).

Further to minute 186/25-26 the Finance Director GCLL had provided the Performance of Services Report which includes details for Health & Safety, Finance and Attendances for February 2026 to April 2026.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)