

Sevenoaks Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Delivery Committee Held on Monday 9th June 2025 in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

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

<https://youtube.com/live/G-pc35bphUk>

Meeting commenced: 7pm

Meeting Concluded: 7.58pm

Present:

Committee Members

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| Cllr Nigel Wightman (Chair) | Present | Cllr Catherine Daniell (Deputy Leader) | Present |
| Cllr Claire Shea (Leader & Vice-Chair) | Present | Cllr Dr Peter Dixon | Present |
| Cllr Libby Ancrum | Present | Cllr David Skinner OBE | Present |
| Cllr Tony Clayton (Mayor) | Apologies | | |

In attendance: Cllr Dr Merilyn Canet (remote attendance), Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Senior Committee Clerk, Planning Committee Clerk.

No Members of the Public were present.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS: None

112 - CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

It was noted that at the Annual Council Meeting held on 12th May 2025, the following appointments were made:

- Chair: Cllr Nigel Wightman
- Vice-Chair: Cllr Claire Shea

113 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and accept apologies for absence as noted above.

114 - REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations were received.

115 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest of interest were received.

116 - MINUTES OF FINANCE & DELIVERY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To receive, adopt and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Delivery Committee held on 14th April 2025 as a true record.

117 - FINANCE REPORTS – YEAR END 2024/25

117.1 - Responsible Finance Officer's Reports to 31st March 2025

Statement of Accounts – to 31st March 2025

The Committee received and considered the Statement of Accounts, together with the Finance Officer's report for the month ended 31st March 2025, including Income and Expenditure by cost centre, Variance Analysis, Fund Balances, Statutory Balance Sheet, Earmarked Reserves and Operating Income and Expenditure, together with:

Supplier's Accounts

- 1st to 31st March 2025, total gross invoices £91,433.96

List of Payments

- Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account - 1st to 31st March 2025, total £205,970.07
- Mayor's Charity Account - 1st to 31st March 2025, total £1,482.30

Payroll Account

- 1st to 31st March 2025, total £104,165.90

Petty Cash Account

- 1st to 31st March 2025, total payments £416.60.

The 2024/25 budget had been built to deliver a surplus of £20,000 as part of the Town Council's strategy to increase its general reserves. It was noted that the year-end position at the end of March 2025 gave a revenue surplus of £39,512.

The Responsible Officer advised that a debt of £1,656 (previously reported to the Committee on 14.04.25) had now been paid in full.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the Management Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2025 be received and accepted
- 2) £20,000 of the revenue surplus be moved to General Reserves, and £19,512 be moved to Earmarked Reserves for 2025/26 Contingency.

117.2 - Hospitality and Gifts Register

Noted that no Hospitality or Gifts had been received by Councillors or staff for the period 1st to 31st March 2025.

117.3 - Review of Internal Controls

The Committee received and considered:

- i. Internal Audit Report for End of Year, Visit 4 (2024/25)

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- ii. Financial Regulations 2025/26 (adopted at Annual Town Council meeting on 12th May 2025)
- iii. Statement of the System of Internal Control

The Committee congratulated the Responsible Finance Officer on the clear audit.

RESOLVED that the:

- 1) Internal Audit Report for End of Year, Visit 4 (2024/25), be received and accepted
- 2) Financial Regulations 2025/26, as approved at Annual Town Council meeting on 12th May 2025,) be received and noted
- 3) Statement of the System of Internal Control be approved and signed by the Chair of the Finance & Delivery Committee and the Responsible Finance Officer

117.4 - Annual Return for year ended 31st March 2025

The Committee received and considered the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, comprising:

- Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25
- Annual Governance Statement 2024/25
- Accounting Statements 2024/25
- Supporting papers for submission to the External Auditors, including Notice of Public Rights of Inspection

It was noted that once the Annual Governance and Accountability Return documents had been approved and signed by the Town Council, they would be passed to the External Auditor for review.

The Committee reviewed and confirmed the Annual Governance Statement as follows:

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| 1. | We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. | Agreed |
| 2. | We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness. | Agreed |
| 3. | We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances. | Agreed |
| 4. | We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. | Agreed |
| 5. | We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. | Agreed |

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| 6. | We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. | Agreed |
| 7. | We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. | Agreed |
| 8. | We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements. | Agreed |

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 be approved and RECOMMENDED to the full Council meeting for adoption and signature by the Mayor and the Town Clerk;
- 2) That the Accounting Statements 2024/25, signed by the Responsible Finance Officer, be approved and RECOMMENDED to the full Council meeting for adoption and signature by the Mayor;
- 3) That the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25, including the Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements 2024/25, and supporting papers for submission to the External Auditors, be RECOMMENDED to the full Council meeting for adoption; and
- 4) That the approved accounts be made available for public inspection for 30 working days, from 11th June to 22nd July 2025 be RECOMMENDED to the full Council meeting for adoption.

118 - FINANCE REPORTS - APRIL 2025

118.1 - Statement of Accounts

The Committee received and considered the Statement of Accounts, together with the Responsible Finance Officer's Report for the month ended 30th April 2025, including Income and Expenditure by cost centre, Variance Analysis, Fund Balances, Statutory Balance Sheet, Earmarked Reserves and Operating Income and Expenditure.

It was noted that the year-to-date position at the end of April gave a revenue surplus of £8,672.

RESOLVED: That the Management Accounts for the Year Ended 30th April 2025 be received and accepted

118.2 – The Committee received and noted:

Suppliers' Accounts

- 1st to 30th April 2025, total gross invoices £88,125.72

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List of Payments

- Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account: 1st to 30th April 2025, total £191,711.03
- Mayor's Charity Account: 1st to 30th April 2025: None

Payroll Account

- 1st to 30th April 2025, total £100,568.52

Petty Cash Account

- 1st to 30th April 2025, total payments £617.31

118.3 - Hospitality and Gifts Register

Noted that no Hospitality or Gifts had been received by Councillors or staff for the period 1st to 30th April 2025.

119 - REVIEW OF FINANCIAL MATTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS

The Committee received and noted financial matters in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders, adopted at Annual Council Meeting on 12th May 2025 (*Minute 82 refers*):

119.1 Inventory of Sevenoaks Town Council's Land & Buildings

RESOLVED: that the inventory of land and building assets be received and noted.

119.2 Freedom of Information Procedure

RESOLVED that the Town Council procedure for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including NALC Guidelines & Publication Scheme, be received and adopted.

119.3 Insurance Cover

RESOLVED: that arrangements for insurance in respect of all insurable risks, as approved at the Finance & Delivery Committee on 3rd March 2025 (*Minute 595*), be noted and confirmed.

119.4 Complaints Policy

RESOLVED: That the Town Council's Complaints Policy, as approved at the Finance & Delivery Committee on 3rd March 2025 (*Minute 599*), be noted and confirmed.

119.5 General Data Protection Regulation Policies [GDPR]

RESOLVED: To note that the Town Council continues to adopt GDPR practices as required by statute throughout all its day-to-day business, and readopts the following:

- Information and Data Policy

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- Neighbourhood Plan Privacy Notice
- Privacy Notice
- Youth Privacy Notice
- Social Media & Electronic Communication Policy

120 - POLICY APPROVALS

RESOLVED: That the following policies be readopted:

- Accessibility Statement
- Equality & Diversity
- Training, Learning & Development
- Value for Money
- Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults

121 - BANK SIGNATORIES

The Committee considered the amending of Sevenoaks Town Council's bank signatories in accordance with reviewed committee structure.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That arrangements be made to remove the Chair & Vice-Chair of the Community Wellbeing Committee as bank signatories and to add the Chair & Vice-Chair of the Community Asset (Open Spaces) Committee as bank signatories
- 2) That the following current elected Councillors to be confirmed as Sevenoaks Town Council bank signatories:
 - The Mayor & Deputy Mayor
 - Chair & Vice-Chair of the Finance & Delivery Committee
 - Chair & Vice-Chair of the Community Asset (Open Spaces) Committee

122 - VINE GARDENS: REPAIRS AND RESURFACE

Consideration was given to options to address issues with the crazy paving at Vine Gardens. It was noted that £10,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding had been earmarked for this purpose and that further CIL funding would be required for the project.

It was noted that the proposed resin product comprised 3000 recycled plastic straws in every square metre, a total of 100,000 for Vine Gardens.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To install Ultra Recycle Bound Resin to Vine Gardens around the pond and pergola area at a cost of £23,130 to reduce ongoing maintenance and provide aesthetically pleasing and anti-slip surface.
- 2) Work to be funded from £10,000 earmarked in current CIL reserves and £13,130 from future CIL income (currently predicted for September 2025 at £69,803).

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- 3) If possible, to have installation take place prior to Britain in Bloom judging.

123 - RECOMMENDATION FROM THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the recommendation from the Planning & Environment Committee requesting additional £100 be approved for the corner protection project to include a section of Bradbourne Road, opposite the rear of Sevenoaks Primary School. The Planning & Environment Committee had noted that adding this location would incur an increase in cost, starting at £100 for the additional lining, with the potential to increase depending on whether any road closures as well surfacing were needed prior to painting.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That £100 be added to the budget for corner protection locations to allow for a section of Bradbourne Road at the rear of Sevenoaks Primary School to be included
- 2) To note that the cost of delivering yellow lines at each location could rise significantly depending on the need for road closures or surfacing works.

124 - SEVENOAKS TOWN TEAM

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Town Team meeting held on 28th May 2025.

125 - PRESS RELEASES

RESOLVED: That press releases be issued in respect of:

- 1) The Town Council's success in achieving a revenue surplus in the 2024/25 financial year, allowing funds to be transferred to General Reserves and Contingency
- 2) New surface Vine Gardens

126 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

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

127 - LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION & ASSETS

The Committee received and noted an update regarding the Expressions of Interest for a Community Asset Transfer submitted to Sevenoaks District Council

There being no further business the Chair closed the Meeting.

Signed Dated
Chair