

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council held on Wednesday 11 February 2026
in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

Meeting commenced: 18:00

Meeting Concluded: 18:55

Youth Council Members Present:

Aahana Verma	Apologies	Kisali Wijesekara	Present
Aalim Saeed-Tirmizi	Present	Lily Court	Present
Adelina Suslikova	Present	Lizzie Hunt, Treasurer	Present
Aditya Srinivasan		Lukas Abromavicius, Vice Chair	Present
Aidan Hirst		Mackenzie Willis	Present
Alex Jin		Mark Bielikov	Apologies
Ali Esad Kutuloglu	Present	Max Oser	
Alice Warren	Present	Max Rowland	
Alicia Ho	Present	Maximilian David	
Allegra Delli Rocioni	Apologies	Megan Philips	Present
Angelos Maroulis	Present	Milly Anscorb	
Arina Evtushenko	Present	Franz Lahura-Sturm	
Aryana Mahdavi Ardestani, Chair	Present	Mirabel Poulson	Present
Audrina Chan	Present	Morgan Ingerfield	
Ayan Motwani		Naima Karki	Apologies
Benjamin	Present	Pendar Ahmadvazir	
Caspar Tillieux	Present	Penelope Muccino	Present
Catherine Barden de Leon	Present	Penelope Rowbotham	
Charlotte Bagoee	Present	Poppy-Grace Dixon-Lyon	Apologies
Chelsey Dai		Reuben Foulkes	
Clement Isong		Rhea Engineer	
Cynthia Chen	Present	Riddley McDermott	Present
Cyrus Tillieux	Present	Riley Ferguson	Present
Dhriti Pasumarty		Russell Street	Present
Ethan Cook	Present	Ryan Zhaeentan	
Eva Wang	Apologies	Sarah Pardasany, Social Media Officer	Apologies
Finn Chadwick	Present	Sayeesha Boysen	
George Kelly		Shinki Yu	Present
Harry King		Shiv Lamba	Present
Henry Thomas		Simi Akintoye	Apologies
Ines Wang Neto		Sofia Vittoria Moschini	Present
Ishwar Sharma	Present	Sophia Yu	
Jasper Barnes	Present	Sophie Sheridan	Present
John Ng	Apologies	Summer Chen	Present
Joshua Maddox Aquino		Susanna Local	Apologies
Joshua Maretlane		Taani Shukla	
Julien Beck	Present	Thomas Heregods	
Karam Kandhari	Apologies	Vihaan Sharma	Present
Katie Lo		Vyom Bhandari	

In attendance: Linda Larter, MBE- CEO & Town Clerk of Sevenoaks Town Council, Alison Futtit- Senior Committee Clerk, Daren Mountain- Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café.

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1 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence, as shown above, were received and accepted.

2 - MINUTES OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL HELD ON 26TH NOVEMBER 2025

The Minutes of the Youth Council Annual General Meeting held on the 26th of November 2025 were agreed as a true record.

3 - MESSAGE FROM LAURA TROTT, MP FOR SEVENOAKS

The Youth Council received a recorded message from Laura Trott Member of Parliament for Sevenoaks:

[Laura Trott MP Message to Sevenoaks Youth Council Feb 2026](#)

She expressed her delight that youth councillors were taking a role in the local area, trying to improve it and make it better, and feeding back to the Town Council what they would like to see changed. She commented on the amazing community in Sevenoaks and that for the youth councillors to be part of it was really important because that could make change, make a difference.

Laura Trott MP invited the Youth Council to visit her at the Houses of Parliament to learn more about the role of an MP. It is hoped a group visit will be arranged later in the year.

4 - FINANCE REPORT

It was noted that the balance of the Youth Council budget for 2025/26 was £1,101.70.

Youth Councillors suggested undertaking some fundraising to increase the budget, perhaps a cake sale, own clothes day or a sustainable second-hand sale.

5 - HOUSE IN THE BASEMENT (HiTB) YOUTH CAFE

Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement, presented his report which included a review of attendance and the wide range of activities during the year. It was noted that during January 2026 more young people had attended the Youth Café than since it first opened 13 years ago.

Daren thanked members of the Youth Council who had attended as volunteers to provide support with homework.

6 - RECOMMENDATIONS ON DEVELOPING HOUSE IN THE BASEMENT YOUTH CAFE (HiTB) FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Youth Council made the following suggestions:

- that Youth Councillors help to promote HitB as they felt that a lot of young people were not aware of it, focussing on social media and word of mouth but also to have posters for schools and a flyer to hand out if required

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- that anyone available to help with subject tuition on weekdays contact Daren, there was a show of hands of youth councillors willing to volunteer for one hour a week
- It was agreed to send out a post on the YC WhatsApp Group
- It was suggested that the view of HitB was as a hang out space, and that maybe promoting the study support would attract people
- It was noted that there might need to be separate spaces or times for hanging out and studying
- The possibility of providing online tuition sessions via Zoom was raised

7 - NOTES FROM WORKSHOP HELD DURING THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Youth Council received the notes from the workshop held at the previous meeting to share youth councillors' ideas on:

- the greatest need for young people right now
- what they would like to see in Sevenoaks if money and practical issues were no problem
- topics they would like to focus on over the next two years
- what they would like to achieve in their two years as youth councillors.

Youth Councillors discussed ways to move forwards in some of the areas:

Transport

- To try to influence Kent County Council (KCC), by campaigning on specific issues and meeting with KCC.

Social Media

- Youth Council social media could be used to promote HitB and other organisations, and to advise of campaigns
- Youth Councillors noted the government was considering whether to introduce a social media ban for under 16s
- People to be encouraged to follow Instagram
- Social media to be used to raise the profile of the Youth Council and what it was doing, and what's happening in Sevenoaks.

Mental Health

- Use social media to raise awareness and share resources available
- To arrange a series of community events with specific themes, e.g. mindfulness
- It was felt that outdoor activities, in Knole Park for example, might be more attractive to some people
- An inclusive charity football match in the summer was suggested

Sevenoaks Town Council
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- A mental health focused event should make the most of spaces available – e.g. HitB, Bat & Ball Centre, Knole Park and West Kent Mind
- To work together with other schools
- There was discussion of whether people experiencing mental health challenges would attend an event or would prefer the anonymity of reaching out via social media
- The idea of developing an App, as a safe platform for communication, was raised. It was noted that this would have to meet safeguarding guidelines.
- It was also noted that resources did already exist and researching and signposting to these would perhaps be more beneficial
- youth councillors emphasised the importance of sharing information with their schools and friendship groups perhaps through school assemblies and school social media accounts
- Publicity material needed to be produced that would engage people

The Town Clerk advised that there were courses available for peer mental health training: If youth councillors were interested this could be arranged

She also advised that a mental health organisation had given a presentation to the previous Youth Council and suggested it would be useful to repeat this.

Youth Councillors commented that whilst many of them had raised their concerns about youth mental health, it was important to identify need. The Town Clerk informed them of the Mental Health Survey undertaken during the previous Youth Council's term of office and it was agreed that it would be useful for this to be considered at the next meeting.

PRIORITY: From the discussion the key priority that emerged was to promote awareness of mental health resources and how to access, and to consider how the Youth Council could be an intermediary to get word out to other young people.

Events

A Health and Wellbeing Fair was being held at Vine Gardens on 30th May: the Youth Council was invited to have a stand there, although it was a Bank Holiday weekend and this might affect people's availability.

Sustainability

- Shops could be asked to reduce their plastic waste
- The Plastic Free Sevenoaks Pledge from a few years ago could be rejuvenated (information on the campaign to be circulated to youth councillors)

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council held on Wednesday 11 February 2026
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- It was noted that some shops and businesses had signed up to provide free water bottle refills, youth councillors were unaware of this
- It was understood that an App was available showing refill points around the country
- Youth Councillors suggested that water fountains be included on maps and signposted in town

There being no further business the Chair closed the Meeting.

Signed
Chair

Dated