

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Youth Services Committee held on 24th March 2021
Available to view on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/Youth Services Committee>

Meeting Started: 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 7.49 p.m.

Cllr Rachel Parry, Chairman	Present		Cllr Claire Shea, Vice-Chairman	Present
Cllr Keith Bonin	Present		Cllr Roderick Hogarth	Apologies
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Present		Cllr Tom Morris Brown	Absent
Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Present		Cllr Edward Waite	Present
Richard Dowling, West Kent Communities	Apologies		Sarah Gaunt, Kent County Council	Present
Maxine Quinton, Sevenoaks District Council	Present		Caroline Berry, SAYT	Present

In attendance: Cllr Merylyn Canet, Cllr Richard Parry, Town Clerk, Senior Committee Clerk

Representations received from Members of the Public: none

506. Apologies for Absence

Received as noted above.

507. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

508. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest at the meeting.

509. Minutes of the Youth Services Sub Committee held on 9th September 2020

RESOLVED: to receive and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2020 as a true record.

510 House in the Basement Youth Café

(i) Update Report

It was noted that 2020 was a difficult year for the House in the Basement Youth Café which closed at the beginning of the Covid-19 national lockdown in March, with staff being placed on furlough. The Youth Café reopened in September 2020 with appropriate adaptations to its the operation to meet government regulations.

Unfortunately, with the announcement of the second national lockdown in November, the placing of Kent in Tier 4 in December and the third national Lockdown in January 2021, it had not yet been possible to reopen the Youth

Café. In line with current government guidance, the Town Council was aiming to reopen on 17th May 2021.

(ii) Finance Report to 28th February 2021

RESOLVED: That the Finance Cost Centre report for the House in the Basement Youth Café to 28th February 2021 be noted.

511. Sevenoaks Youth Council

(i) Youth Council Update

It was noted that due to the national lockdown and restriction around meetings, the activities of the outgoing Youth Council 2018 -2020 had unfortunately been curtailed last year and the decision taken to postpone the election of a new Youth Council until 2021

RESOLVED: that the election process begin in October, with a view to having a new Youth Council in place in November 2021.

(ii) Youth Council Finance Report

RESOLVED: That the Income and Expenditure reports for the Youth Council and its charity to 28th February 2021 be noted.

512. Reports from Co-opted Partners

Noted reports from Co-opted Partners:

(i) Kent County Council (KCC)

Sarah Gaunt reported that the Virtual Sevenoaks Youth Conference had taken place in November and that the Sevenoaks District Youth Assembly, currently consisting of 8 members, continued to meet online once a month. The Youth Assembly was a joint venture between KCC, Sevenoaks District Council and West Kent Communities. The Youth Assembly website was under construction and once it was set up minutes of meetings would be uploaded.

Sarah also advised that street based work had continued last year but stopped in December: it was hoped to resume after Easter although there would be no group work until all restrictions were lifted.

A lot of young people had struggled with mental health loneliness and isolation and were looking forward to being able to meet and talk to people face to face. Sarah commented that there was a lot of support available for young people and parents online provided by a variety of organisations, e.g. Young Mind, and that they would be directed to it. Other issues young people had raised were: the environment, equality, diversity, LGBTQ and Black Lives Matter.

It was noted that KCC was launching its Reconnect Kent Initiative, to run for 18 months until Summer 2022, offering extra support to young people post Covid. This would include access to recreational and educational activities. The initiative was government funded and would be run by the Education People, a trading company in KCC.

Sarah referred to a range of activities and support available to young people: the Committee requested that she provide details so that the Town Council could promote and signpost them in a press release and through the House in the Basement Youth Café.

(ii) SAYT

Caroline Berry reported that SAYT had been constantly adapting to the changing regulations as they occurred. A short video had been circulated to local churches and others to spark interest and encourage volunteers.

There had been a real challenge regarding ways of continuing to work with young people; initially they had been happy to use Zoom but this had lessened once schools were also online. Contact also took place via WhatsApp and on a 1:1 basis. The Youth Worker had completed training on mental health during Lockdown.

(iii) SDC – Community Safety Team

Maxine Quinton reported that there had not been any anti-social behaviour issues since the last Lockdown began but, with the better weather, a few things were starting to bubble up. A meeting was taking place next week to put plans in place for what may happen once restrictions were lifted, including the opening of pubs, and the potential of young people congregating at the rail stations again. It was expected that young people would gather in outside spaces which could result in litter, alcohol and drug issues. Comprehensive plans would be in place for PCSOs when restrictions lifted.

(iv) West Kent Communities:

It was noted that Richard Dowling had taken over the role of Youth Services Manager at West Kent Housing Association. Richard had been unable to attend this meeting but had submitted a written update. The Committee noted the recent activities undertaken.

513. Press Releases

It was agreed that a Press Release be issued signposting a range of activities and support services available to young people in Sevenoaks, together with details of the planned reopening of the House in the Basement Youth Café.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

Signed

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Chairman

Dated