

Delivering, protecting and enhancing community facilities

In the May 2023 elections, a new Sevenoaks Town Council was created and it has been working on finalising its aims and objectives for delivering projects for the local community - these have been formalised in Sevenoaks Town Council's third Community Investment Plan 2023 - 2027. All the Key Projects are being funded by planning levies and/ or external grants.

The Key Project Aims within the Community Investment Plan are:

- Masterplan for Town Centre & St John's Hill
- Green Link Feasibility Study - cycling and walking route linking Sevenoaks and Dunton Green
- 20 mph Signage Scheme implementation (subject to public survey)
- Pedestrian Crossing at Dartford Road near The Vine
- Pedestrian Crossing at Seal Hollow Road
- Electric No 8 Bus
- Wayfinding Signage
- Business Improvement District (BID) development
- Greatness Recreation Ground - consider and implement outcome of consultation
- Greatness Sports & Community Pavilion
- Refurbish St John's Hill Car Park
- Public Toilets
- Redevelop Oast House for Community Use

Sevenoaks Town Council when considering its budget for 2024/2025 wanted to ensure that voluntary groups and organisations within the town which provide such valuable services were still able to access grant funding, Local Organisation Grants have increased by 25% to £15k and Youth Grants have increased 105% rising to £8k. A new grant for Greensands Common has also been agreed.

The Town Council wanted to continue to deliver services and retain and increase its General Reserves which are vital when needed to support the local community.

For any organisation to operate effectively it needs a sound budget. The past couple of financial years have been difficult for most and with the current concerns over the 'cost of living' including utility costs, there are expected to be continued financial pressures in the forthcoming year. Please see overleaf for figures relating to Sevenoaks Town Council Budget for 2024 - 2025.

Some of the functions and facilities the Town Council provides:

7 play areas

6 community buildings

17 public open spaces

Cemetery

Total Financial Support to local organisations £63k

Youth services

2 allotment sites

Community events

Litter bins and litter collecting in open spaces

Public toilets

Bus shelters

(For full details see www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk)

Average Band D home contributes £145.33 per annum/ £2.79 per week



Where does the £1,907,304 Sevenoaks Town Council budget come from?

ANNUAL PRECEPT

£1,437,614

75% of the budget comes from the domestic ratepayer's precept (council tax). The Town Council does not receive any portion of business rates or government grants.

INCOME FROM SERVICES

£428,800

23% of the budget comes from fees and services such as community halls, sports pitches, markets, cemetery, and cafe.

RESERVES

£40,890

2% of the budget will be from Town Council reserves that have been allocated from the Heritage Lottery Fund, £40.890 supports Bat & Ball Station during initial years of opening.

Wherever possible the Town Council aims to provide community facilities at the lowest cost possible to reduce the burden on the taxpayer. At the same time providing the facilities that the community wants and needs. This is often achieved by volunteers assisting in this for which the Town Council continues to remain grateful.

There are some facilities which are not commercially viable including maintenance of public open spaces, play areas and youth facilities, these do not generate income as they are free for public use.

Cost per average household (Band D): £2.79 per week

COMMUNITY SERVICES	ADMINISTRATION & FACILITATION	COMMUNITY INVESTMENT	LOCAL REPRESENTATION
Public Open Space - £459k (net cost £395k)	Council Administration £531k (net cost £493k)	Public Works Loan - £72k	Planning Consultation - £32k
Community Events - £70k (net cost £52k)	Council Offices - £50k (net cost £38k)	Contingency - £70k	Democracy costs (including elections) - £20k
Cemetery - £158k (net cost £79k)	IT - £35k	Local Grants to voluntary organisations - £63k	Total £52k (3%)
Community Venues - £208k (net cost £54k)	Insurance - £19k	Total £205k (11%)	
Markets - £43k (net income £8k)	Professional Fees - £15k		
Youth Provision - £62k (net cost £57k)	Total £650k Net Cost £588k (34%)		
Total £1m Net Cost £645k (52%)			



Total Annual Revenue Budget £1,907,304

Annual Cost per Household (Band D) £145.33 per year / £2.79 per week

An increase of £6.16 per year / 11 pence per week = 4.4% compared to 2023-2024

