



Sevenoaks Youth Council

Meeting of Sevenoaks Youth Council 02nd November 2022 at 6.00pm

Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, TN133QG /House
in the Basement, Stag Community Arts Centre,
London Road, Sevenoaks, TN131ZZ

Youth Council Members:

Henry Barden de Leon	Darcy Hogg
Mahedy Basher	Isabella McGlynn
Emilia Britain	Max Pound
Dexter Buhmann	Vince Rands-Webb
Leah Campbell-Sergeant	Elena Rozo-Navarro
Von Ming Fung Chu	Aanya Sidhu
Phoebe Critchlow, Treasurer	Mia Stack
Neil Gandhi	Anna Tarasheva, Vice-Chairman
Jasmine Geer	Katie Willis, Chairman
Maya Goodrich	Torsa Younus
Valentina Groves	

In attendance: Linda Larter, Town Clerk

Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café

Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Committee Clerk

AGENDA

1.	Apologies for Absence To receive and note apologies for absence.	
2.	Minutes of Last Meeting To receive and adopt the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 07 th September 2022.	Attached
3.	Finance Report To note the balance of the Youth Council budget 2022/23.	
4.	House in the Basement [HiTB] Youth Cafe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive and consider HiTB report September- October 2022 • Offers of help for promotion 	Attached

5.	Talk from the Fire Brigade	
6.	Talk from Kent Wildlife Trust	
7.	Notes of Climate Change Youth Forum	Attached
8.	Notes of House of Commons trip	Attached
9.	Mental Health Workshop Report	Attached
10.	Date of Next Meetings To note the dates of future meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 18th January 2023 • Wednesday 22nd March 2023 	-

**Minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Youth Council
Held on 7th September 2022**

at Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, TN133QG

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 7.00 p.m.

Present:

Youth Council Members:

Henry Barden de Leon	Apologies	Darcy Hogg	Apologies
Mahedy Basher	Apologies	Isabella McGlynn	Apologies
Emilia Britain	Apologies	Max Pound	Apologies
Dexter Buhmann	Present	Vince Rands-Webb	Apologies
Leah Campbell-Sergeant	Apologies	Elena Rozo-Navarro	Apologies
Von Ming Fung Chu	Apologies	Aanya Sidhu	Present
Phoebe Critchlow, Treasurer	Present	Mia Stack	Present
Neil Gandhi	Present	Anna Tarasheva, Vice-Chairman	Apologies
Jasmine Geer	Apologies	Katie Willis, Chairman	Present
Maya Goodrich	Apologies	Torsa Younus	Apologies
Valentina Groves	Apologies		

In attendance: Linda Larter, Town Clerk; Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café; Cllr Andrew Eyre; Andy Watson, Kenwood Trust; Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Committee Clerk

1. Apologies for Absence

Received as shown above.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Youth Council held on 22nd June 2022

The Youth Council noted previously agreed projects.

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council held on 22nd June 2022.

3. Finance Report

It was noted that the Youth Council Budget in the agenda did not include the £500 spent on the inflatable dart board

RESOLVED: That the current balance shown for the Youth Council budget be amended to reflect the spend on the inflatable dart board.

4. House in the Basement Youth Café (HitB)

RESOLVED: To note the report of Daren Mountain, Manager of HitB.

5. Talk from Kenwood Trust

The Youth Council received a talk from Andy Watson from Kenwood Trust talking about who Kenwood Trust are and what they are doing in the community. He explained some of the key problems they tend to interact with,

- like young people smoking, and mentioned the recent increase in numbers of young people using disposable vape pens. He moved on to mention the effects that smoking can have on the body as well as the effects of people sharing vape pens.
- He then moved on to talk about the different types of drugs that are commonly seen in use by young people like cannabis and edibles,
- He also talked about how he would approach young people and what measures he takes to make them feel more comfortable like placing a physical barrier between himself and the people he is talking to while on outreach.
- He then talked about the Cascade programme that Kenwood Trust work with schools to produce where older students help younger students to understand the risks and dangers around drug use and knife crime.

6. Visit to the House of Commons

The Youth Council welcomed the opportunity to visit the House of Commons on the 18th of October and the chance to talk to the Sevenoaks' MP Laura Trott after the tour. They then heard from the Chairman Katie Willis on her personal experience on the previous visit.

The invitation would be resent to Youth Councillors as a reminder and a request for them to respond as soon as possible to enable arrangements to be made.

7. Offer of CPR Training from Sevenoaks Fire Brigade

The Youth Council noted that Kent's Fire and Rescue Service had offered free CPR training to the young people of Sevenoaks. The Youth Council discussed the possibility of this being hosted at House in the Basement during the school holidays for drop in sessions for young people that would want to undertake this event.

8. Sevenoaks' Soroptimists: Literacy Day

The Youth Council were informed that Sevenoaks' Soroptimists had invited some of the Youth Councillors to give a talk on the impact that Covid-19 has had on young people with school work and how they have coped with the different ways of learning that have occurred as a response. It was noted that this event would take place on Tuesday the 13th of September at 7.30pm.

9. Youth Council Priorities

The Youth Council received a list of the previously agreed projects with the current progress that has been carried out on each. Daren Mountain explained that he is currently awaiting a response from the Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) monitoring scheme to help set up a Mental Health Workshop for young people.

It was noted that there is currently a woodland project underway where a lot of trees would need to be planted and any help with this endeavor would be appreciated.

With regards to the aim of encouraging more bees into Sevenoaks, Councillor Eyre advised that he was looking to place a bee hive on top of the Stag Theatre.

The Youth Council reviewed the football table options and decided that it might be best to have a trial run with the first option priced at £129 to see how much use it receives.

Daren explained that during the winter months House in the Basement would be holding a few movie nights and perhaps one or two structured gaming sessions.

10. E sports Tournaments

It was noted that Sevenoaks Town Council had been approached about the possibility of holding an E sports Tournament which was met with enthusiasm from many of the Youth Councilors. However, the point was raised that the types of videos games allowed to be used would need to be considered.

11. Climate Change School Forum

The Youth Council noted that on the 30th of September there will be a Climate Change Youth Forum held for schools to talk about what actions they are taking. Youth Councillors were asked to ensure their schools were aware of the event.

12. Date of Next Meetings

- 2nd November 2022
- 18th January 2023
- 22nd March 2023

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

Agenda Item 9A **Sevenoaks Town Council**
 Youth Council General Income and Expenditure:
 7555/43

2022/23

	Expenditure £	Income £
Carried Forward from 2019/20:	1,834.60	
2022/23 Budget allocated:	500.00	
Total 01/04/21 starting balance:	<u>2,334.60</u>	£ 2,334.60
	£ -	£2,334.60
Available Funds	<u><u>£2,334.60</u></u>	
	<u><u>£ 2,334.60</u></u>	

Agenda Item 9B **Sevenoaks Town Council**
 Youth Council **Charity** Income and Expenditure:
 7555/43

2022/23

	Expenditure £	Income £
Starting Balance: 01/04/2021		£ -
Budget allocated: 0.00		£0.00
	£ -	£0.00
Available Funds	<u><u>£ -</u></u>	
	<u><u>£ -</u></u>	

Sevenoaks Town Council
Youth Services Committee – 2nd October 2022



Manager's Report,

September figures:

We saw a total of 173 Young People, 17 of those were new.

We had 19 new Young people attending SEN.

We were open on 17 Occasions.

We have had 4 SEN sessions.

HiTB report October 2022:

Numbers continue to rise at HiTB especially on Friday & Saturdays with over 20 on a regular basis, takings have also increased in the cafe as numbers rise & the kitchen has re opened.

SEN group is slowly re-growing after a blip in numbers over the school summer holidays.

The silent disco is to go ahead in partnership with SAYT & West Kent Housing at Bat & Ball Centre on Friday 21st October.

During the Britain in Bloom judging House in the Basement received a Level 4-thriving award, the judging scores and criteria are shown overleaf.

South & South East in Bloom - Its Your Neighbourhood 2022

HOUSE in the Basement

Section A - Community Participation (40% or 40 points)

The group is working towards things such as:

Being inclusive of local people

Local ownership and direction

Making a difference to local people

Involving local people with planning, decision-making, communication & implementation

Representative of the local community

Getting support (e.g. from local council, grant aid, sponsorship, in-kind aid etc.)

Planning for the future

Working in partnership with other organisations (i.e. police, community support officers, environmental groups etc.

Total Points Assessed (Out of 40)

34

Section B - Environmental Responsibility (30% or 30 points)

The group is engaged in environmental activities such as:

Conservation (e.g. resources, heritage, wildlife, built environment)

Composting

Recycling

Creating, maintaining or improving green space

Sharing knowledge and skills

The group is engaged in addressing environmental issues such as:

Fly-tipping

Fly-posting

Litter

Graffiti

Dog fouling

Total Points Assessed (Out of 30)

20

SECTION C - Gardening Achievement (30% or 30 points)

The group is employing good gardening practices appropriate to the area, such as:

good plant choice

Good maintenance, presentation and management

Creativity

Innovation

Overcoming site difficulties

Enhancing the area through gardening

Total Points Assessed (Out of 30)

23

GRAND TOTAL POINTS ASSESSED

77

LEVEL ACHIEVED

Thriving (4)

Areas of Achievement

This basement location is used by local young people and provides them a much-needed place of their own. Apart from the facilities, seating, kitchen a place to be etc, it also gives young people a means to express their interest in matters Green. Outside of the "club" vegetables are being grown to a good standard and this makes the connect often needed between the younger members of our society to the wider world. Congratulation on a well-deserved award.

Areas for Development

Should the opportunity arise connect the House to the other planted areas in and around the main car park as this will extend their work and involve them in a slightly larger project.

Results		
Level	Description	Points
	Establishing (1)	0 - 35
	Improving (2)	36 - 52
	Advancing (3)	53 - 68
	Thriving (4)	69 - 85
	Outstanding (5)	86 - 100

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Sevenoaks Climate Change Youth Forum 30th September 2022

On Friday the 30th of September 2022 Sevenoaks Town Council held the first Climate Change Youth Forum which was aimed at encouraging secondary schools to talk to one another about the actions their schools are taking to help combat the current climate crisis.

Councillor Dr Merylyn Canet opened the forum by welcoming all of the delegates from Sevenoaks school, Walthamstow hall and Trinity School. It was noted that other schools wanted to attend future meetings but had not been able to attend that date. She outlined how the Bat and Ball Community centre where the forum took place was built on an older foundation with many of the design features being more eco-friendly. The delegates from the schools then took turns to talk about what actions they were taking to combat climate change.



Sevenoaks School's Climate Action team started the forum by informing us on how their own buildings that have been constructed with sustainability in mind, through increased insulation and adding solar panels. But they had also noted that while these infrastructure improvements were able to be done on a new building it was harder to place these on to buildings that have a listed status and wondered if any of the other schools in the area had come across the same problem and if they had a way of integrating these changes.

Their Climate Action Team have implemented many different ideas from introducing carbon offset flights for school trips that occur abroad by using a company that plants trees. During a school Green Week they looked at gauging how much food is wasted by weighing the waste and showing this to other students, over time they did see a reduction of food waste. Alongside this they have started to

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look at meat alternate options and having meat free meals. They are currently thinking about introducing a traffic light system into the dining hall to show the carbon foot print of each item. The Climate Action team also talked about placing a biodigester to help with food waste and some of those they have researched can have a gas syphon that could be used for heating. They mentioned that there is a price range of between £20,000 and £60,000. Sevenoaks School aims to be carbon neutral by 2032. Sevenoaks School and Trinity School both mentioned that their catering is managed externally and therefore there is a limitation on their waste management.

We then heard from Walthamstow Hall's Eco Council/Sustainability Club who gave a short presentation (see attached). They talked about Eco schools ([Secondary & College - Eco Schools \(eco-schools.org.uk\)](https://eco-schools.org.uk)) which is a pupil based initiative where they give set topics to the different schools to try to tackle over the year and for completion of this the school receive a commendation which has to be renewed yearly.. They explained that they had created a gardening club to address biodiversity matters was introducing more native plants and looking into combating CO₂ emissions through planting more trees and introducing wild flower meadows. The school has planted 11 trees and 6 metres of hedgerow in 2021-2022 to encourage biodiversity. We also heard about how they hosted an impact day in June to hear from designers and their own teachers about how they are tackling the climate problem. At the impact day students recorded a 'pledge to the planet'. Money raised at this event went towards their Eco Schools Green Flag. They also supplied boxes around the school to collect plastics that are difficult to reuse. These were also identified as being within certain shops such as Boots in Sevenoaks. They think there could be a benefit for having a more town wide approach for collecting and recycling of difficult plastics. They are also using an app called Olio which is an app that connects people who have a surplus of edible food with those who need or want the food. Additionally another way they are looking to reduce food waste is by allowing second servings of food during lunch time. They mentioned that some of their goals for the future are to add solar panels to the main building as well as introducing more vegetarian options during meals.

Following this, the representatives from Trinity School talked about their forest school which was introduced to discuss effects of large scale deforestation, and the impact that has on the wider landscape, as well as learn about the environment. Forest schools also have the effect of increased pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours and care of the planet. They have been encouraging students to grow their own vegetables through the introduction of the hope garden to help cut food miles. They have also started worm composting boxes to help break down organic matter and aid the creation of fertilizer for the garden. It was also mentioned that while Trinity make the effort to separate their waste in to different recyclable material it ends up being put together when it is collected.

This sparked a conversation regarding how the waste in Sevenoaks is collected in comparison to other places that do have separate waste collections which was noted that Sevenoaks District Council handle the rubbish collections around Sevenoaks and the wider district. Following on from this it was asked if it could be possible to place collection bins for hard to break down and reuse plastics around the town or if it would be possible to do something like the refill scheme with these bins where businesses could supply the bins.

Sevenoaks school then brought up about the issue of cycling and how it would be good if there were designated routes for young people to take to get to schools that they would feel safe on. It was mentioned that there is currently a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) being carried out by Sustrans which looks into introducing safer walking and cycling routes in the town.

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Additionally a 20 mile an hour speed limit in Sevenoaks from Kent County Council around the High Street and some school zones. Details of both of these would be forwarded to everyone.

Also discussed was the environmental impacts of making electric cars, which Trinity School brought up. They mentioned that although electric cars seem better than fossil fuel powered cars, the environmental impacts in their production in terms of raw materials and energy is huge. Therefore it may be better to continue to use your fossil fuel powered car until you need to replace it, rather than just buying a new electric car.

It was noted that future meetings, perhaps four per year, with other schools across Sevenoaks Town would be useful and that in person meetings were preferred with the possible creation of an e forum for teachers to share some of the ideas and activities that there school are doing.

Potential topics for future meetings Included:

Eco-Schools,

Recycling

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing the curvature of the planet. The top left shows the dark blue of space with some stars. The main part of the image shows the Earth's surface, with Europe and Africa visible. Europe is in the upper right, showing green landmasses and white clouds. Africa is in the lower right, showing brown and tan landmasses. The ocean is a deep blue. A dark blue horizontal bar is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

Good practice on Climate change at Walthamstow Hall

Overview

We have enrolled in Eco-Schools, a pupil-based initiative, to help us target certain areas of sustainability each year.

Last year the topics were:

- **Waste**
- **Global Citizenship**
- **School grounds**

By achieving these targets, we were able to gain our first Green Flag award in July



Waste

- We are using the Olio app to share excess food with those who can use it. In the first month, we saved 75 meals, saving 136kg in Carbon Dioxide.
- We now allow second helpings to reduce food waste: we encourage pupils to take only what they know they can eat and return for more if still hungry.
- Wally have also saved 8 REWORKED boxes of difficult-to-recycle plastic so far. So that's 960 litres of hard to recycle plastic waste. (approx. 73kg in weight).
- We are reducing the amount of paper we use, in favour of online resources, and recycling what we do use.



Global Citizenship

- We took part in The Big Plastic Count run by Greenpeace. This aimed to make the Government more aware of the amounts and types of plastics causing the issue. It also helped raise awareness in school.
- We have helped by raising money for the international charity WWF
- We also had a vegan/fairtrade/local/plastic free cake sale back in June



School grounds

We planted a total of 11 trees at Wally last year:

- We also have a 6-metre section of native hedgerow! With the estimate that trees planted sequester CO₂ at an average of 25 kilos per tree per year, which is a total of 275kg per year.
- To improve the school grounds, we have maintained the wildflower meadow and have planted snowdrops for added value in late winter.



Impact day

- This was held in June.
- This gave year groups the opportunity to hear about how designers are tackling sustainability, including our own alumni.
- Students recorded a 'pledge to the planet', promising a small action that together as a community, makes a difference.
- The money raised went towards our green flag application and the reworked boxes.



What next?

This year, the Eco-Schools topics are:

- **Biodiversity:** where we will be aiming to introduce more bird houses around school and encourage more pupil to attend gardening and wildlife club.
- **Healthy Living:** we aim to make plant-based option more accessible in school lunches and make people more aware of the environmental benefits of a plant-based diet.
- **Energy:** we aim to reduce the amount of energy we are using and to introduce more renewable energy. The school has had solar panels on the swimming pool roof for many years and plan for more on the roof of our main hall.



We also had our first Eco council meeting of the year on Monday where we discussed these three issues and students were able to voice their opinions of how we can tackle the different topics.

We are at the beginning of our journey to beat climate change and reach 'Net Zero'. We recognise that there is still a lot that we can do. But we hope to continue the progress that we have been making, with the aim of helping to tackle the current climate crisis



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Notes of Sevenoaks Youth Council House Of Commons Trip on 18th October 2022

On Tuesday the 18th of October 2022 the Youth Council and young people from House in the Basement Youth Café were invited to visit the House of Commons along with Linda Larter the Town Clerk, Councillor Dr Marilyn Canet, Daren Mountain Manager of House in the Basement and Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Youth Committee Clerk.

At 11:20 am our tour around the historic building started, we entered the lobby where many different groups have peacefully lobbied parliament. We looked at the robing room where the monarch would wait to address the members of the House of Commons and in some cases the House of Lords together. Unfortunately due to the timing of our visit we were unable to enter the chamber as there was a meeting occurring inside.



After the Tour we met with Laura Trott the MP for Sevenoaks who explained about her role as MP and how she is the voice in government for people in Sevenoaks and across the district. Each of the young people had an opportunity to ask a question although a few abstained.

Elena asked “What does sustainability mean to you, and how can we better combat large businesses and companies that use sweat shops?” the reply to this was that we as the consumer have a lot of power to look at these companies and decide for ourselves whether or not we buy products but she did agree that while there is a framework in place to help combat the ways these companies take advantage it does lack the necessary enforcement at the present time.

We then heard from Von who asked “what elements of your childhood helped you to be successful?” the reply to this was that throughout her childhood her parents had tried to help the community they lived in through hosting Quiz nights in the local village hall and raising money to help repair the hall. It was this ideal of giving back to the community that has led her to where she is today.

Next Harry asked “what is the biggest problem brought up in parliament?” the response was at the moment one of the biggest problems is public services having a very slow response time with particular stress on the NHS and waiting times. It is trying to find a solution to these problems that help to give the support that services users need and that can also be sustainable for the service providers like the NHS to keep up that is the current issue.

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Notes of Sevenoaks Youth Council House Of Commons Trip on 18th October 2022

The next question came from Dexter who asked “How can you be an MP for an area you do not live in?” in response to this Laura explain that she did indeed live in the district of Sevenoaks but there are a lot of voices that she represents and with this there are limitations as no one person can represent everyone but what is important is to listen to the persons perspective and try to understand where they are coming from and what experiences they have had that may drive them. The Final question came from Linda Larter on behalf of someone who was not able to attend, “Would you like to be Prime minister?” the response to this was not at this time.

After the Q&A with Laura Trott we went to Pizza Express outside of Charing Cross Station to discuss the visit.

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Mental Health Workshops

The youth council has agreed that helping young people to understand mental health in order to help themselves and their friends and peers is one of their top priorities.

It was agreed that some Mental Health Workshops would be arranged at the HitB Youth Café to do this.

We have had two offers of support from professionals to arrange these workshops.

Firstly, teachers from West Heath School have offered to come and talk to Youth Councillors. It is suggested that they be invited to do this in the new year.

Secondly, Sevenoaks District Council have offered to coordinate some specific workshops on this topic and see what ideas could be generated and then worked up for the benefit of all local young people. In order to progress this, we need some Youth Councillors to commit to at least one initial workshop and agree when this could happen.

RECOMMENDED:

1. Invite teachers from West Heath School to come and talk to Youth Councillors in the new year.
2. Youth Councillors interested in participating in the initial Mental Health Workshop to 'sign up'.
3. Agree a suitable date and time for the Mental Health Workshop.