

## Sevenoaks Town Partnership Meeting

To be held at the Sevenoaks Town Council Chamber

6:30pm : Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019

### Executive Board

| Representing               | Number | Current Member   | Current Organisation   |
|----------------------------|--------|--|--|
| Sevenoaks Town Council     | 3      | Cllr Tony Clayton<br>CEO / Town Clerk<br>Cllr Simon Raikes |  |
| Sevenoaks District Council | 1      | Cllr Avril Hunter  |  |
| Transport                  | 2      | Tony Clayton<br>Austin Blackburn                           | Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association<br>Go Coach              |
| Leisure Facilities         | 3      | Jane Parish CEO<br>Andrew Eyre (Vice<br>Chairman)<br>Knole | Sencio<br>Stag<br>To be confirmed                              |
| Chamber of Commerce        | 1      | Nick Brooker   |  |
| Blighs Meadow              | 1      |  | Savills, agent for Bligh's owners Standard<br>Life Investments |
| Sevenoaks Chronicle        | 1      |  |  |
| Sevenoaks Society          | 1      | Roger Walshe   |  |
| Large Business             | 2      | Maxine Chakowa<br>Elizabeth Dolding                        | Specsavers<br>Warners Solicitors                               |
| Small Independent Business | 2      | Roberta Ware<br>Glenn Ball                                 | Francis Jones Jewellers<br>Local Architect                     |
| Resident Association       | 1      |  |  |
| Round Table                | 1      |  |  |
| Police                     | 1      |  |  |
|                            | 20     |  |  |

### AGENDA

- 1. Chairman**  
To note change in Chairmanship
- 2. Vice Chairman**  
To elect a Vice Chairman

**3. Apologies for Absence**

**4. Declarations of interest**

**5. Minutes**

To receive and approve the minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Partnership Executive Board Meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019 (copy attached)

**6. Sevenoaks Business Hub**

To receive an update report regarding the Sevenoaks Business Hub (report attached)

**7. Business Show & Wellbeing Show 2019**

To receive an update regarding the Business & Wellbeing Show.

**8. Sevenoaks Wednesday Market**

To receive and discuss the attached report regarding Sevenoaks Wednesday Market (copy attached)

**9. Vintage Bus**

To consider operating 3 – 4 times per year on dates agreed with Knole (not weekends or school summer holidays)

**10. Google Digital Garage**

To discuss having a future event by Google Digital regarding updating CV or Social Media ideas.

**11. Member Organisations**

To receive updates from Partnership members on their organisation's activities.

**12. Date of next meeting**

To set date(s) for future meetings of the Town Partnership Executive Board.

- Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July – Town Council Chamber

**13. Press Release**

**Minutes of Sevenoaks Town Partnership Meeting held at the Town Council Chamber  
On Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 6.30 p.m.**

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**Executive Board:**

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| <b>Representing</b>        | <b>Number</b> | <b>Current Member</b>         | <b>Current Organisation</b>                                 |  |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Sevenoaks Town Council     | 3             | Clr Maxine Chakowa (Chairman) |   | Present  |
|                            |               | CEO / Town Clerk              |   | Present  |
|                            |               | Clr Stephen Arnold            |   | Apologies  |
| Sevenoaks District Council | 1             | Clr Avril Hunter              |   | Present  |
| Transport                  | 2             | Tony Clayton                  | Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association                       | Present  |
|                            |               | Austin Blackburn              | Go Coach  | Present  |
| Leisure Facilities         | 3             | Jane Parish CEO               | Sencio  | Apologies  |
|                            |               | Andrew Eyre (Vice Chairman)   | Stag  | Present  |
|                            |               | Knole                         | Hannah Kay  | Present  |
| Chamber of Commerce        | 1             | Nick Brooker                  |   | Present  |
| Blighs Meadow              | 1             |                               | Savills, agent for Bligh's owners Standard Life Investments | Apologies  |
| Sevenoaks Chronicle        | 1             |                               |   | Apologies  |
| Sevenoaks Society          | 1             | Roger Walshe                  |   | Present  |
| Large Business             | 2             | Vacancy Elizabeth Dolding     | Warners Solicitors  | Apologies  |
| Small Independent Business | 2             | Roberta Ware<br>Glenn Ball    | Francis Jones Jewellers<br>Local Architect                  | Present<br>Present                                     |
| Resident Association       | 1             |                               |   | Byron Brown – Bradbourne Residents Association present |
| Round Table                | 1             |                               |   | Apologies  |
| Police                     | 1             |                               |   | Apologies  |
|                            | 20            |                               |   |  |

**Also in Attendance:**

Stephanie Harrison – My Sevenoaks Community

Bonnie Tarling – Committee Clerk

Clr Mrs Pam Walshe – Sevenoaks Town Council

Clr Merylyn Canet – Sevenoaks Town Council & Sevenoaks District Seniors Action Forum

Mary Hayward – National Trust, Knole

Jean Picton Bentley – Blue Flamingo Music

Dan Keeley – Are We Ok?

**1. Apologies for Absence**

As noted above.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**3. Minutes**

The minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Partnership meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February were received and agreed.

**4. Sevenoaks Business Hub**

The attached report was received and noted.

**5. Independent Shopping Day 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

The report was received and discussed. It was noted that several businesses had already signed up to the event. A press release and social media campaign would start on 1<sup>st</sup> May.

**6. STP Events Committee**

A copy of the minutes of the STP Events Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April were received and noted.

**7. Business Show & Wellbeing Show 2019.**

An update was received from the Committee Clerk.

Business Show on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April – sponsors had now been confirmed and stand spaces were now sold out. The Sevenoaks and District Chamber of Commerce would be holding a breakfast event at the Stag before the show and the Next Generation Chamber would be hosting a talk during the event. Nominations for the Business Awards 2019 would be launched at the show.

Wellbeing Show on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May – sponsors had now been confirmed and only 3 stand spaces were still available. Talks and demonstrations had been confirmed.

**8. Friends of Bat & Ball meeting 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

A copy of the minutes from the Bat & Ball meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> March were received and noted.

Copies of the Evaluation Report on the project were distributed.

**9. New STP website**

The new website was now up and running. STP Executive Board members had been asked for feedback with the following received to date:

- Very user friendly
- Works very well when viewing on a mobile phone

Members were asked to give further feedback to the Committee Clerk over the coming weeks.

## **10. Member Organisations**

**Stag** – Business continuing to do well with a very positive article received in the Times newspaper. Discussions were ongoing with STC regarding the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event at the Stag linking it to the Best Town to Live in Kent, further details to follow.

**Glenn Ball** – The new sash windows and disabled access ramp had been completed at the Vine Pavilion.

**Francis Jones Jewellers** – Business had been quiet due to ongoing roadworks in the Town.

**Sevenoaks District Council** – The new multi-storey car park was open. A review of all parking including on-street would be taking place shortly. It was noted that SDC had retained its Platinum Award for Investors in People.

**Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association** – The group were still very concerned regarding rumours that the fast train from Maidstone to London Bridge via Bat & Ball would not happen from December 2019.

**Go Coach** – Sevenoaks District Council and Knole had initiated a new shuttle bus service from Sevenoaks Station-Bus Station – Sevenoaks Town Centre Car Park – Knole would start during the Summer on Sundays only. The service would run every half hour with £5,000 funding received from Knole to pay for operational costs. There would not be a fare charge for passengers. The service would be advertised through Knole via their website and social media. As the route would not be registered it would not be able to advertise the timetable on bus stops. Users of the shuttle (free of charge) would receive a 15% discount in the Knole Café. New way finding signs to Knole would be placed in the Town Centre Car Park.

It was agreed that the service although welcomed was a different service and did not replace the iconic Vintage Bus which has become an established tourist attraction for the town. Sevenoaks District Council and Knole had discussed with Go Coach the opportunity of operating the Vintage Bus with access to Knole on three or four 'Event Days' per year. It was noted that further details were unknown and the practical and economic viability had not been discussed by the Sevenoaks Town Partnership.

Had taken over routes from Arriva and marking it the only Independent Bus operator in the area. New timetables had been placed around the town to promote the new routes.

**Bradbourne Residents Association** – Currently working on plans to turn one of the lakes back into a model boating lake. Recent working party days had been very successful. Sevenoaks District Council were currently working on their Vision Plan for the lakes.

**Sevenoaks Society** – Sevenoaks Society Heritage Exhibition 19<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm at Sevenoaks Library Gallery. There would also be a launch for an accompanying book.

**Sevenoaks & District Chamber of Commerce** – Recent Retail Forum meeting had been a great success with lots of discussions and plans for a future meeting in June.

In July there would be an Employee Experience Week for school children in years 9 and 10. The event aims to bring together employers and young people to discuss different career paths.

It was noted that memberships fees had been reviewed and had risen slightly for the first time in two years.

**Pink Week** – Events for Pink Week had now been arranged with the Pink Run and Quiz Night confirmed.

**My Sevenoaks Community** – The site continued to go from strength to strength with 30,000 hits across the website and social media in one day. The What's On section of the website continues to be the most popular page on the site. A recent film that was shot in Sevenoaks was featured on the site and had received 20,000 hits in one day.

**Sevenoaks Senior District Action Forum** – Currently looking for new ways to help tackle loneliness and helping older people get back into the work place.

**Dan Keeley** – Recent Wellbeing event held at Penshurst had been a great success with people talking about Mental Health Issues. Further projects would be taking place throughout the year with more information to follow.

**Knole** – After 6 years of conservation work thanks to a £21 million Lottery Fund Grant the whole House had been opened to the public on 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

To date 3,000 people had taken part in the Easter Egg hunt in the grounds.

There would be several events taking place throughout 2019 with plans for a Paper Artist installations taking place from March to November 2020.

**Sevenoaks Town Council** – Elections would be taking place on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

Sevenoaks In Bloom competition plans were now well underway with judging taking place on 5<sup>th</sup> July from 10am.

On 29<sup>th</sup> April an event would take place to mark the start of the work on the new ramp access from Sevenoaks Community Centre to Bat & Ball Station.

Bat & Ball Centre – tenders for the project had now been received and works on the building would start in June.

Single Use Plastic Pledge – the project was now underway with businesses encouraged to sign up to the pledge to cut usage single use plastic in Sevenoaks.

Ferrari Event on the Vine Gardens 15<sup>th</sup> September – a new event would take place on the Vine Gardens from 10.30-4.00 with Ferrari Cars, musical entertainment and food. The event would be free entry and help to raise money for the Mayor's Fund.

**11. Date of next meeting**

The next STP meeting would take place on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 6.30pm at the Town Council Chamber.

**12. Press Release**

A press release would be issued regarding the Independent Shopping Day.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.00 pm.





## **Sevenoaks Town Council**

**Sevenoaks Town Partnership 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

### **Sevenoaks Business Hub (former Red Cross building)**

#### Planning Permission

Confirmation of approved Planning Permission for the Business Hub was received on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 subject to the following conditions:

- The external seating area shall only be used between the hours of Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. The external seating area shall not be used on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- Prior to the first occupation of the offices hereby permitted details of the provision of two electric vehicle charging points should be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

#### Tenders

Sevenoaks Town Council sought tenders via the Government Contract Finder Website. 14 tenders were returned on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019. The capital works element of the project had been budgeted at £159,100 (overall project £265,400). Tenders ranged from £213,950 - £424,529.

Some elements of the specification could be eliminated to reduce the cost. However, it should be noted that the introduction of electric vehicle charging points will increase costs. Some additional items require reviewing and addendum tenders have been requested.

#### Funding

Unfortunately, the Town Council did not receive the approval from SELEP in March 2019 as it was hoped. SELEP has stated that there might be further funding available in June 2019. There may also be the opportunity to apply for CIL funding in July 2019.

#### Option to Tax

Sevenoaks Town Council has applied to HMRC for Option to Tax on the Business Hub. Due HMRC had considered it a commercial venture. Following ongoing discussions HMRC confirmed the Option to Tax which enables the Town Council to reclaim VAT on refurbishment and construction costs.



**Sevenoaks Town Partnership Meeting**  
**29<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

**Sevenoaks Wednesday Market Report:**

The Market Operator went into receivership in 2013 owing Sevenoaks District Council a considerable amount of money. Following a local petition Sevenoaks Town Council took the decision to bid for and operate the markets.

Sevenoaks Town Council has been managing the Wednesday market located next to the Bus Station area since then and recently won the tender for the contract for the next five years. Over the past few years the market has seen a steady decline of traders which has resulted in fewer customers visiting the market and its remaining stalls.

Sevenoaks Town Council staff have worked tirelessly over the past few years to try to encourage new stallholders to attend the market and has been successful in recruiting the following:

- Cake stall
- Children's clothing
- Meat products
- Gifts, wrapping paper and cards
- Bedding
- Coffee
- Homemade sausages

However for a variety of reasons, the most common being lack of footfall these new stalls have not stayed. This has meant that the income from the Wednesday market has decreased and the costs of running the market having to be subsidised by Sevenoaks Ratepayers.

In 2018/2019 the cost for the market that Sevenoaks Town Council had to pay Sevenoaks District Council was:

£25,500.00 per annum or £490.38 per week. The current rental income from the market is £197.50 per week leaving a shortfall per week of £292.88.

The costs of the market have increased in 2019/2020:

£25,985.25 per annum or £499.72 per week. The income has not changed and currently no new stallholders have agreed to attend.

Just before Christmas 2018 a petition was handed to Sevenoaks District Council for the market to be moved into the High Street.

Sevenoaks Town Council have been made aware that there are future plans for the area where the market is held with suggestion of a covered, multi decked car park. This would mean that the market would have to either close or be relocated during building works. To date Sevenoaks Town Council has not received any notification from Sevenoaks District Council regarding dates or locations of where the market would be moved too.

Recently there has been Health & Safety issues with the market due to car park users entering the market area wanting to park in the empty spaces. There are currently signs at the entrance to the car park but these are often ignored, putting customers and stallholders at risk of collisions and possible injuries. Stall holders have reported that cars have driven over stall holders boxes trying to gain access to the car park despite it being closed due to market day trading.

The Buckhurst 2 Car Park closure for redevelopment had a detrimental effect on trading at the market with negative feedback received from customers. It is too early to tell at the moment if the new car park will have any impact on trading at the Wednesday market and help increase footfall to the area.

Sevenoaks Town Council requested that in December 2018 Sevenoaks District Council grant permission for the Wednesday Market to be moved into the current position of the Saturday High Street Market (outside Lloyds Bank).

The response from Sevenoaks District Council was:

Thank you for your email of 6 December 2018 to Jim Carrington-West concerning the Sevenoaks Wednesday Market. I apologise for our delay in responding, our Legal Team has been trying to explore this option for us. Unfortunately, the contract was made under EU procurement rules (found in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015), meaning that our options are tightly regulated.

The invitation to tender was originally advertised nationally and across the EU. The EU procurement rules set out some principles to make sure that it is an even playing field for all and that favourable contracts are not granted to particular companies. Changes to a contract should only be allowed where all companies know this beforehand and are given a chance to bid on that basis. Regulation 72 of the 2015 Regulations explains the limited circumstances in which we can modify an existing contract.

Tenderers were asked to submit bids for the Sevenoaks Markets based on entering the draft contract which was attached. The Heads of Terms clearly set out the location of the Wednesday market. Changes are not permitted unless they are explicitly allowed for in the contract documents, where the changes are below a certain value threshold, or the changes fall within some specific other categories. In this case the contract did not explicitly allow for reductions in the rent. The change in rent would also be larger than what is permitted under the regulations.

In order to reduce the rent for the Town Council, we would have had to make all bidders aware of this before we awarded the contract. If we make a modification to the contract that is not compliant with the rules then we would be required to carry out a completely new procurement process for this revised contract (reg. 72(9)).

Therefore, for this reason, it is not open to the District Council to agree to the Town Council's proposals.

Sevenoaks District Council's Economic Development Team have stated that they are putting a plan of action to help increase footfall and stallholders for the market that will be passed on to Sevenoaks Town Council for consideration. To date no information has been received.

It is understood that Kent County Council have no obligation to the relocation of the market to the High Street. There has been a long debate about the historic rights to hold a 'Charter Market' at the High Street location outside the Chequers. To follow this through to conclusion will require legal representation and Sevenoaks Town Council would need to consider whether it would want to pursue this.

