MINUTES of the SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 14 OCTOBER 2026 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor Dawn Johnston – Town Mayor
Councillor Denise Butler
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Celedonia Krawczyk
Councillor Baptiste Reynaud
Councillor Hazel Stephens

ALSO PRESENT: Adil Iftakhar – Interim Town Clerk & RFO
Indigo Allred – Assistant Town Clerk
X1 Members of the public

ABSENT: Councillor Alan Reach

235/26-27. 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 Lorna Cross, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ann Duke, due to an emergency.

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 Councillor Elizabeth Wickham, due to illness.

RESOLVED:

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

236/26-27. 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.

237/26-27. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor Councillor Dawn Johnston greeted all those in attendance and announced her upcoming events.

238/26-27. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2026.

Officers notified Members than there had been an administerial error to minute reference numbers. The minute reference numbers for the Town Council Meeting 10 September 2026 to begin from 192/26-27.

Councillor Hazel Stephens noted that she had not been marked present, though she had attended the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Special Town Council meeting held on 10 September 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record and be signed subject to the above-mentioned corrections.

239/26-27. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation and Environment Committee Meetings held on 23 September 2026 be noted.

240/26-27. 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 item be deferred to Town Council meeting 22 October 2026.

241/26-27. BANK TRANSFERS.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (c) Members considered the list of bank transfers undertaken for August 2026 for approval.

RESOLVED: That the bank transfers undertaken for August 2026 as per the annexed list, be approved.

242/26-27. 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 for August 2026.

RESOLVED: That the receipts and payments between for September 2026 as per the annexed list, be approved.

243/26-27. UPDATED WORKING BUDGET.

Members reviewed the provided working budget.

RESOLVED: That the live position be noted.

244/26-27. SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.

Members were provided with details of the Flex-Budget Report balanced to 30 September 2026.

RESOLVED: That the summary of accounts to 30 September 2026, be noted.

245/26-27. FINANCIAL REPORTING.

Further to minute 82/26-27 Members discussed the Budget Overview Report, produced and presented to Members by the Interim Town Clerk / RFO; which included the Town Council's reserves statement and commentary on significant financial pressures.

RESOLVED: That the financial reporting as detailed by the Interim Town Clerk/RFO be noted.

246/26-27. INTERNAL CONTROL POLICY.

As per the most recent Internal Audit, an Internal Controls Policy was produced and presented to Members by the Interim Town Clerk / RFO.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Controls Policy be adopted.

247/26-27. REVIEW OF BANK MANDATE AND BANK SIGNATORIES.

Due to a change in Council staffing arrangements, the Bank Signatories approved at the Annual General Meeting 13 May 2026 needed to be updated. The updates to the Council's banking arrangements are:

To retain Councillor Lorna Cross and Councillor Richard Lees on the Banking Mandate.

To add Indigo Allred (Assistant Town Clerk) to the Banking Mandate.

To Note the Verification Councillors are Councillor Lesley Howes, Councillor Hazel Stephens, and Councillor Elizabeth Wickham.

RESOLVED: To approve the update to the Town Council's banking arrangements as stated above.

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248/26-27. DIRECT DEBITS AND REGULAR PAYMENTS.

As per the most recent Internal Audit, an Internal Controls Policy was produced and presented to Members by the Interim Town Clerk / RFO.

RESOLVED: That the updated list of Direct Debits and Regular Payments be approved.

249/26-27. TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE UPGRADE.

Further to Minute 160/26-27 and the recommendations contained within the report, Members considered the requirement to upgrade the Town Council's website to achieve WCAG 2.2 AA compliance and meet public sector accessibility obligations.

RESOLVED: That the appointment of Supplier B (Aubergine) to deliver the corporate website upgrade be approved and authority be delegated to the Town Clerk/RFO and Assistant Town Clerk to finalise the contractual terms with Aubergine and progress the implementation of the website upgrade.

250/26-27. PROVISION OF A COFFEE CART IN BROOMFIELD PARK.

Members considered the report produced by the Assistant Town Clerk and the business proposal, risk assessment and public liability produced by Rise and Grind Coffee Co.

RESOLVED: That permission be granted to Rise & Grind Coffee Co to operate at Broomfield Park for an initial trial period from approximately 1 November 2026 to 30 November 2026 and, subject to a satisfactory trial, continue for the remainder of the football season at the agreed commercial hire rate, with charges invoiced monthly based on agreed trading dates, and that officers be authorised to incorporate an appropriate keyholding arrangement within the permit and associated documentation.

251/26-27. NJC PAYSCALES ALIGNMENT.

Further to Minute 587/25-26, Members considered the report regarding the alignment of staff terms and conditions with the NJC framework.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve an in-principle commitment to align staff terms and conditions with the NJC framework, with formal contractual implementation deferred until 1 April 2027, thereby allowing any increased salary and back-pay obligations to be fully considered and budgeted for through the 2027-28 precept-setting process.

252/26-27. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

RESOLVED: That the date of the next Full Council meeting, 22 October 2026, be noted.

253/26-27. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor Denise Butler and seconded by Councillor Baptiste Raynuad.

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.

254/26-27. RESIGNATION NOTICE AND ASSOCIATED STAFFING MATTERS.

Members noted the resignation of Employee 31, with a final working day of 27 November 2026, and considered the associated staffing arrangements.

RESOLVED: That the resignation of Employee 31 be noted, and to approve the recruitment of one Cleaner / Facilities Operatives and one Facilities Operative.

255/26-27. HYBRID WORKING ARRANGEMENTS.

Further to Minute 122/26-27, Members considered the draft Flexible Working Policy, Home Working Policy, and Home Working Letter of Agreement, together with the National Association of Local Councils template documents provided for reference.

RESOLVED: That the Flexible Working and Home Working Polices be adopted, and the hybrid working letter of agreement be endorsed.

256/26-27. FRINGE ALLOWANCE RECTIFICATION.

Further to Minute 46/26-27, Members considered the confidential report concerning the fringe allowance applicable to Employee 78.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained within the confidential report be approved and that officers implement any required changes in conjunction with the payroll provider.

257/26-27. COMPLIANCE REVIEW.

Further to Minute 123/26-27, Members considered the confidential report and associated quotation received from the Payroll Company to enable recommendations 1, 3 and 8 of the compliance review to be implemented.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations as outlined in the confidential report be agreed and that officers action the compliance review with the payroll provider.

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There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Chairman)