

14 July 2020 at 7.00 pm

This meeting will be held virtually via Zoom
and livestreamed here

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIT1f_F5OfvTzxjZk6Zqn6g

Despatched: 06.07.20



Scrutiny Committee

Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Brown; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. London
Cllrs. Ball, Barnes, Firth, Kitchener, Layland, Mrs. Morris, Pender, Purves and
Williamson

Agenda

	Pages	Contact
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 January 2020, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 6)	
2. Declarations of Interest Any declarations not already registered		
3. Responses of the Cabinet to reports of the Scrutiny Committee (if any)		
4. Actions from the Previous Meeting (if any)	(Pages 7 - 8)	
5. Performance Monitoring	(Pages 9 - 24)	
6. KCC Cabinet Members for Children, Young People and Education KCC Cabinet Members for Children, Young People and Education and Area Educational Officer for North Kent in attendance to answer questions about Education in the Sevenoaks District.		
7. Questions to the Portfolio Holder for People & Places	(Pages 25 - 30)	
8. Questions to the Portfolio Holder for Development & Conservation	(Pages 31 - 34)	

9. **In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group CCTV - Interim verbal update**
The Chairman of the Working Group CCTV to give an interim update on progress so far.

10. **Work Plan**

(Pages 35 - 36)

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.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Brown (Chairman)

Cllrs. Ball, Barnes, Kitchener, Mrs. Morris, Pender and Purves

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Firth, Layland and London

Cllrs. McArthur and Piper were also present.

18. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 November 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to minute 16 paragraph 1, line 3 be amended to read as 'the Community Safety theme and privacy impact within the Council plan.'

19. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Brown and Barnes declared for reasons of transparency that they were Members of Sencio Leisure Centres.

20. Responses of the Cabinet to reports of the Scrutiny Committee

There were none.

21. Actions from the Previous Meeting

There were none.

CHANGE IN AGENDA ITEM ORDER

With the Committees agreement the Chairman brought forward consideration of agenda items 6, 7 and 8.

22. Questions to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health presented his report detailing the Council's priorities, overview of housing within the District, and recent achievements and challenges ahead.

The Portfolio Holder advised that within his report he had included additional statistics which provided a comparison to neighbouring boroughs regarding housing

and homelessness. Within more rural locations there were Alms-houses and some had been upgraded. Looking forward it was hoped that this would be extended further. There was a Private Landlord Forum and it was proposed to set up an Alms-house Forum. There would be a Registered Social Landlord Conference later this year.

This year there would be 220 affordable homes built, the most that had been built in the District in any one year so far.

Future challenges ahead included the ongoing provision of housing stock within the District. This need was particularly acute because of the increase in the number of approaches, due to the increasing Homelessness Reduction Act. 80 people were currently homeless. To date 52 units were provided by housing associations, but with 80 people currently homeless the only additional available accommodation was out of the District.

In response to questions Members were advised that following the housing needs survey, there was an understanding of what was needed in the District, focussing on 1 and 2 bedroom properties. Members were also advised that, in addition to those already purchased, further purchases through Quercus Housing were being investigated anymore housing stock was needed especially for affordable housing rather than private or social rented housing.

The Portfolio Holder went on to explain that, unfortunately there was often a conflict with planning and housing and with 97% of the District in the Green Belt. Members discussed whether consideration was given to building up into airspace rather than locating new land.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Portfolio Holder responded that until Quercus Housing the Council had not had their own housing stock. Quercus Housing now had 9 properties but viability was part of the problem. Developers were required to provide up to 40% contribution to affordable housing.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Piper and the Housing and Health team.

23. West Kent Police

The Chairman welcomed Chief Inspector Jon Kirby, Sevenoaks District Commander of Kent Police to the meeting, who gave an overview of the levels of crime within the District.

Chief Inspector Kirby gave an overview of the statistics of reported crime for the year April 2019-December 2019. In Sevenoaks the number of vehicle thefts had increased, in particular in relation to catalytic converters which had seen a rise of 21.7%, with 75 incidents being reported. This increase was seen at national and local levels due to the value of the metal, however good progress was being made locally and arrests had been made.

It was reported that there was a 75% increase of shoplifting being reported which was 205 incidents. There was usually a rise in shoplifting cases around Christmas.

Chief Inspector Kirby reported that there had been a reduction in residential burglaries and compared to last year the figure was down by 14.7% which was a reduction of 84 cases. Other positives included that rapes cases and violence against the person had also seen a reduction.

Members were encouraged to report crime as the figures were recorded and this helped resources to be designated appropriately and for transparency.

It was reported that funding levels were increasing and this would result in an additional 139 staff being recruited, including PCSOs, Police Officers, Community Liaison Officers, cyber specialists and forensic officers.

The Chief Inspector advised that the number of calls received to the 101 non-emergency number in 2019 had decreased. In general the calls were being answered better and the number of abandoned calls was reducing. In response to a question, Members were advised that if a 999 call was abandoned, investigations were carried out and the number would be called back if it was safe to do so. There were also successes with the live chat service and frequently asked questions.

Concerns regarding knife crime were raised, particularly with the District being so close to London. Chief Inspector Kirby responded to concerns advising that the Police nationally were taking a proactive approach to knife crime, working closely with cross-border forces including the British Transport Police. Work also with schools was being undertaken to ensure safety of pupils and staff.

In response to questions the Committee was advised that the strategy going forwards was to be more visible within communities. This included an increase in PCSOs, polished neighbourhood policing, attendance at coffee mornings and working with parish councils.

It was queried whether CCTV contributed to solving crime. Members were advised that the use of CCTV was very useful as it could be the difference between someone walking away or being charged as the footage was able to show someone's whereabouts and the times, especially with quality of digital images improving over the years incidents were more easily identifiable.

In response to further questions, Members were informed that regular visits took place at nail salons, car washes and similar business to ensure that there were no modern slavery issues. This was a proactive approach but there was reliance on the public to be the eyes and ears and report any concerns.

Chief Inspector Kirby agreed to send more details regarding the use of CCTV and also modern slavery to the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Chief Inspector Kirby for his attendance.

24. Sencio Financial Report

Agenda Item 1

Scrutiny Committee - 30 January 2020

Resolved: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that likely disclosure of exempt information was involved as defined by Schedule 12A paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

The Chairman welcomed Jane Parish, the Chief Executive of Sencio Leisure to the meeting. The Chief Officer Communities & Business presented the report which set out more recent financial analysis of Sencio, following the loan of £600,000 in 2017.

Members discussed the confidential report and asked questions of clarification of the Chief Executive of Sencio Leisure.

Members thanked the Chief Executive for her attendance at the meeting.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

It was moved by the Chairman that the public no longer be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the rest of the Scrutiny Committee agenda.

Resolved: That the public no longer be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of agenda items 5, 8 and 9.

25. Performance Report

Members considered the report which summarised performance across the Council as at November 2019. Members were asked to consider 6 performance indications which were performing at 10% or more below their target with a commentary from Officers explaining the reasons and detailing any plans to improve performance. The report also provided key performance indicators relating to the Portfolio Holder in attendance.

Members discussed the Performance indicator for the number of missed waste collections and whether there was too much focus on a very small number missed out of a large number of permits. Members requested an update on fly tipping as the commentary mentioned a significant amount of industrial and construction waste had been reported. The sickness performance indicator was also discussed and noted that the figure was effected by long term sickness. Members queried if long and short term sickness performance could be provided. Officers advised this information could be provided.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

26. In-depth Scrutiny, CCTV Working Group Interim update

Cllr Pender updated the committee on the CCTV Working Group, advising that they had held their first meeting and were data gathering. Experts in the field of CCTV would also be invited to attend and it was queried whether travel expenses would be paid for.

Action: For Chief Officer Finance & Trading to investigate travel reimbursement.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

27. Work Plan

The work plan was noted and agreed for the CCTV final report and for KCC Cabinet Member for Education be invited to the July 2020 meeting.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.07 PM

CHAIRMAN

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ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 30.01.20			
Action	Description	Status and last updated (02/07/20)	Contact Officer
ACTION 1	For Chief Officer Finance & Trading to investigate travel reimbursement. (Minute 26)	I am not aware of travel expenses being offered or claimed when external experts have attended previous Scrutiny Working Group meetings. However, if an external expert requests travel expenses then it would be up to the Working Group Chairman in conjunction with the Chief Officer Customer and Resources to decide and to ensure that a consistent approach is taken.	Adrian Rowbotham Ext. 7153

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PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Scrutiny Committee - 14 July 2020

Report of Chief Executive

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

This report supports the Council Promise to provide value for money

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Peter Fleming

Contact Officer Lee Banks, Ext. 7161

Recommendation to Scrutiny Committee:

- (a) Members note the contents of the report; and
 - (b) If Members are dissatisfied by actions being taken to improve performance by either Officers, Advisory Committee or Cabinet, they consider areas of underperformance for scrutiny.
-

Reason for recommendation: To ensure that the performance of services is considered and reviewed by Members.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Scrutiny Committee have requested an update at each of their meetings on any performance indicators which are not meeting their target level. Appended to this report is an exceptions report with a commentary from officers explaining the reasons why performance is not within 10% of target and detailing any actions the service is planning to take to improve performance levels.

Performance Overview

- 2 The table on the following page summarises performance levels as at May 2020.

Agenda Item 5

	Current Month	Year To Date
Red <i>10% or more below target</i>	7 (17.1%)	6 (14.6%)
Amber <i>Less than 10% below target</i>	3 (7.3%)	4 (9.8%)
Green <i>At or above target</i>	31 (75.6%)	31 (75.6%)

- 3 Provided as Appendix A to this report are details of the seven indicators where performance is 'Red' and missing the target level by 10% or more.
- 4 Commentary is provided for each of the 'red' performance indicators explaining why target has not been met and the actions that are planned to improve performance.

Portfolio Holder Performance Reports

- 5 At the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14 July 2015 it was resolved for 'Officers to provide key performance indicators relevant to the Portfolio Holders invited to the Scrutiny Committee at each meeting'. The following performance reports are provided as Appendices to this report:
 - Appendix B - Development & Conservation Portfolio performance report
 - Appendix C - People & Places Portfolio performance report
- 6 Where performance is 'red' and missing the target level by 10% or more Officers have provided a commentary for Members consideration.

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

- 7 None.

Key Implications

Financial

Effective performance management monitoring arrangements will assist the Council in diverting resources to areas or services where it is considered to be a greater priority.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

Robust arrangements are in place to ensure that the risk of inaccurate data being reported to Members is minimised and assurance can be placed on the accuracy of data used to assess performance. By reporting to Members and ensuring all

Members are able to access the Council's performance management system the risk of poor performance not being identified or addressed is minimised.

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.

Conclusions

This report to Members summarises performance across the Council with data that was available at the end of January 2020. Members are asked to consider nine performance indicators which are performing 10% or more below their target and if the actions being taken by Officers are not deemed sufficient are recommended to refer those indicators to the Cabinet for further assessment.

Appendices

Appendix A - Exceptions Report

Appendix B - Development & Conservation Portfolio performance report

Appendix C - People & Places Portfolio performance report

Background Papers

None

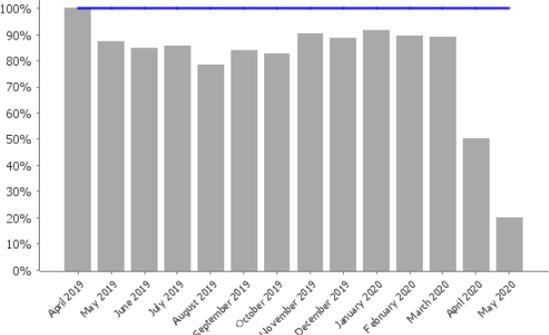
**Dr Pav Ramewal
Chief Executive**

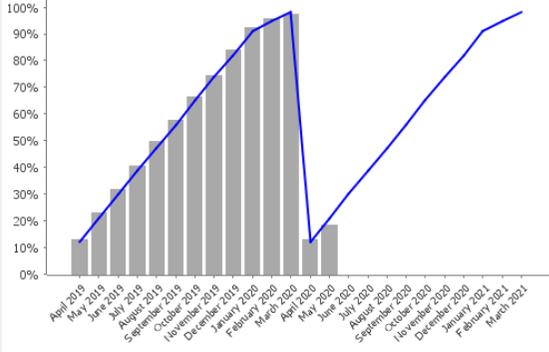
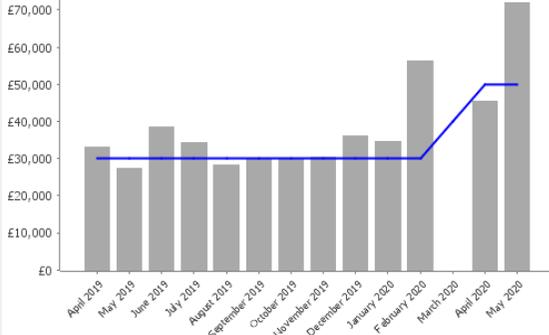
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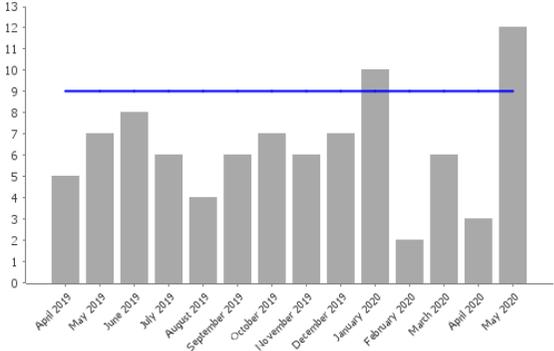
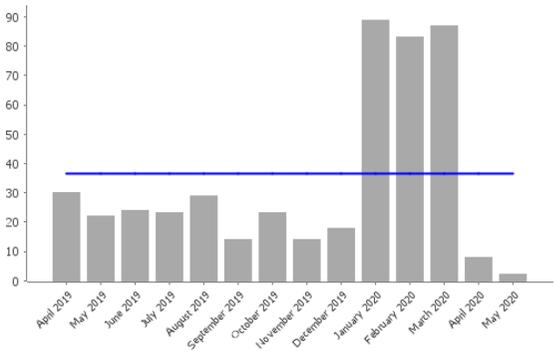
Scrutiny Committee – Exceptions Report

Key:

Status	Colour	Details
	Green	At or above target
	Amber	Less than 10% below target
	Red	10% or more below target

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_EH004	Percentage of higher risk food inspections due that was done (higher risk is categories A & B)	20%	100%			20%	100%		As a high majority of food businesses were required to close in response to the Covid-19 pandemic the Council has been unable to complete the high risk food inspections that were programmed. Targets will be reviewed in light of the impact of Covid-19 and the impact on businesses and the Environmental Health service.

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_BR 04	The percentage of business rates collected in-year (Cumulative)	18.3%	21%			18.3%	21%		As businesses have closed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic the Council has sought to provide by support through delayed collection of business rates and the postponement of recovery action. The Council is forecasting an under collection of business rates in the year ahead as businesses seek to recover from the impact of Covid-19. However, this will not have a direct effect on Council budgets this year as business rates income is assumed at the safety-net level under the business rates retention scheme.
LPI_FS 003	Debts outstanding more than 61 days	£71,976	£30,000			£71,976	£30,000		This indicator now reports the amount of outstanding debt across both Argyle Road and Dubrik based services and the target has been increased to reflect this. The increase in outstanding debt is as a result of deferral of payments and suspension of recovery action to support people and businesses that have been directly affected by Covid-19 and the period of lockdown.

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_HB04	Average number of days to process a change in circumstances for Housing Benefit (monthly)	12	9			12	9		May saw a large increase in change of circumstances caseload as customers moved on to Universal Credit or where circumstances had changed due to the impact of Covid-19 on personal circumstances. Performance is anticipated to return to within target levels as in June, but it is likely that caseloads in the benefits service will remain high throughout this year and performance levels may fluctuate as a result.
LPI_CD H02	Number of customers engaged in the One You Services	2	36.67			10	110		A high proportion of One You customers are traditionally supported in face to face sessions which were halted due to the restrictions in place to manage the Covid-19 pandemic. Although some customers continue to be supported using video call and telephone support the engagement of new customers has not been possible as lockdown has continued. Once Government rules allow, the team will strongly market their services to reach out to residents that may benefit from the services provided.

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_HS R 01	Total number housed through Sevenoaks District Housing Register nomination	8	16.67			11	33.33		Lockdown restrictions placed a temporary suspension on house moves and have also required landlords to sustain tenancies and not move on tenants whilst the economy has been in lockdown. These measures have directly affected the ability to house people on the housing register.
LPI_PS H 02	Number of Disabled Facilities Grants completed	4	5			10	10		Urgent disabled facilities grant works have been able to continue under safe working practices during the lockdown period, only where residents have been able and willing for teams to work in their homes. Whilst performance remains on target for the year, the target of five completions in May was not achieved. Performance in the coming months is likely to continue to be affected by the impact of Covid-19.

Scrutiny Committee – Development & Conservation Portfolio performance report

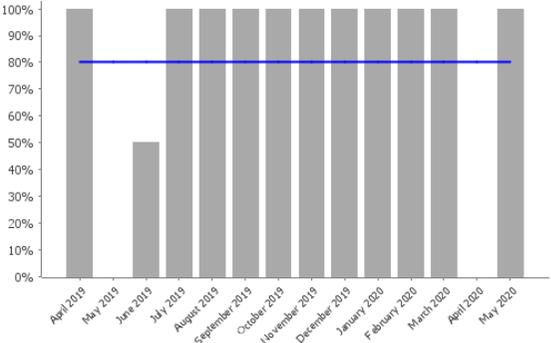
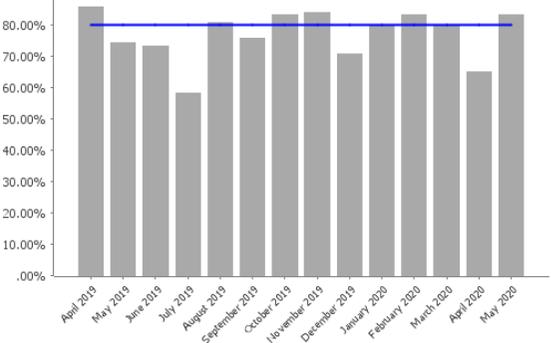
Key:

Status	Colour	Details
✔	Green	At or above target
⚠	Amber	Less than 10% below target
✖	Red	10% or more below target

Page 17	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_BC 01	Percentage of full plans / Building Notices acknowledged within 3 working days	86%	80%	✔		90.5%	80%	✔	

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_BC 02	Percentage of full plans checked within 15 working days	100%	95%	✔		100%	95%	✔	
LPI_BC 03	Market Share	71%	70%	✔		71%	70%	✔	

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_D M 001a	Average number of days taken to validate a planning application	1.95	5			2.38	5		
Page 19 LPI_D M 005	Percentage of planning applications submitted and received electronically	91.00%	80.00%			90.50%	80.00%		

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_D M 007a	Processing of planning applications: Major applications in 13 weeks	100%	80.00%			100.00%	80.00%		
LPI_D M 007b	Processing of planning applications: Minor applications in 8 weeks	83.33%	80.00%			73.68%	80.00%		

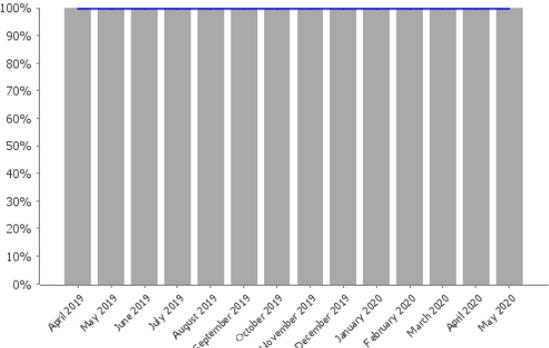
Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_D M 007c	Processing of planning applications: Other applications in 8 weeks	90.60%	90.00%	✔		93.15%	90.00%	✔	
Page 24 LPI_D M 009	Percentage of appeals against planning application refusal dismissed	100%	75.00%	✔		100%	75.00%	✔	

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Scrutiny Committee – People & Places Portfolio performance report

Key:

Status	Colour	Details
	Green	At or above target
	Amber	Less than 10% below target
	Red	10% or more below target

Page 23	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Cumulative (Year to Date) Performance			Latest Note
						2020/21			
						Value	Target	Status	
LPI_CD CS 02	Percentage of responses to reports of Anti Social Behaviour within 25 working days	100%	100%			100%	100%		

Note: Data for performance indicators collected quarterly (Q1) will be available from 15 July 2020 and not reported

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Cllr Lesley Dyball
People & Places
Report to Scrutiny Committee
14 July 2020

Since March 2020, the Council we has been responding to the challenges of COVID-19, and planning for recovery in the months ahead. We have worked closely with our partners across the district to respond to significant changes, especially working on how we can protect and maintain critical services to protect and support citizens.

Our COVID-19 response

- Council investment of £100k towards community based initiatives supporting COVID-19 pandemic awarded additional grants to the value of £19,000 to Age UK, Friends for Families, West Kent Mind, Cross Light Advice and Sevenoaks Counselling.
- The Communities team has supported the district's Care for our Community volunteers scheme, helping those who need support (such as befriending, errands or shopping) or wanting to volunteer to register. To date the scheme has over 1,400 volunteers and seen more than 1,400 new requests for support from some of our most vulnerable households.
- Raised £12,205 as part of Sevenoaks District Communities Together fundraising page for four local charities.
- The Local Strategic Partnership has supported GoCoach to launch the first demand led public transport system in the country. At a time when most areas had completely shut down public transport, Go2 provided a safe transport offer to those who need to access services, shops and hospitals etc. It has particularly benefitted key workers including NHS staff and Police Community Safety Officers. More than 500 passengers used the service within the first 8 days of operating.
- COVID-19 Recovery plans in place for the Economy and Communities.
- Provided funding to launch Kent & Medway Growth Hub advice line for COVID-19 business and grant support.
- Government funding has helped us provide grant funding to those businesses that need support. As at 5 June 2020, as part of the Small business & retail, hospitality and leisure grant funds, the Council has made payment to 1,778 businesses to a total of £21.86m in relief and grants. This accounts for approximately 85% of all eligible businesses and 88% of the £24.7m of funding allocated to us by Government. £10k grants from the Small Business Grant Fund have been paid to each of 1,285 eligible businesses, totalling £12.85m. £10k grants from the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund have been paid to 221 eligible businesses, totalling £2.21m. Grants up to £25k from the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund has been paid to 272 eligible businesses, totalling £6.8m.
- Launched the Sevenoaks District Business Advisory Board to gather business insight and understand the challenges and opportunities facing businesses.

Community Plan:

Key issues emerging from the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) include:

- Performance is 96% on target. There has been a slight increase in the number of people killed or seriously injured on local roads. As road safety is overseen by Kent Fire and Rescue, the LSP will meet with them to discuss road safety initiatives and campaigns.

Agenda Item 7

- Looking to grow the supported internship network through the LSP. The K&M CCG, West Kent MIND and West Kent Housing are interested in the scheme. The scheme has been suspended during the lockdown as Broomhill Bank is closed. We are working to establish what the scheme might look like when restrictions are eased and both Sevenoaks District Council and Broomhill Bank school are committed to continuing to develop the programme.

Safeguarding:

- A Members safeguarding handbook has been produced and distributed to all Members to raise awareness of the key safeguarding issues that they need to be aware of. A safeguarding training session can be organised for members if there is interest.
- Through the internal Safeguarding Group, we are now looking to develop a council wide safeguarding report system to improve reporting, auditing processes and improve risk management.

Community Safety:

- The Community Safety Strategy and action plan refreshed for 2020-21.
- National Internet Safety Day was on Tuesday 4 February. SDC and CSP held an event for all primary schools at the Stag Theatre, on how to stay safe and have fun online Dreams2020 delivered a workshop for Years 5 & 6 and over 200 pupils from 15 schools attended
- SDC and partner agencies were successful in two Crown Court prosecutions against a rogue landlord and property owners of the Convent of Mercy site in Swanley. This resulted in convictions and the payment of fines.
- Over 15 Task and Finish Groups established in the past 12 months, looking at incidents where ASB has been reported more than a couple of times. The groups bring together the relevant agencies to take a joint response.
- The CSP Annual report for 2019-20 highlights the successes of the CSU and all the work that has been achieved. This report is available for all members
- Daily Tasking has continued and Task Groups continuing virtually
- There has been an increase in anti-social behaviour in beauty hotspots. The CSU are visiting 15 locations across the District and are meeting weekly with partners actions include:-
 - Kent Fire Rescue Service doing regular patrol
 - PCSOs and Community Policing Team to visit to all locations
 - KCC detached youth work and West Kent Extra youth work to happen when realised
 - Site locations with owners to see what can be put in place
 - Wildlife cameras where suitable
 - Kenward Trust to visit areas where nitrous oxide is reported

Issues and Challenges

- The Community Safety Partnership receives annual funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). This has continued for 2020-21.
- COVID-19 has seen some challenges with people gathering in open spaces or round people's houses. Police have made a number of visits and the CSU have issued a number of warning letters followed up by Police who can issue tickets.
- Daily Tasking have still been taking place so that no issues are missed and although face to face work including joint visits have not been made actions have still been taken forward.

Youth Services:

- Family Fun Days had to be cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19 but we will be back in 2021
- A Youth Assembly has been set up by KCC and supported by the council and West Kent Extra - young people have decided on their priorities and action plan for the district. The Assembly has met in January and March this year.
- KCC has increased their street base work from 1 night to 4 nights a week from 1 April 2020 and the CSU works in partnership with them regarding target areas to visit. However again this has seen a delay. There have been a lot of work with young people via Zoom and other social media platforms
- Youth Zone is lent out to Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust and West Kent Extra.

Leisure:

- White Oak Leisure Centre planning application approved in February 2020.
- In April, Council approved investment of £20m into the design and build of the new White Oak leisure centre and appointment of a new operator. The contractor started work on site in May 2020.
- Officers are continuing to work with Sencio across all their sites, alongside local clubs.

Community Grants:

- All grant applications have been appraised for 2020-21 and approved by Cabinet at March Cabinet.

Issues and Challenges

- As always a number of applications exceeding grant amount, but SDC has a robust review process.

Communities & Sports:

- Voluntary and Community Forum has been established, chaired by Angela Painter.
- Meetings have been held with Edenbridge & Westerham Citizens Advice and Sevenoaks Citizens Advice to look at more joint working and SLA has been reviewed.
- The Dunton Green project completed on 30 March 2020. Over 5 years, 7 new community groups have been established and one-off engagement sessions e.g. art mural, Family Days, Bike Trials.

Economic Development:

- Continue to offer Team Around Your Business support to businesses across the District helping them access Council services
- Offering free business support to help businesses through West Kent Partnership (open to any business in West Kent Area) - delivered remotely during lockdown
- West Kent Jobs and Training Fair held on 5 March 2020 in Sevenoaks. Over 100 job seekers attended
- Assisting local housing associations and partners to create local jobs club launched prior to lockdown, service being delivered remotely
- Small Business Saturday event took place in Sevenoaks Town Centre with the bus visiting and meeting with a number of local companies focussing mainly on independent retailers to encourage people to shop local
- Support offered for Rural village shops via the Kent rural retailers programme, this offered specific advice from a rural retail specialist.

Agenda Item 7

- Swanley Station renovation programme fully funded bringing a £2.25 million investment into the station.

West Kent Partnership:

The Partnership represents the economic needs of the area and engages with businesses on key issues for them.

Current Projects and success

- West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network - National programme, tailored and delivered locally in partnership with Careers & Enterprise Company. Two Enterprise Coordinators employed at SDC working across West Kent developing strategic relationships with schools and then matching them with a senior level business volunteer who helps provide strategic direction on careers strategy and practical support by linking schools with business to generate a motivated talent pipeline for local businesses
- West Kent Scale Up - 12 month coaching programme for 12 high growth West Kent businesses, involving 36 hour support and peer activities - delivered through Kent Invicta Chamber for Commerce and jointly funded by WKP, South East Business Boost and Growth Hub.
- Retail support programme was scoped for delivery from April with delivery by Action for Rural Communities in Kent. Currently on hold and will be re-framed to best support retailers at an appropriate time and in the light of other support, both National and Regional which becomes available

Issues and challenges

- Ensuring partnership is engaged with needs of local business. Providing appropriate business support to West Kent businesses to aid them in the recovery phase from Covid-19 and beyond.
- Reviewing West Kent Economic Priorities for Growth 2019-22 to reflect the changed circumstances and adjusting the action plan accordingly

West Kent LEADER:

West Kent LEADER is a European Union (EU) funded programme providing grants to local rural businesses to support the rural economy. To date 55 projects in West Kent have benefited, creating over 70 jobs, with a total grant commitment of nearly £1.8m. 18 businesses in Sevenoaks District have benefitted from a share of this funding, which will create over 25 jobs in the rural area.

Issues and challenges

- The current funding programme was due to end March 2020, with projects supported and delivered up to March 2021. Impacted by COVID-19, with many projects currently on hold and six month extensions granted. Further guidance is awaited from DEFRA. Currently it is not clear what the future funding for the rural economy will be post Brexit. Further funding opportunities are being sought.

Tourism:

Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership (DVCRP)

- Appointment of a Community Rail Officer.
- Partnership working with Town and Parish Councils continues and regular Steering Group meetings take place every 2-3 months. Subsequent partnership has been formed with Southeastern trains.

Visitor Economy Forum

- Visitor Economy Forum held in February attracting key tourism providers from the district as well as representatives from; Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Association of Community Rail Partnerships and Visit Britain.

Visitor itineraries

- 4 itineraries have been developed; 7 of the most Instagrammable spots in Sevenoaks, A car-free short break near London, An active family getaway near London, A romantic weekend break near London for history lovers. Itineraries will feature on the tourism website, social media platforms and via existing partnerships.

London Gatwick

- The partnership looks at shared destination marketing in Gatwick Airport terminals - with links to local destination sites such as Penshurst Place.

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Cllr Julia Thornton
Development and Conservation
Report to Scrutiny Committee
14 July 2020

Services within my Portfolio continue to perform to a very high standard, and pleasingly have adapted extremely well to the challenges of recent months. Some aspects in particular are worthy of note.

1. The latest position on the Local Plan was set out in a report to Development and Conservation Advisory Committee on 7 July.

The Inspector's Final Report on the examination was issued to the Council on 2nd March 2020. The report found a failure in the duty to co-operate and recommended that the Local Plan should not be adopted. The Inspector stated that she is unable to recommend any Main Modifications in relation to matters of soundness.

The Council has repeatedly requested feedback on matters other than the duty to co-operate that were discussed at length during the course of the examination hearing sessions. These 'soundness' issues include the approach to protecting the Green Belt in accordance with national policy, the assessment of the Plan through Sustainability Appraisal and the overall spatial strategy to meet District-wide development needs. Notwithstanding a short covering letter provided with the report, substantive feedback on these issues has not been forthcoming.

Saira Kabir Sheikh QC has been appointed as Counsel and a claim was submitted against the Inspector's decision to the Administrative Court on 15th April 2020. On 2nd June 2020, confirmation was received from the Honourable Mr Justice Swift that permission for judicial review had been granted and that all grounds for the claim were arguable.

In addition, all three Members of Parliament who represent the District - Laura Trott, Tom Tugendhat and Gareth Johnson - have written a joint letter to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government, to request that the Inspector's decision be called in for further consideration. Members will be aware that the Leader of the Council also wrote to the Secretary of State on 21st January 2020, outlining his concerns about the Planning Inspector's conclusions. At the time of writing, responses to this correspondence have not been received

And finally, the Council has lodged a formal complaint with the Planning Inspectorate regarding the service it received during the examination. There has been significant interest in the Council's case from local and social media channels. Both the Leader and I have given interviews on BBC Radio Kent and further media interest may follow as our case progresses.

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2. With regarding to Service performance in both Development Management and Building Control targets continue to be met and market share remains very healthy. In fact for the period 1 April to the time of writing more planning applications have been determined, and more in time, than the same period last year which given that most staff have been working remotely is a noteworthy achievement.

The additional investment in Planning Enforcement has been well received and we are continuing to see reductions in the number of historic cases, and more proactive action being taken across the District. Recently this has included the rapid serving of two Article 4 Directions which remove permitted development rights on sites in West Kingsdown and Edenbridge, for which the local communities was most appreciative.

3. By way of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) update, the Council has received £9.15 million since CIL was introduced in 2014. £6 million of this has been available to spend on local and strategic infrastructure, through the CIL Spending Board, with just over £4.5 million of this amount already committed to infrastructure projects. The residual is available for the next CIL Spending Board to award.

A Governance Report went to the Development and Conservation Advisory Committee on 7 July. This annual review looked at the process of how we spend the CIL money, and identified work undertaken with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board, and other Members, to see what is being learnt from each CIL Spending Board and making changes as necessary. This year the report included the following:

- Improved guidance for monitoring bids that have been awarded CIL money, working with the legal agreement (introduced in the last Governance review).
- Drafting a number of templates which ensure that our contact with organisations that have submitted bids is improved.
- Clearer guidelines on how we consider bids that change after their submission to the Board.
- Clarification as to what happens to bids that are not successful.
- Linking bids to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- A timetable for providing further advice and guidance notes to Parish and Town Councils and Organisations submitting bids.

This will ensure that funding allocated through the CIL Spending Board is better assessed, spent and monitored.

4. Finally, I thought it would be helpful to identify some of the many ways the services have adapted to the challenges of working in the current environment. They include;

- Virtual working - the use of MS teams, zoom and skype for business for both internal and external meetings, including pre-apps.
- The end to end process of most applications is now fully electronic.
- An extra focus on staff wellbeing.
- Site notices are being issued to applicants in most cases, and the onus is on them to display and confirm this.
- Recruitment (2 x Planning Officers) has continued and interviews have taken place via Zoom. Feedback has been really positive from all involved.
- We've updated our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to temporarily reflect social-distancing measures
- Officers have been redeployed to assist pressures in other services areas, for example to help with the delivery of grants to businesses

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Scrutiny Committee Work plan as at 2 July 2020

Committee Date	12 November 2019	30 January 2020	31 March 2020 (Cancelled)	14 July 2020
External Invitees		Kent Police (CONFIRMED)		KCC Cabinet Member for Education
Scrutiny Committee	Performance Monitoring Matthew Dickins - Portfolio Holder for Finance and Investments (CONFIRMED)	Performance Monitoring Robert Piper - Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health	Performance Monitoring Chairman's annual report to Council	Performance Monitoring Lesley Dyball - Portfolio Holder for People and Places (confirmed) Julia Thornton - Portfolio Holder for Development and Conservation (Confirmed)
In-Depth Scrutiny	Establishment of a Member Working Group	Interim update		

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Committee Date	10 November 2020	12 January 2021	23 March 2021	Summer 2021
External Invitees	Stag Theatre (Confirmed moved from 31 March 2020) Sencio Leisure Centre (TBC)	KCC Cabinet Member for Highways (TBC)		
Scrutiny Committee	Performance Monitoring	Performance Monitoring		
In-Depth Scrutiny	Stage 1 - Initial Feedback from CCTV Working Group	Final Report CCTV		

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¹ For detailed information on stages refer to "A Guide to In-Depth Scrutiny"

Past In-Depth Scrutiny Working Groups

2015/16	
Leisure	Cllrs. Ball, Brown (Chairman), Clack and Kitchener
2016/17	
Property Investment	Cllrs. Clack (Chairman), Hogg, Kitchener and Purves
2018/19	
Staffing Levels	Cllrs. Brown (Chairman) Ball, Hogg and Purves

Current in-Depth Scrutiny Working Group

CCTV	Cllrs. Pender (Chairman), Ball, Kitchener and Purves
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Possible future areas for In-Depth Scrutiny

Housing - accommodation for vulnerable people
Homelessness

Past External Invitees

2014/15	
15/07/14	Citizens Advice Bureaux (Martin Wells and Angela Newey, Chairman and Manager at Sevenoaks & Swanley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), and Mike Musgrove and Jill Eyre, Director and Manager at Edenbridge & Westerham CAB)
02/10/14	Sencio Community Leisure (Jane Parish, Chief Executive)
20/11/14	KCC Secondary Schools (Roger Gough, KCC Cabinet Member for Education & Health Reform)
03/02/15	West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (Ian Ayres, Chief Officer and Accountable Officer)
2015/16	
14/07/15	KCC Primary Schools and Apprenticeships (Margaret Crabtree, KCC Deputy Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform)
24/11/15	Kent Police (Chief Inspector Roscoe Walford)
23/02/16	KCC Highways (Matthew Balfour, KCC Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport) (Did not attend)
03/05/16	KCC Commercial & Traded Services (Paul Carter CBE, KCC Leader and Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Audit and Transformation and Commercial and Traded Services)
2016/17	
05/07/16	Moat Housing (Elizabeth Austerberry, Chief Executive) West Kent Housing (Deborah White, Housing and Communities Director)
08/11/16	Kent Police (Chief Inspector Roscoe Walford)
07/02/17	Kent County Council Library Provision (County Councillor Mike Hill; Cabinet Member

	for Community Services and James Pearson; Service Improvement Manager of the Libraries, Registration and Archives Service)
30/03/17	Pembury Hospital (Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust) (Angela Gallagher, Chief operating Officer and Jim Lusby, Deputy Chief Executive) (Did not attend)
2017/18	
31/10/17	Pembury Hospital (Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust) (Angela Gallagher, Chief operating Officer and Jim Lusby, Acting Chief Executive)
24/04/18	Roger Gough - Kent County Council Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education
2018/19	
17/07/18	Citizens Advice - North West Kent and Edenbridge and Westerham (Chair, Robin Thompson)
13/11/18	Kent Police (Chief Inspector Tony Dyer)
05/02/19	West Kent Housing (Chief Executive, Frank Czarnowski)
2019/20	
16/07/19	Sencio Sevenoaks Leisure Centre (Chief Executive, Jane Parish)
30/01/20	Kent Police (Chief Inspector Jon Kirby)

Possible External Invitees

Position	Name	Topic
KCC Adult Social Care	TBC	TBC
Chamber of Commerce	TBC	TBC
NHS Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group	TBC	TBC