

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF SEVENOAKS

Minutes of the Meeting of the Sevenoaks District Council held on 21 February 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Raikes (Chairman)

Cllr. Abraham (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Mrs. Bayley, Ball, C. Barnes, Barnes, Bosley, Mrs. Bosley, Brown, Dr. Canet, Clark, Dickins, Dyball, Edwards-Winser, Esler, Eyre, Firth, Fleming, Halford, Hogarth, Hogg, Horwood, Mrs. Hunter, Kitchener, Krogdahl, Lake, Layland, Lowe, Maskell, McGarvey, McGregor, Mrs. Morris, Parkin, Pearsall, Pett, Piper, Purves, Reay, Scott, Scholey, Searles, Ms. Tennessee, Thornton and Williamson

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Clack, Cooke, Grint, Kelly, McArthur, Parson and Miss. Stack

25. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 November 2016

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 November 2016 be approved and signed as a correct record.

26. To receive any declarations of interest not included in the register of interest from Members in respect of items of business included on the agenda for this meeting

No additional declarations of interest were received.

27. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced the sad passing of former Chairman Peter Dean, and advised that he had attended his thanksgiving on Friday 17 February 2017 at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church, Edenbridge. Peter had been an elected member for Edenbridge North from 1991 - 1995 and 1999 - 2007, and Chairman of the Council from 2001 - 2002. Members held a moments silence in his memory.

Christmas had taken place between now and the last meeting of the Council and amongst other events he had enjoyed the Staff Carol Service and had the pleasure talking to staff on his Christmas 'walkabout.' He wished to particularly record his thanks to all staff at Dunbrik for maintaining the once a week refuse collection service over the holiday period. He had visited the CCTV Control Room Christmas day which had been manned by two officers that day, and he had been reminded of the help CCTV could offer other than for crime when a call had come through to help locate a missing person.

The Chairman advised that he had attended St Michael's Primary Schools' Jazz Day with his wife and the Vice Chairman, and was blown away by the jazz concert performed by so many enthusiastic and talented young musicians from primary

schools all brought together at St Michael's for a jazz workshop. It was a joy to listen to and had demonstrated just how much young musical talent the District had.

The Chairman announced that he was hosting a Charity Gala Dinner at Penshurst Place on 7 April, tickets £80 each, fundraising for his two charities, Guide Dogs for the Blind and West Kent Mind.

28. To receive any questions from members of the public under paragraph 17 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution.

No questions had been received.

29. To receive any petitions submitted by members of the public under paragraph 18 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution.

No petitions were received.

30. Matters considered by the Cabinet

(a) Calculation of Council Tax Base and other Tax Setting Issues

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Scholey seconded, the recommendation from Cabinet. The report set out details of the calculation of the District's tax base for council tax setting purposes.

Resolved: That

- a) the report of the Chief Finance Officer for the calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2017/18 be approved;
- b) pursuant to the report of the Chief Finance Officer and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended) the amount calculated by the Sevenoaks District Council as its council tax base for the whole area for the year 2017/18 shall be 49,382.42;
- c) pursuant to the report of the Chief Finance Officer and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended) the amount calculated by the Sevenoaks District Council as the council tax base for 2017/18 for the calculation of local precepts shall be:

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Tax Base</u>
Ash-cum-Ridley	2,417.81
Badgers Mount	329.71

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Brasted	772.34
Chevening	1,448.06
Chiddingstone	595.80
Cowden	406.15
Crockenhill	647.99
Dunton Green	1,116.66
Edenbridge	3,505.34
Eynsford	929.09
Farningham	650.57
Fawkham	284.48
Halstead	760.41
Hartley	2,527.05
Hever	599.88
Hextable	1,650.64
Horton Kirby & South Darent	1,292.20
Kemsing	1,824.29
Knockholt	619.36
Leigh	818.76
Otford	1,668.43
Penshurst	829.69
Riverhead	1,237.13

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Seal	1,198.96
Sevenoaks Town	9,315.37
Sevenoaks Weald	619.66
Shoreham	682.88
Sundridge	924.22
Swanley	5,407.86
Westerham	1,979.25
West Kingsdown	2,322.38

- d) any expenses incurred by the Council in performing in part of its area a function performed elsewhere in its area by a parish or community council or the chairman of a parish meeting shall not be treated as special expenses for the purposes of section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(b) Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Scholey seconded, the recommendations from Cabinet. The report sought approval of the Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18.

Resolved: That the Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18 be approved.

(c) Budget and Council Tax Setting 2017/18

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Scholey seconded, the recommendations within the report and from Cabinet.

Councillor Fleming stated that as with last year, the next financial year would continue to have a balanced ten year budget and the Council would continue to be fully self-sufficient from direct central government grant with the difference that the Council would not be receiving any grant anyway.

He stated that the country had the most centralised local government in the western world, but he truly believed that with the budget before Members, 21 February 2017, was Sevenoaks District Council's independence day and the news would reverberate far beyond the district's borders. The Council would be seen as

not only a shining example of what could be achieved when Councillors, Officers and communities committed to what, was seen by some as an unachievable goal, but also as a road map to a relationship less based on rannygazoo, to one based on mutual respect between local and national government. To even the casual observer the figures were quite extraordinary; in the last seven years Sevenoaks District Council's revenue support grant had fallen by over five million pounds. That meant the direct grant funding for every man, women and child within the District had reduced from £55.95 in 2010 to zero.

With that bleak outlook, many would have expected the recommendations the budget papers to be full of cuts and massive reductions in services, with the consequences of those decisions felt across all the Council's communities and the hard fought reputation for high quality services quickly lost. Instead, Members had before them a balanced ten year budget, that protected the services the public told Members they cared most about. Members had made savings and efficiencies and would continue to need to do both, but not by sacrificing services or making decisions in an unplanned and haphazard way.

Since last year the property portfolio had grown, and the arm's length company was up and running and he thanked all Members and Officers who had helped to make both of those a reality.

He stated that the Council as a whole came to the realisation some time ago that the risk of doing nothing was greater than risk of doing something, that something was to use the capital receipts the Council had in the bank, earning derisory interest, for the benefit of the community served. The Council had built a portfolio of income earning assets, the return from which Members could see was supporting the budget in front of them. It had gone quicker and ambition was now greater; property not just to support the budget but to support, encourage and regenerate our communities. The next year would see plans brought forward in Swanley, Edenbridge and Sevenoaks looking to build out the aspirations of those communities.

Members knew that he strongly believed that the make-up of the money spend should always be balanced. The main three pillars that remained after the removal of government support were Council Tax, Savings and Investment income, and over reliance on any one of those destabilised the authority. However, moving forward the Council should continue to look at how the burden of council tax on residents served could be reduced.

The new Secretary of State had continued with last year's advice to districts, and made it possible for those districts where a five pound rise in the annual council tax rate was in excess of the 2% referendum limit such a rise would not only be allowed but recommended, as part of the more general move away from direct government support. For Sevenoaks it would be an increase of £4.95 and in percentage terms this was a 0.5% increase on the figure in the 10 year budget or an additional 99 pence a year. It was worth remembering that this remained below the original assumptions in the ten year budget of 3%, changed to 2% when it looked unlikely that the government would move its position on referendum limits.

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He advised the Chairman that he could talk at length about the vagaries of central government largess, the fact that just weeks after asking Councils to sign up to a four year deal they reneged on the agreed New Homes Bonus funding, but for this Council us that would have seemed churlish, yes it would have an impact, but, like the Revenue Support Grant there was no longer a direct need for it to support the services provided, so least said soonest mended.

The work that Members and Officers at Sevenoaks District Council had done and the outcomes achieved had gained national recognition, whether within the sector with a double win at last year's Municipal Journal awards or beyond local government with another double win at the Guardian Public Service awards, including being named their overall winner. Whilst awards weren't why anyone there came into local government, they did act as a yard stick with which to measure against others not allowing backsliding or any resting on laurels. Over the coming years the Council would need to go further, faster, and learning from others and leading.

There would undoubtedly be challenges ahead, the future was not without risk, some of them falling outside of the Council's control, and all the Council could do was make sure it was fit for, ready for, and up for the challenges. The work done and the work to do, supported by the balanced ten year budget before Members was the solid foundation that made him believe that the Sevenoaks District wouldn't just survive but would thrive in the future.

The Leader commended the budget to Members.

Councillor Dr. Canet was pleased it had all been taken seriously and carefully but was concerned about the Property Investment Strategy and speculating with Council Taxpayers money.

Councillor Halford expressed a desire to keep business rates fair in order to encourage businesses in the District.

Councillor Fleming responded that the Council was now in its sixth year of the rolling 10 year budget which helped focus Officers and Members when making decisions which impacted on the future. Indeed it was now a model being looked at by other local authorities. It had long been decided that the risk of doing nothing was greater than that of doing something and money sitting in the bank was earning less than 0.5% and was not good stewardship of money held in trust for residents. Yes there was a risk but it was balance and the Council no longer received government support.

The vote was taken.

For	Against	Abstention
Cllr. Abraham Cllr. Mrs Bayley Cllr. Ball Cllr. C. Barnes	Cllr. Dr. Canet Cllr. Hogg	Cllr. Halford

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Cllr. Barnes Cllr. Bosley Cllr. Mrs. Bosley Cllr. Brown Cllr. Clark Cllr. Dickins Cllr. Dyball Cllr. Edwards-Winser Cllr. Esler Cllr. Eyre Cllr. Firth Cllr. Fleming Cllr. Hogarth Cllr. Horwood Cllr. Mrs. Hunter Cllr. Kitchener Cllr. Krogdahl Cllr. Lake Cllr. Layland Cllr. Lowe Cllr. Maskell Cllr. McGarvey Cllr. McGregor Cllr. Mrs. Morris Cllr. Parkin Cllr. Pearsall Cllr. Pett Cllr. Piper Cllr. Purves Cllr. Raikes Cllr. Reay Cllr. Scott Cllr. Scholey Cllr. Searles Cllr. Ms. Tennessee Cllr. Thornton Cllr. Williamson		
41	2	1

It was therefore

Resolved: That

- a) the Summary of Council Expenditure and Council Tax for 2017/18 set out in Appendix E to the report, be approved;
- b) the 10-year budget 2017/18 to 2026/27 which is the guiding framework for the detailed approval of future years' budgets set out in Appendix B to the report, including the growth and savings proposals set out in Appendix C-D to the report be approved, and that where possible any

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variations during and between years be met from the Budget Stabilisation Reserve;

- c) the Capital Programme 2017/20 and funding method set out in Appendix H to the report, be approved;
- d) the changes to reserves and provisions set out in Appendix I to the report, be approved;
- e) the Capital Programme 2017/20, and Asset Maintenance 2017/18 budget of £519,000 be approved (Cabinet 9 February 2017 - Capital Programme & Asset Maintenance 2017/20);
- f) it be noted that at the Cabinet meeting on 23 January 2017 the Council calculated as its council tax base for the year 2017/18;
 - (i) for the whole Council area as 49,382.42 being Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended, (the “Act”); and
 - (ii) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a parish precept relates as set out in Appendix L to the report;
- g) the Council tax requirement for the Council’s own purpose for 2017/18 (excluding Town and Parish precepts) be calculated as £202.77;
- h) the following amounts be calculated for the year 2017/18 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (i) £55,312,649 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Town and Parish Councils.
 - (ii) £41,293,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (iii) £14,019,649 being the amount by which the aggregate at (h)(i) above exceeds the aggregate at (h)(ii) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - (iv) £283.90 being the amount at (h)(iii) above (Item R), all divided by (f)(i) above (Item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section

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31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including Town and Parish precepts).

- (v) £4,006,376 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Town and Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix K).
 - (vi) £202.77 being the amount at (h)(iv) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at (h)(v) above by the amount at (f)(i) above (Item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Town or Parish precept relates.
- i) it be noted that for the year 2017/18 the Kent County Council, the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner and the Kent & Medway Towns Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below:-

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	<u>Precepting Authority</u>			
	Sevenoaks District Council £	Kent County Council £	Kent Police & C.C. £	Kent & Medway Towns Fire Authority £
A	135.18	785.88	104.77	48.90
B	157.71	916.86	122.23	57.05
C	180.24	1,047.84	139.69	65.20
D	202.77	1,178.82	157.15	73.35
E	247.83	1,440.78	192.07	89.65
F	292.89	1,702.74	226.99	105.95
G	337.95	1,964.70	261.92	122.25
H	405.54	2,357.64	314.30	146.70

- j) the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in Appendix N to the report as the amounts of council tax for the year 2017/18 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings;
- k) the Council's basic amount of council tax for 2017/18, shown in (h)(vi) above, was not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

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(d) Financial Results 2016/17 - to the end of September 2016

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Scholey seconded, the recommendation from Cabinet.

Resolved: That a supplementary estimate of £210,000 be approved in respect of timing issues arising from the Council's Property Investment Strategy.

31. Matters considered by other standing committees

(a) Gambling Act 2005: Licence Fees from April 2017

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Clark seconded the recommendations from the Licensing Committee.

Resolved: That the appropriate fees from 1 April 2017, as set out below be approved

Premises Type	New Application £	Annual Fee £
Existing Casinos	n/a	n/a
New Small Casino	7820	4340
New Large Casino	9000	7005
Bingo Club	2220	780
Betting Premises (excluding Tracks)	2790	565
Tracks	1740	780
Family Entertainment Centres	1740	640
Adult Gaming Centre	1740	780
Temporary Use Notice	225	N/A

	Applicati on to Vary	Applicatio n to Transfer	Applicatio n for Re- Instateme nt	Application for Provisional Statement	Licence Application (provisional Statement holders)	Copy Licence	Notificati on of Change
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Existing Casinos	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
New Small	3820	1645	1645	7875	2810	12	28

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Casino							
New Large Casino	4275	2090	2090	9005	4125	12	28
Bingo Club	1670	1200	405	2220	1200	12	28
Betting Premises (excluding tracks)	1500	1200	385	1740	1200	12	28
Tracks	1250	950	385	1695	950	12	28
Family Entertainment Centres	1000	950	390	1735	950	12	28
Adult Gaming Centre	1000	1200	390	1735	1200	12	28
Temporary Use Notice	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12	28

- (b) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 - Licence Fees From April 2017

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Clark seconded the recommendations from the Licensing Committee.

Resolved: That the appropriate fee levels as £3,580 for a new or renewal application, and £1,795 for transfer of an application, be approved.

- (c) Monitoring Officer's Annual Report

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Ball seconded the recommendations from the Standards Committee.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

(d) Members' Allowance Scheme

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Pett seconded the recommendations from the Governance Committee.

Resolved: That Appendix G, Members' allowance Scheme, of the Council's Constitution, be amended at paragraph 3.1 by

i) the additional wording 'no expenses claimed more than three months after they were incurred will be paid' being inserted at the end of the first paragraph;

ii) the additional approved duty (i)

'(i) attendance at meetings, training or other events where the Member is an official Council representative or requested to attend by the Leader, relevant Cabinet Member or Chief Officer.'

32. To consider the following reports from the Chief Executive or other Chief Officers on matters requiring the attention of Council:

(a) Pay Policy Statement

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Lowe seconded the report which set out the elements of senior officer pay that enabled the Council to attract high quality officers whilst protecting value for money to the community. Approval by Council and publication on the Council website improved transparency and accountability whilst ensuring adherence to the Localism Act 2011.

Resolved: That the Pay Policy Statement be adopted and published on the Council's website.

(b) Appointment to Outside organisations - Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Committee

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Lowe seconded the report which advised that a district council appointment was sought to the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Committee.

Resolved: Councillor Hogarth be appointed to serve on the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Development Plan - Steering Committee.

33. To consider any questions by Members under paragraph 19.3 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution, notice of which have been duly given.

One question had been received from a Member in accordance with paragraph 19.3 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution.

Question 1: Cllr. Purves

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“Affordable Housing: How much money has been collected by SDC as a contribution for Affordable Housing during the current financial year? How much of this money has been spent? On which schemes?”.

Response: Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health

So far, in 2016/17, we’ve received £1,807,328.46.

So far, in 2016/17, we’ve only spent £206,450 as we’re awaiting the results of the housing needs study in order to be able properly prioritise spending to best effect as this is now a limited pot of funding with recent changes to national planning developer contribution thresholds.

Part-funding of a new supported housing facility for adults with learning disabilities / funding for essential refurbishment works at an almshouse charity / part-payment of the housing needs study / part-funding the rural housing enabler service / part-funding the external under-occupation officer and Small is Beautiful downsizing scheme.

Supplementary question: Cllr. Purves

Has SDC built or intend to build any any affordable housing on sites it owns which they’re putting forward for development?

Response: Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health

We have not built any houses on any sites that we own its something that the new housing strategy will be looking at.

In accordance with the Constitution, there was no further discussion.

34. To consider any motions by Members under paragraph 20 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution, notice of which have been duly given.

No motions had been received.

35. To receive the report of the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet since the last Council meeting.

The Leader of the Council reported on the work that he and the Cabinet had undertaken in the period 9 November 2016 to 3 February 2017.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.36 PM

CHAIRMAN

