

Swanley Town Council
Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU
Tel: 01322 611663
www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

FULL COUNCIL 11TH JANUARY 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 L Gaire, Cllr S Gaire, Cllr Hogg, Cllr Searles, Cllr Komolafe,
Cllr Halford

Officers: CEO Steve Nash, Estates Manager Dan Sutton, Civic Manager Toni Roast

Public Session: Mr Brown asked why the minutes of previous meeting going back
To May was not on the system
The CEO explained that officers are having difficulty locating these
Minutes but are hoping STC I.T. support will be able to help.

Mr Brown asked if it were possible to see the forward planning
programme for Swanley Banqueting Venues for the future.

Cllr Southern explained it was not possible at this time and that the
Current programme was inaccurate.

Mr Fittock asked if the Swanley Park Contractor had paid their bills.

The CEO explained that payments had been received but there were
Still monies outstanding and if payments were not complete by the
Financial year that legal action would be taken to terminate their
Contract and recover funds.

To receive Apologies for Absence

None received

To receive Declarations of Interest

None received

**To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7th
December 2016.**

To be agreed at the next meeting

**10116 To receive Minutes of Committees and approve recommendations contained
therein:**

Development Control

DATE: 7th December 2016

Finance and Audit

DATE: 14th December 2016

Personnel

DATE: 21ST September 2016

Estates and Facilities

DATE: 19th October 2016

Swanley Banqueting

DATE: 14th December 2016

To be agreed at the next meeting

10117 FUND RAISING STRATEGY

The CEO outlined the need for the strategy to allow him to seek additional funds in support of town council activities.

RESOLVED: That the strategy be adopted

10118 EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION SCHEME

The CEO outlined the need to build staff morale and to have them engage in a positive way to improve the services of the town council and this scheme is an effective way of starting the process.

Cllr Southern stated that it is vital that every member of staff feels they are not just a cog in the system but a valued member of the town council.

Cllr Hogg expressed his concern that the scheme would not put additional pressure on staff to perform their duties.

RESOLVED: That the Employee Suggestion scheme be adopted

10119 BUDGET

Cllr Southern explained some errors in the budget presented and outlined the more accurate figures which suggest the Olympic will make a profit of £11,000 and the Alexandra Suite a profit of £60,000 changing the total profit for Swanley Banqueting to £71,000. In addition, the balanced budget for Civic Services should produce an underspend of £11,000 and that all surplus should be transferred to reserves at the end of the financial year.

Cllr Southern went on to explain some cost saving measures which will be implemented on existing contracts for office services and that the CEO had outlined some potential increase in income to further offset the financial activities of the council.

Cllr Searle suggested that the budget did not show expenditure and what was a balanced budget

Cllr Southern outlined some of the figures again and explained that when the budget had been sent out the new CEO had only been in place for 2 days and had not had a chance to review all figures.

Cllr Hogg said he was pleased that much of the expenditure which had previously gone unchecked had been reduced to ease spending and he hoped that there would be much tighter control of finance in the future to stop money being wasted.

Cllr Morris confirmed that a variety of services had been reduced to save money while concentrating on profitability, he also explained that grass cutting for SDC had been stopped as STC was not getting a proper fee for carrying out the work. He also stated that a great deal of money had been spent on legal fees defending the action of a certain councillor and that perhaps we should be looking to recover those cost from this councillor as he had caused the problem. Cllr Ball asked that councillors stick to budget questions.

Cllr Halford said there should be no arguing and that the cost of enquiry had already been lost.

Cllr Southern said this was a good budget and it is not helped that in his opinion Union Reps have directed staff to take up grievances against STC which have cost large sums to defend by employing Independent Investigators.

Councillors were asked to agree a 2% (around £2 per band D) increase to the annual precept and Cllr Horwood explained that this could have been much higher as Town and Parish councils are not capped in this respect and could have applied £5 per band D properties.

Cllr Southern recommended that we request a Precept of £529,899 from Sevenoaks District Council.

RESOLVED: That the council agree a 2% increase to the annual Precept
RESOLVED: That Sevenoaks District Council be requested to provide a Precept of £529,899

10120 CAR LOAN SCHEME

The CEO outlined there was not a need for this scheme and that it would be better removed at this time.

RESOLVED: That the Car Loan Scheme be removed from Employee Handbook

10121 ELECTION MARCH

To note that the Returning Officer has selected Thursday 2nd March for the local election

This was noted by Councillors

Mayors Communication

The Mayor outlined a number of events he had attended and that he had thoroughly enjoyed each one, including:

10/12/16 Swanley Therapy Centre buffet lunch

15/12/16 Swanley Therapy Centre cheque presentation

23/12/16 Second Chance cheque presentation for money raised by Cllr Barnes during his term as Mayor

25/12/16 Christmas Lunch for Older People with a special thanks to the volunteers who supported them in getting there

04/01/17 Swanley Twinning cheque presentation

05/01/17 Trip to Verrieres –le Buisson in France and a special thanks for the organisation of the event by Christine Hudson and the excellent hospitality he received there.

Report from County and District Councillors

Cllr Horwood reported that he had been looking at street lighting, pot holes and Swanley Lane Crossing to get things fixed but that it was taking some time. He also explained that he had concerns over the speed notification in St Marys Road and that he had asked KCC officers to put in repeater signs to make people aware of the 20mph restriction by the school.

He advised councillors that congestion in Swanley had been mentioned in the Transport Plan and that he hoped for some improvement as this was also going into the Sevenoaks Master Plan.

Cllr Halford stated that there are lots of things that need sorting in the town and with the local bus services and that perhaps TFL should be brought in to Kent. He also mentioned that a number of routes including St Bartholomew's are 30mph but should be 20mph and that they all need double yellow lines.

Cllr Horwood agreed there were some anomalies in speed notices especially on the London Road where there are signs for 30mph and 40mph which is confusing. He also explained that following comments from the Mayor of London about increasing capacity for Londoners that the Leader of KCC had concerns about how those services would affect residents in Kent. He stated that KCC were not minded to hand over South East Transport to TFL at this time.

Cllr C Barnes raised the issue of the PACT meeting and asked if Swanley residents are allowed to attend and ask questions or are councillors allowed to ask questions on their behalf.

Cllr Hogg stated that everyone must go and oppose the project as this is taking away Swanleys Green belt and giving us housing that we don't want.

Cllr Scott stated that residents needed to be made aware but that there would be limited access to the committee room where this is being discussed and that we should not build their hopes unrealistically. It was important that Swanley presents a sound objection to these proposals in a professional way and that perhaps a selected number of residents be permitted in to put their case. She felt it is important that people don't get irate and frustrated and present a logical case. Cllr Scott also made it clear she will work with any political party to protect the town or begin a poll of residents.

Cllr Southern advised members that at a recent meeting of Kent Association of Local Councils that he had been advised that 63% of Swanley were in favour of the developments but that when asked to produce this evidence it was not forthcoming. He further stated that the questionnaire had been cleverly worded in favour of services and not housing and in his opinion was misleading. Cllr Southern also updated members on the legal status of the Recreation Field following advice from our solicitors. He confirmed that there is absolutely no way that any part of the Recreation Field can be used for development or ever sold unless the whole town voted for it in a referendum.

Cllr Morris confirmed that no vote was needed because Swanley Town Council are the trustees of the land and as STC are saying no to the sale then no vote is required to take place.

Cllr C Barnes wanted to ensure people were not confused between the Master Plan and the U & I development. They are completely different and not part of the same project.

Cllr Horwood reminded people about the petition that was being circulated and that he felt there were some moves to discredit this petition but encouraged people to keep signing and keeping adding to the number of objections.

Cllr Southern recommended that given the importance of the meeting at Sevenoaks that all councillors should attend and that the meeting planned for the 25th January should be postponed till the following week. All councillors agreed

Forthcoming Meetings – To note the following dates

Development Control	7:30pm Wednesday 11 th January 2017
Finance and Audit	7:30pm Wednesday 25 th January 2017
Personnel	7:30pm Wednesday 22 nd February 2017
Estates and Facilities (postponed)	7:30pm Wednesday 25 th January 2017
Swanley Banqueting	7:30pm Wednesday 22 nd March 2017

Meeting closed at 8:50pm

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

Council Members:

Mayor Cllr Ball

Leader Cllr Southern

Deputy Leader Cllr Morris

Cllr L Dyball

Cllr C Barnes

Cllr L Gaire

Cllr S Gaire

Cllr T Searles

Cllr M Hogg

Cllr Horwood

Cllr Halford

Cllr Scott

Cllr Willingale

Cllr J Barnes

Cllr E Komolafe