

## Sevenoaks Town Council

### Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

Livestreamed and available to view on YouTube until approved by Council:

<https://youtu.be/safWM3wIMsY>

**Meeting Commenced:** 7.33 p.m.

**Meeting Concluded:** 8.01 p.m.

Cllr Rachel Parry, <b>Mayor</b>	Present	Cllr Claire Shea, <b>Deputy Mayor</b>	Present
Cllr Libby Ancrum	Present	Cllr Keith Bonin	Present
Cllr Nicholas Busvine	Remote attendance	Cllr Sue Camp	Apologies
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present	Cllr Tony Clayton	Present
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Present	Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Present
Cllr Roderick Hogarth	Apologies	Cllr Lise Michaelides	Apologies
Cllr Tom Morris Brown	Absent	Cllr Richard Parry	Present
Cllr Robert Piper	Apologies	Cllr Simon Raikes	Present

**In Attendance:** Town Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer and Senior Committee Clerk

**Present:** Cllr Richard Streatfeild, Sevenoaks District Council & Kent County Council

#### **Representations received from Members of the Public:**

Cllr Richard Streatfeild gave an update on key matters at Kent County Council, including:

- 20 mph zone for Sevenoaks
- Cuts to bus services
- KCC buildings disposal, including three in Sevenoaks, and a focussing of KCC services at the library
- Increased potholes due to recent weather conditions
- Challenges of the KCC budget setting

**524 Apologies for Absence:** as shown above

**525 Requests for Dispensations:** none received.

**526 Declarations of Interest:** none received.

**527 Minutes of the Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022**  
**RESOLVED:** to accept and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 as a true record.

#### **528 Minutes of Committees**

**528.1 RESOLVED:** To receive and adopt the minutes of the Planning Committees held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 as true records.

## Sevenoaks Town Council

### 528.2 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Referendum

In considering the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023, the Council noted the concerns expressed by the Committee regarding Sevenoaks District Council's (SDC) proposed timescale for the referendum on the NDP. Further discussion with Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) had resulted in a proposed date of 8<sup>th</sup> June.

It was noted that SDC had been advised that the Town Council was unable to agree with this for the following reasons:

- Having the referendum a month after election would cost a further approx. £30k of tax payers money
- Having the referendum a month after election is likely to annoy voters for reason above and result in a lower turnout
- STC will not be able to use its £10k grant for printing of copies of NDP
- The referendum is a simple Yes / No question
- The referendum count does not need to take place at the same time as election count and Town Council staff could assist (within normal legislation procedures) with referendum count at a later time
- The referendum would take place outside the current Town Council's term of office
- It was understood at the time of the NDP designation of boundary that SDC received the government grant to cover the cost of the referendum – please could this be confirmed.

**RESOLVED:** That Sevenoaks District Council be advised that the Town Council feels very strongly that the NDP Referendum should take place at the latest by 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023, alongside the local council elections.

### 529 Amendment to Standing Orders: Sealing of Documents

At the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022, the Town Council recommended amendments to the Standing orders in relation to the sealing of official documents [*Minute 442 refers*]. In line with the Town Council's Standing Orders any changes needed to be ratified by two Council meetings, this was the second meeting for consideration.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) Delegated authority be provided to the Mayor and Town Clerk to 'seal' the personal documents as required subject to a separate register of records being maintained
- 2) Standing Order 24 b) be amended to reflect current practice as follows:

Subject to Standing Order 24 a) the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of the Mayor who should sign the deed as a witness.

## Sevenoaks Town Council

### 530 Sevenoaks Town Council Precept Recommendation for 2023-2024

The Town Council received and noted the recommendation unanimously agreed at the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held immediately prior to this Council meeting [*Minute 520, F&GP 16.01.23 refers*].

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council set a precept £1,370,074 for 2023-2024 which is a 4.9% increase to the 2022-23 precept per Band D equivalent, and a Band D equivalent household rate of £139.17 per year, equating to £2.68 per week and 13p increase per week.

### 531 City of Sanctuary Accreditation

Following the Town Council's resolution to work towards obtaining City of Sanctuary status for Sevenoaks [*Minute 308, 26.09.22 refers*] a meeting was held with a representative from Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees to discuss progressing the accreditation.

It was noted that initially a shared vision needed to be agreed and consideration was given to using the objectives of Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees. Councillors agreed this subject to amending the fifth objective, for the purpose of the shared vision, to broaden its reach to all members of the refugee community.

**RESOLVED** that the following objectives be approved and submitted as the shared vision for the City of Sanctuary accreditation application:

1	The relief of financial hardship amongst those granted and seeking refugee status and their dependents living (temporarily or permanently) in Sevenoaks and the surrounding area.
2	To advance the education and training of those granted and seeking refugee status and their dependents in need thereof so as to advance them in life and assist them to adapt within a new community.
3	To advance the education of the public in general, including landlords and local authorities, on the issues relating to refugees and those seeking asylum.
4	The provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life of those persons who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship, or social and economic circumstances.
5	To develop the capacity and skills of the members of the refugee community of Sevenoaks in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society.

**Sevenoaks Town Council**

**532 Mayor's Engagements**

**532.1 RESOLVED:** To note and accept the reports relating to Mayoral activities:

- a) the functions attended by the Mayor or her representative up to 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023
- b) the forthcoming Civic Events being organised by the Mayor during 2022-23

**532.2 Loo of the Year Award 2022**

The Mayor reported that the Bat & Ball Station Café and Platform Toilets and Bat & Ball Centre Toilets had been awarded Loo of the Year; the Mayor congratulated staff on the award, who had also been awarded with Washroom Cleaner of the Year certificate.

**533 Press Release**

**RESOLVED:** To issue press releases regarding the:

- 2023-24 Precept
- Mayor's International Women's Day lunch
- Loo of the Year Award

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting.

Signed .....

Mayor

Dated .....