

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Youth Services Working Group
Held on 22nd May 2024 at the Town Council Offices

Meeting Commenced: 2.20 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 3.04 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Chloe Gustard (Chair)	Present	Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present
Cllr Catherine Daniell (Vice-Chair, Deputy-Leader)	Present	Cllr Gareth Willis	Apologies

Co-opted members

Sevenoaks Youth Council: Harry King Madeleine Politzer	Apologies	Sevenoaks District Council: Maxine Quinton	Present
Kent County Council: Vacant	–	West Kent Communities: Richard Dowling	Apologies
Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust: Peter Robinson	Apologies	National Trust: Amy Sabine	Apologies

In attendance: Cllr Tony Clayton, Responsible Finance Officer & Deputy Town Clerk, Senior Committee Clerk and House in the Basement Youth Café Manager.

1. Chair and Vice-Chair

Noted that at the Annual Town Council meeting held on 13th May 2024, the following appointments were made:

Chair: Cllr Chloe Gustard
Vice-Chair: Cllr Catherine Daniell

2. Revised Committee and Working Group System

2.1 Noted that at the Annual Town Council meeting held on 13th May 2024, the Town Council approved a revised Committee and Working Group system.

It was noted that the aim of the Working Groups was to be able to develop ideas involving members of the community and stakeholders with oversight from the committees. The Chair commented on how useful the former Youth Services Committee had been in this regard, enabling collaborative working with the co-opted members. It was suggested that schools be invited to send representatives to the meetings.

It was noted that some of this Working Group meetings had been scheduled for 2pm, which may be difficult for some of the Co-opted members to attend, but that this was under review.

The Working Group agreed that it would be useful to have a Work Plan for the Group, identifying future items for consideration.

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2.2 The Terms of Reference for the Youth Services Working Group were received and noted.

3. Apologies for Absence: Received and accepted as noted above.

4. Requests for Dispensations: There were no requests for dispensations.

5. Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

6. Minutes of Youth Services Committee held on 20th March 2024

It was agreed to receive and accept the minutes as a true record.

7. Minutes of Sevenoaks Youth Council meeting held on 20th March 2024

It was noted that representatives of the Youth Council's nominated charity, Friends for Families, had attended the meeting last week: the HitB Manager advised that this had been well received. It was suggested that perhaps a Climate Change speaker could be invited to a future meeting and an officer to talk about the Council structure at the Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council.

It was agreed that the Minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 20th March 2024 be received and noted.

8. House in the Basement Youth Café (HitB)

8.1 Manager's Report

Daren Mountain, HitB Manager, presented his report. He advised that numbers for the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Programme were small but that it was really helping those attending. The programme would run until the school summer holidays and consideration be given to whether to continue in September.

Numbers attending HitB were steady, with approximately 15 new young people attending each month.

Daren had been undertaking detached work with Ben Reynolds, West Kent Youth Worker, on Thursdays, sometimes joined by Andy from Kenward Trust. It provided a good opportunity to engage with more young people and promote HitB. Daren commented on the strong working partnership with West Kent this year, particularly as they now visited Sevenoaks Town twice a week.

Daren also reported that the Skateboard sessions for girls had been a great success.

8.2 Finance Cost Centre Reports, February and March 2024

The Finance Cost Centre reports for the House in the Basement Youth Café for February and March 2024 were received and noted.

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9. Reports from Co-opted Partners

The following reports from Co-opted Partners were noted:

(i) Sevenoaks District Council, Community Safety

Maxine Quinton advised that there had been a few incidents over the last few months at the Town Centre Car Park and Leisure Centre, Bat & Ball Railway Station and Sainsbury's Local, with groups of young people causing problems. They had been identified and acceptable behaviour statements drawn up; the young people and their families would be visited.

There had also been some issues on trains; the Transport Police were considering placing some restrictions on travel.

The thing in common with the groups was one school. The child centred police team was to visit the school to talk to staff and maybe hold an assembly.

It was noted that there had been a significant instance of graffiti this week, over a quite wide area. It had been reported to the District Council, and the Direct Services Team hoped to remove by the end of the week. Maxine reported that they had photographs of the tag and were working on identifying those responsible.

The issues in the Town Centre Car Park involved older young people gathering in their cars. Reporting and identifying was improving, and they had been advised that if they were caught their cars would be seized.

It was noted that the Bat & Ball Station toilets had been vandalised three times recently and that the Café on the Vine was finding broken glass on occasion. Maxine requested that incidents be reported to the Community Safety team so that they are aware.

Maxine also reported that the Family Fun Day leaflets were being finalised and that Kelly Webb was organising a community art mural, working with the landowner and a student from Sevenoaks School.

(ii) West Kent Youth Services (WKYS)

Richard Dowling had been unable to attend the meeting but provided a written report, which was received and noted.

It was noted that WKYS had funding of £1,500 to provide six workshops for young people to improve health and wellbeing. Following conversations with young people while on detached work and at HitB, preparation was underway for the first two workshops - street dance and photography.

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10. Swing Doors for House in the Basement Youth Café

Consideration was given to quotations received for the installation of new swing entrance doors at House in the Basement Youth Café, part of the Stag theatre building. Four quotations (excl VAT) had been obtained by the Stag:

- a) £5,693.95
- b) £6,387.21
- c) £7,000.00
- d) £4,223.13

It was AGREED TO RECOMMEND to the Finance & Delivery Committee that:

- 1) funds are provided to enable the installation of new swing entrance doors to the House in the Basement Youth Café; and
- 2) Quotation 4, in the sum of £4,223.13 (excl VAT) be accepted.

11. Children’s Design a Christmas Light Competition 2024

Consideration was given to running the Design a Christmas Light competition, for young people aged 11 and under, for the third year running and to funding the manufacture of the winning designed light from the Youth Outreach Budget.

It was AGREED TO RECOMMEND to the Finance & Delivery Committee that:

- 1) the Design a Christmas Light Competition be run in 2024/25; and
- 2) the £695 (+ VAT) cost of the manufacture of the light from the winning design be funded from the Youth Outreach Budget.

12. Climate Change Youth Forum

It was noted that whilst discussing cycle routes, the Youth Forum commented that some schools did not have secure storage for many bicycles. The Youth Forum also noted that not all families had access to bikes as they were expensive, and asked that consideration be given to donation, bike swap or rent a bike schemes.

The Working Group agreed that ways of enabling affordable cycling be explored, suggesting that local bike shops, the Abacus Project (who ran a cycle repair & recycling scheme prior to Covid) and the Sevenoaks Cycle Forum be consulted. It was also queried whether a call for bikes could be made at next year’s Climate Fair.

It was agreed that the Minutes of the Climate Change Youth Forum meeting held on 17th April 2024 be received and noted.

13. Press Release

It was agreed that a press release be issued when the Christmas Light competition is launched.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.

Signed

Chair

Dated