

**Sevenoaks Town Council**  
**Minutes of the Bat and Ball Centre User Group Meeting held at**  
**The Bat & Ball Centre on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Meeting commenced:** 7.00 p.m.

**Meeting concluded:** 7.21 p.m.

**Present:**

Cllr Claire Shea	Sevenoaks Town Council (Acting Chair)
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Sevenoaks Town Council
Linda Larter MBE	Sevenoaks Town Council
Liz Hodgson	Sevenoaks Town Council
Allan de Turberville	Probus
Myra de Turberville	The Arts Society Knole

**730. Apologies for Absence**

Cllr. Tony Clayton (Chair), Cllr. Victoria Granville Baxter, David Williams (Probus), Jo Wilkinson (Kent Blind), Gail Biggins (GB Pilates), Simon Hadlow (Oaks Martial Arts), Magda Sweetland (Knole U3A), Barbara Coleyshaw (U3A), Andrew Watts (Tea Dance).

**731. Requests for Dispensation**

There were no requests for dispensations from Councillors.

**732. Declaration of Interests**

There were no Declaration of Interests from Councillors.

**733. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Community Centre User Group held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023.**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes were a true record of the meeting and to be signed by the Chair.

**734. Bat & Ball Centre**

Business Development

The Centre continues to be busy, and the Town Council is pleased that it is now showing a good profit which will hopefully continue. The financial aim was for the Centre to make sufficient profit to pay the annual Public Works Loan Board repayments.

There is an ongoing need to keep up with general maintenance to ensure that the venue remains the high quality that people have come to expect.

### Smokers Shelter Request



There has been a request for a Smokers Shelter to be installed near the signposts to avoid people smoking under the canopy at the entrance of the building, which is unpleasant for those who have to walk through it.

**Response:** It was agreed that this was a good idea as it could also be used as a waiting area for buses and taxis.

### Car Club

STC will provide two parking bays at the Bat & Ball Centre, convenient for those coming from the station, for the use of the Sevenoaks Car Club. The cars will be available at approximately £7 per hour plus 27 pence per mile. There will be one Hybrid mid-size car and one small car.

All publicity, branding and signage will be joint between Enterprise Cars and STC.

STC chose Enterprise Cars for a couple of reasons - already have a working relationship with them, national operator, no capital investment required by STC. It was noted at the time that STC would not receive any income from this arrangement but would be facilitating a project as part of its Green Community Investment Plan.

Other options incurred considerable capital investment by STC.

### Main Doors

We have had ongoing problems with the main doors and people not being patient for them to open automatically, this is compounded with people pushing rather than pulling and causing more damage. The post has also been damaged which we will remove temporarily and arrange to be repaired. Push and Pull door signs will also be placed on the front doors.

### Flooring in Main Hall

Some additional work will take place in the near future on the flooring on the Main Hall.

The cost of this is approximate £10,000 for which the Town Council has within Earmarked Reserves.

## **735. Bat & Ball Station**

### Mural

Work on the Bat & Ball Station mural in Otford Road started in February, it has attracted a lot of interest and is progressing well.

Heritage Engagement Officer

The Town Council has been fortunate to have recruited two very good Heritage Engagement Officers. Initially Linda Read helped through the HLF process. Following the pandemic, it was agreed that much of the initial work had to be revisited to encourage engagement at the station. Iona Green has really reinvigorated the project with increased attendance, volunteering, and new projects. The Town Council has extended the contract a couple of times however for economic reasons is no longer able to do this and sadly Iona will be leaving us at the end of March 2024.

Station Café

The public have welcomed the café not only for refreshments but also to have staff at the station on a regular basis. It is also noted that there isn't another café facility, other than at Sainsburys in the ward. Many residents have built up a rapport with café staff.

The café's suffered greatly as did many other similar establishments during the pandemic and has only recently started to bounce back.

The Town Council believe there is still it is believed room to develop and improve the facility further. The Town Council believes if it was operated under a concession, it would operate differently, potentially increased hours and taking additional catering opportunities. Plans are being put in place subject to governance arrangements to go out to tender for a concession during 2024.

**736. Feedback from Hirers**

**736.1** The Report relating to Feedback Forms was received and noted that almost all was positive and complimentary with people stating they would re-book.

**736.2** Those present provided the following feedback:

<p>Allan de Turberville (Probus)</p>	<p><b>Feedback:</b> A couple of members had fallen ill whilst attending Probus lunches. Allan asked if it would be possible for Probus to share training with Sevenoaks Town Council in the use of a defibrillator? Allan also asked if clear signage giving the postcode of the Centre could be displayed for people needing to give directions to the emergency services.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Linda Larter said that training in the use of defibrillators would be looked into. Cllr.Canet suggested that Probus could also contact Sevenoaks District Council to see if they could help. Liz Hodgson would look into the postcode signage.</p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> The image projected onto the screen during presentations was too low for some people to see when sitting further back in rows of seating.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Linda Larter said that it might be possible to adjust the projector settings to facilitate easier viewing of the screen.</p>
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	<p><b>Feedback:</b> The oven had not been hot enough when the caterer was trying to cook a large Christmas meal and the lunch was delayed.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Linda Larter commented that the Town Council and hirers had had other caterers in on several occasions cooking for large events and there had been no issues with the heating of the oven.</p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Very happy with the service given by caretaking staff.</p>
<p>Myra de Turberville (The Arts Society Knole)</p>	<p><b>Feedback:</b> The sound of music being played by hirers using the John London Hall could be heard through the partitioning wall and was a distraction for members of The Arts Society trying to listen to the talk in the Harry Garrett Hall.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Linda Larter asked Liz Hodgson to look into bookings that are taken for the John London Hall.</p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Myra asked if it was necessary for the Society to pay for an hour's extra hall hire before and after their meeting.</p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Liz Hodgson said that this was necessary to allow time for the caretaker to set up for the meeting and tidy away afterwards which also involved cleaning the kitchen. However, it would be discussed with the Facility Manager to see if the hire time before the meeting could be reduced.</p>

**737. Press Releases**

It was agreed not to issue a Press Release.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

Signed .....  
Chairman

Dated .....