

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Delivery Committee – 20th July 2026

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/Z2obOtRmfa4>

Meeting commenced: 19:00 Meeting Concluded: 20:08

Present:

Cllr Nigel Wightman, Chair	Present	Cllr Dr Peter Dixon	Present
Cllr Claire Shea, Leader & Vice-Chair	Apologies	Cllr Victoria Granville, Mayor	Present
Cllr Libby Ancrum	Present	Cllr David Skinner OBE	Present
Cllr Catherine Daniell, Deputy Leader	Apologies		

Cllr Dr Merilyn Canet	Substitute for	Cllr Catherine Daniell
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In attendance: Town Clerk and Senior Committee Clerk.

3 members of the public were present.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. A member of the public addressed the Committee in relation to Agenda Item 8, Additional Land at Longspring Woods (*Minutes 229 & 238 refer*).
2. The meeting was adjourned from 19:29 to 19:40 (*Minute 230 below*) to enable Cllr Richard Streatfeild, Sevenoaks District Council & Kent County Council (KCC), to provide the following update:
 - KCC has approved the Kent Minerals Plan to go forward to the Inspector
 - Public Footpath SU12 will be closed for its whole length between its junction from Robyns Way and London Road from 22nd July to allow for improvements and widening to the footpath, it's expected to take 6 weeks (1st August).
 - Route 4 of the Sevenoaks Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (SDC), which links Sevenoaks Station to Dunton Green Station has received government funding of £1.5m
 - Cllr Streatfeild's current case work includes 3 families submitting SEN transport appeals
 - KCC's SEND Local Area Partnership Ofsted Inspection has taken place with the report due in the Autumn
 - The KCC Crime and Disorder Committee had detailed police work in the County and relative priorities being used, with resources allocated based on levels of crime
 - Noted that the Government had announced its decision on Local Government Reorganisation Kent & Medway, moving ahead with the four unitary council model without boundary changes

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- Shadow elections would be held in May 2027
- There was no information yet on the election of a Kent Mayor

224 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: To receive and accept apologies for absence as shown above.

225 - REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Noted that all Councillors who were also Stag Trustees had a pre-approved dispensation, reference Minute 239 below, regarding the Stag Community Arts Centre.

226 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

227 - MINUTES OF FINANCE & DELIVERY COMMITTEE - 8TH JUNE 2026

RESOLVED: To receive, adopt and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Delivery Committee held on 8th June 2026 as a true record.

228 – CHANGE TO ORDER OF AGENDA

RESOLVED: That the order of the agenda be amended to facilitate consideration of the following item on Land at Longspring Woods for the benefit of the members of public in attendance.

229 – ADDITIONAL LAND AT LONGSPRING WOODS

Councillors were mindful of the public representation at the beginning of the meeting by neighbouring residents who were keen to purchase the land.

In September 2023, Sevenoaks Town Council successfully nominated two parcels of ancient woodland, collectively known as Longspring Wood, to be registered as Assets of Community Value under the Localism Act's national "Right to Bid" process. The larger parcel of land was put up for sale and following a successful community funding campaign the Town Council purchased it in 2024.

It was noted that the owner had now submitted their intent to sell the second smaller parcel of Longspring Wood, located to the west of the main parcel.

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Councillors discussed the Town Council's wish to maintain the ancient woodland in perpetuity and considered practical issues including maintenance and enabling public access to the site, together with the possibility of leasing the site to a neighbouring resident. It was suggested that Kent County Council be asked about their long-term plans for the adjacent playing field. Sensitive information regarding the valuation of the site would be shared with councillors in the confidential part of this meeting (Minute 238 below).

RESOLVED: that the Town Council continues to explore the potential purchase of the land at Longspring Woods, with a further report addressing the practical aspects outlined above to be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

230 - MEETING ADJOURNED 19:29 to 19:40

RESOLVED: That the meeting be adjourned to enable Cllr Richard Streatfeild, Sevenoaks District Council & Kent County Council, to provide an update (recorded at Public Question 2 above).

231 - FINANCE REPORTS - MAY 2026

231.1 Responsible Finance Officer's reports to 31st May 2026

Statement of Accounts

The Committee received and considered the Statement of Accounts, together with the Finance Officer's report for the month ended 31st May 2026, including Income and Expenditure by cost centre, Variance Analysis, Fund Balances, Statutory Balance Sheet, Earmarked Reserves and Operating Income & Expenditure, together with:

Suppliers' Accounts

- 1st to 31st May 2026, total gross invoices £388,297.49

List of Payments

- Sevenoaks Town Council Nat West Account: 1st to 31st May 2026, total £1,305,644.61
- Mayor's Charity Account: 1st to 31st May 2026 - None

Payroll Account

- 1st to 31st May 2026, total £95,812.35

Petty Cash Account

- 1st to 31st May 2026, total payments £356.14

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It was noted that the year-to-date position at the end of May 2026 showed a surplus of £37,718. Key variances to date included:

- Grass seed at 93.3% of annual expenditure as extra work was being undertaken to pitches and a further grant claim would be made to the Football Foundation
- Cemetery Income was £5,325 above budget year to date
- Council Offices income was favourable at £5,138 above budget year to date but the main hirer of the council chamber had not booked as many dates for this financial year

It was noted that the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at the Bat & Ball Centre had been professionally cleaned and re-lined at a total cost of £7,460. It was requested that this be funded from the Council's Contingency budget, which currently stood at £72,165.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the Management Accounts 1st to 31st May 2026 be received and accepted
- 2) to approve the allocation of £7,460 from the Contingency budget to fund the completed cleaning and re-lining works to the Multi-Use Games Area at the Bat & Ball Centre

231.2 - Hospitality and Gifts Register

RESOLVED: To note that no Hospitality or Gifts had been received by Councillors or staff for the period 1st to 31st May 2026.

232 - BANK MANDATE UPDATE

RESOLVED: that the following current elected Councillors be confirmed as Sevenoaks Town Council bank signatories:

- The Mayor & Deputy Mayor
- Chair & Vice-Chair of the Finance & Delivery Committee
- Chair & Vice-Chair of the Community Asset (Open Spaces) Committee

**233 - RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMUNITY ASSETS (OPEN SPACES) COMMITTEE:
ALLOTMENT RENTS**

The Committee considered the recommendation from the Community Assets (Open Spaces) Committee regarding allotment rents for 2027/2028 (*Minute 204.1, CA(OS) 06.07.26 refers*).

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RESOLVED:

- 1) That 2027/2028 allotment rents for Quakers Hall Allotments be increased by no more than 2.8% i.e. to 26p per square metre
- 2) That 2027/2028 allotment rents for Bradbourne Vale Allotments be increased by no more than 2.8% i.e. to 25p per square metre
- 3) That the increase be communicated to the tenants in September along with their renewal correspondence and invoice, with the increase effective from 1st October 2027.

234 - RUGBY CLUB LEASE

Sevenoaks Town Council had granted a lease of land at Knole Paddock to the Rugby Club for a term of 25 years expiring on 24th December 2044. It was noted that the first rent review under the Rugby Club lease was due on 25th December 2026.

RESOLVED: To defer consideration of the rent review to the next meeting of this Committee.

235 - CURRENT MATTERS

RESOLVED: To receive and note updates to current matters.

236 - PRESS RELEASE: None

237 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded for the following items by reason of the confidential nature of the business.

238 - ADDITIONAL LAND AT LONGSPRING WOODS (reference Minute 229 above)

RESOLVED: That the valuation of the additional land at Longspring Woods be received and noted.

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239 - STAG COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE

The Committee noted the latest position in relation to negotiations with Sevenoaks District Council regarding the Town Council's Community Asset Transfer request for the Stag Freehold, including the advice received from King's Counsel, and proposed next steps.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.

Signed: Dated:

Chair