**Sevenoaks Town Team**

**Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting**

**6:30pm: Wednesday 17th September 2025**

**Held at**

**The Council Chamber, Sevenoaks Town Council, Bradbourne Vale Road TN13 3QG**

 **Meeting started 6.30 p.m. Meeting concluded: 8.05pm**

**Executive Board**

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| Cllr Nigel Wightman | Sevenoaks Town Council | Present |
| Cllr Victoria Granville | Sevenoaks Town Council | Present |
| Cllr Libby Ancrum | Sevenoaks Town Council | Apologies |
| Linda Larter MBE | Sevenoaks Town Council | Present |
| Mike Reid | Town Team Facilitator | Present |
| Cllr Graham Clack | Sevenoaks District Council | Present |
| Cllr Richard Streatfeild MBE | Kent County Council | Apologies |
| Cllr Tony Clayton **Chair** | Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association | Present |
| Austin Blackburn | Go Coach | Present |
| South Eastern | Jack Heidry | Absent |
| Andrew Eyre | Stag | Absent |
| Hannah Kay | Knole | Absent |
| Dawn Blee | Chamber of Commerce | Apologies |
| Steve Butler | Workman (Blighs) | Absent |
| Sevenoaks Chronicle | Vacant | Absent |
| Geraldine Tucker | Sevenoaks Society | Apologies |
| Shane Smith | Leisure Centre | Absent |
| Maxine Morgans, **V Chair** | Specsavers | Present |
| Elizabeth Dolding | Warners Solicitors | Present |
| Roberta Ware | Francis Jones Jewellers | Present |
| Avril Hunter | Redlands RA | Present |
| Elizabeth Purves | Hollybush RA | Apologies |
| Byron Brown | Bradbourne RA | Present |
| PC Nick Hubbard/PC Tom Costin | Police | Apologies |
| Cllr Dr Merilyn Canet | Sevenoaks District Seniors Action Forum | Present |
| Richard Baxter | Drive RA | Present |

**In attendance:** None

1. **Apologies for Absence**

PC Nick Hubbard, Cllr Ancrum, Geraldine Tucker, Elizabeth Purves, Dawn Blee, Dennis Glasspool, Cllr Richard Streatfeild.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

None

1. **Minutes**

To receive and approve the minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Team Executive Board meeting of 28th May 2025. All agreed, with just two typographical changes.

1. **Constitution of the Town Team Executive Board.**

No new members

1. **Business Improvement District (BID).**

Cllr Clayton gave an update.

Development is proceeding slowly as economic conditions have not been favourable for securing a “Yes” vote. It is important that the Business Plan provides actions and projects which will be attractive and beneficial to all sectors of the town’s business community, and the Plan drafting is reflecting that.

The fifth Steering Group meeting will take place on 23rd September when the members will review the proposed budget and plan content.

1. **Wayfinding**

Whereas TT had been dealing with a company by the name of Pulsehub, BT had unknown to TT, submitted planning applications for street hubs to SDC, and all of them had been refused. The Pulsehub product is very similar and while they would have been prepared to undertake surveys and make applications at their cost, they are not likely to proceed due to the BT experience.

It was noted that the SDC CIL application had been refused for the second time. On the first occasion it was based on the scheme not being deemed to be “infrastructure”, and on the second through “lack of partnership” – despite being developed by the Town Team (a partnership).

KCC are inviting submissions for their Local Bus Intervention grant. That scheme envisages wayfinding schemes, which support bus and other local transport. TT to submit a bid based on the wayfinding work undertaken to date.

**Town Centre Masterplan**

Response to the public consultation has been mooted despite some very radical proposals for changes to the town centre being considered. Maybe it is due to general acceptance with only the objections and particular comments being received.

There was much discussion about the omission of any provision for buses and taxis in the SDC scheme for East of the High Street. There was also the view that the lack of such provision for the elderly, who make up about 25% of the Sevenoaks population was an unwelcome oversight.

A summary of the Town Centre Masterplan consultation will be presented to the next Exec meeting after which a letter, in which misgivings about the lack of detailed proposals for the bus station and public transport provision in their scheme, will be sent to SDC.

**Health & Wellness Initiative**

Still in development the concept is growing quickly. The plan is not necessarily to encourage people to join a gym, but to find ways to improve their health by way of diet, activity and awareness of their general health levels. A survey has been publicised in social media and Town Crier. It asks about the barriers to healthier living and for suggestions on what the public would like to see to encourage them to live more healthily. Engagement is good and growing. The purpose of the survey is to provide baseline data.

The initiative will be promoted at the Vegan Market of 4th October when The Better Body Group, KIMS and TT will have a stall. Free blood pressure testing will take place.

A Health & Wellness Fair will take place on the Vine on 30th May 2026.

1. **Sevenoaks Food Festival**

This was great success with attendance far exceeding expectation. That raised some logistical problems which will be addressed in 2026.

1. **Sevenoaks Bike Festival**

Due to take place on 20th September this has sadly been cancelled as the organiser has too many staff on sick leave and is unable to run the event safely.

1. **Autumn Vegan Market**

Due to take place on Saturday 4th October with five acts performing during the day.

1. **Sevenoaks Business Awards**

Nominations close on 19th September and as at the date of the meeting 36 had been received. Not all nominees will actually enter, but this is a very good start.

1. **Holly Party**

Booked for Friday 5th December with a change of format where Jonah’s Wail will be running the whole of the entertainment. Tickets are priced at just £27.50 to include the entertainment and a generous buffet created by Florence of Perfect Cuisine.

1. **Reports from Member’s Organisations**

**Go Coach**

Most routes are running well though No 3 is worrying as it is only carrying 25 -40 people per day.

Schools bus passenger numbers are up but the way the system works many buses are overcrowded and others, part empty. Drivers are faced with overcrowding or leaving children at the roadside – a dilemma. It appears that too many children are riding on an inappropriate bus. It would better for all and provide consistency, if the ticketing allocated a child to a specific bus.

The best news is that complaints are “super-down”. Historically they have run at about 20 per day – now its just one or two, sometimes, none.

Sevenoaks services are running fine, aided by a loyal client base. However, routes are up for tender at the end of the year. While most routes will continue, there is no obligation for them to be awarded by KCC, so some are likely to be at risk.

**SDC**

There will be a meeting next week where the Local Plan will be discussed The major item for consideration is the proposal to develop a considerable number of housing developments including the area between Dunton Green and Otford thus “joining them up”.

On 23rd October a six week KCC consultation will open on the shape of the unitary authority options being put forward under the Local Government Reform.

A Cabinet meeting will be held on 18th September which will include discussing the Community Asset Transfer of the Stag to Sevenoaks Town Council.

While it seems that the transfer of the Stag will take place, though whether on a freehold or a long lease basis, it was highlighted that any such transfer must include the loading bay area of the car park used for theatre lorries to bring and remove sets and equipment as otherwise the theatre could not function. This appears not to have been taken into account by SDC or the auditors assisting with the reviews.

**Redlands RA**

Of major concern to this RA and many people and organisations in the town is a new application being developed by Croudace for a major development in Brittains Lane. This is at a “pre-consultation” stage.

**Bradbourne RA**

A written report had been submitted:

1. **Bradbourne Re-bourne Project :**

The project has moved along successfully with much co-operation between the NHLF, the SDC and the BRA. The goal being to meet the 1st stage requirements by March 2026.

Of note is the 'Summer Festival' on the 2nd August held at Bradbourne Lakes Park. This was promoted and organised by the NHLF and the SDC with the BRA offering support where necessary. The event was very well supported by the public with particular interest in the NHLF plans for the Parks restoration, the South East Rivers Trust display, and the History of the Bradbourne Area talk and walk round conducted by Professor David Killingray and Jonathan Fenner. The display by the Crowborough Model Boat Club demonstrated how a similar club could be set up for Sevenoaks using the restored Model Boat Lake (Lake 4 in the programme). Refreshments/commercial food offerings were provided with suitable entertainment for Children.

The BRA considered the interaction with the South East River Trust (SERT) had provided a new dimension to the Lakes area, the quality of the Lakes water, and the organisms it supported.

Following a 'name the Lakes' competition the following were adopted in honour of :-

Lake 1 : 'Aurea'

Lake 2 : Attenborough

Lake 3 : Lady Margaret

Lake 4 : The Boating Lake

Lake 5 : Wildreserve

Each of these were supported by a justification for the choice.

2. **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and transfer of assets.**

The BRA has sent a response to the STC giving a considered decision as to the future ownership of Bradbourne Lakes Park. It stated that it would prefer STC not to be involved as it could be a problem for the HLF bid. STC had considered this point of view however felt that it was best to still progress with a Community Asset Transfer request to act as a ‘Safety Net’ for the HLF bid.

3. **Croudace, Brittains Lane Development (again)**

The news of another application is disappointing for the BRA since along with the SDC and others the last application was refused along with well-reasoned justifications. Now thanks to HMG and the reallocation of some green belt to ‘grey belt’ Croudace has come back with further vigour to try again much against the local will.

A particular BRA concern with this development is the Bradbourne Area being 'down river' from other higher areas of Sevenoaks was the increased risk of uncontrolled flood water being directed towards our homes and streets. In the past flooding of this area had occurred due to heavy rainfall and outflow from housing/streets/watercourses higher up in Sevenoaks. There is much evidence emerging nationally that the HMG rush to build housing is not accompanied with commensurate improvements to the associated infrastructure particularly, that of Sewage outfall, this inevitably leading to the increased disgusting pollution of our rivers and water courses!

1. **Sevenoaks District Seniors Action Forum**

The Forum is very supportive of the Health & Wellness Initiative, as one way of encouraging elderly people to become more active, particularly to walk more and generally enjoy a healthier lifestyle. They also want to work on people who are living lonely existences on their own at home. It would also be a benefit to the NHS and create less of a burden on services.

1. **Sevenoaks Town Council**

Commencement of the scheme to redevelop the football facilities at Greatness is underway.

The STC budget is on track and so too is the that of The Stag.

The concession to run the Station Café is about to be signed with Lilias Kitchen. The café will be opening for longer hours, and it is intended for the cafe to become more of a local focal point.

STC is having to deal with lots or repairs, some due to obsolescence other due to a spate of vandalism.

The electric community mini bus is nearing readiness. It will give community groups the chance to hire at a much reduced cost. Age Concern will be applying to KCC via the Town Council for a second bus

1. **Sevenoaks Society**

A written report had been submitted:

The Society held a highly successful Community Open Day in the Stag Plaza on Saturday 28th June as part of the Sevenoaks Summer Festival. During the day, we were pleased to facilitate the launch by the Town Mayor Cllr Tony Clayton of the Council’s Town Centre Masterplan public consultation.

The Society’s autumn programme of talks begins with the inaugural Roger FitzGerald lecture following its AGM on Wednesday 24th September. Chris Lamb will give a presentation on “Building Design and the Work of Design South East”.

The Society has submitted its response to the Council’s questionnaire about local government reorganisation and potential assets for STC to request from SDC.

1. **Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association**

The train services are running well at the moment.

The introduction of contactless ticketing at Sevenoaks ignored provision for Concessionary fares and that has still not been remedied. The Association has opined that the planned extension of such ticketing to Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells should not take place until this fault has been rectified.

**Meeting closed at 8.05pm**

**Date of next meetings**

12th November – AGM

21st January 2026