

## Sevenoaks Town Team Executive Board Meeting

6:30pm: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Held at

The Council Chamber, Sevenoaks Town Council, Bradbourne Vale Road TN13 3QG

Meeting started 6.30 p.m.

Meeting concluded: 8.00pm

### Executive Board

Cllr Simon Raikes	Sevenoaks Town Council	Present
Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Sevenoaks Town Council	Apologies
Linda Larter MBE	Sevenoaks Town Council	Apologies
Mike Reid	Town Team Facilitator	Present
Cllr Avril Hunter	Sevenoaks District Council	Present
Cllr Richard Streatfeild MBE	Kent County Council	Present
Cllr Tony Clayton	Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association	Present
Austin Blackburn	Go Coach	Apologies
South Eastern	Vacant	Absent
Cllr Andrew Eyre, <b>Chairman</b>	Stag	Present
Hannah Kay	Knole	Absent
Dawn Blee	Chamber of Commerce	Present
Steve Butler	Workman (Blighs)	Absent
Sevenoaks Chronicle	Vacant	Absent
Geraldine Tucker	Sevenoaks Society	Present
Maxine Morgan, <b>V Chairman</b>	Specsavers	Apologies
Elizabeth Dolding	Warners Solicitors	Present
Roberta Ware	Francis Jones Jewellers	Present
Glenn Ball	Local Architect	Absent
Helen O'Sullivan	Eardley Road RA	Apologies
Elizabeth Purves	Hollybush RA	Present
Byron Brown	Bradbourne RA	Present
Mike Williams	Round Table	Absent
Police	Vacant	Absent

**In attendance:** Cllr Rachel Parry, Cllr Richard Parry, Cllr Marilyn Canet and Emily Haswell

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Helen O'Sullivan  
Cllr Granville-Baxter  
Maxine Morgans  
Austin Blackburn  
Linda Larter

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

None expressed.

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of the Town Team Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 were agreed.

### **4. UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

A summary of the fund and its aims was given by Emily Haswell, SDC Economic Development Officer and a copy of a more detailed presentation is appended to these minutes.

Emily explained that the Town Team will be receiving £600 to sponsor the Coronation High Street Safari as it is a tool to support independent businesses and that active consideration is being given to a scheme, out for costing, to extend the lamp post painting programme undertaken in 2022, to St John's Hill.

Emily asked TT to assist in promoting the various funding opportunities becoming available and particularly the Business Support which is being planned.

### **5. Sevenoaks Business Hub**

Quotes have been received from the company which undertook the hub project to create a new two person pod in the lounge area and to replace the current electric heaters with storage heaters to take advantage of the night time electricity rate and gain better control of usage. The quotes are to be considered by the Town Council.

### **6. Wayfinding Project**

There is to be a meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April with KCC, SDC, STC and TT to consider the proposed sign designs, and if generally accepted then to plan for wider consultation.

### **7. Sevenoaks Business Awards and Business Show**

This is confirmed for Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June at the Bat & Ball Centre. We are fortunate that Clive Emson have for the third time offered to be the main sponsor while confirmation from others is awaited. Continuing their support of new Sevenoaks enterprises, FM Conway are once again paying for four young businesses to exhibit.

TT members were asked to assist run the event by being the “meet and great” people at the reception desk. Cllr Canet and Byron Brown both offered help which was gladly accepted.

## 8. Public Realm

The red phone box by The Chequers now has the defibrillator installed, and the sponsor signage has been fitted. The equipment is sponsored by Thackray Williams and SDC. A handover/presentation is being organised which will probably include a resuscitation training session. The defibrillator has already been taken to an emergency, though was not needed.

The defibrillator “phone box” at the Café on the Vine is being refurbished and the wooden railings on the Dartford Road frontage have been renewed.

## 9. Sevenoaks Best Dressed Window

The Chamber has kindly offered to provide the prizes for a similar competition for the Coronation.

## 10. Childrens’ Coronation High Street Safari

This has been sponsored by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and preparation of the marketing materials is now in hand.

## 11. Coronation Events

This is a flier related to events being organised by STC and the Town Team has been sent to most of the town centre businesses:



**Coronation Events and Opportunities**

Sevenoaks is going to be busy celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III and this provides opportunities for local businesses to take advantage.

**The Big Coronation Afternoon Tea**

The decorated High Street will be closed on Sunday 7th May for a huge street party. From 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm a traditional “red, white and blue” street party will be held with entertainers, an impressive helter-skelter, magician, Punch & Judy and entertainers.

There are sponsorship opportunities from £100-1800 and offers of cakes, biscuits etc from businesses will be most welcome.

Is there a business which would like to donate a prize or prizes for the raffle?

**Coronation High Street Safari**

Our safaris have proved very popular with families taking on a modern-day treasure hunt complete with AI imaging. We need ten town centre venues to host a vinyl in their window. The event will attract about 250+ people coming to each venue in the run-up to the Coronation and after. Its free for businesses to participate and we are looking for a single headline sponsor

**Best Dressed Window**

There were 82 town centre businesses which dressed their windows for the Jubilee, lets see if that can be beaten for the Coronation! Competition details coming soon.

For more information, to offer sponsorship or take part in the Safari please contact  
Mike Reid at [townteam@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:townteam@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)

 SEVENOAKS  
TOWN TEAM

And this is information relating to the sponsorship packages which are available:



**Coronation Celebrations Promotional Opportunities**

The Coronation celebrations in Sevenoaks are going to be **BIG** and we are looking for businesses which would like to take part. The High Street will be closed on Sunday 7th May for a massive Tea Party. Donations of any amount or offers of goods in kind will be very welcome, and there are some specific sponsorship opportunities too. Raffle prizes gratefully accepted as well please!

Whether a donation or sponsorship, contributors will be thanked and recognised in a raft of social media posts that will be going out as well as in printed material. Our thanks already to The Silk Root, TN Card, Blighs, Stag, Purelake and Especially Health for their early support.

**Specific involvement**



High Street Punch & Judy/ Magic Show - £400. One outright sponsor to have their own name board, sign or banner.



A Coronation commemorative bench - £1800. The branding opportunities with a single sponsor to be discussed. A Coronation tree sculpture is also being considered.



Table décor - £300. One outright sponsor will have their leaflet under the table decorations.



Helter skelter—A major sponsor will have their board, sign or banner at the location and a photo shoot. To be branded the XXX Ltd helter skelter.



Coronation family High Street Safari - £600. 17th April - 14th May. Sponsor has full branding. Just four more business locations available.

For more information or discuss sponsorship please contact [townteam@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:townteam@sevenoakstown.gov.uk)



There has been a fair level of support with offers of sponsorship, raffle prizes, and assistance with organisation by various businesses. TT Board Members were asked for assistance on the day though no-one volunteered at the meeting.

Bradbourne Residents Association is holding a street party, though because they also wish to support the town centre one, theirs is timed from 12.00pm – 2.00pm.

## 12. Shop, café, restaurant and pub occupancy survey

Though still work in progress, the headline is that there are 314 shops, restaurants and pubs within Sevenoaks Town boundary and considering those premises which are under offer as being let, about 6.5% of the stock is unoccupied which compares very favourably with the British Retail Consortiums figure for “High Street shops” of about 13%. The Sevenoaks survey takes into account all shopping including secondary and tertiary locations.

There was general accord that this information is very useful and that it should be used as the basis for monitoring retail trends in the town, being repeated from time to time. Members wished that the survey should also be categorised such that numbers could be

identified for pure retail, cafes, office etc. Once this has been put together a formal and more complete report will be made available.

Members felt that the survey could be used to identify areas where the Sevenoaks retail offer is weak and maybe to target business types that can be encouraged to open.

### **13. Spring Vegan Market**

The market took place on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 on The Vine. It was a cold grey day but 33 stalls attended and while it took a while for footfall to build, from about 11.00 onwards most stalls had potential customers all the time.

The Music Room Agency was congratulated on the quality of the four acts which it provided. Music has become an important part of the market adding extra ambiance. The Mayor also commented that the stallholders find the Sevenoaks market particularly attractive as they appreciate being welcomed personally – something that does not happen at some other venues.

TT is investigating whether a summer market might be possible, bearing in mind the cricket season, meanwhile the Autumn market has been booked for 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

### **14. Defibrillator locations**

There are several defibrillators in Sevenoaks although no master list. Thought is being given on how to make their locations better known to the public and Members were asked to tell the TT of locations they knew.

### **15. Police letter**

The Chairman has written to Tim Smith, Chief Constable, Kent Police requesting that he attend a TT meeting to consider concerns about the level of policing in the town, especially in respect of shoplifting. A reply is awaited.

*Post meeting note: a reply has been received offering that a meeting will be considered. The cycle of Council Committee meetings for next year is being drawn up and a date for TT meetings is awaited before a date for a meeting with the Police can be settled.*

### **16. Public loos**

There was a lengthy discussion about the condition of the public loos in the town. The outcome is that the Chairman will be writing to SDC making a formal request that those at the Bus Station are refurbished.

SDC have agreed to provide signage at the public loos identifying the location of those available in the event that a site is closed for repairs or due to vandalism. The Chairman also offered to write requesting when that signage would be available – and if needed to review the wording of those notices and the sites to be included.

## **17. Reports from Town Team Members**

*Cllr Avril Hunter – SDC*

The most pressing topic at SDC is the situation regarding Sencio and no progress has been made to re-open the facility as Sencio refuse to surrender their lease or release access to their buildings.

*Roberta Ware – Francis Jones*

The business is working fine, and many people are commenting favourably about the new shop signage. She continues to challenge the Police on all aspects of shop crime, its reporting, and the robbery at her own business.

*Geraldine Tucker – Sevenoaks Society*

Disappointed she could not give an update on the outcome the Croudace appeal which will now not be available until after the local elections.

The Roger Fitzgerald exhibition had been a great success.

*Elizabeth Dolding – Warners*

Nothing special to report but they remain busy.

*Cllr Marilyn Canet – Older People's Forum*

The Forum wants improvements to the quality of the public loos and amount of public seating in the town.

They are also worried about the new SDC parking meters being installed fearing that like those in Brighton (which have received much notoriety recently) which do not take cash or a card and require the use of a phone app. Both the Chairman and Avril confirmed that the new Sevenoaks meters will take both cash and card payments.

*Cllr Richard Streatfeild - KCC*

The JTP has still not publicised its revised 20mph scheme and is deciding on the next consultation process.

The amount being spent by KCC on pot-hole repairs is massive and arising exponentially as more and more are forming.

KCC is in severe difficulties meeting its budget saving targets - £50m this year, and £83m next.

He was pleased to report that 11 trees have been planted at Bradbourne (and thanked by Byron) and suggested that if anyone has other sites where more could be added, KCC will probably be amenable to do so.

*Dawn Blee – Chamber of Commerce*

Delighted to have won “Best Business in the Community” at the recent SDC Community & Voluntary Awards.

Dawn also explained that with the demise of the West Kent Chamber, the Sevenoaks District Chamber was growing fast having been invited to take on Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.

*Byron Brown – Bradbourne RA*

Thanked Richard for the provision of the new trees and confirmed the street party taking place on 7<sup>th</sup> May 12.00 – 2.00pm. There will also be an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Saturday.

*Tony Clayton - Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association*

The various rail authorities have agreed to extend “Zone 9” which incorporates the Darent Valley Line, though not Sevenoaks Station itself. Contactless ticket machines are now being installed.

*Cllr Simon Raikes - STC*

Adoption of the Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Plan is subject to a referendum which forms part of the elections on May 4<sup>th</sup>. If carried, it will add much weight to the Councils position in terms of negotiating and agreeing or refusing development proposals.

*Andrew Eyre – The Stag Theatre*

The Stag’s business continues to improve, with the theatre being particularly busy. Amazon and Netflix have been changing course and are now introducing their streaming films into cinema as well.

Work on the solar panel installation scheme is progressing.

And a special mention for the Mayoral Event on May 10<sup>th</sup>, being an evening with Gloria Hunniford talking about her life on the stage and on TV. A meal is part of the ticket.

**The meeting closed at 8.00pm**

**Date of next meeting - TBA**