

Sevenoaks Town Council

Notes of the advisory meeting of the Youth Services Committee Held on 12th January 2022 via Zoom

Arrangements During COVID 19

Sevenoaks Town Council is endeavouring where possible to continue with its day-to-day activities.

There are still public health restrictions and "Council Meetings" via Zoom are not currently permitted.

This advisory meeting was held by electronic means in accordance with the emergency measures agreed at the meeting of the Town Council held on 6th December 2021 (*Minute 411 refers*).

Meeting Started: 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 7.45 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Edward Waite, Chairman	Apologies		Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter	Apologies
Cllr Rachel Parry, Vice-Chairman	Present		Cllr Roderick Hogarth	Present
Cllr Nick Busvine	Present		Cllr Tom Morris Brown	Apologies
Cllr Dr Merilyn Canet, Mayor (ex officio)	Apologies		Cllr Claire Shea	Present
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Present			
Co-opted Members:				
Ben Reynolds, West Kent Communities	Present		Kent County Council	Apologies
Maxine Quinton, Sevenoaks District Council	Present		Caroline Berry, SAYT	Present

Substitute	For
Cllr Tony Clayton	Cllr Victoria Granville-Baxter

In attendance: Cllr Richard Parry, Town Clerk, Senior Committee Clerk and Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café.

Representations received from Members of the Public: none.

451. Apologies for Absence

Received as noted above.

452. Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

453. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

454. Minutes of Youth Services Committee held on 3rd November 2021

RESOLVED: To receive and sign the Minutes of the Youth Services Committee held on 3rd November 2021 as a true record.

455. House in the Basement Youth Café

455.1 Update Report

The Town Clerk introduced Daren Mountain who had been appointed as the new Manager of the House in the Basement Youth Cafe (HitB) on 1st January. It was noted that Daren had many years of youth work experience, including with SAYT, and had worked at the Youth Café since it opened.

Daren reported that he was working hard to promote the Youth Café in schools and through detached work, most recently at Bat & Ball Station. Attendance numbers were slowly increasing, with 13 young people attending the SEN evening the previous day, and 8 on the Saturday. He anticipated that warmer weather and lighter evenings would see confidence grow in young people and numbers increase. He advised that some work on young people's Covid experience was planned (as set out at Minute 458 below). He commented that whilst there had been some return to normality with schools returning, the level of disruption to young people had been significant. Councillors noted the huge impact of the pandemic on young people, particularly in terms of their mental health and confidence to engage with activities.

The Committee welcomed Daren to his new role and wished him every success.

455.2 Finance Report to 31st November 2021

RESOLVED: That the Finance Cost Centre report for the House in the Basement Youth Café to 31st November 2021 be noted.

456. Sevenoaks Youth Council

It was noted that the inaugural meeting of the new Youth Council had been held on 3rd November 2021. At that meeting Youth Councillors had taken part in a workshop to discuss issues and share ideas for Sevenoaks Town: these would form the basis of a two-year work plan for the Youth Council.

RESOLVED:

- To receive and note the Minutes of the Youth Council Annual General Meeting held on 3rd November 2021
- To receive and note the notes of the Youth Council workshop held on 3rd November 2021.

457. Reports from Co-opted Partners

Noted reports from Co-opted Partners:

(i) Kent County Council (KCC)

It was noted that Sarah Gaunt had left KCC. Her replacement would be taking up the post on 1st February 2022. She would be contacted and invited to join the Committee.

(ii) Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust (SAYT)

Caroline Berry advised that SAYT's Youth Worker, Holly, had maintained contact with a regular group of young people and was looking forward to the lighter evenings and being able to meet outdoors.

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A mini-Christmas party had been held at the House in the Basement for the SAYT youth group. Holly had contacted all church youth workers to promote the House in the Basement. Daren advised that he and Holly were hoping to work together to go into schools.

It was noted that recruitment continued for a second youth worker.

(iii) Sevenoaks District Council, Community Safety

Maxine Quinton reported that anti-social behaviour in Sevenoaks Town had reduced, it had been quiet over Christmas and the New Year. The hotspot continued to be the Town Centre Car Park with drivers taking their cars up to the top level, driving around late at night. When registration numbers were obtained a letter was sent advising that if they returned they would be issued with a S59 Notice by the police, which could result in their vehicle being seized. This seemed to be effective with none of those cars being seen again.

Maxine advised that: the judging panel for Volunteer Awards had taken place that day and that all nominees and their nominators would be invited to an event on 9th March 2022; a Big Sing event was being held on 7th June, which would also celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee; and Kelly Webb had met with Play Place to start planning the Summer Fun Days.

(iv) West Kent Youth Services (WKYS)

Ben Reynolds presented his Quarterly Report for Sevenoaks Town, to 17th December 2021.

Ben commented that Sevenoaks was very quiet at the moment. He understood that there were young people at Hollybush and would expand the detached work to that area once the evenings got lighter. He had received leaflets from Daren promoting HitB which he was distributing. Ben also offered to drop hard copies of WKHA's Young People's Guide to Services into the Town Council offices.

Ben was pleased to report that the Sevenoaks Young Adventurers (8 – 12 group) was now at full capacity with attendance of 20 young people.

458. Sevenoaks District Council Young Person Mentor Project Plan

The Town Clerk reported that the House in the Basement Youth Café (HitB) was one of the partner hubs working with Sevenoaks District Council on its Young Person Mentor Project which was "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."

HitB would receive funding as follows:

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1. £750 to work with young people (target 25 young people) to record (however the young person wishes and can practically be achieved) the impact of COVID-19 on them and their lives and their hopes and aspirations for the future (including any impact of this project).
2. Up to £1,750 to pay activity fees for 25 young people (budgeted at £70 each). Where less is spent on activity fees, this can be used to supplement delivery of 1 above and, where deemed appropriate, extended to include the recordings of impact of COVID-19 by other young people attending the House in the Basement Youth Hub.

The activities proposed were a Skateboard event at Easter, which would take the form of a mini youth festival with music and stalls, and a trip for a group of young people during the Sumer holidays to Hastings indoor skateboard park. The events would also be aimed at young people who enjoyed watching the skateboarding, not limited to participants.

459. National Association of Local Council (NALC) Young People Case Studies

The Committee received and noted the NALC Young People Case Studies booklet which gave summary examples of good practice and demonstrated actions of benefit to local councils and the young people in their areas. The range of activities was noted.

The Committee felt that it would be useful if a grid could be prepared showing what people were doing and what the most popular activities were.

It was suggested that NALC be contacted to ask whether they had drawn any conclusions and could provide an executive summary. It would also be interesting to know whether local councils had been asked what they felt really worked and had made a difference. Cllr Parry agreed to raise this as an agenda item at the next meeting of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC).

The Committee also felt it would be interesting to compare the actions in the case studies to the issues being identified by young people in Sevenoaks. It was agreed that the questions considered by the Youth Council at their workshop in November, regarding the key issues they felt faced young people in Sevenoaks and suggestions for improvement, also be used to consult with young people at HitB, SAYT and through Ben's detached work.

460. Press Release

There were no press releases arising from this meeting.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

Signed
Chairman

Dated