

Wednesday 25th February 2026

SEVENOAKS 52nd ANNUAL TOWN PUBLIC MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORS FOR THE TOWN OF SEVENOAKS WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE BAT AND BALL CENTRE, CRAMPTON'S ROAD, SEVENOAKS, TN14 5DN
MONDAY 9th March 2026 at 7:00pm

The meeting will be preceded at 6.30pm by an opportunity meet the Mayor and local councillors, and to visit display stands provided by local voluntary organisations and the police.

Chaired by the Mayor of Sevenoaks, Councillor Tony Clayton

Please note that the proceedings of this meeting will be streamed live to YouTube for the public to watch via the following: https://youtube.com/live/6Ja_AuLrITY 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 [Recording of meetings protocol](#) or by request.

Agenda available at: https://www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk/Sevenoaks_Town_Council_20065.aspx

AGENDA

1	Welcome by the Mayor, Councillor Tony Clayton
2	Minutes of the 2025 Sevenoaks Annual Town Public Meeting (Copy attached)
3	Presentation of the Sevenoaks Town Council Annual Report: April 2025 - March 2026 Available via following link: https://heyzine.com/flip-book/c715160f5f Hard copies will be available at the meeting and from the Town Council offices.
4	Kent Family Hub Overview of Kent Family Hub Services by Ellen Shaw, Family Hub District Manager Sevenoaks.
5	Presentation of Sevenoaks Town Council Grant Awards to Voluntary Organisations
6	Presentation of The Stag's Annual Report Available via the following link: 2024-25-SCAC-Consolidated-accounts-final-1.pdf Hard copies will be available at the meeting and at the Town Council offices.

7	To receive Comments and Queries from Local People on any matters relating to Sevenoaks Town.
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To enable us to provide a fuller response at the meeting, please send any comments or questions you would like to put to the Town Council to: council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk by noon on Friday 6th March 2026

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Fifty First Annual Assembly of the Townspeople of Sevenoaks
held at Bat & Ball Centre, Crampton’s Road, Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN
on Monday 17th March 2025
7:00 – 8.20pm**

Livestreamed on YouTube: <https://youtube.com/live/Fz-4zKsggpM>

Chair: Cllr Libby Ancrum, Mayor of Sevenoaks

In attendance: 85 members of the public and the following:

Cllr Libby Ancrum Cllr Sue Camp Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet Cllr Tony Clayton Cllr Dr Peter Dixon Cllr Victoria Granville Cllr Chloe Gustard Cllr Lise Michaelides	Cllr Claire Shea Cllr David Skinner Cllr Gareth Willis Cllr Nigel Wightman Cllr Perry Cole, Deputy Leader, SDC Cllr Elizabeth Purves, SDC Cllr Richard Streatfeild, SDC & KCC
Linda Larter, MBE Andrew Eyre Tony McEwen Georgina Jackson Alison Futtit Georgie Elliston Iean Chandler-Wilson Kassia Estrada – Castillon Anna Rosinska	Chief Executive/Town Clerk Chief Executive, Stag Theatre Deputy Chief Executive, Stag Theatre Responsible Finance Officer Senior Committee Clerk Planning Committee Clerk Youth Services Committee Clerk PA to Town Clerk Open Spaces Clerk

Apologies for absence were received from: Cllr Roderick Hogarth, SDC; Cllr Catherine Daniell, Cllr Lionel O’Hara, Cllr Sally Layne, Cllr Nick Varley, Bob Ogley and Elizabeth Dolding.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting members of the public had the opportunity to meet the Mayor and Town Councillors and visit an exhibition of stands provided by local voluntary groups who had received grants from Sevenoaks Town Council, the Police, Tarmac and consultants working on the St John’s Masterplan.

1. WELCOME BY THE MAYOR, CLLR LIBBY ANCRUM

The Mayor welcomed everybody to the Fifty First Sevenoaks Annual Town Public Meeting.

The Mayor advised that her nominated charities for the year were Bradbourne Riding for the Disabled and Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees. She drew attention to the fundraising concerts being held at the Stag Theatre by one of her nominated charities, Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees, on 26th April 2025.

2. MINUTES OF THE SEVENOAKS ANNUAL TOWN PUBLIC MEETING 2024

The Minutes of the Fiftieth Annual Town Public Meeting of the Townspeople of Sevenoaks held on 11th March 2024 were received and adopted and it was RESOLVED that the Mayor sign the Minutes of that meeting as a true record.

3. PRESENTATION OF SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

The Mayor introduced the Town Council's Annual Report April 2024 to March 2025, which had been circulated with the agenda.

The Town Clerk gave a presentation outlining the Town Council's achievements during the year, additional to regular functions and facilities, setting out activities each month.

Highlights included: Celebration of Sevenoaks Town Council's 50 years of service to the community; Sevenoaks Town Centre & St Johns's Hill Masterplans workshops; launch of the Car Club; installation of Bat & Ball Station mural; D-Day commemoration, beacon lighting; Sevenoaks Business Show and Business Awards events; gold awards achieved for South East In Bloom; launch of film celebrating the Stag Theatre; activities for children and young people, including Family Fun Day and skateboarding events; events on the Vine Gardens, including Climate Fair, vegan markets, Street Food and Bike Festivals; completion of the purchase of Longspring Wood; retirement of Deputy Clerk, Anne White, after 30 years' service; Christmas Lights Switch On event at the earlier time (3.00 to 5.30pm) which proved very popular; International Women's Day event; and, on the fifth anniversary of the pandemic, the planting of 5 rose bushes and installation of a plaque at Vine Gardens to mark the UK wide Covid Reflection Day.

4. CLLR PERRY COLE, DEPUTY LEADER OF SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON SEVENOAKS TOWN

The Mayor thanked Cllr Cole for attending the meeting at short notice, substituting for Cllr Hogarth who was unable to attend.

Cllr Cole gave a presentation outlining the Government's Local Government Devolution (Dev) and Reorganisation (LGR) proposals which included:

- Introduction of Elected Mayor's and Strategic Combined Authorities
- Unitary Councils for all part of the country
- To be implemented as quickly as possible

He reported that the Kent County Council (KCC) bid to join the Devolution Priority Programme had been declined.

Cllr Cole outlined key dates in 2025:

- 21st March – Kent authorities to submit interim update for LGR in Kent to the Government
- 1st May – Kent County Council elections
- 28th November – full proposals for LGR in Kent to be submitted to Government

He confirmed that consultation and engagement would take place with residents and other public sector providers, including parish and town councils.

POSSIBLE future timeline might include:

Quarter 1, 2026 - Consultation on LGR proposals run by government

Quarter 2, 2026 - Government decision on LGR in Kent

6th May 2027 – Elections for Shadow Unitary Authorities and Town and Parish Councils

31st March 2028 – Sevenoaks District Council ceases to exist

1st April 2028 – Unitary Authority for West Kent

Comments/Questions raised were:

Comments/Questions	Cllr Cole's Response
What will happen to Kent Libraries, as it currently operates all the libraries across Kent.	Anything KCC operates will be devolved to the unitary authorities, but it wasn't possible to give a definite answer or assurance at the moment.
<p>The last reorganisation was 50 years ago but the difference now is the scale. As the possible West Kent Unitary could be based on a population of 551, 000, Sevenoaks Town will only represent about 4%. This looks like we are becoming more distant.</p> <p>Public assets handed to the unitary will be managed elsewhere.</p>	<p>Parish and Town Councils across Kent had expressed the same thoughts.</p> <p>It was anticipated that a new unitary would have no more than 100 councillors, which could be 25 representing Sevenoaks District, compared to 48 currently at SDC and 4 KCC members. They would be carrying out district plus additional duties currently undertaken by the County Council.</p> <p>Collectively we may be more distant but though we have perhaps fewer voices, they may be more powerful. We are a successful District and should cherish that and try to use it as a template going forward.</p> <p>SDC has begun the Community Asset Transfer Scheme and would be working with all interested parties for the benefit of residents.</p>
What is the fast track KCC missed out on?	The Devolution Priority Programme was an opportunity to get ahead of the game. There was an implied suggestion that it would unlock doors and create opportunities with funding and for the Strategic Authority with elected Mayor, bring in investment.
Will role of Parish Councils increase?	Parish Councils play a pivotal role. Will their responsibilities change? We don't know, given the many sounds from government, e.g. suggestion that some planning decisions be taken away from local councils.

	I don't know whether the responsibilities will increase but I can't see them diminishing. I can't answer as we don't truly know what the landscape will look like.
Thank you for the clear explanation of what's going on. It doesn't inspire optimism for the future, but do you see any positives or is it all about imposing house building on Kent.	The house building targets would be there anyway. This change is coming, and we have the opportunity to make sure that when we come out the other side, we are leaders within our unitary and that our community voices carry weight, to take it forward so that whoever represents us in the future will be in a better position.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Cole for stepping in at short notice and providing a clear explanation of what's happening with the Local Government Reorganisation.

5. SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The Mayor was pleased to present grants awards, to the following:

Grants awarded by the Community & Wellbeing Committee on 3rd February 2025 and Youth Services Working Group on 12th March 2025			
Sevenoaks Sumer Festival	£5000	South East Open Studios	£250
Art in June	£250	Spirit of Peace	£300
Baby Umbrella	£400	Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival	£600
Friends of Pontoise	£500	Sevenoaks Unit of the Sea Cadet Corps	£1,250
Friends of Rheinbach	£450	Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	£1000
Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra	£500	West Kent Mediation	£900
Sevenoaks Bowling Club	£250	West Kent Mind	£1500
Sevenoaks Society	£250	Eynsford Concert Band	£500

Awards had also been made during the year to the following local community organisations, who had attended the meeting to provide a display demonstrating what the funds had been spent on:

Sevenoaks Summer Festival	£5,000	Sevenoaks PHAB	£400
Art in June Open Studios	£250	Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra	£500
Baby Umbrella 1	£400	Baby Umbrella 2	£1,500
Friends of Pontoise	£500	Hi Kent	£1000
Friends of Rheinbach	£450	Sevenoaks Counselling	£2000
Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival	£600	Sevenoaks Three Arts, Young Musician of the Year	£650
Sevenoaks Society	£250	West Kent Mind 1	£2,500
South East Open Studios	£250	West Kent Mind 2	£1,500
Sevenoaks Bowling Club	£250	West Kent Mediation	£900

We are Beams 1 (free room hire)	£1,440	We are Beams 2	£1,500
West Kent Housing Youth Services	£15,000	Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	£1,000
MX Fencing	£1,000		

Displays were also provided by: Kent Police, Tarmac Ltd, St John's Masterplan and Smartphone Free Childhood.

6. PRESENTATION OF THE STAG'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Tony McEwen, Deputy Chief Executive of the Stag Community Arts Centre, presented its Annual Report for the financial year 2023-24. He thanked Sevenoaks Town Council for its continued support.

Tony reported that:

- The Stag continued to fulfil its charitable aims of providing theatre and cinema for the people of Sevenoaks and beyond and had been open every day except Christmas Day and one afternoon in February
- The Stag had shown more than 90 films in 2024 and held hundreds of events in the theatre and Stag Plaza including a wide variety of events and support for community groups

He spoke about the divide between the commercial and community aspects of the Stag, noting that community hire represented 30% of events but only 3.4% of the income. Commercial hire accounted for 70% of events and 96% of income. Commercial success kept the theatre going and helped the community by enabling the Stag to subsidise their efforts.

Specific changes made to improve the Stag's carbon footprint were reported, including the operation of the solar panel project since June 2023 which had generated 116,000 kilowatt hours of energy

Tony paid tribute to Chris Holgate who had sadly passed away in December 2024. Chris had volunteered 100s of days each year to maintain the building and surrounds. A memorial was held in February 2025, and in his memory, the upper foyer was renamed the Holgate Foyer.

7. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM LOCAL PEOPLE ON MATTERS RELATING TO SEVENOAKS

Comments/questions raised at the meeting were:

Comment / Question	Response
When the Adult Education centre in Bradbourne Road closes this summer, what will be the future provision of Adult Education in Sevenoaks and what will happen to Hatton House and its grounds?	KCC have stated - Government funding for Adult Education has changed, with a focus on supporting adult learners with work skills and careers, health and personal development, and family learning. Learning for Leisure and repeat learner courses can no longer be provided using government funding.

	<p>KCC therefore need to make changes to our delivery model as a consequence of the change in Government funding rules. This includes working with the wider Kent and Medway provider base, making best use of available funding to meet skills needs identified in the Local Skills Improvement Plan, and reviewing our buildings estate.</p> <p>The new delivery model will see more courses being delivered from community venues close to the point of need and closer working with touch-point organisations who already have established relationships with clients, for example Housing Associations and Healthy Living Centres.</p> <p>Sevenoaks Town Council has previously registered the property as an Asset of Community Value and expressed an interest in its disposal. This enables a 6-month timespan for community organisations including the town council to consider acquiring it prior to it being placed on the open market for sale.</p>
<p>What do Town Councillors think about the fact that most new build properties are leasehold – can the Town Council address the laws so that people own outright rather than having to pay leasehold fees.</p>	<p>The Government has advised that it is reviewing the leaseholds situation and planning to make changes.</p>
<p>Representative of Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Club – thank you very much to the Town Council. Just installed 200 solar panels on roof of bowls club, thanks to Town Council and local Councillors. Town Council took the lead in awarding £25k Community Infrastructure Levy funding, which was match funded by SDC. Just wanted people to be aware of the work the Town Council puts in.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>It's always good to see us moving towards a better situation regarding net zero.</p>
<p>Reading Annual Report and would like to congratulate the Town Council on a phenomenal year. There can't be many Town Councils that do so much. They have helped the Rugby and Football Clubs a great deal, both are very successful and do an amazing job of training young people, with 3000 children training on Sundays.</p>	<p>Thank you very much.</p> <p>The Mayor took the opportunity to pay tribute to the excellent leadership of the Town Clerk.</p>

Do you have an update on Bat & Ball junction improvements?	The Town Council doesn't have any direct involvement at the moment but has included the junction in its St John's Masterplan. Updates have been requested from KCC and other stakeholders.
What's happening with the planning application on the Farmer's site?	The planning application had been lodged with SDC and is going through the process. It is a large application with a lot of details to be considered. The application can be viewed on the SDC website.

8. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Mayor thanked everybody for attending the meeting.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:20pm.

Signed

Dated

The Mayor