

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 14th September 2020
Held via Zoom and Livestreamed on YouTube

Meeting commenced: 19:00

Meeting Concluded: 21:31

Present:

Cllr Keith Bonin (until 9.26pm)	Present	Cllr Roderick Hogarth (until 8.30pm)	Present
Cllr Nicholas Busvine OBE (from 7.24pm)	Present	Cllr Tom Morris Brown	Apologies
Cllr Sue Camp (from 7.07pm)	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 Tom Morris Brown
Cllr Claire Shea	Cllr Edward Waite

In attendance: Cllr Richard Parry, Town Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer, Senior Committee Clerk

Representations received from Members of the Public

The following members of the public attended the Zoom meeting and addressed the Committee on the items shown:

Andy Richardson – Grant Application, Sevenoaks Vine Cricket Club (Minute 192 below)
 Mike Wooldridge – Review of Lease: Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club (Minute 191 below)

185. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted and received as noted above.

186. Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

187. Declaration of Interests

Declarations of Interests were declared by the following Councillors in respect of the items shown, they did not take part in the discussions or vote thereon.

- Cllr Clayton, in respect of the grant application by Sevenoaks Counselling (Agenda Item 6);
- Cllr Eyre declared an interest in respect of the grant application by Sevenoaks Vine Cricket Club (Agenda Item 6); and
- Cllr Raikes declared a pecuniary interest in respect of the Street Lighting Update (Agenda Item 13) and did not chair the meeting for this item;

188. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 20th July 2020

RESOLVED: To receive and sign the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20th July 2020 as a true record.

189. Finance Reports

189.1 Management Accounts 1st to 31st July and 1st to 31st August 2020

The Committee received and noted, for the periods 1st to 31st July and 1st to 31st August 2020, the Finance Officer's Report with Variance Analysis, Working Capital Summary and Statement of Fund Balances, together with the:

- Suppliers Accounts 1st to 31st July and 1st to 31st August 2020, balance as at 31st August 2020 - £319,755.70.
- Payroll Accounts 1st to 31st July and 1st to 31st August 2020, balance as at 31st August 2020 - £72,296.51.
- Petty Cash Accounts 1st to 31st July and 1st to 31st August 2020, balance as at 31st August 2020 - £903.40.

It was noted that the year to date position at the end of August was a net deficit of £633. Adjusted for agreed reserves movements for Bat & Ball Management & Maintenance reserve (£22,741 YTD), and CIL spend on Jubilee Clock (£4,128 YTD), the position was a surplus of £26,236 against adjusted budget deficit of £10,326, resulting in a year to date net favourable variance of £36,562. This variance was mainly due to £36K Public Works Loan Board budgeted repayment which had been covered by a reserves transfer.

Looking ahead to the end of Q2, the expected adverse impact of Covid-19 on income had been reduced to £20k based on the reopening of the Vine Café, markets remaining open and receipt of Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) grant. It was agreed that projections to the end of the financial year be prepared for the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: To accept the Management Accounts 1st to 31st July and 1st to 31st August 2020.

189.2 Hospitality and Gifts Register

Nothing to report.

190. Change to Order of Agenda

RESOLVED: That the order of the agenda be amended to facilitate consideration of the following agenda items for the benefit of the members of public in attendance:

Agenda Item 7 - Review of Lease: Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club

Agenda Item 6 - Grant Application from Sevenoaks Vine Cricket Club

Agenda Item 8 - Review of Lease of Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk

191. Review of Lease of Land to Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club for Clubhouse

At the meeting of this Committee on 20th January 2020 it was resolved to renew the lease of land to Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club for its clubhouse on terms set out. *[Minute 449, F&GP 20.01.2020 refers]*

The Rugby Club had subsequently requested amendments to the lease terms including a 30- year term, rent review to not be upwards only and a mutual break clause.

The Club also asked the Town Council to consider a one-year rent free period given the impact of Covid-19. Committee members recognised that Covid-19 had impacted a number of sports clubs and agreed that this issue be the subject of a separate report when fees and charges were considered for all sports clubs.

RESOLVED *(as per Minute 449, F&GP 20.01.2020)*:

- 1) To renew the lease of land to Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club for its clubhouse on the following terms:
 - Annual Rent £3,750
 - Term 25 years with landlord's break options
 - Rent Review every fifth year of term, in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI)
 - Other Terms as per the existing Lease (subject to reasonable modernisation)

- 2) That a report be prepared to consider Sports Club rent relief during Covid-19.

192. Grant Application: Sevenoaks Vine Cricket Club

The Committee considered a grant aid request from Sevenoaks Vine Cricket Club in respect of works necessary to return the Vine outfield to a useable and sustainable condition for the playing of cricket at all levels. It was noted that during the exceptional circumstances of the Covid-19 lockdown the public footfall and recreational usage of the site increased significantly causing damage to grass cover and levels.

The Committee recognised the significance of the Vine cricket ground to the heritage and landscape of the town and its key role as recreational space. The need to maintain its condition and appearance was also acknowledged.

RESOLVED: That the grant request, to be funded from the next Community Infrastructure Levy payment due in October 2020, 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
61	n/a	Works necessary to return Vine outfield to useable and sustainable condition for all levels of cricket.	£16,000 to £25,000	Up to £16,000

193. Review of Annual Rent: Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk

The five-year review of the annual rent for the Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk had been due to be reviewed in 2018/19 but this had not happened. The current rent of £3,090 per annum was last increased in December 2013.

RESOLVED: That the annual rent for the Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk be increased to £3,500 per annum with effect from 2020.

194. Grant Budget Update and Grant Applications Received

194.1 Update on Grants Awarded March 2020

The Committee noted the update on grants awarded in March 2020 which related to activities impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Noted that the grant of £350 awarded to the Sevenoaks Literary Festival for the cost of the speaker at the annual free event for local schools would be rolled forward to the 2021 event.

194.2 Community Resilience Fund

The Committee noted the expenditure from the Community Resilience Fund since its creation in March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, total £5,111.

194.3 Grant considered by the Youth Services Committee

It was noted that, at its meeting held on 9th September 2020, the Youth Services Committee had RESOLVED to award the following grant under the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011 Sections 1-8 refers):

Grant Ref No.	Organisation & Charity Reg No if applicable	Purpose of Award	Grant Application	Grant Approved
6	Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival	First prize offered in Young Musician of the Year Competition 2021	£1000	£600

194.4 Consideration of Grant Applications Received

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

RESOLVED: 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
57	PSB Breastfeeding CIC	Provision of Babywearing Peer Supporter training for 10 existing volunteers and 5 new local parents. To pay for training, room rental & equipment, plus supervision and further enrichment for volunteers once trained.	£1000	£1000
11	Sevenoaks Counselling	Supplement bursary fund which assists clients who cannot afford full cost of counselling.	£1,500	£1,500
42	Bradbourne Residents' Association	Part fund purchase of a second heavy duty picnic table made from 100% recycled plastic.	£250	£250

195. Minutes of Town Team Meeting held on 19th August 2020

The Committee noted the Minutes of the Town Team Meeting held on 19th August 2020.

196. Markets – Temporary Covid-19 Planning Legislation

The Committee noted that recent amendments to Town and Country Planning Regulations regarding General Permitted Development (to allow development to assist in supporting the Government's economic renewal package following the coronavirus outbreak) provided an additional allowance for the temporary use of land from 1st July 2020 to 31st December 2020 and a new permitted development right to allow a local authority to hold a market for an unlimited number of days without the requirement to submit an application for planning permission beginning 25th June 2020 and ending 23rd March 2021.

In addition, Sevenoaks District Council had offered the Town Council the use of Buckhurst 1 car park on a full-time basis (including Wednesday market) up to March 2021.

Sevenoaks Town Council had applied for a Premises License for Buckhurst 1 car park.

Consideration was given to whether this might enable the Town Council to move its Wednesday Market to the High Street and/or whether it would be possible to use

the Buckhurst 1 space for more of Christmas market/leisure facility for the Christmas season.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That it would not be appropriate to move the Wednesday market to the High Street as there was insufficient room for all stallholders and social distancing space during Covid-19;
- 2) That, due both to the short timescale and resources required and the need to avoid people gathering, it would not be possible to hold a Christmas market on the Buckhurst 1 space this year; and
- 3) Sevenoaks Town Council and the Town Team promote the availability of the car park space to local businesses for ideas which the Town Council could help with facilitating.

197. Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership – Creation of Community Interest Organisation (CIO)

It was noted that the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership had resolved to create a Community Interest Organisation as the mechanism for its governance. The CIO would ultimately become its own Accountable body but to enable it to progress to this point an Accountable Body was required.

RESOLVED: That Sevenoaks Town Council becomes the Accountable Body for the creation of the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership Community Interest Organisation.

198. No.8 Bus

The Committee was pleased to note the confirmation from Kent County Council that it would fund the No.8 Bus Route at 100% for two years, at £51,000 per annum, total £101,000, from January 2021.

**199. Streetlighting Update
(Cllr Tony Clayton in the Chair)**

The Committee noted the updated position on streetlighting in private roads.

It was noted that discussions with residents of Woodside Road had stalled, particularly as there was no mechanism in place for a single point of contact.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That residents of Woodside Road be advised of a deadline by which this matter needed to be resolved, including providing a single point of contact for the road for the Town Council to invoice, after which time the lights would be removed; and
- 2) That the light at the eastern end of Coombe Avenue be retained while officers investigate whether the footpath is a Public Right of Way or whether the light could be retained under the Town Council's current policy.

**200. Current Matters and Priorities
(Cllr Simon Raikes in the Chair)**

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the reports relating to:

- a. Current Matters; and
- b. Town Council Priorities

201. Press Releases

Press release to be issued regarding grants awarded.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting.

Signed

Dated

Chairman