

MINUTES of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2026 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Councillor Dawn Johnston – Town Mayor
Councillor Richard Lees – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Denise Butler
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Celedonia Krawczyk
Councillor Claire Pearce
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham
Councillor Baptiste Reynaud

ALSO PRESENT: Adil Iftakhar – Interim Town Clerk & RFO
Indigo Allred – Assistant Town Clerk

Kent County Councillor Thomas Mallon
Dartford Borough Councillor Carol Gale
X12 Members of the public

ABSENT: Councillor Emma Ben-Moussa

189/26-27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Alan Reach, due to other commitments.

RESOLVED:

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

190/26-27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillor Denise Butler declared interest on agenda item 18 – Town Council Asset – Town Council Noticeboard.

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.

191/26-27. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor Councillor Dawn Johnston greeted all those in attendance and announced that:

The Town Mayor's Dog Show would be taking place on 13 September 2026, and that she wished to cordially extend the invitation to all in the chamber.

She would also like to remind all present that the reports included within Council agendas are officer reports. They are not political documents.

Council officers are employed by Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council and serve all Members equally, regardless of political affiliation. Officers have a duty to act in the best interests of the Council and the wider community, and all reports are prepared with that responsibility in mind. These reports are then brought before the full Council, where all Members can scrutinise, debate, amend, and make decisions upon the recommendations presented.

Should any Councillor or member of the public have questions, comments, or concerns regarding any report produced by officers, I encourage them to engage directly with the Council's officers so that constructive and productive conversations can take place. I would also encourage members of the public to attend Council meetings whenever possible. Your views, experiences, and perspectives are important. I would like to thank everyone for attending this evening.

192/26-27. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20 AUGUST 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Special Town Council meeting held on 20 August 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record and be signed.

193/26-27. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation and Environment Committee Meetings held on 2 September 2026 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

194/26-27. 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 August 2026 be noted.

195/26-27. 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.

196/26-27. 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 August 2026 as per the annexed list, be approved.

197/26-27. UPDATED WORKING BUDGET.

Members reviewed the provided working budget.

RESOLVED: That the live position be noted.

198/26-27. SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.

Members were provided with details of the Flex-Budget Report balanced to 31 August 2026.

RESOLVED: That the summary of accounts to 31 August 2026, be noted.

199/26-27. 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.

200/26-27. FINANCIAL REPORTING – PETTY CASH.

Members considered the financial reporting detailing the banking of petty cash as per the recommendation of the Locum RFO and internal auditor.

RESOLVED: That the financial reporting be noted.

201/26-27. CO-OPTION OF TOWN COUNCILLOR FOR KNOCKHALL WARD.

Members considered and voted on the two Expression of Interest received for the Knockhall Ward vacancy.

RESOLVED: That Baptiste Reynaud be co-opted to the office of Town Councillor for the Knockhall Ward.

It was at this point that Baptiste Reynaud signed the declaration of acceptance of office and joined the meeting.

202/26-27. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES.

- a) Two Representatives to sit on the Board of Directors of the Ingress Park Management (Greenhithe) Limited.

It was then agreed that Councillor Celedonia Krawczyk fill this position.

MOVED by Councillor Ann Duke and seconded by Councillor Hazel Stephens.

RESOLVED: That the appointment of representatives to outside bodies be approved as per the list detailed in the agenda and to include the above.

203/25-26. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL

Members considered the funding application submitted by Gateway Salvation Church. Following discussion, Members noted the significant financial pressures currently facing the Town Council and resolved not to award funding to the applicant.

RESOLVED:

- a) That no grant funding be awarded to Gateway Salvation Church.
- b) That no further grant funding applications be considered during the remainder of the 2025/26 financial year.
- c) That the remaining £1,000 budget provision for grants be returned to the Council's general fund
- d) That officers be instructed to advise the applicant of the Committee's decision and, where possible, signpost them to alternative funding opportunities and grant providers which may be able to assist with their project.

204/26-27. 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:

- a) That permission be granted to Rise & Grind Coffee Co to operate at Broomfield Park until the conclusion of the 2026/27 Kent Youth Football League season.
- b) That the standard commercial hire rate of £201 per day be applied, amounting to a total seasonal charge of £2,613.00.
- c) That delegated authority be granted to the Town Clerk/RFO and Assistant Town Clerk to agree suitable operating conditions and to prepare and issue the necessary permit and associated documentation.
- d) That the operation of Rise & Grind Coffee Co at Broomfield Park during the 2026/27 football season be treated as a trial period, and that the Council's procedures and arrangements relating to commercial trading pitches within Town Council parks be reviewed at the conclusion of the trial using the experience and information gathered during the period of operation.

- e) That Rise & Grind Coffee Co be advised of the Council's decision and invited to confirm whether it wishes to proceed on the approved terms.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor Denise Butler left the council chamber and took no part in the discussion, or decision of the following agenda item

205/26-27. TOWN COUNCIL ASSET – TOWN COUNCIL NOTICE BOARD.

Members considered the recommendation to sell the Town Council's notice board which had been previously installed on the outside of the Old Fire Station Community Café.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council donate the notice board to the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Community Hub.

206/26-27. CHURCH ROAD COMMUNITY HALL – ASSET REVIEW.

Members considered the asset review report produced and presented by the Interim Town Clerk / RFO and after discussion it was unanimously agreed that:

RESOLVED:

1. That the findings of the review of Church Road Community Hall be noted.
2. That the Town Council retain the asset as part of the Council's active property portfolio.

207/26-27. THE GROVE CAR PARK – ASSET REVIEW UPDATE.

Members considered the asset review report produced and presented by the Interim Town Clerk / RFO and after much discussion it was majority agreed that:

RESOLVED:

1. That the asset review update be noted.
2. That the recommendations as set out in the report be agreed.
3. That the Interim Town Clerk/RFO be authorised to progress the agreed recommendations and report back to the Council as required.

208/26-27. THE GROVE HALL INVENTORY.

Members considered the inventory of the Grove Hall and the recommendation to archive, repurpose, sell or dispose of the items contained within.

RESOLVED:

1. That the inventory of the Grove Community Hall be noted.
2. That the Officers liaise with the Local History group for their advice on items of historical significance within the hall.
3. That after all items of historical significance be identified and safely stored in the Town Council Chamber Storeroom, that the Interim Town Clerk/RFO and

Assistant Town Clerk be delegated authority to repurpose, sell, or dispose of all other items.

209/26-27. 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 representative 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 Dawn Johnston informed the meeting that the next IPGM meeting would be in two weeks and that there was no further update from the last meeting.

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 informed the meeting that unfortunately the WCLG's next meeting had been deferred, and she is unable to attend the new date of the meeting due to prior commitments.

Borough and Parish Forum (BPF)

Councillor Dawn Johnston and the Town Clerk are the Town Councils representatives on the BPF.

Councillor Dawn Johnston informed the meeting that unfortunately she had been unable to attend the most recent meeting.

210/26-27. REPORT FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

Kent County Councillor for Swanscombe and Greenhithe, Mr Thomas Mallon, attended the meeting. He gave a brief report which detailed that:

Kent County Council had finished the works on Stanhope Road, which reportedly has been successful. That signage around Galley Hill may be inadequate at this time, and that he has asked for an engineer to visit and assess the site. That Kent County Council had been made aware of the leak under the Swanscombe Train Station bridge and that discourse with Thames water and other responsible parties was on going to resolve the issue. That the highway team had been informed that the bollards on Swanscombe Highstreet are ready to be installed, but that a date of works was yet to be confirmed. That he had confirmed with Dartford Borough Council leader Jeremy Kite MBE that an additional parking officer would be allocated to occasionally patrol Swanscombe Highstreet in relation to anti-social parking.

RESOLVED: That the item be noted.

211/26-27. REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

Dartford Borough Councillor Carol Gale attended the meeting. She gave a brief report which detailed that:

Several local schools have been nominated for the School Green Awards. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was discussed, with approximately £1 million in professional fees incurred by Dartford Borough Council. Concerns were raised regarding ongoing joyriding and anti-social behaviour in Crossways, which had been escalated to Kent Police. Police activity relating to drugs offences was reported, including a warrant executed in Greenhithe and an associated operation in Swanscombe. That she had agreed to serve on the Pavilion Project Committee to support Dartford Borough Council in delivering the new Swanscombe pavilion project. Concerns were raised regarding air quality impacts from development in the Fleet area. A reminder was given that any coffee cart operating on Council land must have appropriate commercial waste arrangements in place, including a secure commercial waste service and compliance with waste disposal regulations.

Dartford Borough Councillor Claire Pearce was also in attendance. She gave a brief report which detailed that:

Since the last meeting she had reported over 30 outstanding housing repairs from DBC tenants to the Council. That she had conducted 2 Ward Walks across Swanscombe resulting in over 40 fly tips being reported. Work to demolish the subsiding flats in Leonard Avenue has begun and will continue for the next few months. At present there are no plans for the site once demolition has been completed, but she will keep everyone updated. That she had been approached by a company called Collaborate Digital and hope to be working with them early next year to take the message regarding Water Safety out to pupils at Manor and Craylands schools after the tragic death this summer locally.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

212/26-27. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

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

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)