

**Swanley Town Council**  
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**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
7:30PM THE CIVIC CENTRE  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

**MINUTES**

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

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

**Introduction:** The Mayor welcomed the all to the meeting.

The Mayor explained that he had been asked to present a community award made by Kent Association of Local councils. This year the award went to Mrs Christine Hudson, the Mayor said 'I cannot think of a more deserving person in the town and I am very pleased to be making this presentation'. The award recognised the work Mrs Hudson does for Churches Together, Food Bank, Fifty Plus Club, Rural Age Concern and others and held her as an example of volunteering for her community.

**1. To receive Apologies for Absence**

None

**2. Annual Report - Council Leader Cllr Ray Morris**

Cllr Morris read from his report which had been included in the Annual Town Report see Report A.

**3. REPORTS – From Committee Chairmen**

a) Policy & Finance – Cllr M Horwood

Cllr Horwood explained that a lot of work has been put into the Council's finances over the last 12 months in regard to rationalising income and expenditure codes this gave councillors a better understanding of the financial position of the venues, events and general spending. He went on to say that a lot of effort had been put into reducing the Councils creditors and debtors and the finances are in a very good position. He thanked the RFO Steve Innes for all his hard work in bringing the councils accounts into a healthy and transparent state. He also thanked the council officers for their hard work supporting the councillors over the last 12 months

b) Development Control – Cllr R Morris

Cllr Morris had already spoken and referred the meeting to his Development Control report in the Annual Report – Report B

c) Personnel Committee – Cllr L Dyball

Cllr Dyball explained that there had only been two Personnel committee meetings during the last 12 months as they are only convened if there was any need to discuss staffing or personnel policy. She was pleased to report that Swanley Park had been recruiting local youths to work in the park over the coming summer months and commended the staff that worked last year that helped the park and its activities to be a success in its first year. Cllr Dyball also reported that the majority of council officers had attended various training courses and will continue to maintain a full training programme for all staff and councillors.

d) Estates and Facilities Committee – Cllr N Scott

Cllr Scott reported that it had been a positive year for the Estates and Facilities side of the council. There had been some good work undertaken at the Park, venues and spaces own by the council. Cllr Scott thanked the Estates and Facilities manager Dan Sutton and his team for all their hard work over the last 12 months. All the events proved to be a success with the residents and thanked the Civic Manager Toni Roast and the council staff that were involved in the events for making them such a success.

#### 4. Public Questions

Resident from Archer Way, Swanley asked following the displacement of community groups due to the raising of hiring charges back in 2016 what do the council plan to do about providing community areas/building

CEO Steve Nash responded by explaining that hiring of rooms/venues are currently being offered to community groups at discounted prices if they chose to use the facilities when the venues were being staffed.

Resident from Conifer Way, Swanley asked why the council are considering the land opposite the Olympic being used for a new development of houses.

Cllr Morris responded by stating that Swanley Town Council were totally opposed to any form of building on green belt land.

Resident from Archer Way, Swanley asked why there had not been better communication in regards to the publicity of the Neighbourhood plan meeting and what the council plan to do to stop the building of 690 houses between the railway line and Beechenlea Lane. Also had anyone from the council had contact with U & I since the last public meeting?

CEO Steve Nash responded by stating that it was the councils intention to defend any proposed building on green belt but it was for SDC to decide on what has to be done. He added that he had met with U & I but only to discuss SDC Christmas lights project and communal gardens.

The resident went on to ask why Cooper homes were represented at the Neighbourhood Plan meeting The CEO responded saying that local businesses and developers need to be involved because they would be the source of investment to aid with the re-development of Swanley.

The resident then asked had any Council officer or Councillor had contact with U&I?

The CEO said that he had had contact with U&I to discuss sponsorship for the Christmas lights and gardening around the centre of Swanley.

Resident from Birchwood Park Avenue asked who the owners were of the Age concern building and the site of the Old Working men's club and what was being done to develop the site.

The CEO said that he had a meeting with SDC and said that SDC were working with West Kent Housing to develop the Working Men's club with the view to demolish the flats in Bevan Place and redevelop the whole site by building 100 units or less.

A resident from Glendale asked how much money had been spent on tribunal claims. The CEO responded by quoting that £36,000 had been spent on legal fees and settlements and £12000 had been claimed back from the insurance.

A resident from Crescent Gardens asked what efforts will the council take to engage the residents with the Neighbourhood plan.

The CEO replied that there will be several methods to communicate and engage the residents, it is planned to have banners, leaflets, social media and website.

A resident from Waylands asked what safeguards have been put in place to prevent a repeat of the financial problems incurred in 2015.

The CEO responded and said that the plan was to increase the reserves and that every month at the Policy & Finance meeting all the financial reports were perused and discussed, also uploaded to the website for total transparency.

A resident from Birchwood Park Avenue asked if the redevelopment of White Oak Sports complex goes ahead what is the council going to do to keep all the facilities offered by White Oak currently as it is felt there are not enough Sports and Youth facilities in Swanley.

The CEO strongly disagreed and said that there are the following sport/youth facilities offered

Swanley Rugby Club plus the launch of a Junior rugby club in the summer

3 x Football clubs

Boxing Club at the Olympic

Athletics Club

Cllr Horwood added that he had attended the Open day session of the Youth Club in St Marys Road with Cllr Dyball and commended the Youth workers for their dedication. It came across that all the youths that attend the youth club all enjoyed themselves. He went on to say that there were a rich variety of clubs in Swanley naming the Cubs/Scouts, Air Cadets and several others.

## **5. Next Meeting Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

Meeting Closed at 20.35