

Sevenoaks Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Youth Services Committee Held on 8th November 2023 in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

Livestreamed and available on YouTube until Minutes are accepted by Town Council Meeting:
(<https://youtube.com/live/WJS1wxAlbyo?feature=share>)

Meeting Started: 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 8.16 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Chloe Gustard (Chair)	Present	Cllr Catherine Daniell (Vice-Chair) (left the meeting at 7.30pm)	Present
Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present	Cllr Sally Layne	Absent
Cllr Claire Shea (ex-officio)	Apologies	Cllr Gareth Willis	Present
<u>Co-opted members</u>			
Sevenoaks Youth Council: Vacant		Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust: Peter Robinson	Present
Kent County Council: Vacant		West Kent Communities: Richard Dowling	Present
Sevenoaks District Council: Maxine Quinton	Present	National Trust: Amy Sabine	Absent

In attendance: Alison Futtit, Senior Committee Clerk, Daren Mountain, HitB Youth Café Manager, Ieuan Chandler-Wilson, Youth Committee Clerk.

Representations received from Members of the Public: none.

473 Change to Order of Agenda

RESOLVED: That the order of the agenda be amended to facilitate consideration of Agenda Item 15, SEN Work Experience Opportunities, to enable Cllr Daniell to take part in the discussion.

474 Apologies for Absence

Received as noted above. Noted that Cllr Daniell needed to leave the meeting at 7.30pm.

475 Requests for Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

476 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

477 Minutes of Youth Services Committee held on 6th September 2023

RESOLVED: To receive and accept minutes as a true record.

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478 Minutes of Sevenoaks Youth Council Held on 13th September 2023

RESOLVED: To receive and note the Minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 13th September 2023.

479 House in the Basement Youth Café

479.1 Update Report

The Committee noted the report from Daren Mountain, House in the Basement Manager. Daren advised that there had been low attendance at the Silent Disco, with half of those who had booked tickets showing up. He would be reviewing with partners how the event would go forward.

Daren advised of Christmas events being planned, including a Christmas Lunch provided by Perfect Cuisine.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted.

479.2 Finance Report August 2023

RESOLVED: That the Finance Cost Centre report for the House in the Basement Youth Café be noted.

479.3 NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Project

Daren reported that Jenny Godfrey from SDC who had championed the creation of the NEET project had left SDC: the project has been taken on by Kelly Webb and Abbi Canie.

The NEET project, which was planned to be a two-hour programme run over 26 weeks, would have a soft launch in November, with formal start date in January. Daren reported some difficulties with the referral process and getting responses from schools. Maxine Quinton offered to mention the project at the monthly Safeguarding meeting held at SDC.

Cllr Willis advised that a lot of schools had guest speaker events which he could obtain tickets for if any of the young people would like to attend.

480. SEN Work Experience Opportunities

The Committee acknowledged the additional challenges facing young people with special educational needs seeking work experience placements and/or employment and considered ways in which support could be offered. It was suggested that a contact list of supportive businesses able to provide opportunities could be developed, to signpost young people and parents/guardians.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that officers explore with local businesses how a contact list scheme could work, promoting local work experience or SEN friendly employment opportunities; and
- 2) report to be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

481. Reports from Co-opted Partners

Noted following reports from Co-opted Partners:

(i) Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust (SAYT)

Peter Robinson reported that since the last meeting SAYT had a three-day trip to Snowdonia with nine young people attending, including five from the Greatness area and three from House in the Basement. The feedback received from the trip was extremely positive and they were considering what other trips they might be able to offer in the future.

Peter also reported that unfortunately the bus used for outreach work had been taken off the road by SDC for savings reasons. SAYT were exploring other ways to provide the outreach work. Richard Dowling mentioned that West Kent Housing had recently been gifted a van for community use which would be available in the new year; there might be potential for SAYT to use it on occasion.

Peter also reported that SAYT were starting a Youth Alpha group in the near future, to give young people an introduction to Christianity in an informal way, with no commitment from the young people.

(ii) Sevenoaks District Council, Community Safety

Maxine Quinton reported that while the Town had been primarily quiet there had been a few issues at the Bat and Ball Station with two young people being issued anti-social behaviour warning letters and a group of older young people had been spoken to at the Quarry and letters issued. Maxine also reported that during Halloween and Bonfire night Sevenoaks Town had been quiet.

(iii) West Kent Youth Services (WKYS)

Richard Dowling reported that the St.John's school project had finished and the Schools Worker for West Kent Housing had now left the organisation. Recruitment would take place but there was only four months remaining of the project.

It was noted that the Young Adventurers group had been well attended this year with 16 to 20 young people attending each session. Richard also advised that they had a trip to an activity centre with 80 young people in attendance, 20 of those were from Sevenoaks.

Outreach work had continued with almost 100 young people seen during the last three months.

Richard reported that the van donated to West Kent Housing was for community use and there were lots of ideas for next year, including estate visits and community days with housing officers, and PCSOs in attendance, with advice about employment and training.

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West Kent Housing are working with the Sevenoaks Lidl and would receive donations from the Christmas toy appeal. The District Council was also providing some food vouchers for families in need.

Councillors suggested that the Town Council could consider running its warm coats appeal again this year; Richard confirmed that West Kent would welcome donations.

482 Young Person Mentoring Scheme

The Committee received and considered the report outlining the impact of the Young Person mentoring Scheme. Daren Mountain reported that the Scheme had been well attended with HitB seeing dozens of young people.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the report.

483 Funding Proposal for Detached Work in Sevenoaks

The Committee considered a request for funding of £15,000 from West Kent Housing to enable them to maintain the detached youth service in Sevenoaks District following the withdrawal of funding from Kent County Council from March 2024.

The funding is for one year to enable West Kent to continue to provide the service whilst developing a funding plan (including bids to the National Lottery and large charitable trusts) for a long-term project starting in April 2025. Details of the proposed Sevenoaks District Detached Youth Work Project were noted. Richard advised that £21,000 had been secured so far.

RESOLVED: To RECOMMEND to the Finance & General Purposes Committee that £15,000 funding be approved for the West Kent Housing, Sevenoaks District Detached Youth Work Project for 2024-2025 subject to appropriate reporting measures being put in place.

484 Sevenoaks Town Council's Sports Strategy

It was noted that the first meeting of the group set up to guide the direction of the second Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy had taken place on 4th October 2023. The main output of the meeting was the need for additional facilities for growing memberships, with the next steps being an audit of existing and desired sports provision/facilities via a questionnaire to identify trends of use and demand for particular services. Details were awaited from SDC who were doing their own audit, to avoid question replication.

The Committee noted that during the Sports Strategy meeting it was reported that there had been a significant increase in girls' sport, highlighting a shortage of available pitches.

RESOLVED: To note that the next meeting of the Sports Strategy Group would be held once the responses from the planned questionnaire were available.

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485 Public Spaces Protection Order Survey Results

Maxine Quinton informed the Committee that following the overwhelming support in the consultation exercise, the Public Spaces Protection Order for The Vine would be considered at the District Council's People and Places Advisory Committee on 30th November, and if agreed, to full Cabinet on 14th December 2023. If approved implementation would be in the New Year.

486 Greatness Skateboard Park Refurbishment

The Committee noted that the skate park refurbishment was complete and that the very re-opening event on 24th October had been a huge success with up to 200 young people attending at the peak. Thanks were expressed to both officers and the Council for completing this project so quickly.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the report of the Greatness Skate Park refurbishment and event.

487 Climate Change Youth Forum

RESOLVED: To note that Sevenoaks Town Council was to trial holding a meeting of the Climate Change Youth Forum after school to try to improve attendance.

488 Youth Council Elections

RESOLVED: To note that the Youth Council elections had closed the week of the 2nd of October 2023 with 15 new Youth Councillors being elected. The first meeting of the new Youth Council had been held on 1st of November 2023.

489 Press Release

RESOLVED: That a press release be issued regarding the election of the new Youth Council. .

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

Signed
Chairman

Dated