

17 March 2022 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

Published: 09.03.22



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Cabinet

Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Fleming; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Dickins
Cllrs. McArthur, Dyball, Maskell and Thornton

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. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 February 2022, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 14)	
2. Declarations of interest Any interests not already registered		
3. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)		
4. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee, CIL Spending Board or Cabinet Advisory Committees (if any)		
5. LGA Peer Challenge - Final Report	(Pages 15 - 38)	Lee Banks Tel: 01732 227161



REPORTS ALSO CONSIDERED BY THE CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEES

6. Community Grant Scheme 2022/23	(Pages 39 - 70)	Kathryn Bone, Tel: 01732 227176
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Jenny Godfrey
Tel: 01732 227112




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|----|--|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 7. | Voluntary Sector Barometer Survey | (Pages 71 - 92) | Jenny Godfrey
Tel: 01732 227112 |
| 8. | Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Action Plan 2022- 23 | (Pages 93 - 128) | Kelly Webb
Tel: 01732227474 |



- | | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 9. | Citizens Advice Financial Split | (Pages 129 - 136) | Kelly Webb
Tel: 01732227474 |
| 10. | Safeguarding Policy | (Pages 137 - 180) | Sarah Robson
Tel: 01732227129 |



 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.

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2022 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Dickins (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. McArthur, Dyball, Maskell and Thornton

Cllr. Purves was also present.

Cllr Grint was present via a virtual media platform which does not constitute attendance as recognised under the Local Government Act 1972.

66. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minute of the meeting of Cabinet held on 13 January 2022, be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

67. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

68. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

There were none.

URGENT ITEM

In accordance with Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman agreed to accept the urgent matter 'Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rates Relief Scheme 2022-2023', which had been circulated but had missed the statutory despatch deadline.

The matter was urgent as the scheme needed to be agreed in order for the annual billing which needed to be completed before the end of February, and therefore it could not reasonably wait until the next meeting of Cabinet.

The urgent matter was taken as agenda item 6 (Minute 71).

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman, with the Committee's agreement, amended the order of agenda items and in particular brought forward consideration of Scrap Metal Dealer Fees to agenda item 5 (Minute 70). The item on Discretionary Rate Relief was taken as agenda item 7 (Minute 72). White Oak Leisure Centre was taken as agenda item 17

(Minute 82). Budget and Council Tax Setting was taken as agenda item 18 (Minute 83).

69. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee, CIL Spending Board or Cabinet Advisory Committees (if any)

There were none.

70. Scrap Metal Dealer Fees 2022 - 23

The Portfolio Holder presented the report which sought approval for the Scrap Metal Dealers licence fees. The Senior Licensing Officer set out that the proposed fees were set locally on a cost recovery basis and included a 2% inflationary cost. There were currently two site licences in Sevenoaks District. Members were advised that the Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee had considered the same report.

Resolved: That the fees as set out below be approved.

Type of Application	2021/2022 Current Fee	2022/2023 Proposed Fee
Site Licence - Grant (3 years)	£497	£507
Site Licence - Renewal (3 years)	£420	£428
Collectors Licence Grant/Renewal (3 years)	£303	£309
Minor administrative change to licence	£33	£34
Variation - change of site manager	£180	£184
Variation from collector to site licence	£215	£219
Variation from site to collector licence	£139	£142

71.

Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rates Relief Scheme 2022-2023

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Investment presented the report that detailed a business rate relief scheme for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure properties for 2022/23.

The Business Rates Manager advised that Government guidance states that it would be for each billing authority to adopt a local scheme for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rate Relief and decide in each individual case when to grant relief under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended). The value of the relief for 2022/2023 was 50% of the net rates liability, up to a cash limit of £110,000 per business.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: that the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rates Relief Scheme 2022-2023, be approved.

72. Discretionary Rate Relief

The Portfolio Holder presented the report which set out the proposal for awarding discretionary rate relief for 2022/2023. Discretionary rate relief could be awarded in isolation of given to 'top up' a mandatory award. The Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had considered the same report.

The Business Rates Manager advised that the Citizens Advice for North and West Kent had moved premises and as detailed in Appendix B, page 21, it was now First Floor, 5 Bligh's Walk Sevenoaks, TN13 1DB. This would require a slight alteration to rate relief from £911.36 to £1921.15. This would mean that total gross relief would be altered from £194,625 as laid out in paragraph 19 of this report to £195,635.

The estimated level of relief was based upon the multipliers set out in paragraph 17 of the report. Ultimately, should the multipliers change a further report setting out the revised relief awards would be submitted. In response to questions Councillors were informed that these properties would not benefit from other grants and that any changes will be updated throughout the year.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the proposals for granting relief from business rates for 2022/2023 as set out in Appendix B, with the alteration to the address of the Citizens Advice and the corresponding alteration to 2022/2023 gross relief to £195,635, be approved.

73. Report on Special Urgency Decisions

Members considered the report detailing the urgent decision that were taken in compliance with Part 13, paragraph 12(d) of the Council's Constitution. The urgent decisions were also classified as 'Key Decisions' and as such, subject to a notice period of 28 days and 'call-in'.

The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee's consent had been given under Regulation 11 and notices had been published of the decisions as soon as they were made. Under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to information) (England) Regulations 2012, the Chairman of the Council had agreed that the decisions proposed were reasonable in all the circumstances and were to be treated as matters of urgency and not be subject to call-in.

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.

74. Sevenoaks District Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Draft 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder presented the report which set out the Action Plan which collated the available data on health and wellbeing and used this data to target specific actions aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of Sevenoaks District residents. This Action Plan would determine focus, attendees and multi-agency partnership work undertaken in the district.

The Housing & Health Advisory Committee had considered the same report and congratulated the team for their hard work and co-ordination on the project. The Health and Communities Manager answered questions of clarification.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members gave consideration to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the Health and Wellbeing Plan for 2022/23 be approved.

75. Summary of the Sevenoaks District Emerging Housing Strategy 2022 - 26

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health presented the report which set out a summary of key priorities and themes of Sevenoaks District Council's emerging Housing Strategy. The Strategy represented the emerging objectives and key themes for Sevenoaks District. Members were advised that the Housing & Health Advisory Committee had considered the same report and noted the lack of options for first time buyers. An initial consultation event had also been undertaken in January inviting all members for their feedback.

The Housing Strategy Manager advised that The Council appointed recognised consultants, Arc4 and Campbell Tickell, to work with officers to support the collation of the evidence base, consultation and drafting of the strategy. Further consultation would help shape the new Housing Strategy which would identify how the Council would manage and deliver its strategic housing role and provide an overarching framework that would feed into the Local Plan and help to formulate other policies on housing issues. She advised that the draft timetable would need to be amended as public consultation would be extended into April 2022.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the draft priorities and summary of the emerging Housing Strategy, be considered.

- b) any minor amendments to the summary being incorporated by the Housing Strategy Manager following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and Chief Officer - People and Places, be approved; and
- c) the draft priorities and summary be made available for public consultation in order to further shape the development of the emerging Housing Strategy, be approved.

76. Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Scheme

The Portfolio Holder presented the report which set out that the proposed scheme would apply to all applicants seeking social housing in the District and the allocation of vacant social housing stock. The Housing Register Allocations Policy directed applications for, and the allocation of, vacant social housing in the District. It applied to approximately 6,500 homes. The Policy was used in conjunction with the local choice based lettings scheme - Kent Homechoice - and was followed by the District Council's Housing Accommodation Team and the Council's housing provider partners, including Quercus Housing. The Portfolio Holder advised that the Housing & Health Advisory Committee had considered the same report. An initial consultation event had also been undertaken in January inviting all members for their feedback, alongside a further event with Registered Providers operating in the District.

The Housing Strategy Manager advised that the draft timetable would need to be amended as the public consultation would be extended in April 2022. The new Scheme has been drafted to ensure that access to social housing supported the needs of residents and the corporate aims of the Council, as well as reflecting legislation. There was an extremely limited supply of social housing within the Sevenoaks District and this scheme was designed to work with the Council's housing providers to make the best use of the stock available and promote Sevenoaks District as an attractive place to live.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: that

- a) the draft Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Scheme, be considered;
- b) any changes to the draft scheme arising, being incorporated by the Housing Strategy Manager, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health, be approved; and
- c) the draft scheme be made available for public consultation.

77. Financial Results 2021/22 to the end of November 2021

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Investment presented the report which updated Members on the financial results of the council's expenditure. The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading set out that the year-end forecast position was an unfavourable variance of £32,000 against the Council's net service expenditure budget totalling £17.015m. The Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had considered the same report.

He explained that the financial position continued to be actively monitored as the Council approached the end of the year and a small surplus was currently forecast. The largest current unfavourable forecast was in Direct Services as this Council had continued to deliver these key frontline services to the same standard as normal when many other Councils have reduced or stopped their services. This overspend was being offset by Covid grants such as the income compensation scheme.

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.

78. Treasury Management Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Investment presented the report that outlined the Council's Treasury Management Strategy which sets out the Council's Policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. The Principal Accountant (Capital and Treasury) advised that the Annual Investment Strategy remained largely the same as for 2021/22 with Bond, Property, Equity and Multi-Asset Funds as alternative Investment options being retained. Changes to the Treasury Management and Prudential Codes would take effect from 2023/24.

Members were also advised that in regards to calculating Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) assets were only deemed as operational once they had received a full practical completion certificate. Members also indicated that they would set a benchmark target of an overall return of 2% above the SONIA rate.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 be approved as updated in the light of comments.

79. Property Investment Strategy Update Report

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Investment presented the report which updated Members with an update on the progress of the Property Investment Strategy to date.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading advised that investments previously made through the Property Investment Strategy continued to provide a good revenue income stream to the Council and assist it in remaining

financially self-sufficient. The budgeted net income for the 2021/2022 year was £1.372m and a higher amount of £1.386m was forecast to be achieved. By externally borrowing to part-fund White Oak Leisure Centre and other schemes, the Council was prevented from making further direct investments primarily for yield. Thus, no changes to the strategy criteria were proposed. The situation would continue to be monitored with the aim to make further investments via the Council or Quercus 7 in future.

Resolved: That

- a) The report be noted;
- b) It be recommended the Council that the changes to the Property Investment Strategy criteria, as discussed above be agreed.

80. Bevan Place, Swanley Development Proposal

Members considered the report which outlined the Council's plans to redevelop the former Swanley Working Men's Club site and adjacent car park at Bevan Place.

The Strategic Head of Commercial and Property advised that paragraph 4 of the report should be altered to read as: "The proposed scheme included up to 93 homes."

The scheme would also incorporate retail uses along the High Street, a communal garden and landscaped surface car-parking for residents. The scheme would include the highest environmental and sustainability standards possible to ensure the scheme was not only an exemplar benchmark scheme for Swanley, but would also enhance residents' well-being.

Officers were seeking approval to progress the scheme, applying for planning permission and procuring a lead design contractor to deliver the scheme subject to obtaining all the necessary statutory consents. Practical completion was expected by 2024.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Investment advised that the Finance & Investment Advisory Committee and Housing & Health Advisory Committee had considered the same report. Members of the Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had looked in detail at the information detailed within the exempt appendices. There were concerns expressed over the financial projections of the proposals as a longer-term ambition. The Committee agreed that Cabinet needed to satisfy themselves with the robustness of the assumptions and the robustness of the mitigations for the risks, and the case for locking in the current rates for borrowing and include its findings.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: that

- (i) the development of a new residential-led scheme on this site which would deliver up to 93 new homes, retail uses, communal and public garden, resident car parking and highway improvements to Bevan Place, be endorsed;
- (ii) the viability challenges this site and scheme presents, be noted and the delivery of this scheme using an income-based financing model (rent model) that will result in the Council retaining housing and retail stock to generate income to repay the cost of the development, be approved;
- (iii) it be recommended to Council that the provision of £26,575,836 in the 2022/23 - 2024/25 Capital Programme to deliver the scheme within the parameters set in Section 57 of this report, be approved and that this was in addition to the previously approved amount of £730,000 in the 2021/22 Capital Programme for this project, be noted;
- (iv) the acquisition/inclusion of the adjacent West Kent Housing Association land and buildings, known as 1-12 Bevan Place, Swanley, be approved and to enter into a development agreement with West Kent Housing Association that will result in 14 residential units being transferred to West Kent Housing Association on a leasehold basis, the terms of which were outlined in the draft Heads of Terms in the confidential Appendix C and delegates authority to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial Services and the Chief Officer Finance and Trading following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Investment to agree and finalise necessary agreements with West Kent Housing Association;
- (v) it be recommended to Council that officers be authorised to acquire any outstanding legal interests that may not be in the Council's ownership, which may include using its statutory powers, such as the use of compulsory purchase orders;
- (vi) Subject to Council's approval of the capital provision of £26,575,836 in the 2022/23 - 2024/25 Capital Programme, Cabinet delegate authority to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial and the Chief Officer Finance and Trading, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Investment to undertake further detailed design and feasibility work and to proceed with the scheme subject to final scheme viability and in accordance with financial parameters set in Section 57; and

Cabinet - 10 February 2022

- (vii) Subject to Council's approval of the capital provision of £26,575,836 in the 2022/23 - 2024/25 Capital Programme, Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial in consultation with the Chief Officer Finance and Trading and the Head of Legal Services to submit a planning application and to enter into any necessary contracts to facilitate the development and construction of the proposed scheme in accordance with the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules and for the disposal of the residential units to be developed.
- (viii) Subject to Council's approval of the capital provision of £26,575,836 in the 2022/23 - 2024/25 Capital Programme, Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial following consultation with the Chief Officer Finance and Trading and the Cabinet Member for Finance & Investment to prepare appropriate contractual arrangements to set up an appropriate delivery vehicle for the scheme and to return to Cabinet at a later date to approve the appropriate delivery vehicle.
- (ix) That it be recommended to Council that Council notes the proposed development scheme and financial model and approves the provision of £26,575,836 in the 2022/23 Capital Programme to deliver the scheme within the parameters set in Section 57 and detailed in Appendix D; and
- (x) It be recommended to Council to authorises officers to acquire any outstanding legal interests that may not be in the Council's ownership, which may include using its statutory powers, such as the use of compulsory purchase orders and return to Cabinet or Council to resolve invoking such powers if needed.

81. White Oak Leisure Centre Residential Quarter, Swanley - Development Proposal

Members considered the report that gave an update on SDC's project to redevelop the White Oak Leisure centre complex in Swanley.

The Strategic Head of Commercial and Property advised that work on Phase 1, construction of the new leisure centre, had completed and was due to open on Saturday 12 February 2022. Phase 2, demolition of the existing leisure centre and provision of a new car park, had commenced. The report sought approval to proceed with Phase 3, the residential element of the scheme, which would include 81 new homes. A hybrid planning application was granted permission in October 2019. A full planning application was to be sought by July 2022 and, subject to planning being obtained, works could start on site early in 2023.

The proposed development aimed to provide:

- New homes including both flats and houses with private gardens

- Communal green space at the centre of the site
- Car parking
- Trees
- Enhancement of the urban fabric surrounding the new leisure centre

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Health advised that both the Housing & Health, and Finance & Investment Advisory Committees had considered the same report, and in response to questions it had been confirmed that the initial 41 units that had been suggested were no longer financially viable. The Strategic Head of Property and Commercial explained that the cost and valuation assumptions needed to be revised to reflect current market conditions and site conditions.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the viability issues associated with this site and endorses the development of a new residential scheme on this site which will deliver 81 new homes, be noted;
- b) it be recommended to Council that the provision of £20,189,137 in the Capital Programme to deliver the scheme which was note be funded as noted in the Financial Implications, be approved;
- c) subject to Council's approval of the capital provision of £20,189,137 in the Capital Programme, Cabinet delegate authority to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial and the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Investments to undertake further detailed design and feasibility work and to proceed with the scheme subject to final scheme viability; and
- d) Cabinet delegate authority to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to submit a planning application and to enter into any necessary contracts to facilitate the development and construction of the proposed scheme in accordance with the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules and for the disposal of the residential units to be developed.

82. White Oak Leisure Centre

Members considered the report which provided an update on the progress made on the scheme of the White Oak Leisure Centre and additional costs associated with the construction. Works had commenced on site in May 2022 and construction had taken place at a steady pace.

The Strategic Head of Commercial and Property advised that the Council had demonstrated prudent financial and project management discipline on this project and had under originally planned circumstances incurred a total project cost variance of 2.1%. However, unforeseen abnormal site conditions were encountered during ground works, resulting in unexpected costs and delays to the programme. The new leisure centre was now due to achieve practical completion on 11 February 2022. Despite unforeseen circumstances the Council had avoided disruptions and had been able to keep the disruption to leisure services for residents in Swanley to a minimum.

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 that

- a) progress made on the scheme despite difficult market conditions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and abnormal site conditions encountered and the Council's ability to minimise disruptions to leisure services for the local community, be noted;
- b) due to unforeseen circumstances that additional costs associated with the construction of the scheme had to be incurred, be noted;
- c) an increase to the Capital Programme by up to £2,995,379, be approved, and it be recognised that a significant proportion of the amount was risk assessed contingency and may not materialise.

83. Budget and Council Tax Setting

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Investment presented the report which was the final stage of the budget process that had seen significant member involvement. It approved the net expenditure budget for 2022/23 would be £17.3m with the District's Council Tax increasing by 2.2% resulting in Band D Council Tax being £229.86, an increase of £4.95. This report once again leaves the council with a fully funded self-sufficient budget over the next 10 years.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading advised that it had once again been a challenging budget process with a number of changes made at each stage, which were listed in Appendix E including those supported at the last Cabinet meeting in January.

The Final Local Government Finance Settlement was announced earlier this week and there were no significant changes from the provisional settlement affecting this council.

It was noted that appendices N to R were not included for the meeting but would be included in the Council version of the report after the other preceptors have set their Council Tax.

The report included his opinion, as the Statutory Finance Officer, on the robustness of the budget estimates and adequacy of reserves. It was noted that this report once again left the council with a fully funded self-sufficient budget over the next 10 years, a rare achievement in Local Government.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) The saving proposals in Appendix E(ii) be included in the budget; and
- b) it be recommended to Council that
 - i. the Summary of Council Expenditure and Council Tax for 2022/23 set out in Appendix F be approved.
 - ii. the 10-year budget 2022/23 to 2031/32 which is the guiding framework for the detailed approval of future years' budgets set out in Appendix C to the report, including the growth and savings proposals set out in Appendix E to the report, and that where possible any variations during and between years be met from the Budget Stabilisation Reserve, be approved;
 - iii. the Capital Programme 2022/25 and funding method set out in Appendix J(i) and Capital Strategy 2022/23 set out in Appendix J(iii), be approved;
 - iv. the changes to reserves and provisions set out in Appendix K, be approved; and
 - v. the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021/22, be rolled forward to 2022/23, with effect from 1 April 2022 (Appendix M).

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 14 February 2022. The decisions contained in Minutes 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, and 77 take effect immediately. The decisions contained in Minutes 74, 76 and 80 take effect on 24 February 2022. The decisions contained in Minutes 78, 79, 81, 82 and 83 are references to Council.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.23 PM

CHAIRMAN

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LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

Cabinet - 17 March 2022

Report of: Chief Executive

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by:

- **Council - 26 April 2022**

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report informs Members on the outcome of the Council's Corporate Peer Challenge, which was held between 29 November and 1 December 2021.

It provides the full report received from the Peer Challenge Team, which includes the recommendations they have made to the Council and highlights the next steps following the conclusion of the review.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Peter Fleming

Contact Officer: Lee Banks, Ext. 7161

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- Members note their thanks to the LGA Peer Challenge Team for giving their time and expertise in undertaking the peer review of the Council; and
- Members note the findings of the Peer Challenge and the nine recommendations set out in this report.

Recommendation to Council:

- Members note their thanks to the LGA Peer Challenge Team for giving their time and expertise in undertaking the peer review of the Council; and
- Members note the findings of the Peer Challenge and the nine recommendations set out in this report.

Reason for recommendation: To ensure that Members are informed on the outcome of the Council's Corporate Peer Challenge and the recommendations arising from the work of the peer review team.

Agenda Item 5

Introduction and Background

- 1 Corporate Peer Challenges are provided by the Local Government Association (LGA). They are a core element of the sector-led improvement offer to local authorities.
- 2 Peer challenges are managed and delivered by the sector for the sector. They are improvement focused and the scope is agreed with the council and tailored to reflect local needs and specific requirements.
- 3 Since the Council's last Peer Challenge the methodology and level of assurance required has been reviewed. It continues to provide a robust and effective improvement tool and Peers remain at the heart of the challenge process and provide a 'practitioner perspective' and 'critical friend' challenge.
- 4 The Council's Peer Challenge took place across three days, between 29 November and 1 December 2021 and the Peer Challenge team have now issued their final report. The report summarises the main findings and sets out the recommendations that have arisen from the work of the peer challenge team.

Sevenoaks District Council Peer Challenge

- 5 The Peer Challenge was conducted by a team of seven elected Member and Officer Peers, drawn from across the local government sector. The make-up of the peer team reflected the focus of the Peer Challenge, with the peer team bringing considerable experience and expertise.
- 6 The peers were:
 - Cllr Darren Rodwell, Leader of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
 - Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen, Leader of Breckland Council
 - Damian Roberts, Chief Executive, Surrey Heath Borough Council
 - Emma Cooney, Director of Regeneration and Business Development, Southend on Sea Borough Council
 - Judith Atkinson, Strategic Director, Local Partnerships
 - Kevin Kewin, LGA Peer Challenge Manager
 - Georgia Goddard, LGA Graduate Trainee
- 7 Each Corporate Peer Challenge has five core components, which focus on the following areas:
 - **Local priorities and outcomes:** Are the council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the council delivering effectively on its priorities and achieving improved outcomes for all its communities?

- **Organisational and place leadership:** Does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
 - **Governance and culture:** Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of respect, challenge and scrutiny?
 - **Financial planning and management:** Does the council have a clear understanding of its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a clear plan to address its financial challenges?
 - **Capacity for improvement:** Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?
- 8 The Council asked that two further focus areas were included within the Peer Challenge to support the Council to deliver on its ambitions. These were affordable housing delivery and economic development & regeneration.
- 9 The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.
- 10 The peer team prepared by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent three days at Sevenoaks District Council, during which they:
- Gathered information and views from more than 40 meetings, in addition to further research and reading; and
 - Spoke to more than 100 people including a range of Council Members, staff and external stakeholders.
 - Visited strategic development sites in both Swanley and Sevenoaks.

Peer Challenge Report and Recommendations

- 11 The final report from the Peer Challenge Team is provided as Appendix A to this report.
- 12 Overall the Peer team concluded that the council is a well-led and an effectively managed authority with a strong track-record of effective delivery and innovation. This, they say, is reflected in strong performance outcomes across a range of areas; excellent residents' survey results; and a highly committed and talented workforce.
- 13 The Peer team reported that there are good member / officer relations and good relationships between members and that these underpin the council's success.

Agenda Item 5

- 14 They also concluded that the council's current financial position is comparatively strong, that the 10 year budget is an example to the sector and that the council is a valued and respected partner locally.
- 15 The Peer Team noted that community engagement on projects and initiatives is effective, but there is potential to complement this with more open, bottom-up, conversational approaches.
- 16 In considering the Council's additional focus areas, the Peer Team acknowledged that the council has invested in its own housing and regeneration capability. However, a key issue at this point is the balance between the council's scale of ambition and the financial resources available.
- 17 Arising from the Peer Team's work, are nine key recommendations to the Council. These are:
- Recommendation 1:** Build on recent place leadership work - consider developing a renewed, partnership-led, long-term vision for the district, residents and businesses
- Recommendation 2:** Complement the council's existing project-based community engagement work with more open, bottom-up, conversational approaches
- Recommendation 3:** Use service data and community networks to enhance the council's understanding of its diverse and emerging communities
- Recommendation 4:** Consider the optimum balance between the council's scale of ambition and availability of resources
- Recommendation 5:** Explore the scope for a managed increase in Quercus Housing's affordable housing delivery outputs
- Recommendation 6:** Consider the full range of options for additional modest-scale market value and affordable housing activity - 'massive small'
- Recommendation 7:** Review the external specialist skills to challenge viability appraisals and negotiate S106 agreements with developers
- Recommendation 8:** Use the council's influence to optimise the outcomes from the district's strategic development sites
- Recommendation 9:** Consider developing a proposition for inward investment and development as part of the emerging economic development strategy.

Next Steps

- 18 On receipt of the final Peer Challenge report, it must be published on the Council's website within six weeks. Reporting the final report to Cabinet has ensured that publication of the Peer Challenge Report has been achieved within that timescale. The LGA will, in the coming weeks, also publish the report on its own website.

- 19 It is expected that the Council will develop an action plan in response to the findings and recommendations made in the final report, and that the action plan will be published within eight weeks of the report's publication.
- 20 Six months after the Peer Challenge concluded, the LGA will organise a check-in. This session will provide the Council with the opportunity to update Peers on progress against the action plan and to discuss any further next steps. The LGA will produce a short note which reflects the council's progress and there is an expectation that this note will also be published.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

None.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal and risk implications arising from this report.

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

The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, held between 29 November and 1 December last year, has provided both positive feedback on the Council and its performance as well as identifying recommendations for further improvement, for the benefit of our residents and local businesses.

The Peer Challenge has provided a thorough assessment of key business areas, and some reflections on the Council's own focus areas from the skills and experience brought by the Peer Team.

The final report being published in full ensures transparency of the process and the findings. An accompanying action plan will be produced and continually monitored to ensure the recommendations made by the Peer Team are delivered.

Members may wish to join colleagues in noting their thanks for the work of the Peer Team, who have generously given their time and experience to assess how the Council performs and how it could continue to improve in the future.

Agenda Item 5

Appendices

Appendix A - LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback report

Background Papers

None

Dr. Pav Ramewal
Chief Executive

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

Sevenoaks District Council

29 November – 1 December 2021

Feedback report





Agenda Item 5

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1. Executive summary

Sevenoaks District Council is a well led and effectively managed authority. This is reflected in strong performance outcomes across a range of areas; excellent residents' survey results; and a highly committed and talented workforce.

The council has a longstanding track-record of effective delivery. Most recently, this was exemplified by the council's COVID-19 response, where the organisation rapidly and actively supported local residents and businesses while maintaining the delivery of core services.

The council's current financial position is comparatively strong. The organisation has consistently demonstrated good financial management, including through the effective delivery of savings and by making difficult decisions early. The council also innovates. The organisation's ten year budget, for instance, is an example to the sector and supports long-term proactive decision making.

Underpinning the council's success are good member – officer relations and good relationships between members. There is mutual support and effective challenge. Significantly, the council has developed an effective organisational culture based on trust and collaboration. The council's continued Platinum Status in Investors in People (IiP) is evidence of the council's long-term commitment to its staff; the staff culture and the council's performance reflects its benefits.

Sevenoaks District Council is a valued and respected partner locally, including by partner organisations, businesses, and parish and town councils.

The council's leadership has high aspirations for the district and strong expectations of delivery, including in relation to new affordable housing and regeneration. A key question for the council is the best approach to resource these priorities in a difficult financial context. The council's revised property investment strategy and approach to borrowing will be important in shaping the scale of delivery of the council's housing and regeneration ambitions and clarifying its appetite for risk.

The council has demonstrated effective community engagement on specific projects and particular initiatives, including consultation on key development sites for the Local Plan. The peer team feel there is potential to complement this with more open, bottom-up and conversational approaches at a grass-roots level.

Most importantly, the peer team feel there is potential value from the council, as part of its Local Strategic Partnership, developing a renewed long-term vision for Sevenoaks district, its distinct localities and their offer. This work could be co-developed and co-owned with residents, as well as partners, using the forthcoming Community Plan refresh process.

2. Key recommendations

There are a number of observations and suggestions within the main section of the report. The following are the peer team's key recommendations to the council:

2.1. Recommendation 1

Build on recent place leadership work – consider developing a renewed, partnership-led, long-term vision for the district, residents and businesses

2.2. Recommendation 2

Complement the council's existing project-based community engagement work with more open, bottom-up, conversational approaches

2.3. Recommendation 3

Use service data and community networks to enhance the council's understanding of its diverse and emerging communities

2.4. Recommendation 4

Consider the optimum balance between the council's scale of ambition and availability of resources

2.5. Recommendation 5

Explore the scope for a managed increase in Quercus Housing's affordable housing delivery outputs

2.6. Recommendation 6

Consider the full range of options for additional modest-scale market value and affordable housing activity – 'massive small'



2.7. Recommendation 7

Review the external specialist skills to challenge viability appraisals and negotiate S106 agreements with developers

2.8. Recommendation 8

Use the council’s influence to optimise the outcomes from the district’s strategic development sites

2.9. Recommendation 9

Consider developing a proposition for inward investment and development as part of the emerging economic development strategy

3. Summary of the peer challenge approach

3.1. The peer team

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected the focus of the peer challenge. The peers were:

- Cllr Darren Rodwell, Leader of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen, Leader of Breckland Council
- Damian Roberts, Chief Executive, Surrey Heath Borough Council
- Emma Cooney, Director of Regeneration and Business Development, Southend on Sea Borough Council
- Judith Atkinson, Strategic Director, Local Partnerships
- Kevin Kewin, LGA Peer Challenge Manager
- Georgia Goddard, LGA Graduate Trainee (shadowing the CPC)

3.2. Scope and focus

The peer team considered the following five themes which form the core components of all Corporate Peer Challenges. These areas are critical to councils’ performance and improvement.

1. **Local priorities and outcomes** - Are the council’s priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the council delivering effectively on its

priorities?

2. **Organisational and place leadership** - Does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
3. **Governance and culture** - Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of challenge and scrutiny?
4. **Financial planning and management** - Does the council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a plan to address its financial challenges?
5. **Capacity for improvement** - Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?

In addition to these questions, the peer team were asked to provide feedback on the council's approach to:

- Affordable housing delivery
- Economic development and regeneration

3.3. The peer challenge process

Peer challenges are improvement focused; it is important to stress that this was not an inspection. The process is not designed to provide an in-depth or technical assessment of plans and proposals. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent three days at Sevenoaks District Council, during which they:

- Gathered information and views from more than 40 meetings, in addition to further research and reading
- Spoke to more than 100 people including a range of council staff together with members and external stakeholders

This report provides a summary of the peer team's findings. In presenting feedback, they have done so as fellow local government officers and members.

4. Feedback

4.1. Local priorities and outcomes

Sevenoaks District Council is delivering excellently for local people. The council's most recent residents' survey (2021) results demonstrate this: more than 80% of respondents were satisfied with the way the council runs things, which is significantly higher than national benchmarks. The council also performs better than Kent and South East averages on a range of [key metrics](#), such as for planning decisions and council tax collection.

The council led and sustained a strong local COVID-19 response, which was valued by local residents, businesses and other stakeholders. The organisation pivoted to support those most in need while also continuing to deliver effective core services. For example, the council provided support to shielding residents, redeployed civil enforcement officers to deliver emergency food boxes and offered residents a council tax payment holiday. Sevenoaks DC was recognised by central government as a top performer in the distribution of business rates relief and the council also fostered local volunteering efforts in the community.

The council has a clear performance management framework which includes performance reporting to the corporate management team on a monthly basis. Key areas for improvement (such as use of temporary accommodation) are identified and the council is actively seeking to improve. Regular performance reporting and discussion are a core part of the council's member governance arrangements, including at the advisory committees and scrutiny where the relevant portfolio holders are challenged on key issues.

The council is open and transparent in its performance reporting. Public committee reports are clear and understandable, while all members are able to access the council's latest performance data at any time through its online system. One area for future consideration is the potential benefits from greater use of external benchmarking in performance reporting to complement's the council's strong focus on year-on-year improvement. The peer team noted a small number of areas, such

as recycling, where the district may meet its local target but is still below Kent or South East averages. In addition, the delivery of affordable housing – a key council priority – does not currently form part of the council's core performance measures regularly reported to members.

The council has demonstrated positive and effective community engagement on a range of projects. In developing the Local Plan, for example, the council received more than 40,000 representations. Major capital initiatives and development schemes each have their own tailored programmes of consultation with local residents and stakeholders; recent examples have included work to support White Oak Leisure Centre and new housing in Dunton Green.

There are potential benefits from the council supplementing its project based engagement with more open and bottom-up approaches. The council is intending to develop a Community Planning and Empowerment Toolkit to further develop the relationship between members, the council and the wider community. The peer team feel that this could provide an opportunity to secure greater direct engagement with residents about their aspirations for their area that is more open and conversational. There is an opportunity to do more to empower residents to anticipate, own, lead and facilitate change at their local level.

The council can enhance its approach to equality and diversity by making better use of its own data, information held by partner organisations and community networks. The council recognises there is increasing diversity within the district – that may not be reached through traditional engagement methods – and inequality, including a number of gypsy and traveller communities, pockets of deprivation and some isolated rural residents. The council has taken action to reduce inequalities, including its HERO service (Housing, Energy and Retraining Options) which supports some of the most vulnerable people in the district. The council's snapshot of equality and diversity issues was last updated in 2013 and relies upon 2011 Census data. The council may be able to use more up to date data – including from council services and surveys, information held by partner organisations such as Health, through the existing Voluntary Sector Forum barometer survey and engagement with relevant voluntary sector and faith organisations – to better understand changes in community needs and inform the council's approach to equality and diversity.

The council has taken positive steps to develop strong community networks, including the establishment of a voluntary sector forum to bring together existing groups. There is a long-standing community grants programme and, during the pandemic, the council launched a podcast focused on the voluntary and community sector and a community wellbeing fund through its Local Strategic Partnership. There is the potential for the council to work with its statutory and community partners to further build on the organisation's commitment to equality and diversity. For example, current activity could be expanded to actively encourage and facilitate new and emerging communities of interest and harder to reach groups to come together to identify and address local needs.

4.2. Organisational and place leadership

The council's Leader and Chief Executive are valued as visible and highly effective leaders by officers, members and partners. The peer team noted the strength of this leadership was a prominent and recurring theme in discussions with staff at all levels of the organisation. Significantly, local organisations also recognise this leadership; Sevenoaks DC is considered a reliable and trusted partner. The council's relationships with parish and town councils within the district, for example, are very strong. The council understands the importance of parish and town councils and supports their work; the level of local trust, engagement and effective joint working is an example to others in the sector.

The council has undertaken significant work on place leadership in recent years. In addition to Local Plan engagement activity, the council has established a public realm commission and is in the process of developing a local place campaign. Central to much of this work is a recognition of the district's place diversity, including its particular mix of rural and town areas each with their own unique character, and a very high proportion of green belt land. The council is active in exploring opportunities to improve the district for the benefit of local residents and working with partners both inside and outside the district to help achieve this. The council's proactive work to encourage a Higher or Further Education provider into Sevenoaks is a good illustration of the council taking a strong place leadership role.

The peer team feel there is value in the council building on its existing place leadership activity to articulate a renewed long-term vision for Sevenoaks district, its

distinct localities and their offer. This work on developing and articulating a local vision of the district – that recognises the inherent strengths and diversity of Sevenoaks' local areas as well as their opportunities and challenges – is an ideal subject for the more bottom-up, open and conversational engagement described above. Given its relative density and potential for further demographic change, Swanley could be prioritised initially for this grass-roots led visioning work. The council, as part of the district's Local Strategic Partnership, has commenced planning to lead local activity on community priorities in 2022. The peer team support the council's initial thinking to develop a shared vision and plan that goes beyond a traditional community strategy approach. It provides an opportunity to work with residents, communities and partners in localities and for them to shape and own the vision alongside the council.

4.3. Governance and culture

The relationships between officers and members are excellent. The peer team found a shared understanding of respective roles as well as mutual support and challenge. It is also recognised that these relationships need considerable investment to succeed; the council ensures that formal mechanisms, such as a fortnightly written update from the Chief Executive to all councillors, are complemented by more two-way arrangements, including regular meetings.

The council's member governance structure is atypical; specifically, the council has a series of – politically balanced – executive advisory committees that mirror the portfolios of Cabinet members. There are a number of potential risks with such arrangements, including the potential for the advisory committees to slow-down Executive decision making; undermine the statutory Scrutiny function; and be resource intensive. However, overall, the peer team found the council's arrangements work well. The advisory committees provide an opportunity for all members to contribute to policy development at an early stage and give officers assurance that decisions are widely understood prior to implementation. Scrutiny operates with a focus both on council performance and the work of external partners. Peers were impressed both with the quality of committee reports and the high-level of debate at both scrutiny and the advisory committees.

The council has created a strong culture to be proud of, which attracts and retains



high quality staff. A high value is placed on getting services right for the customer, empowering staff to do their jobs effectively, recognition and fostering a 'no blame' culture. The council's strong culture has served the council well, including through COVID-19, by providing a platform for effective delivery in difficult circumstances. The council's residents' survey results demonstrate the council's customer focus is recognised in the community: more than 80% of respondents felt staff were helpful and levels of trust in Sevenoaks DC are significantly higher than sector benchmarks.

In addition to a strong focus on serving residents, the council recognises the importance of supporting colleagues and external partners. The peer team found staff to be supportive of each other across services; in a number of sessions, employees highlighted that 'the customer is anyone who isn't me'. The council recently undertook an internal survey to assess whether staff felt well served by their colleagues with positive results. These findings align with the strong message from the council's external partners that the 'can do' ethos and quality of staff – at all levels – is valued.

It was also clear to the peer team that staff generally feel trusted, empowered and supported by the organisation – findings that are reflected in staff surveys. Positively, the supportive and no-blame aspects of the council's culture has not prevented difficult conversations or tough decisions being taken. The council's recent senior management restructure and its track-record of delivering financial savings are both examples of this.

The council's strong culture has been developed over time through sustained effort and leadership. Key elements include strong communications, including through a monthly staff newsletter and regular briefings where issues can be raised. The council proactively seeks regular feedback from staff and there is a consultative group which provides a forum for employees to offer views on emerging issues or policies. In the most recent staff survey (September 2021), 90% of staff highlighted that they were satisfied with the council's internal communications. Most importantly, staff see senior leaders modelling the council's culture.

4.4. Financial planning and management

Sevenoaks District Council takes a long-term view of financial planning with a focus on self-sufficiency. The council has not received any Revenue Support Grant since

2018 and does not rely on New Homes Bonus to deliver its core services. Over the past seventeen years, the council has worked towards increasing financial sustainability. The council has been successful through a range of approaches, including implementing efficiency initiatives and reducing back-office functions; improving value for money and maximising external income; and moving resources away from low priority services. The council continues to make full use of its permitted flexibilities and increased council tax by £4.95 in 2021/22.

The council's 10-year budget is innovative, an example for the sector and supports long-term decision making. This extended financial framework provides an excellent platform which has supported effective budget management and planned, long-term, decision making. Since 2010/11 the council has managed a £4 million budget reduction (24%) in real terms.

The council has a track-record of delivering savings and making difficult decisions early. For example, the council took the unusual step of agreeing its 2021/22 budget in December 2020 in order to ensure sufficient lead-in time to deliver full-year savings. In recognition of the difficult financial context, the council also has a standing policy of identifying a minimum of £100,000 in savings annually.

As a result of the organisation's consistent and diligent approach, the council's financial position is comparatively strong. As in many authorities, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to some recent overspends, with lower than projected income levels in some areas. However, the fundamental underlying financial health of the council is good. The council is aware of, and publicly reports on, its budget pressures. While there will be a need to identify further savings in the long-term, the council has significant useable reserves. Positively, the council has also received unqualified audit reports over recent years.

Councillors are actively involved in the development of the budget, including through the advisory committees. Members are also engaged in revenue budget monitoring through clear committee reports. There is potential value in reporting capital spend to members in a similar manner; the peer team noted a significant end of year capital underspend in 2020/21. This is particularly important given the increased size of the capital programme (£21.3 million) in 2021/22.

The council seeks to make best use of the organisation's reserves and borrowing.



This approach has been successful and has typically generated approximately 10% of the council's annual budget. For example, the council agreed a property investment strategy in 2015 to deliver increased revenue income with an approved investment limit of £50 million. The council has spent £35 million to date, including on an in-district hotel and five further assets. In general, the yields for completed schemes have been good and exceeded budget expectations. However, the government has recently sought to limit authorities' ability to make property investments for purely commercial gain. In light of this, the council has withdrawn its property investment strategy and intends to bring forward a revised approach later in the year. The refreshed strategy provides an opportunity for the council to make clear its intentions in terms of using property investment, and Quercus 7 – its property investment company – to support local outcomes in addition to any secondary financial gain.

The council's future approach to borrowing will be a central decision for the organisation. Although Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) lending terms now prevent councils investing primarily for yield, commercial benefit is still acceptable if the primary benefits are for housing, regeneration or service delivery, and in November 2021 the council approved PWLB borrowing to enable Quercus Housing to continue its delivery of affordable housing in the district.

The council's leadership has both high aspirations for the district and strong expectations of delivery, particularly in relation to affordable housing and town centre regeneration. The council has referred to its ambitions as 'the largest regeneration programme the district has embarked on in recent memory'. In order to deliver this, the peer team feel that a key issue for the council is to determine the best approach to resource these priorities in a difficult financial context. As highlighted above, both the revised property investment strategy and the council's approach to borrowing will be important factors. Ultimately, the council will need to determine the optimum balance between its scale of ambition, existing resources, and its appetite for further financial borrowing and investment.

4.5. Capacity for improvement

The council's success and improvement has been built upon effective 'in-house' delivery models and innovation, which has been underpinned by strong political and

officer leadership. Sevenoaks District Council has relatively few shared services with other councils and minimal outsourced services. Instead, there has been a strong focus on embedding a strong organisational culture to support internal delivery. The peer team noted the benefits of this approach, including high levels of staff trust and strong collaboration. The council invests in staff development and wellbeing, which helps to sustain this culture. For example, in a recent survey, 85% of staff felt the support provided by the council, as an employer, through the pandemic was good.

The council's COVID-19 response showed the organisation's capacity to deliver, improve and innovate. The peer team highlighted three key areas where the pandemic spurred further progress for the council: effective use of community capacity; rapid decision-making and delivery; and good use of technology. For example, the council supported a 'care for our community' scheme with more than 1,500 residents volunteering to provide food and prescription deliveries, undertake errands and support befriending. The council is putting the volunteers in touch with local groups to help sustain and embed this volunteering.

The council's office based workforce successfully transitioned to working from home without any interruption to service delivery throughout the pandemic. Council staff highlighted the effective use of technology, and strong support from ICT, to enable this to happen. There are also a number of examples of rapid decision making and delivery. The council quickly redeployed its civil enforcement officers to deliver emergency food boxes, for example, and set up its own 'Telepals' initiative to help address loneliness and anxiety before the NHS scheme began. A clear message from both council staff and external stakeholders was the importance of the council maintaining and building upon the learning from its effective COVID-19 response.

The council has invested in its employees and its liP Platinum reaccreditation is evidence of the organisation's ongoing commitment. In return, the council is rewarded with significant goodwill from motivated staff. While the peer team recognised that the council's in-house approach has served it well to date, it was also felt that the organisation should maintain an open mind as new and emerging delivery challenges may require new partnership arrangements. For example, in order for the council to deliver its ambitions in relation to housing and regeneration, the council may need to prioritise more explicitly and explore a range of different delivery models.

Digital and data have been areas of recent progress. In addition to the ICT support for staff highlighted above, residents have benefited from innovative approaches supported by digital technology. This includes Sevenoaks' Rideshare scheme, which uses a CIL funded mobile app to provide an on-demand transport service for residents. Nevertheless, the peer team identified some remaining areas of focus. The council's website could benefit from improved functionality as well the addition of direct debit payment options for some remaining core services. The council has developed and agreed a digital strategy, but this will need a clear action plan, aligned with resources, to support delivery.

Overall, the peer team is confident in the council's capacity to further improve. Over the past year, alongside delivering the council's response to the pandemic, the council has developed a new corporate strategy to support the organisation to deliver its priorities. The strategy is focused around a one team culture, the needs of the customer and the importance of wellbeing, and is complemented by specific strategies for workforce, customer, digital and finance. Despite the council's success to date, there remains a strong commitment to, and a culture of, performance improvement.

4.6. Housing, Economic Development and Regeneration

The council has significant housing, economic development and regeneration ambitions in a challenging delivery context. Land values are high, 93% of the district is green belt and resources are limited. The council recognises the potential tensions in seeking to balance preservation with its aspirations for housing delivery and development.

The council has made significant progress to deliver its ambitions in this area. The organisation has developed excellent internal expertise; peers were impressed with the housing, economic development and regeneration teams. Most importantly, these services are well regarded by business and partners, which provides a strong foundation for success. In addition, the council has a strong and well-led planning service that is delivering well across policy and development management. This is evidenced in key metrics, including the council's excellent performance in terms of speed and quality of its decisions on applications for major and non-major development.

Importantly, there is a joined-up approach to collaboration across teams and within relevant services. The strong underlying property market in the district coupled with the council's enviable skills and capabilities provides Sevenoaks with opportunities not available in many other districts. Positively, the council has begun to develop a pipeline of development projects.

It is important that the council maximises affordable housing from S106 agreements. While the council is already using external support in this area, it is important the council assures itself that it is securing the 'best in class' expertise to robustly challenge developers' viability appraisals submitted as part of the planning process. This same expertise could also be used to advise on project viability and conduct face to face negotiations on affordable housing through the S106 process.

The district's high-level of green belt limits the council's options for housing development. Given this, the peer team feel it is important that the council considers all possible options for the delivery of modest scale housing activity in suitable areas. Potential options that it may be worth the council exploring further, include:

- Proactively working with West Kent Housing to identify whether there are any potential 'hidden homes' that could be turned into affordable housing units – this may include empty or underutilised derelict areas such as old garages, boiler rooms or stores
- Exploring whether there is council land, including small plots, that may feasibly provide any additional affordable homes
- Identifying whether there are further opportunities for street property acquisitions and refurbishments
- Encouraging and purchasing in-district SME developed affordable housing units
- Working with local landowners and communities to explore the potential of Community Land Trusts to deliver affordable housing. There are some emerging examples of CLTs in other parts of the country, where the Trust delivers both housing and supporting infrastructure that become protected community assets

In making these suggestions, the peer team recognise that some of these options

may not be suitable or feasible for a variety of reasons. It is for the council to undertake further exploratory work to determine which options have the most potential.

The council has already established Quercus Housing – its own not for profit housing company – to build new affordable housing from S106 commuted sums. In addition to the suggestions highlighted above, there may be scope for the council to consider a managed increase in Quercus Housing’s annual delivery outputs, which is currently targeted at 10 homes per year. Whilst it is recognised that Quercus Housing’s Business Plan has been updated to support prudential borrowing, as with the peer team’s other suggestions in this area, a primary constraint to increasing delivery is access to funding (beyond S106 commuted sums) which will involve consideration of the organisation’s appetite for further investment and borrowing.

While recognising the value of a ‘massive small’ approach, the forthcoming Local Plan will also set out a number of larger strategic sites in the district. The peer team is confident of the council’s capacity to ensure these areas are utilised – but also highlighted the benefits of maximising the positive outcomes from each site. This may, on occasion, require a more active role that the council has traditionally played in working alongside the private sector at different stages of the process: from site identification, through the process of allocation and consent, and once development is underway on the ground. Related to this, it is important the council assures itself that it is optimising social value through its housing, economic development and regeneration work. This includes ensuring that there is a strategic and shared understanding of social value across the organisation and that it is being optimised on a case by case basis, including through early market engagement, formal procurement, planning and any land disposal processes.

The council has considerable economic development strengths and positive business relationships. In addition to links to the local Chamber of Commerce, the council has its own business board – with organisations from a range of sectors represented – to help understand business priorities. Regionally, Sevenoaks has not been a major beneficiary of the South East Local Economic Partnership; it is the second largest LEP in the country and covers East Sussex, Essex, Medway, Southend and Thurrock as well as Kent. However, the council is a key player in the West Kent Partnership, which also includes Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge & Malling. This arrangement has

provided a range of benefits to the district, including through grant funding to support local rural and land-based businesses.

The council has recently invested in its economic development capacity, including through its commercial and property teams. As well as supporting direct delivery, this expertise will help the council to continue to build relationships with key partners in government and the private sector. The forthcoming economic development strategy provides an opportunity to inform a proposition for inward investment. This proposition could set out the distinctive qualities of the district and clearly articulate its offer to encourage investment in Sevenoaks from both the public and commercial sectors.

5. Next steps

It is recognised that the council's senior political and managerial leadership will want to consider, discuss and reflect on these findings. Both the peer team and LGA are keen to build on the relationships formed through the peer challenge. The CPC process includes a six-month check-in session, which provides space for the council's senior leadership to update peers on its progress against the action plan and discuss next steps.

In the meantime, Will Brooks, Principal Adviser for the South East, is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association. Will is available to discuss any further support the council requires:
william.brooks@local.gov.uk, 07949054421.

Item 6 - Community Grant Scheme 2022/23

The attached report was considered by the People & Places Advisory Committee on 1 March 2022. The relevant Minute extract was not available prior to the printing of this agenda and will follow when available.

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Community Grant Scheme Draft Allocations 2022/23

Cabinet - 17 March 2022

Report of: Chief Officer People & Places

Status: For Information

Also considered by:

- People & Places Advisory Committee - 1 March 2022

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This report sets out information about the Community Grant Scheme and summarises applications received by the Council from voluntary organisations for funding during 2022/23.

Details of the appraisal process are provided. This included a detailed consultation with the Portfolio Holder for People & Places, Cllr Dyball and the Deputy Portfolio Holder for People & Places, Cllr Collins. Recommended grants are set out in Appendix C.

With the Members' Room currently out of use, copies of the applications received are available on One Drive (access instructions provided separately on request). Officers would be pleased to answer detailed questions about individual applications in advance of the meeting.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Providing Value for Money and the Community Plan Vision for Safe & Caring Communities, a Green & Healthy Environment and a Dynamic & Sustainable Economy.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Jenny Godfrey, Ext. 7112 & Kathryn Bone, Ext. 7176

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee:

- (a) That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Grants, as set out in Appendix C of this report, be approved subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 12.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- (b) That the Grants, as set out in Appendix C of this report, be approved subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 12.

Agenda Item 6

Reason for recommendation: Applications received have been appraised according to the Council's Guidelines and those recommended for funding support the aims of the scheme and represent value for money.

Introduction and Background

1. The Council's Community Grant Scheme supports local charities and voluntary sector organisations that, through their work, contribute to the priorities set out in the Community Plan 2013-28.
2. A copy of the Council's Corporate Code of Practice for making grants is attached at Appendix A.
3. The grant guidelines were reviewed during 2013/14 and revised guidelines were agreed by Cabinet on 12 September 2013. There has always been a distinction for monitoring purposes between up to and including £500 grants and those over £500 and up to the maximum, £5,000. For these 2022/23 grants the application process was taken online for second consecutive year. Two separate forms were used again but were further refined and streamlined. The guideline documents were also further developed, this time providing Frequently Asked Questions to assist applicants. These guideline documents can be found at Appendix B.
4. In 2021/22, the grants awarded through the Community Grant Scheme enabled voluntary organisations to support 80,377 volunteer hours in the Sevenoaks District, which represented an economic benefit of £1.53 million.

Details of the Community Grant Scheme for 2022/23

5. The grant scheme was publicised widely across the District within the voluntary sector, through the virtual Voluntary Sector Forum, Town and Parish Councils, In Shape Magazine, Social Media and local press in September 2021. The closing date was 5 November 2021. The total budget available for distribution in 2022/23 is £153,340, including £98,540 for Citizens' Advice in the District, £2,500 for the Sevenoaks District Arts Council (SDAC) and £2,500 for the Sevenoaks District Sports Council (SDSC). Funding for Citizens' Advice, SDAC and SDSC is subject to Service Level Agreements.
6. The 2022/23 budget available for voluntary sector organisations is as follows:-

Funding for the Citizens' Advice Service Level Agreement (SLA)	£ 98,540
Funding for Sevenoaks District Arts Council (SLA)	£2,500

Funding for Sevenoaks District Sports Council (SLA)	£2,500
Amount available for Community Grants Scheme grants	£ 49,800
Total Budget	£ 153,340

7. A total of 29 grant applications have been received, representing total grant requests of £116,736.
8. A full schedule of applications is attached at Appendix C. The Portfolio Holder for People & Places has copies of all of the applications and a full set is available via One Drive (access instructions provided separately on request). Officers would be pleased to deal with any detailed queries in advance of the meeting.

Appraisal Process

9. Members will appreciate that the recommended grants in Appendix C have been put forward following an appraisal by Officers trained in grant appraisal and a detailed consultation with the Portfolio Holder for People & Places, Cllr Dyball and the Deputy Portfolio Holder for People & Places, Cllr Collins. Recommendations have been made in accordance with the Scheme Guidelines and the Council's Corporate Code of Practice for grants and take into account various factors, including:
 - the extent to which the application supports the District Council's priorities;
 - the extent to which the application assists residents across the District and its impact;
 - the extent to which the application should be funded by other organisations;
 - whether performance indicators are relevant and appropriate;
 - whether the applicant meets the eligibility criteria established in the Guidelines and the Corporate Code of Practice for grants;
 - the level of reserves held by the applicant.
 - whether the applicant has appropriate child protection and safeguarding arrangements in place.
 - Cross-departmental checks and information shares about grants and funding being awarded to community and voluntary organisations.

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Recommended Level of Grant

10. A full list of grants recommended to voluntary organisations is attached at Appendix C.
11. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the reason for this decision, and encouraged to contact the District Council's Funding Officers and visit KCC's online free, comprehensive grant search database for advice and support in seeking funding elsewhere if appropriate.

Recommended Conditions

12. It is recommended that grants be made to voluntary organisations subject to the following conditions:
 - That performance indicators as set out in the application forms are adhered to and monitored;
 - That appropriate Safeguarding policies and arrangements are in place, where necessary;
 - That appropriate recognition of this Council's funding contribution is made in all their publicity; and
 - Where services are provided over a wider area than the District boundaries, organisations will be required to hold grant aid from this Council in a restricted fund for the benefit of Sevenoaks District residents;
 - That organisations funded either have or are working towards any quality accreditation.

Key Implications

Financial

13. The level of funding is in accordance with the draft 2022/23 budget of £153,340.

Resources (Non-Financial)

14. The work connected with the Community Grant Scheme administration and monitoring is being undertaken through existing resources.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

15. There are no legal issues relating to this report. All organisations applying for funding are required to have an equalities policy and where appropriate child protection and/or adult protection policies.
16. The following table shows the risks and their mitigation.

Risk	Mitigation
Grants allocated are lower than requested	Application forms ask whether the project could continue if funding were reduced. Appraisal looks at realistic performance indicators for the amount of grant recommended. Performance indicators are agreed with Voluntary and Community Groups.
As a condition of the grant any organisation allocating onward funding on behalf of the Council to another organisation must check whether appropriate police checks and child or vulnerable adult protection policies are in place.	Condition of grant to ensure checks carried out and that application forms seek confirmation. Monitoring process to confirm an effective process is in place.
Grant allocations not approved in March.	A timetable is in place to ensure grants are considered by Cabinet in March and processes in place to ensure grant payments are made in the first week of the financial year.

Equality Assessment

17. 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 report directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and does not vary between groups of people. The summary results of this analysis are set out immediately below.
18. This community grant scheme assists with the provision of services to support Sevenoaks District residents, particularly those in the greatest need. Therefore this decision being made or recommended through this paper does not have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community.
19. The grant scheme provides funding for specific groups, such as older people, families, young people and people with disabilities. The grants scheme is widely publicised to ensure that groups serving a wide range of needs are able to apply.

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20. As no negative impacts have been identified, no further mitigating steps need to be taken.

Conclusions

27. The work of the voluntary sector across the Sevenoaks District is highly valued. The Council's grants programme supports the dedication and commitment of the many volunteers who help the most vulnerable people in the District. Members are asked to agree the draft grant allocations as set out in Appendix C.

Appendices

Appendix A - Council's Corporate Code of Practice for making grants

Appendix B - Community Grant Scheme guidelines Part 1 & Part 2

Appendix C - Full Schedule of applications

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People & Places

Appendix A - Sevenoaks District Council Code of Practice for Grant-making 2015

Background

Sevenoaks District Council is committed to improving the quality of life for our residents. We recognize that the community and voluntary sector has a significant role to play in helping us do this for residents who are more vulnerable and in need of support. In line with this, the Council runs grant schemes where it is able to provide additional activities and projects that complement and support our strategic and overall objectives.

This Code of Practice has been adopted by the Council and is intended for use across all teams and services who are running or considering running a grant scheme. 1.3. From time to time, the Council may manage other grants such as those to individuals and other sectors including businesses. Managers should follow this guidance for those schemes.

Definition

For this purpose, a grant is taken to mean:

‘a cash award for a specified initiative, project or service not provided by the Council which benefits those who live, work and volunteer in the District’

Requirements of our grant schemes

As a minimum, each grant scheme should specify:

- Guidelines for completing the application form;
- The objectives of the grant scheme, in particular how it will help the Council meet its overall objectives and support the Council’s strategic objectives;
- The required outcomes the Council is seeking from the funding;
- Who is eligible to apply (see **Appendix 1**);
- The timescales for the funding, including the deadline for applications and when decisions will be made;
- How we will make our decisions and the criteria against which applications will be appraised;
- Minimum and maximum grant level;
- Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating individual grant awards and the scheme as a whole.

Application Process:

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The application form should be in plain English and targeted to the potential recipients. The degree of information required should be proportionate, reasonable and reflect the level of funding available..

The aim of the form is to give the applicant the opportunity to demonstrate how the application meets the scheme criteria, evidence of need, and the outcomes the applicant group expects to achieve. The suggested contents of the application form are found at Appendix 2.

There should be clear guidance on the application process given to applicants with the form. The suggested contents of this guidance is included at Appendix 3

A checklist should be provided for applicants to ensure that all information has been supplied and all relevant and necessary documents are provided with the application form.

Officers should keep a record of all requests for application forms and follow up, where appropriate, why these were not returned as part of the overall scheme evaluation.

Appraising applications and decision making

The Council supports the following principles regarding appraisals and decision-making:

- The process should be transparent and the method used made clear as part of the application guidelines;
- Grant appraisers should be trained and no decision should be made by an individual;
- Appraisal must take place against the given criteria and applicants must meet the set criteria in order to receive the grant;
- Appraisers must be clear that the scheme/proposal meets the main aim of the grant scheme and that the identified need is met;
- Appraisers need to ensure that they have a checklist for all the documents, e.g. completed application form with all sections completed, accounts, safeguarding policies and procedures. If any document is missing, or is not considered adequate, the applicant should be given a limited period of time to provide them. If the document is provided in this time period, then the application may not be considered;
- Safeguarding arrangements for beneficiaries, staff and volunteers will be considered, and any organisation without adequate arrangements not be funded;
- Audited or independently examined accounts should be considered when the application is appraised;
- Appraisers should keep clear records of their decisions regardless of the outcome of the appraisal.

Approval

All grant applications should receive a response indicating that the grant has been approved, held over or refused.

Approval letters should indicate clearly whether there are any conditions attached to the grant and include: the timescale for payments, monitoring requirements, and the Council's requirements regarding promotion and publicity. The Council's logo will be provided for this purpose;

If the application has not been approved, clear reasons should be given and further feedback provided if requested.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring has to be relevant and targeted to the applicant group, with the degree of detail reflecting the size of grant. It should assess achievements against agreed outcomes/targets;

As a minimum, recipients of grants must keep a record of beneficiary numbers, who else has benefited from the grant and any feedback from users. This should reflect any of the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equalities Act.

The applicant group should carry out an evaluation of the project with the beneficiaries, proportionate to the size of grant, such as a satisfaction survey and/or case studies.

The grant process itself must be evaluated and reviewed internally at regular intervals, at least every 3 years, to ensure the system is still effective. This includes review of application forms, criteria, reporting etc. with feedback from applicants.

General

There should be an SDC database which everyone can access which gives details of those groups who have applied for funding and the outcome.

Details of all successful applications are now provided on the SDC website Transparency pages as required by law under the Localism Act 2011.

Annex 1 Eligibility for all Council community grant schemes

All of the following should be included in the eligibility criteria for applicants.

- The project should be for the benefit of people **living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District**. This includes applicants who are based outside of the area but whose proposed activity is of benefit to those within the District;
- Any funding given should be ring-fenced for those living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District and appear as such in the applicant organisation's accounts;
- The applicant group must have a written constitution or a set of rules;
- The applicant group must have a bank account with 2 signatories, who are not related to each other and who do not live at the same address. If they do not have a bank account, they must nominate a properly constituted voluntary organisation to take responsibility for the money on their behalf;
- The applicant must have, and enclose with the application, a set of audited or independently examined accounts for the latest year available. If they have not been in existence long enough to have a set of audited accounts available, they must have a business/financial management plan made available with the completed application form and provide evidence that they have a bank account;
- The applicant group must have safeguarding policy or policies in place to safeguard children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The level of detail in safeguarding policies will be determined by the level of contact the organisation or individuals have with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults;
- Any organisation working directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults will need to demonstrate that have safeguarding systems in place that safeguard these groups and appropriate DBS checks have been undertaken.

Annex 2: Application Form Contents

The level of detail the Council will require will vary according to the scheme and the amount of funding.

For most schemes we will expect the form to capture the following information:

- A description of the project, who it is aimed at, how it meets the scheme's objectives and criteria, and what outcomes will be delivered;
- The applicant's capacity to deliver the project, based on previous experience;
- A fully costed and itemized budget including any other confirmed or outstanding external funding contributions, and any other contributions whether cash or in-kind. The budget will need to include VAT and to state whether or not this is recoverable;
- Clear evidence of financial need, and how the scheme provides value for money;
- If relevant to the funding pot in question, confirmation as to whether the applicant has applied to the Council on previous occasions;
- A project plan and timetable;
- A section where the applicant will set out performance indicators, which are measurable and capture the outcomes of the project;
- Details of any accreditation the organization has or is working towards;
- Confirmation that the applicant has written policies on equal opportunities, health and safety and safeguarding, and that these have been included with the application;
- Details of the applicant's bank account;
- An Equalities statement;
- A named individual with contact details who will be the lead contact for the grant;
- Signature and date box.

Annex 3 Guidance on the application process

The Council considers that the following information is included in any guidance on the application process:

- Who is eligible to apply;
- The scheme criteria including links to relevant Council documents such as the Community Plan;
- The types of outcomes the funding pot expects to see and at least one example of these;
- Timescales for the scheme and the dates by which we will notify applicants of receipt of applications (within 10 days of receipt) and decisions on awards;
- How we will consider value for money;
- A clear statement that no applications will be considered after the closing date;
- How we will make our decisions, who will do this, and how we will allocate funding if the scheme is over-subscribed;
- A clear reminder that failure to complete all the necessary questions may invalidate the application;
- A statement that the Council will require grants to be paid back if the project does not go ahead for any reason and that failure to notify the Council that a project is not proceeding may jeopardize future applications;
- A statement that any grant monies unspent by the applicant at 31 March of the following year must be paid back to the Council;
- Notification regarding payment processes and at what stage the funding will be made available e.g. on receipt of invoices, 100% in advance, staged payment etc;
- A statement confirming that all Council grants payments will be by direct debit and will be accompanied by a remittance advice and a letter setting out the conditions of the grant and monitoring arrangements;
- The level and timing of monitoring, evaluation and annual reporting required (*see Section 7: Monitoring and Evaluation*);
- Signposting to where further support is available, e.g. on writing and adopting safeguarding policies;
- A statement regarding data protection and our obligations as required by law under the Localism Act 2011 for transparency;

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- Grant managers should provide a form for the applicant to sign and date and return, to confirm they have received the money and that it will be used for the purpose for which it was approved;
- The evidence required from applicants to prove that the money has been spent on what it was intended for. (*The financial threshold needs to be considered*).

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Community Grant Scheme Guidelines 2022/23

Grants up to £500

Please read the following guidelines carefully before completing the application form. If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact Kathryn Bone or Jenny Godfrey at:

Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG.

Tel: **01732 227000** Email: grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Our Community Grant scheme exists to help voluntary organisations which provide projects, services or activities that benefit people living, working or volunteering in Sevenoaks District, focusing on those in greatest need.

In particular, we wish to support projects, services or activities that are delivered with the help of volunteers and that support Sevenoaks District Community Plan priorities set out below.

Please note: We can only accept one application per organisation or group.

Included below are some explanations and tips for the questions in the application form. Please use these when completing the [application form online](#)

What are the scheme's priorities?

Volunteering:

- Promote, encourage or support volunteers and volunteering as part of a project, service or activity.

Social Inclusion:

- Improve opportunities for vulnerable or elderly people;
- Encourage community participation of excluded or vulnerable groups;
- Improve the wellbeing of local residents.

Community Safety:

- Reduce crime or anti-social behaviour.

Information, Advice, Advocacy and Counselling:

- Provide information, advice, advocacy or counselling to residents when they are in particular need.

Young People:

- Projects, services and activities that encourage participation in local communities or provide positive activities or opportunities for young people.

Who can apply?

You can apply if you deliver services to Sevenoaks District residents and are one of the following:

- “Not for profit” registered charity;
- Youth organisation;
- Voluntary organisation;
- Community Interest Company.

How much and what can I apply for?

The minimum you can apply for using this application form is **£100**.

The most we will award for any one application using this application form is **£500**. **If you are looking for more than £500 please refer to the [criteria and guidelines for grants up to £5,000](#).**

The grant can be spent on project, service or activity costs such as support for volunteers, equipment or premises hire. In addition, you can apply for core running costs that are commensurate with the project, service or activity applied for.

What are the main conditions?

By applying, you are confirming that you comply with the terms and conditions. The main conditions include:

- Your organisation or group has a constitution or set of rules;
- Your organisation or group has (or for newly formed organisations or groups, confirm that you will have at the point of receiving this grant) a bank account with at least two authorised signatories;
- Your organisation or group has an equality policy in place (or for a new organisation or group, agrees to implement one) and is prepared to sign our Equality Statement;
- All appropriate legal agreements, insurances and processes needed to deliver the project are in place including appropriate safeguarding arrangements. For newly formed organisations or groups the award of a grant will be conditional upon the implementation of suitable safeguarding arrangements for children and vulnerable adults (including the completion of enhanced level Disclosure & Barring Service checks and appropriate training for all staff and volunteers) and an appropriate Equality Policy;
- Any grant you are awarded will be used only for the project, services or activities set out in your application and will be ring-fenced for those living, working or volunteering in Sevenoaks District. It must not be used for any other purpose;
- You will be required to submit monitoring for your project, services or activities with supporting evidence;
- All publicity materials and annual reports must acknowledge our support;

- Your organization or group can only submit one application in any financial year;
- Any grant unspent at the year-end will be refunded to Sevenoaks District Council.

What we will not fund

We will not fund:

- Projects, services or activities that are primarily the responsibility of another agency or funder, such as the [Sevenoaks District Sports Council](#) & [Sevenoaks District Arts Council](#) respectively;
- Costs for projects, services or activities that your organisation or group is already delivering in the District as part of an existing contract or service level agreement with another funder;
- Costs for projects, services or activities that have already started or been delivered;
- Projects, services or activities where the beneficiaries are not those living, working or volunteering in Sevenoaks District;
- Private concerns operated as a business;
- Organisations seeking to add capital to their reserves;
- Local organisations seeking funding for a central HQ;
- Religious or political organisations;
- Individuals;
- Work that should be provided by statutory, educational, health organisations or social services;
- Schools or parent/teacher organisations.

How will we assess your project?

The appraisal process will look at:

- Your eligibility to apply;
- The extent to which your project meets the Scheme's priorities;
- How many people will benefit from your project;
- The level of need for the project, service or activities;
- The level of benefit to those living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District;
- The level of reserves held by your organisation or group.

Explanations and Tips for completing the online application form

The following are explanations and tips for some of the questions included in the online application form. Please refer to these when completing your application form.

Can more than one person work on the application form?

Yes, the link to your application form can be shared with others in your organisation or group so that you can each complete different sections. However, please note that you cannot have more than one person working on the application form at the same time.

What happens if I go over the character limit for some questions?

The online form will allow you to type beyond the character limit but when you try to validate and submit your form an error message will flag up that you have exceeded the limit. You will not be able to submit your application until these answers are within the character limit. One idea is to type your answer in a word processor document where you can count the characters and then copy and paste into the online form.

Why do some questions have an asterisk (*) against them?

All questions marked with an asterisk (*) are compulsory questions that must be completed in order for you to validate and submit your application.

Do I have to complete the form in one go or can I save it and come back to it later?

You can save your application at any time, close it down and come back to it later by clicking the save button. When you want to carry on please follow the link supplied in the email.

What is the Save button for?

We recommend that you save your application at the end of each section. This will ensure you do not lose any data if your computer crashes for any reason. It should also be used if you want to close the application and come back to it later. Clicking the save button will take you back to the top of the form so just open the section you need and carry on inputting your answers.

What is the Validation button for?

Once you have answered all of the questions and are ready to submit your application please click Validate Application. This will check that you have provided a response for all of the required questions and you are not missing anything important. We strongly recommend that you save your application prior to validating to ensure your data is stored should it take you longer than you anticipate to submit the application.

Question 2.6: What should be attached for a newly formed organisation or group that does not have a set of accounts yet?

Please attach your organisation's or group's financial records showing income and expenditure to date.

Question 2.10: What details are needed?

Appendix B (Part 1)

Please include date, amount, project name and the name of the Sevenoaks District Council contact for the grant.

Question 4.3: Number of volunteer hours

Please state the number of volunteer hours that will be used to deliver your project, service or activity through the funding you are requesting in this application only.

Questions 4.4 to 4.5 inclusive: Selection of Key Performance Indicators

Both Key Performance Indicators must be unique and where you wish to include one that is not in the dropdown please ensure it is measurable.

Question 4.6: Measuring the Key Performance Indicators

Examples of how to measure Key Performance Indicators include (but is not limited to): ask questions before and after; use a survey; and produce a case study including quotations from beneficiaries.

Question 4.7: What would the Case Study need to include?

The Council can provide you with a template example case study.

Question 6: Safeguarding – newly formed organisations and groups

If you are a newly formed organisation or group and do not yet have in place a Safeguarding Policy please tick “no”.

Then in answer to question 6.5 state who your Safeguarding Lead is/will be; how your process works/will work; and what training has been completed/is outstanding to be undertaken. Also state what assistance you would need from the Council to implement the necessary Safeguarding Policy or Policies.

Question 8: Equality Policy – newly formed organisations and groups

Please note that for newly formed organisations and groups the Council can provide assistance with the implementation of a suitable Equality Policy.

When will you know if your application is successful?

The deadline for submitting your completed application form online is **Friday 5 November 2021**. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

During March 2022, we will decide who will receive funding. We will write to you during April 2022 to let you know if your application has been successful.

If you require any assistance, please contact Kathryn Bone or Jenny Godfrey, Community Projects & Funding Officers, on **01732 227000** or by email at grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

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Community Grant Scheme Guidelines 2022/23

Grants £501 to £5,000

Please read the following guidelines carefully before completing the application form. If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact Kathryn Bone or Jenny Godfrey at:

Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG.

Tel: **01732 227000** Email: grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Our Community Grant scheme exists to help voluntary organisations which provide projects, services or activities that benefit people living, working or volunteering in Sevenoaks District, focusing on those in greatest need.

In particular, we wish to support projects, services or activities that are delivered with the help of volunteers and that support Sevenoaks District Community Plan priorities set out below.

Please note: We can only accept one application per organisation or group.

Included below are some explanations and tips for the questions in the application form. Please use these when completing the [application form online](#).

What are the scheme's priorities?

Volunteering:

- Promote, encourage or support volunteers and volunteering as part of a project, service or activity.

Social Inclusion:

- Improve opportunities for vulnerable or elderly people;
- Encourage community participation of excluded or vulnerable groups;
- Improve the wellbeing of local residents.

Community Safety:

- Reduce crime or anti-social behaviour.

Information, Advice, Advocacy and Counselling:

- Provide information, advice, advocacy or counselling to residents when they are in particular need.

Young People:

- Projects, services and activities that encourage participation in local communities or provide positive activities or opportunities for young people.

Who can apply?

You can apply if you deliver services to Sevenoaks District residents in **two or more parishes** and are one of the following:

- “Not for profit” registered charity;
- Youth organisation;
- Voluntary organisation;
- Community Interest Company.

How much and what can I apply for?

The minimum you can apply for using this application form is **£501**

The most we will award for any one application using this application form is **£5,000**. **If you are looking for less than £501 please refer to the [criteria and guidelines for grants up to £500](#).**

The grant can be spent on project, service or activity costs such as support for volunteers, equipment or premises hire. In addition, you can apply for core running costs that are commensurate with the project, service or activity applied for.

What are the main conditions?

By applying, you are confirming that you comply with the terms and conditions. The main conditions include:

- Your organisation or group has a constitution or set of rules;
- Your organisation or group has (or for newly formed organisations or groups, confirm that you will have at the point of receiving this grant) a bank account with at least two authorised signatories;
- Your organisation or group has an equality policy in place (or for a newly formed organisation or group, agrees to implement one) and is prepared to sign our Equality Statement;
- All appropriate legal agreements, insurances and processes needed to deliver the project are in place including appropriate safeguarding arrangements. For newly formed organisations or groups the award of a grant will be conditional upon the implementation of suitable safeguarding arrangements for children and vulnerable adults (including the completion of enhanced level Disclosure & Barring Service checks and appropriate training for all staff and volunteers) and an appropriate Equality Policy;
- Any grant you are awarded will be used only for the project, services or activities set out in your application and will be ring-fenced for those living, working or volunteering in Sevenoaks District. It must not be used for any other purpose;
- You will be required to submit monitoring for your project, services or activities with supporting evidence;
- All publicity materials and annual reports must acknowledge our support;

- Your organisation or group can only submit one application in any financial year;
- Any grant unspent at the year end will be refunded to Sevenoaks District Council.

What we will not fund

We will not fund:

- Projects, services or activities that serve only one parish;
- Projects, services or activities that are primarily the responsibility of another agency or funder, such as the [Sevenoaks District Sports Council](#) & [Sevenoaks District Arts Council](#) respectively;
- Costs for projects, services or activities that your organisation or group is already delivering in the District as part of an existing contract or service level agreement with another funder;
- Costs for projects, services or activities that have already started or been delivered;
- Projects, services or activities where the beneficiaries are not those living, working or volunteering in Sevenoaks District;
- Private concerns operated as a business;
- Organisations seeking to add capital to their reserves;
- Local organisations seeking funding for a central HQ;
- Religious or political organisations;
- Individuals;
- Work that should be provided by statutory, educational, health organisations or social services;
- Schools or parent/teacher organisations.

How will we assess your project?

The appraisal process will look at:

- Your eligibility to apply;
- The extent to which your project meets the Scheme's priorities;
- How many people will benefit from your project;
- The level of need for the project, service or activities;
- The level of benefit to those living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District;
- The level of reserves held by your organisation or group.

Explanations and Tips for completing the online application form

Can more than one person work on the application form?

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What is the Validation button for?

Once you have answered all of the questions and are ready to submit your application please click Validate Application. This will check that you have provided a response for all of the required questions and you are not missing anything important. We strongly recommend that you save your application prior to validating to ensure your data is stored should it take you longer than you anticipate to submit the application.

Question 2.6: What should be attached for a newly formed organisation or group that does not have a set of accounts yet?

Please attach your organisation's or group's financial records showing income and expenditure to date.

Question 2.10: What details are needed?

Please include date, amount, project name and the name of the Sevenoaks District Council contact for the grant.

Question 4.3: Number of volunteer hours

Please state the number of volunteer hours that will be used to deliver your project, service or activity through the funding you are requesting in this application only.

Questions 4.4 to 4.6 inclusive: Selection of Key Performance Indicators

All three Key Performance Indicators must be unique and where you wish to include one that is not in the dropdown please ensure it is measurable.

Question 4.7: Measuring the Key Performance Indicators

Examples of how to measure Key Performance Indicators include (but is not limited to): ask questions before and after; use a survey; and produce a case study including quotations from beneficiaries.

Question 4.8: What would the Case Study need to include?

The Council can provide you with a template example case study.

Question 6: Safeguarding – newly formed organisations and groups

If you are a newly formed organisation or group and do not yet have in place a Safeguarding Policy please tick “no”.

Then in answer to question 6.5 state who your Safeguarding Lead is/will be; how your process works/will work; and what training has been completed/is outstanding to be undertaken. Also state what assistance you would need from the Council to implement the necessary Safeguarding Policy or Policies.

Question 8: Equality Policy – newly formed organisations and groups

Please note that for newly formed organisations and groups the Council can provide assistance with the implementation of a suitable Equality Policy.

When will you know if your application is successful?

The deadline for submitting your completed application form online is **Friday 5 November 2021**. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

During March 2022, we will decide who will receive funding. We will write to you during April 2022 to let you know if your application has been successful.

If you require any assistance, please contact Kathryn Bone or Jenny Godfrey, Community Projects & Funding Officers, on **01732 227000** or by email at grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

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Appendix C Organisation Name	Title of project/activity you are seeking funding	What is the project, service or activity	2020/21 Previous Funding	2021/22 Previous Funding	2022/23 Grant Request	Recommended Allocation 2022 /23	Reason for Refusal
Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with Sevenoaks League of Friends at Sevenoaks Hospital	Vintage Convenience Store for patients with Dementia in Sevenoaks Community Hospital Wards	Funding is needed for transforming an old and tired day room into a vintage Convenience store containing a Post Office, sweets, newspapers, flowers, pillar box and a Fruit and Veg barrow. Also Dementia Software for aiding reminiscence, changes in the décor and items for sensory stimulation to touch, handle, smell and taste for rehabilitation.	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£3,616.25	
The Sir Mark Collet Pavilion	To provide gender neutral toilet facilities	To refurbish and extend an existing male toilet to transform it so that it can be used as a gender neutral facility	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project. It was felt that there are other funding opportunities that may be able to prioritise this project.
Baby Umbrella	Building support for early parenting wellbeing	Deepening support for parents' mental wellbeing. In a year where COVID has significantly impacted new parents, causing huge increases in postnatal depression, anxiety and birth trauma, parents are <u>craving out for additional support.</u>	N/A	£4,307.00	£3,849.00	£1,900.00	
Swanley Scouts (Swanley District Scout Council)	Whole of District Adventurous Activities	Additional quality, exciting, age-appropriate adventurous activities, e.g. canoeing, kayaking, sailing, national Scout Fundays, and adventure centre / dry ski slope. As a youth-led organisation our young people will choose age appropriate activities.	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£2,916.25	
Fegans (Spurgeons)	Early Bird & Teen Life parenting programme for families affected by autism	Providing specialist parenting support for families with children who have autism. NAS Early Bird+ and Teen Life offers support, advice & guidance & strategies & approaches to working with autistic C&YP. ASC families are often forgotten & isolated.	£2,500.00	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project and the applicant has stated that they are unable to scale down their activity should anything other than full funding be offered.
The Lewis Project	The Lewis Project	The Lewis Project was set up to help mental wellbeing in young people aged 16 + through music. We provide a relaxed, non-intimidating atmosphere that encourages confidence, musical interest and creativity. We believe music is great therapy.	£1,150.00	N/A	£5,000.00	£1,000.00	
Home-Start South West Kent (HSSWK)	Improve social inclusion of vulnerable families and children under five years.	HSSWK will support vulnerable families who are struggling to cope. We will recruit and train volunteers and match them with families. Volunteers will visit their families every week and offer practical and emotional support and signposting.	N/A	N/A	£4,368.00	£875.00	
Sevenoaks Area Dementia Friendly Communities Charity	Fund Raising Event to ensure delivery of services through 2022/23 - Launch of New Forget-me-not Cafe in Otford serving the community	1. Fundraising event to raise funds to sustain and build upon our activities and groups 2. New forget-me-not cafe in Otford 2022 3. New Forget-me-not Cafe at Sevenoaks Hospital 2022	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	Full funding has been granted for this project from another source since the application was submitted.

Appendix C Organisation Name	Title of project/activity you are seeking funding	What is the project, service or activity	2020/21 Previous Funding	2021/22 Previous Funding	2022/23 Grant Request	Recommended Allocation 2022 /23	Reason for Refusal
Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	Contribution to running costs	The grant will be used to defray the running costs of SVTG which provides low cost transport for elderly, infirm and disabled residents to Sevenoaks Hospital, other local hospitals and clinics and organisations for the disabled.	£500.00	£500.00	£750.00	£500.00	
PMRGCAuk (Polymyalgia Rheumatica & Giant Cell Arteritis UK)	PMRGCA Sevenoaks Support Group	We want to set up a Support Group in Sevenoaks district for older people who suffer from PMR &/or GCA. PMR is an inflammatory condition of unknown cause. It is recognised to be an autoimmune illness. GCA is a disease known as 'giant cell' because of the presence of very large inflammatory cells in the wall of the arteries, causing them to swell and sometimes become occluded. The group will meet monthly in a safe venue to meet fellow sufferers, get support & information and at times listen to expert speakers in PMR/GCA.	N/A	N/A	£4,766.00	£1,400.00	
Parochial Church Council of Kemsing and Woodlands	Stage 2 of the building of St Mary's Church Hall	A hall which is being built to replace the old timber hall which was destroyed by arsonists in 2014.	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.
Underriver Village Hall	Kitchen Refurbishment	Underriver Village Hall serves both the community of Underriver and the surrounding areas. It is a popular hall for groups offering cookery courses to both to children and young adults with special needs which are regular users.	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.
West Kent Mediation	Conflict Resolution service for SDC residents	West Kent Mediation (WKM) provide a professional, impartial and free mediation service using dedicated, trained volunteers to help resolve conflict and the breakdown of relationships between individuals, families and groups in the SDC area	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	
Crockenhill Village Hall Management Committee	Project to replace old tables	To replace the old, heavy to carry & in some cases failing folding tables. Funds raised pre COVID were used in September 2021 to start the project. To complete the project 20 large tables used by the vast majority of the hirers need replacing too!	N/A	N/A	£2,493.75	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.
Shoreham & Otford Cricket Club	Pavillion Interior Renovation	We would like to use this grant to improve the interior of the Pavillion and the exterior (mildly exterior).	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.
North Kent Mind	Wellbeing Activity Group	A weekly session that combines open discussion and exercise giving the perfect opportunity for those with Mental Health issues to engage with other people in a fun active way (incl badminton, table tennis, short mat bowls & basic gym activities).	N/A	N/A	£609.25	£390.00	
Protection Against Stalking	Core Running Costs - Protection Against Stalking Sevenoaks District	PAS runs a specialist advocacy service in Kent for victims of stalking. We seek funding to help us expand our volunteer-led service in Sevenoaks contributing to community safety & wellbeing, & enabling us to support people at risk & their families	N/A	N/A	£4,680.00	£4,680.00	

Appendix C Organisation Name	Title of project/activity you are seeking funding	What is the project, service or activity	2020/21 Previous Funding	2021/22 Previous Funding	2022/23 Grant Request	Recommended Allocation 2022 /23	Reason for Refusal
Westerham Town Partnership	Discovering and enhancing the River Darent in Westerham, Brasted and Sundridge	The project will improve light levels on the Darent in Westerham and beyond by the sensitive management of bankside trees & shrubs. Improving the light & visibility of the river will enhance its ecological & aesthetic value for wildlife & people.	N/A	N/A	£3,500.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.
BRIDGES	Post-Covid Revival Projects	New partnership projects addressing social isolation, money issues, kids catch-up club, art therapy. Staff to recruit, train & support volunteers & pros to run the projects, community networking, signposting new residents, responding to local needs.	£1,450.00	£960.00	£2,740.00	£2,740.00	
Sundridge and Ide Hill Community Group	Fortnightly coffee mornings.	We operate a free coffee morning every other Tuesday at 10.30am at the Cornflower cafe at Coblands garden centre in Sundridge. We started the coffee mornings last year (2020) as soon as restrictions were eased.	N/A	N/A	£780.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.
Crockham Hill Bonfire Society	Crockham Hill Bonfire and Fireworks 2022	Our event will take place on 29 October 2022, bringing together the whole community: old & young, rich & poor, long-established & new residents alike. It is inclusive, well-organised, great value, safe and fun.	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.
The Hygiene Bank	Improving distribution to expand our reach across Sevenoaks.	We seek funding to purchase more essential hygiene products to distribute to new and existing community partners (CPs) in Sevenoaks. We also seek funding to continue the lease of our storage space which is used to organise and sort these products.	£3,000.00	£2,267.00	£5,000.00	£3,916.25	
Sevenoaks Counselling	To increase the size of the Bursary Fund.	Assistance for clients unable to pay the full recommended contribution for counselling.	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	
Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge	Pop Up Pop Ins	The Pop Ups are hubs to encourage social interaction, reduce isolation & support older people in rural areas. They provide exercise aimed at improving mobility & strength, reducing the no. of falls, improving health & wellbeing of the older people.	£4,250.00	£4,807.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	
Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS)	Supporting Sevenoaks residents experiencing domestic abuse	DAVSS provides vital volunteer support services for often traumatised victims of domestic abuse and their children, empowering them to break the cycle of abuse so they and their children can live safe and fulfilling lives again.	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	
Kenward Trust	Trainee Youth Outreach Worker	Our outreach provides a responsive service with targeted intervention responding to alerts where substances are considered a factor. This grant would help us employ a trainee Youth Outreach Worker to support our team and reach more individuals.	£4400 approved. £210 returned unspent (due to Covid restrictions)	Activities due to take place in 2020-21 were postponed until 2021-22 due to Covid.	£5,000.00	£4,666.25	

Appendix C Organisation Name	Title of project/activity you are seeking funding	What is the project, service or activity	2020/21 Previous Funding	2021/22 Previous Funding	2022/23 Grant Request	Recommended Allocation 2022 /23	Reason for Refusal
Imago	Imago Community Services	Imago's accredited volunteering service helps people to volunteer. We also offer an information, advice and development service for organisations. Finally, the project will help to address social isolation by expanding our transport service.	£4,000.00	£3,500.00	£5,000.00	£3,500.00	
Project Salus	Safety in Action	This is an interactive multi agency event that invites Yr 6 children to learn about the dangers they may face as they prepare for transition to secondary school. The event is designed to develop citizenship, safety skills and to increase awareness.	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£2,000.00	£1,500.00	
Eden Valley Museum	Education and Community Engagement Project	6 month project May to October 2022 to develop & deliver an educational activities programme for children from surrounding parishes during 2022 school half terms & summer holiday period providing employment for two 16 - 17 yr olds to assist delivery	N/A	N/A	£5,000.00	£0.00	The available level of funding is not sufficient for the Council to be able to prioritise this project.

Budget: £49,800.00
Recommended Allocation Total: £49,800.00

Item 7 -Voluntary Sector Barometer Survey 2022/23

The attached report was considered by the People & Places Advisory Committee on 1 March 2022. The relevant Minute extract was not available prior to the printing of this agenda and will follow when available.

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Voluntary Sector Barometer Survey

Cabinet - 17 March 2022

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People & Places

Status: For Information

Also considered by:

- People & Places Advisory Committee 1 March 2022

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: COVID-19 has had a major impact on the voluntary and community sector both nationally and locally. The Voluntary Sector Forum undertook a second barometer survey in September 2021 to track the impact of COVID-19 on the voluntary and community sector in the Sevenoaks District. This report presents the findings of the survey, and, where possible, compares and contrasts the findings with the May 2021 barometer survey.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Providing Value for Money and the Community Plan Vision for Safe & Caring Communities, a Green & Healthy Environment and a Dynamic & Sustainable Economy.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Jenny Godfrey, Ext. 7112

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee:

- (a) That it be recommended to cabinet to note the report.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- (a) That the report be noted.

Introduction and Background

- 1 COVID-19 has had a major impact on the voluntary and community sector both nationally and locally.
- 2 Sevenoaks District Council established the Sevenoaks District Voluntary Sector Forum in April 2020 as a response to the pandemic. The Forum

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continues to informally discuss the impact and in May 2021 undertook its first barometer survey to quantify the impact.

- 3 The Voluntary Sector Forum, chaired by Angela Painter, agreed to undertake a second barometer survey in September 2021, to track the continued impact of COVID-19 on the voluntary, community sector in the Sevenoaks District. The Forum discussed and agreed a slightly revised set of questions whilst ensuring some comparisons and contrasts could be made between the May and September results.
- 4 The results of these surveys provide a sample of the sector's health and recovery in the district and provides information for the Council, Kent County Council (KCC) and others including decision makers and potential funders.
- 5 The Voluntary Sector Forum will revisit the questions and survey the sector approximately every quarter to continue to track the impact of COVID-19 and highlight areas for particular intervention, support and collaboration.
- 6 Survey Monkey was used again to make it quick and easy to access and complete.

Survey results

- 7 There were 17 responses (the Forum usually has between 20 and 30 organisations regularly attend) as compared to 26 for the May 2021 survey. This survey had 22 questions as opposed to the 15 in May. Given some of the feedback, the Forum has agreed that the next survey will have less questions to encourage more participation.
- 8 Whilst similar themes from the May 2021 results remain prevalent, there seems to be emerging the need for the Voluntary Sector Forum to provide the sector with support, guidance and training on:
 - Digital inclusion. In May 2021, 80.77% responded to say that there had been an increase in the proportion of support services taken online. In the September 2021 survey, 50% responded that COVID-19 had significantly impacted on the digital exclusion of their clients and that for 25% there was moderate impact;
 - Supporting voluntary groups and organisations to improve the wellbeing of the sector's leaders, staff and volunteers with training; speakers; support via the Kent & Medway Healthy Business Programme;
 - Recruitment and support for volunteers. There is an evident need to continue work with Imago Volunteer Centre and supplement with additional volunteer training, keynote speakers, other initiatives including those that are being organised by KCC;

- Fundraising. The Forum is being asked to consider how opportunities for fundraising and grant streams can be disseminated to the sector and consider the potential for more collaboration and partnership working;
- Government restrictions and confidence in returning services to face-to-face. Continue to share information and support regarding compliance with restrictions and best practice for returning to some face-to-face interactions.

9 These results and the above areas have been shared with the voluntary sector and will be discussed at a future Forum meeting. We will continue to use the Forum to work on any identified opportunities or challenges.

10 It should be noted that the Council continues to support the voluntary and community sector in the District through the provision of its Community Grants scheme, the Local Strategic Partnership Community Wellbeing Fund, Community Safety Partnership grants and Service Level Agreements. In 2020 and early 2021, particularly through the lockdown periods, the Council undertook a Crowdfunding campaign for the voluntary sector and distributed additional funding via Government's Containment Outbreak Management Fund. More recently, the Council has successfully bid for funding on behalf of the voluntary sector through KCC's COVID support funding, including the Containment Outbreak Management Fund and Helping Hands. For example, the Council successfully secured funding for the voluntary sector, including local foodbanks, counselling and befriending services, Dementia Friendly Communities and digital inclusion activities through COMPAID. The Council regularly shares funding opportunities with the sector and is looking to divert funding it received for an alternative cancelled project towards the cost of expert speakers and training to Forum members, and, other support initiatives, such as volunteer recruitment and deployment and networking opportunities.

Key Implications

Resource (non financial)

11 None.

Financial

12 None.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

13 There are no legal issues relating to this report.

Equality Assessment

17. 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)

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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 report directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and does not vary between groups of people. The summary results of this analysis are set out immediately below.

18. This barometer survey assists the voluntary sector itself and the Council with monitoring the health of the voluntary sector organisations and with identifying key issues. The voluntary sector works to support Sevenoaks District residents, particularly those in greatest need. Therefore, the results being shared through this paper do not have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community.
19. As no negative impacts have been identified, no further mitigating steps need to be taken.

Conclusions

27. The work of the voluntary sector across the Sevenoaks District is highly valued. These regular barometer surveys enable the Council to continue to understand issues facing the sector and provide appropriate and more targeted support. Members are asked to note the September 2021 barometer survey results from September 2021 as set out in Appendix A.

Appendices

Appendix A - detailed results

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People & Places

Appendix A - Voluntary Sector Barometer Survey September 2021 Results in detail

1 Set out below are the results for each question. Where the question was also asked in the May 2021 Barometer Survey, both answers are included for comparison purposes. The questions are grouped by theme:

- Objectives - Questions 1 & 2
- Financial Position - Questions 3 to 5
- Budget - Question 6
- Impact on Services - Questions 7 to 9
- AOB - Questions 10 to 22

Objectives - Questions 1 & 3

Question 1: What impact did COVID-19 have on your ability to meet your objectives?

	May 2021	September 2021
No Impact	7.69%	11.76%
Moderate Impact	23.08%	23.53%
Significant Impact	69.23%	64.71%

Please tell us about the impact COVID-19 had on your objectives (here are some the answers received):

- Funding has become more difficult because funders are focussing on people impacted by COVID, rather than heritage.
- During 2020/21 we secured core funding through the emergency funds established. This year we are finding it much harder to secure wins and the competition for funding has increased. This will necessitate the need to close some services that do not have specific funding attached to them.
- On some existing projects, we have had to ask for permission to run the projects in different ways particularly where we were required to attend or hold group meetings.
- There was a significant amount of Government funding and COVID grant funding until 3 March 2021, but very little since. In addition, there have been few funding opportunities to apply for.
- A major and strong funding application which had been submitted in early 2020 was withdrawn by the grant provider along with all other grants in the

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assessment stage.

Question 2: Are you able to meet your objectives set for 2021?

	May 2021	September 2021
Yes	42.31%	70.59%
No	15.35%	29.41%
Other	42,31%	Option Not Provided

Financial Position - Questions 3 to 5

Question 3: What was your financial position between May 2021 and now (September 2021)?

	Financial Position Pre COVID-19 (Asked May 2021)	Financial Position March to September 2020 (Asked May 2021)	Financial Position October 2020 to May 2021 (Asked May 2021)	Q.3 (above) Asked September 2021
Healthy	50%	34.62%	30.77%	52.94%
Moderate	46.15%	61.54%	57.69%	41.18%
Poor	3.85%	3.85%	7.69%	5.88%
Other	0%	0%	3.85%	Option Not Provided

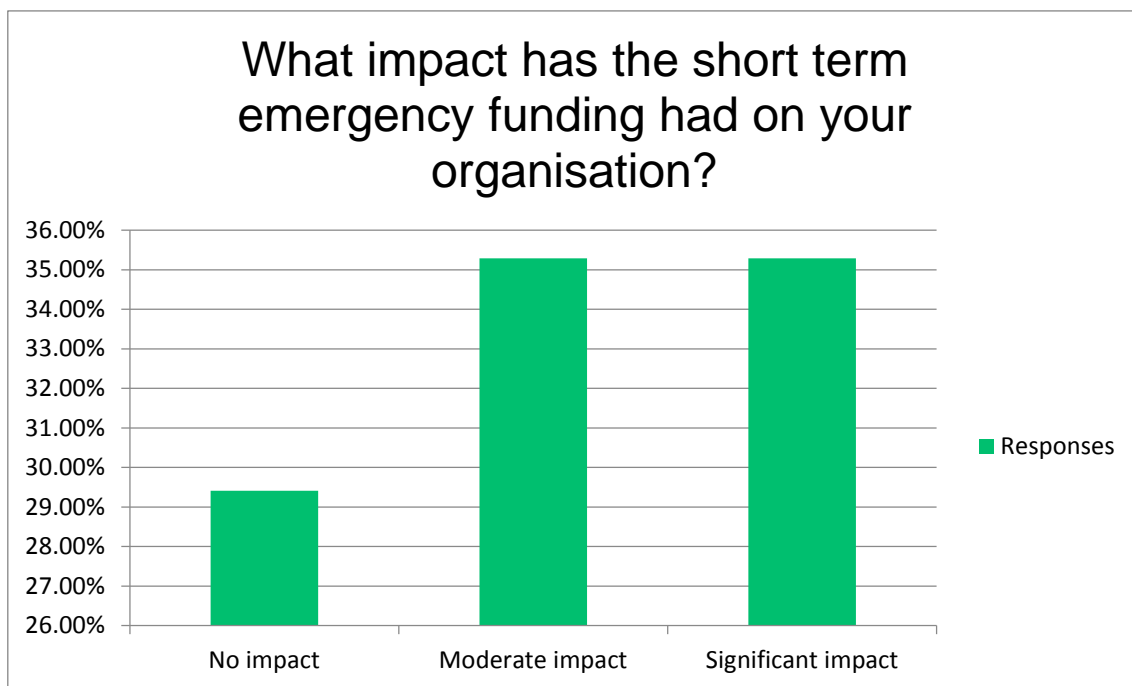
Question 4: What is the likelihood of your organisation no longer operating this time next year as a result of COVID-19?

	May 2021	September 2021
Quite Unlikely	73.08%	76.47%
Neither likely nor unlikely	7.69%	11.76%
Quite Likely	0%	0%

Very Likely	7.69%	0%
Not Sure	11.54%	11.76%

Question 5: What impact has the short term emergency funding had on your organisation?

No impact	29.41%
Moderate impact	35.29%
Significant impact	35.29%



Please share examples and confirm that you would be willing to talk about these as part of a future Voluntary Sector Forum:

- We were able to get core funding which is very unusual nowadays.
- We were able to pilot alternative advice giving models with the emergency funding. These were successful but has required a significant reorganisation / restructure to introduce to our service. The lack of new funding as well as the significant increase in demand for advice has made it harder to achieve the model we would like.

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- We were able to approach new funders and access short-term funding for very specific projects: covering the start-up cost of our online service; the cost of supplying singing masks for the return to in-person sessions.
- We have managed to get some Lottery Funding to combat loneliness and isolation to run a valuable new project during lock down which was of great benefit.

Budget - Question 6

Question 6: How has COVID-19 affected the way you are budgeting going forward?

	May 2021	September 2021
No change from pre COVID-19	23.08%	29.41%
Some changes	50%	47.06%
Significant changes	23.08%	23.53%
Other	3.85%	0%

Impact on Services - Questions 7 to 9

Question 7: To what extent have you modified your services because of the ease of restrictions (since April 2021)?

	To what extent have you already adapted your services because of COVID-19? (Asked in May 2021)	Q. 7 (above) Asked in September 2021
Not at all	3.85%	5.88%
Made moderate changes	30.77%	41.18%
Made significant changes	57.69%	52.94%
Other	7.69%	Option Not Provided

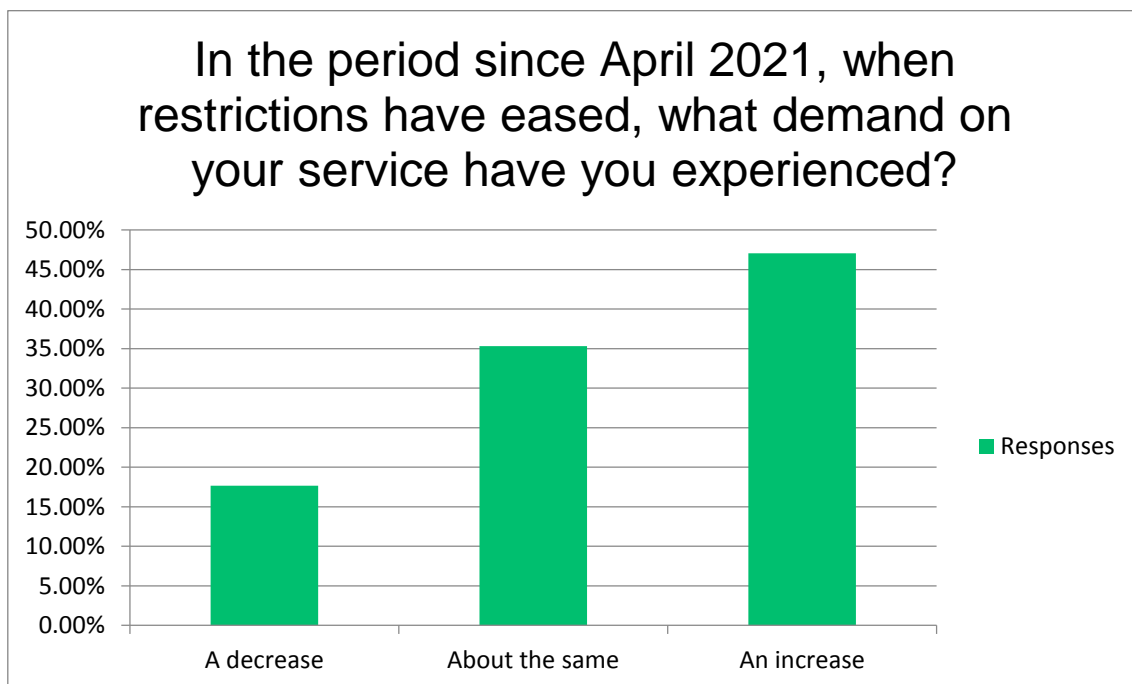
Please tell us about the main adaptations you have made:

- Went on line with groups, able to deliver meaningful interaction but with a much reduced attendance.

- We have recently returned to some face to face activity. However due to the increased vulnerability of some our members to COVID we are working under restrictions and brought in a person to act as a COVID Safety Guide at our first live session.
- We are still providing a telephone only service but our volunteer advisers have been able to return to the office. We are still unable to see clients face to face as we are awaiting funding to enable us to use our unventilated interview rooms.
- We have slowly switched from Emergency to Recovery Projects. The facebook games/competitions etc and keeping-connected initiative 'tapered off' when restrictions eased. The healthy eating project changed in that most of the grants to buy food for struggling families came to an end although we still have a partnership with the cook shop to provide 30 meals a week to which we add a bag of fruit etc. The laptops project is something that we would like to pick up again but haven't looked into potential funders as yet.

Question 8: In the period since April 2021, when restrictions have eased, what demand on your service have you experienced?

A decrease	17.85%
About the same	35.29%
An increase	47.06%



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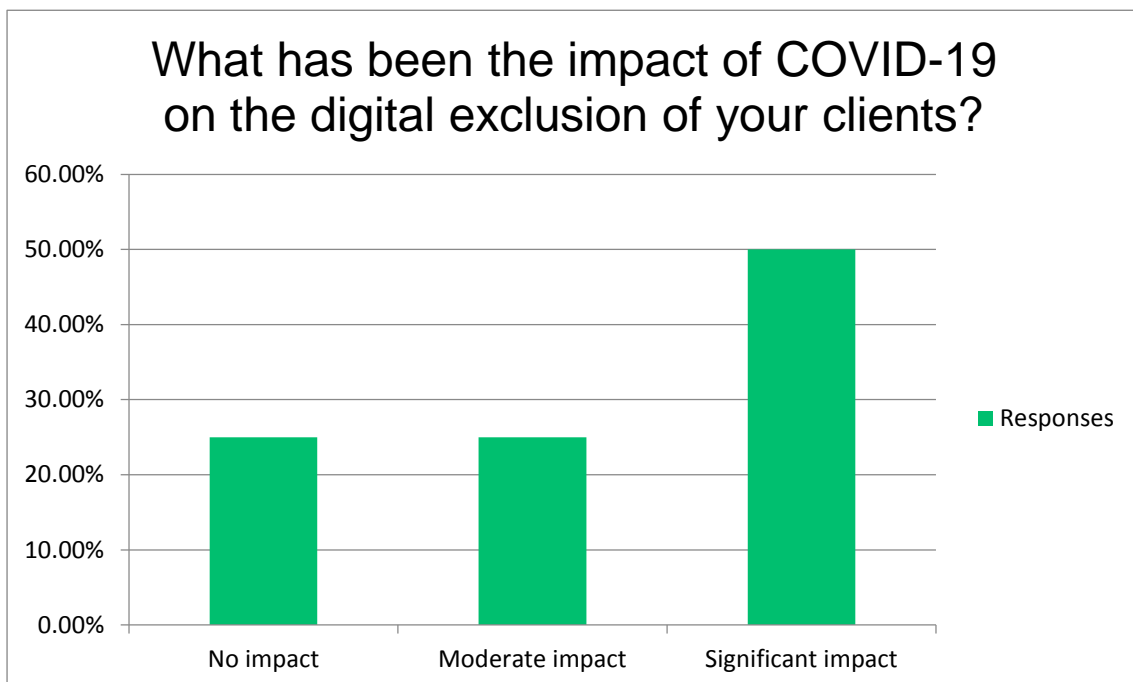
Question 9: What is the expected demand on your services over the next 12 months?

	May 2021	September 2021
A decrease	0%	0%
About the same	19.23%	29.41%
An increase	80.77%	70.59%
N/A	0%	Option Not Provided

AOB - Questions 10 to 22

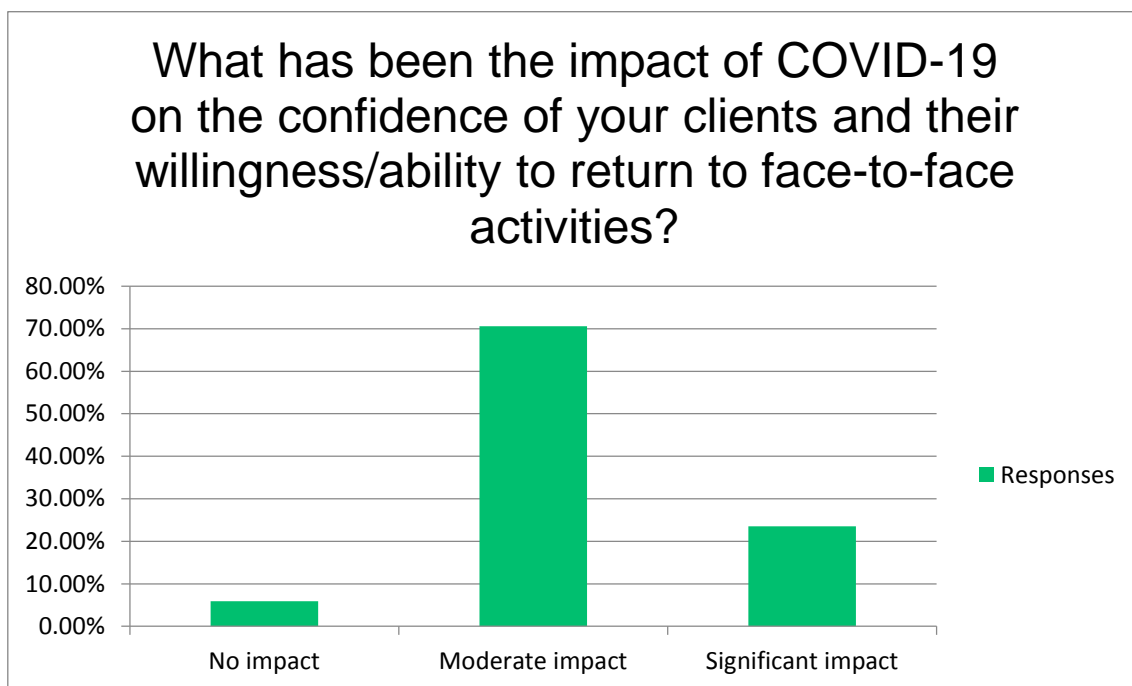
Question 10: What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the digital exclusion of your clients?

No impact	25%
Moderate impact	25%
Significant impact	50%



Question 11: What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the confidence of your clients and their willingness/ability to return to face-to-face activities?

No impact	5.88%
Moderate impact	70.59%
Significant impact	23.53%



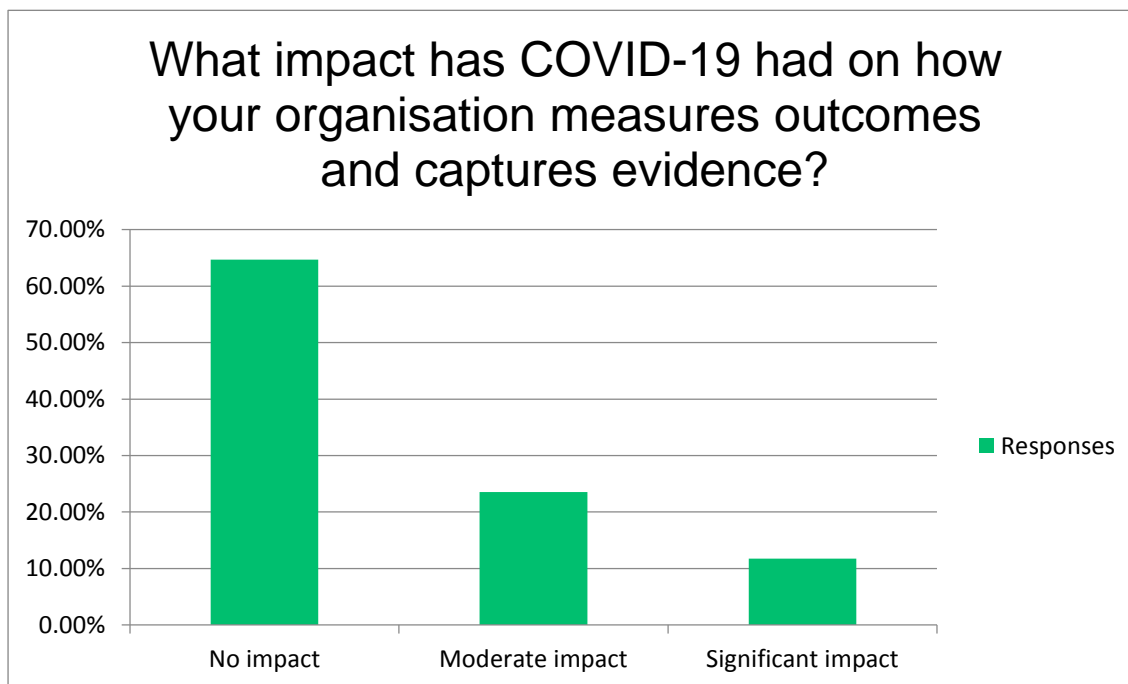
Question 12: Has there been a change in the number of people who volunteer for your organisation since restrictions began to ease in April 2021?

	May 2021	September 2021
Decreased	53.85%	52.94%
Stayed the same	34.62%	35.29%
Increased	11.54%	11.76%

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Question 13: What impact has COVID-19 had on how your organisation measures outcomes and captures evidence?

No Impact	64.71%
Moderate Impact	23.53%
Significant Impact	11.76%

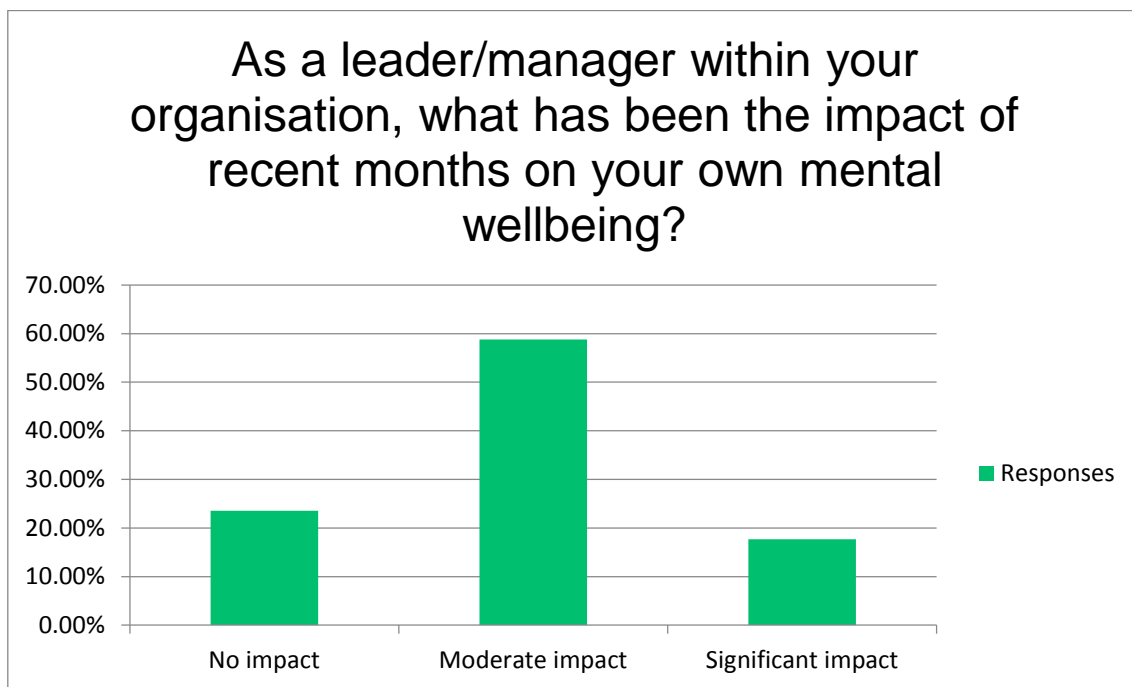


Please tell us more:

- Impact is more difficult to demonstrate in terms of quality rather than simple beneficiary numbers. Our level of support for our vulnerable members has increased in terms of providing the skills and confidence for digital sessions and increased contact to combat social isolation. More time has been spent collecting evidence as some of this has to be done one-to-one through phone calls or Zoom.
- We are collecting different data. We have not undertaken as many evaluation surveys.
- We haven't been able to carry out as much direct work as we had planned, hence this affecting outcomes and capturing evidence for the one to one mentoring. Yet our involvement in group activities has been a short term success.
- Our case recording systems remain the same as before.

Question 14: As a leader/manager within your organisation, what has been the impact of recent months on your own mental wellbeing?

No Impact	23.53%
Moderate Impact	58.82%
Significant Impact	17.65%



Please share examples of how you meet your own emotional and physical wellbeing and confirm that you would be willing to talk about these at a future Voluntary Sector Forum:

- I have had to recognise the realism of change in how COVID has affected many organisations, not just our own. Wanting to drive ideas for our work going forward and being met with barriers, has been a frustration at times
- Working from home can be quite isolating. However I find that it allows for more meetings. Recently partnership meetings have been face to face and there is currently a mixed offer for meetings.
I pray, and share concerns with other Trustees and Managers. I have been grateful for the advice and support of Kent Community Foundation staff.
- I found the change to a digital service very stressful initially but once I got used to it, found it actually had many advantages but I had to be constantly 'upbeat' in order to keep everyone else in a positive frame of mind. I also found the new way of working took a lot of preparation time and, because I

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was working with several groups, it was hard to keep up. I started by trying to phone everyone regularly but that began to drop off, as it was enough just to plan the actual sessions so I felt I was letting people down.

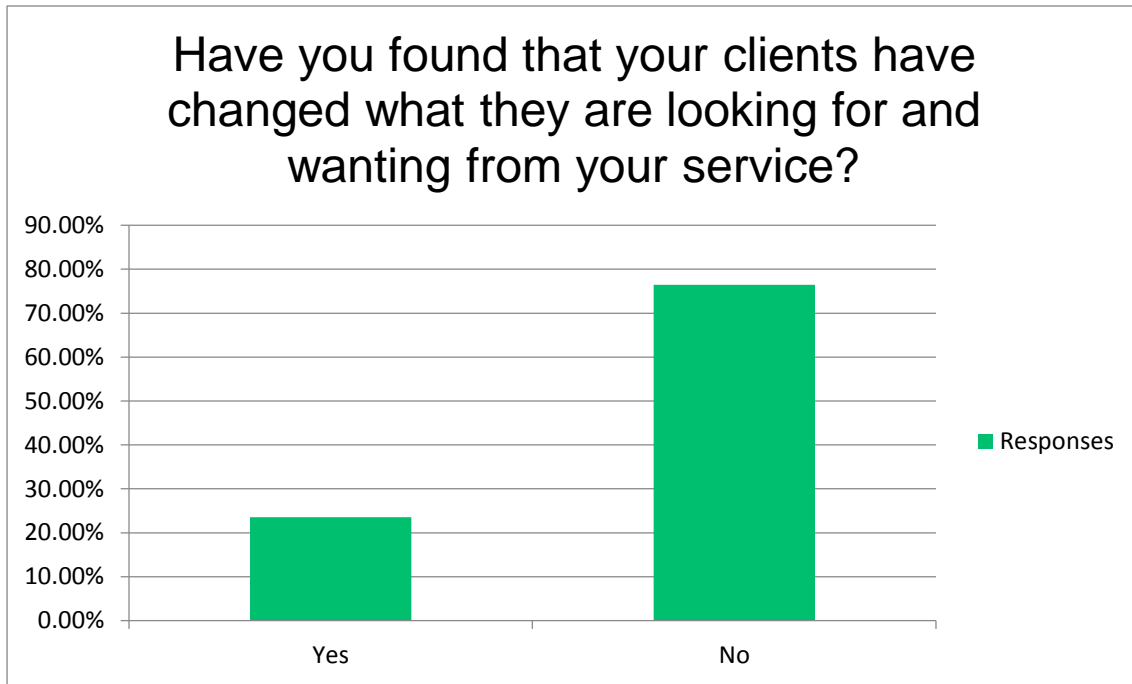
- Throughout the pandemic I focussed significantly on diet and exercise as a key area of maintaining my own wellbeing. Getting up early and working out and then going for a walk outside meant that before i started work I already felt that I was one step ahead.

Question 15: With the need to deliver services using a hybrid model of remote and in person working, what if any issues have been thrown up in terms of staff and volunteer management?

- We haven't had issues here. Our volunteers have generally been understanding and have adapted to change when we have needed to call upon them.
- Some staff have shown reluctance to come in to the office preferring to work from home. Where we can we have accommodated that.
- Not all Volunteers have been comfortable with or able to communicate by zoom or e-mail.
- Maintaining staff/volunteer morale mainly and ensuring that they feel part of the team. Maintaining staff/volunteer morale mainly and ensuring that they feel part of the team.
- Most staff and volunteers adapted very easily. Those volunteers who did not have the necessary skills or whose environment did not allow remote working, did not work through the pandemic. Those that have not worked will require retraining if they wish to return. We have also had to carry out a volunteer recruitment drive for new volunteers who have to show they have the necessary digital skills to carry out the work.
- It is much more difficult both to manage and to support volunteers remotely but we have tried hard to do this using Zoom, phone calls and regular email contact.
- people having the necessary confidence, willingness and skills to use remote communication
- Can't do it! Have been asked about hybrid sessions but I think it would take too much tech ability and equipment and too much time to organise when there's only me! Have managed to engage one new volunteer but also lost some and others have more health problems so are able to contribute less.

Question 16: Have you found that your clients have changed what they are looking for and wanting from your service?

Yes	23.53%
No	76.47%



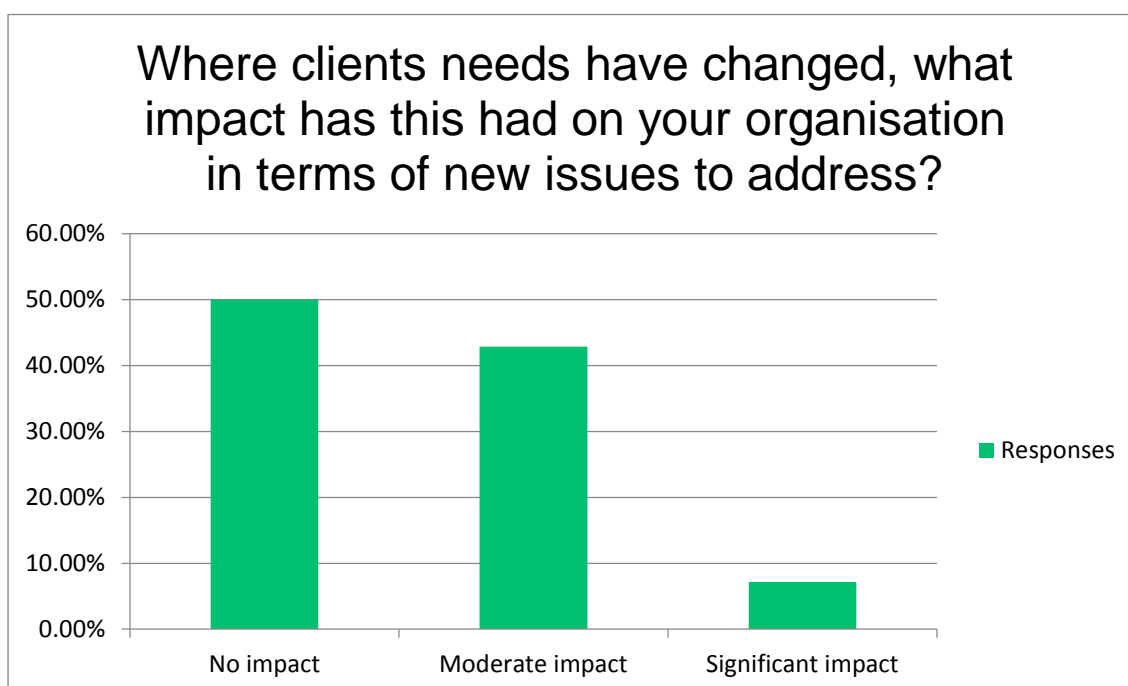
Please state examples:

- If anything it has increased in interest and attendance, people want to get back to face to face so we need to continually monitor and strategies for their anxieties and needs.
- Some have looked for increased contact as other support and services for them had decreased.
- A lot of our clients are a lot frailer than they used to be and need more support.
- Clients want the same level of service as before. We have tried to provide this over the telephone but we get many requests for face to face support.
- Mostly, our clients want to return to the way things were. Counselling online has been a success and we can easily deliver a hybrid service for this.

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Question 17: Where clients' needs have changed, what impact has this had on your organisation in terms of new issues to address?

No Impact	50.00%
Moderate Impact	42.86%
Significant Impact	7.14%



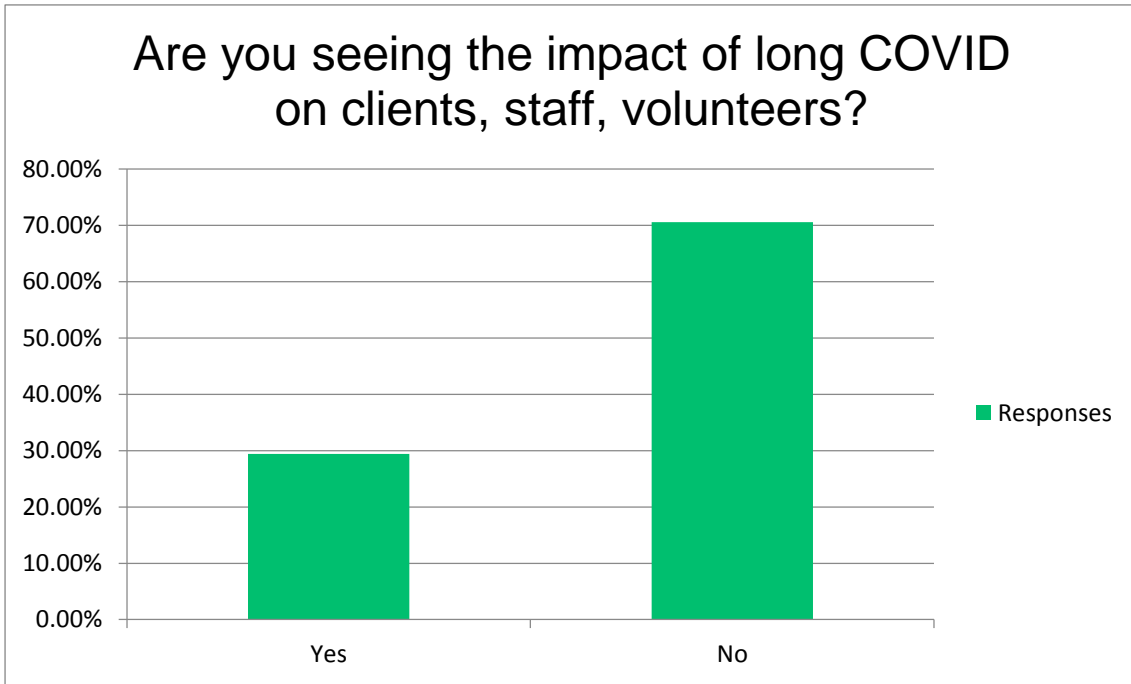
Please state examples particularly those that you would be willing to share at a future Voluntary Sector Forum:

- It has raised a few issues about the role and initial objectives of our charity
- We think we may actually need to go backwards. That is to say our healthy eating food project may need to resume but there is definitely now a lack of funding for this type of project so we do not know what to do.
- Mostly the issues that have arisen are things we are tackling in our new strategic plan. What has changed is that the need is more widespread amongst very specific communities.

Question 18: Are you seeing the impact of long COVID on clients, staff, volunteers?

Yes	29.41%
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No	70.59%
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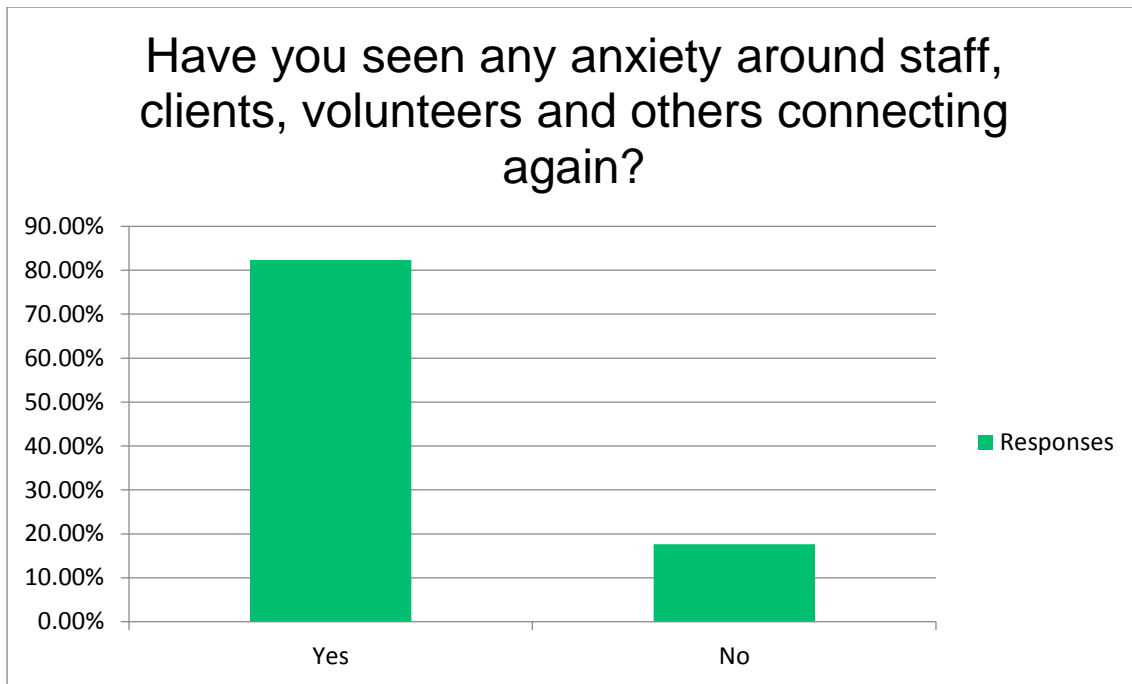


Please give examples of impact:

- We have had a couple of clients who have reported suffering from symptoms of long COVID.
- Some leaders and other officials have left because of the effects of long-COVID, including, in one case, a stroke in a person in their early 40s.
- Our newly recruited volunteer has long COVID so I'm reluctant to demand too much.
- Due to the age of our clients it is difficult to gauge if it is a period of less mobility, age or long COVID that has had an impact on them. We believe there has been a mixture of the above.

Question 19: Have you seen any anxiety around staff, clients, volunteers and others connecting again?

Yes	82.35%
No	17.65%

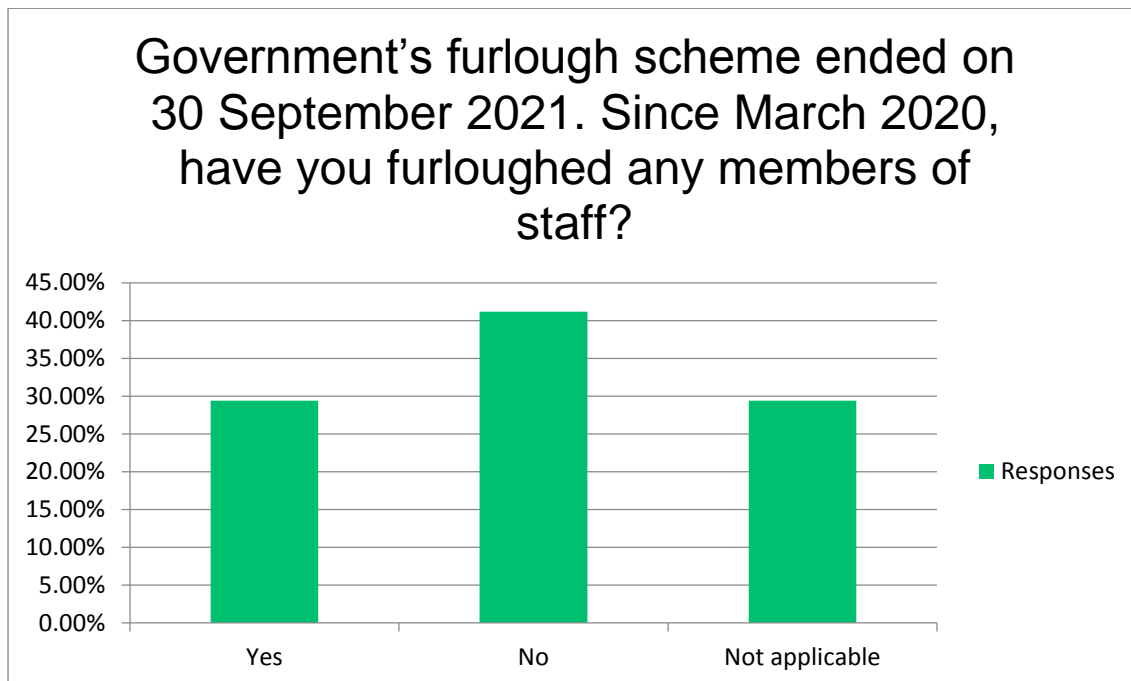


Please share examples, particularly those that you feel may affect community cohesion:

- One example is in our befriending service where we are trying to organise a Christmas get together for our volunteer befrienders. We canvassed them to see if they would prefer a face-to-face or online gathering. We got a mixed response.
- Many clients wanted to get back to face2face groups again in the outside but the summer weather this year affected some planned days more than usual. A few clients were and still are hesitant to do any face2face groups. Now the autumn is here more clients seem to be wanting to meet face2face as long as they know all COVID safety rules are being applied when in a room hired building, as so many were struggling with the isolation and loneliness.
- Our volunteers have generally been very keen to return to the office to be able to enjoy the social aspect of volunteering and to be able to access support & supervision more easily.
- Elderly volunteers are reluctant to re-engage.

Question 20: Government’s furlough scheme ended on 30 September 2021. Since March 2020, have you furloughed any members of staff?

Yes	29.41%
No	41.18%
Not Applicable	29.41%



Question 21: How many members of staff, who have previously been furloughed, are not continuing their employment with you from 1 October 2021?

Only 5 of the 17 responding answered this question. Total number of staff who have previously been furloughed and did not continue their employment from 1 October 2021 was 5.

Question 22: Is there anything else you would like to add?

- It's not been easy to complete this form as our work has been held back by COVID in some areas whilst we have been creative in others. I like to stick with the positives mainly.
- Yes, no-one seems to have picked up on the increase we are seeing in children/young people not in education or employment. We did a survey in the spring on the effects COVID had on already disadvantaged families and were shocked that more than 10% of our families now have at least one (some more) under 18's not in education or employment.
- Our service is run on a totally voluntary basis with very little overheads which has given us an advantage. We also worked very hard during look downs to communicate with our walkers and to encourage them to exercise in different ways. We were also able to start our walks up as soon as we were allowed to owing to our good organisational skills, communication with our volunteers and their dedication.

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Item 08 - Sevenoaks District Community Safety Action Plan 2022/23

The attached report was considered by the People & Places Advisory Committee on 1 March 2022. The relevant Minute extract was not available prior to the printing of this agenda and will follow when available.

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SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN 2022-23

Cabinet - 17 March 2022

Report of: Sarah Robson, Deputy Chief Exec and Chief Officer People & Places

Status: For Agreement

Also considered by: People & Places Advisory Committee - 1 March 2022

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: The 2022-23 Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan is set out. The plan responds to the community safety priorities identified in the most recent Strategic Assessment.

This reports support the Key Aim of: Community Plan - Safer Communities

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Kelly Webb, Ext. 7474

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee:

It is recommended to cabinet that the Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan for 2022 - 23 is approved.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan for 2022-23 is approved.

Reason for recommendation: This Action Plan will determine multi-agency work undertaken in the District to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and increase feelings of safety.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory responsibility on Sevenoaks District Council, Kent County Council, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Health, Probation and Kent Police, together with other key partners, to undertake an audit of crime and disorder in the District and co-operate in the development and implementation of a strategy and action plan for tackling local crime and disorder. The audit is known as the Strategic Assessment.
- 2 The Strategic Assessment was undertaken in December 2021. The six priorities, as ranked in the Strategic Assessment, are:
 - Serious and Acquisitive Crime including Crime Trends

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- Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime & Rogue Trading
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Safeguarding (including Mental Health, Prevent, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), Vulnerable Adults and Protecting Children
 - Violence against Women & Girls including Stalking & Harassment
 - Drug Misuse & County Lines
- 3 The draft 2022-23 Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan is attached as the Appendix. It sets out Partnership activity aimed at addressing the above priorities. The Action Plan is a multi-agency document and is monitored on a quarterly basis by the Community Safety Partnership, to ensure that actions are on target and are helping to meet the identified success measures.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

None

Key Implications

Financial

- 4 The funding required to deliver the Action Plan comes from the Police and Crime Commissioner and existing SDC core Budgets, core budgets of participating agencies and other external funding sources as they become available. No additional District Council funding is required to deliver the plan.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

- 5 There are no legal issues for the Council arising from this action plan.

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. The decisions recommended through this paper directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and varies between groups of people

- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.

This action plan adds value to Safeguarding as it is a priority

Conclusions

The Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan has been prepared following a strategic assessment of crime and disorder issues and provides a multi-agency approach to those issues.

Appendices

Appendix A - The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership 2022-23
Strategy & Action Plan

Background Papers

Strategic Assessment 2021

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Exec & Chief Officer for People & Places

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Sevenoaks District

Community Safety Partnership

Annual Action Plan

2022-23 DRAFT

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Action Plan 2022-23

Introduction

The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership brings together all of the agencies in the District who can have an impact on crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. A list of partners is set out on page 24. The Partnership has 3 key aims. They are to:

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

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

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

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

Priority Issues for 2022-23

The Strategic Assessment was undertaken during the winter of 2021 and identified six priorities for the Partnership to tackle during 2022-23. The data referred to in this Action Plan is based on the Strategic Assessment, and uses data between 1 October 2020 - 30 September 2021, unless otherwise stated. Trends in the identified priorities continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis and the first monitoring will be available in July 2022.

The six priorities, as ranked in the Strategic Assessment, are:

- Serious and Acquisitive Crime incl crime trends
- Drug Misuse and County Lines¹
- Anti-Social Behaviour incl Environmental Crime & Rogue Trading
- Domestic Abuse
- Violence against Women & Girls incl Stalking & Harassment
- Safeguarding (including Mental Health, Prevent, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), Vulnerable Adults and Protecting Children

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

The Action Plan

The following pages set out the overall targets for the Community Safety Partnership. The Action Plan does not include details of the numerous activities already undertaken by partners, town and parish councils, the voluntary sector and others as part of their day-to-day work, but highlights activities in addition to core work, which partners will undertake throughout the forthcoming year. All priorities include actions around public perception and reducing repeat offenders/victims.

¹ County Lines refer to organised ways of dealing drugs

Funding and monitoring

Funding for the actions included within the Action Plan is available from a number of sources, including partners' own budgets, Police & Crime Commissioner's (PCC) funding which is allocated to district Community Safety Partnerships, Choosing Health funding and other small amounts of funding from a variety of sources.

Regular monitoring will take place to ensure that individual projects continue to deliver positive results as well as value for money and that this Action Plan is on target.

Equalities

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

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SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - ACTION PLAN 2022-2023

SUCCESS MEASURES

All recorded crime

All Victim Based Crime - Maintain position in the lowest 3 District/Borough in the County.

Serious & Acquisitive Crime incl Crime Trends

Improve the position of Vehicle Crime and Burglary within the County

Domestic Abuse

Reduction in the percentage of repeat victims

Number of people attending survivor programmes and the male perpetrators programme

Anti-Social Behaviour incl Environmental Crime & Rogue Trading

Maintain position in the lowest 3 District/Borough in the County

Record and reduce repeat victims of Rogue Trading

Safeguarding (including Prevent, Mental Health, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), Vulnerable Adults and Protecting Children)

Deliver training on safeguarding.

Implement new safeguarding system to help implement services to reduce repeat cases

Violence against Women and Girls incl Stalking and Harassment

Reduce the number of repeat victims of stalking

Increase numbers of my community voice for the District

Drug Misuse and County Lines

Reduce the number of young people entering the Criminal Justice System for the first time

Number of young people engaged with around drug misuse

Serious & Acquisitive Crime incl Crime Trends

Criminals behind serious and tactical crime often intimidate and create fear, which is intended to prevent the local community reporting what they see. Often the criminals behind this don't even have to try hard to do this - instead relying on word of mouth and reputation. Over the past year, Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) and crime trends has seen a more targeted approach by Partnerships. The most common crime types associated with these groups is commonly organised theft.

Acquisitive crime consists of Burglary (Residential and Commercial and Business) and Vehicle Crime (Theft of and Theft from - TOMV and TFMV). Although there have been rises and falls throughout the time period, the number of reported crimes are relatively low, but they do sit high in County comparisons. These types of crime have a high impact on the local community. There were decrease in both Burglary types. Burglary Residential from previous year (Oct 2020- Sept 2021) of 112 reported crimes 493 to 381 and a decrease of 87 reported crimes in Burglary Business & Commercial from 208 to 121. Theft from motor vehicle saw a decrease of 91 reported crimes from 471 to 380 as well as Theft of Motor Vehicle from 270 to 246, a decrease of 24 reported crimes.

Serious and Acquisitive Crime including Crime Trends

Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
1.1	Monthly Serious Crime & Tactical Group to address crime trends for the District and to deliver partnership actions/initiatives	Serious Crime & Tactical Group CSU Kent Police All Partners	On Going
1.2	Through media campaigns and use of social media address perception of crime across the District as well as events and arrests. Work with residents and Town and Parish Councils	CSU	All Partners March 2023
1.3	Work in Partnership to disrupt any recognised OCGs, crime trends	Serious Crime & Tactical Group	CSU All On Going
1.4	CSU to offer reassurance and follow up visits following burglary and vehicle crime, including free giveaways to protect cars, out buildings. Greater use of Community Warden resource in follow up visits in communities where CWs are based.	CSU KCC Wardens	PCSOs On Going
1.5	Promote my Community Voice so that residents can get updates on specific crime types in their areas	Police	All On Going
1.6	Targeted approach on prison release of prolific offenders of acquisitive crime	Serious Crime & Tactical Group	All Monthly

Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime

ASB accounts for the second largest recorded issue when compared to individual crime types in the District and makes up 23% of the total recorded figures when included in crime statistics. Figures show 2143 recorded incidents of ASB occurring within the District were reported to Kent Police. The District had the second lowest number of ASB reports in Kent and saw a decrease of 4.4% (98 reports).

Recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour were slightly lower in the period from October 2020 - September 2021. The total number of ASB reports received by the Council during October 2020 and September 2021 equals 53 calls. This is 45 less calls than the same period last year, when 98 calls were received, which equates to a 54% decrease in calls received.

Swanley White Oak had the highest number of reports of anti-social behaviour to the District Council with 11. Westerham and Crockham Hill are 2nd highest with 5.

The highest type of anti-social behaviour reported is Nuisance Behaviour with 25 reports. This is followed by reports of Drugs misuse and dealing and vehicle related nuisance. Calls by type are always higher than reports received as residents can report more than one type at a time.

During the period of October 2021 and September 2022, 20 Anti-Social Behaviour warning letters and 3 Acceptable Behaviour Agreement contracts were issued to named individuals. 1 Acceptable Behaviour Agreement Breach letter was also served. There have been 12 Community Protection Warnings served and 2 Community Protection Notices served.

SDC CCTV

From 1st October 2020 to 30th September 2021 the CCTV Control Room at Sevenoaks District Council assisted the police with 92 arrests for this period.

West Kent Housing

From 1 October 2020 - 30 September 2021 WKHA received 925 complaints of antisocial behaviour and other community safety related matters. This is an increase of 71% over the same period for the previous year.

SDC Environmental Health

Between 1st October 2020 and 30th September 2021, the Environmental Protection Team received 2469 service requests relating to issues within Sevenoaks District, this is 103 fewer than the same period last year.

Of the Service Requests received by Sevenoaks, 1048 relate to matters associated with anti-social behaviour (accumulations of rubbish, animal welfare, dog fouling, noise and nuisance). This is 428 fewer complaints than during the same period in 2019/2020.

SDC Direct Services

For the requested reporting period there were a total of 1417 fly tipping offences reported, which is an decrease from last year of 96 (6.8%). The illegal depositing of waste is predominantly in the North of the District

A total of 122 investigations were undertaken by the team resulting in:

- 2 cautions
- 3 Court Proceedings for S33(1)(a) (Fly tipping) and S34 (Duty of Care)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 offences
- 11 Fixed Penalty Notices for of S33(1)(a) 90 and S34 90 offences
- 21 investigations resolved by providing words of advice
- Approximately 140 S33/34 EPA 90 (letters of engagement) letters were sent
- Approximately 146 S46 EPA 90 (correct disposal of household waste) letters sent
- 40 KMIP (Kent and Medway Information Sharing Protocol) requests sent to Kent Police requesting vehicle and nominal checks.

Graffiti

Graffiti reports to the Council have increased by 42 reports this year with 79 recorded incidents (incl offensive).

There were 19 offensive graffiti reports between October 2020 and September 2021 all of which were removed within the 48 hour deadline set by Sevenoaks District Council.

KCC Community Wardens

A valued element of the Community Warden role remains the uniformed presence which helps build community confidence and reassurance by reducing crime, the fear of crime, deterring ASB, improving access to local authorities and fostering social inclusion.

Whilst the role of the Community Warden is ever evolving, their over-riding objective remains *‘to create safer and stronger communities’*. They work closely with/on behalf of other operational units within KCC and Community Safety Partners to address a wide range of issues

ASB incl Environmental Crime & Rogue Trading

Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
2.1 Increase number of enforcement interventions and prosecutions for fly tipping using all actionable evidence. Increase the number of partnership, cross border and community working actions in repeat locations.	SDC Direct Services CSU	KCC Wardens PCSOs Housing Assoc	March 2023
2.2 Work with the VRU to address and reduce young adults behaviour where there is the potential to escalate, through the Community MARAC	VRU	All Partners	March 2023
2.3 Identify perpetrators and repeat offenders of ASB and undertake actions according to the ASB Act 2014 or other partner agencies powers to take swift action.	All Partners		March 2023
2.4 Continue to set up Task and Finish Groups to deliver a focused approach to reducing repeat ASB and use ASB Powers where appropriate such as Closure Orders, Community Protection Notices and Criminal Behaviour Orders. Invite Community Wardens to Task & Finish Groups where issues pertain to their home communities. Team members have a great breadth of knowledge (issues, useful local stakeholders etc) that would enhance the partnership approach and ensuing actions.	CSU	All	March 2021
2.5 Communicate effective messages on how to report scams/doorstep crimes and raise awareness to remove stigma of embarrassment.	KCC Trading Standards	CSU	March 2023
2.6 Work with the KCC Doorstep crime analyst to progress a database for victims of doorstep crime	KCC Trading Standards	CSU	Sept 2021

ASB incl Environmental Crime & Rogue Trading

	Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
2.7	Work with KCC Trading Standards to help reduce Door Step Crime and Bogus Callers across the District. Greater use of Community Wardens resource in FUVs to scam victims in CW home communities	KCC Trading Standards	KCC Community Wardens CSU	June 2021

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Domestic Abuse

Please note: Domestic Abuse incidents are not reported as violence against the person. If there has been no violence recorded. For example, if there was a verbal altercation, this would be recorded as a Domestic Abuse Incident and not Violence against the Person and that is why the numbers are different.

It is important to remember that these figures are only representative of domestic abuse that was reported to the Police and it is widely recognised that there is a figure of domestic abuse, which remains unreported. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 gained royal assent in April 2021 which gave more powers and increased responsibility to the Police, Courts and local authorities for the protection of victims of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse incidents in the Sevenoaks District have increased by 64 crimes (2.7%). The District has the lowest number of Domestic Abuse incidents (2472) compared to being the second lowest in the same period last year.

Sevenoaks District Council and CSP fund a number of projects to address Domestic Abuse. These are:

12 week Freedom Programme runs 6 x a year including 2 evening sessions and 3 x 12 week Recovery Tool Kit, which is a follow on from the Freedom programme. On average 8-10 women attend these programmes. The programmes continued to run online for 2020-21.

Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme runs weekly on a Wednesday evening. For this time period the programme is run online with an average of 8 men attending weekly. The programme is a rolling programme that runs for 27 weeks.

DAVSS (Domestic Abuse Voluntary Support Services) which provides service for low and medium risk victims. In the period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021, they supported the following number of people in the Sevenoaks District - previous assessment have shown West Kent Statistics.

Data Oct 20-Sept 21	Oct 2020 - Dec 2020	Jan 2021 - March 2021	April 2021 - June 2021	July 2021 - Sept 2021	Total
referrals	65	77	81	84	307
men	1	6	4	1	12
children	114	132	139	113	498
helpline calls	444	332	540	511	1827
volunteer case work hours	1235	1223	1064	1175	4697

Domestic Abuse				
	Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
3.1	Raise public and professional awareness of Domestic Abuse by updating County websites, articles for partner agencies and T&Pcs	DAVSS WK Domestic Abuse Forum KCC Commissioned Service	All Partners	On Going
3.2	Work with DAVSS to ensure that all victims of domestic abuse can receive support	DAVSS	WK Domestic Abuse Forum	March 2021
3.3	Address what actions the CSU can partners can take under the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021	West Kent DA Forum	All Partners	On Going
3.4	Continue with funded services Freedom Programme, Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme, Recovery Tool Kit and DAY programme in schools.	SDC/CSP	DAVSS PAS Look Ahead	March 2023
3.5	Work with the commissioning provider to :- Continue to provide an IDVA and refuge service to support high risk victims of domestic abuse within West Kent.	Look Ahead		Ongoing
	Run a suite of survivor programmes for female and male survivors including: Own My Life & Hope 2 Recovery	Look Ahead		March 2023
	Virtual West Kent One Stop Shop. Work with local partners to build the virtual One Stop Shop model in West Kent and increase engagement through posters and partner liaison. Following easing of covid restrictions	Look Ahead		March 2023

Domestic Abuse

	Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
	<p>this should become a blended model with drop ins added.</p> <p>Training and Sanctuary Scheme- To continue to provide support to high risk victims who wish to remain in their homes by providing extra security items</p> <p>Emergency Accommodation- Provide overnight emergency accommodation for high risk victims needing to flee immediately</p> <p>Welfare Fund- Provide emergency funding for items such as furniture, white goods, food and travel to high risk victims in the community.</p> <p>Obtain future funding to continue the Cyber clinic</p>	<p>Look Ahead</p> <p>Look Ahead</p> <p>Look Ahead</p> <p>Look Ahead</p>	<p>KFRS/Police</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
3.6	Deliver bespoke training on DASH, MARAC and the new Domestic Abuse Act	Look Ahead/DAVSS	CSU	December 2021

Safeguarding including Young People, Vulnerable Adults, Child Sexual Exploitation, Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking, Prevent, Care Act and Mental Health

Safeguarding includes Young People, Vulnerable Adults, CSE, Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking, Prevent, Care Act, Missing Children and Mental Health.

Legislation places a statutory duty on local councils as well as some of the other partner agencies to protect the vulnerable under these crimes. It is also a major contributor to the Kent Police Strategy. The above are a community concern.

Counter Terrorism - Prevent Strategy

In the last two financial years 5% of Dovetail referrals discussed at the Kent Channel panel have been of Sevenoaks residents, with a 50/50 split between adults and children. All were male and referral and adopted case numbers remained the same in both years. Ideology of referrals has been split 50/50 between Unclear and Right Wing Terrorism (RWT).

Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

For the period of 01/10/20 - 30/09/21, Kent Police recorded 5 Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking related investigations in the Sevenoaks District.

The investigations related to 3 male victims and 2 female victims. All were foreign nationals - 2 Chinese males, 1 Ethiopian male, 1 Moroccan female and 1 Eritrean female.

2 victims were subject of potential labour exploitation, 1 of potential domestic servitude. Exploitation type was unknown for the remaining 2 victims.

All investigations are now filed and no charges were made in connection with these matters.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

According to Kent Police there were 1 reports of CSE in the Sevenoaks District, but was linked to 11 crime reports.

These are centred on an area in Edenbridge where one male is alleged to have groomed young girls by giving them drugs and having sex with them. All cases have been filed, insufficient evidence.

Vulnerable Adults

During the period of 15th October 2020 - 30 September 2021 the PCSO for Vulnerable Adults has dealt with approximately 30 vulnerable persons age ranging from 25 - 88 yrs. Of which 19 were female and 11 male.

Vulnerable Young People

The PCSO for Vulnerable Young People was able to go back into schools from September 2020 - December 2020, but then due to another lockdown did not go back in until after Easter in April 2021. However they linked in with schools across the District. Visiting all primary, secondary and private schools to introduce themselves.

They have worked with over 40 young people who have needed additional needs and this could be from anti-social behaviour, school exclusions and missing children. Kent Police are employed Schools Officers and there should be 2 for the District. We are waiting allocation of this and we are hoping this will be in early 2022.

There were 560 referrals of safeguarding (all years to KCC) from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021. This has gone up by 2% since the same period last year.

The number of adults that accessed mental health services in the District was 582 an increase of 65 compared to the same period last year.

SAFEGUARDING (including Mental Health, Prevent, Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking, Vulnerable Adults and Children)

	Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
4.1	Work with Mental Health Services for all age groups especially around isolation and COVID-19 concerns	KCC Public Health	CSU	March 2023
4.2	Deliver on the Youth Mentoring Programme to address mental health concerns for young people	CSU	All Partners	On Going
4.3	To work with Prevent Team on training and education on Counter Terrorism	LSP	All Partners	March 2023
4.4	Work with Sevenoaks District Youth Assembly Forum on their Mental Health priorities for young people, addressing social isolation	CSU Youth Assembly KCC	WKHA SDC/CSU	March 2023
4.3	Work with Police to address Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. Work on evidence received to deliver a partnership approach	Police SCD	CSU All	March 2023
4.5	Attend Chanel Panels where appropriate and provide support to individuals when required and Promote the Prevent Strategy within the community via Social Media etc.	CSU KCC Prevent Team		March 2023
4.6	Deliver projects in schools to identify vulnerable young children and refer onto relevant services	PCSO Vulnerable Young People	All Partners	March 2023
4.7	Work with Vulnerable Adults and sign post to appropriate services including the new Hoarding Officer	PCSO Vulnerable Adults	CSU All Partners	

Violence against Women & Girls (VAWG) incl Stalking & Harassment

The Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) agenda has been a big part of 2021 the Policing Strategy and community concerns, especially since the murder of Sarah Everard, by a Police Officer in March 2021.

Also increased in VAWG is Stalking & Harassment, which highlights excessive intimidation towards women and girls.

There were 1129 reports to Police of Stalking and Harassment for Sevenoaks District. This is an increase of 213 compared to the same period last year (Oct 2019- Sept 2020).

The CSP funds PAS (Protection against Stalking). From April 2021 - 30 September 2021 there were 88 reports of stalking for the Sevenoaks District to PAS. PAS also support the Cyber café which supports all victims of stalking. The café is held on a monthly basis.

**Violence against Women & Girls (VAWG)
incl Stalking & Harassment**

	Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
5.1	Promote Safe Streets App and Community Voice to increase followers to receive advice and information	CSU	All Partners	March 2023
5.2	Develop a web page for VAWG and produce and advertise a tool kit	CSU	All Partners	Sept 2022
5.3	Work with agencies to deliver defence classes for women and girls across the District	CSU	All Partners	March 2023
5.4	Deliver an action plan for the 16 days of no violence and addressing Domestic Abuse and VAWG in November	West Kent DA Forum	DAVSS PAS Look Ahead	November 2022
5.5	Deliver stalking training and workshops with PAS	PAS	CSU	December 2022
5.6	Promote the cyber café and look of possibility of a pilot in Sevenoaks District	PAS Look Ahead	CSU	March 2023
5.7	Reduce the number of repeat victims of stalking and harassment	PAS Police	CSU	March 2023

Drug Misuse & County Lines

Drug offences have slightly increased from 176 to 186 an increase of 10 reports. The District remains the lowest in the County for Drug reports. There is a high number that is also under reported of drug offences.

There has been an increase of young people

Kenward Trust is funded by the CSP and continue to do outreach work across the District. Our focus in 2022/20223 is to support young people caught up in exploitation, grooming and gang culture. With the continued work of reducing ASB and Substance misuse the teams see around 300 young people each quarter and build up good relationships with hard to reach young people.

The team went to all locations that was identified by the CSU to support the young people. The 1-2-1 work has started to show great outcomes. Kenward Trust are looking for a specialist worker will hold a young person for 6 to 8 weeks.

CGL work closely with a range of partner agencies to improve outcomes for substance misusers. Greensands, a supported housing project in Sevenoaks, is assisted by CGL through the provision of group work and peer support to residents for their substance misuse. A joint working programme has also been developed with West Kent Mind to deliver CGL programmes on a weekly basis and a bi-weekly drop in and referral service for Mind service users. This will facilitate better access to drug and alcohol services for these clients.

Addaction are commissioned by Public Health to deliver services to young people.

County Lines

Over the past year there has been a number of County Lines identified in the District, which is naturally linked to gang and gang culture, which is seen by some young people as a “status”. The CSP has been working with the Violent Reduction Unit in working with young people in County Lines and support groups that can be referred to.

Drug Misuse and County Lines

Priority Action	Lead Agency	Other Partners	By When
6.1 Deliver outreach work to designated areas to address substance misuse using CSU reports via the Daily Tasking	Kenward Trust	CSU Schools Youth Groups	March 2023
6.2 Continue to develop a package around substance misuse for primary schools around positive choices to go alongside a parental package	Kenward Trust Addaction	CSU	Sept 2022
6.3 Deliver a parents event around knife crime/county lines	CSU	Kent Police	December 2022
6.4 Use the knife wands on Police operations and consider running a knife amnesty	Police	CSU	On Going
6.5 Work with young people to stop them becoming high risk or into the criminal justice system. Reduce numbers compared to previous year	KCC Youth Team Police	CSU	Ongoing
6.6 Through a mapping exercise look at county lines and drug concerns for a partnership approach to deter these crimes	Serious Crime & Tactical Group	CSU All Partners	December 2022
6.7 Violent Reduction Unit (VRU) to use Community MARAC to make referrals for young people	VRU Kent Police	All Partners	April 2022

Membership of the Community Safety Partnership and contact details

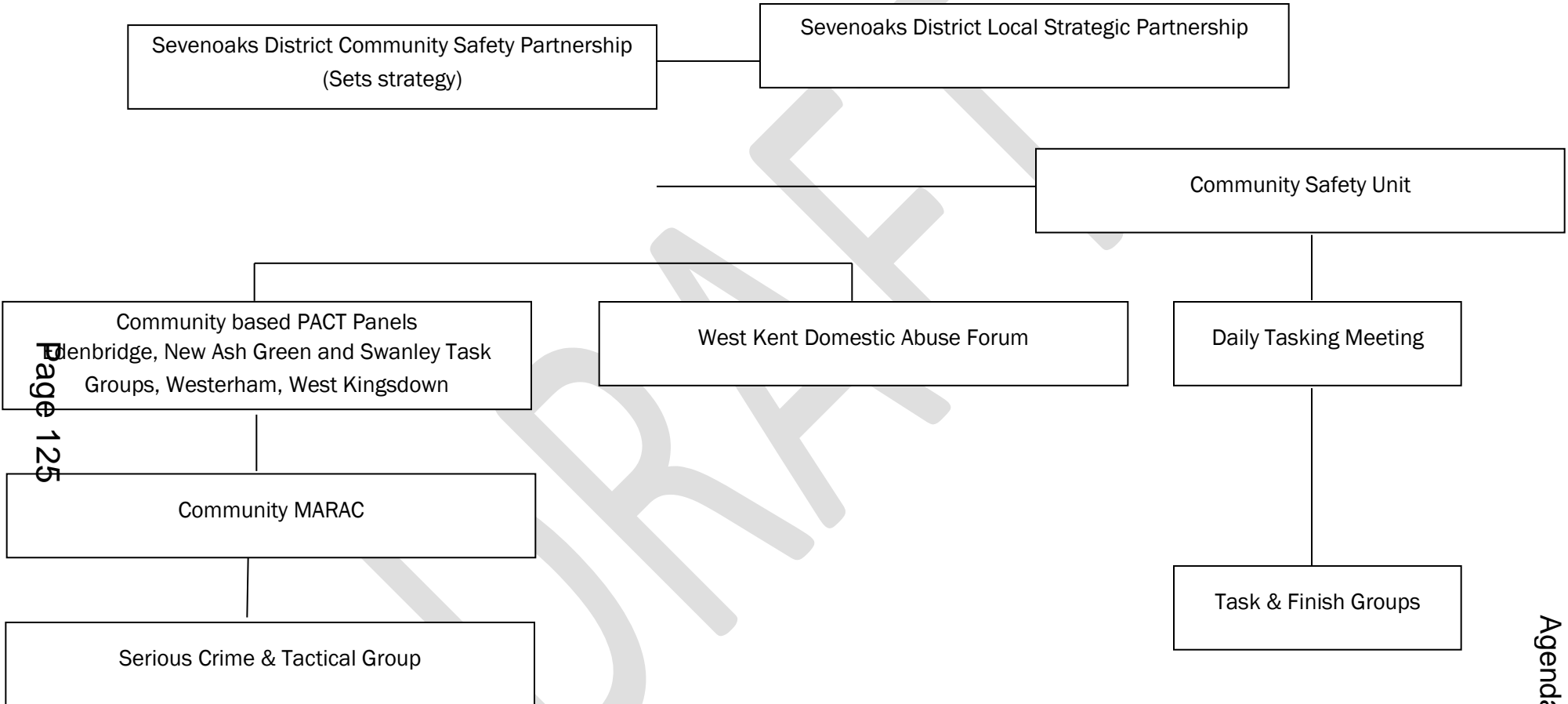
<p>Sevenoaks District Council Argyle Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1GP Tel: 01732 227000 Web: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk</p>	<p>Kent Police 1 Pembury Road Tonbridge Kent TN9 2HS Tel:01622 690690 Web: www.kent.police.uk</p>	<p>Kent Fire & Rescue Service West Group HQ Sevenoaks Fire Station London Road, Sevenoaks Tel: 01622 692121 Web: www.kent.fire-uk.org</p>	<p>Police & Crime Commissioner Kent Police Headquarters Sutton Road Maidstone ME15 9BZ Tel: 01622 677055 Web: www.kentpa.kent.police.uk</p>
<p>NHS West Kent CCG Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road Tonbridge Kent TN9 1RE Tel: 01732 375200 Web: www.westkentpct.nhs.uk</p>	<p>Kent Surrey and Sussex CRC Ltd Maidstone Corporate Centre 3rd Floor, Maidstone House King Street Maidstone Kent, ME15 6AW Tel: 01622 239147 Website: www.ksscrc.co.uk</p>	<p>KCC Social Services The Willows, Hilda May Ave, Swanley Kent BR8 7BT Tel: 0300 041 1400 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>Imago 17-19 Monson Road Tunbridge Wells Kent TN1 1LS Tel: 01892 530330 Web: www.imago.org.uk</p>
<p>KCC Early Help & Preventative Service C/o Swanley Youth Centre St. Mary's Road Swanley Kent BR8 7BU Tel 01322 615275 Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>Protection Against Stalking Town Hall, Tunbridge Wells Referrals support@protectionagainststalking.org Enquiries office@protectionagainststalking.org www.protectionagainststalking.org</p>	<p>KCC Community Safety Team Maidstone Fire Station Loose Road Maidstone Kent ME15 9QB Web: www.kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>West Kent Housing Association 101 London Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1AX Tel: 01732 749400 Web: www.westkent.org</p>
<p>Kenward Trust Kenward Road Yalding, Maidstone Kent ME18 6AH Tel: 01622 814187 Web: www.kenwardtrust.org.uk</p>	<p>MOAT Homes Galleon Boulevard Crossways Dartford Kent DA2 6QE Tel: 0300 323 0011 Web: www.moat.co.uk</p>	<p>West Kent Extra 101 London Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1AX Tel: 01732 749400 Web: www.westkent.org</p>	<p>DAVSS PO Box 530 Tunbridge Wells Kent TN2 9TB Tel: 01892 570538 Web: www.davss.org.uk</p>

Terms of Reference

The Partnership's terms of reference are to:

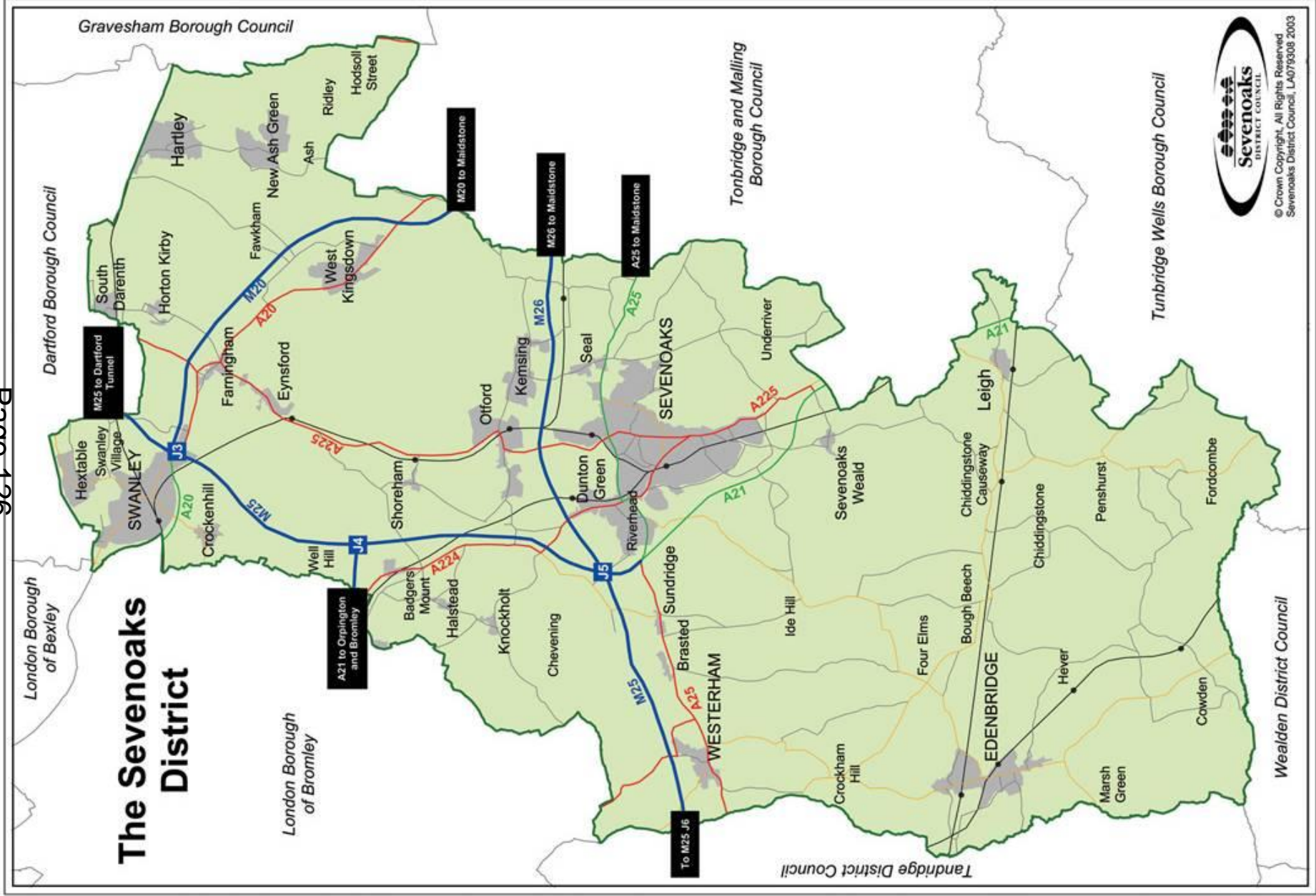
- Undertake periodic reviews of community safety in the District and disseminate the findings to the public
- Develop a yearly strategy and action plan to tackle community safety
- Monitor and report progress in meeting the agreed targets and actions
- Secure resources and funding from parent organisations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

Structure and Meetings Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Meetings



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Enquiries to:

CSU
Sevenoaks District Council
PO Box 183, Argyle Road
Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1GP
Telephone 01732 227000

E-mail community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

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Item 09 - Citizens Advice Financial Split

The attached report was considered by the People & Places Advisory Committee on 1 March 2022. The relevant Minute extract was not available prior to the printing of this agenda and will follow when available.

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CITIZENS ADVICE - CONFIRMED FINANCIAL SPLIT

Cabinet - 17 March 2022

Report of: Sarah Robson, Deputy Chief Exec and Chief Officer People & Places

Status: For Agreement

Also considered by: People & Places Advisory Committee - 1 March 2022

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: To provide an update on the changes made by Citizens Advice on the financial split for the two offices over the next 3 years. This is following the financial agreement in March 2021 by Advisory and Cabinet, but that Citizens Advice decided they wanted to change it after their initial submission.

This reports support the Key Aim of: Community Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Kelly Webb, Ext. 7474

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee:

That it be recommended to Cabinet that the new financial split is approved.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the new financial split is approved.

Reason for recommendation: So that the two Citizen Advices Offices can go forward with the signed SLA

Introduction and Background

- 1 The CA had an SLA for 2021-2024, which had been agreed by SDC and the two CAs.
- 2 The financial split is always done by the two CAs and not SDC. The two managers had agreed the financial split, which had given Edenbridge & Westerham a slightly higher amount than previous years. This was agreed with them and went through the P&PAC Advisory Committee on 2 March 2021 and Cabinet on 18 March 2021 with full approval.

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- 3 After we wrote to the CAs to inform them that everything had been agreed, Edenbridge & Westerham CA came back to say that they were unhappy about the financial split and would not sign the SLA.
- 4 The CAs could not agree on the financials and decided on a mediator to work with them both to come to an agreement. This has been in place since April 2021.
- 5 On 7th December we have received the outcome of their decision, with the new financial split and has been signed by both Chairman's and Chief Officers.
- 6 As the financials were agreed by going through the Advisory and Committee process, we will now be going through the same process to make sure PAPC and Cabinet are in agreement with the new arrangements.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

None

Key Implications

Financial

- 7 There are no financial implications as it is the same allocation, it is just the split that has been in question.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

- 8 There are no legal issues for the Council arising from this decision.

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. The decisions recommended through this paper directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and varies between groups of people

Conclusions

That the new financial split is approved

Appendices

Appendix A - Letter received from Citizens Advice dated 7 December 2021 and received on 20 December 2021.

Background Papers

None

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Exec & Chief Officer for People & Places

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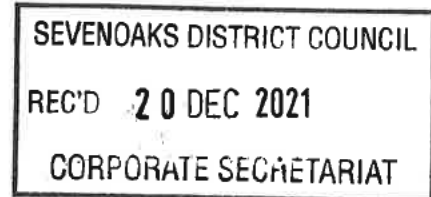
Citizens Advice
Edenbridge &
Westerham
The Eden Centre,
Four Elms Road,
EDENBRIDGE,
Kent TN8 6BY

Citizens Advice in North
& West Kent
Tonbridge Castle,
Castle Street,
TONBRIDGE,
Kent TN9 1BG



7th December 2021

Ms. S Robson,
Chief Officer – People & Places,
Sevenoaks District Council,
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 1HG



Cc Ms. K Webb, Community Safety Manager, Sevenoaks DC

Dear Sarah,
Service Level Agreement between Sevenoaks District Council and Citizens Advice
in the Sevenoaks District – 2021-24

Please note that following negotiations between ourselves, the trustees of both organisations have agreed that the split of the grants for 2022/23 and 2023/24 should be made in the following proportion:

	General Advice		Housing Advice		Total
Edenbridge & Westerham	30%	£29,562	33 ¹ / ₃ rd %	£6,000	£35,562
North West Kent	70%	£68,978	66 ² / ₃ rd %	£12,000	£80,978

Yours Sincerely

	Edenbridge & Westerham	North West Kent
Chairman	G. Allard (Deputy) [Redacted]	R. Thompson [Redacted]
Chief Officer	S. Hiller [Redacted]	A. Newey [Redacted]

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Item 10 - Safeguarding Policy

The attached report was considered by the People & Places Advisory Committee on 1 March 2022. The relevant Minute extract was not available prior to the printing of this agenda and will follow when available.

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**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY
2022-2025**

Cabinet - 17 March 2022

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Officer- People and Places

Status: For Decision

Also considered by:

- People & Places Advisory Committee - 1 March 2022
- Council - 26 April 2022

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: To present the Council's updated Safeguarding Policy and to reflect all changes in legislation and working practices.

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

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Sarah Robson, Ext. 7219

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

To recommend to Cabinet to recommend to Council the adoption of the updated Safeguarding, Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

To recommend to Council the adoption of the updated Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

Recommendation to Council:

To adopt the updated Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

Reason for recommendation: To enable the Council to meet its statutory responsibilities and to follow guidance published by the Department of Health and Kent County Council in relation to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. To ensure that all Council staff, Members, contractors and volunteers are aware of their professional and moral obligations for safeguarding.

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Introduction and Background

- 1 Sevenoaks District Council has a statutory safeguarding role within the wider public sector. We have a responsibility to children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Council has the responsibility to provide and ensure all employees adhere to safeguarding policies and ensure easy pathways to Kent County Council (KCC) to report safeguarding concerns. By ensuring our staff uphold our own Safeguarding Policy, we will support KCC in their statutory role in making safeguarding personal and provide them with the relevant and timely information they need to investigate concerns.
- 2 The Council has an Officer Safeguarding Group which oversees safeguarding work and is responsible for updating and maintaining the Policy. The policy has been updated to take into account various changes in legislation and working practices.
- 3 A revised version of the Safeguarding Policy is attached as Appendix A.

Aims of the Safeguarding Policy

- 4 The policy aims to ensure that an overarching approach to safeguarding is embedded within all Council services and that staff, elected Members, those delivering services on behalf of the Council and volunteers have a good understanding of safeguarding guidelines and good practice.
- 5 The main aims of the policy are to:
 - Raise awareness of the duties and responsibilities for children, young people and adults at risk of harm
 - Encourage good practice among staff, elected members, volunteers and contractors, to safeguard children and adults at risk who receive Council services
 - Provide clear guidance on procedures to be adopted if it is suspected that an adult, young person or child may be at risk of harm

Updates to the Policy

- 6 There have been some changes since the Safeguarding Policy was last updated, which are detailed in this section of the report.
- 7 The Kent Safeguarding Children Board has changed to become the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP), with slightly different reporting arrangements and responsibilities. These revisions have been included in the updated version.
- 8 With regard to adult safeguarding, KCC no longer accept “Adult LADO” referrals (LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer). These referrals were specifically for people wishing to report concerns against any person who works with adults in a position of trust. It is now important that the Council has its own policy and procedures in place to respond to these concerns. This is reflected in the revised policy with clear pathways for raising these concerns, including links to the Councils Whistleblowing Procedure.

- 9 As with previous versions of the policy, there is advice and guidance provided to encourage everyone to respond to safeguarding issues and concerns. This has become particularly relevant in the current climate, as we know the effects of the Covid restrictions have increased difficulties for many, leaving some people more vulnerable, more susceptible to abuse and also increasing anxiety and mental health issues.
- 10 An updated section on safeguarding roles and responsibilities within the Council has been included.
- 11 The types of abuse have been further defined and explained.
- 12 The referrals process has been updated, to provide further information on whether a notification will trigger a Designated Safeguarding Officer consultation or not.
- 13 The referrals process has been updated to include discussing any potential referral with the individual, asking whether this has been done and if not, why not.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

- 14 None. Failure to keep children, young people or vulnerable adults safe represents not only a significant risk to residents, but also to the reputation of the Council.

Key Implications

Resources

Safeguarding training for staff is being met from within existing resources.

Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

Failure to meeting statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under S11 of the Children Act 2004 could lead to litigation if children come to harm whilst the Council are carrying out services/undertaking duties or partner agencies carrying out services/undertaking duties on behalf of the Council.

Failure to follow guidance published by the Department of Health and KCC in relation to vulnerable adults could weaken the Councils' position if vulnerable adults come to harm as a result of failure to implement an effective system of controls and procedures at a local level.

Failure to keep children or vulnerable adults safe represents not only a significant risk to residents but also to the reputation of the Council.

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

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. The decisions recommended through this paper directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and does not vary between groups of people. The results of this analysis are set out immediately below.

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

Net Zero Implications

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or supporting the resilience of the natural environment.

Conclusions

The policy and corporate safeguarding function within the District Council ensures that we are fulfilling our duty through a coordinated approach across all departments to ensure that we are aware of what safeguarding is, how to recognise it, how to discuss safeguarding concerns, where and how to report safeguarding, and lastly how to record all safeguarding concerns.

If approved, the policy will be made available to all staff, contractors and volunteers. The District Council Safeguarding Group will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring its implementation.

Appendices

Appendix A - Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy 2022-2025

Background Papers

None

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People and Places

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Appendix A

Sevenoaks District Council

**Safeguarding Children, Young People and
Vulnerable Adults Policy 2022-2025**

If you see it, say it!



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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Sevenoaks District Council is committed to working in partnership with others to safeguard its residents from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The Council will raise awareness of safeguarding issues to ensure that the needs and interests of children, young people and adults with care and support needs are incumbent in decision making processes and through service provision.
- 1.2 This Policy aims to ensure that an overarching approach to safeguarding is embedded within all Council services and that staff, elected members, volunteers and those delivering contracts on behalf of the Council understand their role and responsibilities in supporting all residents to live a life free from abuse, exploitation and intimidation.
- 1.3 The Council will create an environment where staff, volunteers and elected members are adequately trained and encouraged to think of safeguarding as being their responsibility, understanding the need for them to play a full and active part in the delivery of the Council's response. External training providers will be used to deliver training where necessary.

2. What is Safeguarding?

- 2.1 Safeguarding is about protecting people's health, wellbeing and right to live free from harm, abuse or neglect.
- 2.2 It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop the risk and experience of abuse or neglect.
- 2.3 Some services can play an important role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as part of their day-to-day work – recognising child welfare issues, sharing information, making referrals and subsequently managing or reducing risks
- 2.4 Staff may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults in a variety of different situations and roles at the Council. This might be someone you see on

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the front desk in reception, a child in a family you see on a home or site visit, or a resident you speak to on the phone.

- 2.5 The Council's safeguarding policy sets out what the potential risks are to children and vulnerable adults, the ways you can report a concern, how you deal with concerns, or information/allegations of harm disclosed to you.
- 2.6 **"If you see it, say it"** is the key message in this policy. We want to give staff the confidence to know how recognise, report and get support in dealing with safeguarding concerns, along with good understanding of safeguarding guidelines and good and consistent practice.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 We believe that the action we take to promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and vulnerable adults has a role to play.
- 3.2 The purpose of this policy is to protect and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults using or receiving services who are provided or commissioned by Sevenoaks District Council. This policy supports the Council, its officers, elected members and volunteers in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.
- 3.3 Sevenoaks District Council (from hereon referred to as 'the Council') is not a Children's Services Authority and it is not the role of the Council to investigate allegations of abuse by third parties. However, all Elected Members, employees, volunteers and contracted services providers have a clear responsibility to take action when they suspect or recognise that a child, young person or adult at risk may be a victim of significant harm or abuse.
- 3.4 It is your responsibility to read this information carefully and if you are a manager, ensure it is distributed to all relevant individuals or groups before they have contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- 3.5 Information sharing plays a critical role in safeguarding, in both prevention and detection. Serious case reviews consistently highlight information sharing as a key issue to be addressed by partners. We believe that robust interagency working and partnerships between local council services, health, the family

justice system and the voluntary sector, encourages openness and learning from interventions and are used to inform and improve current and future practice and policies. The Council is committed to strengthening this working practice.

- 3.6 The following flowchart in section 4 gives an overview of the safeguarding procedure while section 5 provides staff with a practical list of Dos and Don'ts for dealing with safeguarding issues.

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4. Referrals Process Flowchart

Sevenoaks District Council employee witnesses or has suspected concerns or receives a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect involving a child/young person or adult at risk

Is there an immediate risk of harm or is it an emergency?

Yes

No

If someone has threatened to commit suicide or intend to harm themselves, please call the Police on 101 for a welfare check. Ensure you complete our [Safeguarding Notification E-Form](#) (on InSite). Email it to safeguarding@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Call the Police on 999. Ensure you complete our [Safeguarding Notification E-Form](#) (on InSite). Email it to safeguarding@sevenoaks.gov.uk

If you have concerns about a vulnerable adult, child or young person, discuss the matter with your Line Manager in the first instance. If you have had the appropriate training, you might be able to make a direct referral to the relevant service. **Please always send a copy of any referral to the safeguarding address. If you are unable to speak to your line manager, please speak to your Designated Safeguarding Officer** and complete our [Safeguarding Notification E-Form](#) (on InSite). Email it to safeguarding@sevenoaks.gov.uk If your concern relates to a member of staff, follow the procedure above. However, you must notify Human Resources and send your notification form to human.resources@sevenoaks.gov.uk

It may be necessary to call Kent County County's (KCC) Central Duty Team for guidance:

03000 41 11 11 for Children and Young People

03000 41 61 61 for Adults

You can also e-mail them on social.services@kent.gov.uk for both Adults, Children and Young People.

If your concerns relate to children or young people, your Designated Safeguarding Officer will advise you if a [Single Request for Support](#) form needs to be made to Social Services. This replaces previous Inter-Agency referral and Early Help notification forms. This can only be done for intensive and specialist [support levels](#) and [full guidance](#) on support levels and the form is available on the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership website [here](#).

**It will be necessary to follow-up the report.
Your Line Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officer will help you to do this.**

4.1 Confirmation that the referral has been actively dealt with

- Reporting the matter should not be delayed by an attempt to obtain more information. A summary of any consultation with, or referral to, the Front Door Service/ Adults Central Duty Team should be recorded by the referring officer. This ought to be retained on file in case any follow-up is needed.
- The onus is on the referring officer, to ensure that Sevenoaks District Council fulfils its statutory obligation to receive confirmation from Kent County Council within 72 hours that they have actively considered the referral.
- Once confirmation is received with information on the outcome of the referral, the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer should be updated so the record of concern entry can be updated
- If a response on the outcome of the referral is not received within 72 hours of making a referral, the referring officer should follow up with the Front Door Service/ Adults Central Duty Team or the relevant Case Management Team if it is an adult referral and the adult is already known to services, as outlined in the Referrals Process Flowchart. If a case has been referred to the Police due to an immediate risk of harm or emergency, the Police crime report number should be noted and placed on file.

4.2 Escalating a referral or concern

- If a member of staff feels that the course of action outlined by Kent County Council following a referral doesn't represent, in their opinion, the best course of action in relation to that case or about the action, or inaction, of another agency then there should be a professional challenge. The aim should be to resolve it at a practitioner level and then at a team manager level. But if it can't be resolved, then concerns should be raised with the Executive Lead or Designated Safeguarding Leader Officer.
- The Executive Lead or Designated Safeguarding Leader Officer will make the final decision as to whether a case will be referred back to Kent County Council or other agency expressing Sevenoaks District Council's concerns in relation to the welfare of that individual. If at that stage it cannot be

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resolved then the case will be further escalated to the Chief Executive of both organisations.

5. Dos and Don'ts

5.1 The following list of Dos and Don'ts has been produced as a quick and practical guide to dealing with safeguarding issues.

Do

- If you see it, say it – report anything that you feel could be a safeguarding issue;
- Call the Police on 999 if you think someone is in immediate risk of harm or danger;
- Speak to your line manager about any concerns;
- Tell your client that you will need to inform people and write things down if they make a disclosure;
- Remember that once you have spoken to your line manager, you can speak to a Designated Officer for further guidance. You can call the Contact Centre on x7001 and they will put you through to an available officer. There is a list of Designated Officers on InSite and on posters throughout the building
- Complete our Safeguarding Notification Form on InSite which will trigger a discussion with a Designated Officer. The matter may then have to be reported to Social Services
- Remember that the Council's role is not to investigate but to report our concerns to Social Services;
- Record all calls with your clients, whether from landlines or mobiles;
- Only provide the support specified within your role;
- Be self-aware - particularly of your body language and tone;
- Ensure you set your privacy settings on any personal social media accounts;
- Always remember to ask for help and support if you need it

Don't

- Promise to keep anything secret in the event of a safeguarding disclosure;

- Wait to report something if something feels wrong or makes your uncomfortable – trust your instincts;
- Undertake home visits if they have not been approved by your line manager – it is better to see clients in authorised Council meeting rooms;
- Be worried about asking for support from another colleague to sit in on a meeting with you if a client makes a disclosure;
- Arrange to meet a client outside work hours or in any circumstances that could be misconstrued by clients, e.g. coffee, lunch;
- Offer help which is not part of your role – it might be appropriate to signpost or clarify the boundaries of your support;
- Give out personal phone numbers or emails – only use work phones;
- Give out details of your personal life outside of work;
- Confide in your client;
- Give any personal opinions on questions/issue your client may ask Engage in discussions with your clients on any form of Social Media

6. How to contact the Kent Safeguarding Team

- Kent County Council have staff available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and can be contacted during the day and out of hours regarding safeguarding concerns.
- Remember that if someone is in immediate danger, please call 999.
- The [Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership](#) also keep a list of other organisations safeguarding contacts
 - Details on making a referral about a child to Kent County Council are also available on KCC's website.
 - Details about adult protection and reporting abuse relating to adults are also contained on the KCC website.
 - A list of useful contact details can be found at Appendix B

7. Fulfilling the Council's Safeguarding Obligations

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

- Senior Management Commitment: The Chief Executive and Chief Officers are committed to the importance of safeguarding and promote the Council's Safeguarding Policy. The Designated Safeguarding Officer/s will be member/s of the Strategic Management Team and the Strategic Management Team will receive regular updates on safeguarding matters.
- Endeavour to keep residents and service users safe from abuse. Suspicion of abuse will be responded to promptly and appropriately. We will always act in the best interests of the child, young person or adult at risk.
- Proactively seek to promote the welfare and protection of all children, young people and adults at risk living in the Sevenoaks District.
- With regard to recruitment, ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children, young people and vulnerable adults through robust recruitment procedures.
- Deal with any concern raised by a Member, employee, volunteer, contracted service provider, or member of the public appropriately and sensitively.
- Safeguarding referrals made by a Member, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider cannot be anonymous and should be made in the knowledge that, during the course of enquiries, the referrers may be required as witnesses.
- Not tolerate harassment of any person who raises concerns of abuse or neglect.
- Work in co-operation with KCC as required under the relevant legislation and make appropriate changes and amendments to improve the Council's safeguarding policies and procedure in light of changes to the legislative framework or as recommended by the relevant multi-agency Safeguarding Board.
- Prevent abuse by using good practice to create a safe and healthy environment and avoid situations where abuse or allegations of abuse could occur.

- Establish a working group of Officers, which engages with officers from appropriate teams across the Council to make necessary improvements around this agenda, led by the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Where appropriate, this work will be reported on regularly Strategic Management Team.
- Ensure that all new staff who have a safeguarding responsibility and who are likely to come into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults have read and understood a copy of this Policy.
- Ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are involved with making decisions about policies and services that may affect them.

7.2 The key responsibility for safeguarding lies with the County Council, and it is important to note the following:

- It is **not** the responsibility of any District Council Member, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider to determine whether abuse is taking or has taken place.
- The role of the member, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider is to *inform*, not to *investigate* or *judge*.
- The District Council is not responsible for investigating any safeguarding incidents or allegations, involving a child, young person or vulnerable adult, except where allegations are made against a member of staff where usual HR policies will apply.
- If presented by a safeguarding concern, for *most* staff who do not engage with safeguarding on a regular basis, the priority is to record the details using the initial notification form as soon as possible, and liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a Safeguarding Lead Officer or their line manager in order to inform the relevant authority regarding the safeguarding incident.
- Where the District Council is engaged with partner agencies around cross-cutting issues such as domestic violence, tackling racism and hate crimes or troubled families, issues regarding safeguarding may also emerge and need to be considered by these agencies or partners.
- Where allegations are made against a member of staff, volunteer or contracted service provider, the matter will be referred to Human Resources in the first

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instance. If appropriate, they will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). More information of the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer can be found on the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership website [here](#)

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

8. Definition of abuse

8.1 The procedure for reporting a concern or allegation informs all Council Members, employees, volunteers and those contracted service providers, what actions they should take if they have concerns or suspicions, or encounter a case of abuse or neglect in any child, young person or vulnerable adults.

8.2 Even for those experienced in working with child or adult abuse it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or already has taken place. Whilst it is accepted that staff are not experts at such recognition all staff have a duty to act if they have any concerns and discuss with an appropriate Safeguarding representative within the Council.

8.3 Abuse is a form of maltreatment that can occur in several forms which are not mutually exclusive. It includes the following types of abuse:

- **Physical:** The non-accidental use of physical force that results (or could result) in bodily injury, pain or impairment including: assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication and restraint.
- **Psychological:** Acts or behaviour which impinges on the emotional health of, or which causes distress or anguish, to individuals.
- **Sexual:** Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent. Inappropriate behaviour from an adult.
- **Grooming:** This is when someone builds an emotional connection with an individual to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking.

- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware what is happening.
- **Female Genital Mutilation:** A collective term used for illegal procedures, such as female circumcision, which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, breast ironing or injury to the female genital organs for a cultural or non-therapeutic reason.
- **Online Abuse:** Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones, inappropriate sexting. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse.
- **Cyberbullying/Bullying:** is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.
- **Domestic abuse:** Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse is not just about partners but all family relationships.
- **Self-neglect/Self-injurious:** This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.
- **Forced Marriage:** In a forced marriage, victims are coerced into marrying someone against their will. They may be physically threatened or emotionally blackmailed to do so. It is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis. It's not the same as an

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arranged marriage where people have a choice as to whether to accept the arrangement or not.

- **Extremism:** Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.
- **Discrimination:** When values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies mainstream opportunities to some groups or individuals.
- **Financial:** Unauthorised, fraudulent obtaining and improper use of funds, property or any resources of an adult at risk.
- **Organisational:** Where the culture of the organisations places the emphasis on the running of the establishment above the needs and care of the person.
- **Domestic Slavery:** Domestic servitude is a specific form of labour exploitation covering nannies, carers, housekeepers etc. Victims of domestic servitude can suffer imprisonment within the confines of the home as well as verbal, physical and sexual abuse.
- **Modern slavery/Human trafficking:** Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- **Neglect and acts of Omission:** Ignoring or withholding physical or medical care needs which result in a situation or environment detrimental to individual(s).
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** are stressful or traumatic events that happen in childhood and can affect people as adults. They include events that affect a child or young person directly, such as abuse or neglect. ACEs also include things that affect children indirectly through the environment they live in. This could be living with a parent or caregiver who has poor mental health, where there is domestic abuse, or where parents have divorced or separated. ACEs can be single events, long-term or repeated experiences.

- 8.4 It is important to understand that a vulnerable adult may be abused by another vulnerable adult, and equally, a child or young person may be abused by another child or young person.
- 8.5 Tools and guidance to help further define and identify abuse are set out at Appendix A.

9. Definitions and responsibilities

9.1 Safeguarding Children

- 9.1.1 Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that concerns about the abuse of children and vulnerable adults are addressed. The lead responsibility for managing child and adult protection lies with Kent County Council Social Services Agency although the Council works in partnership with them to identify and respond to suspected abuse.
- 9.1.2 For the purposes of the Safeguarding Policy the term ‘child’ or ‘children’ applies to children and young people under 18 years of age and statemented (“vulnerable”) young people under the age of 25.**
- 9.1.3 Under the Children Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children), the Council has a duty to co-operate with Kent County Council in discharging its duties as a Children’s Services Authority and to promote the well-being of children and young people.
- 9.1.4 The Children Act 1989 states that every child has a right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under the Children Act 2004 as published in August 2005. The guidance came into force on 1 October 2005.
- 9.1.5 Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Sections 10, 11 and 13 of the Children Act 2004 specifies what is required of the Council, including:
- Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
 - A clear statement of the Council’s responsibilities towards children and young people be available for staff, members, volunteers, contracted services and the public

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- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for reporting safeguarding concerns
- Service development that takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare – and is informed by the views of children, young people, and their families
- Safe recruitment procedures
- Training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people available for all members, staff and volunteers
- Clear protocols on safe working practice known to members, staff and volunteers
- All contracted services and grant funded organisations have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place
- Safeguarding policies and procedures of contracted services and grant funded organisations are regularly monitored
- Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- Effective information sharing
- The voice of children and young people is heard in service planning, decision-making and service delivery

9.2 **Vulnerable Adults**

9.2.1 A vulnerable adult is defined as any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

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

9.2.3 More recently, the Care Act 2014 added responsibility for adult safeguarding into legislation – codifying the principle of wellbeing and placing safeguarding adults duties on a statutory basis. The Council's policies and procedures are

governed by this Care Act, which provides the legal framework for how local authorities (in this case Kent County Council) and other parts of the system such as relevant partners (which includes the Council as a district authority) should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

9.2.4 The Council has a duty to co-operate with Kent County Council in the exercise of:

- their respective functions relating to adults with needs for care and support
- their respective functions relating to carers, and

9.2.5 The Care Act sets down a general duty on all local authorities to promote well-being in relation to how adults are treated - and the following must form part of that:

- personal dignity and respect
- physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- protection from abuse and neglect
- control by an adult over their day-to-day life (including care and support and how it is provided)
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic well-being
- domestic, family and personal relationships
- suitability of living accommodation
- the individual's contribution to society

9.2.6 In exercising this function the local authority must have regard to:

- the importance of beginning with the assumption that the adult is best-placed to judge their own well-being
- the adult's views, wishes, feelings and beliefs
- the importance of preventing or delaying the development of needs for care and or support and the importance of reducing needs that may already exist
- the need to ensure that decisions about an adult are made having regard to all of their circumstances and are not based only on age, appearance, condition or behaviour which might lead others to make unjustified assumptions about the adult's well-being
- the importance of the adult participating as fully as possible in decisions and being provided with the information and support to enable this to happen

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- achieving a balance between the adult's well-being and that of their representative, involved in care
- the need to protect people from abuse and neglect
- the need to ensure that any restriction on the adult's rights or freedom is kept to the minimum

9.2.7 The Care Act places a requirement (Section 42) on a local authority, to make or cause safeguarding enquiries, if there is concern that an adult with care and support needs (met or unmet) is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse and or neglect. This applies regardless of mental incapacity or capacity and setting. The safeguarding duties need to establish the desired outcomes for the adult (or their representative) and their wishes regarding actions that may need to be taken to stop or prevent the abuse or neglect and if so by whom.

9.3 **The Counter-Terrorism Act 2015**

9.3.1 This dictates that local authorities are vital to the Prevent work which exists to reduce the risk of people being drawn into terrorism. Local authorities must use the existing counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLPs) provided by Kent Police, to assess the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism. The Council incorporates this duty into existing policies and procedures to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities - ensuring there are clear and robust policies to identify and safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. Furthermore, the Council has developed a Prevent action plan should there be a risk identifying interventions to be actioned. The Council must also ensure that appropriate frontline staff, including those of its contractors, have a good understanding of Prevent and are trained to recognise vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and are aware of available programmes to deal with the issue.

9.4 **Modern Slavery Act 2015**

9.4.1 Under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 the Council has a statutory duty to report and provide notification to the National Crime Agency about any potential victims of modern slavery or trafficking that staff encounter. Adult victims are

able to remain anonymous should they wish to do so. The Council is under a duty to co-operate with the Commissioner.

9.4.2 Taken together, these pieces of legislation provide local authorities and their partners with strong responsibilities to the general safeguarding of both children and adults at risk.

9.5 Female Genital Mutilation – (FGM)

9.5.1 Female genital mutilation (FGM) is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore covered within the remit of the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

9.5.2 FGM is illegal in the UK and it is important that everyone is aware of the issues around FGM including identifying risk factors. Suspicions may arise in a number of ways that a child is being prepared for FGM to take place abroad. These include knowing both that the family belongs to a community in which FGM is practised and is making preparations for the child to take a holiday, arranging vaccinations or planning absence from school. The child may also talk about a special procedure/ceremony that is going to take place.

10. Reporting abuse

10.1 **When a child, young person or adult at risk makes an allegation of abuse or bullying, you should:**

- Remember that you may be the first person that a child, young person or adult at risk has trusted and it has probably taken a great deal of courage to tell you that something is wrong
- Remember that it is rare for children, and particularly young children, to lie about abuse.
- Stay calm and try to get another witness if it does not compromise the situation
- **If you believe the person is 'at risk' of immediate significant harm**, which includes situations which any Member, employee or volunteer would reasonably believe requires the emergency services, **then** you must contact the relevant emergency service and notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a Safeguarding Lead Officer or your line manager

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- Listen carefully to what is said and allow the person to talk at their own pace, being careful not to compromise potential evidence
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain it is likely that information will need to be shared with other responsible people, **do not promise to keep secrets**
- Only ask questions for clarification, the use of open questions e.g. what, where, when, who? is advisable, do not ask leading questions (that suggest certain answers as this could compromise evidence)
- Do not interrogate or question other than to clarify your understanding. If the matter is to be investigated further, it will be done by trained professionals. No matter how well you know the person, spare them having to repeat themselves over and over. Apart from anything else, the person may begin to think you do not believe them.
- Be aware that the child or vulnerable adult may have been seriously threatened not to tell.
- Remain calm, no matter how difficult it is to listen to the person – think of how hard it must be to say it. You have been chosen because that person feels they can talk to you. If you show anger, disgust or disbelief then they may stop talking for fear of upsetting you further or feel that your negative feelings are being directed towards them.
- Let them know what you are going to do next and why it is necessary.
- As soon as practical, write down everything you have been told, using the Council's Safeguarding Notification Form on InSite
 - Note what was said, using the exact words and phrases spoken if possible.
 - Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.
 - Note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time.
 - Separate out factual information from your own opinion.
 - Use a pen or biro with black ink, so that the report can be photocopied.
 - Be aware that your report may be required later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure.

- Make every effort to preserve any evidence which may be relevant to a police investigation, however taking into account that the wellbeing of the person is your first priority.
- Consider your own feelings and seek support if it is needed by contacting the Human Resources Team to arrange for confidential counselling.
- Respect the confidentiality of the situation and do not share or discuss information with anyone except on a “need-to-know” basis, as outlined in this document.
- Immediately report to and inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Safeguarding Lead, Line Manager or Head of Service (as appropriate and where possible).
- Record all details you are aware of on the initial notification form (SN1) as soon as possible, which is available on the Intranet.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer may have a consultation with Kent Contact and Assessment Service (KCAS) or may ask you to help complete a formal referral
- **A list of all Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Officers and Designated Officers is available on the Council’s intranet site, InSite.**
- The outcome of the consultation/referral will be recorded on the Council’s Safeguarding Register.
- A summary of reporting concerns can be found in section 6 of this policy.

10.2 **Allegations or concerns about a Member, employee or contracted service provider:**

- These procedures should be followed where it is alleged that a person who works with children or adults at risk
 - behaved in a way that harmed a child or adult at risk, or may have harmed a child or adult at risk
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or adult at risk
 - Behaved towards a child or adult at risk in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk to them.
- You should take the allegation or concern seriously.

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- Record all details you are aware of on the initial notification form as soon as possible, which is available on the Council's Intranet.
- In these cases any allegation, concern or suspicion about a Sevenoaks District Council member of staff, member, volunteer or contractor should be reported immediately to your Line Manager, Head of Service and the Executive Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer for Safeguarding. Alternatively, you can also report any suspicion through the Sevenoaks District Council's Whistleblowing Policy.
- If the Line Manager, Head of Service, Executive Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer for Safeguarding is the subject of the allegation/suspicion the report must be made directly to the Chief Executive.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer, alongside Human Resources will follow the Council's Safeguarding Policy and personnel procedures.
- The Council's Disciplinary Policy takes this into consideration.
- Staff are given confidence through a positive open culture to report any safeguarding (or other) concerns and the Council's **whistle-blowing policy** (available on the Council's intranet site, "InSite"), staff who have genuine cause for raising concerns in the workplace.
- The corporate Complaints Procedure sets out how we deal with customers who wish to complain; safeguarding complaints will be directed to the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer/s in the first instance.
- Any employee accused of abuse will, if necessary, be suspended or redeployed pending further Police, Kent County Council and/or internal investigation.
- The Executive Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will consider whether a referral needs to be made to the Disclosures & Barring Service using the guidance and consulting with the LADO (for children)
- A summary of reporting concerns can be found in section 6 of this policy.

10.3 **When allegations or concerns are expressed about any other person (e.g. parent, carer, other service user), you should:**

- Take the allegation or concern seriously

- If you believe the child, young person or adult is 'at risk' of immediate significant harm, which includes situations which you would reasonably believe requires the emergency services, then you should contact the relevant emergency service and then notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Chief Executive, a Safeguarding Lead Officer or your line manager
- Record details on the initial notification form, which can be found through the Council intranet.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer may have a consultation with Kent Contact and Assessment Service (KCAS) or may ask you to help complete a formal referral
- Outcome of the consultation/referral to be recorded on the Safeguarding Notification Form on InSite.

10.4 A short list of safeguarding Dos and Don'ts for staff is included in section 4 of this document This covers dealing with a disclosure and how staff can protect themselves through professional boundaries.

11. Appropriate training for employees

- 11.1 Safeguarding is everyone's business. While Members, employees, volunteers and contracted services providers have varied levels of contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults as part of their duties and responsibilities for the Council, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns.
- 11.2 This general policy therefore applies to all staff. All staff are responsible for ensuring that the activities in which they are involved during the course of their work are carried out in accordance with this general policy and related

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procedures. Safeguarding is included within the Conditions of Service of all staff.

- 11.3 Appendix A to this policy sets out further guidance, information and advice on spotting the signs of abuse and neglect.
- 11.4 Employees must accept and be able to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of signs of suspected abuse or neglect according to the arrangements set out in this policy.
- 11.5 Training needs and opportunities relating to child and vulnerable adult safeguarding and protection issues will be identified and addressed through the Council's Induction and Appraisal Procedures, and in response to any changes in legislation. Training may include internal courses/workshops, externally accredited courses/seminars or workshops organised by relevant agencies. The Council Human Resources Team will organise and keep a record of all staff and volunteers who have received training.
- 11.6 Training Guidance will be produced for Human Resources (HR) to take forward all safeguarding training needs of Sevenoaks District Council staff and contractors.

12. Safe recruitment practices

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

13. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Criminal Records Check Policy

- 13.1 The Council requires staff to have an enhanced DBS check if they have unsupervised contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Chief Officers and Heads of Service, in consultation with Human Resources, are

responsible for deciding which of their staff require a DBS check, the level of check required and for ensuring that DBS checks are kept up to date.

- 13.2 Organisations or contractors undertaking work on behalf of the Council should confirm that they have appropriate DBS checks in place.
- 13.3 More information is available on the [Government's Disclosure and Barring Service website](#).

14. Procurement, third party service providers and tenants

- 14.1 Where the Council works with, commissions or grant-funds other organisations which come into contact with those groups covered by this policy, they will be required to have safeguarding arrangements in place or subscribe to the policies and procedures set out in this policy.
- 14.2 There is an obligation on the council to ensure that any third party service providers, whose services are commissioned, procured or grant funded by the Council, discharge their duties under the relevant legislation. As noted above, this general policy statement on safeguarding covers all employees of the authority – including contracted service providers.
- 14.3 All contracts and Service Level Agreements will also take account of the need of those Service Providers in contact with children, young people and adults at risk to be responsible for discharging their duties for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

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- 14.4 Grant application forms will also include a requirement for the organisation to supply evidence of their safeguarding policy if responsible for children, young people or adults at risk.
- 14.5 Where organisations are delivering services affecting children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the Council:-
- They will be expected to have robust safeguarding procedures in place.
 - Contracts, Service Level Agreements or grant approval letters will set out the safeguarding arrangements required. As a minimum, this will be that where adults work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults they should be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check or be supervised by a person with a DBS check. More information on DBS can be obtained from the Council's Human Resources department and from the government's webpage for the disclosure and barring service, which can be found [here](#).

15. Sevenoaks District Council's approach to implementing the Policy

- 15.1 Whilst other partnerships and organisations have roles in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of the Council's work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults with care and support needs, they are not accountable for the Council's operational work. The Council retains its own lines of accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults with care and support needs through its own service delivery and provision.
- 15.2 All staff, volunteers and elected members are to ensure they familiarise themselves and comply with the Council's Safeguarding Policy and associated procedural documents.
- 15.3 All staff, volunteers and elected members must participate in relevant training to recognise the varying forms of abuse and report any concerns,

incidents or allegations to the Council’s Designated Safeguarding Officers in line with the relevant procedures.

- 15.4 It is the responsibility of staff and elected members to consider safeguarding implications in their decision making processes, including the procurement of services.
- 15.5 All external organisations and contractors providing services to the Council are required to comply with the Council’s Safeguarding Policy as a minimum standard. Where relevant they should have their own safeguarding policy and procedures in place.
- 15.6 Whilst safeguarding is the responsibility of all Council staff, volunteers, elected members and contractors, there are a number of safeguarding roles within the Council with specific responsibilities briefly set out below:

Role	Responsibilities
Executive Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the profile, support the Policy and promote the development of initiatives to ensure the protection of residents within the district. • Allocate resources to enable the Council to meet its responsibilities. • Chair the Officer Safeguarding Group, submitting updates to SMT.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Policy every year issuing operational guidance and promoting good practice and making policy recommendations to SMT and relevant Committees. • Make referrals to KCC safeguarding referral channels as appropriate. • Ensure that action taken is coordinated and monitored. • Coordinate audits and assessments for submission to the Kent Safeguarding Children and Adult Boards. • Development of an annual safeguarding action plan, working with the HR team who will lead on the delivery and

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	<p>monitoring of training, DBS checks and retain a log of all staff training.</p>
Designated Safeguarding Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of the annual safeguarding action plan. • Support the co-ordination of audits and assessments for submission to the Kent Safeguarding Children and Adult Boards. • Ensure that action taken is coordinated and monitored. • Support and advise the Council's contractors, leaseholders and grant recipients on the development of safeguarding policies, where necessary.
Elected Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinise the Council's Safeguarding Policy and safeguarding reports to relevant Committees. • Portfolio Holder with responsibility for safeguarding has responsibility for approving any policy amendments. • Portfolio Holder with responsibility for safeguarding will act as the Council's safeguarding champion. • Training to be undertaken as necessary.
Heads of Service/Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make staff aware of their duty to report any allegations or suspicions of abuse to a Designated Safeguarding Officer and the procedure for doing so. • Operate safe recruitment practices and routinely take up and check references. • Adhere to and operate within the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and support staff who raise concerns. • Ensure all staff receive training in safeguarding consistent with their job roles and responsibilities. • Monitor compliance with Council's Safeguarding Policy with contractors, leaseholders and grant recipients as appropriate.

15.7 See Appendix C for the current staff contacts.

16. The Sevenoaks District Safeguarding Group

16.1 The Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group brings together members of staff who are practitioners most likely to encounter safeguarding issues in their day-to-day work. It meets every 2 months to help ensure that the Council is taking its safeguarding responsibility seriously and complying with legal requirements. It provides a forum for practitioners to discuss issues and concerns relating to safeguarding. This Policy will be monitored through the Council's Safeguarding Group.

17. Partnership arrangements

Organisations receiving funding from the District Council will be required to provide evidence that they have a suitable child and vulnerable adult protection policy and practice in place.

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

18. Record Keeping

In order to ensure that all the details of the allegation are maintained accurately for use in possible future Court proceedings, the Lead Safeguarding Officer shall ensure that the following documentation is collated:

- The written report
- Any notes, memoranda, telephone transcripts or other correspondence dealing with the matter and copies of completed forms
- Any other relevant materials

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These copies will be kept locked at all times and kept for a period of six years.

- 18.1 Documents associated with allegations against a member of staff should be kept according to usual HR practices.
- 18.2 Where there are concerns about the length of time for which individual records should be kept, the advice of the Council's Data Protection Officer will be sought.

19. Updating the Policy

- 19.1 The Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Group will review this Policy every four years or as appropriate in light of significant legislative changes.

Reviewed: December 2021

By: Sarah Robson and Kelly Webb

Next Review data: December 2025

Annex A: Further guidance and information

Children and young people

Further guidance including definitions of abuse is available on the Government's website and includes:

- Preventing neglect, abuse and exploitation (This includes <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>)
- Keeping children safe in education and other settings
- Safeguarding disabled children
- Runaway and homeless children
- Gang activity
- Cross-border child protection

Guidance is available on the following on the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi Agency Partnership website:

- Single Request for Support form and guidance (replaces Inter-agency referral and Early Help Notification) Please speak to a Designated Safeguarding Officer for help and guidance.
- Kent Support Levels Guidance
- Physical and Emotional Wellbeing
- Domestic Abuse
- Trafficking
- Online Safety
- Child Protection Conferences
- Family and Relationships
- Bullying
- Prevent.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Faith Communities
- National legislation – GOV.UK

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[The Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership](#) website useful guidance and details of other safeguarding organisations.

Adults

Kent County Council's website contains details of [adult protection legislation and guidance](#) and details useful national legislation and guidance. It includes:

- [Self-neglect Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Joint Police, Social Services and Health Protocol for dealing with cases of domestic abuse where adults at risk are involved](#)
- [Mental capacity act](#)
- [Protocols for Kent and Medway to safeguard adults who are at risk of sexual exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking](#)
- [Human trafficking and National Referral Mechanism guidance](#)
- [Safeguarding Adults Checklist for Practitioners in Kent \(only\)](#)
- [Adults at risk of abuse guidance](#)
- [Financial abuse toolkit](#)
- [Government guidance – controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship](#)

Information Sharing

- [Kent and Medway Information Sharing Agreement](#)

Annex B: Useful contact numbers

If someone is in immediate danger of risk of harm call 999

During the day in office hours

- If you are concerned about a child? Call 03000 41 61 61
- If you are concerned about an adult? Call 03000 41 61 61
- Out of hours an in an emergency

If you need to contact the Kent Safeguarding Team outside normal office hours, call 03000 41 91 91

Education Safeguarding Team

The Education Safeguarding Team (EST) provide support, guidance and challenge to schools, services and Early Years settings and services

- Headquarters: 03000 41 57 88
- West Kent: 03000 41 22 84
- Child Protection/ e-safety: 03000 41 57 97

Local Authority Designated Officer: 03000 41 08 88 or email

GCSXsafeguardingunit@kent.gcsx.gov.uk

Early Help

- If you would like to make a referral to the Early Help and Preventative Services, they can be contacted using 03000 41 92 22 or email earlyhelp@kent.gov.uk.
- Further information and the notification form is available [here](#)

Child Sexual Exploitation

- Kent has recently launched a campaign to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation called Operation Willow. If you have concerns about a child or young person whom you believe is at risk of sexual exploitation. Call Kent Police on 101 quoting Operation Willow.

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- National Child Sexual Exploitation Helpline: 11 60 00

Child Exploitation and Online Protection

- You can make a make a report by visiting the CEOP website [here](#) or by calling Childline 0800 1111
- Other contact information for NHS and other organisations can be found at www.kscb.org.uk/about-kscb/contact-us

Annex C: Designated Safeguarding Officers

Role	Officer	Contact details
Executive Lead	Sarah Robson, Chief Officer, People and Places	Tel: 7129 Mobile: 07922 388299 Email: sarah.robson@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer	Kelly Webb, Health and Communities Manager	Tel: 7474 Mobile: 07718 120870 Email: Kelly.webb@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Jim Carrington-West. Chief Officer, Customer & Resources	Tel: 7286 Mobile: 07811 113780 Email: jim.carrington-west@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Margaret Carr, Policy Officer,	Tel: 7341 Email: Margaret.carr@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Graeme Taylor, Head of HR & Organisational Development	Tel: 7169 Email: Graeme.taylor@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Abigail Agba, Interim Head of Housing	Tel: 7272 Mobile: 07718 120871 Email: Abigail.agba@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Rav Kensrey, Homelessness Prevention Manager	Tel: 7241 Mobile: 07874 637212 Email: Rav.kensrey@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Dorota Pajsert, Human Resources Project Manager	Tel: 7092 Email: Dorota.pajsert@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Miranda Forrest, PA to Sarah Robson	Tel: 7430 Email: Miranda.forrest@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Jessica Foley, Senior Licensing Officer	Tel: 7480 Email: Jessica.foley@sevenoaks.gov.uk

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Designated Safeguarding Officer	Daniel Shaw, Private Sector Housing Team Leader	Tel: 7155 Email: Daniel.shaw@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Evelyn Gilder, Planning Improvements & Standards Manager	Tel: 7306 Email: Evelyn.gilder@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Chloe Myrie, Private Sector Housing Officer	Tel: 7295 Email: Chloe.myrie@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Sharon Burchell, Customer Solutions Team Leader	Tel: 7211 Mobile: 07432 134556 Email: Sharon.Burchell@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Jenny Weston, Accommodation Team Leader	Tel: 7431 Email: Jenny.weston@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Sue Cressall, Revenues Manager	Tel: 7041 Mobile: 07793 204263 Email: sue.cressall@sevenoaks.gov.uk