

14 June 2022 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

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People & Places Advisory Committee

Membership:

Chairman & Vice - Chair TBC

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Collins, Perry Cole, Cheeseman, P. Darrington, Dyball, Edwards-Winsler, Hudson, Raikes, Bulford and Esler

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. Election of Chairman		
2. Election of Vice-Chairman		
3. Minutes To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022 as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 8)	
4. Declarations of interest Any interest not already registered.		
5. Actions from Previous Meeting (if any)		
6. Update from Portfolio Holder		
7. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee (if any)		
8. Update from A/Chief Insp Mark Stubberfield on Kent Police and Community Voice	(Pages 9 - 10)	Sarah Robson Tel: 01732227129
9. Update on Community Wifi	(Pages 11 - 14)	Sarah Robson Tel: 01732227129
Sam Lain-Rose, Digital Lead (Inclusion & Capabilities) Kent County Council will attend.		

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-------------------|---|
| 10. | Economic Development Strategy | (Pages 15 - 52) | Chris Burchell |
| 11. | Community Grant Scheme Guidelines Review | (Pages 53 - 70) | Kathryn Bone,
Jenny Godfrey
Tel: 01732 227176,
Tel: 01732 227112 |
| 12. | Community Plan Annual Report 2021-22 | (Pages 71 - 98) | Sarah Robson
Tel: 01732227129 |
| 13. | Sevenoaks District New Community Plan 2022-2032 | (Pages 99 - 118) | Sarah Robson
Tel: 01732227129 |
| 14. | Community Safety Partnership Annual Report 2021-22 | (Pages 119 - 144) | Sarah Robson
Tel: 01732227129 |
| 15. | Welcome Back Fund Project Review | (Pages 145 - 176) | Emily Haswell
Tel: 01732227261 |
| 16. | Work Plan | (Pages 177 - 178) | |

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.

PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr Collins (Chairman)

Cllr Cole (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Dr. Canet, Cheeseman, Coleman, P. Darrington, Dyball, Edwards-Windsor, Hudson, Raikes, Hogarth

Cllr Osborne-Jackson was also present.

34. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

35. Declarations of interest

There were none.

36. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

37. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder presented a progress update to the Committee.

Since the last meeting, the Community Safety Unit (CSU) had been acknowledged for its extensive partnership activity and successes by the LGA Peer Team. The CSU had also been reviewed by Kent Police and came out top for partnership engagement and engagement with the community. The CSU had continued to work together to address ASB across the District and address certain crime types. The Chief Inspector would be invited to give an update at the next meeting of the committee.

The new White Oak Leisure Centre had been opened by the Chairman, Deputy Lord Lieutenant and Colin Jackson on Saturday 12 February and had been a great success.

The Portfolio Holder updated the Committee on various events and activities she had participated in and was planning to attend.

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People & Places Advisory Committee - 1 March 2022

The Council had also been successful in funding bids to Kent County Council's Reconnect Fund for the Easter Family Fun Days and Boxing projects. Future bids were also being pursued.

The community Digital Inclusion project which was being delivered by Compaid and supported by the Council and West Kent Housing Association had been well received. The Community Wi-fi pilot, which was being led by Kent County Council in partnership with the Council was in its research and development stage.

38. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

39. Community Grants Scheme 2022/23

The Community Projects and Funding Officer and the Health and Communities Manager presented the report which set out information about the Community Grant Scheme and summarised applications received by the Council from voluntary organisations for funding during 2022/23.

The Council's Community Grant Scheme supported local charities and voluntary sector organisations that, through their work, contributed to the priorities set out in the Community Plan.

The grant guidelines were reviewed during 2013/14 and revised guidelines were agreed by Cabinet on 12 September 2013.

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.

Members discussed the report and it was suggested that a quicker turnaround for the Grant Scheme should be looked into.

It was noted that the grant scheme guidelines had not been reviewed recently and that a review of these documents and the whole current process would be provided at a future meeting of the Committee. This review would not affect current grants.

Applicants were updated as to the availability of alternative grants and so were not merely reliant on the Council's Community Grant Scheme.

Members were advised that the grants had not decreased from last year.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Grants, as set out in Appendix C of the report be approved, subject to the conditions as set out in paragraph 12 of the report below:

- 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.

40. Public Realm Commission Annual Update

The Health and Communities Manager introduced the report which provided an annual update to the Committee on the activities and achievements of the Public Realm Commission. The report was then presented by Cllr Hogarth Public Realm Commissioner

In 2020, the Council created the role of Public Realm Commissioner to lead a district-wide Public Realm Commission. The Public Realm Commissioner was accountable to the People and Places portfolio and the Cabinet.

Cllr Hogarth was appointed as the Public Realm Commissioner for the Sevenoaks District and was supported by an independent panel of volunteers, which included local artists, community leaders and businesses, who were able to provide the Commissioner with advice and support, as appropriate. Together they worked on local community initiatives including art projects.

The Public Realm Commissioner highlighted how valuable the Commission was, which was in its second year of hosting a school video competition relating to young people's impression of the Public Realm. This had been successful, with five entries received from Milestone Academy.

In Summer 2021, residents opened up their gardens for the In Bloom competition which the Commissioner judged by the Chairman of the Council and Neil Jackson of Coolings. Oliver Barrett, a local world renowned sculptor, who lived in the District, had been commissioned to build the cast bronze sculpture for Bligh's Meadow.

A community interest group company, Concrete Wav had been set up to raise funds for the Swanley Skate Park improvements.

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Resolved: That the report be noted

41. Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Policy 2022-2025

The Chief Officer (People & Places) presented the report which informed the Committee of the updated Safeguarding Policy which reflected all changes in legislation and working practices.

The Council had an Officer Safeguarding Group which oversaw safeguarding work and was responsible for updating and maintaining the Policy. The policy had been updated to take into account various changes in legislation and working practices.

The main aims of the policy were 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

The Committee discussed the report.

It was noted that on page 44 of the agenda, question b, the final column of the table should be altered to include 'young people'. The typographical error would need to be corrected.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That subject to the correction of typographical errors, it be recommended to Cabinet that it be recommended to Council, to adopt the updated Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

42. Voluntary Sector Forum Barometer Survey Results

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which updated the Committee on the results of the second barometer survey which tracked the impact of COVID-19 on the voluntary and community sector in the District.

Whilst similar themes from the May 2021 results remained prevalent, there seemed to be the need for the Voluntary Sector Forum to provide the sector with support in the following areas:

- Improving the wellbeing of the sector’s leaders, staff and volunteers with training and events;
- Recruitment and training for volunteers.
- Disseminating fundraising and grant streams to the sector;
- Encouraging more collaboration and partnership working;
- Sharing information and support regarding compliance with restrictions and best practice for returning to some face-to-face interactions.

The Committee discussed the report and the difficulties in the voluntary sector reaching out to those residents who did not wish to embrace the digital age or only wanted to use technology for a limited purpose. It was confirmed that face to face help was available from groups including Compaid for residents.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the report be noted.

43. Citizens Advice Financial Split

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which updated the Committee on the changes made by Citizens Advice on the financial split for the two offices over the next 3 years which had been agreed previously in March 2021 but had been amended subsequently.

The Committee discussed the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the new financial split as set out below be approved.

	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

44. Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Strategy & Action Plan 2022-

23

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which outlined the 2022-23 Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan. The plan responded to the community safety priorities identified in the most recent Strategic Assessment. The Strategic Assessment was undertaken in December 2021. The six priorities, as ranked in the Strategic Assessment, were:

- Serious and Acquisitive Crime including Crime Trends
- 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

All priorities included actions around public perception and reducing repeat offenders/victims.

Members discussed the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Community Safety Partnership Strategy & Action Plan for 2022-23, be approved.

45. Work Plan

The work plan was noted with the following additions:

14 June 2022

- Sevenoaks District Community Plan 2022 - 23
- Update on Kent County Council's Community Wi-Fi pilot
- Community Voice update from Chief Inspector
- Grant Scheme Guidelines Review

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 08:06PM

CHAIRMAN

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KENT POLICE AND COMMUNITY VOICE UPDATE

People and Places Advisory Committee - 14 June 2022

Report of: Chief Officer - People and Places

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: Acting Chief Insp Mark Stubberfield will be giving an overview of policing in the District and Our Community Voice

This reports support the Key Aim of: the Council Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Kelly Webb, x 7474

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

That Members note the update

Reason for recommendation:

To update Members on priorities for the District and potential police changes and also an update on Our Community Voice

Introduction and Background

Acting Chief Inspector Mark Stubberfield is the District Commander for Sevenoaks District.

He will be updating on priorities for the District and potential police changes and also an update on Our Community Voice

Key Implications

Financial

N/A

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Equality Assessment

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- 1 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 results of this analysis are set out immediately below.
- 2 There are no negative impacts - the update applies to all.

Net Zero

N/A

Community Impact and Outcomes

Acting Chief Inspector Mark Stubberfield will update on community impact

Conclusions

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, People and Places

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY WI-FI PILOT UPDATE

People and Places Advisory Committee - 14 June 2022

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

Status: For consideration

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: Kent County Council has been invited to present an update to the committee on its Community Wi-Fi pilot programme in Kent.

This reports support the Key Aim of: the Community Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer: Kelly Webb, Ext. 7474

Recommendation to: People and Places Advisory Committee

(a) To receive and note report.

Reason for recommendation: To acknowledge the work being undertaken to date by Kent County Council to deliver a Community Wi-Fi pilot programme in Kent.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Kent County Council (KCC) Community Wi-Fi project will create an opportunity for low-income areas, who are most digitally disadvantaged, to have the ability to access community Wi-Fi, using the KPSN (Kent Public Services Network), in the area that they live.
- 2 Community Wi-Fi will help support those on a low income, by giving access to digital services and information. It will benefit those who may be reluctant to have internet installed due to confidence and motivation or who do not have the monies to pay for a broadband/data contract due to lack of income/debts. The project will address the ‘access barrier’ to digital exclusion and provide an opportunity for low income, digitally disadvantaged to access services ‘digitally’ that are meaningful to them. Without this access to Wi-Fi, even if a person has the skills to access, they are unable to view ‘digital’ support and enhance their digital skills.
- 3 The project is being funded by KCC via their Helping Hands fund, which will be used to provide targeted support to low-income households and households in financial distress, including individuals and families; and local business.

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- 4 KCC will oversee the delivery of the project, including project analytics, installation, initial maintenance, website safety measures and support from KPSN.
- 5 KCC's objectives for the project are as follows:
 - Work with KPSN to develop community Wi-Fi, in low-income areas across the county, to ensure those on low income can access services digitally.
 - Work collaboratively with public, district, parish, town councils as well as the voluntary sector, social housing groups and schools to promote the use of the community Wi-Fi.
 - Ensure there is a robust system in place to manage the associated costs upon completion of the project to ensure the projects is sustainable into the future.
 - Work with residents to ensure they have the confidence and feel safe to use the community Wi-Fi, and that they have the skills and devices needed to access.
- 6 KCC has been invited to attend People and Places Advisory Committee to provide an update on their Community Wi-Fi pilot project being delivered in Kent. Sevenoaks District is being proposed as a potential pilot area.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

Not applicable.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no current financial implications relating arising from this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal or 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

KCC has been invited to attend People and Places Advisory Committee to provide an update on their Community Wi-Fi pilot project being delivered in Kent. Sevenoaks District is being proposed as a potential pilot area.

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

None.

Sarah Robson
Chief Officer People and Places

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SEVENOAKS DISTRICT DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Committee - People & Places Committee - 14th June 2022

Report of: Strategic Head Property & Commercial

Status: For Decision

Also considered by:

- Improvement & Innovation Committee - 23rd June 2022
- Cabinet 7th July 2022

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: The following report presents a new refreshed draft Economic Development Strategy for Sevenoaks District covering the period 2022-2027. This is a key period for economic recovery and the new strategy incorporates a strong vision and action plan to ensure that the local economy grows in a dynamic, sustainable and inclusive way.

Whilst a number of the strategic priorities identified in the previous strategy remain relevant, the exceptional economic environment and the importance of transitioning to Net Zero means some new priorities and projects are included.

The Strategy will be very closely aligned and integrated with the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan once agreed.

Portfolio Holder: Cllrs. Peter Fleming & Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer: Chris Burchell, Economic Development & Programmes Manager Ext 7136

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee: That it be recommended to Cabinet that Cabinet agrees to adopt the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 included in this Report in Appendix A.

Recommendation to Cabinet: That the Cabinet agrees to adopt the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 included in this Report in Appendix A.

Reason for recommendation: Officers believe that The Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 presented in the Report provides the right delivery framework for sustainable economic growth in the future. This has been endorsed by Members and takes account of an extensive consultation process with local businesses and town and parish councils.

Introduction and Background

1. The Council's existing Economic Development Strategy covered the period 2018-2021. Members agreed that many of the key elements in that Strategy remained relevant, but with the considerable economic changes brought about by Covid-19, the opportunities emerging from the recently published Levelling Up White Paper and the need to plan for a transition to a green economy, a new refreshed and ambitious seven-year Strategy to meet these challenges is required.
2. In general, prior to the pandemic, the economy in Sevenoaks District has performed relatively well with high levels of productivity, good business survival rates, an increasing number of enterprises in the knowledge economy and a relatively resilient retail sector. However, Gross Value Added (GVA - which broadly measures the total value of goods and services in the economy) increased very little between 2018-2019. Future economic performance might be threatened by a limited supply of employment land, skills gaps and the availability of affordable housing.
3. The draft strategy is included in this report under Appendix A and provides a suggested framework to deliver sustainable economic growth for the future.

The Strategy includes the following overarching vision

'Our vision is for Sevenoaks District to have a dynamic and inclusive growing economy for our businesses, communities and visitors that is kind to the environment, and contributes to the health and well-being of all our residents and supports our commitment to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by the Council by 2030'

4. In developing the Strategy, a number of key drivers were considered as providing the context for setting out our strategic priorities in 5 below and these include:
 - The challenges in recovering from the pandemic with economic uncertainty arising from high inflation, rising business costs, a tight labour market and the longer term impact of Brexit
 - The opportunities arising from new hybrid working practices and the potential to capture new spending patterns, new investment and business start-ups
 - The significant drivers transitioning to a Net Zero economy with opportunities to develop and harness new skills and technologies, create new jobs and enhance our natural environment
 - The challenges of operating in a highly competitive bidding environment, but also the opportunities emerging from the allocation to the District of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund ('UKSPF') and the importance of fully aligning the Strategy with the Investment Plan once agreed.

- Opportunities in a new fresh approach to the West Kent Partnership
5. The five Strategic priorities highlighted below were also informed by reference to the promises made in the Council's Plan and an updated SWOT analysis.
- **Environmental sustainability** - with key objectives covering: economic opportunities transitioning to a green economy; securing health and well-being for residents; enhancing the ecological health of our natural environment and embracing the 15-minute community concept
 - **Skills Resilience and job opportunities** - with objectives covering: the delivery of a skilled workforce meeting the key drivers of digitisation; decarbonisation, demographic change and new working practices; providing residents with lifelong learning opportunities; a skills landscape that meets the needs of employers and one that fosters equality of opportunity.
 - **Business Resilience and growth objectives** - with objectives covering: business start-up and scale up support, increased research & development investment, inward investment, international trade and a local procurement programme.
 - **Infrastructure first** - with objectives covering: the support and facilitation of enhanced full fibre broadband investment, 5G networks and modal shift through the adoption of our Movement Strategy.
 - **West Kent Partnership** - with objectives covering: working in partnership to increase the amount of external funding secured, the delivery of local skills projects, increasing the level of business communications and supporting the rural economy

Economic Development Delivery Plan

6. To ensure our strategic priorities are met, we have identified four key focus areas that provide the key actions within our delivery plan. This is likely to be adapted and modified as we finalise our UKSPF Investment Plan. Also included are our key performance indicators and the key partners who will be essential in helping us meet these objectives. The project delivery areas are:

Focus Area One - Business & Enterprise

7. We have a key aim in '**getting to know our businesses better and understanding their needs**'. Whilst Sevenoaks District has one of the highest GVA per Job indicators in Kent (a key measure of productivity in the economy), we hope to see more enterprises engage with business support, to celebrate their successes and provide an attractive environment for new company start-ups. The successful launch of the Swanley Business Hub in the autumn of 2022 will support a wider initiative to connect a number of private and public sector hubs across the West Kent region.

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8. There will also be a strong emphasis on inward investment promotion and export development and increasing the opportunities for local companies to bid for Council business as part of a local procurement programme.
9. Through the Strategy, we will support the wider ambitions for Net Zero within the Council with an emphasis on helping local businesses to access funding and advice to de-carbonise and therefore contributing to reducing those emissions cause by commercial operations.

Focus Area Two - Tourism and Rural

10. These remain key sectors for the District. We will focus on increasing the opportunities for rural diversification supported by more affordable housing, improved local infrastructure, better broadband and telephony coverage, and where possible supporting the conversion of rural buildings for alternative uses. We also hope to facilitate and encourage nature recovery and biodiversity enhancements through planning policy and in collaboration with our local network of landowners.
11. We will build on an already successful visitor economy through maximising the promotion and exposure of the District through our Place Campaign (which it must be stressed is not limited to this sector but will positively impact the whole Strategy). We will facilitate familiarisation trips for key influencers and support the delivery of niche visitor products to meet the needs of specific demographic groups. There is an excellent opportunity to work with the Visitor Economy Forum on increasing the accommodation offer and resilience of local tourism businesses.

Focus Area Three - Town Centres

12. There have been substantial shifts in the nature and functioning of high streets. We will consider the results of the recently published Town Centre Strategy and in combination with new planning rules, there is the opportunity to bring a more diverse range of uses in our key centres. The Council will seek to secure funding for a number of suggested public realm enhancements and a suitable model such as a town steering group to co-ordinate and help expand the cultural and arts offer for the District to build on the legacy of the Welcome Back Fund. As part of the Place Campaign, we will encourage local residents to buy local and explore the potential of a Sevenoaks Trade Mark for local provenance.

Focus Area Four - Skills & Employment

13. Improving local skills provision will be a key instrument for levelling up and improving equalities across the District. Priority will be given to working with colleagues in the Department for Work & Pensions on supporting events and initiatives to assist job seekers through careers fairs, apprenticeships and trainee programmes. We also have a number of outline proposals to deliver local innovative skills projects including the Growth Gurus Community Hub

initiative alongside lifelong learning, intergenerational knowledge sharing and retrofitting training.

The delivery of the Enterprise Adviser Network will transfer to The Education People ('TEP') from September, so schools' engagement work will continue, but we are also exploring opportunities to support enterprise for young people such as through the Children's Business Fair organisation.

Partnerships

14. Sevenoaks District does not work in isolation so in order to deliver the Strategy, we will harness the strong relationships we have in our partner network and develop new ones to:
 - Collaborate on bids and funding opportunities through sharing expertise and best practice
 - Providing referrals to business support partners
 - Joint events to maximise opportunities and to make them viable
 - To co-ordinate promotional activities
15. The Strategy provides a range of partners that can contribute to our ambition, and include the following organisations:
 - Kent County Council
 - The Parish and Town councils
 - Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce
 - The West Kent Partnership
 - Kent & Medway Economic Partnership/South East LEP
 - Locate in Kent
 - Invicta Chamber of Commerce
 - Kent & Medway Growth Hub
 - Federation of Small Businesses
 - Visit Kent
 - Produced In Kent

Measuring and Monitoring

16. The Strategy includes a dashboard of measures that will help us to monitor on-going trends in the economy and our performance against the Delivery Plan. Some of these measures are only available yearly, so we will produce an annual Sevenoaks economic report that will report on these measures and other developments in the local economy. We will also ensure we meet the reporting needs of the UKSPF Investment Plan.

Consultation

17. It was agreed with the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for People & Places, that we would consult on the Strategy with the local business community via a series of focus groups prior to the Strategy going through the

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Committee cycle (these meetings also provided an opportunity to discuss potential UKSPF projects). Three successful focus groups took place on March 30 and 31st March and a special Sevenoaks Business Board meeting on the 13th April. A further focus group took place with the Town and Parish Councils on Thursday 28th April. In addition, individual meetings took place with the CEO of Heaver Castle and General Manager of Peshurst Place to gain their views.

18. The focus groups included a very broad range of businesses across a spectrum of sectors that ensured that a number of different views and perspectives were captured. Officers were encouraged that in general businesses were very supportive and in agreement with the vision in the Strategy, our strategic objectives and our key areas of focus. A number commented that they saw Sevenoaks District Council as being pro-business, having provided valuable support and signposting, but felt that we needed to 'shout about' this more so that more businesses benefit (the Place Campaign was highlighted as a good opportunity to do this)
19. In summary the key points raised by the groups were as follows and although officers are confident that a number of these are already addressed in the Strategy, some changes or increased emphasis resulting from these points is now included:
 - a. Economic growth must be inclusive so that all our residents benefit and there was particular emphasis on the importance of health & well-being of employees within businesses and within the wider community that they are a part of. Sporting activity and local sports organisations were highlighted as a real asset to the District, but one that is not fully appreciated.
 - b. Although inward investment activity was encouraged, priority should be given to supporting existing businesses to grow and scale up particularly as they are in a process of recovery with increasing challenges in the costs of doing business. Comments were made on the importance of the right kind of employment space (and protecting that space) to meet their current and future needs.
 - c. We need to celebrate the diversity and achievements of our local businesses more regularly and more widely.
 - d. For a number of sectors present recruitment and skills shortages are acute, so helping to match local people with jobs and to support up-skilling initiatives needs to be a priority
 - e. The future of our town centres was discussed and it was important that the Strategy did not appear 'Sevenoaks' centric. Projects to increase footfall and maximise dwell time were encouraged and it was recognised that there was an opportunity to develop more non-traditional uses for retail units through the planning system. Importance was also given to the role of culture and creative industries in our key centres and an opportunity was identified to capitalise on the relocation of a number of London artists locally and raising the profile of cultural activities significantly.
 - f. The Rural Economy needed to be clearly defined and understood. A number of representatives from the sector stressed how vital affordable housing and adequate rural transport infrastructure is to the future resilience and

vibrancy of rural communities and to support new revenue streams for landowners.

- g. All recognised the huge advantages the district has in its natural environment and this needs to be capitalised on for well-being, boosting biodiversity and place promotion
- h. The Strategy needs to be clear 'why we are doing what we are doing'.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

- 20. Consideration was given to refreshing and re-framing the existing strategy, but given reasons outlined in paragraph 1, it was considered necessary to undertake a “deeper” refresh.
- 21. A further option considered was to delay the preparation of the Strategy once the UKSPF Investment Plan is completed, but this would cause significant delays. It was decided to run these in parallel but to ensure they are fully connected and in alignment.

Key Implications

Financial

22. The expectation is that the delivery of the Strategy will be funded predominately as part of the UKSPF Investment Plan once agreed (supplemented by existing Economic Development budgets including those from The West Kent Partnership budgets). Each local authority in the UK has been allocated UKSPF funding covering the period 2022/23-2024/25 to support the Government's twelve missions contained within the Levelling up White Paper. Sevenoaks has been funded a £1million allocation over the three years plus an additional £20,000 to cover costs associated with developing the Investment Plan and 4% of the allocation can be used for associated administration costs. The funding covers both revenue and capital, but there is a set formula on the split between the two over the funding period.
23. The funding has been provided to support an overarching objective to 'Build Pride in Place and Increasing Life Chances' and to fund projects and initiatives around three pillars: COMMUNITY & PLACE, SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS and PEOPLE & SKILLS. Work is underway to develop the Investment Plan that needs to be submitted to the Government for approval over the summer (submission window 30th June - 1st August). Our current suggested priorities for the plan are 1) Supporting the rural economy; 2) improving employment opportunities for young people (via the Growth Gurus Community Hub project); 3) Skills and community opportunities from Net Zero; 4) Supporting the recovery of our town centres and 5) Business support and skills projects across the West Kent Partnership.

A link to the UKSPF Prospectus is included here:

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92112/ukspfprospectus.pdf)

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

24. There are no legal implications in relation to the Report
25. RISK ASSESSMENT. THERE ARE MORE RISKS ASSOCIATED IN NOT ADOPTING THE NEW ECONOMIC STRATEGY THAN IT BEING ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL
- If the District Council does not proceed to adopt the Economic Development Strategy, this could result in:-
- (a) A missed opportunity to provide vital leadership and action in ensuring that the District's economy recovers and delivers inclusive growth that benefits all our residents
 - (b) A failure to deliver skills and employment projects that support those in our community who are either unemployed or underemployed.

- (c) A failure to support our local businesses as they continue to recover from the pandemic and deal with the rising costs of doing business. The Strategy will be largely funded from our UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation including supporting local businesses and this provides the framework for 1:1 advice, coaching and mentoring and networking opportunities to help companies build resilience and boost their productivity
- (d) Failure to help the recovery and rejuvenation of our high streets and other key centres and to support the rural and visitor economy as it goes through a time of change

Equality Assessment

- 26. 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.
- 27. The vision for the Economic Strategy emphasises the importance of a growing, inclusive economy. A number of initiatives are targeted at specific groups in particular need in our community such as the unemployed or those experiencing barriers to employment, and the Strategy more widely has been put together to ensure all our businesses and residents benefit. Therefore, the decision being made and recommended through this paper does not have the potential to discriminate against different groups in Sevenoaks District.

Net Zero Implications

- 28. Members are reminded of the Council's stated ambition to be Net Zero with regards to carbon emissions by 2030. The decisions recommended in this paper directly impact on this ambition. An impact assessment has been carried out and a summary of the results is given below
- 29. The Strategy does not focus primarily on the Council's own emissions, however in supporting local infrastructure investment and the Council's recently published Movement Strategy this could provide more sustainable travel opportunities for staff. The Strategy also plans a local procurement project to increase the number and range of suppliers supplying the Council with goods and services. As well as helping to grow the local economy, this will directly support a reduction of the carbon footprint in our supply chain.

30. The Economic Strategy has a vision to grow the economy in a sustainable way and gives due regard to the Councils commitment to Net Zero. With any economic growth comes the risk of increased emissions, however, there are a range of initiatives in the delivery plan that focus on helping to offset the harmful aspects of climate change
- We will help local businesses access advice and share best practice on how to de-carbonise and become more energy efficient
 - We will promote Sevenoaks District as a centre for the adoption of new green technologies
 - We will seek to maximise the opportunities for new job creation in the green economy particularly upskilling for retrofit
 - We will work with our attractions in the Visitor Economy on making Sevenoaks a centre for sustainable tourism
 - We will encourage nature recovery and improvements in biodiversity in both rural and urban areas through sharing best practice in our Rural Economic Forum and helping organisations to access grants such as the Nature Recovery Grant.

Conclusions

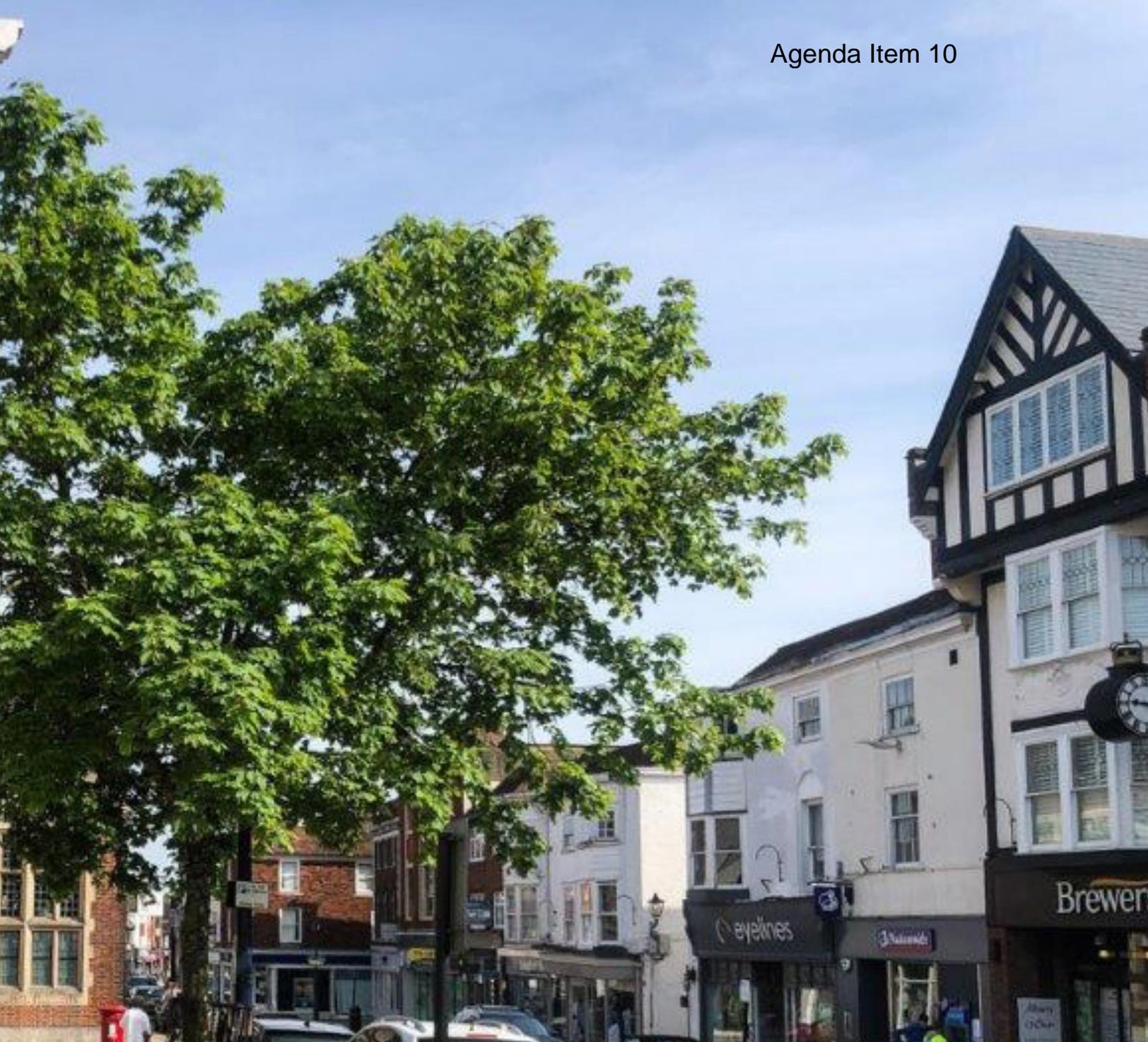
31. This Report presents the draft refreshed Economic Development Strategy for eventual agreement and adoption by Cabinet. Sevenoaks District has the potential to continue to build an economy that is sustainable, inclusive and dynamic, but importantly one that benefits all our residents.

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Economic Development Strategy

Background Papers

None included



Sevenoaks District DRAFT **Economic Development Strategy** 2022-2027

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Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027



Foreword

With the slow recovery and continued uncertainty arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges to local authority funding and the Post Brexit environment, re-building the economy in a way that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient has never been more important.

The challenges of 2020/21 have set the scene for new ways of thinking, a new approach to working patterns and the growing imperative of climate change amelioration. We have a chance to reappraise the economic priorities for Sevenoaks District and refresh our Economic Strategy. This is an opportunity for the District to 'stand out' and to set the tone for the rest of Kent and the wider South East, whilst continuing to emphasise the three promises made in the Council's Plan.

1. We will build on the District's thriving economy through the regeneration of our market towns, and by enhancing both the visitor and rural economies.
2. We will protect the economy of the District by preserving and making better use of existing employment sites and by redeveloping previously used land.
3. We will support new and existing businesses through our "Team around the Business" approach, combining excellent customer service and supporting local employers to promote mental and physical well-being at work.

Our vision

Our vision is for Sevenoaks District to have a dynamic growing and inclusive economy for our businesses, communities and visitors that is kind to the environment, contributes to the health and well-being of all our residents and supports our commitment to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by the Council by 2030.

The strategic context

A number of key strategic considerations are provided to inform our priorities and are material considerations since the last Economic Strategy. These include:

- The challenges in recovering from the pandemic with current economic uncertainty arising from high inflation, the cost of doing business, tight labour markets, disruption of supply chains, the conflict in Ukraine and the longer term impacts and opportunities arising out of Brexit
- The need to align this Strategy very closely with the re-positioning of the West Kent Partnership and its refreshed priorities, the Kent and Medway Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan and our UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan to maximise their impact.
- The recent Case for West Kent refresh identified that whilst the area is the largest contributor to total Gross Value Added ('GVA') and GVA per job within the Kent context, there is potential for further economic growth to improve the District's ranking against comparator locations equidistant to London.
- A public sector bidding environment that remains very competitive particularly for a District like Sevenoaks which is perceived as affluent and has had to self-finance past projects.. Working closely with the West Kent Partnership, The District needs to strengthen its pipeline of projects and collaborate with partners with complementary bidding skills and experience to provide a greater probability of future success.
- The opportunities arising from new hybrid working practices and the potential to capture changing spending patterns, new investment and business start ups
- Continuing to support the recovery of all our high streets and those sectors particularly badly hit because of the pandemic
- Transitioning to a Net Zero carbon economy with opportunities to develop and harness new skills and technologies and enhance our natural environment
- The need to support our rural economy as it goes through a period of change, in particular with the switch away from the Direct Payment System of subsidies, changes in the labour market and the need to remain relevant and competitive in a global market.
- Adopting a hyperlocal approach to the Strategy to ensure that support is targeted to meet the specific needs of our communities given the increasing challenges of inflation and the cost of living particularly through employment and skills initiatives.

Gross Value Added ('GVA') measures the contribution made to the economy by an individual producer, industry, sector or region. The figure is used in the calculation of Gross Domestic Product ('GDP'). The figure is a quantitative assessment of the value of goods and services minus the costs of inputs and materials in the production process. GVA per job is a measure of productivity in the economy (GVA/Number of economically active individuals)

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Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

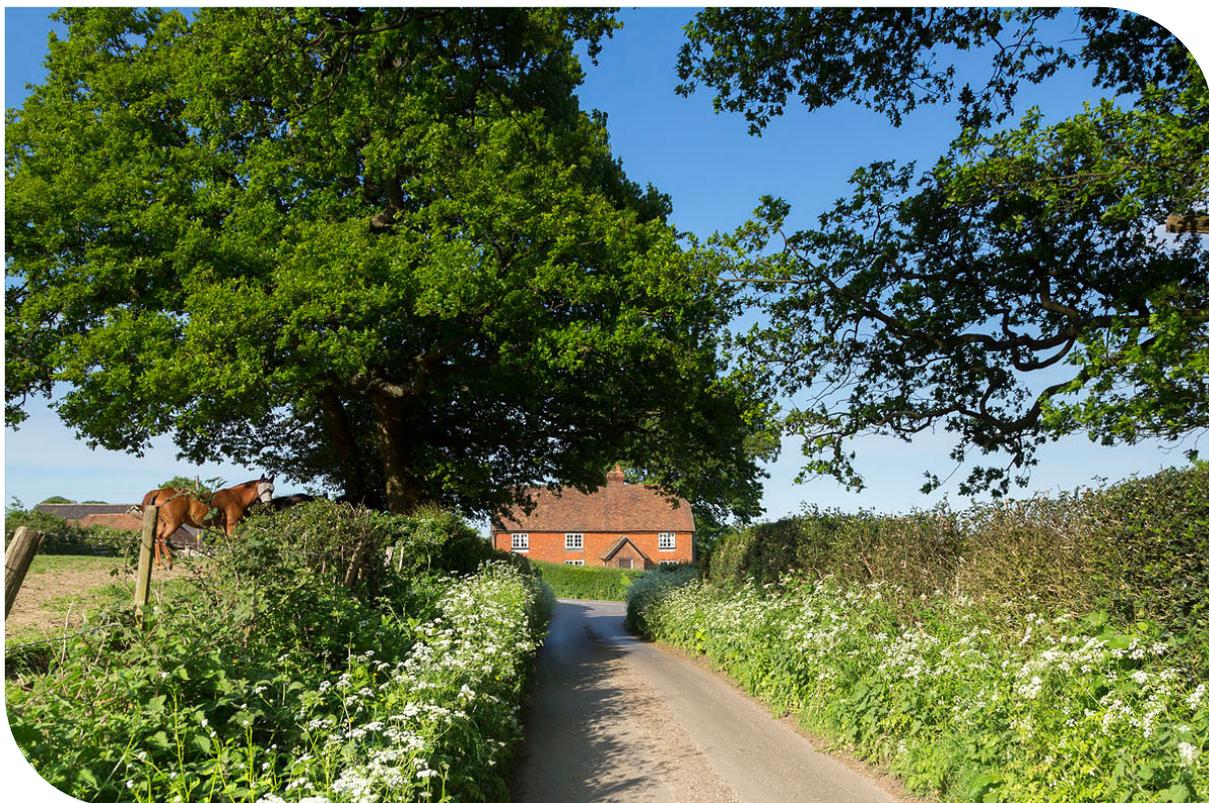
Economic strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats

The strategy is also informed through assessing key opportunities and challenges as outlined in the table below.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strong geographical location – proximity to London and to international market gateways	Limited availability of employment use land and buildings for attracting inward investment and retaining growing businesses and the loss of existing provision to Permitted Development Rights
Highly attractive natural environment	Rural communities have limited public transport links. There are also poor public transport links between centres of education and visitor attractions to support employment
Highly skilled population and labour force. High GVA and GVA per job in the economy	Variable broadband/full fibre coverage and mobile telephony, particularly in rural areas. .
Strong business community with historically good survival rates and a high proportion of enterprises in the knowledge economy	Lack of HE provision in the District
An ambitious and financially resilient local authority	House price affordability

Opportunities	Threats
Post COVID working patterns have accelerated new ways of working. This enhances opportunities for flexible working hubs in both urban and rural areas and in capturing new spending patterns in our town centres	Retention of young workers and provision of adequate local job opportunities and the right 'soft' and technical skills that employers need
Interventions to grow those sectors, such as construction, land based industries and creative industries that through further analysis provide the greatest impact on local job creation and economic growth	Although the District has fared better than other locations, a decline in the retail sector through further migration to on line channels or consolidation of national brands
To improve productivity in SMEs through increased take up of available business support and access to finance	Access to Government and grant funding in a highly competitive environment
To gain a reputation as a leading local authority for sustainable best practice and adoption of (new) green technologies	Changes in rural employment brought about by technology, new funding regimes and skills shortages including seasonal workers
To support the development of resilient town centres through our Town Centre Strategy with more diverse uses and an experiential offer including the night time economy	Continued pressure on supply chains and the full impact of Brexit and changing regulatory environment

<p>To capitalise on our published Movement Strategy to encourage modal shift including extending cycling infrastructure and walking routes</p>	<p>Community complacency or a preservationist approach seeking to maintain status quo.</p>
<p>To strengthen strategic partnerships and secure new ones such as with HE institutions</p>	<p>Slower than expected recovery and continued uncertainty created by the pandemic</p>
<p>Sevenoaks District has a vibrant mix of sports clubs, training facilities and high profile sports professionals. This sector has very strong potential to create new jobs, develop a diverse set of skills and health and well being</p>	<p>Continued high inflation and escalating costs of doing business leading to more insolvencies and reduced investment and growth</p>



Strategic priorities

The refreshed Economic Development Strategy has five key strategic priorities

Priorities	Objectives
Environmental Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To compete in a changing global economy seizing on the opportunities through technological change and the transition to Net Zero and the green economy ■ Secure health and well-being for residents ■ Enhance the ecological health of our natural environment ■ Support the Council's Net Zero Delivery Plan ■ Embrace the 15-minute community concept
Skills resilience and job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To deliver a skilled workforce that drives productivity gains and considers the key drivers identified in the Kent and Medway Workforce Skills Evidence Base: digitisation, decarbonisation, demographic change and changes in working practices. ■ To provide residents with lifetime learning opportunities ■ To help resolve a tight labour market by ensuring we help promote vacancies across the District ■ To build a vibrant labour market with the right technical and soft skills that employers need ■ To support equality of opportunity and a levelling up of economic prosperity right across the District
Business Resilience and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To prioritise business support including innovation, scale up support, export development and improved access to finance with a particular focus on the rural economy ■ Prioritise inward investment and promotion of the District as a great location to start a business ■ Retain and expand employment land where possible in alignment with the emerging Local Plan and Economic Needs Study and promote commercial spaces that meet the needs of local business.
Infrastructure First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To transform local infrastructure including full fibre investment and improved 4G coverage and 5G roll out ■ Create modal shift through our Movement Strategy and facilitate new ways of working ■ To improve infrastructure links in rural areas
West Kent Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To reposition the partnership with a focus on increasing the amount of external funding secured, sectoral development and local skills projects ■ To develop the West Kent brand through increased business communications, sharing success stories, participating in business awards and an annual business summit ■ Supporting diversification and resilience in the rural economy through a new Rural Economy Forum

Footnote – A 15 minute neighbourhood involves a menu of policy actions that provides residents access to most if not all their needs within a short walk or bike ride from the home

To deliver the strategic priorities, we have developed four areas of focus that will frame the Strategy’s delivery and there will be an overarching framework of promotion relevant to all focus areas through the launch of the Sevenoaks District Place Campaign.

The Place Campaign has four key pillars focussed on ‘Live, Work, Invest and Visit’. The campaign proposals have been underpinned by a resident survey that resulted in the development of brand values focussed on the themes ‘Historic, Entrepreneurial, Connected, Vibrant and Beautiful’. We will use the Place Campaign resources including the creation of a Place Portal and the Visit Sevenoaks website and we will use social media to promote our visitor economy, our key centres and as a key asset in our inward investment proposition. We want to reach not only our local and sub-regional audience but also London and international markets.



Focus area 1: Business and Enterprise Key Facts

Supporting and promoting business

- GVA in Sevenoaks District was £4066 million in 2019 which is 3rd highest in Kent
- GVA per job (is £68.183 which is the highest in Kent
- A total of 6610 VAT registered businesses, of which over 90% are micro-businesses
- 45% of enterprises are within the professional, scientific and technical, Construction and Information and Communications sectors.
- Other important growth sectors include creative industries, green construction and land based sectors
- Sevenoaks District has a diverse business community and has traditionally been a good location to start a business.
- Higher than Kent average business start-up and survival rates, although most recent data (2019) reveals a slowing of the birth of new enterprises
- The District has one of the highest proportion of businesses in the knowledge economy and those defined as being ‘high growth’

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Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

Maintaining Sevenoaks District position relative to other areas and extending opportunities is a key to future economic prosperity.

- The Case for West Kent (2022) suggests that local enterprises are not connecting with business support organisations or funding opportunities at the same level as other local authority areas.
- To deliver economic growth it is key to establish a much more comprehensive understanding of the diversity of our local business base . It is essential that we provide the right level of business support and networking opportunities through working with key partners with a focus on building a network of business hubs across the West Kent area with integral business support

We will improve communication with businesses through regular, updates and signposting with a particular focus on and celebrating business successes to raise the profile of Sevenoaks District as a first class business investment location.

Inward investment

The Council will continue to work closely with Locate in Kent and with our neighbouring Districts / Boroughs on inward investment enquiries and new expansions and will seek to help facilitate the delivery of new commercial and industrial floor space in line with the emerging Local plan. We will also seek to facilitate a soft landing team to provide targeted commercial property, business start-up and HR advice for those businesses looking to locate here.



Net Zero and the Green economy

Mitigation for climate change and the growing importance of the transition to a Net Zero circular economy could provide the District with significant opportunities, such as

- The Council sees itself in a leadership role for this agenda by installing electric charging points in its car parks, installing solar power compacting bins and encouraging local communities to engage with nature and appreciate the importance of biodiversity.

- We also have an important role through our skills networks to provide pathways to provide upskilling and employment opportunities in areas like retrofitting, land based industries and ecological and other environmental services.
- We are keen that local businesses benefit from the sharing of best practice and advice available from the Low Carbon Kent Network, the Governments SME Climate Hub and the Low Carbon Across the South East Scheme (LoCase) and the newly emerging Sevenoaks Sustainability Forum. An important focus will be on helping businesses to play their part in reducing emissions from commercial operations and partnering with them as part of our Movement Strategy as they develop travel plans for their employees that emphasizes modal shift.

We are also keen to explore the use of public and privately owned business assets and land to support renewable energy initiatives such as solar and work with partners such as NFU Energy providing energy audits and an opportunity to use rural infrastructure for micro power generation.

Digital Connectivity

Another important priority will be to facilitate investment in full fibre broadband and mobile telephony both in urban and rural locations. We will continue to work with colleagues at Kent County Council, the private sector and communities to identify areas that need more investment or an upgrade in broadband to future proof and enable economic activity.



Focus area 2: Tourism and Rural

Rural Economy

- Sevenoaks District is a predominantly rural district with 93% green belt and 60% Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) being part of both High Weald, and Kent Downs AONB.
- The rural economy is a significant contributor to the local economy, but has been adversely affected by recent events. DEFRA reports a 10% decline in national farm incomes between 2019 and 2020 and this is expected to be even greater in 2020/21.
- The value of crop output in the West Kent area decreased from £90.4m (2019) to £88.8m (2020), with a similar decrease in output from livestock

Rural enterprises have also faced significant disruption from the pandemic and from leaving the EU, including rising input costs, ongoing labour challenges as well as logistics and transport difficulties. There is also uncertainty over the transition from the Direct Payment System of subsidies to the new Environmental Land Management Scheme. Farmers also have to manage the volatility faced year on year due to climate unpredictability. Supporting the development of farming clusters, encouraging best use of funding available for rural areas and working in partnership to support farmers will be an important priority for us.

Diversification of rural activities with new revenue streams will be key to the success of rural areas, supported by improved transport infrastructure and the availability of affordable housing. We will support this sector directly through our interventions in the visitor economy, the promotion of local producers working with key partners such as Produced in Kent, and through our Place Campaign, the Visit Sevenoaks website and through local markets.

Visitor Economy

- The visitor economy supports 5500 jobs in the District (2020)
- The sector is valued at £138 million per annum with a total of 465 active enterprises
- The District has a number of major attractions including historic houses, castles and gardens, together with the variety of unique smaller independent attractions and experiential opportunities which provide a strong basis for future growth in visitor numbers.

Success in the future will depend on developing a more diverse and niche tourism offer in response to the growth of the Staycation market and making the most of the District's natural environment and 'telling stories' that engage our audience. The added benefits to health and wellbeing through the rural nature of the District will be particularly important in a post pandemic world.

Our priorities will be delivered collaboratively through our Visitor Economy Forum with a focus on a number of key areas such as improving 'first' and 'last' mile infrastructure encouraging sustainable travel including cycling and improved wayfinding and capitalise on wider initiatives such as the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership ('DVCRP'), Visit Kent's Interreg Experience Programme and the Gateway Gatwick Network.

We will work with the sector locally to improve the quality of visitor information, building a reputation as a leading centre for a sustainable and accessible tourism where increasing visitor numbers do not have a detrimental impact on the environment or emissions and to increase the accommodation provision. We will also deliver itineraries and visitor products including eco-tourism, heritage, cultural and food and drink trails and walking holidays including 'pilgrimage tourism' will be an important focus. An influencer's familiarisation programme to highlight Sevenoaks District to include travel agents, journalists and trade bodies with a better integration and promotion of lesser-known attractions/events with our 'national/international' assets..

Cultural development will also be a key objective through the creation of an arts and cultural forum in collaboration with existing groups to encourage better planning and co-ordination of events and activities raising the profile of the District. The District also has very strong assets

in the sports sector, whether local clubs, training facilities or the presence of high profile sports professionals that should be further capitalized on.



Focus area 3: Town Centres

- The Council has a number of key centres in particular the mains ones of Sevenoaks, Swanley, Edenbridge, Westerham and New Ash Green

The Council has published a new Town Centre Strategy to look at the key centres and identify bespoke public realm and wider regeneration initiatives. This will provide resilience and capitalise on new trends in the current make-up of high streets and neighbourhood shopping centres and improve connectivity with local communities.

There have been significant changes to the shopping habits within the UK that have been confounded by the pandemic. In 2010, internet sales were £58bn and have now climbed to £84bn, an increase of 45%. The total share of internet sales is now 27% of total retail sales. Another important development is that major retailers are reviewing the format of their real estate requirements, with many national brands looking to rationalise in larger regional centres and out-of-town locations.

A combination of new planning rules concerning Permitted Development Rights and the new Use Class 'E' Order, will provide new opportunities (but in some cases also threats) to the future high street. To thrive, centres will need to combine retail with hospitality, leisure, healthcare and other experiential uses through cultural anchors (15% of businesses in the District's high streets are in creative sectors)

We will work closely with Planning colleagues on supporting positive investment into key centres and to agree a model of how such centres are managed in a collaborative way with town and parish councils, maximising the use of public spaces and promoting a diverse events programme to drive footfall and dwell time, building on projects implemented as part of the Welcome Back Fund.

Focus area 4: Skills and Employment

Recent events have highlighted how quickly the landscape around skills can change. At the beginning of 2020, Sevenoaks District and the West Kent area in general had high levels of employment and relied heavily on migrant labour in many sectors. Contrast this now with a chronic shortage of labour and skills in hospitality, retail, care and other sectors, but equally there are significant opportunities in the emerging green economy such as in retrofitting.

There are a number of national, regional and county initiatives ongoing to deliver on the Skills Agenda. In particular, the Government's Plan for Jobs and the Local Skills Improvement Plan trailblazer in Kent and Medway should provide more employer led and integrated skills provision. The Kent and Medway Employment Taskforce is proactive and responsive to skills needs.

The challenge in Sevenoaks District, and across West Kent, is to ensure that our local population and businesses benefit from these initiatives and that we tailor support to fit local need. The West Kent Skills group provides this local focus and will be one mechanism through which West Kent and Sevenoaks can ensure that challenges and opportunities are identified and actioned. Building on existing strong partnerships with local organisations such as the Jobcentre and West Kent Extra and creating new partnerships will be a key element of delivering on our skills ambitions for the District.

There is also the challenge to build on past successes and identify future projects to improve skills levels locally particularly for young people and to focus this development on business needs. Two West Kent Skills programmes – The West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network and Kickstart West Kent - are coming to the end of their life, both of which have been managed and run through Sevenoaks District Council. Ensuring that legacy projects as highlighted in the Delivery Plan are delivered particularly in respect of supporting young people into meaningful work is a top priority moving forward. The District also has strong ambitions to enhance local education provision by supporting the location of a Further or Higher Education Campus.

Working in partnership

We cannot deliver this Strategy alone. Much of this will be delivered in collaboration with partners and stakeholders and the importance of the West Kent Partnership as highlighted earlier is a strategic priority. Key partners that will support us meet the need of the local economy are wide ranging and include:

- Public bodies such as Kent County Council, neighbouring local authorities and town and parish councils have the ability to work together with Government agencies to unlock national and local funding support to deliver and facilitate positive change for local communities and the local economy
- Business partnerships and business support groups include Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses ('FSB'), the Institute of Directors ('IOD'), the Growth Hub network, Locate in Kent and Visit Kent
- Other important groups including a number of social enterprises and community hubs that provide an important central point of contact into grass root networks



Delivery Plan

Focus area 1: Business and Enterprise

Aim	Activity	KPI/measures	Partners for all aims
<p>Improve awareness and visibility of businesses through business communications strategy at West Kent level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Development of a business database/directory ■ Annual West Kent Business Summit ■ Business awards at West Kent level ■ Annual Economic Report ■ Place Campaign web portal. ■ Establish a Sevenoaks District brand/trademark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Successful business summit ■ Publication of the annual Economic Report ■ Participation in annual business awards event ■ Business success stories case studies ■ Analytics on SDC business webpages ■ Develop an online portal ■ Develop and publish a Brandbook for the District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ West Kent Partnership ■ Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce ■ Growth Hub ■ Department of International Trade/Locate in Kent ■ FSB ■ Kent CC Digital Team ■ Kent Film Office ■ Low Carbon Kent

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<p>Encourage businesses to locate within the District and West Kent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop Inward investment proposition collateral ■ Launch West Kent Inward Investment Strategy including attendance at trade and investment events, meeting inward delegations and promotion in the business press ■ Create 'soft landing team' for new companies locating in the District/ West Kent ■ Identify opportunities on the place portal as part of the Place Campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New jobs created and retained ■ Number of promotional events attended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Locate in Kent ■ Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce
<p>Sectoral development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Undertake further research on sectors including assessing results of the Economic Need ■ Study to identify growth sectors ■ Sectors action plan to establish series of interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase in sector location quotient (a measure of the significance of a local cluster against a national average) ■ New business start-ups ■ Jobs created/ retained ■ Increase in research and development in businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kent and Medway Economic Partnership ■ HE Partnerships ■ FE Partnerships ■ Sector based trade associations

<p>Facilitate new ways of working</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a hub strategy covering the West Kent Partnership area for both public and private sector facilities including feasibility studies for additional sites ■ Successful launch and management of the new business hub at Swanley ■ Support Digital/broadband investment in collaboration with Kent County Council and commercial operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Swanley hub operational within agreed timescales with approved operating model ■ New business starts and scale up of growth businesses ■ West Kent Business Hub Network Group created ■ Extending Superfast/Full Fibre coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce ■ Kent County Council Digital Team ■ Department of Culture Media and Sport
<p>Ensure businesses are able to access suitable business support to develop and grow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Research the specific present and future business needs of SMEs particularly for rural businesses ■ Team around your business including new 'welcome pack' providing information on all relevant services in the Council ■ Feasibility of launching a training app for businesses ■ Effective sign-posting to external organisations including business start-up advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business starts ■ Business survival rates ■ Number of businesses in the knowledge economy ■ Growth of rural enterprises ■ Number of companies on business support programmes ■ Number of businesses benefiting from Team Around The Business and ED team interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce ■ Federation of Small Businesses ■ Kent International Business ■ Department of International Trade ■ DEFRA

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<p>Local Procurement Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the Council's geographical spend profile for goods and services - Develop an action plan to improve visibility of procurement pipeline and building capacity for local businesses 		
<p>Net Zero Economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Connect business community with existing advice on energy efficiency and emissions reduction including Low Carbon Kent and the LoCASE programme ■ Work with landowners in the public and private sector to identify assets that could be utilised for local renewables and power generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduced District emissions from commercial activities ■ Number of local businesses taking up decarbonisation advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low Carbon Kent ■ Carbon Trust ■ Innovate UK



Focus area 2: Tourism and Rural

To engage with and support the Visitor Economy and rural sectors, local food producers and the cultural community to ensure Sevenoaks District continues to grow as a leading visitor location with a growing number of jobs and enterprises in the sector.

Aim	Activity	Measures	Partners for all aims
<p>Maximise promotion and exposure of the District</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regular Visitor Economy Forum meetings to share best practice and promotion of activities. ■ Collaborate with key partners including Visit Kent and Visit England on joint initiatives ■ Active member of the Gatwick Gateway Group ■ Continue to establish the Visit Sevenoaks website and social media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Growth in visitor numbers and spend ■ Growth in enterprises and jobs in the sector ■ Website analytics and social media reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Visit Kent ■ DVCRP ■ Gatwick Gateway ■ Visit England ■ Town and Parish Councils ■ ELAG ■ Sevenoaks ■ Rural Landowners Group
<p>Encourage visitors to Sevenoaks District and attractions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop annual programme of campaigns including familiarisation visits for influencers group ■ Increase niche offerings for experiential and specific demographic requirements ■ Secure additional coach parking capacity ■ Develop the sports sector as a tool to drive promotion of the District, but also wellbeing. ■ Use innovative social media platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ See above- number of inbound visitors/ overnight stays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Visit Kent ■ Kent County Council ■ DVCRP ■ Gatwick Gateway ■ Sevenoaks District Chamber of Commerce (sports network)

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<p>Increase the accommodation offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify Opportunity to develop 5 star/ luxury resort or ■ MICE facility ■ Work with key partners and planning colleagues to increase/ diversify the accommodation offer. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Visit Kent ■ Locate in Kent
<p>Support diversification of rural areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work through a new Rural Economy Forum to share best practice in rural land use, lobbying and securing access to funding via the West Kent Partnership ■ Where possible, support the provision of affordable housing in rural areas and last mile infrastructure projects ■ Promote the sustainable reuse of redundant farm buildings and facilities to support enterprise, economic activity and/or housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Growth in rural enterprises and jobs created and retained ■ Increased funding secured for rural areas ■ Increase in affordable housing in rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sevenoaks Rural Landowners Group ■ Rural Local Action Group ■ Kent County Council ■ DEFRA
<p>Biodiversity and sustainable land management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with local landowners, nature conservation partners and Planning Policy colleagues on nature recovery and biodiversity initiatives 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme ■ Kent Wildlife Trust ■ North West Kent Countryside Partnership ■ Kent Downs AONB ■ High Weald AONB

<p>Sevenoaks Trademark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore creation of a unique Sevenoaks District trademark for local producer and crafts in collaboration with Made In Kent ■ Develop and promote the place campaign brand strategy and book 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Made in Kent ■ Produced In Kent
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Focus area 3: Town Centres

Enabling our market towns to remain viable and vibrant to support local residents

Aim	Activity	KPI's	Partners for all aims
Encourage diversification of use in town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with Planning Policy Team in retaining employment space and supporting mixed uses where possible ■ Introduce a new Town Centres Steering Group and arts/cultural forum sub-group to co-ordinate events, promotion and the Night Time economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Employment floor space retained or provided ■ Footfall and dwell time measures ■ Delivery of agreed events programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ SDC Planning Team ■ Town and Parish Councils ■ Town Centre Partnerships ■ SELEP/KMEP ■ KCC ■ Developers ■ Commercial Agents
Secure investment and regeneration in towns and large villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider Town Centre Strategy ■ Agree a pipeline of projects from the final strategy to direct and support future funding bids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Successful funding bids secured ■ Project delivery of agreed interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Town and Parish Councils ■ KMEP
Improve public realm to support multiple uses and better facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Programme to support shop front improvements ■ Support provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points ■ Improve way finding and signage ■ Support the Public Realm Commissioner to improve the public realm and promote the ethos of the Place Campaign 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Town and Parish Councils ■ Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership
Encourage locals to shop locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Movement Strategy ■ Use local campaigns ■ Redevelop 96 High Street Sevenoaks into a makers/artisan/artist/farmers market hall 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kent County Council ■ Produced In Kent ■ Made in Kent

Focus area 4: Skills and Employment

Ensuring residents and businesses can gain the skills they require including supporting young people into employment and lifelong learning and training.

Aim	Activity	Measures	Partners for all aims
Supporting events and initiatives to assist job seekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Job and career Fairs ■ Promoting apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unemployment measures ■ Apprenticeship placements and vacancies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ DWP ■ West Kent Skills Group ■ North Kent College Network ■ Retrofit Academy ■ Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce (Local Skills Improvement Plans)
Supporting careers advice in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to support the Enterprise Adviser Programme through the TEP team ■ Expand enterprise events for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Achieving Gatsby benchmarks ■ Delivery of training/CPD programmes for schools ■ Children’s Business Fair or other enterprise event during the period of the Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Education People (TEP) ■ vChildren’s Business Fair
Provide local innovative skills programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lifelong and intergenerational skills activities ■ Delivering programmes to help disadvantaged groups or those with protected characteristics into employment ■ Digital inclusiveness programme in conjunction with community Wi-Fi pilot ■ Sector skills programmes including retrofit boot camp, and land based skills ‘Farming in Protected Landscapes (‘FIPL’) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Employment and job creation ■ Sector and economic growth ■ Digital inclusiveness data ■ Growth in the green economy ■ Deliver FIPL project engaging young people with farming and landscapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kent County Council ■ Kent and Medway Economic Partnership ■ Kent Downs and High Weald AONB ■ Hadlow College

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Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

Improving the provision of HE/FE in the District	■ Establish an HE/FE offer in the District		
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References

Page 6 – Data from ONS, presented by Kent County Council in their Economic Dashboard

Page 6 – The Case for West Kent Refresh produced for the West Kent Partnership by Hardisty Jones published (with updates) in January 2022

Page 9: Quoted from Kent On line Newspaper 13/12/2021 per DEFRA Report).

Page 10: (Source ONS Presented by Kent County Council).

Page 11: Town Centres Paragraph 2: (Source –Avison Young Town Centre Strategy Baseline Report 2021

Page 11: Town Centres Paragraph 3 (Source SELEP Creative High Streets Report January 2022)

Page 11: Skills & Employment Paragraph 1 (Source: the Local Government Association Equity Consulting Report estimates the sector could deliver 30,000 jobs in Kent & Medway by 2050)

Annex A

Economic Development Strategy Dashboard

The following key measures will be used for monitoring the economy with an annual Economic Report bringing together a number of other measures to provide a comprehensive overview.

Focus area 1: Business and Enterprise

Measure	Latest data 2020	Source	Frequency of reporting/notes
Birth of new enterprises rate	Growth rate of 9.7% (Kent average 12.1%)	Business Demography 2019 (kent.gov.uk)	Annually
Death of new enterprises rate	10.1% (Kent average is 10.1%)	Business Demography 2019 (kent.gov.uk)	Annually
Ratio of enterprise births to deaths	0.93% (Kent average is 1.20)	Business Demography 2019 (kent.gov.uk)	Annually <i>Please note that a figure below 1.0 shows that the number of deaths exceeds that of births</i>
Stock of active enterprises	7370 currently	Business Demography 2019 (kent.gov.uk)	Annually <i>Between 2010-2020, 880 new enterprises were created equating a rate of 13.6% which is the lowest in Kent after Tunbridge Wells</i>
Enterprise survival rates – Three and five year	3 Year 61.7% (Kent average 58.9%) 5 Year 47.8% (Kent average 42.6%)	Business Demography 2019 (kent.gov.uk)	Annually <i>Will also monitor % of enterprises that are 'high growth' and in the knowledge economy</i>
Number of SDC significant business interventions including Team Around Your Business	Not currently measured	Quarterly SDC report	Quarterly
GVA	£4066 million 2019	ONS/KCC	Third highest in Kent
GVA per Job	£68,183	ONS/KCC	Highest in Kent
Broadband average speeds (download/upload speeds)		ThinkBroadband.com	
% of properties with superfast broadband speeds		ThinkBroadband.com	

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Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

Loss of accommodation under permitted development rights		SDC Annual Monitoring Report	
% of available employment space in the district		SDC Annual Monitoring Report	

Focus area 2: Tourism and Rural

Measure	Latest data 2020	Source	Frequency of reporting/notes
Value of the Visitor Economy	5500 jobs £138 million value	KCC – per visit Kent	
The number of tourism enterprises	465 (6.9% growth rate)	KCC/ONS	2019 data
The number of jobs supported by the visitor economy	2426 (9.1% growth rate)	Cambridge data – per visit Kent	2019 data
Number of users on the Visit Sevenoaks website	295		
Number of visitors	4.3 million 2019 (2 million 2020)	Cambridge data – per visit Kent	
Growth in the provision of affordable housing in rural locations?			
Growth in the number of rural enterprises			

Focus area 3: Town Centres

Retail footfall		GOAD	
Vacancy rates in key centres (total floor space) November/ December 2021 figures			
Amount of employment space in town centres retained or provided (from agreed baseline)			
Number of retail, leisure and hospitality jobs			

Focus area 4: Skills and Employment

Unemployment	2.7% November 2021	DWP	Special focus onwards with above average unemployment
Youth unemployment 18-24 year olds	4.3% November 2021	DWP	
No of apprentices advertised	50	ESFA	
NVQ Level 4	49.1% Kent Average 39.9%	ONS	Annually
NVQ Level 3	60.5% Kent average 58.1%	ONS	Annually
NVQ Level 2	80.4% Kent average 78.2%		Annually

To find out more,
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COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME REVIEW

Committee - People & Places Advisory Committee - 14 June 2022

Report of: Chief Officer for People & Places

Status: For Decision

Also considered by:

- People & Places Advisory Committee - 14 June 2022
- Cabinet - 7 July 2022

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This report provides a review of the Community Grant Scheme with a focus on the speeding up of the process for applicants and possibility of more than one grant round in each year, as requested by the People and Places Advisory Committee on 1 March 2022.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Community Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

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

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee:

- To note the revisions to the Council's Code of Practice for Grant-making as detailed in Appendix A.
- To note the recommended actions as set out in paragraphs 8 and 14.
- To note the revisions to the Community Grant Scheme Guidelines as detailed in Appendix B.
- To recommend to Cabinet (a) to (c) below

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- To approve the revisions to the Council's Code of Practice for Grant-making as detailed in Appendix A.
- To approve the recommended actions as set out in paragraphs 8 and 14.
- To approve the revisions to the Community Grant Scheme Guidelines as detailed in Appendix B.

Reason for recommendation: The review undertaken by officers as requested by the People and Places Advisory Committee has revealed that the overarching code for all Council grant-making and the Community Grants Scheme guidelines and application form requires updating. It has also revealed the need for a further detailed piece of work in consultation with Legal Services and Members to address the speeding up of the Community Grants Scheme appraisal process.

Introduction and Background

- 1 On 1 March 2022 the People and Places Advisory Committee requested officers review the Community Grant Scheme and focus on speeding up the process for applicants and consider the possibility of multiple grant rounds throughout the year. This report is the result of the work undertaken.
- 2 The Community Grant Scheme exists to help those voluntary and community organisations which provide projects, services and activities that benefit people living, working and volunteering in the Sevenoaks District, focusing on those with greatest need. This remains unchanged and did not form part of this review.
- 3 The Community Grant Scheme must adhere to the Council Code of Practice for Grant-making. Dated 2015, the Council Code of Practice for Grant-making was assessed against current practices and requirements as part of this review.
- 4 The Grant Guidelines for the Community Grant Scheme were last reviewed in 2013/14 and as they set out how the Scheme operates have been evaluated as part of this review.

Review of Council Code of Practice for Grant-making

- 5 The Council Code of Practice for Grant-making dated 2015 is the overarching code of practice for grant making made by the Council. To canvas views from officers across the Council all teams with a grant-making function were contacted as part of the review.
- 6 A survey was conducted with all teams within the Council. The survey captured not only current practices with grant making but also highlighted areas where the Code of Practice needs updating to provide a fit for purpose overarching code.
- 7 A summary of the main findings are set out below:
 - Grants are made to a mixture of individuals, groups, organisations and businesses. Some are from external funding and others from Council budgets.
 - Where grants are made using external funding, a key element of managing these grant schemes is to ensure the funders' requirements are fully met.

- Grant application forms are now being made available online as well as hard copies (if required).
- As would be expected, all grant schemes involve officer time to undertake detailed analysis and appraisal. Some then involve Members in the final analysis/recommendation stages. All include for monitoring of the grants and share this information with Members.
- Some teams successfully run multiple rounds of funding in any one year enabling greater access to the grant schemes.

8 To address the findings of the survey, the following actions are proposed:

- The Council Code of Practice for Grant-making is amended as detailed in Appendix A to update it in line with current practices.
- The new version of the Code of Practice for Grant-making is re-distributed to all managers and services that offer grants.
- A meeting of all officers that deliver grant schemes is held twice yearly to share good practice and ensure consistency across Council teams.

Review of Community Grant Scheme & Scheme Guidelines

9 The scoring used for the Community Grant Scheme was reviewed and deemed still appropriate and adequate.

10 The Community Grant Scheme priorities need updating to align with the proposed new Community Plan.

11 The Scheme Guidelines require updating to reflect current practices regarding requirements of applicants and in particular ensuring that they are proportional to the level of grant being applied for.

12 The current Scheme offers the community and voluntary sector one opportunity to apply for a grant each financial year. The timescales of the current scheme means that applicants submitting their application between September and November do not hear the outcome until 4-6 months later in March, just one week before their project, service or activity is due to start:

- Community and voluntary organisations are invited to submit applications from September with a deadline circa 8 weeks later in November.
- Applications are then appraised by both officers and Members during December, with the report outlining recommendations being written by the first week in January.
- Due to the timings of the various Committees that are required to review, note and subsequently approve the report, the final decision is not made until mid-March.
- Officers then ensure that letters are sent to all applicants detailing the outcome of their application usually within one week of the decision but by the end of March at the latest.

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- Grants are then paid within the first 10 days of April and must be used within 12 months.
- 13 The current timescales of the Scheme are a barrier to some community groups and voluntary sector organisations applying to the Scheme. During a survey of the Voluntary Sector Forum in December 2020, it was clear that the voluntary sector would like to see a simpler and more streamlined application process. Responses received as part of the consultation when asked if they would like to see any changes to the scheme include:
- “The move to digital applications was a good one and further streamlining could simplify the process further.”
- “A more streamlined application process would be welcomed”
- “A more streamlined application and reporting process would be very welcome.”
- “A shorter application process”
- 14 To address the findings of this review the following actions are proposed:
- To implement the amended Community Grant Scheme Guidelines attached as Appendix B.
 - To amend the online application form to reflect these proposed revised Community Grant Scheme Guidelines.
 - To share the revised Community Grant Scheme with the voluntary and community sector via the Voluntary Sector Forum.
 - To work with Legal Services and Members to understand if and how the appraisal process for the Community Grant Scheme can be migrated from Committee appraisal to another process, potentially a panel, to enable the approval process to be more streamlined with a quicker turnaround. This piece of work will include investigating the possibility of introducing two funding rounds per year for the Community Grant Scheme.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

- 15 An option considered, but rejected, was to leave the Council Code of Practice for Grant-making and the Community Grant Scheme unchanged. This was rejected because:
- The Council Code of Practice for Grant-making dated 2015 is the overarching code for all Council grant-making and requires some updating to bring it in line with current practices and requirements.
 - The Community Grant Scheme requires updating to align the Scheme priorities with the new Community Plan.
 - The Community Grant Scheme Guidelines need revising to reflect current practices regarding requirements of applicants and in particular ensuring that they are proportional to the level of grant being applied for.

- 16 Consideration was given to the inclusion of a recommendation that the appraisal process for the Community Grant Scheme be migrated from the current Committee appraisal, potentially using a panel. This was rejected at this stage as further detailed work to understand the legal and other implications is required in consultation with Legal Services and Members.

Key Implications

Financial

- 17 Funding for the Community Grant Scheme has already been allocated in existing budgets. There are no financial implications from the recommendations included in this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

- 18 There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations included in this report. As set out in this report the next recommended step of this review is, in conjunction with Legal Services and Members, understand if and how the appraisal process for the Community Grant Scheme can be migrated from Committee appraisal to another process, potentially a panel.

Equality Assessment

- 19 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.
- 20 The Council Code of Practice for grant-making exists to ensure a consistent approach to grant making, made against set rules that promote equality in relation to access to grants.
- 21 The Community Grant Scheme assists with the provision of services to support Sevenoaks District residents, particularly those in the greatest need. It provides funding for specific groups, such as older people, young people and people with disabilities.
- 22 The decision being made or recommended through this paper does not have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community.
- 23 As no negative impacts have been identified, no further mitigating steps need to be taken.

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Net Zero Implications

- 24 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

- 25 The review undertaken by officers as requested by the People and Places Advisory Committee has revealed that:
- the overarching code for all Council grant-making requires updating;
 - there are efficiency savings & further community benefits to be made by implementing some new processes for all Council teams involved in grant-making;
 - the Community Grant Scheme Guidelines and application form requires revision to align the Scheme priorities with the proposed new Community Plan, and, to reflect current practices regarding requirements of applicants and in particular ensuring that they are proportional to the level of grant being applied for; and
 - to speed up the Community Grant Scheme's appraisal process and consider the introduction of two funding rounds in each year a further detailed piece of work is required in conjunction with Legal Services and Members.

In order to address these findings the recommendations set out in this report have been made.

Appendices

Appendix A - Code of Practice for Grant-making

Appendix B - Community Grant Scheme Guidelines

Background Papers

None

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People and Places

Appendix A

Sevenoaks District Council

Code of Practice for Grant-making

1. Background

1.1. Sevenoaks District Council is committed to improving the quality of life for our residents. We recognize that the community, voluntary sector and the businesses community have 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 delivers grant schemes, where it is able, to provide additional activities and projects that complement and support our strategic and overall objectives.

1.2. 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 using Council Funds.

1.3. From time to time, the Council may manage other grants such as those to individuals and other sectors including businesses. Grant schemes being delivered by the Council as a conduit of an external body e.g. DWP, must adhere to the funders requirements. Other Council grant schemes being delivered using external funding must adhere to the funders' requirements whilst following the principals of this policy.

2. 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'

3. Requirements of our grant schemes

3.1. 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 and if appropriate the objectives of the external funding body;
- The required outcomes the Council or funding body is seeking from the funding;
- Who is eligible to apply (see example list in **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;

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- Minimum and maximum grant level (if appropriate);
- Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating individual grant awards and the scheme as a whole.

4. Application Process:

4.1. 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.

4.2. 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**.

4.2. 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**

4.4. A checklist or online equivalent 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.

4.5. 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.

5. 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 required documents, e.g. 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 information is not provided in this time period, then the application may not be considered. Timescales and ability to do this may be restricted due to funding body or other limitations;

- Appraisers must be satisfied that the applicant has confirmed they have an adequate safeguarding policy or policies in place to safeguard children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and the appropriate DBS checks have taken place. If appropriate, any organisation deemed not to have adequate arrangements in place may have conditions attached to their funding agreement or not receive any funding;
- If appropriate to the grant scheme, audited or independently examined accounts should be considered when the application is appraised. Where the applicant has not been in existence long enough to have a set of audited accounts, they must provide financial records commensurate with the level of grant being applied. The review of the accounts should be proportionate, reasonable and reflect the level of funding.
- If appropriate to the grant scheme, appraisers should consider any other funding the applicant has received from the Council and any monitoring data from these grants.
- Appraisers should keep clear records of their decisions regardless of the outcome of the appraisal.

6. Approval

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

6.2. 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;

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

7. Monitoring & Evaluation

7.1. 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;

7.2. 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.

7.3. 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.

7.4. 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.

8. General

8.1. Working in line with the Data Protection Act, there should be an SDC database which everyone can access that gives details of those groups who have applied for funding and the outcome.

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

Appendix A1 Eligibility for all Council funded 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 or be verified that it is genuine entity i.e. a companies house / charity commission check;
- The applicant group must have a bank account and in the case of voluntary or community groups have at least 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, if requested or required by the scheme, 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 should be able to provide financial records commensurate with the level of grant and provide evidence that they have a bank account as detailed above;
- The applicant group must confirm that they have an adequate safeguarding policy or policies in place to safeguard children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and the appropriate DBS checks have taken place.

Appendix A2: 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;
- Details of how the funding will be spent and any other financial or in kind contributions to the project or scheme. The level of information required will be proportionate to the level of grant.
- 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 and/or has confirmed that they will adhere to the Council's policies;
- 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 (or online equivalent).

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Appendix A3 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;.
- 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;
- 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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Appendix B

Community Grant Scheme Guidelines 2023/24

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

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

Purpose of scheme

Our Community Grant scheme exists to help voluntary organisations and groups 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 the priorities of “Our Communities” within the Sevenoaks District Community Plan.

What are the scheme’s priorities? *[This section has been aligned to the current draft Community Plan and is subject to change if the final Community Plan is amended].*

- Address and reduce anti-social behaviour within the community, focusing particularly on the most vulnerable.
- Projects, services and activities that encourage participation and empower young people in local community.
- Promote, support and improve access to volunteering opportunities as part of a project, service or activity.
- Encourage participation and improve opportunities for excluded or vulnerable groups;
- Improve the wellbeing of local residents.
- Projects, services and activities that support and empower carers.
- Help address and deliver digital inclusion.
- Support communities to live happily together and provide information, advice, advocacy or counselling to those in particular need.
- Projects, services and activities that work in partnership to achieve the priorities listed above.

Who can apply?

You can apply if you deliver services to those that live, work or volunteer in the Sevenoaks District.

Applications for grants over £1000 must have beneficiaries in **two or more parishes** and applicants must be one of the following:

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

Applications for grants £1000 or under must have beneficiaries in **at least one parish** and applicants must be either one of the organisations listed above or a community group with a constitution or set of rules.

How much and what can I apply for?

The minimum you can apply for is **£100**

The most we will award for any one application using this application form is **£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.

When can I apply?

There is one round of grant funding each financial year.

The deadline for applications is [XX] November [20XX] for funding in April [20XX]. You will be advised of the outcome of your application by the end of March [20XX]

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:

- For grants over £1000, 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 including those whose free reserves are higher than their annual expenditure;
- 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.
- Large capital projects.

How will we assess your project?

The appraisal process will look at:

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- Your eligibility to apply;
- The extent to which your project meets the Scheme's priorities;
- How many people will benefit from your project and the value for money;
- The level of benefit and the outcomes to those living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District;
- The level of need for the project, service or activity;
- The level of funding already received from the Council over the previous two years and the outcome from any monitoring from these grants.
- The sustainability of the project, service or activity beyond the length of the funding.

Explanations and Tips for completing the online application form

This section will include hints and tips specific to the online form once it is created i.e. the number of people that can work on the application form at one time, how to save, how to upload a document, etc

When will you know if your application is successful?

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by the end of March [20XX] with successful projects receiving funding in early April [20XX]

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.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

People and Places Advisory Committee - 14 June 2022

Report of: Chief Officer - People and Places

Status: For Information

Also considered by:

Cabinet - 7 July 2022

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This report looks at the work of the Local Strategic Partnerships Community Plan from April 2021 - March 2022.

This reports support the Key Aim of: the Council Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Kelly Webb, x 7474

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

To consider the Sevenoaks District Community Plans Annual Report for 2021-22.

Recommendation to Cabinet

To consider the Sevenoaks District Community Plans Annual Report for 2021-22.

Introduction and Background

Making it happen- *together* is the Community Plan for the Sevenoaks District. It sets out a vision that reflects what local people have told us is important to them in the District.

The vision is supported by a three-year plan, which sets out our priorities for action. The current three-year action plan covers the period 2019-22 and ends in March 2022.

This report summarises the work of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) over the last financial year (2021/22).

The report attached at Appendix A is a summary of the work that has taken place over the year.

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Key Implications

Financial

Delivery of the Community Plan is through each agency's own resources. In some cases, work will be dependent upon external funding sources and appropriate funding bids will be made.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Equality Assessment

- 1 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 results of this analysis are set out immediately below.
- 2 There are no negative impacts - the annual report applies to all.

Net Zero

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. Where possible, the Local Strategic Partnership will seek to align with the Council's net zero ambitions or with their organisation's net zero ambitions.

Community Impact and Outcomes

The Community Plan is based upon the actions delivered by Sevenoaks District Council, partner agencies and other stakeholders. It also reflects community needs identified through local data.

Conclusions

- 2 The Local Strategic Partnership Community Plan Annual Report highlights the work throughout 2021-22

Appendices

Appendix A - Sevenoaks District Community Plan Annual Report 2021-22

Background Papers

None

Sarah Robson
Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, People and Places

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Sevenoaks District Community Plan Annual Report April 2022

This Annual Report is produced by Sevenoaks District Council on behalf of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) using data and information provided by partners



Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership

making it happen

- together



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Introduction

Making it happen- *together* is the Community Plan for the Sevenoaks District. It sets out a 15-year vision that reflects what local people have told us is important to them in the District.

The vision is supported by a three-year plan, which sets out our priorities for action. The current three-year action plan covers the period 2019-22 and ends in March 2022.

This report summarises the work of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) over the last financial year (2021/22).

Our 10-year vision:

- **Safe Communities:** A safer place to live, work and travel
- **Caring Communities:** Children are enabled to have the best start and people can be supported to live independent lives
- **Green Environment:** People can enjoy high quality urban and rural environments
- **Healthy Environment:** People have health lifestyles, access to quality healthcare and health inequalities are reduced
- **Dynamic Economy:** A thriving local economy where businesses flourish, where people have skills for employment and tourism is supported
- **Sustainable Economy:** People can live, work and travel more easily and are empowered to share

Our performance

In order to measure success, we have set out a number of key success measures for each of the priorities set out in this plan.

At the end of the third year (April 2021–March 2022) of the 2019–2022 Action Plan, **96%** of key success measures in the plan were achieved. The 4% is missing information and relates to one action that partners have not sent us the data.

The Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership co-ordinates the monitoring and delivery of the Action Plan. It is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

Sevenoaks District Council, Kent County Council, Sencio Community Leisure, Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, West Kent Housing, West Kent Extra, Moat Housing, Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Age Concern Sevenoaks and Tonbridge, West Kent MIND, Churches Together in Sevenoaks and District, Imago, Kent Police, Compaid, Go Coach.

Safe Communities



We want Sevenoaks to be a safer place to live, work and travel

Priority 1, 85% of actions in the Community Safety Partnership action plan achieved each year: Achieved

Priority 2, Keep overall crime amongst the lowest in the county and aim for an improvement in that position. Achieved

Priority 3, Maintain the low number of ASB incidents (no higher than 3rd in the county). Achieved

Priority 4, Road safety measures undertaken to prevent people from being killed or seriously injured on local roads.: Information not received

Priority 5, Enforcement action taken against dangerously or illegally parked cars.: Achieved.

Key Success Measures: Safe Communities

Safe 1. 85% of actions in the Community Safety Partnership action plan achieved each year:

The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership achieved 97% of actions set out in the Community Safety Strategy Action Plan during 2020/21.

The 2021/22 Action Plan focused on Domestic Abuse, Serious and Acquisitive Crime (including Organised Crime Groups, Emerging Trends and County Lines, which is a type of criminal exploitation where gangs and organised crime networks groom and exploit children to sell drugs), Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime, Safeguarding, Substance Misuse, Doorstep Crime and Scams including Cyber Crime.

This year the Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit (CSU) carried out 626 daily tasking's to address reports over the previous 24-hours, and made follow-up visits and calls to residents who reported issues and concerns.

The Community Safety Partnership continued to target repeat locations of concern to local people during 2021/22. The Partnership has over 35 projects in their action plan and schemes to address specific local community safety issues.

Safe 2, Keep overall crime amongst the lowest in the county and aim for an improvement in that position.

During 2021/22, there were 7056 reports of victim based crime between 1 April 2021 & 31 March 2022. This is an increase of 265 crimes compared to same period last year. At the end of the financial year, Sevenoaks District had the **second lowest number** of reported victim based crimes in the County.

Safe 3, Maintain the low number of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents (no higher than 3rd in the county)

During 2021/22, Sevenoaks District had the third lowest level of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the county, with 1513 recorded incidents to Kent Police. Compared to previous year there has been a 44% decrease (1177 reports). During the last three years, Sevenoaks District has maintained the low number of ASB incidents at no higher than the second lowest in the county.

Coronavirus has played a big impact on crime and ASB and has contributed to the decreases and increases.

Safe 4, Road safety measures undertaken to prevent people from being killed or seriously injured (KSI) on local roads.

KCC have not given us any data since the last annual report.

Speedwatch continued to operate in eight locations in the District. Speedwatch enables groups of volunteer residents to contribute to their community's safety and quality of life by helping reduce excessive vehicle speed.

Safe 5, Enforcement action taken against dangerously or illegally parked cars.

During 2021/22, there have been over 5000 enforcement actions taken against vehicles parked in contravention of parking restrictions/regulations.

Caring Communities

We want Sevenoaks to be a place where people can be supported to lead independent, fulfilling lives and where children and young people have the best start



Your priorities for action

Priority 1, Increased number of people supported to live independently: Achieved

Priority 2, Reduced loneliness and social isolation through social prescribing schemes: Achieved

Priority 3, Sevenoaks Local Children’s Partnership Group (LCPG) to produce a set of indicators focused on LCPG priorities, with at least 75% of core indicators on target: Achieved

Priority 4, The number of positive outcomes where homelessness has been prevented: Achieved

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APPENDIX A

Priority 5, Deliver the actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing Starts at Home” to meet the needs of vulnerable and low-income households and improve the condition of existing stock: Achieved

Priority 6, Improve opportunities for vulnerable people through the Community Grant Scheme; Achieved

Key Success Measures: Caring Communities

Caring 1, Increased number of people supported to live independently.

Sevenoaks District Council's Private Sector Housing team work to support Sevenoaks residents to live independently by supporting them with grants. The Disabled Facility Grants are used for major adaptations to people's homes such as stair lifts and flush floor showers. During 2021/22 there were 52 of these grants given out. This has enabled more residents across the District to live more independently.

Safe and Secure Grants are also given out by our Private Sector Housing Team. There have been 31 of these grants given out for 2021/22. There have also been over £5000 worth of Peabody Handyperson Service work for the year that includes 43 keysafes, 10 beds and mattresses, 2 grab rails, 2 rubbish clearance and a property deep clean.

The West Kent Hospital Discharge Programme supported by the Better Care Fund is a partnership project between Sevenoaks District Council, Peabody Home Improvement Agency and the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust. During 2021/22, 15 Hospital Discharge Grants were given out.

Caring 2, Reduced loneliness and social isolation through social prescribing schemes.

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is one of the most ambitious programmes across the NHS and local government to date. It creates a local budget to encourage the NHS and local government to work more closely together, placing people's wellbeing as the focus of health and care services.

During 2020/21 Better Care continued to provide around £100,000 of funding for an exciting partnership project aimed at supporting older people in Edenbridge and Swanley. The "**One You - Your Home**" project is a partnership project between Sevenoaks District Council and Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge. It provides a service for older people who are referred by GPs as needing more general support. The project employs two One You Advisers, who aim to remedy health and housing related issues, reduce demand on GPs, promote independence for customers and provide financial assistance in overcoming obstacles within the home environment.

Your Home Service continue to support clients across the Sevenoaks District in combating social isolation. For most of 2021/22 the Coronavirus had a major impact on the delivery of the Your Home Advisers held appointments with 180 clients, of these 15 were referred for Community Activity and 7 set goals connected with socialisation. However.

Over the last year Your Home Advisers have held appointments with **over 300 clients**. Most of these clients set goals centred on adaptations within the home to ensure personal safety.

Caring 3, Outcomes achieved on Sevenoaks District Local Children's Partnership Action Plan

The Sevenoaks Local Children's Partnership Group continued to focus on the following priorities during 2021/22, including, secondary school attendance, emotional resilience, domestic abuse and supporting families to make healthy lifestyle choices.

During 2021/22, Kent County Council's **Early Help Service** continued to support families who struggle with multiple and complex problems. The Service brings partners together to help families overcome these problems by working intensively with them to provide the stability and practical support they need to improve their lives.

During 2021/22, on entry to the programme, the four most frequent problems for these families were as follows:

- Children with mental health or emotional health and well-being concerns
- A child with 10% absences or more across the last three consecutive terms
- An adult who requires parenting support
- An adult with mental health or emotional health and well-being concerns

The Local Strategic Partnership continue to support Mental Health throughout the District and especially through COVID-19 and the pandemic a lot of services were held on line. West Kent & North Kent Mind delivered a number of 1:1 and group sessions over Zoom. They also released a lot of information and a tool kit on how to address mental health over Social Media. Face to Face sessions have also been reinstated.

Mental Health reports have seen an increase across the County through the pandemic. Release the pressure has been widely advertised. In January and February 2022 Sevenoaks District Council held Mental Health Awareness Training have promoted Mental Health services through the Council and to partner agencies.

Caring 4, The number of positive outcomes where homelessness has been prevented.

Our Housing Advice Team have continued to provide positive outcomes to prevent homelessness. For the past year, the team have supported 245 people with a positive outcome whereby homelessness was prevented or secured alternative accommodation.

Caring 5, Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing starts at Home” to meet the needs of vulnerable and low-income households and improve the condition of existing stock

“Wellbeing Starts at Home” reflects Sevenoaks District Council’s belief that people’s home environment can have a significant impact on health. If our homes are over-crowded, isolated and under-occupied, badly maintained and full of hazards, cold and damp or unaffordable and causing debt - our health will suffer.

S106 housing pots funding from developers have been awarded to WKHA to refurbish a property in Sevenoaks Town to provide accommodation for those with mental health needs and this will provide 7 bed spaces to those most in need. We are currently awaiting funding for 2022/23 to help on Housing

Caring 6, Improve the opportunities for vulnerable people through the Community Grant Scheme

The Community Grant Scheme funded by Sevenoaks District Council enables charities, community groups and organisations to apply for grants from £500-£5,000 for a specific project that helps the health and wellbeing of our residents. From those that applied for funding in 2021/22 **over85% of targets** were met or exceeded and some funding was returned and carried forward for use in funding Community Grants for 2022/23.

Green Environment

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place where people can enjoy clean and high quality urban and rural environments



Priority 1, Planning policies used effectively as monitored through the Local Plan to protect our high quality natural environment, including Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and biodiversity: Achieved

Priority 2, Use and enforce Planning Policies set out in the Local Plan to ensure new development is designed to a high quality and takes into account distinctive local character and impact on the environment: Achieved

Priority 3, Ensure new development is designed to a high quality and takes into account local character and the impact on the environment: Achieved

Priority 4, Recycling campaigns delivered: Achieved

Key Success Measures: Green Environment

Green 1, planning policies used effectively as monitored through the Local Plan to protect our high quality natural environment, including Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and biodiversity

During 2021/22, Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan policies **successfully protected open and green spaces** in the District, ensuring that key developments in the District contributed to future open space provision.

Developments across the District have continued to be built in accordance with the adopted policy in the Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management Plan. The emerging Local Plan also includes policies to conserve and enhance the natural environment, including biodiversity net gain and new developments. Relevant Evidence Base documents also provide development guidance, and include the Green Belt Assessment, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans and Kent Biodiversity Strategy.

Green 2, Use and enforce Planning Policies set out in the Local Plan to ensure new development is designed to a high quality and takes into account local character and impact on the environment

The Local Plan sets out the vision for future development across the Sevenoaks District and used to help decide on planning applications and other planning related decisions.

Sevenoaks District Council's emerging Local Plan also includes policies which encourage development to reflect the distinctive local character of the area and exhibit high quality design.

The Council's Urban Design Officer has delivered training to officers and members on the implementation of adopted local and national policy including the National Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Assessment.

Green 3, Weekly refuse service collection maintained

During 2021/22, Sevenoaks District Council successfully maintained its weekly refuse and dry recycling collection service. Sevenoaks District Council is unique in being the only Council within Kent to maintain a weekly service. It is also one of the few in Kent to retain an in house collection service.

The target for missed collections of waste per 100,000 populations 10.0 and the actual for this is **6.8**, which is a great achievement given the huge increase of waste weights being presented.

Green 4, Recycling campaigns delivered

During 2021/22, 98% of the District's waste was recycled or reused, which is the same as last year. This has been helped by some successful recycling campaigns and initiatives, including:

- In partnership with the Kent Resource Partnership campaigns for recycling happened County-wide.
- The Green and garden waste services were advertised in this quarter via social media, website and Insite magazine.

West Kent Communities manages the Abacus furniture store in Sevenoaks and two others elsewhere in Kent. In addition to providing low cost furniture to those that most need it, the stores recycled **110 tonnes** of goods that would otherwise have gone to landfill

Healthy Environment

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place where people have healthy lifestyles and where health inequalities are reduced



Priority 1, Produce new Health Inequalities Action Plan - Achieved

Priority 2, 85% of success measured in the District Deal to be on target - Achieved

Priority 3, Service improvements delivered through a health in all policies approach - Achieved

Priority 4, Actions delivered in Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Strategy, Wellbeing Starts at Home, focused on supporting the Council's health outcomes and supporting people to remain independent - Achieved

Key Success Measures: Healthy Environment

Healthy 1: Produce new Health Inequalities Action Plan that supports the delivery of the Community Plan

Sevenoaks District Council's and Kent County Council's "Health Deal - the future of health at a local level" is a ten-point plan which involves:

- Training staff on Making Every Contact Count and how to make appropriate referrals
- Working to establish a health in all policies approach; ensuring everything we do supports a health and wellbeing approach;
- Tackling the housing causes of ill-health through the work of HERO and SuperHERO service;
- Accessing new external funding to support delivery of the deal, including two successful Sport England funding bids;
- Improving health in workplaces in the District;
- Working in partnership with GPs;
- Making best use of open space and active travel, including promotion of led cycle rides in the district, and new quarterly health walk leader training;
- One You Advisers continuing to carry out mapping of the key health assets at the local level;
- One You Your Home Advisers now accessing GP data on GP systems;

The Health Inequalities Action plan has been changed to the Health and Wellbeing Plan and a new plan has been implemented and is monitored by a multi-agency Partnership

Healthy 2, 85% of success measured in the District Deal to be on target

95% on target, This has now been exceeded through the new Health & Wellbeing Action Plan.

Healthy 3, Service improvements delivered through a health in all policies approach

A significant portion of our time is being invested in reinstating previous One You services back to face to face. We received funding for Our Parks and this has been delivered throughout the District and working with Involve on delivery health services.

Healthy 4, Actions delivered in Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Strategy, Wellbeing Starts at Home, focused on supporting the Council's health outcomes and supporting people to remain independent.

“Wellbeing Starts at Home” reflects Sevenoaks District Council’s belief that people’s home environment can have a significant impact on health. If our homes are over-crowded, isolated and under-occupied, badly maintained and full of hazards, cold and damp or unaffordable and causing debt - our health will suffer.

A number of planning permissions have been determined during the quarter which will provide new accessible affordable homes: These higher accessibility standards ensure homes will meet the needs of a wider range of applicants and therefore support independence.

Dynamic Economy

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place with a thriving local economy, where businesses flourish, and people have skills for employment



Priority 1, Deliver actions against the key themes set out in the Economic Development Strategy (2018-21) for Growth and Investment, Infrastructure, Visitor Economy, Skill and Enterprise - Achieved

Priority 2, Develop a digital inclusion strategy - Achieved

Priority 3, Funding secured for business support programmes and rural businesses - Achieved

Dynamic Economy: Key Success Measures

Dynamic 1, Deliver actions against the key themes set out in the Economic Development Strategy (2018-21) for Growth and Investment, Infrastructure, Visitor Economy, Skill and Enterprise

Sevenoaks District Council's Economic Development Strategy 2018-21 was agreed last year. This includes a key theme area relating of growth and investment in the district with an ambition to regenerate key market towns.

The Economic Development team continue to deliver actions in the current Economic Development Strategy, as well as the West Kent Priorities for growth strategy. All actions remain on track to be delivered by the end of the Strategy period. A new Strategy is being drafted for the next financial year.

Community Development officers have also worked closely with a partner IMAGO, to deliver an Employability project to enhance the skills of Young Carers and with West Kent Extra on their Job Skills Fayres

Dynamic 2, Develop a Digital inclusion strategy with positive outcomes achieved

Due to our partners Compaid, Age UK, West Kent Housing and other agencies offering support to digitally excluded individuals it has been determined that there is already good provision in the District. However, we are working with KCC on Community Wi-Fi and they have conducted a survey in 2 areas of the District. There is a dedicated Digital Inclusion Hub by KCC and we are working with them on delivering services.

Dynamic 3, Funding secured for business support programmes and rural businesses

SDC is the Gateway for Kickstart West Kent which provides employers with grant funding to employ a young person for 25 hours a week for 6 months. At the end of March over 100 placements had been approved. This scheme has now ended.

Sustainable Economy

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place where people can live, work and travel more easily and are empowered to shape their communities



Priority 1, Projects delivered through the CIL infrastructure plan; Achieved

Priority 2, Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing Starts at Home” to provide a good mix of decent and affordable housing: Achieved

Priority 3, A new Transport Strategy for the District produced, which facilitates improvements to transport in the district: Achieved

Priority 4, Increase number of people who are helped to shape their local community: Achieved

Sustainable Economy: Key Success Measures

Sustainable 1, Projects delivered and/or supported by CIL (Community Infrastructure Plan)

There have been no recent CIL Boards due to the fact of lack of developments, but these will happen in due course. CIL Training has been delivered to Town & Parish Councils

Sustainable 2, Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing Starts at Home” to provide a good mix of decent and affordable housing.

The number of affordable homes delivered in 2021/22 was 20 homes. Broom Hill, Swanley and the Tesco's site, Sevenoaks. These will deliver 39 new affordable homes, including 25 "genuinely affordable" homes, in future years. The affordable housing Provider has yet to be selected for either site.

Sustainable 3, A new Transport Strategy for the District produced, which facilitates improvements to transport in the district.

The Council produced a Sevenoaks District Transport Assessment (Dec 2018) and the Swanley Transport Study (May 2018) evidence base documents, to support the preparation of the emerging Local Plan. Developments continue to be in accordance with adopted policy.

Sustainable 4, Increase number of people who have helped to shape their local community:

Until August 2021 we continued our 'Care for our Community' Scheme. In March 2022 this was set up for the Ukraine Scheme. A host event has been organised for April 2022 and volunteer group set up to help families coming to the District.



For more information or to get in contact

Telephone 01732 227000

Website www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Email communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk

**This publication is available in large print and
can be explained in other languages by calling
01732 227000**

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SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLAN 2022 - 2032

People and Places Advisory Committee - 14 June 2022

Report of: Chief Officer - People and Places

Status: For decision

Also considered by: Cabinet - 7 July 2022

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This report seeks approval of the final draft of Community Plan for the period 2022 - 2032. The document and its supporting Action Plan has been developed by the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership following public consultation.

This reports support the Key Aim of: the Council Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Sarah Robson and Kelly Webb, x 7219

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

That comments on recommendation a) are passed to Cabinet.

Recommendation to Cabinet

- a) That Members are asked to approve the final draft Community Plan and action plan for 2022-2032.

Reason for recommendation: The draft strategy and action plan has been reviewed by the People and Places Advisory Committee and Cabinet. Final changes noted by Cabinet will be incorporated.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) works together to improve the quality of life for people in the Sevenoaks District. The partnership is made up of private, public, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations who work with communities to identify and tackle key long, medium and short-term local issues to ensure Sevenoaks District remains a great place to live and work.
- 2 This Community Plan is the shared, long-term, partnership vision for Sevenoaks District developed by the Sevenoaks District LSP.

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- 3 The overarching priority for the Community Plan is to increase community participation in the Sevenoaks District as a driver to improving resilience and wellbeing, focusing on those parts of the district with the poorest outcomes. The Plan highlights how adopting a collective approach can help to better achieve the ambitions of the people that live and work in the district.
- 4 Sevenoaks District has an active and vibrant voluntary and community sector that already provides a wide range of valuable services, and that makes a positive contribution to the lives of many in the district. The Community Plan wants to further strengthen the ability of these groups to have a positive impact on the district, through better co-ordination and joining up of the public and voluntary sectors on a collective set of priorities. Most importantly the Community Plan wants to encourage actions that mobilise and involve our local communities, so that they become active partners in helping us to meet the growing and changing needs of our population.

Public consultation

- 5 Public consultation was undertaken in the second half of 2021, which helped to identify the following four local priorities for action - place, economy, people and environment.
- 6 The consultation together with examination of local data has informed the final strategy and action plan, which sets out how partners will deliver the priorities in the plan.
- 7 Overall, residents of Sevenoaks District expressed their aspirations and determination to support and develop their district. They care greatly about the place they live and want to see it grow and develop in a way that supports them and their communities.
- 8 The consultation provided the following feedback:
- 9 **Community spirit is something that residents rate highly**
 - Increasing importance of helping our neighbours
 - Getting involved in activities in their local community
 - People want to do more, but time is viewed as a barrier
- 10 **Residents care about their local environment and want to recycle more**
 - They would like to have more opportunities to recycle
 - More, clearer information about what they can recycle and how they can play their part
- 11 **Residents highlighted their ambitions and aspirations for town centres**
 - More events and activities
 - Amenities such as family friendly restaurants and leisure facilities
 - Good availability of local services and transport links

- Many people recognised that town centres are changing, becoming less retail focused and developing into destinations where people can enjoy social activities
- 12 **Residents are keen to take part in more leisure activities across the district making the most of its green spaces**
- Being able to easily access the countryside and green spaces within the district
 - More accessible and well-linked cycling and walking routes
 - Continued investment in our green spaces and nature reserves
- 13 The final draft of the Community Plan and Action Plan which take into account the public consultation feedback are attached at Appendix A.
- 14 The action plan and the associated performance monitoring are the result of discussion with partner agencies and Heads of Service and Chief Officers within the Council about realistic delivery of the aspirations in the Community Plan.
- 15 Whilst the District Council is responsible for co-ordinating this work, the Community Plan is a multi-agency strategy, delivered in partnership with many agencies and therefore covers a wide range of issues and services.

Key Implications

Financial

Delivery of the Community Plan is through each agency's own resources. In some cases, work will be dependent upon external funding sources and appropriate funding bids will be made.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal implications associated with this report. The Community Plan enables partners to work together in a structured and co-ordinated way, helping to improve efficiency, share resources and most importantly secure additional resources and commitments from partners on the delivery of local community aspirations.

Whilst every effort has been made to identify realistic actions, outcomes rely on the continued input of a range of agencies working together, along with the goodwill of communities and voluntary organisations. Regular quarterly monitoring of the Community Plan will identify at an early stage outcomes that may not be delivered so that alternative strategies or revised actions can be agreed.

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

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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 in Appendix B.

Net Zero

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. Where possible, the Local Strategic Partnership will seek to align with the Council's net zero ambitions or with their organisation's net zero ambitions.

Community Impact and Outcomes

The Community Plan is based upon the results of consultation with the community, including its harder to reach groups, partner agencies and other stakeholders. It also reflects community needs identified through local data

Conclusions

The overarching goal of the Community Plan is to build social capital in the district as an underlying driver to improve resilience and wellbeing. Social capital is about creating a shared sense of responsibility and the ways in which communal activity can benefit everyone. It is about shared values and co-operation, building trust and reciprocity. Members are asked to approve the final draft of the Community Plan and Action Plan for publication.

Appendices

Appendix A - Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership Community Plan - Better Together (2022 - 2032) and Action Plan

Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment (to follow)

Background Papers

None

Sarah Robson
Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, People and Places

Better Together

A Community Plan for Sevenoaks District 2022-2032



Welcome to Sevenoaks District Community Plan for 2022-2032.

This Community Plan is the shared, long-term, partnership vision for Sevenoaks District developed by the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership. The partnership is made up of private, public, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations who work with communities to identify and tackle key long, medium and short-term local issues to ensure Sevenoaks District remains a great place to live and work.

Times change, but achieving the best for those who live, work and visit Sevenoaks District remains the cornerstone of the work of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership.

The overarching priority for the Community Plan is to increase community participation in the Sevenoaks District as a driver to improving resilience and wellbeing, focusing on those parts of the district with the poorest outcomes. The Plan highlights how adopting a collective approach can help to better achieve the ambitions of the people that live and work in the district.

Sevenoaks District has an active and vibrant voluntary and community sector that already provides a wide range of valuable services, and that makes a positive contribution to the lives of many in the district. The Community Plan wants to further strengthen the ability of these groups to have a positive impact on the district, through better co-ordination and joining up of the public and voluntary sectors on a collective set of priorities. Most importantly the Community Plan wants to encourage actions that mobilise and involve our local communities, so that they become active partners in helping us to meet the growing and changing needs of our population.

The Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) works together to improve the quality of life for people in the area and is committed to the following values which are embedded in the Strategy's action plan:

shared vision - shared values - collective action

As partners, we will support the Strategy to:

- find simple and effective ways of working together that improve efficiency; make the most of resources and ensure value for money;

- ensure social, economic and environmental wellbeing is embedded in all decisions;
- promote a greater understanding and mutual respect between different sectors and sections of the community; empower local people to make a difference to improve their localities and that encourage them to believe it is both possible and worth it;
- ensure resources are used wisely, become carbon neutral, prevent pollution and waste, and conserve and enhance the environment for future generations, and;
- individual needs and aspirations, the diversity of its landscapes and neighbourhoods contribute to a high quality of life.

The Plan sets out actions for how partners can work collectively with our communities to deliver the priorities. This includes identifying and highlighting the assets in our communities, both physical spaces, as well as people and groups with skills and knowledge that can help strengthen and grow community-led activities.

The emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic has generated very successful networks of residents, businesses, and partners working together to support the most vulnerable residents and key workers across the district. These networks can contribute to achieving the Plan's priorities in a post-pandemic world.

The Strategy is a result of a great deal of information gathering and consultation. The results have allowed us to concentrate on four priorities which the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership can best address through local partners, residents and businesses working collectively together.

Consultation feedback

Overall, residents of Sevenoaks District expressed their aspirations and determination to support and develop their district. They care greatly about the place they live and want to see it grow and develop in a way that supports them and their communities.

Community spirit is something that residents rate highly

- Increasing importance of helping our neighbours

Agenda Item 13

APPENDIX A

- Getting involved in activities in their local community
- People want to do more, but time is viewed as a barrier

Residents care about their local environment and want to recycle more

- They would like to have more opportunities to recycle
- More, clearer information about what they can recycle and how they can play their part

Residents highlighted their ambitions and aspirations for town centres

- More events and activities
- Amenities such as family friendly restaurants and leisure facilities
- Good availability of local services and transport links
- Many people recognised that town centres are changing, becoming less retail focused and developing into destinations where people can enjoy social activities

Residents are keen to take part in more leisure activities across the district making the most of its green spaces

- Being able to easily access the countryside and green spaces within the district
- More accessible and well-linked cycling and walking routes
- Continued investment in our green spaces and nature reserves

The Community Plan's four priorities are:



Our Place

What does success look like?

- Communities where people want to live, feel they belong and it is easy to meet every day needs.
- Built and natural environments are highly valued and well managed to keep the Sevenoaks District an attractive place to live.
- New development sits well with the natural environment and recognised for its quality.
- New homes meet local needs and bring improved and new local facilities, employment and contribution to the community.

What will we do?

- Prepare a revised Local Plan which engages with the public and brings forward the proposals and policies which ensure we have enough homes of the right type to meet future demand and enable existing businesses to grow, new businesses to relocate and provides a range of new employment opportunities.
- Work with central government and key partners to identify the strategic infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development.
- Prioritise environmentally sound policies that enhance biodiversity alongside new development.
- Create a well maintained public realm with accessible facilities and quality public space that encourage people both to get active and stay in the district.
- Improve access to affordable and appropriate housing.

What can you do?

- Take responsibility for your local area by resolving, recording and reporting any issue.
- Use the district's parks and green spaces to get out, have fun and improve your own health and wellbeing
- Attend and take part in events and activities and encourage others to get involved too.
- Landlords and developers work with us to provide quality homes.

Our Economy

What does success look like?

- Increased economic growth making Sevenoaks District a location of choice for business and providing local jobs.
- Towns and villages are lively and welcoming.
- Tourism's contribution to the economy, employment and quality of life is maximised.
- Residents have access to a wide range of local employment opportunities.

What will we do?

- Identify and promote more employment sites for new and expanding businesses in the district.
- Support market towns, high streets and villages to thrive by encouraging new businesses and enterprises, alongside sustainable, quality public and private investment
- Work closely with our businesses to create suitable employment opportunities for people who find it hard to get into work.
- Work with our schools and colleges to help get their students ready for work and to offer training courses that help.
- Reducing the number of young people who are Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET).

What can you do?

- Support your local businesses and shop local.
- Keep your town and village centres clean and tidy by not dropping litter.
- If you run a business, take on an apprentice or offer placements. Think about linking in with schools and colleges to encourage young people to think about their career aspirations from an early age.
- Access the digital opportunities available to make the most of your business.
- If you are an employer, pay the living wage.

Our Communities

What does success look like?

- Neighbourhoods are safe for people to live, work and socialise in.
- Residents of all ages enjoy improved levels of health and wellbeing and reduced inequalities within our communities.
- Parents feel supported to give their child the best start during the early years of their life.
- An empowered and independent voluntary sector that has the capacity to tackle local priorities.

What will we do?

- Address anti-social behaviour within our communities, focusing particularly on the most vulnerable to ensure they are appropriately supported.
- Engage young people in decisions affecting them through regular consultation.
- Work together with partners to get health services right and delivered where you live.
- Deliver targeted health initiatives to help people lose weight, stop smoking and become more active.
- Enable and mobilise our communities to connect and support each other.
- Support carers, providing opportunities to network and come together.
- Support voluntary and community groups to offer a diverse range of volunteering, events and other opportunities to support communities to live happily together.

What can you do?

- Report anti-social behaviour (ASB) to the district's Community Safety Unit.
- Be willing to support enforcement action e.g. impact statements.
- Make the most of the opportunities in our district to do things that make you happy, that connect you to your community
- Use your local free early years and childcare offer and take advantage of Children Centre activities and engage with health provision.
- Encourage your child to join a local group or club in the community.

Agenda Item 13

APPENDIX A

- Tell us if you care for a family member or relative and make sure you look after your own health and happiness as well as the person you are caring for
- Get involved in your community, support events or volunteer.

Our Environment

What does success look like?

- Prioritised protection of the environment and increased biodiversity.
- Minimise waste and increase re-use and recycling.
- Co-benefits for our health and wellbeing, resilience and local economy.

What will we do?

- Develop a Net Zero Action Plan which will set out a roadmap to achieving our carbon reduction targets for the Council and the district.
- Prioritised protection of the environment and increased biodiversity
- Work with partners to increase the number of electric vehicle charging points across the district to promote the use of more environmentally friendly vehicles.
- To promote active travel to work, with a specific focus on co-benefits for climate change.
- Ensure the design and location of new development takes account of the need to improve air quality through the Local Plan in line with Sevenoaks District Council's Air Quality Action Plan.
- Encourage and promote recycling and support national recycling targets and campaigns
- Encourage community participation in efforts to clean-up and directly invest in the management of their local environment

What can you do?

- Reducing your energy consumption by making your home or business more energy efficient.
- Avoiding using your car or replacing your petrol/ diesel vehicle with a low carbon alternative. For short journeys, try leaving your car at home. Walking and cycling improves health and reduces your carbon footprint.
- Recycle more and recycle right.
- Planting trees on your property and encouraging others to do so.

Better Together

A Community Plan for Sevenoaks District 2022-2032

Our Action Plan



The Action Plan

The following pages set out the overall targets for the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership. This is a rolling Action Plan and will be reviewed annually. It does not include details of the numerous activities already undertaken by partners, businesses, 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 next ten years.

Funding and monitoring

Funding for the actions included within the Action Plan is available from a number of sources, including partners' own budgets, 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

We recognise that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to access services without being discriminated against or disadvantaged. In preparing the action plan, issues such as equality and diversity were considered. The Action Plan sets out a firm commitment by partners to:

- Increase prosperity and economic opportunity in the district which will benefit all residents;
- Ensure that services are fully accessible to all community groups;
- Ensure that work programmes are scoped to continue to target and protect the most vulnerable people in our communities;
- Recognise that people need different levels of support and services depending on their circumstances, and;
- Promote new opportunities for people living in the more deprived communities of our district, particularly through apprenticeships, training and employment opportunities, especially for young people.

Better Together - Our Place

Ref	Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Other Partners
1.1	Planning policies used effectively as monitored through the Local Plan to protect our high quality natural environment, including Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and biodiversity	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council
1.2	Through the review of the Local Plan, provide a long-term strategic overview of what is needed in our town centres, within an ever changing environment, putting in place the mechanisms to enable delivery	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Town Councils Businesses
1.3	Working with communities and partners to help identify and deliver the supply of homes which reflects current and future housing needs	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Town & Parish Councils West Kent Housing Other Housing Providers
1.4	Creating communities that have the infrastructure and accessibility to meet the needs of a changing and growing population	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Kent Public Health Town & Parish Councils West Kent Housing Other Housing Providers
1.5	Work with key partners to prevent individuals in financial hardship from becoming homeless through early intervention, advice and support, encouraging people into employment where possible	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Kent Public Health Kent & Medway CCG Housing Providers Voluntary Sector Forum
1.6	Making the most of the benefits of inward investment and economic growth. Promoting the district as an outstanding place to live and work, whilst safeguarding its heritage and natural assets	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Relocate in Kent Town & Parish Councils Business Board

Better Together - Our Economy

Ref	Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Other Partners
2.1	Reduce the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETS), to include local community & job hubs	Department of Work & Pensions	Kent County Council West Kent Partnership West Kent Housing Business Board Youth Assembly
2.2	Work with Town & Parish Councils and local community groups to deliver on supporting local businesses and keeping areas clean and attractive	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Town & Parish Councils
2.3	Young people have access to and benefit from high quality, comprehensive education and training opportunities, including apprenticeships	West Kent Partnership	Kent County Council West Kent Partnership West Kent Housing Business Board
2.4	Enhance the visitor offer in the district by coordinating a full cultural programme and supporting existing or new attractions, accommodation providers and other tourism related businesses	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council West Kent Partnership Business Board Visit Kent
2.5	Work with the private sector to develop and promote business sites in the district	Locate in Kent	Kent County Council Sevenoaks District Council West Kent Partnership Business Board
2.6	Targeted business support to increase the resilience of businesses, including ecommerce and marketing	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council West Kent Partnership Business Board Chamber of Commerce Federation of Small Businesses

Better Together - Our Communities

Ref	Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Other Partners
3.1	Establish links with local residents, businesses and community organisations to help empower and mobilise communities to address issues important to them through events, training and links to funding.	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Community Leaders Local Groups Town & Parish Councils Housing Associations Voluntary Sector Forum
3.2	Increase the number of people joining My Community Voice to ensure local community concerns are being heard and supported	Kent Police	Community Safety Unit Community Leaders Local Groups Town & Parish Councils Voluntary Sector Forum
3.3	Implement and promote a range of campaigns to tackle unhealthy weights, promote social inclusion and mental wellness	Kent Public Health	Sevenoaks District Council Voluntary Sector Forum
3.4	Outcomes achieved on Sevenoaks District Local Children's Partnership Action Plan	Kent County Council	All partners Youth Assembly
3.5	Identify social inequalities resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, updating recovery action plans in light of the findings	Sevenoaks District Council	All partners
3.6	Support the Sevenoaks District Access Group to deliver an annual event, promoting a range of information, advice and activities for people with a physical, learning or mental disability who may not be aware of the services that are available, or how to access them	Access Group	All partners
3.7	Identify the challenges and opportunities currently faced by the district's voluntary and community sector as a result of Covid-19, and how best we can support them	Voluntary Sector Forum	All partners

Better Together - Our Environment

Ref	Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Other Partners
4.1	Deliver on local and partnership Net Zero Policies and Climate Change Action Plan	Sevenoaks District Council	All partners
4.2	Seek opportunities to work with our communities and partners to reduce the amount of household waste produced by increasing recycling and ensuring improved knowledge of our recycling processes	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Town & Parish Councils West Kent Housing Housing Associations
4.3	Ensure the design and location of new development takes account of the need to improve air quality through the Local Plan in line with Sevenoaks District Council's Air Quality Action Plan.	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Kent Developers Group
4.4	Work with partners and communities for all to become more energy efficient	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Town & Parish Councils
4.5	Work with communities, landowners and local groups to project landscape, wildlife and heritage e.g. Darent Valley Heritage Landscape Partnership	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent County Council Darent Valley Heritage Landscape Partnership Kent Wildlife Trust Bore Place
4.6	Support Kent County Council's emerging Strategy for Electric Vehicle and Low Emissions, through the provision further public electric vehicle charging points in the district, subject to infrastructure	Kent County Council	Sevenoaks District Council Town & Parish Councils

What is the Sevenoaks District like?



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

- Despite adjoining the outer edge of London it is predominantly rural with 93% of the District designated as Green Belt.
- 60% of the District is in the Kent Downs or High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 11% is covered in Ancient Woodland.
- Six main settlements - Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge, Westerham, New Ash Green and Otford.
- Train services to London take just under 30 minutes from Swanley

and just under 30 minutes from Sevenoaks.

- One hour by car to Dover port and 40 minutes by car to London airports.
- Nine miles from Swanley to Ebbsfleet International railway station.
- Sevenoaks District is perceived to be affluent but this masks local pockets of urban and rural deprivation. For example, Swanley St Mary's ward falls within the 10% most deprived wards in Kent and the South East (2015, Indices of Multiple Deprivation).
- 11.6% of children under 16 (2,465) live in low-income families in receipt of Child Tax Credit where rural deprivation is more isolating than poverty in the towns. The majority of children living in poverty (73.9%) live in lone parent families.
- According to the Kent County Council housing led population forecast projections, the population of Sevenoaks District is forecast to grow by more than 13,500 by 2028.
- The 2017 mid-year population estimates (Office for National Statistics) show that Sevenoaks District has a population of 119,400 residents and the third lowest population density in Kent measured at 3.1 persons per hectare.
- According to Kent County Council the number of people over 65 is forecast to rise by 41.1% by 2036 (10,400 people) and the number of people over 85 is forecast to rise by 97.2% by 2036 (3,500 people).

Membership of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership

Sevenoaks District Council

Kent County Council

Kent Public Health

Kent & Medway Clinical Commissioning Group

Kent Police

Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Kenward Trust

Department for Work & Pensions

West Kent Partnership

Conway

Go Coach

West Kent Housing

Moat Housing

Sevenoaks District Voluntary Sector Forum

Imago

West Kent Mind

Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services

Age UK

Compaid

Change Grow Live

SupaJam

Arts without Boundaries

Kent Wildlife Trust

Darent Valley Landscape Partnership

Bore Place

Sencio Leisure Trust

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**SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2021
- 2022**

People and Places Advisory Committee - 14 June 2022

Report of: Chief Officer - People and Places

Status: For Information

Also considered by:

Cabinet - 7 July 2022

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This report looks at the work of Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership from April 2021 - March 2022.

This reports support the Key Aim of: the Council Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Kelly Webb, x 7474

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

To consider the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Annual Report for 2021-22.

Recommendation to Cabinet

To consider the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Annual Report for 2021-22.

Reason for recommendation: To keep Members updated on the work of the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership.

Introduction and Background

In 2006, a review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police Reform Act 2002 led to a series of recommendations to strengthen and extend existing requirements through the experience gained from partnership working. This resulted in a new set of national minimum standards which came into force in August 2007.

The 1998 Crime & Disorder Act included the requirement to produce a detailed crime and disorder audit through consultation with key agencies and the wider community and to use the findings to identify strategic priorities and take action

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to address them. The new national standards placed a legal obligation on responsible authorities to comply with the specified requirements, one of which was the creation of an annual strategic assessment in place of the previous 3 yearly audit.

The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan 2021-22 was put in place for the year ended March 2022 and the report attached at Appendix A is a summary of the work that has taken place over the year to deliver that action plan.

Key Implications

Financial

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

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

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

Equality Assessment

- 1 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 results of this analysis are set out immediately below.
- 2 There are no negative impacts - the annual report applies to all. All victims of crime and anti-social behaviour are treated equally and fairly regardless of disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership, race, gender, carer status or religion and belief.

Net Zero

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. Where possible, the Local Strategic Partnership will seek to align with the Council's net zero ambitions or with their organisation's net zero ambitions.

Community Impact and Outcomes

The Community Safety Partnership is based upon the actions delivered by Sevenoaks District Council, partner agencies and other stakeholders. It also reflects community needs identified through local data.

Conclusions

- 2 The Community Safety Annual Report highlights the work of the Community Safety Partnership throughout 2021-22

Appendices

Appendix A - Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Annual Report 2021-22

Background Papers

None

Sarah Robson
Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, People and Places

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Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership



Annual Report 2021-22

Produced by: Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership

April 2022

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Introduction

Background

Community Safety Partnerships were set up under the 1998 Crime & Disorder Act. Their purpose is to bring together all of the agencies in an area who can have an impact on crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. In Sevenoaks District, the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership undertakes this role. Co-ordinated by the Council, its membership includes the Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent County Council, the Probation Service, Housing Associations and others. A full list of partners is given on page 18 of this report.

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

2021 Strategic Assessment

One of the Partnership's functions is to undertake an annual strategic assessment which identifies current and future community safety issues using evidence, consultation and analysis. It then puts in place a multi-agency action plan aimed at tackling the identified priority issues.

The 2021 Strategic Assessment includes a comprehensive analysis of crime and other data. This identifies local needs for 2022/23 to help the Partnership put in place its annual priorities and action plan. It was published early in April 2021 and our priorities for 2022-23 are:-

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

Young People is identified as a priority, as it reaches across all the above priorities. It is recommended that the 2022-23 Strategy & Action Plan resulting from this year's Strategic Assessment have actions dedicated to young people.

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Annual Report

This Annual Report looks at what the Partnership and the Community Safety Unit (CSU) have achieved over the last financial year (1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022).

The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership **achieved 97% of actions** in the Community Safety Strategy Action Plan during 2021/22.

COVID-19 Impact

The Pandemic is having a huge impact on the community and partner organisations and changed the way we worked over the past two years and will continue to do so.

The daily briefings continue via MS Teams. Reports continued to come into the Council, Housing Associations, Community Wardens and Police. We were still able to continue a co-ordinated approach in helping residents reporting crimes, anti-social behaviour and community safety concerns. Many of which were regarding neighbour and noise nuisance, breaches of Covid-19 guidelines and mental health concerns.

Police and SDC staff have continued to operate from the CSU albeit on a rota basis with less people in the office. All monthly meetings continued via MS Team platforms.

Visits to residents and site visits have continued throughout the last year, in a safe way for staff and residents.

Commissioned services were able to be delivered. DAVSS continued with all of their services apart from face to face during lockdown periods. Their extended telephone hour's service from 8am-1pm to 8am-4pm is still happening. All other funded projects were able to be delivered whether via a media platform such as MS Teams or Zoom.

All detached youth work was able to continue. Kenward Trust delivered throughout the year as well as West Kent Extra. KCC Youth Teams were able to do some street based work, but also did a lot of work online sessions and promoting mental health services via Facebook, Twitter & Insta Gram.

COMMUNITY SAFTY PRIORITIES FOR 2021/22 – PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY

Anti-Social Behaviour including environmental crime

The Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014 was implemented in 2014.

The Act replaced nineteen pre-existing measures with six new measures for tackling anti-social behaviour and providing protection for victims and communities.

Between 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 the legislation has been used as follows:

- 3 community triggers were raised and 1 taken forward - no further action
- 4 Criminal Behaviour Order served but 4 CBO applications are awaiting court dates.
- 63 Community Protection Warnings were served
- 11 Community Protection Notice was issued
- 0 Community Protection Notice Breach that has been heard at court and defendant was convicted
- 1 Closure Order
- 19 Warning Letters specifically for vehicle use were issued because of repeat calls generated by the Sevenoaks Town Car Park

The Police in the CSU also helped by attending visits and delivering letters on the Partnerships behalf. There were 50 reports of anti-social behaviour from residents. This is a reduction of 47 reports as compared to the same period last year. However, these calls are separate to those that come into the CSU daily briefing.

The highest number of calls were concerning nuisance reported about neighbour nuisance and parking.

The Community MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) is designed to address medium and high risk victims, offenders and problem locations. The areas of work covered are:

- ASB including Disputes & Environmental Crime

- Hate related incidents
- Mental Health concerns
- Persistent offenders of crime and Disorder
- Vulnerable victims and locations including Child Sexual Exploitation, human trafficking, modern slavery and gangs
- Vulnerable adults and young persons
- Substance Misuse
- Low to Medium Risk Domestic Abuse

The meetings are chaired by the CSU Police Sargent and Vice Chair is the Community Safety Officer. This group consists of KCC Adult and Children's Services, Youth Offending Team, Probation, Housing Associations, Mental Health Services, Schools and Health Groups. On average the group discusses around 15 cases per month, of which 90% are removed within 6 months due to changed behaviour. This change is due to support and education as well as enforcement action taken.

The group have issued 31 ASB Warning Letters, 14 ABA's and 1 ABA Breach Letters

The number of incidents of ASB recorded by Kent Police in Sevenoaks District from 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022, was 1513. This is the lowest level of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the county. Compared to previous year there has been a 44% decrease (1177 reports).

Op Liberty addressed ASB through Spring/Summer in line with the COVID ASB Action Plan set up in May 2020 and continued started again in May 2021. The group meets every 2 weeks and also works with land owners. We have designed a poster campaign and over 20 landowners took this up. Op Wallaby addressed the Euros to address ASB and licensing issues and concerns. This worked really well.

PACT (Partners & Communities Together) Panel meetings are held in Swanley, Edenbridge, and New Ash Green. The Panels consist of partner agencies including the District Council, Police, Housing Associations and local Town or Parish Councils, businesses and residents. Activities include youth projects, community litter picks and other actions to tackle local priorities. This can include Site Visits which are joint walkabouts with residents, police, local housing officers and community wardens to tackle environmental issues.

Mobile CCTV has been deployed to target ASB and criminal damage. The CSP has 7 cameras. They were deployed across the District.

Safeguarding

Prevent - The Counter Terrorism and Security Act received Royal Assent on 12 February 2016, placing the Prevent Programme on a statutory footing. Part 5 of the Act (Chapter 1 s. 26-35) places a general duty on all specified authorities to, when exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The three specific objectives of Prevent still stand and focus on:

1. Challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it;
2. Protecting vulnerable individuals to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support;
3. Supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

The CSU received 4 Prevent Channel Panel referrals this year. These individuals were discussed at the appropriate county-based multi-agency panels, with no further outcome, but support was given. All referrals were of individuals aged under 18.

There were Prevent Graffiti Training Events held detailing how Far Right Groups are using COVID to promote protests. This was delivered by KCC Prevent Team to partnership agencies over MS Teams.

The Town Centre Ambassadors were tasked to find, report and remove the offensive stickers. All stickers found by the TCAs were photographed and logged by the KCC Prevent team in order that they could follow any trends.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking legislation confers a duty on Local Authorities who must ensure that we safeguard anyone reporting that they have suffered the above.

Enforcement and Police where they believe modern slavery is taking place in properties. We have made 3 multi-agency visits to locations in response to reported concerns and have dealt with any issues arising. The visits revealed no signs of modern slavery or human trafficking and all those concerned had passports. We did however give housing advice to them and serve prohibition orders on property owners, as they were house of multiple occupancy. There has been joint visits with SDC Private Sector Housings Team, Planning

CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation). The Community Safety Manager is the CSE Champion for the Community Safety Partnership and the District Council. Our partner agencies also have CSE Champions within their own organisations.

Young People. In 2021-22, the dedicated PCSO has been able to visit schools from April 2021. She is in regular contact with schools in order to assist with any concerns they have with individual pupils and has attended to do a number of assemblies.

Tuesday 8 February 2022, was National Internet Safety Day. Interactive sessions were put on during the morning of the 8th where close to 300 pupils took part approximately 15 classes in total from all different schools. The pupils were very confident providing many good suggestions during the morning. The feedback from the teachers was that the pupils really enjoyed the morning.

All schools that took part were awarded an Amazon voucher to spend on their pupils.

Vulnerable Adults There have been a number of safeguarding referrals for older people and vulnerable adults. There is a dedicated PCSO for Vulnerable Adults working within the CSU.

There remit is to look at all concerns for vulnerable adults and repeat victims. One of the main safeguarding referrals is around self-neglect and victims of fraud (especially rogue trading).

There are a number of support services in place and referrals receive a multi-agency approach as they are referred through to the Community MARAC process, which is also comforting for the resident, as they know that the issues are being listened to.

Mental Health has been incorporated into the Community MARAC and a number of mental health cases have been raised and through partnership working specific services have been put in place.

Mental Health and especially through COVID-19 a lot of services were held on line. West Kent & North Kent Mind delivered a number of 1:1 and group sessions over Zoom. They also released a lot of information and a tool kit on how to address mental health over Social Media.

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Domestic Abuse, Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 there were 2,264 reports of Domestic Abuse to the Police. This was an increase of 156 reports (6.9%) compared with the previous year. The increase is always looked as a positive that victims are phoning in and reporting Domestic Abuse and that services can be put in place. Sevenoaks District has the second lowest number of reports in the County.

Domestic Abuse Training was held in July and August 2021. This was DASH (Domestic Abuse Stalking & Harassment) Training delivered face to face basis to front line workers from Sevenoaks District Council and West Kent Housing's Housing Teams.

Cyberstalking was delivered by PAS on 29th June, 28th July and 19th August 2021.

Domestic Abuse Voluntary Support Service (DAVSS) supports any victim of Domestic Abuse who seeks help. Volunteers are trained to a high level to deal with all aspects of Domestic Abuse. They support victims including helping them through any court proceedings. The IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) service provided by DAVSS looks at high risk cases through the Domestic Abuse MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference). The Partnership works closely with DAVSS and helps to fund the service for low and medium risk cases. During the year, DAVSS supported 341 victims of domestic abuse in the Sevenoaks District, an increase of 46 (13.4%) compared with the previous year. There were 17 male victims, an increased in 4.

The Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme (CDAP) is a 29 rolling week programme covering 9 modules to help men tackle their abuse. The women and children of perpetrators are supported by a Woman's Support Worker. 2 men from Sevenoaks District attended the course in 2021-22. The sessions continue via over Zoom.

The Freedom Programme is designed to help women who have been a victim of or are affected by domestic abuse. It is a 12-week programme, which runs for two hours each week usually at various locations across Sevenoaks District, again this year they were all on Zoom. We delivered 4 day programmes and 2 evening programmes, attended by a total of 51 women.

Recovery Tool Kit sessions follow on from the Freedom Programme and we ran and 2 evening and 1 day session again by Zoom. 28 women attended the programme.

Substance Misuse

The Kenward Trust provides sessions within schools and detached work to help young people understand the facts about substance misuse and help those misusing drink or drugs to change their behaviour. They run a number of initiatives using a mobile unit and interactive and visual tools to engage young people about the dangers of substance misuse, so that they will make informed and responsible choices. They are also tasked through the CSU daily briefings to attend “hot spot” locations to work with young people and identify and address substance misuse issues.

With PCC funding through the Partnership, Kenward Trust has worked with 1062 young people from 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022.

Kenward Trust saw large numbers of young people in the main areas of West Kingsdown, New Ash Green Westerham, Greatness, Sevenoaks and the Vine, Sevenoaks. . Main areas Chipstead Lake, Vine, Greatness and New Ash Green. The main substances that were discussed were alcohol, cannabis and high energy drinks.

The teams worked with young people to educate on carrying something they are unaware of and the issue of grooming that can lead to different issues from being caught in possession of drugs or dangerous items like knives; owing the person money as they may have had the drugs stolen from them or confiscated by the police and the person wanting their money back for it that then leads into debt and working to pay the debt off. They also try to explain where this behaviour can lead to and how easily this way of life can escalate into bigger issues. Mental health is another issues among young people and their families this is due to COVID, and this is leading to more Drinking or Substance misuse and risk taking behaviour. This is something that need possible looking at how we can support young people with signs of mental health issues. Kenward Trust are aiming to get an apprentice to learn the skills of intervention outreach and train them in current issues of county lines supporting young people with signs of mental health.

CGL (Change, Live, Grow), commissioned by the Kent Drugs and Alcohol Service, provide early intervention services. This includes breakfast clubs and specialist rehabilitation services. They also undertake home visits to those with children and mobility issues.

Addaction is commissioned by the Kent Drugs and Alcohol Service for young people’s services. This includes work around legal highs and preventative work.

Acquisitive Crime incl Organised Crime Groups (OCGs), Emerging Trends and County Lines

OCGs are criminals behind organised crime often intimidate and create fear, which is intended to prevent the local community reporting what they see. Often the criminals don't even have to try hard to do this - instead relying on word of mouth and reputation. Over the past year, Organised Crime has seen a more targeted approach by Partnerships. There were no current OCGs within the Sevenoaks District. However there are 2 sites that are still monitored at the monthly Serious Crime & Tactical Group, which is a monthly multi-agency meeting to address OCGs and serious crime. The most common crime types associated with these groups is organised theft.

Acquisitive Crime includes Burglary and Vehicle Crime

There were 356 reports of Burglary Residential an increase of 26 (7.9%) compared to the same period previous year. There was also an increase of Burglary Business and Community compared to the same period last year. There were 131 reports, 16 more reports (13.9%).

Vehicle Crime

There was also decreases in Theft of Motor Vehicles of 27.9%, or 90 crimes (233 in total) during the year and Theft from Motor Vehicles of 25% or 147 crimes (423 in total).

Doorstep Crime and Fraud incl Cyber Crime

Kent County Council is currently mapping out the process for each partner agency which is involved in or takes part in, tackling of Doorstep Crime and Financial Abuse or supporting the victims of these crimes.

As part of this, data on processes and procedures are being gathered and recorded.

98% of partners have been visited and a draft recommendation for the county is currently being produced. The draft recommendations will be completed and presented to the partners before the end of 2020.

The final report with recommendations will be produced and presented before the end of Q1 2021.

The KCC Community Wardens have been inspirational in leading the way forward in gathering information, making the relevant referrals and working with the banks to make sure that any victim of a scam is protected.

The CSU are working hard in reinforcing to residents about scams and are working with Action Fraud to tackle this.

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Police & Crime Commissioner Funding (PCC)

The PCC funded Sevenoaks District CSP £34,218, the same as the previous year towards CSP projects. The table below sets out what the Partnership agreed in March 2021 to spend the funding on.

Organisation	Project Name	Amount
DAVSS	Support for Medium & High Risk Victims - Domestic Abuse	£10,000
Kenward Trust	Youth Diversionary & Targeted Youth Project against substance misuse	£10,000
Kent Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme	Support males through the CDAP programme	£1,500
Sevenoaks CSU	CSU Crime Reduction initiatives	£312
Protection Against Stalking	Training sessions on Cyber crime and stalking	£1,000

Community Safety Unit (CSU)

The CSU is located within the District Council's Communities & Business Team at Argyle Road, Sevenoaks. There are 3 Police Officers including a Sergeant, 3 dedicated PCSOs addressing Domestic Abuse, Vulnerable Adults and Vulnerable Young People. The Council's Health & Communities Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and Community Safety Officer as well as the KCC Community Warden Supervisor and the Business Crime Reduction Co-ordinator are also based within the CSU.

The CSU also has access to an additional Local Community Policing Team (CPT) which can be deployed to tackle local issues within the District. The CPT are based in Swanley but can be tasked by the CSU across the District.

The CSU works closely with other Council teams - People & Places, CCTV, Environmental Health, Licensing, Social Housing, Revenues and Benefits Planning Enforcement, Planning, Building Control and the Customer Solutions Centre.

The CSU meets every morning to go through the previous 24 hours' ASB reports, Concern Calls and community safety issues from Police, SDC, Wardens, Housing Associations and other partners. There have been **626** daily taskings from 1 April

2021 - 31 March 2022; this is a decrease of 259 compared to previous year. All actions have been taken forward and dealt with and all residents/customers have been updated on the action taken, apart from those who approached the CSU anonymously or have said that they do not want feedback.

A lot of the cases have been complex, requiring a partner agency response. Many have been repeat callers dealing with issues such as mental health, neighbour disputes, harassment in the community and nuisance bikes (motor and pedal).

There have been over **816** follow up visits and calls made by partner agencies (Police, SDC, Community Wardens and Housing Associations) to all the residents who have reported issues and concerns. The other actions have been followed up but have either been reported back to organisations, town and parish councils or they have been anonymous so have not expected feedback on actions taken.

Task and Finish Groups have been established to provide intensive intervention by partner agencies when a number of reports have come in through the CSU Daily Tasking meetings relating to specific areas or to vulnerable people. During 2021-22, there were 21 Task and Finish Groups set up this is the same number as last year.

There was also over **12** site visits conducted by the CSU to various locations across the District.

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Work of Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership 2021-22 by month

The Partnership month by month

In addition to the daily work of the Partnership and CSU, the following projects and successes took place.

April 2021

- Regular patrolling of hotspot areas including Knole Park and Sevenoaks Town Car Park.
- All meetings still being held on virtual platform MS Teams so that CSU can continue to deliver important actions
- We had skeleton staff in the office to be able to take calls. Whilst we were not going out and completing house visits during this quarter. We were still working with our partner agencies to address community concerns.
- This reporting period has seen the shopsafe scheme working closely with local police in assisting with Op Chalice by issuing 4 Exclusion Orders and 1 warning letter to offenders for shoplifting. Scheme has been successful in its funding bid application to KCC to replace its analogue radio system to an up to date digital system, which will improve radio communication resilience and reliability.

May 2021

- Community Wardens continue to deliver on safeguarding referrals which have increased for them, making home visits and working with banks to protect the most vulnerable.
- Op Mint was set up and weekly meetings were held with partners to address ASB and Nitrous Oxide
- Edenbridge and Swanley PACT and New Ash Green Focus Group meetings were held virtually via Zoom.

June 2021

- The Community Safety Unit organised a Community Market Place Event in New Ash Green on 28th June. There were representatives there from Kent Police, KCC Community Wardens, Parish Council and Sevenoaks District Council.
- Face to face Pubwatch meetings re-established and held recently.
- Pubwatch member notified by radio town CCTV of an intoxicated driver who was later arrested by police for drunk driving and possible theft offence.
- The Spring/Summer Covid ASB Plan. There have been 6 different posters designed for ASB and litter. These were designed to discourage ASB and litter coming out of lockdown in order to try and avoid the incidents from the first lockdown easing in May 2020.
- KW said that 22 different landowners and Parish Councils have requested posters to display in their hot spot locations.

July 2021

- A partnership litter pick and flytipping awareness event was held on 23rd July in Caxon Close, Hartley. This was arranged by West Kent Housing and members of the CSU attended along with local PCSOs, KCC Community Warden and the Parish Council.
- DASH face to face training took place.
- DHR39 Panel meeting took place discussing a Sevenoaks District resident the Community Safety Officer was the representative.
- Operation Wallaby is an operation specifically designed for demand over the Euro 2020 event, Sevenoaks District Officers will be covering licensed premises and ASB hot spots. There will be an addition resource of a duty Inspector who will also cover the evenings England are playing.

August 2021

- Face to Face DASH Training took place on 4th August.

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- The Community Safety Officers was invited to join the Extraordinary meeting to Incidents of violence in North Kent. In order that any individual that is known for violence offences in North Kent can be highlighted in case of them crossing borders into Sevenoaks District.
- CSU members attended an Emergency Safety Advisory Group to discuss concerns regarding activities in Eynsford Bank Holiday Monday.

September 2021

- The Community Safety Officer attended a Chanel Panel meeting to discuss a young person who lives in the Sevenoaks District.
- The CSU were asked to visit a location in Halstead by Planning Enforcement had concerns about land being used illegally. More visits were arranged as well as Planning Enforcement serving notices to the landowner and occupant.
- The Community Safety Officer were part of an OSARA planning meeting to discuss increasing problems in Edenbridge regarding nuisance bikes.

October 2021

- Moat Homes successful eviction of family causing ASB in Edenbridge. The family were associated with a large amount of ASB and criminality in Edenbridge Town and the surrounding area.
- The Community Safety Officer attending the Serious Violence Duty meeting - creating a shared needs assessment. This meeting discussed what data should be included within the needs assessment.

November 2021

- Kent Police arranged an event to discuss their agenda for Violence Against Women and Girls. The event took place in Swanley on 11th November with over 60 attendees.
- Assistant Chief Constable Ayling visited the CSU on 11th November, in order to get an understanding of the CSUs. He was impressed with the way the Sevenoaks CSU was run. He was impressed with communications between Police and Partners.

- During Peer Review week members of the group attended the Daily Tasking meeting. They were really impressed that the CSU meet every day and that they were going to be taking back this as good practice.

December 2021

- Safeguarding Training was given to Frontline Staff.
- The Community Safety Officer held a mediation Zoom meeting to try to combat an ongoing neighbour dispute.
- On 7th December 2021 the West Kent Community Safety Team along with the Tenancy Services Officers, the Community Safety Officer and members of Swanley Town Council had a flytipping event in Lullingstone Avenue. The team undertook a letter drop about the consequences of flytipping, completed a litter pick and arranged a bulky waste day for the removal of large items for free.
- West Kent obtained an injunction against a tenant in Swanley who had been involved in Anti-Social Behaviour. The order will remain in place for 1 year and carries a power of arrest if the tenant breaches the terms of the order
- Cobra Defence training courses took place.

January 2022

- The Community Safety Officer and the Crime Prevention PCSO was requested to visit Swanley Park to give advice regarding lighting in the location.
- Successful Closure Notice served on plots in Hever Road Traveller site.

February 2022

- Tuesday 8 February 2022, was National Internet Safety Day. Interactive sessions were put on during the morning of the 8th where close to 500 pupils took part approximately 15 classes in total from all different schools. The pupils were very confident providing many good suggestions during the morning. The feedback from the teachers was that the pupils really enjoyed the morning.

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- All schools that took part were awarded an Amazon voucher to spend on their pupils suggested goods.
- The Community Safety Officer visited Northview, Swanley with the West Kent Housing Tenancy Support Officer to discuss flytipping reported at the location. Photos were taken and details of location were made and set to the Environment Enforcement Officer and a request made for a multi agency litter pick event be held at the location.

March 2022

- The Community Safety Officer was requested to attend the Freedom Programme as extra support to the facilitator.
- The Community Safety Officer carried out a joint visit with the West Kent Housing Safety Manager in order to serve a Community Protection Warning to one of their tenants causing ASB in the community.

Alongside all the above the CSU held their quarterly PACT meetings in Westerham, West Kingsdown, New Ash Green, Edenbridge and Swanley. There were also monthly Community MARACs, Serious Crime & Tactical Group, West Kent Domestic Abuse Working Groups and Daily Taskings.

The CSU also attend County meetings on Reducing Reoffending, Prevent, Kent Community Safety Managers, Safeguarding Leads, Threats Risks and Vulnerabilities, Online Safeguarding and Offender Management monthly meetings.

The CSU is very proactive on Social Media, our Twitter account has increased by 68 followers to 997 followers.

Future Developments

The Strategic Assessment was completed in January 2022 using data supplied by a variety of agencies. Based on this, our new 2022-23 Community & Safety Strategy & Action Plan will prioritise the following issues:

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

Young People is identified as a priority, as it reaches across all the above priorities. It is recommended that the 2022-23 Strategy & Action Plan resulting from this year's Strategic Assessment have actions dedicated to young people.

Glossary

- **ASB** - Anti-Social Behaviour
- **BCRP** - Business Crime Reduction Partnerships
- **BOTD** - Burglary Other Than Dwelling
- **CSE** - Child Sexual Exploitation
- **CSP** - Community Safety Partnership
- **CSU** - Community Safety Unit
- **KFRS** - Kent Fire & Rescue Service
- **KCC** - Kent County Council
- **MARACs** - Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
- **OCGs** - Organised Crime Groups
- **PACT** - Police and Community Together
- **PCC** - Police & Crime Commissioner
- **PCSOs** - Police Community Support Officer
- **SDC** - Sevenoaks District Council
- **TFMV** - Theft from a Motor Vehicle
- **TOMV** - Theft of a Motor Vehicle
- **YOS** - Youth Offending Service

WELCOME BACK FUND PROJECT REVIEW

People and Places Advisory Committee - 14th June 2022

Report of: Detlev Munster, Strategic Head of Commercial and Property

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by:

- Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer: Emily Haswell, Ext. 7261

Recommendation to People and Places Committee:

The Committee is asked to note the successful delivery of the Reopening High Streets Safely/Welcome Back fund and the positive impact the interventions have had across the District.

Recommendation to Innovation and Improvement

The Committee is asked to note the successful delivery of the Reopening High Streets Safely/Welcome Back fund and the positive impact the interventions have had across the District.

Reason for recommendation:

The Reopening High Streets Safely/Welcome Back fund has concluded with £212,383 of funding providing direct support to the Town and Village centres across the District during the Covid pandemic. 99% of the allocated funding was used with 100% of the claims paid in full, the project has therefore successfully contributed to the mitigation of negative impacts of the pandemic by supporting businesses, residents and visitors in Town and Village centres across the District.

Introduction and Background

- 1 In June 2020, the government announced the Reopening High Streets Safely fund (RHSSF) allocation for Local Authorities. The initial allocation for Sevenoaks District was £107,106. As this was part of European funding (ERDF), it was subject to strict delivery guidance and restricted expenditure

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eligibility. Eligible disbursements were financed by the Council in advance of claiming back finance from Central Government.

- 2 In order to access funding, the Council had to produce an action plan demonstrating key activities and this was agreed as part of the Grant Funding Agreement. This had to be completed at pace to get projects up and running due to the nature of the pandemic and the negative effects on the High Streets and Town Centres.
- 3 A cross-departmental working group was formed and met regularly to produce and deliver an agreed action plan. Initially the focus was on supporting safety in the High Streets. Key interventions included: purchase of hand sanitiser stations, production and delivery of a business pack for traders as well as communication activity to reinforce safety messaging.
- 4 The programme of activity had to be responsive to the fast changing environment (due to constantly changing restrictions) with the key aim of supporting high street safety and recovery. The key activity themes throughout were communication with businesses and traders, communication with the public and temporary public realm changes and support.

Achievements

- 5 A list of project achievements can be found in Appendix A, along with two communication campaign reviews. Interventions included safety signage, a temporary road closure as well as the production and delivery of business packs providing reopening and safety information for Town centre businesses. In December 2020, a High Street project officer was recruited to oversee delivery of the scheme.
- 6 In March 2021, the RHSSF timeframe was extended and became known as the Welcome Back Fund, with an additional allocation. This provided an opportunity to extend activities to encompass a much wider geographical area and also increased eligible activities to focus more on beautification and encouraging visitors back to Town Centres.
- 7 The key to success in delivering the Welcome Back fund has been the need to work collaboratively with Town and Parish Councils to ensure that the Fund supported all areas in the District. Responsibility for project delivery and financial claims remained with the District Council; this was important as the project was funded 'at risk' so all expenditure was made and then reclaimed. All Town and Parish Councils were consulted and invited to submit a list of interventions for their area. The key criteria remained in place such as proving additionality, the need to ensure all interventions were temporary and interventions occurred in the key activity areas.

All four Town Councils received support along with 23 Parish Councils ensuring that the reach of the funding was maximised. 4 Parish Council's declined to be involved (Cowden, Weald, Hextable, Kemsing).

- 8 This was a complex project to be delivered at pace, within a period of fast changing Government restrictions meaning it had to remain agile. The successful delivery of not only the activities but the administration of complicated financial claims is testament to the Council's team approach to delivery. In particular, cross departmental engagement ensured most efficient use of funds and expertise. Early partner engagement also contributed to the scheme's successful implementation.
- 9 Each of the seven financial claims submitted were paid in full meaning that there was no negative financial impact on the Council. This is a significant achievement given the scheme's complex eligibility and procurement criteria, as well as the financial evidence requirements. There was also very stringent programme and contract monitoring by the funders which increased the Council's management burden.. At the end of the project period in March 2022, 99% of the finance allocated to Sevenoaks District was spent, a total of £212,383.68.

Next Steps

- 10 The success of the Welcome Back fund has demonstrated the advantages of delivering Town Centre Management and interventions at a District level. Research funded by the Welcome Back Fund added to the recent 'Town Centre Strategy' report, which forms part of the emerging Local Plan evidence base. The report outlines potential interventions to support Town Centres providing a framework for future activities, which will also link to the actions in the emerging Economic Development strategy (2022-2027). The UK Shared Prosperity Fund, recently announced by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities, has a focus on developing places through supporting business, communities and skills. Proposed investments around Town Centres and place will benefit from the learning that delivery of RHSSF and the Welcome Back fund has provided.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

The offer of finance to spend on Town Centres could have been declined by the Council if felt it was too resource intensive, but that approach would not have supported the Town Centres through the difficult times of the pandemic, so was not considered to be an appropriate course of action.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications to note as the project has been delivered with the external finance provided and all claims have been met in full meaning no risk to Council finances. Additional staffing was funded from the allocation via temporary contract meaning no onward financial implication. There is an ongoing requirement for document retention for audit purposes, which will be managed

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from within existing economic development team resource so no financial implication.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications to note.

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.

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

In addition items recommended to the Parishes were all recycled items adhering to the District Net Zero commitments.

Conclusions

The Committee is asked to note the successful delivery of this programme, the achievements made and how this has informed future Town Centre Management for the District.

Appendices

Appendix A - RHSSF and WBF list of achievements

Appendix B - Sevenoaks RHSSF End of campaign report - Spring 2021

Appendix C - Sevenoaks RHSSF End of campaign report - Winter 2021/22

Detlev Munster

Strategic Head of Commercial and Property

RHSSF and WBF- list of Achievements

Activity	Number
Town centre Project officer (Dec 20- March22)	1 post created initially FT then PT
Hand sanitizer stations purchased situated in the four town centres	6 + 6 replacements and at additional pinch points
Safety signage in place in Town Centres initially in Sevenoaks, Westerham, Edenbridge & Swanley, then offered to all Parish councils – taken up by New Ash Green, Hollybush & St Johns areas Sevenoaks, Otford, Brasted, Chiddingstone, Shoreham, Riverhead, Chevening, Shoreham, Eynsford, Hartley, Knockholt, Horton Kirby, Dunton Green, Crockenhill.	600 x lamppost signs 4 Town Centres & 15 parishes 40 x bollard covers Edenbridge (first lockdown) 50 x pavement adhesive signs Edenbridge (first lockdown)
Road closure to provide capacity for outside dining Bank St, Sevenoaks - supporting 6 food & beverage businesses which had little if any other outside space	1 temporary closure
Business packs produced and delivered to all town centre traders	2 x 200 packs, also online
Public information campaigns completed <i>Reopening the High Streets Safely</i> Apr 2021 <i>Hospitality</i> May 21 <i>Live Eat Breathe</i> Sevenoaks Nov 21 <i>Show Local Some Love</i> Christmas 21 and rolled over to Jan-February 2022 due to Omicron restrictions	4 (see separate analysis in end of campaign reports)
Business facing campaigns completed On line support page on SDC website Town Centre newsletters Briefings for Town centre ambassadors Sevenoaks Town Loyalty scheme	4
Benches and Seating provided Edenbridge, Westerham, Otford, Dunton Green, Crockenhill, Eynsford, Fawkham, Hartley, Hever, Halstead, Dunton Green, Ash cum Ridley, West Kingsdown, Seal, Brasted, Riverhead	15 Town/ Parish centres
Buildings decorated with graphics (seasonal safety messaging and supporting Town Trail to encourage visitors) SDC offices, Tesco's building x2	1 x shop once 1x shop twice 1 x small window graphics
Events supported Farmers Markets plume flags, Farningham, Ide Hill & Sundridge	4
Additional cleaning / beautification / graffiti removal Swanley, Edenbridge	2
Business training delivered Westerham to all interested businesses	2 programmes delivered
Additional bins provided Swanley, Sundridge, Shoreham, Westerham, Edenbridge	17
Signage and maps Eynsford, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks	3
Planters Badgers Mount, Swanley, Chiddingstone & Leigh, Chevening, Sevenoaks, Penshurst, Riverhead	Approx. 20 across 6 areas
Photography to support communication campaigns	4 occasions

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APENDIX A

Research / surveys completed Sevenoaks x 2	2
Pilot projects supported Sevenoaks	1

Reopening High Street Safely Fund

End of campaign report
July 2021

Background on the project

From the outset, the main objective of the RHSS team were to reassure the public that the town centres and other shopping areas of the Sevenoaks district were safe and open for business. It was also important to remind shoppers and visitors of the need for continued safe behaviour, and to bring visitors back to the four main shopping centres of Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Swanley and Westerham.

We were able to deliver a comprehensive marketing plan to support high street businesses by promoting town centres and shopping areas as welcoming and safe places to spend money, while responding to government guidance at all times.

The project team devised a virtual festival for the district to showcase the different businesses in each of the four high streets. Traders would either be filmed or film themselves showcasing their business and introducing the products, services and people to potential shoppers. The videos would be shared on YouTube from 12th April through to June and supported by a comprehensive social media, press and advertising strategy to encourage shares, engagement and incremental participation from further businesses.

Activity was split into two phases to coincide with the easing of lockdown restrictions and to benefit different local businesses.



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Phase one

To tie into the reopening of retail and outdoor hospitality on 12th April, we launched the first phase of the Reopening High Street Safely campaign in Sevenoaks. This involved the creation of business videos which we rolled out on YouTube and social media, as well as graphics and messaging to support safety in the town centres.

Summary of activity

- Outreach to businesses across the district's four high streets to register interest in RHSS activity
- Creation of a filming and promotional guide circulated
- Creation and procurement of 11 videos, and creation of a new YouTube channel featuring the promotional videos
- 3x master edit of videos to cover all retail businesses in the district
- Advertorial content to support the videos for two weeks across the local media, with supporting blog content for the council website and press releases for editorial opportunities
- Creation of an e-newsletter to key stakeholders, businesses and residents to promote the return to the high street and profile the participating businesses
- Weekly catch up meetings to review stats, uptake and direction of the content in line with Government guidelines.

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Phase two

As hospitality businesses reopened on 17th May, we chose to capitalise on the growing confidence and interest in visiting town centres and created a fresh batch of video, social media and press content featuring local hospitality businesses.

Summary of activity

- 16 new videos featuring Sevenoaks' hospitality businesses and interview with key team members, as well as teaser videos
- Suite of graphics and assets for social media/web/Print media to promote 'Book Your Table' message
- Advertorial features in the local media
- Press release summarising key quotes and messages to the public
- Resharing of phase one content to build momentum and interest



Business involvement in the RHSS campaign

22 retail and hospitality businesses across the district signed up to participate in the RHSS campaign.

Hospitality businesses:

- The Anchor, Sevenoaks
- Malabar Coffee House, Sevenoaks
- Brisket & Barrel, Sevenoaks
- The Olive Tree, Otford
- The Old Eden, Edenbridge
- The Courtyard, Westerham
- Piccalilly's Café, Swanley
- Dulce's Patisserie, Sevenoaks
- The Restoration, Sevenoaks
- Napoli é, Westerham
- The Minstrel, Edenbridge
- King & Queen, Edenbridge

Retail businesses:

- Knobbly Knees Deli & Eco Shop, Sevenoaks
- Schmidt Sevenoaks
- The Springbank Clinic, Sevenoaks
- Entre Nous Lingerie, Westerham
- Flowerworks of Swanley
- County Clothes, Sevenoaks
- Lennox Cato Antiques & Works of Art, Edenbridge
- The Vintage Home Company, Westerham
- Swanley Pet Centre
- Manuka Shoes, Westerham



Feedback from businesses and the public

While we were out filming, we received lots of positive feedback from the businesses about Sevenoaks District Council and the support it has given to the high streets through this campaign. Positive comments included Pat at Manuka Shoes, Maria at The Vintage Home Company and Jane at Entre Nous Lingerie.

Businesses have also shared their thanks for letting them be involved and praised the quality of the videos that have been produced. Positive comments included Barry at The Anchor, Julia at Malabar Coffee, Rebecca at Piccalilly's Café and Debbie at Napoli é.

The YouTube videos and social media posts have also received some extremely positive engagement, with people sharing their support for the businesses and saying it has made them want to visit the businesses.

“Thank you so much for including us in this project!”

“Thank you Jane and all of the ambassador team for the amazing work you do. The Community Cupboard absolutely could not have managed to support the hundreds of families throughout the pandemic without you. Your dedication to your jobs is outstanding and always with a smiling face. Sevenoaks District Council Official you are amazing!”

“What a lovely place – definitely going to pop in there!”

“Thank you for this initiative SDC. It helps increase the profile of small independents like us ”

“Oooo my favourite shop in town. Amy is lovely and so helpful and friendly. You really need to go in and see her and all the lovely local products she stocks”

“I went in there for the first time last week. Lovely selection of high quality items and yummy treats!”

“Great video well done to all involved.”

Impact of the RHSS campaign

The RHSS Fund enabled the council to engage with businesses and obtain quality digital content that conveyed stakeholders' unique services, stories and characters in a format that was easily accessible – and recognisable – to the public. The activity not only allowed us to share safety messages to the public in a variety of formats, but also re-introduced the district's high street businesses to them in a positive light.

Businesses felt supported and engaged with the council, and could see provision was being made to boost their marketing and profile both locally and further afield. Consumers were also given clear, positive information and reassurance about being able to return to the high streets safely. As the videos featured contained messages from real people they could see and hear from virtually, consumers could better identify and empathise with the need to support local.



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Agenda Item 15

YouTube video performance

As a platform for our campaign, we set up a dedicated YouTube channel - Shop Eat Drink Breathe Local, from which to share our videos.

6,100 video views since channel launch.

Over **11,000** video impressions with a **38%** click through rate.

20th May was the best day for video views, with a total of **470 views** on that day.

Facebook is the top performing traffic source, it contributes to **88%** of your total external traffic.

15 channel subscribers.

The Anchor video has received the most views with a total of **821 views** to date.

Sevenoaks Chronicle ad campaign performance

Across the two phases, we ran advertising campaigns with Sevenoaks Chronicle to raise awareness of our campaign to a wider audience.

April

Online Article - Reached 28,381 people.
145 people clicked through to the site, and
12 likes/comments/shares on social media.

May

Facebook Campaign - 23,747 impressions & 937
clicks to the site, from chosen target audience.

Optimised Impressions - 110,000 impressions
& 363 clicks to the site. Optimised are extremely
targeted and this will be people that fit within
the campaign criteria.

In your area – 10,002 impressions and 83 clicks
to the site - This is done by location so meaning
83 people located within the area went to the
site, which is great for brand awareness.



Summary

With 6,100 video views so far to date, aided by supportive social media content and advertising campaigns, the campaign to promote Reopening High Streets Safely successfully reached a very large audience and engaged with residents about the benefits and ease of supporting the district's town centres.

The campaign's creative outputs encouraged people to spend time and money within the town centres of Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Swanley and Westerham, and reassured the public that the necessary safety measures were in place, as businesses were also shown support from Sevenoaks District Council.

Our RHSS activity took place from the end of March until June 2021, across key reopening dates including non-essential retail and indoor hospitality and was a great collaborative effort with the Sevenoaks District Council teams. This was not only a successful campaign, but a great example of creative collaborative campaign work for a district and it has potential to be held up as a leading example of the RHSS scheme.

Looking ahead, the Welcome Back Fund provides Sevenoaks District Council with the opportunity to push the successes achieved with the business videos further in a new campaign.



Thank you

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Sevenoaks Welcome Back Fund

End of campaign report



Background on the project

Ahead of Christmas 2021, Sevenoaks District Council was looking to deliver a campaign to encourage local residents and out-of-area visitors to support retail, leisure and hospitality businesses within the district and in particular those in our town centres.

The campaign was implemented across multiple channels, but will focus on digital advertising, with communications produced and delivered to appropriate audiences.

The activity was funded by the Welcome Back Fund and built on the work conducted under the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF). The main aim of the campaign was to offset the turbulence experienced by the retail, leisure and hospitality sector throughout COVID-19 restrictions.

Our activity

Our campaign took place in December 2021 and February 2022, encouraging people to support local particularly around Christmas and Valentine's Day. We ensured our campaign reflected government guidance at all times.

Summary of activity:

- Outreach to businesses across the direct to register interest in WBF activity.
- Creation of two videos – 1 x young professionals / 1 x families.
- Creation of 24 social media graphics sized for each platform (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram).
- Strategy and deployment of paid social and PPC campaigns.
- Procurement of digital advertising across KentOnline & partner sites, including MailOnline, Evening Standard and METRO, and creation of ads.
- Advertorial content for InShape magazine.
- Design and installation of window vinyls in Sevenoaks town centre.
- Weekly catch up meetings to review progress and performance, as well as ensuring our messaging reflected the latest government advice.

Videos

To showcase the varied appeal of the Sevenoaks district, we created two videos to support our social media campaign.

- One targeting young professionals – 146 views on YouTube / 225 views on Instagram.
- One targeting families – 134 views on YouTube / 105 views on Instagram.

These videos included key destinations from across the district including retail businesses, restaurants, pubs and heritage attractions.



Social media graphics

To support both our paid and organic social media campaigns, we also created a selection of creative assets to showcase the wonderful businesses across the district.

These graphics were centred around the tagline of 'Show Local Some Love'. We adopted a more festive approach ahead of Christmas and also refreshed the graphics to tie into Valentine's Day in February.



Social media | Facebook

Facebook	Dec-21		Feb-22		Increase Feb compared to Dec	
	Organic	Paid	Organic	Paid	Organic	Paid
Reach	7,138	50,948	9,898	61,662	+ 39%	+21%
Link Clicks	4	49	14	456	+ 250%	+ 831%
Likes	63	10	127	23	+ 102%	+ 130%
Comments	16	0	13	2	- 19%	-
Shares	20	0	13	4	- 35%	-
Total Engagements	244	59	376	485	+ 54%	+722%
Engagement Rate	3.42%	0.12%	3.80%	0.79%	+ 11%	+ 579%

We have compiled data for the months of December and February when the social media paid adverts were live and when we were posting organically on the Sevenoaks District Council page.

You can see from the results above that paid had a significant impact in awareness due to the high number of profiles reached. Overall engagements were very good, on both organic and paid social posts. Organic posts tend to do better with engagements as the audience you're reaching out to is a group that follows your page, whereas paid reaches brand new people.

The engagement rate for organic posts is considerably higher than the industry average of 0.13% for the platform.

Top engaged post organically – 11th February – which reached a total of 2,430 accounts, received 90 reactions, 6 shares and 14 clicks on the website.

Social media | Instagram

Instagram	Dec-21		Feb-22		Increase Feb compared to Dec	
	Organic	Paid	Organic	Paid	Organic	Paid
Reached	1,116	39,861	2,537	34,270	+ 127%	- 14%
Link Clicks	0	21	0	129	-	+ 514%
Likes	76	17	96	23	+ 26%	+35%
Comments	1	0	3	1	+ 200%	-
Shares	0	3	8	3	-	0%
Total Engagements	77	41	107	156	+ 39%	+ 280%
Engagement Rate	6.90%	0.10%	4.22%	0.46%	- 38.84%	+ 360%

Similar to Facebook, the paid adverts saw a very high number of profiles reached, which is fantastic for awareness of the Sevenoaks district. Reached accounts on organic posts saw a 127% increase in February, compared to December. Overall engagements also saw a very healthy increase in February compared to December on both organic and paid adverts which is great to see.

Engagement rate was high for organic posts in both December and February. The engagement rate was lower for the paid campaign, but we saw a 360% increase in February compared to December.

Top engaged post organically – 9th February which reached a total of 301 accounts, received 18 reactions, 1 comment and 2 shares.

Social media | Twitter

Instagram	Dec-21	Feb-22	Increase Feb compared to Dec
	Organic	Organic	Organic
Impressions	4,118	5,841	+41.84%
Likes	30	38	+ 26.67%
Retweets	13	23	+ 76.92%
Replies	0	2	-
Link clicks	10	2	- 80%
Total Engagements	110	109	- 0.91%
Engagement Rate	2.67%	1.87%	- 29.96%

We didn't run any paid campaigns on Twitter, but did share organic content, which performed well for the duration of the campaign. Impressions, likes and retweets all saw healthy increases in February, compared with December.

While the engagement rate decreased in February, compared with December, across both months the engagement rate is significantly higher than the industry average of 0.6%, which is extremely positive. Link clicks also dipped in February, but that was largely because we were no longer directing people to the landing page.

Top engaged post organically – 14th December generated 1,148 impressions, 8 likes and 2 retweets.

Pay per click (PPC) performance

We have broken the campaign out into targeted audiences, the table on the left are those who live in London and Kent (excluding Sevenoaks District) and the table on the right hand side are those who live in the Sevenoaks district only.

As you can see the Kent/London audience campaign performed better in terms of impression, clicks and cost per click.

A healthy cost per click is under £0.30 and as you can see ads shown to people in the area of Sevenoaks were quite expensive, where as those living in Kent and London saw cheaper cost per click.

CTR was healthy across both audience groups, the average CTR on these types of ads is 2%, which means all months apart from December for Kent/London audience were above the industry average.

PPC - Kent/London	Dec-21	Feb-22
Impressions	15,300	12,500
Clicks	260	507
CPC	£0.27	£0.17
CTR	1.70%	4.07%

PPC - Sevenoaks	Dec-21	Feb-22
Impressions	1,840	2,350
Clicks	77	202
CPC	£1.00	£0.40
CTR	4.19%	8.61%

Digital advertising

Standard digital format advertising across KentOnline & partner sites, including MailOnline, Evening Standard and METRO.

We booked 440,000 page impressions across two ad sets – one for a local audience and one for wider Kent/London audience.

- Page impressions served: 1,027,770 (more than double what we paid for)
- Total clicks: 586
- CTR: 0.057% (national average is 0.04%)

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Ads included Leaderboard, Mobile, MPU and Skyscraper formats.

InShape Magazine

We produced a full-page advertorial for the winter edition of InShape Magazine, which included content and design.

InShape magazine is Sevenoaks District Council's quarterly magazine which is delivered direct to homes and businesses.

Show Local Some Love This Christmas

Whether it's visiting Sevenoaks' lively pubs for a festive celebration, picking up a unique Christmas gift in Edenbridge's historic high street, getting all your essentials at Swanley's bustling market or dining in one of Westerham's independent eateries, the district is packed with things to do this December. Our town centres offer a festive experience like nowhere else.

We are lucky to have such an amazing selection of hard-working businesses across our district and our town centres are a vital part of our community.

It is important for residents and visitors to feel safe in our high streets this winter. We encourage everyone to help protect themselves and others by wearing face coverings in crowded places, washing or sanitising hands frequently and taking regular lateral flow tests.

What better gift than to show them some love this Christmas?

The campaign is part of activity delivered with the Welcome Back Fund.

Festive Inspiration

Stock up on Christmas dinner essentials at T. Allman's Butchers in Edenbridge

Choose from a selection of stylish ladieswear and accessories at Grace Sevenoaks

Enjoy craft beers and artisan gins on a winter evening at The Cotton Mill, Swanley

Treat yourself or a loved one to a festive wreath or bouquet from Posy and Wild, Westerham

European Union European Regional Development Fund | HM Government | Sevenoaks DISTRICT COUNCIL

@sevenoakscd | @sevenoaksdistrictcouncil | @SDC_newsdesk

Window vinyls

We designed and installed winter-themed window vinyls for a building in the Sevenoaks town centre, to encourage people to support local.



Above you can see example visuals of the window vinyls.

Thank you



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People and Places Advisory Committee Work Plan (as at 31/5/22)

14 June 2022

- Sevenoaks District Community Plan 2022 - 23
- Community Plan annual report 2021-22
- Update on Community Wifi
- Community Voice update from Chief Inspector
- Community Grant Scheme Guidelines Review
- Community Safety Partnership Annual Report 2021-22
- Economic Development Strategy
- High - Streets and Welcome Back Fund Closure Report

4 October 2022

- TEP - Next Steps
- Budget 2023/24: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)
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