



07 July 2022 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks



Cabinet

Supplementary Agenda

	Pages	Contact
7. UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan	(Pages 1 - 10)	Chris Burchell Tel: 01732227136
		
13. Welcome Back Fund	(Pages 11 - 12)	Emily Haswell Tel: 01732227261
14. Sevenoaks District Draft Economic Development Strategy	(Pages 13 - 14)	Chris Burchell Tel: 01732227136
		

If you wish to obtain further factual information on any of the agenda items listed above, please contact the named officer prior to the day of the meeting.

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Cabinet Briefing 7th July Supplementary Notes - Economic Development Strategy

The following are updates and suggested changes to the Strategy to be considered by Cabinet and their origin:

- The referencing for quotes or data highlighted in the Strategy will now follow the Oxford Standard of referencing
- Any abbreviations to be written out in full when first mentioned and where possible certain expressions such as ‘Modal Shift’ be described in a way that can be understood by the general public (People & Places Committee)
- The cost of living crisis should be referenced in the Strategic Context section - page 3 (People & Places Committee)
- The Sevenoaks District Community Plan should be referenced in the first section of the Strategic Context section
- BREXIT - to include in Opportunities in the Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats (‘SWOT’) section to include opportunities to increase international trade - page 4 (People & Places Committee)
- To include the importance of improving infrastructure and public transport in both urban and rural areas under Infrastructure in the strategic priorities section - page 6 (Improvement & Innovation Committee)
- Our Vision - The Council’s Net Zero commitment is to be ***working towards*** Net Zero. Should this be amended?
- The Focus Area ‘Tourism & Rural’ should be renamed ‘Visitor & Rural economy’ for consistency
- The data in the economic dashboard will be updated to include the very latest data where available (for example unemployment levels) at publication

Chris Burchell

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Appendix A

UKSPF Investment Plan – Sevenoaks District Projects list

This table provides the substantive list of projects that will be included in the detailed Investment Plan to be submitted to Government

The Investment plan requires the rationale for projects, details of consultations carried out and a detailed spend and outputs profile

Theme: Community and Place:-

Project	Description	Cost £	Rationale	Outputs	Outcomes
Social Value Engine	Tool for managing grants, showing social value outcomes which can help leverage further investment.	9,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will help us monitor outcomes of the UKSPF and act as a reporting tool Will help support future bids 	Organisations receiving grant funding	Accurate analysis of UKSPF outcomes plus Improvement in engagement numbers (number of residents participating in community activities from an agreed baseline)
Community Mobilisation Officer	0.5 FTE for 2 years to manage UKSPF Community mobilisation and community hub projects	50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This post will co-ordinate local community activities as they recover post pandemic Addresses the fact that a number of community organisations have disbanded and general rise in levels of anxiety and mental health issues in the community The post will build community membership, create a network of community hubs and increase volunteering opportunities Help create a digital portal to improve communications in the community and better access to services 	A minimum of 20 local community led projects or events supported	Improvement in engagement numbers (Number of additional residents participating in community activities from an agreed baseline)

Digital Infrastructure	Feasibility study around enhancing the infrastructure for digital connectivity in rural areas	15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting digital inclusiveness and access to services. Reducing 'digital poverty' (Highlighted by Kent Community Foundation) Rural economic growth and productivity (highlighted by rural business owners in focus groups and key deliverable in our new Economic Development Strategy) 	One feasibility study supported	Increase in projects funded as a result of feasibility studies
Improving Green Spaces	Sensory garden project at Hollybush. Would seek 50% match – possibly alongside DEFRA nature recovery grant. Serve as a pilot and ties in to Public Realm project to link all green spaces.	15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases access to green spaces for residents Boosts biodiversity Deliverable in Sevenoaks District Net Zero Plan 	One facility supported	Increase in users of facility/amenities from agreed baseline
Community Mobilisation Grants	Grant funding for community mobilisation projects	42,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above – Community Mobilisation Officer Grants that will empower local communities to design and deliver projects with a social purpose 	20 community based organisations receiving grants	Increase in users of facilities/amenities from agreed baseline
Rural Isolation	Community Pop ups to bring people together and build community links	10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural isolation an issue as highlighted by Kent Community Foundation 2022 Needs analysis – linked to digital infrastructure above 	100 individuals reached	Increase in users of facilities/amenities from an agreed baseline

Supporting Town Centres	Capital project covering public realm and greening improvements in our key centres	181,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support and boost pride and place across all our key centres Facilitates unfunded public realm projects Builds on legacy of the Welcome Back Fund Evidenced by our Town Centre Strategy 	Amount of public realm created or improved	Improved perception of amenities
Creative Sector Development	Support creative businesses by showcasing for residents and visitors the cultural and experiential offer, through seed funding and through effective partnership working	12,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the arts and cultural sector through grants Seed fund local events Creative industries strong growth sector, and important for our town centres (SELEP Creative High Streets Report) 	10 organisations receiving grants	Improved engagement numbers (residents engaging with the arts from an agreed baseline)
TOTAL		£334,500			

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Theme: Supporting Local Business:-

Project	Description	Cost £	Rationale	Outputs	Outcomes
West Kent Green Business Grant Scheme	A grant scheme to encourage local businesses to move towards zero carbon as per the aspirations of the District Climate Change Strategy. The scheme would include grant contributions of up to £5,000 towards interventions such as renewable energy sources, energy efficiency measures and business development support	65,500 SDC contribution over the funding period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligns with West Kent Priorities for Growth and SDC Economic Strategy Aligns with SDC Net Zero action plan and Kent Environment Strategy 	15 businesses receiving grants	10 businesses adopting new to firm technologies

<p>West Kent Business Support Programme including dedicated officer</p>	<p>After many years of learning from providing business support across West Kent, this service will provide a co-ordinated programme of events and training, along with a start-up mentoring service that also offers seed funding grants (of up to £500). A dedicated business support adviser will be recruited</p>	<p>54,500 SDC contribution over the funding period</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from Case for West Kent refresh that businesses do not access business support or funding at the same level as elsewhere in Kent • ONS data suggests poor business survival rate in Year One • Although still relatively high compared to other parts of Kent some decline in the number of businesses in the knowledge economy 	<p>20 businesses receiving non-financial support</p> <p>20 businesses receiving grants</p>	<p>15 early stage firms which increase their revenue following support</p>
<p>Rural Business Development Programme</p>	<p>Develop a programme that provides targeted support for rural and land based industries (still to be fully defined)</p>	<p>28,000 Plus existing West Kent budgets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could be utilised as a match for any replacement of the LEADER programme. • Highlighted by UKSPF focus groups that dedicated support required for rural businesses 	<p>10 businesses receiving non-financial support</p>	<p>Jobs created and retained</p>

Town Centre activities	Events and promotions to support town centres development and to grow cultural offer across all our town centres including part-time officer.	60,000 + 60,000 town centre officer role (now part-time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds on recommendations from the Town Centre Strategy on the need to grow footfall and improve dwell time in key centres • Will be part of our tool kit to improve occupancy levels in centres notably Edenbridge and New Ash Green • Key point raised from consultation with our focus groups 	Supporting markets and the retail, leisure and hospitality sector	Increased footfall
Alternative Accommodation	Supporting the visitor economy by encouraging camping, champing, farm stays and other pop up accommodation across the District and increasing the number of overnight stays during the summer season. Feasibility study, bringing groups together, toolkit creation followed by campaign to target visitors	14,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To boost the amount of accommodation provision in the District • Aligns with our Place Campaign • Visit Kent/Christ Church University Kent Accommodation Study 2020 identified low level of 3* or budget accommodation provision in the District 	Number of businesses receiving non-financial support	Increase in visitor numbers
Digital Heritage and Visitor Economy Project	Feasibility study to utilise augmented and virtual reality to promote our heritage and visitor economy assets	11,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase and improve engagement in our community with heritage – pride in place • Boost productivity in the visitor economy 	Number of feasibility studies supported	Increase in projects funded as a result of feasibility studies
TOTAL		£293,000			

Theme: People and Skills:-

Project	Description	Cost £	Rationale	Outputs	Outcomes
Growth Gurus	Establish a community hub pilot within Swanley providing a physical presence delivering support and access to services. Also a virtual dimension. Aimed at preventing worklessness via a triage service and a holistic approach across a range of partners. Delivering training, signposting and employability support. A dedicated support advisor for each young person via The Education People and a dedicated growth guru. Year 1 of an envisaged 3 year programme.	180,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although there has been some improvement since 2021, youth unemployment is high particularly in St Mary's and White Oak wards in Swanley Sevenoaks has a high proportion of young people with Special Education Needs and a physical disability (Kent Community Foundation) 	Number of people accessing mental & physical health support leading to employment	Number of people reporting increased employability through the development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF
Support for economically inactive adults	1:1 and group sessions for economically inactive adults who face multiple barriers to employment. Outreach in Swanley and Edenbridge and specialist support for those aged 50-64. Potential for delivery on a WK basis	60,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still to be fully defined, but the focus will be on life skills, health and well-being, confidence building and reducing barriers for those furthest from the work place. 	Number of people supported to access basic skills	Number of people engaged in job searching following support

Green retrofit skills	Covering 1) improved coverage and understanding of the Retrofit agenda in our communities 2) Retrofit Boot camp (training local retrofit advisers)	72,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key deliverable in our Economic Development Strategy • The LGA has predicted that the green economy could support up to 30,000 jobs in Kent & Medway by 2050 	Number of people gaining a qualification on completion of a course following support	Number of people gaining a qualification on completion of a course following support
Upskilling in digital skills	Supporting business growth by delivering digital training to fill skills gaps. Voluntary sector to also access training to build capacity	20,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links above to both the rural economy and projects focussed on economically inactive adults 	Number of people gaining a qualification on completion of a course following support	Number of people gaining a qualification on completion of a course following support
TOTAL		£332,500			

Indicative project cost

£. 960,000 + 4% administration allowance = £1,000,000

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Item 13 - Welcome Back Fund

The attached report was considered by the Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee on 23 June 2022. The relevant Minute extract is below.

Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee (23 June 2022, Minute 9)

Members considered the report presented by the Economic Development & Programme Manager which reviewed the Welcome Back Fund Project. He explained to the Committee that the funding of £214,212 (available as £107,106 per year between 2020 and 2022) was for temporary projects that supported the high street.

He explained how the project worked closely with Town and Parish Councils to ensure local needs were met. The Committee heard that the Council successfully spent 99% of the allocation, with 100% of the claims on the funding paid in full. The Committee then heard an outline of the projects successfully funded in this way. He further explained that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan would develop upon these projects. The Committee discussed the success of the Project in forming relationships with smaller businesses and how these could be developed upon in the future.

Resolved: That the successful delivery of the Reopening High Street Safely/Welcome Back Fund and the positive impacts the interventions had across the district, be noted

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Item 14 - Sevenoaks District Draft Economic Development Strategy

The attached report was considered by the Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee on 23 June 2022. The relevant Minute extract is below.

Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee (23 June 2022, Minute 10)

The Economic Development & Programme Manager presented the report which detailed the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) for the District for the period 2022 - 2027. He explained that the Strategy addressed the challenges facing businesses with supply chain issues, a tight labour market and rising costs. It also focusses on the opportunities provided by changes in working practices and the possibility of capturing new spending patterns.

He outlined the four focus areas of the Strategy, which were Business & Enterprise, Tourism and Rural, Town Centres, and Skills & Employment, and explained the elements within these that the EDS specifically targeted. He emphasised the importance of sustainability and Council's Net Zero plan within all these areas, and the opportunities for growth that these presented for the District.

The Committee then heard about the importance of the District Council's partnerships in the Strategy, and the role of consultation with these groups in the creation of the Strategy's priorities. They also heard about how the Strategy includes an annual economic report to monitor its performance.

The Committee discussed the measures in the EDS to retain businesses in the District once developed, and heard the measures the EDS included to develop the available office space within the District to allow these businesses to remain. They further discussed the ways the EDS addressed inequality in the District, and how the provision of digital and transport infrastructure in both rural and urban areas was crucial to the levelling up of the District as a whole.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Economic Development Strategy 2022 - 2027 be adopted.

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