

# Swanley Town Council

Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU

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## ESTATES AND FACILITIES

Date 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Dear Member

A meeting of the above committee will be held at the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019 from 7:30pm** or at the conclusion of the public participation session.



Mr S Nash  
CEO / Town Clerk

**Committee Members:** (Chair) Cllr S Andrews, (Deputy Chair) Cllr L Ball, Cllr C Barnes, Cllr J Domigan, Cllr M Foster, Cllr J Griffiths, Cllr T Searles, Cllr A Skipper

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

If required, the meeting will be preceded by a public participation period of up to 15 minutes in total at 7:30pm. Members of the public are also entitled to speak, during the meeting, on agenda items only and with express permission from the Chairman / Mayor. Those wishing to speak on an Agenda item must indicate this during Public Participation.

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### RECORDING (AUDIO AND / OR VIDEO OF COUNCIL MEETINGS AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

During this meeting the public are allowed to record the Committee and Officers from the front of the public seating area only, providing it does not disrupt the meeting. Any items in the exempt Part of an agenda cannot be recorded and no recording device is to be left behind. If another member of the public objects to being recorded, the person(s) recording must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking. The use of social media is permitted, but all members of the public are requested to switch their mobile phone devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

### MOBILE PHONES

Member of the public are reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) is prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

## AGENDA

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019

**4. LAND EXCHANGE**

The CEO to update councillors on the transfer of open spaces from SDC to STC

**5. OLYMPIC**

Current changes and activities see Report A

**6. ALEXANDRA SUITE**

Current changes and activities see Report B

**7. THE LINK**

Current changes and activities see Report C

**8. PARKS DIRECTOR**

To comment on the report and ask questions of the Director – Report D

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

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)

## **The Alexandra Suite Update Report to Estates and Facilities 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

### **Introduction**

In the last 12 months there have been additional improvements to the Alexandra Suite which some councillors will not be aware of, this report will now be a quarterly feature for this committee to review going forward. Items requiring budget allocation or Full Council permission will go to the appropriate committee for debate or decision.

#### **1. Re-decoration**

Was carried out in the Pavilion area and rear toilet facilities to improve the entrance way into the venue and to the rear office where the venue manager will now be located. The main hall area has been re-carpeted through to the Pavilion area and we will be re-varnishing the dance floor in the coming weeks once some additional payments have been received. We have put new curtains on hold until the decoration of the hall is complete and are currently looking for quotes for folding doors between the main hall and bar area for increased use.

#### **2. Office Changes**

The closing of front reception is to allow the venue manager to get on with normal work without being disturbed. As most appointments are pre-booked this will not hinder current requirements at this time and ad-hoc drop ins will be dealt with by the Marketing Officer.

#### **3. Kitchen**

Some of the kitchen equipment has gone past its usable life and we have recently replaced the 2 deep fat fryers at almost £1000 each and changed them from Gas to Electric. This will help us reduce the cost of inspection tests for gas while switching to less costly PAT testing. In addition we need two new freezers which will cost in the region of £2000 and a cooker/steamer at around £4500 which we are still obtaining quotes for.

#### **4. Venue's Manager**

The Venue's Manager along with the RFO have now provided standard fees across both venues for bar stock and food and standardised the menus available. This makes life much simpler for stock control and for the Marketing Officer to sell packages.

#### **5. Roof Repairs**

The changing rooms and bar cellar area have been damaged through water ingress over the last few years causing issues with electrics and damage to ceilings. Work has started on the repairs to the external roof areas and should be complete within a week. This is an essential piece of work and will assist in securing another hirer.

## **6. Football Changing Rooms**

This area is unfit for use because of the water damage which has been constant for many years, but repairs are about to be carried out. There is huge under use of existing changing facilities here and there is an opportunity for STC to provide a new home for the Food Bank. The changing area would make an ideal storage facility until use increases to warrant additional changing facilities and would provide additional rental income.

## **7. Summary**

Some new events have been tried during 2018-19 including Boxing show case, Wrestling and a Hindu Festival. These are helping to not only raise additional income but also to raise awareness of the facility for further bookings which are slowly growing in number. The re-decoration is key to attracting new customers and is a worthwhile investment for the future. We are grateful for the partnerships which have helped us improve as a Town Council. Boxing pay rent at the Olympic and hire the Alexandra Suite for an additional hire and bar take, Swanley Rugby Club do exactly the same and like boxing they go from strength to strength along with local youth football. In 2019-20 we expect to see a good year for all venues.

## **The Olympic Update Report to Estates and Facilities 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

### **Introduction**

In the last 12 months there have been significant improvements to the Olympic which some councillors will not be aware of, this report will now be a quarterly feature for this committee to review going forward. Items requiring budget allocation or Full Council permission will go to the appropriate committee for debate or decision.

#### **1. Re-decoration**

The decorating is proceeding well with entrance hall, stairs and corridors now complete in grey and white. There is a wedding due shortly so it has been decided to wait until this has taken place before decorating the main bar area.

#### **2. Office Changes**

Two new offices have been created at the top of the stairs costing around £3000 and will accommodate staff from Sky Training and We Buy Any Car. A new care company will then occupy the empty conference room downstairs with up to 8 staff and this will create an additional annual income of around £13,000.

#### **3. Driving Range**

The area has not been well used for some time now despite trials with some new activities such as Junior Quad biking. There are currently 3 horses being allowed to graze there which is providing a small income while actually alleviating the need for us to cut the grass, which in turn has freed up the grounds team for other works.

#### **4. Putting Green**

The putting green has suffered the same as the driving range and is currently being used to store some vehicles by a local car sales company which is also providing some additional income for the Olympic

#### **5. Snooker Hall**

Income has increased in the snooker hall so the CEO has chosen not to shut the facility at this time despite having approval council approval. There will be new covers put on 3 of the tables and the racks have been replaced. If the income continues to improve it may not be necessary to go for closure.

#### **6. Boxing Club**

The boxing club has gone from strength to strength and they have made bookings at the Alexandra Suite for some their bouts, which has provided additional income for STC. We will be increasing their rent slightly in line with the additional use we are now seeing which will again improve income for the Olympic.

#### **7. Flat Rental**

There are no current issues with our tenants and again the flat provides regular income.

## **8. Darts League / Karaoke**

These events now run concurrently and have really complimented each other while increasing the number of visitors and the takings over the bar. The Darts League was brought in by Dan Perfect our Maintenance Officer and we are regularly seeing bar takings of £600 per night when the events are on. When we have sufficient staff we will be looking at opening on a regular Friday night probably starting in September.

## **9. Bowls**

The Bowls Club virtually look after themselves and provide a rental income for the Olympic budget. While they hold occasional league meetings at the venue there is minimal additional income through the bar or other services at this time and we are looking at how much maintenance is provided at the whole site.

## **10. Summary**

Despite the loss of income incurred when British Gas left last year the venue is now profitable for the first time in nearly 10 years and is providing good facilities for the community and for local business. We expect to see income and bookings increase over the coming months and if the Sevenoaks Suns continue as expected this could turn into a huge success for the town council in the future.

## **The Link Update**

### **Report to Estates and Facilities 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

#### **Introduction**

There have been several changes in the Link which some councillors will not be aware of, this report will now be a quarterly feature for this committee to review going forward. Items requiring budget allocation or Full Council permission will go to the appropriate committee for debate or decision. As a point to note: while we own the building it is leased to Kent County Council and STC has very little say in the activities of other services within the Link although we do seek to influence positive change.

#### **1. Services**

The Post Office will shortly introduce National Lottery ticket sales which it is hoped will attract additional footfall into the venue.

#### **2. Cafe**

While the café was meant to open in June this was delayed by an administration error where the legal documents had not been passed on to Invicta Law. This has now been resolved and the new provider is still very keen to get the café up and running, but no firm date has been fixed for occupation.

#### **3. Library Activity**

In autumn 2019 a contemporary art exhibition will be taking place at the Turner gallery in Margate. Thousands of visitors will come to see this exhibition. To welcome visitors to Kent, Turner Contemporary, Kent libraries and Margate Festival have asked an artist to make a new piece of art working with people from across the county. The artwork will generate a constantly changing and never ending anthem for and about Kent for visitors to listen to. Swanley Link's library has been chosen as one of the 12 in Kent to hold a workshop and contribute to this piece of art. We are currently contacting local residents and groups to attend the workshop.

#### **4. New Organisations Using the Link**

These organisations now hold regular events and activities within the Link throughout the year.

- New organisations using Swanley Link - MEGAN - Medway Engagement Group and Network.
- IMAGO - Social Prescribing.
- SciTech Workshop - STEM - Building Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths confidence.
- NHS Health Checks and Blue Badge assisted applications continue to be popular during 2019.

## **5. Withdrawal of SDC Funding**

This will be the last year where STC receive funding from SDC for the provision of services on their behalf. While this has been challenged several times STC will lose £24,000 of funding at the end of this year. Despite Over 3000 transactions carried out by Swanley Town Council staff between April and June 2019 on behalf of Sevenoaks District Council.

## **6. Senior Passport to Leisure (SPTL)**

SPTL trips for July, August and September sold out with full coaches booked for each trip.

In addition a fully booked London theatre trip left the Civic Centre on the 10th July. Final SPTL trips for 2019 are currently being advertised, these include Winchester Christmas market, Army Museum and Christmas lights at Kew.

## **7. Sports Bookings**

More and more booking activities have been moved to the Link, including the Mayoral Diary, to get make Link staff a more integral part of council activities. Sports bookings prove popular with local netball, football and croquet teams continuing to book at the STC Desks at the Swanley Link. Individuals are also making good use of the tennis courts, which is up on last year.

## **8. Remembrance Celebrations**

All the poppies for the Steel Silhouettes were gained through the Link and new Giant Poppies in a variety of colours are being created for this year display, including poppies in the Town Colours. Swanley Links 2019 Knitted and crocheted poppy appeal will also be starting soon.

## **9. Summary**

There are other events that are organised within the Link both by the Manager and Cllr Skipper who recently did the D Day event supported by local cadets. There is still some capacity at the Link for staff to take on other activities organised by STC such as party bookings in the park, hall bookings and sale of promotional items. These are key requirements when STC finally loses all its funding to ensure that we retain staff and that they are as effective for the council as they are for local residents.



**To:** Estates & Facilities Committee

**From:** Ryan Hayman Park Director

**Date:** 17 July 2019

**Subject:** Estates & Facilities update

### **1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To inform the committee of any new projects, bookings or changes to operations.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 To accept the update report and note any new bookings/changes to operations.

### **3. Background and information**

#### **3.1 Swanley Park**

##### **3.1.1 Rearrangement of Licence and Lease holders**

Significant relocations have taken place for key stakeholders at Swanley Park with the Café, Swanley RFU and Swanley & District Athletics Club all being affected. The Café have occupied the space of the former Swanley RFU clubhouse. This space is in addition to the current Café area and the new building will act as a storage area for the Café in the short-term and in the long-term it will be used as a walk-in freezer, kitchen, staff toilet and additional serving hatch.

This will eventually, allow more customer space in the current Café area. Swanley RFU have moved into the former Swanley & District Athletics Club storage area for the short-term until new buildings are constructed by their playing field at Swanley Park. Finally, Swanley & District Athletics Club have a new storage area next to their clubhouse after a container was provided and placed in the Park's Yard (see photo). These relocations have been welcomed by all the parties involved as each organisation has gained a net benefit from the move.



##### **3.1.2 Easter Egg Hunt**

Around 500 families entered this year's Easter egg hunt in aid of baby trauma charity, Making Miracles. The event was a resounding success with £2000 being raised on the day for this worthwhile cause. The weather was generous on the day and this meant families could enjoy the various activities in the park as well. Discussions have already taken place regarding running the event again next year at the park.



### 3.1.3 Colour Dash

The Park Director managed to encourage We Are Beams to bring its popular Colour Dash event to Swanley Park. After various meetings the planning paid off as the event was a huge triumph. In excess of 700 participants enjoyed the run which encouraged entrants of all abilities and ages to tackle the 5k route. The run raised crucial funds for We Are Beams with a staggering £16,500 being raised so far. This has gone a long way to promoting the park over a wider area

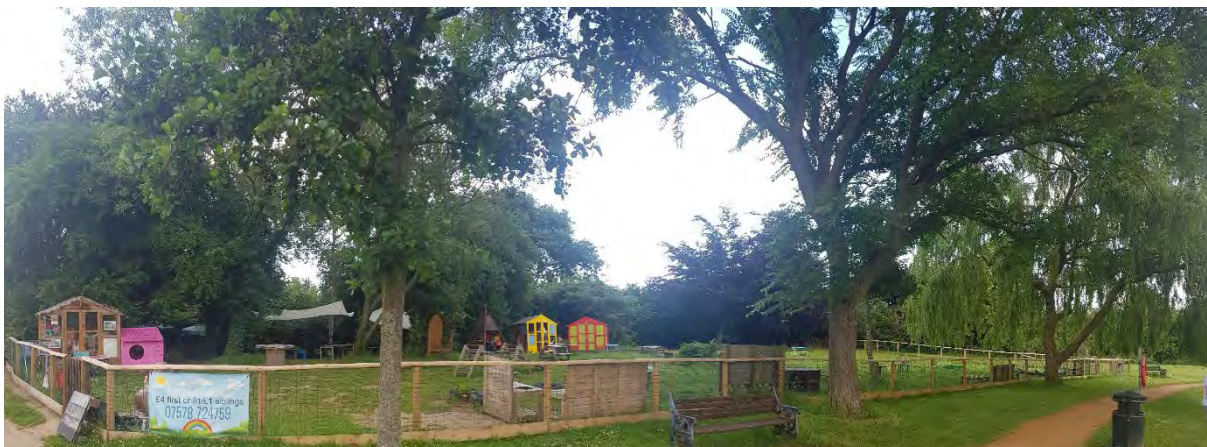


### 3.1.4 Luna Cinema

On July 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> two films were shown to in excess of 500 cinema goers. The Greatest Showman and Mamma Mia 2 were played to the crowds who also enjoyed the food vendors and bars on-site. The park received income from car parking and a percentage of ticket sales was also gained.

### 3.1.5 The Great Outdoors Extension

After joining in December 2018 The Great Outdoors have gone from strength to strength. The activities were fully booked on a regular basis, meaning some families were left disappointed after being turned away. The Park Director offered the organisation a larger plot which would allow for more visitors and this area has now been constructed with extended fencing. The larger plot has led to a 50% increase in income received for Swanley Town Council. Due to the continuing success of the activity, the Park Director is now assisting the Founder with franchising the brand into new areas.



### 3.1.6 Toilet Purifying System

An agreement with Complete Hygiene Solutions to install a purifying system into Swanley Park's toilet facilities has been arranged by the Park Director. The technology ensures that visitors are welcomed by a clean and clear smell when they use the toilets. Since they have been introduced and alongside regular cleaning duties, complaints about the toilets have reduced significantly. In the near future, additional cleans will be undertaken by an experienced cleaner.

### 3.1.7 New Paving

Two areas which have been subject to high footfall are being paved as grass was not realistically going to grow in these areas. One paved area will be in front of the boating kiosk and the other has already been installed and is located next to the playground.



### 3.1.8 New Bins

Four new Character Bins have been installed in Swanley Park, they are bears, a frog and a dolphin. They are aimed at educating and encouraging children to 'bin it'. The fun factor these bins add should help the cause and they have proved very popular to date, with visitors even spotted posing with the bins and children cuddling them.



### 3.1.9 Car Park Line Marking

Both car parks have benefited from new markings and arrows which had not been painted on for approximately 15 years. Disabled bays are now clearly marked and the layout of parking has improved to allow for increased capacity.



### 3.1.10 Trip Advisor Award

Swanley Park have for the first time been awarded a certificate of excellence from Trip Advisor. This is thanks to a 90% visitor review rating, a vast increase on previous year's ratings. Only 1% of businesses on Trip Advisor receive this award and Swanley Park joins other popular UK visitor attractions such as; Coca-Cola London Eye, Hyde Park, Madame Tussauds Blackpool and Paultons Park in receiving this accolade.



### 3.1.11 Additional Award Updates

Green Flag results are due on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July, both the Park and Recreation Ground have been entered.

South & South East in Bloom results are due on 13<sup>th</sup> of September, both Swanley Park and Town have been entered. This year new plantings have been introduced across the park.

Kent Tourism awards results are due in November. Winners enter Visit England awards in 2020.



### 3.1.12 Swanley New Barn Railway Update

Over the last few months SNBR have been building new coach bodies, replacing the most worn out bodies, with just shy of half the fleet of coaches being upgraded.

After a fairly recent storm, bricks were loosened on the mess room and fell through the carriage shed roof, the roof has seen new panels fitted and is now fully repaired.

In our workshop some of our worn out machines have been replaced with more robust machines.

A swarm of angry bees arrived and then congregated at the entrance of the ticket office. This forced the railway to close during our normal service hours for the first time on a non-rainy day.

Plans are well underway for our summer gala, with multiple visiting locomotives, miniature traction engines, buses (hopefully one route master), face painter, a local acrobat type stall on the Sunday and Jambos owls all booked in. Taking advantage of our gala and a welcome addition SWAN will be holding there open day on the Saturday of the gala.

Over the Luna Cinema nights the railway will be running for a good cause, this year a semi local school STEM club, who need financial help to compete next year. The club has been run by one of our members for the last 5+ years.

A new safety announcement system for the car park station (Swanley Parkway) is presently being tested and so far has proved useful.

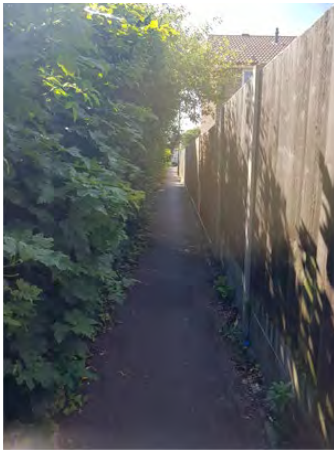
Credit Peter Jackson.

### 3.2 Grounds Maintenance

The team have undertaken an extensive list of nationally recognised qualifications to cover all the key elements of their job responsibilities. This should result in improved working practices and standards. In addition to this, a new seasonal staff member has joined the team and he will be largely based at Swanley Park concentrating on strimming and cutting. This will free up the other team members to undertake some essential tree maintenance and hedgerow cutting.

Work that has been undertaken in the last three months largely concentrates on grass cutting but also includes; hedgerow cutting, rugby pitch drainage improvements, tree maintenance, flower planting, litter picking, watering, chipping, repairing playground equipment, strimming, setting up events and assisting the Swanley Wildlife Group.

The Team have now secured contracts at St Marys School and St Marys Church to provide additional income. The team have also been asked to provide Grounds Maintenance to another primary school but this will be dependent on recruiting a full time member of staff.



### 3.3 Swanley Sports Forum

The most recent Sports Forum meeting took place at The Olympic on 4<sup>th</sup> July. It was requested that the netball courts at St Marys Road should undergo some remedial work and this has been agreed with the CEO. The courts will be swept by the Sevenoaks District Council sweeping machine, followed by cleaning the courts with a power washer. Next the line markings will be painted on all courts for netball and tennis at a cost of around £1795. Whiteoak Netball League will then provide Swanley Town Council with the information for the correct netball posts so some can be replaced.

The forum also agreed to support the upcoming Jordan Dawes Memorial Cup which is to be hosted at Green Court, Crockenhill. 2 Marquees, tables, chairs and a PA system will be provided to aid this great cause.

Finally, a logo and Facebook page was created due to the growing popularity of the forum.



### 3.4 Splash Area

The most popular area in the park is clearly the splash area which is now reaching the end of its functional life. Extensive repairs have been carried out in this area over the last two years by both STC staff and external contractors. It is essential that as soon as funding allows this area is replaced with a newly constructed Splash Area. Tenders have been sent out and quotes obtained with the current preferred option being costed at £326,302.83+VAT.



**Recommendation:** It is recommended that as soon as funding allows the council approves the construction of this new facility.

### 3.5 Indoor Softplay Quote

In order to ensure the park can bring in revenue all year around it is crucial that indoor facilities are introduced. Indoor softplay will be able to fit in the empty barn at Swanley Park Yard. This will help balance the costs of running the park through the winter, when income is drastically reduced. The current preferred quote for a custom built indoor softplay area is £43,244.71.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that as soon as funding allows the council approves the construction of this new facility.

## 4. Reasons for recommendations

All the activities in the park are complimentary and while there is a cost for many of the other activities it is essential that key activities remain free such as the play area and splash area. Since 2017 the park has gone from a deficit to a profit this year of over £20,000. All senior staff are confident this trend will continue to grow each year as we continue to improve the capacity of our facilities.

## 5. Conclusions

5.1 As highlighted in this report, we continue to aim to maximise the use of our facilities, whilst also generating additional income for the Council.

Ryan Hayman

Park Director