

9th January 2024

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 3QG** on **Monday 15th January 2024 at the conclusion of the Finance & General Purposes Committee which commences at 7.00 pm**. Town Councillors are reminded that they have a duty to state a Declaration of Interest prior to the appropriate agenda item and to consider the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.17 when reaching a decision.

Please note that the proceedings of this meeting will be streamed live to YouTube for the public to watch via the following link: <https://youtube.com/live/sYcTSDx-6EE?feature=share> and may be recorded in line with regulations set out in the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. A copy of Sevenoaks Town Council's procedure for the recording of meetings is available online at sevenoakstown.gov.uk or by request.

Members of the public wishing to address the Council Meeting should notify the Town Council by 12 noon on the day of the meeting. Members of the public not wishing to be recorded should put this request to the Clerk at the earliest possible opportunity.



Town Clerk

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To enable any questions previously submitted by members of the public on any matter to be drawn to the attention of the Town Council.

AGENDA

1	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> To receive and note apologies for absence.	-
2	<u>REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS</u> To consider written requests from Members which have previously been submitted to the Town Clerk to enable participation in discussion and voting on items for which the Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. (s.31 & s.33 of the Localism Act 2011).	-
3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> To receive any declarations of interest from members in respect of any items of business included in this report.	Town Council Offices Bradbourne Vale Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3QG

tel: 01732 459 953 fax: 01732 742 577
 email: council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk
 web: sevenoakstown.gov.uk



Town Clerk

4	<p><u>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</u> To receive, adopt and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Sevenoaks Town Council held on 11th December 2023 as a true record.</p>	Attached
5	<p><u>MINUTES OF COMMITTEES</u> Council is asked to consider and adopt the Minutes of the following Committee meetings:</p> <p><u>Planning Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18th December 2023 • 8th January 2024 	Copies circulated separately and available on request
6	<p><u>SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT RECOMMENDATION FOR 2024 – 2025</u> To consider the recommended Precept for 2024-2025 discussed at the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held immediately prior to this meeting.</p>	–
7	<p><u>DRAFT COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN 2023</u> To consider adoption of draft Community Investment Plan 2023.</p>	Attached
8	<p><u>APPOINTMENT OF LEADER & DEPUTY LEADER OF SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL</u> To formalise appointment of Leader & Deputy Leader.</p>	–
9	<p><u>REPORTS TO COUNCIL – STC REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</u></p> <p>9.1 <u>To note role of External Liaison Representatives</u> There are several key organisations within Sevenoaks where it is considered that it is helpful both to the organisations and the Town Council to have regular liaisons and interaction with. Although the Town Clerk and STC Staff have regular dialogue with most organisations it is helpful for Town Councillors to also be involved. It is not possible for all Town Councillors to be involved with all groups and therefore External Liaison Representatives are appointed at the Annual Meeting to reflect Councillors skills and interests.</p> <p>The appointment by the Town Council means the Councillor appointment is not required to Declare an Interest when the organisation actions are considered by STC.</p> <p>It should be noted that this is a Liaison role and unless specified e.g., Board of Governors it does not give the Councillor automatic rights to be involved in the organisation it is liaising with, although it is hoped the appointment will be of mutual benefit.</p> <p>To receive reports from representatives on external organisations:</p>	–

9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Rheinbach • Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership 	Attached
10	<p><u>MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS</u> To receive and note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the functions attended by the Mayor or her representative up to 20th November 2023 b) the forthcoming Civic Events being organised by the Mayor during 2023/2024 	Attached Attached
11	<p><u>PRESS RELEASE</u> To consider any agenda item which would be appropriate for a press release.</p>	-

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Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 11th December 2023
Held in the Bat & Ball Centre, Crampton's Road, Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN

Livestreamed and available to view on YouTube until approved by Council:
<https://youtube.com/live/7K5Qrv0tnSs?feature=share>

Meeting Commenced: 7.02 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 7.20 p.m.

Cllr Claire Shea, Mayor	Present		Cllr Chloe Gustard	Present
Cllr Libby Ancrum, Deputy Mayor	Present		Cllr Sally Layne	Present
Cllr Sue Camp	Present		Cllr Lionel O'Hara	Present
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present		Cllr Lise Michaelides	Present
Cllr Tony Clayton	Present		Cllr David Skinner OBE	Apologies
Cllr Catherine Daniell	Present		Cllr Nick Varley	Apologies
Cllr Peter Dixon	Present		Cllr Nigel Wightman	Present
Cllr Victoria Granville	Present		Cllr Gareth Willis	Apologies

In Attendance: Town Clerk, Senior Committee Clerk

Also present: Responsible Finance Officer/Deputy Town Clerk and Planning Committee Clerk

Members of Public in Attendance: 50

Representations received from Members of the Public: None

Presentation of Painting by the Mayor

In line with Town Council tradition, the Mayor presented a painting to add to the Town Council's Community Art Collection of local scenes by local artists which create a visual social history of Sevenoaks.

The Mayor was pleased to welcome local artist Lawrence Jenkins to the meeting and to present his painting of the view from his home in Bradbourne Vale Road during the 1980s.

560 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received and accepted as shown above.

561 Requests for Dispensations: none received.

562 Declarations of Interest: none received.

563 Minutes of the Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 27th November 2023

RESOLVED: to accept and sign the minutes of the Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 27th November 2023 as a true record.

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 11th December 2023

564 Minutes of Committees

564.1 Planning Committee

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4th December 2023 as a true record.

564.2 Finance & General Purposes Committee

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 27th November 2023 as a true record.

565 Asset of Community Value: Longspring Woods

The Council had previously considered land for sale at Longspring Woods which was being sold and its community use displaced [*Minute 243, Council 24.07.2023 refers*] and agreed to register the site as an Asset of Community Value. The successful registration was confirmed on 25th September 2023.

Sevenoaks District Council had advised that the land was currently under offer and notified that a 6-week moratorium had been placed on the site to allow community groups to bid for the land. The deadline was 4th January for submission of an intention to bid. This would not constitute an obligation to bid or purchase the property but would extend the moratorium by six months to enable the Town Council time to undertake public consultation and prepare a bid and business plan.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Sevenoaks Town Council confirms its intention to bid, as per its Green Community Investment Plan, on land at Longspring Woods under the Community Right to Bid; and
- 2) a Working Group be formed to aid in the preparation of a formal bid and business plan, to be approved at a future meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council

566 Sevenoaks to London Changes to Off Peak Rail Fares

Cllr Clayton presented a report prepared by the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association expressing concern at the recent introduction of restrictions on use of off-peak fares from Sevenoaks and other stations and consequent increase in costs for many rail travellers. The paper commented on the complicated and confusing changes which were being justified as part of the lead-in to contactless fares although without any of the benefits the contactless system was supposed to bring.

Town Councillors shared the concerns raised by the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association and endorsed the comments set out in the paper.

RESOLVED: that

- 1) The comments in the paper prepared by the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association in relation to the recent restrictions on off-peak fares and consequent rail fare increases (as attached) be endorsed: and
- 2) The Town Council write to the Department of Transport, copying in Laura Trott, MP for Sevenoaks, accordingly.

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 11th December 2023

567 Councillor Reports: Town Council Representatives on External Organisations

RESOLVED: To note that Cllr Camp had given a presentation to the National Association of Local Councils online event “Making the planning system work for local councils” on 22nd November 2023. She discussed Sevenoaks Town Council’s recent key projects including the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan, information on how the Town Council handles planning applications, and future projects.

568 Mayor’s Engagements

RESOLVED: To note and accept the reports relating to Mayoral activities:
a) functions attended by the Mayor or her representative up to 5th December 2023; and
b) forthcoming Civic Events being organised by the Mayor during 2023-24

569 Press Releases

RESOLVED: That press releases be issued in respect of:
1) Asset of Community Value: Longspring Woods
2) Sevenoaks to London Changes to Off Peak Rail Fares
3) Painting added to the Town Council’s Community Art Collection

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting.

Signed

Mayor

Dated

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COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN 2023

Sevenoaks Town Council

Council Offices

Bradbourne Vale Road

Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3QG

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Sevenoaks Town Council

Community Investment Plan 2023

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1. Summary

In 2014 Sevenoaks Town Council set out its first ambitious £4m Community Investment Plan to restore and improve community facilities. This was followed up with a further Community Investment Plan in 2019 and a Green Community Investment Plan in 2021.

Together these Community Investment Plans have provided the impetus for investing over £6m of community assets and improving the local environment for those who live, work, and visit Sevenoaks town. Copies of all documents are available at www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk or available on request at the Town Council offices.

Building on the success of the past Plans and having a new Council in place following the elections in May, a new Community Investment Plan 2023 has been created. All of Sevenoaks Town Council funds come either via domestic council taxpayers or funds it generates via its operations, sports pitches etc.

Sevenoaks Town Council is mindful of the financial resources required to maintain current community facilities and meet the ambitions of its Community Investment Plan and also to be adaptable for future opportunities which benefit residents of the town.

The capital projects are normally delivered 'in house' by professional staff supported by appropriate paid professionals e.g., architects and quantity surveyors. The Town Council staff carry out these roles in addition to their 'day jobs' which is maintaining and administering community facilities and functions. The Town Council has a good record of investing into external grant applications, this can often require considerable resources. Overall, this creates real value for money but does mean the availability of all resources need to be considered when implementing ambitious plans.

2. Community Engagement

Sevenoaks Town Council wants to continue with its good record of involving the community in all aspects of future plans. This is carried out via Working Parties involving local representatives, surveys, public consultation, topic-based groups e.g., Sports Review, Youth Council. Also, by providing information in its quarterly newsletter delivered to all homes and arranging public consultation as appropriate.

3. What are the plans within the third, 2023 Community Investment Plan?

3.1. Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Development Plan (STNP)



The Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan was successfully ‘made’ at a public referendum in May 2023. The STNP sets out a comprehensive list of policies, projects, proposals and aims to provide a cohesive approach for the development of the Sevenoaks for the wellbeing of its current and future residents.

The STNP will be used to inform the Town Council’s priority and organisation, used in the Town Council’s planning recommendations when assessing planning applications. Current projects for the next four-year term of the Town Council include:

- Masterplan for Town Centre and St Johns Hill
- Cultural Quarter development
- New Wayfinding Signage for Town Centre
- Sports Strategy Review
- Feasibility Study for Local Green Link between Dunton Green and Bat & Ball.

3.2. Green Community Investment Plan

Sevenoaks Town Council’s Green Community Investment Plan was created following considerable consultation with the local community.

The Green Community Investment Plan has the following aims:

To put in place affordable and practical initiatives with long term green benefits for the local community and to support and encourage residents to pursue individually. Together making changes to reduce Sevenoaks carbon consumption footprint.

STC’s Green Community Investment Plan (appendix to STC Community Investment Plan 2019 – 2023) brings together all of its climate change initiatives to publicise to and involve the local community and progress practical delivery under the following five themes:

- Theme 1 Buildings
- Theme 2 Transport & Movement
- Theme 3 Making Sevenoaks Greener
- Theme 4 Consumption
- Theme 5 Information & Access to information

There are a wide range of projects and aims within the document including:

- Buildings – improving carbon use
- Transport & Movement – including improving cycling and pedestrian facilities
- Making Sevenoaks Greener - including extending tree planting programme and acquiring land for this purpose.
- Reducing Consumption
- Information & Access to information – including liaison with youth groups

3.3. 20 mph Consultation (and potential implementation subject to results of survey)

Sevenoaks Town Council carried out a public consultation exercise between the 1st November and 14th December 2023 relating to the idea of extending the current 20 mph roads within the town. The scheme is a 'Signage Only Scheme' and if implemented would be at a cost of approximately £130,000 which would be paid for by developers contributions via the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Why are 20 mph plans introduced? (source Government Atkins 20mph Study)

Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casualty and injury reduction Reduction of rush hour traffic through residential areas Reduce the negative impact of cars in urban centres
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community concerns about speed, safety, and the quality of the local environment Demand from local groups and individuals in the community Seen as a low-cost initiative, which delivers instant improvements for local residents, schools, and commuters.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage active travelling locally (walking and cycling instead of driving) Improve public health and wellbeing.

3.4. Assets of Community Value

The Right to Bid is a national process that has been introduced through the Government's Localism Act. It came into force on 21 September 2012.

The Right to Bid gives voluntary and community groups, as well as town and parish councils the opportunity to nominate local land and buildings to be included on a list of 'Assets of Community Value', maintained by the District Council.

For an asset to be listed, nominators must demonstrate to the District Council that its main use now, or in the recent past, contributes to the social wellbeing or cultural, recreational, or sporting interests of the local community – and that this use will continue.

Examples could include village shops, pubs, community centres and playing fields. Buildings used as administrative offices and land or property where community use isn't the main function would not be included.

If successfully listed, the sale of the asset is paused for an initial period of six weeks, (a moratorium) during which time any community group with a local connection can submit an Intention to Bid to the District Council via their standard form. If this is submitted, the moratorium extends to six months, giving communities the time to prepare a bid and get a business plan together.

Any sale, after the six-month period, takes place under normal market conditions and the owner is under no obligation to sell to a community group. Equally, community groups which have registered an interest are under no obligation to bid or purchase.

Longspring Wood had been successfully registered by Sevenoaks Town Council – alongside another nearby piece of adjacent woodland – as an Asset of Community Value on 25th September 2023. This was on the grounds that it furthers the social wellbeing and recreational interests of the community, with reasonable expectation for it to continue to do so in the future.

Sevenoaks Town Council was notified that the woodland, was put up for sale at the end of 2023. On 11th December 2023 at its Town Council meeting Councillors resolved to submit an Intention to Bid in order to protect the land as an Asset of Community Value.

What does this mean?

Registering the Council's intention to bid does not constitute an obligation for the Town Council to submit a bid and buy the land, nor does it obligate the landowner from selling to the Town Council. Rather, it extends the period by which the landowner must delay sale on the open market, in order to allow community organisations time to prepare a bid and business plan for how it would purchase and maintain the land.

Sevenoaks Town Council has registered the following as Assets of Community Value to protect them for current and future generations:

- Bradbourne Lakes
- Kaleidoscope
- Longspring Woods (2 areas of land)
- Stag Community Arts Centre
- St John's Public Toilets (in progress)

3.5. Encouraging Cycling and Walking

Sevenoaks Town Council will work with KCC and Sevenoaks District Council to encourage cycling safety and experience by:

- Adding more routes
- E-bike scheme

- Providing secure storage
- Reducing HGV traffic in town

The Town Council is also carrying out a Feasibility Study to provide a Green Link between Bat & Ball Station (Sevenoaks) and Dunton Green Station to enable access to the two stations and travelling between locations without having to use the main A road and related junctions.

3.6. Pedestrian Safety

Sevenoaks Town Council will work with KCC and Sevenoaks District Council to improve pedestrian safety and experience by

- Improving safety around the station
- Improving safety on the High Street
- A crossing at Dartford Road near the Vine
- Crossing at Seal Hollow Road
- Reducing HGV traffic in the town.

3.7. Electrify the No 8 Orbital Bus

The No. 8 bus operates six days per week, Monday to Saturday, linking the two train stations, bus station, residential areas, and the town centre. It operates on a loose figure of eight route – hence its name.

The bus service was an initiative of Sevenoaks Town Council following public consultation and feedback. The Town Council now wants to operate the service using an electric bus.

3.8. Public Realm and Wayfinding

The aim is to provide bespoke Wayfinding signage for the town, starting with the town centre.

The Wayfinding Signage scheme will use clear and concise language and illustrations in an attractive manner to guide the public around the town facilities and at the same time promoting awareness of what Sevenoaks Town has to offer.

Effective Wayfinding Signage can have the following economic benefits: Help visitors and local people find their way throughout the town, boosting economic growth and increasing visitor traffic. Improve customer experience, create a visual story for businesses, reduce confusion, create a space of discovery, and keep businesses relevant.

Effective Wayfinding Signage can have the following social benefits: Make spaces easier to get around, helping people feel more independent and safer. Making visitors and locals to

have more knowledge of what the town has to offer – many people do not know there is a museum for example.

Many of the venues in the town have names which are dissociated from their functions. The Wayfinding Signage will help people know that Kaleidoscope = Library, Museum, Art Space, Stag = Theatre and Cinema.

The proposed Wayfinding Signage scheme will also help develop the proposed Cultural Quarter in Sevenoaks.

3.9. Business Improvement District (BID)

Since 2011 the Sevenoaks Town Team (formally known as Sevenoaks Town Partnership) has worked within limited resources to establish Sevenoaks as a prosperous and vibrant place to visit, shop and do business. The aim is to create a Sevenoaks BID which if agreed, will enhance, and improve on this work.



Business Improvement Districts are business led partnerships which are created through a ballot process to deliver additional services to local businesses. They can be a powerful tool for directly involving local businesses in local activities and allow the business community and local authorities to work together to improve the local trading environment.

Currently Sevenoaks local businesses and the local community can be seen to be at a disadvantage to neighbouring business areas e.g., Oxted, Orpington, Tunbridge Wells who do have BIDS and therefore additional funds to invest in events to attract footfall, additional security, and many other projects.

Currently Sevenoaks local businesses and the local community can be seen

3.10. Markets

Sevenoaks Town Council wants to develop the Markets within Sevenoaks to reflect its Market Town status. The STNP and intended Masterplan for the Town Centre will take this into account.

3.11 Arts & Culture

Within the development of the proposed Cultural Quarter Sevenoaks Town Council will

- Continue to support the Stag Community Arts Centre development as a key part of its proposal Cultural Quarter.
- Support art exhibitions including local initiatives and street performance.

- Support annual Music, Arts and Literature Festivals.

3.12 Youth Provision

Sevenoaks Town Council invests in youth provision within the town via providing a Youth Café open throughout the year, Collaboration with other youth providers, employing Youth Workers – visiting to school, arranging events and outings etc. A Youth Climate Change Forum. Youth Council. Grants to youth organisations. Design a Christmas Light Competition, providing free resources e.g., Skateboard Park, outside table tennis, futsal goals and play equipment.

During the next four years, subject to available resources in addition to the above the Town Council wants to

- extend its youth provision
- consider how to provide Girl Friendly Places
- support School Workshops
- include areas of Natural Play within its Play Policy
- consider and implement outcome of Greatness Recreation Ground consultation

3.13 Education

The Town Council is not a statutory education provider. It is keen to support via its STNP process and planning recommendations the following:

- Addressing the shortage of Children’s Nurseries
- Since the town is a major education hub, consider with other stakeholders whether a Tertiary Facility (e.g., university annex) could be developed.

3.14 Events

Sevenoaks Town Council have a small team of staff who in addition to their ‘day jobs’ assist with the provision of events within the town. These range from small youth and outdoor events to large events such as the Christmas Lights Switch On which can attract up to 10,000 people.

In addition to regular annual events the Town Council would like to

- Hold conversations with Sevenoaks School to reinstate the Town Fireworks if possible
- Hold a town event in May 2024 to commemorate the Sevenoaks Town Council’s 50th anniversary.
- Hold 80th D Day commemoration as per national programme
- Consider a programme of other themed town centre events.

3.15 Sports and Recreation

In 2013 Sevenoaks Town Council commenced consultation with 40 organisations involved in sports within the town with the aim of producing a Sports Strategy. The final document was published in 2015. The Sports Strategy resulted in over £1.2m being invested into sports provision within Sevenoaks town on sports projects. In addition, the new Bat & Ball Centre is used for floor-based sports including martial arts, zumba and dance etc.

Having accomplished much of the first Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy it is time for it to be reviewed. The Sports Strategy will



- Support the building of the new Greatness Football Pavilion with community provision
 - Undertake an audit of current sports provision and identified future needs
 - Develop a Town sports promotion policy – perhaps a Sport Week
- consider how to enable new sports and related facilities to be provided within the town.
 - Continue to provide free access to outdoor games e.g., chess, table tennis, skate park.

3.16 Development and Housing

Sevenoaks Town Council will

- Work with Tarmac, KCC and Sevenoaks District Council to maximise the public benefit from the Greatness Quarry redevelopment (including affordable housing, road improvements, the Oast House, schooling and if possible public health).
- Consider long term plan to move Sevenoaks Town Council offices to Sevenoaks District Council site, freeing current site for housing.
- Refurbish St John's public toilets.
- Identify assets and legally list as and Asset of Community Value
- Press for development of derelict or underused sites as identified in the STNP including Farmers, Edwards, BT, and Waterworks.
- Lobby for better provision of public health facilities including better GP coverage and the future of Sevenoaks Hospital
- Only recommend approving developments that include affordable housing.

4 Summary of Community Investment Plan 2023 Projects

Ref	Project	Draft Budget
3.1.	Masterplan for Town Centre & St John's Hill	£65,000
3.1.	Feasibility Study – Green Link	£16,000
3.3.	20 mph Signage Scheme Implementation (subject to public survey)	£130,000
3.5	Pedestrian Crossing @ Dartford Road near Vine	£25,000
3.5.	Pedestrian Crossing @ Seal Hollow Road	£25,000
3.6	Electrifying No 8 Bus	£300,000
3.7	Wayfinding Signage	£170,000
3.8.	Business Improvement District (BID) development	tbc
3.11	Greatness Recreation Ground – consider and implement outcome of consultation	tbc
3.14	Greatness Football Sports Pavilion	£2,000,000
3.15	Refurbish St John's Hill Car Park Public Toilets	£40,000
3.15	Redevelop Oast House for Community Use	tbc
	Total draft Project Budget	£2,771,000

5 Where does the money come from?

Sevenoaks Town Council does not receive any government funding or any income from Business Rates. The Town Council's income is from domestic council rate payers, income it earns through facilities, Community Infrastructure Levy, and external grants when successful.

Sevenoaks Town Council has a policy that wherever possible external funding should be sought initially for Capital Projects. External funding could be from grants, sponsorship, and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

As previously stated, to obtain significant grant funding there is a need to invest in obtaining professional information to support grant applications and this comes at a cost which needs to be initially resourced.

6 How can I make comment or become involved?

Comments on the Community Investment Plan can be forwarded to the Town Clerk, Sevenoaks Town Council, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN133QG. Alternatively emailed to townclerk@sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Sevenoaks Town Council holds weekly meetings at its premises (see above) and each meeting has a time allotted for the public to address Councillors. A schedule of meetings can be obtained at the website www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk or by contacting the Town Council on 01732 459953 or emailing council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk.

Sevenoaks Town Council wherever possible will include public participation in its projects and currently there are opportunities for the public to be involved via the following – please contact the offices if these are of interest to you:

- Neighbourhood Development Plan Monitoring & Implementation Group
- Sports Strategy Review
- Friends of Bat & Ball Station
- Friends of Greatness Cemetery
- Bat & Ball Centre / Station User Group
- Town Team
- Sevenoaks Youth Council (11 – 18 Age)
- Sevenoaks in Bloom

Sevenoaks Town Council – 15th January 2024

STC Representatives on External Organisations: Reports to Council
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1	Cllr Dr Peter Dixon	Friends of Rheinbach
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I attended the Friends of Rheinbach (FOR) AGM in December 2023.

Following my suggestion, FOR will have a recruitment piece in the next Town Crier.

Cllr Varley and I will meet with FoR representatives on January 8 to discuss using digital marketing to enhance their recruitment efforts.

2	Town Clerk	Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership
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Please see attached.

December 2023 Update

Wishing you all happy holidays and a fabulous New Year!

Thank you all so much for your support over the last year – so many wonderful projects came to fruition in 2023 and some very welcome recognition from an assortment of award organisations.

Here are a few **highlights**:

*The **Rail Trails walking app and booklets** were published in May, an initiative led by the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme (Kent Downs AONB) with our involvement, focusing on the stations along the Darent Valley Line. Local volunteer Alan Dyer, Jennifer Smith from DVLPS and this rail officer all contributed trails to the pack. The initiative has been very popular with physical packs of the trails flying off the shelves, many downloads of the Darent Valley Trails app and local news coverage. And we led our first walk!*

***New Views of the Darent Valley** – an exhibition coordinated with the talented members of the Sevenoaks Camera Club, who caught the train to various destinations along the line and returned with over 70 outstanding photographs, all exhibited at Bat & Ball station over a two day period in May 2023. Now **nominated for a CRN award**.*

***Eynsford station** – with the work in the ticket office and waiting room completed and artwork finally rehung in the restored platform shelter, we were nominated for a prestigious National Railway Heritage Award. At a ceremony in Merchant Taylors Hall in London, we received a Highly Commended award (December 2023). The collaborative work at Eynsford (thank you Railway Heritage Trust/TOCs) has also been **nominated for a CRN Award**.*

***Station gardens** have evolved beautifully, with Friends of Otford Station planting wonderful displays and Sevenoaks and Shoreham regaining planters (thanks to Chris and John, Men in Sheds and several volunteers), and Eynsford in Bloom working their usual magic. Swanley is lined up for a new team of gardening volunteers in the new year. The Otford Station team has been **nominated for a CRN award**.*

***Online poster sales** – our beautiful set of Kit Boyd designed posters finally went online in August, with hundreds of posters already ordered and posted to happy recipients. We are working with GTR Marketing on a campaign next year using the posters as a springboard.*

***Displays** have gone up everywhere, from detailed history posters written by local experts to colourful arrays of the Darent Valley line posters, to information panels in Eynsford station.*

Shoreham station – the next Victorian station restoration project on our books – is underway, with inspiring sketches produced to reimagine the space, and the community engaged.

Plenty of collaborations – the GTR CRP officers created a Thameslink Trail centred on art galleries along the line; Sarah gave a presentation to visiting Friends of Sevenoaks, from Pontoise; and presentations to several CRN seminars.

**And last, but not least, the icing on the cake...
Accreditation by the Department of Transport!**



From top left: Eynsford Station; platform shelter; NRHA Ceremony

Second row: Otford station spring planting; Otford station history posters; Sevenoaks planters team

Third row: Rail Trails pack; Guided Walk from Eynsford; Poster Array Swanley; Sevenoaks School team

Bottom row: Sevenoaks Camera Club/DVCRP exhibition; Friends of Pontoise visit to Bat & Ball

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Sevenoaks Town Council – 15th January 2024

Events Attended – 2023/2024

Mayor: Councillor Claire Shea

Day & Time	Date	Organisation & Event/Venue	Attending
Sat 10.30	13 May	Darent Valley Photographic Exhibition at Bat & Ball Station	Mayor & Deputy
Thur 5.45	18 May	Meet and Greet Friends of Pontoise at Bat and Ball Centre	Deputy
Fri 7.00	19 May	Friends of Pontoise Gala Dinner in the Harry Garrett Hall	Mayor & Cllr Varley
Sat 7.00	20 May	Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees – Concert in Ship Theatre, Walthamstow Hall	Deputy
Sun 7.30	21 May	Sevenoaks Symphony Orchestra – Concert at the Pamoja Hall	Mayor & Guest
Mon 9.00	22 May	Opening of the new Specsavers Store	Mayor
Thur 10.30	25 May	Mayor of Maidstone – Scenic Cruise & Tour of Allington Castle	Mayor & Guest
Sat 10.00	27 May	Presentation of Shield to Billy Westley – 40 Years as a stallholder in the Market	Mayor & Cllr Clayton
Sun 10.30	28 May	Sevenoaks Indoor and Outdoor Bowls Club – Big Bowls Weekend	Mayor
Tues 5.00	6 June	Birketts informal drinks and canapes evening	Mayor
Sun 3.00	11 June	Church of Scientology, Saint Hill Manor – Shakespeare Open Air Theatre – A Comedy of Errors	Mayor & Guest
Tues 4.00	13 June	Presentation of Safari Voucher at Bat & Ball Sports	Mayor
Tues 6.00	13 June	Thank You Event for Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan	Mayor
Mon 10.30	19 June	Sevenoaks DC – Fly the Flag for Armed Forces Day	Mayor
Tues 8.00	20 June	Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees – Film Night “The Breadwinner” at the Stag	Mayor
Thurs 7.30	22 June	Annual General Meeting – League of Friends of Sevenoaks Hospital	Mayor
Sat 6.30	24 June	Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival – Festival Cup Winners Concert at Walthamstow Hall	
Sun 6.45	25 June	Chance to Dance – Summer Performance at the Stag	Deputy Mayor
Wed 11.30	28 June	Kippington Nursing Home – Open week	Mayor
Thur 2.00	29 June	Weald Heights Care Home – Summer Festival	Mayor
Fri 9.45	30 June	South & South East in Bloom Judging	Mayor
Sat 7.00	1 July	D’Vine Singers – Community Concert	Deputy Mayor
Sat 1.00	1 July	Sevenoaks Primary School – Colour Fest & Colour Run	Mayor
Sat 7.30	1 July	Sevenoaks Philharmonic Choir and Sevenoaks Symphony Orchestra – Verdi’s Requiem at the Stag	Mayor
Sun 5.30	2 July	Kentish Opera – Opera Gala at Chiddingstone Castle	Mayor

Sevenoaks Town Council – 15th January 2024

Day & Time	Date	Organisation & Event/Venue	Attending
Mon 10.30	3 July	Rockdale Housing Assoc – Garden & Tour/Art & Craft Exhibition by residents	Mayor
Sat 5.00	8 July	Sevenoaks Sings – Picnic on the Vine	Mayor
Thurs 5.30	13 July	Knole Academy – Production of Little Shop of Horrors	Deputy
Sun 4.00	16 July	Mayor of Swanley – Meal at The Thai Emperor	Mayor
Sat 7.30	29 July	The Lydian Orchestra – Summer Concert	Deputy & Guest
Mon 10.00	31 July	Family Fun Day at Greatness Recreation Ground	Mayor
Tues 2.00	22 Aug	Goldilocks and Friends at the Bat and Ball Centre	Mayor
Wed 2.00	23 Aug	Goldilocks and Friends at Pontoise Park	Mayor
Thurs 2.00	24 Aug	Goldilocks and Friends at Greatness Recreation Ground	Mayor
Fri 11.00	25 Aug	Crufts event at Weald Heights Care Home	Deputy
Fri 2.00	25 Aug	Goldilocks and Friends at The Vine Gardens	Deputy
Fri 6.00	25 Aug	Mayor of Swanley – 40 th Anniversary Firework Event	Deputy + 1
Fri 9.45	1 Sept	Chairman SDC – Fly the Red Ensign for Merchant Navy Day	Mayor
Mon 1.00	4 Sept	Rockdale Housing Assoc. 75 th Anniversary Celebration	Mayor
Mon 10.00	4 Sept	Mayor of Hawkinge – Visit Battle of Britain Museum	Deputy +1
Wed 12.00	6 Sept	Photoshoot with Panto Cast	Mayor
Fri 8.50	8 Sept	Sevenoaks D C – Fly the 999 Day Flag	Mayor
Sat 2.00	9 Sept	Bradbourne Residents Association – Picnic in the Park	Mayor
Sun 2.00	10 Sept	Garden Party at the Bat and Ball Centre	Mayor
Sun 6.00	10 Sept	Stag Youth Theatre project – Film in a week	Mayor + 1
Wed 11.00	13 Sept	Mayor of Medway – Call the Midwife Tour at Chatham Dockyard	Mayor + 1
Wed 6.00	13 Sept	Final meeting of the youth Council 2021 – 2023	Mayor
Fri 10.00	15 Sept	Guide Dogs for the Blind – Blindfold Walk	Mayor
Mon 1.00	18 Sept	Visit to Sevenoaks School – Tour of the campus with the Headmaster, Jesse Elzinga	Mayor
Fri 5.30	22 Sept	Chairman SDC – Tour of the Eden Valley Museum	Mayor
Fri 10.00	29 Sept	South & South East in Bloom Awards at Wisley	Mayor + 1
Tues 7.00	3 Oct	Sevenoaks Counselling – Annual Open Meeting	
Wed	4 Oct	Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce – Networking meeting at the Bat and Ball Centre	Mayor
Mon 10.00	9 Oct	Judge entries to the Christmas Lights Competition	Mayor
Fri 9.30	13 Oct	Mayor of Tunbridge Wells – Charity Clay Shoot	Mayor & Guest
Sat 5.30	14 Oct	Mayor of Faversham – Carnival and Torchlight Procession	Mayor & Guest
Wed 2.00	18 Oct	Gloucester House Care home – Opening of the Reminiscence Shops	Mayor
Fri 6.00	20 Oct	Sevenoaks Business Awards at the Bat and Ball Centre	Mayor

Sevenoaks Town Council – 15th January 2024

Day & Time	Date	Organisation & Event/Venue	Attending
Tues 2.00	24 Oct	Weald Heights Care Home – Understanding Dementia	Mayor
Tues 11.00	24 Oct	Opening of the refurbished Greatness Skate Park	Mayor
Wed 6.00	1 Nov	First youth Council Meeting following the Elections	Mayor
Sat 6.00	4 Nov	Sevenoaks Indian Community -Diwali Party at the Bat and Ball Centre	Mayor
Mon 7.00	6 Nov	Mayor of Maidstone – Charity Dinner at Bliss Bar and Restaurant	Mayor +
Thurs 6.00	9 Nov	Cook – Informal Gathering	Deputy Mayor
Sat 11.00	11 Nov	Armistice Day – Laying Crosses at Greatness Cemetery	Mayor
Sun 11.00	12 Nov	Remembrance Sunday	Mayor
Thurs 2.00	16 Nov	Mayor of Faversham – Visit to the Kent Police Museum and Faversham Charters & Magna Carta	Mayor + 1
Sat 7.00	18 Nov	Mayor of Medway – Evening of Nepalese Culture and Cuisine	Mayor + 1
Sun 3.00	19 Nov	Sevenoaks Symphony Orchestra – Concert at the Stag Theatre	Mayor
Fri 6.00	24 Nov	Christmas Lights Switch-on	Mayor
Sat 2.00	25 Nov	Bradbourne Residents Association – Open New Duck Feeder at Bradbourne Lakes Park	Mayor
Sat 7.00	25 Nov	Sevenoaks Lions Charter Dinner at Wildernesse Golf Club	Mayor + 1
Sun 10.30	26 Nov	Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees Winter Party	Mayor
Sun 11.00	26 Nov	West Heath School Christmas Fair	Mayor
Wed	29 Nov	Mayor of Margate – Private conducted tour of Hornby Hobbies	Mayor + 1
Sat 7.30	2 Dec	Sevenoaks Philharmonic Choir Ceremony of Carols at St Nicholas Church, Sevenoaks	Mayor + 1
Sun 6.00	3 Dec	Mencap Carols and Mince Pies in the Mencap Hall	Mayor
Mon 7.00	4 Dec	Community Carols involving groups across Sevenoaks including PHAB, Primary Schools and WKM Skiffle at St Luke’s Church	Mayor
Tues 11.00	5 Dec	Judging of the Best Dressed Christmas Window	Mayor
Sun 6.00	10 Dec	Stag Pantomime – Jack & the Beanstalk	Mayor
Tues 10.00	12 Dec	Presenting Awards for the Best Dressed Window	Mayor
Tues 12.30	12 Dec	Call in to Staff Christmas Meeting to wish them a Merry Christmas	Mayor
Wed 12.00	13 Dec	Tree Planting at Greatness Recreation Ground	Mayor
Thurs 2.00	14 Dec	Tree of Hope Fundraising Carol Service at St Nicholas Church	Mayor + 1
Fri 12.30	15 Dec	Sevenoaks Almshouses Christmas Lunch	Mayor

Sevenoaks Town Council – 15th January 2024

Day & Time	Date	Organisation & Event/Venue	Attending
Sun 4.00	17 Dec	Eynsford Concert Band and Kent Youth Wind Orchestra – Spirit of Christmas Concert in the Space, Pamoja Hall	Mayor + 1
Sun 4.00	17 Dec	Mayor of Swanley – Christmas Carol Concert at St Mary the Virgin Church	Deputy + 1
Mon 4.30	18 Dec	Unveiling Light at Stag Theatre with Design a Christmas Light Competition Winner & family	Mayor
Tues 7.15	19 Dec	Westerham Sea Cadets Awards Evening	Mayor
Wed 7.30	20 Dec	The Lydian Orchestra – Winter Concert in the Pamoja Hall, Sevenoaks School	Deputy + 1
Sun 11.00	24 Dec	Midnight Mass at St Nicholas Church	Mayor



2023 – 2024

The Mayor of Sevenoaks Councillor Claire Shea
Provisional Dates for Mayoral Events

<p>May/June 2023</p> <p>24th June Armed Forces Day</p>	<p>July 2023</p> <p>Friday 21st June Peppercorn Rent Ceremony</p>	<p>August 2023</p>
<p>September 2023</p> <p>3 September Merchant Navy Day</p> <p>Sunday 10th September Mayor’s Garden Party at Bat & Ball Centre</p>	<p>October 2023</p>	<p>November 2023</p> <p>Saturday 11 November Armistice Day</p> <p>Sunday 12 November Remembrance Day Tree Planting</p>
<p>December 2023</p>	<p>January 2024</p>	<p>February 2024</p>
<p>March 2024</p> <p>8 March International Women’s Day Lunch</p> <p>Monday 11 March Commonwealth Day</p> <p>Quiz Night Saturday 16 March</p>	<p>April 2024</p> <p>End of Term Reception</p> <p>Wednesday 17 April Tour of Knole House</p> <p>Saturday 27 April Mayors Charities Concert at The Stag Theatre</p>	<p>May 2024</p>