

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 11th December 2023
Held in the Bat & Ball Centre, Crampton's Road, Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN

Livestreamed and available to view on YouTube until approved by Council:
<https://youtube.com/live/7K5Qrv0tnSs?feature=share>

Meeting Commenced: 7.02 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 7.20 p.m.

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

In Attendance: Town Clerk, Senior Committee Clerk

Also present: Responsible Finance Officer/Deputy Town Clerk and Planning Committee Clerk

Members of Public in Attendance: 50

Representations received from Members of the Public: None

Presentation of Painting by the Mayor

In line with Town Council tradition, the Mayor presented a painting to add to the Town Council's Community Art Collection of local scenes by local artists which create a visual social history of Sevenoaks.

The Mayor was pleased to welcome local artist Lawrence Jenkins to the meeting and to present his painting of the view from his home in Bradbourne Vale Road during the 1980s.

560 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received and accepted as shown above.

561 Requests for Dispensations: none received.

562 Declarations of Interest: none received.

563 Minutes of the Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 27th November 2023

RESOLVED: to accept and sign the minutes of the Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 27th November 2023 as a true record.

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564 Minutes of Committees

564.1 Planning Committee

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4th December 2023 as a true record.

564.2 Finance & General Purposes Committee

RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 27th November 2023 as a true record.

565 Asset of Community Value: Longspring Woods

The Council had previously considered land for sale at Longspring Woods which was being sold and its community use displaced [*Minute 243, Council 24.07.2023 refers*] and agreed to register the site as an Asset of Community Value. The successful registration was confirmed on 25th September 2023.

Sevenoaks District Council had advised that the land was currently under offer and notified that a 6-week moratorium had been placed on the site to allow community groups to bid for the land. The deadline was 4th January for submission of an intention to bid. This would not constitute an obligation to bid or purchase the property but would extend the moratorium by six months to enable the Town Council time to undertake public consultation and prepare a bid and business plan.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Sevenoaks Town Council confirms its intention to bid, as per its Green Community Investment Plan, on land at Longspring Woods under the Community Right to Bid; and
- 2) a Working Group be formed to aid in the preparation of a formal bid and business plan, to be approved at a future meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council

566 Sevenoaks to London Changes to Off Peak Rail Fares

Cllr Clayton presented a report prepared by the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association expressing concern at the recent introduction of restrictions on use of off-peak fares from Sevenoaks and other stations and consequent increase in costs for many rail travellers. The paper commented on the complicated and confusing changes which were being justified as part of the lead-in to contactless fares although without any of the benefits the contactless system was supposed to bring.

Town Councillors shared the concerns raised by the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association and endorsed the comments set out in the paper.

RESOLVED: that

- 1) The comments in the paper prepared by the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association in relation to the recent restrictions on off-peak fares and consequent rail fare increases (as attached) be endorsed: and
- 2) The Town Council write to the Department of Transport, copying in Laura Trott, MP for Sevenoaks, accordingly.

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567 Councillor Reports: Town Council Representatives on External Organisations

RESOLVED: To note that Cllr Camp had given a presentation to the National Association of Local Councils online event “Making the planning system work for local councils” on 22nd November 2023. She discussed Sevenoaks Town Council’s recent key projects including the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan, information on how the Town Council handles planning applications, and future projects.

568 Mayor’s Engagements

RESOLVED: To note and accept the reports relating to Mayoral activities:

- a) functions attended by the Mayor or her representative up to 5th December 2023; and
- b) forthcoming Civic Events being organised by the Mayor during 2023-24

569 Press Releases

RESOLVED: That press releases be issued in respect of:

- 1) Asset of Community Value: Longspring Woods
- 2) Sevenoaks to London Changes to Off Peak Rail Fares
- 3) Painting added to the Town Council’s Community Art Collection

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting.

Signed
Mayor

Dated