

Minutes of a Meeting of the Forty Sixth Annual Assembly of the Townspeople of Sevenoaks held in both the Small and the Large Hall at the Sevenoaks Community Centre, Sevenoaks on Monday 18th March 2019 at 7:00 pm.

Cllr R M C Hogarth – Mayor of Sevenoaks

Cllr N J L Busvine OBE	Cllr R L Piper
Cllr J M Canet	Cllr S G Raikes
Cllr A S Clayton	Cllr O Schneider
Cllr A Eyre	Cllr P E Towell
Cllr Mrs R E Parry	Cllr E T Waite
Cllr R J Parry	Cllr P C Walshe

(13)

Also Present:

Cllr P Fleming OBE, Leader of Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr G Clack, Sevenoaks District Council
Youth Councillor Samuel Crawford
Chief Executive / Town Clerk, Mrs Linda Larter MBE
Deputy Town Clerk, Mr Hugh D’Alton
Committee Clerk, Mrs Michèle MacDonald
Sevenoaks Community Centre Administrator, Mrs Liz Hodgson

64 Members of the Public

Apologies for absence:

The Right Hon Sir Michael Fallon MP
Cllr S L Arnold
Cllr E Parson
Cllr Irene Collins, Chair of Riverhead Parish Council

Prior to the commencement of the meeting members of the public had the opportunity to visit an exhibition of stands, in the Small Hall, provided by local voluntary groups who had received grants from Sevenoaks Town Council and to meet local Town Councillors.

The Mayor, Cllr Roderick Hogarth welcomed everyone and thanked all for attending the meeting as well as viewing the exhibits of how previous grant money was spent in the local community. He hoped that all had enjoyed the opportunity to learn about voluntary activities happening in Sevenoaks.

The Mayor proudly launched the Town Council’s “Plastic Free Sevenoaks Pledge” stating that Youth Councillor Gabby Tan had designed the logo. The Mayor asked that attendees take away the pamphlet and encourage their local community and local organisations to sign up to the pledge as soon as possible.

1 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Forty Fifth Annual Parish Meeting of the Townspeople of Sevenoaks held on 19th March 2018 were adopted and it was **RESOLVED** that the Mayor sign the Minutes of that meeting as a true record. It was noted that Cllr E Parson had also attended the meeting.

2 **PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL 2018/2019**

The Mayor presented the Annual Report of the Town Council and invited the Town Clerk to summarise the Town Council's achievements to date for the year 2018/2019.

In addition to the Town Council's report, which had been distributed together with the 2019/2018 budget to all at the meeting, the Chief Executive/Town Clerk, Mrs Linda Larter MBE, provided a visual slide show of the highlights of the Town Councils' achievements over the past year.

3 **PRESENTATION FROM CLLR PETER FLEMING, OBE LEADER OF SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

The Mayor invited Cllr Fleming OBE to address the meeting.

Cllr Fleming addressed all present stating that the District includes over 30 Town and Parish Councils, with a population of approximately 120,000 covering 140 square miles and stated that the team at Sevenoaks Town Council punched above its weight and the strength within the community.

Cllr Fleming OBE advised that since 1999 the District Council's spend has decreased by £2m, with an increase in services and now without direct Government funding. The District charges developers a sum of money per square footage for any new developments under its Local Plan of which the Town Council receives 25%. A bid for extra money may also be made and such money has been allocated to the Bat and Ball Station plus the Bat and Ball Centre.

The District Council is working towards a new Local Plan for the next 30 years, to protect housing, employment and land within the district. The Government requested the District Council to build 13,500 new homes. The District's Local Plan achieves 75% of the target.

Cllr Fleming updated all present as follows:

i. **Edwards Electrical Site – Sevenoaks High Street at the junction with Pembroke Road and Suffolk Way**

A planning application had been submitted for a temporary long stay car park. The current Local Plan designated the land as mixed use and it is hoped that the owner will bring forward an application to build the site out in line with this designation.

- ii. Farmers Site – Sevenoaks Railway Station
The District Council had previously had conversations with the owners about working collaboratively as part of the Premier Inn development however this had not proved fruitful.
- iii. Sevenoaks District Council – Investment in Property
The District Council had been investing in commercial property for income generation to offset the savings required in its annual budget.

Cllr Fleming thanked Sevenoaks Town Council for the support given and advised the delegates that the Town Council is fighting their corner.

Finally, the Leader thanked the Mayor and the team at Sevenoaks Town Council.

The Mayor invited questions from the floor relating to Cllr Fleming’s presentation:

- a) **Question One** – Request for an update on the former Tesco Metro Site in the town
Answer: Cllr Fleming OBE, advised that the premises are owned by the family Freshwater and have been in discussions with the District Council. The current proposal being considered is that the rear of the site has residential development with the frontage for retail development with smaller units.
- b) **Question Two** – Will the access rights of the Farmer’s site cause issues?
Answer: Cllr Fleming OBE, advised that during the build of the Premier Inn, smaller equipment was used to ensure access to the site and that access rights remain.
- c) **Question Three** – St John’s Hill Properties – vacant for 20 years.
Answer: Cllr Fleming OBE, advised that the District had served a tidy up notice which somewhat slightly helped the appearance.
- d) **Question Four** – Buckhurst 2 Car Parking – will the temporary on street parking continues?
Answer: Cllr Fleming OBE, advised that there would be no immediate reversion and that within the first six months of the 2019/2020 year, there would be an holistic review of the parking within the district.

Compliment – Sevenoaks Sports Council

Mr Edward Oatley complimented the Town Council on their tremendous support given to all local sport, stating that over 2000 children enjoyed local sports every weekend and local primary schools had benefited over the last ten years from similar investment and confirmed that the *“Town Council certainly does punch above its weight in terms of sport”*.

4 MAYOR'S PRESENTATION OF GRANT CHEQUES TO LOCAL VOLUNTARY GROUPS

The Mayor presented cheques to the following organisations: -

- £500 – Mr Anthony Weston Smith, Treasurer Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group, towards completing their website
- £350 – Mrs Jill Webster, Sevenoaks Literary Festival, to hire speakers for the annual free event for local schools to attend.
- £250 – Mrs Margaret Willis, on behalf of Friends of Pontoise, in support of twinning activities [France].
- £600 – Mrs Sue Day, on behalf of Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival to finance the hire of a piano for competitive classes and prize-winners.
- £250 – Mr Mike Wither, on behalf of Friends of Rheinbach, in support of twinning activities [Germany].
- £200 – Mr Harvey Mahn, on behalf of the Sevenoaks Art Club in support of publicity material costs.
- £750 – Ms Jill Brewster, on behalf of West Kent Mediation, towards training for volunteers plus publicity.
- £5,000 – Mr Ray Russell, on behalf of The Sevenoaks Summer Festival, for funding towards the 2019 annual festival fortnight as Sevenoaks Town Council is its main partner.
- £500 – Mr Tom Lee, representing the Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra, to provide a free Youth Jazz Workshop to all schools on 25th June 2019.
- £750 – Mr David Green, representing the Sevenoaks Society, to provide £250 towards an exhibition from 19th June to 6th July 2019 at the Kaleidoscope Gallery and £500 towards the publication of an accompanying book.

5 COMMENTS AND QUERIES FROM LOCAL PEOPLE ON ANY MATTERS RELATING TO SEVENOAKS

The Mayor invited the public to ask any question or to raise queries relating to Sevenoaks.

No further questions were posed by the public in attendance.

The Mayor advised that on a democratic level, the Town Council has many events at which the public may raise local issues including weekly meetings to which the public are invited to pose questions relating to the agendas at the beginning of the committee meeting under Public Question Time.

Cllr Hogarth's final breakfast meeting will be held on 5th April 2019 at Wildernesse House to which all are invited.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7:48pm.

MAYOR