

Sevenoaks Town Council

Minutes of the Communication Working Group

Held at 11.00 a.m. on Thursday 2nd May 2024 at Bat & Ball Centre

Present: Cllr Varley (Chair), Cllr Granville, Cllr Gustard, Town Clerk and Community Engagement Manager.

Absent: Cllr Dr Canet and Cllr Layne.

1. Notes of the Previous Meeting 14th December 2023

These were agreed as a true record.

It was also noted that the planned meeting for 22nd February 2024 did not take place due to insufficient quorum.

2. 20 mph

It was noted that it was hoped that the final arrangements for the implementation for the installation of the 20 mph project in Sevenoaks would be signed off on 28th May 2024 for installation at the beginning of September.

The Community Engagement Manager would prepare Communications Programme for the project to include:

- Q & A document for STC website and social media (How, When, Where and Benefits)
- Social Media coverage
- Contact to schools
- Local press.

3. Town Crier

Ongoing from past meetings discussion took place about the future of the Town Crier publication noting and agreeing the following:

- On the recruitment of the new Community Engagement Manager some short term changes and improvements had been made to the publication.
- The next issue goes to print on 20th May 2024.
- The purpose of the publication is to inform residents of the town about the activities of the Town Council and how public funds are spent.
- The publication cannot be commercially sustained with advertising due to legislation.
- Cllrs would be asked again for the view on any specific requirements to change the Town Crier, including name. A short timescale for response would be requested.
- The Community Engagement Manager will be asked to take on board comments and bring some concept ideas to the next meeting in June.

- It was hoped that a 'new look' publication would be issued in September.
- Plans were being put in place to have a 'button' on the front page of the website for viewing current edition (turn the page option) and subscribing to receive digitally.

4. Update from Community Engagement Manager, Helen Cook

Helen had been in post for six weeks. Initial tasks had included producing the April edition of the Town Crier and increasing engagement on social media and providing information about Sevenoaks Town Council's 50th Year.

It was noted that in the short space of six weeks social engagement had increased significantly it was hoped that this would translate into more people using the Town Council's facilities, engaging in surveys, and attending events.

Longer term a review of the Town Council's branding and style would be considered. Cllr Varley offered to provide the link to Sevenoaks District Council's forty five page Branding Policy to review.

At future Working Group meetings a three monthly report relating to community engagement statistics would be provided.

5. Councillors Surgeries

It was noted that these had not been successful in encouraging people to attend.

It was agreed that the next two would take place on 8th June and 13th July 10 – 11.00 a.m. at Café on the Vine.

A new advert and poster would be designed. Cllrs liked the Swanley version.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place 2 p.m. on Wednesday 12th June 2024 in the Council Chamber.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12 p.m.