

## Sevenoaks Town Team Annual General Meeting

**6:30pm: Wednesday 26th October 2022**

**Held at**

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

**Meeting started 6.30 p.m.**

**Meeting concluded: 8.10pm**

### Executive Board

Cllr Simon Raikes	Sevenoaks Town Council	Present
Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Sevenoaks Town Council	Present
Linda Larter MBE	Sevenoaks Town Council	Present
Mike Reid	Town Team Facilitator	Present
Cllr Avril Hunter	Sevenoaks District Council	Present
Cllr Richard Streatfeild MBE	Kent County Council	Present
Cllr Tony Clayton	Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association	Present
Austin Blackburn	Go Coach	Present
South Eastern	Vacant	Absent
Jane Parish	Sencio	Absent
Cllr Andrew Eyre, <b>Chairman</b>	Stag	Present
Hannah Kay	Knole	Absent
Dawn Blee	Chamber of Commerce	Present
Steve Butler	Workman (Blighs)	Apologies
Sevenoaks Chronicle	Vacant	Absent
Roger Walshe	Sevenoaks Society	Present
Maxine Morgan, <b>V Chairman</b>	Specsavers	Present
Elizabeth Dolding	Warners Solicitors	Present
Roberta Ware	Francis Jones Jewellers	Present
Glenn Ball	Local Architect	Present
Helen O'Sullivan	Eardley Road RA	Apologies
Elizabeth Purves	Hollybush RA	Present
Byron Brown	Bradbourne RA	Present
Mike Williams	Round Table	Absent
Police	Vacant	Absent

**In attendance:** Cllr Dr Canet, John Levett, Jim Hughes, Richard Baxter, Victoria Baxter,

**1. Election of Chairman of Sevenoaks Town Team**

Thanking Cllr Eyre for his considerable contribution to the Town Team, Elizabeth Purves proposed Cllr Clayton as a candidate for election to the post. The nomination was accepted by Cllr Clayton and duly seconded. A vote by a show of hands resulted in Cllr Eyre receiving eight votes and Cllr Clayton six. There were a number of abstentions. Cllr Eyre was declared the winner and continues as Chairman

**2. Election of Vice Chairman of Sevenoaks Town Partnership**

Maxine Morgans stood again in this role, and with no other nominations was elected nem con.

**3. Apologies for Absence**

Steve Butler

Helen O’Sullivan had planned to joining by Zoom, but a mix-up by STC meant the equipment could not be used.

**4. Declarations of Interest**

None

**5. Minutes**

To receive and approve the minutes of the Town Team Executive Board Meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022.

Approved.

**6. Annual Report**

To receive and discuss the annual report for 2022 (copy attached). Arising from the report were the following matters:

*Digital Projects*

Members were advised that TT would be looking to gain revenue from the information screens and asked to promote the facility to contacts.

To help bring the new TT URL up the rankings, members were asked to use [www.sevenoakstownteam.org](http://www.sevenoakstownteam.org), deleting or not using the partnership URL.

*High Street Safaris*

Since the Annual Report was circulated, Sencio have agreed to sponsor the Christmas event, donating a six month family swimming membership.

*Sevenoaks Town Trail*

By virtue of the trail being on an app, it is not readily discovered by an internet search. Further promotion is being considered.

#### *Sevenoaks Business Awards*

A discussion took place on the time of year that would be best for the Awards (and 2023 Business Show). The meeting was advised that officers of the District Council are considering the creation of a district wide Business Awards event for 2023. Further discussion on dates is on hold pending advice being sought from SDC on whether they are going to hold such an event on 2023, and if so, when.

#### *Best Dressed Christmas Window 2022*

Since the production of the Annual Report the Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce has kindly offered to provide the prizes for both the retail and non-retail categories. The event will now be marketed.

#### *Public Realm improvements*

SDC has received notification that Levelling Up funds have been allocated to the District, but without guidance at this stage on what kind of projects will qualify. In order not to lose time on what will apparently be quite a short time scale for spending the grant, SDC is open to suggestions for inclusion.

It is understood that public realm projects would most likely be acceptable nominations. After discussion among members such projects might include:

- Painting the remaining blue lamp posts and belisha beacons in the northern section of St Johns Hill
- Refreshing the pavements and kerbs in Lime Tree Walk
- Painting the blue railings in Pembroke Road, at the junction of High Street with Seal Hollow Road and in the Sencio Leisure Centre area.

#### *Sevenoaks Business Show*

A request was made that in future AGM Reports a synopsis of the speakers' presentations should be included.

#### *Events Committee*

Within the Report was a question relating to whether the Committee should be re-instated. The view was taken that the committee fulfilled two main functions:

- To assist organisers with risk assessments and administration
- To alert members to forthcoming events, to mitigate clashes and to help with promotion.

It was decided that "Events" should be an agenda item in future Board agendas.

#### *Sponsors*

The Chairman expressed his thanks to all the sponsors who support the Town Team events

## **7. Finance Matters**

No matters were raised about the Town Team Financial report

**8. Business Show 2022 Report**

As in the AGM Report and above.

A discussion ensued at this stage about the engagement of retailers. There are only a handful of retailers who are members of the Chamber and there are few who “join in” with Town Team activities. There was a suggestion that maybe Town Team should organise a specific show for retailers but dismissed for the reasons below.

Such businesses fall into two main groups and the reasons why they do not participate are largely:

National chains – The local managers have no say or budget for promoting their businesses

Independents – They are usually owner managed and have limited, if any staff. Accordingly, they find it difficult to join in extra-curricular activities.

Town Team will work on growing the retailers What’s App group.

**9. Business Hub Report**

Nothing in addition to the AGM report

**10. Fireworks & Christmas Lights**

Linda explained that the Round Table fireworks arrangements are in hand with STC providing help but mostly related to the administration rather than staffing on the day. TT has emailed the town centre businesses suggesting they might stay open late on 5<sup>th</sup> November and asking for responses. None have been received.

Arrangements for the Christmas Lights are progressing well with Specsavers, Manaks and Blighs all kindly sponsoring again. Volunteers are needed to run the event and all members were asked to consider helping.

**11. Childrens Christmas High Street Safari**

As above

**12. Christmas Best Dressed Window competition**

As above

**13. Holly Party**

This is a new event designed for businesses to hold their Christmas staff party at modest cost. It will take place at the Bat & Ball Centre on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Guests will pay £12 per ticket with a food van and pay bar providing refreshments. John Levett has arranged musical entertainment. Tickets are for sale on Eventbrite.

**14. Business Awards 2023 – June again?**

As above

## 15. Members Organisations

### *Go Coach*

Now relocated to Swanley with premises which suit them better. The business is desperate for new staff. KCC has increased its bus support budget but cut routes. Passenger numbers are increasing. The Travel Centre at Buckhurst Lane is now closed saving approx. £16,000pa.

### *Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association*

The new timetable now provides a 45 minute service from Bat & Ball though it does involve one change of train.

### *Glenn Ball*

Busy but with nothing to add except that the Business Show needs more visitors.

### *Specsavers*

Very busy as always

### *Cllr Raikes*

It is Sevenoaks Players Centenary this year.

### *Cllr Streatfeild*

KCC has adequate funding for bus support this year but not into the future. Its projections had been based on 3% inflation, not the current 10% or thereabouts.

There will be a public meeting on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> at the Bat & Ball Centre to consult on the 20 mph project. There had been 890 responses to date and the majority are supportive. The TROs will have to be submitted on a road by road basis.

### *Music Room Agency*

The Festival made a loss this year.

### *Francis Jones*

A brief report was given listing those business presently empty.

Of greater concern is the level of town centre crime affecting businesses. There is correspondence running with the police on a range of topics and once this reaches a conclusion then the detail will be shared with members. In the interim the Chairman said that TT will send a letter too to the District Commander urging for a speedy response to the matters raised and lend support for a detailed reply.

The meeting learned that members of the Shopwatch scheme had paid £430 for a radio link, but that the police never have it on, so that it is not possible to report a crime or suspicious behaviour. Also, that only 6% of reported business crime results in a prosecution.

### *Warners*

Nothing to report

### *Chamber*

Nothing to report

*Elizabeth Purves*

A “new home” is sought for several “History of Sevenoaks” display boards. The Stag offered to consider displaying some of them.

*Bradbourne RA*

Residents are concerned about the level of crime in this location too, with a recent stabbing as an example. The RA is supporting SDC on the Croudace appeal. A Santa event will be taking place.

*Stag*

Customer numbers are improving though still down from their peak by about 25%. Panto tickets are selling very well.

*Sevenoaks Town Council*

The Neighbourhood Development Plan inspection of the town will be taking place soon. The Council is entering its busiest public engagement period of the year with fireworks, Remembrance Day, Christmas Lights and the other events listed above.

**16. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022