

Sevenoaks Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Held on 27th February 2023 in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

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

<https://youtube.com/live>

Meeting commenced: 7.11pm

Meeting Concluded: 9.16 pm

Present:

Cllr Tony Clayton, Chairman	Present		Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Present
Cllr Keith Bonin, Vice-Chairman	Present		Cllr Roderick Hogarth	Present
Cllr Libby Ancrum	Present		Cllr Mrs Rachel Parry, Mayor (ex-officio)	Present
Cllr Sue Camp	Present		Cllr Richard Parry	Present
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present		Cllr Simon Raikes	Present
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Present			

In attendance: Town Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer (remote attendance), Senior Committee Clerk.

Representation received from Member of the Public: See Minute 615 below

609 Apologies for Absence

As noted above.

610. Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

611. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Eyre declared a pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 7, Stag Theatre Request for CIL Funding.

Cllr Raikes declared a pecuniary interest in respect of street lighting matters included in Agenda Item 13 Current Matters, insofar as they related to Woodside Road.

Cllr Clayton declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 9.3, insofar as it related to the grant application from Friends of Pontoise.

The Town Clerk declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 9.3, insofar as it related to the grant application from Sevenoaks PHAB.

612. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 16th January 2023

RESOLVED: to receive and sign the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 16th January 2023 as a true record.

Sevenoaks Town Council

613. Finance Reports

613.1 Management Accounts to 31st January 2023

The Committee received and noted, for the period ended 31st January 2023, the Responsible Finance Officer's Report with Variance Analysis, Income and Expenditure, Working Capital Summary, Statement of Fund Balances and Capital Expenditure and funds.

It was noted that the year-to-date position at the end of December 2022 gave a revenue deficit of £52,128. Adjusted for required Bat & Ball Station Management & Maintenance Reserves movement to be actioned at year end, which offsets the Bat & Ball Station year to date deficit of £80,019, the adjusted position was a surplus of £27,891.

The Responsible Finance Officer commented that performance was in line with budget, and she anticipated a year end surplus in the region of £20,000, after planned movement to reserves.

The Chairman congratulated officers for keeping the budget on track given the substantial challenges during the year.

RESOLVED: To accept the Management Accounts 1st to 31st January 2023.

613.2 The Committee received and noted:

Suppliers Accounts for:

- 1st to 31st January 2023, total invoices £99,964.25

List of Payments Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account

- 1st to 31st January 2023, total £211,539.04

List of Payments Mayor's Charity Account:

- 1st to 31st January 2023, total £100.00

Payroll Accounts for:

- 1st to 31st January 2023, total payments £79,129.82

Petty Cash Accounts for:

- 1st to 31st January 2023, total payments £674.80

613.3 Hospitality and Gifts Register: None received.

614 Review of Internal Controls: Financial Regulations 2023/24

RESOLVED: To adopt the updated Financial Regulations 2023/2024.

Sevenoaks Town Council

615 Suspension of Standing Orders at 7.36pm

RESOLVED that: in accordance with Standing Order 28, standing orders be suspended to enable the Deputy Chief Executive of the Stag Theatre to speak in respect of Agenda Item 7, Stag Theatre Request for CIL Funding.

Tony McEwen, Deputy Chief Executive at the Stag Community Arts Centre, addressed the meeting and responded to queries in relation to the Stag Theatre's request for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for the purchase and installation of batteries to store excess solar energy and night-time electricity.

616 Reconvening of the Meeting at 7.43pm

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 7.43pm.

617 Stag Theatre Request for CIL Funding

The Committee considered a request from the Stag Community Arts Centre (Stag Theatre) for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for the installation of SolaX battery units to store excess solar energy harvested on sunny days and night-time electricity, available at a cheaper rate.

Cllr Eyre took no part in the discussion and abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED: That the Stag Community Arts Centre request for £30,086.04 of Community Infrastructure Levy funding to enable the purchase of 4 SolaX battery units and a 20-year warranty be approved.

618 Provision of IT Equipment for Councillors

Further to the decision taken by this Committee (*Minute 319, F&GP 26.09.2022 refers*) to agree in principle the supply of suitable IT equipment to all Town Councillors, quotations had been obtained by the Town Council's IT consultant for the most appropriate hardware and software.

It was noted that the proposed iPads would be configured with Apple Business Manager so that they can be centrally managed, with settings deployed, to meet the government Cyber Essentials standard.

RESOLVED: that approval be given for the purchase of (if required by all Councillors):

Description	Cost	Qty	Sub
Apple iPad 10.2" 9th Gen Wi-Fi	£294.17	16	£4706.72
Otterbox React Case (Clear/Black, Rugged yet lightweight & thin)	£17.58	16	£281.28
Screen Protectors (Tempered Glass, Twin Pack)	£13.99	9	£125.91
Total			£5,113.91

Sevenoaks Town Council

619 Grants to Local Organisations

619.1 Reports Received from Grant Recipients 2022/23

RESOLVED: That the reports received from recipients of grants awarded during 2022/23 be received and noted.

619.2 Review of Grant Application Form

Noted that, in keeping with the Town Council's priority to promote affordable and practical initiatives with long-term green benefits for the local community, the grant application form and guidance notes had been updated to include green credentials criteria.

RESOLVED: That the updated Grant Application Form and Guidance Notes be approved.

619.3 Grant Budget Update & Grant Applications Received

The Committee noted the budget for grants to local voluntary organisations for 2022/23 and the balance to date.

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	Purpose of Award	Grant Application	Grant Approved
45	Hi Kent	To continue to run free hearing aid users support clinics at Hollybush Day Centre for another year.	£1,000	£1,000
2	Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	To help cover costs in 2023/24 to enable SVTG to continue to provide low cost local transport to elderly and disabled users.	£750	£750
17	West Kent Mediation	Contribution to costs: volunteer training, supervision & expenses; hall hire; publicity.	£800	£800
5	Friends of Pontoise	To build & expand on links between Sevenoaks & Pontoise, promote understanding of French life & culture ,and of English life & culture amongst French counterparts.	£250-500	£350

Sevenoaks Town Council

Grant Ref No.	Organisation	Purpose of Award	Grant Application	Grant Approved
6	Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival	Hire of performance space for competition and cup winners concert.	£600	£600
3	Sevenoaks Literary Festival	To support annual schools event which takes place during the Festival at start of Autumn term	£500	£500
68	Baby Umbrella	Cost of specialist support practitioner fees and venue costs.	£1,418	Not awarded
12	South East Open Studios	To produce posters and hire (STC) roadside advertising sites for 2 weeks.	£250	£250
72	Art in June Open Studios	Towards publishing cost of guide booklets	£500	£250
73	Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra	Contribution to costs of Youth Jazz Workshop to be held in June. No charge to participants.	£500	£500
74	Youth Resilience UK	To run series of mental health awareness workshops and youth mental First Aid two-day courses	£1,600	£1,600
75	Sevenoaks PHAB	Contribution towards running costs of group/activities for adults with either learning disability and/or physical disability	£450	£450
56	The Children's Workshop	Purchase of items to enhance preschool garden area	£540	£540

It was noted that the Sevenoaks Youth Council had identified youth mental health as its key priority: it was suggested that Youth Resilience UK be asked to consider working with the Youth Council.

620 Kent County Council Consultation on its Community Services

The Committee noted that Kent County Council had launched a consultation on proposed changes to how it delivers its Community Services. This would close on 26th March 2023. The impact on Sevenoaks Town was set out in the Design Handbook for the Sevenoaks Locality.

It was agreed that the proposals be considered in relation to the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan and the Town Council's youth services.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Councillors be asked to send their comments to officers who will consolidate the response on behalf of the Town Council, and

Sevenoaks Town Council

- 2) The draft response be considered by the Planning Committee on 20th March 2023

621 Notes of Meeting regarding Celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III

Town Councillors expressed their concern that Kent County Council (KCC) would not approve the road closure of the High Street for the proposed celebration event for the King's coronation.

RESOLVED:

- 1) to receive and note the notes of the meeting regarding the celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III held on 8th February 2023; and
- 2) to request the Town Clerk to write to David Brazier at KCC, regarding the disappointment that KCC was not supporting the historic celebration event by refusing the road closure request, and to seek his support for KCC to be asked to reconsider this decision.

622 Minutes of Town Team meeting held on 22nd February 2022

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Team held on 22nd February 2023 be received and noted.

623 Current Matters and Sevenoaks Town Council Priorities

The Committee considered the updates received.

RESOLVED that the updates on the Current Matters and Town Council Priorities be received and noted.

624 Press Release

Agreed to issue press releases regarding the grant awards to local community organisations and the award of CIL funding to The Stag for the installation of SolaX battery units.

625 Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED: under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude the public and press for the following item by reason of the confidential nature of the business.

626 Tenders for the Operation and Management of two Sevenoaks Markets

RESOLVED: That Sevenoaks Town Council re-tender for both the Saturday High Street and Wednesday Markets on the basis set out in the Officer's report.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting.

Signed

Dated

Chairman