

## Council

### Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2023 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Layland (Chairman)

Cllr. Ball (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Alger, Baker, Barnes, Barnett, Bayley, Bulford, Camp, Clack, Clayton, Penny Cole, Perry Cole, G. Darrington, P. Darrington, Dyball, Edwards-Winsor, Ferrari, Granville, Grint, Gustard, Harrison, Haslam, Hogarth, Horwood, Hudson, Kitchener, Leaman, Lindop, Malone, Manamperi, Manston, Maskell, Cathy Morgan, James Morgan, Purves, Reay, Robinson, Roy, Scott, Shea, Skinner, Streatfeild, Thornton, Varley, Waterton and White

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Barker, Esler, McArthur, Silander and Williamson

30. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 July 2023 and Extraordinary Council held on 17 October 2023

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Council held on 18 July 2023 and Extraordinary Council held on 17 October 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

31. 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.

32. Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman started his announcements by noting that a lot of work had been done around Sevenoaks and the wider area.

Firstly, the historic Mill Pond in Sevenoaks had undergone major repair works and was now, once again, open to the public. Over time, silt from the road and other building projects had built up in the pond, and eventually, lead to a Thames Water culvert saying the pond had suffered contamination. However, Mill Pond was now back to its best, with additional wildlife friendly greenery being planted and replacement of the rotten boardwalk. This was all thanks to the partnership working with Greatness Residents Association, and the funding they secured along with our own £60,000 to make this area feel much loved again.

## Council - 14 November 2023

There had been several free community events organised by the council including, a free healthy cooking on a budget course for low income households, which started on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October. The annual Silver Sunday events were taking place until December including tea dances and walking groups on offer, and he encouraged Members that if they had not already done so to attend one of these amazing events. He reminded Members that as the weather was turning colder, warm and safe spaces were available again throughout the district. Details could be found on the Better Together community website.

Furthermore, the Big Community Sing would return next year, giving local singing groups the chance to perform at The Stag, Sevenoaks. Choirs, quartets, schools and other singing groups would be in attendance to showcase their musical talents. Entry for signing groups was free and the deadline to apply was 31 January 2024.

Members were also advised that an application was put in by Officers to the Institute of Economic Development awards and were shortlisted in the equality, inclusion and diversity category. He was pleased to inform everyone that the Council won the award this week and he expressed his congratulations to the Team.

Finally, since he had become Chairman, it had been great to visit and support so many organisations, including celebrating Merchant Navy Day and raising the Red Ensign above the Council offices in honor of the British Merchant Navy on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September. He thanked those who also attended his Charity Event which raised £162.50 for his chosen charities.

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

One question had been received from a member of the public in accordance with paragraph 17 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution.

Question 1: Leo Manston

Question 1

“Hi, my name is Leo and I’m an 11 year old boy. On 25th June 2019, Gravesham Council declared a climate emergency and I asked them to include children and young people in their climate change plans. Tonight, I’m here to ask Sevenoaks Council to do the same.

Floods, storms, heatwaves and droughts happen every year in the UK and it’s worrying to think about what other things might happen in the future. Our air is dirty, our rivers and seas are polluted and even the nature and wildlife that surrounds us is under threat.

## Council - 14 November 2023

I don't want to spend my time worrying about things like this. But I'd rather help fix what's gone wrong and help put things right than ignore it and hope it goes away. It won't go away. It will just get worse. We need to start taking it seriously and working hard to make things better and to make sure my siblings, my friends and all the children and young people in Sevenoaks - and everywhere - have a healthy and happy environment to grow up in. So I urge you to please show you care for children and young people by voting for this motion and making climate change your top priority.

I also think that your plans would be even better if children and young people were involved in the decision making. We will have to live and work in the District that you are creating so we would like to help shape it.

Will you please consider creating a way for children and young people to take part in all your climate change plans - and all decision making - at Sevenoaks Council?"

Response: Leader of the Council

The Council, as part of its commitment to tackling climate change had already engaged with young people in the District. Most recently, through the idling campaign which all schools were invited to take part in the poster competition to encourage parents to stop idling in cars whilst parked around schools. It was unfortunate that not all schools had engaged with the process but it was a successful campaign and there were new banners being made up for those schools.

The Kent network for air quality had created an interactive pollution resource which could be provided to primary schools if they wanted to know about pollution.

Further initiatives for next summer included 'walk to school' and working with schools who had either had eco clubs and or other climate change projects. The Council was working with the climate change youth forum which involved students from local secondary schools. However, due to a lack of engagement from the schools and low numbers had resulted in the past two meetings being cancelled.

A particular area where the Council was directly facilitating a climate resilient district was through the development of its emerging Local Plan. The need to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change were central to the plan. The Plan sets out the local policy that ensures all future development was built to significantly reduce and offset carbon emissions and be resilient to a changing climate. It was however, not just limited to build development, but local policies on design, flood risk and water management, transport, open space, biodiversity and more to ensure a robust and joined up approach to tackling climate change over the plan period.

The consultation on the local plan starts on Thursday 23 November and it created a way for young people to take part in policy setting, which affects all decision making.

There was no further discussion.

34. 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 had been received.

35. Matters considered by the Cabinet and/or Scrutiny Committee:

a) Council Plan

Cllr. Thornton moved and Cllr. Perry Cole seconded the recommendation from Cabinet. The report sought adoption of the Council Plan, subject to final design and associated amendments.

Cllr. Thornton spoke to the motion stating that the plan set out the Council's priorities for the coming years, building on the promises already made and setting out what would be delivered for the communities and businesses of the district. Once adopted the plan would direct the work and resources of the Council and its commitments and so far as possible, other strategies, policies and initiatives were aligned to ensure the priorities were at forefront of policy making and budget setting. The plan had five clear priorities, the economy, environment, housing and managing the council efficiently and responsibly. Each Cabinet Member set out what their portfolio priorities were to meet these commitments. To ensure that the plan would remain relevant it would be reviewed annually via the Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee ensure the priorities remained relevant to the residents and business' needs. The plan remained ambitious to retain the long held reputation of being financially stable and working to ensure strength for the economy, local communities and working to secure the environment's future.

Members debated the motion, with some Members noting the plan did not provide enough detail and measures as to how the promises would be kept.

At the end of debate, the Leader responded to the points made stating that that the document was a statement of the intentions, clearly identifying the five priorities as the basis of work that will take place. Individual plans and policies will come forward with more detail as they go through the committee system. It was important not to lose sight of previous promises as it was fundamental to continue the work already started.

Resolved: That, subject to final design and associated amendments, the Council Plan be adopted.

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

a) **Draft Calendar of Meetings 2024/25**

## Council - 14 November 2023

Cllr. Thornton moved and Cllr. Perry Cole seconded the recommendation for the approval of the draft calendar of meetings 2024/25, which would need formal agreement at Annual Council in May 2024.

Resolved: That the draft calendar of meetings for 2024/25 be approved, subject to formal adoption at the Annual Meeting of Council on 14 May 2024.

### **b) Appointments to Other Organisations 2023/24 – Non executive**

Cllr. Thornton moved and Cllr. Perry Cole seconded the recommendation for appointments to outside organisations, following the initial appointments made in May 2024.

Resolved: That

- a) Cllr. Cathy Morgan be appointed as the Council's representative on the Outside Organisation – The Council for the Voluntary Service North West Kent for the municipal year 2023/24; and
  - b) Cllr. Hogarth be appointed as the Council's representative on the Outside Organisation – Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring and Action Group.
37. 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.

Two questions had been received from Members in accordance with paragraph 19.3 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution.

Question 1: Cllr Jim Morgan

“The current IT spend is over £1m. In particular nearly £400k is spent with Capita for Revenues and Benefits. What annual review process is in place to ensure that SDC gets value for money out of all its IT services?”

Response: Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council advised that the overall contract with Capita was £382k per year to provide a system that was used by both Sevenoaks and Dartford Councils of part of the Revenues and Benefits Partnership. The cost was therefore split between the two authorities with the actual cost to Sevenoaks Council being £191k per year. She was pleased that the system was mentioned as in particular it was responsible for supporting the collection of £145m, in Council Tax and Business Rates annually, of which £15m, was retained by the Council. It was also key to the council being able to deliver over £75m of much needed business support funding throughout the recent pandemic, in many cases more quickly than many other local authorities.

At an operational level the service budget for IT services was monitored on a monthly basis and all contracts were reviewed on a rolling basis to ensure best value was in place and efficiencies were achieved where possible through appropriate procurement routes.

Through our constant strive to ensure this best value, whether through procurement or IT enabled efficiency, we have been able to deliver over £4m, in cumulative savings through our 10 year budget approach in this area alone as well as driving future efficiencies enabled by the use of technology.

In response to Cllr Jim Morgan's supplementary question surrounding procurement, the Leader advised that she would be happy to provide a written response to his supplementary questions, if he could clarify in writing his exact questions.

In accordance with the constitution, no further discussion was allowed.

Question 2: Cllr. Gustard

"At a recent meeting with Sports representatives within Sevenoaks it was highlighted that the explosion in girls' sports has placed huge pressure on resources. There simply aren't enough cricket pitches, hockey pitches and football fields etc. to cater for the additional demand. The problem is not funding but space. Are there mechanisms in the local plan process to identify sites not just for development into housing but to provide sports facilities?"

Response: Portfolio Holder for Development & Conservation

The Portfolio Holder for Development & Conservation advised that although housing was understandably a large part of the emerging local plan, the plan also recognised the important role that high quality sporting facilities play in the health and wellbeing of our communities, and the Council were committed to enabling increased participation in sport. With this in mind and acknowledging that the existing strategies were somewhat out of date, in July 2023 specialist consultants Knight Kavanagh and Page (KKP) were commissioned to update our Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Facilities Strategy, covering outdoor and indoor sports respectively. They were currently carrying out audits of the existing facilities within the district and analysing needs and trends in participation and how they were likely to evolve over the emerging local plan period. This included demographic indicators such as gender and any increase in girls' sport participation would be picked up in this way.

The strategies would use this information to identify areas of quantitative and qualitative deficits and make recommendations as to how these might be addressed by the council, including how the district's existing facilities could be used more efficiently and providing robust evidence and data which could be used to support future funding bids for new facilities. While it was unlikely that the strategies and the local plan themselves would be able to identify specific sites (except potentially on strategic sites), the emerging local plan included a suite of policies requiring the

## Council - 14 November 2023

provision of open space/recreation space and supporting the provision of new sports and leisure facilities. This would mean that we would be able to work with developers to provide the right type of space/facilities on any sites that did come forward. An example was the recently granted permission for the school rebuild at Orchards Academy in Swanley, which included a new sports hall, which the Council has helped fund and includes a condition requiring a community use agreement so that the facilities would be available to our communities.

Supplementary Question: Cllr Gustard

As part of the local plan, has it been considered to ask land owners if they have sites to provide the space for much needed facilities.

Response: Cllr Reay

The research being done to provide these facilities will be taken into full consideration of the local plan and the sporting facilities will be taken into consideration but wanted to reassure that the aim and ambition was to deliver sports facilities for all of its residents which were desperately needed.

38. 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.

Cllr. Skinner proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr Leaman.

“This Council notes:

- The need for increased affordable housing that has been identified in the Housing Strategy: and
- The consistent failure of the Council to meet that need over a number of years, including repeated failure to utilise the Council's own land to meet this need.

The Council therefore resolves:

- To make an urgent step change in its commitment to the supply of affordable housing in order to sustain a vibrant and prosperous community in Sevenoaks District, particularly in light of cost of living crisis facing many local families: and
- To set a positive example to all developers, by using its own land for the development of affordable housing”

## Council - 14 November 2023

Speaking to the motion, Cllr. Skinner stated that the issue was important and complicated and he accepted that there were no easy solutions to the problems faced. He hoped to work together with Officers and all Members to ensure progress would be made. He clarified why it was important to have affordable housing in the district so that young people would be able to live here, those that were born here would not need to move away, and people would want to live here. The community was getting older and if there was no affordable housing then those required to do important jobs, teachers, drivers, shops assistants etc, and this would have an impact on the cost of delivering services. Communities would become less environmentally sound and would require travel to district which would add to carbon emissions.

He further stated that for Sevenoaks to be a special place to live, work and enjoy it would require housing that would bring social economic and environmental benefits to sustain a vibrant community. There were complexities across the country regarding affordable housing especially where there was high percentage of Green Belt land in the District and it was important to safeguard land and finances. However by using district council land for this development this would show leadership, the land would be benefited by economic, social or environmental reasons and therefore disposal of the land at less than market value would meet those three tests for building affordable housing.

Members debated the motion noting the need for affordable housing and the policies and legislation which would allow for council owned land to be disposed of at lower than market value. Discussion continued with further points raised on the construction industry challenges, the district being 93% green belt, Conservation areas, and a number Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The council was committed to affordable housing as it had been demonstrated through the Local Plan and Quercus Housing. There were however, competing priorities and financial challenges.

An amendment to the motion was moved by Cllr. Horwood and duly seconded as:

“This Council notes:

- The need for increased affordable housing that has been identified in the Housing Strategy.

The Council therefore resolves:

- To reaffirm its commitment to the supply of affordable housing in order to sustain a vibrant and prosperous community in Sevenoaks District, particularly in light of the cost of living facing many local families: and
- To set a positive example to all developers, by using its own land for the development of affordable housing, where financially viable to do so”.

Members debated the amendment. Some Members expressed concern that there would be little change to making progress to address the need of affordable housing



## Council - 14 November 2023

in the district. Other points raised in debate, included the emerging local plan, the importance of affordable housing, and the number of affordable housing that had been built in the District in comparison to other Local Authorities. It was raised in debate that there was a lack of understand the Councils approach to Affordable Housing and detailed within the Council's Housing Strategy it addressed the council building housing but also rural exception sites. The Council had been working to put these sites in, but had faced problems with residents and parish councils objecting to these affordable housing sites. Finances were also raised in debate, that the Council had responsibility to its residents by managing finances appropriately.

In his right of reply to the amendment Cllr Horwood highlighted financial viability and if that wasn't allowed when looking at development of sites, it would result in the council having to borrow money or the impact it would have on other services provided or services being cut. He highlighted the trusted approach from Officers when they looked at sites to enable or make affordable housing possible when it was viable.

In exercising his right of reply, Cllr Skinner advised that following financial viability it would be treated as requirement to get full market value not full value with social, economic and environmental reasons. He expressed some concern that the local plan did not fully address the affordable housing needs and the need to affirm a step change and take leadership.

The amendment was put to the vote and the amendment was carried.

Debate continued on the substantive motion.

After further debate, Cllr Skinner gave his right of reply and the motion was put to the vote.

The substantive motion was carried.

Resolved: That the Council

- a) Noted the need for increased affordable housing that has been identified in the Housing Strategy.

## Council - 14 November 2023

- b) reaffirm its commitment to the supply of affordable housing in order to sustain a vibrant and prosperous community in Sevenoaks District, particularly in light of the cost of living facing many local families: and
- c) set a positive example to all developers, by using its own land for the development of affordable housing, where financially viable to do so

Cllr. Manston proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr. Thornton.

“This Council wholeheartedly supports the Local Government Association’s “Debate not Hate” campaign and pledges to:

- Sign up to the Debate Not Hate campaign on the LGA website
- Write to the MPs for Sevenoaks District to ask them to support the campaign
- Write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of politicians
- Ensure that every Member of this Council receives a copy of the Debate Not Hate campaign report
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors and officers
- Ensure the council has a clear reporting mechanism which councillors can use to monitor and record incidents of harassment and abuse of councillors and officers
- Regularly review the support available to councillors and officers in relation to abuse, intimidation and personal safety
- Work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors and their families and discuss the need to take a preventative approach that accounts for the specific risks that councillors face, as they do with other high-risk individuals like MPs.

Cllr. Manston spoke to the motion stated that the campaign was led by the Local Government Association which all Councillors would benefit from. Debating and disagreeing with each other was a healthy part of democracy but abuse and intimidation was not and the increasing levels of abuse and intimidation aimed at politicians in person and online prevented people from standing for election and undermined local democracy. Casting minds back to the brutal murders of MPs showed extreme hate to politicians and ignoring this type of behaviour at all levels normalised that behaviour and could lead to more extreme cases. It was important to demonstrate a zero tolerance towards abuse and intimidation. The council was 47%

## Council - 14 November 2023

female and three out of the four Group Leaders were women and it was important to have this level of diversity. With other changes since the election in May it was also imperative to highlight the importance of respectful and inclusive debate. She expressed the importance of being able to sympathise with residents situations especially as having being subject to antisocial behaviour including intimidation.

Members debated the motion, detailing the importance of being out there for residents but how this was without risk with being easily contactable when signing up as a Councillor and social media and how to manage being targeted by abusive comments through keyboard worriers. Members expressed concern that being subject to wider abuse could prevent further diversity of the councillors. Members discussed the importance of supporting the motion as it demonstrated the importance of robust and respectful debate. Some Members gave examples of when they had been the subject of abuse from the public and within the Chamber debate the importance of keeping debate polite.

The motion was put to the vote and it was

Resolved: That the Council wholeheartedly supports the Local Government Association's "Debate not Hate" campaign and pledged to:

- Sign up to the Debate Not Hate campaign on the LGA website
- Write to the MPs for Sevenoaks District to ask them to support the campaign
- Write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of politicians
- Ensure that every Member of this Council receives a copy of the Debate Not Hate campaign report
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors and officers
- Ensure the council has a clear reporting mechanism which councillors can use to monitor and record incidents of harassment and abuse of councillors and officers
- Regularly review the support available to councillors and officers in relation to abuse, intimidation and personal safety
- Work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors and their families and discuss the need to take a preventative approach that accounts for the specific risks that councillors face, as they do with other high-risk individuals like MPs.

## Council - 14 November 2023

At 20.57 the Chairman adjourned the meeting for the comfort of Councillors and Officers.

At 21.05 the meeting reconvened.

Cllr. Robinson proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr. Clayton

“This Council believes its proceedings should be transparent and that Councillors should be accountable to the residents whom they represent. This Council therefore resolves that as soon as possible:

- All public meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees will be recorded on video, this record will be made immediately available, and will be saved on a publicly available website.
- A system of electronic voting will be installed to make it straightforward and efficient to record the votes of individual Councillors.”

Cllr. Robinson spoke to the motion detailing the importance of recording meetings and making them publically available would demonstrate transparency to the residents of the District and hold Members accountable to those who had elected them. A recorded voted system would demonstrate how individual members have voted on issues.

Members discussed the benefit of recording meetings making these available to the public and be accessible online.

An amendment was moved by Cllr. Thornton and was seconded by Cllr Clayton to add a third point of

“that the Governance Committee consider a protocol for the recording of public meetings and the use of the electronic voting system to recommend to Council for inclusion within the council’s constitution.

Cllr. Thornton spoke to the amendment detailing that many Authorities were already streaming meetings with the recordings being available online and it was something that she had also been considering being implemented. She advised that it would be important for a protocol in place as it would offer a level of protection around context

## Council - 14 November 2023

and the consideration of data protection. Debate took place on the amendment which Members expressed their support.

The amendment was put to the vote and it was carried.

Debate continued on the substantive motion.

The motion was put to the vote and it was

Resolved: That

- a) all public meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees will be recorded on video, this record will be made immediately available, and will be saved on a publicly available website.
- b) A system of electronic voting will be installed to make it straightforward and efficient to record the votes of individual Councillors.
- c) that the governance committee consider a protocol for the recording of public meetings and the use of the electronic voting system to recommend to Council for inclusion within the council's constitution.

Cllr. Streatfeild proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr Shea.

"This Council notes that:

- Small Business Saturday 2023 is coming up on 25 November. Small Business Saturday has grown into a significant event – with £1.1 billion spent at small businesses during the 2020 event alone.
- This is an excellent opportunity to promote small businesses across Sevenoaks District and to celebrate the contribution smaller businesses make.

This Council therefore resolves:

- To ask the Chief Executive and Heads of Service to ensure that the Council participates fully in Small Business Saturday on 25 November 2023.
- To request that officers work closely with local business organisations and smaller enterprises across the District to make them aware of the day and encourage them to sign up.
- To ensure that Small Business Saturday is promoted thoroughly and prominently on the Council's website, social media channels and other external communications.

## Council - 14 November 2023

- To make parking free in all District Council car parks on 25 November 2023 and on five following days in the lead up to Christmas.”

Cllr Streatfeild spoke to the motion stating the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council had offered six free parking days in the lead up to Christmas and some residents would need to decide where to do their Christmas shopping. This would promote the District's own towns and encourage shopping and it would bring a number of benefits. Small Businesses over the past five years had had a difficult time and Christmas trade was a way of getting through the winter season and so it was important to encourage Christmas trade to support small businesses. Lots of residents were also facing hardship with the cost of living and this would give an opportunity to park for free and this would benefit businesses and the vulnerable residents would be supported.

Members debated the motion considering the date of small business Saturday and Officers had been working on communicating Small Business Saturday on 2 December 2023. There was a lot of work that supported small businesses by the Council and Small Business Saturday through its business networks, Small Business Rate Relief, Team Around Your Business, social media, Sevenoaks So Much More website, a West Kent Business Expo and a competition at Meeting Point. Further details within the debate detailed the other ways in which small businesses were support throughout the year and the level of support which small businesses had received since the pandemic and support which was provided throughout the year. The Federation of Small Businesses Local Leadership Pledge, strengthening support for the District's small businesses, was signed up to in 2022 and resigned in 2023. Pursuant to rule 22.7 Cllr Streatfeild altered his motion to reflect that Small Business Saturday was 2 December 2023, with the consent of the meeting.

Debate continued on the motion with some Members expressing concern that free parking would have an impact on the budget. Other Members expressed that there were alternatives that could be considered in regard to free parking options which would not have a significant impact on the budget, in particular if it was on a day when numbers of shoppers in the district was lower. Members continued to debate free parking and some Members expressed concern that free parking would have to be absorbed into the budget which would have to be considered within the budget and the impact this could have going forward. Members were reminded that consultation was taking place on freezing parking fees which would benefit shoppers all year.

In exercising his right of reply, Cllr Streatfeild took the opportunity to remind Members that free parking had been provided by the Council in the past and the financial loss had been covered through supplementary estimates.

The motion was put to the vote and it was lost.

Cllr. Lindop proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr. Purves.

“This council recognises the scale and magnitude of the climate and nature emergency and pledges to:

- Publicly declare a Climate and Nature Emergency
- Reduce emissions from the Council’s estate to net zero by 2030
- Do all we can to reduce carbon emissions from Sevenoaks District to net zero by 2050
- Take these steps to achieve net zero for the council and district:
  - a) Develop a Climate Change Strategy
  - b) Establish a Climate Change Panel
  - c) Convene a Climate Change Community Forum
  - d) Report on progress via FIAC and Cabinet
  - e) Provide a detailed Climate Change Assessment on all new undertakings
  - f) Ensure that annual budgeting allows for the above Net Zero goals
  - g) Write to Government to call for the powers, resources and funding to achieve Net Zero”

Cllr Lindop spoke to the motion detailing that children were more likely to face the impacts of pollution quicker than adults and this would cause them greater harm over the years than adults. By committing to a climate emergency it would demonstrate the commitment to protect the planet.

Members debated the motion, with some Members highlighting that Sevenoaks was one of the only Council’s in Kent to not declare an emergency with climate change. SDC had a net zero policy but it was questioned as to whether it went far enough. The climate change policy in the local plan was discussed as well as small businesses and the impact climate change was having on them.

In response to some of the points discussed so far, it was raised that although many other councils had declared a climate emergency, the actions and degree to which the actions had been taken varied. Whereas Sevenoaks had actively participated with partnership groups such as Kent Council County Climate Change Network, and a Climate Change Strategy was currently being developed by officers and would be presented to Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee in due course. One particular area where the Council was directly facilitating a climate resilient district was through the development of its emerging Local Plan. However it was important to be mindful of managing expectations and that there was no quick fix. Influencing behaviour change, even just small changes at a time, takes time to multiply into large contributions that transpire into physical results, such as a reduction in emissions.

## Council - 14 November 2023

Tackling the challenge of climate change isn't limited to built development, and the Plan also set out local policies on design, flood risk and water management, transport, open space, biodiversity and more, to ensure a robust and joined up approach to tackling climate change over the plan period to 2040.

At 22:20 it was moved by the Chairman that, in accordance with rule 16.1 Part 2 of the Constitution, Members extend the meeting beyond 10.30pm to enable the Committee to complete the business on the agenda.

Debate continued on the motion, concerning recycling rates, flooding and importance of high quality buildings. Thoughts were also given to joined up thinking and travel to the District.

It was moved by Cllr. Grint and duly seconded by Cllr. Edwards-Winser that the motion be put.

The motion was put to the vote and it was agreed.

Cllr Lindop exercised his right of reply stating that he hoped that the voice of those most in need would not be overlooked.

The Chairman moved to take the vote. In accordance with the Council's constitution, Part 2, paragraph 24.4, five Members of the Council stood and demanded a recorded vote on the motion.

The motion was put to the vote.

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstention</b>
	Abraham	
Alger		
	Baker	
	Ball	
	Barnes	
	Barnett	



Council - 14 November 2023

	Bayley	
	Bulford	
Camp		
	Clack	
Clayton		
	Penny Cole	
	Perry Cole	
	G. Darrington	
	P. Darrington	
	Dyball	
	Edwards-Winser	
Granville		
	Grint	
Gustard		
	Harrison	
	Haslam	
	Horwood	

**Council - 14 November 2023**

	Hogarth	
Hudson		
Kitchener		
	Layland	
Leaman		
Lindop		
	Malone	
Manamperi		
Manston		
	Maskell	
	C.Morgan	
J.Morgan		
Purves		
	Reay	
Robinson		
	Roy	
	Scott	

Council - 14 November 2023

Shea		
Skinner		
Streatfeild		
	Thornton	
Varley		
Waterton		
	White	
	Williams	
19	29	0

The motion was lost.

39. 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 she and the Cabinet had undertaken since July.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 10.50 pm

CHAIRMAN