

Sevenoaks Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Sevenoaks Town Council
Held on 29 September 2025 in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

Livestreamed and available to view on YouTube until approved by Council:

<https://youtube.com/live/oLkZnenwcPA?feature=share>

Meeting commenced: 19:00

Meeting Concluded: 19:32

Present:

Cllr Tony Clayton, Mayor	Present	Cllr Sally Layne	Apologies
Cllr Victoria Granville, Deputy Mayor	Present	Cllr Lise Michaelides	Present
Cllr Libby Ancrum	Apologies	Cllr Lionel O'Hara	Apologies
Cllr Sue Camp	Present	Cllr Claire Shea, Leader	Present
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present	Cllr David Skinner OBE	Apologies
Cllr Catherine Daniell, Deputy Leader	Apologies	Cllr Nick Varley	Apologies
Cllr Dr Peter Dixon	Apologies	Cllr Gareth Willis	Present
Cllr Chloe Gustard	Apologies	Cllr Nigel Wightman	Present

In attendance: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Senior Committee Clerk and Planning Committee Clerk.

Members of public present: 2

Cllr Richard Streatfeild, Sevenoaks District Council & Kent County Council (KCC), advised of challenges at Kent County Council meetings with protest and counter protest interrupting proceedings. He expressed concern that decisions were being taken without going through the committee process. He stated that there was a lot of misinformation and acknowledged the pressure officers were experiencing. He noted, in particular, the decisions of the Reform led Council to rescind the declaration of a climate emergency and its proposal to pursue a one unitary authority for Kent.

358 - PRESENTATION - BRITAIN IN BLOOM ENTRY

The Town Clerk shared the presentation that had been given to the judges for the Town Council's Britain In Bloom entry by herself, the Town Team Facilitator and the Community Engagement Manager. It was noted that the results were expected on 31st October 2025.

Councillors acknowledged the wide community involvement in the project and expressed their gratitude to everyone who contributed, including volunteers, council officers, and fellow members.

359 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: To receive and accept apologies for absence as noted above.

360 - REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

361 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

362 - MINUTES OF MEETING OF SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 1ST SEPTEMBER 2025

RESOLVED: To receive, adopt and sign the minutes of the meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 1st September 2025 as a true record.

363 - MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the Minutes of the following Committee meetings:

Planning & Environment Committee

- 8th September 2025
- 22nd September 2025

Finance & Delivery Committee

- 1st September 2025

Youth Services Committee

- 10th September 2025

Community Assets (Open Spaces) Committee

- 15th September 2025

364 - CONCLUSION OF AUDIT 2024/2025

The Council congratulated the Responsible Finance Officer and her team on achieving a clean audit.

The following comment included in "Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority" was noted:

"We were required to return the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to enable the Council to correct the following:

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- (1) Fixed assets at Box 9 initially omitted a newly-acquired fixed asset valued at £185,000. This asset has since been correctly included in a revised version of the AGAR submitted during the review.*
- (2) The authority also took the opportunity to make minor corrections to Boxes 3, 6, 8 and 9, addressing non-material errors identified during the review.*

We acknowledge the authority's proactive approach in rectifying these issues. In future the Council should ensure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete and accurate."

RESOLVED: To note the conclusion of Audit for year ended 31st March 2025 and to receive and accept the following:

- Completion Letter from Forvis Mazars LLP
- Certified Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2024/2025
- Notice of Conclusion of Audit

365 - INTERNAL AUDIT 2025/2026 - INTERIM REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2025)

The Council considered the first interim report received from the Town Council's new internal auditor, Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the Internal Audit 2025/2026 Interim Report (September 2025) and to adopt the recommendations therein:

- 1) That the following wording be added to the Councillor's Acceptance of Office form *"As per Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, I consent to the receipt of all council meeting papers by electronic methods. I understand I may withdraw this consent at any time."*
- 2) In respect of the verification of bank reconciliations, that the Town Council's Financial Regulations be amended to include the NALC recommended wording which states *"The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the Council (Finance Committee)."*

366 - REPORTS TO COUNCIL - STC REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Granville reported that she had attended the Annual General Meeting of the Sevenoaks District Arts Council which had unfortunately been inquorate and would be reconvened. She advised that there was anxiety about Local Government Reorganisation and whether funding would still be available for the Sevenoaks District Arts Council.

367 - MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

RESOLVED: To receive and note:

- a. Functions attended by the Mayor or his representative up to 22nd September 2025
- b. Forthcoming Civic Events being organised by the Mayor during 2025/2026

368 - PRESS RELEASE: None.

There being no further business the Chair closed the Meeting.

Signed

Chair

Dated