

# **Local Government Review and Sevenoaks Town Council**



# Local Government Reorganisation & Assets



There is still a good deal of uncertainty about the Government's two proposals for Local Government Reform:

- 1) **Devolution** - creation of Strategic Authority and Elected Mayor (replacing KCC) and
- 2) **Reorganisation** and creation of Unitary Authorities (removing / combining current district and borough councils).



It has been confirmed that Kent is not within the fast track for Devolution and therefore a timetable is not available for what will happen to KCC.

Local government reorganisation process has started. District and Borough Councils had to submit outline plans in March 2025 for proposals for disbanding and creating new Unitary Authorities.

A more detailed plan is required in November 2025. The government is expected to provide a decision and timetable relating to these plans in November/December 2025.



In the meantime, SDC is working with town and parish councils to enable the protection of local assets via transfers, if possible, to town and parish councils or voluntary organisations.

It should be noted that the default position is all assets transfer to new Unitary Authority.

This will not be an easy process due to resources required to produce Business Proposals for each asset and current legislation.

# Sevenoaks Town Council's Transfer of Assets Ethos



Sevenoaks Town Council is providing Expressions of Interest for the transfer of several assets. Some of the assets will be income generating and some only having outgoing costs.

The aim is that the overall 'package' will be cost neutral where possible both to the new Unitary Council and the local taxpayer.

These discussions are expected to continue over a couple of years with Sevenoaks District Council and the new proposed Unitary.

The Town Council has an ongoing consultation process with residents asking them via a survey what assets they consider are a priority for this process. The survey can be found here: [STC Potential Future Asset Bids](#).

# Sevenoaks Town Council – Expression of Interests

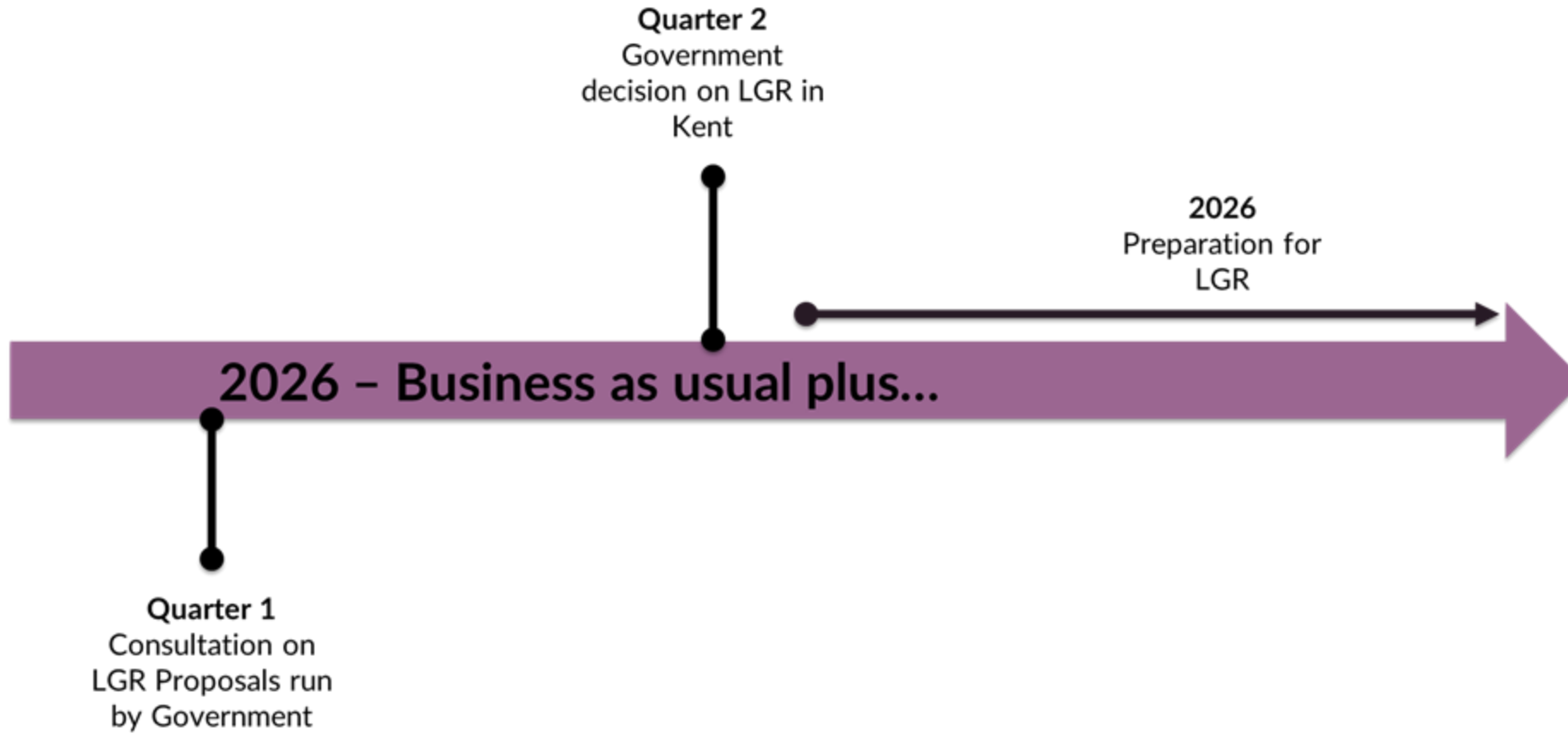


The Town Council submitted 6 Expressions of Interest for the first Tranche.

1. Stag Community Arts Centre
2. Hollybush Recreation Ground
3. Land at Bradbourne Vale Road – Horses field
4. Land at High Street / Market Rights
5. St John's Hill Car Park
6. St James Road Car Park

All but the Stag have been recommended for not pursuing by SDC. At this stage the Town Council is continue to progress requests by completing a Business Proposal for Hollybush Recreation Ground, Land at Bradbourne Vale Road (Horses Field) and Land at High Street (Market Rights). These are expected to be considered in Tranche 2.

## Possible timeline for 2026





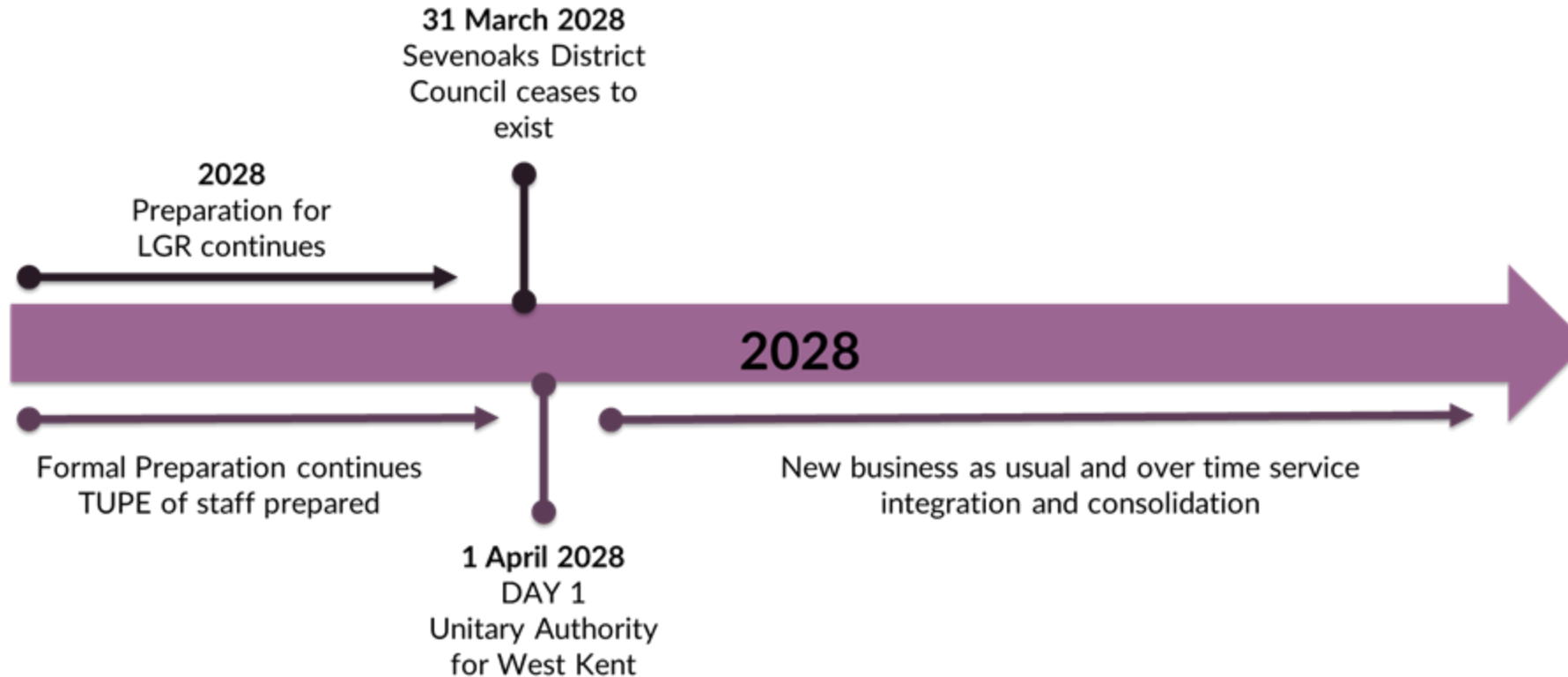
## Possible timeline for 2027







## Possible timeline for 2028



# Town and Parish Councils



In unparished areas, e.g. no Town or Parish Councils (not the case for Sevenoaks), there are concerns about:

- Democratic deficit
- Management of community assets
- Local civic pride – when governance is more remote
- Mayoralty and local heritage

# What does Sevenoaks Town Council do?

## About Sevenoaks Town Council

- 16 elected Town Councillors
- 59 staff (32 FTE)
- £2m annual turnover



# The Voice of the Local Community

- Planning
- Highways
- Health
- Government Matters



# Owens and Manages Community Assets



## OPEN SPACES & LEISURE

### Allotments:

*Bradbourne Vale Road  
Quaker's Hall Lane*

Bethel Road Burial Ground

Brittains Common

Brittains Lane Wood

Greatness Recreation Ground

The Green, Hillingdon Rise

Hanging Baskets

Horse Troughs (*Old Police Station,  
Rheinbach Gardens, St Botolph's  
Road*)

Judd's Piece

### Land At:

*Letterbox Lane*

*Littlewood*

*Tonbridge Road*

Longspring Wood

Muga (Multi Use Games Area)

Middlings Wood

Millpond Wood

Planters (*The Shambles, Dorset  
Street, Pembroke Road, London  
Road, Buckhurst Lane*)

The Pound, Pound Lane

Raley's Field & Knole Paddock

Rheinbach Gardens

Sevenoaks Common

Sports Pitches

Upper High Street Gardens



Vine Cricket Ground & Pavilion  
Vine Gardens

*Public Toilet, Telephone Kiosk  
With Defibrillator*

War Memorial

White Hart Beeches

Woodside Road Open Space

## CAR PARKS

Raleys Car Park

## PLAY AREAS

Buckhurst Lane Play Area

Greatness Recreation Ground &  
Playground

Hillingdon Rise Play Area

Julians Meadow & Playground

Kippington Meadow

Mount Close Open Space &  
Playground

Pontoise Close Open Space &  
Playground

## SERVICES

Bat & Ball Centre (Formerly  
Sevenoaks Community Centre)  
*Available For Hire: Meetings,  
Conferences Etc.*

Bat & Ball Station Building  
*(Including Café And Rooms  
Available To Hire)*  
batandballstation.com

Business Hub

Bus Shelters (*Dartford Road X1,  
Bradbourne Vale Road X2,  
London Road X2, Tonbridge  
Road X1*)

Café On The Vine  
cafeonthevine.com

Consultees (*Planning, Highways, Etc*)

Grants To Local Organisations

Greatness Park Cemetery

House In The Basement (Hitb)  
Youth Café (*available for hire*)  
houseinthebasement.weebly.com

Info-Pods & Digital Display Screens

Litter Bins And Grit Bins

Markets (*Wednesday And Saturday*)

Masterplan For Northern Sevenoaks

Neighbourhood Development Plan

Orbital No 8 Bus

Public Clocks (*Jubilee Clock Old  
Market House And Warren Clock  
Above Brewers*)

Public Seats In Various Locations

Public Toilets (*The Stag, The Vine,  
Lower St Johns, Greatness  
Recreation Ground*)

Sevenoaks Town Team  
sevenoakspartnership.org

Stag Community Arts Centre  
*Defibrillator In Foyer*  
stagsevenoaks.co.uk

Street Lights In Some Unadopted  
Roads

Town Council Offices/Chamber  
*Available For Hire: Meetings,  
Conferences Etc.*

Twinning With Pontoise And  
Rheinbach

Youth Council  
sevenoaksyouthcouncil.weebly.  
com

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

Christmas Illuminations In Town

Civic Functions

Vine Bandstand/Free Summer  
Concerts

## SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks  
TN13 3QG



## Example of current asset: Bat & Ball Centre

Bat & Ball Centre was funded with Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Public Works Loan.



## Example of current asset: Bat & Ball Station

Bat & Ball Station is funded with Heritage Lottery Funding and Community Infrastructure Levy.

*Before*



*After*





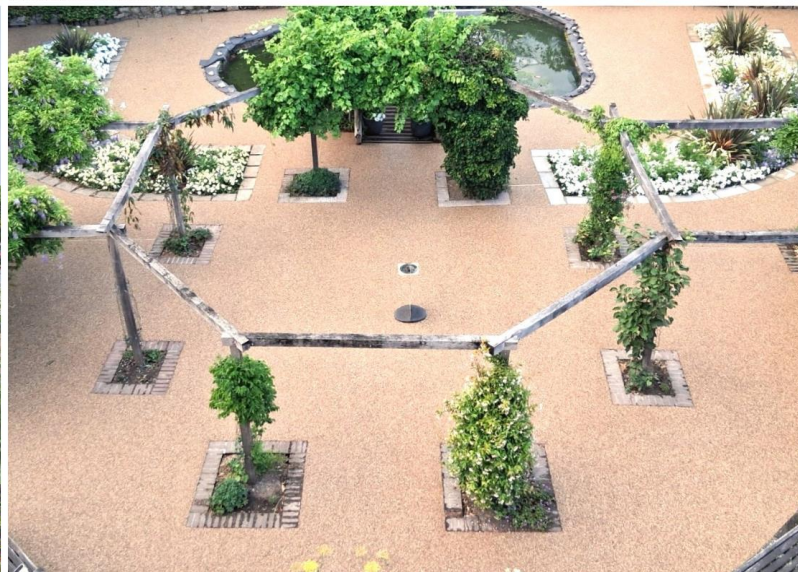
## Example of current assets: Stag Theatre & Cinema / HitB Youth Cafe

Operates separately as 'sister company' and independent charity.





## Example of asset: Vine Grounds / Café on the Vine





# Arranges and Facilitates Local Community Events

- Summer Festival
- Climate Fair
- Youth Events
- Bike Festival
- Music on the Bandstand





# Delivers Local Green Agenda

- Protecting Ancient Woodland

## Another example of the Town's passion for trees

Purchasing 14 acres of  
Ancient Woodland



Amazing community fundraising  
£100,000+ in 23 days!



# Delivers Local Green Agenda

- Electric vehicles and charging points
- Climate Fair
- Free hire – thermal camera for homes, Reusable Party Kit
- Water drinking fountains
- Use of sustainable products – new surface at the Vine using the equivalent of one million recycled straws





# Planning for the Future

- Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan – public referendum
- Masterplans for Town Centre and St Johns (secondary shopping centre)
- Tarmac site – 950 new homes, new primary school, lakeside sports & leisure, additional green spaces, community buildings
- Greatness Pavilion – new sports pavilion
- Stag Masterplan for sustainability

# How much does the Town Council cost?



Sevenoaks Town Council is 1 of 70 'Super Councils' in England which indicates it is more active than most.

- Approx £2m turnover per year
- Generates income of £451,949
- Precept £1,545,147

Average home £153.67 per year, £2.96 per week.

