

**Notes of the Town Team Annual General Meeting held via zoom
On Wednesday 7th October 2020**

Meeting Commenced: 6.30 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 8.00 p.m.

Executive Board – Chairman: Andrew Eyre, Vice Chairman: Maxine Morgan

Representing	Number	Current Member	Current Organisation	
Sevenoaks Town Council	3	Clr Victoria Granville-Baxter Clr Simon Raikes Town Clerk		Apologies Present Present
Sevenoaks District Council	1	Clr Avril Hunter		
Transport	3	(Clr) Tony Clayton Austin Blackburn Elliott Waters	Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association Go Coach Southeastern	Present Present Apologies
Leisure Facilities	3	Jane Parish, CEO Andrew Eyre, CEO Hannah Kay, CEO	Sencio Stag Knole	Apologies Present Apologies
Chamber of Commerce	1	Julie Phillips, CEO	Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce	Present
Bligh's Meadow	1		Savills, agent for Blighs owners Standard Life Investments	
Sevenoaks Chronicle	1			
Sevenoaks Society	1	Roger Walshe		Present
Large Business	2	Maxine Morgan Elizabeth Dolding	Specsavers Warners Solicitors	Present Present
Small Independent Business	2	Roberta Ware Glenn Ball	Francis Jones Jewellers Local Architect	Present
Resident Association	1	Elizabeth Purves	Hollybush Residents Association	Present
Round Table	1			
Police	1			
	21			

In Attendance: Clr Marilyn Canet, Clr Busvine, Emily Haswell, Clr Richard Parry, Jim Hughes, Evy Drew

1. Election of Chairman of the Town Team

Andrew Eyre and Tony Clayton were nominated and seconded. The nominations were put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED: Andrew Eyre to be Chairman of the Town Team for the next year.

2. Election of Vice Chairman of the Town Team

Tony Clayton and Maxine Morgan were nominated and seconded. Tony Clayton was the opinion that the post should be held by a retailer and withdrew from the nomination.

RESOLVED: Maxine Morgan to be Vice Chairman of the Town Team for the next year.

3. Apologies for Absence

Elliott Waters, John Levett, Steph Harrison, Hannah Kay

4. Declaration of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest

5. Minutes of the Town Team Meeting held on 17th September 2020

It was noted that Minute 2 was incorrect in relation to the square meterage of the planning proposal and should read – three retail units one at 4,000 sqm and two at 2,000 sqm.

RESOLVED: Subject to above the Minutes were agreed to be a true record.

6. Annual Report 2020

It was noted that several of the regular annual events had not been able to take place due to COVID-19 and priority had moved towards a Recovery Plan and promoting local businesses.

There was some discussion about the disappointment that the Town Team's proposals for the Recovery Plan had not been supported and moved forward by other organisations. The Town Team would continue to use its voice for requesting improvements for safety in the town during COVID-19.

There was also discussion about the composition of the Town Team Executive Board.

RESOLVED: To place the composition of the Executive Board on the agenda for a future meeting.

7. Strategic Aims

A small group from the Executive Board had updated the Strategic Aims at the end of 2019. It was noted that the Strategic Aims and Priorities needed to be reviewed considering COVID-19, volunteers for this task were requested.

RESOLVED: The following small group meet and review the Strategic Aims and report back to a future Town Team meeting: Andrew Eyre, Emily Haswell, Cllr Marilyn Canet, Maxine Morgan, Town Clerk

8. Finance Matters

It was noted that there had not been any financial activity since the previous meeting.

9. Recovery Action Plan

The Town Team would continue with its campaign to encourage people to use local businesses either in person or online.

Sevenoaks District Council had received Re-Opening High St. Safety Fund this would be used for a wider communication strategy across the District, focusing also individually on the four towns promoting them as a safe place to visit. It was noted that Sevenoaks due to the work of the Town Team was more advanced than other towns.

Sevenoaks District Council had made the generous offer of use of the Buckhurst 1 Car Park for other uses up to March 2021. Sevenoaks Town Council and the Chamber of Commerce had jointly invited suggestions from local businesses for use of the land. Two suggestions had been received – 1) Traditional wooden Christmas Stalls, 2) Ice Skating Rink. These ideas had previously been discussed by Sevenoaks Town Council who were not willing at present to put in place the investment needed to progress these ideas. It was noted that Sevenoaks District Council were developing some alternative ideas for the land.

10. Christmas 2020 Promotions

i) Sevenoaks Promotional Video

At the previous meeting it was agreed that a Sevenoaks Promotional Video would be a good idea. Given the time that it would take to create it was agreed that this would be beneficial to promote the Christmas Offer in Sevenoaks.

RESOLVED: to produce a Sevenoaks Christmas Promotional Video to be available for the end of November 2020.

ii) Christmas Trail

At a previous meeting, the provision of a Town Trail had been discussed. At the time, the Town Team did not like the offer as it involved users making a financial contribution (to NHS) to use.

The Town Clerk had negotiated for Sevenoaks to be part of the national Christmas Spirit Safari which takes place between November 14th and December 31st, 2020 which includes the following:

A new story for a festive-themed Safari, free to play, based around families interacting with 10 cheerful Studio-Ghibli inspired Christmas 'Spirits'. Families will use the knowledge they gain from each character to solve a simple mystery (involving the disappearance of Father Christmas' brother) and unlock the Christmas eBook.

£350 Pack includes

- 10 x A4 QR enabled character window vinyl stickers
- Press Release

- Social media imagery and examples
- Website copy
- 25 x Branded QR A3 printed poster
- Standard collection page header
- Branded print ready A4 QR enabled posters
- Branded print ready A5 QR enabled flyers
- 5 x A1 Branded QR enabled posters

RESOLVED: to proceed with the Christmas Trail for 2020

iii) Window Wonderland

Window Wonderland is a national scheme with the branding 'The Opportunity to Light up the Community with a COVID safe celebratory festival, with no risk of cancellation. The proposal is that businesses, shops, and homes are transformed by lit window displays giving everyone the chance to use their creative skills to spread collective community cheer and a free outdoor art gallery around the whole town.

The concept is being used around the country to promote businesses and get the public fully involved and immersed in the winter festivities.

Sevenoaks has been registered – <https://windowwanderland.com>

It is envisaged to coincide the start of Window Wonderland with the switching on of the Christmas Lights, which sadly will be a low key turning on of the lights in the town centre in 2020 without the accompanying event or street festivities.

The £350 pack includes the following:

- Your own event page with interactive map
- Email platform to keep in touch with your window makers and local community
- Planning toolkit with timeline
- Display ideas gallery for makers
- Add images, links, and logos to event page
- 'Print at home' downloadable maps
- Facebook event page
- Template flyers, posters, and logos
- Schools pack
- Health and safety information
- Branding kit and survey advise
- PowerPoint presentations for schools and community groups

RESOLVED: To proceed with the Window Wonderland initiative involving as many schools, community groups and members of the community as possible.

11. Virtual Business Awards Event

It was noted that the project had not been progressed and that the Town Team's current priority were related to the Christmas season.

RESOLVED: To plan for the Virtual Business Awards Event early in 2021.

12. Member Organisations

- i) Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association
AGM taking place on 15th October 2020 with two main themes Future of Rail Franchising impact on Kent – New Kent Rail Strategy and Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership (DVCRP)
- ii) Senior Action Forum
Continue to be active. Previous Sunday had arranged a film showing at the Stag, unfortunately had poor attendance. Continue to have concerns regarding digital exclusion.
- iii) Resident Associations
Several were focusing on campaigning for 20 mph in resident association areas. Working with Sevenoaks Society on the Government Planning White Paper.
- iv) Go Coach
Currently operating at 60% capacity with 1,500 less passengers per day. Noticeable that traffic in general was reduced with more people WFH. Go2 service still operating and likely to continue.
- v) Sevenoaks District Council
Working on the Government Planning White Paper.

Discussion took place about the higher demand for premises in Sevenoaks due to people moving businesses out of London. It was noted that the new Business Hub in Cobden Road was very busy and smaller office spaces needed, rather than larger premises which seem to be remaining empty. Emily Haswell was asked if SDC could provide some background information to this.

- vi) Warners Solicitors
Approximately about 50% of staff back at work in the office, shopping in the town centre during lunch breaks. Town seems very busy during the day, especially the restaurants.
Hoped that Warners might be able to be involved in the Window Wonderland initiative.

- vii) Chamber of Commerce
Had held a positive virtual networking event earlier that day with 65 attending which is nearly up to the levels of face to face networking. Continuing to attract new members and providing online services for members. Encouraging businesses to support each other. Arranging a virtual event for members at Christmas.
- viii) Specsavers
Remaining busy and evidence that people were still spending. Staff subject to abuse from people who were not personally happy with COVID-19 restrictions. Concerned that Café Nero had closed.
- ix) Stag
Cinema had been open since July 2020. It was disappointing that restaurants were full that people still lacked confidence to return to the cinema which followed strict protocol to create a safe environment.

Following the success of the Live on the Vine a similar initiative was being held in the Theatre to encourage the return of audiences.

- x) Sevenoaks Town Council
The Bat & Ball Station Café had re-opened on 5th October 2020.

Works to the Bat & Ball Centre were nearing completion, mainly the exterior area to be completed, car park etc. The Town Clerk could arrange visits for Town Team members (it is still a building site). Those who had attended encouraged others to visit.

Town Councillors would be considering tenders for the Business Hub on 12th October 2020 and whether to go ahead with the project.

Although not arranging a full Christmas Lights Switch On event would be focusing on moving forward with Christmas initiatives including those already mentioned and a potential electronic Sevenoaks Christmas Gift Guide for the benefit of local businesses and residents.

13. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 16th December 2020

14. Press Release

It was agreed to issue press releases on the projects agreed above as they developed.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.