

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr. Hogarth (Chairman)

Cllr. Maskell (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Barnes, Dr. Canet, Esler, Eyre, McGarvey and Pearsall

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Abraham, Krogdahl, Lake, Maskell and McGregor

11. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2018, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

13. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

14. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman, advised that the Sevenoaks District Council Voluntary & Community Awards was now open for entries. He advised that the Chairman of the District would visit all community groups throughout her year encouraging applications.

He also advised that the Economic Development Strategy consultation was under way, with results to be reported back at the next meeting.

He reported that the Premier Inn was now open for business which had helped both Sevenoaks District Council by creating an investment, and helping the needs of the district with the addition of a hotel.

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman also advised Members that the two floors above the High Street shop M&Co had been developed into artist studios for 20 artists, which was now 84% full.

15. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

16. Budget 2019/20: Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report, which explained that this was the second stage of the budget process and ensured that all Members of the Advisory Committees had a role to play in the governance of the Council and the budget decision making process. He explained that since the current financial strategy was introduced in 2011/12, over £7 million of savings had been agreed.

To continue to have a balanced budget position and remain financially self-sufficient, a net savings requirement of £100,000 per annum was included in the budget. The Chief Finance Officer also advised Members that other pressures may come out later in the budget process such as when the Local Government Finance Settlement was announced in December. These may result in additional savings being required.

No growth and savings proposals were included in the report for this Committee but Members were asked for their suggestions, in order to achieve the £100,000 net saving required for the next year, which would be considered by Cabinet, before finalising the budget for 2019/20.

Members questioned what the capital budget of £51,000 for Parish Projects, shown in Appendix B was and whether this could become a saving due to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding now available. The Chief Officer Communities & Business explained that this capital expenditure was for rural parishes and village halls, or for the need of disabled access for community buildings and had been a one off capital sum.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Officers for their work in maintaining the financial self-sufficiency of the Council.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) no growth and savings proposals had been identified in Appendix D to the report; and
- b) the Parish Projects capital budget of £51,000 be investigated as a possible one off saving due to the now alternative option of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding.

17. Community Plan 2017-18 Annual Report

The Community Planning & Projects Officer presented the report which set out the Annual monitoring for the second year (2017/18) of the Sevenoaks District Community Plan 2016-19.

In response to questions by Members whether the One You Your Home project would be rolled out to the north of the District, the Chief Officer Communities & Business confirmed that the Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had asked Sevenoaks District Council to coordinate a Care Navigator bid.

Members also questioned whether there was evidence of how many people the One You and One You Your Home service had provided for. The Chief Officer Communities & Business explained that there had been partnership work with neighbouring Councils to create a database that now captured information about customers seen.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

18. Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan Annual Report 2018-19

Members considered the report and the Community Safety Manager gave a [presentation](#) on the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan annual report for 2017-18.

She explained that there had been 653 daily taskings from 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018, and the Police had confirmed that the Sevenoaks District Community Support unit (CSU) was one of the most successful in Kent. She also confirmed that there had been a 24% reduction in anti-social behaviour reported to the Sevenoaks District CSU and to the police.

Members asked if the Community Safety Manager could notify Members of crimes per a thousand people in the District. She confirmed this could be done and would be circulated after the meeting.

Action 1 - The Community Safety Manager to give breakdown of crimes per a thousand residents for the Sevenoaks District.

In response to questions as to whether the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Unit (CSU) could forward reported crimes to the emergency services number 101, the Community Safety Manager clarified that individual crimes and incidents should always be reported to the police but where there seemed to be a pattern of crime or repeated anti-social behaviour it was helpful if it could be reported to the CSU. People would still need to report to the police as this helped build an evidence base but the CSU could take a more holistic approach to solving the problem for the local community.

The Community Safety Manager also confirmed the Sevenoaks District CSU were awarded a Team Contribution Award from Kent Police for their work.

The Committee congratulated the Community Safety Manager on her team's award and thanked her for their efforts over the year.

Resolved: That this report be noted

19. Dunton Green Annual Report 2017-18

The Community Safety Manager presented the report and gave a [presentation](#) on the Dunton Green Community Development project for 2017-18.

She highlighted the work the team at Sevenoaks District Council had put in, in order to bring communities in the area closer together. She explained that there had been over 1240 attendees in its activities during the year, and all projects had been promoted in a variety of ways including newsletters, which had been posted to every household.

The Community Safety Manager advised Members of the activities that had been opened in the area, including netball, which had seen 70 people attend since its opening and a Christmas bazaar in 2017, in which 250 families attended.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

20. Community Grants Scheme 2017-18 year end monitoring

The Chief Officer Communities & Business presented a report on the year-end monitoring for the Community Grants Scheme 2017-18. She explained that monitoring of the Community Grants was split into two levels. The first was up to £500, for which a confirmation was required from the organisation that the funding had been spent on the intended purpose, and for grants over £500, for which there were agreed performance indicators, which were monitored twice yearly.

Where an organisation was not meeting its required indicators, Officers would make a visit to discuss how this should be addressed. Further explanation was given to Members that the Chairman of the District would visit every community group that had received a grant throughout her year and promote the community grants scheme for the coming year.

Members questioned whether the current financial pressures were contributing to a reduction in community grants. The Chief Officer Communities & Business advised that in her opinion, voluntary groups had changed over the past ten years, in response to the commissioning of services by organisations such as Kent County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups. This meant that more workers were paid employees. In addition, funding tended to be more focused on new projects which meant that voluntary organisations were constantly trying to reinvent their services in order to obtain funding. The District Council, at its last review of grant guidelines had deliberately focused on volunteering and volunteers

Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee - 25 September 2018

and voluntary organisations were able to apply for funding towards core costs. The District Council's grants budget had remained unchanged for some years.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chief Officer Communities & Business confirmed that an organisation that seemed to be struggling would receive a visit or an invitation to meet Officers.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

21. Work Plan

The work plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.55 PM

CHAIRMAN

