MINUTES of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 16 JULY 2026 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Councillor Dawn Johnston – Town Major
Councillor Richard Lees – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Denise Butler
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Hazel Stephens
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham
Councillor Celedonia Krawczyk

ALSO PRESENT:

Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Indigo Allred – Administration Officer
Jack Turner – Locum RFO – via teams
DBC Councillor Jeremy Kite
Caroline Hicks – DBC Deputy Chief Executive
X4 Members of the public

ABSENT:

Councillor Alan Reach

134/26-27. **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.

135/26-27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Emma Ben – Moussa, due to illness.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ann Duke, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lesley Howes, due to other commitments.

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

RESOLVED:

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

136/26-27. **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.

137/26-27. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE TOWN MAYOR / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

138/26-27. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18 JUNE 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 18 June 2026 be confirmed as a true record and be signed.

139/26-27. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 JULY 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation and Environment Committee Meetings held on 8 July 2026 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

140/26-27. MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE AND AMENITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Recreation Leisure and Amenity Committee Meeting held on 25 June 2026 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

141/26-27. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1 JULY 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 1 July 2026 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

142/26-27. TOWN COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION

Councillor Peter Harris submitted a written letter of resignation on 19 June 2026, which took immediate effect.

A Notice of Casual Vacancy for the Knockhall Parish Ward was posted / displayed, with a deadline of 8 July 2026.

The Electoral Services Manager, Dartford Borough Council, confirmed that they had not received sufficient requests for the vacancy in the Knockhall Parish Ward and that the Town Council were now able to fill the vacancy by co-option.

Vacancy Posters will now be displayed on the Town Councils website, social media and notice boards requesting Expressions of Interest (EOI).

Members thanked Mr Peter Harris for his work and dedication to the community and wished him the best moving forward. Members asked that the Town Clerk write a letter to Mr Harris detailing their gratitude.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk write a letter to Mr Peter Harris thanking him for his years of dedicated service to the community.

143/26-27. VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Members are asked to consider the current vacancies on Committees and Sub-Committees.

a) Allotments & Cemeteries Sub-Committee.
b) Community Safety Committee.
c) Executive & Emergency Committee.
d) Finance & General Purposes Committee.
e) Heritage Sub-Committee.
f) Leases & Legal Sub-Committee.
g) Personnel Committee.
h) Planning, Major Developments, Transport & Environment Committee.
i) Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee.

It was agreed that Councillor Celedonia Krawczyk join the Community Safety Committee, Councillor Denise Butler join the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee, Councillor Celedonia Krawczyk join the Planning, Major Developments, Transport & Environment Committee, and Councillor Denise Butler join the Personnel Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Appointment and Constitution of the Standing and Other Committees be adopted as per the annexed list and detailed above.

144/26-27 WORKING GROUP – VACANICES.

As per Standing Order 25 (a) each Working Group should have a membership of between 3 – 5 members with the quorum for a meeting to take place being 3.

a. Community Event Working Group
b. Devolution Working Group
c. Environmental Action Plan Working Group
d. Financial Risk Assessment Working Group

e. Grove Car Park Working Group
f. Ingress Park Community Centre Working Group
g. Lorry Park Working Group
h. Pavilion Working Group
i. Polices and Procedures Review Working Group

It was agreed that Councillor Denise Butler join the Devolution Working Group, and Councillor Celedonia Krawczyk join the Ingress Park Community Working Group.

RESOLVED:

That the memberships of the Working Groups, including the amendments as detailed, be confirmed.

145/26-27. **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).

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliations for February 2026, March 2026, April 2026, and May 2026 be noted and that bank reconciliations for June 2026 be deferred to the next meeting.

146/26-27. **BANK TRANSFERS.**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (c) Members considered the list of bank transfers undertaken for February 2026, March 2026, April 2026, and May 2026 for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the bank transfers undertaken for June 2026 as per the annexed list, be approved.

147/26-27. **TO RECEIVE FINANCE STATEMENTS AND PASS ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (a) Members considered the details of all receipts and payments for authorisation June 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the receipts and payments for June 2026 as per the annexed list, be approved.

148/26-27. **UPDATED WORKING BUDGET.**

Members reviewed the provided working budget and list of payments allocated to the queried cost codes.

RESOLVED:

That the live position be noted and continue to be monitored.

149/26-27. **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.**

Members were provided with details of the Flex-Budget Report balanced to 30 June 2026 and the list of payments allocated to Administration Miscellaneous and Café Miscellaneous.

RESOLVED:

That the summary of accounts to 30 June 2026, be noted and continue to be monitored.

150/26-27. **FINANCIAL REPORTING.**

Members discussed the suggested regular and year end schedules of financial reporting, provided by the Locum RFO.

RESOLVED:

That the financial reporting as detailed by the Locum RFO be agreed.

151/26-27. **LOCUM RFO – UPDATE.**

Members reviewed the letter of resignation received from the Locum RFO which detailed that his last day of service to be 24 July 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted and the Locum RFO be thanked for his time and work.

152/26-27. **TOWN CLERK / RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO) – UPDATE.**

Members were provided with an update regarding the appointment of a Locum Town Clerk / RFO.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

153/26-27. **PAVILION – UPDATE.**

Members considered the update regarding the Pavilion, the advice received, and the quotations received for the required survey.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council select company A to provide the assessments requested from the insurance provider.

154/26-27. **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 Dawn Johnston is 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 Johnston had no matters to report directly relating to the IPGM. However, she advised that there had recently been a change in management at one of the blocks and noted that the managing agents do not operate from a site office, with management functions currently being carried out remotely.

Whitecliffe Community Liaison Group (WCLG)
Councillor Dawn Johnston is the Town Councils representatives on the WCLG. As previously agreed, the agenda from the meeting on 21 January 2026 was available for inspection.

Councillor Dawn Johnston advised that the most recent meeting had been cancelled and so she was unable to provide a report.

Borough and Parish Forum (BPF)
Councillor Dawn Johnston and the Town Clerk are the Town Councils representatives on the BPF.

Unfortunately, the Town Clerk and Councillor Dawn Johnston were unable to attend the meeting and were unable to provide a report.

155/26-27. **REPORT FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR.**

Unfortunately, Kent County Councillor for Swanscombe and Greenhithe, Mr Thomas Mallon, was unable to attend the meeting.

No report was submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

156/26-27. REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

Unfortunately, Dartford Borough Councillor David Mote was unable to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

157/26-27. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.

There were none

158/26-27. TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor announced her forthcoming Town Mayor's Dog Show, which is due to take place on 13 September, and encouraged all Members and residents to attend and support the event.

The Town Mayor then advised that this would be Town Clerk Graham Blew's final official Council meeting following 19 years of dedicated service to the Town Council. On behalf of the Council, she expressed her sincere thanks for his commitment, professionalism, and significant contribution to the community over many years.

Members of the Council and those members of the public in attendance joined the Town Mayor in thanking Mr Blew for his hard work and dedication and wished him every success and happiness for the future.

159/26-27. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor Richard Lees and seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Wickham.

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.

160/26-27. CHANGE OF AGENDA ORDER

The chairman advised the meeting that, as the Leader of Dartford Borough Council and the Deputy Chief Executive Officer were present, that the order of the last two agenda items be switched.

RESOLVED:

That the last two agenda items be switched.

161/26-27. PAVILION

Members considered and discussed at length the confidential report and briefing provided by Dartford Borough Council.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal submitted by Dartford Borough Council (DBC), as detailed within the confidential report, be unanimously agreed.

160/26-27. TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

Members reviewed the confidential correspondence, supporting papers and quotations received in relation to the Council's website arrangements.

During discussion, Members noted that the quotation did not appear to cover the full scope of the original request submitted to the website provider; and queried whether additional quotations should be sought and requested that Officers further investigate the current contractual arrangements, pricing structure and service agreements in order to establish whether the charges and support arrangements are consistent with industry standards and represent value for money for the Council.

It was further agreed that the findings of this review, together with any future website compliance and development requirements, should be taken into consideration as part of the Council's budget-setting process for the 2027/28 financial year.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted and that Officers query the scope of the provided quote and review the current website arrangements.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed:________________________________ Date:________________________
(Chairman)