

Sevenoaks Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Services Committee Held on 3rd November 2021 in the Council Chamber at the Town Council Offices

Meeting Started: 7.13 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 8.13 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Edward Waite, Chairman	Apologies		Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Apologies
Cllr Rachel Parry, Vice-Chairman	Apologies		Cllr Roderick Hogarth	Apologies
Cllr Nick Busvine	Present		Cllr Tom Morris Brown	Absent
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet (ex officio)	Present		Cllr Claire Shea	Present
Cllr Andrew Eyre In the chair for this meeting	Present			
Co-opted Members:				
Richard Dowling, West Kent Communities	Present		Sarah Gaunt, Kent County Council	Present
Maxine Quinton, Sevenoaks District Council	Present		Caroline Berry, SAYT	Present

Substitute	For
Cllr Richard Parry	Cllr Mrs Parry

In attendance: Town Clerk and Senior Committee Clerk

Representations received from Members of the Public: none.

340. Election of Chairman for this Meeting

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Committee elected a Chairman for this meeting only.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Andrew Eyre be elected Chairman for this meeting only.

Cllr Eyre in the Chair

341. Apologies for Absence

Received as noted above.

342. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

343. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interest.

344. Minutes of Youth Services Committee held on 8th September 2021

RESOLVED: To receive and sign the Minutes of the Youth Services Committee held on 8th September 2021 as a true record.

345. House in the Basement Youth Café

(i) Update Report

It was noted that attendance issues remained, but the SEN group held on Tuesday evenings was building. Consideration was being given to ideas to promote, including the relaunch of the Pool competition nights and events. The new Youth Council had been asked to help in developing ideas at their next meeting, which would take place at the Youth Café. The Town Clerk would be working on refocusing and promoting the House in the Basement.

(ii) Finance Report to 30th September 2021

RESOLVED: That the Finance Cost Centre report for the House in the Basement Youth Café to 30th September 2021 be noted.

346. Sevenoaks Youth Council

It was noted that the new Sevenoaks Youth Council had held its AGM earlier that evening. Thirteen Young people had been elected. They had carried out a workshop exercise to identify issues of concern to them and things they would like to see in Sevenoaks. These would form the basis of a two-year work programme to be formulated at the next meeting.

There were still three places available on the Youth Council and applications would be welcomed. It was agreed that Knole Academy would be contacted again to see if any of their students would like to join.

347. Sevenoaks District Council Pledge: To Reconnect Kent Children and Young People

The Committee received and noted an update report provided by Kelly Webb, Sevenoaks District Council.

It was noted that the next KCC Reconnect Locality Grant would be specifically tailored for summer 2022 activities: the round of funding would open on 5th January with the deadline for applications being 1st February 2022. Town and Parish Councils and Community Groups, including The Stag, were eligible to apply to deliver youth initiatives.

Sarah Gaunt undertook to ensure that the Town Council was added to the mailing list for the Reconnect project.

348. Reports from Co-opted Partners

Noted reports from Co-opted Partners:

(i) Kent County Council (KCC)

It was noted that this was the last meeting that Sarah Gaunt would attend as she was leaving her role at KCC after 8 years. The Committee thanked her for her valuable contribution and wished her well for the future.

Sarah reported that since the last meeting her youth team had been visiting Sevenoaks Town on Wednesday evenings and had reported back that it seemed very quiet.

(ii) Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust (SAYT)

Caroline Berry commented that SAYT was visiting Greatness on Thursdays (Youth Worker and two volunteers) and was also finding the Town quiet. They were planning to start using the bus again now that the evenings were darker.

Caroline reported that interviews for a second youth worker were taking place in 10 days' time.

(iii) Sevenoaks District Council, Community Safety

Maxine Quinton was pleased to report that there hadn't been any reports of issues at the Town Car Park this month. There had been one incident at the Environmental Park: PCSOs had spoken to young people, taken names and seized alcohol, there had been no further incidents there.

There had been a few issues with a group of young men in town but following identification via CCTV and the service of letters on them, there hadn't been any further issues.

Maxine advised of the Kent Police Engagement Evening on 11th November being held in Swanley - Safeguarding Women and Girls. It was hoped that similar events would be held in Sevenoaks and Edenbridge. Maxine advised that the police were also hoping to attend markets at the beginning of December. The Town Clerk suggested that the Christmas Lights Switch on Event on 26th November might also be a useful venue for them to reach a lot of people.

(iv) West Kent Youth Services (WKYS)

Richard Dowling, Youth Services Manager, reported that targeted detached work was taking place at Greatness on Mondays and in passing on Fridays. He was pleased to report that two new apprentices had been appointed at the end of August which would enable WKYS to deliver more on the KCC contract. The quarterly report circulated by Ben Reynolds, Lead Youth Worker, was welcomed and noted.

Richard reported that the Young Adventurers 8 - 12 project had reopened in Sevenoaks and was now attended by up to 16 young people.

Richard advised that a Mental Health and Anxiety programme had been developed and they had been inundated with requests from schools. The focus was on Covid and home schooling, children being scared to go into school, worried about passing on Covid to grandparents, anxiety and disrupted sleep patterns.

Sarah commented that Covid, how to come out from it and build up emotional resilience was a massive issue. Cllr Busvine added that the football club had also noticed that a lot of children were more withdrawn post Covid.

It was noted that the new Youth Council had raised mental health as a key issue generally for young people. Sarah commented that there was support available, but a lot of young people did not understand how to access it and how it would help them. This was a matter which the Youth Council had been interested to understand and consider. Sarah undertook to send the detailed list of resources available, highlighting key ones, to the Town Council. Richard Dowling also agreed to send their “pocket guide”.

(v) Draft Young Person Mentor Project Plan

The Committee noted the draft Project Plan being co-ordinated by Sevenoaks District Council, in partnership with several Partner Hubs, including the House in the Basement. The project was being funded by Reconnect.

It was noted that this was a district-wide project,

“aimed at providing young people with the opportunity to record the impact COVID-19 has had on them; gain access to mental health learning and support; give them the opportunity to try a new (or previously enjoyed) activity; and to pair them with a mentor for additional support. The young people targeted will also be signposted to other appropriate agencies and organisations. There will be one or multiple ‘Exhibitions of Expression’ as part of this project, designed with input from young people as the project progresses. “

The Town Clerk advised the Plan was in the early stages. It was noted that Partner Hubs had queries about ability to deliver, the referrals process and reporting. It was agreed that a further report be submitted to a future meeting.

349. Press Release

It was agreed that a Press Release be issued regarding the election of the new Youth Council, restarting post pandemic.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

Signed
Chairman

Dated