

**Swanley Town Council**  
Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU  
Tel: 01322 611663  
[www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk)

**FULL COUNCIL 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017**  
**7:30PM THE CIVIC CENTRE**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Mayor Cllr Ball, Leader Cllr Southern, Deputy Leader Cllr Morris, Cllr Horwood, Cllr Willingale, Cllr C Barnes, Cllr J Barnes, Cllr Scott Cllr Dyball, Cllr Hogg, Cllr Komolafe, Cllr Darrington, Cllr Halford

**Officers:** CEO Steve Nash, Civic Manager Toni Roast, Estate & Facilities Manager Dan Sutton, Democratic Services Officer Barb Playfoot

**Information:** The Mayor advised Councillors that item 17 would not be discussed as this was still a Draft proposal

**Blessing:** The Mayor had invited Reverend Dayne Batley-Gladden to say a short prayer at the start of the meeting and invited those not wishing to take part to leave at this time. He also included a short prayer for June Searles recently deceased who had been a previous Mayoress of Swanley.

**Public Session:** Mr Bob Alexander asked at the last Full Council on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 under Budget 2017/18, it was stated \*the Olympic should produce a surplus of £25,780” He understands that these figures for both venues are based on ‘Predicted Income and Expenditure’ and not profit, any profit/loss not being apparent until the end of the financial year.

This being so and mindful of the huge losses incurred by SB over the last 3 years, he suggested that when STC engages in this and any other projects that involve Council resources being managed, that in the event of losses being incurred at the end of the FNY all Councillors of the controlling party underwrite such a loss from their personal finds, thus indemnifying Swanley Council taxpayers against any such loss.

Cllr Southern explained that the above would be illegal and would not happen.

- 1. To receive Apologies for Absence**  
Cllr L Gaire, Cllr S Gaire, Cllr Searles

**To receive Declarations of Interest**  
**None received**

- 2. To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017**  
**AGREED**

**3. To receive Minutes of Committees and approve recommendations contained therein:**

Development Control

DATE: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017

Finance and Audit

DATE: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017

Personnel

DATE: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017

**AGREED**

**4. 10131 LONG SERVICE SCHEME**

Cllr Southern spoke on the report and agreed that the long service payments are to cease from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and that a new scheme to recognise staff performance be considered in the future

**RESOLVED: That the Long Service Scheme be revoked from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017**

**5. 10132 MEETING DATES 2017/18**

Cllr Southern advised that the Personnel committee scheduled on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 should be cancelled revisited nearer the time and that the Chair would decide if the meeting is required.

**RESOLVED: That the Meeting Dates 2017/18 is approved**

**6. 10133 PRESS POLICY**

Cllr Southern ask for an amendment to the wording item 4, line 3, remove 'and' so the paragraph read better. Cllr Morris asked for additional line to state that "my personal opinion" be added at the Town Clerk's discretion

**RESOLVED: That the Press Policy is adopted**

**7. 10134 EVENTS DIARY**

Cllr Southern commended STC on the number of events planned for 2017. Cllr Horwood suggested that Swanley in Bloom is extended to encompass SDC areas which will enhance the whole area. Cllr Halford suggested that a Kent Farmers Market be added to the events, the CEO informed him that there were plans for several additional markets and it would be considered.

**RESOLVED: That the Events diary is approved**

**8. 10135 AUDIT REPORTS**

Cllr Southern suggested that the Audit Report be posted on the website to provide transparency.

**RESOLVED: That the Audit Reports are approved**

**9. 10136 Mayors Communication**

The mayor attended the 593 (Swanley) Air Cadets Sqn Presentation Evening on the 17<sup>th</sup> February, he reported he found it to be a worthwhile visit, meeting both the cadets and their Commanding Officer.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> February he visited the Italian market held in Swanley Town Centre and also attended the Mayor of Canterbury's Charity Dinner on the 4<sup>th</sup> March.

## 10. 10137 Report from County and District Councillors

Cllr Horwood reported that the 20mph speed limit was now in place on St Mary's Road.

He has arranged a meeting with the Street light management team to discuss the reinstatement of the street lighting between the Bexley border and the Premier Inn following the death of Mr Draper.

He also reported that he was on a waiting list with both SDC and KCC for CCTV to be installed on London Road to monitor/record the movement of shopping trolleys and the creation of trolley trees.

Cllr Halford has resigned from the Health and Hazard Committee at SDC, he commented that he would not agree to additional funds being allocated to provide sex education to secondary schools. Also he would be calling for an investigation into the pollution levels in Swanley. Cllr Morris voiced his opinion on the pollution levels coming from the Bexley incinerator.

Cllr Dyball reported that the figures on housing were now public, the parking survey on St Marys Road had been completed and awaiting results. She also advised the SDC were offering a 'Switch and Save service' offering easy transition to new energy etc. providers.

Cllr Southern asked if the SDC councillors could arrange for something to be done with the neglected fountain in the town centre, either reinstate it or re-pave the area.

Cllr Scott suggested that the Council chamber be used for School councils meetings the alike, Civic Centre Manager Toni Roast explained that this arrangement is already in place and have several bookings arranged for this year.

## 11. Forthcoming Meetings

Finance and Audit	7:30pm Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017
Development Control	After 7:30pm Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017
Swanley Banqueting	After 7:30pm Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017
ANNUAL MEETING	7.30pm Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2017

## 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7:30pm Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017

**Meeting closed at 8.30.pm**

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mr Steve Nash, on 01322 611663 or [snash@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:snash@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk)

## Council Members:

Mayor Cllr Ball

Leader Cllr Southern

Deputy Leader Cllr Morris

Cllr C Barnes

Cllr J Barnes

Cllr P Darrington

Cllr L Dyball

Cllr L Gaire

Cllr S Gaire

Cllr J Halford

Cllr M Hogg

Cllr M Horwood

Cllr E Komolafe

Cllr N Scott

Cllr T Searles

Cllr H Willingale

### **Introduction**

This scheme currently provides members of staff reaching key periods of annual service to receive an automatic payment related to their long service with the town council, but does not recognise the abilities or work ethic of individuals. This system has been in place since 1988 and no longer fits the organisational needs of the town council. Such rewards should also be based on the performance of individuals and not on the fact that they have served a certain amount of time.

### **Current Practice**

1. 15 years service = £500
2. 20 years service = £750
3. 25 years service = £1000

### **Employee Suggestion Scheme**

This council has already approved an Employee Suggestion Scheme which allows staff to receive a 'bonus/reward' for creating better practices or through suggesting money making or money saving ideas. There is no restriction on the number of suggestions an individual can put forward and so rewards could be fairly frequent and motivate staff into regular participation in the scheme.

### **Current Staff**

There is currently only one member of staff who will be eligible for payment later this month under this scheme. No other member of staff will be eligible for the scheme within the next 10 years but this is a good time to remove the policy with negligible effect in the long term or short term.

### **Honorariums**

There has always been an ability for council to provide honorariums to staff who have performed above and beyond or provided exceptional service. This is the new recommended way that STC should choose to reward its staff if they deem it appropriate and based on the performance of individuals or on their attendance records. This revokes the ability of staff to receive a reward simply based on time spent.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Long Service payments be revoked as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and that Honorariums are considered in the future as a method of reward.**

**REPORT B****COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2017/18**

17 May 2017		Dev Control	Policy & Finance		
07 June 2017	Full Council	Dev Control			
21 June 2017		Dev Control	Policy & Finance	Personnel	
05 July 2017	Full Council	Dev Control			
19 July 2017		Dev Control	Policy & Finance		Estates & Facilities
06 September 2017	Full Council	Dev Control			
20 September 2017		Dev Control	Policy & Finance	Personnel	
04 October 2017	Full Council	Dev Control			
18 October 2017		Dev Control	Policy & Finance		Estates & Facilities
01 November 2017	Full Council	Dev Control			
22 November 2017		Dev Control	Policy & Finance		
06 December 2017	Full Council	Dev Control			
13 December 2017			Policy & Finance	Personnel	
10 January 2018	Full Council	Dev Control			
24 January 2018		Dev Control	Policy & Finance		Estates & Facilities
07 February 2018	Full Council	Dev Control			
21 February 2018		Dev Control	Policy & Finance	Personnel	
07 March 2018	Full Council	Dev Control			
21 March 2018		Dev Control	Policy & Finance		
28 March 2018	Annual	Town	Meeting		

18 <sup>th</sup> April 2018		Dev Control	Policy & Finance		Estates & Facilities
02 May 2018	Full Council	Dev Control			
09 May 2018	Mayor	Making			

# REPORT C



## SWANLEY TOWN COUNCIL PRESS POLICY

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to guide both Councillors and Officers of the Council in their relations with the Press and Media (including Social Media), in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council.

This policy does not seek to be either prescriptive, restrictive or comprehensive but sets out to provide guidance on how to deal with some of the practical issues that may arise when dealing with the Press and Media.

Above everything else, a Councillor must observe Swanley Town Council's Code of Conduct whenever he/she conducts the business of the authority, conducts the business of the office to which he/she has been elected/appointed or acts as a representative of the authority.

### 2. Town Clerk and Officers of the Council

The Town Clerk as the Proper Officer of the Council is authorised to receive all communications from the Press and Media and to issue Press Statements on behalf of the Council. In the absence of the Town Clerk, media communications will be handled by the Civic Manager. In the absence of both of these officers enquirers will be referred to the Leader of the Council who will act as the spokesperson for the purposes of this element of the policy. All communications made by the Town Clerk will relate to the stated business and day to day management of the activities or adopted policy of the Council. The Town Clerk is not expected or authorised to speculate on matters that have not been considered by the Council. Where such questions are put to the Town Clerk they should refer the enquirer to the Leader of the Council, Mayor or a Committee Chairman as considered appropriate.

No other officer of the Council, unless authorised by the Town Clerk, is permitted to speak or communicate with the Press and Media on any matter affecting the Council or its business.

### 3. Members of the Council

A Councillor must not disclose information that is of a confidential nature at any time. This includes any discussion with the press on any matter which has been discussed under confidential items on Council or Committee agendas or at any other private briefing.

# REPORT C

A Councillor should act with integrity at all times when representing or acting on behalf of Swanley Town Council

When speaking or providing written material to the Press and Media, Members should make clear the capacity, in which they are providing the information. For example: -

- as Mayor
- as Chairman of a Committee
- as a Political Group Leader
- as an individual (i.e. letter to press for publication)
- as spokesperson or as Press Officer for a political party

Councillors should never use the prefix “Councillor” when writing to the press as an individual. This implies you are stating Council policy. A copy of any written material sent to the Press and Media by a Member, *as representing the Council*, must be forwarded to the CEO/Town Clerk.

Councillors should take particular care if the press or media approach you for comment on a controversial subject, and do not be led into stating something you did not really mean to say. If unsure about any particular policy, simply state “no comment” and ask the press to contact the Council Offices.

#### **4. Councillors should be aware that case law states that the role of Councillor overrides the rights to act as an individual.**

This means that Councillors should be careful about expressing individual views to the press or media, whether or not they relate to matters of Council business. Councillors also have an obligation to respect Council policy once made whilst it may be legitimate for a Councillor to make clear that he or she disagreed with a policy and voted against it (if this took place in an open session).

A Councillor should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer at meetings held in public or before the press if there is a current issue or complaint being dealt with, as this may unduly influence others and damage any case the council may have.

#### **5. Dealing with the Press**

When dealing with the Press verbally, members and officers should be aware of the following:

- Be informed and certain of all your facts
- Ensure that when making comments on behalf of the Town Council that you are aware what Council Policy is and that your comments reflect that policy.
- Be calm
- Ensure that your comments and views will not bring the Council, its Councillors or its staff into disrepute and ensure that comments are neither libellous nor slanderous.

# REPORT C

## **6. Issues to be Aware of**

Councillors and officers not used to dealing with the press may be surprised when they see that statements made in all innocence look very different in print than they did when they were spoken. It is advantageous to write out a statement or position beforehand.

## **7. Meetings of Council and Committees**

Copies of Agendas, Minutes and Reports sent to Members for meetings of the Council or its Committees will be e-mailed to the Press and Media.

Facilities will be provided at meetings for the Press to take notes of the proceedings.

As provided in the Council's Standing Orders both the Press and Public may be excluded from a meeting whilst certain confidential matters (as provided for in the relevant legislation) are under discussion.

*[Note: The Town Council as a Parish Council is governed by the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960.*

## **8. Press Releases**

All press releases made on behalf of the Town Council will be prepared or overseen by the Town Clerk following any meetings of Committees, Sub-Committees, Working and Steering Groups.

The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader of the Council or Town Mayor, is also authorised to publish press releases on any urgent matters where there is insufficient time for a council meeting or to provide information on activities the council may wish to highlight, such as events.

This document has been prepared as a guidance note for officers and elected members. It represents the policy of the Council in respect of its relationships with the Press and Media. The policy has been prepared to ensure consistency in the Council's dealing with the Press and Media and details who is authorised to speak on behalf of the Council. It has been drafted to ensure that the views and policy of the Council are presented accurately.

In providing information to the Press and Media, Members and Officers representing the Council will abide by the "*Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity*" published by the Department for Communities & Local Government.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1878324.pdf>

The overriding principle of this policy is that all elements of the Press and Media will be treated equally.

Prepared by: Steve Nash CEO, BSc, MInstF

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017

# Report D

## Planned Events for 2017

The chief executive has asked me to put together a report giving a brief overview of the events both large and small planned so far for 2017.

### 24<sup>th</sup> February 2017 Italian Market

A new themed market will be in Swanley Centre on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February, the first theme is Italian. The stalls are owned by Italian people with food from Italy who will be able to bring their knowledge of Italian cuisine and give helpful tips on recipes. The stalls include a cheese stall and a Panini stall.

### 3<sup>rd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017 The Great British Spring Clean

The Great British Spring Clean will take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> of March which Swanley Town Council will be running concurrently with Sevenoaks District Council for the Great British Spring Clean initiative. Their aim is for members of the community to all get together and tidy up littered areas of their town.

### 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Fly the Commonwealth Flag

At 10am sharp on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March the Commonwealth Flag will be raised along with many other local authorities, town, parish and community councils as well as organisations. Swanley Town Council will be sent a press release template in late February which we distribute on social media and to local press. A student from Orchards Academy will be selected by their Head teacher to raise the flag on behalf of Swanley. Before the raising of the flag the Commonwealth Affirmation will be read aloud to the crowd.

The Commonwealth is made up of 53 sovereign states working together with mutual support towards the shared goals of democracy, development and respect for diversity.

### 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2017 French Market

A second themed market for Swanley will be a French Market for 3 days in March. This will include both food and craft stalls displaying and selling French Cuisine and crafts.

### 25<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Swanley in Bloom

Swanley in Bloom is getting its first launch in the Town Centre. This year Swanley Town Council are working in conjunction with Cooling's Garden Centre to make Swanley in Bloom the biggest ever. Residents can come along and express their interest and hopefully sign up for the competition.

### 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 Swanley Park

With effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April Swanley Town Council will take back the running of Swanley Park. This will include the running of the boats and the bouncy castle. The car parks will be manned by STC staff.

### 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017 School Cluster Council

Swanley Town Council writes to the local primary schools (St Mary's, Horizon, St Bartholomew's, Downsview, St Pauls and High Firs) inviting 2 members of their School Council to the Civic Centre to attend a meeting with the Deputy Mayor Lesley Dyball, where they will be provided with refreshments and be given an agenda to follow. Students are invited to participate in a short question. During the meeting minutes will be taken and distributed to the schools once typed.

The School Cluster Council meeting gives the students a glimpse into council life and how a council meeting is conducted as well as learning more about Swanley Town Council.

### 6<sup>th</sup> May 2017 Craft Market

A new themed Craft Market will be in Swanley Centre on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May. This is for all local makers of craft such as Jams, candles and shabby chic helping them to build their business.

### 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017 Italian Market

The Italian Market will be returning to Swanley Town Centre on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May. There will be a greater variety of stalls than in February offering a wide variety of goods.

### 24<sup>th</sup> June 2017 Armed Forces Day

The first Armed Forces Day will be taking place on the Recreational Ground where there will be food & Beer stalls, charity stalls, children's rides and activities and stalls from organisations within the community. The Army, Air and Sea cadets will all be in attendance along with RBL, H4H and other charities. Funding of £1000 has been given by KCC courtesy of Cllr Horwood. A further grant of £3450 has been applied from the armed forces. A registration has been made for a Battle of Britain and Red Arrow flypasts. The Armed Forces Flag will be raised and will fly for 1 week.

### 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2017 Luna Cinema

Luna Cinema will be back this summer, showing two different shows on two consecutive days. The first film to show will be Breakfast at Tiffany's (the original), the second and final film will be The Bodyguard. The movies will be shown at Swanley Park by Luna Cinema. STC receive a percentage of the ticket, food and drink sales from Luna Cinema.

### 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017 1812

1812 will be hosted at Swanley Park, with performances from crowd pleasers The Rock Choir. Live entertainment continues throughout the evening with a finale of fireworks. During the day there will be children's activities and a variety of stalls from different local community groups and charities. In

addition to the usual glow stall a BBQ and Beer tent will this year be provided by STC. Entry will be free for all.

### September 2017 TBC

Mayor at Home- Alexandra Suite. The Mayor will provide an afternoon tea for the senior citizens of Swanley. There will be a prize drawer, bingo and a live entertainer. This event is ticketed for number purposes only but is free for those attending.

### 6<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Bonfire Night

Bonfire Night will be hosted on Swanley Recreational Ground, with children's entertainment, refreshment stalls and a glow stall. Entry to the Recreational Ground is free of charge. Fireworks will commence at 7:30pm with the Fireworks going off to a selection of popular Disney songs.

### 12<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Remembrance Day Parade

At 2.30pm on Remembrance Sunday the Parade will depart the Town Centre, the parade will be led by the Royal British Legion who Swanley Town Council work closely with for the event. Road Closures will be put into place around the roads of the parade so that it can pass through the town freely and without problem and reach the War Memorial in St Mary's Church. It is there at 2.45pm the Wreath Laying will commence. After a service in St Mary's Church will begin with readings and a two minute silence to remember those who had fallen and all who battled for our freedom.

### 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Christmas Light Switch On

Swanley Christmas Lights will be switched on in the Town Centre, there will be children's activities and Father Christmas will also come along to say Hello to the children and listen to their Christmas requests. The Rock Choir will perform before the switching of the lights and after. Christmas music will be played throughout.

### 25<sup>th</sup> December 2017 Christmas Day Lunch

The senior citizens of Swanley who will be on their own on Christmas Day can attend Emily Court Wilmington for their Christmas dinner. The cost of this is covered by Swanley Town Council. Transportation is provided for those needing it by The North West Kent Volunteer Centre.

## **Swanley Town Council**

### **Interim Internal Audit Report for the year ended 31 March 2017**

I am pleased to report to Councillors of Swanley Town Council (the "Council") that I have completed the interim internal audit of the Council's records for the first 6 months' activity to 30 September 2016, following my audit visits on 21 October and 15 November 2016.

Councillors should be aware that my work cannot be relied upon to identify the occasional omission or insignificant error, nor do I actively seek evidence of breaches of trust or statute, neglect or fraud, which may have taken place. It is the responsibility of the Councillors of the Council to guard against such events, but if during the course of my audit testing such events are discovered I am duty bound to disclose such events to the Council.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the CEO and Town Clerk, Mrs Julie Pilbeam for her assistance given to me during this audit.

#### **Previous Audits:**

##### External Audit 2015-16

The external auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP, signed off Section 3 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2016 on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2016. There were no matters raised by the Auditor.

##### Year-end Internal Audit 2015-16

There were some areas of concern raised in the year-end Report to follow up, such as the lack of trained finance staff, the updating of the website and the spread of cash reserves to take advantage of the FSCS protection available to Town Councils.

#### **Interim Internal Audit 2016-17:**

##### **Findings**

This visit concentrated on the payment of invoices and payroll arrangements linked to the accounting arrangements. Other areas included the website, banking arrangements and the pension provision for staff.

Following my visit there are some observations I wish to bring to Members' attention. The structure of my Report is different this year, which I hope makes it easier to read and provides a fuller picture of the areas audited. There is a separate template based on my Audit Plan with notes of my findings.

##### **Website:**

During previous Audit visits, I have discussed with the CEO the Transparency Code arrangements that became mandatory for the smaller parish councils with an annual turnover below £25,000 from 1 April 2015, with the emphasis of having a good website in place.

## Report E

Councillors will already be aware of the statutory need to publish details of Councillors Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's), which are on the Council's website. The CEO has also complied with the new publication regime for the Annual Return, which requires the "un-audited" Annual Return to be published immediately after it has been approved by the Council and when the Audited Return is sent back the Section 3 (External Auditor certificate and report) must be posted on the official noticeboards and the Council's website. The Annual Returns must be available for "public access" for a period of 5 years from the date of publication (as per Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015). The easiest and probably the preferred means of public access is via your website.

Essentially the Transparency Code is all about improving the information about the Council available to the residents and electorate, making councils more accountable and transparent. Although not mandatory for Swanley Town Council, my "mission" is to encourage my clients to embrace the Code, which requires a lot more information to be posted to a council website, by the creation of an on-line "electronic filing cabinet". The creation of the "electronic filing cabinet" will allow Councillors to have access to all these documents as well, reducing the need to have paper copies at home. I appreciate that not all Councillors may have access to a computer or wish to and the same applies to the electorate, but that cannot be avoided.

The CEO has created a Local Government Transparency Code webpage, which contains the pre-audit version of the Annual Return, the staffing structure, the Annual Town Meeting Report 2016 and the Strategic Plan 2016. The website contains a lot more information such as the Policy & Procedures pages as well as the agendas and minutes. The CEO has already created a good example of the "electronic filing cabinet". There is still a problem with the timely updating of the website particularly the Agendas and Minutes, but I realise that the CEO has had quite severe staffing problems to contend with including staff to update the website.

### **Standing Orders & Financial Regulations:**

The Council approved new Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in May 2016, which incorporated the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Both documents are on the Council's website.

### **Risk Management and Insurance:**

The Council reviewed and re-approved Risk Assessment schedule covering the general and financial risks at the Annual Meeting in May 2016. The Council has in place a Long-Term Agreement for insurance cover with Ecclesiastical via the broker Came & Co., which is due to expire on May 2018. The Fidelity Guarantee insurance cover is £150,000. This needs to be reviewed as using the "rule of thumb" guide of year-end balances plus ½ the Precept the cover should be at least £250,000. **Post Audit Note:** A higher level of cover has been arranged.

### **Budgetary Control/Cashbook:**

In my previous Report, I commented on the lack of Finance Staff, which also co-incided with the introduction of a new accounts package, Sage from 1 April 2016. The CEO has made very good use of the contractors MI Payroll Services, who have a great deal of experience working with Sage and in a parish/town council environment. The Company is effectively providing the Financial Services for the

## Report E

Council and are currently producing manuals of the accounting processes being established including the Swanley Banqueting invoicing which is moving from the Rendez-Vous system to Sage providing a smoother interface for future financial reporting. **Post Audit Note:** The financial system notes and procedures is to be discussed by the Finance & Admin Committee in January 2017.

The CEO showed me a draft of the Budget Report for 2017-18, which was being discussed by the Finance & Audit Committee at its meeting on 23 November to make recommendations to the next Council meeting, by which time the CEO may have been advised of the Tax Base for 2017-18. The Council needs to be mindful of the referenda criteria proposed by DCLG for next year, although the suggested 2% increase is within the referendum criteria.

### **Payments & Payroll (inc. contracts):**

I randomly inspected the payment schedules for the six-month period checking the entries in the new Sage system, which included the payroll payments and the HMRC and pension payments. I found no errors or omissions from the random sample inspected.

The Council has received two re-imburements of the VAT to date, they were in respect of the first quarter claim for 2016-17, £32,082 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter for £23,110.

The payroll administration is outsourced to the company Gary Sargeant, who provide the net pay details for staff and the various deductions to be paid over to the likes of HMRC and KCC.

### **Staffing:**

During my recent visit the CEO advised me that she had resigned and would be leaving the Council in early 2017. I understand the Council has appointed Mr Stephen Nash who is currently the Town Clerk at Ringwood in Hampshire. There is still the issue of the lack of Finance staff, although the service provided by MI Payroll Services is working well providing the necessary support and reports to the CEO.

**David J Buckett CPFA DMS**

**12 December 2016**

**Swanley Town Council**  
**INTERNAL AUDIT 2016-2017**  
**AUDIT PLAN WITH COMMENTS / FINDINGS**

Area	Item	Comments / Findings Interim Audit 21 Oct & 15 Nov 2016	Comments / Findings Final Audit XX April 2017
Previous Audits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of last External Audit Certificate</li> <li>• Comments if any</li> <li>• Publication on website.</li>   <li>• Date of last Internal Audit</li> <li>• Comments if any</li>   <li>• Review of any items outstanding from previous internal / external audit reports.</li> </ul>	<p>25 August 2016</p> <p>No comments</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>See covering report and comments below.</p>	
Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scan of the minutes of the Council's meetings and the Finance Committee.</li> <li>• Localism Act 2011</li> <li>• General Power of Competence ?</li> <li>• Dispensations</li> <li>• S.40 LA&amp;A Act 2014 filming/recording</li> </ul>	<p>Yes – April to October 2016</p> <p>YES, reviewed at AGM – 11 May 2016</p> <p>YES, prior to meetings as necessary</p> <p>Agendas have a note at the foot of the agenda page alerting members of the public of the possibility of filming/recording. The Chairman of the meetings will advise all those attending the meeting before it commences.</p>	
Code of Conduct/ Acceptance of Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date adopted</li> <li>• Any changes in elected/co-opted members since last Audit ?</li> <li>• DPI's complete</li> <li>• DPI's on website or weblink</li> <li>• New Governance Compliance</li> </ul>	<p>Reviewed at AGM – 11 May 2016 Code on the website linked to Ward Cllrs. page as are DPI's. Cllr Brookbank died in August 2016, by-election – 13 Oct. 2016 Cllr Horwood elected. Cllr Hulton-Scott resigned to be replaced in 2017.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	

# Report E

<p>Standing Orders and Financial Regulations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have they been formally adopted and applied?</li> <li>• Have any changes been made since they were adopted or the last audit?</li> <li>• Have any changes been formally adopted by the Council?</li> <li>• Updated re Procurement Regs 2015?</li> <li>• Two signature rule still in place?</li> </ul>	<p>SO's &amp; Fin Regs. - Reviewed by Council on 11 May 2016. Both documents are on the website.</p> <p>See above</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	
<p>Risk Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Assessments – Are they:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Carried out regularly?</li> <li>○ Adequate?</li> <li>○ Reported in the minutes?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Insurance cover – is it:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Appropriate/Adequate?</li> <li>○ LTA in place?</li> <li>○ Reviewed regularly?</li> <li>○ Fidelity Guarantee Cover £ (Balances + ½ Precept)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Internal controls – are they:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Documented?</li> <li>○ Adequate?</li> <li>○ Reviewed regularly?</li> <li>○ Statement of Internal Control?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Systems and Procedures – are they:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Documented?</li> <li>○ Adequate?</li> <li>○ Followed?</li> <li>○ Reviewed regularly?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Annual Review of financial and other risk areas were considered at AGM – 11 May 2016.</p> <p>Yes, impressive range of Risk Assessment Schedules covering parks and playing fields including skatepark, tree mtce. and “sharps” handling. Council employee’s complete inspections reports. – RoSPA annual inspection is done by Seagrove Inspection Services</p> <p>LTA put in place expires May 2018 with Ecclesiastical via Came &amp; Co., separate policies for vehicles fleet and boiler, electrical and plant.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>£150,000 – This should be reviewed to at least £250,000, level provided previously. See Covering Report.</p> <p>My audit testing gave assurance that internal controls were in place and working effectively.</p> <p>The financial systems are being re-written following the introduction of the SAGE accounting package. See Covering Report</p>	

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<p>Budgetary Controls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the annual budgeting process reported and approved by the Council?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Budget/Precept amounts minuted?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is the actual performance against the budgets reported to the Council during the year ?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Compare with Fin Regs?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are significant variances explained in sufficient detail?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes, there is no budgetary information on the website at the moment, but this is being retrieved following a loss of data.</p> <p>First 2017-18 Budget discussion scheduled for Dec., the Finance &amp; Audit Committee will be reviewing the final recommendation on 9 Jan. 2017</p> <p>The Finance &amp; Audit Committee receives a report on income &amp; expenditure compared to Budget. The latest reports are produced from the SAGE accounts.</p>	
<p>Section 137 expenditure</p> <p><b>£7.42 FOR 2016-17</b> (£7.36 FOR 2015-16)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the cash limit for the year?</li> <li>• Is a separate account/analysis kept?</li> <li>• Has the cash limit been exceeded?</li> <li>• Have the spending powers been properly used and Minuted?</li> </ul>	<p>Used for annual poppy donation and local charities</p>	
<p>Book-keeping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cashbook - is it:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fit for purpose?</li> <li>○ Up to date?</li> <li>○ Arithmetically correct?</li> <li>○ Balanced regularly?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Rialtas Business Systems (RBS) accounting package was replaced with SAGE as from 1 April 2016 with the support of MI Payroll Services, which is on-going. The Accounting situation is heavily reliant on the support on MI Payroll Services. See covering report.</p> <p>Yes Yes Yes</p>	

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<p>Petty Cash</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the amount of petty cash float been agreed?</li> <li>• Are all petty cash entries recorded?</li> <li>• Are payments made from petty cash fully supported by receipts / VAT invoices?</li> <li>• Are petty cash reimbursements signed for?</li> <li>• Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?</li> <li>• Is petty cash balance independently checked regularly?</li> </ul>	<p>Various floats held at the function venues, TIC and Civic Office.</p> <p>To be covered during the year-end Audit as the level and number of floats required is to be reviewed.</p>	
<p>Payroll</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Who is on the payroll and are contracts of employment in place?</b></li> <li>• Who is the RFO?</li> <li>• Have there been any changes to the establishment during the year?</li> <li>• <b>Have there been any changes to individual contracts during the year?</b></li> <li>• Have new appointments and changes to contracts been approved and minuted?</li> <li>• Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the Council?</li> <li>• Have any ad-hoc payments or benefits been appropriately approved?</li> <li>• <b>Have PAYE/NIC requirements been properly applied and accounted for?</b></li> <li>• <b>Payroll outsourced?</b></li> <li>• <b>WORKPLACE PENSION IN PLACE?</b></li> </ul>	<p>See covering report.</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Yes, see above</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Variable Standing Order arrangement in place, amount reported by CEO and approved by Council.</p> <p>The payroll function is outsourced to a local company Gary Sargeant, although there have been issues over the quality of the payroll reports received.</p> <p>The Council contributes to the LGPS.</p>	

<p>Payments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are all payments recorded and supported by appropriate documentation?</li> <li>• Are payments minuted?</li> <li>• Review of DD's and SO's ?</li> <li>• Has VAT been identified, recorded and reclaimed?</li> <li>• Are items above a de minimus amount purchased competitively?</li> <li>• Have internal control procedures been adhered to?</li> <li>• Contracts:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What contracts exist?</li> <li>○ Compliance with SO's</li> <li>○ Have any new contracts or contract variations/extensions been awarded in the year?</li> <li>○ Procedures adopted for letting of contracts</li> <li>○ Have contract payments been made in accordance with the contract document?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Based on random tests carried out – Yes</p> <p>Payment schedules are presented to Council</p> <p>Most payments are still paid by cheque, although an increasing proportion are paid via BACs and there are a lot of DD's set-up.</p> <p>Yes - VAT is reclaimed quarterly, 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr = £32,082 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr = £23,110. Good procedures in place.</p> <p>Based on tests carried out – Yes</p> <p>Based on tests carried out – Yes</p> <p>Numerous contracts in place from the obvious utility supplies including telecoms and IT services, to suppliers to Swanley Banqueting.</p> <p>Based on tests carried out – Yes</p>	
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# Report E

Receipts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are all receipts recorded correctly?</li> <li>• Are all receipts promptly banked?</li> <li>• Precept, CTSG and Sect 136 payments</li> <li>• Are internal controls of cash adequate?</li> <li>• Are invoicing arrangements adequate?</li> </ul>	<p>Sample invoices were checked and the trail into Sage verified, see comments below re future invoicing.</p> <p>Not checked at this interim audit</p> <p>Not checked at this interim audit</p> <p>The Rendez-Vous invoicing system used by Swanley Banqueting is to be replaced by a Sage invoicing system, which will interface with the Sage Accounts system.</p>	
Bank reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What current/deposit accounts exist?</li> <li>• FSCS aware and compliant?</li> <li>• Are bank reconciliations regularly carried out for each account?</li> <li>• Level of Balances to Precept ratio</li> <li>• Are the cheque counterfoils, paying-in books and bank statements adequately referenced?</li> <li>• When was the last review of the banking arrangements?</li> <li>• Internet Banking/Corporate Card ?</li> <li>• Signature review (Two signatures required?)</li> <li>• Any PWLB loans ?</li> </ul>	<p>Barclays current a/c as at 30 Sept 2016 = £419,327 includes the 2<sup>nd</sup> instalment of Precept.</p> <p>Aware from previous Reports, the investment with Darlington BS has been repaid.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Internet banking to be considered to replace the cheque payments</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes, various payment dates.</p>	

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<p>Assets and Asset Register (AR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are all the material assets owned by the Council recorded in an AR ?</li> <li>• Is the AR up to date?</li> <li>• Basis of Asset Values?</li> <li>• Are investments recorded?</li> <li>• Are the valuations regularly reviewed?</li> <li>• Does the AR show the insurance values ?</li> <li>• Digital Photographic evidence?</li> <li>• Is there a separate Inventory List of low value items (e.g. below the insurance excess levels) ?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes, the planned proposal to sell "The Woodlands" facility fell through, to be re-marketed.</p> <p>Yes, as at 31 Mar 2016,</p> <p>At cost or Proxy value and Nominal values where applicable.</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Estates Manager has full inventory of everything with asset ID numbers</p>	
<p>Year-end procedures Inc. Annual Return</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the Annual Return Statement of Accounts agree with the cashbook?</li> <li>• Is there an audit trail from the financial records to the accounts?</li> <li>• Have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?</li> <li>• Date of approval of Annual Return</li> <li>• Annual Return posted on website ?</li> <li>• New governance compliance regime - refer to new Practitioners' Guide 2016</li> </ul>	<p>Year end procedures to be checked at final audit</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>2015-16 AR posted as required by new Regs.</p>	

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<p>Additional tests – (as necessary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer systems:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The procedures for the backing up of computerised records</li> <li>○ Council owned PC/laptop ?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Record keeping and the arrangements in place to store previous year's accounts etc.</li> <li>• Annual review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit inc. Appointment of IIA</li> <li>• Annual Statement of Internal Control</li> <li>• Website host and Webmaster</li> <li>• Website functionality/ up to date?</li> <li>• TRANSPARENCY CODE compliant ?</li> </ul>	<p>Data back-up automated</p> <p>Part owned, part leased hardware and software, including printing facilities and cash registers, included on inventory list.</p> <p>2015-16, approved by the Finance &amp; Audit Committee – 16 June 2016</p> <p>Transparency Code webpage set-up includes staff structure, Strategic Plan 2016, pre-audit Annual Return and Annual Report for 2015-16</p>	
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