

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Youth Services Working Group
Held on 11th November 2024 at the Town Council Offices

Meeting Commenced: 2.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 3.02 p.m.

Present:

CLlr Chloe Gustard (Chair)	Present	CLlr Dr Marilyn Canet	Present
CLlr Catherine Daniell (Vice-Chair, Deputy-Leader)	Apologies	CLlr Gareth Willis	Apologies
Co-opted members			
Sevenoaks Youth Council: Harry King Madeleine Politzer	Apologies Apologies	Sevenoaks District Council: Maxine Quinton	Present
Kent County Council: Vacant	–	West Kent Communities: Richard Dowling	Present
Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust: Peter Robinson	Apologies	National Trust: Amy Sabine	Apologies

Substitute		For
CLlr Shea	Present	CLlr Catherine Daniell (Vice-Chair, Deputy-Leader)
Dawn Hallam- Chair of SAYT	Present	Peter Robinson

In attendance: Town Clerk, Manager of House in the Basement Youth Café, Youth Committee Clerk.

- 219. Apologies for Absence:** Received and accepted as noted above.
- 220. Requests for Dispensations:** There were no requests for dispensations.
- 221. Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
- 222. Minutes of Youth Services Committee held on 11th September 2024**
It was agreed to receive and accept the minutes as a true record.
- 223. Minutes of Sevenoaks Youth Council meeting held on 11th September 2024**
It was agreed to receive and accept the minutes as a true record.
- 224. House in the Basement Youth Café (HitB)**
- 224.1 Manager's Report**
The Working Group received a report from Daren Mountain, Manager of House in the Basement, noting in particular:
- Skateness had taken place and was very well attended with all three of the sessions provided by Samsara Sport, funded by Sevenoaks Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council, being fully booked. Samsara had expressed an interest in hosting a similar type of event over the February half-term.
 - Open Mic Nights had returned to HitB with over 30 young people attending the first one on Wednesday 30th October. It was noted that many of the young people who attended these events had not previously heard of HitB and some had since attended regular sessions. It was suggested that

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consideration be given to contacting Sevenoaks Three Arts with a view to holding an Open Mic Night at HitB during their festival.

- Uptake on the NEET project had not taken off with little engagement from schools. It was noted that new guidelines had been set out by central government regarding the level of NEET individuals recorded across the country. The lack of engagement from schools might be a byproduct of this. It was suggested that a way to tackle this issue could be to register the project as an alternate provision to schools. Daren commented that many young people unable to attend school may not feel comfortable attending something similar. However, he reported that those who had attended in the past had since started attending the SEN club every Tuesday and that one young person has trialed a few of the other sessions at House in the Basement.
- HitB Christmas party would be held on Friday 20th December at 4.30 pm. Daren expressed his thanks to Florence & Perfect Cuisine for providing the food for this event. It was noted all were welcome to come and join but there would be limited spaces available.

224.2 Finance Cost Centre Reports, September 2024

The Finance Cost Centre reports for the House in the Basement Youth Café for September 2024 were received and noted.

It was noted that House in the Basement received a grant in August from the National Lottery for £10,000 towards staffing costs.

225. House in the Basement Video

The Working Group watched a video produced by youth workers Gabby and Kassia, interviewing young people about their experience of attending House in the Basement Youth Café. It was noted that the video had been posted on social media and the House in the Basement Website.

The Working Group watched an interview with Daren Mountain by the Rail Safe Friendly team talking about Sevenoaks Town Council, the Darent Valley Rail Partnership and House in the Basement's plan to hold sessions for young people in years 5 and 6 to visit the Bat and Ball Station, watch a video on rail safety and carry out an activity to design a poster to promote rail safety to young people which will also allow the schools to apply for the Gold achievement through the Rail Safe Friendly scheme. It was noted there had been no uptake from Primary Schools regarding this as of yet.

It is hoped that the scheme would be extended to secondary schools after the primary school sessions.

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226. Reports from Co-opted Partners

The following reports from Co-opted Partners were noted:

i) Sevenoaks District Council, Community Safety

Maxine Quinton reported that Sevenoaks Town had been reasonably quiet with fewer reported issues than in previous years. It was noted that there were some issues over Halloween with a group from Edenbridge, Maxine advised that the police were now dealing with the situation.

The Chair raised the issue of a letter that had been sent via Kent Police to the local schools regarding the Christmas Lights Switch On event. It was noted that the letter was not supportive of young people.

ii) West Kent Youth Services (WKYS)

The Youth Services Working Group received Ben Reynold's report. Richard Dowling reported that WKYS would be attending the Christmas Lights Switch On, with a stall and providing detached work within the town.

Richard reported that during the October half-term, they had taken 60 Young Adventurers to Thriftwood, 17 of those who attended were from Sevenoaks Town. It was noted that the Young Adventurers would finish for the winter break on the 13th of December and reopen on the 2nd of January.

The Youth Services Working Group also heard that the National Lottery had changed the eligibility criteria for grants and unfortunately, WKYS no longer qualified for the funding. Richard also reported that the Young Adventurers funding from Children in Need would run out in March and they had informed WKYS that there was a 12% chance of receiving funding due to the number of applications received this year.

iii) Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust (SAYT)

Dawn Hallam reported that since the loss of the minibus, SAYT had been exploring different ways of undertaking detached work. One of the SAYT youth groups had suggested attending the MUGA at the Bat and Ball Centre and inviting their friends to attend. Dawn expressed an interest in hiring one of the Bat & Ball Centre rooms for a Thursday in case of poor weather.

Richard also offered the use of the West Kent Van which is currently parked at the Bat and Ball Centre.

227. Skateboarding Sessions

The Councillors noted that Sevenoaks Town Council and the District Council had funded a series of Skateboarding Sessions that took place on the 1st of November. It was noted that Samsara Sport would be writing a proposal to

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Sevenoaks Town Council to provide more sessions over a longer period in 2025.

228. Press Release:

Agreed that a press release be issued regarding the House in the Basement Christmas Party.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting.

Signed
Chair

Dated