

Minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Team Executive Board Meeting
Held at 6:30pm: Wednesday 5th June 2024
At Sevenoaks Town Council Chamber, Bradbourne Vale Road TN13 3QG

Executive Board

Cllr Nigel Wightman	Sevenoaks Town Council	Apologies
Cllr Victoria Granville	Sevenoaks Town Council	Present
Linda Larter MBE	Sevenoaks Town Council	Present
Mike Reid	Town Team Facilitator	Present
Cllr Graham Clack	Sevenoaks District Council	Apologies
Cllr Richard Streatfeild MBE	Kent County Council	Apologies
Cllr Tony Clayton Chair	Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association	Present
Austin Blackburn	Go Coach	Present
Hannah Kay	Knole National Trust	Apologies
South Eastern	Gemma Louro	Absent
Andrew Eyre	Stag	Apologies
Dawn Blee	Chamber of Commerce	Present
Steve Butler	Workman (Blighs)	Absent
Sevenoaks Chronicle	Vacant	
Richard Baxter	Sevenoaks Society	Present
Elizabeth Dolding	Warners Solicitors	Present
Roberta Ware	Francis Jones Jewellers	Present
Glenn Ball	Local Architect	Resigned
Avril Hunter	Redlands RA	Apologies
Helen O'Sullivan	Eardley Road RA	Resigned
Elizabeth Purves	Hollybush RA	Present
Byron Brown	Bradbourne RA	Present
Mike Williams	Round Table	Absent
Police	PC Nick Hubbard	Apologies
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Sevenoaks District Seniors Action Forum	Apologies

In Attendance: Dennis Glasspool

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Avril Hunter, Cllr Richard Streatfeild, Andrew Eyre, PC Nick Hubbard, Glenn Ball, Cllr Wightman, Geraldine Tucker.

It was also noted that Glenn Ball had decided to resign from the Town Team. Glenn had been a founder member of the Town Team and was thanked for his contribution and support.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes

It was agreed to receive and approve the minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Team Board Meeting held on 10th April 2024.

4. Retirement of Helen O'Sullivan

Helen had represented Eardley RA for many years and due to ill health can no longer continue with that or her attendance at Town Team meetings. This is an extract from her resignation:

"I was a founding member of its predecessor, the Sevenoaks Town Forum, when Bruce Cova, Chief Executive of Sevenoaks District Council until 1996, set it up to guide Council thinking on the redevelopment of Blighs (I think we were pretty successful in that) and I have attended meetings off and on since then. Sometimes there were gaps because of personal circumstances but it has been an enjoyable time. Among other things it has allowed me to get to know and perhaps make common cause with the representatives of other residents' associations. It has been a good place to air a problem before it has become widely talked about, as Roberta did with shoplifting and burglaries. In recent years it has probably been a useful sounding board for the Town Council, but the District Council seems to have less interest in feedback from local groups like ours nowadays. They have put their faith in consultants and the somewhat limited results you can get from an online survey by boxes. Perhaps social media gives them as much feedback as they want.

The benefit of a group or forum or committee is that you can develop ideas in discussion, speaking, testing, absorbing. Initial assumptions can be challenged. If everyone stays at home and fills in boxes online that doesn't happen."

Both Cllr Clayton and Mike Reid have sent Helen messages of appreciation, members of the Town Team reiterated this.

5. STC representation on Town Team

It was noted that Cllr Cloe Gustard has stepped down and for 2024/5 the Sevenoaks Town Council representatives will be Cllr Victoria Granville, Cllr Nigel Wightman and Linda Larter.

6. Town Centre Redevelopment

In his absence an update was provided from SDC Cllr Graham Clack in the link below giving a comprehensive analysis of the public consultation process to date:

[09 - App F - 2024-05-13 LEHS Stage 1 Engagement Report.pdf \(sevenoaks.gov.uk\)](#)

Members of the Town Team discussed SDC proposal and overall confirmed that in principle it welcomed the exciting proposals.

The Town Team did have concerns regarding the following elements:

- i) The proposed library within the new proposed combined building was considered too small.

- ii) Public bus transport access for the future was not clear as there were no details about plans for the bus station. Provision was needed for buses to drop off people and collect as near as possible to the town centre, there wasn't necessarily a need for them to park there.
- iii) Reduced car parking.
- iv) It was thought that overall, the three points above if not addressed would negatively impact the future of Sevenoaks businesses.
- v) The hope was that the plans for the development would be in keeping with the proposed Cultural Quarter and would be exciting and vibrant externally and in their surrounds.
- vi) Also needed within the development was Wayfinding signs – implementing the project already in design stage.

7. Business Improvement District (BID).

An information leaflet had been prepared ahead of the 'launch' at the Business Show. The leaflet had a tear off section to receive initial feedback. Members of the Town Team were encouraged to assist with help in obtaining feedback via this methods from their contacts.

British BIDS had been appointed as consultants to assist with the process of developing a BID proposal up to ballot stage.

8. Sevenoaks Business Show 2024

The stands are completely sold out (with a short waiting list!) and a wide spectrum of business types is attending. The main sponsor is Clive Emson Auctioneers with FM Conway, Berry & Lamberts, Specsavers, Sevenoaks Chamber and STC supporting too.

The speakers are Ben Collins of British BIDs, and Mark Perkins of Insight 6 on customer satisfaction.

As much promotion as possible had been carried out. Town Team members were asked to encourage their contacts to attend.

It was noted that the Business Show was one of the income generating projects for the Town Team.

9. Sevenoaks Master Plan.

Sevenoaks Town Council were progressing two Masterplans, 1) for Town Centre and 2) for St John's Hill. Most members of the Town Team had been involved in one of the Workshops.

The planning consultant would be available at the Business Show to provide information to local businesses.

TIMELINE



10. Sevenoaks Guided Tour

As a development of the self-guided Trail Tale app, a new tour has been developed with Chris Conlan, the Town Crier who will be undertaking tours wearing his full ceremonial rig throughout the summer.

The first tour had taken place the previous week, overall, it was thought it would be developed into a good attraction for the town. Feedback had been received which would be incorporated for the future.

11. Sponsorship

A sponsorship brochure had been produced providing details of how local businesses and organisations could become involved in Sevenoaks Town Council and Town Team projects.

It was agreed that it was a good brochure and Mike was congratulated on its production.

12. Holly Party

Further to observations from some retailers, this year the event is moved from a Friday to Saturday 7th December. The main entertainment is an Abba tribute band. Starting really early this year, marketing of the event will commence at the Business Show.

13. Lighting The Vine

A detailed report had been provided to the last meeting. It was noted that quotations were still being reviewed.

14. Public Realm

The last of the town Centre repainting has been completed with work having been undertaken to the railings outside the SDC offices.

Efforts are being made to have the railings at the Sevenoaks Railway Bridge to be painted to augment the new mural which has been completed within the car park.

Helping create more interest in St Johns, 17 flag sockets are to be installed on some of the commercial buildings. These will be used for events such as the Summer Festival.

15. Sevenoaks Summer Festival 2024

This event is going to take place over the period Saturday 22nd June to Sunday 7th July, organised by Ray Russell & John Levett. The brochure had been published and the Town Crier being delivered to all homes contained a double page spread about the festival.

16. Members Organisations

The following updates were received from Team members and their organisations' activities.

Specsavers

Currently quiet and still experiencing knock on impact from Covid in yearly recalls also people's personal finances were generally more limited. Had joined the security radio system and found it extremely helpful and had a good police response.

It was noted that there were currently 17 security radios used by business premises in the town.

Go Coach

Austin was no longer involved in the operating of bus services but still involved in the engineering of the buses. It was noted that Go2 had funding for another year.

Bradbourne Lakes

Byron reported on the positive news relating to the successful HLF bid of £1.6m which would be added to the CIL £500k for the future development of the lakes. It was the intention to turn the annual event at the lakes to be held on 7th September to be turned into a big celebration of this.

The Resident Association was disappointed with Tarmac after they had requested for local people to be involved in the new development had not received a response. STC were looking into this.

It was noted that police regular publication My Community Voice was very useful.

Hollybush Residents Association

A planning application had been submitted to convert some of the tennis courts into padel courts, there were some concerns about potential noise impact on local residents.

Community Art Projects

Clr Granville and Elizabeth Purves were involved in a community art project which involved celebrating 'people who make things'. This would involve photography, production of a book and an exhibition at Kaleidoscope.

It was also noted that a similar art project being undertaken by Paul Burgess was taking place as part of the Summer Arts Festival taking photographs of retailers inside their premises. During the festival an exhibition would take place at the Anchor Pub, there would also be other promotion including an exhibition at Kaleidoscope.

Sevenoaks Society

Currently in summer break. AGM would be in September.

SDC Community Safety Unit

It was noted that there had been problems recently with nuisance youths attacking shops in St John's Hill, police were working on this issue. A spate of fake £50 trying to be used in the town had happened recently.

Francis Jones Jewellers

Noted that Pret had opened and was looking to partner with local charity for left over food. It was hoped that they would join the town wide scheme.

Concerned about the damaged street sign outside Waitrose hanging at a dangerous angle reported several times to KCC with no improvement to date.

Pleased to see that Sevenoaks had again been named one of the most successful town centres in the country.

Warners Solicitors

Remain busy. Working with STC on the conveyance of Longspring Woods. Cllr Clayton thanked Warners for providing this free essential service.

Chamber of Commerce

Membership continued to increase. Summer Soiree arranged for 7th July at Penhurst Place.

Sevenoaks Town Council (STC)

STC were currently focusing on the following projects:

- i) Working with KCC on the design and implementation of 20 mph scheme within TRO timetable.
- ii) D Day commemoration and Beacon Lighting
- iii) Refugee Week – Desperate Journeys project in STC car park
- iv) STC 50th Year Commemoration
- v) Longspring Woods purchase and development
- vi) Sevenoaks in Bloom – Judging Day 27th June. Volunteer Tidy Up Days 13th and 23rd June
- vii) New Sports Strategy
- viii) 2 Masterplans
- ix) Car Club Launch and development.

Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association

Suggestions again that Sevenoaks could become part of the Oyster scheme, yet to be defined and or confirmed.

17. Dates of Next Meetings

July 31st

September 25th

November 20th

February 5th

May 28th

DRAFT