

11 May 2016 at 2.00 pm

Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks



Health Liaison Board

Supplementary Agenda

	Pages	Contact
4. Healthy Workplace Update	(Pages 1 - 4)	Annie Sargent Tel: 01322 353085

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP – SEVENOAKS AND DARTFORD
REPORT FOR HEALTH LIAISON BOARD – 11 MAY 2016 MEETING

THE KENT HEALTHY BUSINESS AWARDS

1. Background

In 2014, The EH Partnership was asked by KCC if they would be interested in a project to promote improved health and wellbeing in businesses in the Dartford and Sevenoaks area. The idea was to have an award scheme, where if businesses could achieve certain criteria or standards, they could apply for the award and upon successful attainment; they could promote themselves as a good employer to work for. As well as improving the health and well-being of their staff, levels of sickness may also be reduced.

The aim of the project is to engage with as many businesses and organisations and to get them to sign up to and achieve the award. The award is based on self-assessment, and providing evidence of policies and procedures that help support a healthy workforce. There are three levels of award: **Commitment, Achievement and Excellence**. So no matter the size of business and level of resources, there is an opportunity to attain an award.

2. Methodology

With Sevenoaks on board with the initiative, lead officers were appointed and a small working group in the Communities & Business team began working on the best approach to engage businesses.

The launch of the event was in May 2014, and at this point members of the Economic Development team emailed information and invites to all businesses on their mail shot list. We believe this was to over 500 businesses in Sevenoaks.

EH were shortly asked to duplicate their Healthy Business work with Dartford businesses shortly before the launch, and we were only too pleased to take on the task.

Naomi Shipman and Shona McQuade, our lead officers for the Healthy Business Award Scheme, met many times with the KCC Lead, Karen Hardy. Through KCC a networking group was set up with all the local authorities in Kent who were involved.

At this group, business engagement strategies could be shared along with the availability of health checks, well-being therapies, sports groups, useful websites and other contacts.

As well as all the promotional work that KCC have done for the scheme, here at Sevenoaks we have specifically carried out the following work.

- Mailshots

Since 2014, there have been three postal mailshots to Sevenoaks businesses. The most recent letter, which was sent out in March, focuses very much on the benefits to businesses and their employees. We have highlighted the availability of a range of fully funded opportunities for both staff members and managers including: smoking quit clubs; free health

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checks; training on mental health in the workplace; sports tasters and dealing with alcohol and substance misuse issues. The Healthy Business Award is promoted alongside these.

- Personal Engagement

Members of the EH Commercial team have been briefed on the Healthy Business Award as part of their monthly team meetings. Whilst out on their routine inspections, officers will discuss the award where possible and refer interested businesses to Naomi for follow up. It is estimated that Naomi, during her own inspection work, has discussed the award with at least 100 businesses.

- Networking

Naomi regularly attends at Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce at Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce events.

At these events there is the opportunity to network with local businesses. The majority are self-employed people offering services such as gardening and reflexology. Other businesses are small business owners with ten employees or less.

Naomi also attended the Sevenoaks Business Show 2015, Kent B2B at Brands Hatch and Kent Healthy Business Award business breakfasts.

All these events provided an opportunity to obtain business cards and contact details. These people are always contacted following the event to provide more detailed information and offer support options.

- Promotional Materials

At the events there are KHBA postcards handed out, that contain basic information about the scheme. Also popular are the KHBA stress balls, pens and pedometers. Information packs are available for the interested businesses.

3. Results

Currently, we are working with two large organisations in the district and two businesses, with new leads coming in in the last few weeks. They are working towards the most appropriate level of award for their needs.

There has not been as much uptake of the scheme as we would have anticipated however; we have identified the following challenges that are restricting greater uptake.

- Other competing award schemes that businesses see as taking precedent.
- The awards scheme is more targeted towards manufacturing and manual workers, of which there are very few medium/large businesses in Sevenoaks.
- Organisations and businesses struggle with the time resource required to put the portfolio together
- Food businesses often have a high turnover of staff and momentum to achieve the award is difficult.

4. Conclusion

We currently have had 4 organisations/businesses that are committed to going for the award. Going forward we need to consider the strategies that can be put in place to support businesses and organisations further in achieving the award.

Another positive outcome has been that our engagement with businesses has heightened awareness in workplace well-being issues. Even though some businesses choose not to proceed with the award, they have been motivated to build on existing health and wellbeing initiatives that they already may have in place. They are also able to fully use the resources that we are able to signpost them to.

5. Strategies going forward

- Planned focus on face to face meetings with Sevenoaks town centre businesses in June.
- Providing promotional information at Sevenoaks Wellbeing Show on 14th June.
- Emails to Healthy Living Pharmacies, who are being encouraged to sign up to the award scheme through their Healthy Living accreditation.
- Promotion at Kent Vision Live event at Detling Showground.
- Continue to follow up with interested businesses.
- Publicise the scheme in the local press and promote success stories.
- Continue to promote the awards with appropriate businesses during food hygiene inspections.
- Work further with local organisations such as West Kent Mind, West Kent Housing and Sencio.

For further information please contact Annie Sargent 01322 343085

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