

Minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Youth Council
Held on Wednesday 1st November 2023

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

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 6.50 p.m.

Present:

Youth Council Members:

Aryanna Mahdavi Ardestani	Present	Simba Li	Present
Catherine Barden De Leon	Present	Madeleine Politzer	Absent
Dexter Buhmann	Absent	Elena Rozo-Navarro	Apologies
Elena-Teodora Dragoi	Present	Aanya Sidhu	Present
Maya Goodrich	Present	Jospeh Soanes	Present
Bea Hayward	Absent	Aditya Vara	Present
Sharma Ishwar	Present	Niki Zhang	Present
Harry King	Present		

In attendance: Linda Larter, Town Clerk; Mayor Cllr Claire Shea; Cllr Gareth Willis, Councillor for the Town Ward; leuan Chandler-Wilson, Committee Clerk.

1. Apologies for Absence

Received as shown above.

2. Introductions

Each of the Youth Councillors gave a brief introduction as to why they wanted to join the Youth Council.

3. Welcome from the Mayor of Sevenoaks

The Mayor, Councillor Claire Shea, welcomed all the new Youth Councilors to the Sevenoaks Youth Council stating that she could not wait to see what the Youth Council would achieve in the next two years and looked forward to working with them on future projects.



4. Election of the Chair

Five youth Councillors put their names forward to be Chair of the Sevenoaks Youth Council for the period 2023-2024. A vote was taken by drawing lots, giving each of the Youth Councillors one vote for a candidate of their choice.

RESOLVED: That Aanya Sidhu be elected as Chair.

Aanya Sidhu took the Chair and invited nominations for the election of Vice-Chair and Treasurer.

5. Election of the Vice-Chair

Four youth Councillors put their names forward to be Vice-Chair of the Sevenoaks Youth Council for the period 2023-2024. A vote was taken by drawing lots, giving each of the Youth Councillors one vote for a candidate of their choice.

RESOLVED: That Niki Zhang be elected as Vice-Chair.

6. Election of the Treasurer

Five Youth Councillors put their names forward to be Treasurer of the Sevenoaks Youth Council for the period 2023-2024. A vote was taken by drawing lots, giving each of the Youth Councillors one vote for a candidate of their choice.

RESOLVED: That Simba Li be elected as Treasurer.

7. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Youth Council held on 13th September 2023

RESOLVED: To review the minutes at the following meeting to be held on the 17th of January.

8. Finance Report

RESOLVED to note:

- 1) that £500 had been put towards funding a re-opening event for the Greatness Recreational Ground Skate Park; and
- 2) that the current balance was £1,720.10.

9. House in the Basement Youth Café (HiTB), Manager's Report:

The Chair gave an explanation regarding what the Youth Café is and some of the work and projects that they carry out. It was noted that House in the Basement was hoping to do a soft launch of the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) project later this month with a more structured launch in January 2024.

New Youth Councillors were encouraged to visit the Youth Café and introduce themselves to the Manager.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the report from Daren Mountain, Manager of HiTB.

10. Youth Survey Results

The Youth Council received feedback from the COVID-19 survey that was given to young people to help gauge the impact COVID had on the lives of young people. The Youth Councillors noted the responses to the following questions:

- What is the main problem young people face in Sevenoaks?

- What is one improvement you would make to Sevenoaks? (Facilities, Clubs, etc.)
- What, in your opinion, should the Youth Council do for young people in Sevenoaks?

It was noted that the common themes from these responses were clubs and facilities, mental health, improved safety and cycling.

The Youth Council noted that it would be useful for another survey to be created for schools and local young people to gauge what they would like to see in the town.

11. Workshop ideas for future Youth Council Activities

The Youth Council adjourned to participate in a workshop to discuss and share ideas for Sevenoaks Town.

What do you think is the greatest need for young people now?

1. Mental wellbeing, support (for anything such as problems)
2. More open spaces
3. Communication
4. Mental health support
5. Education
6. Accessible social activities
7. More communal support and shared spaces

What do you want to achieve in your two years as a Youth Councillor?

1. Give other young people a voice
2. Improve the overall mental health and wellbeing of young people in Sevenoaks
3. I want to improve mental health support for young people dealing with personal struggles (peer pressure into drugs, alcohol, eating disorders and toxic relationships)
4. More Youth Council members (inclusive and diverse and a willingness to contribute),
5. More community spaces and pedestrian friendly areas
6. More available clubs and activities to the public
7. More activities and chances where young people can discover what they are good at
8. I want to improve Sevenoaks as a Town especially environmentally, a way to encourage cycling in the town
9. Improve mental health support in the town
10. To help young people and give some people a chance to speak

If money and practical issues were no problem, what would you like to see in Sevenoaks?

1. More cycle lanes
2. More Greenery/ Shrubbery
3. More dedication to sustainability
4. Add more streetlights in neighbourhood areas (hopefully powered sustainably)
5. More spaces for people to speak and communicate even if they have health issues and more open schools
6. A general safe place for young people to go without worrying about anything,
7. The creation of new activity centers
8. More outreach into schools; workshops on anti-social behavior
9. Free counselling services
10. More fun events; themed parties/discos at House in the Basement
11. Paths for cycling/ cycle lanes
12. More parks and open spaces

13. More spaces for young people to socialize and enjoy themselves
14. More available methods of travel
15. More available clubs and activities
16. Mental health improvement and events

After the workshop the Youth Councillors discussed some of the ideas that had been suggested, it was noted that Mental Health was one of the key themes. It was also suggested that more could be done for the promotion of local sports clubs and mentoring schemes.

12. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: To note the dates of future meetings:

Wednesday 17th January 2024

Wednesday 20th March 2024

Wednesday 15th May 2024

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.