

24th March 2021

You are hereby summoned to attend a virtual meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** to be held **via Zoom on Monday 29th March 2021 at 7.00 pm**. Town Councillors are reminded that they have a duty to state a Declaration of Interest prior to the appropriate agenda item and to consider the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.17 when reaching a decision.

Please note that the proceedings of this meeting will be streamed live to YouTube for the public to watch via the following link: https://youtu.be/uz_DxxrNvO4 and may be recorded in line with regulations set out in the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. A copy of Sevenoaks Town Council's procedure for the recording of meetings is available online at sevenoakstown.gov.uk or by request.

Members of the public wishing to address the Committee should notify the Town Council by 12 noon on the day of the meeting. Zoom joining instructions will then be provided. Members of the public not wishing to be recorded should put this request to the Clerk at the earliest possible opportunity.



Deputy Town Clerk

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Committee Members:

Cllr Keith Bonin	Cllr Roderick Hogarth
Cllr Nicholas Busvine OBE (ex officio)	Cllr Tom Morris Brown
Cllr Sue Camp	Cllr Robert Piper
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Cllr Simon Raikes (Chairman)
Cllr Tony Clayton (Vice Chairman)	Cllr Edward Waite
Cllr Andrew Eyre	

AGENDA

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To enable any questions previously submitted by members of the public on any matter to be drawn to the attention of the Town Council.

1	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> To receive and note apologies for absence.	
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Town Council Offices
Bradbourne Vale Road
Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3QG

tel: 01732 459 953 fax: 01732 742 577
email: council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk
web: sevenoakstown.gov.uk

2	<u>REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS</u> To consider written requests from Members which have previously been submitted to the Town Clerk to enable participation in discussion and voting on items for which the Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. (s.31 & s.33 of the Localism Act 2011).	
3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> To receive any declarations of interest from members in respect of any items of business included in this report.	–
4	<u>MINUTES OF FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 1st MARCH 2021</u> To receive and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 1 st March 2021.	Attached
5	<u>BUSINESS HUB</u>	
5.1	Capital Budget	Attached
5.2	SLA Agreement for Administration	Attached
6	<u>PROVISION OF OUTDOOR TRADING SPACE INCLUDING PARKLET – MAY & JUNE 2021</u>	Attached
7	<u>PRESS RELEASE</u> To consider any agenda item, which would be considered appropriate for a press release.	–

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 1st March 2021
Held via Zoom

Available to view on YouTube: [Finance & General Purpose Committee 01/03/21 - YouTube](#)

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 8.03 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Keith Bonin	Present		Cllr Roderick Hogarth	Present
Cllr Nicholas Busvine, OBE	Present		Cllr Tom Morris Brown	Present
Cllr Sue Camp	Present		Cllr Robert Piper	Present
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present		Cllr Simon Raikes, Chairman	Present
Cllr Tony Clayton, Vice -Chairman	Present		Cllr Edward Waite	Apologies
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Present			

Substitute	For
Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Cllr Edward Waite

In attendance: Cllr Michaelides, Cllr Parry (7.06pm), Cllr Shea (7.20pm), Responsible Finance Officer, Town Clerk and Senior Committee Clerk

Representations received from Members of the Public: none

457. Apologies for Absence: As noted above.

458. Dispensations: There were no requests for Dispensations.

459. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Canet and Clayton declared an interest in Agenda Item 8, Grant Applications, on the basis that they were members of the Friends of Pontoise.

Cllr Raikes declared a pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 10, Current Matters, insofar as it related to the Streetlighting update, which was submitted for noting only.

460. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 18th January 2021

RESOLVED: To receive and sign the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 18th January 2021 as a true record

461. Finance Reports

461.1 Management Accounts 1st to 31st January 2021

The Committee received and noted, for the periods 1st to 31st January 2021, the Finance Officer's Report with Variance Analysis, Income and Expenditure, Working Capital Summary and Statement of Fund Balances, together with the:

- Suppliers Accounts 1st to 31st January 2021, balance £80,054.96
- Payroll Accounts 1st to 31st January 2021, balance £ 79,989.23
- Petty Cash Accounts 1st to 31st January 2021, balance £ 922.25

It was noted that the year to date position at the end of January 2021 including precept, gave a net deficit of £23,538. Adjusted for required Bat & Ball Management & Maintenance Reserves movement (£37,326 YTD), the position was a surplus of £13,788 against adjusted budget deficit of £1,798 resulting in a year to date net favourable variance of £15,586.

The Committee acknowledged that the Café on the Vine income was under budget mainly due to pandemic restrictions but emphasised the significant social benefit it provided and positive feedback received from the public.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the Management Accounts 1st to 31st January 2021;
- 2) To congratulate the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer on their financial management during the extraordinarily difficult year, which had ensured that the Town Council was very close to budget; and
- 3) To thank the staff of the Café on the Vine for their hard work and dedication during this challenging year.

461.2 Hospitality and Gifts Register: None to report.

461.3 Review of Internal Controls: Risk Assessment 2021/22

The Committee received and noted the draft Risk Assessment for 2021/22

RESOLVED: That a Working Party be formed to review the Risk Assessment comprising the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, the Chairman of the Open Spaces & Leisure Committee, Cllr Bonin, the Town Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer and other senior management as required.

462 Capital Receipts Reserve

It was noted that £230k earmarked for the 3G rugby pitch at Knole Paddock had been released back into the Capital Receipts Reserve following the dismissal of the planning appeal by the Planning Inspectorate. The unallocated balance was now £460k.

463. Funding Request from Open Spaces & Leisure Committee

At its meeting held on 15th February 2021 (*Minute 435, OS&L 15.02 21 refers*), the Open Spaces and Leisure Committee requested that the Finance and General Purposes Committee consider allocating CIL funds for the installation of new gates between the Cemetery and Greatness Recreation Ground and to improve the infrastructure of the sports pitches at Knole Paddock and Raleys Field.

In the light of the transfer of £230k funds back into the Capital Receipts Reserve (as set out at Minute 462 above) it was suggested that £30k be allocated to upgrading

and improving the drainage to the sports pitches. It was noted that independent specialist advice would be obtained prior to any decision about the works to be carried out.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That £30k of Capital Reserves be allocated to the upgrading of the sports pitches at Knole Paddock and Raleys Field; and
- 2) That £2k be allocated from CIL funds for the installation of new gates between the Cemetery and Greatness Recreation Ground.

464. Grant Applications & Reports

464.1 Consideration of Grant Applications Received

The Committee considered grant aid requests received, together with the balance of the Grant Aid Budget.

The Committee commented on the extremely valuable work being undertaken by Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group (SVTG) which had continued throughout the pandemic. The financial challenge facing the group because of lost income was noted. It was agreed that SVTG be invited to submit a further grant application for £250.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That grant requests be awarded under the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011 Sections 1-8 refers) as follows:

Grant Ref No.	Organisation & Charity Reg No if applicable	Purpose of Award	Grant Application	Grant Approved
17	West Kent Mediation 1100637	Volunteer training, supervision and expenses. Hall hire costs and publicity.	£800	£800
6	Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival 1031815	Annual Performing Arts Festival, to be held by video this year. Admin costs including insurance, website etc.	£600	£600
5	Friend of Pontoise	To build on and expand links between Sevenoaks and Pontoise; to promote understanding of French life and culture in Sevenoaks and of English life and culture in Pontoise.	£250	£250 Subject to annual exchange visit taking place
2	Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group 276663	To support costs 2021/22 so that can continue to support elderly people requiring low cost local transport. Service maintained	£500	£500

		during pandemic at considerable cost, facing deficit without assistance.		
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- 2) That Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group be advised that the Committee had agreed in principle to award a further £250, subject to a further grant application being submitted.

464.2 Reports from Grant Recipients 2020

RESOLVED: to receive and note the reports submitted by recipients of grant awards in 2020.

465. Consultation on Proposals to Reform Strand 2

It was noted that The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government was currently consulting on proposals to reform Strand 2 (land owned by a local authority or certain other public bodies) of the Right to Contest under the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 operated by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Committee considered the draft consultation response prepared which would be considered at the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Planning Committee be advised that this Committee does not believe that the right should be extended to include unused and underused land owned by town and parish councils (Question 4); and that
- 2) It be noted that public open space was identified as an appropriate use of land and therefore not subject to the Right to Contest.

466. Current Matters

The Committee received and considered the report on Current Matters, including: Risk Assessment Review; Streetlighting; Business Hub; Bat & Ball Centre; Markets and Wayleaves.

RESOLVED: To note and accept the report

467. Press Release

RESOLVED: Press Release to be issued regarding grant awards.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting.

Signed
Chairman

Dated

**Sevenoaks Town Council
Finance & General Purposes Committee - 29th March 2021**

Sevenoaks Business Hub

1. Capital Budget

The construction of the Business Hub commenced in November 2020 and was due for completion in March 2021. Even with the national lockdown and snow the construction on the building has progressed well. The project included new tarmac to the council offices site.

In the final stages of the construction two problems have been identified with the site which have considerable financial impact on the project.

- i) The drains under the car park are considered damaged beyond repair and part of the reason the car park is dipping in parts. It was originally hoped that some areas of drainage could be repaired. The cost for replacement drainage is £22,845.
- ii) The UKPN connection and upgrade to the site was expected to be in the region of £5,000. UKPN have now stated that the connection is needed further up the road than originally expected and the cost has risen to £45,202.24.

It should be noted that the drainage would be required regardless of whether the Business Hub was being created. It is also likely that the UKPN upgrade would also need to be done in the near future as electrics are being updated.

At the final stage of the construction of the project it is hard to 'value engineer' the project down to a lower than the original budget of £274,268 (includes fixtures and fittings, IT, alarms etc.), although this remains under constant review.

STC are due to receive a CIL payment of £98,162.13 in March 2021.

RECOMMENDED: £65,000 of the March 2021 CIL payment is used for the additional costs for the Business Hub / STC site.

2. Service Level Agreement for Booking Administration

Within the revenue budget STC had included costings for a part time administrator. STC stated that it preferred that this was operated by an external organisation.

The Chamber of Commerce will be renting an office at the Business Hub and are agreeable to entering into a Service Level Agreement for handling the booking administration on the following Heads of Terms:

- i) 1 year rolling lease.
- ii) Private lockable office with 2 desks
- iii) Able to use on a flexible basis, i.e., not necessarily in the office every day.
- iv) Parking spaces in line with Business Hub policy

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- v) Availability to use meeting room to host Chamber events.
- vi) Rent is £400 + Vat per month.
- vii) One-month free rent from 1st May
- viii) Able to move in from 1st May but official arrival date 1st June.
- ix) The Chamber will help to promote the space at the Hub.
- x) Chamber will be responsible for administration of Business Hub bookings and will promote booking link on website (new booking system to be installed) and will be given 10% of bookings income.

RECOMMENDED: A Service Level Agreement be entered into with the Chamber of Commerce as outlined in the Heads of Terms.

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Provision of Outdoor Trading Space including Parklet – May & June 2021

In 2020 Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) offered Sevenoaks Town Council (STC) the use of Buckhurst 1 car park on a full-time basis (including Wednesday market) up to March 2021. STC considered the use of the space as more of a market / leisure facility (parklet) for the Christmas 2020 season. Resources permitting areas could be designated similar to a ‘parklet’ by using the cycle planters, a busking space provided, and wooden sheds installed for Christmas fayre. At the F&GP Cttee Meeting September 2020 it was deemed to be too much of a financial risk to proceed.

STC officers continued with and obtained a Premises Licence for the space to enable events to take place in the future at relatively short notice.

Within the government’s road map for re-opening of facilities closed as a result of the pandemic there will be a period for some retailers who will find their trading restricted due to the size of their premises and public health guidelines.

It is proposed that Buckhurst 1 car park is used to enable an Outdoor Trading Space with a parklet during May & June 2021. Space would be provided for outdoor market traders, pop up businesses and a leisure area for people to have refreshments and social time outside, potentially also space for buskers and entertainment.

Images of parklets for reference are shown at the end of the report.

SDC have extended the offer of the use of the car park to the beginning of July to enable time for clear up after end of June 2021.

It should be noted that a decision is required by STC on the project to enable time for procurement and installation of equipment and promoting the business space. The timetable will be challenging.

The following financial information is based on the Wednesday market takings during lockdown and are deliberately conservative.

RECOMMENDED: STC accept SDC’s offer to use the Buckhurst 1 car park to provide an outdoor trading area space including parklet during May & June 2021.

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<u>Background for Wednesday Market</u>	<u>financial per week</u>		
Rent	£507	Income	£243 (during covid restrict)
<u>6 days per week</u>			
Rent	£507		£1,455
<u>May & June</u>			
<u>2021</u>	9 weeks	£4,563	£13,095

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Capital Costs	Parklet		
Surface	4,000	reusable	£2,500 non reusable
seating	£3,000		
planting barriers	£1,500		
cycle racks	£0		
promotion	£500		
banners	£500		
	<u>9500</u>		

Green highlighted items reusable after June 2021 in other locations

Premises Licence already obtained.

Weekly income to break even £1,562.56

Parklet Details and Images for reference.

The definition of a Parklet is the transferring of a car parking space into ‘people places’. Usually, parklets are installed on parking spaces and may use several parking spaces together or separately. Parklets can green and enliven streets, instantly adding colour, plants and enjoyment and provide a place to stop, to set and rest whilst taking in other activities. A parklet may accommodate bicycle parking or bicycle parking may be associated with it.

