

Despatched: 09.05.2017

ANNUAL COUNCIL

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25 April 2017. (Pages 1 - 4)

5. b) To note the delegations of executive functions (Appendix U of the Constitution) and appointments to the Cabinet made by the Leader. (Pages 5 - 12)

6. To appoint the Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Membership of Committees for the municipal year 2017/18. (Pages 13 - 16)

Appendix attached which was marked to follow.

8. To appoint representatives on other organisations (non executive). (Pages 17 - 20)

Appendix attached which was marked to follow.

9. To note the outgoing Chairman's Report. (Pages 21 - 24)

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

For any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact:

The Democratic Services Team (01732 227000)

This page is intentionally left blank

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF SEVENOAKS

Minutes of the Meeting of the Sevenoaks District Council
held on 25 April 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, Clack, Clark, Dickins, Dyball, Edwards-Winser, Esler, Eyre, Firth, Fleming, Gaywood, Grint, Hogarth, Horwood, Mrs. Hunter, Kelly, Kitchener, Krogdahl, Lake, Lindsay, London, Lowe, Maskell, McArthur, McGarvey, McGregor, Mrs. Morris, Parson, Pearsall, Pett, Purves, Reay, Scholey, Searles, Miss. Stack, Thornton and Williamson

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Cooke, Halford, Hogg, Layland, Parkin, Piper, Scott and Ms. Tennessee.

38. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 February 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

39. Declarations of interest not included in the register of interest from Members in respect of items of business included on the agenda

No additional declarations of interest were received.

40. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman was pleased to announce that his Charity Dinner at Penshurst Place on 7 April had been successful. He expressed particular thanks to Cllr Abraham and the Westerham Sea Cadets; and sponsors Handelsbanken, Specsavers and Conway; along with Mr. Edward Raikes, Mrs. Margaret Crabtree, Mr. Stephen Arnold and Mr. Ian & Mrs. Pat Bosley.

He reported that he had been enjoying watching local talent, and had attended events such as D'Vine Singers, Sevenoaks Young Musician of the Year, St Michaels School Big Sing (involving over 100 local primary school children) and a couple of musical events at Knole Academy. He had also had the pleasure of attending a presentation by the High Sheriff of Kent to SupaJam for their work with disengaged youngsters.

There was a lot going on in the district and it was gratifying and heart warming to be able to attend events. Other events he had attended had included the unveiling of a rare artefact belonging to Anne of Cleves; the Visitor Economy Study at the Riverhill Himalayan Gardens; the Spring Investor Networking Event at Brandshatch Place Hotel; and official Launch of the Mercure Dartford Brands Hatch Hotel and Spa.

He took the opportunity to remind Members of the Knole Park Charity Run on 14 May 2017 which was to raise money for local dementia services. He also updated Members on the unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampment at Hollybush recreation ground where a member of staff had been assaulted, which was a distinct and separate event from the recent Romany funeral. He had written to the member of staff on behalf of all Members.

Finally he was very pleased to announce that the Council had yet again been successful and has been awarded CIPFA's Public Finance Innovator of the Year and, the overall 'Grand Prix' Public Finance Innovation Award.

41. 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.

42. Petitions submitted by members of the public under paragraph 18 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution.

a) Syrian Refugees

The Lead Petitioner, Mr. Humphrey Pring, had submitted a paper petition with 1170 signatures with a concurrently run 'online' petition with 402 signatures, both in the following terms:

"We, the undersigned, call upon Sevenoaks District Council to take part in the Kent Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme and pledge to provide at least one Syrian family a home in the next 5 years, as has every other District in Kent."

The lead petitioner, Humphrey Pring, addressed the Council in support of the petition. He acknowledged that since the commencement of the petition the Council had agreed to house a family in Eynsford, however he urged the Council to follow the examples of neighbouring authorities such as Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and make a commitment to house a specific number of Syrian refugees.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health responded advising that it had been possible to offer a house in Eynsford due to a unique set of circumstances. However the Council would not be committing to a target but would continue to look out for similar opportunities, and had fully committed to the Syrian Community Sponsorship Programme.

Cllr. Purves pointed out that Sevenoaks as a District was not new to welcoming refugees and had a history of doing so. She hoped that the Council would continue to look for suitable accommodation and find private landlords who would accept lower rents as this was a humanitarian not a political issue.

The Leader acknowledged the distressing situation over in Syria. He advised that from the start the Council had offered it's HERO service to all Kent Districts, however, like a number of London boroughs, Sevenoaks did have a buoyant private

rented market with above average rents so it was more difficult to find any private landlords and the Council did not own any properties. The property in Eynsford had been an opportunity to do something which had been ceased. He did not believe in setting arbitrary targets, but this did not mean the Council would not stop at anything to find suitable properties. At the moment, in the present situation, what the Council was able to do was help community groups, work with private sector landlords, and bring communities together when somewhere was found.

Resolved: That the petition be acknowledged, but that no further action other than that which the Council was already doing be taken.

43. Matters considered by the Cabinet

(a) Property Investment Strategy

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Scholey seconded, the recommendation from Cabinet. The report updated Members on the progress of the Property Investment Strategy and looked at its future direction.

Resolved: That

- a) expenditure of a further £25 million be approved for the Property Investment Strategy as updated; and
- b) the updated Property Investment Strategy, as set out in Appendix A to the report, with the following amendments, be approved
 - i) deletion of current point 5 and replaced with ‘Investment opportunities are restricted to those within a 50 mile radius of the Council’s Argyle Road offices’
 - ii) point 7 - deletion of ‘3% net of borrowing costs’ and replaced with ‘in excess of 3% for schemes that include some external borrowing’
 - iii) point 11.i - deletion of ‘or 3% net of borrowing costs’ and replaced with ‘in excess of 3% for schemes that include some external borrowing’
 - iv) point 11.vi - deletion of ‘Rented’ to read ‘Private Residential’
 - v) deletion of point 11.vii as no longer relevant.

44. Reports from the Chief Executive or other Chief Officers on matters requiring the attention of Council

(a) Loan facilities to Quercus 7

Agenda Item 3

Council - Tuesday, 25 April 2017

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Scholey seconded the report which sought to amend the current delegated authorities to ensure openness and transparency of reporting and decision making.

Resolved: That the Chief Executive be authorised to offer loan facilities to Quercus 7 following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance in line with the rules set out in this report relating to State Aid.

(The Chief Finance Officer and Head of Legal & Democratic Services left the room and were not present during consideration of this item.)

45. Questions by Members under paragraph 19.3 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution

No questions had been received.

46. Motions by Members under paragraph 20 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution

No motions had been received.

47. 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 6 February 2017 - 31 March 2017.

48. Report from the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee on the work of the Committee

The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee commended his report to the Council, thanking Members and Officers for their work. There were no questions.

49. Report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee on the work of the Committee

The Chairman of Audit Committee commended his report to the Council, thanking Members and Officers for their work. There were no questions.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.35 PM

CHAIRMAN

Cabinet Membership

(7 Members: 7 Conservatives) Cllrs. Fleming, (Chairman), Dickins, Firth, Hogarth, Lowe , Piper and Scholey

Portfolio Holders 2016/17 (Annex to Appendix H of the Constitution – last revised November 2016)

Cllr. Peter Fleming	Leader Policy & Performance	Corporate Policy & Performance, Communications, Customer Service Standards, Business Transformation, Special Projects (Asset Acquisition, Disposal & Redevelopment), Digital, Human Resources.
Cllr. Matthew Dickins	Direct & Trading Services	Direct Services, Street Cleansing, Waste & Recycling, CCTV, Environmental Health, Markets, Parking, Pest Control.
Cllr. Roddy Hogarth	Economic & Community Development	Economic Development, Business Continuity, Emergency Planning, Regeneration, Town Centres, Tourism, West Kent Partnership, West Kent Leader Programme, Community Grants, Community Plan, Community Safety, Safeguarding, Youth, Parishes.
Cllr. John Scholey	Finance	Audit & Corporate Governance, Budget & Financial Strategy, Local Tax, Procurement Policy, Facilities Management, Strategic Risk, Housing Benefit, Fraud, Operational Assets.
Cllr. Michelle Lowe	Housing & Health	Housing Strategy & Policy, Housing Standards, Housing Needs, Empty Homes, Gypsy and Traveller, DFG, Health, Energy Efficiency, Fuel Poverty, Leisure.
Cllr Anna Firth	Legal & Democratic Services	Corporate Health and Safety, Equality, Democratic Services, Elections, Legal, Licensing, Trading Company, Shared Service Programme, Governance.
Cllr. Robert Piper	Planning	Conservation, Development Services, Development Control, Local Plan, Planning Policy, Building control, Transport policy, Enforcement.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX U - Scheme of Delegations of Executive Functions by the Leader of the Council (May 2017)

1. Scope of the Scheme of Delegations of Executive Functions by the Leader of the Council

- 1.1 This Scheme of Delegations is made pursuant to paragraph 9.2 of Part 2 of the Council's Constitution which requires that a written record of delegations of executive functions be presented by the Leader of the Council at the first meeting of the Council following whole Council elections.
- 1.2 Thereafter this Scheme of Delegations of Executive Functions may be amended at any time by the Leader of the Council on written notice to the Chief Executive and to the person, body or Committee concerned. The notice must set out the extent of the amendment to the scheme of delegation and whether it entails the withdrawal of delegation from any body, Committee or the Cabinet as a whole. The changes will be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.
- 1.3 This Scheme of Delegations has regard to the Council's Constitution and should be read in the context of the procedure rules contained in Part 4 of the Constitution. Should there be any conflict between this Scheme of Delegations and the Council's Constitution then the Constitution will prevail.

2. Role

- 2.1 The Cabinet (the Executive) will carry out all of the District Council's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the District Council, whether by law or under the Constitution. Please see table below for those functions delegated to Officers of the Council:

Function	Delegation of functions
Any function relating to contaminated land.	Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services
The discharge of any function relating to the control of pollution or the management of air quality.	Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services
The service of an abatement notice in respect of a statutory nuisance.	Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services
The passing of a resolution that Schedule 2 to the Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the Authority's area.	Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services

Agenda Item 5b

Function	Delegation of functions
The inspection of the Authority's area to detect any statutory nuisance.	Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services
The investigation of any complaint as to the existence of a statutory nuisance.	Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services
The obtaining of information under section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as to interests in land.	Chief Planning Officer
The obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.	Chief Planning Officer

3. Form and Composition

- 3.1 The Cabinet will consist of the Leader of the Council together with a further 4 Members appointed by the Leader of the Council (the Leader). The membership of the Cabinet and individual portfolios will be reported to the Annual Meeting of the Council.

4. Leader

- 4.1 The Leader will be a Member elected to the position of Leader by the Council at the first meeting of the Council following whole Council elections. The Leader will chair the Cabinet (if present) and will hold office until:
- (a) he/she resigns from the office; or
 - (b) he/she is no longer a Member; or
 - (c) the expiry date of his/her fixed term of office as Leader, which is the date of the post-election annual meeting which follows his/her election as Leader (e.g. for a Leader elected at the Annual Council in May 2011, the period of election will continue to the Annual Meeting in May 2015); or
 - (d) he/she is removed from office by resolution of the Council.
- 4.2 In the event of the Leader being removed from office by resolution of the Council, the new Leader may be appointed at the same or a subsequent meeting.

5. Other Executive Members

- 5.1 The Leader will appoint one member of the Executive as Deputy Leader, who will hold office until the end of the Leader's term of office, unless:
- (a) he/she resigns from the office; or
 - (c) he/she is no longer a Councillor; or

- (d) he/she is removed from office by the Leader, who must give written notice of any removal to the Chief Executive. The removal will take effect two clear working days after receipt of the notice by the Chief Executive.
- 5.2 Where a vacancy occurs, the Leader will appoint another Deputy Leader.
- 5.3 If for any reason the Leader is unable to act or the office of Leader becomes vacant (and pending the election of a new Leader) the Deputy Leader shall discharge all roles and functions of the Leader.
- 5.4 If, for any reason, both the Leader and Deputy Leader are unable to act or both offices become vacant, the Executive shall act in the Leader's place or arrange for another Member of the Executive to act in his/her place.
- 5.5 Other Cabinet members shall be appointed by the Leader who shall notify the Council of their appointment and they shall hold office until:
- (a) they resign from office; or
 - (b) they are no longer Members; or
 - (c) they are removed from office on the expiry date of their appointed term of office, save that the Leader may remove the Cabinet Member from office at an earlier date if he/she so decides. The Leader must give written notice of any early removal of a Cabinet Member to the Chief Executive and the removal will take effect two clear working days after receipt of the notice by the Chief Executive.

6. Delegation to Executive and Portfolio Holders

Introduction

- 6.1 The Cabinet and Portfolio Holders or Officers must take all decisions within the context of the Budget and Policy Framework.

Who may Make Executive Decisions?

- 6.2 All key decisions will be taken by the Executive as a whole.
- 6.3 Individual members of the Cabinet may take decisions which are not key decisions.

Principles of Delegation

- 6.4 The Executive should focus on:
- (a) co-ordination of decisions with a corporate-wide implication;
 - (b) major or key decisions;
 - (c) decisions which are recommendations on change in policy - and hence

Agenda Item 5b

need Council approval;

- (d) monitoring progress on key tasks; and
- (e) developing new policy.

6.5 Portfolio Holders have full delegated authority from the Executive to take all decisions within the remit of their portfolio (outlined in the Annex to Appendix H of the Constitution (attached to this scheme of delegations)) except:

- (a) key decisions which:
 - (i) result in the District Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates i.e. decisions which exceed £50,000 in value (but procurement decisions within the budget e.g. refuse vehicles can be undertaken within delegated powers); or
 - (ii) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the District Council.
- (b) decisions outside the agreed policy framework;
- (c) decisions which cut across two or more portfolios; and
- (d) proposals for new or amended policies or strategies.

Note: The fact that a decision could be made by a Portfolio Holder would not preclude that individual bringing the matter to the Cabinet for decision.

Portfolios

6.6 Portfolio Holders should be aware that the allocation of functions indicates an area of responsibility but does not automatically grant decision-making powers in that area. It is within the remit of each Portfolio Holder to:

- (a) provide direction and support to Chief Officers and Heads of Service in the management of the resources supporting their respective portfolios - including approval for filling vacancies and other minor personnel changes within agreed budgets;
- (b) oversee partnership working and external relationships within their portfolio areas; and
- (c) keeping their colleagues informed of significant or important issues as they emerge and develop.

Further Delegation of Executive Functions

- 6.7 Where the Cabinet, a Committee of the Cabinet (if one is established) or an individual member of the Cabinet is responsible for an executive function, they may delegate further to joint arrangements or an Officer.
- 6.8 Unless the Council directs otherwise, if the Leader delegates functions to the Cabinet, then the Cabinet may delegate further to a Committee of the Cabinet or to an Officer.
- 6.9 Unless the Leader directs otherwise, a Committee of the Cabinet to whom functions have been delegated by the Leader may delegate further to an Officer.
- 6.10 Even where executive functions have been delegated, that fact does not prevent the discharge of delegated functions by the person or body who delegated.
- 6.11 The Leader may amend the scheme of delegation relating to executive functions at any time during the year. To do so, the Leader must give written notice to the Chief Executive and to the person, body or Committee concerned. The notice must set out the extent of the amendment to the scheme of delegation, and whether it entails the withdrawal of delegation from any person, body, Committee or the Executive as a whole. The Chief Executive will present a report to the next ordinary meeting of the Council setting out the changes made by the Leader.
- 6.12 Where the Leader seeks to withdraw delegation from a Committee, notice will be deemed to be served on that Committee when he/she has served it on its Chairman.
- 6.13 Where a Cabinet member would normally exercise executive functions delegated to him/her in respect of any matter but is unable to do so because of absence or indisposition, a decision on the matter may be taken by the Leader, by the Cabinet or by a Committee of the Cabinet.
- 6.14 Where a Cabinet member would normally exercise executive functions delegated to him/her in respect of any matter but has a prejudicial interest in that matter as defined in the Members' Code of Conduct he/she shall not exercise those delegated powers in respect of that matter. A decision on the matter shall be taken by the Cabinet or a Committee of the Cabinet and the normal rules for declaration of interests at meetings shall apply.

Conflicts of Interest

- 6.15 Where the Leader has a conflict of interest this should be dealt with as set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.
- 6.16 If every member of the Cabinet has a conflict of interest this should be

Agenda Item 5b

dealt with as set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.

- 6.17 If the exercise of an executive function has been delegated to a Committee of the Cabinet, an individual Member or an Officer, and should a conflict of interest arise, then the function will be exercised in the first instance by the person or body by whom the delegation was made and otherwise as set out in the Member' Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX

CHAIRMEN, VICE-CHAIRMEN AND MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2017-18

Appointments Committee

(10 Members: 6 Conservatives plus Leader of the Council and 3 appropriate Portfolio Holders)

Cllrs. Clark, Grint, Krogdahl, London, Pearsall and Miss Stack

(Please note the election of the Chairman will take place at the first meeting of the Committee in the municipal year.)

Audit Committee

(9 Members: 7 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 UKIP)

Chairman: Cllr Grint

Vice Chairman: Cllr Reay

Cllrs. Ball, Clack, Halford, Layland, McArthur, Purves and Searles

Development Control Committee

(*Please note that this is the name of the Committee and not as per the main agenda papers)

(19 Members: 16 Conservative, 1 Independent, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat)

Chairman: Cllr Williamson

Vice-Chairman: Cllr Thornton

Cllrs. Ball, Barnes, Bosley, Brown, Clark, Cooke, Edwards-Winsor, Mrs. Hunter, Hogg, Horwood, Gaywood, Kitchener, Layland, Parkin, Purves, Raikes and Reay

Governance Committee

(7 Members: 6 Conservative, 1 UKIP)

Chairman: Cllr Pett

Vice-Chairman: Cllr Ms Tennessee

Cllrs. Clack, Halford, Layland, London and McGarvey

Agenda Item 6

Health Liaison Board

(8 Members: 6 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 UKIP)

Chairman: Cllr. Mrs. Bosley

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Dyball

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Clark, Halford, McArthur and Parkin and Searles

Homelessness Review Board

(3 Members: to be drawn from the Council)

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health to be Chairman of the Board and the membership to be drawn from the Council.

Licensing Committee

(13 Members: 11 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 UKIP)

Chairman: Cllr Mrs Morris

Vice-Chairman: Cllr Clark

Cllrs. Mrs Bosley, Cooke, Dr. Canet, Esler, Halford, Kelly, Lake, McArthur, Parkin, Pett and Raikes

Scrutiny Committee

(11 Members: 7 Conservative, 1 Independent, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 UKIP)

Chairman: Cllr Brown

Vice-Chairman: Cllr London

Cllrs Ball, Clack, Hogg, Kitchener, Lindsay, McArthur, Purves, Reay and Searles

Standards Committee

The Standards Committee will be composed of:

7 Members other than the Leader of the Council and no more than 1 Member selected from a particular Parish Boundary.

(7 Members: 7 Conservative)

Only one Member out of the above seven Members to be an Executive Member without being a Chair of the Committee as Standards is a Council function as opposed to an Executive function (s.27(8), Part 1, Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011).

Up to 2 co-opted Members of a parish or town council (a parish/town council member)

Chairman: Cllr Gaywood

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Ball

Cllrs. Bosley, Clark, McGarvey, McGregor, Morris

This page is intentionally left blank

APPOINTMENTS TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS 2017/18 - NON-EXECUTIVE

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Period of appointment</u>	<u>No. of Reps</u>	<u>Appointee(s) 2017/18</u>
Action with Communities in Rural Kent	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	2	Cllr. Clark Cllr. Thornton
Age UK:				
Darent Valley	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Parkin
Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & District	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Edwards-Winser
Biggin Hill Airport Consultative Committee	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Hogarth
Bough Beech Reservoir Recreation Consultative and Management Advisory Committee	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Cooke
Citizens Advice Bureau:				
Edenbridge & Westerham	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	2	Cllr. Maskell Cllr. Cooke
North & West Kent	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Mrs. Hunter (Reserve: Cllr. Dyball)
Health & Wellbeing Boards:				
Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Searles
West Kent and Weald	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Mrs. Bosley
Clinical Commissioning Groups (Observers):				
Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley			1	Cllr. Searles
West Kent and Weald			1	Cllr. Mrs. Bosley

Agenda Item 8

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Period of appointment</u>	<u>No. of Reps</u>	<u>Appointee(s) 2017/18</u>
Kent County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	On rota system	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Searles
Kent County Playing Fields Association	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Abraham
Local Democracy & Accountability Network for Councillors (SEE)	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1 (+deputy)	Cllr. Raikes (Cllr. Miss Stack)
RELATE: West Kent & Tunbridge Wells	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Esler
Sevenoaks Churches Group for Social Concern	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	2	Cllr. Hunter Cllr. McGarvey
Sevenoaks Conservation Council	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	4	Cllr. Clack Cllr. Edwards-Winser Cllr. Piper Cllr. Purves
Sevenoaks District Access Group	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	5	Cllr. McArthur Cllr. Parkin Cllr. Pett Cllr. Piper Cllr. Dr. Canet
Sevenoaks Leisure Board of Trustees	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	2	Cllr. Mrs. Bosley Cllr. Clark
Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Committee	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Hogarth

Volunteer Bureau:

Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Raikes
Edenbridge Volunteer Transport Service	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Layland
North West Kent Volunteer Centre (Swanley)	yearly	May 2017 - 2018	1	Cllr. Pett

This page is intentionally left blank

SDC Chairman's report 2016/17

A year ago when I was privileged to be elected Chairman by my peers, I took on the role with some diffidence - despite experience as Town Mayor. I was still not sure what to expect in a role covering a much wider geography. What I have experienced as Chairman has been a growing and amazing appreciation of what goes to make up our unique District.

The initial press release highlighted my recognition of and interest in supporting local talent. What my wife and I have experienced has exceeded any reasonable expectations. Very early in the year we were invited to a community choir festival in Edenbridge - the standard of singing amongst the several choirs taking part was fantastic, especially since community choirs do not audition. These included D'Vine Singers based in Sevenoaks, established to measure the benefits of singing for people suffering mental illness. There can be little doubt about the wellbeing effect of singing for the members, and we have always enjoyed their concerts. The nationally recognised metrics used showed a significant measurable improvement in well being and mental health.

We are fortunate that we are surrounded by performing arts. We have attended two thought provoking plays by Stag Youth Theatre. We have been amazed by the talent exhibited by Kentish Opera and Sevenoaks Players - I even managed to squeeze in a participation in Sevenoaks Players performance of Mikado at Stag Plaza and am proud to say that I remembered all the right words in the right order. It would have been even better if I had managed them all in the same performance! In also name checking Sevenoaks Symphony Orchestra I have to declare an interest as my wife is a member, their concerts reach a very high standard in what is a relatively small town. That performers come from quite a wide geography is testament to the quality of the facilities and core talent in the District. And anyone who has not experienced the extraordinarily high standard achieved by choirs such as Cantate, Temenos and Sevenoaks Philharmonic have missed a treat. That said, we have also many attended musical events outside the District, one of the many highlights being the London Mozart Players performing in New Romney (a town of 8,000?) which included the premiere of a work commissioned from the renowned Paul Mealar, made even more special as the composer was present and proved to be a delightful conversationalist.

However all this talent doesn't just happen. It starts at school age. We were fortunate to be invited twice to St Michael's School for concerts given at the end of a day of workshops to which St Michael's invited 6 or so local primary schools. For children of primary age, the standard reached, firstly for the jazz concert and a few weeks later for their Big Sing, was astonishing. We also attended a number of performances at Knole Academy where the benefits of music and performance on the confidence and wellbeing of participants became increasingly self evident. So perhaps it comes as no surprise that the Tonbridge Grammar School Senior Carol Concert had singing that was almost sublime, nor that the Sevenoaks Young Musician of the Year competition attracted talent of such high quality. And I have

Agenda Item 9

merely scratched the surface; all these activities add tremendously to the quality of life and wellbeing in our District.

It was good to see our local schools being so inclusive and community minded. The New Beacon hosted a seminar on mental health in schools. Knole Academy hosted a dance show involving many groups and schools at The Stag in Sevenoaks. And it is this theme of community that created such a powerful impression during the year. I had the privilege of collecting an award on behalf of Sevenoaks District Council for its work with people living with Dementia. The Forget me Not café in Westerham received an award at the same ceremony. Whilst SDC had provided practical support, the establishment of this café (and another in Edenbridge) was driven by the local community. Another community initiative was the Howard Venue in Hextable, which through the drive of one individual supported by a dedicated team of helpers revived an unused modern dance studio complex and reopened it as a much needed performing arts complex.

A highlight late in the year was being present for the High Sheriff's Award to SupaJam in Swanley, an extraordinary place where music is used to help young people in desperate need. The common theme with all these is an undying extraordinary commitment by ordinary(?) people to help their fellow beings and their community. This is also reflected in my two chosen charities for the year, Guide Dogs for the Blind and West Kent Mind. Again, I have only scratched the surface of the very many organisations and people dedicated to helping others in so many ways; we owe them an enormous debt.

So far I have focused on the culture and the people who help to make our District such a wonderful and special place to live. But I could not finish without commenting on our environment and the vibrant economy found within it. 93% of the District is Green Belt, and of that 93%, 60% is Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a lot of it is also of Special Scientific Interest. I doubt that there are any Districts or Boroughs that have such a wealth of heritage assets as we have, much perhaps down to the fact that we are within a days carriage ride of London. I wonder whether we take them too much for granted, and do not realise how valuable they are. Sevenoaks Town Council recently commissioned an economic evaluation of Stag Theatre from a firm of reputable and experienced consultants. Using recognised metrics, they assessed the value of Stag to the local economy as £7m - some comes from direct employment, some from visitor spend, more from direct spend into the economy and so on. This is just one visitor attraction, but we have so many more. During my year I have tried to highlight some of these. We held a civic tea and tour of Hever Castle, a tour of the Kent Wildlife Trust reserve off Bradbourne Vale Road and a gala charity dinner at Penshurst Place. The response was almost stunned amazement at the beauty and quality of these places. We also arranged a civic visit to Castle Farm to view the lavender fields, on which occasion I sampled a lavender massage in one of the fields - a unique experience. What became obvious was that our traditional heritage attractions have had to become far more business like and professional to survive. But interestingly many of our businesses are also becoming tourist attractions - Castle

Farm is very much a business, but the lavender fields are spectacular in July and the farm shop itself is interesting to visit. Just down the road in Shoreham is Mount Vineyard, producing award winning wine - people visit it for tastings and for tours round the vineyard. Our townscapes and the unique retail offering in those high streets can also attract visitors - think of Eynsford with its ford, castle and buildings, Westerham with its charming square, Sevenoaks with its independent shops - all business centres which attract people perhaps bored with shopping malls and their uniqueness.

Given the beauty and wonder of our Green Belt, maybe it is appropriate to finish by highlighting the pleasure of visiting two other farms on Open Farm Sunday last year. One produces wheat that goes into Warburtons bread, the other produced organic milk that goes into Yeo Organic Yoghurt - a timely reminder along with Castle Farm and Mount Vineyard (amongst others) that our Green Belt is economically productive that helps to underpin our local economy and local employment. Something easy to forget when so many people live in the District but commute to London.

It has been a humbling year learning a lot, hopefully supporting some extraordinary "ordinary" people doing so much for their communities, and waving the flag for what is a unique, special and beautiful District throughout the region.

Cllr Simon Raikes May 2017

This page is intentionally left blank