

**Sevenoaks Town Council**  
**Minutes of meeting of Finance & Delivery Committee – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

**Held in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG**

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

<https://youtube.com/live/FOn28Qlx9BY>

Meeting commenced: 19:24 Meeting Concluded: 20:30

**Present:**

|   |           |  |           |
|---|-----------|--|-----------|
| Cllr Nigel Wightman, <b>Chair</b>                               | Apologies | Cllr Catherine Daniell,<br>Deputy Leader | Apologies |
| Cllr Claire Shea, <b>Leader &amp; Vice-Chair</b> (In the Chair) | Present   | Cllr Dr Peter Dixon                      | Apologies |
| Cllr Libby Ancrum   | Present   | Cllr David Skinner OBE                   | Present   |
| Cllr Tony Clayton, Mayor  | Apologies |  |           |

|                         |                |                        |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet   | Substitute for | Cllr Tony Clayton      |
| Cllr Victoria Granville | Substitute for | Cllr Catherine Daniell |
|                         |                |                        |

**In attendance:** Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer and Senior Committee Clerk.

1 member of the public was present.

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS:** None

**656 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**RESOLVED:** To receive and accept apologies for absence as shown above.

**657 - REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

There were no requests for dispensations.

**658 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**659 - MINUTES OF FINANCE & DELIVERY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** To receive, adopt and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Delivery Committee held on 12th January 2026 as a true record.

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**660 - FINANCE REPORTS - JANUARY 2026**

**660.1 - Statement of Accounts**

The Committee received and considered the Statement of Accounts and Responsible Finance Officer's report for the month ended 31st January 2026, including Income and Expenditure by cost centre, Variance Analysis, Fund Balances, Statutory Balance Sheet, Earmarked Reserves and Operating Income & Expenditure, together with:

**Suppliers' Accounts**

- 1st to 31st January 2026, total gross invoices £265,324.40

**List of Payments**

- Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account: 1st to 31st January 2026 – total £467,740.12
- Mayor's Charity Account: 1st to 31st January 2026 - None

**Payroll Account**

- 1st to 31st January 2026, total £100,026.97

**Petty Cash Account**

- 1st to 31st January 2026, total payments £1,025.72

It was noted that the year-to-date position at the end of January 2026 showed a surplus of £2,087. The Committee noted that this was a good position given the number of additional projects and unexpected spends, to a total of £60,000 previously reported, which had been contained within the budget. The following items were also noted:

- that to date £13,830 had been allocated from the contingency of £62,000
- there were outstanding debts of £500 on allotment payments which were being pursued
- the Statutory Balance sheet showed total assets to end of January were £3,011,106, a decrease of £200,046 from December 2025

**RESOLVED** that the Management Accounts 1<sup>st</sup> to 31st January 2026 be received and accepted.

**660.2 - Hospitality and Gifts Register**

The following Hospitality or Gifts received by Councillors or staff for the period 1st to 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026 was noted:

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| Date of offer | To         | Accepted/declined | From                   | Item                                     | Estimated value |
|---------------|------------|-------------------|------------------------|--|-----------------|
| 19.01.26      | Town Clerk | Accepted          | John Levett            | Derek Nash concert at The Stag           | £56             |
| 21.01.26      | Town Clerk | Accepted          | Sevenoaks Entertainers | 3x tickets for annual amateur pantomime. | £60             |

**661 - FINANCE REPORTS - DECEMBER 2025**

**661.1 - Statement of Accounts**

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

**Suppliers' Accounts**

- 1st to 31st December 2025, total gross invoices £420,584.13

**List of Payments**

- Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account: 1st to 31st December 2025 – total £657,503.21
- Mayor's Charity Account: 1st to 31st December 2025 - None

**Payroll Account**

- 1st to 31st December 2025, total £104,390.88

**Petty Cash Account**

- 1st to 31st December 2025, total payments £1,662.66

**RESOLVED** that the Management Accounts 1<sup>st</sup> to 31st December 2025 be received and accepted.

**662 - COMMUNITY MINIBUSES & VAT**

It was noted that the Community Minibus, which was available for hire exclusively to not-for-profit community groups under a Section 19 transport permit, constituted a non-business/exempt passenger transport for VAT purposes. As the use falls wholly outside the scope of taxable business activities, VAT on the purchase and running costs of the vehicle was not recoverable. This had resulted in the project exceeding budget by £20,929.58.

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For the same reason, the project to obtain a second minibus for use by Age Concern UK also exceeded budget by £7,439.98.

**RESOLVED:** That the funding of the deficits on the Community Minibus projects be met from the No.8 Bus Ear Marked Reserve, which currently holds £74,101.

**663- INTERNAL AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026: SECOND INTERIM REPORT**

The Committee considered the second interim report received from the Town Council's internal auditor, Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd.

The Committee congratulated the officers on achieving a clean audit, noting in particular the following comment in the report:

*“Whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system.”*

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) Receive and note the Internal Audit 2025/2026 Second Interim Report (January 2026)
- 2) Note that no audit points had been raised.

**664 - MEMBERS ALLOWANCES POLICY**

Consideration was given to Members' Allowances Policy 2026-2027.

**RESOLVED:** that the following allowances be approved:

- Sevenoaks Town Council Members parish allowance for 2026/27 at £309 per annum.
- Sevenoaks Mayors' parish allowance for 2026/27 at £6,044 per annum.
- Sevenoaks Mayor's car/ travel allowance for 2026/27 at £2,715 per annum.

**665 - RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMUNITY ASSETS (OPEN SPACES) COMMITTEE:  
RFU FUNDING FOR PITCH MAINTENANCE**

The Committee considered the recommendation from the Community Assets (Open Spaces) Committee held on 26th January 2026 [*Minute 614 refers*] that the Town Council enter into a funding agreement in collaboration with Sevenoaks Rugby Football Club (SRFC) to enable funding to be obtained from the Rugby Football Union (RFU) for rugby pitch maintenance at Knole Paddock.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council enter a five-year funding agreement, as below, to enable funding from the RFU to be obtained towards the improvement of rugby pitch maintenance at Knole Paddock.

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| RFU Grant Funding per Pitch |         |             |                         |
|-----------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Year 1                      | Cost    | Grant Value | Club (STC) Contribution |
| Year 1                      | £3,600  | £3,600      | -                       |
| Year 2                      | £3,600  | £3,600      | -                       |
| Year 3                      | £3,600  | £2,400      | £1,200                  |
| Year 4                      | £3,600  | £2,400      | £1,200                  |
| Year 5                      | £3,600  | £1,200      | £2,400                  |
| Year 6                      | £3,600  | £1,200      | £2,400                  |
|                             |         |             |                         |
| Totals                      | £21,600 | £14,400     | £7,200                  |
|                             |         |             |                         |
| Total x 3 Pitches           | £64,800 | £43,200     | £21,600                 |

**666 - CIL UPDATE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the update report on CIL funds and the status of projects, noting the following:

- 1) The remaining projects for CIL as at 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026:

|   | Original Budget | Spent    | Balance  | Agreed          | Planned Completion                                    |
|---|-----------------|----------|----------|-----------------|---|
| Public Realm Town Ward  | £50,000         | £50,000  | £0       | Reviewed Feb 24 | Ongoing   |
| Judd's piece resurfacing  | £2,000          | -        | £2,000   | Reviewed Feb 24 | 2026  |
| Woodside Rd - fencing   | £1,000          | -        | £1,000   | Reviewed Feb 24 | 2025  |
| knole paddock front barn doors                                      | £2,000          | -        | £2,000   | Reviewed Feb 24 | 2025  |
| Green Link Feasibility  | £15,000         | -        | £15,000  | Reviewed Feb 24 | Ongoing   |
| Masterplan x2   | 65000 + £20k    | £65,000  | £20,000  | Reviewed Jan 26 | Started   |
| 20 mph  | £141,967        | £111,271 | £10,000  | 10/06/2024      | Contingency Left                                      |
| Dartford Road Crossing  | £25,000         | £4,170   | £20,830  | Reviewed Feb 24 | 2025  |
| Greatness Pavilion  | £87,500         | Moved    | £0       | Reviewed Feb 24 | 133,600 added Sep 25 for green initiatives            |
| Greatness CCTV  | £9,000          | -        | £9,000   | Reviewed Feb 24 | 2026 - linked to the completion of Greatness Pavilion |
| Vine Gardens Crazy Paving   | £10,000         | £10,000  | £0       | Reviewed Feb 24 | 2025  |
| Balance of cost for Recycle bound resin (Vine Gardens crazy paving) | £13,130         | £13,130  | £0       | Agreed June 25  | 2025  |
| Greatness Play Area   | £150,000        |          | £150,000 | Agreed June 25  | 2025  |
| Solar Batteries   | £20,000         | £20,000  | £0       | Agreed June 25  | 2025  |
| Play Areas inc Buckhurst  | £25,000         | £27,112  | -£2,112  | Agreed July 25  | 2025  |
| Oast House Feasibility Report                                       | £4,500          | £4,500   | £0       | Agreed Sep 25   | 2025  |
| Portable floodlights for Knole Paddock                              | £13,000         |          | £13,000  | Agreed Nov 25   | 2026  |
| Permanent floodlights for Knole Paddock                             | £38,000         |          | £38,000  | Agreed Nov 25   | 2026  |
| Repairs to Raleys Car Park  | £36,125         | £27,313  | £8,812   | Agreed Nov 25   | 2026  |
|   |                 |          | £287,530 |                 |   |

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2) STC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Receipts

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Projected unallocated CIL Balance (reported to Finance & Delivery Committee 12 <sup>th</sup> January) 2026 | £20,832        |
| <b>Less new projects:</b>  |                |
| Further monies allocated to the Masterplan project   | -£20,000       |
| <b>Unallocated Balance</b>   | <b>£832</b>    |
| Add current SDC CIL balance (CIL collections October 2025 to date)   | £62,690        |
| <b>Total Unallocated Balance (March 2026)</b>  | <b>£62,690</b> |

It was noted that the final cost for the Buckhurst Play Area improvements was £2,112 over budget allocation, mainly due to vandalism.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) CIL Update Report to February 2026 be received and noted
- 2) Projected unallocated balance of £62,690 as at March 2026 be noted
- 3) Progress on allocated projects be noted
- 4) Approval be given to the transfer of £2,500 of unallocated funds to the Buckhurst Play Area Project.

**667 - GRANTS REPORTS & APPLICATIONS**

**667.1- Reports from Grant Recipients**

The Committee was pleased to receive and note reports from recipients of grants awarded during 2025, commenting on the breadth of projects and the significant contribution made by volunteers to the wellbeing of the Sevenoaks Community.

**667.2 - Grant Applications for Consideration**

The Committee considered the grant applications received.

Whilst expressing support for Sevenoaks Larder, the Committee did not feel that the Town Council's Community Grants Scheme was the way to help them with their capital project. A grant was not awarded on this occasion, but Sevenoaks Larder was invited to meet with Town Council representatives to discuss their project further.

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It was noted that grant applications received from Sevenoaks Three Arts Festival and Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra would be considered at the Youth Services Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**RESOLVED:** That grant requests be awarded under the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011 Sections 1-8 refers) as follows:

**1) Grant Subsidy for Free Room Hire**

| Grant Ref No | Organisation  | Purpose of award   | Grant Application | Grant Subsidy for Free Room Hire Awarded |
|--------------|---|--|-------------------|--|
| 91           | Recovery & Wellbeing College, Kent & Medway Mental health Trust | To meet cost of hire of Bat & Ball Station Luggage Room for 12 sessions from May 26 – July 27. | £810              | £810                                     |

**2) Grant Awards to local community groups:**

| Grant Ref No | Organisation                                     | Purpose of award   | Grant Application | Grant Awarded |
|--------------|--|--|-------------------|---------------|
| 13           | Art in June                                      | Towards cost of administering & promoting event, including introduction of an App.   | £500              | £500          |
| 68           | Baby Umbrella                                    | To provide free specialist 1:1 support for STC residents from qualified lactation consultants and breastfeeding counsellors. | £1,971            | £1,971        |
| 90           | DAVSS (Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service) | Towards costs of providing specialist domestic abuse services, including early intervention and recovery focused support.    | £1,000            | £1,000        |
| 43           | D’Vine Singers                                   | To help fund 10 weekly workshops with creative health specialist singing leader.   | £1,350            | £1,350        |
| 9            | Friends of Rheinbach                             | Towards expenditure on promotional and developmental activities.   | £500              | £500          |

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| <b>Grant Ref No</b> | <b>Organisation</b>                 | <b>Purpose of award</b>   | <b>Grant Application</b> | <b>Grant Awarded</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 65                  | The Hygiene Bank Sevenoaks          | Towards purchase of hygiene products, cost of delivery of palletted donations and lease of storage unit.  | £2,000                   | £2,000               |
| 3                   | Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group | Towards costs of coordinating volunteer drivers to assist elderly, infirm & disabled residents who need affordable transport to medical and related appointments. | £1,000                   | £1,000               |
| 12                  | South East Open Studios             | Towards costs of designing & producing a Sevenoaks Artists Trail Map. Celebrating 30 years of SEOS.   | £300                     | £300                 |
| 69                  | We Are Beams                        | Hire costs of House in the Basement for family advice clinics, one day a week for 36 weeks.   | £1,584                   | £1,584               |
| 17                  | West Kent Mediation                 | Contribution to costs for volunteer training, supervision & expenses, hall hire & publicity.  | £900                     | £900                 |
| <b>Total</b>        |                                     |   |                          | <b>£11,105</b>       |

**668 - NALC CASE STUDIES IN RELATION TO COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFERS**

The Committee considered the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) case studies in relation to Community Asset Transfers as part of the Local Government Reorganisation process. The case studies brought together practical examples of devolution of assets to parish and town councils across the country.

It was noted that in none of the examples in the case studies were upper-tier authorities shown to be charging town or parish councils to take on these assets. Instead, arrangements often involved grants or service level agreements to support the transfer of responsibilities.

Councillors noted that this national context was highly relevant. At a recent Sevenoaks District Council Finance & Investment Advisory Committee meeting, assets were agreed to be transferred to parish and town councils at a cost. The NALC report indicated that such an approach would be exceptional. Councillors expressed concern that any requirement to pay for the transfer of assets would have implications for the precept and for local taxpayers. They considered that charging to simply move an asset from one public body to another was double charging residents.

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**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the NALC Devolution Case Studies Report be received and noted
- 2) That the Town Council raise awareness of the Case Studies with residents and District Councillors

**669 - LOCAL POWER PLAN: PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH SCAN**

Consideration was given to the notes of a meeting with Sevenoaks Climate Action Network (SCAN) and a report produced by Locality UK “Clean Power = Community Power, How the Local Power Plan can be a win-win for net-zero and local communities.”

It was noted that producing a Local Power Plan would be resource intensive and an initial discussion had taken place with SCAN to see if they could assist with the work.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the notes of the meeting with Sevenoaks Climate Action Network (SCAN) and the report produced by Locality UK be received and noted
- 2) That the Committee strongly supports the idea of a potential partnership with SCAN to explore a Local Power Plan and hopes that productive conversations can take place in the future.

**670 - NOTES OF GREATNESS RECREATION GROUND WORKING GROUP**

It was noted that the new play area and outdoor gym at Greatness was out to tender and was receiving a lot of interest.

**RESOLVED:** To receive and note the notes of the Greatness Recreation Ground Working Group held on 14th January 2026.

**671 - MINUTES OF TOWN TEAM MEETING**

It was noted that the next steps on the proposal for the Business Improvement District (BID) were awaiting the outcome of changes to local business rates.

**RESOLVED:** To receive and note the minutes of the Town Team Meeting held on 21st January 2026

**672 - CURRENT MATTERS**

**RESOLVED:** To receive and note updates to the list of Current Matters.

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**673 - PRESS RELEASE**

**RESOLVED:** That press releases be issued in respect of the following items:

- 1) The funding agreement to enable funding from the Rugby Football Union to be obtained towards the improvement of rugby pitch maintenance at Knole Paddock
- 2) Completion of the improvement works at Buckhurst Play Area
- 3) Installation of solar panels at Quaker’s Hall Allotments
- 4) NALC Case Studies on the transfer of Community Assets process

There being no further business the Chair closed the Meeting.

Signed .....  
Chair

Dated .....