Sevenoaks Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council
Held on 24th November 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/AD0mY40Pt5c

Meeting commenced: 19:00 Meeting Concluded: 19:25

Present:

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

Apologies: Town Clerk

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

Members of public present: 1
There were no public questions submitted.

488 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

489 - REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

490 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

491 - MINUTES OF MEETING OF SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 29TH SEPTEMBER 2025

RESOLVED: To receive, adopt and sign the minutes of the Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council held on 29th September 2025 as a true record.

492 - MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED:

1) To receive and adopt the minutes of the following Committee meetings:

   Planning & Environment Committee

   - 6th October 2025
   - 20th October 2025
   - 3rd November 2025
   - 17th November 2025

   Finance & Delivery Committee

   - 29th September 2025

   Community Assets (Open Spaces) Committee

   - 10th November 2025

   Youth Services Committee

   - 19th November 2025 (to follow)

2) To note Minute 465 of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 17th November 2025 regarding the **pending application for the Cross Channel Geopark to be granted UNESCO World heritage status** and to reaffirm the Town Council's support for the proposal.

3) That a press release be issued noting:

   - The proposed UNESCO Global Cross Channel Geopark, of chalk downland and supporting landscape, from Sevenoaks to Dover and beyond the Channel to the geological region on chalk as far as St Omer in northern France
   - The bid being prepared jointly by the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Parc Naturel Regional des Caps et Marais d' Opale with wide support from local communities

- The bid as a celebration of the relationship between the underlying geology, people, and natural and cultural heritage: it will help to protect the chalk landscapes in both regions, promote sustainable tourism and bring communities closer together through shared understanding of where they live

That Sevenoaks Town Council believes that:

- UNESCO designation will bring benefits to Sevenoaks and the surrounding area, strengthening protection for the two Sites of Special Scientific Interest within Sevenoaks Town, Bradbourne Wildlife Reserve and Knole Park, as well as for the River Darent chalk stream which flows through the northern part of Sevenoaks
- Designation will support environmental objectives in the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan and respond to current climate change and ecological emergencies.

That Sevenoaks Town Council resolves to:

- To support the Kent Downs National Landscape Unit and the Parc Naturel Regional des Caps et Marais d' Opale in promoting the bid, working with other organisations and Local Authorities in Kent
- To raise public awareness about the Geopark and the benefits it will bring to the local community and natural environment
- To support the Kent Downs National Landscape Unit in reaching out to schools, students, young people and the wider community to help shape the bid and on projects that follow

493 - APPOINTMENT TO GREATNESS RECREATION GROUND WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED: That Cllr Chloe Gustard be appointed to the Greatness Recreation Ground Working Group.

494 - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

RESOLVED:

1) To note the following requests received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

Date received	Date responded	Topic	STC hours to compile information
18.09.25	10.10.25	Investment, maintenance, and works relating to Sevenoaks Rugby Football Training & Playing Pitches	40 hours

29.09.92	06.10.25	STC expenditure related to Brittains Lane/Croudace proposals at Land west of Brittains Lane, Sevenoaks (planning ref 21/04236/OUT) and the related appeal/public inquiry, decided 15 Nov 2023, dismissed	1hour
07.10.25	27.10.25	Any communications that have taken place between Sevenoaks Town Council and Croudace Homes Group over the period 1st July 2023 until now	6 hours
20.10.25	20.10.25	Incidence, responses, and enforcement practices related to hoarding cases. Matter outside remit of Town Council, advised to contact Sevenoaks District Council, the appropriate authority	Nil

2) To thank staff for their hard work in producing a very comprehensive response to the request for information regarding the rugby pitches.

495 - REPORTS TO COUNCIL - STC REPESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Friends of Rheinbach

Cllr Dixon reported that Friends of Rheinbach had recently held their AGM and were pleased to have gained some new members. He advised that the Choir of Städtisches Gymnasium was performing at Knole Academy on 3rd December, the Friends of Rheinbach New Year dinner was being held on 6th February and that the summer visit from Freunde von Sevenoaks would take place in May/June. The Facebook page and website had been revamped with help from the grant from the Town Council. Cllr Dixon advised that members had very much enjoyed the talk by Sir Sebastian Wood, former ambassador to Germany.

Friends of Pontoise

Cllr Canet had attended the AGM of the Friends of Pontoise and reported that a motion had been passed that the May 2026 visit to Pontoise would be a celebratory closure of the 60 years of the town twinning organisation. It was noted that friendships would continue but that the organisation had recognised the diminishing number and advancing years of current members and the struggle to attract new ones and volunteers for committee roles and felt that it was no longer sustainable. Thanks were given to Michael and Evy Pembrey for their hard work in keeping the organisation going for so long. It was noted that Les Amis de Sevenoaks was experiencing similar difficulties.

Sevenoaks CPRE, The Countryside Charity

Cllr Michaelides reported that she had attended a CPRE meeting, which had been discussing concerns about proposed new housing developments in the District Council's Local Plan.

496 - MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

The Mayor advised that he was hosting the launch of Bob Ogley's book on Knole Park on 2nd December, the event had sold out very quickly. The launch would be preceded by a walk in the park recalling the visit of the Beatles in 1967.

He reported that, together with Cllr Ancrum and Cllr Skinner, he had attended a very enjoyable Bangladeshi Community event. He also praised the very successful Sevenoaks Business Awards event. The Mayor had been pleased to visit Lady Boswell's Church of England Primary School and Weald of Kent Grammar School with Cllr Canet to present young people with their RHS Britain in Bloom Young Champion awards.

RESOLVED: To receive and note:

a. Functions attended by the Mayor or his representative up to 16th November 2025
b. Forthcoming Civic Events being organised by the Mayor during 2025/2026

497 - PRESS RELEASE:

RESOLVED: That a press release be issued in respect of the pending application for the Cross Channel Geopark to be granted UNESCO World heritage status.

There being no further business the Mayor closed the Meeting.

Signed …….. Dated ……..
Chair