



Scheme of Delegation (including Council & Committees Terms of Reference)

To be Approved by Council: 12th May 2025

Revisions to this document:

- STNP / Masterplan Terms of Reference updated and approved by STNP / Masterplan Working Group on 1st July 2024
- Minor grammatical and formatting corrections made throughout on 25th November 2024
 - Changes to Committee & Working Group structure & terms of reference 12th May 2025

Review following each election or if change of Committee structure.

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

By this Scheme of Delegation, the Council in pursuance of its powers under section 101 of the LGA 1972 Local Government Act and in pursuance of its powers under section 15 of the LGA 2000 Local Government Act, General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 and to the extent of their respective powers authorising the Proper Officer (Chief Executive / Town Clerk) and Responsible Financial Officer / Deputy Town Clerk, Standing Committees of the Council to act with delegated authority in the specific circumstances detailed.

The intention of the Scheme of Delegation is that the Council should act with all reasonable speed. Decisions should be taken at the most suitable level and that Officers are given power over the day-to-day administration and operation of the Council.

Sevenoaks Town Council is accredited with the General Power of Competence and a Local Council Gold Award status, Investors in People, Civility and Respect Pledge and Town of Sanctuary status.

PROPER OFFICER (CHIEF EXECUTIVE / TOWN CLERK) – DUTIES AND POWERS

The Proper Officer of the Council has statutory duties which are set down in legislation.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is specifically authorised to:

- i) Receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office
- ii) Receive and Record notices from Councillors of Disclosing Interests
- iii) Receive, Retain and process plans and documents
- iv) Sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council
- v) Sign and issue summonses to attend meetings of the Council and Committees
- vi) Give public notice of the time, place, and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council or Committees (provided that the public notice with agenda of an Extra Ordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them)
- vii) Convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council.

In addition, the Chief Executive / Town Clerk has the delegated authority to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council:

- i) The day-to-day administration and operation of services, together with routine inspection and control.
- ii) Day to day supervision and control of all staff employed by the Council
- iii) Authorisation of routine expenditure within the agreed budget.

- iv) Emergency expenditure up to £10,000 outside of the agreed budget in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- v) Project manage and associated expenditure on projects approved by the Council and up to budget approved.

Delegated actions of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk shall be in accordance with Legislation, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation and Committee Terms of Reference with directions given from the Council from time to time.

In the absence of the Town Clerk the Deputy Town Clerk is delegated to take on said responsibilities.

Delegated Authority is given to Council Officers to make decisions on behalf of the Committees, in the case of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk full Council, **on urgent matters between meetings**. These decisions are to be made after consultation with Councillors.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE / TOWN CLERK EMERGENCY DELEGATED AUTHORITY

In extreme cases for example the Covid pandemic lockdown Emergency Delegated Authority is required for the Chief Executive / Town Clerk (Deputy Town Clerk) to enable the day-to-day operation of Sevenoaks Town Council to continue to operate within legislation when the Council cannot meet in person and a legal alternative is not available.

The following is an example of the delegation used in such circumstances.

Council Meeting 23rd March 2020 Minute 567 ii)

RESOLVED: To agree emergency measures that if it was not possible to convene a meeting of the Council or Committee in reasonable time or where restrictions are in place, the Town Clerk (and Deputy Town Clerk) shall have delegated authority under s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make decisions on behalf of the Council where such decision cannot be reasonably deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. This will be carried out where possible by consultation with members by electronic means or telephone. The Town Clerk will further consult with the Mayor for guidance as necessary. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decision made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

The Responsible Financial Officer within the meaning of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 and subsequent legislation shall be responsible for the Town Council accounting procedures and financial governance in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations in force at any given time.

The Responsible Financial Officer as Deputy Town Clerk will also assume the Town Clerk's role if there is an absence and need.

The Responsible Financial Offer has delegated authority for day-to-day responsibility for:

- Fiscal Governance
- Accounts Management
- Budget & Financial Monitoring / Predictions
- Insurance
- Financial Risk Management
- Internal Financial Controls
- External & Internal Audits
- Payroll & Pensions administration
- VAT
- Performance of Finance Team
- Financial Transparency

TERMS OF REFERENCE – THE TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL

The Town Council is the final authority on matters of policy and the powers of duties exercised by the Council. The Town Council will be solely responsible for the following specific functions:

- (a) The power of raising loans and setting the precept
- (b) The power of incurring capital expenditure not specifically included in the Council's approved estimates of expenditure for the time being
- (c) The appointment or dismissal of the Town Clerk
- (d) Appointment of Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Leader, Deputy Leader
- (e) Appointment of Committees, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen thereof
- (f) Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies
- (g) Annual Subscriptions
- (h) Standing Orders as to the conduct of the Council's business
- (i) The Committee Structure including terms of reference, membership etc

STANDING COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

Sevenoaks Town Council will operate and govern under a Committee and Working Group system with the following delegated powers.

Councillors shall be members of the Standing Committees and Working Groups of the Council in accordance with Standing Orders.

Standing Committees to meet approximately every 6 weeks, with exception of Planning & Environment which will be every 2 weeks and Personnel which will normally be 2 times per year.

Working Groups will meet as and when required and will be providing recommendations to Standing Committees. Working Groups can invite external representatives as non-voting members to participate on relevant topics. Working Groups with external representatives will not be recorded for YouTube.

The Mayor is a voting member of all Committees and Working Groups.

All Councillors regardless of whether they are on a Committee or Working Group will receive all Agendas, Supporting Papers, and Minutes.

A quorum of a Committee is one third.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – FINANCE & DELIVERY COMMITTEE

- (a) To study the long term aims and objectives of the Town Council in the context of the STNP and Community Investment Plan and recommend such forward programmes and other steps as may be necessary to achieve the Council's objectives in whole or in part during specific time spans.
- (b) To consider all the following matters and have executive powers once general policy and expenditure has been approved by the Town Council.
 - i) All financial matters and accounts for payment as provided for by the Financial Regulations
 - ii) Annual Estimates
 - iii) Capital Works Programme
 - iv) Grant Aid
 - v) Public Offices
 - vi) Executive powers to be granted to officers and Committee Chairmen
 - vii) Projects for the benefit of the Sevenoaks Community and to make recommendations thereon to the Council
 - viii) Annual Management letter from the Auditors

- ix) Insurance policies
- x) Asset Register
- xi) Town Twinning and Liaison
- xii) To consider any general purposes business
- xiii) Town Team
- xiv) Assets including Bat & Ball Centre, Bat & Ball Station, Business Hub
- xv) Christmas Lighting & Town Centre Events/Festivals
- xvi) Markets
- xvi) To receive and approve grant applications normally twice a year.

- (c) To receive reports from the Town Team/BID and the following Working Groups: Community & Wellbeing, Communications, Sports Strategy, Arts & Culture, Quarry Liaison, Greatness Recreation Ground, Bat & Ball User Group and Town of Sanctuary Liaison Group.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – COMMUNITY & WELLBEING WORKING GROUP

- (a) To pursue Objective 12 of the STNP (to deliver enhanced community assets for the town) and implement Policy COM1 (promote new health and education provision, faith facilities and other necessary community infrastructure as an integral part of new development)
- (b) To receive reports and recommendations from three Working Groups - Youth Services, Sports Strategy and Arts & Culture)
- (c) To identify community groups to support and promote
- (d) To identify gaps in community support (including healthcare) and lobby for improvement

TERMS OF REFERENCE – COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

- (a) To review the internal and external communication strategy of Sevenoaks Town Council and make recommendations to the Finance & Delivery Committee.
- (b) The Working Group can invite external representatives as non-voting members to participate on relevant topics.
- (c) Meetings of the Communications Working Group will meet as and when required.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - SPORTS STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

Aim: To create a second Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy for the STNP revision and to establish sporting needs within Sevenoaks Town for the next 10 years in line with Objective 14 of the STNP (to deliver enhanced recreational and sports facilities for the town) and Policies S1 & S2.

1. Naming and role

- 1.1 The Working Group shall be referred to as the Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy Group (STSS).
- 1.2 Topics for consideration by the Working Group may be added, provided that they are within the scope of the Sports Strategy process and do not conflict or duplicate the work being carried out by another Sevenoaks Town Council (STC) Committee or Working Group.
- 1.3 Any proposed modification to the list of topics to be considered by the Working Group must be approved by the STC Community & Wellbeing Committee before they may take effect.

2. Membership

- 2.1 Excluding elected Councillors, members of the STSS shall be limited to representatives of Sports organisations within Sevenoaks Town.
- 2.2 Members of the STSS shall be, as far as possible, representative of the demographics within Sevenoaks Town.
- 2.3 The formal list of members of the STSS and all related General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) matters will be maintained and controlled by the Community & Wellbeing Committee.
- 2.4 Meetings of the STSS will be open to all members of the public who wish to attend.
- 2.5 Members of the public in attendance at a STSS meeting shall be free to contribute to the discussions taking place however will not hold voting rights.
- 2.6 Members of the STSS must disclose any personal or financial interests which may conflict or coincide with the topics being considered by the Sub Committee.

3. Governance and decision making.

- 3.1 The STSS will be presided over by a Chair or Vice Chair who must be an elected member of Sevenoaks Town Council.
- 3.2 If the Chair is not able to be present, meetings shall be chaired by the Vice Chair. If neither are present, members shall elect a Chair for the meeting from those present.
- 3.3 Decisions will be made by the consensus of formal members present at the STSS meeting. When a vote is tied the Chair will have the casting vote.

- 3.4 Recommendations made by the STSS will be considered as purely advisory and hold no weight unless explicitly ratified by Sevenoaks Town Council's Community & Wellbeing Committee.

4. Meetings

- 4.1 It is for the individual STSS to determine frequency of meetings; however, the frequency should be adequate to allow the STSS to meet deadlines set by the Community & Wellbeing Committee.
- 4.2 It is recommended that as soon as possible a schedule of STSS meeting dates is agreed and circulated to members.
- 4.3 Sevenoaks Town Council must be notified at least 5 working days in advance of any proposed meetings to allow them to be publicised adequately.

5. Record Keeping

- 5.1 Sevenoaks Town Council will endeavour to have an Officer present at meetings of STSS who will be responsible for the production of the minutes.
- 5.2 Minutes of meetings will be publicly available and will be publicised on Sevenoaks Town Council's website.
- 5.3 Agendas for the STSS will be circulated via email to all who have expressed an interest in the second Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy process. Paper copies will be made available at the meeting.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - ARTS & CULTURE WORKING GROUP

- (a) To pursue Objective 13 of the STNP (to develop and promote a cultural quarter in the town centre and to enhance the town's cultural offer and improve access to existing cultural assets)
- (b) To implement Policy COM2 (the Town Council will promote the development of a cultural quarter in the town centre together with an arts and cultural strategy)
- (c) To liaise with the Sevenoaks Summer Festival and consider all other opportunities to promote the arts in the town.
- (d) To receive regular reports from the Stag Theatre & Cinema as to its performance and consider all requests from the Stag for funding.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – QUARRY LIASON WORKING GROUP

The Quarry Liaison Group is arranged by Tarmac and Sevenoaks Town Council has representatives from Ward Councillors and the Town Clerk.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - GREATNESS RECREATION GROUND WORKING GROUP

- (a) To review the responses from the Greatness Recreation Ground public survey and feed into a revised Greatness Recreation Ground Management Plan.
- (b) To meet as and when required.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – SEVENOAKS TOWN TEAM

1. Name

The partnership will be called the ‘Sevenoaks Town Team’ (formally known as Partnership).

The Town Team was established with the aim of working together with a wide range of people in the local community to make Sevenoaks Town a prosperous, vibrant, and attractive place to live, visit, and do business.

2. Aim

- 2.1. To pursue objectives 10 & 11 of the STNP and where relevant implement Policies E1, E2, E3, E4 & E5.
- 2.2. To develop a Business Improvement District (BID) to referendum stage.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. Improving engagement between public, private and community sector partners in order to use this combined expertise and resources to improve the town.
- 3.2. Increasing visitors (footfall) in the town centre to support local businesses and organisations.
- 3.3. Encourage inward investment in the town and make Sevenoaks an attractive place for businesses looking to start-up.
- 3.4. Improving the accessibility and environment of Sevenoaks Town.

- 3.5. Invest and investigate different forms of digital marketing.
- 3.6. Produce a Yearly Calendar of Events.
- 3.7. Market the town as 'clean and safe'.
- 3.8. Produce initiatives to address 'Empty Shops' issues
- 3.9. Retain and improve upon the services provided to local residents.

4. Membership

- 4.1 Members should be welcomed from a wide range of different sectors to reflect the diverse aspirations of people in the town.

4.2 Governance.

Members who are appointed by organisations should be clear that they act to represent their own organisation and in doing so should obtain from their organisation the necessary consent or ratification for any commitment or decision to which they are party on behalf of the Town Team.

Members may also be known as an 'Individual Member' when they are not representing an organisation.

- 4.3 The Chair of the Town Team will be an elected member recognising responsibility of public money and national code of conduct.
- 4.4 Members of the Executive Board who miss more than 3 months of meetings will cease to be members. Exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 4.5 The Town Team will ensure that it remains a fully representative body.
- 4.6 The Town Team will seek to ensure the full participation of the community wherever possible and seek to inform the community of the progress of its work.
- 4.7 The Town Team will comply with the Sevenoaks Town Council Equal Opportunities statement.
- 4.8 The Partnership will operate in an environment which is fully accountable and transparent.
- 4.9 Any alterations to the terms of reference must be agreed by the Town Team.

5 Meetings and Decision Making

- 5.1 Sevenoaks Town Team Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Town Team, will timetable at least 4 full Town Team meetings at regular intervals throughout the financial year.

- 5.2 Additional meetings may be called by 5 or more members indicating to the Chair that a meeting is needed.
- 5.3 Agenda items for such a meeting should be agreed in consultation with the Chair and notice given to the Clerk at least 10 days in advance.
- 5.4 Decisions will be made by consensus of those present on a majority vote
- 5.5 It is recognised that many members of the Town Team will have a personal interest in promoting the best interests of the business of the partnership and that conflicts of interest are therefore difficult to identify. However, partners should declare a personal interest that might represent a conflict with the best interests of the partnership.
- 6. Administration**
- 6.1 Sevenoaks Town Council will undertake the administrative functions necessary for the co-ordination of the Town Team.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - BAT & BALL USER GROUP

The aim of the Users Group is to assist the operation and development of the Bat & Ball Centre and Bat & Ball Station. The Group may suggest, where applicable, improvements or ideas.

The management and day to day operation of the Centre and Station are not matters for the User Group.

- (a) Membership will consist of the following representatives: -
- (i) 2 Town Councillors
 - (ii) User Groups

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk or an appropriate substitute will attend all meetings.

- (b) The Council will invite organisations who use the centre to nominate representatives to the Group to ensure community input to the Bat & Ball Centre and to the Bat & Ball Station

- (c) A Councillor is to be elected annually as Chair of the User Group, together with one other Councillor. Should the Chair step down during the term of office, the other Councillor will assume the role until the end of the term.
- (d) Agendas for meetings will be compiled by the Town Council
- (e) The Group will normally meet two times per year
- (f) The Town Council may consult the User Group, as appropriate, about any projects relating to the Bat & Ball Centre and Bat & Ball Station.
- (g) A quorum will be the Chair, or in their absence, a representative, together with 3 other representatives.
- (h) Membership of the Group is voluntary, and no expenses or remuneration are paid.
- (i) Suggestions and / or ideas formulated by the Group for presentation to the Town Council, must be supported by a majority vote at the Groups' meeting. The Chair, if necessary, will have a casting vote.
- (j) Notes of meetings to be reported to the Finance & Delivery Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE – TOWN OF SANCTUARY LIAISON GROUP

In 2023 Sevenoaks Town Council became the first Town of Sanctuary in the UK.

In order to continue to keep this accreditation the Town Council must demonstrate its ongoing commitment via various actions.

The Town Council does this by working through an Action Plan with Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees and people who have sought sanctuary in the town.

- Delegated Town Councillors including Mayor will meet regularly throughout the year with Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees and people who have sought sanctuary in the town.
- The Town of Sanctuary Action Plan and Strategy will be considered, worked on and developed.
- The Town of Sanctuary aims will be promoted wherever possible via Town Council's functions and facilities and in partnership with other organisations.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – COMMUNITY ASSET (OPEN SPACES) COMMITTEE

Aim: to pursue relevant objectives in the STNP (in particular objectives 4, 5 & 6) and where appropriate implement policies L1, L2, L3, L4, L5 & L8.

To consider all matters relating to the following items and make recommendations to the Finance & Delivery Committee.

- (a) Cemeteries
- (b) Lawn of Remembrance
- (c) Recreational Facilities
- (d) Refuse and litter collection; Grit Bins/Litter Bins
- (e) Allotments
- (f) Raleys Field, Knole Paddock, Greatness and associated developments
- (g) The Open Spaces, Woodlands, and Common Areas under the Council's control
- (h) Vine Gardens/Upper High Street Gardens
- (i) Sevenoaks Common and other Open Spaces
- (j) Seats, other than seats in bus shelters
- (k) Maintenance of footpaths
- (l) Rights of Way on both footpaths and bridleways including obstructions and applications for diversions; closure or creation of rights of way and to have executive powers regarding action necessary for dealing with obstructions of right of way
- (m) Public Shelters, Bus Shelters, and to have executive powers regarding urgent action necessary in the interest of public safety in these places
- (n) Town Clocks
- (n) Public Lavatories

TERMS OF REFERENCE – PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Aim: To pursue relevant objectives of the STNP (in particular objectives 1, 2, 3, 15, 16 & 17) and implement relevant policies (in particular C1 – C10 and D1 – D6).

- (a) To consider and have executive powers except to address all Town and Country Planning matters.
- (b) To consider all matters relating to redevelopment schemes including the provision of attendant roads and ancillary parking
- (c) To have authority to hold additional Planning meetings on Tuesdays when the fortnightly cycle of commenting on planning applications would be impossible to adhere to owing to Bank Holidays
- (d) The Chair of the Committee, or in his/her absence the Vice Chair, in consultation with one other Committee Member (to be a ward member for the premises concerned) and the Town Clerk, to have executive powers to make observations in respect of planning applications referred to the Town Council, where it is not possible to convene a meeting of the Committee in time to meet the deadline date for return of observations to the Planning Officer

Where this executive power has been exercised, the observations made to the Planning Officer are to be reported to the next meeting of the Town Planning Committee or direct to the next meeting of the Town Council if sooner

- (e) To consider and have executive power in respect of all matters relating to Licensing within the Parish, including licensing of premises for the sale of alcohol
- (f) The Chair of the Committee or in his/her absence the Vice Chair in consultation with one other Committee Member (to be a ward member for the premises concerned) and the Town Clerk to have executive powers to make observations in respect of Licensing Applications referred to the Town Council where it is not possible to convene a meeting of the Committee in time to meet the deadline date for return of observations to the Licensing Authority.

Where this executive power has been exercised the observations made to the Licensing Authority are to be reported to the next meeting of the town Planning Committee or direct to the next meeting of the Town Council if sooner

- (g) To consider any long term aims and objectives of the Town Council in relation to the Local Plan and the Local Development Framework; Town Development and other strategic Town and Country Planning matters
- (h) Conservation Areas and Environmental Improvements except where relating to Town Council land and properties
- (i) Formation of Neighbourhood Plans (& Masterplans)
- (j) Tree Work Applications - The Chair of the Committee or in his/her absence the Vice Chair in consultation with another Committee member (to be a ward member for the site concerned) and the Town Clerk to have executive powers to make observations to the Local Planning Authority in respect of

Tree Work applications (both Conservation Area and Tree Preservation Order) which the Town Council is notified of in order to maximise the opportunity to object to inappropriate works prior to a determination being reached by the Local Planning Authority.

Where this executive power has been exercised the observations made to the Local Planning Authority are to be reported to the next meeting of the Planning Committee or direct to the next meeting of the Town Council if sooner.

- (j) To receive reports and recommendations from the Movement & Net Zero Working Group, the STNP / Masterplan Working Group and the Quarry Liaison Working Group.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – MOVEMENT & NET ZERO WORKING GROUP

To consider matters relating to the following items and make recommendations as necessary to the Finance and Delivery Committee or the Planning and Environment Committee as appropriate:

1. The Town Council's aim to improve sustainable movement with the Town.
2. The Town Council's strategic aims in relation to working towards net zero.
3. The implementation of the sections of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan relevant to movement and achieving net zero. In particular Objectives 7 – 9 and Policies and Aims M1 – M12.
4. Sevenoaks Town Council's Green Community Investment Plan.
5. Initiatives from other organisations relating to movement and or net zero.
6. To consider all matters relating to traffic routes designed to reduce or remove traffic from the centres of the Town and the Upper High Street
7. To consider all matters relating to Highways (other than footway lighting) within the area of the Town Council including parking restrictions and street car parks, street signs, street numbering, traffic movements and routes, one way systems, maintenance, and cleaning
8. To consider all matters relating to:-

- (1) Car Parks and car parking charges
- (2) Public Transport Services associated with the Town
- (3) Any proposed Motorway Interchanges affecting the Town
- (4) Rail Services
- (5) Air transport

9. All matters relating to road safety

10. To set out objectives for the Working Group.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – STNP / MASTERPLAN WORKING GROUP

Terms of Reference for Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan / Masterplan Working Group – originally the STNP Monitoring & Implementation Group

1. Naming and role

1.1 The Group will be referred to as the “Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan / Masterplan Working Group” – STNP / Masterplan Working Group

1.2 The STNP / Masterplan Working Group is not a formal Committee of Sevenoaks Town Council. It may make recommendations to the Town Council’s Planning & Environment Committee, which will make the final decision.

1.3 The Group will be responsible for:

- i. The oversight of how the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan Policies and Aims are being implemented, and annual review of how policy performance and wording can be improved – via Annual Report. This to include recommendations to be presented to the Planning & Environment Committee for consideration.
- ii. Actively promoting the STNP process to residents, local businesses, Residents Associations, and stakeholders to encourage a participation in the continuing project and the sharing of views.
- iii. The production of the Monitoring and Implementation Strategy document and any subsequent modifications. This will itemise each policy, aim and objective, and provide details of the targets, performance indicators and delivery status.

Any iterations to be agreed by the Planning & Environment Committee.

- iv. Provide recommendations on actioning of any further studies or projects as identified in the STNP or later during its review process by the Independent Examiner, to be approved by the Planning & Environment Committee.
- v. Recommending further studies or projects that will improve the evidence base of the STNP – including a Masterplan for Sevenoaks Town Centre. These to be approved by the Planning & Environment Committee.
- vi. The production and analysis of any relevant public consultations on the aforementioned projects or studies.
- vii. Assessing new and existing evidence bases which will impact development in Sevenoaks Town during the plan period.
- viii. Undertaking of a 5-year review of the STNP, as required by the Independent Examiner, and implementation of any improvements to policy wording identified in the aforementioned annual reports.
- ix. Consulting on emerging or amended policies identified and recommended in the 5-year review of the STNP.
- x. Reviewing the STNP in relation to SDC's expected Local Plan.
- xi. Oversight of any future edits or reiterations of the Plan.

2. Membership

- 2.1. The STNP / Masterplan Working Group shall be made up of Local Stakeholders, Residents, and professionals.
- 2.2 Members of the Group shall be, as far as possible, representative of the demographics within Sevenoaks Town.
- 2.3 At the Monitoring and Implementation Group meeting held on 27th September 2023, it was agreed that membership would remain fluid and open to new members, to encourage higher engagement and involvement of different stakeholders as relating to the various Themes of the STNP.
- 2.4 Where members of the Group are representatives of an organisation it is the responsibility of the individual members to ensure that they have obtained the necessary consent of their organisation.
- 2.5 All meetings of the STNP / Masterplan Working Group will be open to members of the public who wish to attend.
- 2.6 Members of the Public in attendance at the Group meetings shall be free to contribute to the discussions taking place however will not hold voting rights.

- 2.7 Members of the Group must disclose any personal or financial interests which may conflict or coincide with the topics being considered as part of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan and must sign a document declaring these if applicable.

3 Governance and recommendation making

- 3.1 The STNP / Masterplan Working Group will be presided by a Chair or Vice Chair who must be an elected member of Sevenoaks Town Council.
- 3.2 If the Chair is not able to be present, meetings shall be chaired by the Vice Chair. If neither are present, members shall elect a Chair for the meeting from those present.
- 3.3 Decisions will be made by the consensus of the formal STNP / Masterplan Working Group members present at the meeting. Where a vote is tied the Chair will have the casting vote.
- 3.4 All decisions must be approved by Sevenoaks Town Council's Planning & Environment Committee before they may be actioned.

4. Meetings

- 4.1 Meetings of the STNP / Masterplan Working Group will typically be held from 6:00pm in the Sevenoaks Town Council Chamber where possible.
- 4.2 Meetings will be structured to focus on one Theme of the STNP at a time, with relevant stakeholders to be invited as deemed appropriate.
- 4.3 The Group will aim to meet with a frequency not less than once every 12 weeks.
- 4.4 Additional meetings may be arranged by Sevenoaks Town Council, subject to at least 5 working days' notice being given prior to the date of the meeting to allow for adequate publicity.

5. Record keeping

- 5.1 The Town Council will endeavour to have an Officer present at all meetings of the Group who will be responsible for the production of minutes.
- 5.2 Minutes of meetings will be publicly available and will be publicised both on Sevenoaks Town Council's website, and on the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan website.
- 5.5 Agendas for the STNP / Masterplan Working Group will be circulated via email to all who have expressed an interest in the Neighbourhood Plan Process. Paper copies will be made available at the meeting.

6. Modifications to Terms of Reference

The STNP / Masterplan Working Group shall review its Terms of Reference

throughout the project and amend as it deems fit. Any amendments to the Terms of Reference will require the agreement of Sevenoaks Town Council prior to taking effect.

7. General Data Protection Regulation

All General Data Protection Regulation matters will be the responsibility of Sevenoaks Town Council

TERMS OF REFERENCE - YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE

To consider all matters relating to the following items and make recommendations to the Community & Wellbeing Committee in respect of:

- (a) Sevenoaks Youth Council
- (b) House in the Basement Youth Café
- (c) Liaising and working with other youth service providers with aim of assessing needs and to encourage and support activities with the aim of fostering the personal development of young people.
- (d) Arranging events and facilities for young people
- (e) The Youth Services Working Group may co-opt non-voting members to the Committee, including two Youth Councillors.
- (f) Meetings of the Youth Services Working Group normally to be held after Youth Council meetings.
- (g) A quorum of the Youth Services Working Group will be three voting (elected) members
- (h) Approve Youth Grants within allocated Youth Outreach budget.
- (i) The Youth Services Working Group shall be constructed as follows:
Town Councillors will be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, plus the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Finance & Delivery Committee and the Town Mayor (ex-officio). The Youth Services Working Group can increase its membership with Co-Opted Members from members of other youth related organisations.
- (j) Co-opted members

All Co-Opted members of the Working Group would not be voting members; it is

hoped most decisions would be agreed by consensus and will serve for a period of one year but can be re-elected.

(k) Finance

The Youth Services Working Group shall make recommendations on the budgets associated with its activities for:

- Youth Council
- HitB Youth Café
- Youth Grants

TERMS OF REFERENCE - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

To have executive authority in respect of all personnel matters, in particular:

- (a) Senior Staff appointments
- (b) The Council's establishment
- (c) Training report and evaluation

To make recommendations to Council on:

- (a) Terms and conditions of service in respect of staff
- (b) Responsibility for Health and Safety Matters

MAYOR OF SEVENOAKS TOWN

Sevenoaks Town Council is a small local authority which does not have the legal powers to operate with a 'portfolio' system as per larger local authorities. Decisions are made in a transparent manner in public by being placed on an agenda and discussed and a decision made within Council or a Committee meeting.

The Mayor is not directly elected and is chosen at the May Annual Meeting from the sixteen elected members. It is normal protocol for the Deputy Mayor to become Mayor Elect.

The Mayor is responsible for Chairing the full Council meetings in a fair and transparent manner and summarising decisions that have been made. If required, the Mayor will have a casting vote.

In addition, the Mayor is a voting member of all Committees and Working Groups and will Chair the Annual Town Public Meeting and any other Public Meetings which could be called.

The Mayor does not have any executive powers to instruct staff, and or make decisions between meetings.

The Mayor represents the Council at civic and public events.

CHAIR OF COMMITTEES (& WORKING GROUPS)

Sevenoaks Town Council is a small local authority which does not have the legal powers to operate with a 'portfolio' system as per larger local authorities. Decisions are made in a transparent manner in public by being placed on an agenda and discussed and a decision made within a Committee.

The Chair is responsible for Chairing the Committee or Working Group in a fair and transparent manner and summarising decisions that have been made. If required, the Chair of the Committee or Working Group will have a casting vote.

The Chair does not have any executive powers to instruct staff, and or make decisions between meetings.

LEADER & DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL PROCESS & PROTOCOL

In the unusual situation where all councillors on Sevenoaks Town Council are from a single party, to ensure transparency, clarity, and accountability in the way the Council operates, for life of the current Council the following Process & Protocol for Sevenoaks Town Council Leader and Deputy Leader has been adopted and will be reviewed at each Annual Meeting in May.

PROCESS

Leader of the Council

1. The Annual Council Meeting may elect a Councillor as Leader of the Council, at the same time they may elect a Deputy Leader of the Council.
2. The Leader of the Council may be replaced at any meeting of Full Council. Motion to replace the Leader must be notified in the Agenda.
3. The Leader of the Council will usually be the Leader of the largest political group of Councillors.

4. The Leader is the most senior Councillor of the Council politically. The Leader will lead the decision-making process at Councillor level and liaise with the Town Clerk on those issues, forward plans and matters of policy or strategic direction. The Leader has no legal status or civic and ceremonial responsibilities.
5. The Town Clerk may use the Leader and Chairs of Committees as a 'sounding board' in advance of formal consideration of any matter to assist in gauging likely Councillor reaction to a proposal,
6. The Deputy Leader can deputise for any actions normally carried out by the Leader.

LEADER PROTOCOL

Introduction

This protocol aims to ensure that the Leader and the Town Clerk are guided by a set of ground rules designed to maintain high standards of public accountability, mutual respect, and an understanding of the Council's decision-making structures. If a Deputy Leader has been elected, this protocol shall also apply when the Deputy is acting in place of the Leader.

1. General Principles

- i) In accordance with the Statutory Code of Conduct, the Leader must not use Council resources for party political purposes. The Leader must uphold the political impartiality of the Town Clerk and not ask the Town Clerk to act in any way which would conflict with the Council's Officer Professional Code of Conduct, Protocol on Member / Officer relationships, or Conditions of Service.
- ii) The Leader does not have line management responsibilities for the Town Clerk and should not issue management instructions to the Town Clerk.
- iii) Where a decision is required following discussion between the Leader and the Town Clerk, the matter will be submitted to Council or a Committee for consideration, unless the matter is already delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader.
- iv) Matters wholly within the responsibility of the Town Clerk, or which have been delegated to the Town Clerk without consultation requirements, may still be discussed between the Leader and the Town Clerk.
- v) In undertaking their roles, the Leader and Town Clerk should respect the following principles:

Principle 1 As a 'visible' and accountable elected representative, with defined responsibilities, the Leader will need to be properly briefed on all significant aspects of the work of the Council. The Town Clerk should ensure a proper information flow so as to ensure that the Leader can effectively 'lead'.

Principle 2 Good communications can be best achieved through planned and programmed meetings and briefing arrangements. On the basis that the Town Clerk should

be ensuring that the information needs of the Leader are met. The Leader, should in turn, seek to avoid making requests for unanticipated briefings.

Principle 3 The Leader (and all the Councillors) should channel significant requests for information, advice, and other support via the Town Clerk (or in absence Deputy Town Clerk – in which case the Town Clerk will be copied into requests). Other arrangements may apply as agreed and established between the Leader and the Town Clerk. The Leader shall not approach other staff directly with requests for information (except in the cases of emergency in the absence of the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk) or seek to commission work from individual staff, as this may confuse day-to-day line management accountabilities.

Principle 4 The Leader may work with the Town Clerk and or the other senior managers in the development of policies and programmes.

Principle 5 All Councillors have collective responsibility to the Council for the conduct of employment policy, and the Council acts as the employing body for all Council staff. Employment policies, having been set by the Council, are implemented via the Town Clerk.

Principle 6 When a report to Committee or Council is being prepared, the Leader is entitled to discuss issues with the Town Clerk and with other officers concerning the contents of such reports and the framing of recommendations. Whilst the Leader may wish to make suggestions on content and drafting, the Leader should not attempt to edit out or override any content of reports which the Town Clerk or other officer feels is important to put before the Council.

Principle 7 When the Leader (and all Councillors) wish to put forward proposals of their own, it is the responsibility of the Councillor (via the Town Clerk) to produce a report to the relevant Committee for consideration. The Town Clerk may wish, and has a right, to add comments to such reports.

Principle 8 The Town Clerk, managers and other officers exercise statutory functions and have individual responsibilities. The Leader should understand and respect these roles.

2 The Leader and Fellow Councillors

- i) The distinctive role of the Mayor, Committee Chairs and Councillors are already well established at the Town Council.
- ii) The Leader should ensure to consult as necessary with colleagues in the early stages of formulating proposals. Committee Chairs, in particular, should be consulted on issues relevant to their Committee and the Mayor should be involved in any civic related matters or issues which may affect the conduct of Council meetings.

Principle 9 nothing in these arrangements shall infringe:

- The right and duty of each individual councillors to speak and vote according to their best judgement

- The right of all councillors to information and guidance from Council officers, or
- The duty of Council officers to support each councillor with equal consideration