



SEVENOAKS TOWN TEAM

Executive Board

Wednesday 23rd February at 6.30pm

Sevenoaks Council Chamber
Bradbourne Vale Road

Executive Board Members:

Representing	Number	Current Member	Current Organisation
Sevenoaks Town Council	3	Clr Simon Raikes Clr Victoria Granville-Baxter CEO / Town Clerk	
Sevenoaks District Council	1	Clr Avril Hunter	
Transport	3	Tony Clayton Austin Blackburn Elliott Waters	Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association Go Coach Southeastern
Leisure Facilities	3	Jane Parish CEO Andrew Eyre (Chairman) Knole	Sencio Stag Hannah Kay
Chamber of Commerce	1	Dawn Blee CEO	
Blighs Meadow	1	Andy Sims	Savills, agent for Bligh's owners Standard Life Investments
Sevenoaks Chronicle	1	Editor	
Sevenoaks Society	1	Roger Walshe	
Large Business	2	Maxine Morgan (Vice-Chairman) Elizabeth Dolding	Specsavers Warners Solicitors
Small Independent Business	2	Roberta Ware Glenn Ball	Francis Jones Jewellers Local Architect
Resident Association	1		
Round Table	1	Mike Williams	
Police	1		
	21		



AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

3. Minutes

To receive and approve the minutes of the Town Team Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting of 6th October 2021

4. Presentation by Chris Burchell SDC Head of Economic Development speaking on:

- The role of the Economic Development Team
- Some economic facts about the District
- The emerging new Economic Development Strategy

5. Post Lockdown

The Town Team has been fortunate to secure Welcome Back funding for a number of small but important projects aimed at attracting people back into the town centre.

Bus back advertising

Since the New Year ten Go-Coach vehicles have been operating in the District carrying messages to encourage people to shop, eat and relax in Sevenoaks. These adverts feature Life on High, La Manica and Sevenoaks Bookshop, the design is appended.

Funds have recently been released for two further adverts, one for the Business Hub and one for The Stag.

Our thanks go to Go-Coach for hosting these adverts free of charge.

Hand sanitisers

16 hand sanitiser stations have been installed in STC public buildings

Litter Pickers

Following the success of Clean Up 2021 when STC funded the purchase of litter pickers, which were given to the volunteers, we have been able to fund the purchase more pickers, though this time they will be returned for storage.

Guided walk app

Following a recommendation of NALC concerning an app provider with a good track record, Trailtale have been appointed to create a walking tour of the town.

Our thanks for funding these initiatives is due to Dawn Blee and SDC for having made these things possible. There are also a couple more projects in the pipeline.....

Christmas 2021

This was a busy period for TT and STC. The major event was of course the Christmas Lights Switch-on which, though the attendance seemed slightly down, proved to be every bit as successful as in recent years. The event sponsors were Manaks, Specsavers and Blighs.



The Best Dressed Window was won by Sevenoaks Bookshop, though, if their toy train had been running The Chocolate Shop might have succeeded. In the non-retail category Life on High were the winners with NFU coming second.

A Christmas Town Trail was run for the youngsters and an outcome report is attached. The prize winners were Primrose and Poppy Clucas and the event was sponsored by Warners Solicitors.

6. Business Hub update

By the nature of the hub, hiring levels of the space vary from day to day. At the time of reporting all five private pods are let producing £1450 per month. There are presently 35 signed-up members, with 12 already joining in 2022 though some have yet to actually use the facility. On any given day there are about 2-3 hot desk users.

Income from the Hub is now exceeding outgoings and running at about 60% of budget for 2022/23.

7. Social media

The problems with the replacement STC Facebook page have been resolved and it is performing to expectation. The previous Facebook page is now closed.

The new Town Team Facebook page is still not operating properly due to log-in problems and a new page is going to be created.



SDC has re-launched [Visit Sevenoaks | Places to visit & things to do in Sevenoaks District](#)

8. Public realm

The joint project involving TT/STC/SDC and KCC is moving forward but very slowly. The agreed path to making improvements called for a condition audit of all the publicly and privately owned assets in a designated town centre area. To enable this Cllr Streatfeild offered to fund that work through his Members Grant. The application process has however been lengthy and while the principle has been agreed with the KCC Strategic and Corporate Services the funds have still to be received.

The Britain in Bloom national competition adds a dynamic to this work. The judging of the competition takes into account the overall appearance of a town or city – not just the floral attributes.

Using money from CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) STC has allocated £50,000 towards improvements to the public realm. This money is not generally intended to be used on “catch up maintenance” of the public realm but for improvements and additions to the infrastructure, though that might include an element of maintenance.

The audit is intended to identify assets for:

- removal
- cleaning
- repainting
- renewal

It will also shortlist those buildings which are in poor repair or require decoration.

Since starting this project in the summer of 2021 the following things have happened

- Sevenoaks Round Table volunteered to refurbish the redundant phone box outside HSBC. The outside is complete and they intend to finish inside this month. Funding for a defibrillator has been given by SDC and a local business, and this project should be completed around Easter.
- The white lamp posts at The Vine have been cleaned
- The white bollards and railings in the Upper High Street have been cleaned
- The Sevenoaks Society is undertaking a survey of the signs it has on historic and listed buildings – for the most part they need repainting.
- Consideration is being given to creating a new signage scheme for the town.

Though not directly attributable to the project these are updates on developments happening since the project started regarding some of the poorly presented buildings in the town:



- The M & Co Store has been let and is now occupied by Hospice in the Weald
- Work has started on the refurbishment of the former Edinburgh Woollen Mill premises
- Work is nearing completion on the redevelopment of 48 High Street and a sale has been agreed on the top floor flat.
- No 43-45 High Street, (formerly Swinton Insurance) which requires a very substantial investment has been To Let but is now For Sale through new agents.
- The former dilapidated warehouse building in Lime Tree Walk is in the process of being converted to a business centre. [LIME TREE WORK SHOP](#)
- No 8 London Road has been refurbished and is about to open as a high class restaurant.
- Go Coach have repainted the bus station.
- “I have noticed that some of the junctions around the town centre have started to wear so I have requested these to be refreshed. Budget depending, I will also see if we can refresh the rest of the white lining along London Road, Pembroke Road and High Street” – Highway Steward, KCC.

Britain in Bloom

Sevenoaks has reached the finals in the Business Improvement Districts, Town Centres and City Centres category of the National competition. The other finalists are:

- Bury in Bloom, Suffolk
- Ulverston BID, Cumbria
- Orpington 1st BID, London
- Blackburn Town Centre, Lancashire
- Shaftesbury in Bloom, Dorset
- Sevenoaks, Kent
- St Austell BID, Cornwall

A meeting of interested parties has been held to develop ideas for the Sevenoaks entry.



The colour theme which is being adopted is purple and gold to tie in with The Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations and STC purchased 10 wrought iron crowns to be used as part of garden displays. These are about 18" high and cost £16 each. The response from the Britain in Bloom committee was so enthusiastic that five 2m crowns and a further 13 small crowns have been ordered. Funding for these is being provided by the Welcome Back Fund.

The Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations, 2-5 June 2022

On 8th February a meeting of 30 people discussed plans for the Jubilee. The headline topics were:

- ❖ Lighting of the Jubilee Beacon.
- ❖ A children's High Street Safari, Jubilee Trail similar to those held in 2021.
- ❖ A Jubilee edition of Town Crier similar to that produced for the Diamond Jubilee.
- ❖ A Community Art project relating to "Crowns" will be organised.
- ❖ A children's literary competition based on "If was king or queen for a day...."
- ❖ A Big Jubilee Lunch to be organised at Vine Gardens.
- ❖ Highway decorations to be developed.

A full copy of the meeting notes is available on request.

9. Business Awards

Due to the proximity of the original March date for the Awards and the then unknown effects of Omicron the date has been postponed until Friday 10th June.

Sponsor interest has been good and at the time of producing this agenda confirmation is awaited from just the last one expected to contribute.

A highly successful business person with a very interesting back story is likely to become the speaker for the evening, and confirmation is awaited on that too.

confirmations are received the entry forms will be distributed through all the media channels. Printed versions will also be distributed to town centre businesses.

The 2022 categories are:

2022 Category	Outline Criteria
Independent Business	Open to all independent businesses with fewer than 50 employees operating within Sevenoaks town.
Larger Business	50+ Employees
Green Business Award	Demonstrating commitment to climate change initiatives
New Business	Set up within last 5 years
Customer Choice – Local business or local business person of the year	Open nominations -no criteria Voted by public
Micro Enterprise	Home working or Business Hub small business
Judges Choice	The Judges retain the ability to present an award to a business or person that has provided a significant contribution to economic development and the local community.

10. Greening Sevenoaks Survey

STC has launched its Green Community Investment Plan and to measure what progress is made over the years a baseline survey has been created and is being distributed. It is intended that this will create a picture relating to various measures of “green-ness” now, and into the future.

11. Reports from Town Team Members

To receive updates from partnership members and their organisations activities.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 6th April.