

Minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Youth Council
Held on 17th January 2024
at HiTB Youth Café, London Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1ZZ

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 7.00 p.m.

Present:

Youth Council Members:

Aanya Sidhu- Chair	Present	Maya Goodrich	Present
Niki Zhang- Vice-Chair	Apologies	Bea Hayward	Absent
Simba Li- Treasurer	Present	Cristian Hunter-Garcia	Present
Aryanna Mahdavi Ardestani	Absent	Sharma Ishwar	Present
Catherine Barden De Leon	Present	Harry King	Present
Dexter Buhmann	Present	Madeleine Politzer	Present
Rosie Blackmore	Present	Elena Rozo-Navarro	Absent
Elena-Teodora Dragoi	Apologies	Joseph Soanes	Apologies
Ayush Gautam	Absent	Aditya Vara	Present

In attendance: Linda Larter, Town Clerk; Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café; Cllr Chloe Gustard, Chair of the Youth Services Committee, Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Youth Committee Clerk

1. **Apologies for Absence**
Received as shown above.
2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Youth Council held on 01st November 2023**
RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council held on 01st November 2023.
3. **Finance Report**
It was noted that the Current balance was: £1,720.10.

RESOLVED: To note that the current balance was £1,720.10

4. **Youth Council Website Report**
The Chair noted that the average amount of time people spent on the website was quite low and they would like to figure out ways to improve the amount of time people spend on the website.
RESOLVED: To note the Website report.
5. **House in the Basement Youth Café (HiTB), Managers report:**
Daren noted that while House in the Basement had continued to offer hats, scarves and coats to young people who might need them over the winter months, there have not been many donations.
The Youth Council offered to help with this by spreading the word around their schools.

RESOLVED: To note Daren's Report.

6. Anti-littering poster

The Chair reported on the proposal. However, there was no decision to progress.

7. Charity

It was proposed that the Youth Council support **Friends for Families** who help support young people and Families in the Sevenoaks area who are facing financial hardship by helping with the donation of items like clothing, beds, white goods, to help families in need.

RESOLVED: The Youth Council agreed to support **Friends for Families** over their two-year term.

8. Youth Council Representative for the Youth Services Committee

The Youth Council heard how in the past the Youth Services Committee have asked for a representative from the Youth Council to attend the Youth Services Meeting to provide a Young Persons perspective. Both Harry King and Madeleine Politzer put their names forward and explained why they wanted to represent the Youth Council at the next Youth Services meeting.

RESOLVED: Both Harry and Madeleine were elected to represent the Youth Council at the Youth Services meeting.

9. Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) on the Vine- Update

The Youth Council noted that the PSPO on the Vine was agreed by Sevenoaks District Council. It was noted that Sevenoaks District Council had sent out draft posters that would be put on the Vine to inform people that the PSPO is in place. These were given to the Youth Council to get their feedback on the posters.

It was noted that from the designs on the posters it is not very clear what is acceptable at the location and what is considered Anti-Social Behavior, it was felt this could be explained with the use of images similar to what is used in a Swimming pool. The Youth Council also mentioned that one of the poster designs there is a red cross going across a group of people that gives the connotation that any large gathering at the site is not permitted. It was noted that a fine is mentioned on the posters, but it is in small lettering which could be made larger to act as more of a deterrent.

The Youth Council also discussed that the poster itself is on a black background which makes some of the lettering hard to read and would be even harder to see in the dark when a lot of the Anti-Social Behavior takes place, the recommended using a red outline to help draw more peoples attention to the notices.

It was noted that while a map of the area that the PSPO covers is useful it does take up a lot of space on the poster and would not draw people's attention to the sign. It was suggested that it might be useful to have a QR code on the poster for people to scan to see the area that is affected by the Public Spaces Protection Order.

10. Sevenoaks Summer Festival

The Youth Council heard that Sevenoaks Summer Festival is a collection of different arts events to help bring people into the town and would like the Youth Council to be engaged with deciding what types of events are held during the festival for young people.

RESOLVED: The Youth Council would like to be involved in the conversations regarding events held during the festival for young people.

11. Climate Change Youth Forum

It was noted that in previous years the Climate Change Youth Forum had been open to schools to start the conversation regarding the Climate Crisis and what young people could do in the Town. This is now open to any young person to attend to offer ideas on how to combat the climate crisis in the town.

The Youth Council heard that Trevor Kennet, Head of Direct Services for Sevenoaks District Council would be speaking at the event about “*Recycling in Sevenoaks*”. The Youth Council was invited to attend the meeting.

It was hoped that as many Youth Councillors as possible would attend and help promote the event.

RESOLVED: To note the first meeting of Climate Change Youth Forum will be taking place on the 28th of February 2024 at 6pm till 8pm.

12. Notes for the Workshop held at the Annual Meeting to discuss priorities.

The Youth Council Received notes from their workshop held on the 1st of November 2023 and discussed what they should place as their priorities for the duration of their two-year term. The Chair of the Youth Council categorised all of the ideas in to three main topics and prioritised them, these were:

- Environment,
- Mental Health and Wellbeing,
- Community,

The Chair opened the discussion to the Youth Councillors as to which of these three they felt was the most important. It was noted that Environment might be important as while schools have the facilities for students to recycle there is still a lot of packaging waste being thrown away that is mainly being produced through the catering companies that the schools employ. It was suggested that the schools could talk to the catering companies to see if they can reduce the amount of waste they produce.

The Youth Council also noted that food waste was a problem, it was mentioned that some schools use Biomass facilities to help turn excess food waste into fuel for vehicles. It was also noted that other schools have done projects where they have collected and weighed the wasted food to show how much is being thrown away.

It was also noted that in some classrooms, the lights are left on for long periods of time without anyone in the room. It was suggested that the schools change their lights on a sensor so that they only come on when there is someone in the room. Some other ideas were to add electric charging points for teachers with electric cars to use to help encourage the use of electric vehicles.

RESOLVED: It was noted that the Youth Council agreed that the Environment should be their main priority.

The Second point that was brought up was around young peoples Mental Health and Wellbeing especially on buses to and from school. It was noted that they would like to see posters on public transport similar to the See it, Say it, Sort it slogans on trains placed on buses to help young people know who they can go to get help or report incidents on busses to.

It was also noted that a parent/ guardian or teacher as a volunteer could be present on the bus to help with any incidents that might occur on the bus with these adults alternating on different days.

It was also noted that the youth council could hold a survey to compile reports of acts of bullying, harassment or assault that occur on public transport to take to transport companies.

RESOLVED: It was noted that the Youth Council agreed that Mental Health and Wellbeing should be their second priority with Community being their third.

Promotion of Youth Council Activities:

The Chair advised that they have created an Instagram account for the Youth Council and are currently looking for ideas about what the first post on the account should be as well as ways to help reach more young people through the social media platform.

13. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: Wednesday 20th March 2024- Sevenoaks Council Chamber, TN13 3QG
Wednesday 15th May 2024- HiTB Youth Café, TN13 1ZZ

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.