

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Maskell (Vice Chairman in the Chair)

Cllrs. Abraham, Barnes, Dr. Canet, Esler, Krogdahl, Lake, Maskell, McGarvey, Pearsall and Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Mrs. Bosley and Hogarth

Cllrs. Eyre, Firth and Pett were also present.

21. Minutes

It was noted that the previous meeting on 13 December 2016 had been inquorate. Informal notes of the meeting had been taken and were available on line and tabled at the meeting for information.

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2016, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

22. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Scott advised that she would leave the meeting and not take part in the debate or voting thereon in relation to agenda items 6, 8 & 9 (Minutes 26, 28 & 29).

23. Actions from Previous Meeting

The Chief Officer Communities and Business advised that at the inquorate meeting in December, the Manager of West Kent Partnership had given a presentation on who the partnership was and how it worked; how the partnership aimed to be the voice for west Kent outside of West Kent; how they engaged with businesses within West Kent; and how the partnership added value to work at a district level. Future challenges and opportunities had also been discussed.

24. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Deputy Portfolio Holder introduced Andrew Stirling the new Head of Economic Development and Property who had started the day before.

He also advised that consultants had been commissioned to undertake an economic study of Edenbridge. The Economic Development Officer explained that the study was to be completed by the end of March and look at population growth, changing demography and how the town centre could move forward and meet future demand. The results would be fed into the economic strategy.

25. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

26. Domestic Abuse Volunteer Service (DAVSS)

The Chairman welcomed the Chief Executive of Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS), Mark Hutcheon, to the meeting.

He stated that the main issue for DAVSS was raising its profile. It was a community-based charity created in April 2011 and provided support for anyone, man or woman. They delivered their service on an innovative cost effective volunteer model, relying on volunteers to deliver their services with a small number of paid staff. They worked across West Kent covering Sevenoaks District, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells. Demand had increased dramatically since 2011. The year ending 2016, there had been over 741 referrals (including 52 men) which had been a 16% increase on the previous year. 1044 affected children (an increase of 395) and 800 calls to the helpline. Research showed that at some point in their lives, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men would experience domestic abuse and many victims endured abuse for years before seeking help. Every week in the UK alone, 2 women die as a result of domestic abuse. The aim was to break the cycle of abuse, enable survivors to take control of their lives again and improve life opportunities for their children who are often traumatised by their experiences.

Volunteers were needed not just as Advisors but for other tasks such as administration, fundraising, social media. 50/60% of referrals were from West Kent Police, next biggest was self referrals then other agencies including health and social services, and voluntary organisations. They provided practical and individual support to our clients including: access to a Helpline weekday mornings giving immediate safety advice (answerphone outside of these hours); face-to-face support at venues convenient to clients for those at high risk of serious harm, offering them options for action and support; signposting to other agencies or voluntary groups e.g. Police, Social Services, Citizens Advice, Benefits and Housing, Health Professionals, Counselling etc.; support to Court to clients who often found this process very daunting and frightening; and raising public awareness by arranging presentations, workshops, attending business and community events and providing safe and healthy relationship courses for young people in schools and colleges.

In response to questions Mr. Hutcheon advised that the The Serious Crime Act 2015 had not been retrospective and had relied on a pattern of behaviour, therefore they were only just starting to see any of these cases coming forward. With regards to helping 'perpetrators', first of all they had to recognise themselves that they had a problem, but there were 6 month (27 sessions) [CDAP \(Community Domestic Abuse Programme\)](#) programme. He also advised that with regards to whether there were enough refuges, placing someone in one was a last resort and as yet they had not been unable to place someone.

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It was suggested that Parish and Town Councils would be able to help promote the service and he would be passed the contact details of Kent Association of Local Councils ([KALC](#)).

[The Chairman thanked Mr. Hutcheon for attending.](#)
[\(Cllr. Scott left the meeting for the above item and did not take part in the debate or voting thereon\)](#)

27. Economic Impact of Tourism - Sevenoaks District

Members received a [presentation](#) from Louisa Mungall and Raluca Brebeanu from Destination Research - Partnerships & Skills, Visit Kent, who had undertaken a study into the economic impact of tourism in the Sevenoaks District based on 2015 data. Members took the opportunity to ask questions.

The Economic Development Officer advised that the next step was to make it an action in the economic strategy as part of the destination management plan. There was an event at the end of March 2017 and she hoped to pick up the actions identified in the study along with the accommodation strategy with a report to the meeting in October 2017.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

28. Community Grant Scheme Draft Allocations 2017/18

The Partnership & Project Officer presented the report which set out information about the Community Grant Scheme and summarised applications received by the Council from voluntary organisations for funding during 2017/18. Details of the appraisal process were provided and included a lengthy and detailed consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development, Cllr Hogarth, the Deputy Portfolio Holders for Economic & Community Development, Cllrs Maskell and McGarvey, and Cllr Mrs Bosley who had been trained in appraisal techniques.

The Committee requested their vote of thanks to be recorded, to all the volunteers and voluntary groups, to acknowledge all their hard work and how valuable it was to the community.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted, and recommended to Cabinet.

(Cllr. Scott left the meeting for the above item, did not take part in the debate or voting thereon and did not return to the meeting.)

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29. Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan 2017-18

The Community Safety Manager presented the report which sought consideration of the 2017-18 Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan. The plan responded to the community safety priorities identified in the most recent Strategic Assessment. Members also received a [presentation](#) on the Strategic Assessment.

In response to questions the Community Safety Manager undertook a number of actions:

- request Police feedback on the number of enforcements arising from Speed Watch initiatives;
- circulate the link of the safeguarding video shown to taxi drivers by the licensing section;
- feedback that the PCSO needs to be more visible in the New Ash Green area;
- circulate the contact for the Independent Police Advisory Group.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted and recommended to Cabinet.

(Cllr. Scott left the meeting for the above item and did not take part in the debate or voting thereon)

30. Work Plan

The work plan was noted subject to the following:

6 July 2017

- Visit Kent moved to 3 October (see below)
- Addition of Dunton Green Community Development Project
- End of year economic development monitoring

3 October 2017

- Edenbridge economic study
- Refresh of the economic strategy (workshop)
- Tourism Strategy (with Visit Kent)

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.00 PM

CHAIRMAN