



Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Despatched: 28.04.14

CABINET
08 May 2014 at 7.00 pm
Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

AGENDA


Membership:


Chairman: Cllr. Fleming Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Ms. Lowe
Cllrs. Bosley, Hogarth and Ramsay

	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 April 2014, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 8)	
2. Declarations of interest Any interests not already registered		
3. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)		
4. Matters referred from Council (if any)		
5. Matters referred from the Audit Committee and Scrutiny Committee (Paragraph 5.20 of Part 4 (Executive) of the Constitution) (if any)		
6. Recommendations from the Cabinet Advisory Committees	To follow	
a) Safeguarding Policy ((Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee, 29 April 2014)		
b) Community Safety Action Plan (Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee, 29 April 2014)		
7. Budget: Council Tax Support Funding for Town and Parish Councils	(Pages 9 - 38)	Adrian Rowbotham Tel: 01732 227153



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|----|--|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 8. | Safeguarding Policy
 | (Pages 39 - 98) | Lesley Bowles
Tel: 01732 227335 |
| 9. | Community Safety Action Plan
 | (Pages 99 - 134) | Lesley Bowles
Tel: 01732 227335 |

 Indicates a Key Decision

 indicates a matter to be referred to Council

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing this agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.)

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 227241)

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2014 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Bosley, Hogarth and Ramsay

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Ms. Lowe

Cllrs. Ayres, Mrs. Ayres, Brookbank, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Davison, Davison, Fittock, Mrs. George, Mrs. Hunter, Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Parkin, Piper, Scholey and Searles were also present.

90. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 6 March 2014, be approved and signed as a correct record.

91. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

92. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

There were none.

93. Matter referred from Council

Resolved: That the recommended proposed arrangements for Cabinet Advisory Committees for the next municipal year, be noted.

94. Matters referred from the Audit Committee and Scrutiny Committee (Paragraph 5.20 of Part 4 (Executive) of the Constitution)

a) Risk Management Strategy (Audit Committee – 18 March 2014, Minute 36)

This was considered under Minute 96.

95. Recommendations from the Cabinet Advisory Committees

a) Gypsies and Traveller Plan Consultation (Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee – 25 March 2014)

This was considered under Minute 97.

b) Establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company Structure (Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 26 March 2014)

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This was considered under Minute 98.

- c) Rural Broadband (Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee – 26 February 2014, and Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 26 March 2014)

This was considered under Minute 99.

- d) White Oak Leisure Centre Asset Maintenance – Update (Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee – 26 February 2014, and Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 26 March 2014)

This was considered under Minute 100.

- e) Asset Management Plan - Update (Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 26 March 2014)

This was considered under Minute 101.

- f) Investment Strategy (Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 26 March 2014)

This was considered under Minute 102.

CHANGE IN AGENDA ITEM ORDER

With the agreement of the meeting Agenda Item 8 was brought forward for consideration.

96. Gypsy and Traveller Plan - Site Options Consultation

The Portfolio Holder Local Planning & Environment presented the draft Gypsy and Traveller Plan which sought approval to go out to consultation site options. Government policy required local planning authorities to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and prepare a plan to show how those needs would be met. The Council had undertaken a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in March 2012, which had identified a need for 72 pitches over the period 2012-2026. This consultation was the first stage of a process looking at 'potential' sites and inviting stakeholders to comment. It also included a 'call for sites' and suggestions would be welcome.

The Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee had been updated and it was contained within the report, that the the Planning Inspector who was examining the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) had outlined that he planned to recommend a 'main modification' to the document, to allocate the identified site, land west of Enterprise Way, Edenbridge, for housing development, and therefore indicated that it would be incompatible for this site also to be considered for Gypsy and Traveller pitches. Officers and the Advisory Committee had therefore recommended that this site be removed from the consultation draft.

If agreed the draft would go out for consultation in May/June 2014 and responses would inform the process as the Plan moved towards a further consultation stage. Before the Council could adopt a Gypsy and Traveller Plan it would be subjected to independent examination and found sound by a Government-appointed Planning Inspector. It was critical, therefore, that the suitability and deliverability of sites was robustly assessed and that sound planning reasons could be presented for the Council proposing or rejecting sites.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and recommendations received from the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee which had considered the same report, and update.

Before moving any further the Chairman moved that the land west of Enterprise Way, Edenbridge be removed from the consultation document. This was put to the vote and agreed.

The Chairman took the meeting through each of the proposed sites (excluding the one already agreed to be removed) contained within the report and all Members had the opportunity to speak. The Chairman of the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee informed the meeting of the debate had at the meeting and highlighted the minutes and recommendations of to the Cabinet. Generally there had been concern over the cumulative effect and impact and lack of suitable infrastructure to accommodate many of these sites could cause. Since the meeting Officers had confirmed that Holly Mobile Home Park, Hockenden Lane, Swanley was not in an Air Quality Monitoring area and therefore was not being recommended for removal. However there had been much discussion as illustrated within the minutes and reasons given as to why certain areas were being recommended for removal from the consultation document.

Members were reminded that this was only the first stage of a lengthy consultation process and it was necessary to consult closer to the number of sites being sought. If there were no plan and evidence of clear and unmet need, then it would be hard to refuse applications through the development control process, and historically it had been shown that the planning inspectorate would look favourably on the applicant in the absence of a plan. A plan would also provide time to plan for necessary infrastructure etc. If all the sites were removed as as recommended by the Advisory Committee then only 37 pitches were left to consult on. Being part of the consultation document did not mean that these sites would make it to the final document, but due process needed to be demonstrated with sound and valid reasons provided for not considering certain sites, in order to be found sound and pass the robust testing by the Government appointed Planning Inspector.

It was noted that many of the potential site options were temporary sites being made permanent.

With regards to Barnfield Park, Ash-cum-Ridley Officers agreed with the points raised by the local councillor at the Advisory Committee that good reasons had been provided to remove this site from the consultation. These related to the scale of the existing site and the scale of the 'settled' community of Ash. Officers noted that national planning policy for Gypsy and Traveller sites states that 'when assessing the suitability of sites in rural or semi-rural settings, local planning authorities should ensure that the scale of such sites does not dominate the nearest settled community'.

The Cabinet were also addressed by speakers from Shoreham Parish Council concerning the unsuitability of land south of Mesne Way, part of Timberden Farm, Shoreham and doubted the accuracy of the Salford GTTAA Study; and a speaker from CBRE representing the landowner at Fort Halstead who suggested that the site's location in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its importance for biodiversity indicated that it gave reasons why the site should be considered for early exclusion.

Many of the points made during the debate were why the consultation process was required and were issues that needed to be fed into the consultation process.

Resolved: That

- a) the 'Gypsy and Traveller Plan – Site Options Consultation', set out as Appendix 1 to the report, and the Gypsy and Traveller Plan – Site Options – Assessments, set out as Appendix 2 to the report with Barnfield Park, Ash-cum-Ridley and land west of Enterprise Way, Edenbridge removed as potential site options, be published for consultation (along with the Sustainability Appraisal) during a period to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder;
- b) the Portfolio Holder be authorised to agree minor presentational changes and detailed amendments to the consultation documents to assist their clarity; and
- c) the consultation document be published on the Council's website and made available to purchase in hard copy at a price to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder.

97. Risk Management Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources presented the report which sought adoption of a revised strategy. The Strategy had been updated to reflect the introduction of the Council's new Corporate Plan and to ensure that all risk management activity was undertaken to help the Council achieve the Vision and Promises set out. The Strategy set out how the Council would approach risk management, the outcomes it expected to achieve and the practice it would adopt to ensure effective governance of the Council's risk management arrangements. Members noted and considered the relevant minute and recommendation received from the Audit Committee considered the same report.

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In response to a question the Audit Risk and Anti Fraud Manager advised that the strategy would work for other proposals as set on the agenda such as a local authority trading company and the proposed investment strategy.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the Council Risk Management Strategy be adopted.

98. Establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company Structure

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources presented the report which sought authorisation in principal to the creation of a local authority trading company structure to facilitate opportunities for income generation in order to reduce the reliance on Government grants. Members noted and considered the relevant minute and recommendations received from the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

The Chairman requested that any executive appointments be made on merit and ability with a person specification outlining the necessary skills required. He also wished to see appointments of Non Executive Directors. The Chief Officer Legal and Governance advised another report would come forward to the June meetings of the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee and then Cabinet and that at the moment external legal advice would be needed to report back on the finer detail.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the Chief Officer Legal and Governance be authorised to incorporate a company wholly owned by the Council so as to allow the Council to exercise the power to trade contained in the Local Government Act 2003 and the Localism Act 2011;
- b) the broad governance and funding arrangements for the trading company as set out in the report subject to the incorporation of Non Executive Directors and the appointments of Executive and Non Executive being made on merit, be approved and the Chief Officer Legal and Governance in consultation with the Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources be given delegated authority to settle the detailed arrangements for the establishment of the company;
- c) consideration be given by the Cabinet as appropriate to any individual business cases in respect of the use of the Council's trading powers as part of the development of the future strategy for income generation;

- d) further details be reported to the June meeting of Finance & Resources Advisory Committee and the following Cabinet with draft Memorandum and Articles of Association.

99. Rural Broadband

The Chief Officer Communities and Business presented the report advising Cabinet of the six options that had been analysed by Officers to improve Broadband in the District, as detailed within the report. Members noted and considered the relevant minutes and recommendations received from the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee and the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development advised that the window for any commercial opportunity for Option 5 had passed, but that Option 2 presented a good role for the Council which was already well positioned with in house expertise.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the following Options be agreed:

- a) Option 1 – Assist local communities in taking advantage of the BDUK and RCBF rollout Continuing to develop the relationship with BT and assisting in delivery of the BDUK and RCBF projects; and
- b) Option 2 - Working with small network providers to encourage them to invest in the District. Developing the relationship with small private sector providers. Giving them information about specific areas of the District that have subpar speeds. Putting them in contact with local communities, parish councils and broadband working groups so that the companies could present to local communities.

100. White Oak Leisure Centre Asset Maintenance - Update

(Exempt Information by virtue of Para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A LGA 1972)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources presented the confidential report. Members noted and considered the relevant minutes and recommendations received from the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee and the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

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- a) the Cabinet confirm it's continued support for leisure centre provision in Swanley;
- b) The White Oak leisure centre continue to be maintained until such time as a replacement leisure centre is in place;
- c) the sites named in paragraphs 51 and 53 of the report be further investigated;
- d) the Chief Officer Communities and Business be authorised to fully investigate and prepare a business case for the options set out in paragraphs 55 and 56 of the report;
- e) the option to refurbish the existing centre, as detailed in paragraph 50, not be pursued.

101. Asset Management Plan Update

(Exempt Information by virtue of Para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A LGA 1972)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources presented the confidential report. An addendum replacing wording at paragraph 7 and correcting spellings within paragraph 11 of the report was noted. Members also noted and considered the relevant minute and recommendations received from the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That approval, in principle, be granted for the disposal of land and properties identified within the report.

102. Investment Strategy

(Exempt Information by virtue of Para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A LGA 1972)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources presented the confidential report. An addendum removing wording from paragraph 24 of the report was noted. Members also noted and considered the relevant minute and recommendations received from the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

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- a) the proposed approach to the principle of an Investment Strategy based on property assets, be approved;
- b) the proposed Investment Strategy be adopted subject to the criteria as set out at paragraph 22 of the report;
- c) it be recommended to Council that the figure identified within the report, be set aside from a review of reserves, for the purposes of the proposals outlined in the Investment Strategy

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 14 April 2014. The decisions contained in Minutes 96 and 97 take effect immediately. The decisions contained in Minutes 98, 99, 100, 101, 102 (a) & (b) take effect on 24 April 2014.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.14 PM

CHAIRMAN

BUDGET: COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FUNDING FOR TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Cabinet – 8 May 2014

Report of Chief Finance Officer

Status: For Decision

Also considered by: Council – 13 May 2014

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary:

At the Council meeting on 18 February 2014 it was resolved that “no Council Tax Support funding for Town and Parish Councils be issued as no money had been ring-fenced for this purpose in the Government Grant Settlement, and the approach be agreed and adopted”. This was also recommended by Cabinet on 6 February 2014.

Westerham Town Council supported by Sevenoaks Town Council and Dunton Green Parish Council have said they intend to seek a judicial review of this decision. It was believed that the decision was not as clear as it could have been.

The Council Leader, Chief Finance Officer and Legal Services Manager met representatives of the three Town and Parish Councils on 3 April 2014 and it was agreed that a report would be taken to Council on 13 May 2014 to give Members the opportunity to reconsider passing Council Tax Support funding to Town and Parish Councils.

This report supports the Key Aim of providing value for money.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Ramsay

Contact Officer(s) Adrian Rowbotham Ext. 7153

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That one of the following options be recommended to Council:

- a. An amount of funding is passed to Town and Parish Councils for Council Tax Support in 2014/15 equivalent to the amount passed on in 2013/14 less 24% (the Council’s reduction in Revenue Support Grant);
- b. A different amount is passed to Town and Parish Councils for Council Tax Support in 2014/15;
- c. No funding is passed to Town and Parish Councils for Council Tax Support in 2014/15.

Recommendation to Council:

That one of the following options be approved:

- a. An amount of funding is passed to Town and Parish Councils for Council Tax Support in 2014/15 equivalent to the amount passed on in 2013/14 less 24% (the Council's reduction in Revenue Support Grant);
- b. A different amount is passed to Town and Parish Councils for Council Tax Support in 2014/15;
- c. No funding is passed to Town and Parish Councils for Council Tax Support in 2014/15.

Reason for recommendation: The amount of Revenue Support Grant given by Government to Sevenoaks District Council has reduced by 24% in 2014/15 and will continue to reduce in future years. If a proportion of this grant is passed on to Town and Parish Councils, further savings would be required to continue to have a balanced 10-year budget.

The majority of Town and Parish Councils increased their Council Tax in 2013/14 by above inflation which may have been to offset the effect of not expecting to receive the funding in later years.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Government introduced a change from Council Tax Benefit (CTB) to Council Tax Support (CTS) from 1 April 2013.
- 2 CTB was fully reimbursed by Government resulting in local authorities receiving the same level of income via either Council Tax or CTB or whether a household received 100% CTB or 0% CTB.
- 3 CTS is a Council Tax Discount (similar to the Single Person Discount) and local authorities now only receive the amount of Council Tax they collect.
- 4 To partly offset this, the Government gave a grant to Major Precepting Authorities (i.e. Sevenoaks District Council, Kent County Council, Fire, and Police) in 2013/14 amounting to 90% of the CTB they had received in 2012/13. Town and Parish Councils were initially excluded from this but the Government later changed their minds and allocated an additional identifiable grant to billing authorities to pass on to Town and Parish Councils.
- 5 When allocating this additional grant for 2013/14, the Government pointed out that this may not continue in future years. Officers advised Town and Parish Councils that in view of the information published by Government it could not be certain that this additional funding would be paid in future years. This resulted in many Town and Parish Councils increasing their Council Tax Precept (as Town and

Parish Councils do not have a referendum limit like Major Precepting Authorities) to offset the future likely loss of this funding stream. (Appendix D).

- 6 Officers informed Town and Parish Councils throughout 2013/14 that if this additional funding could not be clearly identified in the 2014/15 grant settlement, nothing would be passed on to Town and Parish Councils (Appendix C).

Government Funding

- 7 When the Government announce the funding settlement each year they can show funding in the following three ways:
 - a. Ring-fence an amount so that it has to be spent on a specific purpose or it has to be returned.
 - b. Highlight an amount for a specific purpose using a separate formula (e.g. Homelessness in 2014/15); this does not have to be spent on the specific purpose.
 - c. Revenue Support Grant – a formula based grant that can be used for any legal purpose.
- 8 In 2013/14 the additional funding for Town and Parish Councils was shown as a (b), in 2014/15 the Government agrees that it is within (c) and no specific amount for this purpose is shown.
- 9 Governments have treated other funding in a similar way in the past, e.g. Concessionary Fares, when funding was initially separately identified but was later included within the Revenue Support Grant.
- 10 As the additional funding for Town and Parish Councils was clearly identified in 2013/14, Sevenoaks District Council was early to commit to pay the full amount.
- 11 Officers have not been able to identify a specific amount for Town and Parish Councils within the Government Grant Settlement. Our external advisers have also not been able to identify it.
- 12 The Council Leader has been communicating with Brandon Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, to ask where the funding for Town and Parish Councils is within the Government Grant Settlement. As shown in Appendix B the Minister has been unable to provide a firm response.
- 13 The amount of Revenue Support Grant funding is reducing by 47% over the next two years with 10% annual reductions assumed in the 10-year budget for later years. At that rate it would not be long before the amount included for Council Tax Support in 2013/14 exceeded the total Revenue Support Grant received for the whole of the District Council.

Judicial Review

- 14 Westerham Town Council sent a pre action protocol letter to the Council on 10 March 2014 which is an initial step towards seeking a Judicial Review of the decision made by Council on 18 February 2014 (Appendix A).

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- 15 Officers have obtained the advice of a leading Queens Counsel who confirms that Sevenoaks District Council has discretion whether to pass any funding on to Town and Parish Councils. Counsel has advised that the Council should make a fresh decision whether to pass on any funding on the basis that some funding may have been included regardless of the Council's view that no funding was included in the Government Grant Settlement.
- 16 Cllr Alan Wesley, Chairman Westerham Town Council has asked several questions in his letter to Cllr Fleming dated 10 April 2014, which are answered as follows:
- Have you been allocated specific funding in respect of the local council tax support scheme for 2014/15? – *No specific funding in respect of the local council tax support scheme for 2014/15 has been allocated to Sevenoaks District Council.*
 - If so, the amount of that allocation. – *Not applicable.*
 - The total amount of the funding in respect of the local council tax support scheme you received (i.e. including the amount of £274,000 passed down to local councils) for the 2013/14 year. – *£1.008m.*
 - Full reference to the content of my prior to action letter. – *The letter is included in Appendix A.*
 - The minority position Sevenoaks District Council now finds itself in. – *17 out of 241 billing authorities who are parished have not passed any funding on to Town and Parish Councils. Across Kent the majority of billing authorities are passing on some funding although the majority passed on significantly less than £274,000 in 2013/14 and have reduced the amount further in 2014/15. Very few Kent authorities are fully parished so the impact on them is much less.*
 - The lack of equality in denying us any money whereas your RSG continued to be paid to you, albeit at a lesser level of the previous year's provision. – *This is a matter for Government who have chosen not to ring-fence or highlight for a specific purpose any amount for Town and Parish Councils as they did in 2013/14.*
 - And that your overall local government funding shows only a 0.8% reduction. – *The 0.8% reduction referred to is the change in 'Spending Power', which is the Government's assumption about all of the income the Council will receive, not the amount that the Government will actually provide. For example it includes Council Tax which is collected from residents. It also makes a national assumption for Business Rates growth which is unlikely to reflect the true opportunities available in a district such as Sevenoaks.*

Key Implications

Financial

If a decision is made to pass funding on to Town and Parish Councils, compensating adjustments will be required to retain a balanced 10-year budget. This could include

taking actions to increase income further or making additional savings or reductions in services to the amount of any funding passed on.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

A leading Queens Counsel's advice has been obtained which confirms the Council has an unfettered discretion as regards passing on funding.

Public Sector Equality Duty

In considering what action to take, Members should openly consider whether any actions could be taken which can avoid or mitigate any impacts on particular groups, in line with their responsibilities to have due regard to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity, as required by the Public Sector Equality Duty. In considering each of the options Members should note the following:

- If Town and Parish Councils receive less funding than they had planned for, there is the potential for there to be a detrimental impact on services provided by Town and Parish Councils which could disadvantage protected groups.
- If we decide to provide Town and Parish Councils with an amount of funding, there is the potential for there to be a detrimental impact on services provided by the District Council which could disadvantage protected groups.
- We have sought to mitigate the impact by consulting with Town and Parish Councils over the possible decision over the last year.

In summary, there is the potential for an impact on people with protected characteristics who use public services whichever option Members decide to adopt. It will be necessary to monitor the impact of the decision and gather evidence about which services might be affected by any funding reductions and whether these are used by people with protected characteristics. The District Council and Town and Parish Councils are both subject to the public sector equality. The relevant decision-making authority would need to engage the duty when taking further decisions about service changes or reductions following the funding decision.

Conclusions

The funding provided by Government to local authorities continues to reduce and decisions have to be made as to how this is used. Many Town and Parish Councils within the district increased their Council Tax in 2013/14 as it was uncertain whether the funding they received for Council Tax Support would continue after 2013/14.

Following advice from a leading Queens Counsel, Council is asked to discuss this matter and decide whether any funding should be passed on to Town and Parish Councils in 2014/15.

Appendices

Appendix A – Correspondence between Cllr Alan Wesley, Westerham Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council.

Appendix B – Correspondence between the Council

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Leader and Brandon Lewis MP.

Appendix C – Emails from Sevenoaks District Council to Town and Parish Councils and minutes of the KALC Sevenoaks Area Meeting on 11 January 2013.

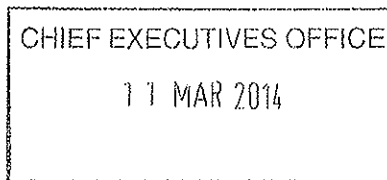
Appendix D – Changes in Council Taxes for Town and Parish Councils

Background Papers:

[Cabinet – 6 February 2014 – Revenue Budget and Council Tax](#)

[Council 18 February 2014 – Budget and Council Tax Setting 2014/15](#)

**Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer**



Cllr Peter Fleming
Leader Sevenoaks District Council
Leader's Room
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 1HG

10th March 2014

Dear Cllr Peter Fleming,

I refer to your letter of 5th February 2014 in which you set out your reasons for denying Westerham Town Council and all other Town and Parish Councils in the Sevenoaks District any element of Council Tax Support Funding. As SDC did not meet until 18th February 2014 to pass the "no funding for Town and Parish Councils" resolution we do not know what authority you claim to have for the decision in your letter of 5th February.

Be that as it may, having taken advice, we are now taking the steps necessary in order to be able to seek a Judicial Review of your decision. This letter is the first step in the Judicial Review process under the heading of pre-action protocol. As such a response from SDC is expected within fourteen days.

The reasons we consider a judicial review appropriate to quash your Council's decision are as follows:

1. The letter from Brandon Lewis MP dated 24th December 2013 clarifies that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) expects billing authorities (such as Sevenoaks) to "pass down" to local Councils some of the funding provided to the billing authorities "to mitigate the impact of localised council tax support schemes on the council tax base" in 2014 – 2015.

Your letter of 5th February 2014 does not refer to that expectation. Instead, it refers to the fact that a specific sum for that purpose was ring-fenced last year (2013–2014), and concludes that "if this funding wasn't identifiable in our grant settlement [this year] we wouldn't be in a position to pass anything on".

This "no ring-fence no money" excuse is inconsistent with the letter of 20th December 2012 from SDC official, Roy Parsons who wrote to all Town and Parish Councils stating "Indications are that in future years the funding will be included in the Council's overall Rate Support Grant settlement. You should be aware that, if future years RSG settlements are lower, this will affect the level of grant that the District passes on."

WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Russell House, Market Square,
Westerham, Kent TN16 1RB
Tel 01959 562147 / Fax 01959 569373
Email westerhamtowncouncil@btconnect.com

This position has not been adhered to in subsequent communications from SDC officials where the above reference to levels of support has been replaced by "no support."

You go on to say that "Ministers are unwilling or unable to identify the money and therefore we have to take the position that the money isn't there" and "The District Council would always pass 100% of monies clearly identified for another authority on to that authority, as we did last year, unfortunately the government has made this impossible for us to do this year."

The DCLG has clearly passed on its expectations to billing authorities and both DCLG and Sevenoaks knew full well that the grant funding to local councils at Town and Parish levels would not be ring-fenced. Notwithstanding the absence of ring-fencing, however, there was a clear expectation that some funding would be passed down.

2. You have acted as if your hands were tied, ignoring the fact that you have discretion to give grants to local Councils where you could have:

- i) kept the funding for local Councils at the same level as last year;
- ii) reduced the level of grants to local Councils to reflect the proportion of the cut to your own funding levels;
- iii) phased out grant support over a number of years.
- iv) utilized the Budget Stabilisation Reserve to mitigate the reduction in your RSG and thereby provide Council Tax Support Funding to Town and Parish Councils. After all this is exactly what that reserve is there to do as set out in the Cabinet minutes of the 10/1/2013 meeting, page 22, point 67. "Chairman reported that a Minister in DCLG stated further 8.5% reduction in funding affecting 13/14. This would impact SDC and Towns and Parishes - it was important that the Council had a healthy budget stabilization fund in order to mitigate against the impact of future proposals." The Budget Stabilisation Reserve is indeed healthy at £4,051,000.

Instead of pursuing the above, you decided to off-set the cuts to your funding by cancelling all grants to local Councils.

3. Your decision has been based upon irrelevant considerations, i.e. that funding for local Councils had not been ring-fenced.

Your decision ignored relevant considerations, namely that funding had been made available by DCLG for grants to local Councils and that the DCLG expected such grants to be made.

The decision is irrational ("if this funding wasn't identifiable in our grant settlement [this year] we wouldn't be in a position to pass anything on").

You have failed to exercise, or even acknowledge, your discretion.

You have used your powers for an ulterior motive to nullify the effect of the cuts in your overall budget.

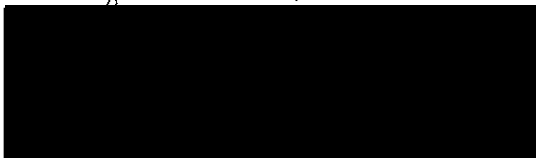
You failed to consult your local Councils in an appropriate manner to determine their views and the impact of your stated decision. Further your officials communicated that decision to local Councils before your Council considered the matter in session as you did in your premature letter of 5th February 2014

You have apparently failed to consider your public sector equality duties as, inter alia, this decision fails to foster good relations between SDC and Town and Parishes.

4. We are supported in this application by many affected Sevenoaks District Town and Parish Councils.

I would suggest a meeting with you to discuss the foregoing prior to your written response. Given the level of concern generated by this perverse decision, I suggest also in attendance should be a representative number of Towns and Parishes as referred to in point 4 above.

Yours truly



Alan Wesley
Chairman

cc The Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP
The Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP



Councillor Alan Wesley
Westerham Town Council
Russell House,
Market Square,
Westerham,
TN16 1RB

Tei No: 01732 227475
Ask for: Legal Services
Email: leslie.roberts@sevenoaks.gov.uk
My Ref: PL11 517
Your Ref:
Date: 13 March 2014

Dear Councillor Wesley

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FUNDING

I have been instructed by the Council Leader Peter Fleming to deal with your pre action protocol letter of the 10th March 2014 the receipt of which I acknowledge.

I am in the process of considering the documentation relating to this matter and I hope to be able to respond in detail by the 24th March 2014. If I am not able to do so before that time I will advise you and if necessary request any necessary extension of time.

I note you have suggested a meeting with the Council Leader Peter Fleming as potential means of resolving the matter. I consider that such a meeting would be a political rather than a legal meeting and as such I will leave it to Councillor Fleming to decide if that might move matters forward in a useful way.

Yours sincerely



Leslie Roberts. Solicitor
Legal Services Manager
DX 30006 SEVENOAKS



Chief Executive: Dr. Pav Ramewal
Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG
Telephone: 01732 227000 DX 30006 Sevenoaks
Email: information@sevenoaks.gov.uk
www.sevenoaks.gov.uk





Councillor Alan Wesley
 Westerham Town Council
 Russell House,
 Market Square,
 Westerham,
 TN16 1RB

Tel No: 01732 227475
 Ask for: Legal Services
 Email: leslie.roberts@sevenoaks.gov.uk
 My Ref: PL11 517
 Your Ref:
 Date: 28 March 2014

Dear Councillor Wesley

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FUNDING

I am now responding to your pre-action protocol letter dated the 10th March 2014.

Adopting the numbering in your letter

- 1 I note the Governments stated intention as regards funding as set out in the letter from Brandon Lewis MP. The Council's Leader Councillor Peter Fleming has written seeking clarification of how this intention has been translated into action. He has asked but has yet to receive a reply as to what sum if any has been provided to Sevenoaks District Council to pass down to Parish and Town Councils.

While not directly referring to the expectation in the letter of the 5th of February Councillor Peter Fleming does refer to the "mantra the districts have your money" and there is no intention in the letter to deceive you as to the position.

The 2012 email from Mr Parsons to which you refer has clearly been superseded by events. I would refer you to the various letters and emails sent during 2013 advising you of the Council's position on this matter. These allowed you to prepare your budget accordingly and increase your precept which I note you have in fact done. In any event as an officer of the Council Mr Parsons has no authority to bind the Council to any future course of action in such matters.

- 2 The Council has prepared its budget in accordance with its Constitution. It has carefully considered how to deal with Council Tax Support funding through a series of budget reports prepared by officers, debated and as necessary amended by Cabinet and debated and as necessary amended in full Council on the 18th February 2014.

The Council has not previously provided Council Tax Support funding to Parish and Town Councils merely passed on money clearly identified for that purpose.

- 3 The failure of the Government to clearly identify any sum of money or a

Chief Executive, SE, Sevenoaks
 Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG
 Telephone: 01732 227000 DX 30006 Sevenoaks
 Email: information@sevenoaks.gov.uk
 www.sevenoaks.gov.uk



percentage of Council Tax Support funding as being money for Parish and Town Councils is entirely relevant to this issue. It is denied that the Council has acted irrationally, has ignored relevant considerations, has failed to exercise discretion or used any of its powers for an ulterior motive.

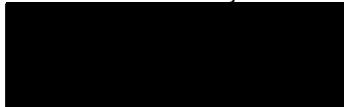
The Council did consult Town and Parish Council's along with others in the preparation of its budget as it is required to do in accordance with the Constitution. Town and Parish Council's were advised in writing during 2013 of the situation and were given the opportunity to adjust their budgets via their precepts. Your Town Clerk attended a forum meeting on the 14th January 2014 when the position was extensively explained the Council's Chief Executive and the Council's Chief Finance officer.

The public sector equality duty was considered during the process of preparing the budget.

4 The support you set out is noted

I trust this explanation is sufficient for your purposes but should you feel the need to take the matter further any proceedings should be addressed to Legal Services at the Council.

Yours sincerely



Leslie Roberts, Solicitor
Legal Services Manager
DX 30006 SEVENOAKS

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Practice Management Standard
Law Society Accredited

10 April 2014

Councillor P. Flemming
Sevenoaks District Council
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 1HG

Dear Councillor Fleming,

I refer to our meeting on the 3rd April 2014. I did request that you write confirming your agreement to bring before Council, at the next meeting, this matter again. Would you please do so as it is relevant to the limited timescale for a judicial review and should be disclosed by us in our application for permission.

Since we met, the small number of billing authorities refusing to pass on tax support to Towns and Parishes has become clear with only 17 out of 241 who are "parished," remaining in the "no" category.

Had I possessed that information on the 3rd April I would have asked the question, "how can 93% of billing authorities identify funds to pass on but SDC can't?" Perhaps you can answer that question now.

Hearing your repeated unwillingness to pass on the funds in question, our advisers say we need to ask three specific questions for written replies from you. These are;

1. Have you been allocated specific funding in respect of the local council tax support scheme for 2014-2015?
2. If so, the amount of that allocation and
3. the total amount of the funding in respect of the local council tax support scheme you received, (i.e. including the amount of £274,000 passed down to local councils), for the 2013-2014 year.

Also, in correspondence with Charles Merritt of DCLG, I am told that the total local government funding to SDC has only fallen by 0.8% as compared with an England average reduction of 2.9%. These broader definition funds include Business Rates, Council Tax and any New Homes Bonus, as well as your RSG. Would you please validate these figures, or otherwise as we intend to use them in our evidence.

Turning to your May meeting, the question arises as to the content of your briefing documentation to Members given Cabinet's previous stance.

I have spoken to a number of District Councillors who believed SDC's decision to refuse to "pass on" was in line with other billing authorities. Will you therefore include;

1. full reference to the content of my prior to action letter,
2. the minority position SDC now finds itself in,
3. the lack of equality in denying us any money whereas your RSG continued to be paid to you, albeit at a lesser level of the previous year's provision
4. and that your overall local government funding shows only a 0.8% reduction.

We are advised that your decision to examine the matter again is irrelevant to the timetable for a Judicial Review and your May 13th date is outside the three months limit so if we are not to fall at the first hurdle we must press on.

Councillor Fleming, at the end of the day the legal costs are for the taxpayers' account and with a Protective Costs Order, whatever the outcome, more for your coffers than ours and our supporters. There is also the very serious damage to the relationship between District and Towns and Parishes, something which I think has been forgotten by SDC.

I expect you have seen the recent Press Release from NALC urging the 17 remaining Councils to rethink their "short-sighted" decision and demanding further action by Government. We support those comments and await your prompt reply to the points in this letter.

Yours truly,

Alan Wesley
Chairman Westerham Town Council.

Councillor Peter Fleming
Leader of the Council



Alan Wesley
Chairman Westerham Town Council
Westerham Town Council
Russell House
Market Square
Westerham
Kent TN16 1RB

Tel No: 01732 227180
Ask for: Cllr Fleming
Email: Cllr.Fleming@sevenoaks.gov.uk
My Ref: PF/kd
Your Ref:
Date: 14 April 2014

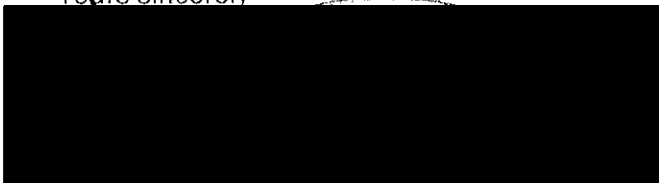
Dear Mr Wesley

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 10th of April.

I confirm it is my intention to bring a further report on the council tax support funding for Parish and Town Councils to Council in May. As explained in the meeting of the 3rd April the content of the report is a matter for this Council but all relevant correspondence will be appended to the report. The report will where appropriate respond to the questions raised by you and others.

Given this assurance that the decision is to be reconsidered, I would venture that judicial review would now be pointless. A successful judicial review could only require the Council to reconsider the decision taken in February and this is to be done.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Fleming
Leader Sevenoaks District Council



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**Department for
Communities and
Local Government**

Leaders of All Councils
By email

Brandon Lewis MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

***Department for Communities and Local
Government***

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 0303 444 3430
Fax: 0303 444 3986
E-Mail: brandon.lewis@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dclg

06 January 2013

Dear Leader,

The Government's written ministerial statement, laid in parliament on 18th December, set out clearly the Government's intention that the element of localised council tax support funding provided to local authorities which reflects reductions in town and parish tax bases should be passed down to those councils. I am writing to bring this to your attention, and to emphasise the importance of billing authorities and town and parish councils working together to agree this level of funding. I attach a copy of the statement and the link to it in Hansard.

<http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-vote-office/December%202013/16%20December/8.%20DCLG%20LG%20Finance.pdf>

I wrote on this issue in 2012 and I am encouraged that statistics recently published show that 98 per cent of the funding attributable to parish and town councils was passed down for 2013-14.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2013-to-2014-individual-local-authority-data>

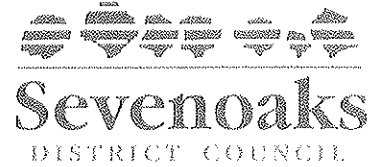
In 2014-2015, the funding provided to local authorities in respect of local council tax support will be £3.3bn, the same amount as for 2013-14. As part of our move to a more flexible local government funding system, the LCTS funding and the town and parish council element within it is not separately identified at a local authority level, but forms part of the overall funding available to local authorities. However, the fact that the town and parish element of the funding is not separately identified and is not ring-fenced should not be used as an excuse to avoid passing down funding, or to avoid proper engagement with parish and town councils.

The Government believes that as the tier of local government closest to their communities, parish and town councils have a key role to play in our vision for localism and the Big Society. Parish councils provide communities with a democratically accountable voice and a structure for taking community action. We want to help parish councils take on a greater service delivery role for their local communities, and use the community rights available to them through the Localism Act 2011.



BRANDON LEWIS MP
Page 25

Councillor Peter Fleming
Leader of the Council



Brandon Lewis MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel No: 01732 227180
Ask for: Cllr Peter Fleming
Email: Cllr.Fleming@sevenoaks.gov.uk
My Ref: PF/kd
Your Ref:
Date: 26 February 2014

Dear Brandon

Good to see you yesterday, your off the cuff remark reminded me that I hadn't responded to your latest missive on Council Tax Support to Parishes, my apologies.

In the final paragraph you state your disappointment to learn that some councils haven't passed monies down to the parishes this year, perhaps it is worth at this stage sharing my disappointment that you are unwilling or unable to point to the funding you claim should be directed towards the parishes. This year Sevenoaks District Council saw its RSG reduce by 24%. To be honest I wouldn't even bother complaining about this normally and I along with my colleagues have long been resigned to the fact that we will have had our RSG reduced to a de minimis amount within a few years, but then for ministers to insist that they have included an amount for the parishes within this reduced figure really doesn't stack up.

Hats off to you, this is a very neat ministerial trick, but some of us have been caught before and are wise to the old 'we will ring fence it for one year then claim it is there in future years'.

So to be honest we haven't chosen not to pass the money on, you and I both know the money wasn't there in the first place!

I have included a copy of my letter to parish chairmen.

See you soon.

Best wishes


Cllr Peter Fleming
Leader Sevenoaks District Council
Encs





Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Cllr Peter Fleming
Sevenoaks District Council
Leader's Room
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 1HG

Brandon Lewis MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

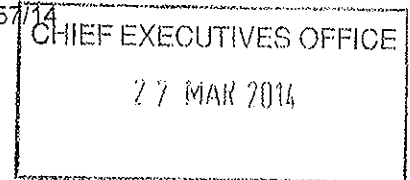
*Department for Communities and Local
Government*
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 0303 444 3430
Fax: 0303 444 3986
E-Mail: brandon.lewis@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dclg

Our Ref: BL/BL/006657/14
Your Ref: PF/kd

25 MAR 2014



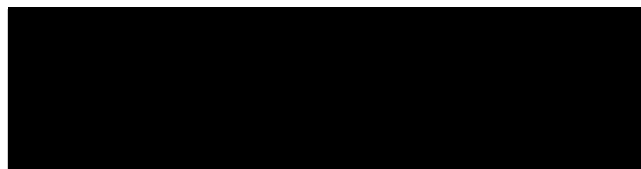
Dear Peter

Thank you for your letter of 26 February in regards to parish funding, further to my letter sent to Council Leaders on the 21 February 2014.

I note your comments, and I acknowledge the measures Sevenoaks District Council has made to contribute to the Government's vital programme of deficit reduction.

You comment in your letter about raising parish expectations and the lack of clarity from central government. As I outlined in my Written Ministerial Statement of 18 December, there is some £3.3 billion in the settlement this year for Council Tax support schemes. There is an element within this national pot that is there specifically to reflect reductions in the parish tax base. We have not separately identified the money because it is not ring-fenced and as caseloads change and schemes evolve, the amount that different parishes need will change. It would be wrong to try to manage that centrally.

However, we have been clear that we expect billing authorities to carry on passing on support to town councils and parishes to help mitigate any reduction in their taxbase due to the local Council Tax support scheme.



BRANDON LEWIS MP

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CHANGES IN BAND D COUNCIL TAXES BETWEEN 2012/13 AND 2014/15 - TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

	Band D 2012/13	Band D 2013/14	% Change	Band D 2014/15	% Change
Ash-cum-Ridley	26.86	29.98	11.62	32.78	9.34
Brasted	46.85	49.68	6.04	48.87	-1.63
Chevening	40.97	43.86	7.05	45.72	4.24
Chiddingstone	47.39	49.97	5.44	49.35	-1.24
Cowden	44.00	48.10	9.32	48.28	0.37
Crockenhill	82.04	88.60	8.00	99.80	12.64
Dunton Green	63.01	85.56	35.79	87.08	1.78
Edenbridge	120.09	120.09	0.00	129.58	7.90
Eynsford	71.77	75.92	5.78	75.37	-0.72
Farningham	52.32	57.00	8.94	58.13	1.98
Fawkham	24.46	27.06	10.63	31.65	16.96
Halstead	53.20	58.19	9.38	55.87	-3.99
Hartley	44.30	52.54	18.60	53.14	1.14
Hever	41.84	45.16	7.93	45.16	0.00
Hextable	79.38	79.38	0.00	79.38	0.00
Horton Kirby & S Darent	63.80	78.08	22.38	77.21	-1.11
Kemsing	45.24	50.76	12.20	50.25	-1.00
Knockholt	57.75	57.75	0.00	57.75	0.00
Leigh	21.96	30.82	40.35	32.01	3.86
Otford	77.68	83.53	7.53	87.71	5.00
Penshurst	28.52	35.41	24.16	33.63	-5.03
Riverhead	38.67	39.06	1.01	41.52	6.30
Seal	48.23	53.26	10.43	56.94	6.91
Sevenoaks Town	77.49	81.33	4.96	88.69	9.05
Sevenoaks Weald	56.92	56.91	-0.02	60.99	7.17
Shoreham	39.00	42.57	9.15	44.10	3.59
Sundridge	55.78	63.28	13.45	63.56	0.44
Swanley	103.50	102.94	-0.54	100.88	-2.00
Westerham	73.60	86.60	17.66	91.71	5.90
West Kingsdown	36.16	39.32	8.74	40.10	1.98
Average Parish	66.89	70.61	5.56	73.41	3.97

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Adrian Rowbotham

From: Roy Parsons
Sent: 20 December 2012 16:05
To: Parish and Town Councils
Cc: Councillors; Pav Ramewal; Helen Martin; Lee Banks; Adrian Rowbotham
Subject: FW: Update on Localising Support for Council Tax - Effect on Town & Parish Councils
Attachments: Parish Funding Shortfall #2.xlsx

Further to the email below and my letter dated 11 December 2012, I have now received details of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013/14 and am in a position to advise town and parish councils of their shares of the funding available to reduce the effect of receiving less council tax income.

I have updated the spreadsheet that was attached to my letter of 11 December 2012 and attach a copy. The column headed (k) shows each town or parish share of the funding and the column headed (l) shows the estimated shortfall in income.

When setting your budget and, hence, your precept for 2013/14, you need to be mindful that you will be receiving the funding specified in column (k). The process is to calculate your net budget (i.e. take expenditure less income and then deduct the amount of funding the district will be providing), which will be your precept requirement and then divide that figure by the taxbase in column (g) of the table to arrive at the band D tax for your town or parish.

So, taking Ash-cum-Ridley as an example, its precept in 2012/13 is £68,500 and its taxbase is 2,550.68. This means that the Band D tax is $£68,500 / 2,550.68 = £26.86$. Assuming that it wanted to hold its Band D tax at £26.86 for 2013/14, the spreadsheet shows that it needs to reduce its precept to £62,920 in 2013/14. However, it will be receiving funding of £4,782 from the district council, so its net expenditure can be that much higher. What I am trying to show is that, even though you may be holding your combined cash precept plus funding at the same level as for 2012/13, the band D tax may increase.

Indications are that, in future years, the funding will be included in this council's overall RSG settlement. You should be aware that if future years' RSG settlements are lower, this will affect the level of grant that the district passes on to town and parish councils.

I trust this will assist in your precept setting for 2013/14, but if you have any questions, do please let me know.

I have also copied this email into a letter, which you will receive in due course.

Roy Parsons
Principal Accountant
Tel: 01732 227204
Fax: 01732 740693
Sevenoaks District Council | Council Offices | Argyle Road | Sevenoaks | Kent | TN13 1HG
Email: roy.parsons@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

From: Adrian Rowbotham
Sent: 30 November 2012 09:58
To: Parish and Town Councils

Cc: Councillors; Pav Ramewal; Helen Martin; Roy Parsons; Lee Banks

Subject: Update on Localising Support for Council Tax - Effect on Town & Parish Councils

On 1 October 2012 Dr Pav Ramewal, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources, emailed you to provide an update on the effect of the change to Council Tax Support on the tax base and therefore the level of precept. At that stage the government proposal meant that the change to Council Tax Support would have no impact on town and parish councils.

On 26 November 2012 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) provided a communications update which was different to the earlier proposal. The DCLG has decided that there will be no specific protection for town or parish councils and that the district council should not apply an unadjusted council tax base to the town or parish council. However, the government will provide additional funding to the district council that can be passed on to town and parish councils which will help to reduce the effect of receiving less council tax income.

Details of the additional funding will be given to the district council alongside the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which is not expected to be announced until 19 December. Therefore, it will not be possible to provide you with details of the tax base and additional funding until after this date and no later than 11 January.

I understand that this is later than originally intended and may affect the plans you have for setting your precept but unfortunately, we are reliant on government information and are restricted by their timescales. I recognise that in some cases you will need to change the dates of your Town or Parish Council Meeting. In the meantime I will ensure that the relevant information is forwarded to you as soon as we are in receipt of it which will then allow you to make a fully informed decision.

We will continue to keep the development of localising support for council tax under review and will update town and parish councils with any relevant information.

Regards

Adrian Rowbotham
Group Manager – Financial Services
Tel: 01732 227153
Fax: 01732 740693
Sevenoaks District Council
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1HG
Email: adrian.rowbotham@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

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SEVENOAKS AREA COMMITTEE

Chairman: Larry Abraham

Secretary: Philip McGarvey
17 Tilmans Mead, Farningham DA4 0BY
Tel: 01322 862870 / 07803 121830
Email: cllr.mcgarvey@sevenoaks.gov.uk

MINUTES of KALC 7oaks Area Meeting, at 7pm 11th January 2013 (at Sevenoaks Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks)

Presentations & Discussions:

Adrian Rowbotham, Group Manager, Financial Services, SDC, on "Localising Support for Council Tax – the Effect on Town & Parish Councils"

- This has come about to replace existing Council Tax Benefits Scheme.
- 100% Council Tax benefits are to reduce to 91.5%
- All pensioners are protected, therefore full extent of the cuts in Council Tax Benefits falls on working age claimants.
- It will mean that some Council Tax Benefit recipients who had been used to receiving 100% benefits will now have to pay some council tax.
- Those [households] who receive Council Tax benefit are no longer included in the Tax Base.
- The Tax Base and therefore the Council Tax on which it is calculated are both being reduced.
- Support Grant will cover some of the shortfall in 2013/4 – but only guaranteed for this first year (there might be more, but do not expect it).
- Support Grant will be paid out on top of parish/town precept requested.
- It was not compulsory on District Councils that they pay out the Support Grant to Town/Parish Councils, but SDC will, and will pay it at the same time as the precepts are paid out.
- Threat that capping on Town/Parish councils may be introduced by Government (from 2014/5).
- SDC collect council tax into the Collection Fund and while the collection rate had been 99.5% up to now in Sevenoaks District, they are making provision for this to drop next year to 99.3 %

Adrian Rowbotham

From: Adrian Rowbotham
Sent: 31 December 2013 11:46
To: Parish and Town Councils
Cc: Councillors; Pav Ramewal; Helen Martin; Roy Parsons; Lesley Bowles
Subject: Update on Council Tax Support - Effect on Town and Parish Councils

As I am sure you are aware, the Government recently announced the Local Government Finance Settlement 2014/15.

The Government has suggested that there is an amount in the settlement to pass on to Town and Parish Councils. However, we have been unable to identify this, particularly when our Revenue Support Grant amount has been reduced by over 20% in 2014/15 and a further 30% in 2015/16.

Once we have completed our analysis of the settlement, the implications will be reported to Members and I will contact you again with a more detailed update.

I have not found any mention in the settlement of Town and Parish Councils being capped so it is likely that you will continue to have the freedom to set Council Tax increases. Many of you took advantage of this last year to increase your Council Tax so that the uncertainty regarding Council Tax Support funding would not have a detrimental effect on your income streams.

Roy Parsons wrote to you on 5 December to inform you of your tax bases which have generally increased due to the reduced discounts included in the 2014/15 Council Tax Support Scheme.

Regards

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer
Tel: 01732 227153
Fax: 01732 740693
Sevenoaks District Council
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1HG
Email: adrian.rowbotham@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

From: Adrian Rowbotham
Sent: 25 November 2013 16:36
To: Parish and Town Councils
Cc: Councillors; Pav Ramewal; Helen Martin; Roy Parsons; Lesley Bowles
Subject: FW: Update on Council Tax Support - Effect on Town and Parish Councils

It wish to clarify the situation regarding Sevenoaks District Council's position regarding any additional funding the Government may provide for the impact of Council Tax Support on town and parish council's.

Please see the email below that I sent last month, stating that as mentioned last year, funding will only be passed on to town and parish council's if the Government specifically earmarks it for that purpose.

The Government has not provided any relevant new information since my last email and it is possible that nothing will be disclosed until the Government issues the local government settlement figures in December.

I will send you an update as soon as I hear anything as I realise that this has an impact on your budget setting processes for next year.

Regards

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer
Tel: 01732 227153
Fax: 01732 740693
Sevenoaks District Council
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1HG
Email: adrian.rowbotham@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

From: Adrian Rowbotham
Sent: 23 October 2013 10:00
To: Parish and Town Councils
Cc: Councillors; Pav Ramewal; Helen Martin; Roy Parsons
Subject: Update on Council Tax Support - Effect on Town and Parish Councils

You will recall that from 1 April 2013 Sevenoaks District Council was required to put in place a local scheme for Council Tax Support to replace the national Council Tax Benefit system.

One of the impacts of the change to Council Tax Support was that the tax base reduced because previously all households receiving Council Tax Benefit were included in the tax base but now those in receipt of Council Tax Support are excluded. This resulted in a reduced tax base for town and parish councils meaning that each of them would have to increase their Band D Council Tax charge to receive the same level of precept.

In 2013/14 the Government provided additional funding to the district council that was passed on to all town and parish councils. As mentioned last year, if the Government provides additional funding to the district council for 2014/15 that is specifically earmarked for this purpose, it will again be passed on to town and parish councils. However, if no funding is specifically earmarked for this purpose then nothing will be passed on.

I will provide further updates when I have more information.

Roy Parsons will be writing to all town and parish councils in early December as usual, informing you of the tax base figures and arrangements for next years precept.

Regards

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer
Tel: 01732 227153
Fax: 01732 740693
Sevenoaks District Council
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1HG
Email: adrian.rowbotham@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Adrian Rowbotham

From: Adrian Rowbotham
Sent: 21 January 2014 09:49
To: Parish and Town Councils
Cc: Councillors; Pav Ramewal; Helen Martin; Roy Parsons; Lesley Bowles
Subject: Council Tax Support - Town and Parish Councils

Firstly I wish to thank you for inviting Pav Ramewal and I to the Town and Parish Council Clerk Forum on Tuesday where you highlighted your thoughts about Council Tax Support funding for your Councils.

At the forum you requested further information regarding timescales due to the uncertainty of this issue affecting your ability to set your precepts, which I have explained below.

Roy Parsons has previously provided you with a deadline of 31 January so that your precepts can be included in the report to Full Council that will be circulated to Members prior to the meeting. Some of you have already provided us with your precept figures.

I am pleased to inform you that we will be able to accept your precepts up to 14 February which will then be circulated to Members at the Full Council meeting.

If a precept is not received before the Full Council meeting, then the District Council is required to anticipate a precept for a Town or Parish Council as stated in 'The Billing Authorities (Anticipation of Precepts) Regulations 1992 S.I.3239 as amended by S.I.1995/235'.

A Town or Parish Council is still legally able to set a precept up to 1 March.

I have delayed responding to you until now as I took part in a conference call with Brandon Lewis MP yesterday when I was hoping for further information about referendum limits. Unfortunately no further information was released and no mention was made of Town and Parish Councils.

I will contact you again if I obtain any more information that may affect your decisions but in the meantime please come back to me if you have any further questions.

Regards

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer
Tel: 01732 227153
Fax: 01732 740693
Sevenoaks District Council
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1HG
Email: adrian.rowbotham@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Councillor Peter Fleming
Leader of the Council



Tel No: 01732 227180
Ask for: Cllr Fleming
Email: Cllr.Fleming@Sevenoaks.gov.uk
My Ref: PF/kd
Your Ref:
Date: 5 February 2014

I am writing to you to clarify the District Council's position regarding Council Tax Support funding, particularly with regard to any element to support Town and Parish Councils.

Last year, 2013/14, Sevenoaks District Council passed 100% of the identified and ring fenced funding on to the parishes, this was not universally the case with a number of districts holding back some or all of the money. We also wrote to all parishes clearly setting out our position for 2014/15. In our letter to parishes we stated that if this funding wasn't identifiable in our grant settlement we wouldn't be in a position to pass anything on. Our reasoning behind the letter was that the District had been caught before by government ring fencing for one year then removing the ring fence and claiming it was contained within our core grant settlement, the most recent example being the support for bus passes.

We also recommended that parishes used their ability as precepting authorities, without referendum limits, to protect their base for future years which many did, although clearly this was a decision for individual parishes.

Below I have set out the figures that illustrate the situation described above that the District Council finds itself in. We have also been given an indicative grant position for 2015/16 in which we see our government grant reduced by a further 30%:

- Revenue Support Grant including Council Tax Support funding 2013/14 £2.934m, including a clearly identified ring fenced £0.274m to be passed on to Town & Parish Councils.
- Revenue Support Grant 2014/15 £2.225m (24% reduction) with no identified or ring fenced amount to be passed on to Town & Parish Councils.

What has made this situation particularly difficult is that Ministers have repeated the mantra that the districts have 'your' money. As you will see from the figures above this has put the District in precisely the position that we feared when we wrote to you early



last year. Ministers are unwilling or unable to identify the money and therefore we have to take the position that the money isn't there.

A number of parishes have asked why the situation in the Sevenoaks District is different from many other Kent authorities; Sevenoaks District is fully parished, with four Town Councils, with Swale the only other Kent authority not passing money on being a local authority with a high number of parishes. The situation arises from the fact that towns in many other Kent districts are not parished and therefore the burden of passing on money is greatly reduced, in most cases to a few thousand pounds.

The District Council would always pass 100% of monies clearly identified for another authority on to that authority, as we did last year; unfortunately the government has made this impossible for us to do this year.

Following the announcement today from The Minister, parishes will not be hit this year by any Council Tax referendum limit.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further questions regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Peter Fleming

Leader Sevenoaks District Council

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Cabinet – 8 May 2014

Report of Chief Officer for Communities and Business

Status: For decision

Also considered by: Housing and Community Safety Advisory Committee - 29 April 2014
Council - 22 July 2014

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary:

This Policy updates and refreshes the existing Safeguarding Policy to enable the Council to more effectively meet its responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

This report supports the Key Aim of the Community Plan - (Safe Communities, Caring Communities, Healthy Environment)

Portfolio Holder Cllr Michelle Lowe

Contact Officer(s) Lesley Bowles Ext. 7335

Recommendation to Housing and Community Safety Advisory Committee:

To recommend to Cabinet the updated Safeguarding Policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Recommendation to Cabinet: To recommend to Council the adoption of the updated Safeguarding Policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Recommendation to Council: To adopt the updated Safeguarding Policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Reason for recommendation: To enable the Council to meet its statutory responsibilities under S11 of the Children's Act 2004 and to follow guidance published by the Department of Health and Kent County Council in relation to vulnerable adults. To ensure that all Council staff, Members, contractors and volunteers and aware of their professional and moral obligations for Safeguarding.

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Introduction and Background

1. Safeguarding is a key priority for the Council and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from avoidable harm or abuse.
2. The Council has statutory obligations under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
3. District Councils are expected to ensure:
 - senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the well being of children and young people.
 - a clear statement of the Council's responsibilities to children is made available to staff.
 - clear lines of accountability for work on safeguarding and promoting well being.
 - that the views of children and young people to help shape services.
 - safe recruitment procedures for those coming into contact with children and young people.
 - appropriate training for staff.
 - effective working relationships within the Council and partner agencies to safeguard and promote wellbeing, and to share information effectively.
4. The "No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care" Department Of Health guidance, March 2000 was issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. This places a responsibility on Social Services to play a co-ordinating role in developing local policies and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse. In addition it states that other statutory agencies should 'work together in partnership to ensure that appropriate policies, procedures and practices are in place and implemented locally.'
5. In response to the "No Secrets" Department of Health guidance a Kent and Medway Multi-Agency Adult Protection Policy Protocols and Guidance document was issued by Kent County Council Social Services Directorate.
6. The revised Safeguarding Policy has been written to ensure that the Council appropriately meets its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding children through S11 of the Children's Act 2004 and responds to guidance in relation to vulnerable adults.
7. It also sets out information and the procedures to follow in order to report suspicions, allegations or matters reported to them.
8. A corporate group, chaired by the Chief Officer for Communities and Business has been set up. The full terms of reference for this group are set out in Appendix D of the revised Safeguarding Policy. It aims to promote safeguarding across the Council, advise on training needs and act as a source of help and guidance for staff needing advice.

9. New legislation regarding vulnerable adults is likely to come forward in the near future.
10. This Policy is intended to apply to all staff, Members of the Council, contractors and volunteers. In addition, it clarifies the District Council's responsibility for ensuring that any organisation that receives funding from the District Council has appropriate policies in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

Key Implications

Financial

11. There are no financial implications. Training for staff in Safeguarding is being met from within existing resources.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

12. Failure to meeting statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under S11 of the Children Act 2004 could lead to litigation if children come to harm whilst the Council are carrying out services/undertaking duties or partner agencies carrying out services/undertaking duties on behalf of the Council.
13. Failure to follow guidance published by the Department of Health and Kent County Council in relation to vulnerable adults could weaken the Councils' position if vulnerable adults come to harm as a result of failure to implement an effective system of controls and procedures at a local level.
14. Failure to keep children or vulnerable adults safe represents not only a significant risk to residents but also to the reputation of the Council.

RISK	MITIGATION
Failure to keep children or vulnerable adults safe or report appropriately anything which a member of staff suspects, alleges or is informed about may lead to children and vulnerable adults coming to harm, injury or death	All staff and Members to be aware of the revised Safeguarding Policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. In addition, training for front line staff, Chief Officers and Managers rolled out within the organisation
Risk of significant harm to the Council's reputation	Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities
Failure to ensure groups in receipt of funding also take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously	Conditions attached to funding agreements should be monitored appropriately

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Equality Impacts

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	This Policy is intended to ensure that the needs of children and vulnerable adults are appropriately recognised and their welfare promoted, in all communities in the District
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	This Policy is intended to ensure that the needs of children and vulnerable adults are appropriately recognised and their welfare promoted.
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		This Policy is intended to ensure that the needs of children and vulnerable adults are appropriately recognised and their welfare promoted.

Community Impact and Outcomes

The purpose of the Policy is to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. Therefore, the impact on the community should be positive.

Resource (non-financial)

Officer time to service the Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group Board is currently committed from within existing budgets with responsibility for safeguarding falling to the Communities and Business Team. The Head of Communities and Business is the nominated lead Safeguarding Officer, supported by the Head of Human Resources, members of the Safeguarding Group (See Appendix 1) and Managers trained in Safeguarding. A list of all Managers trained in Safeguarding is available on the Council's intranet "inSite".

Conclusions

Members recommendation to Cabinet of the updated Safeguarding Policy is sought. Following approval, the policy will be made available to all staff, contractors and volunteers. The District Council Safeguarding Group will be responsible for reviewing its implementation.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults together (amended version circulated after the printing of the Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee Agenda for 29 April 2014) with Appendices A-F

Background Papers:

[Children Act 2004](#)

["No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care" Department Of Health guidance, March 2000](#)

Lesley Bowles
Chief Officer for Communities and Business

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Sevenoaks District Council

Policy for the Protection

of

Children

and

Vulnerable Adults

This policy is available on InSite





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Appendix A1: A guide to types of abuse

Appendix A2: Guidance notes for staff and volunteers when dealing with allegations of abuse

Appendix B: Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group

Appendix C1 SDC Internal notification form

Appendix C2 Guidance notes and Specialist Children’s Services Children in Need and Child Protection referral form (KCC)

Appendix C3 Form AP1 –Kent Social Services Adult Protection Alert Form

Appendix D: Contacts for Safeguarding

Appendix E: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information

Appendix F: Council roles and Safeguarding – How might I be involved?

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The action we take to promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and vulnerable adults has a role to play.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to all staff and volunteers working within Sevenoaks District Council who have contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, or who have responsibility for contractors and organisations providing services on behalf of the Council.

<p>1.3 It is your responsibility to read this information carefully and if you are a manager, ensure it is distributed to all relevant individuals or groups <u>before</u> they have contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.</p>

- 1.4 Sevenoaks District Council's Safeguarding Policy seeks to enhance the quality of life of children and vulnerable adults through consultation with them about the services we provide, identifying and responding to child and adult protection issues, seeking to prevent cases of abuse, promoting good practice and sharing information to assist in the prevention of abuse.
- 1.5 Studies have revealed the complexity of deciding when and how to intervene to protect and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. These studies have highlighted that successful intervention depends on robust interagency working and partnerships between local council services, health, the family justice system and the voluntary sector. Sevenoaks District Council is committed to this strengthening this working practice.
- 1.6 This policy seeks to ensure that staff and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults have a good understanding of safeguarding guidelines and good practice.

2 Equality and Inclusion Statement

- 2.1 We recognise that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to access services without being discriminated against or disadvantaged because of their:
 - Race, colour, nationality, ethnicity
 - Gender, marital status or caring responsibility
 - Sexual orientation
 - Age
 - Physical or mental disability or mental health
 - Religion or belief
 - Health status
 - Employment status.

3 Definitions and responsibilities

3.1 Safeguarding Children:

3.1.1 Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that concerns about the abuse of children and vulnerable adults are addressed. The lead responsibility for managing child and adult protection lies with Kent County Council Social Services Agency although Sevenoaks District Council works in partnership with them to identify and respond to suspected abuse.

3.1.2 For the purposes of the Safeguarding Policy the term ‘child’ or ‘children’ applies to children and young people under 18 years of age and stated (“vulnerable”) young people under the age of 25.

3.1.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by “Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, 2013” (available at www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3.1.4 The Children Act 1989 states that every child has a right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under the Children Act 2004 was published in August 2005. The guidance came into force on 1 October 2005.

3.2 The Council’s duties under the Children Act 2004 are:

3.2.1 Duty to co-operate to improve children’s wellbeing

- Section 10: requires each local authority (Local Education Authority and Children’s Services Authorities - Kent County Council) to make arrangements to promote co-operation between the authority, each of the authority’s relevant partners and such other persons or bodies working with children in the local authority’s area as the authority considers appropriate. The arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in the authority’s area, which includes protection from harm or neglect.

3.2.2 Duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children:

- Section 11: requires a range of organisations (including District Councils) to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions, and services provided on their behalf, are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.2.3 Expectations of district councils include:

- Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting wellbeing.
- A clear statement of the Council's responsibilities to children, made available to employees.
- Clear lines of accountability for work on safeguarding and promoting wellbeing.
- Using the views of children and young people to help shape services.
- Safe recruitment procedures for those coming into contact with children and young people.
- Appropriate training for employees.
- Effective working relationships within the Council and with other agencies to safeguard and promote wellbeing, and to share information effectively.

3.2.4 The Children and Families Act (2014) came into force on 21st April 2014. This sets out:

- Where there are signs that a child under the age of 18 years or an unborn baby is
 - **suffering or may have suffered abuse and/or neglect**
 - **likely to suffer abuse and/or neglect**
- No professional has the right or responsibility to withhold information or to respect a child/ young person's wishes for confidentiality.

3.3 Vulnerable Adults

3.3.1 A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who "is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation" (No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care, Department of Health, 2000) available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-secrets-guidance-on-protecting-vulnerable-adults-in-care

3.3.2 A vulnerable person may be someone with learning disabilities, mental health problems, or someone who is old or has a physical disability or impairment including an individual who may be vulnerable as a consequence of their role as a carer and victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti social behaviour.

3.3.3 A person's need for additional support to protect them may be increased when complicated by additional factors, such as physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, drug or alcohol problems, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness.

3.3.4 The “No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care” Department Of Health (DoH) guidance, March 2000 was issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. It places a responsibility on social services to play a co-ordinating role in developing local policies and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse. In addition it states that other statutory agencies should ‘work together in partnership to ensure that appropriate policies, procedures and practices are in place and implemented locally.

3.3.5 In response to the “No Secrets” DOH guidance a Kent and Medway Multi-Agency Adult Protection Policy Protocols and Guidance document was issued by Kent County Council Social Services Directorate.

4 Definition of abuse

4.1 The definitions of abuse set out below are taken from the Department of Education document “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2013) and the Department of Health document “No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care” (2000).

4.2 Abuse is “a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons’ and can be perpetrated by, and to, anyone, regardless of age, gender, class or ethnicity”. Abuse may be a single act or repeated over a period of time. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or vulnerable adults may be abused in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

4.3 It is important to understand that a vulnerable adult may be abused by another vulnerable adult, and equally, a child or young person may be abused by another child or young person.

4.4 Tools to help further define and identify abuse are set out at Appendix A1.

4.5 Appendix A2 sets out guidance notes for staff when dealing with people who are disclosing allegations of abuse.

4.6 Appendix F sets out how the Council’s staff might come into contact with safeguarding issues as part of their day-to-day role.

5 Fulfilling the Council's Safeguarding Obligations

5.1 In order to fulfil its commitment to ensure good working practice in protecting children and vulnerable adults the Council will undertake the following:

5.1.1 **Senior Management Commitment:** The Chief Executive and Chief Officers are committed to the importance of safeguarding and promote the Council's Safeguarding Policy. The Lead Safeguarding Officer will be a member of the Strategic Management Team and the Strategic Management Team will receive updates on safeguarding matters.

5.1.2 **Cascading the Policy:** This Policy sets out a clear statement of the Council's responsibilities. It will be made available to all staff. Managers will ensure that staff who have a safeguarding responsibility or who are likely to come into contact with children or vulnerable adults have read, understood and signed for receipt of, a copy of this Policy.

5.1.3 **Shaping services:** All consultations affecting children or vulnerable adults will be undertaken using methods that are accessible and appropriate. The views of children and vulnerable adults will be taken into account when shaping services that affect them.

5.1.4 **Safe recruitment practices:** The Council will adopt safe recruitment practices to reduce the likelihood of recruiting unsuitable staff. This includes ensuring that a statement about the organisation's commitment to safeguarding is included in all recruitment and selection materials including reference to regular DBS checks. Satisfactory explanations for any gaps in employment will be sought. References will always be obtained direct from the referee, never through the applicant. Appropriate levels of Disclosure and Barring Service checks will be obtained.

5.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Criminal Records Check Policy

5.2.1 The Council requires staff to have an enhanced DBS check if they have unsupervised contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Chief Officers and Heads of Service, in consultation with Human Resources, are responsible for deciding which of their staff require a DBS check, the level of check required and for ensuring that DBS checks are kept up to date.

5.2.2 Organisations or contractors undertaking work on behalf of the Council should confirm that they have appropriate DBS checks in place.

5.2.3 For further information, please see Appendix E.

5.3 Appropriate training for employees.

5.3.1 Everyone with access to children and vulnerable adults shall have regular training on safeguarding matters.

5.3.2 Employees must accept and be able to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of signs of suspected abuse or neglect to either the Police or Kent County Council's Central Duty Team and

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understand Sevenoaks District Council's statutory obligation to ensure confirmation is received from the County Council that any referrals made are being actively dealt with.

- 5.3.3 Training needs and opportunities relating to child and vulnerable adult safeguarding and protection issues will be identified and addressed through the Council's Induction and Appraisal Procedures, and in response to any changes in legislation. Training may include internal courses/workshops, externally accredited courses/seminars or workshops organised by relevant agencies. The Council Human Resources Team will keep a record of all staff and volunteers who have received training.
- 5.3.4 In most cases the Council will ensure that photographs taken of children participating in Council events will not be used for publicity purposes unless express written permission has been agreed from the parent(s), guardian(s) or carer(s). An exception will be community events which are open to all, and where it is therefore not possible to get prior consent. In such instances highly-visible signs will be put up advising the public the photographs are being taken that could be used for publicity purposes.
- 5.3.5 Organisations who are delivering services on behalf of the Council where there is a safeguarding element to the work that they do will be invited to join internal training courses.
- 5.3.6 Where organisations are delivering services affecting children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the Council, the following governance arrangements will apply:
- Guidance and training on safeguarding will be provided for key Council staff responsible for commissioning or grant aiding such services.
 - The Council will offer safeguarding training to commissioned organisations
 - Contracts, Service Level Agreements or grant approval letters will set out the safeguarding arrangements required. As a minimum, this will be that where adults work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults they should be subject to a DBS check or be supervised by a person with a DBS check. The organisation should take part in safeguarding training and should have its own safeguarding policy and safe recruitment arrangements in place.

5.4 Effective working relationships within the Council and with other agencies

5.4.1 The Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group (See Appendix B for details) brings together members of staff who are practitioners most likely to encounter safeguarding issues in their day-to-day work. It meets quarterly to help ensure that the Council is taking its safeguarding responsibility seriously and complying with legal requirements. It provides a forum for practitioners to discuss issues and concerns relating to safeguarding. This Policy will be monitored through the Council's Safeguarding Group.

5.4.2 The Council has a whistle-blowing policy and staff who are worried about the practice of another member of staff, another organisation or Member are encouraged to use the policy.

The Council will ensure that organisations with whom we work in partnership on child and vulnerable adult matters are made aware of this Policy. Organisations receiving funding from the District Council will be required to provide evidence that they have a suitable child and adult protection policy and practice in place.

5.4.3 The Council will ensure, where appropriate, that partner organisations sign relevant Information Sharing Procedures set up by the Kent Safeguarding Board to ensure good practice.

5.4.4 The Council will take part in any County or District-wide forum to which they are invited that exists to co-ordinate multi-agency arrangements relating to safeguarding matters.

5.4.5 The District Council's exposure to safeguarding issues is rare. The County Council LADO's (Local Authority Designated Officer) role is to advise on matters relating to safeguarding for children. The Council will consult the LADO if there is doubt about an appropriate course of action or referral or if the Council is unsure as to whether it is appropriate to suspend a member of staff who has been accused of inappropriate behaviour. In addition, advice relating to safeguarding matters for vulnerable adults can be sought from Kent County Council's Central Duty Team. Contact details can be found at Appendix D

5.5 Clear lines of accountability for work on safeguarding and promoting wellbeing.

5.5.1 The procedures for dealing with child and vulnerable adult safeguarding issues are set out in section 5.6 (pages 10-16). Actions fall broadly into three categories:

- To take appropriate action when staff or volunteers are concerned that someone in their care, through projects and activities of Sevenoaks District Council is the victim of abuse.
- To take appropriate action when staff or volunteers are accused of abuse. If a member of staff or volunteer is accused of abusing a child or vulnerable adult, appropriate investigations by the Council's Human Resources Department will be carried out.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers do not abuse those in their care.

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5.6 Procedures for reporting abuse

5.6.1 Every reported incident of abuse, or suspected abuse, must be taken seriously and addressed with appropriate urgency.

5.6.2 Procedures for reporting abuse are given in the table below (pages 10 -16).

5.6.3 This applies whether you:

- are given information about alleged abuse
- suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused
- receive complaints or are suspicious about a colleague

DRAFT

This procedure should only be followed in non-emergency cases. Instances where a child or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk of harm must be reported to the Police as soon as possible – this act saves lives.

What action should I take?	A: I have received an allegation of abuse or a serious incident involving a colleague or I am suspicious about a colleague	B: I suspect someone is being abused or suspect a serious incident has taken place	C: Someone has told me about an incident of abuse or a serious incident
Stage 1 – Initial Notifications			
Who should I tell?	Your Service Manager, Head of Service or Chief Officer, who will help you to collate the necessary information so that you can complete the Initial Notification form.		
Timescale	You should do this straight away		
How do I make the Initial Notification?	Any allegations, incidents or suspicions must be documented. An Initial Notification must be made using form C1. This should be handed to the Head of Human Resources and the Deputy Chief Executive. (or member of the HR department, or one of the members of the Safeguarding Group listed on Appendix B & D if they are unavailable)	Any allegations, incidents or suspicions must be documented. An Initial Notification must be made within 2 hours using form C1 which should be given to the Lead Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Chief Executive (or one of the members of the Safeguarding Group listed on Appendix B&D if they are unavailable)	Any allegations, incidents or suspicions must be documented. An Initial Notification must be made within 2 hours using form C1 which should be given to the Lead Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Chief Executive (or one of the members of the Safeguarding Group listed on Appendix B& D if they are unavailable)
Guidance notes for staff and volunteers	Please refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix A1: This provides a guide to different types of abuse and how to recognise them Appendix A2: Guidance notes for staff and volunteers when dealing with people who are disclosing allegations of abuse Appendix D – This sets out the contact details for managers responsible for dealing with Safeguarding issues within the organisation. It also lists the contact details for the KCC Lead Authority Designated Officer and the KCC Central Duty Team 		
What forms do I need to use	Form C1	Form C1	Form C1
Next steps	The form will be reviewed by the Head of Human Resources.	An appropriate manager trained in Safeguarding will be appointed.	An appropriate manager trained in Safeguarding will be appointed.

In consultation with the individual's line manager, the Head of Human Resources will consider whether to suspend from duty the member of staff who is accused in line with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

This is designed to protect the member of staff in the first instance.

The Head of Human Resources, Deputy Chief Executive or Lead Safeguarding Officer should consider consulting the KCC Lead Authority Designated Officer or KCC Central Duty Team regarding whether it is necessary to suspend or involve the Police.

HR will ensure that members of staff making the report receive appropriate support

HR will ensure that members of staff making the report receive appropriate support

HR will ensure that members of staff making the report receive appropriate support

Page 57	Police involvement	<p>Any decisions to contact the Police due to immediate risk of harm when it involves a member of staff being accused of abuse will be taken by the Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Executive or Lead Safeguarding Officer.</p> <p>If the Police are contacted, make a note of the Police crime number or the name of the Police Officer handling the case should be taken.</p>	<p>If following completion and review of form C1, a decision is taken to refer the matter to the Police due to immediate risk of harm, make a note of the Police crime report number or the name of the Police Officer handling the case.</p>	<p>If following completion and review of form C1, a decision is taken to refer the matter to the Police due to immediate risk of harm, make a note of the Police crime report number or the name of the Police Officer handling the case.</p>
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Stage 2 – Further investigation and/or making a referral

What action should I take?	A: I have received an allegation of abuse involving a colleague or I am suspicious about a colleague	B: I suspect someone is being abused	C: Someone has told me about an incident of abuse
Further investigation and/or making a referral	<p>The Head of Human Resources will use the Council’s usual follow up procedures to determine the outcome.</p> <p>The Head of Human Resources will keep the Deputy Chief Executive briefed about the status of the allegation.</p>	<p>In order to ensure that all the relevant details have been gathered the following form should be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form C2 for Children • Form C3 for vulnerable adults <p>This must be provided to the Lead Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Chief Executive.</p>	<p>In order to ensure that all the relevant details have been gathered the following form should be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form C2 for Children • Form C3 for vulnerable adults <p>This must be provided to the Lead Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Chief Executive.</p>

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Timescale	Set out in the Council's usual procedures.	As soon as possible, aiming for a turn around within 24 hours	As soon as possible, aiming for a turn around within 24 hours
Guidance notes for staff and volunteers	Please refer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix A1: This provides a guide to different types of abuse and how to recognise them Appendix A2: Guidance notes for staff and volunteers when dealing with people who are disclosing allegations of abuse Appendix D – This sets out the contact details for managers responsible for dealing with Safeguarding issues within the organisation. It also lists the contact details for the KCC Lead Authority Designated Officer and the KCC Central Duty Team 		
Further actions to be taken by the Lead Safeguarding Officer or Head of Human Resources Page 58	If a safeguarding referral is required, please follow procedures set out at B or C.	<p>The Lead Safeguarding Officer will determine whether, taking into account the particular circumstances of the case, any action is justified and whether the matter should be referred to the appropriate safeguarding team within KCC and make a referral (see below.)</p> <p>A summary of any consultation with or referral to KCC's Local Authority Designated Officer, KCC Central Duty Team or Duty Social Worker will be retained.</p> <p>The Lead Safeguarding Officer will keep the Deputy Chief Executive informed.</p>	<p>The Lead Safeguarding Officer will determine whether, taking into account the particular circumstances of the case, any action is justified and whether the matter should be referred to the appropriate safeguarding team within KCC and make a referral (see below.)</p> <p>A summary of any consultation with or referral to KCC's Local Authority Designated Officer, KCC Central Duty Team or Duty Social Worker will be retained.</p> <p>The Lead Safeguarding Officer will keep the Deputy Chief Executive informed.</p>
If the Lead Safeguarding Officer or Head of Human Resources is unavailable	A member of the Human Resources team should deputise for the Head of Human Resources. The Deputy Chief Executive should deputise for the Lead Safeguarding Officer.	In the event the Lead Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, the matter will be dealt with by the Deputy Chief Executive	In the event the Lead Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, the matter will be dealt with by the Deputy Chief Executive

Considerations only if making a safeguarding referral to KCC			In the case of a child, the Officer making the referral shall discuss with the KCC Local Authority Designated Officer or Duty Social Worker, what further action is required by the District Council.	In the case of a vulnerable adult, discuss with the KCC Central Duty Team and or Duty Social Worker what further action is required by the District Council.	In the case of a child, the Officer making the referral shall discuss with the KCC Local Authority Designated Officer or Duty Social Worker, what further action is required by the District Council.	In the case of a vulnerable adult, discuss with the KCC Central Duty Team and or Duty Social Worker what further action is required by the District Council.
Forms that I need to use for making a safeguarding referral to KCC			Form C2	Form C3	Form C2	Form C3
Who should receive (at KCC) the child or adult protection forms from the referring officer (at SDC) at KCC?/ and who can be contacted for guidance about the safeguarding issue			KCC's Local Authority Designated Officer Please keep details of any conversations. Please see section 6 Record Keeping	KCC Central Duty Team Please keep details of any conversations. Please see section 6 Record Keeping	KCC's Local Authority Designated Officer. Please keep details of any conversations. Please see section 6 Record Keeping	KCC Central Duty Team Please keep details of any conversations. Please see section 6 Record Keeping
Stage 3 – Follow up action						
	I have received an allegation of abuse or I am suspicious about a colleague	I suspect someone is being abused	Someone has told me about an incident of abuse			
Action to be taken by SDC	The Head of Human Resources will keep the Deputy Chief Executive informed about the outcome of any investigations.	A record of the incident will be added to the Safeguarding Incident Log by the Lead Safeguarding Officer, where progress will be regularly monitored	A record of the incident will be added to the Safeguarding Incident Log by the Lead Safeguarding Officer, where progress will be regularly monitored			

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<p>Follow up action to be taken by the SDC Officer if a referral has been made to KCC using either form C2 (children) or C3 (Vulnerable Adults)</p>			<p>If a response is not received within 72 hours of making a referral, the referring Officer should follow up with the KCC Local Authority Designated Officer.</p>	<p>If a response is not received within 72 hours of making a referral, the referring Officer should follow up with the Central Duty Team</p>	<p>If a response is not received within 72 hours of making a referral, the referring Officer should follow up with the KCC Local Authority Designated Officer.</p>	<p>If a response is not received within 72 hours of making a referral, the referring Officer should follow up with the Central Duty Team</p>
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6 Record Keeping

- 6.1 In order to ensure that all the details of the allegation are maintained accurately for use in possible future Court proceedings, the Lead Safeguarding Officer shall ensure that the following documentation is collated:
- The written report
 - Any notes, memoranda, telephone transcripts or other correspondence dealing with the matter
 - Any other relevant materials
- 6.2 These copies should be kept locked at all times and kept for a period of six years by the Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- 6.3 Documents associated with allegations against a member of staff should be kept according to usual HR practices.
- 6.4 Where there are concerns about the length of time for which individual records should be kept, the advice of the Council's Data Protection Officer will be sought.

7 Updating the Policy:

- The Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group will review this Policy as appropriate and will be consulted about any changes to The Children Act 1989 and other relevant regulations and legislation.

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A guide to types of abuse and how to recognise them

The definitions of abuse set out below are taken from the Department of Education document “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2013) and the Department of Health document “No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care” (2000)

Abuse is “a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons’ and can be perpetrated by, and to, anyone, regardless of age, gender, class or ethnicity”. Abuse may be a single act or repeated over a period of time. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

It is important to understand that a vulnerable adult may be abused by another vulnerable adult, or conversely, a child or young person may be abused by another child or young person.

Tools to help define and identify abuse

Please note that the categories of abuse are not mutually exclusive; a child or a vulnerable adult may be subjected to more than one type of abuse at the same time. Caution is suggested against establishing abuse merely due to the presence of one or more of the indicators, without further detailed assessment/investigation

The table below provides the main categories of abuse and their indicators they should be read to refer to children and vulnerable adults unless otherwise stated. The table can be used as a guide to assist with recognising abuse in domestic homes, care homes, day centres, workplaces and other community settings.

TYPE OF ABUSE	DEFINITION	INDICATORS
Physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, slapping, scratching, pushing, shaking, suffocating, scalding or otherwise causing physical harm • Restraint without justifiable reason (may include misuse of medication) • Inappropriate sanctions (deprivation of food, clothing, warmth, health care needs) • May include a caregiver fabricating or deliberately inducing illness (Münchhausen by Proxy Syndrome) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises, fractures, bites, burns, scalds, hair loss in one area, urine burns, bed sores, scars, lack of mobility aids where applicable • Cowering, flinching, general fearfulness • Injuries especially in well-protected areas of body (e.g. inside of thighs or upper arms) • Injuries of uniform or unusual type • Accumulation of non-administered medicine • History of unexplained falls or minor injuries • Frequent changing of

TYPE OF ABUSE	DEFINITION	INDICATORS
Physical abuse		General Practitioners (GPs) or reluctance against GP consultation or visit
Sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual activity involving force, coercion or enticement • Violence not necessarily involved • Sexual activity where the child or vulnerable adult lacks the mental capacity to understand and/or give consent • Rape or attempted rape • Sexual assault and harassment • Non contact abuse (e.g. voyeurism, pornography, grooming over the internet (see pages 11-12 for details about E Safety) • Perpetrator not solely adult males, could be female and/or another child or vulnerable adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition can be tricky unless disclosed, indicators most likely to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Behavioural (e.g. attention seeking, withdrawal and isolation, sexually explicit behaviour/ language, sleep disturbance, self-harm) ○ Physical (bruising, bleeding or itching around the genitals, bed-wetting, torn or blood/semen stained underclothing, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy)
Psychological abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour that has a harmful effect on emotional health, wellbeing and/or development • Verbal abuse; humiliation, ridicule, intimidation, threat of punishment, abandonment • Isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks • Deliberate denial of religious or cultural needs • Failure to provide access to appropriate social skills and educational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any sudden changes to mood, behaviour, appetite, sleep patterns, continence, use of eye contact, sociability • Anxiety, confusion or general resignation • Easily frightened • Loss of self esteem • Uncharacteristically becoming manipulative, uncooperative and aggressive • Obsessions or phobias • Dysfunctional relationships with family members/caregivers

TYPE OF ABUSE	DEFINITION	INDICATORS
Psychological abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development training • <i>By-product of all forms of abuse</i> 	
Neglect and acts of omission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent failure to meet physical/psychological needs of child or vulnerable adult • Failure to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ provide reasonable care, privacy and dignity ○ provide adequate food, clothing and shelter ○ protect from harm ○ provide appropriate health, social care or educational services ○ meet basic emotional needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate heating, lighting, hygiene, clothing, food or fluids • Poor physical condition (e.g. bed sores, weight loss) • Failures to give prescribed medication or obtain appropriate medical care • Sensory deprivation (e.g. no access to glasses, hearing aids) • Thriving outside the home/care environment • Children may be frequently absent or late to school • <i>Rarely an act of deliberate cruelty in a home environment, often indirect result of unmet needs of the parent(s) or caregiver(s)</i>
Discriminatory abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power • Discrimination on basis of sex, disability, age, race/ethnicity, colour, language, culture, religion, politics or sexual orientation • Degrading harassment and slurs • Hate crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tendency to withdrawal and isolation • Fearfulness and anxiety • Being refused access to services or being excluded inappropriately • Loss of self esteem • Resistance or refusal to access services that are required to meet need • Expressions of anger and frustration
Financial abuse (in the case of vulnerable adults)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use personal resources without informed consent or authorisation • Theft, fraud and/or extortion of material assets • Exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety about money • Unexplained inability to pay for household shopping or bills etc. • Withdrawal of large sums of money which cannot be explained • Personal possessions go missing from home

TYPE OF ABUSE	DEFINITION	INDICATORS
Financial abuse (in the case of vulnerable adults)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> property or inheritance Misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits Misuse of power of attorney or appointee-ship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living conditions substandard and unsatisfactory in contrast to adult's apparent financial position Extreme interest and involvement by the family, carer, friend or stranger in a vulnerable adult

Multiple forms of abuse may occur in an on-going relationship or an abusive service setting and may include more than one person, making it important to look beyond single incidents or breaches in standards, to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent and targeting of children or vulnerable people, negligence or ignorance.

Other situations to be aware of

Whilst the table above describes six manifestations of abuse, there are situations which have heavy implications for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. As such these need expanding:

CIRCUMSTANCE	EXPLANATION	INDICATORS
Domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or who have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to any one of the six manifestations of abuse outlined in the previous table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frontline workers throughout the council are likely to encounter signs of domestic abuse and possibly even a disclosure. It is vital that any indicator, explicit or otherwise, is taken seriously and reported – this act saves lives. Staff who suspect domestic abuse must consider safeguarding issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who else is at risk? Are children or vulnerable adults present? What preventative action is needed? Incidents reported by Kent Police through domestic abuse protocols will be addressed under child and adult protection processes if a child or vulnerable adult is at risk.

CIRCUMSTANCE	EXPLANATION	INDICATORS
Forced marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be seen as distinct from arranged marriage (where families organise marriage but the choice whether to accept lies with the adult or young person) • Forced marriage denotes a situation where one or both of the spouses do not consent and some element of pressure is involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May exhibit signs of physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional abuse
Institutional Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children or vulnerable adults placed in any kind of care home or day care establishment are potentially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation • Shows lack of respect for dignity and human rights • When care standards and practices fall below an acceptable level, institutional abuse is more common • May result from poor standards of care, lack of knowledge, understanding and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators include regimented regimes, unusually subdued residents, anxiety in the presence of social care workers • Users may exhibit signs of physical, sexual, financial, psychological or discriminatory abuse • Whistle-blowers must know how to access support and protection, anonymous reports are permitted and should be taken seriously
Restraint (formerly 'physical intervention')	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is illegal and unprofessional to use any form of physical, mechanical, emotional or any other form of restraint as a means of punishment • Restraint may only be considered in situations where there is a clear or perceived risk of an adult injuring themselves, or others, or seriously damaging property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and vulnerable adults who have been unlawfully restrained are most likely to exhibit signs of physical or psychological abuse • Depending on the circumstances, restraint could also be considered institutional abuse
Self neglect or self injurious behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This should be considered as a separate issue and should necessitate assessment by social and/or health care professionals 	

E-Safety

The growth of the Internet has brought with it a mass of opportunities and also complex and diverse risks to safeguarding. Sevenoaks District Council has an obligation to help keep children and vulnerable adults safe online by being adequately equipped to understand, identify and mitigate the risks of new technology. There are complex dangers out there and outlined below are some of the key considerations to be aware of:

E-ABUSE	EXAMPLES
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phishing scams, designed to obtain personal and/or financial information and possibly steal your identity • Fraud, from fake shopping, banking, charity, dating, social networking, gaming, gambling and other websites
Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to inappropriate content (sexually explicit, racist, violent, extremist or other harmful material, either through choice or in error) • Inappropriate contact (people who may wish to abuse, exploit or bully) • Inappropriate conduct (because of their own and others' online behaviour, such as the personal information they make public, for example on social networking sites) • Commercialism (targeted by aggressive advertising and marketing messages)
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to sexually explicit content • "Sexting" • Grooming in web forums and chat rooms • Online predators, cyber-stalking and risk of abuse
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to legal highs and illegal drugs • Online predators, cyber-stalking and risk of abuse • Exposure to violent content

E-abuse has been separated for ease of understanding, yet risks are likely to interact and overlap in complex ways.

Abuse in hospital

Please be aware that if abuse is witnessed or suspected within a hospital, concerns should be immediately reported to the hospital's senior manager. If it is believed that concerns have not been taken seriously, then it should be reported to the police, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Care Quality Commission or to the Social Services Agency.

The impact of abuse and neglect

The repeated abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults can have major long-term effects on all aspects of a health, development and well-being. Repeated abuse is likely to have a deep impact on self-image and self-esteem, and on his or her future life. Difficulties resulting from abuse can be lifelong: the experience of long-term abuse may lead to difficulties in forming or sustaining close relationships, establishing oneself in the workforce and to extra difficulties in developing the attitudes and skills needed to be an effective parent.

It is not only the stressful events of abuse that have an impact, but also the context in which they take place. Any potentially abusive incident has to be seen in context to assess the extent of harm and appropriate intervention. Often, it is the interaction between a number of factors that serve to increase the likelihood or level of actual significant harm.

For every child or vulnerable adult, there may be factors that aggravate the harm caused and those that protect against harm. Relevant factors include the individual's means of coping and adapting, support from a family and social network, and the impact of any interventions. The effects on a child or vulnerable adult are also influenced by the quality of the family/caring environment at the time of abuse, and subsequent life events. An important point to note is that the way in which professionals respond has a significant bearing on subsequent outcomes.

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Guidance notes for staff and volunteers when dealing with people who are disclosing allegations of abuse – Sevenoaks District Council Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Staff and volunteers must, at all times:

- Acknowledge the characteristics of the group you are working with and respond accordingly.
- Remember that it is rare for children, and particularly young children, to lie about abuse.
- Even if there are ambiguities or uncertainties around an allegation, it may nevertheless indicate children or vulnerable adults need for help in other ways.
- Never trivialise or exaggerate abuse issues.
- Allow the person time to speak and not do interrupt.
- Do not make suggestions to them which could imply you are intending to make an investigation at that time as the person may then refuse to give any information at all.
- Reassure the person that you are glad he or she has told you what has happened and that it is right to tell.
- Never push for information. If the person decides not to tell after all, then accept that and let them know you are always ready to listen.
- Do not interrogate or question other than to clarify your understanding. If the matter is to be investigated further, it will be done by trained professionals. No matter how well you know the person, spare them having to repeat themselves over and over. Apart from anything else, the person may begin to think you do not believe them.
- Be aware that the child or vulnerable adult may have been seriously threatened not to tell.
- Remain calm, no matter how difficult it is to listen to the person – think of how hard it must be to say it. You have been chosen because that person feels they can talk to you. If you show anger, disgust or disbelief then they may stop talking for fear of upsetting you further or feel that your negative feelings are being directed towards them.
- Listen to the person – **Really Listen** – take what they say seriously. Tell them they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Be honest - tell the person that you cannot keep it a secret and that you have to talk to someone else who can help.
- Let them know what you are going to do next and why it is necessary.
- As soon as practical, write down everything you have been told including all the elements that should be in the report as stated in the **Procedures** section of this Policy (See Appendix 1, Procedures – pages 10-16)
 - Note what was said, using the exact words and phrases spoken if possible
 - Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about
 - Note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time
 - Separate out factual information from your own opinion
 - Use a pen or biro with black ink, so that the report can be photocopied
 - Be aware that your report may be required later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure
 - Make every effort to preserve any evidence which may be relevant to a police investigation, however taking into account that the wellbeing of the person is your first priority.

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Guidance notes for staff and volunteers when dealing with people who are disclosing allegations of abuse – Sevenoaks District Council Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults **Appendix A2**

- Consider your own feelings and seek support if it is needed by contacting the Human Resources Team to arrange for confidential counselling
- Respect the confidentiality of the situation and do not share or discuss information with anyone except on a “need-to-know” basis, as outlined in this document

Terms of Reference for Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group – Sevenoaks District Council Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Appendix B

Purpose:

To co-ordinate the Council's approach to safeguarding children and adults and to ensure that all employees recognise and understand their responsibility to report any signs of abuse and neglect.

Responsibilities:

1. To oversee and steer the development, promotion and review of the Council's Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults.
2. To provide a platform for the discussion of all aspects of safeguarding and ensure liaison internally and externally with Kent County Council's Specialist Children's Services Department and Adult Social Services.
3. To oversee the Safeguarding Training Plan for employees, councillors, contractors and other stakeholders.
4. To review and, if necessary, prioritise recommendations/action plans based on national guidance, local priorities etc.
5. To ensure that Strategic Management Team is kept regularly informed of progress in developing and implementing the Council's safeguarding requirements.
6. To ensure that key stakeholders (employees, councillors, contractors, customers, partner agencies, community groups etc.) are kept informed of the activities of the Steering Group.

Membership and role:

- Lesley Bowles – Chief Officer, Communities and Business (SDC Safeguarding Lead)
- Alan Whiting, Community Planning and Projects Officer, Communities and Business, policy input and administration 01732 227446
- Kelly Webb, Community Safety Manager 01732 227474
- Cara Sillett, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, SDC Communities and Business
- Pat Smith, Chief Officer, Housing
- Leslie Roberts, Legal Services Manager
- Jane Ellis, Housing Advice and Standards Manager
- Ian Mott, Deputy Recovery Manager
- Other co-opted members/Chief Officers as and when specialist input is required

Accountability:

The Group is accountable to the Strategic Management Team.

Frequency of meetings:

Quarterly

Minutes

The Group will produce a set of minutes from each meeting

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Appendix C1, C2 and C3 – Sevenoaks District Council Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Appendix C1: SDC Notification Form

This form is to be used to report all suspicions or allegations of abuse or a serious incident and is to be sent to the Council’s nominated Child Protection Officer as soon as possible. (Use additional pages if necessary).

1. Your name and designation and the name and designation of anyone else who has been involved in collecting information
2. The date, time and place that you were advised of the Incident <u>or</u> when you became suspicious of abuse.
3. The names, addresses and telephone contact details of any witnesses to the incident.
4. The name and address and telephone contact details of the person making the allegation.
5. The name, address and (if known) the telephone number of the alleged victim of the incident
6. Brief account given of the incident including if any abuse has occurred.
7. If applicable, describe any injuries which have been observed (e.g. cuts, bruises, burns etc. and where on the body they were observed).
8. If the incident relates to neglect, please describe the conditions that are in place that have led to the need to take safeguarding action , e.g. state of the home, clothing or the child or vulnerable adult

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**Appendix C1, C2 and C3 – Sevenoaks District Council Policy for the Protection of
Children and Vulnerable Adults**

**Guidance on issues relating to children for use with form at Appendix C2 - Kent
Safeguarding Board: Specialist Children's Services Child in
Need and Child Protection Referral Form**

A note on parental consent: A 'child in need' referral cannot be accepted without the parent/carer's consent. If the parents/carers do not consent to a child in need and the concerns do not meet the criteria for child protection, then the referrer could consider using the Common Assessment Framework and Team Around the Child (when their own training permits). However, should the referrer have concerns about the child's needs which they consider may be increased due to the parents/carers' refusal to engage in the child in need process, then it is essential that they consult with the Central Duty Team.

Definitions:

- Child protection: 'Child or young person. Where a child is at risk of significant harm, through neglect, physical, emotional or sexual.' Section 47 of the 1989 Children Act.
- Child in need – 'is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development' and/or 'health or development is likely to be significantly impaired' Section 17 of the 1989 Children Act.
- Common Assessment Framework (CAF): Aims to identify, at the earliest opportunity, a child's or young person's additional needs which are not being met by the universal services they are receiving, and provide timely and co-ordinated support to meet those needs. CAF involves completion of standardised paperwork and requires the informed consent of the young person or parent/guardian as appropriate. Advice regarding the use of CAF and training for CAF can be obtained from the CAF Coordinator in Specialist Children's Services.
- Team around the Family (TAF - If the CAF identifies that multi agency support is required to meet the needs of the child and family then this team (of agencies) becomes the Team around the Family. The parent and the TAF must then agree who is best placed to become the lead professional.



SPECIALIST Children's Services Child in Need & Child Protection Referral Form



This form is to be used by all agencies when referring a child to Specialist Children's Services. The more information received at the first point of contact, the more likely it is that appropriate services will be delivered at the earliest opportunity to help children and their families.

BEFORE PROCEEDING – PLEASE CONSIDER - Have you consulted within your own agency about this referral? If so, was it agreed that a referral was required?

1. Child's First Name/s:		Child's Surname:		
Any alternative name:				
Date of Birth or EDD	Gender (M/F) Male	Religion Please select:	First Language Please select (A-F): Please select (G-Pe): Please select (Po-T): Please select (U-V):	
Name of Parents/Carers:				
Home Address:		Any other relevant addresses		
Post Code: Telephone Number/s:		Post Code:		
Ethnic Origin [Please choose one category and select from the drop-down menu]				
White Please select:	Mixed Please select:	Asian or British Asian Please select:	Black or Black British Please select:	Other Ethnic Groups Please select:

Other Significant Family Members / Adults			
Name	Relationship	Date of Birth	Contact Details

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3. Professionals involved with the child, for example GP, Health Visitor, School:

Role	Name	Address	Telephone

Have you had a consultation with Specialist Children’s Services (0300 333 5647)? If so, what advice were you given? Please include the consultation number and a copy (if available).

Has a CAF been completed in respect of this child? If not, has this been considered?
If a CAF has been completed, please attach a copy of the CAF and most recent plan.

Why are you referring this child to Specialist Children’s Services today?
[Please identify your specific concerns and comment on what you think the family need from Children’s Services. State how long you have known the child and in what capacity, i.e. as teacher, doctor, etc.]

--

7. What information do you know about this child:

[Include all relevant information about the child, i.e. about their development, health, behaviour, their views about the referral, their views about the issues/concerns, etc. If you have information such as a chronology, body maps or centile charts, please attach].

--

8. What information do you know about the child's parent(s) and wider family:

[Include relationships, friendships, behaviour, support, stability, safety, English is their second language, parent unable to read, substance misuse, etc.].

--

What information do you know about the wider environmental factors which may impact on the child: *[Consider for example, housing issues, who is working in the household, financial situation, community and social involvement.]*

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10. Any other relevant information: *[Including previous referrals.]*

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11. Is there a perceived risk of violence or other matters that could place those making contact with this family in danger (such as an unsafe neighbourhood, persons of a violent nature, an un-tethered dog, etc.)?

YES / NO

If yes, please specify what the identified risk is:

. In circumstances such as where there is a risk of violence (such as domestic abuse), please provide details regarding a safe point of contact for the non-abusing parent, e.g. alternative telephone number or postal address, contact through school, children's centre, friend or relative.

. Have you spoken to the Parent or Carer about making this referral? If not, please explain why not?

If you are making a Child in Need referral, agreement must be sought from the parent/carer (and where appropriate the young person) to making the referral. If parental agreement is not obtained it will not be possible to progress a Child in Need referral. Wherever possible, the parent/carer should be asked to sign the referral form.

If you are making a referral of child protection concern and are unsure about whether to advise the parent/carer about the referral, you should consult within your own agency about this issue. If you remain unsure about whether the parent/carer should be consulted/informed about the referral (i.e. due to evidence being compromised, or someone being placed at risk) please consult with Specialist Children's Services in the first instance. See Guidance Notes.

14. Parental agreement: [See Guidance Notes before completion.]

I agree to the information in this referral being passed to Social Services.

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian [Please Print] :
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian:
Date:

15. Referrer:

Name and Status (Print) :
Address:
Contact Tel number:
Signature: Date:

Please e-mail the completed Inter-Agency Referral Form to:

CentralDutyTeam@kent.gcsx.gov.uk (Secure e-mail*)

*Secure e-mail is accepted from the following addresses:

@nhs.net @pnn.police.uk @gcsx.gov.uk @gsi.gov.uk

central.duty@kent.gov.uk (Standard e-mail)

Please note if using this email address, it is not secure. If you wish to send client level information, then you will need to password protect the document and not include in the body of the email.

If you do not have e-mail facility please fax the completed form to 01732 221645.

Appendix C3: Form AP1 Kent Social Services AP1 Alert Form (1st August 2013)

**Adult Protection Alert Form for Service Providers and Members of the Public.
Please ensure this form is completed as fully as possible if adult abuse is witnessed or suspected.**

This form is designed to be completed as a word document and includes drop down boxes to support completion. There are free text boxes throughout the form and these sections will grow to accommodate the information being added. An electronic name will be considered as a signature within this document.

If you are unable to complete the form electronically a hand written form will be accepted.

(Details of where and how to send the AP1 are found at the end of this form). If you require assistance in completing this form, please see the guidance notes on the kent.gov website: [Guidelines to report adult protection concerns to the Social Services Agencies in Kent and Medway](#)

Date(s) & Time(s) of Incident(s) if known: (s)					
Client's Details					
Name of client*: (s)		Title:		LA Client ID / Hospital ID / Rio Number/ NHS Number *	

AP1 Stage 1 – Alert	
FOR INDIVIDUAL ACUTE HOSPITAL TRUST INFORMATION TO BE ADDED	
i. Name and Role/Relationship of person completing this form (s)	
i. Do you wish to remain anonymous (s)	
i. Contact Address and Telephone Number (Fax and/or email)	
ii. Name and role or relationship of person who reported the alleged incident (if different from person named above)	
ii. Do they wish to remain anonymous	
ii. Contact Address and Telephone Number	
KCC OFFICE USE ONLY- DATE AP1 RECEIVED (Date of Alert) (s):	
Method of contact: (s)	Source of Contact/Alert: (s)

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Client's Normal Address*: (s)		Address of where the alleged incident of abuse occurred:	
Postcode* (s)		Location, where did alleged abuse take place?* (s)	
Is this a registered care home*?		<u>Communication needs</u>	Is Support Required?
Tel No. 1:		Speech (s)	
Tel No 2:		Hearing (s)	
Email:		Visual (s)	
Date of Birth*: (s)		Explanation of Communication Needs	
Date of Death: (s)		Interpreter (s)	
Gender*: (s)		First Language: (s)	
Marital Status*: (s) If other give details		Details of Interpreter required	
Ethnicity*: (s)		Contact details of Advocate	
Sexual Orientation:			
Religion: (s)		Contact details of significant other (s)	
Next of Kin or significant other, address and telephone number (s)		Contact details of nearest relative under MH Act	
Relationship to client (s)		General Practice address and telephone number General Practitioner (if known) (s)	
Is the client aware that this concern is being reported to Social Service Agency*? (s)		If not, reason why?	
Has the client given their consent to this information being shared with social services and/or other agencies*? (More details can be			

added in text box)		
If no, reason why?		
Information will be shared with other agencies where issues of capacity to give consent are unclear and/or where the safety of other vulnerable people may be at risk or where a crime is suspected.		
To your knowledge has this client been the subject of previous adult protection alerts? (s)		
For Social Services to explain if person has been subject to previous adult protection alert?		
To your knowledge has this setting been the subject of previous adult protection reports?		
Key Professionals if known*?	Contact Address	Telephone, Fax and Email
Social Services Case Manager		
District Nurse/CPN/Other		
Any other significant professional/s		
Is the vulnerable adult a carer?		
Is the person under a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Authorisation? If so please give brief details		
To the best of your knowledge Primary Category of client* (s) (If you are completing by hand please describe whether physical, sensory, learning disability or mental health difficulties experienced)		
Secondary Category of client if relevant :		

Details of Allegation -what happened*? *(Include information about any witnesses and their contact details. What has triggered the alert now? Where possible provide details of the vulnerability of the subject of the alert. These may include communication issues, understanding, first language and any essential medical information. (Complete body map if appropriate.)*

Remember to answer-Who, What, When, Where and details of any witnesses.

At this stage, do you have a view of the individual's mental capacity regarding this adult protection alert and related concerns? Is there a known mental disorder?

Please give details:

Type of alleged abuse* Identify all that are relevant (s)
 Please tick the **Domestic Abuse** or **HATE Crime** beside any type of abuse that is also related to these

Main category of abuse				Was the alleged abuse between partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Abuse	Dom Abuse	Hate Crime		Abuse	Dom Abuse	Hate Crime
Physical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Institutional / Systemic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional / Psychological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Injuries Reported

Please describe injury* - When recording an injury you need to try and include the following information:

- Exact site of injury; size of injury (cm or inches); approx shape of injury; colour of injury; is injury clean?
- Is the skin broken? Is there any swelling?
- Are there any scabs / blistering / bleeding present?
- Is mobility restricted; does the site feel hot? Does the client feel pain?):

Please also consider and record psychological impact on Client (if known):

Is there a body map to be made available? please attach and send with AP1.	
Are there any photographic records of these injuries? Please attach	
Has client been medically examined?	
If yes – who by and when?	
Is there a need to preserve any potential Forensic Evidence?	
If yes are you aware of – or have you been advised of what to do regarding forensic or other evidence? – please advise	

Do you consider anyone else to be at risk e.g. other vulnerable adults or children

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<p>Information about the main alleged perpetrator / organisation <i>(Please provide, as much information as possible to enable the police to carry out necessary checks. If the identity of the alleged perpetrator(s) is not available do not delay sending the referral to the police if from your consultations a crime has or may have been committed.)</i></p> <p>If an organisation is alleged to be responsible only limited parts of this section can be completed</p>			
Multiple Perpetrators		Next perpetrator – if yes please copy this page and attach to AP1	
Full name of a person or name of the organisation alleged to be responsible for the abuse. If unknown then state UNKNOWN (S)			
Relationship of primary alleged perpetrator:* (s)			
AKA / Alternative name:		Gender	
DOB:		Age / Estimated age:	
Home Address/Post Code/Telephone No:			
Ethnicity			
Occupation: (If Applicable)			
Is the alleged perpetrator aware of the referral? (s)			
Does the alleged perpetrator pose a possible risk to children? If yes, give details			
Does the alleged perpetrator pose a possible risk to other vulnerable adults? (s) If yes, give details			
Is the alleged perpetrator a vulnerable adult themselves? (s)			
<p>If yes, Vulnerability of Alleged Perpetrator if known: Include communication / understanding / capacity & first language, Physical Disability, Learning Disability, any Mental Health problems & any relevant medical information. Please record if a mental capacity assessment is required in relation to the alleged perpetrator.</p>			
Does the alleged perpetrator care for others? (s)			

Do they live with the vulnerable adult?			
Has the alleged perpetrator been mentioned in previous referral(s) as an alleged perpetrator?			
Details of any professional helper/s (e.g. Case Manager / Social Worker/CPN/Comm LD Nurses) involved in the care of the alleged perpetrator (if applicable name / role / telephone number):			
Have you taken any immediate action? If so what? Please attach relevant risk assessment or other documents/reports if available			
Have you informed any other person/agencies of this alleged incident? Please give details. (Police, CQC, Health, Next of Kin)			
Name and/or role of person informed	Brief summary of contact – e.g. faxed, phoned, emailed etc and date sent.		
Name of person completing this alert form*:		Date*	
Signature If completed by hand			

*** SEND TO CASE MANAGEMENT TEAM IF YOU KNOW THAT THE VULNERABLE ADULT IS OPEN TO KENT CASE MANAGEMENT**

*** SEND TO CENTRAL DUTY TEAM FOR ALL OTHER CASES**

CentralDutyTeam@kent.gcsx.gov.uk (Secure e-mail*)

***Secure e-mail is accepted from the following addresses:
@nhs.net @pnn.police.uk @gscx.gov.uk @gsi.gov.uk**

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Central.duty@kent.gov.uk (Standard e-mail)

Please note if using this email address, it is not secure.

Use social services ID number where this is known or initials of the vulnerable person

If you wish to send client level information, then you will need to password protect the document.

Send the password separately - do not include it in the body of the email.

If you do not have e-mail facility please fax the completed form to 01732 221645 between 08.30 – 17.00 hours

Out of Hours fax: 01233 646596 (Both are safe haven).

If you wish to consult with Kent Social Services to discuss your concerns please call: 08458 247102 between 08.30 – 17.00 hours.

Out of hours service on 0845 7626777.

**Please note that a list of all managers trained in Safeguarding is kept on the
Council’s intranet site “inSite”**

Lead Safeguarding Officer for Sevenoaks District Council and Chair of the Sevenoaks
District Safeguarding Steering Group:

Lesley Bowles Chief Officer Communities & Business
Tel: 01732 227335

Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group members:

- Cara Sillett, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, Communities and Business - 01732 227229
- Kelly Webb, Community Safety Manager – 01732 227474
- Pat Smith, Chief Officer, Housing 01732 227244
- Jane Ellis, Housing Advice and Standards Manager 01732 227296
- Ian Mott, Recovery Manager, 01732 227274
- Leslie Roberts, Legal Services Manager 01732 227475
- Alan Whiting (policy input and administration), Communities and Business 01732 227446

Head of Human Resources - Syreeta Gill 01732 227403

Social Services Contacts and Locations

The Kent County Council Social Services Department can be contacted during normal
office hours on:

West Kent Area Office	01732 525000
For Sevenoaks	01732 525000
For Swanley	01322 611000

Outside normal office hours (8.30am – 5.00pm)

Outside of normal office hours, the Kent County Council Social Services Department Duty
Social Worker can be contacted on:

Tel: 08457 626777

Agenda Item 8
**Contacts for Safeguarding – Sevenoaks District Council Policy for the
Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults**

Appendix D

**Kent County Council (KCC) Local Authority Designated Officer – LADO - (for
safeguarding matters relating to Children and allegations relating to members of
staff or anyone in the wider workforce)**

LADO North Kent (Sue Unwin) – 01622 696366

KCC Central Duty Team:

For Children

Telephone: 03000 41 11 11

For adults

Telephone 0300416161

Fax number 03000 412345

Out of Hours Telephone: 0845 762 6777

KCC Emergency line 03000419191

Email centraldutyteam@kent.gcsx.gov.uk

Kent Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit:

01622 690 690

Please see Appendix C2 and C3 for details

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Criminal Records Check Policy

There are three types of DBS checks (Disclosure and Barring Service website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about> as follows:

Standard DBS check

Standard CRB checks are for people entering certain professions, such as members of the legal and accountancy professions, non-healthcare roles in the NHS, people working in the security industry, as traffic wardens, veterinary surgeons maintenance workers, engineers, trades persons, catering staff, drivers and porters. This list is not exhaustive. For more information please see the link above.

Standard DBS checks list details of an individual's convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings recorded on police central records and includes both 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions

Enhanced DBS Check

Enhanced checks are generally for those who work allows them close access to children and vulnerable adults, but are they not responsible for care giving or teaching e.g. ancillary support roles in education, NHS or adult social care. A person must work 1 day a week or 4 days in a 30 day period or overnight with children or vulnerable adults in order to qualify for this check. It also applies to those working in adult detention centres, volunteers who work with child on a day to day basis in a supervised role, live-in family members or friends of foster carers, charity trustees and school governors. This list is not exhaustive. For more information please see the link above.

Enhanced checks contain the same details as a standard check, together with any information held locally by police forces that it is reasonably considered might be relevant to the post applied for.

Enhanced DBS Check with barred list check

Enhanced checks are the highest level checks and should be sought for those engaging in Regulated Activities with respect to children and adults. This includes those working in a healthcare or social care capacity for children or adults, specific child-related roles – often unsupervised, and those working in specified places such as under 18 education centres, nursery, and child detention centres. This list is not exhaustive.

Enhanced checks with a barred list check contain the same details as an enhanced check with the inclusion of checking if an individual on either the adult or child barred list. Depending on the role, only the adult or child list will be checked. Some roles will require both to be checked.

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Council roles and safeguarding – how might I be involved?

Key roles in safeguarding: The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is applicable corporately across the authority, however, some services can play an important role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as part of their day-to-day work – recognising child welfare issues, sharing information, making referrals and subsequently managing or reducing risks

- Community Safety
- Troubled Families project
- Planning
- Enforcement Services
- Housing and Housing Advice services
- Environmental Health
- Benefits
- Revenues
- Health Projects
- Licensing
- Community voluntary activities
- Providing services to young people

These are just some examples of how your role may interact with the Council's safeguarding duty:

Community Safety

- Through daily Police intelligence received at the daily tasking and co-ordination meetings with the Police, KCC Community Wardens, Housing Association and other partner agencies.
- Through the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and visits to family homes
- Multi-agency troubled family project led by Kent County Council – involves regular contact with both vulnerable children and adults. Many of these families are experiencing multiple issues, for example worklessness, absence from school and involvement in anti-social behaviour. It should be noted that Kent County Council is producing separate guidance on Safeguarding for staff involved in this project.

Housing

- Day-to-day contact with members of the public and with families may become aware of concerns about the welfare of particular children or vulnerable adults.
- Day-to-day contact with families and tenants, may become aware of needs or welfare issues that they can either tackle directly (for instance, by making repairs or adaptations to homes) or by assisting the family in accessing help through other organisations.
- Housing authorities are key to the assessment of the needs of families with disabled children, who may require housing adaptations in order to participate fully in family life and reach their maximum potential.

- Front-line emergency role – for instance, managing re-housing or repossession when adults and children become homeless, or at risk of homelessness, as a result of domestic violence.

Environmental Health

- Environmental health officers inspecting conditions in private rented housing may become aware of conditions that impact adversely on children. Under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, authorities will take account of the impact of health and safety hazards in housing on vulnerable occupants, including children, when deciding on the action to be taken by landlords to improve conditions.

Planning

- Planning and enforcement employees, in their day-to-day site visits may become aware of needs or welfare issues.

Housing Benefits

- Housing Benefits officers will need to have regard to the Council's duty to safeguard children and young people, particularly where direct claims are made by 16 and 17 year olds.

Revenues

- Revenue Officers may become concerned about the welfare of children and vulnerable adults when dealing with customers in financial difficulties

Health Projects

- Day-to-day contact with members of public, vulnerable adults, children and young people where staff or volunteers may become aware of concerns about the welfare of children and vulnerable adults

Licensing

- Licensing officers have a duty to consider the welfare and protection of children and vulnerable adults when making licensing decisions, and report any safeguarding breaches (suspected or otherwise) of owners and staff of licensed premises.

Community, voluntary activities

- Sevenoaks District Council works in partnership to provide community, voluntary activities to children and families, e.g. diversionary activities such as holiday play schemes.

Council roles and safeguarding – how might I be involved?

- Employees, volunteers and contractors who provide these services have various degrees of contact with those children who use them, and appropriate arrangements need to be in place, including procedures for employees to report concerns about the children they meet and appropriate codes of practice for employees.

Providing services for young people

- The Council provides some services for young people directly and others in partnership with other organisations.

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SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN 2014/15

Cabinet – 8 May 2014

Report of Chief Officer Communities & Business

Status: For decision

Also considered by: Housing and Community Safety Advisory Committee - 29 April 2014
Council – 22 July 2014

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report seeks approval for the adoption of the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan 2014-15.

The Strategy & Action Plan is attached at the Appendix. It takes into account the Strategic Assessment undertaken Sept 2012 – Oct 2013 as well as more up-to-date data where it is available.

This report supports the Key Aim of

Community Plan – Safe Communities
Corporate Plan - To work in Partnership to keep the District of Sevenoaks Safe

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Michelle Lowe

Contact Officer(s) Kelly Webb, Community Safety Manager Ext. 7474

Recommendation to Housing and Community Safety Advisory Committee: Members views are sought

Recommendation to Cabinet: Members are asked to recommend to Council that the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Action Plan be adopted.

Recommendation to Council: That the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Action Plan be adopted

Reason for recommendation:

The Action Plan sets out the Council’s contribution to the work of the Partnership and encourages multi-agency activity that supports safe communities across the District.

Agenda Item 9

Introduction and Background

1. In 2006, a review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police Reform Act 2002 led to a series of recommendations to strengthen and extend existing requirements through the experience gained from partnership working. This resulted in a new set of national minimum standards which came into force in August 2007.
2. The 1998 Crime 7 Disorder Act included the requirement to produce a detailed crime and disorder audit through consultation with key agencies and the wider community and to use the findings to identify strategic priorities and take action to address them. The new national standards placed a legal obligation on responsible authorities to comply with the specified requirements, one of which was the creation of an annual strategic assessment in place of the previous 3 yearly audit.
3. The Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan is a yearly plan which seeks to address the outcomes and priorities of the annual Strategic Assessment. Eight priorities have been highlighted for 2014/15, which are:
 - Road Safety
 - Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Vehicle Crime
 - Burglary Dwelling & Burglary Other than Dwelling
 - Young People's Issues
 - Substance Misuse
 - Theft
4. There are 15 success measures and 50 actions/projects in the 2014-15 Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan and all Partners will provide detailed monitoring information to the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership at the end of each quarter.

Key Implications

Financial

The cost of the action plan itself is minimal. Funding to implement the plan is provided by all partner agencies through their core budgets with additional funding the PCC (Police Crime Commissioner) and other external funding streams.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

National Standards require Partnerships to produce an annual year action plan which is reviewed and updated annually. The requirement to produce an action plan to take forward a multi-agency approach to community safety stems from the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

Equality Impacts

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	This action plan is for all of the community and will be beneficial to everyone.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	Yes in the actions we promote equality through our community safety work
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		N/A

Appendices

Appendix– Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan 2014-15

Background Papers:

[The Sevenoaks District Strategic Assessment 2013](#)

Lesley Bowles

Chief Officer Communities & Business

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Sevenoaks District

Community Safety Partnership

Annual Action Plan 2014 - 2015 DRAFT



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www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
 If you need help communicating with us or understanding this document, we can arrange for an interpreter to help you.
 Please contact us on 01732 227000 stating your language and telephone number

Introduction

The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership brings together all of the agencies in the District who can have an impact on crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. A list of partners is set out on page 28. The Partnership has 3 key aims. They are to:

- Reduce and detect crime
- Reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime
- Strengthen community involvement

Each year the Partnership, in common with all Community Safety Partnerships, undertakes an assessment of crime and disorder in the District, using data provided by partners and feedback from residents. The assessment identifies the priority issues for the next year using the following rationale for each community safety type:

- Whether there is significant community concern
- Whether there is an increasing trend
- Whether it contributes to a high volume of crime
- The level of harm it causes
- How well it is performing compared with other parts of Kent and similar partnerships nationally
- Whether the Partnership can add value to the work

This Action Plan identifies where we can best work together to achieve results

Priority Issues for 2013 – 2014

The Strategic Assessment undertaken during the winter of 2013 has identified 8 priorities for the Partnership to tackle during 2014-2015. The data referred to in this Action Plan is based on the Strategic Assessment, which uses data between October 2012 and September 2013. Trends in the identified priorities continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis and the first monitoring will be available in July 2014.

The 8 priorities, in no particular order, are:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (including Fly-Tipping)
- Burglary (Burglary Other than Dwelling and Burglary Dwelling)
- Theft Offences (including Shoplifting, Theft of Metal and Theft Offences)
- Substance Misuse
- Young People's Issues
- Vehicle Crime (Theft of Motor Vehicles and Theft of Motor Vehicles)
- Domestic Abuse
- Road Safety

Although the Partnership's main focus will be the 8 priorities, it will continue to monitor and plan for trends in crime and other community safety issues and address them through the Community Safety Unit's daily briefings and other tasking arrangements in order to reduce recorded crime.

Between April 2013 and 28 February 2014, Sevenoaks District had the third lowest recorded crime in the County. However there was an increase in crime compared to the same period last year (April 2012 – February 2013) with the number of crimes increasing from 4682 crimes to 4903.

The Action Plan

The following pages set out the overall targets for the Community Safety Partnership and an action plan is linked to each priority. The action plan does not include details of the numerous activities already undertaken by partners, town and parish councils, the voluntary sector and others as part of their day to day work, but highlights activities in addition to core work, which partners will undertake throughout the forthcoming year. All priorities include actions around public perception.

Funding and monitoring

Funding for the actions included within the Action Plan is available from a number of sources, including partners' own budgets, Police & Crime Commissioner's (PCC) funding which is allocated to district Community Safety Partnerships, Choosing Health funding and other small amounts of funding from a variety of sources, for example the Kent People's Trust. Regular monitoring will take place to ensure that individual projects continue to deliver positive results as well as value for money and that this Action Plan is on target.

Equalities

In preparing the action plan, issues such as equality and diversity were considered to ensure that everybody feels safe in the District.

Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership – Action Plan 2014-15

Success Measures

All recorded crime

All Victim Based Crime reduced compared with the previous year

Burglary

Number of Burglary Dwelling to be reduced compared with the previous year

Number of Burglary other than Dwelling (shed, commercial/retail premises) to be reduced compared to previous year

Vehicle Crime

Number of Theft of Motor Vehicles to be reduced compared with the previous year

Number of Theft from Motor Vehicles to be reduced compared with the previous year

Anti-Social Behaviour

An improvement in behaviour achieved in 80% of cases accepted by the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group.

75% of Anti-Social Behaviour victims satisfied with action taken.

Young People's issues

Intervention projects and positive media for young people to be maintained

The number of young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time to be reduced.

Theft offences & handling stolen goods (incl shop lifting, theft of metal & metal offences)

Reduce the number of theft offences compared to same period last year

Domestic Abuse

Increase number of referrals to local services & Domestic abuse action plan to be 80% on target

Substance Misuse

Substance Misuse Action Plan to be 85% on target

Speeding incl Road Safety

Communities in areas where speeding has been identified as a top 3 priority involved in a range of speeding initiatives.

Burglary

Burglary is divided into Burglary Dwelling and Burglary Other offences. Although individually these offences account for a relatively small percentage of total crime in the District (8.8% and 13.6% respectively), rates are higher than County and MSG¹ averages. This year the Sevenoaks District ranked as 3rd highest for dwelling offences and 1st highest for other burglary offences in County comparisons. The District has the 2nd highest rate of dwelling offences and 1st highest rate of other burglaries in its MSG.

Between October 2012 and September 2013, Burglary Dwelling saw a 27.8% increase, with the number of offences rising to 478. Burglary Other Than Dwelling (BOTD) this saw a 30.6% increase, with the number of offences rising to 789.

Updated figures: April 2013 – 28 Feb 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 390 reports of Burglary Dwelling (22 fewer than the same period last year) and was 7th highest across the county and there were 667 Burglary Dwelling offences (and additional 21 compared to same period last year) and was 4th highest in across Kent.

¹ A Group of Partnerships thought by the Home Office to have similar characteristics and used for benchmarking purposes

Priority Action		Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
Burglary (Dwelling and BOTD)					
1.1	Proactively target action on hot spot areas using Pred Pol data through the monthly Tasking & Co-ordination Group	CSU	Police Housing Assns KCC Wardens	April 2014	Existing Budgets
1.2	Work with Town and Parish Council and Neighbourhood Watch to help educate residents secure their property through communicating effective advice	CSU	Police KCC Wardens	April 2014	Existing Budgets
1.3	Expand role of Priority and Prolific Offenders to help support intervention for prisoners under 21 who have received 12months or less for Burglary crimes	Probation Service	Police CSU	Sept 2014	Existing Budgets
1.4	Continue to deliver Smart Water to vulnerable and repeat victims of Burglary & Burglary other than Dwelling across the District	KCC Wardens	CSU	On-going	Existing Budgets
1.5	Through Media campaign use local celebrities to help promote CSU and education of Burglary & BOTD through Twitter & Face book	CSU	Police Housing Assns KCC Wardens	April 2014	Existing Budgets
1.6	North West Kent Crime Prevention Panel (NWKCPP) to attend village days/fetes across the District promoting Home Security	NWKCPP	CSU	On-Going	Existing Budgets

Vehicle Crime

Vehicle crime is up by 8% on last years figures, (Oct 2012-Sept 2013) with the District recording 805 crimes ranking the 3rd highest in the County (crimes per thousand population) and, 2nd highest in its MSG.

Kent Police categorise vehicle crime as Theft from a Motor Vehicle (TFMV) and Theft of a Motor Vehicle (TOMV). The figure for TFMV stands at 590 this year, this is up 12.2% on last year's figures and the District is the 3rd highest in Kent, 4th in its MSG. Despite a slight reduction of 2.7% bringing the total number of TOMV to 215 this year, the District still ranks comes 2nd highest in the County and MSG (crimes per thousand population).

Updated figures: April 2013 – 28 Feb 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 560 reports of TFMV (+64 compared to same period last year) and improving to 5th highest across the County. There were 167 TOMV offences (34 fewer than the same period last year) and improving to 5th highest in across Kent.

Theft of a Pedal Cycle

There were only 38 offences being recorded this year. Sevenoaks District ranks 1st lowest in Kent and 2nd lowest in its MSG, having had a 11.9% reduction on last year's figures.

Updated figures: April 2013 – 28 Feb 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 30 reports of Theft of a Pedal Cycle. (5 fewer than the same period last year). Sevenoaks District had the lowest pedal cycles thefts in the county.

Priority Action		Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
VEHICLE CRIME (TOMV & TFMV)					
2.1	Target Beauty Spot locations and work with trusts and rangers to raise awareness, high visibility patrols and usage of wildlife cameras	CSU	Police National Trust KCC Wardens	April 2014	Existing Budgets
2.2	Promote Safe Plates, work with local dealerships and promote service through PCSO surgeries	CSU	Police	May 2014	Existing Budgets
2.3	Expand role of Priority and Prolific Offenders to help support intervention for prisoners under 21 who have received 12months or less for Burglary crimes	Probation Service	Police CSU	Sept 2014	Existing Budgets
2.4	Targeted work through the Tasking & Co-ordination Group to identify hotspot locations and be proactive in those areas, use Pred Pol data	Police	CSU	April 2014	PCC Budget

ASB incl Environmental Crime

Evidence shows that ASB remains one of the priority issues within Sevenoaks District among residents. ASB accounts for the largest recorded issue when compared with crime in the District and makes up 34.4% of total crime when included in crime statistics. Figures show 2,297 recorded incidents of ASB occurring within the District and reported to Kent Police Oct 2012-Sept 2013; this is the lowest number of ASB reports in Kent and falls well below the County average number of reports (4,174). All districts and boroughs reported a decrease in ASB, the Sevenoaks District saw a total reduction of 8.2% (206 offences) which is less than the County average reduction of 14.9%.

There has been a 24.7% reduction in the number of reports to the District Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Officer. The total number of calls received was 143 (47 fewer calls than last year).

The County average has been decreasing since 2010, however the number of ASB incidents in Sevenoaks District has seen slight fluctuations during this time.

Sevenoaks District Council's (SDC's) CCTV Room reports ASB as the single highest recorded incident.

MOAT Homes identified 'Noise' complaints as the highest reported for of Anti-Social Behaviour. West Kent Housing received 337 complaints of ASB this year. Complaints of 'Noise' were significantly reduced by 44% (72 reports) from 166 to 94.

Updated figures: Between April 2013 and 8 March 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 2046 reports of ASB (268 fewer than the same period last year) and Sevenoaks District had the lowest number of reports across the county. In the same period there were 144 calls to the Council's ASB Officer, a reduction of 1 report compared to same period last year.

Fly Tipping

Fly tipping has seen a slight rise this year and remains one of the most prominent issues. The Sevenoaks District Direct Services received 744 reports of fly tipping (a 24% increase and 126 more reports than the previous year), with 380 of them removed. It is worth noting that an increase in reports does not necessarily indicate an increase in incidents, with often more than one report per incident.

Abandoned Vehicles

There has been a 20% rise in reports of abandoned vehicles over the last year, with 108 reports being made to SDC and 12 vehicles being removed. Most reports came from the more densely populated areas of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge. The low proportion of vehicles removed is in the most part due to the vast majority of those vehicles reported either being driven or declared SORN (Statutory Off Road Notice) and parked off-road.

Graffiti

Graffiti reports to the Council have risen by 34% (10 reports) this year with 39 recorded incidents. There were 12 offensive graffiti reports between October 2013 and September 2013 all of which were removed within the 48 hour deadline set by Direct Services.

Priority Action		Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
ASB Incl Environmental Crime					
3.1	Increase number of prosecutions for fly tipping through camera deployment	KCC Clean Kent CSU	KCC Wardens PCSOs Housing Assns	March 2015	Existing Budgets
3.2	Proactively celebrate good news stories through InShape, Partners publications and through Social Media	CSU	Housing Assns	March 2015	Existing Budgets
3.3	Promote legal ways to dispose of rubbish and promote the Moat promise to deter fly tipping.	CSU	SDC Housing Assns KCC Wardens	Sept 2014	Existing Budgets
3.4	Deploy mobile cameras across the District to deter ASB and Criminal Damage through the Tasking & Co-ordination Process	CSU	Police Housing Assns	On-Going	Existing Budgets
3.5	Work with specific families through the Troubled Families Project	KCC	SDC Housing Assns Faith Community ASB Task Group	On-Going	Existing Budgets
3.6	Work with communities to reduce ASB through PACTs and EVAs	CSU	All Partners	On-Going	Existing Budgets
3.7	Respond to ASB issues through the daily Tasking Process and report back in 100% of cases	CSU	All Partners	On-Going	Existing Budgets

Young People

There has been a reduction in the number of young offenders (under 18 years) for the third consecutive year, with figures for the District falling from 104 offenders to 70 over the period July 2012 to June 2013, representing 0.6% of the total District population of 10 to 17 year olds. This is the District has the 2nd lowest rate of young offenders in the County, significantly below the Kent average of 1.0%.

In line with the overall reduction in the number of young offenders, the total number of youth offences recorded in the District has dropped from 220 to 146 (July 2012 – June 2013). This is a reduction of 33.6% (74 offences), which is the largest rate of reduction in the County and places Sevenoaks 2nd best in Kent.

Not in employment, education or training (NEET)

Using CXK's figures for October 2013, the number of young people recorded as NEET in Sevenoaks District has decreased from 93 to 89 (a reduction of 4.3%) over a 12 month period. This is the joint smallest recorded number of NEETs in the County. Despite the reduction in numbers, the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds who are classed as NEETs has gone up from 4.7% to 5%.

Schools

Sevenoaks District ranks 1st in the County with the lowest recorded number of fixed term exclusions and a continued reduction over the last three academic years. In the 2012 - 2013 academic year, 33% (120) fewer pupils living within the District received fixed term exclusions with a total of 244 pupils excluded from schools within the Sevenoaks District during this period.

The CSP has identified a need to focus on e-safety and cyber bullying.

Priority Action		Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
YOUNG PEOPLE					
4.1	Work more proactively with KIIASS	KIIASS CSU	All Partners	March 2015	Existing Budgets
4.2	Set up a data monitoring system to identify young people's issues	CSU	KIIASS CXK Kenward Trust	June 2014	Existing Budgets
4.3	Maintain low level number of young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time	KIIASS Commissioned Youth Services	Police YISP Housing Assns CSU Kenward Trust (KIP program)	March 2015	Existing Budgets PCC Budget
4.4	Target detached youth work through the CSU	CSU KIIASS Kenward Trust	Police Housing Assns KCC Warden	On-Going	Existing Budgets PCC Budget
4.5	Continued promotion of E-Safety creating a centre for resources and continued cyber bullying programmes. Explore CEOP resources	SDC KCC	CSU KIIASS KCC Education	May 2014	Existing Budgets
4.6	Work with partners to help young people transition from Education to Employment	KIIASS LSP	SDCYP West Kent Partnership CSU	June 2014	Existing Budgets

	Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
4.7	SAFE- Support and Develop Services in Health Suicide Awareness for everyone	KCC Public Health	SDC KIASS VAWK	Sept 2014	Existing Budgets
4.8	Promote work with young people	CSU	KIASS VAWK	On-Going	Existing Budgets

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse has seen a marginal increase in the number of incidents and the number of repeat victims this year October 2012-September 2013. There have been an additional 16 incidents of Domestic Abuse recorded within the Sevenoaks District which represents a 1.8% increase on the previous year. The Sevenoaks District has seen a similar increase in the number of recorded repeat victims of Domestic Abuse with 3.5% more (7 reports, totalling 209).

Whilst on the surface this could reflect an absolute rise in cases of domestic abuse, the increase could also be interpreted positively with more people feeling able to come forward and report domestic abuse to the Police. It is important to remember that these figures are those reported to the Police and it is widely recognised that there is a high number of domestic abuse incidents which remain unreported.

Updated figures: Between April 2013 and 31 January 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 823 reports of Domestic Abuse. (an additional 49 compared to same period last year). Sevenoaks District had the lowest number across the County. There were 195 repeat victims (an additional 20 compared to same period last year) and again the lowest in the County.

Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding	
DOMESTIC ABUSE					
5.1	Raise awareness and sign posting to local and county wide services and resources including refuges, particularly targeting repeat victims	CSP Domestic ASB Group	All Partners KCC Youth Services	On going	Existing Budgets
5.2	Focus on young people and healthy relationships. Dedicated resources across the District using National campaigns and local services	DAVSS DA Working Group	VAWK KIASS	June 2014	Existing Budgets
5.3	Continue to support local funded programmes such as CDAP, ISVA, Freedom, DA Drop In Centre & Youth project. Work to increase numbers attending these programmes	Domestic Abuse WG	All Partners	March 2015	Existing Budgets
5.4	Review "Drop-in" Service outcomes and divert service if necessary	DA Working Group	DAVSS NK Women's Aid	May 2014	Existing Budgets
5.5	External Evaluation of DA Services funded by CSP	CSP	DAVSS ISVA NK Women Aid	Sept 2014	Existing Budgets
5.6	Consider Domestic Abuse as a marker for Phase 3 of Troubled Families	KCC SDC	DA Working Group	April 2014	Existing Budgets
5.7	Joint meeting with Substance Misuse mid year to take forward joint projects	SDC	Substance Misuse Group DA Working Group	September 2014	Not Applicable

Substance Misuse

Drugs

Since April 2013, substance misuse is no longer recorded in the Victim Based Crime figures released by Kent Police. However, figures collated in iQuanta show total drug offences are up 32.3% (43 offences) with 176 recorded this year. Despite this, Sevenoaks has the lowest rate in the County and ranks 1st in Kent and 2nd in its MSG.

Drug offences include possession and trafficking of drugs. Possession is up 53% in the District and 158 crimes were recorded October 2012-September 2013. Again, despite the increase, the District performs well and ranks 2nd best in Kent and MSGs.

Updated figures: Between April 2013 and 28 February 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 172 drug offences. (an additional 44 compared to same period last year). Sevenoaks District had the 2nd lowest number of offences across the County.

Alcohol

Until recently, alcohol misuse was measured using alcohol attributable hospital admission rates which have been increasing year on year on a District and County level². It is generally felt that these rates no longer accurately reflect alcohol admission trends as some 'attributable' conditions have undergone massive rises in admission rates over recent years and this is only partly attributable to alcohol. The clearest example is Hypertension, admission for which has dramatically increased and is recorded as attributable, despite approximately 20% cases being alcohol attributed.

According to the Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT) there are an estimated 30,432 dependant drinkers and 17,410 binge drinkers in the County. Most recent figures provided by KDAAT recorded 821 Kent residents in receipt of treatment for alcohol June 2013. Young Persons data shows a 14.6% reduction in the number of young people receiving treatment for alcohol with 310 in treatment (April 2012 to March 2013).

Smoking

Public Health profiles for 2013 show the Sevenoaks District to have lower rates of smoking-related deaths than the England average. 16.4% of the District population was estimated to smoke in 2013, compared to the 21% County average and 20% England average.

² Kent has seen a steady increase of alcohol related hospital admissions over the past ten years and alcohol remains the most common substance for those seeking treatment; this year (June 2012 to May 2013) hospital admissions for evidence of alcohol involvement by Blood Alcohol has seen a Countywide increase of 76 (8.2%). Sevenoaks has seen the sharpest rise in numbers during this period (45.5%, 25 additional residents), making a total of 80 alcohol related hospital admissions this year.

Priority Action		Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
SUBSTANCE MISUSE					
6.1	Preventative and early intervention youth work to address identified local needs and improve well-being of young people	KCA Substance Misuse TG Kenward Trust	KDAAT KCC Youth Services Early Intervention Team	On going	Choosing Health CSP Alternative funding PCC budget
6.2	Use a partnership approach to address underage drinking where it is reported by communities as a problem	Trading Standards	Landlords/Off License Substance Misuse Task Group KDAAT	June 2014	Existing budgets
6.3	Address work around Legal Highs and prescribed medication. Training and support for front line workers	Substance Misuse TG	CRI Kenward Trust KCA	On going	Existing Budgets
6.4	Use of Social Media to get information to all residents across the District with a focus on young people	CSU	Police KIASS KCA Residents & Youth Forums	On going	Existing Budgets
6.5	Structured interventions through Troubled Families where Substance Misuse is an issue	Substance Misuse Task Group	Kenward Trust Troubled Families CSP	On going	Troubled Families

	Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
6.6	Create "Recovery Communities" such as Non Alcohol Bars and Social Enterprises	Substance Misuse Task Group	Kenward Trust KCA All Partners	Sept 2014	Grants
6.7	Work with local employers to raise awareness on drug and alcohol issues and where to go for early interventions	Kenward Trust	Substance Misuse Task Group Local Business Forum	Sept 2014	Public Health Boards

Theft Offences incl Shoplifting

Theft Offences have been reduced by 5%, with 38 fewer offences recorded between October 2012 and September 2013 than the previous year. Despite only a minor reduction of 5% this year, the Sevenoaks District still has the 2nd lowest rate per 1000 population in the County. In contrast, the District has the 9th lowest rate, just below average, in its MSG.

Theft and Handling of Stolen Goods

As expected there has been a similar decrease in recorded offences for theft and handling of stolen goods. A 1.8% reduction (21 offences) has seen recorded crimes drop from 1191 to 1170 over the last year.

Updated figures: Between April 2013 and 28 February 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 795 reports of Theft & Handling (7 fewer compared to same period last year) and Sevenoaks District had the 2nd lowest offences across the county.

Metal Theft

Data on metal theft was collected for the first time in April 2012, allowing for some comparison in the year's strategic assessment. Recorded figures have dropped significantly from 171 to 129 (a crime reduction of 24.6%, with 42 fewer cases).

Updated figures: Between April 2013 and 31 Jan 2014 in Sevenoaks District, there were 87 reports of metal thefts (115 fewer compared to same period last year) and Sevenoaks District had the 6th highest number of offences across the county.

Shoplifting

Sevenoaks District has seen a slight increase in the number of shoplifting offences this year, but when we take a look at the figures for the last three years, we see that on average monthly figures are reducing. Looking at the figures for April 2012 to March 2013, the District has achieved a crime reduction of 15.7% (62 offences) and has the lowest crime rate in the County. However if we look at more recent figures from October 2012 to September 2013, shoplifting has increased by 9 offences (2.5%), from 359 to 368. Despite the fluctuation, Sevenoaks' performance remains the best in the County and 6th best in its MSG.

Updated figures: Between April 2013 and 8 March 2014, there were 372 reports of Shoplifting. (44 more compared to same period last year and the lowest in the county).

Priority Action		Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
THEFT incl SHOPLIFTING					
7.1	Develop and expand the Business Crime Reduction Partnership across Sevenoaks District to include Safer Socialising	BCRP	CSU Economic Development	June 2014	Existing resources
7.2	Target repeat offenders of acquisitive crime through the Offender Management Unit	Probation Police BCRP	CSU	April 2014	Existing resources
7.3	Publicise arrests and convictions through Social Media especially around BCRP work	SDC Police	BCRP	April 2014	Existing Budgets
7.4	Co-ordinated multi agency operations concerning retail theft and enhance visibility such as Safer Plates ops in retail car parks	Police	CSU	April 2014	Existing Budgets
7.5	Develop email groups to send out bespoke messages for specific themed retailers	BCRP	CSU	April 2014	Existing Budgets
7.6	Joint visits with BCRP to help identify hard to reach local management and seek to engage at a higher level	BCRP PCSOs	CSU	April 2014	Existing Budgets

Road Safety incl Speeding

Throughout Sevenoaks there are major trunk roads i.e. M25/A21 which facilitate the majority of traffic through the District. As a result figures for Road Traffic Accidents (RTAs) fluctuate depending on the area that is being assessed.

Jacobs figures released for January to September 2013 show a slight reduction (3.8%) in RTA casualties in the District compared with the same period last year. 407 RTA casualties were recorded during this period and the Sevenoaks District has one of the highest RTA casualties in the County, second to Maidstone. 12.8% of all RTA casualties were Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) with Sevenoaks District reporting the highest number of KSI RTA casualties in the County.

Speed Watch

Speeding and perception of speed is a high concern for residents across the District and has featured in all PACT Panels' action plans. The community safety survey conducted in December 2013 shows 'road safety/speeding' to be the biggest concern, with 54.8% respondents describing themselves as 'very concerned'. Speed Watch training has worked well in the District with residents being trained by Kent Police to monitor the speed of vehicles passing through their community. In November 2013 a total of 29 District locations were used for Speed Watch and there have been over 100 residents trained, over a quarter of all volunteers in Kent. Between December 2012 and November 2013, a total of 2,090 letters were sent out to the owners of vehicles speeding within the District thanks to the Speed Watch initiative.

Priority Action		Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When	Funding
ROAD SAFETY					
8.2	Identify parking hotspots and work with agencies and residents on local concerns	Police KCC Highways SDC	CSU	June 2014	Existing Budgets
8.2	Identify repeat callers around speeding and traffic issues and have a joint response for residents and Town and Parish Councils	CSU	All Partners	June 2014	Existing Budgets
8.4	Continue with Speed Watch. Identify a cohort of volunteers who could be tasked across the District to speeding hotspots	CSU	Police Volunteers	June 2014	Existing Budgets
8.5	Minimum of 4 Multi-Agency events to address speed enforcement	Police KFRS	CSU All Partners	March 2015	Existing resources
8.6	Education on road safety to be delivered through schools including Pedestrian and Cycle Safety	KFRS Police	CSU	June 2013	Existing resources KFRS

Glossary:

ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour

BCRP – Business Crime Reduction Partnership

CCTV – Closed Circuit Television

CDAP – Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme

CSP – Community Safety Partnership

CSU – Community Safety Unit

CXK - Connexions

DAVSS – Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services

EVA – Environmental Visual Audit

ISVA – Independent Sexual Violence Advisor

KCA – Drug, Alcohol and Mental Health Services

KCC – Kent County Council

KDAAT – Kent Drug & Alcohol Action Team

KFRS – Kent Fire & Rescue Service

KIASS – Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Service

MSG - A Group of Partnerships thought by the Home Office to have similar characteristics and used for benchmarking purposes

NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training

PACT – Partners and Communities Together

PCC – Police & Crime Commissioner

PPO – Persistent and Prolific Offender

SDC – Sevenoaks District Council

T&CG – Tasking and Co-ordination Group – monthly meeting to plan response to trends

VAWK – Voluntary Action Within Kent

YISP – Youth Inclusion Support Panel

YOS – Youth Offending Service

Membership of the Community Safety Partnership and contact details

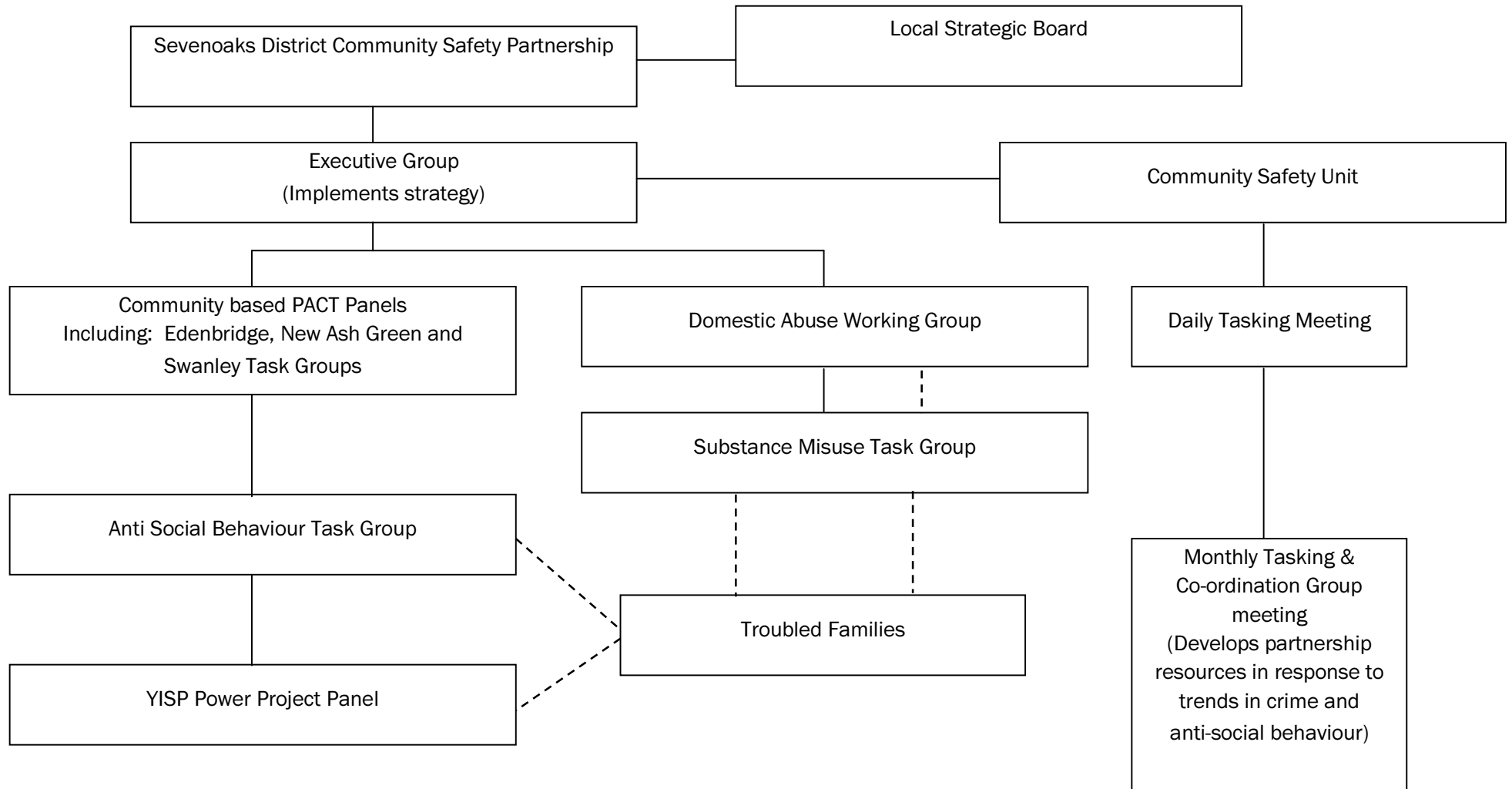
<p>Sevenoaks District Council Argyle Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1GP Tel: 01732 227000 Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk</p>	<p>Kent Police 1 Pembury Road Tonbridge Kent TN9 2HS Tel: 01622 690690 Web: www.kent.police.uk</p>	<p>Kent Fire & Rescue Service The Godlands, Straw Mill Hill, Tovil, Maidstone ME15 6XB Tel: 01622 692121 Web: www.kent.fire-uk.org</p>	<p>Police & Crime Commissioner Kent Police HQ Sutton Road Maidstone ME15 9BZ Tel: 01622 677055 Web: www.kentpa.kent.police.uk</p>
<p>NHS West Kent CCG Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road Tonbridge Kent TN9 1RE Tel: 01732 375200 Web: www.westkentccg.nhs.uk</p>	<p>Kent Probation Service 17 Garden Road Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 2XP Tel: 03000 473130 Web: www.kentprobation.org</p>	<p>KCC Social Services The Willows Hilda May Avenue Swanley Kent BR8 7BT Tel: 01322 611000 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>KCC Children and Families Information Service Invicta House Maidstone Kent ME14 1XX Tel: 03000 412323 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>
<p>KCC Youth Offending Service IH3 Invicta House Sessions Square Maidstone Kent ME14 1XX Tel: 01622 694465 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>KCC Youth Service Area Youth Officer C/o Swanley Youth Centre St. Mary's Road Swanley Kent BR8 7BU Tel: 01322 615275 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>KCC Trading Standards PO Box 286 West Malling Kent ME19 4HW Tel: 01732 525291 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>KCC Community Safety Invicta House County Hall Maidstone ME14 1XX Tel: 01622 221106 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>
<p>West Kent Housing Association 101 London Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1AX Tel: 01732 749400 Web: www.westkent.org</p>	<p>Kenward Trust Kenward Road Yalding Maidstone Kent ME18 6AH Tel: 01622 814187 Web: www.kenwardtrust.org.uk</p>	<p>MOAT Homes Galleon Boulevard Crossways Dartford Kent DA2 6QE Tel: 0845 600 1006 Web: www.moat.co.uk</p>	<p>Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team Invicta House County Road Maidstone Kent ME14 1XX Tel: 01622 221676 Web: www.kdaat.org.uk</p>
<p>West Kent Extra 101 London Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1AX Tel: 01732 749400 Web: www.westkent.org</p>	<p>Voluntary Action Within Kent 19 Monson Road Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 1LS Tel: 01892 530330 Web: www.vawk.org.uk</p>		

Terms of Reference

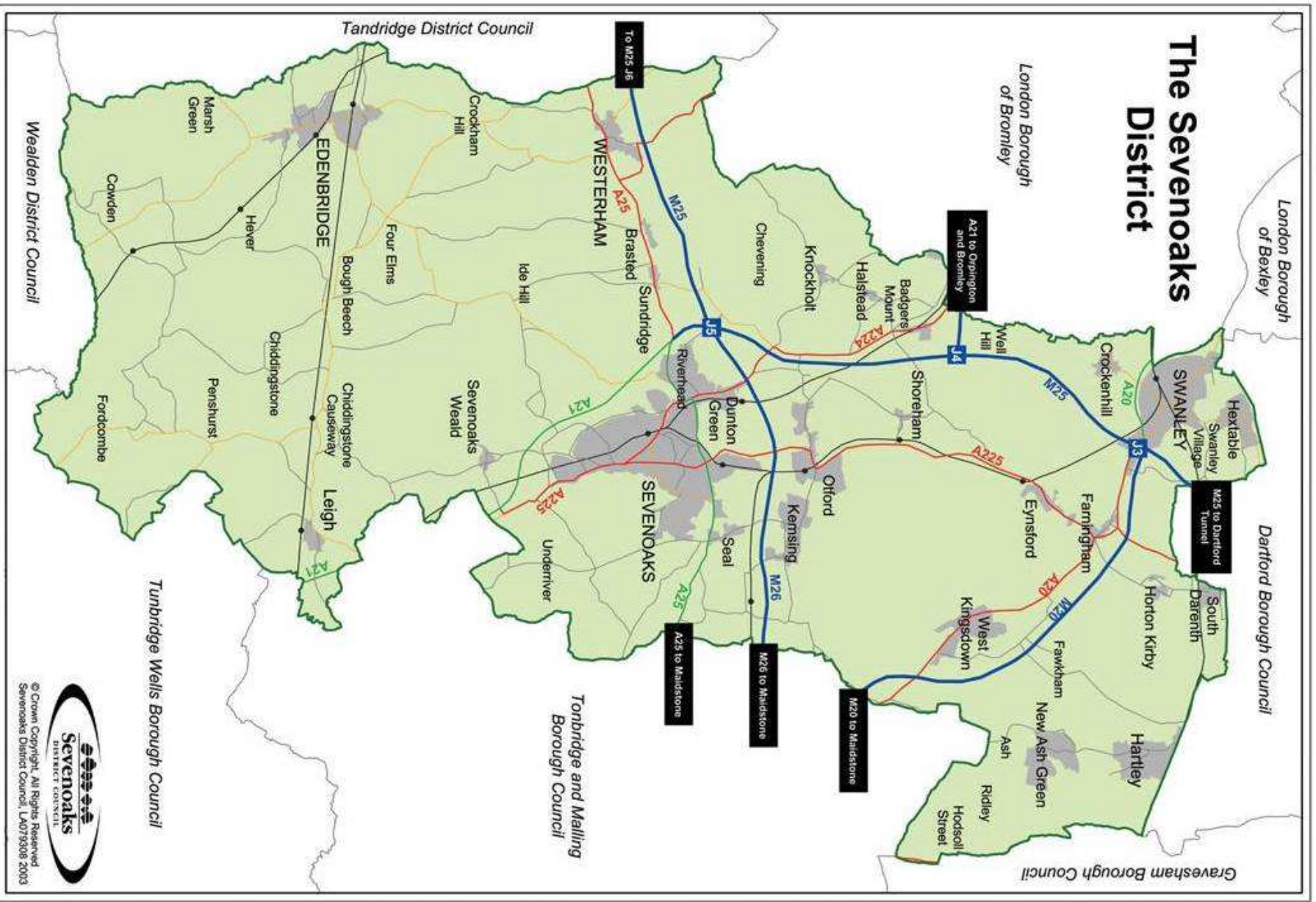
The Partnership's terms of reference are to:

- Undertake periodic reviews of community safety in the District and disseminate the findings to the public
- Develop a yearly strategy and action plan to tackle community safety
- Monitor and report progress in meeting the agreed targets and actions
- Secure resources and funding from parent organisations and others for projects to address agreed shared priorities in the Community Safety Action Plan
- Act as a forum for discussion of topical local community safety issues and agree follow up actions if appropriate
- Promote community safety in the District in conjunction with other local organisations and bodies
- Co-ordinate and maintain an overview of all activities relevant to community safety in the District.

Structure of Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership



Sevenoaks District map



Enquiries to:

Community Safety Manager
Sevenoaks District Council
PO Box 183, Argyle Road
Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1GP
Telephone 01732 227000
Fax 01732 742339
Minicom 01732 227496
E-mail community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

