Swanley is a town and civil parish in the Sevenoaks District of Kent, England. It is located approximately 15 miles (24 km) southeast of central London, adjacent to the Greater London boundary and within the M25 motorway. The population at the 2011 census was 16,226. Swanley Town Council formed in 1974. The Conservative Party has a majority of councilors on the town council with 2 Labour seats, 1 UKIP and 2 Independents.

SWANLEY TOWN COUNCILLORS

Christchurch Ward
Cllr Laurence Ball (Conservative)
Cllr John Barnes (Conservative)
Cllr Shanker Gaire (Independent)
Cllr Ray Morris (Conservative)
Cllr Victor Southern (Conservative)

St Mary’s Ward
Cllr Clare Barnes (Conservative)
Cllr Lesley Dyball (Conservative)
Cllr Michael Hogg (Labour)
Cllr Elizabeth Komolafe (Labour)

Swanley Village
Cllr Tony Searles (Conservative)

White Oak Ward
Cllr Paul Darrington (Conservative)
Cllr Laxmi Gaire (Independent)
Cllr Jim Halford (UKIP)
Cllr Michael Horwood (Conservative)
Cllr Claire Barnes (Conservative)
Cllr Nina Scott (Conservative)
Cllr Harry Willingale (Conservative)

Swanley Town Council elects a Mayor and Deputy Mayor annually at its annual general meeting.

The Mayor for 2017/18 was Cllr Laurence Ball.

The Deputy Mayor for 2017/18 was Cllr Lesley Dyball
COMMITTEES AND MEMBERSHIPS

Swanley Town Council operates its powers and duties through a committee system. These committees, wherever possible, reflect the political balance of the Council. The Council and its committees make the policy decisions of the Council, the CEO/Town Clerk carries out the decisions of the Council and has some delegated powers under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to ensure the smooth day to day running of the Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Control Committee</th>
<th>Policy and Finance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considers responses to planning applications on behalf of the Council</td>
<td>Reviews the financial performance of the Council and considers monthly expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Laurence Ball</td>
<td>Cllr Victor Southern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr John Barnes</td>
<td>Cllr Laurence Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr Jim Halford</td>
<td>Cllr Lesley Dyball</td>
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<td>Cllr Michael Hogg</td>
<td>Cllr Elizabeth Komalafe</td>
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<td>Cllr Michael Horwood</td>
<td>Cllr Ray Morris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Ray Morris (Chair)</td>
<td>Cllr Tony Searles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Paul Darrington</td>
<td>Cllr Horwood (Chair)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estates and Facilities Committee</th>
<th>Personnel Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oversees parks, open spaces and assets of the Council</td>
<td>Oversees staffing matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr Victor Southern</td>
<td>Cllr Lesley Dyball (Chair)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cllr Clare Barnes</td>
<td>Cllr Tony Searles</td>
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<td>Cllr Harry Willingale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr Paul Darrington</td>
<td>Cllr Victor Southern</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Senior Council Staff**

- Chief Executive Officer: Mr Stephen Nash
- Civic Manager: Mrs Toni Roast
- Responsible Financial Officer: Mr Steve Innes
- Estates and Facilities Manager: Mr Dan Sutton
- LINK Centre Manager: Mrs Claire Cormack
- Park Manager: Mr Ryan Hayman
- Sales and Marketing: Mrs Suzy Barnbrook
- Venue Manager: Mrs Kerina Keir
- Senior Venue Assistant: Miss Jess Wheeler
ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

CEO

To act as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service to Swanley Town Council with overall responsibility for the effective corporate and operational management of the Town Council in the provision of cost effective high quality services and amenities which best serve and reflect the interests and expectations of the Swanley community and its environment. To provide professional, legal and policy advice for decision making to the Council.

RFO

To undertake the role of Responsible Finance Officer appointed under the provisions of Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. To provide a complete financial and accounting service for the Council. To ensure that best professional standards and practices are applied to the finance function.

CIVIC MANAGER

To manage the various activities and events put on for the local community and promotion of the Council’s services in the parish and to co-ordinate and develop the following initiatives: Swanley in Bloom campaign, 1812 Night, Fireworks Night, Christmas lighting, Lantern Parade, Remembrance Sunday Parade, Mayor at Home and Charity Ball. Other Responsibilities Monitor Absence, Sickness & Lateness, Administer Holiday Cards and Holiday requests, Carry out investigations, Grant Aid applications & Donations, Encourage participation in Community Events from local businesses, Actively promote Community involvement in Events.

ESTATES AND FACILITIES MANAGER

To manage and oversee all of the estates and facilities owned by Swanley Town Council and including the parks and open spaces. To maintain relationships with all Town Council premises stakeholders and ensure supportive working. To develop a proactive schedule of annual maintenance for Town Council estates and facilities. To develop a list of approved contractors and ensure work standards are maintained. To react to property issues promptly and aim to address all problems within the agreed service standards. To manage Anti Social Behaviour and Criminal Damage issues affecting Town Council estates and facilities, working with local crime prevention organisations to reduce incidents affecting the Town Council and its functions.

SALES & MARKETING MANAGER

Focus on developing a marketing plan for Swanley Town Council. Working with the Civic Manager to ensure all Town Council events are promoted and maintain a high profile within the community. Develop and deliver a communications plan to raise
the Town Council’s profile locally. Develop and update relevant areas of the website and social media. To meet budget targets as set by the CEO and RFO. Encourage broad participation by local business and the community in the quest to improve the environment and the town’s image. Identify sponsorship and funding for the Town Council, working with Events and Finance departments to secure this funding.

**VENUE MANAGER/SENIOR VENUE ASSISTANT**

To manage venue effectively and efficiently, fulfilling all service, cost and quality parameters defined by the CEO, to ensure customers receive a high quality service at the best possible profit for the Town Council. To engage with Community Groups and provide a range of activities for Commercial and Community benefit.

**PARK MANAGER**

To coordinate all park activities and efficient and effective maintenance of public open spaces and woodland including play areas and the associated equipment. To ensure good Staff and Public relations are maintained between STC, Swanley Café, New Barn Railway and others to project a friendly and co-operative image at all times. To further develop and enhance income streams for Swanley Park though existing or new activities and to seek sponsorship, partnerships, grants or donations to achieve this. To market Swanley Park in conjunction with the CEO, Sales and Marketing Officer and other staff ensuring local and regional awareness of the facility. To manage all Park Rangers and ensure they are adequately trained on all activities, certificated in First Aid, Child Protection, H & S, DBS, COSSH, Manual Handling, inducted, properly attired and capable.

**LINK MANAGER**

Ensure the smooth running of the LINK facility and liaison between partners. To effectively manage the staff at the LINK centre to provide adequate cover at all times, ensure staff are properly trained and able to fulfil their roles. To carry out appraisals of staff and report any issues relating to difficulties to the CEO. Attend all stake holder meetings and ensure the building report and inspections ensure a safe environment for visitors and staff. To work with other town council staff to ensure a range of new services can be provided and that SPTL visits continue to offer best value to users.
Swanley Town Council owns a variety of open spaces and buildings in Swanley. The Council, as a ‘corporate body’ is also the Trustee of Swanley Recreation Ground. A large proportion of official's time is spent managing the large portfolio of open spaces and land assets owned and maintained by the Town Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Description</th>
<th>Title Deed Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archer Way &amp; Newland open space</td>
<td>K518904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus shelter - Azalea Drive</td>
<td>K465342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Centre, Alexandra Suite, Clocktower</td>
<td>K980832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football pitches</td>
<td>K532178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footpath from Nightingale to Rec</td>
<td>K979730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Firs Open Space 2</td>
<td>K527988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Firs Open Space 1</td>
<td>K527989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettlewell allotments</td>
<td>K755155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower over flow car park</td>
<td>K505609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space on Beechenlea Lane 1</td>
<td>K211877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space on Beechenlea Lane 2</td>
<td>K486133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petham Allotments &amp; Open Spaces</td>
<td>K579699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petham Court Farm</td>
<td>K600884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Marys Recreation Ground (Trustees)</td>
<td>K980833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Station Road</td>
<td>TT18411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swanley Paddling Pool</td>
<td>K504137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swanley Park</td>
<td>K407898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swanley Park Bungalow &amp; Swanley Park (Yard)</td>
<td>K520500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Oaks Clinic</td>
<td>K282317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Oaks Clinic Ground floor</td>
<td>TT17049</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other assets of a lesser value can be found documented on the Town Councils web site www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk
Word from the Mayor

This last year has been substantially better than the previous: New Staff have bedded in well at the Council, Swanley Park has been running well (when the weather allows) and we have more activity at The Olympic and the Alexander Suite again.

Swanley was in the news when five of our residents won Awards at the Sevenoaks Community Awards evening. It really does make one proud when one sees our neighbours picking up these awards in the District. Prizewinners were all honoured at a Council Meeting by the Council and all of those present.

Public events such as the Fireworks night and the Turning on of the Christmas Lights, with the carol singing and the Rock Choir, continued to be well supported. We had great weather and a huge crowd for the 1812 Night at the Park, an event that seems to get better every year: Besides the polished performance from the Eynsford Concert Band, the Rock Choir had everybody humming and the concluding Firework Display was breathtaking. An increased variety of stalls were also doing brisk business.

The Mayor’s 007 Ball was excellently supported by both residents and visitors alike. It is hoped that this will once again be an annual event. The Mayor at Home luncheon was affected by the adverse weather, but a fun time was had by those residents present. This year the flowers around Swanley looked tremendous. This was partly due to a generous sponsorship from U&I. The Swanley in Bloom competition goes from strength to strength with many residents going to great lengths to improve their entries. Many thanks to Coolings for their involvement. For the first time we had an Armed Forces Day and this was well supported. We look forward to expending this event next year. The support for Remembrance Sunday reflects its importance to the people of Swanley.

One of the most important occurrences that affected us this year was the U&I proposals: Many of us would agree that the Town Centre needs something of a facelift, and increased shops. There was a major application by U&I that included a Major facelift that included some highrise flats in the Town Centre. A number of residents were unhappy with the proposals and many meetings were held with Local Councillors to discuss the matters. The Council objected to the plans in their existing form and many Councillors went to a lot of trouble and voiced their objections at the District Council. The objections were noted and the proposals were rejected. It is likely that U&I will come back to residents for their opinions on future developments, we would urge residents to become involved in future consultations. I would like to thank all of the Swanley Town Councillors for their support and for making my year as Mayor a memorable one.
Word from the CEO

Following a very active year for all Town Council staff I am pleased to say that all targets set by councillors at the start of 2017 have all been achieved and continue to be improved upon. Those targets included:

- Reducing Costs and improving income
- Improving Staff Training
- More contact and support of community groups
- Supporting sporting clubs and activities
- Improve income to all venues
- Greater transparency

Our financial position is well documented every month and every penny of council spending is shown as a total figure and as a break-down of venue activities. Our Internal and External Audit reports have been very good with no concerns raised by either which fills me with growing confidence.

Community groups have been encouraged back to our venues and new events such as Open Mic Nights, Quiz Nights, Tribute Acts and Parties have been introduced to re-fill available slots.

Sports Clubs have benefitted hugely with a new Rugby Club being provided with their own pitch and club house in addition to funding to provide coach training to its volunteers. Swanley Boxing Club now has a permanent home at The Olympic after garage area was converted into a training room including boxing ring. Both local football clubs have been provided with funding to purchase equipment and 4 coaches have been trained up, including one female coach to increase training potential along with access to home pitches.

Free sessions of sport and survival skills have been provided since September with an average of 50 young people attending sessions over and above those from established clubs.

A range of Continental and Craft Markets were provided during 2017 and this will be repeated in 2018 with the hope that the Town Council will establish a regular Saturday Craft Market in the town.

Every event of 2017 was better attended than in previous years as we improve on our advertising methods and engage with local residents on a more frequent basis. I would urge all residents to have their say on the Neighbourhood Plan which is currently underway and ensure that the message of what people would like for the town is clearly conveyed to Swanley Town Council Councillors and to Councillors at Sevenoaks District Council.
Major Changes for Swanley Town Council

During 2017/18 a number of significant changes had been introduced to save money and bring in smarter ways of working, with the long term goal of ensuring the sustainability of venues and to allow improvements to existing services.

Swanley Park has now been back in control of the Town Council for a year now and many improvements have been made including, work to the toilets, replacement of the Pedalow Fleet, introduction of mini pedalows and new signage throughout.

The Rugby Club and Athletics Club are now both in situ in new rooms at the park and are being supported in building memberships and increasing activities in the park.

A new Park Manager is in place and the recruitment of young people to run the activities there is ongoing and proving to be very popular as staff obtain a variety of new qualifications.

New Activities for Swanley Town Council

The park now offers a wider range of activities for all age groups with Nerf Wars and Survival Parties, to a new paddle pool for boats and an assault course. A new range of party offers means that children can stay locally and enjoy some really fun activities while adding to the vibrancy of the park. Some of the public areas are undergoing small changes to ensure there is more space for relaxation and to keep very small children safe.

Markets

In 2017 we saw 6 continental and craft markets take place in the Town Centre which were well received by local residents and provided some worthwhile income for the Town Council. Other markets are planned for 2018 and the hope is to establish a regular Craft Market on a Saturday to increase the footfall into the town centre and offer a greater shopping experience for residents.

Christmas Lights Switch On

This is a new event and will be an addition to the Annual Calendar going forward. Along with Santas Grotto, Snow Machines, Live Music and Lantern Parade there will be a small market for people to enjoy. This will be a ‘Light up the Town Event’ every year and it is hoped that sponsors will come forward each year to help us expand the lights to other areas of the town. The CEO and his staff are eager to engage with schools, youth groups and residents to make this a really great event for 2018 following great comments from the 2017 event.
Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Council has received some external funding to create its own Neighbourhood Plan. This will help to shape future developments in the town and give people a voice in the way the town should develop over the coming years.

Consultants are currently working with Theme Group Leaders to advise them of what can and cannot be considered by a Neighbourhood Plan.

When this is complete then local residents will be invited to Public Meetings to have their say and listen to proposals. Details will be published on the web site and social media pages and the CEO would like to see as many residents as possible take part in this project.
Swanley Town Council is committed to building and maintaining open communication lines with the residents of the Town. Our website and social media pages are constantly being updated and we welcome comments from residents as to their content. All meeting documents are available from the Town Council’s website or in hard copy on request at the Link or from the main office. The ‘Town Crier’ is a regular newsletter delivered to residents providing news about the town and the Town Council and there are plans for a more frequent electronic version being made available. The Town Council organises and supports many community events throughout the year including:

**June 2017 Armed Forces Day**
The day saw re-enactors firing muskets and cannons in the Recreation Ground along with local organisations such as the Rugby Club and Boxing Club showing off their talent. Local cadet units participated alongside a variety of community groups and military charities. The event which was part funded by the Ministry of Defence and a KCC grant from Cllr Horwood will be repeated this year and we hope to see it grow in size each year.

**July 2017 Luna Cinema**
For the second time films were shown back to back over 2 days. In July Breakfast at Tiffanies was shown followed by The Body Guard. Over the 2 days more than 1500 people attended the showing of these films. Swanley Town Council received a percentage of the ticket and food sales which all goes toward running costs.

**August 2017 1812**
The free 1812 concert took place at Swanley Park. The music which was provided by the Eynsford Concert Band from 7.30pm was this year proceeded by a performance from The Rock Choir who were very well received by the public. Children’s entertainment was provided along with food and drink being on sale by Swanley Town Council staff assisted by the CEO and his family. The weather was excellent and with an estimated turnout in excess of 3000 people it was the best attended event in some time.
27th February 2018
Mayor at Home
The annual Mayor at Home afternoon tea took place in the Alexandra Suite from 1.00pm – 3.30pm on the 27th February and despite the snow this was attended by more than 60 senior citizens who live in Swanley.

There was live entertainment throughout the afternoon from Jack Valentine. The six students from Orchards Academy who assisted with the serving of sandwiches and cakes and did themselves proud. Three games of bingo rounded up the afternoon.

November 2017
Bonfire Night
Bonfire Night was held on Swanley Recreational Ground, with children’s entertainment and refreshments provided along with a Guy Competition with the winner collecting £25 from the Mayor.

A bonfire was provided along with music and it is hoped to expand this event in future years to involve more schools and community groups.
November 2017
Remembrance Day Parade
On Remembrance Sunday a Parade formed of The Royal British Legion, Air and Sea cadets, Scouts and guides, Councillors, Dignitaries including The Lord Sackville and The Rt Hon Sir Michael Fallon, and the public left the Town Centre at 2.30pm and marched towards the War Memorial situated in the grounds of St Mary’s Church.

Wreath Laying took place followed by a service in St Mary’s Church and refreshments at The Clocktower Pavilion. The road closure actioned by Entertainment Traffic Management Services assisted by volunteers from Swanley and North Downs Lions. A huge carpet of poppies made by residents was displayed for a week in St Mary’s Church as part of Remembrance Day.

November 2017
Christmas Light Switch On
There were new lights placed around the town centre along with a much larger Christmas Tree a small market and Santa’s Grotto in the Square.

Some local business sponsorship and funding from the National Lottery helped establish this as a first event with the tree being sponsored by Cllr Michaels Horwoods county councillor grant.

Mischievous elves gave out free sweets all day and snow machines helped to really set the scene for young children.

December 2017 Christmas Lunch
The senior citizens of Swanley who would have been on their own around Christmas attended a Christmas dinner event at The Olympic along with SPTL members. The cost of this was covered by Swanley Town Council and is set to be an annual contribution to improve the quality of life for Swanley residents.
2017 Markets

Of the Markets provided we saw an Italian Market in February and May, a French Market in March, International Market in June and Craft Markets in May and August. These are a valuable source of income for the Council and will provide new opportunities for other local organisations and business to generate income.

2nd & 3rd March 2018
The Great British Spring Clean

A Spring Clean was due to take place on the 2nd and 3rd March but due to the inclement weather this has been postponed to the 23rd and 24th March. Our staff were instead employed on snow clearing duties and ensuring many local pathways were clear for our older residents.

12th March 2018 Fly the Commonwealth Flag

The raising of the Commonwealth Flag will take place on 12th March 2018 in the Civic car park. The report of this will appear on the next annual report.
I am pleased to report that this year has been a more positive year than in the past few years as the Finance Reports will show. The town centre is much improved particularly the summer flowers and the Christmas lights. I was very proud to meet Princess Anne at the opening of the new Citizens’ Advice Bureau and, with the Mayor, welcome her to Swanley.

The Town Clerk and his officers have worked hard with the normal town events such as 1812 and firework night as well as introducing quite a number of new ones that may well turn into regular fixtures, these events are always greatly appreciated by residents.

The year was dominated by pressure of development. The town centre proposals by U&I were debated most of the year and finally refused but it is expected that the owners will continue to pursue the development of the town centre in the coming year. The Town Council agrees that the town would benefit from improvements to the town but the proposals were not appropriate for Swanley.

The proposed Garden Village development in Green Belt was also refused and the Green Belt around the town will remain. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many residents who made such a good case for preserving the Green Belt, it made an enormous difference and refusal probably wouldn’t have been possible without your action. The Green Belt around the town is under constant threat but I confirm that the Town Council remains determined to protect our precious Green Belt in the coming year.

The Mayor, Cllr Laurence Ball, has been an asset to the town and, on behalf of the Council members, I would like to thank him for his commitment and cheerful nature attending to his many duties. He has been ably supported by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Lesley Dyball, and Lesley will be an excellent Mayor for 2018/19.

Finally I would like to thank the Town Clerk, Steve Nash, as well as his officers and staff for their professional work over the past year and we are very fortunate to have such a good team going into the next civic year.
The Personnel Committee has met twice during the year. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and revised and those relating to personnel issues are brought before the committee for adoption.

The internal reorganisation and revised staffing and management responsibilities have provided a robust structure and successful team working. Key roles have been recruited to, including a new Parks Manager who took up the post in December 2017, and has already been on several training courses including a Safeguarding Instructors course.

Swanley Town Council is committed to training and development to ensure that all staff are equipped with up-to-date knowledge and skills to deliver quality services. All staff have received training in several areas relevant to their roles and responsibilities, and one manager is currently undertaking the *CiLCA qualification.

Although the park is open all year round, most of the activities are seasonal. The park will shortly commence its second season of operation by the Town Council, expanding the range of activities on offer and employing over 30 seasonal DBS** checked park ranger staff who provide cover not only in the park but also for other community events in the town. The park rangers have been on a number of training courses including First Aid, Safeguarding Children, Health & Safety, Rescue Procedures, COSHH*** and Manual Handling.

Grounds staff have received training in First Aid, COSHH, Strimming and Health and Safety.

The new General Data Protection Regulations come into force in May 2018; and managers and staff will have all received appropriate training before the implementation date to ensure compliance.

* Certificate in Local Council Administration
** Disclosure and Barring Service
*** Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
The recent U&I application for development of the town centre was refused. Although the DC Committee and this Council accepts the town needs improvement the proposals by U&I had a number of concerns.

The buildings were far too high, there was insufficient parking and there was little regard for increased traffic. This was the second application, the first was not recommended by the professional officers but the second was recommended, so it was quite an achievement to have this recommendation overturned by councillors at the committee. I would like to thank all the residents who took the time to write, email and campaign against the proposals.

A concerted effort from residents and councillors saw off the Garden Village proposal to be built on Green Belt Land by Sevenoaks District Council through its Master Vision. Without everyone’s input at the District Council meeting when this was discussed there is every likelihood that this plan would have been approved and lead to congestion within the town and loss of prime Green Belt. It is hoped that this demonstrates that in future the District Council should consult and discusses development in Swanley and surrounding area with Swanley Town Councillors and residents at an early stage.

Councillors on this committee meet twice a month on average which is more frequent than other committees and shows the seriousness applied to applications. The Town Council is only a ‘consultee’ but we have, with the Birchwood site, the town centre and the Garden Village, shown that we can be far more than this with support from our residents. We are aware of large developments coming to Swanley and we are working with developers already to ensure the housing scheme going into the St Marys Road area of the town on the old school field will meet local needs.

In addition we are working closely with developers of the now closed Woodlands site to make sure the proposals are appropriate and sympathetic with the surrounding area and will be an asset to the town. We welcome input and Swanley residents are able to comment on all applications during Development Control meetings. I would like to thank the members of the committee for their support and work over the past year and welcome a new Chairman to take over the committee for the coming year.
POLICY AND FINANCE CHAIR
CLLR MICHAEL HORWOOD

This has been a year of real change for the council and I am glad to see greater transparency with all our activities and reporting via the CEO Mr Stephen Nash and our newly appointed RFO Mr Steve Innes. The committee again consisted of 7 councillors although both the Finance and Audit Committee and Swanley Banqueting Committee have now been amalgamated into Policy and Finance.

Overview
• To scrutinise and agree all actual and projected expenditure, with the exception of staff remuneration. This includes reviewing and validating the following reports:

  • Monthly bank / Cashbook reconciliation;
  • Monthly payments out;
  • Aged creditors and debtors;
  • Cashflow projections across each venue within the Council
  • To examine the income sources of the Council and any official’s reports pertaining to such matters; and,
  • To agree, with other officials, of setting the annual budget for consideration by the full Council.

We are now in the second year of keeping all financial records on one accounting package, and this has demonstrably shown much improvement in relation to:

  • Greater clarity relating to income and expenditure;
  • Venue specific data analysis;
  • Timely and accurate reports;
  • Clearer understanding of aged debtors and creditors

The Council’s accounts for the last financial year are to be submitted by early June 2018 and we anticipate that all such matters will be approved without any adverse or advisory comments. Our Audit reports have been very positive with little remedial action required and positive comments on the expertise of the RFO.
RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER
STEVE INNES

It has been a year now since I have been in post as the RFO having previously been employed by the council as a Financial Administrator. I am pleased to say that during this time a plethora of policies and procedures have been adopted by this council to ensure clear accountability and transparency. The town councils financial position is improving all the time and with the pending sale of the Woodlands it will provide greater security for the future along with some project development.

Budget Performance
2018 saw an improved performance in respect of income / expenditure across all venues:

The Alexendra Suite
Although the income in 2018 reduced by £65,000, there was also a commensurate reduction in the expenditure. As a result, the overall picture was the same as the previous year.

The Olympic
The income for 2018 reduced by £90,000 from the previous year, but at the same time the reduction in expenditure was £175,000; this has resulted in the Olympic being in balance for the first time.

Civic Centre
Due to a number of increased efficiencies, supplier contract renegotiations and greater income generation, the Council has been able to maintain its budget but also allow for greater expenditure for its main events throughout the year, namely 1812, Swanley in Bloom, Armed Forces Day, Bonfire Night and the Christmas Lights switch on.

Swanley Park
This was a new element for our budget and produced an income of over £165,000 for the year although expenditure exceeded this in the need to provide adequate training for staff and to replace the fleet of pedalows. Without this expenditure in 2018/19 the Park should be able to realise a modest income above expenditure.
During 2018, greater emphasis was placed on the Aged Debtors and Creditors to ensure that we not only meet our supplier commitments, but also rigorously chase any outstanding payments due. New procedures were put into effect across the Council, and this has paid dividends with the both Debtors and Creditors showing a much improved position compared with last year.

**Aged Debtors**

![Aged Debtors Graph]

**Aged Creditors**

![Aged Creditors Graph]

* does not include salaries
During the last 12 months more than 15 community events have been provided by Swanley Town Council.

The programme of events included some long standing events such as the 1812 concert and Fireworks in Swanley Park and the Remembrance Day Parade and Service.

A bonfire was introduced to the annual Fireworks display on Swanley Recreation Ground along with a Guy competition which proved to be popular.

The Luna Cinema provided two nights of cinema in Swanley Park which was attended by more than 1100 people. This brought in an income of over £2000 with no outlay by Swanley Town Council.

DNG Bouncy Kingdom provided entertainment during the school holidays and at various events throughout the year providing an income of around £10,000.

2017 saw the introduction of some new events into the calendar both on the Recreation Ground and in the Town Centre.

The Armed Forces Day proved to be a huge success and was well received by both the residents and stall holders and will now take place annually.

A variety of new markets were arranged for the Town Centre including an Italian Market, an International Market and a Craft Market which helped local new businesses get their products into the market place.

After many years The Civic Carol Service was reinstated after in St Mary’s Church followed by light refreshments in The Alexandra Suite.

Due to the decline in the take up of the Christmas lunch provided for the senior citizens who would be on their own on Christmas Day it was decided to move the event to The Olympic providing a carvery with entertainment on Christmas Eve subsidised by Swanley Town Council.

It was good to have over 50 residents attend. This will now come under the Senior Passport to Leisure scheme and will be on the Sunday before Christmas.
SALES AND MARKETING MANAGER
SUZY BARNBROOK

Last year we introduced new Survival parties at Swanley Park between July – October 2017 we had 16 parties and received fantastic feedback. This year for 2018 we have introduced Nerf Parties as well as Survival. Already there are 10 parties for the period of January – March. Bookings are from addresses local and as far as London and Tunbridge Wells.

Swanley Park Half Term Activities
October Half term we held Survival, Nerf and Archery sessions which were very popular with the children and we had all sessions booked out. February Half term we hosted Nerf sessions which were again all booked out.

Summer 2017 – Swanley Park
Despite our British weather we had a fantastic summer with great activities for the children to include: Circus Workshop, Multi Sports, Bouncy Kingdom, Punch & Judy, Magic Show, Birds of Prey Displays, Live Singing, Live DJ, Face painting, Balloon Modelling and Mascot Appearances.

Swanley Town Council/Venue Events
Events have been well attended this year, advertising has really paid off. The venues events are becoming more and more popular and we even have waiting lists for some of these. Christmas and New Year was a great success at the venues and this year we have even better and exciting new nights to be released soon.

Advertising
Facebook
We have really built on our social media following over this year below shows the increase from March 2017 – March 2018. This year we will also be adding Twitter and Instagram and linking these all up.
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<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>March 2017</th>
<th>March 2018</th>
<th>New Followers</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Swanley Town Council</td>
<td>1,421</td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td>550</td>
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<td>Swanley Park</td>
<td>6,213</td>
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<td>2,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Alexandra Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Olympic</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Banners**
Each event is promoted with banners around the town of Swanley, we are also looking at other locations further afield to promote activities.

**E-Shot**
Emails go out to a database of around 3,540 contacts, which is increasing daily.

**School Book Bags/School Mail Outs**
Parks Parties and Activities have been very responsive and feedback from the parents is impressive.

**Town Crier**
The information included in the Town Crier editions proves to be working and we receive regular enquiries from this.

The Pie charts below show the sources of advertising for events, activities and bookings.
Swanley Business Network Meetings
We have been working closely with Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce to build a monthly Network meeting in Swanley. Since starting in June 2017 we have gained great business contacts and sealed deals for advertising, sponsorships, memberships and conference bookings. January’s meeting had a record number of first time visitors, and it is great to see that the word is spreading about our business networking. Please do pass on our details to any businesses you feel could benefit from being involved, and we would be happy to invite them to join us at future events. Please contact Suzie on 01322 665855.

Wedding Fair
We recently exhibited at Brands Hatch Motor Vision. The day proved very successful with two confirmed wedding bookings for 2019. We also held a wedding fair at The Alexandra Suite and lots of brides were very impressed with our venues and packages we had to offer. Hopefully this will lead to further bookings.

Closing Statement
Sales has been very successful over the last year with record sales on our party nights, party bookings and activities for the children. We are looking at advertising opportunities in further areas and attending more networking meetings and exhibitions this year. Swanley Park is not far from 10,000 followers on our Facebook page and hope we will reach this by end of the year. For advertising opportunities or to join our database, so you don’t miss out on events and activities!! Please contact Suzie on 01322 665855 or email sbarnbrook@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk.
There have been 5 meetings of the Estates and Facilities Committee since the start of 2017 and during this period the Council has continued its work to improve local services, create sustainable revenue streams for the Council whilst supporting and hosting sports clubs and local events for the people of Swanley.

Swanley Park has been under the control of the Town Council for the past year which has enabled the Council to make numerous improvements, replace and update equipment and signage as well as hosting a number of highly successful events.

Investment has been made in equipment such as new pedalows to improve the fleet of boats available for hire. Works have also been carried out to improve the toilets and signage throughout the Park.

A new Park Manager is in place and the Council ran a very successful recruitment drive which has brought on board young people to run the activities. This recruitment drive is ongoing and proving to be highly popular due the opportunity to obtain professional qualifications.

Swanley Park has hosted a number of highly successful events over the past year, including the Luna Cinema showings and the, ever popular, 1812 Concert Evening. Council Staff work tirelessly to organise, promote and run these events which were very successful and saw increased attendance on previous years. Due to the success of this year’s events the Council is hoping to expand some of the already successful events.

**Sports Clubs:**
I am also pleased to report that the Council has done a lot to support a number of local sports clubs. Last year I reported that the Boxing Club was due to move into the Olympic Building. The Boxing Club now has a permanent home at The Olympic after the garage area was converted into a training room which includes a boxing ring. Additionally, both the Rugby Club and the Athletics Club have moved to new rooms at the Park and are being supported in building their membership base and increasing activities with the Park.

Both local football clubs have been provided with funding to purchase equipment and 4 coaches have been trained up, including one female coach to increase training potential along with access to home pitches.
Health Hub:
Swanley Town Council has also supported a request for CIL funding to be allocated to a Health Hub for the town. Plans and discussions are underway regarding the additional services that could be housed in The Oaks Surgery and how extra space may be provided to facilities the provision of additional health and wellbeing services for Swanley residents.

ESTATES AND FACILITIES MANAGER
DAN SUTTON

The 12 months since the last Annual Report has seen significant changes and improvements in the Estates & Facilities department which has led to us being able to start the process of modernising and rectifying some long overdue issues with the venue buildings and infrastructure.

Through selling off old, broken or unused equipment from various parts of the estate we have been able to start replacing it with new Fit for Purpose equipment. The most notable of these being the John Deere 1570 Ride on Mower which can do the same jobs that used to be carried out by 3 different cutting units. This has meant that we have been able to streamline costs and improve the upkeep & maintenance of the Parks & Open space areas we are responsible for, and working with KCC and SDC we have been able to deliver a much more definitive map showing the areas of responsibility for grass cutting and maintenance which is now on the Councils Website.

We are in a better financial position now than in previous years which means we can take a more proactive approach to repairs and maintenance rather than just trying to react to issues that arise and so will be looking at some more of the major projects to help carry on improving the delivery of services and activities throughout the council.

Some of the projects we will be looking at are the refurbishment of the splash pool, connection of drainage from the Park toilets and amenities to the main sewer (which will reduce the annual cost of over £12k for the Cesspit), possible refurbishment of the Parks toilets. The equipment in all the play areas is now pretty much all serviceable and in use with exception of 1 or 2 items which were deemed as non-cost effective repairs, and we will be looking at the possible expansion of the play area at Swanley Park to include some Inclusive play equipment.

With the sale of the Woodlands progressing this will provide an opportunity to invest in various projects to give the council some long term sustainable revenue allowing us to continue improving services for and from the council.

The Estates team regularly spend time collecting abandoned ASDA trolleys and rubbish to help keep the Town looking smart and tidy but unfortunately there has been an increase in fly tipping around the Town and surrounding areas.
In the last year we have been working with the community warden and District council to try and resolve with this and we are now starting to see results and have seen at least one conviction for a major contributor to this problem but there is still a long way to go.

The year ahead will again be a very busy but exciting one for the Estates and Facilities department and will see further improvements and expansion in delivery of services and infrastructure.

**PARK MANAGER**  
**RYAN HAYMAN**

Boating Lake – An entire new fleet of pedalos were purchased in 2017. These boats provided reliability and ensured that income remained high throughout the year. Canoes and rowing boats remained steady earners and will continue to be replaced in line with demand. New party packages were introduced, both Survival and Nerf parties have added additional income to the Park. It is hoped that new streamlined versions of these parties will increase profitability and encourage more school groups to come along as we also explore the provision of ‘Forest Schools’.

A new office has been created in the outbuilding previously used for storage which will allow us to improve the quality of service to park users and provide an administration area for staff to use which had not previously been available.

New Events – An additional important aspect of this growth, is the expansion of the events on offer at the Park. One new element, is the attendance of Happy’s Circus. The market leaders will be performing 30th May – 3rd June, with the booking being a real coup for Swanley. We are in further decisions with a number of other suppliers with the aim of securing added business.

The Town Council is also growing its own events this year, 1812 night is being expanded over two days and discussions are well underway to look into the feasibility of hosting a Winter Wonderland in December 2018.
Marketing is being further exploited and Social Media is playing a significant role in this, the Park aims to have 10,000 ‘Likes’ by the end of the financial year 18-19. Maps are being created to assist visitors and advertise the site more effectively, these will be in the form of leaflets and ‘You are here boards’. Advisory signs have been created to prevent harm to the wild life and we are able to provide bags of appropriate food to those people who would like to feed the ducks. We are working with local groups to involve more people in the parks environmental activities and get more people active. Keep watching for new Walking Groups which will be led by Councillor Dyball

With 262,852 people walking through its doors, the Swanley Link was a busy place during 2017. The visitors and residents made great use of the various organisations that inhabit the building, these include:


At the Swanley Town Council desks nearly 14,000 transactions took place on behalf of Sevenoaks District Council while over 1,000 coach seats were booked by the Senior Passport to Leisure members who took advantage of the varied selection of trips that Swanley Town Council offer, these included The Dickens Christmas Market, days out to the coast, museums and London theatre shows.

Senior Passport to Leisure Members can look forward to more exciting days out during 2018, with trips already planned to Stratford- upon- Avon, Kew Gardens and Transport for London Museum. Two well received author evenings took place in the building with those attending listening to authors speaking of their experiences before signing copies of their latest books.

Watch out for local advertising as more book events are planned for the coming year.
The Link were overwhelmed by the support from local residents, support groups and Coolings Garden Centre for our Knit One, Purl One Poppy Appeal. Nearly 3000 poppies were knitted and crocheted which culminated in a beautiful display inside St Mary’s Church. We hope that the great support will continue as we add to our amazing display in time for Remembrance Day. The Swanley Link is looking forward to another successful year having already kicked off 2018 with a quiz night in January; followed by the well-received Digital Den promotional day in February which resulted in one of the busiest Saturdays in the building.

This has led to the new Digital Den sessions

ALEXANDRA MANAGER
KERINA KEIR

As manager of the Alexandra Suite, I am responsible for the functions and events held within the venue throughout the year. Whilst we are most known for hosting wedding functions, incorporating first class banqueting facilities, we also cater for a number of other events. We have two function rooms and can host simultaneous events; this allow us to entertain everything from small conferences to formal weddings with up to 250 guests.

Weddings
We had a successful 2017 wedding season resulting in great customer feedback. In readiness for the 2018 season we have attended wedding fayre’s and also revamped our packages allowing more flexibility and catering choices.

Party Nights
During the year we introduced a number of party nights:
• Motown / Soul: this is now very popular and we are holding our 4th such event in April
• Elvis and Curry: this was held in October and sold out; we are to hold another night in April
• 70s 80s Night: this was held in February and we sold over 200 tickets which is a record for The Alexandra; this proved so popular so we are hosting another event in April.
Due to the success of these evenings we have established a regular base of guests and plan to hold other party nights throughout the year so there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Charity Ball
October 2017 saw the return of the charity ball on behalf of the Mayor; this was a James Bond themed night and raised money for a local charity.

Panto
We had record sales for panto in December 2017 with sales increasing by 50%. This has proved very popular with local residents and we have four performances over two days later this year.

Christmas 2017
We had a very successful Christmas period with all weekend sold out for functions. Although it was a very busy period, we had tremendous feedback from our customers. One such customer hired the Alexandra Suite for the first time having had bad service previously from other providers; they enjoyed it so much, they have already booked for 2018.

New Years Eve
Not only did we host our regular Dinner Dance evening, we also brought back the family party on the same evening. Again this was a huge success and we are looking to build on this for NYE 2018.

School Proms
For a number of years now we have hosted the proms from a couple of schools nearby; this year we have actively promoted these events and have secured two additional bookings for 2018.

Regular Hirers
In addition to hosting our regular hirers, amongst others, National Blood Service, VIBE dance nights, U3a, Swanara, we have also taken on more customers from the local area:
• Hartbeeps: a baby sensory group held each week which has led to two private functions for The Alexandra.
• Market Research: three different companies now use our services.
And new to 2018 is Dance Blast: A dancing / acting club which is run by a West End actress/dancer.

Whilst these events have been happening, we have also regularly reviewed the business with our suppliers to ensure we get improved service delivery and value for money in order to remain competitive with our function and event packages.

So with all that is going on, we are looking forward to a very busy and exciting 2018: one of the highlights being a new theme night, Rydall High in July and our newest Christmas event: Only Fools and Horses.

**OLYMPIC SENIOR VENUE ASSISTANT**

JESS WHEELER

The Olympic continues to expand the facilities and events on offer for Swanley Residents and local communities.

Swanley Boxing Club is now set up in what was an un-used space in the building, providing exercise and boxing facilities for Swanley residents and additional income for The Olympic.

The Sunday Carvery continues to grow each week and is a great opportunity for family and friends to gather together and enjoy a delicious, freshly cooked roast dinner.

The Open Mic Night has continued throughout 2017 and into 2018, with new regular events planned for 2018, including a Quiz and Karaoke night.

Other popular events are regularly put on for the public, including tribute nights which are a great success and enjoyed by all that come.

British Gas have vacated the two permanent rooms that were hired at The Olympic, however a replacement for one room has already been found which will be starting in March.

The Golf Driving Range has handed back their lease, however we are currently looking at exciting opportunities for extra facilities to replace this loss of income.
How do we compare to Parish and Town Council’s with a similar precept amount?

For Swanley in 2017/18 this amount was £539,867.

Swanley Town Council needed to provide a 2.43% increase in Council Tax for the forthcoming year 2018/19 for residents.

How do we compare to Parish and Town Council’s with a similar precept amount?

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<tr>
<th>Parish/Town</th>
<th>Band D Tax 2017/18</th>
<th>Band D Tax 2018/19</th>
<th>% increase</th>
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<td>Edenbridge</td>
<td>133.49</td>
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<td>Swanley</td>
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