

10 January 2019 at 7.00 pm

Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks  
Despatched: 02.01.19

# Cabinet

## Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Fleming; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Lowe  
Cllrs. Dickins, Firth, Hogarth, Piper and Scholey

## Agenda

There are no fire drills planned. If the fire alarm is activated, which is a continuous siren with a flashing red light, please leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs.

	Pages	Contact
Apologies for Absence		
1. <b>Minutes</b> To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 December 2018, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 8)	
2. <b>Declarations of interest</b> Any interests not already registered.		
3. <b>Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)</b>		
4. <b>Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee, CIL Spending Board or Cabinet Advisory Committees</b>		
a) In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group - Staffing	(Pages 9 - 36)	
b) Allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Contributions to Local and Strategic Infrastructure Projects	(Pages 37 - 38)	
5. <b>Budget Update 2019/20</b>	(Pages 39 - 68)	Adrian Rowbotham Tel: 01732 227153
6. <b>Calculation of Council Tax Base and other tax setting issues</b>	(Pages 69 - 76)	Roy Parsons Tel: 01732 227204



7. **Annual Review of Parking Management arrangements for 2019-20** (Pages 77 - 84) John Strachan  
Tel: 01732227310



8. **Land at Jenkins Neck Wood, Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount** (Pages 85 - 94) Andrew Stirling  
Tel: 01732227099




#### REPORTS ALSO CONSIDERED BY THE CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEES

9. **Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021** (Pages 95 - 174) Andrew Stirling  
Tel: 01732227099



 Indicates a Key Decision

 indicates a matter to be referred to Council

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

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

Should you need this agenda or any of the reports in a different format, or have any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact Democratic Services on 01732 227000 or [democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2018 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Lowe (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Dickins, Firth, Hogarth, Piper and Scholey

Cllrs. Dr Canet, Eyre, Grint, Mrs Hunter, McGarvey, Parkin, Pett, Searles and Thornton were also present.

44. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 8 November 2018 be approved and signed as a correct record.

45. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

46. Questions from Members

There were none.

47. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee, CIL Spending Board or Cabinet Advisory Committees

There were none.

CHANGE IN AGENDA ITEM ORDER

With the agreement of Cabinet, the Chairman brought forward considerations of Agenda Item 10 - Local Plan - Results of The Draft Local Plan Consultation, agreement to publish the Regulation 19 proposed submission version and next steps (Minute 48).

48. Local Plan - Results of The Draft Local Plan Consultation, agreement to publish the Regulation 19 proposed submission version and next steps

The Chairman of the Planning Advisory Committee advised that Members at that Committee had considered the report and agreed to the recommendations subject to an extension of the consultation period.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning presented a report which set out the key content of the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Plan and the process for

taking it forward to examination. It was also proposed to consult on the Affordable Housing SPD; Development in the Green Belt SPD; and Design Review Panel SPD. The Council had received four additional proposed Greenfield Green Belt sites in response to the Regulation 18 consultation process, and following assessment, those considered as being potentially suitable for inclusion would be consulted on alongside (but not part of) the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the following be issued for public consultation (to close on Sunday 3 February 2019)
  - i) the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan (as detailed within Appendices 5 and 6 to this report and subject to the removal of sites MX50 and HO70);
  - ii) the additional strategic greenbelt greenfield sites received during Draft Local Plan consultation (as detailed within Appendix 4 to this report); and
  - iii) the associated Supplementary Planning Documents (as detailed within Appendix 7 to this report)
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Planning Officer following consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder to finalise any non-policy text changes required in the Draft Local Plan prior to Regulation 19 public consultation; and
- c) it be recommended that Full Council agrees to the submission of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan for examination.

49. Budget Update 2019/20

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report which set out progress made in preparing the 2019/20 budget and updated Members on key financial information. The Council had an excellent track record in identifying, planning for and addressing financial challenges. In light of the challenging financial position facing all authorities eight years ago, for 2011/12 the Council produced a 10-year budget together with a savings plan for the first time. This was the ninth year this method had been used and provided the Council with a stable basis for future years.

There were several changes to the assumptions since the Financial Prospects report on 13 September 2018 which included additional income from the Property

## Cabinet - 6 December 2018

Investment Strategy. Since the last report the Advisory Committees had been presented with growth and savings proposals. If all of the proposals included in the report were accepted by Cabinet together with the changes to assumptions an additional small saving of £4,000 will be required to produce a balanced 10-year budget.

The Chief Finance Officer informed Members that the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was due to be announced today but had been delayed due to the Government's commitment to Brexit business.

Cabinet identified which further growth and savings suggestions made by the Advisory Committees would require Service Change Impact Assessments to Cabinet in January, be kept on the list for possible future investigation or to not take any further.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) Cabinet support SCIA's 2-15 as listed in Appendix D;
- b) the approaches below to each further growth and savings suggestion listed in Appendix F, be agreed:
  - i. the following be considered for this budget cycle and SCIA's presented to Cabinet on 10 January 2019

#### Growth

- Preventative asset maintenance in order to have it fully funded within five years.

#### Savings

- The Parish Projects capital budget of £51,000 be investigated as a possible one off saving due to the now alternative option of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding.
- Removal of the Equalities Legislation budget.
- Review of the associated costs of agenda printing, delivery and Member postal arrangements.
- A taxi licensing training centre at the Council's offices.
- An increase in the publicity of the Council's MOT test centre.

- ii. the following items be kept on the list for possible future investigation

#### Growth

- Consideration be given to asking Officers to investigate whether there was an increased need which outweighed the

current provision of the HERO service, and if so the Committee gave its general support to the scheme as a growth item.

Savings

- A shared service for the Legal team.
- A full time magistrate on call to support the Legal team
- Sponsorship of the Council's car parks.
- A service level agreement for operators of council premises to use print studio.

- iii. no further action be taken on the following
- None

- c) Officers identify further savings options to be included in the Budget Update report to Cabinet on 11 January 2018.

50. Land at Jenkins Neck Wood, Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount

The Leader referred to the report which provided an update on the proposed disposal of surplus property assets at Jenkins Neck Wood, Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount.

He advised that the Finance Advisory Committee had considered the report and moved from the Chair that the item be deferred until the next meeting of Cabinet so that further information may be provided by Officers.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That that this item be deferred until the next meeting of Cabinet so that further information may be provided by Officers.

51. Treasury Management - Mid-Year Update 2018/19

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

He advised that the Finance Advisory Committee had also considered the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

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Resolved: That the Treasury Management Mid-Year Update for 2018/19, be approved.

52. Asset Maintenance - Planned Preventative Maintenance

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented a report which detailed the results of recent asset maintenance surveys for Council owned buildings where the Council had maintenance liability responsibilities and recommended full consideration be given to the implications for the ten year budget plan.

He advised that the Finance Advisory Committee had considered the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the results of the Planned Preventative Maintenance Surveys be noted and be fully considered in a future budget report and the implications for the 10 year budget plan.

53. Financial Results 2018/19 - to the end of September 2018

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented a report on the Council's financial results 2018/19 to the end of September 2018, which showed the year end position was currently forecast to be an unfavourable variance of £99,000; which represented 0.67% of our net service expenditure budget totalling £14,687,000.

He advised that the Finance Advisory Committee had considered the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the report be noted.

54. Process undertaken to alter discretionary grant maximums associated with the Housing Assistance Policy

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health presented a report which sought amendments to the current Housing Assistance Policy (HAP) adopted in December 2017 as demand for discretionary funding had dramatically increased. As a result of this dramatic increase the ability to better manage demand against available resource is required for all discretionary assistance, ensuring sufficient resources remained for the core services especially Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants.

The Housing Standards Team Leader explained the proposals and he advised that the Housing & Health Advisory Committee 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) a reduction of the maximum Accelerated Facility Grant from the current £7,500 to £6,500 and reduction of the Specific Situation Funding from the current £50,000 to £0.00 be approved; and
- b) the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health (and any successor with responsibility for Housing) be delegated authority to amend all discretionary grant maximums.

#### 55. Housing Allocations Policy

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health presented a report which sought approval of the revised Sevenoaks District Housing Allocations Policy to incorporate changes in legislation and to ensure that social housing allocations prioritise those with the greatest housing need.

The Head of Housing explained the report. She advised that the Housing & Health Advisory Committee had considered the report and suggested revised recommendations to Council, which were included in a supplementary agenda.

#### 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 Council, to approve the Housing Allocations Policy subject to

- a) 3.1 (a) under 'Local Connection' being amended to read  
  
'a) Having lived permanently in Sevenoaks District continuously for 6 out of the last 12 months, or 3 years in total out of the last 5 years'  
  
to bring it in line with the Homelessness Code of Conduct; and



- b) the Council's definition of Local Essential Workers' criteria, as set out within the draft Local Plan, be included in 3.2 'Employment in Sevenoaks District.'

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.20 PM

CHAIRMAN

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 7 December 2018. The decisions contained in Minutes 49, 50, 51, 52 and 53 take effect immediately. The decisions contained in Minutes 48 (a) & (b), 54 and 55 take effect on 17 December 2018. Minute 48 (c) is a recommendation to Council.

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**IN-DEPTH SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - STAFFING**

**Cabinet - 10 January 2019**

Report of                      Cllr Brown (Chair - In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group)

Status                         For Consideration

Key Decision                No

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**This report supports the Key Aim of the effective use of Council resources**

**Portfolio Holder**        Cllr. Peter Fleming

**Contact Officer**        Jim Carrington-West, Ext. 7286

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**Recommendation to Cabinet:** That Cabinet

- (a) consider the report from the Scrutiny Committee and note the recommendations as set out in paragraph 17 of the report; and
- (b) ask officers to investigate further and implement the recommendations, as appropriate, as operational decisions.

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**Introduction**

- 1     At its October 2017 meeting the Scrutiny Committee resolved to set up a working group to look in more depth at matters relating to staffing within the Council.
- 2     The group had a particular focus on recruitment, retention, and flexible working. While sickness has been covered during meetings, this is a substantial topic and was not the focus of the enquiry (for data on this topic, see Appendix E - sickness absence as of February 2018 and data in relation to occupational health).
- 3     The working group was made up of the following members of the Scrutiny Committee:
  - Cllr Cameron Brown (Chair)
  - Cllr Elizabeth Purves
  - Cllr Lawrence Ball
  - Cllr Michael Hogg

## Agenda Item 4a

- 4 As part of it's work, the group met with the following people.
- Dr Pav Ramewal - Chief Executive;
  - Jim Carrington-West - Chief Officer Corporate Services;
  - Nuala Beattie - HR Manager;
  - Kirsteen Allen - Director Ten 2 Two Recruitment Agency;

### Background

- 5 Sevenoaks District Council is recognised as a high performing local authority, having achieved a number of awards in recent years including LGC Council of the Year, Guardian Public Service Awards - Overall Winner and CIPFA Awards - Grand Prix winner to name but a few.
- 6 All of these awards in some way reflect the approach and attitude of staff and culture of the organisation in delivering excellent services. This culture reflects a hard working approach from staff and does in part rely on a significant amount of good-will to achieve. In respect of recognition as an employer, more directly reflecting the approach to it's workforce, the council has also achieved:
- Investors in People Platinum accreditation - the first Local Authority to do so and still only one of two in the country. SDC prides itself on the training programmes generally for its staff (see for example application form for the approval of a course leading to qualification and data in relation to training, appendix A and B. Five degrees have obtained by staff currently working at SDC - SDC will pay for training, although this is repaid if staff then leave within two years);
  - Best Companies - Top Local Authority in the not-for-profit organisations category, based entirely on staff feedback (see also attractive staff prospectus, background document);
  - National Association of Civic Officers - Civic Office of the Year. Recognised for excellence on a shoestring.

### Challenges and current approach

- 7 Alongside the record of achievement for the organisation, there are a number of challenges in relation to the workforce in terms of both recruitment and retention of staff. These relate to: -
- a. Sevenoaks' geographic location and consequential factors such as house prices. For example, most council staff do not live within the immediate area due to high house prices, with an average value well in excess of that found nationally;

- b. Proximity to London, with higher competitive salaries available likely to be a contributing factor to any difficulties relating to recruitment and retention. Some 32 staff moved on last year (103 over three years - see appendix C) - approximately 8% of the workforce - and the primary reason for leaving when giving reasons was salary (see appendix D). Data shows that recruitment to senior and middle management, certain service areas (democratic services) and professionally skilled roles is the most problematic. The market place is extremely competitive and other local authorities are not keen to share data with SDC. This is of course in the context of trying to find savings across the Council.
- 8 These issues can have significant knock on effects on SDC finances - see for example cost of agency staff (appendix G).

**How does SDC combat these issues?**

**(1) Recruitment Campaigns**

- 9 When it comes to recruitment, posts are widely advertised in a number of different ways dependent on the role, including JobsGoPublic, social media, trade press and where necessary via recruitment agencies (see example of job advert, appendix H).

**(2) Market Related Payments**

- 10 As an employer, Sevenoaks District Council operates on National Terms and Conditions and utilizes recognised job evaluation schemes when evaluating the salary bands for posts across the organization. This ensures consistency across the organisation but does not take into account market conditions for different skill sets at any given time.
- 11 In order to try and compensate for this, there is a Market Related Payment (MRP) scheme in place. This allows an additional sum to be offered on top of base salary where difficulty in recruitment is experienced and market conditions dictate. Each instance to apply a MRP to a post is considered on a case by case basis by the Strategic Management Team (SMT) and is required to also include benchmarked data for comparison. Agreed MRPs are then reviewed by SMT every two years.

**(3) Other Benefits**

- 12 Even with an excellent reputation and this wide ranging approach to advertisement, there can still often be difficulty in attracting staff. This would appear to be related in most instances, directly to salaries and despite measures such as MRPs mentioned earlier, a shortfall when compared to the wider market. This is especially noticeable where the role may be in competition with the private sector in areas including Planning, ICT or Legal.

## Agenda Item 4a

- 13 Despite the limitations on direct pay benefits, the organisation has sought to look at other, non-pay related benefits that can be offered to try and encourage both recruitment and retention.
- 14 As examples, these include the following. A full list of staff benefits can be seen at appendix I:
- a. Flu vaccinations;
  - b. Eye care;
  - c. Child Care vouchers;
  - d. Health checks;
  - e. Visiting Osteopaths and reflexologist (payment required but service available in the building)
  - f. Discounted leisure membership;
  - g. Cycle to work scheme;
  - h. Discounts with high street and online retailers (Costa Coffee and Ashford Designer Outlet);
  - i. Competitive car loans;
  - j. Season ticket loans.

### **(4) Flexible Working**

- 15 The Council also has a good current approach to flexible working (some 34/39 requests approved, 2015 - 2018, see appendix F). There are numerous examples of flexible working arrangements, facilitated by current technology, that enable effective services to be delivered but at the same time balance individual circumstances with operational requirements.
- 16 As technology has developed and systems are available remotely along with the ability to interact with the public, this trend has increased and is seen as a useful tool to maintain both services and an effective workforce. There are however clearly some service areas that are more able to make use of this approach than others.

### **Suggestions for Consideration**

- 17 Based on the work of the group and the challenges set out above, the following are made as suggestions from the Scrutiny Committee for discussion and recommendation to Cabinet .

- a. Wider use of flexible working arrangements, particularly the 10-2 market/ job shares where those coming back to the work place can be extremely well qualified but do not wish to commute to London, and the ability to work from home;
  - b. Increasing the period where staff have to pay back the costs of training from 2 to 3 years, including where they move to another local authority as opposed to the private sector, as currently occurs; It is suggested for consideration that this is on a tapered basis. If an officer leaves within 1 year of completing training, the full training cost is repayable. The amount then tapers as a reducing amount over years 2 and 3.
  - c. Widen the radius for the relocation allowance (Currently 10 miles from District boundary);
  - d. Review of structures, roles and responsibilities, and use of market related payments (reviewable every two years) - where finances permit;
  - e. Improvement of the kitchen areas for staff;
  - f. Introduce a lower rate for car loans (Currently 2.55%);
  - g. Extend the period before which MRPs are reviewed;
  - h. Create a recruitment microsite for the Council to better advertise vacant posts and consider different places to advertise such as local press and social media (Linkedin, mumsnet etc.)
  - i. Review structures as part of the current Customer Redesign initiative, introducing career grades to support career development and succession planning;
  - j. Encourage greater use of apprentices, funded through the apprenticeship levy.
  - k. Consider a referral payment to staff who introduce an individual who then successfully takes up a position within the council. To be paid once new member of staff has successfully completed probation or 6 months of employment without issue.
- 18 Many of these suggestions are operational in nature and sit as part of the remit of the Head of Paid Service. Cabinet is asked to note the recommendations and ask officers to investigate further and implement as appropriate as operational decisions.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

Sevenoaks District Council operates within a balanced, 10 year budget. Any recommendations would therefore need to be subject to further investigation to remain within current allocated budgets.

## Agenda Item 4a

### Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Post Entry Training Form

Appendix B - Training Data

Appendix C - Leavers Data

Appendix D - Exit Data

Appendix E1 - Sickness Data

Appendix E2 - Occupational Health

Appendix F - Flexible Working Data

Appendix G - Agency Costs 2017/18

Appendix H - Sample Job Advert

Appendix I - Staff Benefits

### **Background Documents**

Employee Prospectus

**Cllr Cameron Brown**

**Chair - In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group - Staffing**



## Application for approval of course leading to qualification

Please complete both sides of this form and hand it to your Chief Officer for countersigning before forwarding to the Human Resources Team.

### Personal details (please attach the applicant's original application form or photocopy)

Title:  Mr  Mrs  Miss  Ms

First name:  Surname:

Department:

Job title:

Grade:

### Course of Study

Qualification to be obtained:

Date course starts:

Duration of course:

Method of study: *e.g day/evening*

College:

Method of study:

If this is not your first attempt at this course of study or examination, please give details of previous attempts:

Please explain why you wish to undertake this course of study:

In what way do you feel this course of study will benefit this council?

**Estimate of costs.** *Please give for each year of the course.*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Course/Tuition Fees						
Registration Fees						
Examination Fees						
Additional Costs						
Travel & Subsistence						
<b>Total</b>						

If the course is longer in duration than the above, please detail separately.

N.B Please detail the cheapest practicable means of travel to your study here:

**Training History**

Course	Dates	If certificated, did you pass?	Trainer/College

**Undertaking**

In consideration of the Council granting me facilities and financial assistance to enable me to acquire a recognised qualification, I hereby undertake to remain in the Service of the Council for a period of two years from the date on which I obtain such qualification or leave the course. I have read Section 2 of the Scheme of Conditions of Service prescribed by the National Joint Council for Local Authorities APT&C Staff and understand that the Conditions of Assistance referred to in para. 20(5) apply to me. I agree that any refund of financial assistance required in accordance with the foregoing paragraphs shall be a debt from me to the Council and recoverable by deduction from any salary which may be due to me from the Council or, if necessary, by legal action.

Should I leave the Council's employment during the period of study, I also undertake to repay the financial assistance provided in full.

Signed:

Date:

**Certified by Department**

The above application is recommended for approval. The Course of Study leads to a recognised qualification relevant to a career in my Department.

Signed:

Chief Officer/Head of Service

Date:

**For HR use only**

Signed:

Human Resources Representative

Date:

Attended TIM 17/18	Attended External Training 17/18	Post Entry Training 17/18
116	118	11*

\* 6 professional training  
5 degrees  
All still employed

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2017-2018			2016-2017			2015-2016			Over the 3 years
Leavers	No:	To SMT	Leavers	No:	SMT	Leavers	No:	SMT	Total Leavers
Audit	0	0	Audit	1	0	Audit	0	0	1
Building Control	0	0	Building Control	5	4	Building Control	0	0	5
CCTV	1	0	CCTV	3	3	CCTV	3	3	7
Communities and Business	1	1	Communities and Business	2	2	Communities and Business	2	1	5
Communications	0	0	Communications	1	1	Communications	0	0	1
Customer Services	1	1	Customer Services	0	0	Customer Services	1	0	2
Democratic Services	2	2	Democratic Services	2	1	Democratic Services	1	1	5
Development - Planning	4	3	Development - Planning	7	7	Development - Planning	2	2	13
Development - Validation	1	1	Development - Validation	3	2	Development - Validation	0	0	4
Dunbrik - Office	6	2	Dunbrik - Office	5	0	Dunbrik - Office	4	1	15
Environmental Health	1	1	Environmental Health	0	0	Environmental Health	0	0	1
Facilities Management	1	1	Facilities Management	3	1	Facilities Management	2	2	6
Finance	1	1	Finance	0	0	Finance	0	0	1
Housing	0	0	Housing	1	1	Housing	1	1	2
HR	0	0	HR	0	0	HR	1	0	1
IT Services	2	2	IT Services	3	3	IT Services	1	0	6
Legal	1	0	Legal	0	0	Legal	2	1	3
Licencing	4	4	Licencing	2	2	Licencing	1	1	7
Parking & Amenities	0	0	Parking & Amenities	0	0	Parking & Amenities	3	2	3
Planning Policy	1	1	Planning Policy	0	0	Planning Policy	1	0	2
Print Studio	1	1	Print Studio	0	0	Print Studio	0		1
Revenues and Benefits	4	2	Revenues and Benefits	3	3	Revenues and Benefits	3	2	10
Secretariat	0	0	Secretariat	1	0	Secretariat	1	1	2
Total	32	23		42	30		29	18	103

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Department	Reason for leaving	Length of service
CCTV	unknown	Under 1 year
CCTV	Resignation	Under 1 year
CCTV	unknown	Under 1 year
CCTV	Resignation	Under 1 year
CCTV	Retirement	between 10 and 15 years
CCTV	Resignation	Under 1 year
CCTV	Resignation	between 5 and 10 years
Emergency Planning & Property Services	unknown	between 1 and 5 yrs
Grounds Maintenance	Redundancy	between 1 and 5 yrs
Grounds Maintenance	End of contract	Under 1 year
Grounds Maintenance	Retirement - Early	10 years
Kent Resources Partnership External Funded	Resignation	Under 1 year
Licensing	End of contract	between 5 and 10 years
Licensing	Resignation	between 10 and 15 years
Parking and Amenities	Resignation	between 5 and 10 years
Parking and Amenities	Resignation	over 25 years
Refuse Collection	Resignation - Personal	between 10 and 15 years
Refuse Collection	Resignation	Under 1 year
Street Cleansing	Retirement	between 5 and 10 years
Audit Risk and Fraud	Transfer - Re-organisation	between 10 and 15 years
Revenues and Benefits	End of contract	between 1 and 5 yrs
Revenues and Benefits	Resignation	Under 1 year
Revenues and Benefits	Resignation	between 10 and 15 years
Revenues and Benefits	Retirement	between 5 and 10 years
Economic Development and Property	Resignation	between 1 and 5 yrs
Housing Advice and Standards	Resignation	between 5 and 10 years
Housing Advice and Standards	Redundancy	between 20 and 25 years
Housing Advice and Standards	Redundancy	between 20 and 25 years
Democratic Services	Redundancy	between 1 and 5 yrs
Democratic Services	Resignation	between 1 and 5 yrs
Legal Services	Retirement - Early	between 10 and 15 years
Legal Services	Redundancy	over 25 years
Legal Services	Resignation	between 1 and 5 yrs
Development Management	Retirement - Early	between 5 and 10 years
Development Management	Resignation	between 5 and 10 years
Development Management	Resignation	between 1 and 5 yrs
Development Management	Resignation	between 5 and 10 years

<b>Number of leavers</b>	<b>44</b>
End of contract	3
Redundancy	5
Resignation	19
Retirement	6
Unknown	3

Department	Reason for leaving	Reason for leaving	Length of service
Building Control	previous job		under 1 year
Building Control	setting up own business		between 5 and 10 yrs
Building Control	setting up own business		between 5 and 10 yrs
Communities and Business	relationship with line manager		between 1 and 5 yrs
Democratic Services	remuneration	workload	between 1 and 5 yrs
Development Control	career opportunities	remuneration	between 1 and 5 yrs
Development Control	pace of working		between 5 and 10 yrs
Development Control	new challenge		between 10 and 15 years
Facilities	work colleague		between 1 and 5 yrs
Facilities	do not like job	progression	between 1 and 5 yrs
Parking and Surveying	challenge	remuneration	between 5 and 10 yrs
Audit	team morale		between 1 and 5 yrs
Licensing	relationship with line manager		between 5 and 10 yrs
Planning	remuneration		between 1 and 5 yrs
Planning	different type of work	lack of progression	between 1 and 5 yrs
Revenues and Benefits	flexible working (working from home)		between 1 and 5 yrs
Revenues and Benefits	more flexibility		
Secretary	promotion	remuneration	under 1 year
Validation	natural progression		under 1 year
Corporate Project Delivery	lack of progression		under 1 year

<b>Number of leavers</b>	<b>63</b>
Redundancy	7
Capability	1
Retirement	2
Resignation	45



Department	Reason for leaving	Reason for leaving	Length of service
Parking and amenities	retirement		over 25 years
Facilities	stay at home parent		between 1 and 5 years
Licencing	career progression	renumeration	between 1 and 5 years
Legal and Democratic Services	full time carer		under 1 year
Direct Services	move abroad		between 15 and 20 years
Corporate Services	renumeration		under 1 year
Development Management	career progression and work-life balance	renumeration	between 1 and 5 years
Planning	retirement		between 1 and 5 years
Corporate Projects	career progression	renumeration	under 1 year
Revenues and Benefits	contract end		between 1 and 5 years
Corporate Resources	career progression and work-life balance	renumeration	between 5 and 10 years
Development Services	retirement		over 25 years
Community and Planning	move abroad		between 10 and 15 years
Licencing	more responsibilities	training and development	under 1 year
IT	more responsibilities		between 5 and 10 years
Direct Services	family	work - life balance	between 1 and 5 years
Planning	career progression	salary	between 5 and 10 years
Planning	career progression		between 1 and 5 years

<b>Number of leavers</b>	<b>49</b>
Resignations	22
Casual employees resignations	9
End of contract	4
Retirement	10
Redundancy	1

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## Scrutiny Committee information request

Sickness absence as at end of February 2018

Information request	2017/18 (to end of Feb)	2016/17	2015/16
Total number of days sickness absence	2,851	2,889	3,359
Average number of FTE's employed	376.8	374.2	372.4
Sickness absence per FTE employed	7.57 days per FTE	7.72 days per FTE	9.02 days per FTE
Total sickness - long term	5.03 days per FTE	3.05 days per FTE	4.25 days per FTE
Total sickness - short term	2.53 days per FTE	4.67 days per FTE	4.77 days per FTE
Number of people taking sickness absence	242	239	250
Top reasons for absence	Back/Neck problems Operations & Recovery Stress	Operations & Recovery Other Sickness Depression	Depression Operations & Recovery Anxiety

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Occupational Health (PAM)

Cost per year to SDC for the service: **£10,080 per annum**

The service provides:

On site OH clinic twice a month providing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management referrals</li> <li>• Staff self-referrals</li> <li>• Mini health checks</li> </ul>
Physician appointments at PAM head office for referred staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 this year (contract review staff and health advise on more complex sickness cases)</li> </ul>
Ill health retirement Tier 1/2/3 for current staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 to date PAM head office</li> </ul>
Ill health retirement Tier 1/2/3 for previously employed staff wanting early release of deferred pension on the grounds of ill health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 so far PAM head office</li> </ul>
Fit4 Jobs – new starters online questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59 actioned from June 17 until Feb 18 – online</li> </ul>
HAVS screening for staff that use vibrating tools in their role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 per year on site</li> </ul>
HAVE tier 4 and 5 for staff found to have symptoms of hand/arm vibration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 at PAM head office per year</li> </ul>
Hearing tests for manual workforce in noisy environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 per year onsite</li> </ul>
Hep B vaccinations for cesspool workers amongst others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to be approx. 12 a year but currently on hold as national shortage of vaccine and SDC non priority group</li> </ul>

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<b>Reason</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Declined</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Working from Home	8	1	9
Increase	7		7
Decrease	18	1	19
Career Break		1	1
Increase & Working from Home	1		1
Compressed Hours		2	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>39</b>

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**2017\_18 Agency Costs**

	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>Partnership</b>	<b>SDC Ratio</b>	<b>SDC Cost</b>
P/ship Benefits	10,563	Revs & Bens	0.5	5,281
P/ ship Benefits	42,908	Revs & Bens	0.5	21,454
P/ ship Benefits	44,902	Revs & Bens	0.5	22,451
Principal Planning Solicitor	54,182			54,182
Temp Support Officer	13,741			13,741
Building Control Team Leader	20,399	Building Control	0.5544	11,309
Building Control Manager	20,020	Building Control	0.5544	11,099
Building Control Surveyor	40,071	Building Control	0.5544	22,215
Environmental Health Officer	27,738	Environmental Health	0.56	15,533
Environmental Health Officer	832	Environmental Health	0.56	466
Technical Officer	37,909	Environmental Health	0.56	21,229
Environmental Protection Officer	24,587	Environmental Health	0.56	13,768
Casual Accountant	13,171			13,171
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>349,559</b>			<b>224,437</b>

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# Job Opportunity



**DEPARTMENT:**

**SALARY:**

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**OVERVIEW:**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**HOW TO APPLY:**

**CLOSING DATE:**

**INTERVIEW DATE:**

Council Offices  
Argyle Road  
Sevenoaks  
Kent TN13 1HG

t 01732 227000  
e [information@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:information@sevenoaks.gov.uk)  
DX30006 Sevenoaks  
[www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk)

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## **Benefits offered to staff**

### **Core Benefits**

- Generous Annual Leave including facility to buy and sell leave
- Local Government Pension Scheme
- Supportive sickness process (up to 6 months full pay, 6 months half pay)
- Free onsite parking for staff
- Occupational Health
- Care First employee assistance programme
- Phased return to work after sickness

### **Health and Wellbeing**

- Discounted bike and equipment through the cycle to work scheme
- Free eye tests (where screen work is a part of your role)
- Flu vaccinations
- Health Checks
- Osteopathy
- Reflexology
- Simply Health - employee contribution health scheme
- Discounted leisure membership
- Employee Assistance Provider offering counselling, legal advice and lifestyle advice.

### **Recognition, Learning and Development**

- Inclusive Appraisal process
- Regular 1:1 meetings
- Coaching
- Employee of the Month (Dunbrik)
- Long Service Awards
- Retirement Awards
- Staff Consultative Group
- Staff Suggestion Scheme
- Team Awards
- Talent in Me - Bitesized learning and development with 50+ modules
- Extra day leave for Volunteering opportunities

### **Staff Discounts and Special Offers**

- Costco Membership
- Days Out - Kaarp Benefits, includes Chessington, Sea Life Centre, Theatre Tickets etc.
- Tastecard+
- Ashford Outlet discounts
- Hotel Discounts
- Local Shopping Discounts
- Mobile Phone Discounts
- Motoring Discounts

**Work/Life Balance**

- Career Breaks
- Flexible Working
- Car Loans
- Childcare Vouchers
- Compassionate Leave
- Enhanced Maternity/Paternity Pay
- Season Ticket Loans

**Item 4 (b) - Allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)  
Contributions to Local and Strategic Infrastructure Projects**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2018 containing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Board's recommendations to Cabinet were not available prior to the printing of this agenda and will follow as soon as they are available.

All of the documents considered by the CIL Spending Board can be viewed [here](#).

(<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=320&MId=2351&Ver=4&J=2>)

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**BUDGET UPDATE 2019/20**

**Cabinet - 10 January 2019**

Report of Chief Finance Officer

Status For Consideration

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 eight 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 ninth 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 2019/20 budget and updates Members on key financial information.

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 13 December 2018. The two most relevant elements for this Council were that the Council Tax increase referendum limit for 2019/20 has been increased from 2% to 3% (or £5 if higher) and that the Kent and Medway Business Rates Retention Bid for 2019/20 was unsuccessful.

The current budget position is a £3,000 per annum gap over the 10-year budget period.

Cabinet will make its final recommendation on the budget at its meeting on 14 February 2019, after taking into account any updated information available at that date.

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. John Scholey

**Contact Officer(s)** Adrian Rowbotham, Ext. 7153

Alan Mitchell, Ext. 7483

**Recommendation to Cabinet:**

- (a) Members give consideration to the growth and savings proposals in Appendix E and make one of the following recommendations for each:
  - i. Support the SCIA and include in the budget
  - ii. Investigate further and consider for the 2019/20 budget setting

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process.

- iii. Keep on the list for possible future investigation
- (b) Recommend the Council Tax increase for 2019/20.
- (c) Depending on the budget position following the recommendations above, provide officers with any further instructions.

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### Introduction and Background

- 1 At the Cabinet meeting on 13 September 2018, Members considered a report setting out the Council's financial prospects for 2019/20 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 2019/20 and beyond.
- 2 As part of the budget process officers put forward their Service Dashboards to the Advisory Committees between September and November, which set out a summary of current and future challenges and risks. The Advisory Committees recommended new growth and savings items which were considered at the Cabinet meeting on 6 December 2018.
- 3 The report to Cabinet on 6 December 2018 also contained updates to the Financial Prospects report.
- 4 This report sets out the current position for the 2019/20 budget and updates Members on key financial information received since the last report, including the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 13 December 2018.

### Financial Self-Sufficiency

- 5 The Council's Corporate Plan, introduced in 2013, set out an ambition for the Council to become financially self-sufficient which was achieved in 2016/17. This means that the Council no longer requires direct funding from Government, through Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus, to deliver its services.
- 6 This approach was adopted in response to the financial challenges the Country is faced with in bringing its public spending down to ensure it is able to live within its means. In practice this has seen Government funding to local authorities dramatically reduced since 2010/11 with Sevenoaks District Council receiving no Revenue Support Grant from 2017/18.
- 7 The decision to become financially self-sufficient is intended to give the Council greater control over its services, reducing the potential for decision making to be influenced by the level of funding provided by government to local authorities.

- 8 The Council's decision to seek to become financially self-sufficient was subject to scrutiny by the Local Government Associations Peer Challenge of the District Council during December 2013. In their closing letter to the Council they concluded that they 'fully support that aspiration and given the existing and anticipated squeeze upon public finances this makes much sense'.
- 9 With the Council receiving no Revenue Support Grant from 2017/18 and New Homes Bonus reducing from 2018/19, this approach remains appropriate. The attached 10-year budget assumes no Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus. Any funding received from these sources will be put into the Financial Plan Reserve which can be used to support the 10-year budget by funding invest to save initiatives and supporting the Property Investment Strategy. One of the aims of the Property Investment Strategy is to achieve returns of 5% when not borrowing or in excess of 3% for schemes that include some external borrowing; therefore using funding for this purpose will result in additional year on year income that is not impacted by Government decisions.
- 10 Cabinet are keen to remain financially self-sufficient and be ahead of the game. This will allow this Council to move ahead in the knowledge that this Council has the financial resources to provide the services that the district's residents want into the future.

#### Updates to the Financial Prospects Report

- 11 The Financial Prospects report considered in September raised a number of financial risk areas for the Council. These were updated in the December report but further information has been received since which is explained below.
- 12 ***The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement*** for 2019/20 was announced on 13 December 2018 and was for 2019/20 only. The most relevant elements for this Council were as follows:
  - The Council Tax increase referendum limit for district councils for 2019/20 has been increased from 2% to 3% (or £5 if higher).
  - The Kent and Medway Business Rates Retention Bid for 2019/20 was not successful.
  - The Fair Funding Review consultation paper has been published.
  - The Business Rates Retention consultation paper has been published.
  - Commercialisation - The Secretary of State said that he shared the concerns of CIPFA regarding some councils' commercial investments and the potential "risks they are exposing" themselves and the public to and he would discuss with the Treasury "whether further intervention might be required"

## Agenda Item 5

- 13 **Government Support: Revenue Support Grant (RSG)** (£nil received in 2018/19) - As previously assumed, this council no longer receives Revenue Support Grant from 2017/18.
- 14 **New Homes Bonus (NHB)** (£1.3m received in 2018/19 but not used to fund the revenue budget) - 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. The basis of NHB was changed with effect from 2017/18. Previously it was based on cumulative figures for 6 years but this has been reduced to 5 years from 2017/18 and 4 years from 2018/19. In addition, NHB will only be received on tax base growth above 0.4% instead of on all growth (known as the deadweight).
- 15 In the same way as RSG, the attached 10-year budget assumes no NHB resulting in there being no reliance on this funding source to support the revenue budget. Any amounts received will be put into the Financial Plan Reserve for the same purpose as noted above.

New Homes Bonus (estimated amount)

2019/20	£1.220m
---------	---------

- 16 **Council Tax** (£10.4m) - in the Local Government Finance Settlement it was announced that the referendum limit for 2019/20 was being increased to 3% (or £5 if higher) in line with current inflation.
- 17 Band D Council Tax in 2018/19 is £208.80 and the following table shows the potential changes.

2019/20 Council Tax	Original Assumptions	Referendum Limit
% increase	2.00%	2.97%
£ increase (Band D pa)	£4.18	£6.21
£ (Band D pa)	£212.98	£215.01

- 18 Due to the uncertainty of future Council Tax increase referendum limits, if maximum increases are not taken there will be an ongoing detrimental impact on the ability to increase Council Tax in future years.
- 19 The Council Tax Base has increased from 49,902.9 to 50,772.3 Band D equivalent properties. That is an increase of 869.4 (1.17%) which is below the assumed increase of 880.5 (1.18%).
- 20 Part of this increase is due to changes to the empty property discount. A year ago the Government announced that Council's would be able to make changes from 2019/20 but the details have only recently been published. As

part of the 2018/19 budget setting process, Members agreed that an estimated change for this would be included in the assumptions and a separate report on this is being presented at this meeting.

- 21 The Collection Fund position, which is where Council Tax and Business Rates income is initially held before being distributed, will be reviewed in January. It is currently estimated that there will be no impact in 2019/20.
- 22 **Business Rates Retention** (£2.7m) - 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 the funding received by each local authority is not significantly different to pre 2013/14 amounts.
- 23 There has been a commitment from Government to introduce Business Rates Retention since before the 2015 General Election. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) invited local authorities to participate in a pilot of Business Rates Retention in 2018/19. A Kent and Medway pilot bid was submitted including Sevenoaks and was successful. This resulted in this Council retaining significantly more Business Rates in 2018/19 than had previously been assumed.
- 24 That pilot was for one year only and a further Kent and Medway pilot bid was submitted for 2019/20 but was not successful.
- 25 The situation in Kent and Medway is that Business Rates Retention for 2019/20 will revert back to the Business Rates Pool which operated in 2017/18. This Council and Dover Borough Council were not part of that pool but as part of the pilot negotiations it was agreed that Sevenoaks and Dover would benefit as if they were in the pool.
- 26 The assumption in the 10-year budget assumes Business Rates at the safety net level of £2.1m but it is expected that a higher amount will be retained due to the pool agreement.
- 27 The 'safety-net' amount in the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2019/20 is £1,000 higher than included in the previous year's settlement but there is also a one-off levy surplus distribution amount of £35,000.

Business Rates Safety-Net	
2019/20	£2.132m

- 28 The previous settlement continued to include an indicative 'tariff adjustment' (known as negative RSG) amount of £1.083m in 2019/20. It is pleasing to report that this has now been removed from the latest settlement.

## Agenda Item 5

- 29 **Interest receipts** (£0.13m) - Returns are continuing to be significantly lower than they were a few years ago due to low interest rates and the Council's Investment Strategy taking a low risk approach.
- 30 The Bank of England Base Rate increased from 0.5% to 0.75% in August and recent investments have reflected this change. Link Asset Services, the Council's treasury advisors, are forecasting further increases over the next two years.
- 31 Based on the above information the interest receipts assumption for 2019/20 has been reduced from £250,000 to £200,000 but remains at £250,000 in later years.
- 32 **Property Investment Strategy** - The strategy was approved by Council on 22 July 2014 with the intention of building on an approach of property based investment in order to deliver increased revenue income. This was set against a background of reducing Government Support and continued low rates of return through existing treasury management arrangements.
- 33 Five assets have been purchased to date at a cost of £18m and on 25 April 2017, Council agreed to set aside a further £25m for the Property Investment Strategy. The Sennocke Hotel is also now open.
- 34 The income assumptions are proposed to be updated based on the current income levels.

Property Investment Strategy Income	Previous Assumption	Proposed Assumption
2019/20	£1.185m	£1.258m
2020/21 - 2022/23	£1.185m	£1.311m
2023/24	£1.285m	£1.411m
2024/25 - 2025/26	£1.329m	£1.455m
2026/27 - 2028/29	£1.529m	£1.655m

- 35 A Property Investment Strategy Update report will be presented to Finance Advisory Committee on 29 January 2019 and Cabinet on 14 February 2019.
- 36 **Pay costs** (£15m) - The pay award assumption in the previous 10-year budget was 2% per annum. The national pay award for 2019/20 has been finalised with staff on Band D and above receiving a 2% increase with staff on Bands A-C receiving a greater increase (on average over 3%). This additional increase for lower paid staff will increase the cost of the 2019/20 pay award by £60,000.
- 37 Members previously agreed that a budget would be set aside to address the Council's recruitment and retention difficulties and challenges going forward.

- 38 The Council's new Council Plan was recently launched. In order to ensure the effective delivery of the Council Plan, some services are being redesigned so that they are better aligned to customer needs and with a much stronger emphasis on wrapping services around the customer.
- 39 In order to achieve this, the new Customer Solutions Centre has recently started operating. The Customer Solutions Centre is resourced with a wider skill set in order to deal with more interactions at first point of contact and in parallel more effective processing is being investigated. It is anticipated that the cost of these changes can be met within approved budgets and therefore a SCIA will not be required.
- 40 **Superannuation fund** - the last pension fund triennial valuation, which was the third by the actuaries Barnett Waddingham, took place in November 2016.
- 41 The funding level has increased from 72% to 77% since the previous valuation in 2013 and the deficit recovery period for the fund has reduced from 20 years to 17 years. The 10-year budget includes the contribution amounts set by the actuaries for 2017/18 to 2019/20 and includes an additional £100,000 from 2020/21 when the next triennial valuation will come in to effect. This amount will continue to be reviewed during the budget process if additional information becomes available.
- 42 **Non-pay costs** - The budget assumes non-pay costs will increase by an average of 2.25% in all years. In practice, items such as rates and energy costs often rise at a higher rate, so other non-pay items have been allowed a much lower inflation increase. Following detailed work on the non-pay costs budget, the actual amount allocated for 2019/20 is £12,000 less than previously assumed. Inflation is currently at 2.3% (CPI - November 2018).
- 43 **Use of Reserves** - Ensuring the adequacy and sustainability of the Council's reserves continues to be a key part of the budget process. A detailed review of reserves will be included in the February Cabinet report.

### Current Budget Position

- 44 The table at **Appendix D** shows the differences between the 10-year budget agreed by Council on 20 February 2018 and the latest version set out in **Appendix B**. This shows that only a £3,000 budget gap remains.
- 45 The Advisory Committees made a number of further growth and savings suggestions which were discussed by Cabinet on 6 December 2018. Cabinet resolved that the following items be considered for this budget cycle and for SCIA's (**Appendix E**) to be presented to this Cabinet.

### Growth

- Preventative asset maintenance in order to have it fully funded within five years. (SCIA16)

## Agenda Item 5

### Savings

- The Parish Projects capital budget of £51,000 be investigated as a possible one off saving due to the now alternative option of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. (SCIA17)
  - Responding to legislation. (SCIA18)
  - Review of the associated costs of agenda printing, delivery and Member postal arrangements. (SCIA19)
  - A taxi licensing training centre at the Council's offices. (SCIA20)
  - An increase in the publicity of the Council's MOT test centre. (SCIA21)
- 46 Members are asked to give consideration to the growth and savings proposals (SCIAs) in **Appendix E** and make one of the following recommendations:
- i. Support the SCIA and include in the budget.
  - ii. Investigate further and consider for the 2019/20 budget setting process.
  - iii. Keep on the list for possible future investigation.
- 47 The current budget gap of £3,000 per annum will be updated once views are obtained on the Council Tax increase for 2019/20 and the SCIAs listed above.

### 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 challenges together with risks were included in the Service Dashboards 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 changes to Business Rates Retention. The risk will be mitigated by continuing to review assumptions and estimates and by updating Members throughout the process.

### Equality Assessment

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups.

Individual equality impact assessments have been completed for all Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) to ensure the decision making process is fair and transparent.

### 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.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Budget Timetable

Appendix B - 10-year Budget

Appendix C - Summary of the Council's agreed savings and growth items

Appendix D - Summary of changes to the 10-year Budget

Appendix E - Service Change Impact Assessment forms (SCIAs) for new growth and savings proposals

### **Background Papers**

Report to Cabinet 6 February 2018 - Budget and Council Tax Setting 2018/19

Report to Cabinet 13 September 2018 - Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2019/20 and Beyond

## Agenda Item 5

Report to Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee 25 September 2018, Planning Advisory Committee 2 October 2018, Legal and Democratic Services Advisory Committee 4 October 2018, Direct and Trading Advisory Committee 9 October 2018, Finance Advisory Committee 15 November 2018, Housing and Health Advisory Committee 27 November 2018, Policy and Performance Advisory Committee 29 November 2018 - Budget 2019/20: Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

Report to Cabinet 6 December 2018 - Budget Update 2019/20

**Adrian Rowbotham**  
**Chief Finance Officer**

2019/20 Budget Setting Timetable

	Date	Committee
<b>Stage 1</b>		
Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2019/20 and Beyond	4 September	Finance AC
	13 September	Cabinet
↓		
<b>Stage 2</b>		
Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)	25 September	Economic & Comm. Dev. AC
	2 October	Planning AC
	4 October	Legal & Dem. Svs AC
	9 October	Direct & Trading AC
	15 November	Finance AC
	27 November	Housing & Health AC
	29 November	Policy & Performance AC
↓		
<b>Stage 3</b>		
Budget Update (incl. Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs), feedback from Advisory Committees)	6 December	Cabinet
↓		
<b>Stage 4</b>		
Budget Update (incl. Government Settlement information)	10 January	Cabinet
↓		
<b>Stage 5</b>		
<i>Budget Update and further review of Service Change Impact Assessments (if required)</i>	<i>January - February</i>	<i>Advisory Committees</i>
↓		
<b>Stage 6</b>		
Budget Setting Meeting (Recommendations to Council)	14 February	Cabinet
↓		
<b>Stage 7</b>		
Budget Setting Meeting (incl. Council Tax setting)	26 February	Council

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

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	Plan 2018/19	Plan 2019/20	Plan 2020/21	Plan 2021/22	Plan 2022/23	Plan 2023/24	Plan 2024/25	Plan 2025/26	Plan 2026/27	Plan 2027/28	Plan 2028/29
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Expenditure</b>											
Net Service Expenditure c/f	14,470	14,687	15,151	15,447	15,862	16,240	16,626	17,017	17,413	17,815	18,326
Inflation	732	608	654	471	478	486	491	497	502	510	519
Superannuation Fund deficit and staff recruitment & retention	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net savings (approved in previous years)	(427)	(181)	(298)	14	0	0	0	(1)	0	1	0
<b>New growth</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>New savings/Income</b>	<b>(380)</b>	<b>(119)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(70)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Service Expenditure b/f</b>	<b>14,687</b>	<b>15,151</b>	<b>15,447</b>	<b>15,862</b>	<b>16,240</b>	<b>16,626</b>	<b>17,017</b>	<b>17,413</b>	<b>17,815</b>	<b>18,326</b>	<b>18,845</b>
<b>Financing Sources</b>											
Govt Support: Revenue Support Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax	(10,420)	(10,813)	(11,155)	(11,506)	(11,866)	(12,236)	(12,617)	(13,007)	(13,408)	(13,796)	(14,193)
Business Rates Retention	(2,700)	(2,132)	(2,139)	(2,182)	(2,226)	(2,271)	(2,316)	(2,362)	(2,409)	(2,457)	(2,506)
Collection Fund Surplus	(255)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interest Receipts	(130)	(200)	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)
Property Investment Strategy Income	(735)	(1,258)	(1,311)	(1,311)	(1,311)	(1,411)	(1,455)	(1,455)	(1,655)	(1,655)	(1,655)
Contributions to/(from) Reserves	(14)	(353)	(353)	(353)	(179)	(179)	(635)	148	148	148	148
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>(14,254)</b>	<b>(14,756)</b>	<b>(15,208)</b>	<b>(15,602)</b>	<b>(15,832)</b>	<b>(16,347)</b>	<b>(17,273)</b>	<b>(16,926)</b>	<b>(17,574)</b>	<b>(18,010)</b>	<b>(18,456)</b>
<b>Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>(256)</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>389</b>
<b>Contribution to/(from) Stabilisation Reserve</b>	<b>(433)</b>	<b>(395)</b>	<b>(239)</b>	<b>(260)</b>	<b>(408)</b>	<b>(279)</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>(487)</b>	<b>(241)</b>	<b>(316)</b>	<b>(389)</b>
<b>Unfunded Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Assumptions**

Revenue Support Grant:	nil all years
Business Rates Retention:	Business Rates Retention safety-net in 19/20 plus 2% in later years
Council Tax:	2% in all years
Council Tax Base:	Increase of 886 Band D equivalent properties in 19/20 including changes to empty property discounts, 580 from 20/21, 480 from 27/28
Interest Receipts:	£200,000 in 19/20, £250,000 in later years
Property Investment Strategy:	£1.258m in 19/20, £1.311m from 20/21, £1.411m from 23/24, £1.455m from 24/25, £1.655m from 26/27 onwards. Sennocke Hotel income included from 2019/20.
Pay award:	2% in all years (additional increase for lower paid staff in 2019/20)
Other costs:	2.25% in all years
Income:	2.5% in all years except for off-street car parks which are an average of 3.5% per annum from 19/20 -23/24.

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SCIA Year	No.	Description	2011/12 - 2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	Later Years £000	Total £000
		<b>Direct and Trading Advisory Committee</b>				
2016/17	8	Playgrounds: reduction in asset maintenance (reversal of temporary saving item)			7	
2016/17	9	Public Conveniences: reduction in asset maintenance (reversal of temporary saving item)			8	
		<b>Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee</b>				
		No savings or growth agreed from 2019/20 onwards				
		<b>Finance Advisory Committee</b>				
2011/12	62,63	Staff terms and conditions - savings agreed by Council 18/10/11		(186)	(187)	
2018/19	11	Members Allowances: increase following JIRP review		15		
		<b>Housing and Health Advisory Committee</b>				
		No savings or growth agreed from 2019/20 onwards				
		<b>Legal and Democratic Services Advisory Committee</b>				
		No savings or growth agreed from 2019/20 onwards				
		<b>Planning Advisory Committee</b>				
		No savings or growth agreed from 2019/20 onwards				
		<b>Policy and Performance Advisory Committee</b>				
2017/18	10	Apprenticeship Levy (reversal of temporary growth item)			(45)	
2018/19	3	Swanley Local Office contract		(10)	(15)	
2018/19	13	IT Developers: funding for two years (reversal of temporary growth item)			(51)	
		Minor movements between years			(1)	
		<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>(7,051)</b>	<b>(196)</b>	<b>(188)</b>	<b>(7,435)</b>
		<b>Total Growth</b>	<b>1,930</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>(96)</b>	<b>1,849</b>
		<b>Net Savings</b>	<b>(5,121)</b>	<b>(181)</b>	<b>(284)</b>	<b>(5,586)</b>

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SCIA Year	Advisory Committee No.	Description	Year	Ongoing	2019/20 Impact £000	10-year Budget Impact £000
<b>Growth proposals supported by Cabinet 06/12/18</b> (detailed SCIA's were included in the previous report)						
2019/20	2	DTAC Direct Services - Reduced recycling income	2019/20	Yes	40	400
2019/20	3	DTAC Bradbourne Lakes - Consultancy	2019/20	No	60	60
2019/20	4	DTAC Public Conveniences - Reduced income	2019/20	Yes	5	50
2019/20	5	DTAC Environmental Protection - Reduced income	2019/20	Yes	10	100
2019/20	6	DTAC CCTV - Reduced income	2019/20	Yes	10	100
2019/20	11	FAC Facilities Management - loss of income	2019/20	Yes	22	220
2019/20	15	HHAC Travellers site - loss of Kent County Council grant	2019/20	Yes	9	90
<b>Savings proposals supported by Cabinet 06/12/18</b> (detailed SCIA's were included in the previous report)						
2019/20	7	DTAC Car Parking - Enforcement for Tandridge DC	2019/20	No	(30)	(60)
2019/20	8	DTAC Car Parking - Rental income	2019/20	Yes	(15)	(150)
2019/20	9	DTAC Markets - Additional income	2019/20	Yes	(5)	(50)
2019/20	10	DTAC Environmental Health - change in shared service split	2019/20	Yes	(40)	(400)
2019/20	12	FAC Sevenoaks Bus Station - reduced expenditure	2019/20	Yes	(5)	(50)
2019/20	13	FAC Facilities Management - reduced expenditure	2019/20	Yes	(10)	(100)
2019/20	14	FAC Property Management - reduced Business Rates	2019/20	Yes	(14)	(140)
<b>Sub Total</b>					<b>37</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Remove 2019/20 new savings target</b>					<b>100</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Base Changes:</b>						
Rolled on to 2028/29 and base figures updated to 2018/19 budget					1	475
2017/18 outturn surplus transferred to Budget Stabilisation Reserve					0	(856)
<b>Sub Total</b>					<b>1</b>	<b>(381)</b>
<b>Assumption Changes:</b>						
Other costs inflation: reduced to actual amount required					(12)	(140)
Pay award: higher increase for lower paid staff					60	652
Interest Receipts: 2019/20 reduction only					50	50
Property Investment Strategy: additional income from current assets					(73)	(1,207)
Council Tax Base updated					3	26
Business Rates Retention safety-net updated					(36)	(45)
<b>Sub Total</b>					<b>(8)</b>	<b>(664)</b>
<b>Total 10-year Budget change gap/(surplus)</b>					<b>130</b>	<b>25</b>

i.e. £3,000 gap per annum

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**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA 16 (19/20)

<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Richard Wilson	<b>Service:</b>	Asset Maintenance
<b>Activity</b>	Asset Maintenance	<b>No. of Staff:</b>	-

Activity Budget Change	Year: 2019/20 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Preventative asset maintenance	100	Ongoing with further increases

**Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

See 'Asset Maintenance - Planned Preventative Maintenance' report to FAC (15/11/18) and Cabinet (06/12/18).

Asset maintenance surveys for Council owned buildings have recently been completed. This shows that the current budget will fund 54% of the average yearly liability identified of £780,000 over the next twenty years.

Looking at the shorter term, the average liability identified over the next four years is £746,000 which is £327,000 more than the current budget.

Finance Advisory Committee proposed for preventative asset maintenance to be fully funded within 5 years. £100,000 growth is shown above as an example which would add 13% to the average yearly liability covered.

An alternative approach would be to include a growth item for 2019/20 (ongoing) and review further changes in future years taking into account any changing asset maintenance requirements, and other funding demands within the Council.

**Key Stakeholders Affected**

All users of Council premises.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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

It is important to get the best useful life out of the Council’s assets and by increasing the annual spend, this is more likely to be achieved. If the budget matched the average yearly liability, there would be greater assurance that this could be achieved.

It is also important to maintain the Council’s assets in a state which attracts local residents to use them

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

Medium

2018/19 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	419	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-			
Net Cost	419			

**Equality Impacts**

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA 17 (19/20)

<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Lesley Bowles	<b>Service:</b>	Parish Projects
<b>Activity</b>	Parish Projects (capital)	<b>No. of Staff:</b>	-

Activity Budget Change	Year: 2019/20 Growth/ (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Parish Projects (capital)	0	n/a

**Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

There has been a Parish Projects capital scheme for many years where the original sum has reduced as projects have been completed.

ECDAC proposed that this capital scheme is no longer required as Parish Councils can now access funds from other sources such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

As this is a capital scheme there is no revenue budget impact.

**Key Stakeholders Affected**

Parish councils

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

None as other funding sources are now available.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Risk to Service Objectives (High / Medium / Low)

Low
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2018/19 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	51	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	n/a		
Net Cost	51			

**Equality Impacts**

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA 18 (19/20)

<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Pav Ramewal	<b>Service:</b>	Transformation & Strategy
<b>Activity</b>	Corporate Policy	<b>No. of Staff:</b>	-

Activity Budget Change	Year: 2019/20 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Responding to legislation	(19)	Ongoing

**Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

The Council holds a budget for equalities which enabled a part-time officer to be employed to support the Council in meetings its obligations and improving its services. Since that officer left the Council the structure has been reviewed and responsibilities transferred to the Transformation & Strategy team. The budget also ensures that the Council has finances available to it should it need to invest in activities to ensure it complies with its equalities duties or can advance it services.

The budget for the part-time officer, was approximately £14,000.

The level of risk associated with deleting this element of the budget is relatively low.

Deleting the remaining £5,000 would reduce the Council's ability to respond should an equalities issue or opportunity present itself and would in future need to be met from within existing service budgets.

The level of risk associated with deleting this element of the budget is considered to be medium.

**Key Stakeholders Affected**

Customers and staff

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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

Saving the budget that was previously used to employ a part-time equalities officer would require the work to permanently remain with the Council’s policy team, predominantly the Head of Transformation & Strategy.

Under current circumstances this presents a limited amount of risk to the Council. Consideration will need to be made to ensure there is additional resilience to the function and providing training for officers as necessary.

Saving the budget associated with addressing issues or taking up opportunities presented under equalities legislation would require any future costs to be met from within service budgets and the risk to the Council would be considered to be medium.

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

Low / Medium

2018/19 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
Operational Cost	19	Code & Description	Actual	Target
Income	-	None		
Net Cost	19			

**Equality Impacts**

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through this paper have the potential to directly impact on end users.



**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA 19 (19/20)

<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Jim Carrington-West	<b>Service:</b>	Democratic Services
<b>Activity</b>	Democratic Support	<b>No. of Staff:</b>	3 FTE

Activity Budget Change	Year: 2019/20  Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Agenda Printing, delivery and postal arrangements	TBC	TBC

**Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

Members have asked that officers further investigate the process and associated costs with the printing, delivery and postal arrangements relating to Committee Agendas and Councillor communication.

Any reduction in direct printing costs of printing hard copy agendas would need to be offset by a corresponding reduction in achievable internal income for the Print Studio.

It may however be possible to derive wider savings from increased take-up of electronic provision of Committee agendas by Members. These would be more related to delivery and postage costs and a review would therefore need to include the involvement of other service areas e.g. Facilities Management. At this point in time, it is not possible to estimate a financial figure for this SCIA.

It is suggested that any changes that may be proposed are built in to the Member induction process to be carried out immediately after the May 2019 Local Elections.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Key Stakeholders Affected**

All SDC Councillors

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

Any proposed impacts would be mainly related to Councillors and the options that they may have for the receipt of Committee Agendas and communication. A review would need to ensure the democratic process and requirements are not disadvantaged.

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

Low

2018/19 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
		Code & Description	Actual	Target
Operational Cost	22			
Income	-			
Net Cost	22			

Above budget is for Legal and Democratic Services printing costs only.

**Equality Impacts**

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA 20 (19/20)

<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Richard Wilson	<b>Service:</b>	Licensing
<b>Activity</b>	Taxi Licensing	<b>No. of Staff:</b>	1.39 FTE

Activity Budget Change	Year: 2019/20 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Training for knowledge test	TBC	Ongoing

**Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

Cabinet recommended to investigate the possibility of charging potential taxi drivers for training to assist them in sitting their knowledge test prior to becoming licenced.

Currently, SDC charge £48 to sit a knowledge test and the same for a re-sit.

The level of passing first time may be increased if the knowledge test sitting was supplemented by a pre-training exercise on the test. Although the test training material is sent out in advance of the test so research can be done, the first time success rate, particularly for private hire drivers, can be quite low, particularly when English is not their first language.

A premium for the training could be added to the knowledge test fee to fully cover staff training time.

The other Licensing Partners do not currently provide this, so it is recommended that a trial be investigated at SDC only, using SDC Licensing [not Hub] officers.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Key Stakeholders Affected**

Taxi driver applicants

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

Nil

**Risk to Service Objectives ( Low)**

Low

2018/19 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
		Code & Description	Actual	Target
Operational Cost	139			
Income	(150)			
Net Cost	(11)			

**Equality Impacts**

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA 21 (19/20)

<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Richard Wilson	<b>Service:</b>	Direct Services Workshop
<b>Activity</b>	MOT testing	<b>No. of Staff:</b>	8.22 FTE

<b>Activity Budget Change</b>	<b>Year: 2019/20 Growth / (Saving) £000</b>	<b>Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)</b>
Additional Income	TBC	Ongoing

**Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

To investigate utilising any unused test slots [MOT bay and Tester] in the vehicle workshop after booked MOT tests and taxi testing undertaken.

Class 5 [minibuses] can now be tested and a contract with a commercial operator has recently been secured.

An on-line booking system was recently introduced via the Council's website.

Advertising could be placed on parking pay & display tickets, the website and In-Shape.

In 2017/18 387 MOT tests carried out and 734 taxi tests generating £56,648 income.

**Key Stakeholders Affected**

MOT customers and taxi operators

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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

Utilising any spare capacity

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

Low

2018/19 Budget	£'000	Performance Indicators		
		Code & Description	Actual	Target
Operational Cost	661			
Income	(662)			
Net Cost	(1)			

**Equality Impacts**

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

**CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE AND OTHER TAX SETTING ISSUES**

**Cabinet - 10 January 2019**

Report of the: Chief Finance Officer

Status: For Decision

Also considered by: Council - 26 February 2019

Key Decision: No

**Executive Summary:**

This report sets out details of the calculation of the District’s tax base for council tax setting purposes. These figures are used to determine tax rates for each of the council tax bands once the Council’s budget requirement is known. The report also advises Members of the timetable for setting the 2019/20 council tax.

**This report supports the Key Aim of efficient management of the Council’s resources.**

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. John Scholey

**Contact Officer** Roy Parsons, Principal Accountant - Ext 7204

**Recommendation to Cabinet:** That it be recommended to Council that:

- (a) the report of the Chief Finance Officer for the calculation of the Council’s tax base for the year 2019/20 be approved;
- (b) pursuant to the report of the Chief Finance Officer and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended) the amount calculated by the Sevenoaks District Council as its council tax base for the whole area for the year 2019/20 shall be 50,772.34;
- (c) pursuant to the report of the Chief Finance Officer and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended) the amount calculated by the Sevenoaks District Council as the council tax base for 2019/20 for the calculation of local precepts shall be:

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Tax Base</u>
Ash-cum-Ridley	2,460.65
Badgers Mount	334.28
Brasted	778.50

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Chevening	1,450.74
Chiddingstone	602.66
Cowden	435.77
Crockenhill	660.41
Dunton Green	1,323.31
Edenbridge	3,556.04
Eynsford	945.99
Farningham	664.59
Fawkham	283.39
Halstead	782.28
Hartley	2,555.38
Hever	610.42
Hextable	1,666.94
Horton Kirby & South Darent	1,299.56
Kemsing	1,839.00
Knockholt	634.77
Leigh	948.18
Otford	1,709.88
Penshurst	835.95
Riverhead	1,249.06
Seal	1,253.83
Sevenoaks Town	9,637.63
Sevenoaks Weald	615.09
Shoreham	685.46
Sundridge	932.07
Swanley	5,607.45
Westerham	2,068.71
West Kingsdown	2,344.35

- (d) any expenses incurred by the Council in performing in part of its area a function performed elsewhere in its area by a parish or community council or the chairman of a parish meeting shall not be treated as special expenses for the purposes of section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.



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**Recommendation to Council:** That the various calculations detailed above be approved.

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**Reason for recommendations:** As part of the tax setting process for 2019/20, the Council needs to formally approve the tax base at individual town and parish level as well as for the District as a whole.

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### Introduction and Background

- 1 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, made under powers of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, specify formulae for calculating the council tax base which must be set between 1 December and 31 January.
- 2 The council tax base is a measure of the number of dwellings to which council tax is chargeable in an area or part of an area. It is used for the purposes of calculating a billing authority's and other precepting authorities' band D council tax.
- 3 Under the regulations, the council tax base is the aggregate of the relevant amounts calculated for each valuation band multiplied by the Council's estimated collection rate for the year.
- 4 The Council is required to calculate a tax base figure for the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG). This is based on the valuation list as at 10 September 2018 and occupancy information at 1 October 2018. The tax base for tax setting purposes is based on information available in December 2018. In addition, other factors may be taken into account to reflect likely changes to the tax base during 2019/20. These factors include:-
  - An allowance for changes in the amount of disabled relief
  - An allowance for changes in the number of exempt properties
  - An estimate of the number of new properties liable to council tax
  - An estimate of the number of properties ceasing to be liable to council tax
  - An allowance for changes in the number of single person discounts
  - An allowance for the effect of appeals by taxpayers on the banding of their properties
- 5 It has always been the practice to assume that these items will be self-balancing and hence no adjustment to the overall tax base was made other than the usual allowance for non-collection. Over the last few years the tax base has been rising due to new properties being built. In addition, changes are planned for 2019/20 to the levels of discount for uninhabited properties and properties that are both unoccupied and unfurnished. Members agreed

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to this approach as part of the last budget cycle and it will be the subject of a more detailed report to be brought before them in due course. An estimate of the likely effect of these changes has been made and the tax base increased accordingly.

### Detailed Tax Base Calculations

- 6 The current year's tax base calculation assumes a 99.4% collection rate, which also allows for some movement in the items mentioned in Paragraph 4. Having assessed previous years' collection rates plus the effect of changes to council tax support, it is considered prudent to maintain the assumed collection rate at 99.4% for 2019/20.
- 7 The second column of the table below sets out the number of band D equivalents based on the valuation list and occupancy information at 1 December 2018 for each parish, together with a summary for the District. The figures are then subjected to the collection rate adjustment in column 3 to arrive at the tax base for council tax setting purposes appearing in column 4. The corresponding figures for 2018/19 appear in column 5.

<u>(1)</u> <u>Parish</u>	<u>(2)</u> <u>Band D</u> <u>Equivalents</u>	<u>(3)</u> <u>Collection</u> <u>Rate</u> <u>Multipliers</u>	<u>(4)</u> <u>Tax base</u> <u>2019/20</u>	<u>(5)</u> <u>Tax base</u> <u>2018/19</u>
Ash-cum-Ridley	2,475.50	0.994	2,460.65	2,431.82
Badgers Mount	336.30	0.994	334.28	329.31
Brasted	783.20	0.994	778.50	779.00
Chevening	1,459.50	0.994	1,450.74	1,443.19
Chiddingstone	606.30	0.994	602.66	600.18
Cowden	438.40	0.994	435.77	402.07
Crockenhill	664.40	0.994	660.41	656.44
Dunton Green	1,331.30	0.994	1,323.31	1,180.38
Edenbridge	3,577.50	0.994	3,556.04	3,548.58
Eynsford	951.70	0.994	945.99	930.38
Farningham	668.60	0.994	664.59	657.83
Fawkham	285.10	0.994	283.39	280.51
Halstead	787.00	0.994	782.28	777.21
Hartley	2,570.80	0.994	2,555.38	2,538.28
Hever	614.10	0.994	610.42	598.98
Hextable	1,677.00	0.994	1,666.94	1,643.18
Horton Kirby & South Darent	1,307.40	0.994	1,299.56	1,298.26

Kemsing	1,850.10	0.994	1,839.00	1,813.75
Knockholt	638.60	0.994	634.77	628.51
Leigh	953.90	0.994	948.18	877.50
Otford	1,720.20	0.994	1,709.88	1,687.32
Penshurst	841.00	0.994	835.95	831.38
Riverhead	1,256.60	0.994	1,249.06	1,242.10
Seal	1,261.40	0.994	1,253.83	1,223.02
Sevenoaks Town	9,695.80	0.994	9,637.63	9,470.04
Sevenoaks Weald	618.80	0.994	615.09	621.15
Shoreham	689.60	0.994	685.46	686.26
Sundridge	937.70	0.994	932.07	925.22
Swanley	5,641.30	0.994	5,607.45	5,485.19
Westerham	2,081.20	0.994	2,068.71	1,985.12
West Kingsdown	2,358.50	0.994	2,344.35	2,330.73
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>51,078.80</b>		<b>50,772.34</b>	<b>49,902.89</b>

- 8 The Council has previously resolved that its expenses are to be treated as general expenses. In addition the Council has formally to approve what are to be regarded as special expenses now that parish precepts are treated as part of the District Council's general fund and therefore its budget requirement.

#### Timetable for Setting the Tax

- 9 The County Council, Police & Crime Commissioner and Fire and Rescue Service have advised me of their budget meeting dates for 2019/20:

County Council	14 February 2019
Police & Crime Commissioner	6 February 2019
Fire and Rescue Service	12 February 2019

- 10 The council tax for the Sevenoaks area cannot be set before the County, Police and Fire precepts have been ratified. There are several dates laid down in regulations on, or by which, certain tasks in relation to the budget process and tax setting have to be carried out. These key dates appear in the Appendix.

- 11 As part of the tax setting process, the Council is required to make an estimate of the collection fund surplus or deficit at 15 January 2019 or the first working day after this, for the year ending 31 March 2019.

- 12 The amount of any surplus or deficit which a billing authority estimates in its collection fund will not remain in the collection fund but will be shared and

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taken into account by both billing and major precepting authorities in calculating their basic amounts of council tax for 2019/20.

- 13 In estimating any surplus or deficit, items relating to community charge will not be taken into account. These are to remain with the billing authority and will be taken into account by it in calculating its basic amount of council tax for the year.
- 14 An authority's share of any surplus or deficit relating to council tax is to be in the same proportion as its demand bears to the total demand and precepts on the collection fund for 2018/19. Payment is to be made during 2019/20 on the same dates as precept payments.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

There are no financial implications.

#### Community Impact and Outcomes

There are no community impacts arising from this report.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

Calculation of the tax base for the District is a statutory requirement. The information is used by other authorities in setting their precepts. The actual tax base will vary during the year as new properties are built and exemptions and discounts are granted or withdrawn. Any difference in the revenue raised to that needed to pay precepts remains in the collection fund to be distributed to or collected from major precepting authorities in the following year.

#### Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

### **Conclusions**

Members are asked to approve the calculation of the District's tax base for council tax setting purposes and to note the timetable for setting the 2019/20 council tax.

**Appendix:** Key dates in the council tax setting process

**Background Papers:** None

**Adrian Rowbotham**  
Chief Finance Officer

**APPENDIX**

**KEY DATES IN THE COUNCIL TAX SETTING PROCESS**

- |       |   |  |
|-------|---|--|
| i)    | By 12 October 2018                          | Notify tax base for grant settlement purposes to Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG)  |
| ii)   | During December 2018                        | DCLG notifies schedule of payment dates for Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Non-Domestic Rates (NDR). DCLG notifies the NDR multiplier (rate in £) for 2019/20 |
| iii)  | By 31 December 2018                         | Issue proposed schedule of payment dates to precepting authorities   |
| iv)   | By 31 January 2019                          | Agree actual schedule of precept payment dates   |
| v)    | Between 1 December 2018 and 31 January 2019 | Notify tax base for tax setting purposes to KCC, Fire & Rescue Service and Police & Crime Commissioner   |
| vi)   | On 15 January 2019                          | Estimate collection fund surplus or deficit for year and calculate the amount to be shared between SDC, KCC, Fire and Police (where applicable)                |
| vii)  | By 22 January 2019                          | Notify KCC, Fire and Police of their shares of the surplus or deficit and when amounts are to be paid or transferred during 2019/20 (where applicable)         |
| viii) | During January and February 2019            | Notify Town/Parish Councils of tax bases for their areas within 10 days of them making such a request  |
| ix)   | During February 2019                        | DCLG notifies entitlements and payment dates of Formula Spending Share (FSS), RSG and NDR  |
| x)    | By 1 March 2019                             | KCC, Fire & Rescue Service, Police & Crime Commissioner and Town/Parish Councils issue their precepts  |
| xi)   | By 11 March 2019                            | District sets council tax for 2019/20, taking account of its own budget requirement and those of the precepting authorities.                                   |

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## ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARKING MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2019-20

Cabinet - 10 January 2019

Report of Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services

Status: For Decision

Key Decision: Yes

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**Executive Summary:** This report informs Members of the outcome of the public consultation on the annual review of parking management arrangements for 2019-20, which proposed a moderate increase in the daily and season ticket charges in the Council's Bradbourne car park, and amendments to the maximum stay periods in Sevenoaks town centre car parks.

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**This report supports the Key Aim of:** The effective management of Council resources and supporting the local economy.

Portfolio Holder Councillor Matthew Dickins

Contact Officer John Strachan, Ext. 7310

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**Recommendation:** That following consideration of the responses to the public consultation, the revised parking management arrangements for 2019-20 be agreed by Cabinet.

---

**Reason for recommendation:** To help regulate and manage the use of parking facilities in the District; to ensure car parking charges are set to support a sustainable local economy; and, to support services for residents as set out in the approved 10 year budget.

---

### Introduction

- 1 This report considers the response to proposals for revised parking management arrangements in the Council's car parks for 2019-20, intended to help regulate demand for parking.
- 2 Following a careful review of both on and off street parking management arrangements, the proposals taken forward for consultation were:
  - a) a moderate increase in the daily and season ticket charges in the new Bradbourne multi decked car park serving in the main, commuters using Sevenoaks railway station

## Agenda Item 7

- b) a change in the maximum stay periods in Sevenoaks town centre South Park (Stag), Suffolk Way and Buckhurst 1 car parks from 5 hours to 4 hours.
- c) The introduction of an “up to 5-hour” period in the new Buckhurst 2 car park to replace the provision described in “b”.

3 Under the proposals, all other tariffs will be frozen in 2019-20.

### Background Information

4 Proposals were considered by Cabinet on 11 October 2018, which resolved that:

- a) the parking management proposals for 2019-20 be agreed for consultation; and
- b) a flexible multi-year approach be adopted, to allow the Council, as a local parking provider, to be more responsive to economic cycles as well as the needs of its customers and communities

5 The public consultation, advertised locally on signs erected in car parks and on the Council’s website, informs Cabinet of the public’s response on these proposals.

6 Ten consultation responses were received from eight respondents.

7 Some respondents queried the level of increase at Bradbourne.

8 Other responses discussed the provision of parking for workers, the need for long stay parking in Sevenoaks town and the proposed removal of the 5-hour maximum stay in town centre short-stay car parks.

9 Members will be aware that in addition to the extensive freeze in charges in most of the Council’s car parks last year and again this year, there have been no increases at Bradbourne for the past four years. In addition, development of the new multi decked car park on the site has significantly improved the facility, with “leading edge” smart lighting, most spaces under cover and extensive cctv security coverage.

10 In respect of long-stay parking provision in Sevenoaks town, it is proposed that the “up to 5-hours” period remains in the short stay car parks until the new Buckhurst 2 multi decked car park reopens. The “up to 5-hours” level of charge - designed predominantly to help part time workers in the town - will then be available in the new car park.

### Key Implications

#### Financial

11 The Council approach for 2019-20 adopts a more flexible approach to its budget intentions, reflecting its continuing focus on achieving a balanced



budget and efficiencies, while taking account of the national economic climate and cycles, and the needs of our customers and communities.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

- 12 Changes to the charges will require Notices of Variation in respect of the off-street Parking Order governing the management of off-street parking arrangements.

Equality Impacts

- 13 There is a low risk that the proposals in this report would have any implications under the Equality Act.

Community Impact and Outcomes

- 14 Measured and reasonable parking charges can encourage the use of more sustainable transport options and healthier lifestyles for journeys to school, work, and visits to shops and other amenities in towns and villages.

Human Rights

- 15 There are no human rights issues or implications.

**Conclusion**

- 16 Adoption of the revised parking charges will help improve management of parking in the District whilst also satisfying the Council's financial targets.

**Appendices**

Appendix A - Proposed parking management charges

**Background Papers**

[Cabinet - 11 October 2018](#)

**Richard Wilson**

**Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services**

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Areas for consideration: Review of Fees and Charges 2019-20

Off Street

		Current	Revised
1A	Blighs	Up to 30 mins	70p
		Up to 1 hr	£1.50
		Up to 2 hours	£3
		Up to 3 hours	£5
		Up to 4 hours	£10
1B	Buckhurst 1 South Park Suffolk Way	Up to 1 hr	£1
		Up to 2 hours	£2
		Up to 3 hours	£3
		Up to 4 hours	£4
		Up to 5 hours	£4.50
	Buckhurst 2 Weekdays	Up to 5 hours	n/a
		Over 5 hours and all day	£4.60
	Buckhurst 2 Saturdays	Up to 1 hr	£1
		Up to 2 hours	£2
		Up to 3 hours	£3
Up to 4 hours		£4	
Up to 5 hours		n/a	
Over 5 hours and all day		£4.60	
Buckhurst 2 Season Tickets	Annual Season Ticket	£859	
	Quarterly Season Ticket	£224.75	
	Monthly Season Ticket	n/a	
	Weekly Season Ticket	n/a	
	Resident Permit	£35	
1D	Council Offices	Saturdays & Sundays	Free
2A	St Johns St James	Up to 30 mins	20p
		Up to 1 hr	40p
		Up to 2 hours	60p
		Up to 4 hours	£1
		Over 3 hours and all day	£3.10
		Annual Season Ticket	£429
		Quarterly Season Ticket	£117.25
		Resident Permit	£35
2B	Bradbourne	Up to 1 hr	£1
		Up to 2 hours	£2
		Up to 3 hours	£3
		Up to 4 hours	£4
		Up to 5 hours (weekdays)	£5
		All day (weekdays)	£7
		All day (weekends)	£5
	Bradbourne Season	Premium Bay	£2,500
		Annual	£1,110
		6 Monthly	£565
	Quarterly	£287.50	
	Monthly	£140	
	Weekly	£35	
2D	Bevan Place Park Road Station Road	Up to 30 mins	30p
		Up to 1 hour	50p
		Up to 2 hours	70p
		Up to 4 hours	£1.10
		Over 4 hours and all day	£4
2E	Bevan Place Season Tickets	Annual	£396
		Quarterly	£109

Areas for consideration: Review of Fees and Charges 2019-20

Off Street (continued)

		Current	Revised
2F	Darent	Up to 30 mins	Free
		Up to 1 hr	
		Up to 2 hours	
		Up to 3 hours	
		Up to 4 hours	
		Over 4 hours and all day	
2G	Quebec Avenue	Up to 15 mins	No Change
		Up to 30 mins	
		Up to 1 hr	
		Up to 2 hours	
		Up to 4 hours	
		Over 4 hours and all day	
2H	Vicarage Hill	Up to 15 mins	No Change
		Up to 30 mins	
		Up to 1 hr	
		Up to 2 hours	

Areas for consideration: Review of Fees and Charges 2019-20

On Street

		Current	Revised
3A	High Street London Road South Park	Up to 30 mins	No Change
		Up to 1 hour	
		Up to 2 hours	
		Sunday	
3B	Sevenoaks Town Holly Bush Lane Plymouth Drive	Up to 30 mins	No Change
		Up to 1 hour	
		Up to 2 hours	
		Over 2 hours and all day	
3C	Sevenoaks Station Morewood Close (West)	Up to 30 mins	No Change
		Up to 1 hour	
		Up to 2 hours	
		Up to 4 hours	
3D	Sevenoaks Station St Botolphs Ashley Close Morewood Close (East)	Up to 30 mins	No Change
		Up to 1 hour	
		Up to 2 hours	
		Up to 4 hours	
3E	Sevenoaks District Resident Parking Permits	First	No Change
		Second	
		Third	
		Fourth	
3F	Resident Visitors	Book of 5	£6
3G	Non-Resident Parking	Town Annual	£270
		Town Half Yearly	£135
		Town Quarterly	£67.50
		Station (West) Annual	£765
		Station (West) Half Yearly	£382.50
		Station (West) Quarterly	£191.25
		Station (East) Annual	£650
		Station (East) Half Yearly	£325
Station (East) Quarterly	£162.50		
4A	Knockholt	All Day	£3.50
		After 2pm up to 6pm	£2.40
4B	Godsel Rd/Azalia Dr	Up to 30 mins	No Change
		Up to 1 hour	
		Up to 2 hours	
		Up to 4 hours	

**Areas for consideration: Review of Fees and Charges 2019-20**

**On Street**

			Current	Revised
4B	Godsel Rd / Azalia Dr	Over 4 hours and all day	£3.50	No Change
4C	Westerham On Street The Green The Grange Market Square	15 minutes	10p	
		30 minutes	20p	
		1 hour	60p	
		2 hours	£1.50	
4D	Westerham On Street Fullers Hill Croydon Road	15 minutes	10p	
		30 minutes	20p	
		1 hour	60p	
		2 hours	£1.50	
		3 hours	£2.50	

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**LAND AT JENKINS NECK WOOD, SHACKLANDS ROAD, BADGERS MOUNT**

**Cabinet - 10 January 2018**

Report of Chief Finance Officer

Status: For Recommendation to Cabinet

Key Decision: Yes

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**Executive Summary:** This supplementary report (further to the report considered by Cabinet on 6 December 2018, [Minute 50](#)) attaches a letter from the Solicitors acting for owners of 1 Shacklands Cottages. The Solicitors have requested that the letter is considered by Cabinet in taking decisions on the proposed disposal of surplus property assets at Jenkins Neck Wood, Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount.

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**This report supports** the Key Aim of Value for money

Portfolio Holders Cllr John Scholey, Cllr Peter Fleming

Contact Officers Andrew Stirling, Ext. 7099

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**Recommendation:** That Cabinet considers the letter attached at Appendix A to the report in taking any decisions on the proposed disposal of surplus property assets at Jenkins Neck Wood, Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount.

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**Reason for recommendation:** The Solicitors acting for the owners of 1 Shacklands Cottages have requested that their letter is considered by Cabinet in taking decisions on the proposed disposal of surplus property assets at Jenkins Neck Wood, Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount.

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**Introduction and Background**

- 1 Laker Legal Solicitors act for the owners of 1 Shacklands Cottages and wrote to the Council on 4 December 2018 requesting that their letter is considered by Cabinet as part of the decision making on the proposed disposal of surplus property assets at Jenkins Neck Wood, Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount. The letter is attached at Appendix A to the report.
- 2 The owners of 1 Shacklands Cottages are requesting that consideration is given to converting the remainder of their 99 year lease to a freehold interest or to extend the term of their long lease. The owners of 1 Shacklands Cottages have expressed concern that they were inequitably treated by the decision taken by the Cabinet on 15 May 2008 to transfer the land to them on a 99 year Lease, whilst a separate piece of land adjacent to

## Agenda Item 8

another property was transferred freehold. The minute of the Cabinet meeting from [15 May 2008](#) is attached at Appendix B to the report.

- 3 The Cabinet will have taken the decision at that time on the basis of information provided and any context and background around the management and retention of the woodland in this particular location. The section of the minute is reproduced below:

*“The Professional Services Manager advised that following the Performance and Governance Committee he had been in discussion with Shoreham Parish Council and the prospective purchaser of the land set out in Appendix B of the report. Their responses were circulated as late information to Cabinet. The Parish Council had raised issues in relation to the odd shape of the land and whether it would affect the District Council’s use and management of the remainder of the land. The shape of the land was as a result of consultations with the operating department being requested to identify the land in response to the offer to buy. The question of a lease had been discussed with the prospective purchaser who would prefer to buy the land but was not averse to a possible 99 year sub-lease. This would make no difference to the income for the Council.”*

### Key Implications

#### Financial

Disposal of surplus and underperforming assets will generate capital receipts that can be reinvested in higher performing assets in accordance with the Council’s approved Property Investment Strategy.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

Resources from the Council’s legal team are and will continue to be needed to complete the disposal process.

No significant risks have been identified for the Council in progressing the sale. The land is not required for operational purposes.

#### Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

### Conclusion

The request to either convert the long leasehold interest into a freehold or further extend the long lease can be considered by Cabinet as part of the wider consideration of the proposed disposal of the land at Jenkins Neck Wood.



**Appendices:**

Appendix A - Site Plan

Appendix B - Minute of the meeting of Cabinet  
of 15 May 2008

**Background Papers:**

[Cabinet agendas and minutes](#)

**Adrian Rowbotham**

**Chief Finance Officer**

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Our Ref: FR/ELL002/0001

Your Ref:

**FAO: CHAIR OF CABINET OF  
DISTRICT COUNCIL OF SEVENOAKS  
& EMAIL ADDRESSEES BELOW**

**TO BE BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF CABINET PRIOR TO SITTING OF 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER  
2018**

**By Email Only:**

**URGENT**

**Cabinet Chair:** [cllr.fleming@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.fleming@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

**Chief Executive:** [Pav.ramewal@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:Pav.ramewal@sevenoaks.gov.uk)  
[Jim.Carrington-West@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:Jim.Carrington-West@sevenoaks.gov.uk)  
[Mandy.Rodgers@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:Mandy.Rodgers@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

**Head of Property &  
Economic Development:** [Andrew.Stirling@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Stirling@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

**Head of Legal:** [Martin.Goodman@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Goodman@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

4<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Our Client: Gillian Ellis & Bruce Frew**  
**Matter: Application to acquire freehold reversion in woodlands known as  
Jenkins Neck Wood**  
**Sitting of District Council of Sevenoaks – Cabinet Meeting 6<sup>th</sup>  
December 2018**

We are instructed by the above-named Gillian Ellis & Bruce Frew, who as you are aware are current tenants of the District Council of Sevenoaks, pursuant to a 99 year Lease ('Lease') granted to them on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2010 in relation to the leased Woodlands described as part of Shoreham Woods, Shoreham, Kent edged red on the Lease Plan and commonly referred to as Jenkins Neck Wood.

As you are aware the Lease specifically states at Clause 5.9 that the leased Woodlands are to be used, *inter alia*, for the amenity of the[ir] adjoining residential dwelling known as 1 Shacklands

## Agenda Item 8

Cottages Shacklands Road Shoreham Kent TN14 7TY. Furthermore, the alienation provisions in the Lease make it clear that the said Woodlands cannot be assured in isolation – but must be assured with the residential property.

It is thus with some surprise that our Client's application to acquire the freehold interest in the 99 year lease has been stonewalled, following initial successful negotiations in 2015. Part of this delay in dealing with our Client's application appears to be based on some protracted negotiations with Badgers Mount Parish Council (BMPC), who are unable to offer any consideration above a nominal one. Whilst that is not the only consideration – or the best consideration that can be reasonably obtained - for such sale, our Client's leasehold ownership and management of Jenkins Neck Wood has not caused any concerns, despite the somewhat wild and unfounded allegations made by BMPC to the Council included in the recent Report of 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

We understand that the Council are now only considering transfer of the freehold or on a long leasehold title to either Badgers Mount Parish Council or a private Developer of a residential estate of all or part of its lands, but no longer wish to consider our Client. This is somewhat puzzling given a fairly similar sale of the freehold to another private individual owner in 2008 and the reason for differentiating between that residential owner and our Client has not been adequately addressed in correspondence with them.

Our Client is concerned that the Council are now considering disposing of the freehold reversion of all its woodlands, including those held by our Client under the 99 year lease, for a nominal consideration to BMPC. BMPC do not, as far as our Client is aware, have any experience dealing with the maintenance of Woodlands, as our Client did query this but again no adequate response was provided. It is also understood that the Chair of BMPC is also a Sevenoaks District Councillor and it does raise the question of a potential conflict. Our Client can of course make a Freedom of Information request. However, our Client is anxious to try and resolve matters amicably with the Council, as heretofore our Client has and continues to have an excellent relationship with the Council.

Our Client is extremely disappointed that their application is not even being considered at this stage given their maintenance and experience of Jenkins Neck Woods. It is clear our Client is not a public body but given that they hold a 99 year lease on the property it is not accepted that the 'control would be diluted' in circumstances where they have peaceably held and maintained the leased woodlands for 8 years, without issue.

Our Client remains concerned that they are being unfavourably overlooked for the freehold interest in their 99 year lease based on assumptions made by a third party, BMPC, who is not their Landlord.

The contents of BMPC's letter to the Council at Appendix B of the Report of the Finance Advisory Committee of 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 make a number of wide and unsubstantiated allegations generally, including against our Client. At no point in the Report are any such refuted by the Council and/or backed up by any professional report or background experience in woodlands maintenance. Such unsubstantiated claims include

- that there are 'no doubt bats' – has an environmental or other report been produced to this affect, as if there are bats, that could also impact on the proposed residential development by FM Conway?
- Noise emanating from the M25 route: This was already constructed when our Client acquired the 99 year lease from the Council and had entailed a substantial invasion into other woodland. To suggest that our Client's proper maintenance of the Woodland trees pursuant to the terms of their Lease have caused excessive noise is without foundation and frankly it's unclear on what basis BMPC make such an allegation directly against our Client, without an independent environmental assessment or other report. Our Client instructs that at no time has any Notice to that affect been served on them by the Council.
- BMPC also suggest that the Council would be in breach of its statutory obligations if it sold to a private individual and/or for commercial profit. This is not what Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 states and if such claim is being relied upon by the Council, as it has not been refuted, our Client requires the legal basis upon which their application as an occupying tenant is being overlooked. Our Client is not a random private owner, they paid a premium for the 99 year lease and have maintained and attended to their woodlands lease property without any complaints from its Landlord, the Council.
- It is also unclear on what basis BMPC suggest that our Client's would be incapable of 'protection and preservation ' when they have done just that since they acquired the 99 year lease. It is also unclear on what basis BMPC can do just that as it is understood they have never maintained woodlands.
- It is understood that a TPO was only introduced by the Council after the creation of the 99 year lease to our Client. Again, no Notice has been served on our Client in relation to breach of any such TPO. Any trees felled were done via an SDC certified tree arborist.
- BMPC indicate that conditions or covenants on sale may not be imposed against a subsequent owner. That is incorrect. If a long lease is granted to our Client - instead of BMPC - that long lease will contain pertinent covenants and conditions. Indeed, our Client's 99 year lease already contains covenants and conditions as to the maintenance and upkeep of the woodlands leased to them. Thus, if the Council will not consider the

## Agenda Item 8

sale of the freehold reversion to our Client, our Client now asks the Council if they will consider extending their current lease or granting a long lease to them, as occupying tenant of Jenkins Neck Wood, instead of BMPC.

- BMPC states that the Council will be relieved of the financial burden of maintaining the Woodlands. The Financial information in the Report suggests those sums may be nominal. Our Client already expends separate monies on their leased woodlands maintenance, as well as public liability insurance.
- It is understood from clause 1 of the Report of 15<sup>th</sup> November that our Client's woodland plot sits within the wider areas of woodland managed by the Council that are not for public amenity.

Our Client has already paid £17,000 for the 99 year lease, but has already indicated their willingness to pay a reasonable premium, unless the long lease can be made to them for nominal consideration as is being suggested for BMPC. Our Client does not agree with BMPC assertions that a commercial profit on this part of the woodlands would only arise on redevelopment.

Our Client's woodlands lease clearly restricts use – the lands owned by FM Conway however are subject to planning for a residential property estate.

Our Client will still retain its 99 year lease even if the freehold sale proceeds to FM Conway. However, there is no reason why they cannot maintain the woodlands plot on a long term lease as well, given that the residential property cannot be sold without the benefit of the woodlands plot.

We ask you to reconsider your decision to sell the freehold to our Client or in the alternative agree to extend our Client's 99 year or grant them a long leasehold title. Our Client has been an excellent tenant and has enjoyed a very harmonious relationship with the Council and would like to resolve this to everyone's satisfaction.

**Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and confirm that it will be put before the Cabinet prior to the sitting of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018, as our Client indicates that recent correspondence sent to the Council has not been acknowledged**

Yours faithfully

Laker Legal Solicitors  
[fiona.roche@lakerlegal.co.uk](mailto:fiona.roche@lakerlegal.co.uk)

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Head of Schedule 12(A) and Brief Description</u>
14.	Shoreham Woods, Shoreham – Disposal of Part	3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
40.	<u>SHOREHAM WOODS, SHOREHAM – DISPOSAL OF PART</u> (REPORT NO. 14 – 15.05.08)	

Further to the Performance and Governance Committee (17.04.08), Members were advised that as part of the ongoing Property Review the Council considered applications from third parties to acquire land and property currently owned by the District Council. In 1991 the District Council acquired some 250 acres of established woodland at Shoreham from the Forestry Commission. The land was acquired to preserve and provide access to the countryside for the public and since the woods had been in public ownership grant funding had been received under the Woodlands Grant Scheme in respect of the management of the woods. Since acquisition the District Council had constructed a rangers' lodge with public toilets together with a woodland depot. The lodge is the base for the countryside ranger team. The construction of the M25 Motorway in the 1980s had fragmented the parcels of woodland with the main areas of woodland to the east of the M25 separated from the remainder of the land holding to the west of the motorway. Two high level pedestrian and bridle bridges connected the areas of woodland.

The Professional Services Manager advised that following the Performance and Governance Committee he had been in discussion with Shoreham Parish Council and the prospective purchaser of the land set out in Appendix B of the report. Their responses were circulated as late information to Cabinet. The Parish Council had raised issues in relation to the odd shape of the land and whether it would affect the District Council's use and management of the remainder of the land. The shape of the land was as a result of consultations with the operating department being requested to identify the land in response to the offer to buy. The question of a lease had been discussed with the prospective purchaser who would prefer to buy the land but was not averse to a possible 99 year sub-lease. This would make no difference to the income for the Council.

Cllr. Grint, a Local Member of the ward abutting the woods, asked whether the disposal of this land was part of a coherent strategy of land management and whether the disposal of the land would make it easier for the Council to dispose of the land at Jenkins Neck Wood. He had walked the land and had found it unprepossessing. However it was a good habitat for flora and fauna. The Performance and Governance Committee had raised the question of the advantages and disadvantages of a private sale as opposed to an open market sale. Cllr. Grint was advised that sales of such parcels of land in the past had attracted inappropriate prospective purchasers.

Resolved: (a) That it be agreed that the parcel of land identified in appendix C of the report be sold to the adjoining land owner for the sum

NOTE:

*Date of publication: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2008. Key decisions will take effect on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2008.*

## Agenda Item 8

Cabinet – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008

indicated in the report and subject to such other terms and conditions that the Head of Legal and Committee Services deems necessary to protect the Council's interests; and

(b) that it be agreed that the parcel of land identified in appendix B of the report be leased to the adjoining land owner for a peppercorn rent and premium that would equal the proposed purchase price and subject to such other terms and conditions that the Head of Legal and Committee Services deems necessary to protect the Council's interests.

### 41. LEADER FUNDING (REPORT NO. 15 – 15.05.08)

The Head of Housing Services advised that Leader was a new source of funding for rural businesses and communities. In early 2008 the West Kent Partnership submitted a successful bid for funding being offered by South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA). There were conditions to be met which Members approved, subject to other West Kent Partners also giving their support.

Resolved: That approval be given to the conditions associated with the proposal, subject to other West Kent Partners also giving their support.

### 42. CABINET VERBAL REPORT – DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Chairman stated that he was sure Members were all aware of the importance, both in terms of quality services and financial management of the Development Services Review. He therefore proposed that the Cabinet should take a direct role in overseeing the review and asked that Officers prepare a comprehensive report on progress to be submitted for consideration to Cabinet as soon as possible.

This was agreed.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.35 P.M.

Chairman

NOTE:

*Date of publication: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2008. Key decisions will take effect on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2008.*



**Item 10 - Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021**

The attached report was considered by the Economic & Community Advisory Committee on 11 December 2018. The relevant Minute extract is below.

Economic & Community Advisory Committee (11 December 2018, Minute 29)

The Head of Economic Development & Property introduced a report on the final draft Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2021.

He explained that the plan aimed to be short and succinct, and was designed to be flexible and be able to attach individual actions to it in the future.

Members queried whether there was provision for helping older people back into work. The Chairman confirmed this was being worked on.

The Committee discussed the number of responses the consultation received and whether more needed to be done to engage more businesses. The Chairman explained that everything that could have been done to engage as many people as possible was and felt the strategy covered all bases in regards to economic development in the District.

Members of the Committee also discussed the need for faster broadband in the District and whether this would help keep businesses in the area. The Head of Economic Development & Property confirmed there had been a change of emphasis at a government level, which aimed to provide fibre broadband straight into premises. He explained that a parish-by-parish assessment was being carried out by Kent County Council on current broadband requirement provision. The assessments for the Sevenoaks District would be completed by the end of January 2019. Plans would then be prepared for improvements in those parts of the District with poor provision.

Resolved: That

- a) the report be noted and
- b) it be recommended to Cabinet that the Economic Development Strategy be approved.

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2018-2021**

**Cabinet - 10 January 2019**

Report of	Chief Officer Communities and Business
Status	For Decision
Also considered by	Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee - 11 December 2018
Key Decision	Yes

**Executive Summary:** The report details the responses to the consultation on the draft Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2021 and recommends adoption of the Strategy. The new Economic Development Strategy has three areas of common interest; Innovation & Technology, the Rural Economy and Sustainability and is based around five themes; Growth and Investment, Infrastructure, Visitor Economy, Skills and Enterprise.

Each theme has a series of outcomes and those cover investment and regeneration, improvements to infrastructure for digital connectivity, health and wellbeing, maintaining a strong Visitor Economy, improved skills and training and the provision of support for new and existing business.

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** Supporting and developing the local economy from the Corporate Plan and supporting the Dynamic and Sustainable economy priorities in the Community Plan.

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Roderick Hogarth

**Contact Officer** Andrew Stirling, Ext. 7099

**Recommendation to Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee:**  
That

- (a) the Committee notes the consultation responses to the Economic Development Strategy; and
- (b) the Committee recommends to Cabinet that the Economic Development Strategy be approved.

**Recommendation to Cabinet:**

That the Economic Development Strategy be approved.

---

**Reason for recommendation:** The consultation with partners and stakeholders has been completed and the Strategy is now ready for formal adoption by the District Council.

---

### Introduction and Background

- 1 The Council's current Economic Development Strategy was prepared in 2014 and has become out of date, due to national and international policy and economic changes, emerging new technologies and opportunities for growth. The new Economic Development Strategy will cover the period from 2018 to 2021.
- 2 The Strategy has three areas of common interest; Innovation & Technology, the Rural Economy and Sustainability; with five themes; Growth & Investment, Infrastructure, Visitor Economy, Skills and Enterprise.
- 3 The outcomes are for investment and regeneration, improvements to infrastructure for digital connectivity, health and wellbeing and maintaining a strong Visitor Economy. Additional outcomes are to improve skills and training and the provision of support for new and existing business.
- 4 The Strategy reflects the context in which the Council undertakes its Economic Development activity and the number of organisations and partners who are involved through setting policy, providing funding sources or controlling the ability to deliver outcomes which benefit our residents, businesses and visitors.
- 5 The Strategy has been designed to be a short document which can be used to underpin specific action plans to realise individual outcomes or be adapted to future changes in the economy arising from changes in national and international policy and financial circumstances.
- 6 The Strategy has also been prepared in parallel with the draft Local plan and in close collaboration with the Planning Policy team. The Strategy will help to achieve the growth outcomes set out in the draft Local Plan.
- 7 The development of the Strategy and the detail within the themes has been informed by the workshop session that the Committee undertook at its October 2017 meeting and by the subsequent consultation programme.

### Consultation

- 8 The Consultation on the draft Strategy was completed on 26 October. The consultation was publicised in Inshape, on Twitter, the Real Business newsletter and the Town and Parish Council newsletter. A promotional video was prepared and Digital Advertising used to publicise the consultation. Presentations given to the Rural Landowners Group and Sevenoaks Town Partnership, a Business focus group was held and direct e-mail contact was made with over 450 businesses.

- 9 An online survey was created on Survey Monkey and that received 32 responses. A further 3 responses were received directly by the Economic Development team. Of the 32 survey responses received 7 were from local businesses, 15 from members of the public and 10 from a range of other respondents.
- 10 A full breakdown of the survey is attached at Appendix 2. The key points from the survey are shown below:

Of the 7 business responses 6 gave further information about their characteristics. 2 employed between 1 and 9 people and 4 employed between 10 and 19 people. 1 business has been established between 1 and 5 years, 1 business between 5 and 9 years and 4 had been established longer than 10 years.

The most important aspects of the Strategy for respondents were:

Of the three overarching themes Sustainability was ranked most important by 75% of the respondents.

Across the 5 individual themes the most important elements were as follows:

Theme	Most important to business	Highest average score of importance to business
<b>Growth &amp; Investment</b>	Development of new and refurbished commercial space	Investment/regeneration in our towns and villages
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Improved transport infrastructure	Improved transport infrastructure
<b>Visitor Economy</b>	Availability of locally produced food and drink	Availability of locally produced food and drink
<b>Skills</b>	Work ready young people	Work ready young people
<b>Enterprise</b>	Access to flexible employment space	Information on potential business funding sources

Whilst the first four themes showed clear preferences about the most important themes for business, under the Enterprise theme the highest percentage scores were 3 or 4 with a single point of contact for business scoring a 4 and events and access to business support and advice scoring a 3.

- 11 The individual responses have been tabulated and comments made to each response. Those are attached at Appendix 3. Responses were drawing out specific issues which are either reflected in the Strategy, outside of the

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direct control of the District Council or are being addressed within the draft Local Plan.

- 12 As part of the consultation a Business Focus Group was convened. The key issues that came from that group are set out in the table below:

Theme	Feedback from the Focus Group
<b>Growth &amp; Investment</b>	<p>A map of the district would be useful for understanding where businesses are located across the District and for attracting investment. This could include the % of rural areas, a cluster map of existing employment land and a breakdown of existing employment space.</p> <p>Swanley is seen as having potential for growth and investment, need to engage better with business community in Swanley</p> <p>The supply of good quality office/industrial space is low. Consideration should be given to encouraging business hubs/flexible workspace and developing an investment strategy to deliver small industrial estates.</p> <p>Further work could be done to understand potential needs of current businesses to predict their future demand, together with the drivers for business relocations. In any regeneration or redevelopment consideration should be given to accommodating local 'service' businesses.</p>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<p>The provision of Broadband is a continuing challenge for the future and it needs to be reliable.</p> <p>There is a need for flexibility in planning policy on energy efficiency measures with relation to older buildings.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to improve our Waste education about what can be recycled and re-used.</p> <p>The emergence of Car clubs and provision of electrical charging points.</p>
<b>Visitor Economy</b>	<p>There is a need for more hotel accommodation across the District.</p> <p>Mapping/Wayfinding at Sevenoaks Train Station to provide information including how many minutes' walk to get to the town centre and attractions.</p> <p>The opportunity exists to improve visitor 'dwell time' in the District and improve transport links for visitors</p>

<p><b>Skills</b></p>	<p>There are not enough people in the District with the right skills. Is there an opportunity to support businesses in developing employee skills? Upskilling of older workers or returnees to work is vital.</p> <p>Teachers do not always advise students of different career opportunities, like degree apprenticeships, and may not understand the range of different industries /careers there are or have the time.</p> <p>Jobs fairs/ events sometimes don't work as schools can select lower achieving students only to participate.</p> <p>Sports clubs and their links to career avenues in the future need local business support.</p> <p>Can FE provision be developed in Sevenoaks?</p>
<p><b>Enterprise</b></p>	<p>Need to think about how people are going to be working in the future, the implications of potential increased home working. Business hubs will be useful to reduce isolation for those working from home, and provides meeting space.</p> <p>There is a need to find different ways to communicate key messages to businesses.</p> <p>The self-employed need support, as well as established businesses.</p>

- 13 Additional direct consultation responses also noted the importance of the visitor economy to the District, particularly the food and drink sector, and the benefit of diverse town centres that served both those who work in them as well as visitors. The response noted the benefit of the food and drink sector to 'destination' towns such as Malton, Ludlow and Whitstable.

The provision of housing that was affordable for all and enabled businesses to attract and retain their staff was important, together with the provision of good quality employment space, as well as space available at low cost.

The lack of a Higher Education offer in the District was noted and the promotion of apprenticeships and vocational training was welcomed.

- 14 The new Strategy provides the basis for development of individual action plans or projects. From the responses the Team Around Your Business model, the identification of areas for improvement in Broadband provision and further collaboration with the Visitor Economy sector are three topics for early work arising from the adoption of the Strategy.

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### Key Implications

#### Financial

There are no financial implications for the delivery of the Strategy which is resourced through the Economic Development budget and by working in partnership with other organisations. Specific projects arising from the strategy would be subject to their own funding proposals to be agreed by the Council or partners.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal implications for delivery of the Economic Development Strategy.

#### Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on ends users.

### Conclusions

The development of the new Economic Development Strategy reflects the significant national and international political and economic changes that have occurred since the previous Strategy was written. The Strategy reflects the vision and themes and the feedback given by the Committee at its meeting in October 2017 and aligns with the policies in the emerging Local Plan.

The consultation responses have supported the choice of themes for the Strategy and show the close relationship that exists with the policies in the draft Local Plan. Infrastructure and transport are two areas where other partners take the lead and our role is more of an influencer through our networks such as the Kent and Medway Enterprise Partnership or the West Kent Partnership.

The new Strategy provides the basis for development of individual action plans or projects. The Team Around Your Business model, Broadband service improvements and further collaboration with the Visitor Economy sector are three areas for early work arising from the Strategy.

### Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021

Appendix B - Breakdown of the Survey

Appendix C - Individual Survey free text responses

### Background Papers

None.

**Lesley Bowles**

**Chief Officer Communities and Business**





# Draft Economic Development Strategy 2018 – 2021





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## Foreword

Sevenoaks District offers the best of both worlds, excellent connectivity to London and further afield, whilst situated in picturesque countryside. This presents opportunities and challenges for the economic growth of the District, which this strategy seeks to address.

Our strategy complements our promises in the Council Plan to build on our thriving economy through regeneration of our market towns and enhancing the visitor and rural economies; to protect our economy through preserving and making better use of employment sites and redeveloping previously used land; and to support new and existing businesses and encouraging employers to promote mental and physical wellbeing at work.

We want to continue to build on its strong economic performance, whilst acknowledging the pace of change in innovation and technology which is shaping future patterns of employment and growth. Our District is home to many smaller enterprises, particularly in the rural and visitor economies, and the District will continue to work with partners to maintain and improve digital and physical connectivity.

The District is attractive to residents, employers and visitors and our ambition is to leave a positive legacy from our future growth. We want to do this through encouraging a sustainable approach, whether through new technologies, careful use of natural resources or enabling local growth to underpin the continuing vitality of our towns and smaller settlements.

Over the next four years, we will continue to work with local businesses and give them the support they need to prosper. We will also be working closely with employers and partners to ensure our residents have the skills they need to gain employment opportunities in the District.

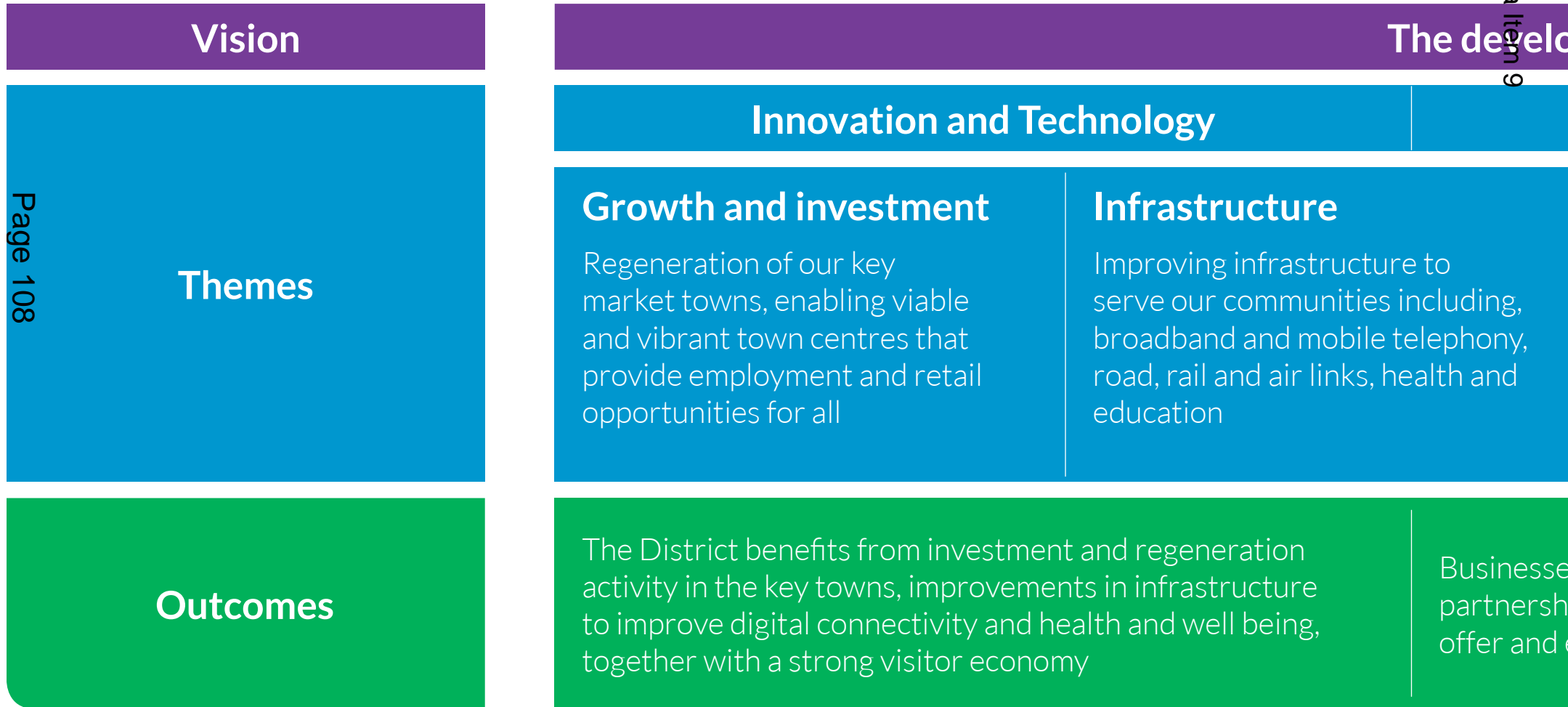
Councillor Roddy Hogarth

**Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development**



## Introduction

The strategy sets out five themes for economic development in the District over the next four years from 2018-2021. Those themes will reflect three areas of common interest; Innovation and Technology, the Rural Economy and Sustainability and are shown in the diagram below:



# Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021

## Development of a fair, safe and thriving economy

### Rural Economy

#### Visitor Economy

Engaging with and supporting the Visitor Economy sector, local food producers and arts and culture venues, to maintain Sevenoaks District as a key destination for visitors

#### Skills

Ensuring residents and businesses can gain the skills they require to sustain a prosperous District, including supporting young people into employment and life-long learning and training

### Sustainability

#### Enterprise

Working with businesses to ensure Sevenoaks District continues to be a place where businesses can prosper and grow

Businesses and residents benefit, through effective partnership working, from an improved skills and training enhanced access to lifelong learning

The expansion of businesses is underpinned through the provision of support services for business, continuing the Team Around Your Business model

## About Sevenoaks District

Sevenoaks District is located in West Kent, with the edge of Greater London to the north-west, Surrey to the west and East Sussex to the south. The District covers almost 143 square miles and 93% is designated Green Belt. The main towns are Sevenoaks, Swanley, Edenbridge and Westerham, where a significant proportion of the 119,160 residents in the District live. There are over 30 villages and smaller settlements, of which the largest is New Ash Green.

The District is a popular place to live, partly because of its proximity to London and the continent. Major transport links are provided by the M25, M26, M20, A21, A20 and A25. Stations throughout the District provide rail access to London in under an hour, with travel from Sevenoaks and Swanley around half an hour. The District is also well located for Gatwick, Heathrow and Biggin Hill airports, as well as the Channel Ports, Ashford and Ebbsfleet International stations.

The District has the lowest level of unemployment in Kent. The residents of the District are generally well qualified with only 8% of the population having no qualifications. There are a number of employment areas within the District. The majority of residents work in the West Kent area but more than 40% work within Greater London. The District also has a strong rural economy, but issues of poor connectivity and slow or limited broadband are common.

The District has vibrant town centres with many independent shops and a good retail offering. There is strong competition from nearby areas including Bluewater and Tunbridge Wells. Some areas are in need of regeneration, including Swanley town centre and New Ash Green village centre. Areas outside towns are served by local facilities within

villages. These services are of great value to local communities and contribute to the District's rural economy.

The District has a high quality landscape with a mostly rural character. 60% of the District lies within the Kent Downs or High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are many areas of woodland, much of which is designated as Ancient Woodland, two Country Parks and a large network of public rights of way. Parts of the District afford impressive views over Kent and the South East, particularly from the North Downs and the Greensand Ridge.











There are many historic settlements in the District, reflected in the high number of conservation areas and listed buildings. The District also boasts many nationally recognised heritage assets, including the historic estates of Knole, Chartwell, Hever Castle, Penshurst Place and Lullingstone Castle. Other places of interest include the National Trust village at Chiddingstone, Eynsford Castle, Lullingstone Roman Villa, Otford Palace and Toys Hill (the birthplace of the National Trust). There are many visitor attractions within the District and it is particularly popular with day visitors.







## The Sevenoaks District economy in numbers

<p>Population 118,800 projected to rise to 137,200 by 2031</p>		<p>47,020 households</p>		<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Agenda Item 9</p>
<p>30.4% with qualifications to level 4 or equivalent and above</p>		<p>71.5% of 16-64 year olds are in employment</p>		
<p>6,580 enterprises registered for VAT</p>		<p>£3,204 million GVA</p>		
<p>From 28 minutes to London 2hrs to Europe</p>		<p>Gatwick within 45 minutes Heathrow within 75 minutes Biggin Hill within 30 minutes</p>		
<p>52.5% of those in employment drive to work</p>		<p>3.9 m visitors generated £230m and 5,032 jobs in the Visitor Economy</p>		

84,100 economically active residents projected to rise to 99,000 by 2031



Median weekly earnings: £580 for District residents £543 for employees in District businesses



90% of businesses have fewer than 10 employees



Dover within 75 minutes



93% of the District is designated as Green Belt and 60% in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



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ONE 60  
LONDON RD

See Panel 10

## Context

Following the referendum on membership of the European Union in 2016, and the triggering of Article 50 in March 2017, the impact and implications of that decision on the economy are still to be fully understood. The District Council is assessing the impact on the local economy, including engaging with national and local partners who are undertaking similar assessments at a national and regional level.

The Government published its Industrial Strategy 'Building a Britain fit for the future' in November 2017, seeking to enable all parts of the country to succeed in delivering a high-skilled, competitive economy. The Industrial Strategy will underpin any future investment and growth funding that will be put in place by Government, including any funding packages, as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund, to replace existing EU funded programmes beyond March 2019.

Funding to support economic growth is currently channelled through national agencies and, at a regional level, Local Enterprise Partnerships. The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) which covers Kent, East Sussex and Essex includes Sevenoaks District within its geography. At a sub-regional level the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP), on which the District Council is represented, is the interface between SELEP and businesses, partners and local authorities in Kent and Medway. The Industrial Strategy sees a continuing place for Local Enterprise Partnerships in delivering its outcomes, but their role, structure and geographical boundaries may alter.

Both SELEP and KMEP have Strategic Economic and Growth Plans which set out the strategic economic investment priorities. These provide the framework for bidding, allocation and governance of

funding such as the Local Growth Fund, current European Structural and Investment Funds and other public funding sources.

Locally the West Kent Partnership, comprising the Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge & Malling Councils, is delivering skills and business support projects with local partners, together with the LEADER programme which provides opportunities for funding for rural enterprises. The Partnership's vision is to sustain a dynamic and well connected economy and seeks to promote West Kent as a place to do business.

## Economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

### Opportunities:

- Diversification of the rural economy and new live/work units in rural areas
- Growth of sectors including creative and digital, tech start-ups, logistics and tourism
- Regeneration in Swanley and New Ash Green

Page 16 The longer term redevelopment of Fort Halstead

### Strengths:

- Strategic location of the District with access to London and further afield by road, rail and air
- A highly skilled population and labour force
- A very strong reputation as an attractive and desirable place to live and work
- Significant number of micro businesses with higher than average 'survival rates for start ups'

### Threats:

- Pressure on employment sites for housing development and extension of permitted development rights to allow conversion of offices to housing
- Demographic factors including an ageing population and failure to retain younger workforce
- Changes in retail sector impacting on high streets
- Employment changes in the rural economy arising from technology and workforce availability

### Weaknesses:

- Shortage of commercial development sites and premises, including low cost workspace, and an ageing existing stock
- Poor public transport links to employment, education and tourism destinations
- Varying quality of broadband and mobile telephony coverage
- Affordability of housing affecting demographic spread and recruitment of workforce





## Theme 1: Growth and investment

Whilst the District continues to maintain the growth of new businesses and its attractiveness as a location, to live work and visit, there are a number of challenges to address. The District Council will not be able to solve those challenges on its own and will continue to work closely with partners to achieve the necessary outcomes.

As housing growth continues, it creates additional demand for businesses, services and new infrastructure and will require our existing towns and larger settlements to adapt to those changes. The District Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the period to 2035. This Strategy is one of a number of tools to support the emerging growth proposals in the Local Plan.

Swanley, Sevenoaks, Westerham and Edenbridge are the main town centres in the District. Other larger settlements include New Ash Green, Otford and Hartley. Areas of future growth in the District are likely to be Swanley, the northern fringe of Sevenoaks, Westerham, Edenbridge and Fort Halstead.

In Swanley, work is continuing on regeneration proposals for individual sites in the town centre. Additionally, the District Council continues to lead work on a wider Master Vision for the town. Sevenoaks Town Council has prepared a Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan. This is promoting growth around Bat and Ball station and making use of quarries on the urban fringe for new housing development and additional commercial and employment space. In the centre of Sevenoaks, the District Council will use its land ownerships and work with partners to promote or undertake further development to maintain the vitality of the town centre.

In Edenbridge there are key retail sites in the High Street and to the north of the town centre to be brought into use, as well as sustaining the current stock of employment land and buildings. The regeneration of the commercial centre in New Ash Green continues to be a local priority.

Fort Halstead, through the approved employment led redevelopment scheme, is the main site for longer term growth in the District in the early 2020s. This location, when combined with the growth of avionics and aviation support businesses at Biggin Hill and development opportunities in Croydon and Swanley, can provide the foundations for a technology and engineering cluster along the North Downs.

Whilst growth is predominantly housing led, the loss of existing employment sites through permitted development rights is eroding our supply of employment land and space. We will seek to encourage, either through direct investment or promoting Inward Investment, the retention, refurbishment or new provision of employment and retail sites and buildings in the District. To support this we will continue our collaboration with the Planning Policy and Development Management teams to maximise development opportunities.





## Theme 2: Infrastructure

The continuing growth of the District has to be matched, where possible, by additional infrastructure to support our communities. The Council will continue to work closely with utility and transport providers, government departments and agencies or other local authorities to enable the provision of our infrastructure needs. Through new growth, additional Council Tax, Business Rates and section 106 Agreement and Community Infrastructure Levy, contributions will be realised to provide funding towards projects or schemes mitigating the impact of new development.

Good road, rail and air transport infrastructure underpins the economic vitality of the District. Our strategy, in conjunction with the emerging Local Plan, will take account of the Lower Thames Crossing, the Southeastern railway franchise transfer in April 2019 and Transport for London's future aspirations for Metro rail services, together with the growth of Heathrow, Gatwick and Biggin Hill airports.

Bus services and community transport schemes provide important links between our hamlets and villages and our larger centres. We will work with partners to seek to maintain or develop alternative services for the benefit of the District's residents, employers and visitors.

As the pace of change to electric vehicles and autonomous driving technology increases, the Council will seek to promote these technologies and encourage provision of vehicle charging infrastructure to support the use of commercial and private electric or hybrid vehicles.

There are areas of poor broadband and mobile telephony connectivity and these have a particular impact on new and existing businesses in the rural parts of the District. A particular focus will be finding solutions for those areas where the 'Making Kent Quicker' broadband delivery programme is unable to reach. Those solutions may either come through independent providers, enabling provision of fibre to the premises or cabinet, using local networks serving clusters of properties, or through use of wireless or satellite solutions. 5G technology will offer future options for improving connectivity. We will continue to work closely with the County Council, independent providers and partners to maximise future funding opportunities, including 'Voucher' schemes, to improve digital connectivity.

The Kent and Medway NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) is aiming to provide the necessary healthcare services and infrastructure for the future and we continue to work with the two NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to enable opportunities for new medical facilities within future developments.

Life-long learning infrastructure (schools, further, higher or adult education and skills training) and libraries is also key to the economic vitality of our communities and we will continue to work with partners to enable opportunities for new facilities, particularly for post 16 education within future developments.





### Theme 3: Visitor Economy

The Visitor Economy sector is a cornerstone of our rural economy and a major contributor to the District’s strong economic performance. There are strong relationships between with local food and drink producers and arts and cultural venues, and both this strategy and the emerging Local Plan recognise the significant importance of this sector.

Our local food and drink producers form part of our diverse rural economy which help sustain our smaller settlements and also underpin the very high levels of self-employment and home-based working within the District. The management of our landscapes by our rural enterprises maintains the attractiveness of our District to both visitors and residents.

We will continue to work with Visit Kent and Produced in Kent, as well as other national and local bodies, to maintain the profile of the District and its attractions and suppliers. The availability of funding programmes remains important for rural enterprises and they help to underpin the provision of basic services such as village shops and enable diversification and expansion of farming and forestry businesses. The West Kent LEADER programme currently provides those funding opportunities, together with any future schemes brought in after March 2019, and the District Council will continue to actively promote those programmes.

High demand continues for a diverse range of accommodation for visitors to the District, whether Bed and Breakfast, mid-range or luxury hotel accommodation. We have built a new 83 bed Premier Inn hotel, which opened in Sevenoaks in summer 2018, and further accommodation opportunities will be sought and encouraged to be developed in the District to serve different market segments.

A sector led study of our Visitor Economy has highlighted the challenge of maintaining visitor numbers and diversifying their activities without saturating, changing or damaging our historic landscape and properties. Visitors are seeking more of an ‘experience’ at the venues they visit, including direct participation or understanding the provenance of the food and drink being purchased or served to them. We will support and encourage the sector to innovate. Examples of innovation include providing charging points for electric or hybrid vehicles, hiring electric bicycles, or developing smart ‘apps’ for walking, cycling and ticketing and marketing. We will also encourage links with local food and drink producers and collaboration with the train operating companies to increase access for visitors by rail to the Eden and Darent Vallys.

Our major landowners in the District are at the forefront of sustaining our rural economy and maintaining and managing our rural landscapes. We will continue to work with them to support their diversification and innovation they bring in terms of renewable energy supplies, conversion of redundant buildings into small business units and improving local broadband and mobile telephone connectivity.



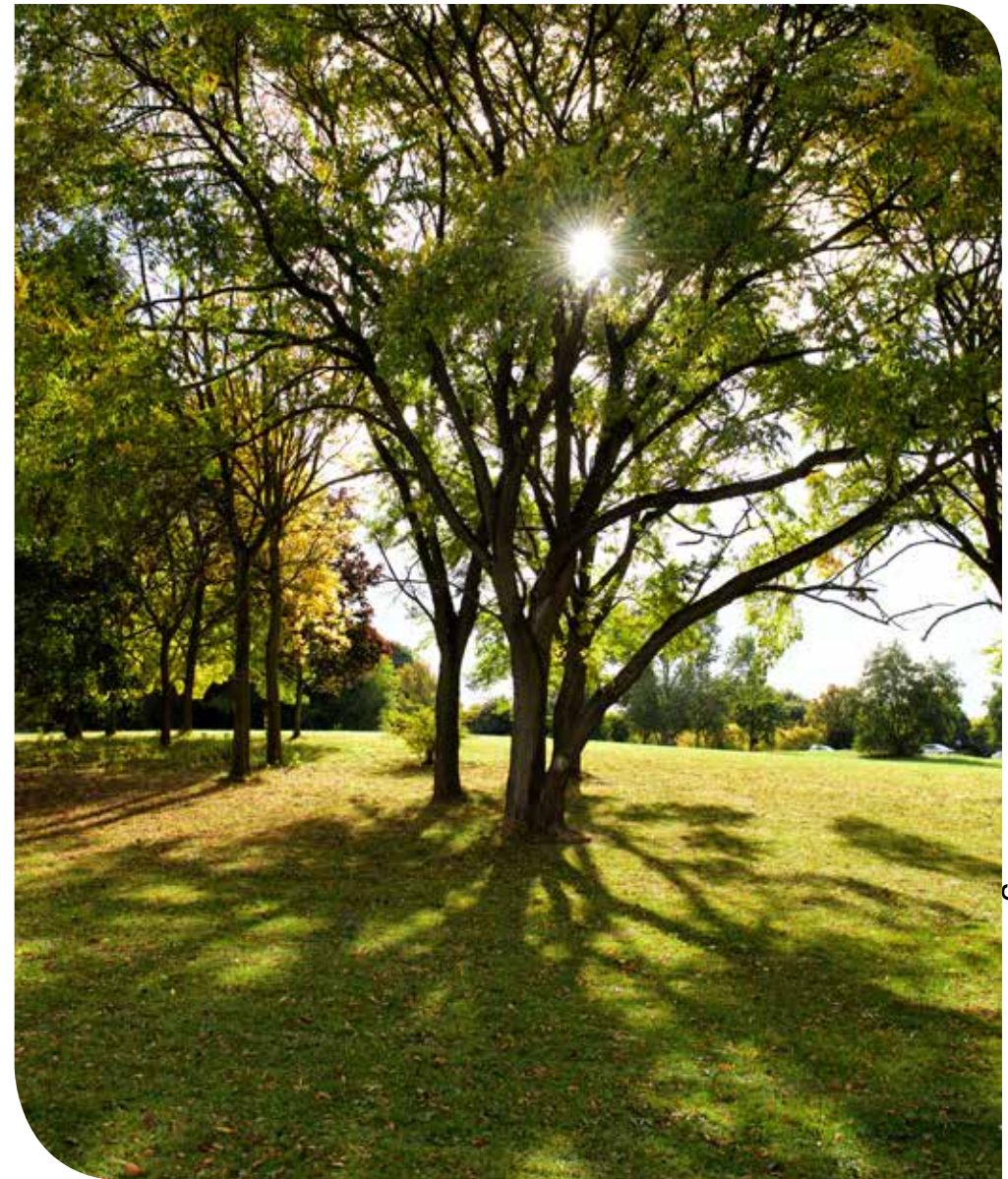
*“LEADER funding enabled us to purchase our tracked wood chipper, a machine we previously hired multiple times a month. Since owning our own machine, we have experienced an upsurge in the acceptance of jobs relating to woodland works. This is primarily because we no longer need to include the hire charge of a machine within our quote package. Our focus is now on developing our growth strategy with conversion and margins leading the process.”*

Navin Sehmi – Down to Earth

*“We feel incredibly lucky to be located in such a beautiful area. Shoreham, voted the second best village in England last spring by The Times newspaper, lies in the Green Belt and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and also benefits from a wonderfully welcoming and thriving community. We are proud to be close neighbours of Sevenoaks with all its amenities and are lucky to have great public transport access to both the town and London via the trainline. There is a good spirit of collaboration between local, independent businesses which is so important too.*

*We have received wonderful support from the Council with regards to understanding collaborative opportunities in the area and support in business development and look forward to a continued good relationship with them as we grow and evolve.”*

Lizzie Buxton – The Mount Vineyard



## Theme 4: Skills

The projected growth in the District is estimated to generate 9,358 additional jobs in the period to 2035 (source: Employment Needs Study for SDC Turley 2016) and our residents will need to be fully equipped with the skills to enable them to benefit from these new job opportunities. The projected areas of growth for employment over this period include professional services, computing and telecoms and real estate.

Whilst the District has a very low unemployment rate, and a high proportion of residents with NVQ level 4 or above, this masks difficulties that employers have in recruiting employees with the appropriate skillsets as well as, particularly for younger people, a lack of preparedness for work and knowledge of the many career opportunities available to them. The District does not have direct Further or Higher Education provision, with students travelling to colleges or universities elsewhere in Kent or further afield.

The Council, through its membership of the West Kent Partnership, including Further and Higher Education providers, the County Council and JobCentre Plus on a number of initiatives. These include the promotion of careers to young people still at school and building and maintaining relationships with business. The West Kent Partnership launched an Enterprise Adviser network in September 2017 and this is already opening up opportunities in schools across the District. Besides the existing Job Fairs in the Partnership area, we are working with the Local Strategic Partnership on a project to bring careers advice and support to harder to reach young people in the District.

We will also work with employers and training providers across specific

sectors to enable the design and delivery of relevant skills training and support that will meet the needs of businesses. This is particularly relevant to the take up of Apprenticeships and Degree Apprenticeships.

As higher education institutions seek to expand their research and development activities, we will seek opportunities to collaborate on the use of 'Big Data' to inform planning for the future economic growth of the District.

Improving the skills of our workforce also has an influence on the wider health and wellbeing of the District. As our population ages, there will be increased demand on health and social care and this will provide a range of employment opportunities arising from new business activity and innovation in the sector.





## Theme 5: Enterprise

The projected employment growth in the District, together with high rates of retention of existing businesses, places a clear emphasis on supporting existing businesses and nurturing new ones. Our economy is dominated by small businesses, with over 90.5% having less than 10 employees and 79.9% having less than five employees. The survival rate for businesses is 64.7% after three years and 45.5% after five years, which is higher than the Kent average.

In order to strengthen and sustain the numbers of businesses, through working with partners, we are able to signpost businesses to advice and support on starting up or expansion, funding opportunities or specific guidance for exporters. The Kent and Medway Growth Hub, funded through SELEP, provides web based support for business start up and expansion. Whilst future funding opportunities will vary, and may be sector or category specific, current examples of available funding have included packages for start ups as well as expansion of businesses and the employment of apprentices. The West Kent Partnership has a Business Support Programme which enables local businesses to access free 1:1 support.

Additionally there is a diverse range of business in the District including Chambers of Commerce in Sevenoaks, incorporating Westerham and Swanley and Edenbridge, together with other formal and informal groups. These can provide advice, mentoring and marketing opportunities for new and existing businesses.

The provision of low cost employment space for business start ups or micro-businesses, particularly in the creative and digital and tech sectors, is going to be a key element of future growth. We will

encourage and support the provision of this type of workspace in the District.

We undertake a number of statutory roles including planning and building control, environmental health, licencing and administering business rates that are relevant to new and existing businesses. Our 'Team Around Your Business' model provides assistance for businesses using those services with the aim to simplify access and points of contact with the Council.

As part of our communications plan, we provide a regular e-newsletter, realBusiness, and use Twitter to publicise events, such as Global Entrepreneurship Week and Small Business Saturday, and funding opportunities for businesses in the District.

As further advances in technology occur (green energy, carbon reduction, electric vehicles, artificial intelligence and robotics) together with the associated risks including cyber crime and fraud, we will continue to promote events and workshops, in conjunction with partners, to provide advice to businesses on these topics.

***"We started our business in Sevenoaks 7 years ago introducing local businesses to part time and flexible professionals and have seen the town thrive in that period. Our client base has grown considerably and 2017 was our most successful year yet."***

Andrea Starbuck - Ten2Two





## Economic Development strategy framework

The table summarises the challenges and actions arising from the Strategy's themes and provides a framework to develop specific action plans and targets to monitor and measure success.

Theme	Challenges	Actions
1: Growth and investment	Loss of employment sites through Permitted Development Rights Changes in retail sector Quality of employment and retail space	Encourage diversification of uses in town centres Secure investment and regeneration in towns and large villages
2: Infrastructure	Funding Planning	Mapping need and priority Securing funding
3: Visitor Economy	Limited visitor accommodation Capacity of individual destinations Increasing visitor 'stay' or 'dwell' time	Supporting sector led initiatives Working with Visit Kent, Produced in Kent and others to maximise promotion
4: Skills	Improvement of Qualifications and Skills Low wages	Partnership working with education and training providers West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network Links to employer guilds
5: Enterprise	New technologies Networks Workspace	Communication Advocacy and networks Low cost workspace



	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
	Retail and business premises vacancy rates Business satisfaction	More space for business Improved retail offer Retaining spend within the District
Page 129	Broadband speed and access	Better places to live and work Improved efficiency for business
	Visitor numbers Visitor spend Visitor 'stay' and 'dwell' time	Wider accommodation choice Increased local spend on goods and services
	Unemployment and JSA rates KS4 attainment	Improved labour market to support businesses Increased personal income supports demand and local business
	Number of businesses Business survival rates	Jobs for local people Diversity of businesses and services for local communities

## Economic Development strategy framework – monitoring and measuring

Theme	Indicator	Source
Growth and investment	Retail vacancy rates	Goad
Growth and investment	% of available employment space in District	SDC Annual Monitoring Report
Growth and investment	Loss of office accommodation under permitted development rights	SDC Annual Monitoring Report
Infrastructure	Average Broadband download and upload speeds	ThinkBroadband.com
Infrastructure	% properties with UK superfast broadband access	ThinkBroadband.com
Visitor Economy	Visitor numbers	Visit Kent
Visitor Economy	Visitor spend	Visit Kent
Visitor Economy	Visitor dwell time	Visit Kent
Skills	Estimate of unemployment	ONS
Skills	Number and % of residents claiming JSA	Department for Work & Pensions
Skills	KS4 attainment	Department for Education/KCC (Kelsi)
Enterprise	Number of businesses in the Sevenoaks District	ONS Business Demography
Enterprise	Size of businesses and numbers of employees in the Sevenoaks District	ONS Business Demography
Enterprise	Business survival rates (three and five year)	ONS Business Demography

	<b>Frequency</b>
	Annually
	Annually
	Annually
	Quarterly
	Quarterly
	Annually
	Annually
	Annually
	Quarterly
	Monthly
	Annually
	Annually
	Annually
	Annually













Call us on:  
01732 227000

Email us at:  
[business@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:business@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

Visit our website:  
[www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk)

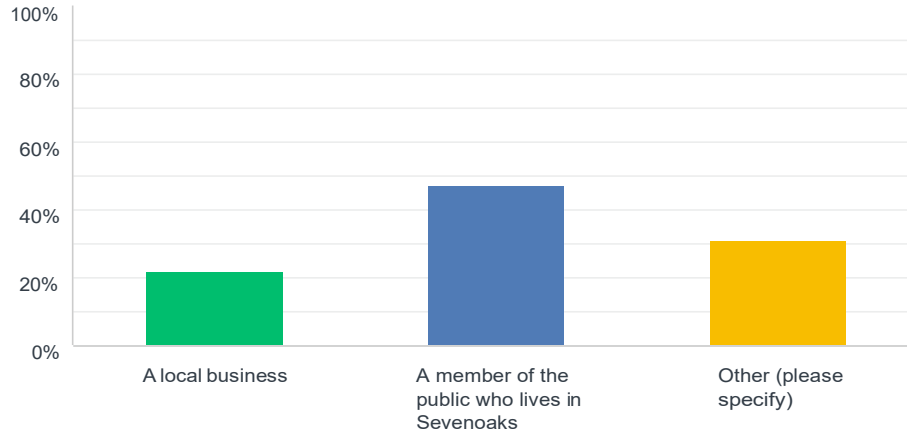
 [sdc\\_newsdesk](#)  
 [Sevenoaks District Council Official](#)





Q1 Are you responding to this questionnaire as:

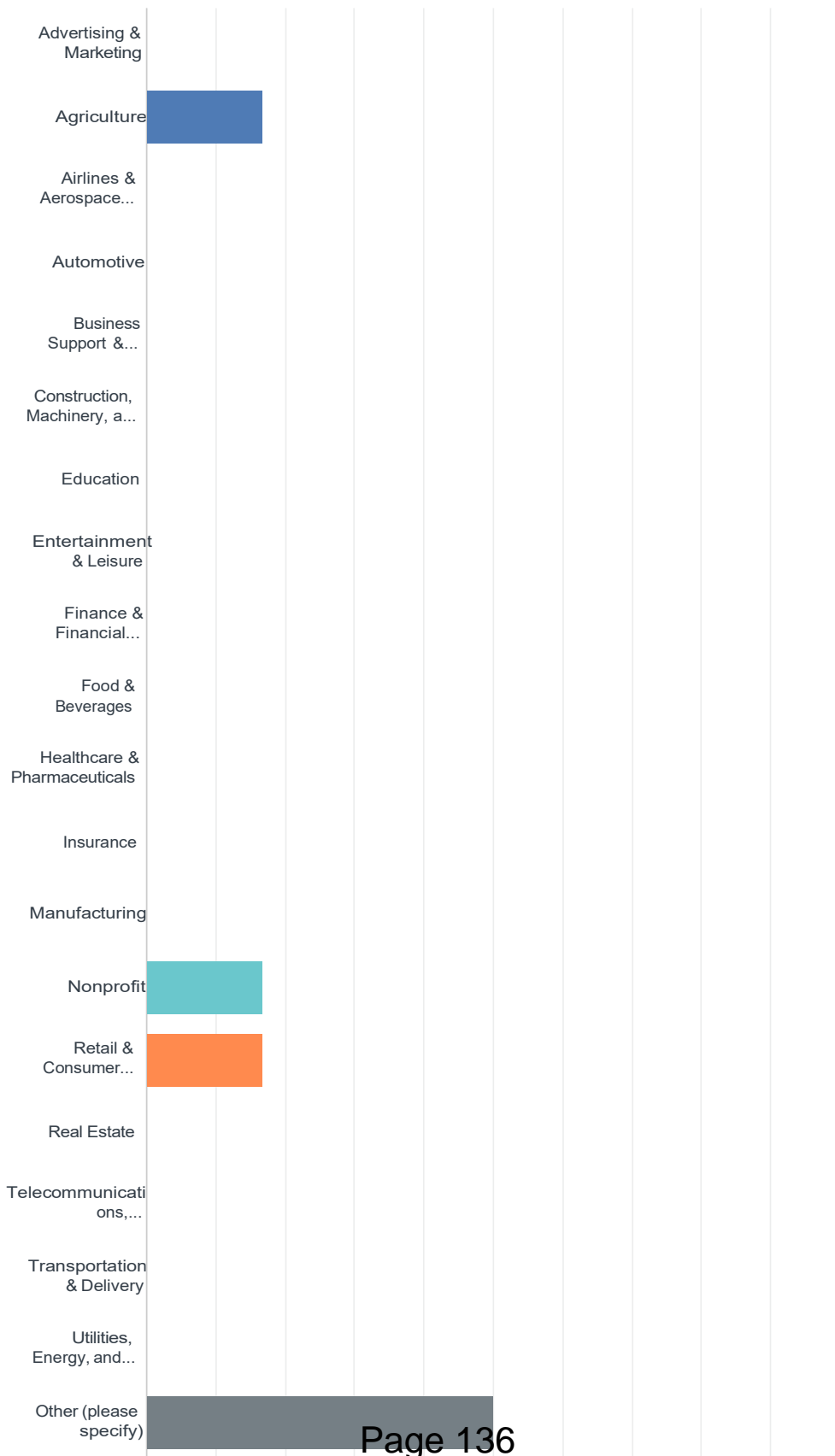
Answered: 32 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A local business	21.88%	7
A member of the public who lives in Sevenoaks	46.88%	15
Other (please specify)	31.25%	10
Total Respondents: 32		

## Q2 Which sector is your business in?

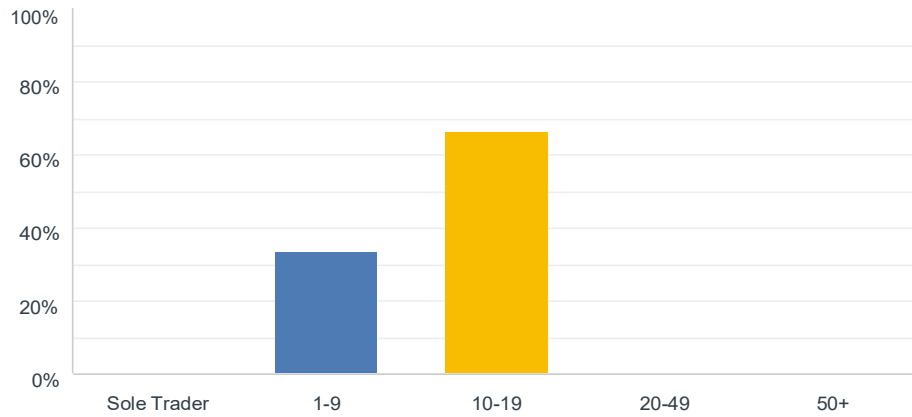
Answered: 6 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Advertising & Marketing	0.00%	0
Agriculture	16.67%	1
Airlines & Aerospace (including Defense)	0.00%	0
Automotive	0.00%	0
Business Support & Logistics	0.00%	0
Construction, Machinery, and Homes	0.00%	0
Education	0.00%	0
Entertainment & Leisure	0.00%	0
Finance & Financial Services	0.00%	0
Food & Beverages	0.00%	0
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	0.00%	0
Insurance	0.00%	0
Manufacturing	0.00%	0
Nonprofit	16.67%	1
Retail & Consumer Durables	16.67%	1
Real Estate	0.00%	0
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	0.00%	0
Transportation & Delivery	0.00%	0
Utilities, Energy, and Extraction	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	50.00%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6</b>

### Q3 How many people are employed at your company?

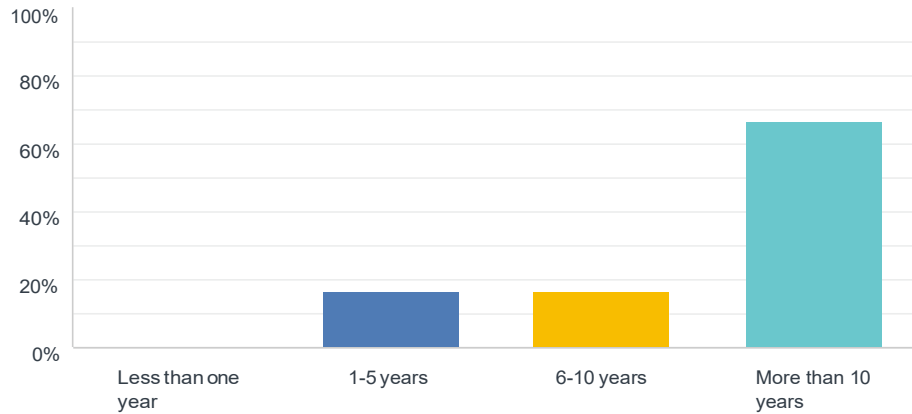
Answered: 6 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sole Trader	0.00%	0
1-9	33.33%	2
10-19	66.67%	4
20-49	0.00%	0
50+	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6</b>

### Q4 How long has your company been in business?

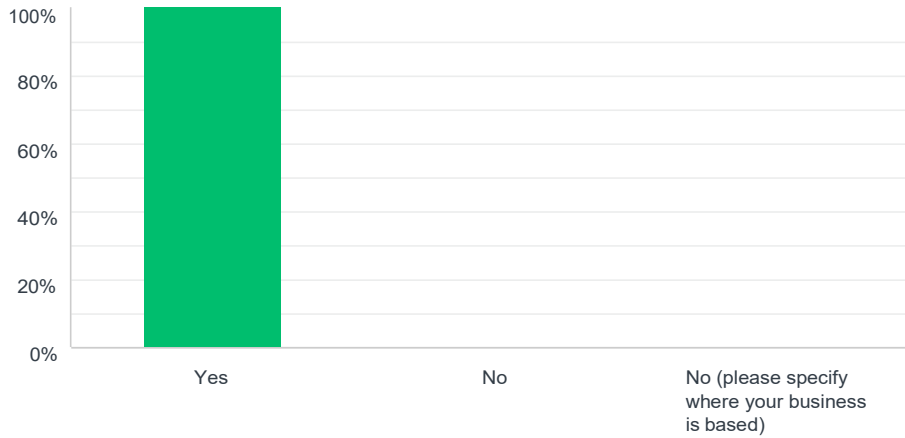
Answered: 6 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than one year	0.00% 0
1-5 years	16.67% 1
6-10 years	16.67% 1
More than 10 years	66.67% 4
Total Respondents: 6	

### Q5 Is your business located within the district of Sevenoaks?

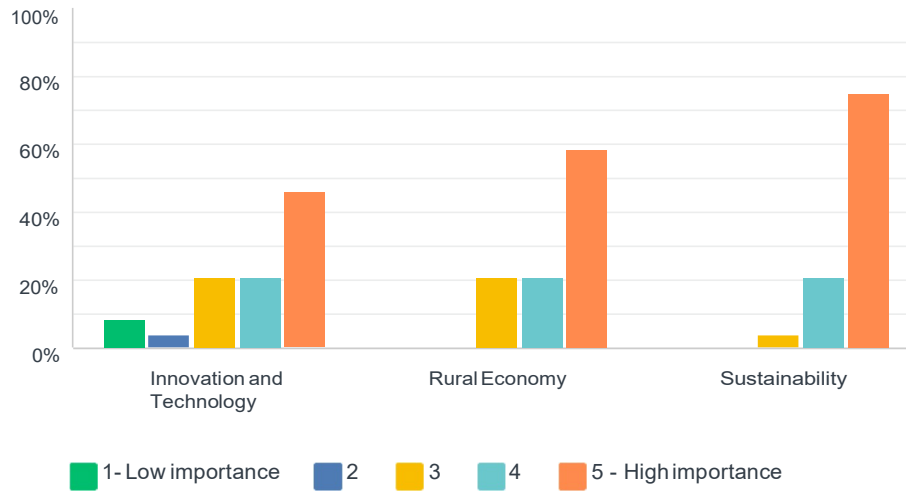
Answered: 6 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	6
No	0.00%	0
No (please specify where your business is based)	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 6		

### Q6 Our draft strategy proposes three cross-cutting themes, how important are these to you/your business?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 8

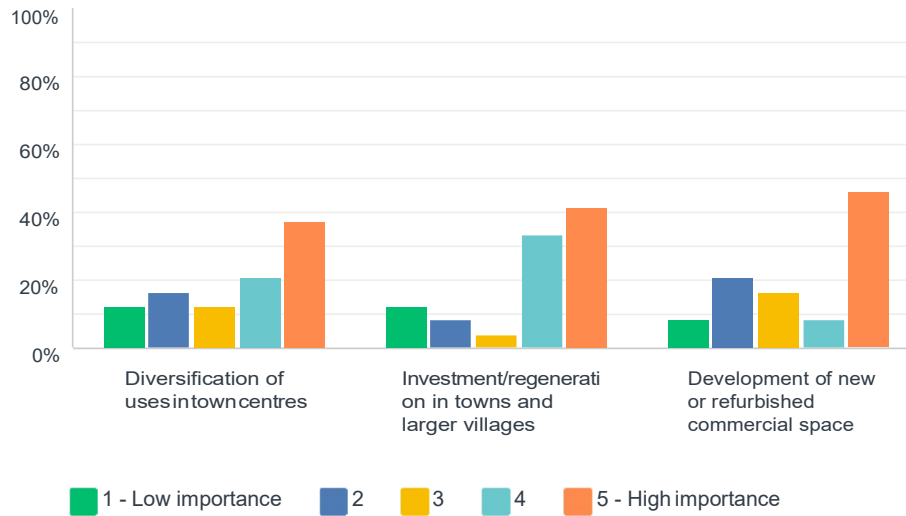


	1- LOW IMPORTANCE	2	3	4	5 - HIGH IMPORTANCE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Innovation and Technology	8.33% 2	4.17% 1	20.83% 5	20.83% 5	45.83% 11	24	3.92
Rural Economy	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.83% 5	20.83% 5	58.33% 14	24	4.38
Sustainability	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.17% 1	20.83% 5	75.00% 18	24	4.71



Q7 On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being low and 5 being high, please tell us how important you think each area is to you/your business

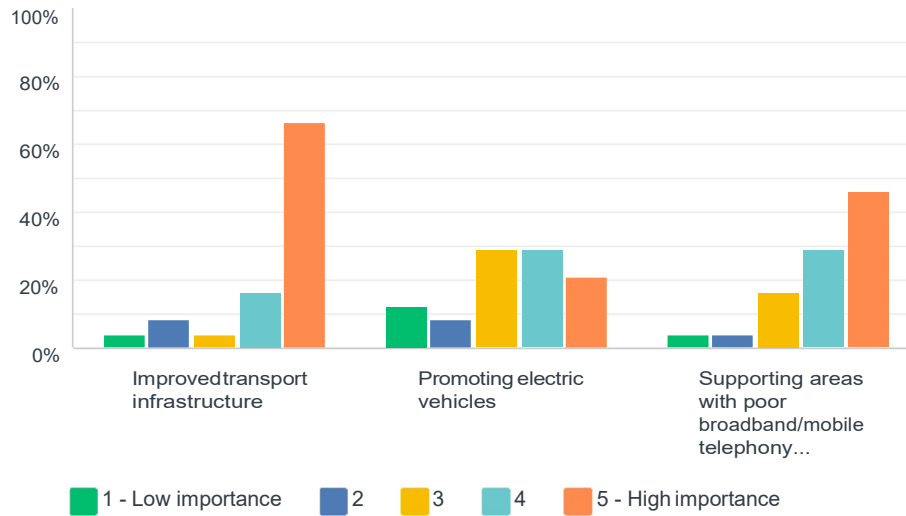
Answered: 24 Skipped: 8



	1 - LOW IMPORTANCE	2	3	4	5 - HIGH IMPORTANCE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Diversification of uses in town centres	12.50% 3	16.67% 4	12.50% 3	20.83% 5	37.50% 9	24	3.54
Investment/regeneration in towns and larger villages	12.50% 3	8.33% 2	4.17% 1	33.33% 8	41.67% 10	24	3.83
Development of new or refurbished commercial space	8.33% 2	20.83% 5	16.67% 4	8.33% 2	45.83% 11	24	3.63

### Q8 On a scale of 1 to 5, please tell us how important you think each area is to you/your business

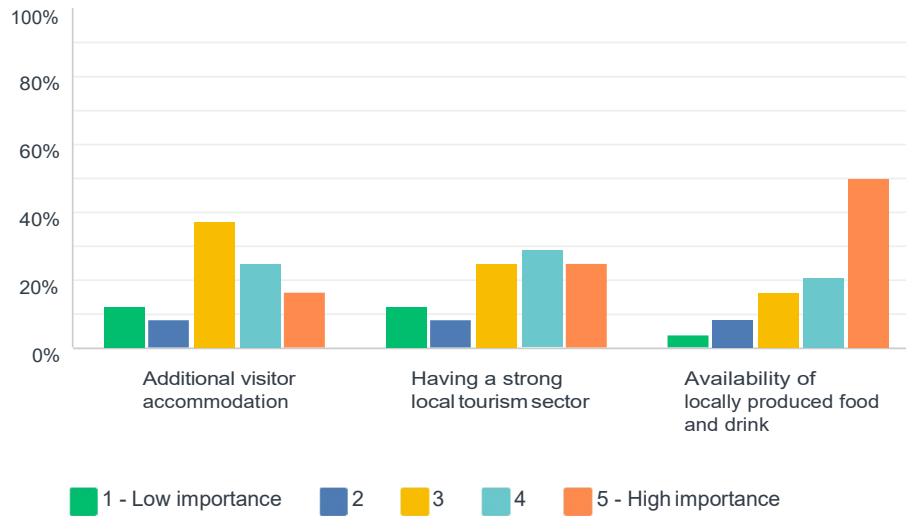
Answered: 24 Skipped: 8



	1 - LOW IMPORTANCE	2	3	4	5 - HIGH IMPORTANCE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Improved transport infrastructure	4.17% 1	8.33% 2	4.17% 1	16.67% 4	66.67% 16	24	4.33
Promoting electric vehicles	12.50% 3	8.33% 2	29.17% 7	29.17% 7	20.83% 5	24	3.38
Supporting areas with poor broadband/mobile telephony connectivity	4.17% 1	4.17% 1	16.67% 4	29.17% 7	45.83% 11	24	4.08

### Q9 On a scale of 1 to 5, please tell us how important you think each area is to you/your business

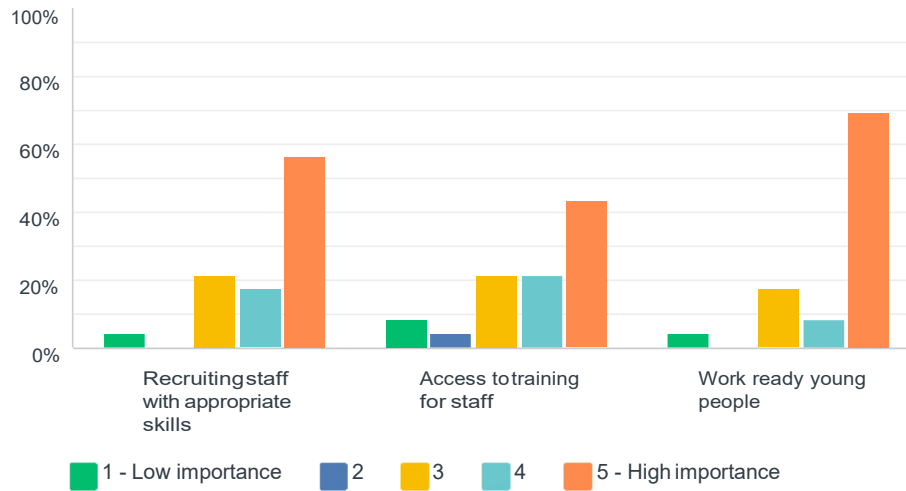
Answered: 24 Skipped: 8



	1 - LOW IMPORTANCE	2	3	4	5 - HIGH IMPORTANCE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Additional visitor accommodation	12.50% 3	8.33% 2	37.50% 9	25.00% 6	16.67% 4	24	3.25
Having a strong local tourism sector	12.50% 3	8.33% 2	25.00% 6	29.17% 7	25.00% 6	24	3.46
Availability of locally produced food and drink	4.17% 1	8.33% 2	16.67% 4	20.83% 5	50.00% 12	24	4.04

### Q10 On a scale of 1 to 5, please tell us how important you think each area is to you/your business

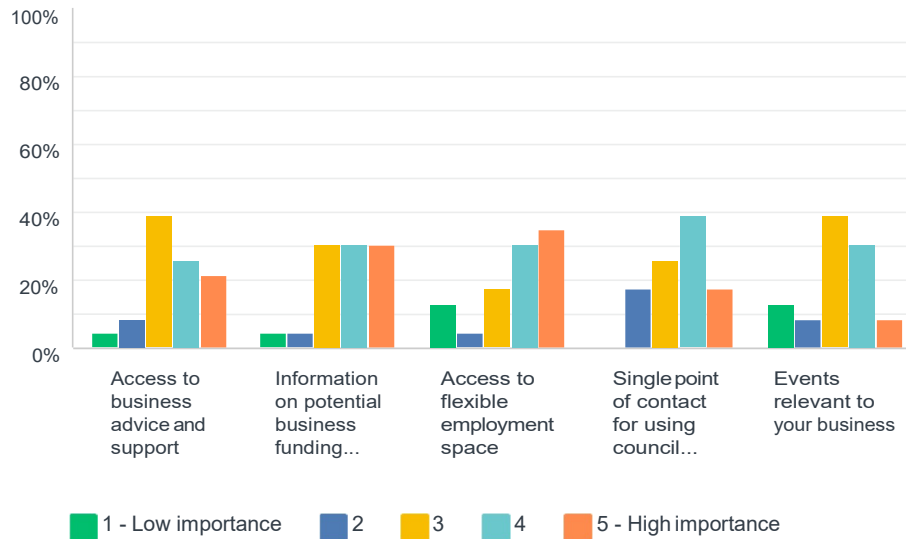
Answered: 23 Skipped: 9



	1 - LOW IMPORTANCE	2	3	4	5 - HIGH IMPORTANCE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Recruiting staff with appropriate skills	4.35% 1	0.00% 0	21.74% 5	17.39% 4	56.52% 13	23	4.22
Access to training for staff	8.70% 2	4.35% 1	21.74% 5	21.74% 5	43.48% 10	23	3.87
Work ready young people	4.35% 1	0.00% 0	17.39% 4	8.70% 2	69.57% 16	23	4.39

### Q11 On a scale of 1 to 5, please tell us how important you think each area is to you/your business

Answered: 23 Skipped: 9



	1 - LOW IMPORTANCE	2	3	4	5 - HIGH IMPORTANCE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Access to business advice and support	4.35% 1	8.70% 2	39.13% 9	26.09% 6	21.74% 5	23	3.52
Information on potential business funding sources	4.35% 1	4.35% 1	30.43% 7	30.43% 7	30.43% 7	23	3.78
Access to flexible employment space	13.04% 3	4.35% 1	17.39% 4	30.43% 7	34.78% 8	23	3.70
Single point of contact for using council services (Team Around Your Business)	0.00% 0	17.39% 4	26.09% 6	39.13% 9	17.39% 4	23	3.57
Events relevant to your business	13.04% 3	8.70% 2	39.13% 9	30.43% 7	8.70% 2	23	3.13

**Q12 Do you have any suggestions on how we can support a dynamic and sustainable economy for Sevenoaks District?**

Answered: 19 Skipped: 13

See Appendix C.

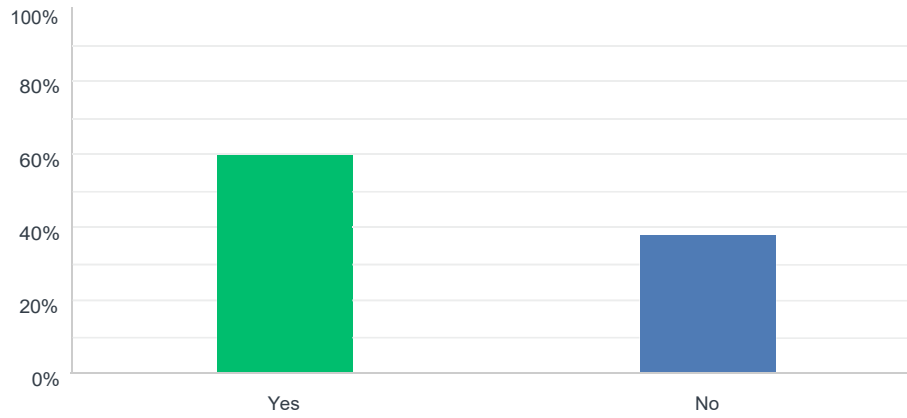
**Q13 Do you have any other comments, suggestions or views on the  
Economic Development Strategy?**

Answered: 7 Skipped: 25

See Appendix C.

### Q14 Would you like to receive further information from our Economic Development Team?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.90%	13
No	38.10%	8
Total Respondents: 21		



Q15 Please provide your details to receive further information.

Answered: 14 Skipped: 18

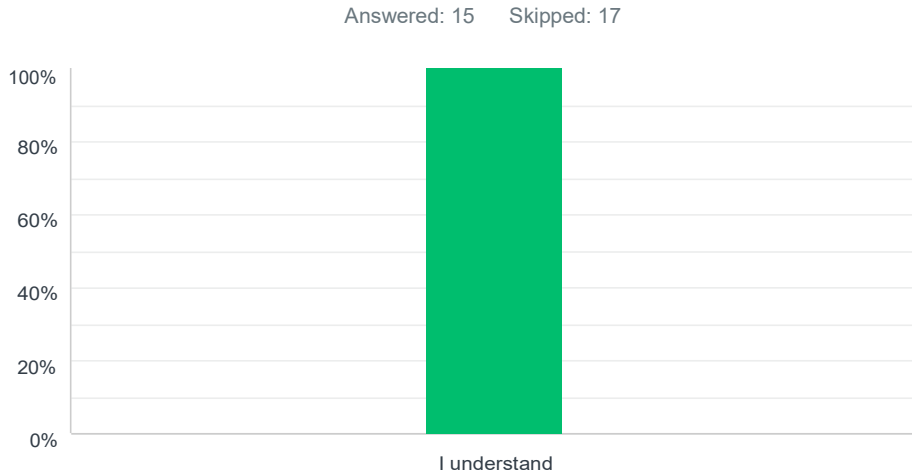
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	100.00%	14
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	0.00%	0
Phone Number	0.00%	0

**Q16 Please provide only details you would like us to use to contact you in the future.**

Answered: 14 Skipped: 18

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	0.00%	0
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	100.00%	14
Phone Number	71.43%	10

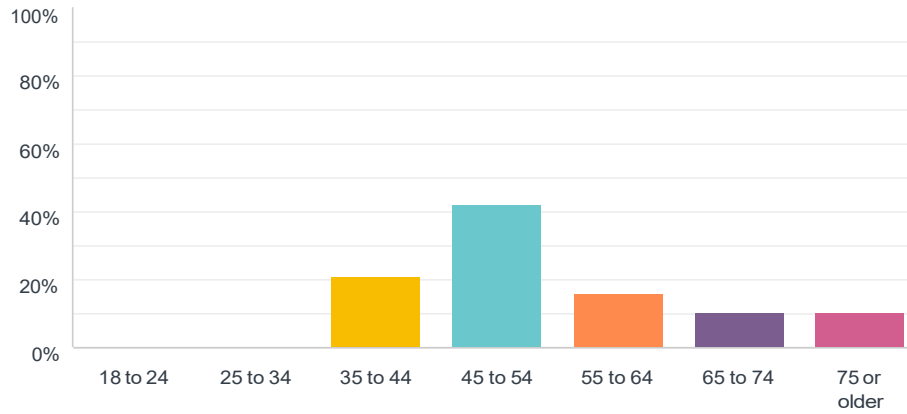
Q17 I understand that you will retain my information, which will be used for updates from the Economic Development Team and for other closely related purposes such as our realBusiness newsletter or to notify me of relevant events and opportunities. This information would also be subject to the Council's privacy notice, which can be accessed on [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk) I understand that I can cancel my subscription at any time by contacting [business@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:business@sevenoaks.gov.uk) all details will then be deleted from our records.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I understand	100.00% 15
Total Respondents: 15	

### Q18 What is your age?

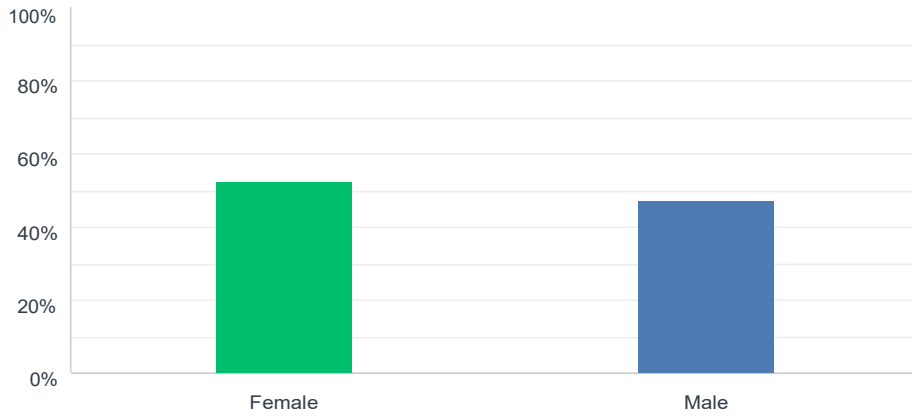
Answered: 19 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
18 to 24	0.00%	0
25 to 34	0.00%	0
35 to 44	21.05%	4
45 to 54	42.11%	8
55 to 64	15.79%	3
65 to 74	10.53%	2
75 or older	10.53%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>19</b>

### Q19 What is your gender?

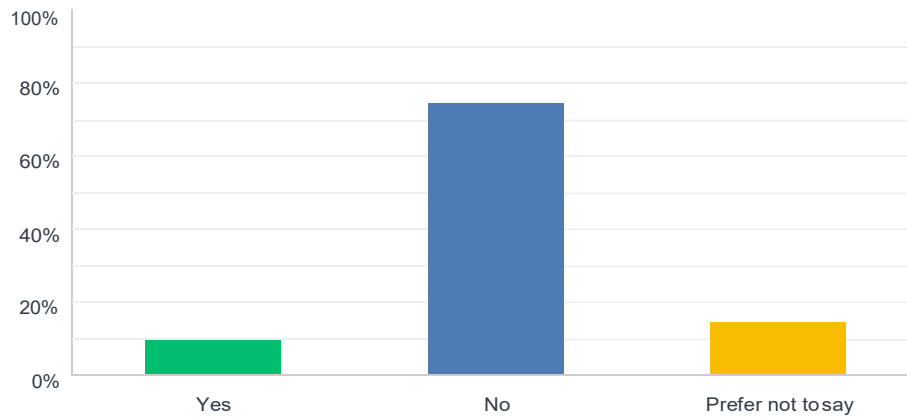
Answered: 19 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	52.63%	10
Male	47.37%	9
TOTAL		19

**Q20 Under the Equalities Act 2010 a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal every day duties. Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?**

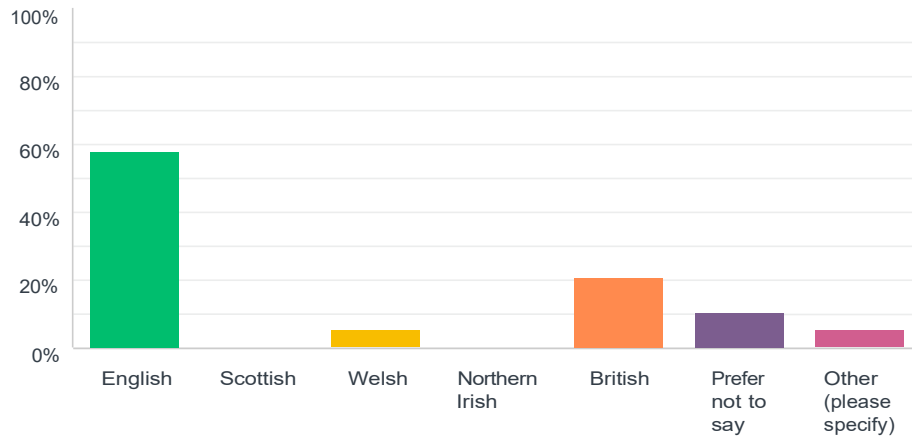
Answered: 20 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	10.00%	2
No	75.00%	15
Prefer not to say	15.00%	3
Total Respondents: 20		

### Q21 Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

Answered: 19 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
English	57.89%	11
Scottish	0.00%	0
Welsh	5.26%	1
Northern Irish	0.00%	0
British	21.05%	4
Prefer not to say	10.53%	2
Other (please specify)	5.26%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>19</b>

Appendix 3 - Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021 Consultation ‘free text’ responses to questions and comments on responses

Our draft strategy proposes three cross-cutting themes.

Are there any areas you feel are missing?

Appendix C

Response to question	Comment on response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of housing for young people in the district means that they are unable to live and work in the area, and encourages them to move away.</li> </ul>	<p>This is identified as a weakness within the ‘SWOT’ analysis in the Strategy. The Council’s Housing Strategy seeks to address the issue of provision and affordability for all.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas outside of Sevenoaks.</li> </ul>	<p>The Growth and Investment section of the Strategy addresses specific issues and opportunities in other towns across the District. Other sections of the strategy apply across the whole District</p>
<p>Page 157</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't find these themes particularly useful at all in the drafting of an economic development strategy. But if you want these kind of themes, why just "rural economy" and not also "urban economy" and why not the other things which business need to thrive in addition to "innovation and technology"?</li> </ul>	<p>A significant part of the District is rural and plays a key part in influencing the character and economic structure. The individual themes reflect the “urban economy” and other areas of business need</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy acknowledges the role of transport in the Infrastructure theme.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise park for young and old</li> </ul>	<p>The provision of open spaces and leisure facilities for exercise forms part of the District Council’s Leisure Strategy, Health Inequality Action Plan, Community Plan and Local Plan.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• connectivity - transport ideas linked to the other 3 themes</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy acknowledges the role of transport in the Infrastructure theme.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Quality - Sevenoaks and its surrounding villages have been built up over the last 150 years on the basis that it's a great place to live, with access to work and to markets in London, and many of its businesses depend on that. The interaction between local residents and the local economy needs more work, and greater emphasis.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy acknowledges the unique sense of place in the District and how we can ensure that the local economy is there to serve and support our residents and to create opportunities for new businesses in the District.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No</li> </ul>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of concern for transport infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy acknowledges the role of transport in the Infrastructure theme. Whilst the provision of transport infrastructure is outside of the direct control of the District Council, we continue to work with partners on their plans and proposals for new or improved transport infrastructure.</p>
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**Growth and Investment priority**

**What else is a Growth and Investment priority for you?**

Response to question	Comment on response
<p>Page 158</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonably priced accommodation for professionals visiting the area unless they stay in Sevenoaks. Sensible planning policies to include a broader definition of brown field sites. Getting around the area. I really feel the junction of Cold Arbor Road and the A25 is ridiculous. All traffic, of any size, has to turn right into Riverhead. With the schools on the A25 I do think you should be also focusing on clean air. Having just undertaken a traffic survey at Salters Heath Farm, it is interesting to note that there are more vehicles heading to Edenbridge in the morning than there are heading to Sevenoaks. I thought it would be the other way around with tradesmen from Edenbridge heading to Sevenoaks and school runs. Clearly, from this information there must be a lot of employment in Edenbridge.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy notes the need for additional visitor accommodation in the District and encourages provision. The draft Local Plan contains a range of policies to enable growth in the District.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sevenoaks District Council needs to focus more on economic development outside Sevenoaks Town. A lot of Sevenoaks DC thought and investment appears to go into Sevenoaks Town as opposed to other towns in the District. The first question in this consultation does not make a distinction between Sevenoaks Town and Sevenoaks District - but it is confusing as a result = and the rest of the strategy does mention the other towns but the photos seem to be more representative of Sevenoaks Town than Sevenoaks District. All the town in Sevenoaks District are small and need some careful planning so that their growth population-wise and economically grow hand</li> </ul>	<p>The Growth and Investment section of the strategy identifies specific opportunities for growth in towns and large villages including Edenbridge, Swanley and New Ash Green and the Council is working with landowners and partners to enable growth and investment.</p> <p>The Council's draft Local Plan provides the policies for the future growth of the District which reflect the need for economic growth and housing.</p>

<p>in hand so that they remain good places to live, work, and spend leisure time and money in.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Parking</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council carries out an annual parking management review and consultation on parking charges.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable office space for small businesses and availability of space for growing business.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy encourages the provision of this type of office accommodation as part of the Enterprise theme.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking facilities and traffic in Sevenoaks town centre. I need better provision for staff parking as well as for customers - in order for the centre to remain vibrant I need it to be easy for customers to travel in, park cheaply and without difficulty and shop.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council is providing additional capacity through the redevelopment of the Buckhurst 2 multi storey car park into a multi storey car park. This will provide additional long stay capacity for the Town Centre.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to grow you cannot lose sight of the heart of the Towns. By ripping out everything that is there and replacing it will destroy it ie Woolwich, Eltham and Bromley. Towns like Tenterden and Hythe have retained their characters and history whereas Eltham? All anyone remembers is Stephen Lawrence and not Henry VIII or Anne Boleyn. Investment programmes for SMEs. Ones that can help develop and grow a business and not make them another statistic after three years.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council is promoting business support programmes, including Business Boost and Scale Up that are provided through the West Kent Partnership and other partners.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public transport links within the district and to surrounding districts.</li> </ul>	<p>The Infrastructure theme in the Strategy notes that the District Council will continue to work with partners and transport providers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect local towns from overdevelopment NO to tower Blocks</li> </ul>	<p>The scale of development in towns reflects national and local planning policies and consideration of the impact of the proposed development on its surrounds.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of stronger infrastructure and networks for people who work from home.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council is working with the County Council on a review of existing broadband provision on a parish by parish basis and will look to work with providers to find solutions to improve provision in those currently poorly served areas.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As an agricultural estate we would like to see centres developed outside the town centre. We are particularly interested in hubs of food and drink tourism (like the Westerham Brewery / Squerryes Winery we've developed) to draw consumers out of London into our district. We see this as an important compliment to heritage sites within the</li> </ul>	<p>This fits with the Visitor Economy theme in the Strategy and we will work with the sector to develop those ideas further. We will also promote any successor to the West Kent LEADER programme, which has been successful in providing support to food and drink producers.</p>

<p>district e.g. National Trust properties, Hever Castle, Penshurst etc. Consumers enjoy a diversity of activities in a day trip</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro businesses benefit from flexible office space - FSB would encourage the Council to consider establishing co-working spaces where SMEs can access flexible office space for work and collaboration.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy encourages the provision of this type of office accommodation as part of the Enterprise theme. The District Council has supported the successful Second Floor Studios project in the centre of Sevenoaks and will look to either provide or enable further scheme throughout the District.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversification - what does this mean?</li> </ul>	<p>Diversification in this context has a range of definitions including a range of uses in town centres such as retail, leisure and community facilities; or expanding a traditional farming business into providing tourism accommodation or farm based food and drink production and shops.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in diversifying, planning support.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy reflects this in the Visitor Economy and Enterprise themes. Our Team Around Your Business model can assist with this type of support.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making sure the right type of commercial development comes forward - especially meeting the needs of small/start up businesses</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy encourages the provision of this type of accommodation for small and start-up businesses as part of the Enterprise theme.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport Parking at work</li> </ul>	<p>The new draft Local Plan has a policy, - Policy 14 - Town and Local centres, which specifically mentions the provision of 'adequate and convenient' car parking</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cutting edge spaces for technology start-ups that supports small businesses.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy encourages the provision of accommodation for small and start-up businesses as part of the Enterprise theme. The District Council is encouraging this type of use to be included in proposals for Fort Halstead.</p>

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**Infrastructure priority**

**What else is an infrastructure priority for you?**

Response to question	Comment on response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly improved bus services to outlying villages and major/minor train stations during the day and not just a limited service during rush hour. Train station car parking</li> </ul>	<p>The provision of rural bus transport is led by the County Council and the District Council will continue to work with them and other partners and providers on their plans for services.</p>

<p>at Sevenoaks is still horrendous if you do not park by 11am. I always have to allow extra time to find a car parking space. The car parking operator is horrendous.</p>	<p>The County Council is introducing a new service which is being piloted in 2019, the Sevenoaks taxi bus: This will run from Fairseat, Stansted, West Kingsdown, East Hill and Otford into Sevenoaks to a timetable.</p> <p>The District Council has built the Bradbourne multi storey car park and that provides additional daily capacity for parking for rail users.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broadband is important for those who work remotely.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council is working with the County Council on a review of existing broadband provision on a parish by parish basis and will look to work with providers to find solutions to improve provision in those currently poorly served areas.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sport and Leisure in Edenbridge. Better thought out sport, leisure and parkland in Edenbridge could result in more people visiting Edenbridge, healthier workers, more people and families spending time and money who currently travel out of the district because there is very little here. As the population in Edenbridge grows, it should be able to support more restaurants, cafes etc. Perhaps Sevenoaks DC could do something creative in the way that it did to attract Premier Inn to Sevenoaks but for the restaurant trade in Edenbridge instead.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council funded the Edenbridge Economic Study to assist partner organisations in Edenbridge plan for future economic growth in the Town. The District Council will continue to support the Town Council, Business Forum and other partners on their plans for the future of the town.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic Control</li> </ul>	<p>The overall responsibility for traffic management on the highway lies with Kent County Council. The District Council manages parking enforcement on their behalf.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking availability for businesses and visitors.</li> </ul>	<p>Parking provision is made across the District by a wide range of organisations, including the District Council. Policies about the provision of parking in new developments are included within the draft Local Plan.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ease and affordability of parking in Sevenoaks town centre.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council is providing additional capacity through the redevelopment of the Buckhurst 2 multi storey car park into a multi storey car park. This will provide additional long stay capacity for the Town Centre.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roads but not at the expense of the Green Belt. Regeneration of Swanley is due BUT the road network is so poor. You are proposing to built an inordinate amount of homes within this</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council works with Highways England and the County Council on their proposals for improving roads infrastructure. Where development causes an impact on the</p>

<p>area without changing the road network to accommodate the increased traffic. You reduce the amount of buses yet you wish us all to use these? What about the elderly who are infirm? You want us to use electric vehicles yet - apart from the distinct lack of power points - these vehicles will ultimately damage us all. Recycling points? None. Leakage of the ions into the water tables? The country is having a crisis about plastic recycling what about electrical? We need bio fuel vehicles not electrical!</p>	<p>existing network them mitigation measures are sought through the planning process. Transport studies have been prepared for Swanley. The District Council continues to work with the County Council and providers on bus service provision. The District Council is rolling out charging points and Policy 7 - Transport and Infrastructure of the draft Local Plan seeks their provision within new developments.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public transport and cycle tracks/lanes to encourage people out of their cars.</li> </ul>	<p>The new Draft Local Plan contains a policy, Policy 7 - Transport and Infrastructure, which includes provision of new cycleways and improvements to existing ones. The Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy promotes the use of cycleways across the District.</p>
<p>Page 162</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basis transport infrastructure is essential to avoid gridlock. Rail links to London, and bus links to rail stations and to key population centres are the only way of catering for the substantial increase in population. Better digital infrastructure is the best way to help people work efficiently from home.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council is working with the County Council on a review of existing broadband provision on a parish by parish basis. We will look to work with providers to find solutions to improve provision in those currently poorly served areas.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking. We would like to see the planning policy for enlarged carparking in rural and town centres.</li> </ul>	<p>The new draft Local Plan has a policy,- Policy 14 - Town and Local centres, which specifically mentions the provision of 'adequate and convenient' car parking</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good broadband and mobile connectivity is essential for SMEs to function effectively.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council is working with the County Council on a review of existing broadband provision on a parish by parish basis and will look to work with providers to find solutions to improve provision in those currently poorly served areas.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disabled access at Station. 1st rate maintenance system including drainage. Community bus services.</li> </ul>	<p>The provision of access for disabled people at railway stations is the responsibility of either the Train Operating Company or Network Rail. The provision of highway maintenance and drainage is the responsibility of the County Council as highways authority. The provision of rural transport is led by the County Council and the District Council will continue to work with them and other partners and providers on their plans for services.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordinated problem solving regarding the vintage road networks</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council works with the County Council on their proposals for improving roads infrastructure. Where</p>

	development causes an impact on the existing network then mitigation measures are sought through the planning process. Mitigation or improvement measures may be achievable through discussions with landowners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved flood defences that help to unlock growth in West Kent</li> </ul>	The Environment Agency is the lead organisation for flood defence and management. The County Council, District Council and other partners have a role in managing Flood Risk. The District Council will continue to work with partners on any proposals to provide flood relief to those areas identified in the 2017 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport Lack of low cost housing for lower income residents or workers</li> </ul>	The lack of low cost housing is identified as a weakness within the 'SWOT' analysis in the Strategy. The Council's Housing Strategy seeks to address the issue of provision and affordability for all.

### Visitor Economy priority

What else is a Visitor Economy priority for you?

Response to question	Comment on response
<p>163</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good public transport to the outlying destinations such as Chartwell, Hever, Penshurst etc. I like the idea of bicycles but you may be some more cycle routes should be created or at least safer cycling?</li> </ul>	<p>The provision of rural public transport is led by the County Council and the District Council will continue to work with them and other partners and providers on their plans for services.</p> <p>The new Draft Local Plan contains a policy, Policy 7 - Transport and Infrastructure, which includes provision of new cycleways and improvements to existing ones. The Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy promotes the use of cycleways across the District.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The whole Sevenoaks area could do more to produce locally grown foodstuff and drink. It doesn't have to be high end but more affordable for 'normal' people.</li> </ul>	<p>There are a wide range of local food and drink producers in the District and a proportion of those have direct outlets for their produce. These include meat, vegetable, baked goods and dairy products as well as beers, wines and soft drinks. Affordability of food and drink will reflect the producer and sales costs and</p>

	those may be higher in producers direct outlets than large national retailers where costs and margins
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having shops, events, facilities that both visitors and locals will want to spend time and money in so that the district economy grows rather than the majority of our residents in Edenbridge going out of district to spend time and money because there is so little here.</li> </ul>	The District Council already works with partners in Edenbridge, including the Eden Valley Tourism Forum, and will continue to provide support to initiatives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A showcase of all the unique things on offer in the locality maybe part of the local museum Tourist Board. We have some amazing produce and services, we need to shout about them!!</li> </ul>	We work with Visit Kent and Produced in Kent to maintain the profile of the District. There is an opportunity to develop this idea further with the sector.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to park in the town a reasonable price.</li> </ul>	Parking provision is made across the District by a wide range of organisations, including the District Council. The District Council carries out an annual parking management review and consultation on parking charges for those car parks that it manages. Other providers determine their own charges.
<p>Page 164</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the tourist areas (Knole) to be encouraged to work with local businesses rather than existing as separate enclave/compound, working independently of the town. It's one of the few NT properties in a town and better more supportive links could be established.</li> </ul>	The District Council has links with the major visitor attractions in the District. Representatives from a number of them are active in the group that contributed to the Visitor Economy Study.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Garden of Kent is the best place in the world to live and visit. Visitors to our area increase the economy however we need to improve what we have and are good at. For example, I tried to get a late lunch whilst out recently and Bedgebury Pinetum was in the vicinity; it was 15.00. To enter you have to pay @£16? I only wanted a coffee and sandwich. I continued driving home. For visitors to buy into our attractions you have to a) not be greedy b) be viable and accessible and c) signpost! The Americans(for their sins) do attractions very well! Take a leaf out of their books but please! don't go OTT!</li> </ul>	The group that contributed to the Visitor Economy Study recognised the importance of improving the existing visitor experience. The District Council will continue, where it can, to support the sector and encourage innovation, whether directly or with partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional public transport and cycle and walking routes for visitors to see the area. Preservation of ecologically important sites, including reducing and controlling the littering of villages and the countryside.</li> </ul>	The Strategy reflects the evidence from the Visitor Economy Study that some visitor attractions are close to or at capacity already. The District Council in conjunction with the Kent Downs AONB and others is exploring the development of a Community Rail Partnership to improve access by rail to the Darent Valley.

	The new Draft Local Plan contains a policy, Policy 7 - Transport and Infrastructure, which includes provision of new cycleways and improvements to existing ones. The Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy promotes the use of cycleways across the District.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the new tourism is sustainable, and less car based than it is today</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council in conjunction with the Kent Downs AONB and others is exploring the development of a Community Rail Partnership to improve access by rail to the Darent Valley. Separately we want to work with the Train Operating Company to improve access to attractions in the Eden Valley.</p> <p>The new Draft Local Plan contains a policy, Policy 7 - Transport and Infrastructure, which includes provision of new cycleways and improvements to existing ones. The Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy promotes the use of cycleways across the District.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FSB research shows that for events £1 spent locally with a small business, 63p remains in the local economy. Just 40p remains within the local economy when £1 is spent with a big business.</li> </ul>	The group that contributed to the Visitor Economy Study recognised the importance of improving the existing visitor experience and the value in increasing customer 'dwell time' and spend. The District Council will continue, where it can, to support the sector and encourage innovation, whether directly or with partners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage from main routes into Edenbridge.</li> </ul>	Road signage is managed by the County Council as Highways Authority.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well targeted tourism promotion and marketing</li> </ul>	The District Council has a service level agreement with Visit Kent to ensure promotion and marketing of the District. There are other regional or national bodies who also provide promotion and marketing. Individual attractions will also undertake their own direct marketing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of other language guides to our historic places of interest and training for people working at these sites. Improved language classes in schools and Adult education.</li> </ul>	The suggestions about different language guides will be shared with the group that contributed to the Visitor Economy Study.

**Skills priority**

What else is a skills priority for you?

Response to question	Comment on response
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of housing for rural employees. Since owning our land we have increased the number of employees (ie more than doubled). Many of our recruits have required subsidised Estate housing, the offer of a house rent free, or we are fortunate that they live at home (this does influence our recruitment decision). Clearly, every time we have to offer the new position with an Estate house, we lose a tenant and income. This is a cost to the Estate.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council’s Housing Strategy seeks to address the issue of provision and affordability for all. The draft Local Plan also acknowledges the challenges of providing accommodation for workers and policies 8 - Market and Affordable Housing and 10 - Housing in Rural Areas will support this situation. This issue is also relevant to the longer term viability of businesses who provide the support to all who live, work and visit our District.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be more apprenticeships for trades.</li> </ul>	<p>There are a wide range of apprenticeships available and trade bodies have been involved in their design and implementation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three tiers of council with the skills to town plan well for economic development.</li> </ul>	<p>The development of strategic, local and neighbourhood planning occurs through a collaborative approach between County, District and Town or Parish Councils.</p>
<p>Page 166</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common Sense, Attention To Detail, and Emotional Intelligence</li> </ul>	<p>These key attributes form part of work readiness. Whilst they cannot be directly taught, working with peers can help develop these skills. The work being done through the West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network aims to introduce students to different career paths and opportunities and work experience to help build those skills.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not in agreement with the sentence stating that there are 'not enough young people with the right attitude to work'. My problem is that the growth is limited/capped for local businesses, meaning that bright young people learn with you then leave to progress their careers in London.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy notes the feedback from employers about ‘a lack of preparedness for work and knowledge of the many career opportunities open to them.’ The Enterprise Adviser Network has been helping to do the latter. The relocation of young people away to London or other parts of the UK isn’t confined solely to Sevenoaks and is prevalent in other parts of the country. Comments have been made elsewhere about creating space for tech start-ups and future opportunities at Fort Halstead could enable that to happen.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• innovation hubs - so entrepreneurs can connect with others - shadowing and mentoring schemes for all ages</li> </ul>	<p>The Enterprise section of the Strategy acknowledges the formal and informal opportunities that exist for connecting businesses and entrepreneurs. The introduction of Business Hubs in Edenbridge and Sevenoaks will also enable collaboration. The District Council supports Global Entrepreneurship Week.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When I am match fit, I would like run my own business and to be able to have staff that are qualified or working towards a recognised qualification is a must. I will need to go to Europe</li> </ul>	<p>The Skills section of the Strategy recognises the wide range of organisations who provide learning and training. The District</p>

<p>to train because the qualifications in the UK aren't recognised in the wider spectrum. We need to bring everyone in line irrespective whether we are in or out of Europe. We will be doing business with Europe as before so we need to ensure we are employable as well as being able to employ.</p>	<p>Council is keen to see additional opportunities for Further and Higher Education provision and local access to those facilities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public transport links for young people to access local employment</li> </ul>	<p>The provision of public transport is led by the County Council and the District Council will continue to work with them and other partners and providers on their plans for services. An example of a new service being piloted in 2019 is the Sevenoaks taxi bus: This will run from Fairseat, Stansted, West Kingsdown, East Hill and Otford into Sevenoaks to a timetable.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that local businesses have access to the full range of skills needed, as far as possible from local residents; we need to reconnect the local economy with local residents.</li> </ul>	<p>The development of skills in employees starts at school and continues through further or higher education or other training routes, such as apprenticeships. The work being done through the West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network aims to introduce students to different career paths and opportunities and work experience to help build those skills. Access to apprenticeships through colleges or specialist providers builds on initial education. Continuing education or retraining is provided by a range of organisations including college, universities and the County Council Adult Education programmes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FSB members struggle to find staff, and also struggle to find the right skilled-staff.</li> </ul>	<p>Recruitment and retention in a local economy that has a very low unemployment rate is a consistent challenge. As highlighted already the District Council and partners are seeking to assist and support in the provision of the right skills for staff for businesses.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication around apprentices. We have a great apprenticeship scheme in an interesting, relevant, diverse business but find it hard to find local young people to recruit.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council may be able to assist further with this through our existing networks.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing training /education for older workers or semi-retired people, to access local employment, maybe in different jobs from the one's done before.</li> </ul>	<p>There are a range of providers of education for re-entrants to the employment market. There are opportunities to raise the profile of this through both the West Kent Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnership.</p>

## Enterprise priority

What else is an enterprise priority for you?

Response to question	Comment on response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication with the public, and asking their assistance re managing the landscape ranging from being tough on fly tipping, general litter picking to appreciating the visual amenity and sticking to the footpaths. We feel we end up providing services that in reality the Council should be doing or we need assistance with. If SDC are using AONB and Green Belt to attract tourism and investment then landowners should be given more assistance with the maintenance of it.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council can assist in communicating specific messaging around littering, trespass, and fouling.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need to stop having men in suits telling us how to run our businesses. Provide literature for the masses who are self employed.</li> </ul>	<p>There is a large amount of material available through telephone helplines or on line around business support and development. The information can either be obtained digitally or in printed form. The Kent and Medway Growth Hub website along with many others are good sources of information.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A skilled team who know how to promote inward development across the whole district and can work with others to make changes that will help attract new business across all sectors.</li> </ul>	<p>The opportunity exists to review the current Team Around Your Business model to encompass inward investment and working with Locate in Kent and the West Kent Partnership.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support with marketing or advertising or window dressing, all skills essential for small business. Beautifully dressed windows are very important for the aspirational appearance of a town or village.</li> </ul>	<p>We can work with the Chambers of Commerce, the FSB and others to promote seminars or access to marketing and advertising support.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to provide a social environment for sole traders, home workers and independent advisors.</li> </ul>	<p>The development of business hubs and informal groups will assist in this.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For starting businesses, the areas listed above are important. To grow enterprises, to develop competitive and productive employment, businesses need to be able to scale up - with easy access to international markets. Scale up is more important than Start up, to raise incomes from Sevenoaks jobs to the level enjoyed by Sevenoaks residents.</li> </ul>	<p>There is specific funding available for Scale Up projects at the time of reviewing the comments.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It would be so helpful to have a single point of contact to help solve business threatening problems quickly. Ideally someone</li> </ul>	<p>Our Team Around Your Business model can provide assistance to businesses, particularly in accessing services provided by the</p>

who develops a relationship with us so they know who we are when we call.	District Council. There may be issues which will require signposting to specialist legal or financial advisors
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**Do you have any suggestions on how we can support a dynamic and sustainable economy for Sevenoaks District?**

Response to question	Comment on response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SDC really should have a more high profile renewable energy policy. It would create extra income for the Council.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council is keen to support renewable energy installations and to see a 10% increase in energy generated from renewable sources by 2020.</p> <p>The draft Local Plan includes a policy - Policy 18 Health and Wellbeing, Air Quality, Climate Change and Flooding - which supports the provision of community led renewable energy schemes and utilising opportunities for decentralised energy and heating.</p>
<p>Page 169</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be more inclusive of towns within the SDC area rather than just Sevenoaks town centre. We all pay council tax and help should be inclusive.</li> </ul>	<p>The Growth and Investment section of the strategy identifies specific opportunities for growth in towns and large villages including Edenbridge, Swanley and New Ash Green and the Council is working with landowners and partners to enable growth and investment.</p> <p>The Council's draft Local Plan provides the policies for the future growth of the District which reflect the need for economic growth and housing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More thorough and forward looking town planning and economic development planning for all the settlements. Regeneris report for Edenbridge for example is a low key, budget-price desk-based study. SDC strategy for Edenbridge seems mainly to be about fit in as many houses as possible even in what is/was protected green space in high density open spaces and hope all the rest will come out in the wash.</li> </ul>	<p>The preparation of the Economic Development Strategy and the draft Local Plan has occurred at the same time and the teams responsible for these have worked closely together. The Regeneris Report gave an overview of the economic situation in Edenbridge and proposed a series of courses of action and ideas for further progression. The approaches to allocation of housing sites across the District is clearly set out in the draft Local Plan and that is subject to further consultation prior to submission to the Secretary of State.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do something with empty shops - to make the town/village look more vibrant and less dreary.</li> </ul>	<p>Opportunities for empty shops can include 'pop up' or 'meanwhile' uses that enable the property to be used for a</p>

	<p>short period for seasonal activities, artist studios or galleries or to test new concepts or products.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborating with local businesses, gaining their support and buy in.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council works with established fora such as the Chambers of Commerce, Guilds and town Business Partnerships or Groups. We will seek to do more over the Strategy period.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please help with parking in the Town Centre of Sevenoaks. I think a scheme - similar to supermarkets - whereby an hour can be refunded if a certain amount is spent in a local independent business - £10 or £20, say. The cost of the scheme could be shared between businesses wanting to join and the council and help to keep shoppers coming to the town rather than shopping online. Also, I think business rates should be changed on empty sites and properties so that if owner/landlords haven't created functioning businesses on their sites within a 2 year period (for example), the business rates should increase to a much inflated level in order to keep a town dynamic and open for business.</li> </ul>	<p>At the time of writing the responses to the comments the District Council is carrying out its annual consultation on parking charges until the 16<sup>th</sup> November. The respondent has been advised of the consultation. The regulations around Business Rates and charges applying to empty properties are determined by the Government.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong local politics would also involve dynamic responses from the grass roots - not just top down management</li> </ul>	<p>The comment is noted.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play to it's strengths. We are the Garden of England. Use it wisely. Use local farmers for food and drink. Increase the subsidiary so that you get more start ups. Look at the wasted space at Dartford Crossing where building huge warehouses in the hope that the conglomerates would use them amounted to nothing. Revenue stream wasted. Look at OAD Street Craft centre. Micro businesses bringing economy to the area.</li> </ul>	<p>There are a wide range of local food and drink producers in the District and a proportion of those have direct outlets for their produce. These include meat, vegetable, baked goods and dairy products as well as beers, wines and soft drinks. There are similar examples to the Oad Street Craft Centre in the District. Just over 79% of businesses in the District have less than 5 employees.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the farms and green belt land. Pay more for milk, help farmers prosper by cutting the red tape</li> </ul>	<p>There are 200 farming and forestry enterprises in the District. 93% of the District is allocated as Green Belt. Farmgate milk prices are determined by the processing companies and market conditions. The Government has recently published an Agriculture Bill which sets out the approach to farming following BREXIT.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build in Sevenoaks not in outside towns</li> </ul>	<p>The draft Local Plan proposals set out the distribution for development across the whole District for the plan period. The quantum of development required for the District to support</p>

	future housing needs and wider economic growth cannot be solely met within Sevenoaks town.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct support by Sevenoaks District Council to help local businesses maintain access to international skills which they have enjoyed within the EU, and support from Kent to access markets so that they can grow. Both of these are vital for innovation .... more so than technology International competitiveness - in attracting workers and in attracting customers - is the strongest determinant of whether or not businesses can grow and sustain attractive incomes for their employees.</li> </ul>	The West Kent Partnership, of which the District Council is a member, and the County Council provide a range of funding packages which help businesses. The new UK Shared Prosperity Fund will provide further funding opportunities and Government will be consulting on the shape of the Fund over the months ahead.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be helpful to define specific zones in the district within the report to help with the planning process for further development. We would like to see a food hub defined around the existing business of the Westerham Brewery and Squerryes Winery. We would also like to see provision for new build hotels and leisure facilities within the district.</li> </ul>	The Strategy seeks to encourage the further provision of hotels within the District to ensure that a range of accommodation is available for visitors. The suggestion of zoning and clusters need to be carefully considered in tandem with the Draft Local Plan and existing and future land uses and constraints. Food and drink producers are spread across the District and as noted earlier there is a need to balance development appropriately across the District. However if a particular sector sees an opportunity to develop a cluster then from an economic development perspective that would be supported.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowering business rates and reviewing class.</li> </ul>	The Government announced changes to the current business rates payments for those with property with a rateable value of £51,000 or less. Government also announced proposed changes to permitted development rights to enable conversion of certain classes of premises to housing or other uses to town centres.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road network improvements</li> </ul>	The District Council works with the County Council on their proposals for improving roads infrastructure. Where development causes an impact on the existing network them mitigation measures are sought through the planning process. Mitigation or improvement measures may be achievable through discussions with landowners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing business support resources on those businesses that have a high potential for growth and job creation.</li> </ul>	The District Council is promoting business support programmes, including Business Boost and Scale Up that are provided through the West Kent Partnership and other partners.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be open to different ways to engage all the adult population in the local economy.</li> </ul>	<p>The District Council and partners endeavour to communicate with a wide range of tools and ideas to stimulate interest and opportunities for all in the local economy. We would welcome ideas for specific initiatives.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible work spaces for technology companies. Technology companies are contributing so much to economies now and the council must put technology at the heart of its policy. Work spaces, training, networking for sharing of ideas and collaborative projects with the council.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy encourages the provision of accommodation for small and start-up businesses as part of the Enterprise theme. The District Council is encouraging this type of use to be included in proposals for Fort Halstead. The introduction of Business Hubs in Edenbridge and Sevenoaks will also enable collaboration between businesses. The District Council is open to ideas of collaborative projects to help boost the economy.</p>

**Do you have any other comments, suggestions or views on the Economic Development Strategy?**

Response to question	Comment on response
<p>Page 172</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Economic Development Strategy seems focussed and well thought out. Although, living so close to the continent, post BREXIT, it would have been good to see an outing of questions regarding this. Please, please keep plugging away wherever you can on broadband and 5G, as the area is so behind the times in terms of speed and coverage it is unbelievable. I travel the world and have only once encountered an area worse than our district. but we have no excuse when we live within 25 miles of Oxford Circus. Our service should be far better/at the top end of what it is supposed to be, especially for the 40% of workers who work in London but come home to Sevenoaks and the local area. It is an embarrassment. I know you know, but it still needs to be stressed!</li> </ul>	<p>The shape of BREXIT still remains to be agreed at the time of writing the responses to these comment. The Strategy has been designed to hang individual action plans from it and if required one be prepared to address specific post BREXIT issues once they are known.</p> <p>We will continue to work with partners on Broadband provision for the District. Whilst 5G is important we still have areas of the District where 2 and 3G are scarce and we need to seek to achieve equal coverage for all.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bit bland. Hasn't got down to the nitty gritty of what the way forward could be in the various different places in the district. Bit Sevenoaks Town biased in terms of photos even so makes you wonder if anyone is getting to grips with what is happening / could happen in the individual settlements.</li> </ul>	<p>As noted above the Strategy was designed to take a wider overview and to enable specific action plans to be created around specific areas that the District can make a real change in. The images will be amended.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road repairs or services being dug up should be scheduled with much more concern for the businesses being affected by the chaos. As is the case in Westerham High Street at the moment!</li> </ul>	<p>The co-ordination of street works by utilities and other parties is managed by the County Council. The age and condition of some utility infrastructure does require major work that can last for a period of time. Unplanned emergency work can provide additional short term disruption.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It needs stronger input on infrastructure, on what it will do to connect local residents to the local economy, as well as on how it will help new enterprises compete beyond the local market. We have seen several national / international enterprises leave Sevenoaks in the last two decades, (e.g. Hodder, Marley, Salmons, Swiss Life) and one or two (e.g. Conway) come in. How can the strategy address the balance?</li> </ul>	<p>On both these points the District Council is only one of a larger number of partners who are the providers of infrastructure. The modernisation or improvement of the road and railway networks and public transport are led by others. In conjunction with the County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership we can provide funding or signposting to funding to help businesses compete. In terms of large companies leaving Sevenoaks that has happened in part through consolidation and technology creating product obsolescence. Unlike other parts of Kent the District does not have the sites to achieve the equivalent of Kings Hill or the commercial growth around the Dartford Crossing and therefore we have to create those opportunities where they exist, such as at Fort Halstead or renewal of existing commercial space in northern Sevenoaks. As evidenced in some of the comments there is also demand for housing that is affordable by all those in the District and that will not be reducing. Proposed changes to permitted development rights will enable further use of commercial properties for housing and the creative tension between providing housing and employment becomes tighter.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is difficult to know how much weight the economic strategy will be given to planning applications especially due to the very special circumstances for green belt / AONB development in the rural part of the district.</li> </ul>	<p>The draft Local Plan policies 13 and 14 reflect the issues drawn out in this Strategy, which formed part of the supporting evidence. In considering individual planning applications consideration will be given to all the relevant prevailing policies to arrive at a decision.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure that the elements of the strategy that focus on town centres do not get too fixated with retail, and look more towards mixed use centres - with encouraging social, community and leisure in these areas.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy recognises diversity in town centres and that is echoed in the draft Local Plan policy as well.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is only for 3 years and we are living in rapidly changing times, not much confidence for the future.</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy covers the period leading up to and after BREXIT and the remaining Parliamentary term and the initial period of</p>



	the new Local Plan. Whilst times are rapidly changing, there are also some near constants and we can adapt our action plans to achieve the aims of the Strategy accordingly.
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