Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Delivery Committee – 25th November 2024

Held in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices, TN13 3QG

Livestreamed and available to view on YouTube until approved by Council:
https://youtube.com/live/ae2SHEhY1lw?feature=share

Meeting commenced: 7:24pm Meeting Concluded: 8:36pm

Present:

Cllr Tony Clayton, **Chair**	Present	Cllr Catherine Daniell (Deputy Leader)	Present
Cllr Nigel Wightman, **Leader & Vice-Chair**	Present	Cllr Dr Peter Dixon	Present
Cllr Libby Ancrum (Mayor, ex-officio)	Present	Cllr David Skinner OBE	Present
Cllr Dr Merilyn Canet	Present	Cllr Nicholas Varley	Present

In attendance: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

Members of Public in attendance: 0
Representations received from Members of the Public: None

432 Apologies for Absence: None

433 Dispensations: There were no requests for dispensations.

434 Declaration of Interest
Cllr Varley declared an interest in Agenda Item 10, Review of Lease of Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk, as he was a former member of the cricket club and still occasionally played cricket at the Vine. He took no part in the discussion and did not vote thereon.

435 Minutes of Finance & Delivery Committee on 14th October 2024
RESOLVED: to receive and sign the Minutes of the Finance and Delivery Committee held on 14th October 2024 as a true record.

436 Management Accounts to 31st October 2024

436.1 The Committee received and noted, for the period ended 31st October 2024, the Responsible Finance Officer's Report including Income and Expenditure by Cost Centre, Variance Analysis, Fund Balances, Statutory Balance Sheet, Earmarked Reserves and Operating Income and Expenditure.

It was noted that the year-to-date position at the end of October 2024 gave a revenue surplus of £15,833. Allowing for the Bat & Ball Station reserves movement which offsets some of the Bat & Ball Station £37,336 year to date deficit, the adjusted position was £53,171 surplus.

The Committee noted that the Heritage Lottery Fund support for the start-up phase of the Bat & Ball Station would run out at the end of December 2024. The uses of contingency set out in the report were noted.

RESOLVED: to receive and accept the Responsible Finance Officer's Report and Management Accounts 1st to 31st October 2024.

436.2 The Committee received and noted:

Suppliers Accounts
- 1st to 31st October 2024, total gross invoices £70,423.72

List of Payments Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account
- 1st to 31st October 2024, total £307,557.06

List of Payments Mayor's Charity Account:
- 1st to 31st October 2024, total £-45.00

Payroll Accounts
- 1st to 31st October 2024, total payments £107,753.95

Petty Cash Accounts for:
- 1st to 31st October 2024, total payments £438.26

436.3 Hospitality and Gifts Register: None

437 Management Accounts to 30th September 2024

437.1 The Committee received and noted, for the period ended 30th September 2024, the Responsible Finance Officer's Report with Income and Expenditure by Cost Centre, Variance Analysis, Fund Balances, Statutory Balance Sheet, Earmarked Reserves and Operating Income & Expenditure.

It was noted that the year-to-date position at the end of September 2024 gave a revenue surplus of £12,300. Allowing for the Bat & Ball Station reserves movement which offsets some of the Bat & Ball Station £32,082 year to date deficit, the adjusted position was £44,382 surplus.

RESOLVED: to receive and accept the Responsible Finance Officer's Report and Management Accounts 1st to 30th September 2024.

437.2 The Committee received and noted:

Suppliers Accounts
- 1st to 30th September 2024, total gross invoices £95,805.84

List of Payments Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account
- 1st to 30th September 2024, total £216,217.44

List of Payments Mayor's Charity Account:
- 1st to 30th September 2024, total £0.00

Payroll Accounts

- 1st to 30th September 2024, total payments £99,638.42

Petty Cash Accounts for:

- 1st to 30th September 2024, total payments £316.40

437.3 Hospitality and Gifts Register: None

438 Internal Audit Report Visit 1

The Council received and noted the Internal Audit Report Visit 1 (2024/25), dated 24th October 2024 and congratulated officers on receiving a clear audit.

RESOLVED: that the the Internal Audit Report Visit 1 (2024/25) be received and noted.

439 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Update Report

The Committee considered the CIL Update report, including the list of agreed projects, and noted that the projected unallocated balance at the end of April 2025 (as of November 2024) would be approximately £145,000.

It was noted that the commitment of £87,500 for the new Greatness Recreation Ground Pavilion would be required in the next financial year.

RESOLVED: That the CIL Update report be received and noted, future reports to include approximate timeline for delivery of project.

440 Grant Application received

The Committee noted the budget for grants to local voluntary organisations for 2024/25 and the balance to date.

Consideration was given to an application from MX Fencing Club for support with alternative venue costs when their regular venue was not available. It was suggested that the Club consider using the Bat & Ball Centre.

RESOLVED: That a grant request be awarded under the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011 Sections 1-8 refers) as follows:

Grant Ref No.	Organisation	Purpose of Award	Grant Application	Grant Approved
80	MX Fencing Club	Towards cost of 40 (5 weeks) hours of venue costs at standard rates.	£2000	£1000

441 Review of Lease: Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk

The Committee considered the Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk lease, which was for a 25-year term, expiring on 23rd September 2028. The lease was last reviewed in 2020. It was noted that previous lease reviews had not been in line with inflation.

RESOLVED: That a rent review be undertaken and the annual rent for the Vine Cricket Pavilion and Tea Kiosk be increased to £4,500 per annum.

442 Government Consultation: Enabling Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting at Local Authority Meetings

Consideration was given to the Government consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings. Committee members confirmed their support for remote attendance at meetings but expressed reservations regarding proxy voting as they felt that the current Town Council practice of appointing substitutes was an efficient process.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk submit a response on behalf of the Town Council in support of the process to enable remote attendance at local authority meetings but did not agree to proxy voting as believed Councillors should engage with debates prior to voting.

443 Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Review of Sevenoaks District Council

The Committee noted that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England was seeking views on a proposed reduction of Sevenoaks District Councillors from 54 to 48, and how the wards should be amended to reflect this.

RESOLVED: To note the process at this stage, and await the recommendations from the Boundary Commission

444 Draft Revenue Estimates 2025/26

The Committee received updated draft revenue estimates and the following information.

14.10.24	Draft Precept	
	£1,510,834	5.09% increase
	£152.73 Band D	£7.40 p.a. increase on previous year
Nov 24	Government Budget	
	Changes to Employer NI & Minimum Wage levels	
	£27,166 p.a. increase to STC on wage bill	
	CEO / RFO review = reduce special events from £20,000 to £10,000	
	Change to Special Events + £27,166 = **6.28%**	

Cllrs have been given summary document for other changes to STC operation if they wish to make further savings.

Dec 24 *Band D numbers expected from SDC, expected to reduce percentage.

Jan 25 STC to confirm Precept / Budget

Precept	£	% increase
2023 /24	1,370,074	
2024 / 25	1,437,614	4.42%
2025 / 26	1,528,080	6.28%

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Tax Base	9,845	9,892	9.892*
Band D equivalent	£139.17	£145.33	£154.47
		4.42%	6.28%

RESOLVED: To receive and note the updated draft Revenue Budget 2025/26 which would be subject to further review, prior to submission to Council for approval in January 2025.

445 Recommendation from Community & Wellbeing Committee – 16th September 2024

The Committee considered the recommendation from the Community & Wellbeing Committee regarding an allocation of a £2000 budget to the Bat & Ball Station for grant subsidies for room hire. *[Minute 311.1, Community & Wellbeing Committee 16.09.2024 refers]*

RESOLVED: That £2,000 be allocated for Grant Subsidies for Room Hire at the Bat & Ball Station.

446 Community Asset Working Group

The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Community Asset Working Group held on 6th November 2024.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the meeting of the Community Asset Working Group held on 6th November 2024

447 Sevenoaks Town Team

The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Town Team Annual General Meeting held on 20th November 2024, together with the recommendation therein to progress the Business Improvement District (BID) proposal.

It was noted that if the BID proposal was successful the Town Council would be able to recover the previously agreed development costs from BID income but if it failed the costs would fall to the Town Council.

RESOLVED:

1) To receive and note the minutes of the Town Team Annual General Meeting held on 20th November 2024
2) That the Business Improvement District (BID) proposal proceeds to the next stage which includes the appointment of a steering committee and the development of a Business Plan, which in due course would to be put to a ballot of qualifying businesses.

448 Current Matters

RESOLVED: To note the updates to current matters.

449 Press Release: It was agreed that press releases be issued in relation to:

- Grant award to MX fencing
- Government Consultation on remote attendance at meetings
- Progression of Business Improvement District (BID) proposal

There being no further business the Chair closed the Meeting.

Signed …….. Dated ……..
Chair