



Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Despatched: 03.12.14

CABINET
11 December 2014 at 7.00 pm
Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

AGENDA

Membership:

Chairman: Cllr. Fleming Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Ms. Lowe
Cllrs. Hogarth, Piper 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 13 November 2014, as a correct record	(Pages 1 - 12)	
2. Declarations of interest Any interests not already registered		
3. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)		
4. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee or Cabinet Advisory Committees a) 'Budget 2015/16: Service Reviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAS) ' (References from the Advisory Committees)	(Pages 13 - 16)	
5. Draft Budget 2015/16	(Pages 17 - 68)	Adrian Rowbotham Tel: 01732 227153

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEES

6. Economic Development Strategy	(Pages 69 - 148)	Lesley Bowles Tel: 01732 227335
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7. **Asset Management Plan Update**

(Pages 149 - 162)

Adrian Rowbotham
Tel: 01732 227153

(If Members wish to discuss any information contained within Appendix C a resolution must be passed to exclude the public and press from the meeting)



EXEMPT ITEMS

Consideration of Exempt Information

Recommendation: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting when considering Appendix C of agenda item 7 above, on the grounds that likely disclosure of exempt information is involved as defined by Schedule 12A, paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

7. Appendix C

(Pages163-192)



Indicates a Key Decision



indicates a matter to be referred to Council

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 13 November 2014 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Hogarth, Ms. Lowe, Piper and Ramsay

Cllrs. Ayres, Mrs. Ayres, Firth, Gaywood, Mrs. Hunter, Searles and Walshe were also present.

37. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 11 September 2014, be approved and signed as a correct record, subject to Minute 33 being amended to read 'Mr. Innes' not Ennis.

38. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

39. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

There were none.

40. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee or Cabinet Advisory Committees

- a) Performance Indicators and Targets for 2014 - 15 – Response to Referral to Cabinet from Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee

Members noted the response from the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee who had considered the referral of the waste and recycling performance targets and been satisfied with the explanations given in the commentaries provided. It had been referred from Cabinet on 17 July 2014 and the Advisory Committee had received an updated version as at 10 October 2014.

Resolved: That the response be noted.

41. Appointments to Outside Organisations

Members considered a report on a vacancy that had arisen from the retirement from the post by Mr. Bovington the Council's appointed representative on Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Forum.

Resolved: That Councillor Piper be appointed as the Council's representative on Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Forum for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15, and the Council's thanks be extended, in a letter to be written by the Chairman, to Mr Bovington for his service.

42. Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014

The Chief Officer Communities and Business presented a report on the [Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#) (the Act) which had received Royal Assent on 13 March 2014 and would start to take effect from 20th October 2014. It replaced nineteen pre-existing measures with six new measures for tackling anti-social behaviour and providing protection for victims and communities. She reported that the Civil Injunction power would not be in place until Spring 2015, until then it was still possible to use Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs).

The Chief Officer Communities and Business presented a report on the [Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#) (the Act) which had received Royal Assent on 13 March 2014 and would start to take effect from 20th October 2014. It replaced nineteen pre-existing measures with six new measures for tackling anti-social behaviour and providing protection for victims and communities. She reported that the Civil Injunction power would not be in place until Spring 2015, until then it was still possible to use Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs).

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Community Safety advised that the Advisory Committee had received a presentation at their previous meeting, and reported that the Committee had been keen on the proposed Member level involvement with Community Trigger arrangements.

In response to a concern raised, the Chief Officer Communities and Business confirmed that the Council would only move forward with sanctions under the new powers if in each case they were justified, necessary and proportionate, For those powers taken forward by the Council, appropriate evidence would be provided and the Portfolio Holder and local members would be consulted. Members were keen that Member level involvement be more clearly identified in the recommendations. Additional wording was added to the recommendations before Cabinet and it was

Resolved: That

- a) the new powers available to the Council be noted;
- b) delegations to Officers be approved as follows:
 - i) to the Chief Officer Communities & Business to authorise the Council's actions under the Act with reference to Civil Injunctions, Criminal Behaviour Orders, Public Spaces Protection Orders, Closure Notices and Closure Orders and the Community Trigger
 - ii) to the Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services to authorise the Council's actions under the Act relating to Community Protection Notices and the power to enforce penalty notices (£75) for dropping litter from a vehicle;
- c) Community Trigger arrangements, as set out in paragraph 15 and Appendix A to the report be approved; and

Cabinet - 13 November 2014

- d) in cases that are led by the Council, the delegated powers would be used subject to local Members and the Portfolio Holder being consulted.

43. Bank Account Signatories

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which sought approval for a change to the list of Officers authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council. At present, four Officers plus the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer were authorised signatories to the Council's bank accounts. This number was required to ensure that Officers were always able to undertake banking business for the Council. He also advised that the authority of Mrs Scott to sign cheques etc. had been cancelled with the bank immediately upon her departure.

Resolved: That

- a) Mrs Kathryn Scott, former Technician Accountant, no longer be authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council; and
- b) pursuant to Finance Procedure Rules 4.73 and 4.74, Miss Joanne Cheeseman, Finance Officer, be authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council in respect of all bank accounts other than the Chief Executive's Imprest Account.

44. Variations to the "A Home of your own" Scheme (DIYSO)

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Community Safety presented the report mentioned the decision to approve funding for Round 2 of the "A Home of Your Own" scheme (DIYSO) and included variations to the scheme. She advised that Round 1 had proven successful and along with the Vice Chairman and Chief Housing Officer she had met the the Deputy Mayor for London as the scheme was being launched by a number of London authorities. Property prices in Sevenoaks were 17 times higher than the average wage earner could afford, and this helped people get onto the property ladder.

The Chief Housing Officer reported that it was an award winning scheme and had been runner up in the national housing awards. The Housing Policy Manager gave some background to the scheme for Members.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and recommendations received from the Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee who had considered the same report. The Chairman thought it would be helpful to see the salary/earnings band and how they equated to what people could buy. The Housing Policy Manager agreed to circulate a [report](#) soon.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development sought confirmation that anyone entering these schemes were signposted or received information on energy savings schemes. The Chief Housing Officer confirmed that they did get an information pack on schemes such as 'switch and save' and various initiatives to encourage insulation etc.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the following proposed variations be adopted:

'Variation 1. For applicants who are housing association tenants, the value of the home to be purchased may be up to £350,000. This enhanced value cap would only apply where the applicant is assessed by Moat as suitable for a 3 or 4 bedroom home and the applicant is actually buying this size of home. The enhanced value cap would only be applied to a maximum of 3 purchases

Variation 2. For all applicants, the minimum initial share of the home to be purchased is reduced to a 35% share.'

45. Annual review of parking charges for 2015/16 and Christmas Parking 2014

The Chairman clarified that the report before the Cabinet was to decide what would go out for consultation with the final decision taken in February 2015. The Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development presented the the annual review of parking charges report which proposed car park and on-street parking charge options for 2015/16 for consultation, and included consideration of free Christmas parking for 2014. The Portfolio Holder highlighted the recommendations made by the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

Members discussed freezing the on street parking charges and in Sevenoaks making parking free after 8.30pm by removing the £1 charge and bringing daytime charges up to 8.30pm.

It was noted that there was also free parking being made available for the Christmas lights evening events in Westerham on 27 November and Sevenoaks on 28 November.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That:

- a) the proposed car park charges for 2015/16 be as shown in Option 1-3 in Appendix B1, confirming that the 3 hour charge for the Blighs car park be increased by 30p as shown, the £1 evening charge in the Sevenoaks town centre car parks which runs up to 9.30pm be removed and daytime charges extended through until 8.30pm, and that no changes be applied to the St Johns Hill car parks or the Westerham car parks;
- b) no increases be applied to on-street parking charges for 2015/16 and that the on-street charges in Sevenoaks town centre which apply up to 9.30pm be amended to end at 8.30pm;

Cabinet - 13 November 2014

- c) free Christmas parking be provided in all car parks and on-street parking areas throughout the District for two Saturdays before Christmas 2014, on 6 and the 13 December 2014 as requested by the consultees; and
- d) a working group be set up to review the car parking fees at Sevenoaks St. John's and the Membership include Cllrs. Hogarth, Miss. Stack and Miss Thornton and report this to the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development to report to Cabinet.
- e) it be recommended to Council that cost in terms of lost income for free parking to be provided in all car parks and on-street parking areas throughout the district for two Saturdays before Christmas 2014 be funded from Supplementary Estimates.

46. Business Continuity Planning

The Chief Officer for Environmental & Operational Services presented the report which provided an update on the current Business Continuity Plan. The revised plan incorporated recommendations from a recent audit and provided a framework for the organisation to continue delivery of services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident. This would improve the Council's resilience against the disruption of its ability to achieve its key objectives, and improve its ability to recover from any such disruption while protecting welfare and safety. A Business Continuity Strategy was included within the revised Business Continuity Management Plan and is reproduced within this report.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and the recommendations received from the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development stated that it was carried out in accordance with international norms and was continuously reviewed.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the revised Business Continuity Plan and Strategy be approved.

47. EU Waste Framework Directive

Member considered the report which provided an outline of the requirements of the England and Wales Waste Regulations 2011 (as Amended 2012), promoting high quality recycling. It summarised the methodology of the Waste Regulatory route map which had been accepted by the Environment Agency as an acceptable assessment to demonstrate compliance. An Independent Consultant had been engaged to undertake the assessment, and their findings were summarised together with conclusions reached. The conclusion reached was that, on the basis that the recommended actions, as outlined in the report, were implemented, the Council did not need to collect paper, card

and plastic separately in order to promote high quality recycling. Members noted and considered the relevant minute and the recommendations received from the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment explained that it was a question of quality not volume, and was good news that there were few actions to implement to be compliant.

The Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services drew Members attention to the list of recommended actions within the report. He further advised that it would soon be possible to recycle different types of plastics in the clear sacks, including tetra packs, due to a new plastic recycling facility that had opened in Rochester. There would be a communications campaign, funded by the Kent Resource Partnership, to promote this and help in educating what could go in the clear sacks for recycling. The assessment will be forwarded to the Environment Agency in the New Year to demonstrate compliance with the Regulations.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That, on the basis that if the recommended actions identified in the report were implemented, there was good evidence that the Council did not need to collect paper, card and plastic separately in order to promote high quality recycling.

48. Treasury Management Mid Year Update

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources presented the report which detailed treasury activity in the first half of the current financial year, recent developments in the financial markets and fulfilled the reporting requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and the 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 the Treasury Management Mid-Year Update for 2014/15 be approved.

49. Financial Results 2014/15 - to the end of September 2014

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources presented a report in response to a request from Cabinet to regularly review the budgetary position and covered the financial position at the end of September 2014.

Cabinet - 13 November 2014

The Chief Finance Officer advised that at the end of September there had been a favourable variance of £873k, a variance which was predominantly due to fees and charges income (especially from Planning) being ahead of profile; pay costs due to unfilled vacancies; and Direct Services making a larger surplus than budgeted. This report indicated that the expected year end forecast was a favourable position of over £330k. The significant items giving rise to this favourable forecast were: Direct Services Trading account expecting a favourable variance of £101k; renegotiation of the partnership agreement with Dartford for Revenues and Benefit; and, discretionary rate relief, and external audit fees, which were reported to Finance and Resources Advisory committee as potential savings items in next years budget.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and the recommendations received from the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee who had considered the same report.

The Chairman warned that any favourable variance could be eaten up by further cuts to the RSG.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the comments made by the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee and the report, be noted.

50. Community Infrastructure (CIL) Governance

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which advised that until governance arrangements were agreed, the Council should set out a non-exclusive list of the types of infrastructure that would be funded through CIL and those that would be secured/funded through planning obligations. He advised that there was still ongoing discussion on the governance and a further working shop of the Advisory Committee membership would be meeting to discuss this soon, and would report to Cabinet.

The Chairman of the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee further advised that the working group were presently considering ideas such as using a pool of Members similar to the Licensing Committee arrangements for hearings, but further discussions were needed and there was another workshop on 25 November 2014.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and the recommendations received from the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee who had considered the same report. It was felt that the recommendations were not as clear as the minute preamble in relation to the the '25% of the £125'.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

The Chairman moved the recommendations from the Advisory Committee subject to an amendment to (a) and it was

Resolved: That

- a) all Town and Parish Councils, irrespective of whether they have a Neighbourhood Plan in place, be given control over the 25% of the higher rate of CIL in line with the regulations; and
- b) the 'Regulation 123 List: Types of Infrastructure to be funded by CIL' as below, be adopted.

'Community Infrastructure Levy

The following types of infrastructure will be funded through CIL receipts:

- Transport schemes other than site-specific access improvements;
- Flood defence schemes;
- Water quality schemes;
- Education;
- Health and social care facilities;
- Police and emergency services facilities;
- Community facilities;
- Communications infrastructure (beyond that directly secured by agreement between the developer)
- Green infrastructure other than site-specific improvements or mitigation measures (for example improvements to parks and recreation grounds).

The Council will not treat this list as exclusive and may use CIL to fund other types of infrastructure, subject to its governance arrangements. However the Council will not use CIL to fund site specific infrastructure to be secured through a planning obligation.

Planning Obligations

SDC will use planning obligations for site specific infrastructure, such as:

- Site specific access improvements (these could also be secured through s.278 of the Highways Act 1980 in some circumstances);
- On-site open space, for example children's play areas;
- Site specific green infrastructure, including biodiversity mitigation and improvement;
- On-site crime reduction and emergency services infrastructure, for example CCTV or fire hydrants; and
- Site specific Public Rights of Way diversions or impact mitigation.

Where required to accord with national or local policy, the Council will also use planning obligations to secure the re-provision of any infrastructure that is permitted to be lost through a planning permission granted for redevelopment of that site.

In addition, affordable housing provision and contributions, and related monitoring and legal fees, will continue to be secured through planning obligations.'

51. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - final for adoption

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which outlined the proposed changes to the document arising from the comments made during a six week public consultation, and sought permission to adopt the SCI. The Council's Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI) set out how the Council proposed to engage local people and organisations in the development planning process, both in Planning Policy and Development Management and had been originally adopted in 2006. In 2013/14 it had been reviewed in order to bring it up to date with current planning legislation and new consultation methods and then sent out for consultation.

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

Concern was expressed at the weight given to ministerial statements, and it was agreed that this be removed.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning, as amended and set out in Appendix A to the report, subject to the amendment discussed above, be adopted.

52. Update on the Allocations & Development Management Plan (ADMP)

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which provided a summary of the comments received as part of the Main Modifications consultation and outlined the next steps for the adoption of the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP), and the Joint Planning Policy Team Leader gave a brief overview. The three main modifications were to MM6, MM8 and MM13.

The Chairman pointed out and had confirmed that these were modifications made to the plan by the Inspector and not the Council.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and the recommendations received from the Local Planning & Environment 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

- a) the comments received through the ADMP Main Modifications consultation be noted; and
- b) the Council's responses to the comments made during the ADMP Inspector's main modifications consultation as set in Appendix E to the report, be agreed, subject to the additional wording outlined above.

53. Gypsy and Traveller Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which outlined the content of the recent government consultation (Planning and Travellers which was published 14 September and possible implications for the Council. The report also set out the alternative sites proposed through the call for sites, that could be subject to a supplementary consultation in the autumn/winter and outlined the proposed next steps to progress the Plan. It also contained details of the recent government amendment to the National Planning Practice Guidance for Members to note. It was anticipated to go out to consultation on 27 November 2014 and run for 8 weeks.

In response to a question the Joint Planning Policy Team Leader advised that there had been one appeal decision where a site had been refused and the Planning Inspectorate had granted temporary permission for three years, however the Secretary of State overturned this decision.

Members noted and considered the relevant minute and the recommendations received from the Local Planning & Environment 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 the Council undertake a supplementary site options consultation, to provide an opportunity for interested parties to comment on potentially suitable alternative site options, put forward through the recent call for sites.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 17 November 2014. The decisions contained in Minutes 41, 43, 46, 48 - 52 take effect immediately. The decisions contained in Minutes 42, 44, 45, 47 and 53 take effect on 25 November 2014.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.23 PM

CHAIRMAN

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Item 4 – References from the Advisory Committees

Below are the relevant minute extracts from the Cabinet Advisory Committees when considering ‘Budget 2015/16: Service Reviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAS).’

Strategy & Performance Advisory Committee – 7 October 2014 (Minute 19)

Budget 2015/16: Service Reviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAS)

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which detailed the update to the 2015/16 budget within the existing framework of the 10 year budget and savings plan. The report considered by the Committee represented the second stage of the budget process and would be presented to all Advisory Committees. The purpose of the report was for the Advisory Committees to advise Cabinet on growth and savings ideas for the Services within their terms of reference. He advised that the budget was currently balanced and this was where the Council wanted to be at the year end.

Currently there were no growth or saving proposals identified which were applicable to the Committee. The Service Overview was a new document that was intended to provide Members with improved information to give further context.

In response to questions the Chairman advised the Committee of staffing levels within Democratic Services and how as the team was so small, there were limited options for partnership working.

It was queried whether previous Freedom of Information (FOI) requests could be included on the website. The Chief Finance Officer advised that there was an Officer working group looking at what additional information regarding FOIs could be included on the website.

Members discussed the length of the reports and whether there were alternative options for the information to be presented. The Chief Finance Officer advised that the contents of this report has changed over recent years to reflect Members comments and any further comments would be considered when writing similar reports in future years. The Chief Executive advised that certain information included in all reports was a requirement and also that safeguarding was an important issue. Members agreed that it was important to have a high standard of reports, so that if processes failed lessons could be learnt.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That there were no further suggestions for growth and savings for the services within the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee

Agenda Item 4

Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee – 8 October 2014 (Minute 22)

Budget: Review of Service Plans and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which set out updates to the 2015/16 budget within the existing framework of the 10-year budget and savings plan. The report presented proposals that had been identified which the Committee considered and agreed.

Following on from the discussion during Minute 20, Cllr. Eyre proposed, and it was duly seconded that the budget for air quality monitoring be reduced and consolidated to £40,000 a year (£120,000 over three years). This was put to the vote and the motion was lost by virtue of the Chairman's casting vote.

Members further discussed the reduction of the budget but whilst in agreement that it should be reduced were divided as to the amount of the reduction.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: **That it be recommended to Cabinet that**

- a) the growth and savings proposals identified in Appendix C to the report, be agreed; and
- b) an additional saving be made on the budget for local air quality monitoring with a reduction to either £40k per year (an ongoing annual reduction of £18k), or £45k per year (an ongoing annual reduction of 13k).

Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee – 21 October 2014 (Minute 19)

Budget: Service Reviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which detailed the update to the 2015/16 budget within the existing framework of the 10 year budget and savings plan. A replacement page 17 was tabled which included current and future pressures. There were no proposed growth or savings items included in the report for this committee.

In response to questions the Chief Finance Officer advised that works to the all weather pitch in Edenbridge came under the Asset Management plan which was reported to the Finance and Resources Advisory Committee annually. Members were advised that the income from Council Tax court costs were to recover the costs of taking people to court. The Head of Parking and Surveying Services

advised that Development Control fees were set by central government but the building control fees were different and were set within the legal framework on a cost recovery basis. Savings in Building Control had been made by the new partnership between Sevenoaks District and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councils.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that there were no further suggestions for growth and savings proposals for the services within the terms of reference of this Advisory Committee.

Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee – 23 October 2014 (Minute 21)

Budget: Service Reviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAS)

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which set out updates to the 2015/16 budget within the existing framework of the 10-year budget and savings plan. The report did not present any savings proposals, but one growth item had been identified which the Committee considered and agreed. Cllr. Edwards-Winser addressed the Committee but was advised that his queries came under the remit of the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee.

Action 1: The Chief Finance Officer to ask Property to respond to Cllr. Edwards-Winser.

The Portfolio Holder advised that he would like to investigate further the possibility of increasing the budget (a further growth item) in order to be able to test viability studies (see Minute 19). The Committee agreed that this should be investigated further.

Resolved: **That it be recommended to Cabinet that**

- a) the growth proposal identified in Appendix C to the report be agreed; and
- b) there were no growth or savings items to propose at this time.

Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 11 November 2014 (Minute 30)

Budget: Service Reviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAS)

The Chief Finance Officer presented a report which detailed the update to the 2015/16 budget within the existing framework of the 10 year budget and savings

Agenda Item 4

plan. The report identified seven growth items and seven saving proposals. It was brought to Members attention that the saving and growth items for Legal would be removed as a current central government consultation may impact on future income streams of the service.

Members discussed staffing levels in IT Services. Members were advised that the team covered many different functions within the Council and it also included the Geographical Information System (GIS) team. The IT Services team were one of the smallest in comparison to other Local Authorities. Partnership working had been investigated previously with the GIS team, and this arrangement had now come to an end. Other options had been considered with key points being the potential of increased costs and the need to ensure requirements for the Government Code of Connection (COCO) to be met.

In response to questions Members were advised that the Council subscribes to a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement for it's Microsoft licences and the cost was fixed for the duration of the agreement. Inflation costs were covered in the overall budget, not on specific items as some items listed would not be ongoing for 10 years. If the assumption of a 2% increase changed it would alter the budget and need to be reviewed. Licences were changing to per user rather than per device which presents an increased cost. Software options were frequently being reviewed however some of the systems that the Council used were specifically designed to work with Microsoft Software.

Action 1: Chief Officer Corporate Support to provide a breakdown of Microsoft Licence costs.

A Member queried the expenditure on the Bus Station, and the reasons as to why they were high.

Action 2: For Head of Finance to provide a breakdown of costs of the bus station.

In response to a question Members were informed that changes had been made to the split of partnership costs between Sevenoaks and Dartford Borough Council due to the demographic differences which has resulted in an increased number of benefit changes in Dartford. Members thanked Officers for their hard work.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: that it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) the growth and saving items proposed in Appendix C of the report be agreed; and

there were no additional growth or savings item to propose.

DRAFT BUDGET 2015/16

Cabinet – 11 December 2014

Report of Chief Finance Officer

Status: For Decision

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: The Council has an excellent track record in identifying, planning for and addressing financial challenges. In light of the challenging financial position facing all authorities four years ago, for 2011/12 the Council produced a 10-year budget together with a savings plan for the first time. This will be the fifth year this method has been used and provides the Council with a stable basis for future years.

This report sets out progress made in preparing the 2015/16 budget and updates Members on key financial information.

Since the last report on 11 September 2014, the Advisory Committees have proposed additional growth and savings items.

There remains uncertainty over the level of Government Support; therefore a further report will be presented to Cabinet on 15 January 2015 subject to settlement figures being received in time.

The Cabinet will make its final recommendation on the budget at its meeting on 5 February 2015, after taking into account any updated information available at that date.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Ramsay

Contact Officer(s) Adrian Rowbotham Ext. 7153

Helen Martin Ext. 7483

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- (a) Consider and respond to comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committees.

Reason for recommendation: It is important that the views of the Advisory Committees are taken into account in the budget process to ensure that the Council's resources are used in the most suitable manner.

Agenda Item 5

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Council's financial strategy over the past ten years has worked towards increasing financial sustainability and it has been successful through the use of a number of strategies including:
 - implementing efficiency initiatives;
 - significantly reducing the back office function;
 - improved value for money;
 - maximising external income;
 - the movement of resources away from low priority services; and
 - an emphasis on statutory rather than non-statutory services.
- 2 Over this period the Council has focused on delivering high quality services based on Members' priorities and consultation with residents and stakeholders. In financial terms, the adoption of this strategy has to date allowed the Council to move away from its reliance on general fund reserves which has ensured that the general fund reserves have remained largely unchanged.
- 3 Due to the level of funding and other potential changes and uncertainties, it is increasingly difficult to anticipate with sufficient accuracy what the level of Government settlement is likely to be after 2015/16. However, using the data sources available to the Council, this report sets out a budget position over the 10-year period but recognises that this is a constantly changing situation.
- 4 In setting its budget for 2011/12 onwards, the Council recognised the need to address both the short-term reduction in Government funding as well as the longer-term need to reduce its reliance on reserves. The outcome was a 10-year budget, together with a four-year savings plan, that ensured the Council's finances were placed on a stable footing but that also allowed for flexibility between budget years.
- 5 With the amount of Revenue Support Grant provided by Government continuing to reduce at a significant rate it is important that the council aims to become more self-sufficient by having a balanced economy with local solutions. These solutions include:
 - continuing savings;
 - below inflation increases;
 - council tax; and
 - increased income.
- 6 Local Government generally appears to be feeling the impacts of the Government funding reductions and the impact of the recession. However, productivity and morale within this Council remain high which has a positive impact on the financial bottom line.

- 7 At the Cabinet meeting on 11 September 2014, Members considered a report setting out the Council's financial prospects for 2015/16 and beyond. That report set out the major financial pressures the Council is likely to face, together with a proposed strategy for setting a balanced and sustainable budget for 2015/16 and beyond.
- 8 As part of the budget process officers put forward their Service Overviews to the Advisory Committees in October and November, which set out a summary of current and future issues or pressures. The Advisory Committees recommended new growth and savings items which will be considered at this meeting.

Updates to the Financial Prospects Report

- 9 The Financial Prospects report considered in September raised a number of financial risk areas for the Council. These are updated below and Members will be aware that this is a rapidly evolving situation, and the Council needs to be prepared to act flexibly in response to changes in economic conditions.

Government Support

- 10 **Government Support: Revenue Support Grant** (£2.2m in 2014/15) – This formula based grant has significantly reduced over recent years as the emphasis of Government Support has changed. The illustrative amount provided by Government for 2015/16 suggests a 32% reduction and a 10% reduction has been assumed for all later years. The Government is not expected to provide updated figures until later in December.
- 11 **Council Tax Support Funding for Town and Parish Councils** – Council resolved on 13 May 2014 that no funding be passed to Town and Parish Councils for Council Tax Support in 2014/15. The 10-year budget currently assumes this will continue in later years, however Members will be asked to decide this later in the process. The Government has not yet stated whether they will show a separate amount for Town and Parish Councils in the grant settlement.
- 12 **Government Support: Retained Business Rates** (£1.9m) - The basis for allocating Government Support from 2013/14 changed to the Business Rates Retention Scheme. This scheme initially allows billing authorities, such as this council, to keep 40% of Business Rates received, however tariffs and top ups are applied to ensure that initially each local authority is not significantly affected by this change.
- 13 In the first year of this scheme, it was assumed that this council would receive funding at the safety net level as no significant increase in the amount of Business Rates collected was expected. Future projections continue to take this prudent approach and further analysis will be completed when more information is available.
- 14 Several Kent districts have joined up with Kent County Council and Kent Fire and Rescue Service to form a Business Rates Pool as there are financial benefits to them from doing this. It is not beneficial for this council to join the pool at this stage as the safety net protection would be lost resulting in less Business Rates income staying with the council. This position will be reviewed each year taking into account future Business Rates projections.

Agenda Item 5

- 15 *New Homes Bonus* (£1.4m) – the Government started this new funding stream in 2011/12 with the intention that local authorities would be rewarded for new homes being built over a six-year period. It is anticipated that this funding stream may be reduced by 40% from 2017/18, after the initial period has ended.

Council Tax

- 16 The assumptions in the 10-year budget are currently 2% for 2015/16 and 3% for later years.
- 17 The tax base has been increased using the latest information available.

Interest Receipts

- 18 Interest receipts have been reviewed with our treasury advisors, Capita Asset Services, modelling different scenarios to see which option is the most viable and realistic. The current assumption uses the Capita Bank Base Rate Forecast and adds 0.1%. The increases in this area are due to higher balances pending use in the property investment strategy.

Use of Reserves

- 19 One of the principles of the Financial Strategy is to make more effective use of the remaining earmarked reserves. The Budget Stabilisation Reserve was also set up to manage the fluctuations between years to ensure that an overall balanced budget remains for the 10-year period. This reserve has been increased by surpluses achieved on the revenue budget since 2009/10.
- 20 A more detailed review of reserves will be included in the February Cabinet report.

Pay

- 21 The pay settlement for 2014/15 and 2015/16 has now been agreed resulting in a 2.2% increase from 1 January 2015 and small non-consolidated payments in December 2014. The previous assumption was for a 1% increase in both years, therefore it has been required to include an additional £37,000 in 2015/16 and £28,000 in later years
- 22 The assumptions for later years remain unchanged at 1.5% in 2016/17 to 2017/18 and 2% in later years.

Superannuation Fund

- 23 The next triennial valuation will take place in 2017/18 so no changes have been made to the assumptions this year.

Other Costs

- 24 The inflation assumption for Other Costs (i.e. non-pay costs) has reduced from 2.25% to 1.3% in 2015/16 which is line with the current CPI figure (October 2014).

Current Budget Position

- 25 The following table shows the differences between the 10-year budget included in the Financial Prospects report on 2 September 2014 and the latest version set out in Appendix B.

10-Year Budget	£m
Previous 10-year budget gap/(surplus) at 02/09/14	0.6
Changes:	
Growth: Advisory Committees (see Appendices D & E)	3.9
Savings: Advisory Committees (see Appendices D & E)	(2.8)
Other costs inflation 15/16: reduce from 2.25% to 1.3% (Oct 14 CPI)	(1.1)
Council Tax base: increase	(0.6)
Interest receipts: reviewed	(2.2)
Pay settlement: 2014/15 and 2015/16 agreed nationally	0.3
Revised 10-year budget gap/(surplus)	(1.9)

- 26 The 10-year budget (Appendix B) currently shows a surplus. Due to the uncertainty regarding Government Support and Council Tax a further report will be presented to Cabinet on 15 January 2015 containing a more complete picture.

- 27 The Cabinet will make its final recommendation on the 2014/15 budget at its meeting on 5 February 2015, after taking account of the latest information available at that date.

Collection Fund and Tax base

- 28 The 2015/16 tax base will be agreed at Cabinet on 15 January 2015. At the same time, Members will be presented with an estimate of the Collection Fund balance as at 1 December 2014.

2014/15 Outturn

- 29 Supported by the Finance and Resources Advisory Committee, tight financial monitoring and control has been in place for a number of years and again for 2014/15. Given the constraints being placed on all budgets, and the savings planned for 2014/15 and future years, it will be essential to continue on this basis.

Agenda Item 5

- 30 Officers have set a target favourable variance of between £400,000 and £500,000 to enable:
- funds to be set aside for development projects and asset maintenance;
 - funding of a housing stock condition survey; and
 - any further variance to be applied to Budget Stabilisation reserve.

Key Implications

Financial

All financial implications are covered elsewhere in this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications.

For the effective management of our resources and in order to achieve a sustainable budget it is essential that all service cost changes and risks are identified and considered.

Current and future pressures were included in the Service Overviews presented to the Advisory Committees and each Service Change Impact Assessment (SCIA) includes the likely impacts including a risk analysis.

An effective integrated policy and priority driven long-term financial and business process is required for the Council to deliver on its priorities and maintain a sustainable budget. It is also essential that continuous improvements are identified and implemented in order to take account of the changing climate within which the Council operates and to meet the expectations of both Government and the public on the quality of service demanded from this Council.

The risks associated with the 10-year budget approach include uncertainty around the level of shortfall and the timing of key announcements such as future grant settlements. The risk will be mitigated by continuing to review assumptions and estimates and by updating Members throughout the process.

Community Impact and Outcomes

Members' early consideration of the issues raised in this report would be beneficial to residents in that a planned approach to achieving a balanced budget should produce the best outcome for the community in limiting the level in budget reductions.

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?	Yes	Individual equalities assessments have been completed for all of the Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) to ensure the decision making process is fair and transparent.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

Conclusions

The 10-year budget currently shows a surplus, but due to the uncertainty regarding Government Support and Council Tax, an updated position will be reported to Cabinet on 15 January 2015 subject to settlement figures being received in time.

This budget process will continue to be a major financial challenge for a Council that already provides value for money services to a high standard. In making any budget proposals, Members will need to consider the impact on customers, service quality and staff well-being, to ensure that these proposals lead to an achievable 10-year budget that supports the Council's aspirations for customer-focused services.

Appendices

Appendix A – Budget Timetable.

Appendix B – 10-year Budget.

Appendix C – Summary of the Council's agreed savings plan and growth items.

Appendix D – New growth and savings items proposed by the Advisory Committees.

Appendix E – Service Change Impact assessment forms (SCIAs).

Background Papers:

Report to Council 18 February 2014 – Budget and Council Tax Setting 2014/15

Report to Cabinet 11 September 2014 – Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2015/16 and

Agenda Item 5

Beyond

Report to Strategy and Performance Advisory Committee 7 October 2014, Housing and Community Safety Advisory Committee 8 October 2014, Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee 21 October 2014, Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee 23 October 2014, Finance and Resources Advisory Committee 11 November 2014 – Budget 2015/16: Service Reviews and Service Plan Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer

2015/16 Budget Setting Timetable

	Date	Committee
Stage 1		
Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2015/16 and Beyond	2 September	Finance & Resources AC
	11 September	Cabinet
↓		
Stage 2		
Review of Service Overviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)	7 October	Strategy & Performance AC
	8 October	Housing & Comm. Safety AC
	21 October	Economic & Comm. Dev. AC
	23 October	Local Planning & Env. AC
	11 November	Finance & Resources AC
↓		
Stage 3		
Budget Update (incl. Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs), feedback from Advisory Committees)	11 December	Cabinet
↓		
Stage 4		
Budget Update (incl. Government Support information)	15 January	Cabinet
↓		
Stage 5		
Budget Update and further review of Service Change Impact Assessments (if required)	January	Advisory Committees
↓		
Stage 6		
Budget Setting Meeting (Recommendations to Council)	5 February	Cabinet
↓		
Stage 7		
Budget Setting Meeting (incl. Council Tax setting)	17 February	Council

Note: The Scrutiny Committee may 'call in' items concerning the budget setting process.

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Ten Year Budget - Revenue

	Budget 2014/15	Plan 2015/16	Plan 2016/17	Plan 2017/18	Plan 2018/19	Plan 2019/20	Plan 2020/21	Plan 2021/22	Plan 2022/23	Plan 2023/24	Plan 2024/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure											
Net Service Expenditure c/f	13,800	14,136	14,260	14,786	15,660	16,101	16,450	17,246	17,653	18,060	18,469
Inflation	488	473	539	516	712	565	593	407	407	409	406
Superannuation Fund deficit: actuarial increase	0	0	0	520	0	0	390	0	0	0	0
Net savings (approved in previous years)	(152)	(154)	(323)	(162)	(301)	(216)	(187)	0	0	0	0
New growth	0	177	200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New savings	0	(372)	110	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Service Expenditure b/f	14,136	14,260	14,786	15,660	16,101	16,450	17,246	17,653	18,060	18,469	18,875
Financing Sources											
Government Support											
: Revenue Support Grant											
: Revenue Support Grant (incl CTS)	(2,225)	(1,503)	(1,344)	(1,201)	(1,072)	(956)	(851)	(757)	(672)	(596)	(527)
: Retained Business Rates	(1,898)	(1,942)	(1,990)	(2,030)	(2,071)	(2,112)	(2,154)	(2,197)	(2,241)	(2,286)	(2,332)
: Council Tax Support (CTS)											
: to be passed on to Ts & Ps	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
: passed on to Ts & Ps	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	(1,389)	(1,810)	(2,231)	(1,339)	(1,339)	(1,339)	(1,339)	(1,339)	(1,339)	(1,339)	(1,339)
Council Tax	(9,011)	(9,287)	(9,621)	(9,966)	(10,324)	(10,694)	(11,077)	(11,473)	(11,884)	(12,308)	(12,747)
Interest Receipts	(244)	(301)	(509)	(655)	(661)	(629)	(591)	(546)	(499)	(451)	(405)
Contributions to/(from) Reserves	(192)	(183)	(183)	(303)	(303)	(303)	(303)	(303)	(129)	(129)	(585)
Total Financing	(14,959)	(15,026)	(15,878)	(15,494)	(15,770)	(16,033)	(16,315)	(16,615)	(16,764)	(17,109)	(17,935)
Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit	(823)	(766)	(1,092)	166	331	417	931	1,038	1,296	1,360	940
Contribution to/(from) Stabilisation Reserve	823	766	1,092	(166)	(331)	(417)	(931)	(1,038)	(1,296)	(1,360)	(940)
Unfunded Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Remaining balance / (shortfall) in Budget

Stabilisation reserve: 6,291 7,177 8,389 8,223 7,892 7,475 6,544 5,506 4,210 2,850 1,910

Assumptions	
Revenue Support Grant:	-32% in 15/16, -10% later years
Retained Business Rates:	2% all years
Council Tax:	1.99% in 15/16, 3% later years
Interest Receipts:	0.85% in 15/16, 1.35% in 16/17, 1.75% in 17/18 1.85% later years
Pay award:	2.2% in Jan 15, 1.5% in 16/17 - 17/18, 2% later years
Other costs:	1.3% in 15/16, 2.25% in later years
Income:	3.5% in all years

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SCIA		Description	2011/12 £000	2012/13 £000	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	Later Years £000	Total £000
Year	No.								
		Economic and Community Development							
2014/15	2	Broadband and business growth (reversal of temporary growth item)						(80)	
2014/15	20	Building Control: Shared working with Tonbridge & Malling BC					(9)		
		Finance and Resources							
2011/12	62,63	Staff terms and conditions - savings agreed by Council 18/10/11					(117)	(979)	
2014/15	18	Corporate Projects (reversal of temporary growth item)						(60)	
2014/15	21	Customer Services: Channel shift programme						(20)	
		Housing and Community Safety							
2014/15	13	Housing efficiency review - Housing Initiatives (reversal of temporary savings item)					7		
		Local Planning and Environment							
2014/15	15	Planning: Use CIL funds for monitoring						(50)	
2014/15	16	Planning: Efficiency review					(35)		
		Total Savings	(2,984)	(841)	(314)	(479)	(154)	(1,049)	(4,618)
		Total Growth	371	45	50	327		(140)	793
		Net Savings	(2,613)	(796)	(264)	(152)	(154)	(1,189)	(3,825)

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New Growth and Savings Items Proposed by the Advisory Committees

Appendix D

Growth		Description	Year	Ongoing	Annual Impact £000	10-year Budget Impact £000
SCIA Year	No.					
Economic and Community Development						
none						
Finance and Resources						
2015/16	1	Staffing: Employers National Insurance increase from April 2016 - implications due to change in legislation	2016/17	yes	200	1,800
2015/16	2	Estates Management: loss of income following previous sale of assets	2015/16	yes	48	480
2015/17	3	Estates Management: STAG - loss of maintenance income	2015/16	yes	14	140
2015/16	4	IT: Microsoft licence price increase	2015/16	yes	45	450
2015/16	5	IT: 'COCO' compliance additional costs	2015/16	yes	32	320
2015/16	7	Treasury Management: debit and credit card fees	2015/16	yes	10	100
Housing and Community Safety						
none						
Local Planning and Environment						
2015/16	8	Parks Rural: Timberden Farm - loss of rent when sold	2015/16	yes	28	280
Strategy and Performance						
none						
Total					377	3,570

Savings		Description	Year	Ongoing	£000	£000
SCIA Year	No.					
Economic and Community Development						
none						
Finance and Resources						
2015/16	9	Finance: Business Rates Discretionary Relief	2015/16	yes	(106)	(1,060)
2015/16	10	Finance: External audit fee reduction	2015/16	3 years	(30)	(90)
2015/16	11	Dartford BC partnerships: revised split of costs	2015/16	no	(90)	(90)
2015/16	13	Property: additional income from Argyle Road office rent	2015/16	yes	(18)	(180)
2015/16	14	Revenues: Council Tax court costs	2015/16	yes	(25)	(250)
Housing and Community Safety						
2015/16	15	Youth: Youth Development efficiency savings	2015/16	yes	(10)	(100)
2015/16	16	Community Safety: Project costs to be matched by ext. funding	2015/16	yes	(5)	(50)
2015/16	17	Housing Advice: Bed and breakfast reduction	2015/16	no	(10)	(10)
2015/16	18	Housing Advice: Private Sector Letting scheme	2015/16	no	(10)	(10)
2015/16	19	Housing Standards: Disabled Facility Grants	2015/16	yes	(50)	(500)
2015/16	20a	Environmental Health: Air Quality Monitoring OR	2015/16	yes	(18)	(180)
2015/16	20b	Environmental Health: Air Quality Monitoring	2015/16	yes	(13)	(130)
Local Planning and Environment						
none						
Strategy and Performance						
none						
Total (including 20a) OR					(372)	(2,520)
Total (including 20b)					(367)	(2,470)

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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 1 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Finance Officer	Service:	All services with staff
Activity	All activities with staff	No. of Staff:	362.93 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Employers National Insurance increase from 06/04/16	-	£200,000 from 2016/17 ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

The Government has introduced a single tier pension from 2016 which will mean the abolition of 'contracting out'. To fund this change, all employees will pay A Rate National Insurance and employer National Insurance Band D contributions will increase from 10.4% to 13.8%.

Key Stakeholders Affected

None

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

All services with staff will face an increased cost to pay for the additional employers National Insurance contributions. This change will add 1.5% to the cost of staffing.

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	888	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	n/a		
Net Cost	888			

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	It is unlikely that this increase in cost would make any individual services unviable.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 2 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Corporate Support	Service:	Property & Facilities Management (FM)
Activity	Estates Management	No. of Staff:	3.65 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Rental income which not be achieved, due to disposals or vacant properties.	48	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

A review of rental income has been completed taking into account recent disposals and vacant properties. This includes 27-37 High Street, Swanley being vacant, pending disposal or redevelopment, where rental and service charge income was previously £35,066.

Capital receipts have been obtained for properties that have been disposed of.

Key Stakeholders Affected

None

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

Rental income to the Property & FM Budget will reduce by £48,000 per annum ongoing, as a consequence.

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	97	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(163)	n/a		
Net Cost	(66)	n/a		

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 reduction in income has no impact on different groups in the community.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 3 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Corporate Support	Service:	Property & Facilities Management (FM)
Activity	Estates Management	No. of Staff:	3.65 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Loss of fee income from Stag Theatre - FM Management	14	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	<p>Following the retirement of Joe Burrows from the Property Team, the work which he undertook managing the mechanical and electrical (M&E) maintenance for the Stag Theatre, can no longer be delivered. Joe had previously worked on the installation of the M&E services at the Stag and therefore had specific knowledge for which the Stag retained his services via SDC.</p> <p>Therefore, the fees of £14,000 which SDC charged the Charity which runs the Stag Theatre are no longer able to be charged.</p>
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Key Stakeholders Affected	None
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	Fees and charges income to the Property & FM Budget will reduce by £14,000 per annum from now on, as a consequence.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	Low
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	97	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(163)	n/a		
Net Cost	(66)	n/a		

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 reduction in income has no impact on different groups in the community.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 4 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Corporate Support	Service:	IT Services
Activity	Software Maintenance	No. of Staff:	12 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Microsoft Software Licence Costs	45	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

The Council purchases its Microsoft Licensing through an agreed government buying framework called the 'Public Sector Agreement 2009'. This framework agreement was negotiated between Microsoft UK, the Cabinet Office and the Office of Government Commerce (now Crown Commercial Service) in 2009.

The agreement allowed local authorities to purchase Microsoft Software Licensing through the framework at a fixed price for either 3, 4 or 5 years. This Council opted to use the 4 year fixed price model which could be extended for a further 12 months. This contract started on the 1st August 2011 and is scheduled to end on the 31st July 2015, the opportunity to exercise a 12 month extension will not be used as the new PSA14 / PSA15 agreement between Microsoft and Central Government will enable the Council to make use of new Cloud based technologies like Office 365.

The increase in price of Microsoft Licensing has been caused because of the following two reasons:

1. Prices have been locked at 2011 levels and were not linked to inflation
2. Under the PSA 2012 agreement, Sterling and Euro pricing were adjusted and owing to a weak pound meant that the cost of Microsoft Licensing within the UK substantially increased
3. Microsoft no longer offer 'per device' licensing which the Council is currently using. Device licensing at the time was slightly more expensive than 'per user' but the number of devices in use was about 40% less than the number of users on the system which made it a more affordable option.

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4. Microsoft are now providing more value added services, for example Office 365 and mobile device management as part of the core license.

Key Stakeholders Affected All users of Council IT systems

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis) Failure to account for this increase in budget will result in a net overspend on future revenue budgets.

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low) Medium

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	764	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	0	n/a		
Net Cost	764			

Equality Impacts

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
d. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	This growth item will allow frontline services to continue to operate in the same way they do at present.
e. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
f. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 5 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Corporate Support	Service:	IT Services
Activity	Code of Connection compliance	No. of Staff:	12 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
IT system security products	32	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

The IT network at Sevenoaks District Council is connected to a central government network called the 'Public Service Network' or 'PSN' for short.

The network enables the secure transfer of information between local and central government departments. The connection is heavily used by Revenues and Benefits, Electoral Registration and is frequently used by IT, Finance and Customer Services.

In order to connect to the PSN, Councils must ensure that their IT security meets Central Government requirements. The Council was already meeting many of these; however there were some areas where new systems and processes have had to be implemented. These new systems have resulted in an increased revenue cost.

Key Stakeholders Affected

All users of Council IT systems

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

Failure to account for this increased cost will result in a net overspend in future years. Not complying with Central Government requirements will result in our disconnection from the PSN and a resultant adverse impact on public services.

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

High

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	764	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	0	n/a		
Net Cost	764			

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	If this change is not implemented, the Council would be disconnected from the PSN which will result in out of date Benefits information being used which would mean that customers may not receive the amounts they are entitled to.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 7 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Finance Officer	Service:	Treasury Management
Activity	Debit and credit card fees	No. of Staff:	n/a

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Increased cost of debit and credit card transactions	10	ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

A fee is payable for each debit and credit card transaction. Use of these payment methods by council customers to pay for services continues to rise. This fee is not currently passed on to customers as we do not wish to discourage payment and it generally remains a cheaper option than paying by cash.

Key Stakeholders Affected

All customers who pay for council services.

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

No impact

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	56	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	n/a		
Net Cost	56			

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	Offering a range of payment methods reduces the likelihood of different groups being unable to pay.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 8 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Environmental & Operational Services	Service:	Parks Rural
Activity	Countryside	No. of Staff:	1

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Loss of income	28	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

Due to agreed sale of Timberden Farm, Shoreham, loss of Farm Business Tenancy rent [£10,330 p.a.] and loss of Countryside Stewardship grant [£15,000 p.a.].

Loss of income from single payments scheme for Folly Field and Riverside, Edenbridge [£3,000 p.a.].

Key Stakeholders Affected

Farm Business tenant

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

Loss of income only. Sale of Timberden farm will attract a capital receipt.

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	107	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(33)	N/A		
Net Cost	74			

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	
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		.

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 9 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Finance Officer	Service:	Misc. Finance
Activity	Business Rates – Discretionary Relief	No. of Staff:	n/a

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Business Rates – Discretionary Relief budget no longer required	(106)	ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	When the Council previously awarded 20% discretionary relief to businesses, the Council paid a proportion of it. Since the change to the business rates retention scheme, any discretionary relief awarded is charged to the Collection Fund and the Council receives its share of the total business rates collected. A separate budget for this purpose is therefore no longer required.
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Key Stakeholders Affected	None
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	None as the change in regulations has resulted in a different treatment of discretionary relief for business rates.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	Low
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	106	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	n/a		
Net Cost	106			

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	The change in regulations has resulted in a different treatment of discretionary relief for business rates. This has no impact on business rates customers.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 10 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Finance Officer	Service:	Corporate Management
Activity	External Audit fees	No. of Staff:	n/a

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
External Audit fees reduction	(30)	Until 2017/18 when a new contract is awarded

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	Grant Thornton were awarded the external audit contract for the South East England region from 2013/14 until 2017/18. This has resulted in the audit of the annual accounts being completed at a reduced cost and the cost of auditing grant claims is also reducing due to the improvements made by the Benefits Service. These reductions have been reported to the Audit Committee.
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Key Stakeholders Affected	None.
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	None.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	Low
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	130	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	n/a		
Net Cost	130			

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	No impact.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 11 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Finance Officer	Service:	Revenues, Benefits, Audit, Anti-Fraud, Environmental Health
Activity	Partnerships with Dartford Borough Council	No. of Staff:	60.26 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Revised split of partnership costs between Sevenoaks DC and Dartford BC	(90)	One-off

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	<p>As part of the agreements with Dartford BC, cost sharing arrangements are reviewed annually and revised if there is a significant change in activity levels between the partners.</p> <p>In recent years, activity levels in Benefits in particular have changed due to the demographic differences between the two authorities resulting in the number of benefit changes increasing at a greater rate in Dartford BC.</p> <p>As the economic position improves, activity levels may return to their original levels. This is why the saving is only included for one year but will be reviewed during each annual budget process.</p>
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Key Stakeholders Affected	Dartford BC
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	None.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	Low
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost*	3,058	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	n/a		
Net Cost	3,058			

*SDC contribution to the partnership hub costs.

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 saving has no impact on service levels.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 13 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Corporate Support	Service:	Property & Facilities Management (FM)
Activity	Central Offices	No. of Staff:	3.65 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Argyle Road Rental Income	(18)	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	Increased income derived from the rental of surplus capacity within the Argyle Road offices to MOAT Housing and Kent County Council.
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Key Stakeholders Affected	None
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	Rental income to the Property budget will increase by £18,000 per annum ongoing.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	Low
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	484	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(35)	n/a		
Net Cost	449	n/a		

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 increase in income has no impact on different groups in the community.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 14 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Finance Officer	Service:	Revenues
Activity	Revenues Court Costs	No. of Staff:	n/a

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Increased Revenues Court costs income	(25)	ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	In recent years an increased number of summonses have been issued due to non-payment of Council Tax and Business Rates. Resources within the Revenues Service have been moved to increase the recovery function and the costs are a legitimate charge to cover the work required to recover this income.
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Key Stakeholders Affected	This additional income is due to an increase in volume, not an increased charge so there is no additional impact on stakeholders.
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	This change takes into account current volumes, which may change over time and impact on the ability to collect the total amount.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	Medium
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	999	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(276)	n/a		
Net Cost	723			

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	Residents who do not pay their Council Tax are liable to be taken to court if officers consider it to be the correct course of action. This SCIA does not change the current situation.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 15 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Officer Communities & Business	Service:	Community Safety
Activity	Youth	No. of Staff:	0.1 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Wages – basic pay (a)	(2)	Ongoing
Efficiency savings (b & c)	(8)	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

- (a) As the Youth Zone programme is now delivered in partnership with the voluntary sector we have a reduced need for casual staff.

- (b) A significant amount of Safeguarding training has been completed this year and a reduced budget will be sufficient to top up training in future years.

- (c) Following reductions in Youth Development staff some years ago we have found other ways to undertake major events and now work with other providers and partners to deliver such events which means we have been able to make savings in previous years.

Key Stakeholders Affected

No negative effect

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

No negative effect

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	48	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	Youth Development forms part of Strategic Plans such as the Community Safety Strategy, Health Improvement Plan, Community Plan and Economic Development Plan.		
Net Cost	48			

Equality Impacts

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
d. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	No impact on service provision.
e. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
f. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		n/a

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 16 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Officer Communities & Business	Service:	Community Safety
Activity	Community Safety	No. of Staff:	3.3 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Equipment and Materials	(5)	ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

This saving will come from a reduction in project costs, including printed information following greater emphasis on website and e-communication, and graffiti removal materials, following reduction in graffiti.

Wherever possible, external funding is applied for to ensure that projects continue to be delivered.

Key Stakeholders Affected

There should be no adverse effect on services.

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

These savings are achievable without adverse impacts because of the reduction in printing and paper costs associated with projects and publicity, together with a reduction in graffiti removal materials that are associated with the reduction in reports of graffiti.

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	179	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	LPICD001: Percentage of Community Safety Partnership actions achieved	98%	85%
Net Cost	179			

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	No impact on service provision.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 17 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Housing Officer	Service:	Housing Advice
Activity	Bed and Breakfast	No. of Staff:	1.7 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
B&B savings for one year 2015/16	(10)	This will be a one off to be reviewed again next year

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

£10,000 savings has been identified for 2015/16 as successful proactive schemes to avoid homelessness have removed the need for B&B except for emergencies. This is a one year saving as we need to see the impact of the welfare reform and universal credit going forward.

Key Stakeholders Affected

Homeless people

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

There is no risk to homeless households because if the need for B&B drastically increased we will use some external funding.

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	121	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(25)	LPIHSA004: No. of households living in B&B	1	20
Net Cost	96			

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	The client group are vulnerable due to the fact they are homeless. The Council has been successful in avoiding evictions and drastically reducing the need for B&B except in emergencies. B&B is not the best type of temporary accommodation for homeless people. This will be reviewed next year.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		By being proactive to avoid evictions and to make available more suitable alternatives.

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 18 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Housing Officer	Service:	Housing Advice
Activity	Private Sector Letting Scheme	No. of Staff:	6.22 fte

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Private Sector Letting (PSL)	(10)	To reduce budget for one year 15/16 and then review.

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	<p>The PSL scheme is very successful and assists with rent in advance and deposit bonds to enable people to rent in the private sector.</p> <p>The PSL Officer has been successful in recovering costs and where appropriate we have maximised Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to pay for this, with the result that the budget is able to make a saving for one year. This will not be permanent but will be reviewed again next year to see the effect of Welfare Reform and Universal Credit.</p>
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Key Stakeholders Affected	Homeless people
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	No adverse impact due to DHP and external funding available if necessary to top up the reduced budget.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	Low
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	464	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(17)	-		
Net Cost	447			

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 does not reduce the availability of the PSL scheme. This will be reviewed after one year to determine if there is any greater need due to Welfare Reform and Universal Credit.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		Reviewing the situation and maximising DHP where appropriate and topping up with external funding for a short period if needed.

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 19 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Chief Housing Officer	Service:	Housing Standards
Activity	Disabled Facility Grants (DFG)	No. of Staff:	n/a

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Reduced revenue contribution to capital budgets	(50)	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service

The DFG service was brought in house in December 2013 and there have been underspends in recent years. In addition, we have received increased funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and this has created underspends on the SDC portion of the budget. It is therefore the view that the service can be sustained with a £50,000 capital saving on going.

WKHA ring fenced DFG funding remains the same.

Key Stakeholders Affected

Older and disabled people

Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)

No adverse impacts on the service as this underspend has occurred over the last couple of years. Although we will promote the service there will be sufficient budget to meet the need.

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	517	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	(410)	LPIHSS001: No. of DFG's approved.	19	20
Net Cost	107			

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	The budget for DFGs is for older and or disabled people and has been underspent in recent years. Increased funding is being received from DCLG, therefore the client group will not be affected with this saving. The service will be promoted but there will still be sufficient funding to meet the need.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		A review of the DFG service is being undertaken and the pilot of running it in house will now be extended until June 2015 (as there have been staffing vacancies).

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA 20 (15/16)

Chief Officer:	Environmental & Operational Services	Service:	Environmental Health
Activity	Air Quality Monitoring	No. of Staff:	n/a

Activity Budget Change	2015/16 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Reduced use of Consultants and outside contractors	(a) (18) or (b) (13)	Ongoing

Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service	Recommendation by the Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee to reduce the budget to £40,000 p.a. [a saving of £18,000 p.a.] or £45,000 p.a. [a saving of £13,000 p.a. to reflect actual current spend on air quality monitoring over the last 3 years]
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Key Stakeholders Affected	District wide service
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Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)	Routine statutory responsibilities should not be effected, but if exceedances of pollutants are recorded following an updating and screening assessment and through routine monitoring and it is necessary to appoint consultants to undertake a detailed assessment leading to the declaration of an air quality management area, the budget maybe exceeded in that year.
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Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)	M
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SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2014/15 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	58	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	0	N/A		
Net Cost	58			

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	
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

Item 6 – Economic Development Strategy

The attached report was considered by the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee, relevant minute extract below:

Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee – 21 October 2014 (Minute 23)

The Chief Officer Communities and Business presented the revised final draft of the three year Economic Development Strategy and three year Action Plan (2015-2018), following the public consultation period. Members were advised that the current document would be redesigned for the final version. The action plan had focused targets and measures to achieve the targets set. The Committee was advised that Appendix B was the summary of public comments with the Council's response which, on occasions, resulted in a change being made to the document. A response from Sevenoaks Town Council, Riverhead Parish Council and National Farmers Union was tabled.

It was discussed whether further investigation could be taken forward with the inclusion of Bat and Ball and Enysford train stations in the Zone 6 proposals relating to Swanley. Concerns were raised that it could have an impact on the Darent Valley Villages including additional parking problems and that it could seem as if the villages were part of a London Borough. Members discussed whether there would be any additional benefits of the inclusion but agreed that Swanley should be part of it as there was already some Zone 6 benefits in place. Members were advised that at Swanley and Dartford stations there was a change to contactless payments but it was unknown if this would include the Oyster card and Zone 6.

Members' attention was brought to the comments made regarding attracting retailers to the area and were advised that the Council could not control retailers that came into the area. A Member expressed concern that there should be greater support for planning and that businesses could find it hard to set up in rural areas due to listed buildings and conservation sites which prevented businesses starting up.

A Member queried why Broadband was not listed on aim 3.6. Members were advised that '21 Century Connectivity' included Broadband but the wording could be amended to read 'Broadband and other 21 Century connectivity'. Members agreed it had been a good consultation process and that issues had been identified. It was queried what resources could be put into obtaining funding. In response, the Chief Officer Communities and Business informed Members that there would be a change in structure and that a Head of Service was being recruited for a merge of the Economic Development and Property teams to ensure that funding was secured and to encourage future investment.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for their diligence and quality of work for the document.

Agenda Item 6

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: **That it be recommended to Cabinet** that subject to the comments and views made above the final draft of the Economic and Development Strategy and Action Plan, be approved.

Note: The additional papers tabled at the meeting are attached.

DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Cabinet 11 December 2014

Report of	Chief Officer Communities and Business
Status:	For consideration
Also considered by:	Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee - 21 October 2014 (this report is not identical)
Key Decision:	No

Executive Summary:

This report asks Members to consider the final draft of the three year Economic Development Strategy and three year Action Plan (2015-2018), following the public consultation period in August and September 2014.

This report supports the Key Aim of the Community Plan's Dynamic & Sustainable Economy priorities and the District Council's Corporate Plan

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Hogarth

Contact Officer(s) Lesley Bowles Ext 7335

Recommendation to Cabinet

Members are asked to approve the final draft of the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan

***Comments made by the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee (see referenced minute at front of this report) and consultations have been included within the attached final draft of the Strategy and Action Plan**

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Sevenoaks District Community Plan makes a commitment to a thriving local economy where businesses flourish, where people have the skills for employment and where tourism is supported. The Community Plan also commits to a sustainable economy where people can live, work and travel more easily and are empowered to shape their communities. One of the Council's five promises in the Corporate Plan is to support and develop the local economy.
- 2 The Council's Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan will help us to prioritise our ambitions and provide support for our local economy. Officers and

Agenda Item 6

Members have held consultation workshops with interested groups including Town and Parish Councils, town partnerships, business support and inward investment organisations, rural support groups, businesses, tourism businesses, young people and Council officers engaged in associated work.

- 3 Members were invited to consultation workshops and the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee held its own workshop. Businesses were also consulted by way of a survey which was e-mailed to them and publicised in the Council's e-publication 'real Business'.

Changes as a result of Consultations

- 4 The results of the consultation were used to inform a draft consultation strategy. The draft strategy was circulated to all groups, businesses, partners and Members who took part in the consultation. This gave further opportunity to make suggestions for amendments or additions to the draft strategy and action plan.
- 5 Changes requested by the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee have also been reflected in the final document. Further detail has been added with regard to the impact of Bat and Ball and Enysford train stations considered within Zone 6 proposals for Swanley. Further detail has also been added to "21 Century Connectivity" and "Broadband".
- 6 From consultation comments, sections relating to the rural economy and tourism have been expanded to reflect the significant contribution these make to the District's overall economy.
- 7 The final draft Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan draft takes into account the changes made as result of the responses received during the public consultation and follow up feedback. It is set out at Appendix A.
- 8 A summary of all the public consultation responses received, additional feedback and a list of changes made to the draft Strategy and Action Plan are set out at Appendix B.

Conclusions

- 9 Cabinet are asked to approve the final draft of the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan which incorporates changes requested Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee and consultations.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications associated with this report. Work identified in the Economic Development Strategy Action Plan will be funded within existing Council resources or from external funding where this can be obtained.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Equality Impacts

A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the Strategy.

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	As part of the consultation process for the development of the Strategy and Action Plan, different community groups were consulted to ensure the consultation was inclusive.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	This Strategy represents the economy of this District as a whole and promotes equality across the District.
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A	

Sustainability Checklist

A sustainability checklist have been completed.

Appendices

Final Draft Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan - Appendix A

Summary of Public consultation responses received - Appendix B

Background Papers:

South East LEP Growth Deal and Strategic Economic Plan

Results of consultations

West Kent Priorities for Growth

Lesley Bowles

Chief Officer Communities and Business

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Sevenoaks District Council: Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan

Page 75

Agenda Item 6

Foreword

Sevenoaks District offers both exciting opportunities and interesting challenges in terms of its economy. With strong retail offers, a highly skilled workforce and unrivalled connectivity; the District can look forward to a prosperous and bright future. We continued to perform excellently throughout the recession, with town centre vacancies some of the lowest in the country and business survival rates continuing to be higher than the county and national averages. We continue to attract strong inward investment and ensure that the most innovative and exciting companies stay here in Sevenoaks District.

Despite the success of the local economy, this is no time to rest on our laurels. As a council we are proud of being proactive with our businesses. One of our biggest challenges is retaining land in employment use at a time when residential values are compelling for potential developers. This strategy aims to support business, attract inward investment and growth and provide more innovation and employment opportunities. We want to continue to make this a great place to live, do business and prosper.

Signature

Cllr Roddy Hogarth

Portfolio Holder for Economic Development

Contents

Section		Page
1	Introduction	
	About Sevenoaks District	5
	The Economy	8
	National Policy Context	16
	Regional and Local Context	17
	Strategic Objectives	
	Inward Investment	18
	Skills and Support	21
	Transport and Infrastructure	24
	Energy and Sustainability	27
	Places for Growth and Improvement	29
	Rural Economy	34
	Tourism	37
3	Economic Development Action Plan	42

Page 77

Introduction

This document sets out the major priorities for economic development in the District over the next three year period (2014-2017). Sevenoaks District Council is committed to developing the local economy and securing future jobs and growth. The document sets out 6 key priorities which support the vision set out in the Sevenoaks District Council Corporate Plan and the Sevenoaks District Council Community Plan. Specifically, it supports *Promise 5* in the Corporate Plan which is 'Supporting and developing the local economy'. It also supports the 'Dynamic Economy' and 'Sustainable Economy' priorities in the Community Plan.

We have consulted widely with the business community and partners to shape the content of this Consultation Draft strategy. We have tried to capture the concerns and aspirations of those businesses, communities and others already consulted.

The key priorities and draft action plan is available to view on page 23. We are now asking for your comments, suggestions and any additional information, priority locations or actions you would like to put forward.

Who have we consulted?

The following groups have been consulted in the preparation of this document:

- Businesses through a District-wide questionnaire.
- Business Support organisations
- Inward investment organisations
- Tourism groups and businesses
- Rural support groups, businesses and landowners
- Sevenoaks District Council Members
- Town Partnerships
- Town and Parish Councils
- Sevenoaks District Council officers engaged in Planning, Property and Housing and Business Rates
- Young people at the Youth Café at Stag Community Arts Centre, Edenbridge House Project and students at Hextable School

About Sevenoaks District

Sevenoaks is a large District lying to the south east of London with an overall area of just over 143 square miles (370 square km). It is long and relatively narrow measuring 20 miles north-south by about 7 miles east-west. The Thames Gateway lies to the north, Surrey and East Sussex to the west and south and the rest of Kent, including Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells to the east and south east.

Despite adjoining the outer edge of London it is predominantly rural with 93% of the District designated as Green Belt. The quality of the landscape is a distinctive feature of the area. The national significance of the landscape is recognised by the inclusion of 60% of the District within either the Kent Downs (to the North) or High Weald (to the South) Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are also extensive areas recognised for their nature conservation importance. It is rare to find such extensive areas of high quality landscape so close to London. This uniqueness makes Sevenoaks District one of the most desirable places to live and work in the Country. Development to accommodate growth has to be balanced against protecting the landscape.

The District has a thriving business community and strong foundations in place for future economic growth. The resident workforce is very highly skilled, with nearly 50% of the resident population educated to degree level or above. There is a culture of entrepreneurialism; we have a very small number of larger employers. The vast majority of businesses are what are called 'microbusinesses' which have 5 employees or less. We also have some of the highest levels of homeworking, self-employment and home-based businesses in the County.

Our highly skilled local population is reflected in our large finance sector and continually growing businesses in the 'knowledge economy'. These firms and others are brilliantly placed to access the powerhouse of the finance industry, the City of London, often in less than 40 minutes.

Locating in Sevenoaks District gives them distinct advantage of far lower overheads, cheaper business rates and access to a highly skilled, yet competitively priced workforce.

Even during a time of fiscal conservatism, the District's main urban settlements have continued to attract strong inward investment. The land West of Bligh's in Sevenoaks Town Centre is being redeveloped by Marks and Spencer. Late in 2014 a new supermarket store and apartments will be completed. Swanley Town Centre has made a remarkable recovery since the recession, with a number of new high street brands opening in the shopping centre. Edenbridge Town Centre is awaiting the start of construction on a brand new Sainsbury's store and recently welcomed Waitrose to the town. In the large modern village of New Ash Green there is an opportunity to regenerate or redevelop the central business and shopping area to redress the problems stemming from its outdated 1960s design.

The District has an important tourism offer and historic and cultural legacy with 17 nationally designated historic parks and gardens including Knole House and Park. Sevenoaks has a number of historic houses including Penshurst Place, Hever Castle and Lullingstone Roman Villa. The District features a substantial legacy of historic towns and villages, with 40 Conservation Areas, 2,112 listed buildings and 23 scheduled ancient monuments. We hosted the Paralympic Games 2012 at Brands Hatch which boosted our profile even further. This legacy acts as an important base for our burgeoning tourist industry which is worth over £232 million a year, and is continuing to grow.

The rural economy plays a large part in the economic success of the District with over half of the population living in the 40 or so villages and hamlets around the District. The success of the West Kent Leader Programme highlights the strength of our rural business offer. The recent investment in Westerham by the Westerham Brewery and Squerryes Estate are examples of the strength of this sector.



The Economy



Page 81

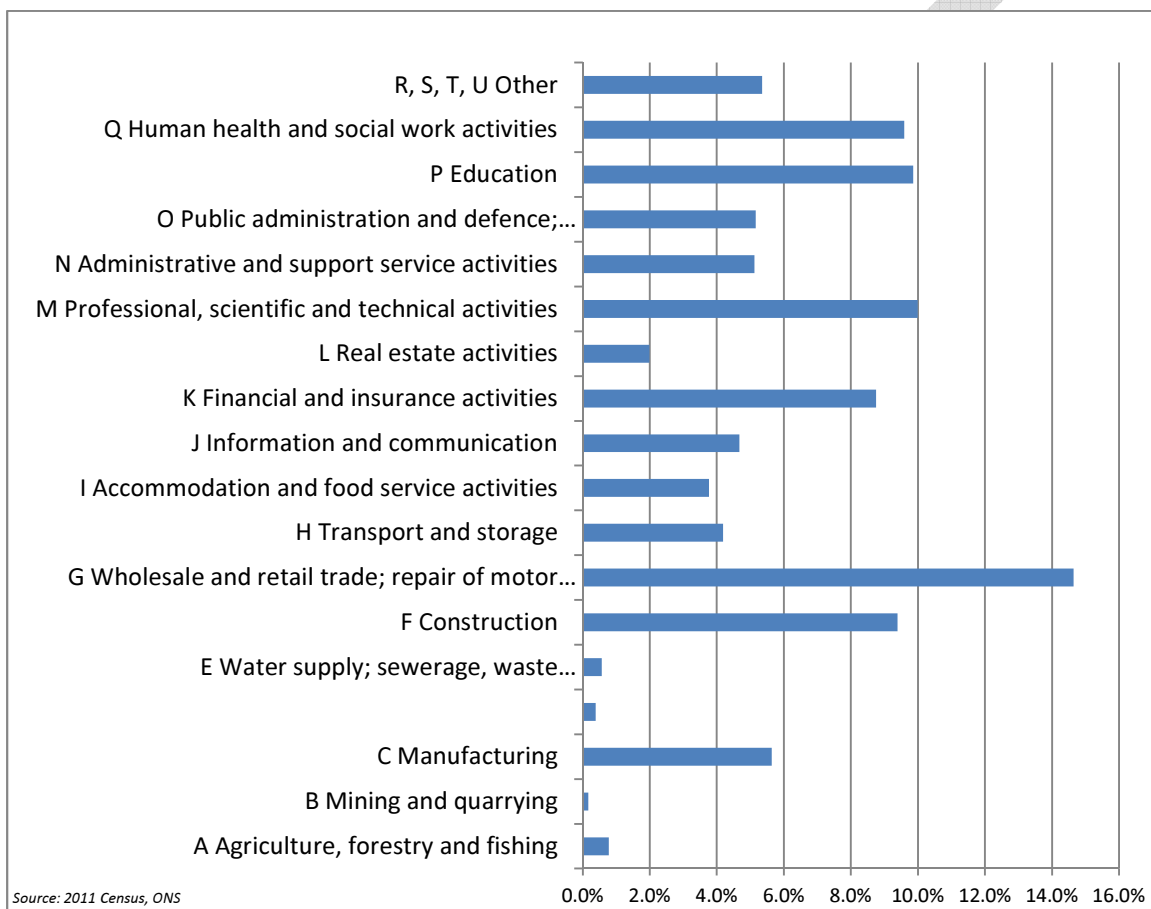
Agenda Item 6



The Economy

The economy in Sevenoaks is broadly based. There are no dominant sectors or large employers that substantially skew the balance of employment. The District has low public sector dependency.

Figure 1: Employment by industry

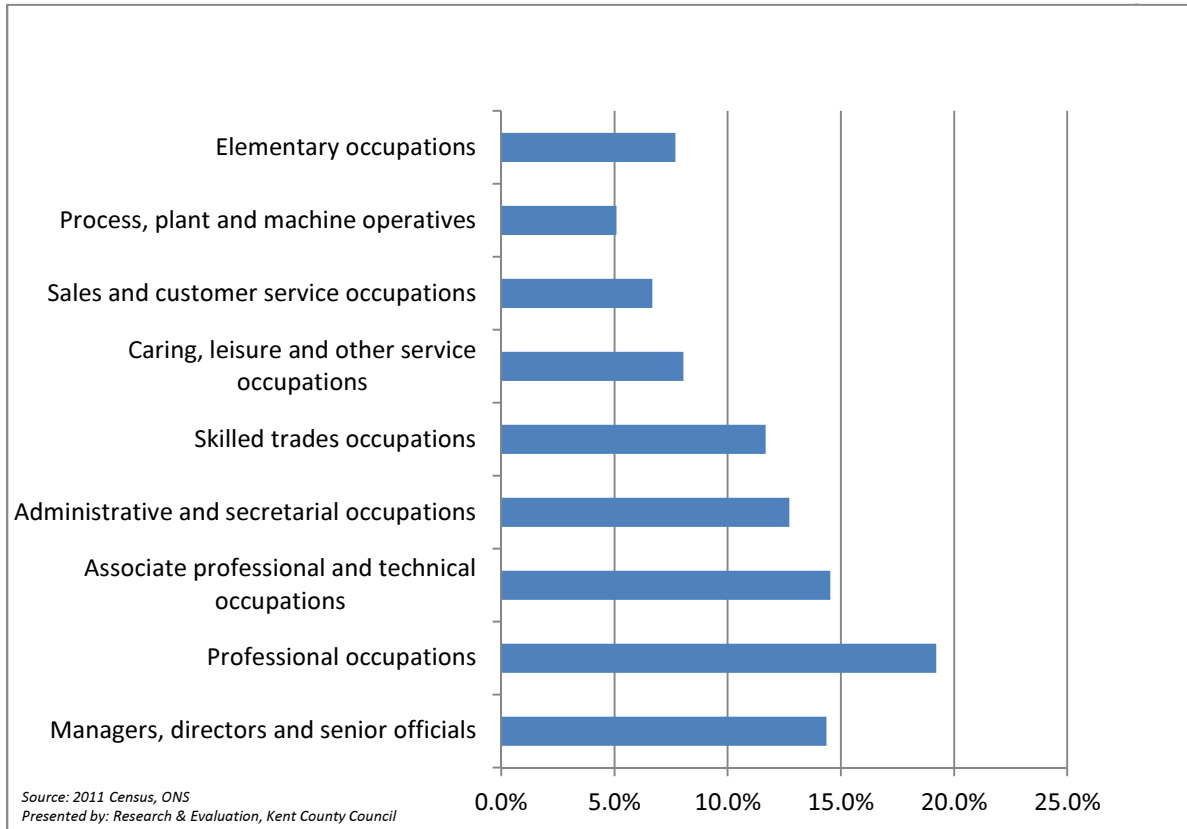


The District has a large 'knowledge economy' with around 7,500 jobs in 2010. Sevenoaks has one of the highest concentrations of jobs in knowledge rich sectors in Kent. Using Kent County Council's definition of the knowledge economy it is evident that the majority of these are in scientific research and development, most of which are likely to be linked to operations at Fort Halstead.

There are also notable concentrations of employment in head office and management consultancy activities (800), legal and accounting services (700), architectural and engineering activities (700), activities auxiliary to financial services and insurance activities (600) and computer programming and related activities (500).

Such employment tends to be focused in smaller sized organisations. In 2008 around 40% of knowledge economy jobs were in businesses of 1 to 10 employees and a further 20% were in businesses of 11 to 49 employees. There were only around 20 knowledge economy businesses with 50 employees and over in the District.

Figure 2: Employment by occupation



The District is not dominated by large employers; 87% of businesses employ less than 10 people. Businesses employing 50 or more staff only account for 2% of the total businesses in the District. This is further reflected in the very high percentage of home-based workers, home-based businesses and self-employed people we have in the District.

Workforce (Economically Active population)

Economic activity relates to a person who was aged 16-74 and working, looking for work or not working at all at the time of the 2011 Census. Those who are economically active include, employees (both full and part time), the self employed, full-time students and the unemployed. Those who are economically inactive include, a person looking for work but not able to start within two weeks, as well as anyone not looking for work or unable to work such as people who are retired, looking after home/family or disabled.

Sevenoaks District has a current economic activity rate of 71.5%. This is above the county average of 69.9% and the national average of 69.7%. However Sevenoaks will see a 6.4% decline in the resident workforce up to 2030.

Earnings

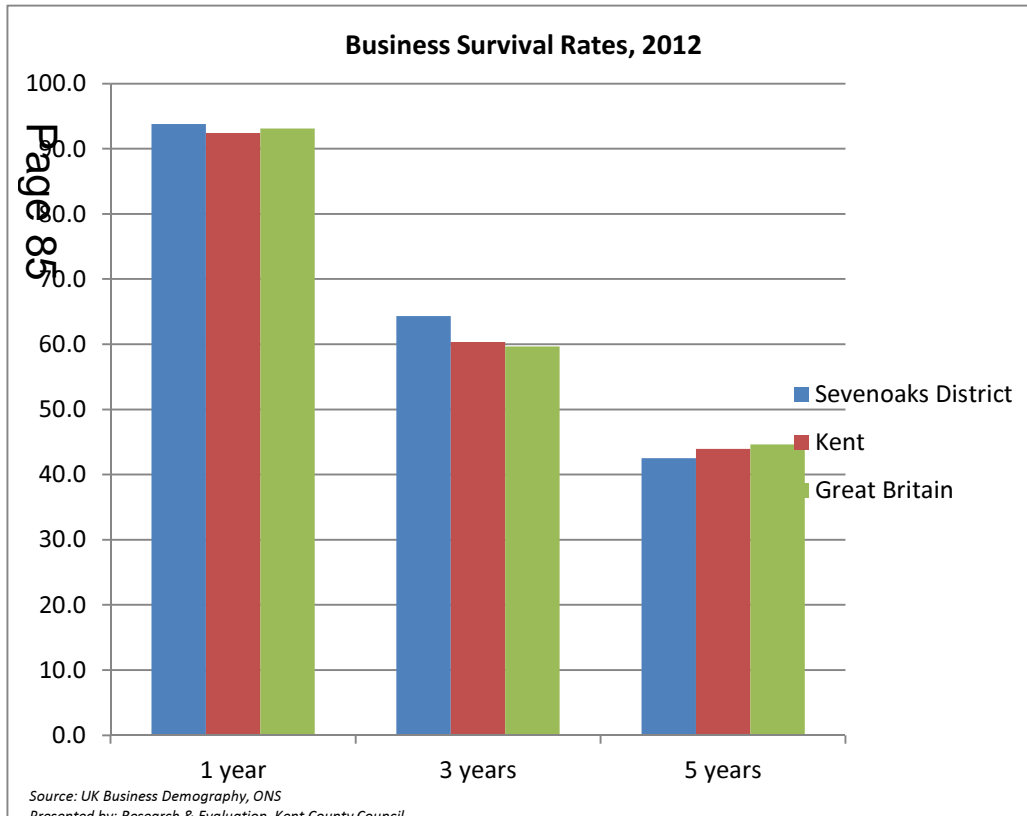
Average earnings for those resident in the District are typically far higher than the County and national average. Median weekly full-time earnings in the district are £690.70, compared with £610.40 in Kent and £558.80 in Great Britain. This translates to high local spend potential and undoubtedly has a positive impact upon our high streets and cultural attractions. The median workforce earnings show a similar trend. Median full-time earnings in the District are £602.00, compared with £542.70 in Kent and £558.30 in Great Britain. Median workforce earnings are slightly higher, reflecting the highly skilled nature of the resident workforce.

There is a significant disparity between the resident earnings and workplace earnings in the District. The likely reason for this is the high level of out commuting that the District experiences, with median earnings in London significantly higher than in Kent.

Business Survival Rates

Business survival rates in Sevenoaks in Year 1 and Year 3 are above the County and national average. Survival rates are below the County and national average for Year 5. This indicates that although businesses find it easy to start up and survive within the District in the first instance, they are slightly less likely to sustain this than average.

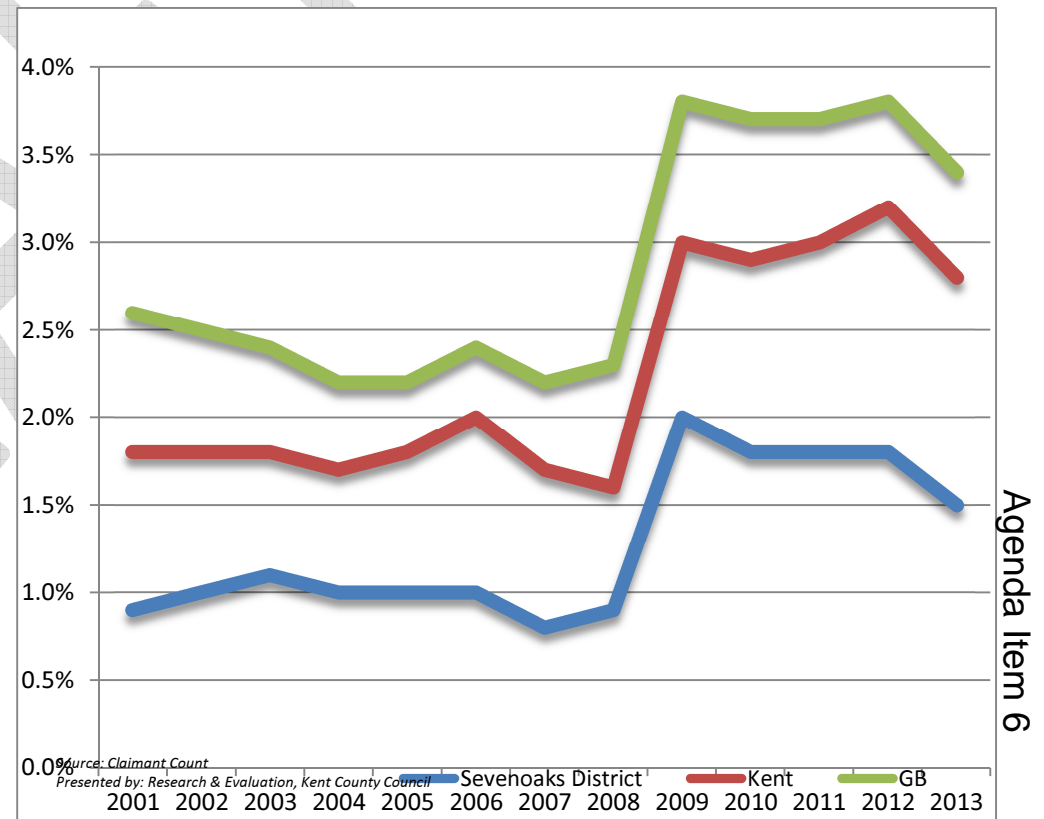
Figure 3- Business Survival Rate, 2012



Unemployment

Unemployment is typically low in most parts of the District. The average rate of unemployment has consistently stayed below the regional and national averages, even during the 2008 recession. The District has pockets of unemployment which are above the regional averages; these are found in Swanley and Edenbridge.

Figure 4- Annual Average Unemployment Rate- 2001-2013



Economic Output (Gross Value Added)

Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure of economic output. It is primarily used to monitor the performance of the national economy and is now the measure preferred by the Office for National Statistics to measure the economic wellbeing of an area. GVA and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are not the same. GVA measures the economy excluding tax and subsidies.

Sevenoaks District has a GVA of (£mil) 2,090; this is the 6th largest in the County. The GVA per head is also the 6th largest in the County at 18, 112.

We must exercise caution with these estimates for a number of reasons. Firstly, national statistics are not available for District GVA. It is an approximation based on the total GVA for Kent. This can be misleading as the estimate is based on the number of employees, rather than actual productivity. Secondly the estimate excludes the self-employed. We have one of the highest self-employed workforces in Kent. Thirdly the GVA per head figure is grossly affected by out-commuting. A high proportion of our residents commute to London each day.

Connectivity

The connectivity in Sevenoaks District is often seen as one of its most appealing traits for the commercial sector. There are excellent transport links to London, Europe and the Thames Gateway via rail, air and road. There is also easy access to a number of major roads which cross the District including the M25, M26, M20, A25, A20 and A21. The rail services are excellent, with services to London, Kent/Sussex coasts, Redhill, Uckfield and East Croydon.

Thameslink trains run from Sevenoaks and Swanley into central London and beyond with connections to Luton Airport and Bedford. International destinations are closer than ever via Ebbsfleet International Station. The main priority airports are easily accessible and the Port of Dover is just over an hour away. The Medway Valley Line offers fast services to London, Medway Towns and Ebbsfleet International Station.

Large areas of the District have been part of the countrywide expansion of the 4G service for mobile communications. Broadband is one of the top issues for businesses throughout the District.

There has already been significant investment in this area through the BDUK project led by KCC, independent providers and community based projects. However broadband speeds are still substandard in some parts of the District and this must be addressed. This form of connectivity is vital to the ongoing growth of the rural economy and will continue to be a priority.



Economic Strengths

The economy continues to perform strongly in the face of increasing economic uncertainty and pressure:

- There are strong levels of **inward investment** such as Blighs (Sevenoaks) and the West Kent Cold Store (Dunton Green). We host some of the most exciting companies in Europe and the rest of the world such as BT, Siemens Nixdorf, QinetiQ and Marks and Spencer.
- Sevenoaks District has **exceptional connectivity**. There is excellent access to London (London Bridge, Waterloo, Charing Cross, London Victoria and Blackfriars) from any of the major towns in the District (Sevenoaks: 25 minutes, Swanley: 26 minutes and Edenbridge: 40 minutes). The District also benefits from access to London provided by the Thameslink and links to London and international destinations provided by Ebbsfleet International station. The Medway Valley Line offers fast services to London, Medway Towns and Ebbsfleet International Station. All of the major airports in the south east (Gatwick, Heathrow, Stansted and London City) are easily accessible by rail or car. Road access is exceptionally good with strong links to the M25, M26, M20, A25, A20 and A21. Access to Europe is easy with the Port of Dover a short distance away.
- Sevenoaks District has a strong base of **very high skilled** workers. Nearly 50% of workers in the area have qualifications at NVQ4 and higher level. This is far above the UK and South East average.
- There are a number of **key sectors** with strong growth potential such as: Tourism, Financial Services and Professional Scientific and Technical
- **Unique landscapes and scenery** which attract people from all over the world.
- Superb **cultural and leisure** facilities.
- The District has a **very high quality of life**. Sevenoaks is consistently named as one of the top places to live in the UK, combining beautiful countryside with a host of cultural attractions.
- The **tourism industry** continues to grow strongly year upon year. It is now worth over £230 million annually and continues to go from strength to strength.
- Resilient and **entrepreneurial** culture. Our business survival rates in Year 1 and Year 3 are better than the UK and County average. We have some of the highest levels of **self-employment** in the County.
- Robust **retail offering**. Sevenoaks, Westerham, Swanley and Edenbridge have some of the lowest retail vacancy rates in the County, offering an eclectic mix of independent shops and high street brands.

Key Challenges

The local economy faces a number of challenges that need to be addressed in order to facilitate further growth:

- Swanley Town Centre has seen some incremental improvements since the recession, however there are still areas in the town centre which could be improved and regenerated. **Bevan Place and the Meeting Point** are key strategic sites for regeneration.
- New Ash Green Village Centre struggles to provide the services and amenity that residents now require. **Regeneration** of this area is a key strategic priority for the Council.
- **Fort Halstead** is a major developed site within the green belt. The current occupier is DSTL, who have announced that they will be leaving the site in 2018. This one of the largest employment sites in West Kent and as such, needs strong commercial development.
- **Bat and Ball and the BT Exchange** have been identified as potential regeneration sites within Sevenoaks town. The future development of these sites will play a vital role in the prosperity of the town in years to come.
- Loss of **employment land to residential**
- Supporting growth in our burgeoning **tourism industry** through increased marketing and the availability of suitable accommodation for tourists.
- Making sure **broadband speeds** are superfast in rural areas of the District.
- **Graduate retention** is falling and higher level skilled staff are being lost to London due to out-commuting.
- We should ensure that we continue to have the best transport links to London. Enabling Swanley to be included as a in Transport for London's travel zone and making it Oyster card ready and investigating the inclusion of Bat and Ball and Eynsford in the Transport for London's travel zone could kick start regeneration and further improve connectivity.
- A high proportion of residents in the District have a high level of skills and qualifications, however, there is still a small proportion that **lack skills** and **work readiness**.
- Apparent affluence masks pockets **of deprivation** where there can also be low levels of educational attainment.

National Policy Context

The vast majority of public funding to support the local economy and employment is channelled through various national, regional and sub-regional agencies. The government has introduced a series of policy initiatives and legislative changes designed to assist economic growth. The main channels for stimulating economic growth are:

Localism Act

The Localism Act aims to give more power to local authorities and communities to influence planning and housing decisions. In particular, the Community Right to Bid could potentially foster a spirit of entrepreneurialism in local communities. Another important aspect of this act is Neighbourhood Planning, allowing communities the opportunity to get the right type of development for their community.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

In 2010 the government decided to abolish the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and replace them with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). LEPs are private/public sector partnerships that have a clear remit to drive sustainable private sector led growth. Sevenoaks is part of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), which consists of Kent, Essex and East Sussex. The Lord Heseltine review 'No Stone Unturned' in 2013 encouraged the government to devolve further powers and funds to LEPs so that they can drive economic growth. The

SELEP has developed a strategic growth plan which includes two major growth areas in the District, Fort Halstead and Swanley.

Our submission to the LEP included a number of other areas for growth which they have not currently accepted into their plans but that we think is vital to the further regeneration and prosperity of the District. They are listed as priorities later in this document

Growing Places Fund

The Growing Places fund is designed to improve local funds in order to unlock growth on specific development sites, infrastructure projects and stimulate economic growth.

Regional Growth Fund

The £1.4 billion Regional Growth Fund has been developed to support the creation of more private sector jobs. Currently, businesses in Sevenoaks are able to access the £5.5 million Escalate fund. Escalate is designed for high growth businesses in the Sevenoaks District and other Districts along the A21 corridor.

Regional and Local Context

At the District and sub-regional level there are a number of plans that either link or support delivery of our economic priorities.

Unlocking Kent's Potential

Unlocking Kent's Potential sets out Kent County Council's overarching vision for how the County should look in the next 10 years. It assesses the major opportunities and challenges facing the County.

West Kent Priorities for Growth

The WKP for Growth is a strategy developed by the West Kent Partnership which is an economic partnership of Sevenoaks District Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The strategy sets out a proactive and strategic approach to the future investment needed to support the West Kent economy now and in the future.

Sevenoaks District Council Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was adopted by full council in February 2011. It sets out the vision and policies for future development in the District up to 2026. The core strategy sets the general approach to the scale and location of development. It does not deal with specific development sites, nor does it deal with the most detailed policy issues which are considered by the Allocations and Development Management Plan. The Core Strategy will soon

be reviewed to bring it in line with current government guidance and the ADMP.

Sevenoaks District Council Draft Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)

The ADMP allocates specific sites for development such as housing and employment land. The examination hearing sessions considering the soundness of the plan have recently closed. If found sound, the Council will be able to adopt the plan.

Sevenoaks District Council Corporate Plan

The Corporate plan sets out the Council's vision up to 2015. It commits to 5 promises in the coming years which are to provide value for money, to work in partnership to keep the District of Sevenoaks safe, to collect rubbish efficiently and effectively, to protect the green belt and to support and develop the local economy. The overriding vision for Sevenoaks District is "to sustain and develop a fair, safe and thriving economy".

Community Plan

The Economic Development Strategy has been developed to complement the Sevenoaks District Community Plan. The Community Plan sets the long term vision for Sevenoaks District and encompasses the community's priorities for action. This vision already includes a number of priorities related to economic growth and employment. The document is a 15 year vision which is the result of widespread consultation with the community.

Strategic Objective 1: Inward Investment

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Inward Investment

The core aim of any Economic Development strategy is to deliver projects and actions which facilitate business growth, expansion, inward investment and an atmosphere of entrepreneurialism.

It means that we have to ensure that businesses already located here are sufficiently supported in being able to grow. The Sevenoaks Business Demand Survey, compiled by URS in September 2013 has given us a robust evidence base for understanding the needs of businesses in the future. The following results give us a strong steer for our future objectives:

- The top issue affecting businesses surveyed was the 'building or site size'.
- The majority of respondents to the survey expect the market to grow gradually over the next five years.
- For businesses intending to move, the most popular reason is that they are ready to expand and need larger premises. Furthermore, the majority of businesses intending to move required larger office space.
- 87% of those businesses planning to move premises want to stay within Sevenoaks District. This is a 23% increase since the last telephone business survey in 2005.

It is clear that businesses want to stay within the District, and are anticipating strong growth in the future. It is vital that the size and quality of office space is developed to ensure that these businesses stay here.

Our own consultations corroborated the findings from the business survey and identified additional need for employment space that is required. Start up business units or a 'business hub' was frequently mentioned throughout the consultations. It was felt that there is a lack of space for people starting a business who might need flexibility with their working arrangements until they are able to grow their business and move into a longer term lease on a property. This is a need which has also been identified in the West Kent growth strategy. Additional units or hubs would help engender a stronger sense of entrepreneurialism and ensure that more businesses develop and grow in the District.

A recent report compiled by Locate in Kent confirmed that there is significantly less commercial property to choose from in Sevenoaks District in comparison with the rest of West Kent and the County.

The Council's pro-business attitude has led to significant amounts of inward investment such as the recent Marks and Spencer's development in Blighs in Sevenoaks town. A number of innovative multinational companies have chosen to locate and invest in the District such as BT, Siemens Nixdorf and Bayerngas. As well as growing businesses already located here, we want to ensure that the District continues to attract strong investment and the most exciting businesses.

We cannot achieve significant economic growth in the District without enforcing strict protections on our current employment land. Current land values mean that it is more profitable for developers to build housing than good quality commercial premises. Our planning policy stipulates that we will protect employment land where there is a market for it now or there is likely to be one in the future. This is vital if we are to attract and keep businesses in the District.

The following aims will be progressed by the Council and its partners in order to achieve this ambition:

- **Aim 1.1 Market Sevenoaks District as a place to invest and grow**
- **Aim 1.2 Encourage viable and vibrant town centres through a range of partnerships**
- **Aim 1.3 Maintain and protect employment land and commercial premises**
- **Aim 1.4 Work with QinetiQ to develop an engineering cluster and training opportunity**

Strategic Objective 2: Skills and Support

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Skills and Support

Sevenoaks has a very highly educated and skilled population. A large proportion of young residents are who are educated outside the District in some of the highest achieving schools in the country. The District has a higher proportion of individuals with NVQ4 and NVQ3 and above equivalent qualifications compared to the South East (41.9% in Sevenoaks District compared to 36.2% in the South East and 32.9% in Great Britain). The District has a higher proportion of individuals with NVQ3 and above equivalent qualifications (62.7% in Sevenoaks compared to 56.7% in the South East and 52.7% in Great Britain).

We also have a high proportion of residents with very low qualifications. The proportion of individuals in Sevenoaks District with no qualifications is higher than for the South East as a whole, but lower than Great Britain (11.1% in Sevenoaks District compared to 9.1% in the South East and 12.3% in Great Britain). Evidence of low skills has been corroborated by a number of local businesses who have had to appoint workers from outside the District due to a skills shortage at the local level. A common theme throughout the whole consultative process is that businesses struggle to find trainee staff with a work-ready attitude.

With local housing being amongst the most expensive in the UK, both in the owner-occupier and private rented sectors, more affordable housing is key to keeping younger and other economically-active groups as part of the District's workforce.

Studies have consistently shown an out-migration of those groups in search of cheaper housing elsewhere. All too often, those people will seek out employment local to their new home area and the District will lose essential workers. The District Council's Housing Policy Team works with social housing providers and a wide-range of other partners to enable the delivery of new affordable housing across the District. The Housing strategy also aims to make better use of the existing social housing stock, with under-occupation being a key issue currently being tackled.

The following points are just a selection of those that were mentioned during consultation:

- Not enough young people with the right attitude to work
- Some worklessness
- Poor links to training for young people in the District
- More links with businesses needed.
- Gap in sector skills

A number of consultees emphasised that there has been a strong focus on young peoples' training and employment. There needs also to be a focus on getting people over 50 retrained and back to work. This is an often neglected age range whose unemployment rose dramatically during the recession.

The Local Strategic Partnership Employment sub-group which is a multi-agency partnership of organisations who work to reduce unemployment were also consulted. They highlighted two

important issues: the trouble young people have in getting to work from rural areas in the District and the lack of links between themselves and the private sector. A similar response was encountered in the consultations with young people who found public transport expensive and unreliable and wanted more links with local businesses so that they can build up their experience. In the north of the District many young people make use of schools and colleges in Dartford and Gravesend and in the south many access schools in Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and other adjoining districts.

Unemployment in Sevenoaks District is below the County and country average. The perception is that unemployment is low throughout the District. This is incorrect. There are a number of unemployment hotspots throughout the District. Job fairs are an excellent opportunity for the Council to bring unemployed people and employers together in these areas.

We are unfortunate in that we do not have a Jobcentre Plus within the District or a College. Therefore we must ensure that we make excellent links to colleges and training establishments outside the District, for example Hadlow College, Bromley College and West Kent College. We should also take advantage of better links with Universities and training colleges in London. There are a plethora of underemployed and capable graduates in London who would like to work with growing, innovative companies. We need to ensure that our businesses are able to capture the talents of underemployed or unemployed graduates in London.

The District Council delivers a number of services to businesses. It is vital we ensure that different departments in the Council communicate with one another to enable businesses to feel welcomed into the District and that they can turn to the Council if they need assistance. Whether it be for a planning application, business rates or licensing, it is clear that we need to be able to work more closely together to ensure that businesses are nurtured and feel supported by the District Council rather than simply looking upon us as the billing authority.

Our consultations identified a need for the Council to provide more clarity with regards to businesses support and what funding is available. Businesses sometimes find the large amounts of information offer confusing and don't know who to contact in order to get the best information. We need to ensure that the Council is providing clear, concise advice that businesses find easy to access.

The following aims will be progressed by the Council and its partners in order to achieve this ambition:

- **Aim 2.1: Work with businesses to identify skills gaps**
- **Aim 2.2: Work with education and skills providers to bring the right skills**
- **Aim 2.3: Our Team around your business – soft landing for new or expanding businesses**
- **Aim 2.4: Single point of access for funding and business support**

Strategic Objective 3: Transport and Infrastructure

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Transport and Infrastructure

Infrastructure is vital to the continuing economic growth of the District. There are a number of key infrastructure projects that need to be delivered over the timescale of this strategy in order for us to facilitate economic growth. The Sevenoaks District Strategy for Transport (2010-2026) is a document which sets out the range of transport issues facing the District. The Economic Development strategy seeks to support the initiatives identified in the strategy for transport. Our consultation process identified a number of other key areas for improvement in the District such as improvements to Swanley and Bat and Ball stations and inclusions of some stations within the Transport for London travel zone.

The Sevenoaks Business Survey (2013) indicated that Transport and Infrastructure were still very important considerations for businesses throughout the District. This has been corroborated by local parishes and other groups who are keen for us to lobby for integrated and improved public transport.

The consultations highlighted that many areas want to take advantage of our close proximity to London. In particular, those in Sevenoaks and Swanley want to be included in the travel zone for Transport for London. This has obvious advantages for businesses and residents. For Swanley, inclusion in the Transport for London travel zone would help to kick start significant regeneration in the area and create new jobs. For Bat and Ball and Eynsford, consultees felt it inclusion in the Transport for

London travel zone would take pressure off the service to London Bridge and also stimulate local regeneration projects. Train services from the District to London are not undergoing the improvements necessary to keep pace with other areas. Commuters are being unfairly targeted with high prices which are being used to subsidise new and improved services in other parts of the South-East. The London Bridge redevelopment is having a negative impact upon commuters in Sevenoaks. The recent timetable changes for 2015 mean that commuters can no longer stop at London Bridge on the London Charing Cross service.

The flooding and bad weather that visited us over Christmas 2013 had dire consequences for residents and businesses. Our consultations identified that those areas flooded would like additional support from us to engage with the Environment Agency on flood protection and funding for those affected.

Car parking has been another consistent theme during the consultative process. Businesses and local communities are very concerned about future parking capacity. There are also significant concerns about the capacity of the road network in Sevenoaks and Swanley. The Sevenoaks District Transport Strategy and Cycling Strategy identify a number of schemes which would help ease congestion and promote sustainable forms of transport. The enabling of the Lower Thames Crossing would take considerable pressure off M25, M26 and M20 junctions; benefitting traffic flow in the District.



Broadband is a vital 21st century amenity for both residents and businesses. The speed and access to services can have a severely detrimental effect on business performance and has the potential to negatively affect house prices. The 2013 business phone survey indicated that broadband is now the number 1 concern of businesses within the District. Many of our businesses are located in rural areas which may not feel the benefit of normal

commercial broadband upgrades. For the District to remain competitive we must ensure that superfast broadband services are rolled out to all areas of the District. The number one concern for businesses in the 2014 Business Survey was access to superfast broadband services; 91% of those surveyed thought that this was the most important issue. In the face to face consultations with business groups this was highlighted as the most important infrastructure upgrade in the District. To help solve this problem in the most rural areas of the District we should engage the landowners to try and find an effective solution. There are examples of successful community and landowner led schemes in the District.

Our consultations also highlighted another important issue. Mobile phone signals and 3G/4G signals are often very poor in the rural parts of the District. We must ensure that future

connectivity is first rate. Wi-Fi is an increasingly sought after service and currently the service is limited. Increasing the scope of Wi-Fi is vital for the visitor experience, for those accessing services and shopping in our main towns.

The following aims will be progressed by the Council and its partners in order to achieve this ambition:

- **Aim 3.1: Ensure that the District has broadband, mobile telephone and other 21st Century connectivity**
- **Aim 3.2: Inclusion of Swanley in Transport for London's travel zone including making it Oyster card ready and making improvements to the rail station**
- **Aim 3.3: Investigate the inclusion of Bat and Ball and Eynsford in Transport for London's travel zone**
- **Aim 3.4: Support efforts to improve car parking in the District**
- **Aim 3.5: Support efforts to ease congestion in Sevenoaks and Swanley**
- **Aim 3.6: Ensure areas are sufficiently protected from extreme weather and flooding**

Strategic Objective 4: Energy and Sustainability

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Energy and Sustainability

Local authorities are being encouraged to make cuts in energy costs and 'go green'. Businesses are also looking to cut overheads in the face of ever climbing energy prices. The 2013 and 2014 Sevenoaks District Council business surveys indicated that energy costs were one of the most important concerns for businesses looking forward.

The District Council is supporting the Climate Local initiative led by Kent County Council. This is a Local Government Association initiative to drive, inspire and support council action on climate change. As part of this we are committed to a number of actions to reduce our carbon footprint and ensure that residents and businesses are given the right information to cut costs and go green.

We have already started a number of initiatives to support this exciting programme of work. In partnership with the KCC Low Carbon Team we have delivered two Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) workshops. We are also developing an information pack for businesses so that they can make the right decisions when it comes to being energy efficient. Our consultations showed that there was some confusion amongst businesses and other organisations as to what schemes are operating and that there needs to be greater clarity and understanding about what support and funding is available.

We need to ensure that the green infrastructure is in place to enable businesses and residents to be able to buy more energy efficient vehicles. Charging points for electric vehicles are becoming increasingly prevalent in London and surrounding boroughs. The installation of charging points in the District will be a priority.

The following aims will be progressed by the Council and its partners in order to achieve this ambition:

- **Aim 4.1: Ensure that businesses are able to access training and funding opportunities to become more energy efficient**
- **Aim 4.2: Install charge points for electric vehicles in the District**
- **Aim 4.2: Provide energy efficiency workshops and information packs**

Strategic Objective 5: Places for growth and improvement

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Places for Growth and Improvement

After consulting our corporate plans, emerging local plans and the business community a number of areas were identified for improvement:

Swanley

Swanley is the second largest town in the District. It is located adjacent to Junction 3 of the M25.

It has services which include a youth and community centre, leisure centre, library, civic centre, schools, railway station and a range of other community facilities and support services.

Improvements to the library and information centre will facilitate the continued provision of good services to local people. The town centre itself contains a pedestrianised shopping centre which includes a major food superstore.

The Retail Study update 2009 showed that the town was at that time only capturing a low proportion of available spend, particularly for non-food goods and suggested that the town could be more attractive to shoppers if larger units were available in order to attract more high street names. Currently there is no additional land available adjacent to the pedestrianised centre to enable this. It is important that the retail offer satisfies the needs of local people and encourages visitors to the town.

The local market continues to attract a large number of people into the centre and there is scope for additional marketing and support for this event.

There is scope for improvement to the land at the vehicular entrance to the town centre, which could provide additional employment, possibly a small business hub for new businesses and workshops. This could nurture a new generation of businesses which will go on to stimulate further economic growth and jobs in the town. Land at Bevan Place is earmarked for housing. These two sites together could improve the attractiveness of the 'gateway' to the town.

A key part of the regeneration of Swanley is ensuring that the transport links are of sufficient quality and dealing with traffic congestion. The train station is not currently up to standard, it lacks many of the facilities you would expect at a top quality commuter station. The accessibility is poor and it lacks appropriate signage and links to the Town Centre. The inclusion of the station in Transport for London's travel zone would assist in progressing the much needed improvements and encouraging regeneration in Swanley. The Transport Strategy for the District has identified the need to deal with congestion.

Another opportunity to help skills and employment in Swanley would be to bring back into use the technical and vocational centre at the Orchards Academy. A new Job Centre Plus service will soon be available when the new Swanley gateway opens in February/March 2015. We will work proactively to market the services available here.

Fort Halstead

Fort Halstead is a previously developed site situated in the Green Belt and the Kent Downs AONB that was originally a Ministry of Defence research establishment and is still occupied by defence related industries. It is currently the largest employment site in the District.

Since the adoption of the Core Strategy, DSTL, the largest employer, has announced its intention to withdraw from the site by 2017. The Council is working with DSTL, QinetiQ and the site owners to develop proposals for the future. In line with our policy (Fort Halstead is identified as a Major Employment Site in the Green Belt) we expect future development to be employment led.

The site currently employs over 1200 people. The District Council expects that any future redevelopment would provide the same number of jobs. QinetiQ have indicated that they plan to stay on the site. There are excellent opportunities to develop the site with other partners such as Biggin Hill Airport. Our ambition is that Fort Halstead is transformed into a park specialising in science and engineering. We want to develop a new studio school onsite which will provide businesses with the specialist skills they need and young people with the bespoke training, education and experience that will help them into employment straight after leaving school. We want to take advantage of the excellent strategic position and expansive location at Fort Halstead and develop a start up business hub. Our vision is that the site will harness the skills and expertise of residents in West Kent with

new innovative start up businesses and an assortment of high flying science and engineering firms. There is also space on the site for a high quality hotel with conference facilities. This would support business visitors and take care of a well established need in the district for high quality conference facilities. It would also accommodate our growing tourism industry.

New Ash Green Village Centre

New Ash Green was developed as a new community in 1960s with its own village centre. The centre has proved to be far less successful than other aspects of the development and continues to suffer from a high amount of vacant units and environmental issues. The local community are enraged by the dilapidated state of the town centre and are disappointed by the lack of action by the local landowners. Significant improvements are needed in the village centre.

The Council is attempting to work with landowners and the local community to develop proposals for its regeneration so that it better meets the needs of the local community, while retaining a scale appropriate to the size of the community it is intended to serve and a form that respects the distinctive character of the settlement. An element of residential development could be included as part of the regeneration scheme. The final form of development will follow local consultation and will be mixed use to adhere to the established planning policy.

Sevenoaks Town Centre and Bat and Ball

Sevenoaks has a successful town centre. Despite competition from other larger centres outside the District and increased vacant premises during the recession, it has one of the lowest vacant premises rates in the country. It benefited from the completion of the Bligh's Meadow development in 2007 and has a good range of independent shops and services and multiple stores. Recent and current investment includes a major Waitrose store and a new Marks and Spencer store. Both of these developments should help Sevenoaks town to remain an important shopping centre in the future, attracting further high street names as well as boosting footfall to the benefit of the smaller, independent traders. The town has a high quality environment that needs to be maintained and enhanced as it continues to develop. An active town partnership ensures a focus on the town with a variety of events and marketing activities.

Parking for the town has been an issue and the District Council is seeking to remedy this by creating additional long-stay spaces at Buckhurst. Congestion has also been identified as an issue for the town centre and this may require a range of solutions including smarter technology to improve traffic flows.

Further growth will be needed over time if the town is to maintain its position relative to other centres. Vital to this is two main regeneration projects, Bat and Ball and the BT Exchange.

Bat and Ball lies just to the north of Sevenoaks Town and has some properties that are empty or substandard. The rail station

is of a substandard quality and the surrounding environment could be significantly upgraded in order to support the vibrant business atmosphere at the Bat and Ball Enterprise Centre. Any investigation of the inclusion of Bat and Ball in Transport for London's travel zone, will need to be determine whether the inclusion of this area in the travel zone will relieve pressure from the London service of the nearby Sevenoaks town station.

The BT Exchange site is located in the centre of Sevenoaks Town. This has been identified for future redevelopment.

Vestry Estate

The Vestry Estate is located in Otford on the edge of Sevenoaks Town with access to the motorway network via Junction 5 of the M25. The estate comprises a mix of industrial, warehouse and workshop units covering a range of sizes. Some of the B1 and B8 properties located on this site are old and need redevelopment. This site has been identified as an area appropriate for new business development within these areas, including the provision of sites for small and medium sized businesses and start up facilities.

The following aims will be progressed by the Council and its partners in order to achieve this ambition:

- **Aim 5.1: Improve and redevelop places for growth and employment in the District**

Other sites for Development

A number of other sites are listed in the draft ADMP which are identified for retention, intensification and regeneration for B1-B8 uses:

- Erskine House, Sevenoaks
- Hardy's Yard, Riverhead
- High Street, Sevenoaks
- London Road, Sevenoaks
- Morewood Close (excluding housing area), Sevenoaks
- South Park, Sevenoaks
- Lime Tree Walk, Sevenoaks
- Wested Lane Industrial Estate, Swanley
- Swanley Town Council Offices, Swanley
- Swan Mill, Goldsel Road, Swanley
- Media House, Swanley
- Moreton Industrial Estate, Swanley
- Park Road Industrial Estate, Swanley
- Teardrop Industrial Estate, Swanley
- The Technology Centre, Swanley
- Edenbridge/Warsop Trading Estate
- Station Road, Edenbridge
- Westerham Trading Centre, Westerham
- Blue Chalet Industrial Park, West Kingsdown
- West Kingsdown Industrial Estate, West Kingsdown
- Horton Kirby Trading Estate, South Darenth
- 160 London Road, Sevenoaks
- Broom Hill, Swanley
- Powder Mills, Leigh
- United House, Swanley

Strategic Objective 6: Rural Economy

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Rural Economy

The rural economy is a significant part of the District's economic output. We have a broad and diverse agricultural industry which assists the smaller rural hamlets and villages throughout the District. We also have some of the highest levels of homeworking, self-employment and home businesses in the County, many of which are located in rural areas. Our draft planning policies recognise the benefits to the local economy of tourist accommodation and visitor attractions and seek to protect existing facilities from conversion, where they remain viable.

In consultations with rural landowners and rural businesses a number of important issues were identified:

- Farmers are having to be increasingly efficient and find ways to diversify their businesses
- Rural housing for workers is in short supply
- Support for change of use for agricultural buildings could encourage new businesses and generate jobs in rural areas
- It is essential to train and maintain a skilled and motivated workforce
- Food and drink production should be better supported
- There are opportunities for use of sustainable fuels, such as wood-burning
- There is an urgent need for better broadband in rural areas

Rural Kent Plc highlights the value of the farming sector to the rural economy. It highlights farming as “the key ingredient in the

UK's food sector, the key ingredient to 1 in 7 UK jobs and GVA of £85 billion.” Rural Kent Plc aims to continue to attract investment into Kent's Food and Farming sector by demonstrating its strengths and opportunities.

Planning policies support the maintenance and diversification of the rural economy, including development for agriculture, forestry, small scale business development and rural tourism. This is provided that development is compatible with policies for protecting the Green Belt and the value and character of the woodland and landscape. For more details see the Council's LDF Core Strategy and associated documents and the Kent Downs and High Weald AONB documents.

The District Council is committed to engaging with rural and agricultural stakeholders and supporting them in their ambition to raise the profile of the rural sector and seek new inward investment opportunities.

A key part of our support for the rural environment is the West Kent Leader programme. This £1.5million fund worked diligently to support rural enterprise. Work is currently taking place to attract further funding to support rural businesses and provide local jobs.

The following aims will be progressed by the Council and its partners in order to achieve this ambition:

- Aim 6.1: Retain existing employment sites in rural settlements
- Aim 6.2: Establish rural sector skills pathways and consider the need for worker accommodation
- Aim 6.3: Showcase food produced in Sevenoaks
- Aim 6.4: Set up regular rural stakeholder meetings

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**Strategic Objective 7:
Tourism**

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Tourism

The tourism industry is a major contributor to economic viability and growth in the District. We have a wealth of excellent tourist attractions which bring hundreds of thousands of visitors every year. The tourism industry is worth over £230 million to the local economy and visitors are increasing on a yearly basis. The tourism sector supports over 4,250 jobs in the Sevenoaks District and in 2011 generated over 290,000 visitors, of which 47,000 were from overseas.

In 2012, the District hosted the Olympic Torch Relay and Paralympic Games Road Cycling events at Brands Hatch as part of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Around 30,000 visitors and residents spectated at these events over an eight day period.

The District has the highest proportion of tourist attractions in Kent, with internationally renowned historical houses, gardens and castles. These include Knole, Hever Castle, Chartwell, Chiddingstone Castle and Penshurst Place, many of which have featured in Hollywood and British films.

The District Council will work with new attractions on the outskirts of the District to maximise tourism and economic opportunities for the District. This includes the £2billion Disney-style theme Park in Swanscombe on the outskirts of the District has now been granted nationally significant infrastructure project status.

Sevenoaks District Council will work to support tourism investment projects, including two new Heritage Lottery funded initiatives which will strengthen community infrastructure and increase the influx of visitors to the District.

- £7.75 million has been granted to the National Trust at Knole for a five year project to repair and conserve Knole House, the former Archbishop's palace, and share its heritage with visitors.
- The Darent Valley's Landscape Partnership scheme "Samuel Palmer's Earthly Paradise" has been given a development grant to work towards a £2.1million grant.
- We have consulted extensively with tourism businesses, town partnerships, town & parish councils and rural land owners. It is recognised that tourism plays a vital role in sustaining the economy within this District. Consultations have highlighted a number of key developments for tourism in the District and the District Council continues to work with local businesses and partners to progress the following:
 - There is a need for tourism businesses to work closer together to offer integrated packages for tourists visiting and staying in the District.
 - The District Council, in partnership with local businesses and Visit Kent, continue to improve tourist access and information across the District.
 - A shortage of overnight accommodation as been identified. Attracting new accommodation providers

would increase the number of staying visits in the District, including hotels, as identified within the planning policies.

- Parking for visitors at town centre locations needs to be improved with public transport more integrated.
- More sustainable travel opportunities including better facilities for cyclists, cycle paths, walking trails and electric car charging points are needed.
- There is a need to provide training and knowledge sharing opportunities for accommodation providers and attractions to improve their social media and online presence to maximum bookings and visitor numbers.
- There is a need to provide business start-up workshops for local residents considering setting up a new bed & breakfast or self catering establishment in the District

We are working closely with tourism attractions, local businesses, land owners and accommodation providers to develop a Districtwide Destination Management Plan and a new website, in partnership with Visit Kent and other tourism providers, to further promote Sevenoaks District as a key tourism destination in Kent. This will ensure that all partners are working together to achieve economic benefits and tourism outcomes for the District.

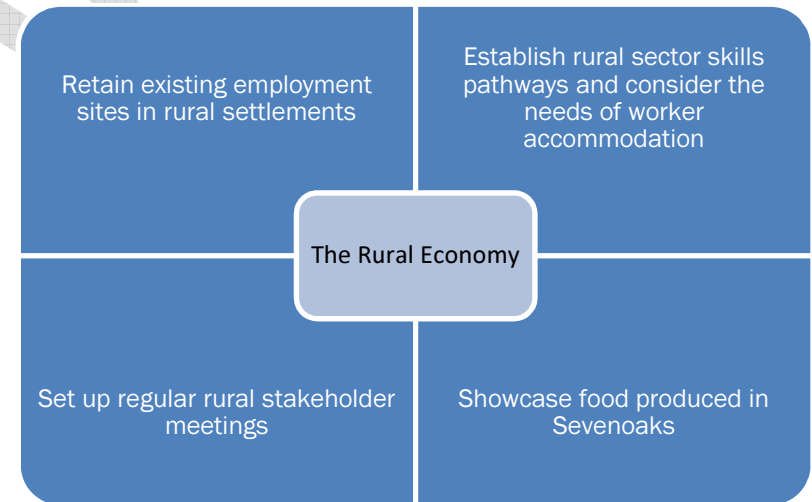
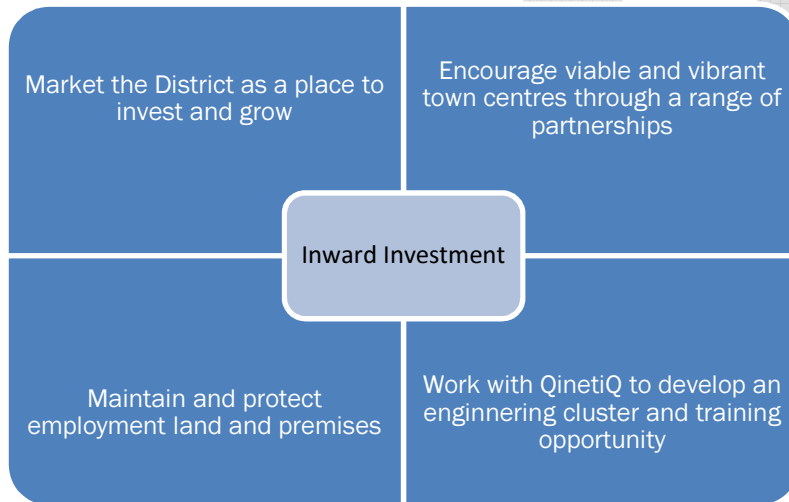
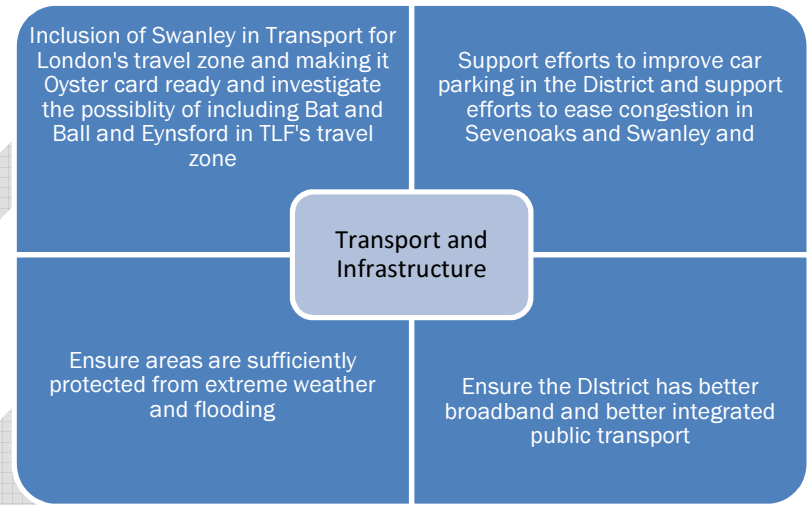
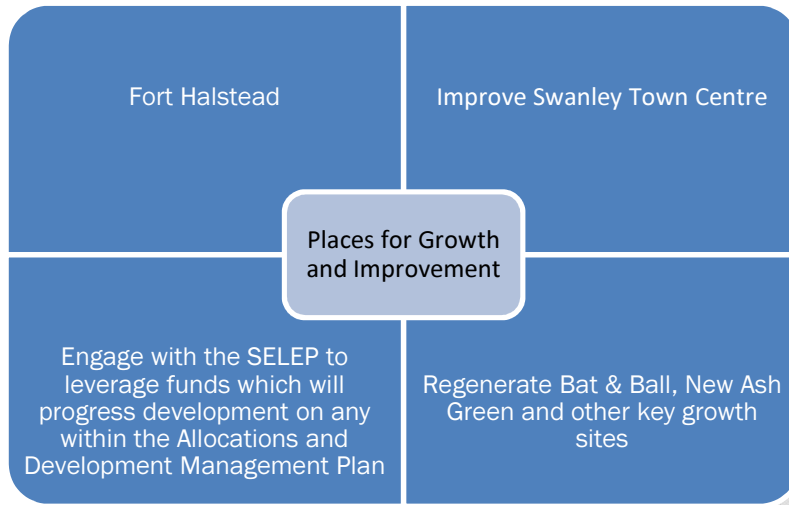
Summary of Corporate Priorities

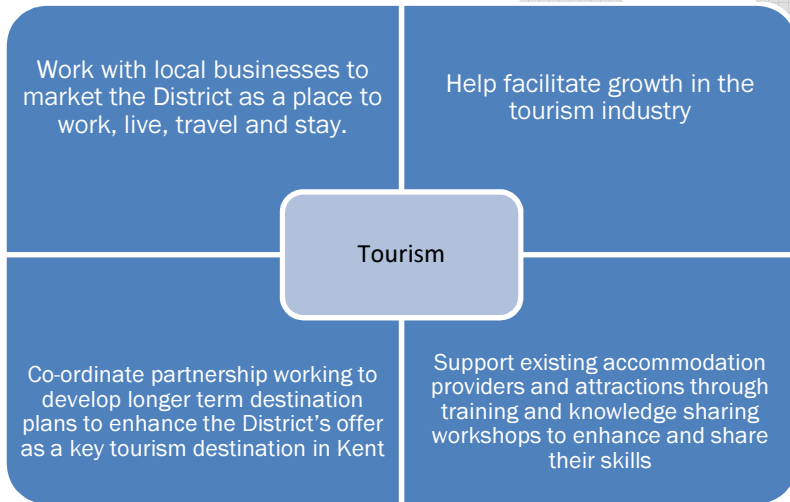
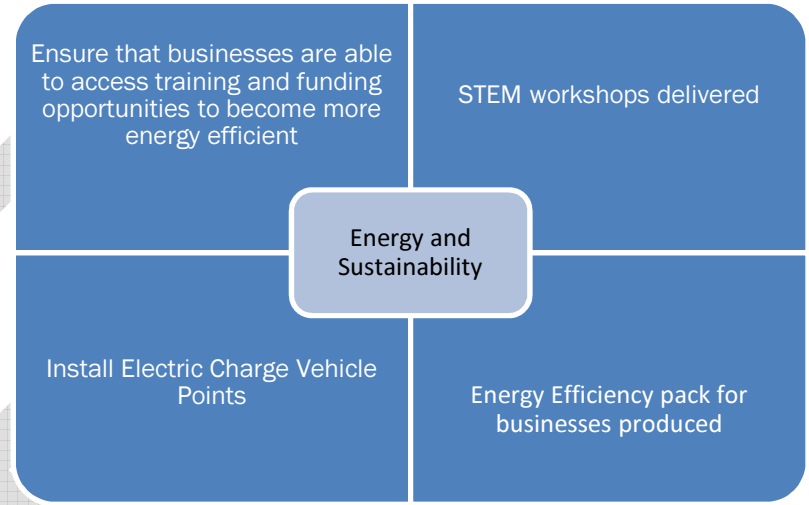
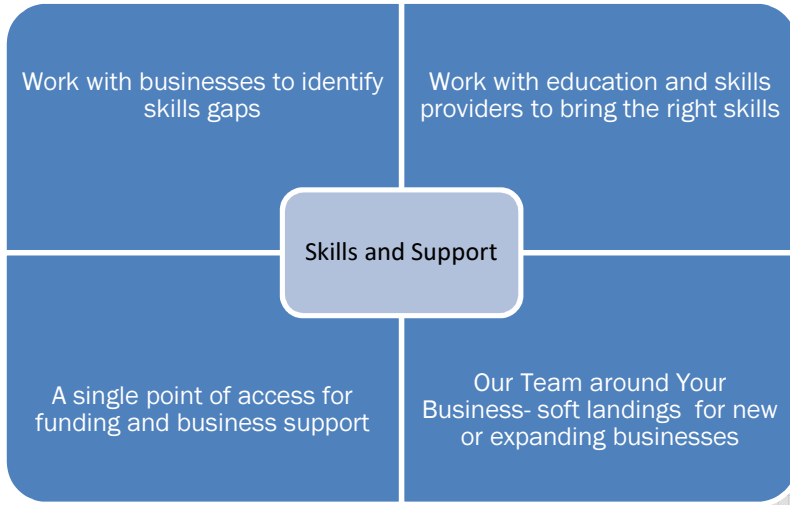
Tourism networking and training events bring together tourism businesses and are found useful by the industry.

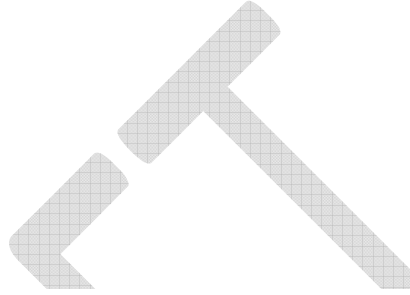
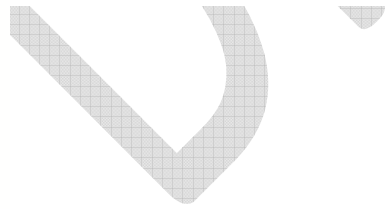
Promotion of staying accommodation and the marketing of tourism businesses is key to the success of the local economy.

The following aims will be progressed by the Council and its partners in order to achieve this ambition:

- Aim 7.1: Work with local businesses to market the District as a place to work, live, travel and stay.
- Aim 7.2: Help facilitate growth in the tourism industry
- Aim 7.3: Co-ordinate partnership working to develop longer term destination plans to enhance the District's offer as a key tourism destination in Kent
- Aim 7.4 Support existing accommodation providers and attractions through training and knowledge sharing workshops to enhance and share their skills







Economic Development Strategy Action Plan

Ref	Action	Target	How will we do this?	Timescale	Lead	Delivery Supported by
Strategic Objective 1: Inward Investment						
1.1	Market Sevenoaks District as a place to invest and grow	<p>1.1A Increase the number of businesses locating or setting up in Sevenoaks District over the plan period</p> <p>1.1B Increase in commercial space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a new Business and Regeneration Team Create an investment prospectus featuring the unique selling points and case studies of successful businesses. Work closely with partners; especially Locate in Kent to advertise business development opportunities. Set up the 'team around the business'- the purpose of the team is to assist businesses coming into the District. Develop start up units and work hubs Promote small rate relief and investigate other rate discounts 	2015-2018	SDC	<p>LSP Partners and Sub Groups</p> <p>Locate in Kent</p> <p>West Kent Partnership</p>
1.2	Encouraging viable and vibrant town centres through a range of partnerships	<p>1.2A At least 70% A1 frontage within Primary Frontage of Sevenoaks Town Centre</p> <p>1.2B At least 45% of A1 frontage within Primary frontage of Edenbridge Town Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with town partnerships to help them progress their objectives. Help town partnerships access funding and support for local priorities 	2015-2018	SDC	Town Partnerships
1.3	Maintain and protect employment land and commercial premises	<p>1.3A Measure the change in employment space in non allocated sites through the floor the</p> <p>1.3B No loss of Employment allocations in Major Developed Employment Sites the Green Belt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocating and safeguarding the District Council's planning policy land for employment use. Resisting changes of use from employment to other planning use classes Work proactively with 	2015-2018	SDC	Developers

			developers to identify new brownfield sites for development as part of the review of the core strategy.				
1.4	Work with QinetiQ to develop an engineering cluster and training opportunity	1.4a – Regular meetings held with QinetiQ 1.4b - Feasibility study for training opportunities produced as part of plans to redevelop Fort Halstead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish regular meetings with QinetiQ and draw up feasibility study for training opportunities linked to the development of Fort Halstead 	2015-2018	SDC	QinetiQ	
Strategic Objective 2: Skills and Support							
2.1	Enable businesses to access support and advice and finance	2.1A	Number of business accessing 1:1 support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with colleagues in the West Kent Partnership to develop a business support offer that reflects local concerns and needs. Ensure the District Council website provides clear, up to date information on funding and support available to businesses 	2015/16	SDC	Kent Libraries Business Information Team Business Support Organisations
		2.1B	The number of businesses in the District accessing Escalate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise and engage with businesses interested in the Escalate fund. 	March 2015		
		2.1C	Increase the amount of LEP funding obtained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) to ensure that we can access funds and specialist advice. 	Ongoing		
		2.1D	Amount of European funding leveraged into the District increased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to investigate further European funding opportunities 	Ongoing		
2.2	Improve the skills and employability of residents in the	2.2A	Reduce the number of NEETs in line with targets set KIASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting 16-24 year olds into employment through a range of training courses. 	2015	KIASS SDC	LSP Supporting Young

	District.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that jobs and training within the District is well marketed and available to all people • Work with the Local Strategic Partnership to progress actions on employment issues throughout the District. • Engage Kent Foundation 		<p>People into Employment Group</p> <p>Kent Foundation</p> <p>Job Centre Plus</p> <p>SDC Access Group</p>
	2.2B	Reduce the number of JSA claimants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more coordinated support for business start ups and encourage entrepreneurship • Establish Annual Entrepreneurship event • Support people over 50 in retraining and access to skills and employment opportunities • Work with businesses to identify skills gaps. • Engage landowners and rural businesses about rural skills 	LSP Supporting Young People into Employment Group	<p>SDC</p> <p>Job Centre Plus</p> <p>LSP Older People Sub Group</p> <p>Older Peoples Forums Land/estate owners</p> <p>Business Support Organisations</p> <p>Land based business Support organisations</p> <p>West Kent</p>

						Partnership SDC Access Group
2.3	Set up the 'team around the business'- the purpose of the team is to assist businesses coming into the District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses are satisfied with contact with the District Council. Information channels are clear and the number of businesses accessing the Real Business newsletter increases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with all departments at the Council who have some kind of contact with businesses. Distribute the Sevenoaks Business Guide and Burrows Directory to ensure that businesses have a clear understanding of our services. Clarify the business support and funding available and ensure that there is one single point of contact. Continue to publish the monthly Real Business newsletter. Continue to advertise and promote sources of funding. 	2015	SDC	
2.4	Clarify the business support and funding available and ensure that there is one single point of contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A single point of contact is established for business support and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our website provides clear, up to date information on funding and business support. 	2015	SDC	
Strategic Objective 3: Transport and Infrastructure						
3.1	Broadband, mobile telephone and other 21 Century	3.6 Increase the number of communities accessing superfast broadband	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applying for funding to support communities in getting superfast broadband Support local communities in 	2014-2017	SDC	Landowners/ Estate owners

	connectivity'		<p>finding alternative broadband solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with independent broadband providers to develop innovative solutions in rural areas of the district. • Work with broadband providers to ensure that towns in the District have a reliable and fast Wi-Fi service • Develop a programme of Digital inclusion with appropriate partners to ensure that all residents and businesses have the skills to embrace new technology and connectivity. 			
3.2	Inclusion of Swanley in Transport for London's travel zone and making it Oyster card ready, including improvements to the Rail Station	<p>3.1A .A Improvements to Swanley Rail Station and making it Oyster Card ready</p> <p>3.1B Inclusion of Swanley in Transport for London's travel zone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange meetings with TFL to discuss future expansion of Swanley the TFL travel zone 	2015-2017	SDC	<p>Transport for London</p> <p>Kent County Council</p>
3.3	Investigate the inclusion of Bat and Ball in Transport for London's travel zone and improvements to the Rail Station.	<p>3.2A Improvements to Bat and Ball Rail Station</p> <p>3.2B Investigate the inclusion of Bat and Ball and Enysford train stations in the Transport for London's travel zone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange meetings with South Eastern to discuss further improvements to the Bat and Ball and Swanley Rail Stations. 		SDC	<p>South Eastern</p> <p>Kent County Council</p>
3.4	Support efforts to improve car parking in the District	3.3 A Buckhurst 2 decked car park is built.	Support the development of Buckhurst 2 decked car park.	2015	SDC	
		3.3B The expansion of the Darenth car park is successfully delivered.	Support the expansion of the Darenth car park in Westerham.		SDC	

3.5	Support efforts to ease congestion in Sevenoaks and Swanley and improve integration of public transport	3.5A: Increase the amount of funding for transport infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for fairer and improved bus and train services in the District Improvements made to public transport as a result of major developments Work with Kent Highways and the SELEP to access funding to implement solutions which will ease traffic congestion and improve integration of public transport 	2015-2018	SDC	West Kent Partnership KCC
		3.5B Proportion of housing supply in the major settlements (Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge) – LDF Indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus the majority of new housing, employment and retail development in the towns of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge with smaller scale development in the larger villages which have a more limited range of local facilities 	2015-2018	SDC	Registered Social Landlords Developers
3.6	Ensure areas are sufficiently protected from extreme weather and flooding	3.6A The number of businesses accessing support for flood prevention measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable businesses to access funding for flood protection if they are liable to flood 	2015-2018	SDC	Business Support Organisations
		3.6B Rural areas reporting improvements to mobile phone signal coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby and Work with mobile phone providers to ensure that rural areas have sufficient mobile signal coverage. 	Ongoing	SDC	Town and Parish Councils
Strategic Objective 4 Energy and Sustainability						
4.1	Ensure that businesses are able to access training and funding opportunities to become more energy efficient.	4.1A Successful planning permissions for renewable energy schemes in the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with land/estate owners to encourage energy efficiency schemes, particularly wood fuel 	2015-2018	SDC	SDC Climate Change Group Landowners/ Estate owner
		4.1B Increase the number of businesses taking up energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a series of STEM workshops in partnership with 		SDC	Business Support

		measures (Annual survey)	<p>the Low Carbon team at Kent County Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency information pack completed and distributed • Support the rollout and delivery of the Green Deal 			Organisations Kent County Council
4.2	Install charge points for electric vehicles in the District	4.2 Charge points are installed and the number of charging points increased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleagues to install charge points for electric vehicles 	2014-2015	SDC	KCC Transport Planners
Strategic Objective 5 Places for Growth and Employment						
5.1	Improve and redevelop Places for Growth and Employment in the District	5.1 Funding identified for places for growth and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work proactively with developers and identify funding to regenerate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sevenoaks Town Centre and Bat and Ball ○ Vestry Estate ○ Fort Halstead ○ New Ash Green Village Centre ○ Swanley Town Centre • Engage with the SELEP to leverage funds which will progress development on any within the Allocations and Development Management Plan 	2015-2018	SDC	Developers Town Partnerships Town and Parish Councils West Kent Partnership Kent County Council
Strategic Objective 6 Rural Economy						
6.1	Enhance and improve the rural	6.1A Successful West Kent Leader funding bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with West Kent Partnership to identify 	2015-2018	SDC	Land/estate owners

	economy.	<p>6.1B Enhance the rural economy through the West Kent Leader fund by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs created Jobs safeguarded Start ups Business expansion <p>6.1C Explore other opportunities to lever in funding/investment</p>	<p>sector specific support and funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to secure private sector investment to support Leader projects Work with land/estate owners to identify opportunities 		West Kent Partnership	Business Support Organisations
		6.1D The number of rural and home-based businesses taking up business support services increased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that rural and home-based businesses are able to receive business support and advice 	2015-2018	SDC/Land/Estate Owners	Land based support organisations
		6.1E Set up regular rural stakeholder meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up regular land/estate owner meeting with the District Council's SMT and establish shared priorities for action 	2015/16	SDC	Land/estate owners
6.2	Establish rural sector skills pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up rural skills and rural work accommodation workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate rural skills and worker accommodation issues through rural skills sector workshops Identify rural housing issues Engage land/estate owners 	2015/2016	SDC	Land/estate owners Business Support Organisations Land based support organisations
6.3	Showcase food produced in Sevenoaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing campaign and case studies and key messages disseminated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with key partners in the rural food industry, farmers and land/estate 	2015/16	SDC Produced in	Land/estate owners

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> owners to promote food and drink produced in Sevenoaks 		Kent	<p>Rural Businesses</p> <p>Land based support organisations</p>	
Strategic Objective 7 Tourism							
7.1	Work with local businesses to market the District as a place to work, live, travel and stay	7.1A	Increase number of users for a District Tourism web portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop District Tourism website portal for the Sevenoaks District 	2015-16	SDC	Land/estate owners
		7.1B	Provide at least 2 sector specific workshops and 1 networking event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional support, networking and skills workshops for tourism businesses. 	2015-16	SDC	<p>Tourist destinations</p> <p>Tourism businesses</p>
7.2	Help facilitate growth in the tourism industry	7.2A	Sustain the number of bedrooms provided by tourist accommodation providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support for bed and breakfast providers 	2015-2018	SDC	Town and Parish Councils
		7.2B	Increase the number of providers of hotel accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with planners and developers as part of major developments to encourage hotel accommodation 			
7.3	Co-ordinate partnership working to develop long-term destination management plans to enhance the District's offer as a key tourism destination in Kent	7.2A	Destination management plan (DMP) produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with tourism businesses to develop a new destination management plan for the District 	2016/17 for production of plan	SDC	Town Partnerships
		7.2B	Partnership meeting coordinated to take actions within the DMP				Visit Kent
7.4	Support existing accommodation providers and attractions through		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver 4 training workshops a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Visit Kent to provide targeted training and information sharing workshops to improve the 	2015-2016	SDC	Land based support organisations

	training and knowledge sharing		skills of tourism information businesses			
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DRAFT

Equality and Inclusion statement

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

Abbreviations

3G- Third Generation Wireless
4G- Fourth Generation Wireless
ADMP- Draft Allocations and Development Management Plan
AONB- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DSTL- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory
GVA- Gross Value Added (£)
LEP- Local Enterprise Partnership
NVQ- National Vocational Qualification
RDA- Regional Development Agency
SELEP- South East Local Enterprise Partnership
Wi-Fi- Wireless Local Area Network
WKP for Growth- West Kent Partnership for Growth

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Appendix B - - Summary of public consultation responses and changes made to the Economic Development Strategy (final draft)

Ref	Name of Respondent and organisation	Summary of response	Response	Change made to the document
1	H Dilley – Chairman, Chevening Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport infrastructure is a bigger problem than is recognised in the strategy. They welcome the proposed development of a business hub at Fort Halstead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy and action plan will be changed to recognise need to lobby for fairer and improved public transport services. This will include train and bus operators, KCC and other providers The Sevenoaks District Transport Strategy deals specifically with traffic and transport issues, including infrastructure and public transport. Support for hub at Fort Halstead noted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan: Action 3.4 “ Support efforts to ease congestion in Sevenoaks and Swanley and improve integration of public transport ” and under How will we do this” added “Lobby for fairer and improved bus and train services in the District” “This has been corroborated by local parishes and other groups who are keen for us to lobby for integrated and improved public transport” (p.26)
2	Westerham Town Partnership (WTP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business rates: WTP feel they have above average levels of start up and 5 year fail rates and want business rates examined on this basis, including the extension of 100% small business rate relief. WTP would like to see better analysis of the Business rates structure Welcomes further support for superfast broadband in outlying rural areas Promote better public transport and transport integration WTP focus on poor and expensive public transport particularly cross border (Surrey) and poor interaction between bus and rail services. WTP suggest a subsidised commuter bus in all directions Support for business hubs and greater analysis of businesses in Westerham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ward level analysis for start up – only available at District level The small business relief is a Government scheme Investigate levels of rate relief that can be offered – as part of an action to promote small business rate relief The Sevenoaks District Transport Strategy deals specifically with transport issues, including infrastructure and public transport. The Economic Development Strategy and action plan will be changed to recognise need to lobby for fairer and improved public transport services. This will include train and bus operators, KCC and other providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 3.4 “ Support efforts to ease congestion in Sevenoaks and Swanley and improve integration of public transport ” and under How will we do this” added “Lobby for fairer and improved bus and train services in the District” and “ Improvements made to public transport as a result of major developments” . “This has been corroborated by local parishes and other groups who are keen for us to lobby for integrated and improved public transport” (p.26) Under Action 1.1 “Market

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to for better infrastructure planning for new developments to including parking considerations. • Need for better infrastructure planning and integration of Charman’s Farm to Westerham Town Centre to maximise benefits to the economy • Better support for tourism initiatives including promotion of existing accommodation providers and expansion of accommodation offer. • Would like support for lighting and signage upgrades. • Support for improved business communications more proactive support for the Town Partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy now recognises the role of CIL in supporting infrastructure • Support for Town Partnerships has been strengthened in the action plan so that detailed local issues can be addressed • Draft modifications to the ADMP set out measure to mitigate travel impact. An action has been added to this plan to measured number of developments with adopted travel plans 	<p>Sevenoaks District as a place to invest and grown” added target 1.1F “Promote small rate relief” and Under How will we do this “Investigate level of rate relief that can be offered”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1.2 “Encouraging viable and vibrant town centres through a range of partnerships” How will we do this includes “Work with town partnerships to help them progress their objectives” and “Help town partnerships access funding and support for local priorities”
3	Westerham Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key points as outlined in Westerham Town Partnership response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Westerham Town Partnership response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
4	D Vesey Hartley Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and action plan noted and supported Supportive of regeneration in Swanley Town Centre and New Ash Green. Expressed concerns to ensure residents and businesses in Hartley are consulted about regeneration proposals. • Signposting for residents to make best use of Swanley Gateway. • Concerns about overcrowding on trains, congestion of road networks and particularly the impact of rural roads and misuse by inappropriate heavy goods vehicles. • Support given for schemes to provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks District Council will work with developers to ensure that any areas impacted by any redevelopment proposals are be consulted – • Sevenoaks District Council will support and market the new Gateway in Swanley. • The Sevenoaks District Transport Strategy deals specifically with transport issues, including infrastructure and public transport. • See transport comments in 1 and 2 above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy Change: We will work proactively to market the services available here. (p.31- in reference to the new Swanley Gateway) • Action Plan: Action 3.4 “ Support efforts to ease congestion in Sevenoaks and Swanley and improve integration of public transport ” and under How will we do this” added “Lobby for fairer and improved bus and train services in the District”

		additional car parking in the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for schemes to provide plans to provide additional car parking in Sevenoaks Town 	
5	Eynsford Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports businesses to set up apprenticeships Wish to see the proposed inclusion of Swanley in Rail Zone 6 extended to Eynsford as it lies between Swanley and Bat & Ball “The council supports additional and cheaper car parking in Sevenoaks town to attract more shoppers and evening visitors to support local businesses.” Bus network to better serve the needs to employees and businesses Strongly support initiatives to enable business to become more fuel efficient Strongly supports employment led approach to the future development of Fort Halstead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The action plan recognise links between the partners in the Supporting Young People into Employment Group in supporting delivery of the Economic Development Action Plan objectives, this will include apprenticeship campaigns. Members are referred to the recent review of car parking charges. Issues of car parking will be considered in a way which is consistent with the Council’s agreed policy and approach Members views are sought in relation to the inclusion of Bat and Ball and Eynsford in the zone 6 proposals relating to Swanley See transport comments in 1 and 2 above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan: LSP Supported Young People into Employment Group added as an other partner and lead agency in the action plan within action 2.2 “Improve the skills and employability of residents in the District”
6	J Davies KCC – Libraries Registration and Archives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the support that Kent Libraries can provide through the Business Information Team Page 15 “We do not have a Jobcentre plus within the District” Need to point out that there will be a Jobcentre presence in the new Swanley Gateway from 2015. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The action plan recognises the role of the Business Information Team as a supporting partner. The Jobcentre presence in Swanley Gateway is already recognised in the Strategy under Place for Growth and Improvement. Strategy now says “We haven’t had a job centre” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan: Action 2.1 “Enable businesses to access support, advice and finance”. Kent Libraries Business Information Team added as an Delivery Partner

Appendix B - - Summary of public consultation responses and changes made to the Economic Development Strategy (final draft)

7	G Berghie Farningham Parish Council (noted that this is a personal response rather than one of behalf of Farningham PC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed analysis of what causes failure of start ups. • Strong efforts need to be made to lobby London to pay for the leisure time it spends in Sevenoaks. • More emphasis should be placed on hospitality and protecting the environment, listed buildings and conservation areas. This is the only growth sector predicted by the Economic Intelligence Unit. • Suggests a twelve monthly review would be better than five yearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action has been added to reflect the need to support start ups and recognise barriers • The business support section identifies support for all businesses including start ups. • Actions have been added to the rural economy section which seeks to determine and address the employment issues and barriers faced by rural and tourism employers. . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 2.2 “ Improve the skills and employability of residents in the District” – under target 2.2B “Reduce the number of JSA claimant”, includes the following under How we will do this: • “.Provide more coordinated support for business start ups and encourage entrepreneurship” and “Engage Kent Foundation”
8	P Cracknell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for document’s intentions. Given the actual and growth potential of the district’s tourism, there is still a major requirement for a much higher tourism profile. As a district with the highest number of tourist destinations in the county, it would seem important for SDC to play an important role in supporting and working in partnership with private enterprise/voluntary groups to develop and deliver a coherent tourism strategy. SDAF are keen to engage and work with all relevant parties to achieve this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action has been added to reflect that SDC will be working in partnership with tourism partners in 2014/15 to develop a dedicated Sevenoaks District tourism website and a strategic Destination Management Plan (2015/16) to ensure that all partners are working holistically to achieve economic benefits and tourism outcomes for the District. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan: Action 7.1 “ Market the District as a place to work live travel and stay”, add targets 7.1A “ Destination Management Plan developed at least 75% of actions on delivered in the first year ” and 7.1B “ Increase number of users for a District Tourism web portal”
9	Edenbridge Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edenbridge Town Council would like the Eden Centre, Edenbridge, and the Chamber of Commerce station building to be used for the provision of skills and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Economic Development Strategy will seek to engage all appropriate partners in the delivery of the strategy • Support for Town Partnerships has been strengthened in the action plan so that detailed local issues can be addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan: Action 1.2 “Encouraging viable and vibrant town centres through a range of partnerships” How will we do this includes “Work with town partnerships to help them progress their objectives” and “Help town partnerships access

				funding and support for local priorities”
10	G Humble Target Your Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the role of social enterprise working to support businesses in recruiting staff and the local young people in the community into employment and “Bridge the Gaps” as a Route-to-employment Target Your Potential wish to expand on their Route-to-Employment “Make it Happen” event in Tunbridge Wells held in partnership with which support a range of people from different ages into considering alternatives to employment from self employment to volunteering. This includes expanding a scheme into New Ash Green to complement efforts to regenerate the Village Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategy will harness the work of Local Strategic Partnership Supporting Young People into Employment Group, where all partners are asked to look at ways bridge gaps to employment. The New Ash Green Town Team has invited Target Your Potential to discuss employment and training opportunities for young people at a future Town Team meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan: LSP Supported Young People into Employment Group added as an other partner and lead agency in the action plan within action 2.2 “Improve the skills and employability of residents in the District”
11	Dr H Leicester Oxford Parish Councillor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likes the strategy but wish to acknowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a legal requirement to make documents and data accessible. That means putting them in formats, or easily convertible into formats, which are easy to use and understand by as many people as possible. This would seem to apply to The Strategy, as it develops, to sources of supporting evidence, to council decision materials, and to any tendering documents. Making sources of info/data simpler DWP have launched the “Accessible Britain Challenge”. It’s about accessible businesses (information and premises), 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Council policies are available in alternative formats on request An Equalities Impact Assessment has been produced for this Strategy. Covered under the Council’s corporate equalities policy The SDC Access Group, which includes Dr Leicester, is producing an action plan. This will look at the Council’s role in relation to the Accessible Britain Challenge and will engage other partners and groups as part of this process. An action has now been added to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan: Action 2 “Improve the skills and employability of residents in the District.” How will we do this - add “Establish Annual Entrepreneurship event” This includes, among others, the SDC Access Group as an “Other Partner”

		<p>buildings generally, and the outdoor environment too. Sevenoaks should build this initiative firmly into its Economic Development Strategy, supporting those wishing to use and visit our local amenities to the full.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the needs of disabled innovators and entrepreneurs into account. This is not just about expanding the workforce. It's also about individuals with knowledge and skills to build new businesses, or support others as they develop, but who are currently limited by inaccessible technologies, documents, buildings and so much more in today's society. 	<p>establish annual entrepreneurship/innovation training. Dr Leicester's advice will be sought in relation to this event.</p>	
12	A Bryne English Heritage South East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The historic environment and heritage assets of the district have a key role to play in the successful promotion and development of the tourism and rural economy sectors. A tourism and/or cultural strategy allied to the Economic Development Strategy and the Local Plan would be a useful tool to ensure appropriate enhancement of the assets and maximisation of their contribution to the economic progress of the district. • It should be made explicit that the development promoted through the strategy, which is welcomed in principle by English Heritage, is respectful of the historic environment and character of rural areas, and that the character and setting of towns and villages and the heritage assets within 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action has been added to the strategy. Sevenoaks Council will be working in partnership with tourism partners in 2014/15 to develop a dedicated Sevenoaks District tourism website and a strategic Destination Management Plan (2015/16) to ensure that all partners are working holistically to achieve economic benefits and tourism outcomes for the District. • Respect for design of development and the Countryside and the Rural Economy is already recognised in Planning Policy (SP1 and LO8). • The District Council are working with the partners to submit heritage lottery funding bids to sustain and redevelop iconic heritage sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan: Action 7.1 " Market the District as a place to work live travel and stay", add targets 7.1A " Destination Management Plan developed at least 75% of actions on delivered in the first year " and 7.1B " Increase number of users for a District Tourism web portal

13	Cllr C Clark	<p>them are protected and enhanced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page. 4 About Sevenoaks District 4th para. Add “In the large modern village of New Ash Green there is an opportunity to regenerate or redevelop the central business and shopping area to redress the problems stemming from its outdated 1960s design.” • Page 4. 6th para. Add “Developments such as renewable energy and leisure facilities have to be balanced against protecting the landscape and residential amenity.” • Page 5 Map . It should at least show the A21 and the HS1 rail line from Ebbsfleet International to Ashford (which is not named) as well as rail links to the south and west and preferably all the roads and rail lines mentioned on page 9. • Page 10 Key Challenges Final bullet. Reword the first sentence: “New Ash Green Village Centre struggles to provide the services and amenity that residents now require.” • Page 12 Add a reference to the fact that the Core Strategy is to be reviewed to bring it in line with current Government guidance and the ADMP • Page.15 Skills and Support 3rd para. Need to recognise that in the north of the District many young people make use of schools and colleges in Dartford and Gravesend and examples given. • Page 16 Transport and Infrastructure 3rd para. Add “Adequate train services on the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All changes noted and changes made with the following exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members views are sought as to whether further changes to the map are required ○ Members’ views are sought on whether references to train services should include links to Medway Towns. ○ Action has been amended to reflect need to lobby for improved public transport services and better integration of public transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See 1 and 2 for transport actions/targets • All changes noted and changes made with the following exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members views are sought as to whether further changes to the map are required ○ Members’ views are sought on whether references to train services should include links to Medway Towns. ○ Action has been amended to reflect need to lobby for improved public transport services and better integration of public transport.
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		<p>London to Chatham line which serve the villages in the north of the District are threatened as a result of the concentration of resources on services from the east of the County and on HS1 and there is very poor connectivity to destinations other than London, including Sevenoaks itself.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport infrastructure section must mention buses. There needs to be recognition that bus services in the District are generally poor, with almost no evening buses and many bus services are designed to take people out of the District rather than into or within it, notably in Swanley, Edenbridge and New Ash Green. Bus services between centres in Sevenoaks District are very poor, particularly on the Northeast – Southwest axis. This should be reflected in a further Aim on p.17 to work with bus operators and KCC to retain and improve services. • Page.19 New Ash Green Village Centre Add, at the end, “... , preserving the key facilities necessary for the village and surrounding area.” • Page.30 change 3.7 to “Lobby for fairer and improved public transport services” and include bus operators and KCC in the ‘How’ column with improved bus services added to the outcome. 		
14	Cllr L Stack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Overall a sensible document, but much aspiration rests on cooperation from areas outside the Councils control (transport/broadband/office to residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating new business hubs is already identified as a priority relating to Fort Halstead and recognising the need to seek other opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A number of consultees emphasised that there has been a strong focus on young peoples’ training and employment. There

		<p>conversions)”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most businesses are independent and small, likely to be professional services and unlikely to grow significantly. “Those not providing professional services such as retail sole traders need to be supported through national policy decisions (business taxes must be lower)” • Focus on creating ‘hubs’ around larger employers to create centres of excellence and drive partnership with relevant educational establishments. • Sevenoaks is a commuter town and this unbalances statistics. • “Outside of commuter population and professional services, low paid jobs in care and retail are prevalent. Low paid workers cannot afford to live in the District but increasingly anyone on less than a six figure salary or qualifying for benefits struggles too Does Sevenoaks Does Sevenoaks District ultimately accept it is mostly a rich area for rich people and put all efforts into regenerating Swanley. Swanley has the potential to be a young vibrant affordable alternative to London?” • Need to mention the over 50’s taking into account the issues of skills gaps and the inability to retire and lack of support and this group. • Need to look at community transport solutions. The car is necessary to access local employment and public transport is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text in the Economy section recognises that statistics are unbalanced by Sevenoaks being a commuter town. • Swanley is a high priority area for regeneration and focus of efforts in relation to supporting young people in education, employment and training. • The Strategy and action plan now reflects the need to support over 50s in retaining or access to employment. • The District Council’s approach to business is designed to put a team around the business and create a single point of contact. This is designed enable the business to access advice and services from the Council is a simple, speedy and effective manner. • Members are referred to the recent review of car parking charges. Issues of car parking will be considered in a way which is inconsistent with the Council’s agreed policy and approach • Innovation solutions will continue to be explored in all areas of delivery 	<p>needs to be a focus on getting people over 50 retrained and back to work. This is an often neglected populace whose unemployment rose dramatically during the recession” (p.23 in reference to unemployment and skills issue for over 50s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 1.1A “Increase the number of businesses locating or setting up in Sevenoaks District over the plan period and “1.1B “ Increase in commercial space” includes “ Promote small rate relief and investigate other rate discounts” under How will we do this • Under Action 2.2 “Improve the skills and employability of residents in the District”. “Support people over 50 in retraining and access to skills and employment opportunities” added to How will we do this for target 2.2A “ Reduce the number of NEETs in line with targets set KIASS” (Kent Integrated Adolescent Support Services – KCC)
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		<p>very poor in evenings, weekends and rural areas. Low paid workers of all ages are disadvantaged as are local employers who cannot attract staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More innovation is needs to be explored e.g. pop up shops and markets for places for growth and improvement. • “ If SDC can relieve the burden of red tape, manage • planning to facilitate business and sort out high parking charges in the retail areas that would be a good start in a practical way. Strategy is great but short term quick win tactics also need to be factored in.” 		
15	Cllr D Morris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan states, ‘Land at Bevan Place is earmarked for housing.’ This should not be the case for all the good reasons mentioned in the plan in relation to the regeneration of Swanley. This site is in the High Street of the second largest town in the district and should be retained for commercial use to support the town. Residential use can be accommodated elsewhere in the area rather than one of the most high profile commercial sites in the area.” • “The draft Plan states that the Swanley Leisure Centre is in the Town Centre but it isn’t. It is on the Whiteoak Estate” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ADMP does currently list Bevan Place as a site for development of housing • Plans to redevelop the White Oak Leisure Centre will be carried out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reference to Swanley Leisure Centre being in the town centre has been removed. • White Oak Leisure Centre to be included under Swanley.
16	E Rogers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further comments to add following completion of questionnaire in August 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable 	
17	B Taylor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the strategy do to protect the rural nature of the District with 93% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LDF and Planning Policies identify policies for the rural economy and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 7.1 “ Market the District as a place to work live travel and

		<p>designated as Green Belt?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to clarify what we mean by stating that the rural economy plays a large part in the economic success of the District • Agricultural and associated food businesses do not appear in the Key Challenges and identify support. • Superfast broadband this is key objective for the agricultural sector • Are the Council to 'enhance and improve the rural economy' dependent on obtaining funding through the Leader programme. If this is not successful what other plans • "Is the £1.5M leader programme for Sevenoaks District? Or West Kent." 	<p>green belt and this is referred to in the Strategy. Actions to support the rural economy have been strengthened</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a Draft Green Belt SPD • Actions to support the rural economy have been enhanced in the action plan • Broadband is a priority in the Strategy • The Leader funding would play a significant role in providing funding for rural businesses. However, it is hoped that engagement with landowners and estate owners will bring further rural economic benefits to local communities and this is reflected in the Strategy and action plan. • The Leader Funding bid is subject to confirmation and if successful, private sector investment will be sought to increase the available funds. The funds would be of benefit to business across West Kent. The action plan has been strengthened in respect of the Leader scheme 	<p>stay", add targets 7.1A " Destination Management Plan developed at least 75% of actions on delivered in the first year " and 7.1B " Increase number of users for a District Tourism web portal"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 6.1A "Successful West Kent Leader Funding Bid" and target 6.1B "Enhance the rural economy through the West Kent Leader fund by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jobs created ○ Jobs safeguarded ○ Start ups ○ Business expansion"
18	CLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband, flooding, and mobile phone coverage needs to be a priority • Change of use through Permitted Development is an opportunity to develop farm buildings to commercial use to add to the rural economy part of the document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband, flooding and mobile phone coverage are covered in the strategy • The Sevenoaks District Core Strategy states that one of the ways that the Council will support the District's economy is by 'giving priority to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of buildings in the rural 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 6.1C 'Hold rural sector skills and worker accommodation workshop'.

			area'. Recent changes to permitted development rights allow agricultural buildings to be converted to a range of different uses, including shops, offices and residential, subject to conditions set out in legislation.	
19	Cllr P Fleming SDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There are a number of issues with Bat and Ball being in Zone 6 not least rail heading and lack of infrastructure around the station and the fact that the other stations on that line are also not designed for large volumes of traffic that zone 6 may encourage.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members views are sought about the inclusion of Bat and Ball within zone 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
20	S Green Montreal Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No farming enterprise, dairy, woodland or arable can work without buildings fit for purpose. If a farming business is unable to build appropriate facilities it can not succeed • Montreal has identified renewable energy as a 21st century income stream through harvesting our 1000 acres of wood on a sustainable basis, and through photovoltaic on our new barn roofs. It is estimated our woodland could heat 200 homes. Before they implement this strategy they are building a district heating system for our properties at coakham. Renewable energy is the way forward and estate owners can assist Sevenoaks district council with their renewable energy policies. This will be covered elsewhere on the agenda. • In order for the country side continue to be maintained, the rural economy needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sevenoaks District Core Strategy states that one of the ways that the Council will support the District’s economy is by ‘giving priority to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of buildings in the rural area’. Recent changes to permitted development rights allow agricultural buildings to be converted to a range of different uses, including shops, offices and residential, subject to conditions set out in legislation. • An action has been added to the Strategy to take into account the need to involve land/estate owners in solutions to renewable energy • Actions have been added to the rural economy section and will involve land/estate owners • An action has been added to reflect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy changed – 93% green belt – “it is important that opportunities in the rural area and our planning policy supports this process” • Action Plan: New target added 4.1B “Work with partners to bring forward energy efficiency schemes” Under How will we do this added “Work with landowners to encourage energy efficiency schemes “ • Action7 “ Market the District as a place to work live travel and stay”, add targets 7.1A “Develop Destination Management Plan for Sevenoaks District to enhance the visitor experience and maximise the benefits of

		<p>council support and engagement. Future plans are linked to planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism: Major landowner estates are within 30 miles of Central London and less than 80 miles from France. Montreal Estate is getting many business enquiries about our land and redundant buildings 	<p>that SDC will be working in partnership with tourism partners in 2014/15 to develop a dedicated Sevenoaks District tourism website and a strategic Destination Management Plan to ensure that all partners are working holistically to achieve economic benefits and tourism outcomes for the District. Land/estate owners will be engaged as part of this process</p>	<p>culture attractions” and 7.1B “Develop District Tourism website portal for the Sevenoaks District</p>
21	E Barham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that CIL and S106 are “deal breakers” for rural building conversions. Many are listed and demolition is not an option. Need to explore flexible approach to costs that go alongside the buildings. Also need identified for little flats for workers, students etc. as offer of accommodation could compensate for the lower wages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sevenoaks District Core Strategy requires an affordable housing contribution to be paid or affordable units to be provided on site where a development results in a net increase in the number of dwellings. However, the policy also allows for contributions or on-site provision to be reduced where an independent assessment of viability demonstrates that the development would not be viable if the policy requirement was met. • The Council has been charging the Community Infrastructure Levy since August 2014 and subject to some exemptions and ‘reliefs’ it is a mandatory charge. CIL will ensure that new developments continue to make a contribution towards funding the infrastructure that they place additional demand on. In order to introduce the charge the Council was required to prepare evidence on the infrastructure required to support planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan: Target 6.1C added to action plan “Hold rural sector skills and worker accommodation workshop

			<p>development in the District and the viability of development, in order to support the preparation of a Charging Schedule. Two rounds of consultation and an examination by an independent inspector on the Charging Schedule were undertaken, where interested parties had the opportunity to challenge the Council’s proposed charging rates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIL legislation allows for existing on-site in-use floorspace to be subtracted from the floorspace proposed as part of the development. Therefore, if a building can be shown to have been in a continuous lawful use for at least 6 months within the past 3 years then CIL would only be payable on any new floorspace created as part of the conversion. In some instances, the CIL payment due may be zero as a result of this provision. • A 100% relief is also available through CIL legislation for social housing, which includes ‘assured agricultural occupancy’ tenure where this is provided by a registered social landlord or private registered provider of social housing. 	
22	N Watson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District has a very restricted housing supply. The private rented sector will grow from 9% in 2001 to 37% in 2025. It will take around 19 years for a single person to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action has been added to the Strategy to look at barriers to rural employment • See comments at 18,20 and 21. As 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan: Target 6.1C added to action plan “Hold rural sector skills and worker accommodation workshop”

		<p>save for a deposit. Pressure is so much higher with lower wages. Redundant farm buildings should be used for housing. In addition building buy to let houses – aim to build 6 per year and landowners could work with Council to let houses</p>	<p>above, there is the opportunity to convert agricultural buildings to residential use through permitted development rights, subject to conditions set out in the legislation. Under national planning policy (the NPPF), the development of new residential buildings in the Green Belt would be inappropriate development, for which ‘very special circumstances’ would need to be proven to justify the development</p>	
23	W Alexander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of use for rural agricultural buildings “imperative”. Between 8 landowners, 150 employed by estates – those employed on estates 300 at £25,000 per year which equates to £10.5million in salary. • Modern conversion exceeds required standards for modern buildings. The cost of conversions is greater than new build. • Landowners can support the Council’s objective to make more commercial space available and greater emphasis needs to be given to this in the Economic Development Strategy • Estate owners hope there is a will to look at lower limit for business rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See comments at 18, 20, 21 and 22. The Sevenoaks District Core Strategy states that one of the ways that the Council will support the District’s economy is by ‘giving priority to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of buildings in the rural area’. Recent changes to permitted development rights allow agricultural buildings to be converted to a range of different uses, including shops, offices and residential, subject to conditions set out in legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan: • Target 1.1A “Increase the number of businesses locating or setting up in Sevenoaks District over the plan period and “1.1B “ Increase in commercial space” includes “ Promote small rate relief and investigate other rate discounts” under How will we do this • Target 6.1C added “Hold rural sector skills and worker accommodation workshop”
24	B Thomas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural tourism attracts 10% of the jobs in the District and 4 million visitors. • It is unrealistic to expect the private sector to do Visit Kent work. The Council needs to take a role in attracting visitors • Need for young people to have skills and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSP Supporting young people into employment group to include rural skills focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan: • LSP Supported Young People into Employment Group added as an other partner and lead agency in the action plan within action 2.2 “Improve the skills

		training in retail, catering, filming and wedding industry.		and employability of residents in the District” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action7 “ Market the District as a place to work live travel and stay”, add targets 7.1A “Develop Destination Management Plan for Sevenoaks District to enhance the visitor experience and maximise the benefits of culture attractions” and 7.1B “ Develop District Tourism website portal for the Sevenoaks District
25	National Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in getting seasonal catering staff. It links to difficulty in rural accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to support from LSP Supporting Young People into Employment Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan: LSP Supported Young People into Employment Group added as an other partner and lead agency in the action plan within action 2.2 “Improve the skills and employability of residents in the District”
26	E Ecclestone St Clere Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication and rural broadband: The estates’ in the District could be a catalyst for community solutions for rural broadband solutions. Need to work with KCC as need to prevent finding solutions leading to an area being taken out of the scoping for BDUK areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up broadband meetings with landowners An action has been added to the Strategy which recognises the need to set up a land/estate owner broadband group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help solve this problem in the most rural areas of the District we should engage the landowners to try and find an effective solution (p.27- in reference to broadband in rural areas) Action Plan: Target 3.6 “Increase the number of communities accessing superfast broadband” now includes “ Support local communities in finding alternative broadband solutions”

				under the How will we do this section. This target includes land/estate owners as an other partner.
27	A Colgrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping the woodland industry going is important. Estates are increasingly using wood burners Local woodland owners can work together. Montreal Estate can produce fuel for 200 homes. Need to consider roles in relation to this industry and possibly apprenticeships. Using woodlands as a reliable supply of energy generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An action has been added to the Strategy to take into account the role that land/estate owners have in relation to renewable energy solutions, especially wood burning. The Sevenoaks District Core Strategy supports small scale and community-based renewable energy developments where such development does not adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt and is consistent with AONB policy. National Planning Practice Guidance has recently been published in relation to solar farms. This encourages local authorities to favour developments on previously developed and non agricultural land and to take account of the impacts on the landscape and heritage assets. The NPPF also states that ‘when located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances’ 	Action Plan: New target added 4.1A “Successful planning permissions for renewable energy schemes in the District 4.1B “ Increase the number of businesses taking up energy efficiency measures (Annual survey)
28	H Warde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produced in Kent is blooming but Sevenoaks District is not. Westerham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An action has been added to promote local produce and support food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan: Target 6.1C added “Hold rural

Appendix B - - Summary of public consultation responses and changes made to the Economic Development Strategy (final draft)

		Brewery is 2 nd biggest in Kent. Need to explore how we can better support food businesses by having more flexible business rates. Also need housing for people for six months of the year.	businesses by working with Produced in Kent and delivering a Produced in Sevenoaks campaign and series of media messages. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An action has been added to the Strategy 	sector skills and worker accommodation workshop” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 6.1E “Produced in Sevenoaks campaign developed and case studies and key messages disseminated”
29	J Silve, West Kent College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document does not mention West Kent College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of West Kent College was left out of the main document. At the time of drafting the College was known as K College and was in a period of change. They were left out until the situation was clarified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Kent College now added to the strategy, p.24
30	Sevenoaks Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sevenoaks Town Council welcome the opportunity to comment on this document, and are in general support of the aims and aspirations set out within it. Sevenoaks Town Council wished to thank the staff at Sevenoaks District Council, and the Portfolio Holder for their work in drafting it. Throughout the document the proposal to extend Zone 6 to Bat and Ball is highlighted, Sevenoaks Town Council requested that this proposal be extended to encompass Sevenoaks Mainline Station. the reference to “team around the business” is vague, and the Town Council would request that a named individual or central email address be provided for the convenience of new/prospective businesses Sevenoaks Town Council requested a specific reference to the redevelopment of Sevenoaks Community Centre and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted Members views were sought regarding the zone 6 inclusion. Email and contact details to be included in the ‘Team Around the Business’ promotional material when the scheme is finalised. Sevenoaks Community Centre can be included in the ‘Places for Growth and Improvement’ section There is a commitment to work with tourism partners to develop a destination management plan and to provide networking for tourism businesses. This should include networking with town centre partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of the zone 6 proposals have been added to the Strategy. Team Around your Business features within the document. The tourism section of the Strategy has been strengthened and provides more detail regarding key developments to support tourism outcomes and its impact on the local economy.

Agenda Item 6

Page 146

		<p>positive impact this would have on the wider regeneration plans for Bat and Ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that Knole were anticipating a double of their visitors as part of their restoration project, and that more should be done to capitalise on this influx of visitors to the town, which could benefit Town Centre retailers. 		
31	Riverhead Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No consumer groups have been consulted except ‘young people’ at several locations. A survey around people who are shopping in town would have been welcome. • Cycling facilities should be included. • Under places for growth and improvement, attracting further high street names should not be a target. Small specific retailers should be encouraged. • Traffic issues to be considered when planning permissions granted to developers, especially in the busy London Road” • The specificity of each town should be enhanced. A study on the businesses/trade (independent or not) they type of market and the architectural particularities of each town should be added. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a strategic document which covers the whole district and further consultation will be required when taking forward some of the actions in various localities. A survey of all businesses was undertaken and the response helped to shape the draft document. Every effort was made to reach as wide a variety of groups as possible. • P33 of the document refers to Marks and Spencer and Waitrose saying they ‘should help Sevenoaks town to remain an important shopping centre in the future, attracting further high street names as well as boosting football to the benefit of the smaller, independent traders’. Members views are sought. • Again, this is a strategic document and any more localised actions would need to look at the locality in more detail. There are actions under inward investment to encourage viable and vibrant town centres through a range of partnerships and to market the District as a place to work live travel and stay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We make reference to the Sevenoaks District Transport and Cycling Strategy in the document, saying that it identifies a number of schemes that promote sustainable forms of transport. • Action 3.4 supports efforts to ease congestion in Sevenoaks and Swanley. •

32	National Farmers' Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and horticulture have not been given specific and targeted consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further consultation will be taking place with rural land owners and businesses to make sure views relating to the rural economy and agriculture are added. Further consideration can be given to this but the comments have been received very recently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions have been added following a consultation with rural regarding a Produced in Sevenoaks campaign, rural sectors skills and rural worker accommodation workshops, enhancing the rural economy through Leader and renewable energy schemes (woodburning), which address some of the issues raised by the NFU. • A section dedicated to the Rural Economy has been added to the Strategy to highlight the importance of this sector.
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Page 148

Agenda Item 6

NOTE: Page numbers given by respondents refer to the Public Consultation draft. This differs to the page numbers in the new Final Draft presented to Members

Item 8 – Asset Management Plan Update

The attached report will be considered by the Extra-ordinary meeting of the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee on 3 December 2014, a Minute extract is therefore not yet available.

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ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Cabinet – 11 December 2014

Report of Chief Finance Officer

Status: For recommendation to Cabinet

Also considered by: Finance and Resource Advisory Committee - 3 December 2014

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This paper is presented to Members to advise them of the outcome of the bids received in respect of the proposed sale of Timberden Farm, Shoreham. It also contains recommendations as to the proposed disposal method of three other sites previously approved for disposal.

This report supports the Key Aim Asset Management Plan

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Ramsey

Contact Officer(s) Adrian Rowbotham Ext. 7153

Lesley Bowles Ext. 7335

Recommendation to Finance & Resource Advisory Committee

That the recommendation to Cabinet be endorsed.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That Cabinet approve:

- (a) the recommendation as set out in Appendix C following receipt of the bids in respect of Timberden Farm.
 - (b) the disposal of the three other sites by way of auction on the terms set out in Appendix C.
-

Reason for recommendation: Land/Properties identified as surplus to requirements and/or underperforming financially.

Agenda Item 7

Introduction and Background

Timberden Farm, Shoreham

1. The farm comprises approximately 2.13 acres (86.2 hectares) and was acquired in 1990, it has been let to a local farmer on a Farm Business Tenancy since then.
2. Earlier this year the disposal of Timberden Farm was recommended by Finance & Resources Advisory Committee (FRAC) to Cabinet due to a fall in income and gross return, and approved.
3. In order to ensure the best consideration is obtained, three agents, each with considerable experience in disposing of agricultural holdings, were interviewed and invited to submit their fees for acting on behalf of the Council in respect of the sale.
4. Carter Jonas were appointed and their advice was to market the farm on the open market either as disposal as a whole, or as 4 lots, as shown in Appendix A.
5. A copy of their particulars are included in Appendix B.
6. Their recommendation was that bids should be invited for the whole in excess of the sum of £2.1 M
7. Marketing began at the beginning of October, and in order to ensure compliance with the Council's disposal policy, all neighbouring properties were notified of the proposed disposal as part of the proactive marketing campaign which included adverts in local and national papers, For Sale Boards etc.
8. Bids for either the farm as a whole, or for one of the lots, were invited to be submitted to the Democratic services Department of the Council by Noon, 18 November 2014. These were opened by Democratic Services in the presence of Councillor Ramsay, the Solicitor to the Council and Head of Communities & Business.
9. Following receipt of the bids, details of which are set out in Appendix C, a recommendation is set out for consideration.

Disposal of three sites by way of auction

10. The disposal of these three sites was previously recommended by FRAC to Cabinet and approved earlier this year.
11. Advice has now been sought from an auctioneer with considerable experience in disposing of small lots, the advice received and recommended reserves for each site is set out in Appendix C and approval is sought to these recommendations.

Key Implications

Financial

Net proceeds after costs (agents fee and disbursements for the Timberden Farm disposal, and entry fees and commission for the auction disposals) will be added to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

Further resource from the Legal Section will be required to support the disposal process through to completion.

There is still a small risk that officer time may still be expended and any sale not complete. However, due diligence will be undertaken as far as possible to assess the purchaser’s ability to complete the sale at the agreed sale price in an effort to minimise that risk.

The disposal by way of auction means that, if the agreed reserve is exceeded, then the Council will be legally committed to the disposal so there is minimal risk.

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	The disposal processes are open to all members of the public
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

Value for Money and Asset Maintenance

The Councils land Disposal Policy will be followed, to ensure best value for money is achieved for the proposed disposals.

Asset maintenance liabilities will be reduced upon completion of disposals.

Conclusions

The receipt of the bids be noted and the disposal of Timberden Farm be progressed in accordance with the recommendation in Appendix C.

Agenda Item 7

The disposal by way of auction of the three sites identified be progressed as soon as possible with a view to completing before the end of the financial year.

Appendices

Appendix A – Timberden Farm Lot Plan

Appendix B – Timberden Farm particulars

Appendix C - Timberden Farm Bid Summary and disposal recommendations for three sites (**Exempt Information**)

Background Papers:

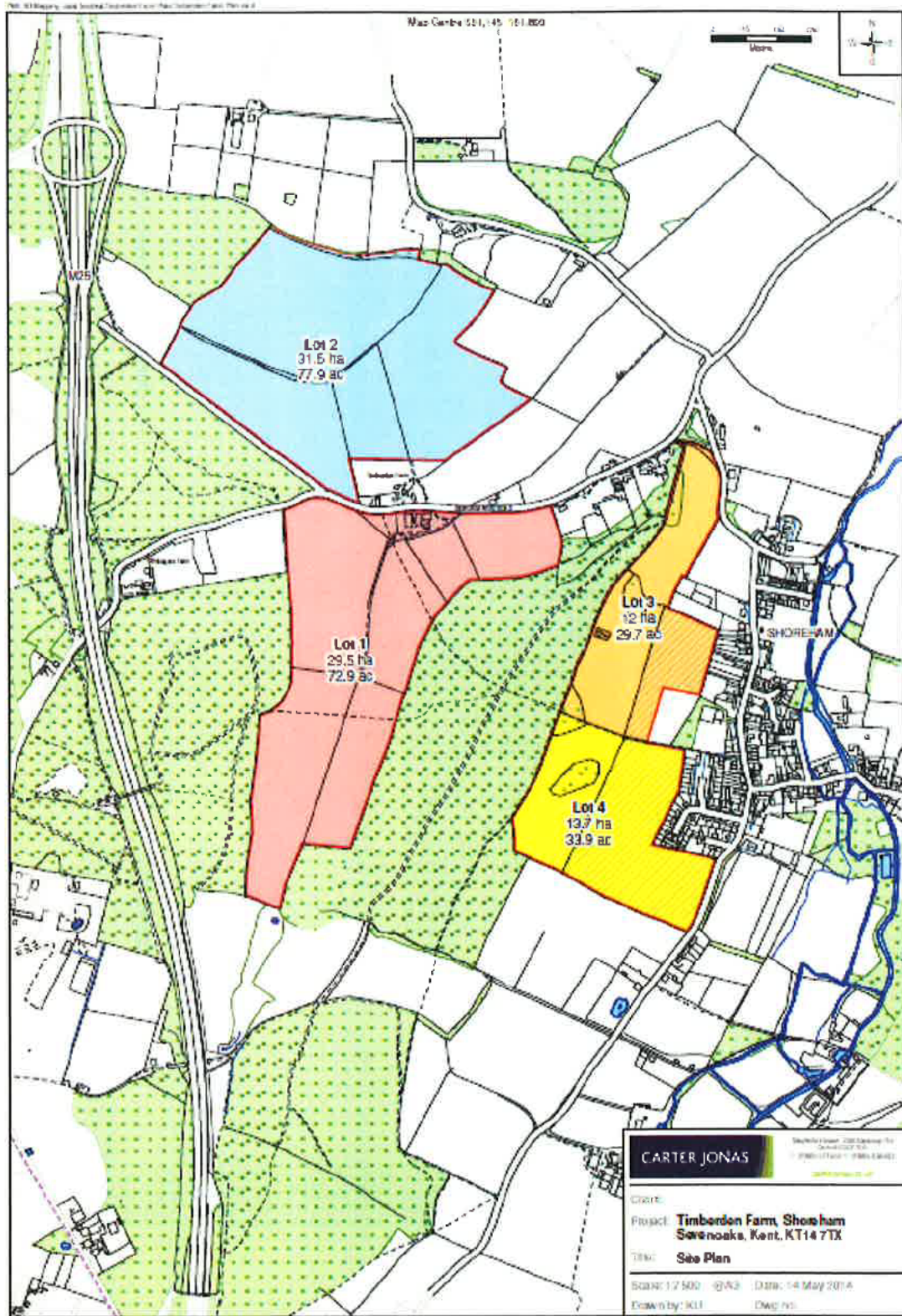
None

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer

Timberden Farm

CARTER JONAS

APPENDIX 2: Sale Plan





For sale as a whole or in four Lots. An attractive block of amenity/agricultural land in the Kent Downs AONB. A 213.1 acre (86.2 hectare) farm comprising arable and pasture land and a range of farm buildings at Timberden Farm. Two lots are on Shacklands Road and lie to the west of Shoreham and the other two lots adjoin the village on its western flank.

LOCATION

Timberden Farm offers an excellent opportunity to both agricultural and amenity purchasers to buy a property in an attractive setting. Two parcels lie in an undulating valley and the other two lots are on the escarpment lying to the west of Shoreham. Shoreham is a vibrant village with a shop, 4 public houses, shops and tea room. There is a strong community spirit in Shoreham village which has a primary school and cricket club and there are many country walks some of which pass through the property being sold.

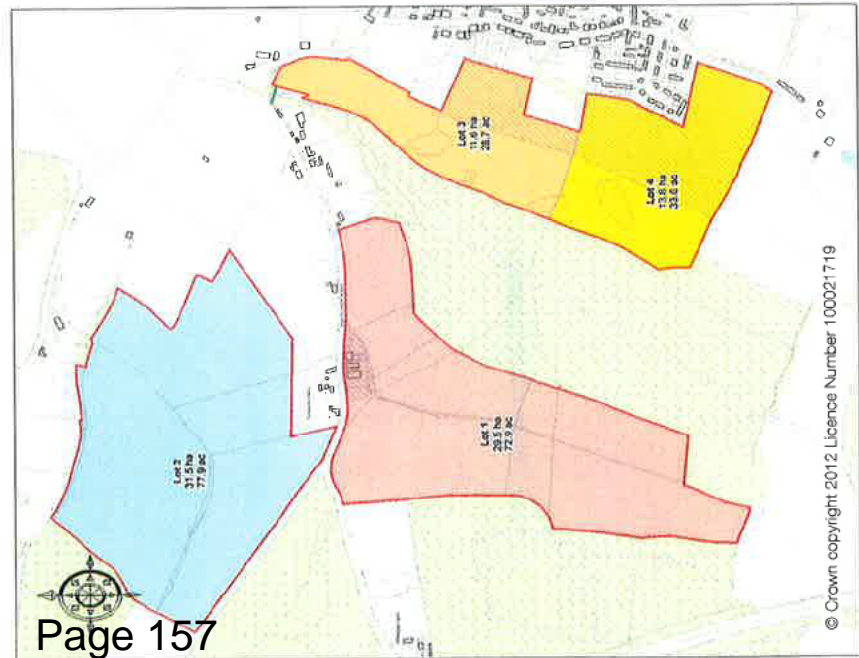
The farm is well located with access to the M25 at J4 within two miles and there are excellent rail links to London via Shoreham, Sevenoaks and Chelsfield. The main town Sevenoaks lies 5 miles to the south and the town has a full range of shops, restaurants and facilities.

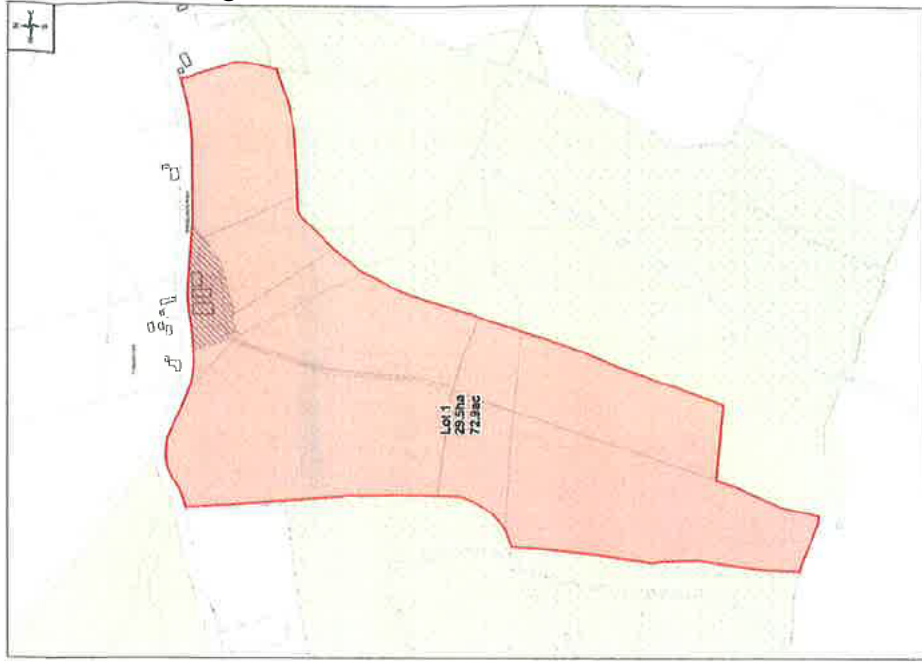
TIMBERDEN FARM

A predominantly livestock farm which was purchased by Sevenoaks District Council in 1990 and has since been let under a series of agricultural tenancy agreements.

The Council have now decided to dispose of its interest. The land has the benefit of being registered with the Rural Payments Agency for single farm payments and the entitlements are available by separate negotiation.

It should be noted that there are footpaths crossing the land and the parts of the land hatched on the individual lot plans are the subject of an overage/development covenant.



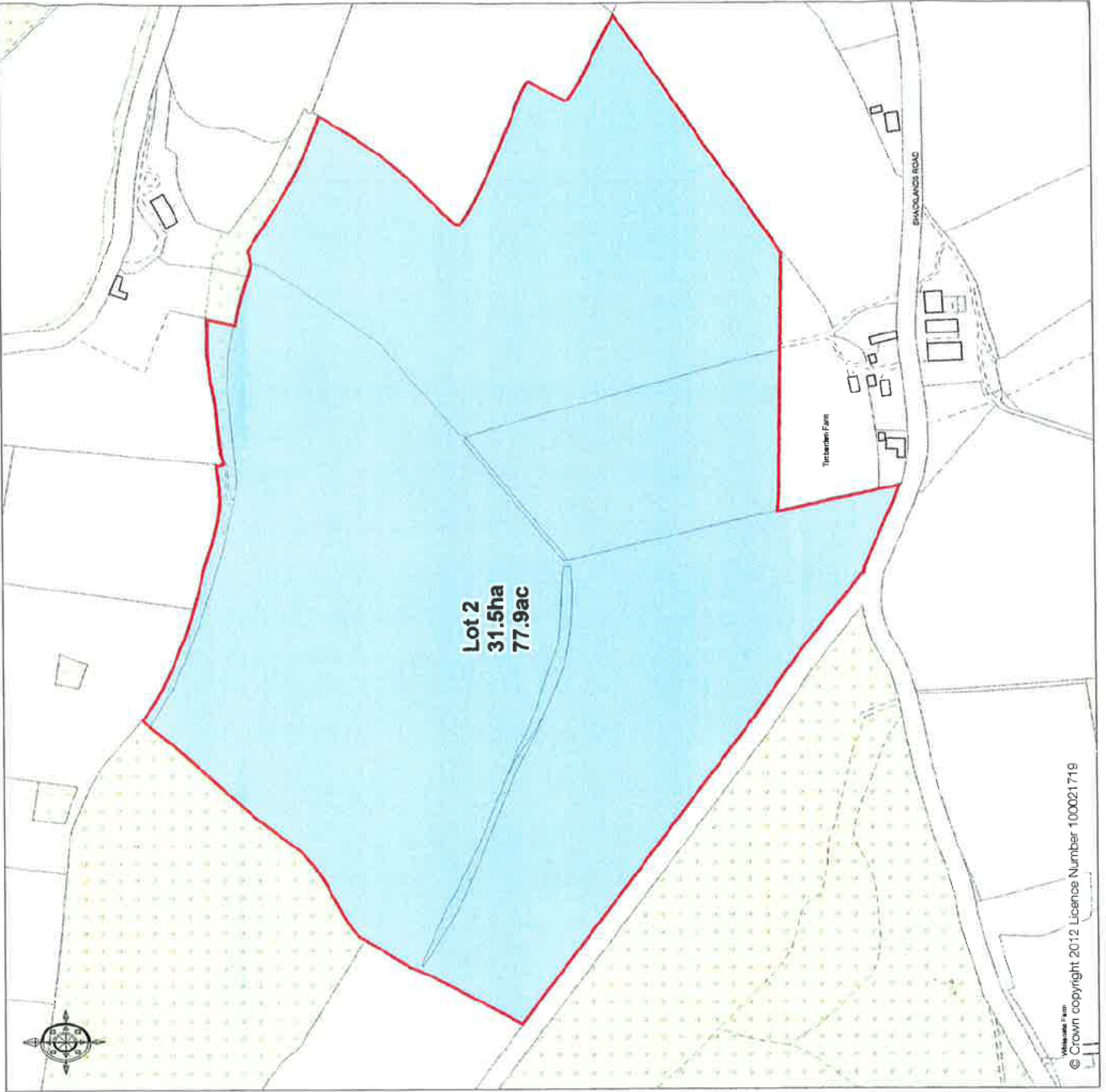


LOT 1: FARM BUILDINGS AND PASTURE LAND 72.9 ACRES (29.50 HECTARES)

Timberden Farm buildings and land front onto Shacklands Road on the northern boundary. The buildings are shown on the plan and comprise a Straw Barn of steel frame with asbestos roof and cladding, Cattle Yard of concrete frame with block walls under asbestos roof and cladding and the former Grain Store of steel frame with block walls under asbestos roof and cladding. The buildings are served by a concrete yard and have been the centre for the farming operation for the complete holding.

The land rises gently to the south in the main and is surrounded by woodland along most of the boundary.





**LOT 2: PASTURE LAND 77.90 ACRES
(31.52 HECTARES)**

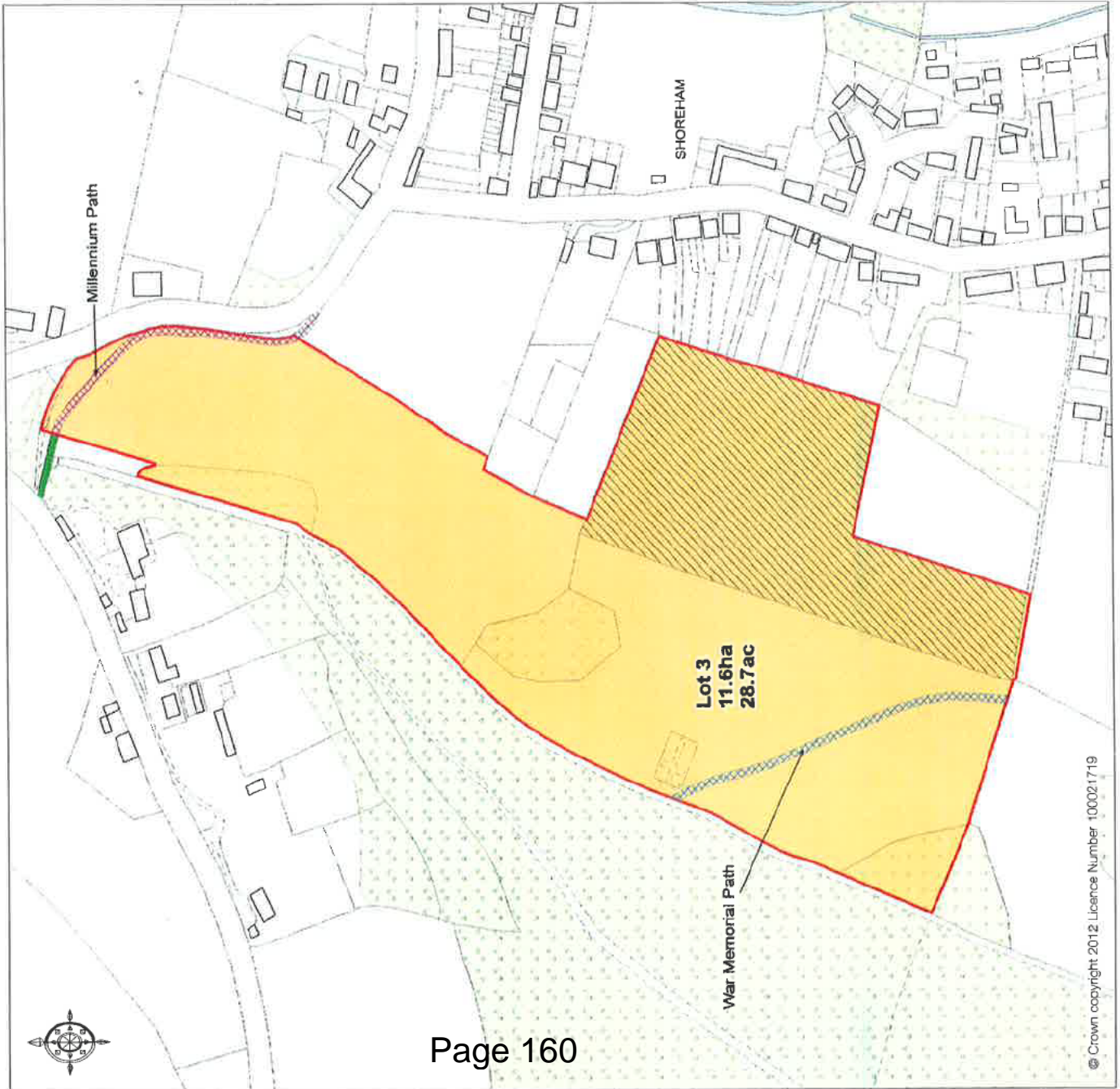
A south facing block of pasture land lying to the north of Shacklands Road. The parcel has a good length of road frontage with a woodland border and wood along the northern boundary. This parcel of land sits naturally with Lot 1 and the buildings situated thereon.

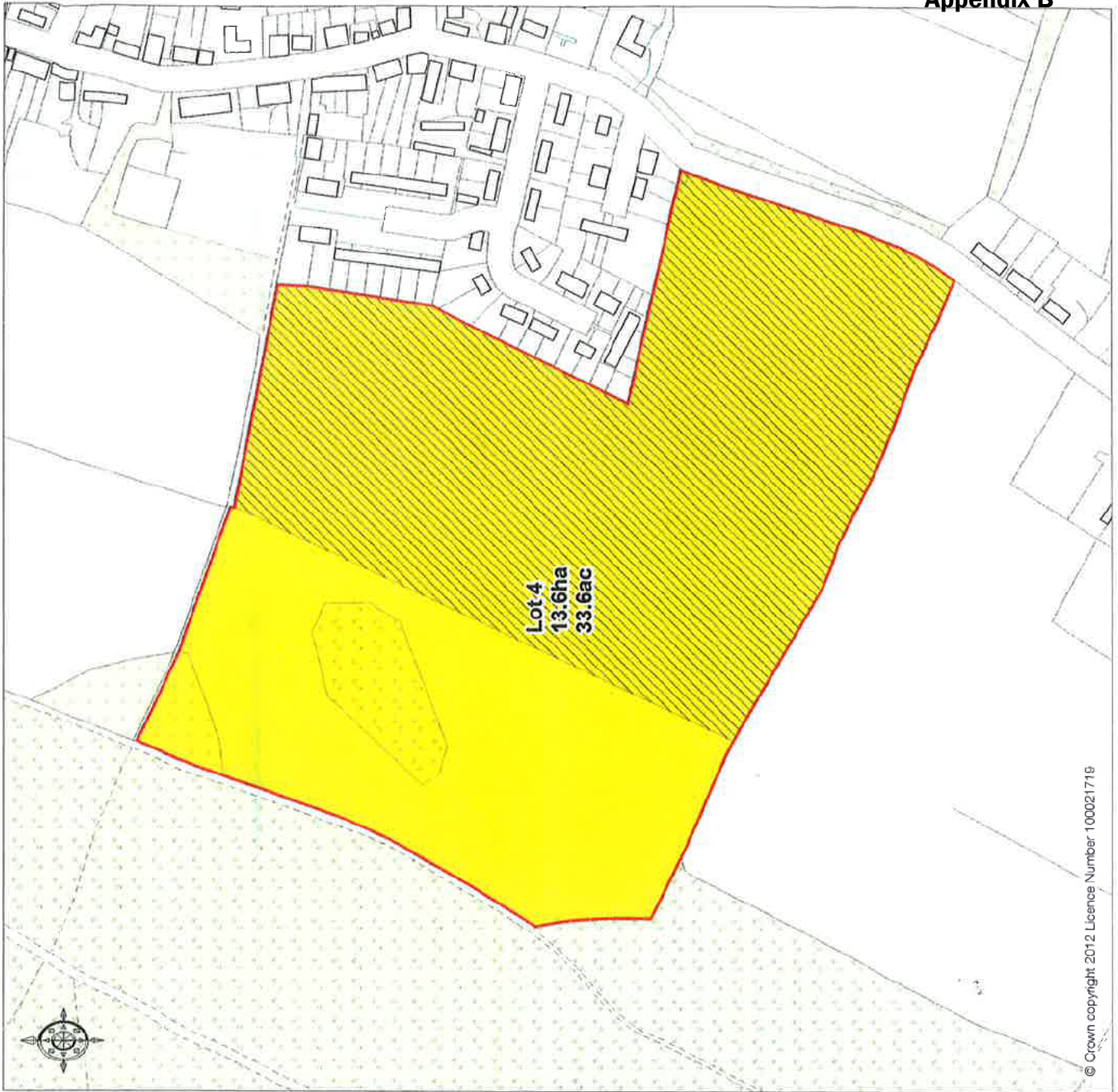


**LOT 3: PASTURE ESCARPMENT AND ARABLE LAND
ADJOINING SHOREHAM VILLAGE 28.7 ACRES
(11.6 HECTARES)**

Access to this land is via right of way, coloured in green, the ownership of which will be retained by Sevenoaks District Council. The vendor will also be granting a right of way on foot only over the Millennium Path hatched purple on the plan for use by the general public. The Council intend to reserve a timber storage site to facilitate their timber management obligations in the adjoining woodland areas.

The land is predominantly a steep escarpment which provides an attractive back drop to the west of Shoreham village and is a key natural feature and setting. There is a level area of arable land lying immediately behind the cottages along the High Street. Within this lot also lies the War Memorial Cross which is let under a 999 year lease from June 1921 to The Parish Council of Shoreham. There is a footpath from the village leading to the War Memorial Cross, hatched blue, on the plan.





LOT 4: ARABLE AND PASTURE LAND ADJOINING SHOREHAM VILLAGE 33.6 ACRES (13.6 HECTARES)

Access to this parcel of land is from Filston Lane and lies to the west of Shoreham. A majority of this parcel of land is suitable for maize/cereals with the continuation of the permanent pasture escarpment to the west.

Part of lot 4 had previously been proposed for inclusion in the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document for the period to 2026. This site has now been excluded from the Plan.



TENURE

Timberden Farm will be offered for sale freehold with vacant possession upon completion. Depending upon the timing of the sale it may be necessary to holdover in some of the farm buildings and necessary adjoining land for the over wintering of cattle and the storage of fodder. This holdover provision will only apply to part of Lot 1 and further details can be provided by the selling agents.

SINGLE FARM PAYMENTS

The land is currently registered with the Rural Payments Agency and single farm payments have been received by the tenant. The land was also subject to a Countryside Stewardship Scheme and this agreement came to an end on the 30th September 2014.

All payments due in respect of the 2014 claim and the CSS will be retained by the tenant and/or Sevenoaks District Council. The entitlements are available to the purchaser by separate negotiation and details of what is available can be provided by the selling agents.

COVENANT / DEVELOPMENT COVENANT

A development covenant was imposed when Sevenoaks District Council purchased the land in 1990 and is for a term of 80 years. The land affected by the covenant is hatched in black on the plan for each lot and it applies to land within Lot 1, 3 and 4.

Under the covenant 50% of the net development value is payable for the land sold. There are a number of provisions relating to the covenant and full details can be obtained from Sevenoaks District Council legal department.

SERVICES

The land has the benefit of a mains water supply to all parts of the farm. The selling agents have prepared a detailed plan of the water supplies showing the various meters and troughs on the land and within the buildings. Depending upon how the land is sold it may be necessary for further meters or sub meters to be installed.

There is a three phase electricity supply to the grain store and lights and sockets to the main barn all of which are within Lot 1.

EASEMENTS RESTRICTIONS AND RIGHTS OF WAY

There are two footpaths SR5 and SR6 crossing the land and these pass over Lot 1 and between Lots 3 and 4.

The property is subject to rights of way to adjoining land, easements for pipes with the right to maintain the same, rights of passage for various media for the retained land with rights to maintain and the right to enter after notice. The property itself also has the benefit for media under the retained land together with the right to repair and maintain. These matters are contained within the property register for title number K694814 and full details can be obtained from the selling agents.

The property is being sold subject to and with the benefit of all rights of way whether public or private, light, sporting, drainage, water and electricity supplies and other rights and obligations easements and quasi-easements, and all existing and prepared wayleaves for masts, pylons, stays cables drains water and gas and other pipes whether referred to in these particulars or not.

METHOD OF SALE

The property is offered for sale by private treaty as a whole or in 4 lots. The closing date for offers will be 12 noon on Tuesday 18th of November 2014.

VAT

The property is not elected for VAT

LOCAL AUTHORITY

Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1HG
01732 227000

VIEWING

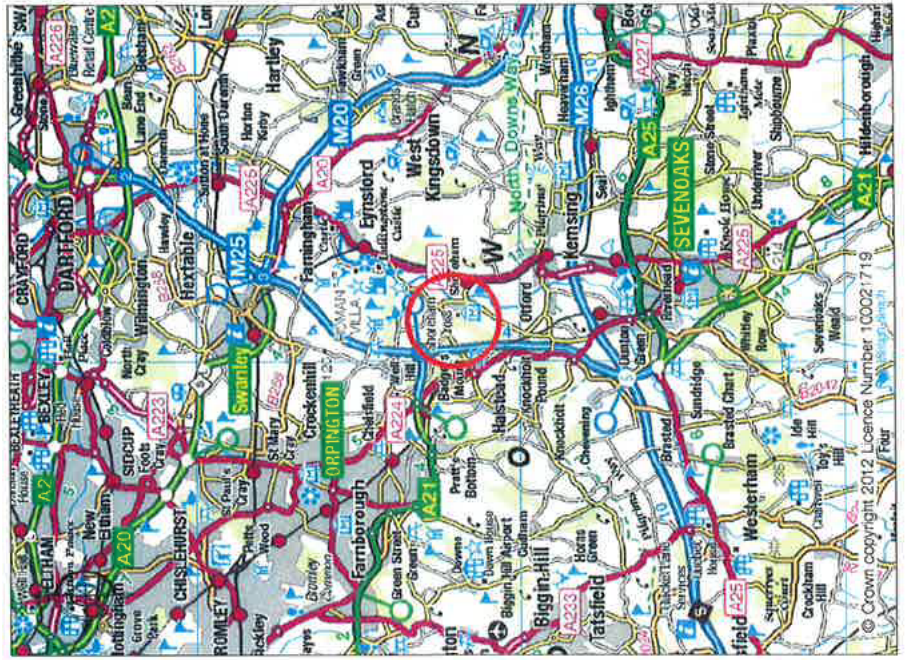
Viewing is strictly by appointment through the Carter Jonas Newbury office on 01635 263000. A number of viewing times will be set where the selling agent will be available at the Timberden Farm buildings to deal with specific enquiries.

DIRECTIONS

From junction 4 of the M25 take the A21 (A224) towards Orpington. At the first roundabout take the first left on A224 towards Dunston Green/Badgers Mount. After 1 mile at the roundabout take the first left into Shacklelands Road sign posted Shoreham Village. After 1 mile you come to Lots 1 and 2 at Timberden Farm buildings. Proceed up the hill and take the first right into Shoreham village where Lot 3 and 4 can be seen on your right hand side.

POSTCODE

The postcode at Timberden Farm buildings is TN14 7TX.



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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