

07 November 2023 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

Published: 30.10.23



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# Housing & Health Advisory Committee

## Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Perry Cole; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Harrison

Cllrs. Bulford, Camp, Clack, G. Darrington, Edwards-Winsler, Gustard, Hudson, Lindop, Cathy Morgan and Streatfeild

## Agenda

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

	Pages	Contact
Apologies for Absence		
1. <b>Minutes</b>	(Pages 1 - 6)	
To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 September 2023, as a correct record.		
2. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>		
Any interests not already registered		
3. <b>Actions from Previous Meetings (if any)</b>		
4. <b>Update from Portfolio Holder</b>		
5. <b>Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee (if any)</b>		
6. <b>Health Inequalities Work in Swanley</b>	(Pages 7 - 18)	Jolanda Gjoni Tel: 01732 227121
7. <b>Budget 2024/25: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)</b>	(Pages 19 - 60)	Alan Mitchell Tel: 01732227483
8. <b>Housing Stock &amp; Waiting Times in the District Update</b>	(Pages 61 - 68)	Alison Simmons Tel: 01732 227272
9. <b>Housing Strategy - 1 Year On</b>	(Pages 69 - 94)	Alison Simmons

Tel: 01732 227272

- |  |                   |                                     |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 10. <b>Rough Sleeper Initiative Fund Year 1 Update</b> | (Pages 95 - 102)  | Alison Simmons<br>Tel: 01732 227272 |
| 11. <b>Work Plan</b>                                   | (Pages 103 - 104) |                                     |

**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

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

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

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

**HOUSING & HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Perry Cole (Chairman)

Cllr. Harrison (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Bulford, Clack, G. Darrington, Edwards-Winsler, Gustard, Hudson, Lindop and Streatfeild

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Cathy Morgan

Cllrs. P. Darrington, Purves, and Skinner were also present.

15. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

16. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

17. Actions from Previous Meetings

The Action Sheet was noted.

18. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman, gave an update on the services within his portfolio. Quercus Housing had purchased the 17 new homes delivered by the Council-led development at 27 - 29 High Street, Swanley for affordable housing use. The number of residents in temporary or emergency accommodation had been reduced to 89 in August 2023, compared with 139 in March 2022. The impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the Homes for Ukraine and Afghan Resettlement schemes on the budget continued to be monitored.

The Housing Team had migrated to from Locata to the HUUME system, which incorporated the Housing Register and Housing Application, to streamline the process for customers in the District and across Kent. The Council had recently signed up for the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance, and was looking to adopt their established standards. The Gypsy & Traveller Allocation Policy was improved by Members in July 2023, and works to refurbish three pitches at the Hever Road site were underway. Energy efficiency measures were installed in 14 low-income homes that were unconnected to the gas grid, as part of the Home Upgrade Grant. Further funding of over £1.2 million had been secured as part of Phase 2 of the grant, which would be used to deliver energy efficiency and clean heating upgrades to 60 houses over the next two years.

## Agenda Item 1

### Housing & Health Advisory Committee - 12 September 2023

The HERO team had supported around 90 customers with the cost of living over the last three months. They further attended a number of community groups across the District to provide outreach support.

The Health & Wellbeing Partnership had met in July, focusing on mental health provision and joint projects. The Edenbridge Medical Centre was due to open in November. The Council had secured external funding to appoint two One You advisors to the centre to provide wellbeing support. Kent Public Health had recently confirmed its annual funding of the One You programme, and an additional officer had been recruited to deliver the Why Weight management service. The One You programme also organised walking groups, and, in conjunction with the Communities team, would run two programmes to assist families with cooking and food budgeting. The Dartford, Gravesham, and Swanley NHS Health & Care Partnership had funded the Council to deliver a community development programme in Swanley and other northern parishes, centred on community health and wellbeing.

#### 19. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

#### 20. Sevenoaks District - Homes for Ukraine and Asylum Seeker Dispersal Update

The Head of Housing presented the report, which updated the committee on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, the Asylum Seeker Dispersal Areas, and the Refugee Resettlement Schemes.

The officer explained that the Homes for Ukraine scheme had received 555 host applications since launching in March 2022, with 471 guests arriving. The accommodation was provided for at least 6 months to better allow for integration. Three housing options - rematching to a new host, sole occupancy, or shared accommodation - were available for guests that were unable to continue staying with their first host. 107 homeless applications had been received from guests accommodated through the Ukrainian Refugee Schemes since February 2022, of which 41 homeless duties had been accepted. 5 households were placed in temporary accommodation and 27 guests had been accommodated in the private rented sector. A Lettings Negotiator had recently been appointed to assist in bringing guests into private rentals.

The committee heard that nearly £3 million of capital funding had been secured through the Local Authority Housing Fund, for the provision of 16 housing units for Homes for Ukraine and one 4 bedroom unit for the Afghan Scheme. Six of the units for the Homes for Ukraine scheme had already been delivered at the 27 - 29 High Street, Swanley site. A further £297,898 had been received from central government, which would be used to support guests into private accommodation and employment.

All local authorities were required to participate in the Asylum Seeker Dispersal Scheme, as more asylum seekers continued to arrive in the UK. The South East

Strategic Partnership for Migration were working with local authorities to and had put forward a place-based approach to the Home Office to address the issue. Through the place-based approach Sevenoaks was expected to receive 86 asylum seekers before 31 December 2023, though this figure had not been approved and could change. The Home Office's contractor would acquire the properties and work with stakeholders to ensure sufficient infrastructure was in place to support the asylum seekers once they were in place. The officer outlined the other settlement schemes the Council participated in.

In response to questions, the officer explained that the Refugee Settlement schemes were coordinated by Kent County Council (KCC), and that forecast figures for arrivals were unknown. Five families were housed in the district under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, and six were housed through the Afghan Resettlement Scheme. The Council had an internal officers group working across the Communities and Housing services to ensure support was provided for guests coming into the district. The teams continued to have weekly meetings with KCC, and worked proactively to address issues before they arose. A consultation event was held in March 2023 with hosts and guests, offering advice and support to find alternative accommodation and other areas in which they required further support.

The officer explained that the Council had not been approached by the Home Officer to accommodate Asylum Seekers through the Asylum Seeker Dispersal Scheme and did not have the details of the offers that would be available to landlords who let their properties through the Scheme. The Council faced a demand for social housing that outweighed the available stock, and land and property prices made it difficult to deliver more. The Council attended numerous government events and outlined the additional pressure on these services that resettlement schemes would create. The Chief Officer for People and Places outlined the Landlord Incentive Scheme in place to encourage landlords to house homeless people, but explained that uptake was low. Owners of empty homes were approached directly regarding the scheme, but few owners were willing to participate.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

21. Edenbridge Memorial Health Centre

The Health Team Leader presented the report, which set out the work undertaken to include the One You Kent Service in the delivery of the Edenbridge Memorial Health Centre, set to open in November 2023. The centre would work on a model of integrated care and would address the social, health, and wellbeing needs of residents. Two full-time One You advisors would be based in the premises to provide lifestyle and weight management services.

In response to questions, it was explained that the One You staff would be funded from a yearly grant from KCC, which would be renewed subject to review. This was because the central government budget was renewed annually. The replacement of the hospital with the health centre was decided by the NHS and Primary Care Network. The Council may monitor planning applications for similar proposals, for

## Agenda Item 1

### Housing & Health Advisory Committee - 12 September 2023

opportunities to replicate this in other parts of the district. The scheme had significant support from GPs and local healthcare professionals. The Health Centre did not include facilities for overnight stays, but the One You staff would be able to signpost patients to council services such as the Disabled Facility Grant to aid in and expedite their discharge.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

#### 22. 'One You' Programme Update

The Health Team Leader outlined the report, which updated the committee on the provision of the One You services for 2022-23. The officer delivered a [presentation](#) on the performance of the service and future developments. These included expanding the provision of online programmes, improving signposting to other services, and reinstating the Health Walk programme.

In response to questions, it was explained that participants had to be adult residents of the District. The service was funded by KCC, and although there had recently been delays in its receipt the Council were working with them to ensure the situation was managed. Public Health England, who provided the funding to KCC for the service, received multiple benefits from it and thus it was expected that funding would remain. Uptake had been consistent across the district, and the team actively targeted all areas to increase engagement, such as through holding face-to-face workshops in Swanley and Westerham. The service proactively targeted residents that were motivated to make lifestyle changes, but it was acknowledged that around 60-65% of Sevenoaks residents were overweight or obese, and that this motivation was not widespread. Expanding the provision of service to unmotivated residents would not yield results and subtract resources from helping those that were motivated. Follow-up data was scarce, as only roughly 10% of participants responded to the team's attempts to gather feedback.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

#### 23. Work Plan

The Work Plan was noted, with the following additions:

##### **23 January 2023**

- Dartford, Gravesham, and Swanley Health and Care Partnership funding update

##### **June 2024**

- Review of Allocations Policy
- Housing standards in the private rented sector
- Sevenoaks District Health & Wellbeing Action Plan 2024/25

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.44 PM

CHAIRMAN

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**Swanley and Northern Parishes Health Inequalities Project-Update**

**Housing & Health Advisory Committee – 7 November 2023**

**Report of:** Chief Officer People & Places

**Status:** For Information

**Key Decision:** No

**Executive Summary:**

**This report supports the Key Aim of: Providing an update on Swanley and Northern Parishes Health Inequalities project for the Housing & Health advisory committee.**

Swanley and Northern parish fall within the remit of Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Healthcare Partnership (DGS HCP). This entity has been allocated a health inequalities fund from the Kend and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) to engage with local communities facing health inequalities and gather insights and solutions to these challenges and barriers. Following this, the aim is that interventions that address the causes of ill health and poor health outcomes that residents in the area experience will be identified and embedded in place. The health team at Sevenoaks District Council are leading on this piece of work and are working collaboratively with local partners and stakeholders to identify and implement solutions to challenges that residents live with due to circumstances beyond their control. This briefing report is an update of the progress of this piece of work, to date.

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Perry Cole

**Contact Officer(s):** Kelly Webb, Ext. 7474 & Jolanda Gjoni, Ext. 7121

**Recommendation to Housing & Health Advisory Committee**

For members to note the briefing report on the progress of the project.

**Reason for Recommendation:**

To inform Members of the Council's progress in tackling health inequality in Swanley and Northern Parishes

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### Introduction and Background

1. Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Healthcare Partnership (DGS HCP) has been allocated funds to tackle health inequalities locally. HCP Health They, and partners, partners believe they do not have enough information on how and what hard to reach communities (Adults and/or Children) need in order to access health services and improve their health outcomes. They proposed that with a small proportion of the inequalities funding to undertake targeted community development work, to inform solutions that gives full benefit to those communities with regard to the 3 greatest areas identified by public health colleagues of health inequality – obesity, diabetes, cancer screening and respiratory. This engagement would either build on existing community development projects that need more insight into a specific inequality or wider determinant area or start with a new group selected by the individual districts.
2. The money was allocated to districts by population size: Dartford 63k, Gravesham 57k, Swanley 31k. Each area can select the hard-to-reach group most relevant to either their previous work or where there is a proven drive to focus. Each district was allowed to explore which group (Adult and/or Children) they wish to work with – the groups to select from are as follows: travellers (gypsy-roma), homeless, SMI, low-income families, poor housing, ethnic minority (BAME), ethnic minority (eastern European), physical disability or learning disability.
3. The Health and communities team put in a bid for leading on this piece of work in Swanley and selected low-income families as a cohort of interest and obesity and diabetes as the two main areas of health inequality.
4. The health and communities team proposed to undertake a two-pronged approach to the community development scoping and engagement exercises in Swanley to find evidence-based feedback on the best ways to address their health inequalities and support health improvement and prevention for the short and long term. Loosely based on the Maidstone blueprint (Appendix A) developed by the West Kent HCP, it aimed to combine insights from services delivered by partners and stakeholders in the area on needs and priorities of clients with first-hand insights from residents themselves, and then work to identify themes on needs and priorities for further investigation and intervention. In addition, this insight work aims to crowdsource ideas and solutions in a co-productive method with communities in place, to foster ownership of solutions and ensure buy-in from key community champions and delivery partners.
5. We want to use a health creation approach to pinpoint actions that these communities will actually use, access and benefit from. Their feedback into the design of those interventions will ensure maximum take up and impact. This

will be achieved by securing voluntary/community sector partners to undertake specific engagement with the hard-to-reach groups to identify how they would like to access information, support and services for obesity, diabetes and screening services as well as other routine primary healthcare.

6. The health and communities team decided to split the funds and utilise half of the funds to hire a community insights officer internally who would work closely with partners and stakeholders. In addition, the remaining funds were used to hire an external, skilled and experienced community engagement organisation to undertake resident insight and utilising qualitative methods to investigate, explore and analyse resident responses. The consultant will utilise surveys, partner insights and a range of methods to develop lines of inquiry and develop a comprehensive report to be brought back to the team for further developmental work. This work will take place Oct-Dec 2023.

### **7. Key Successes & Future Developments**

8. A Community Development officer was hired internally and started work on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2023.
9. Work was started to collect partner and stakeholder insights and feedback and a call to action was delivered to these organisations to join the work collaboratively. Organizations such as CAB, West Kent Housing, Imago and others are updated and informed of progress and involved in the project delivery.
10. Procurement for an external organisation was completed in September 2023 and contract allocated to Engaging Kent 360. The organisation has started its mobilisation phase in liaison with the relevant officers to identify and utilise opportunities for community and resident engagement locally.
11. An interim report of findings is due at end of October 2023 with a final report being compiled and presented in December 2023.
12. Insights and information gathered to date is being analysed for themes and areas of priority with a view to put in proposals for intervention work from April 2024.

### **Other options Considered and/or rejected.**

None

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

This is funded by DGS HCP.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

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### 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]

Also insert any other "Key Implications" headings as appropriate such as:

- **Community Impact and Outcomes**  
This report links in with the community and any impacts.
- **Wellbeing**  
This report has a link to wellbeing due to the nature of the report.

### **Conclusions**

To update members on the Swanley and Northern Parishes Health Inequalities project.

#### **Appendices**

Appendix A – West Kent Blueprint.

#### **Background Papers**

DGS HCP proposal to the ICB.

**Sarah Robson**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People & Places**

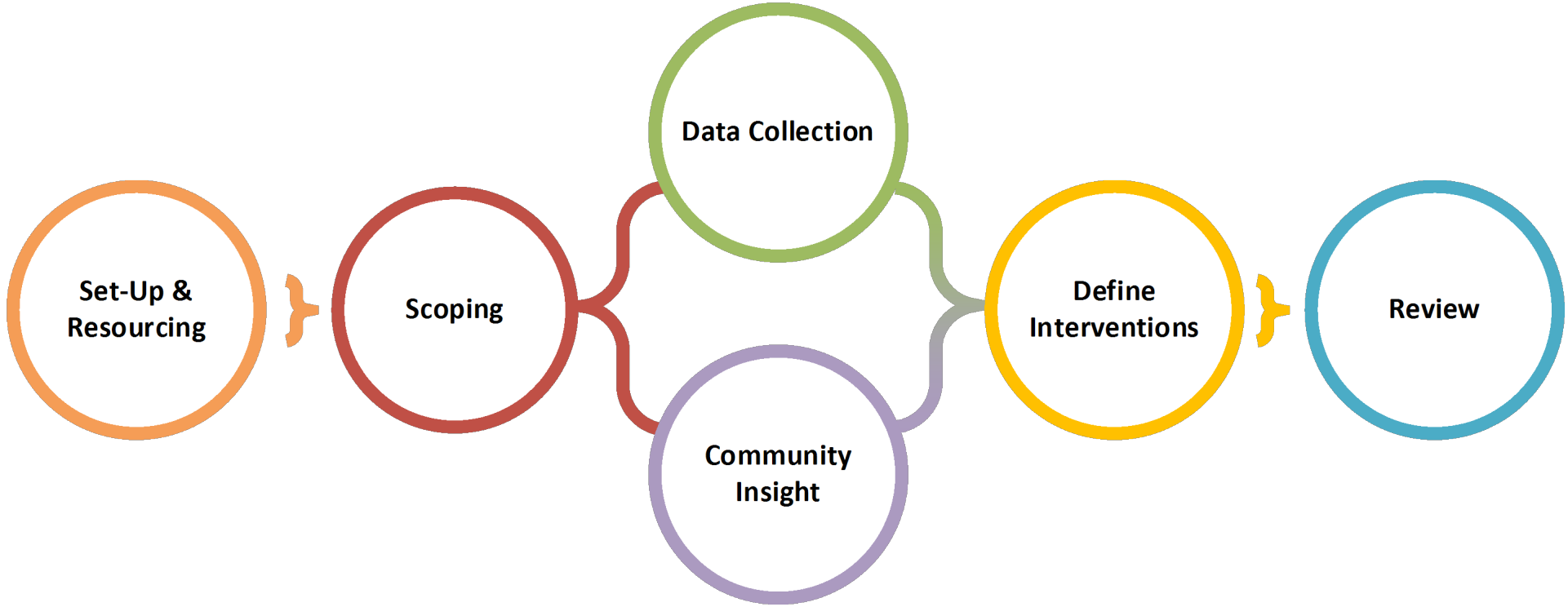


**West Kent**  
Health and Care Partnership

# **Blueprint Approach to Tackling Health Inequalities**

**January 2023**

# Blueprint Approach to Tackling Health Inequalities



# Set-Up & Resourcing

- Owing to the diverse and varied nature of health inequalities, ensuring sufficient **resource** is a key step in the set-up of a health inequalities project.
- The project group should include a **range of skills and expertise**, including subject matter experts, data and business analysts and project management.
- Health inequalities are influenced by a broad spectrum of issues and have a strong relation to the wider determinants of health, therefore ensuring a range of **multi-disciplinary stakeholders** is essential.
- Due to the complex nature of multi-agency working, a **project sponsor and champion** is critical in shaping the direction of the project, promoting aims, objectives and benefits; and ensuring buy-in from stakeholders.
- It is important at this early stage to give consideration towards **patient and resident engagement**. Consider to what extent patients and residents will be involved and how their input may influence the direction of the project.



- Health inequalities can be attributed to a broad range of issues as described via the wider determinants of health. This can become overwhelming, so it's important to have a **clearly defined scope** of what you want to achieve.
- Establish your aims and objectives early on, and **understand the issue you want to address** – Tools such as Fingertips Public Health Profiles can aid in identifying issues in local wards and boroughs; whilst data sets such as hospital admissions and discharge planning can help identify common outliers.
- Determine your **key areas of focus**. This will provide a clear scope for the next two steps in the process regarding data collection and community insight. You can further narrow your focus from there.
- Be clear on **what you want to achieve**. Think about what the outcomes of this work will be and what the benefits are.





- Data is a **core element of identifying and tackling health inequalities**; enabling high-level scoping of the project, providing detail to the defined area of scope, and informing outcome measures in order to evaluate the success of any agreed intervention.
- Due to the broad scope of health inequalities, and accounting for the wider determinants of health, it is key to **establish a joined-up data set** that captures health and social data.
- Consider whether data is to be collected at a **population level or at a person-centred level**. Population level data will provide an overview of an area and may indicate a wider issue affecting a ward, borough or county; however, person-centred data will offer more granular detail about a person's journey.
- Data should be replicable in order to measure changes over time.



- Community insight **provides an invaluable source of data and information** from residents, patients and services about their priorities and experiences.
- It's important to recognise **engagement with residents may challenge assumptions** and even shift the work in another direction.
- Plan for community insight and resident engagement from the outset so that the project can **be flexible to change**.
- Residents are best placed to speak to **their experience with the system**, as well as the things that affect them the most.
- Local organisations can offer **insights into the issues their clients commonly raise**, as well as inform of gaps where they are unable to meet a demand.
- It's important to **build trust** with residents. Often people will have had a negative experience with services, and may be reluctant to engage. **Understanding trusted assets** and what makes something a trusted asset is a key step to building good relations with a community.



# Define Interventions

- A **system led approach to defining interventions** should be taken to ensure a range of possibilities are explored to address the target inequality.
- It is important to **continue engagement with stakeholders, patients and residents** when identifying and defining possible interventions.
- Consider **hidden barriers** to an intervention. Whilst a service might look ideal, residents may know of hidden barriers as to why it might not work.
- Tools such as **workshops, surveys and one-to-ones** help facilitate engagement and provide a good accompaniment to the information gathered through local insight and asset mapping.
- Consider other work being undertaken at both a system level and place level. **Identify interdependencies** with other programmes, projects and initiatives **which can be aligned** with the aims and objectives of the health inequalities project.



- When seeking to implement an agreed intervention, it is critical to **be clear about what you want to achieve** and to **clearly understand how you will measure improvement**.
- Taking an **incremental approach to implementation** will create opportunities to understand what is and isn't working, and supports a gradual build of services whilst optimising the use of resources.
- Utilising **tools such as PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) supports this approach** in defining what is to be done, delivering upon, reviewing how it is functioning, and make adjustments accordingly.
- **Benchmarking data before, during and after implementation** will provide a baseline to work and review an implementation against, demonstrating any impact and change delivered by the intervention.
- Continue to follow up on any resident engagement work that has taken place. **Co-production is a continuous process**. Have resident's views and experiences change with the implementation of an intervention?



**BUDGET 2024/25: REVIEW OF SERVICE DASHBOARDS AND SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (SCIAs)**

**Housing and Health Advisory Committee – 7 November 2023**

**Report of:** Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – Finance and Trading

**Status:** For Comment

**Also considered by:**

- Development and Conservation Advisory Committee – 31 October 2023
- Finance and Investment Advisory Committee – 2 November 2023
- Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee – 23 November 2023
- People and Places Advisory Committee – 30 November 2023
- Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee – 5 December 2023

**Key Decision:** No

**Executive Summary:**

This report sets out updates to the 2024/25 budget within the existing framework of the 10-year budget and savings plan. The report presents growth and savings/additional income proposals that have been identified which need to be considered (if applicable to this Committee), and requests further suggestions from the Advisory Committees, before finalising the budget for 2024/25.

Informed by the latest information from Government and discussions with Cabinet, it is proposed that the Council continues to set a revenue budget that assumes no direct funding from Government through additional Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus. This will result in the Council continuing to aim to be financially self-sufficient.

To achieve this aim and to ensure a balanced budget position over the next 10-year period will be challenging partly due to the uncertainties and ongoing financial impacts of national and international events.

Some changes have been made to future assumptions and they will continue to be reviewed during the budget process, as usual. However, the key cost driver continues to be inflation with pressure coming through on service demand, the pay award and the cost of goods and services. The items listed in Appendix E report a current annual budget gap of £1.368m.

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Many of the reasons for the budget gap were raised with Members as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process and they continue to impact the finances of this council. There is also the impact of the leisure provider, Sencio ceasing to operate.

Inflationary and resulting service pressures are largely unavoidable. It is worthwhile making Members aware that they are likely to have to make more difficult decisions during the 2024/25 budget setting process than they have had to make for many years.

The Advisory Committees will comment on the growth and savings/additional income proposals included in the reports, and their recommendations will be considered by Cabinet as part of the process to remove this gap.

By addressing these issues, this Council will once again be in a strong financial position that other councils would aspire to.

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Kevin Maskell

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

Alan Mitchell, Ext. 7483

**Recommendation to each Advisory Committee:**

- (a) Advise Cabinet with views on the growth and savings/additional income proposals identified in Appendix G applicable to this Advisory Committee.
- (b) Advise Cabinet with further suggestions for growth and savings/additional income applicable to this Advisory Committee.

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

### Introduction and Background

#### Financial Strategy

- 1 The Council's financial strategy continues to aim for long-term financial health and continues to work towards improving financial sustainability. It has been successful through the use of a number of actions including:
  - implementing efficiency initiatives.
  - significantly reducing the back-office function.

- improved value for money.
  - maximising external income.
  - the movement of resources away from low priority services.
  - an emphasis on statutory rather than non-statutory services.
- 2 A summary of the Financial Strategy can be found at **Appendix J**.
- 3 Over this period, the Council has focused on delivering high quality services based on Members' priorities and consultation with residents and stakeholders.
- 4 Using the data sources available to the Council, this report sets out a budget over the 10-year period but recognises that it is likely that more accurate data will become available and current assumptions may need to be updated.

#### 10-year Budget

- 5 In setting its budget for 2011/12 onwards, the Council recognised the need to address both the immediate reduction in Government funding as well as the longer-term need to reduce its reliance on reserves. The outcome was a 10-year budget, together with a four-year savings plan, which ensured the Council's finances were placed on a stable footing but that also allowed for flexibility between budget years.
- 6 It should not be forgotten that £8.8m of savings have been made since 2011/12.

#### Financial Self-Sufficiency

- 7 With the Revenue Support Grant provided by Government having ceased from 2017/18 it is important that the council remains financially self-sufficient by having a financial strategy that is focused on local solutions. These solutions include:
- continuing to deliver financial savings and service efficiencies.
  - growing the council tax and business rate base.
  - generating more income.
- 8 This Council's approach to budgeting has been recognised by the sector as being exceptional which resulted in it being the winner of the CIPFA Public Finance Innovator of the Year Award in 2017.
- 9 The Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge in December 2021 also commented that 'Sevenoaks District Council takes a long-term view of financial planning with a focus on self-sufficiency. The council's 10-year budget is innovative, an example for the sector and supports long-term decision making.

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### Current Budget Gap

- 10 It was mentioned in reports presented as part of the 2023/24 Budget Setting Process that it was highly likely that additional savings/income would be required as part of the next budget process. An 'Early Indications' report was presented to FIAC and Cabinet earlier in the summer which identified the areas that could have a significant financial impact on the Council. These remain the major contributors to the budget gap of £1.368m included in this report.
- 11 The growth/additional expenditure items total £1.827m per annum. Many of these items were raised with Members as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process and they continue to impact the finances of this council. The largest items are:
- Pay Awards above previous assumptions. The Council is on national terms and conditions. The National Employers and unions have not yet agreed on the 2023 pay award but the current offer which is an average increase of 5.7% is significantly higher than the budget assumption of 2%.
  - Direct Services – the cost of delivering the full range of services as well as the continuing higher quantities of waste and recycling. Quantities remain much higher than before the pandemic which result in increased staff costs, fuel and vehicle repairs and maintenance.
  - The change in leisure provider as agreed by Council on 4 April 2023.
- 12 Other threats to the financial position, which are managed through the budget process, include energy cost volatility and uncertainty; ongoing demands for homelessness services and temporary accommodation; and the higher costs of goods and services as a result of higher inflation.
- 13 The savings/additional income items total £0.459m per annum. The largest items are:
- Additional income anticipated from a fees and charges review.
  - Government funding streams expected to continue in 2024/25 only.
  - Council Tax premium changes.

### The Way Forward

- 14 The intention of this report is to provide Members of each Advisory Committee an opportunity to give their views on potential growth and savings/additional income items that could be included in the updated 10-year budget that will be presented to Council on 20 February 2024.
- 15 The 'Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2024/25 and Beyond' report has been presented to FIAC and Cabinet to start the budget setting process for 2024/25.



## **Review of the 10-year Budget Process**

- 16 An audit of the 10-year budget process was completed by Mazars (working for Internal Audit) in 2021 and their findings were that the Council has adequate, effective and reliable controls in place over budget setting and long-term financial planning.

## **Financial Self-Sufficiency**

- 17 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 set out an ambition for the Council to become financially self-sufficient which was achieved in 2016/17. The current Council Plan aims to continue with this approach. This means that the Council does not rely on direct funding from Government, through Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus, to deliver its services.
- 18 This approach was adopted in response to the financial challenges the Country was faced with in bringing its public spending down to ensure it was able to live within its means. In practice this has seen Government funding to local authorities dramatically reduced since 2010/11 with Sevenoaks District Council receiving no Revenue Support Grant from 2017/18.
- 19 The decision to become financially self-sufficient is intended to give the Council greater control over its services, reducing the potential for decision making to be influenced by the level of funding provided by government to local authorities.
- 20 The Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge in December 2021 commented that 'Sevenoaks District Council takes a long-term view of financial planning with a focus on self-sufficiency. The council's 10-year budget is innovative, an example for the sector and supports long-term decision making. This extended financial framework provides an excellent platform which has supported effective budget management and planned, long-term, decision making.'
- 21 With the Council receiving no Revenue Support Grant from 2017/18 and New Homes Bonus reducing from 2018/19, this approach remains appropriate. The attached 10-year budget assumes no additional Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus. Any funding received from these sources will be put into the Financial Plan Reserve which can be used to support the 10-year budget.
- 22 In 2023/24 the government rolled two grants into the Revenue Support Grant which are shown as 'Govt Support: Rolled in grants' on the attached 10-year budget. This Council continues to receive no Revenue Support Grant through the Government formula.
- 23 Cabinet are keen to remain financially self-sufficient which has served the Council well and ensured it is one of the most financially stable local authorities in the country. This will allow this Council to move ahead in the

## Agenda Item 7

knowledge that this council has the financial resources to provide the services that the district's residents need into the future.

### Service Dashboards

- 24 The intention of service dashboards is to provide Members with improved information during the budget setting process to provide context and inform any growth and savings/additional income ideas that Members may put forward.
- 25 The Service Dashboards cover a summary of the services provided, objectives, achievements and opportunities, challenges and risks and performance.
- 26 **Appendix A** contains the Service Dashboard for this Advisory Committee. **Appendix A1** contains the Performance Indicators and **Appendix B** contains the budget for those services.

### Savings Plan

- 27 **Appendix C** to this report sets out a summary of the savings/additional income and growth items previously approved by Council since the 10-year budget strategy was first used in 2011/12, which have allowed the Council to deliver a 10-year balanced budget.
- 28 The savings plan requires a total of over £8.8 million to be saved between 2011/12 and 2023/23 which is an average saving of £676,000 per annum.

### Current 10-year Budget Position

- 29 The 10-year budget set out in **Appendix D** has been updated from the version agreed by Council on 21 February 2023 by rolling it forward one year.
- 30 Changes have been made to the following assumptions:
  - Business Rates Retention – additional income from the Business Rates Pool of £250,000 included in 2024/25 only.
  - Pay award – increased from 2% to 3% for 2024/25.
  - Interest receipts – increased from £288,000 to £332,000 for 2024/25 to 2026/27 and from £188,000 to £232,000 from 2027/28.
  - Property Investment Strategy – decreased from £1.618m to £1.478m for 2024/25 to 2025/26, from £1.715m to £1.575m from 2026/27 to 2028/29 and from £1.756m to £1.616m from 2029/30.
- 31 The current budget gap is £1.368m which is detailed in **Appendix E**.

- 32 The major reasons for this gap are pay awards (explained below), the cost of providing the full range of Direct Services operations and the change in leisure provider.
- 33 The National Employers for local government services final pay award offer for 2023/24 was £1,925 per full time employee up to a certain pay point and 3.88% on higher pay points. This equates to an average increase of 5.7% in the Council's staff costs against a figure of 2% in the 10-year budget. In cash terms this is £750,000 above the budgeted assumption. It should be recognised that the current cost of living crisis has had a severe effect on colleagues on lower salary grades. However, the unions have rejected this offer and further news is awaited.
- 34 Negotiations regarding the 2024/25 pay award have not yet commenced. The assumption in the attached 10-year budget has been increased from 2% to 3% in 2024/25 and remaining at a 2% increase in all future years.
- 35 Officers have been working on proposals to reduce the gap which are included in this round of reports to the Advisory Committees.
- 36 Due to the size of the budget gap this year it is more important than ever that Members fully participate in the process by making suggestions and recognising that some tough decisions may need to be made.
- 37 As previously reported, the options are likely to cover a number of areas including:
- Service efficiencies.
  - Additional income.
  - Re-prioritisation of reserves including use of the Budget Stabilisation Reserve.
  - Service reductions.
- 38 When looking at prospects for year 11 onwards, there is still likely to be a need to take further actions as these years come into the rolling 10-year period.

### **Proposed Growth and Savings/Additional Income Items**

- 39 Growth items are items that would result in additional expenditure or reduced income. Savings items would result in reduced expenditure or additional income. These are in addition to the items highlighted in the 'Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2024/25 and Beyond' report considered by Cabinet on 19 September 2023.
- 40 A number of growth and savings/additional income items will be proposed at the Advisory Committees with the aim of helping to achieve the savings/additional income required to bridge the budget gap.

## Agenda Item 7

- 41 Managers have agreed a range of savings that do not require Member approval. These are listed in **Appendix F** (if applicable).
- 42 The proposed growth and savings/additional income items relating to this Advisory Committee are listed in **Appendix G** (if applicable).
- 43 Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) contain further details for all proposed growth and savings/additional income items. SCIAs applicable to this Advisory Committee can be found in **Appendix H** (if applicable).

### **Role of the Advisory Committees**

- 44 Training sessions on the budget process were provided to Members in October. If Members require any further training or require any additional details on the content of this report and appendices, please contact Adrian Rowbotham or Alan Mitchell prior to the meeting.
- 45 Views of the Advisory Committees on the growth and savings/additional income items proposed together with any additional suggestions the committees put forward will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 14 December 2023.

### **Process and Timetable**

- 46 This report is the second stage of the budget process as shown in the Budget Setting Timetable (**Appendix K**).
- 47 The next stage will be a Budget Update report to Cabinet on 14 December 2023 to provide details of progress made.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

All financial implications are covered elsewhere in this report.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications.

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

Challenges and risks are included in the Service Dashboards and each Service Change Impact Assessment (SCIA) includes the likely impacts including a risk analysis.

A separate Risks and Assumptions report will be presented to the Finance and Investment Advisory Committee and Cabinet.

### Equality Assessment

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

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

### Net Zero Implications

Members are reminded of the Council's stated ambition to be Net Zero with regards to carbon emissions by 2030.

Individual net zero implication assessments have been completed for all Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs).

### **Conclusions**

The Financial Strategy and 10-year budget process have ensured that the Council follows a logical and well considered process and approach in dealing with the many difficult challenges that it has faced. They have also helped to ensure that the Council is well placed in dealing with more immediate and longer-term challenges.

By becoming financially self-sufficient at an early stage, this Council has become much more in control of its own destiny.

The attached 10-year budget shows that this Council is aiming to continue to be financially stable going into the future with a level of assurance that any council would aspire to. However, with a range of issues impacting the council's finances, this is the most challenging budget process this Council has faced for many years.

The Council aims to continue to provide value for money services to a high standard ensuring that the decisions made lead to an achievable 10-year budget. Members will need to consider the impact on service quality, staff and well-being.

Members' consideration and scrutiny of the relevant services is an essential and key element in the budget process. If the net total of growth and savings/additional income proposals identified by the Advisory Committees and approved by Cabinet

## Agenda Item 7

does not reach the £1.368m budget gap currently identified, additional savings will be required that may result in service changes, to ensure a balanced budget position.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – Service Dashboards relating to this Advisory Committee

Appendix Ai – Performance Indicators

Appendix B – 2023/24 Budget by Service relating to this Advisory Committee

Appendix C – Summary of the Council’s previously agreed savings plan and growth items

Appendix D – 10-year budget

Appendix E – Changes to the 10-year budget

Appendix F – New growth and savings/additional income items agreed by managers (if applicable)

Appendix G – New growth and savings/additional income items proposed relating to this Advisory Committee (if applicable)

Appendix H – Service Change Impact Assessment forms (SCIAs) for the new growth and savings/additional income items relating to this Advisory Committee (if applicable)

Appendix J - Financial Strategy

Appendix K – Budget Setting Timetable

### **Background Papers**

Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2024/25 and Beyond – Cabinet 19  
September 2023

**Adrian Rowbotham**

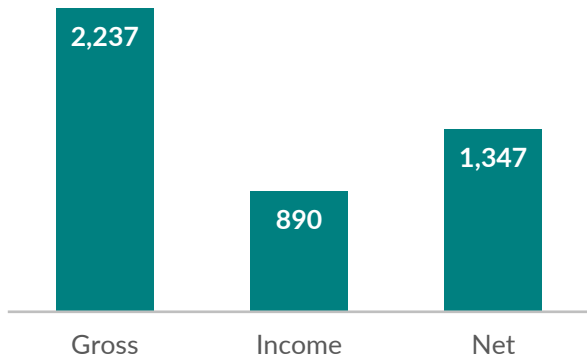
**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – Finance & Trading**

## Service Dashboard Portfolio for Housing & Health

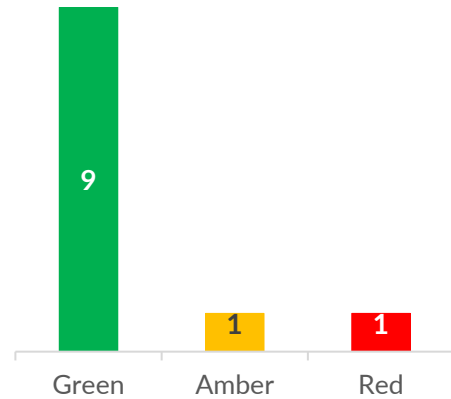
### The services we provide

Housing strategy & policy, housing standards, housing needs, homelessness, empty homes, gypsy and traveller, disabled facilities grants, health, energy efficiency, fuel poverty, HERO, wellbeing

#### Revenue Budget (£000)



#### Performance



#### Service contribution

Statutory service



Income generating



Working in partnership



#### Council Plan

Wellbeing ✓

Environment ✓

Economy ✓

Housing ✓

Community Safety ✓

Health ✓

#### Achievements & Opportunities

- Progress in delivering the Housing and Homelessness strategies.
- Delivery of 58 affordable homes via Quercus Housing and work with partners, with 11 units in the pipeline.
- Two additional Registered Providers on board to deliver affordable homes in the District.
- Reduced the number of households in temporary accommodation by 20%.
- Secured £1.6m funding to deliver energy efficiency upgrades and low-carbon heating solutions to low-income households living off the gas grid.
- Secured £2.8m funding to deliver affordable housing to support Ukrainian and Afghan refugee

#### Challenges & Risks


- Levels of homelessness arising from cost of living pressures on households and landlords.
- Land and property values impacting the viability to deliver housing that meets the District's needs.
- Rising private sector rents and static Local Housing Allowance rates.
- Continuing to support the Homes for Ukraine scheme and other refugees settling in the Sevenoaks District.
- Budget reductions in other public sector organisations impacting schemes to support Sevenoaks district residents


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## Performance Report - Housing & Health Advisory Committee



**Key:**

 Green – Performance is at or above target

 Amber – Performance is less than 10% below target

 Red – Performance is 10% or more below target

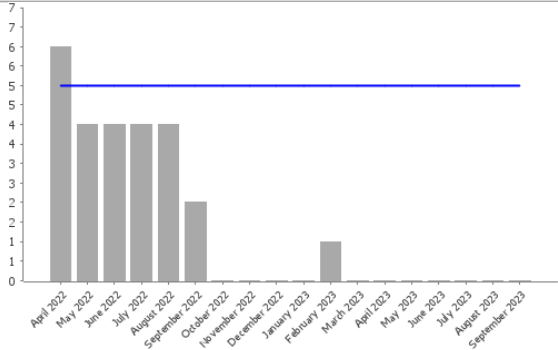
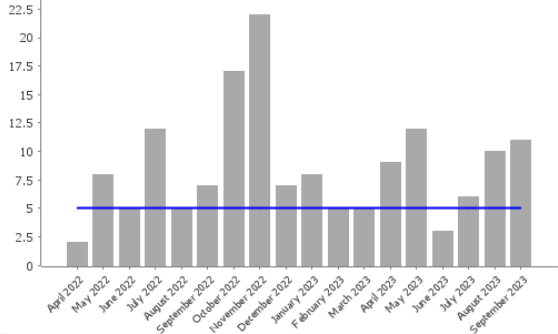
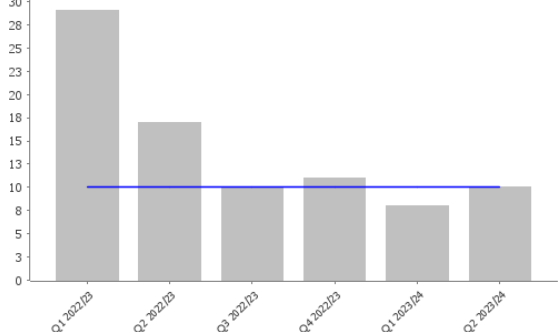
Page 31


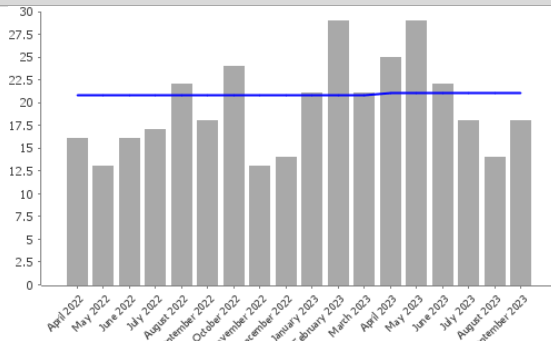

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Year to date Value	Year to date Target	Year to date Status
LPI_CD H 01	Percentage of the Sevenoaks District Partnership Health and Wellbeing Action Plan actions on target	86%	80%			86%	80%	

Agenda Item 7

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Year to date Value	Year to date Target	Year to date Status														
LPI_CD H 04	Number of referrals to the One You Kent Service (SDC area)	136	100	✔	<table border="1"> <caption>Quarterly Referrals Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1 2022/23</td> <td>150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2022/23</td> <td>160</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2022/23</td> <td>135</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2022/23</td> <td>125</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2023/24</td> <td>150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2023/24</td> <td>135</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Value	Q1 2022/23	150	Q2 2022/23	160	Q3 2022/23	135	Q4 2022/23	125	Q1 2023/24	150	Q2 2023/24	135	285	200	✔
Quarter	Value																					
Q1 2022/23	150																					
Q2 2022/23	160																					
Q3 2022/23	135																					
Q4 2022/23	125																					
Q1 2023/24	150																					
Q2 2023/24	135																					
LPI_CD H 05	Number of individuals completing the One You initial appointment	92	75	✔	<table border="1"> <caption>Quarterly Initial Appointments Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1 2022/23</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2022/23</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2022/23</td> <td>120</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2022/23</td> <td>65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2023/24</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2023/24</td> <td>90</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Value	Q1 2022/23	80	Q2 2022/23	95	Q3 2022/23	120	Q4 2022/23	65	Q1 2023/24	80	Q2 2023/24	90	173	150	✔
Quarter	Value																					
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Q3 2022/23	120																					
Q4 2022/23	65																					
Q1 2023/24	80																					
Q2 2023/24	90																					
LPI_CD H 06	Percentage of participants of tier 2 weight management that have lost weight at the end of their active intervention	100%	75%	✔	<table border="1"> <caption>Quarterly Weight Loss Percentage Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Value (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1 2022/23</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2022/23</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2022/23</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2022/23</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2023/24</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2023/24</td> <td>100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Value (%)	Q1 2022/23	95	Q2 2022/23	95	Q3 2022/23	60	Q4 2022/23	95	Q1 2023/24	95	Q2 2023/24	100	100%	76%	✔
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Q3 2022/23	60																					
Q4 2022/23	95																					
Q1 2023/24	95																					
Q2 2023/24	100																					

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Year to date Value	Year to date Target	Year to date Status																																						
LPI_CD H 07	Percentage of clients that have completed an end of intervention satisfaction service and recorded as at least "satisfied" with the 1:1 lifestyle support and weight loss services they may have received.	96%	90%	✔	<table border="1"> <caption>Performance Chart Data for LPI_CD H 07</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Value (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1 2022/23</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2022/23</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2022/23</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2022/23</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2023/24</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2023/24</td> <td>95</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Value (%)	Q1 2022/23	90	Q2 2022/23	95	Q3 2022/23	80	Q4 2022/23	90	Q1 2023/24	90	Q2 2023/24	95	76%	90%	✔																								
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Q1 2023/24	90																																													
Q2 2023/24	95																																													
LPI_HS A 02	Number of households where a positive outcome has been achieved (homeless prevented or secured alternative accommodation)	161	15	✔	<table border="1"> <caption>Performance Chart Data for LPI_HS A 02</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>April 2022</td><td>50</td></tr> <tr><td>May 2022</td><td>50</td></tr> <tr><td>June 2022</td><td>35</td></tr> <tr><td>July 2022</td><td>35</td></tr> <tr><td>August 2022</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>September 2022</td><td>35</td></tr> <tr><td>October 2022</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>November 2022</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>December 2022</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>January 2023</td><td>50</td></tr> <tr><td>February 2023</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>March 2023</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>April 2023</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>May 2023</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>June 2023</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>July 2023</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>August 2023</td><td>55</td></tr> <tr><td>September 2023</td><td>160</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Value	April 2022	50	May 2022	50	June 2022	35	July 2022	35	August 2022	30	September 2022	35	October 2022	45	November 2022	40	December 2022	45	January 2023	50	February 2023	40	March 2023	30	April 2023	25	May 2023	45	June 2023	25	July 2023	20	August 2023	55	September 2023	160	338	90	✔
Month	Value																																													
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September 2023	160																																													
LPI_HS A 03	Number of households in all types of emergency & temporary accommodation	96	95	⚠	<table border="1"> <caption>Performance Chart Data for LPI_HS A 03</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>April 2022</td><td>130</td></tr> <tr><td>May 2022</td><td>115</td></tr> <tr><td>June 2022</td><td>105</td></tr> <tr><td>July 2022</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>August 2022</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>September 2022</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>October 2022</td><td>95</td></tr> <tr><td>November 2022</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>December 2022</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>January 2023</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>February 2023</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>March 2023</td><td>85</td></tr> <tr><td>April 2023</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>May 2023</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>June 2023</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>July 2023</td><td>95</td></tr> <tr><td>August 2023</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>September 2023</td><td>95</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Value	April 2022	130	May 2022	115	June 2022	105	July 2022	100	August 2022	100	September 2022	100	October 2022	95	November 2022	100	December 2022	100	January 2023	90	February 2023	90	March 2023	85	April 2023	90	May 2023	90	June 2023	90	July 2023	95	August 2023	90	September 2023	95	96	95	⚠
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Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Year to date Value	Year to date Target	Year to date Status
LPI_HS A 04	Number of households in B & B	0	5	✔		0	5	✔
LPI_PSH	Number of Disabled Facilities Grants completed	11	5	✔		51	30	✔
LPI_HS P 01	Number of customers housed in PSL property	10	10	✔		18	20	✘

Code	Short Name	Current Value	Current Target	Current Status	Performance Chart	Year to date Value	Year to date Target	Year to date Status
LPI_HS R 01	Total number housed through Sevenoaks District Housing Register nomination	18	21			126	126	

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Housing and Health Advisory Committee								Appendix B
Chief Officer	Budget Book Reference	Budget Book Description	2022/23 Exp Budget	2022/23 Inc Budget	2022/23 Approved Net Budget	24/25 Forecast Outturn	24/25 Forecast Variance	Statutory Services (*out of 10)
<b>Revenue</b>			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
People & Places	GYPSY	Gypsy Sites	60	(63)	(3)	17	20	10
People & Places	HEALTHIMP	Community Health and Wellbeing	36	0	36	36	0	2
People & Places	HOMELESS	Homeless	831	(139)	692	676	(16)	10
People & Places	HOUSEREG	Housing Register	127	0	127	124	(3)	10
People & Places	HOUSIHDFG	Disabled Facilities Grant Administration	0	(55)	(55)	(55)	0	10
People & Places	HOUSING	Housing	182	0	182	182	0	7
People & Places	HOUSINIT	Accommodation Service	79	0	79	77	(2)	10
People & Places	HOUSTRAILBLA	Housing Energy Retraining Options (HERO	61	0	61	49	(12)	0
People & Places	HSHOMUKR	Homes for the Ukrainians	42	(42)	0	0	0	0
People & Places	PRIVSEC	Private Sector Housing	229	(9)	220	174	(46)	10
People & Places	STAFFHOUSE	Admin Expenses - People & Places Housing	7	0	7	7	0	0
People & Places	XCHOOSE	One You - Kent Public Health	123	(123)	0	0	0	0
People & Places	XHOMEFUND	Homelessness Funding	459	(459)	0	0	0	10
			2,237	(890)	1,347	1,288	(59)	
*Whole service = 10, Major part = 7, Minor part = 2, None = 0 (Includes support services)								

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Summary of the Council's Previously Agreed Savings/Additional Income and Growth Items

Appendix C

Year	SCIA No.	Description	2011/12 - 2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	Later Years £000	Total £000
		<b>Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee</b>				
2021/22	-	Car Parking: assumed 25% reduction in 21/22 income improving by 5% per year	617	(206)	(411)	
2023/24	20	Env. Health: Air quality monitoring (reversal of temporary growth item)	22	(22)		
		<b>Development and Conservation Advisory Committee</b>				
2022/23	9	Development Management: additional application fee income (reversal of temporary savings item)	(25)	25		
		<b>Finance and Investment Advisory Committee</b>				
2023/24	21	Various: Utility Costs (reversal of temporary growth item)	180	(180)		
2023/24	22	Prop & Comm: Meeting Point Business Hub (reversal of temporary growth item)	60	(27)	(33)	
		<b>Housing and Health Advisory Committee</b>				
2022/23	1	Housing: Temporary accommodation (reversal of temporary growth item)	300	(300)		
2023/24	1	Housing: Temporary accommodation occupation charge (reversal of temporary growth item)	36	(36)		
		<b>Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee</b>				
2023/24	1	Apprenticeship Levy (reversal of temporary growth item)	55	(55)		
		<b>People and Places Advisory Committee</b>				
2022/23	-	New White Oak Leisure Centre	216	(205)	(11)	
2023/24	11	Health & Communities: Reduction in youth funding associated to removal of van (part reversal of savings item)	(6)	2		
		Minor movements between years			0	
		Other savings/additional income items completed in earlier years	(8,161)			
		Other growth items completed in earlier years	2,218			
		<b>Total Savings/additional income</b>	<b>(8,192)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(8,165)</b>
		<b>Total Growth</b>	<b>3,704</b>	<b>(1,031)</b>	<b>(455)</b>	<b>2,218</b>
		<b>Net Savings</b>	<b>(4,488)</b>	<b>(1,004)</b>	<b>(455)</b>	<b>(5,947)</b>

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	Budget 2023/24	Plan 2024/25	Plan 2025/26	Plan 2026/27	Plan 2027/28	Plan 2028/29	Plan 2029/30	Plan 2030/31	Plan 2031/32	Plan 2032/33	Plan 2033/34
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Expenditure</b>											
Net Service Expenditure c/f	17,297	18,533	21,712	19,548	19,649	20,189	20,689	21,191	21,879	22,392	23,117
Inflation	1,188	1,505	565	573	582	593	602	613	624	635	647
Superannuation Fund deficit	(270)	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net growth/(savings) (approved in previous yrs)	319	(1,115)	(253)	(272)	58	7	0	75	(111)	90	18
<b>New growth</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,988</b>	<b>(2,376)</b>	<b>(150)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>New savings/Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>
<b>Net Service Expenditure b/f</b>	<b>18,533</b>	<b>21,712</b>	<b>19,548</b>	<b>19,649</b>	<b>20,189</b>	<b>20,689</b>	<b>21,191</b>	<b>21,879</b>	<b>22,392</b>	<b>23,117</b>	<b>23,782</b>
<b>Financing Sources</b>											
Govt Support: Rolled in grants	(186)	(186)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
: Funding Guarantee	(912)	(912)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
: Lower Tier Services Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
: Services Grant	(90)	(90)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax	(12,229)	(12,858)	(13,356)	(13,807)	(14,271)	(14,748)	(15,238)	(15,744)	(16,262)	(16,794)	(17,269)
Business Rates Retention	(2,868)	(2,920)	(2,723)	(2,409)	(2,457)	(2,506)	(2,556)	(2,607)	(2,659)	(2,712)	(2,766)
Collection Fund Deficit/(Surplus)	(216)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interest Receipts	(288)	(332)	(332)	(332)	(232)	(232)	(232)	(232)	(232)	(232)	(232)
Property Investment Strategy Income	(1,618)	(1,478)	(1,478)	(1,575)	(1,575)	(1,575)	(1,616)	(1,616)	(1,616)	(1,616)	(1,616)
Contributions to/(from) Reserves	(131)	(2,215)	398	398	398	398	398	398	398	370	331
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>(18,538)</b>	<b>(20,991)</b>	<b>(17,491)</b>	<b>(17,725)</b>	<b>(18,137)</b>	<b>(18,663)</b>	<b>(19,244)</b>	<b>(19,801)</b>	<b>(20,371)</b>	<b>(20,984)</b>	<b>(21,552)</b>
<b>Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>2,057</b>	<b>1,924</b>	<b>2,052</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>1,947</b>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,021</b>	<b>2,133</b>	<b>2,230</b>
<b>Contribution to/(from) Stabilisation Reserve</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>(371)</b>	<b>(370)</b>	<b>(580)</b>	<b>(636)</b>	<b>(638)</b>	<b>(751)</b>	<b>(674)</b>	<b>(765)</b>	<b>(841)</b>
<b>Unfunded Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>1,686</b>	<b>1,554</b>	<b>1,472</b>	<b>1,390</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>1,368</b>	<b>1,389</b>
<b>Cumulative Unfunded Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit</b>											<b>13,677</b>

**Assumptions**

Business Rates Retention:	Business Rates Retention safety-net plus 2% per year. Also 'Updated safety net and underindexing compensation' until 25/26 when a Business Rates reset is due to take place. Business Rates Retention Pool income is included for 24/25 only.
Council Tax:	3% in 24/25, 2% in later years
Council Tax Base:	Increase of 730 Band D equivalent properties per annum
Interest Receipts:	£332,000 in 24/25 to 26/27 and £232,000 in later years
Property Investment Strategy:	£1.478m from 24/25, £1.575m from 26/27, £1.616m from 29/30
Pay award:	3% in 24/25, 2% in later years
Other costs:	2.25% in all years
Income:	2.5% in all years.

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	2024/25 Impact £000	10-year Budget Total Impact £000	10-year Budget Per Annum Impact £000	Comments
<b>Growth: Additional Expenditure or Reduced Income</b>				
Savings target built into budget	100	1,000	100	Annual savings assumption included in the 10-year budget.
April 2023 pay award	760	8,322	832	Current employers offer would cost £750,000 in 2023/24.
April 2024 pay award	188	2,060	206	Unknown but this reflects a 1% increase above the current assumption.
Apprenticeship levy	40	400	40	Current growth SCIA for £55,000 ends after 2023/24 but the Government scheme is expected to continue. Future growth item reduced to £40,000 as assumed £15,000 could be removed from staff training budget.
Utility costs	180	500	50	Current growth SCIA of £180,000 only included for 2023/24. Assume this increase reduces over time.
Property Investment Strategy	150	1,500	150	Not currently achieving the budgeted income levels from properties held. A separate Property Investment Strategy Update report will be included in the budget process.
Direct Services	600	2,500	250	Agency staff required to deliver current service levels noting continuing high levels of refuse and recycling quantities. Vehicle costs and income issues should improve. Initially £600,000 but assumed that actions will be agreed to reduce future costs.
Homelessness	150	150	15	Current growth SCIA of £300,000 ends after 2023/24. A lot of work has been carried out so that the extra cost in 2024/25 is estimated to be reduced to £150,000 with further actions to remove the extra cost completely from 2025/26.
Leisure provider change	183	1,830	183	Initial estimate of 2 year interim provider of £1.83m (as per report to Council). Updates on operator performance will be provided during the budget process to provide a basis for revised figures. The amounts here reflect the reimbursement of the reserve.
Markets: new contracts from 01/04/23	77	5	1	New contracts from April 2024. Assumed that the number of stalls at Swanley Sunday market gradually increases.
<b>Growth Total</b>	<b>2,428</b>	<b>18,267</b>	<b>1,827</b>	
<b>Savings: Reduced Expenditure or Additional Income</b>				
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	
Quercus 7 dividend	- 10	- 100	- 10	Increase from £50,000 to £60,000 from 2024/25. Scope to increase further but Q7 then unable to build funds for further investment.
Council Tax: Premium Unoccupied Properties	- 12	- 132	- 13	Provisionally agreed by Council in February 2023. Starts on 01/04/24.
Council Tax: Second Homes Premium	-	- 591	- 59	Provisionally agreed by Council in February 2023. Start delayed until 01/04/25 due to Government legislation requirements.
Fees and Charges	- 200	- 2,000	- 200	Implementation of review. Assume that this will deliver an additional £200,000 of income per annum after allowing for the inflation assumption.
Interest receipts	- 44	- 440	- 44	This budget was increased by £100,000 for 4 years from 2023/24. Current receipts suggest that it can be increased further but note expected reduction in balances and fluctuations in interest rates.
Govt settlement: Funding Guarantee	- 912	- 912	- 91	Latest suggestion from Government is that this funding will continue in 2024/25 only.
Govt Settlement: Services Grant	- 90	- 90	- 9	Latest suggestion from Government is that this funding will continue in 2024/25 only.
Govt settlement: Rolled in Grants	- 75	- 75	- 8	Latest suggestion from Government is that this funding will continue in 2024/25.
Business Rates Retention Pool	- 250	- 250	- 25	Include the expected extra retained income in 2024/25 only instead of transferring it to the Budget Stabilisation Reserve as has previously been the case.
<b>Savings Total</b>	<b>- 1,593</b>	<b>- 4,590</b>	<b>- 459</b>	
<b>NET TOTAL</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>13,677</b>	<b>1,368</b>	

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**New Savings/Additional Income Items Agreed by Managers: Housing & Health Advisory Committee**

These items are for information only. No recommendation by the Advisory Committee is required.

MGR		Description	Year	Ongoing	2024/25 Impact £000	10-year	10-year
Year	No.					Budget	Budget Per
Savings/Additional Income						Total	Annum
						Impact	Impact
						£000	£000
24/25	5	Reduce Family fun Days	24/25	Y	(4)	(40)	(4)
		Utilise internal resource rather than external consultants to monitor community					
24/25	5	plan	24/25	Y	(2)	(20)	(2)
24/25	6	Annual rent review of Hever Road site	24/25	Y	(3)	(30)	(3)
24/25	6	Review of Housing structure	24/25	Y	(56)	(560)	(56)
<b>Total</b>					<b>(65)</b>	<b>(650)</b>	<b>(65)</b>

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**New Growth and Savings/Additional Income Proposals: Housing & Health Advisory Committee**

SCIA Year	No.	Description	Year	Ongoing	2024/25 Impact £000	10-year Budget Total Impact	10-year Budget Per Annum Impact £000
<b>Growth</b>							
24/25	G1	One-off increase in budget to support homelessness service	24/25	N	150	150	150
		Sub Total			150	150	150
<b>Savings/Additional Income</b>							
24/25	5	Seek alternative methods to deliver community initiatives	24/25	Y	(6)	(60)	(6)
24/25	6	Seek alternative options to deliver community grants and reduce the annual grant budget	24/25	Y	(5)	(50)	(5)
		Sub Total			(11)	(110)	(11)
		<b>Net (Savings)/Growth Total</b>			<b>139</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>139</b>

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**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA\_G1\_ (24/25)

Housing and Health, Sarah Robson:

People and Places

Housing Accommodation, Advice and Homeless Prevention

No. of Staff 5.3 FTE

Details of proposed change	Cost Centre & Account Code of Budget	2024/25 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Homelessness		150	One-off (and then reviewed)

**Box 1. Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, all councils (nationally) have seen an increase in the number of households presenting as homeless or threatened with homelessness. As a result, this Council has seen an increase in the use and cost of temporary and emergency accommodation.

The length of time customers stay in temporary accommodation is often longer due to lack of suitable and affordable move-on accommodation in the district, both private rented and social housing.

The cost of living has placed further pressures on the homelessness service, alongside new asylum schemes (Homes for Ukraine, Afghan etc.) and increased domestic abuse placements as a result of the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act. Changes to the private rented sector has also resulted in private landlords leaving the sector.

Over the past 3 years, the Council's Housing team has worked hard to minimise the use of temporary and emergency accommodation, which has seen numbers placed into interim accommodation decrease. This has been achieved through introducing more robust processes, a new landlord incentives scheme, support with rent deposit and rent in advance and the success of Quercus Housing, the Council's affordable housing company, which has delivered 41 new affordable homes in the Sevenoaks District. The Council has also sought partnerships with local partners, including West Kent Housing Association and the charity HfT, which has brought forward supported accommodation units at Vine Court Road and Orchard Close, alongside accommodation for single mums and women at Stay Green House.

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Box 2. Key Stakeholders Affected:**

Homeless households.

**Box 3. Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)**

The cost of expensive temporary accommodation, including nightly paid accommodation places a budget growth pressure on the Council.

The Council currently receives Government funding to support homelessness via the Homelessness Prevention Grant. The funding is used to support homelessness prevention staffing costs, but is also used to support part of the nightly paid temporary accommodation costs for homeless households.

The council has a statutory duty to assess the housing needs of households who present as homeless. As demand for homeless services continues, without additional growth funding, the Housing team would be unable to meet its statutory duties under the Homelessness Prevention Act’s prevention and relief duties, which includes the provision of interim accommodation.

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

Medium

**Cost Centre 2023/24 Budget (£'000)**

Operational Cost	831
Income	(139)
Net Cost	692

**Service Budget 2023/24 (relating to the area affected by this SCIA)**

Operational Cost	539
Income	-

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Net Cost	539
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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]

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

SCIA\_5\_(24/25)

Portfolio / Chief Officer : Sarah Robson  
 Service: People & Places  
 Activity Health & Communities  
 No. of Staff 1.71 FTE

Details of proposed change	Cost Centre & Account Code of Budget	2024/25 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Services	60501 CDDEVLP	(6)	ongoing

**Box 1. Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

The team is able to reduce the budget to deliver community initiatives and community safety in the District. Instead, we will seek alternative funding routes or opportunities for other partners organisations.

**Box 2. Key Stakeholders Affected:**

Local communities where initiatives and projects are hosted

**Box 3. Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)**

Reduction in Number of projects/community safety initiatives delivered

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

Medium

**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Cost Centre 2023/24 Budget (£'000)**

Operational Cost	132
Income	0
Net Cost	132

**Service Budget 2023/24 (relating to the area affected by this SCIA)**

Operational Cost	132
Income	£0
Net Cost	132

**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]

**Community Impact and Outcomes**

There will be a community impact as a number of projects will not be funded

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCIA \_6\_ (24/25)

Portfolio / Chief Officer : Sarah Robson

Service: People & Places

Activity Health & Communities

No. of Staff 0.7 FTE

Details of proposed change	Cost Centre & Account Code of Budget	2024/25 Growth / (Saving) £000	Later Years Comments (ongoing, one-off, etc.)
Services	67100 CDGRNTS	(5)	ongoing

**Box 1. Reasons for and explanation of proposed change in service**

The Health and Communities team runs an annual community grants programme. However, we are proposing to reduce the annual budget by £5,000.

The team considers it is able to support the saving as it runs other funding options through its Better Together and Community Safety Partnership grants, whilst enabling communities and partner organisations to secure funding and deliver projects as part of our community mobilisation programme.

**Box 2. Key Stakeholders Affected:**

Voluntary & Community organisations

**Box 3. Likely impacts and implications of the change in service (include Risk Analysis)**

There will be a reduction in the number of grants awarded each year.

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

Medium



**SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Cost Centre 2023/24 Budget (£'000)**

Operational Cost	201
Income	0
Net Cost	201

**Service Budget 2023/24 (relating to the area affected by this SCIA)**

Operational Cost	201
Income	£0
Net Cost	201

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]

Community Impact and Outcomes

There will be a community impact as a number of projects will not be funded

Wellbeing

Wellbeing towards the communities who would not get their projects funded

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# Financial Strategy



## INTRODUCTION

In the years preceding this Strategy Sevenoaks District Council has proven itself to be highly successful in some of the most austere and challenging times faced by local government. This was only possible because of our award winning financial strategy and the achievement of a self-sufficient balanced budget within our unique 10-year budget framework.

With the cost of living crisis and events around the world, it remains important to have clear plans in place that may require difficult but necessary savings proposals.

Our Financial Strategy enables the Council to deliver its services effectively, in accordance with the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy. At the same time, it ensures that our spending is prioritised to deliver the promises our Members set out in the draft **Council Plan themes**:

-  Environment
-  Economy
-  Housing
-  Communities
-  Wellbeing

## OUR FINANCES

**Our Vision** Long-term financial health to deliver exceptional services and achieve the promises set out in the Council Plan.

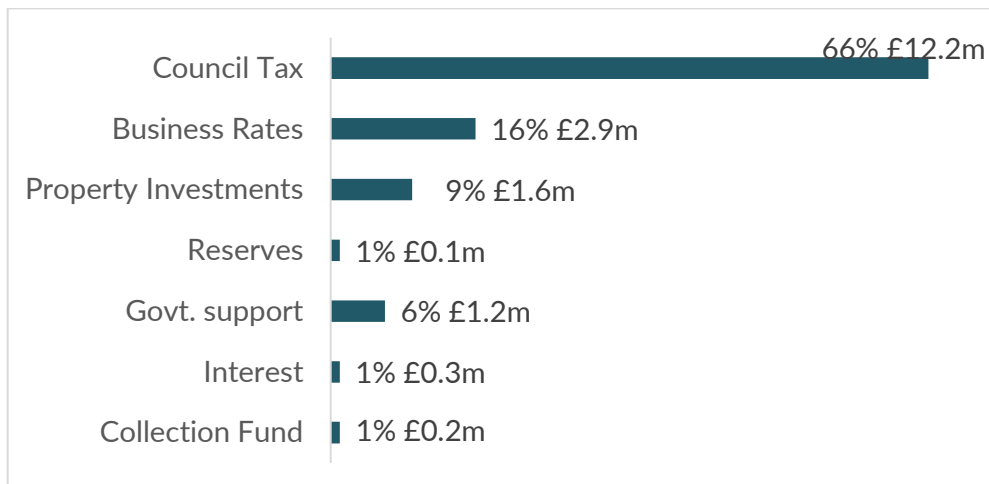
### What's important to us:

- Our budget supports the Council's vision and priorities
- Taxpayers and customers receive quality services and value for money
- Innovation, efficiency and cost-effectiveness
- Maximising income from grants and other funding opportunities
- Taking a commercial approach where it will benefit our budgets and our residents and local businesses
- Good quality, risk managed investments to generate more income for local priorities

### To be successful, we must:

- Remain financially self-sufficient
- Be clear about the Council's future financial prospects, with a ten-year budget as an integral part
- Ensure a strategic approach is taken to the management of the Council's finances, Council Tax, and budget setting
- Make effective use of reserves and capital receipts
- Manage our money carefully, monitor monthly and constantly strive for better value from our spending

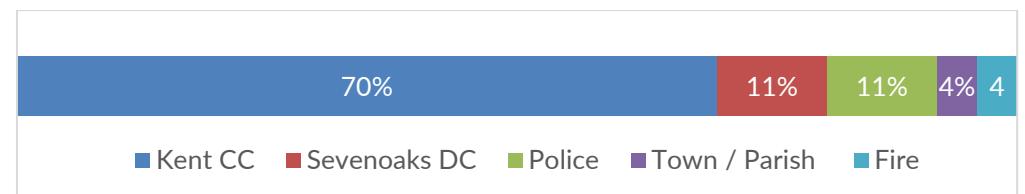
### WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM (also income from services is £12.6m)



### COUNCIL TAX




Sevenoaks District Council collects the Council Tax charge for itself but also for Kent County Council, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent Police & Crime Commissioner and all the local town and parish councils. Each authority sets its own charge that contributes to the total.




Sevenoaks District Council's part of the charge at Band D is £236.70, 11% of the total. Council Tax contributes about £12.2million to District Council services.



### WHERE OUR MONEY IS SPENT

In 2023/24 the Council will spend about £18.5million on services for local people

	Cleaner & Greener £5.8m
	Development & Conservation £1.0m
	Housing & Health £1.4m
	People & Places £0.8m

	Finance & Investment £3.3m
	Improvement & Innovation £6.4m
	Other £-0.2m

**OUR PRIORITIES** | By keeping a focus on our priorities we will deliver our vision

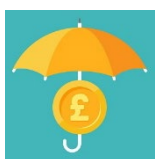
**Financial self-sufficiency**



No longer relying on direct government funding gives greater certainty to our financial planning. It allows for long-term plans to be developed over our 10-year budget period.

- We will produce high quality financial reports and monitor our budgets every month
- We will address growth items and service pressures annually through the budget planning process
- We will manage inflationary pressures and prudent assumptions about future pressures and keep them under regular review

**Savings & reserves**



Creating a culture where there is a continuous drive for better value in our spend helps to create savings to balance our budgets. Alongside flexible and effective use of reserves, it allows for sustainable solutions to financial pressures

- We will seek to deliver a minimum of £100,000 in savings annually
- We will regularly review the use of reserves and maintain a minimum balance of 10% of the Net Service Expenditure budget.
- We will make flexible use of the Budget Stabilisation Reserve to increase resilience in the budget setting process

**Income & investments**



Making best use of the Council's reserves and carefully managed borrowing. Seeking new opportunities for funding from grants and investments is increasingly essential to the Council's financial sustainability.

- We will bid for external funding
- We will adopt a commercial approach where it will be of benefit to our budgets and support the delivery of Council priorities
- We will make investments to bring in income to support the delivery of Council services

**Delivering our Financial Strategy**

Our Financial Strategy is supported by a number of related strategies and an action plan to help us achieve our vision and to deliver the ambitions set out by Members in the Council Plan.

How we work as a team of officers is critical to the success of the organisation and to help us achieve our aims, the Financial Strategy seeks to unite us all behind the same priorities and approach.

The outcomes we hope to achieve and the measures that will help us to determine whether we have been successful are set out below.



**Outcomes and success measures**

Financial self-sufficiency					
	Financial plans ensure there are no unplanned reductions to Council services		Overall proportion of Council budgets funded by income from council tax does not increase		A balanced 10-year budget is delivered annually
Savings & Reserves					
	Annual savings exceed the £100,000 target whilst continuing to protect services		The General Fund reserves retains at least 10% of the Net Service Expenditure budget		Specific savings agreed as part of the annual budget process are achieved as planned.
Income & Investments					
	Successful bids for external funding generate new income and opportunities for the Council		Income from paid for services is in accordance with budget costs, is comparable to neighbouring authorities and is considered to provide value for money		Treasury Management, Property and commercial investments exceed expected yield

## 2024/25 Budget Setting Timetable

### **Stage 1: Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2024/25 and Beyond**

5 September – Finance & Investment AC

19 September – Cabinet

### **Stage 2: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)**

31 October – Development & Conservation AC

2 November – Finance & Investment AC

7 November – Housing & Health AC

23 November – Cleaner & Greener AC

30 November – People & Places AC

5 December – Improvement & Innovation AC

### **Stage 3: Budget Update (incl. Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs), feedback from Advisory Committees)**

14 December – Cabinet

### **Stage 4: Budget Update**

18 January – Cabinet

### **Stage 5: Budget and Council Tax Setting Meeting (Recommendations to Council)**

8 February – Cabinet

### **Stage 5: Budget and Council Tax Setting Meeting (incl. Council Tax setting)**

20 February – Council

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

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## HOUSING STOCK AND WAITING TIMES IN THE DISTRICT UPDATE

Housing and Health Advisory Committee – 7 November 2023

**Report of:** Deput Chief Executive and Chief Officer People and Places

**Status:** For Noting

**Key Decision:** No

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** the Housing Strategy 2022-2027

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Cole

**Contact Officer:** Alison Simmons, Extension 7272

**Recommendation to Housing and Health Advisory Committee:**

To receive and note the report

**Reason for recommendation:**

To provide Members with the further information requested relating to the social housing stock (Social and Affordable Rented) in the District and waiting times for applicants registered with the Council for social housing.

### Introduction

1. This report provide an update on the social housing stock in the Sevenoaks District and waiting times for those applicants on the Council's Housing Register.
2. As a Local Housing Authority, Sevenoaks District Council has a statutory duty to publish a Housing Allocations Scheme for assessing and prioritising applications for social housing to determine who can join the housing register and the criteria to determine the priority banding of each application.
3. Sevenoaks District Council transferred its housing stock to West Kent Housing Association in 1989 and is no longer stock holding. Registered Providers such as West Kent Housing, Moat and Town and Country are the main providers who own, develop and manage social housing in the District (please see point 10 of this report for further information).
4. As a non-stockholding authority the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Scheme enables the Council and its partners to work together to ensure we prioritise those in most need of affordable housing.
5. The Council is part of Kent Homechoice, which is a Choice Based Letting Scheme for all housing association and council homes in Kent. Kent Homechoice gives applicants more choice about where they want to live, subject to meeting the local Housing Register Allocations Scheme, which sets out a framework that describes how to register, the assessment process and property allocation process.

# Agenda Item 8

## Housing Register

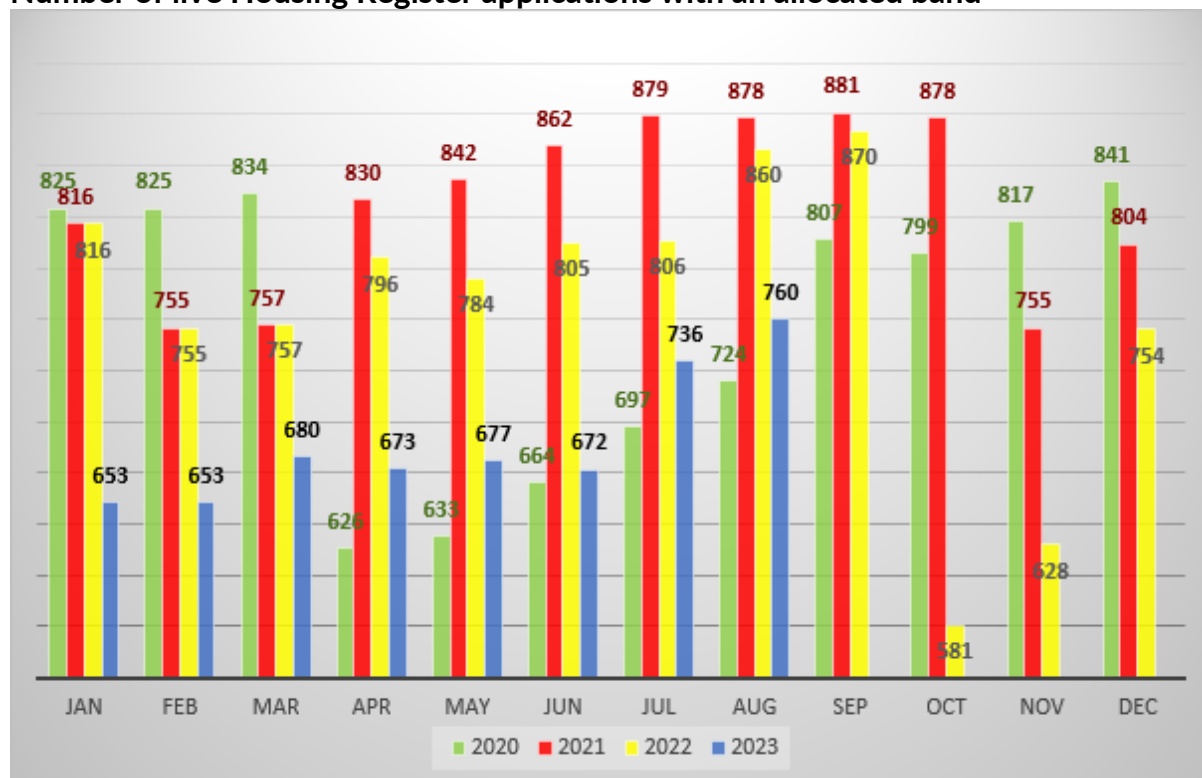
6. Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 requires Local Authorities to have a scheme (their 'allocation' scheme) for determining housing priorities and defining the procedure to be followed in allocating housing accommodation. As Sevenoaks District Council does not own any housing stock for social rent, the term allocation is defined as the nomination by the Council of a person to be a tenant of a Registered Provider commonly referred to as a Housing Association. The Council assesses all applications for social housing in accordance with the Housing Allocation Policy, adopted in July 2022. The Policy sets out:

- Who qualifies to be included on the register
- How to apply to get on the register
- How we determine an applicant's priority on the register
- How to bid for available properties
- How available properties are allocated
- How we keep the register up to date
- How applicants can seek a review of decisions made regarding the application assessment and allocation process

7. Councils are required to review their Housing Allocation Policy, usually every 4 years, to ensure it remains fit for purpose. With the implementation of the new Policy in November 2022 all applicants were re-assessed in accordance with the new Banding criteria, which is divided into 4 priority bands.

8. The table below details the number of live Housing Register applicants with an allocated band from January 2020 to August 2023:

**Number of live Housing Register applications with an allocated band**





9. Applications are assessed based on housing circumstances, suitability of their property and any long term medical problems, awarded a Band and the type of accommodation they are eligible to bid for.

The four priority bands are:

**Band A – Urgent Need to Move**

- Emergency medical conditions, welfare need or disability
- Statutory Overcrowding
- Release of Social Housing
- Imminent risk of serious harm, violence, or domestic abuse
- Demolition, Prohibition, Compulsory Purchase Order, or requirement to leave tied accommodation
- Homeless households who meet the additional qualifying criteria

**Band B – High priority to move**

- Homeless households meeting additional qualifying criteria
- Serious medical, welfare, or disability needs
- Young people
- Move on from supported housing

**Band C – Medium priority to move**

- Homeless applicants who do not meet additional qualifying criteria
- Overcrowding
- Medical, welfare or disability needs, including applications from care receivers/care givers
- Rough Sleepers

**Band D – Low priority to move**

- Non-priority and/or intentionally homeless households
- Rural exceptions housing and rural local needs housing
- Applicants aged 55 years and over
- Single “Local Essential Workers”

### **Social Housing Stock**

10. Social housing stock within the District totals approximately 6,500 homes. These are owned and managed by the following Registered Providers (formerly known as Housing Associations):

- West Kent Housing Association
- Moat Housing Group
- Places for People
- Orbit
- Hyde
- Town and Country Housing
- Anchor Hanover

11. West Kent Housing Association hold the largest share of the social housing in the District, owning and managing a total stock of just over 5,500 homes. The table below details the split of social housing across all Registered Providers who own and manage homes within









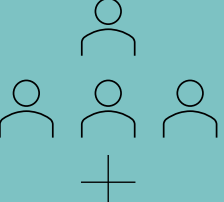



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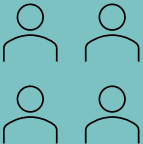

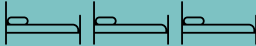
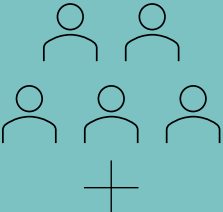


the District and provides a guide to the percentage of overall stock in terms of bedroom size:-

Registered Provider	General Needs (Social or Affordable Rent)	Sheltered (Social or Affordable Rent)
West Kent Housing Association	4,819	743
Moat	490	35
Total of Registered Providers with Limited Stock	470	45

12. The Council advertises and allocates social housing relets across the District through Kent HomeChoice. Applicants who are eligible to join the housing register can express a preference over the area and type of accommodation in which they would like to live.

13. The table below shows the average waiting times for social housing in the District according to the size of accommodation an applicant requires:

Household Composition	Size of accommodation eligible for	Average Waiting Time across the 4 Bands
 1 person	Sheltered accommodation 	10 months
 1 person	Bedsit/studio flat 1 bedroom flat, house, or bungalow 	15 months
 Single person with 1 child	Two bedroom flat, house, or bungalow 	19 months
 Single Person with 2 Children	Two or three bedroom flat, house, or bungalow (depending on the age/sex of children) Or 	19 months 26 months
 Single Person with 3 or more Children	Three or four bedroom house (depending on the age/sex of children) Or 	26 months 48 months
 Couple	One bedroom flat, house, or bungalow 	15 months

 2 adults or couple with verified need for separate bedrooms	Two bedroom flat, house, or bungalow		19 months
 Family with 1 child	Two bedroom flat, house, or bungalow		19 months
 Family with 2 children	Two or three bedroom flat, house, or bungalow (depending on the age/sex of children)	 Or 	19 months  26 months
 Family with 3 or more children	Three or four bedroom house (depending on the age/sex of children)	 Or 	26 months  48 onths

14. There are exceptions to this guide, depending on individual circumstances, which will be assessed by the Council.
15. There are no restrictions on the number of properties that applicants can bid for and can place bids on any property that meets their household's needs as and when they are advertised.
16. Please note bungalows will usually only be allocated to households where the applicant, or a member of their household has been assessed as needing single level living accommodation.

**Social Housing Relets**

17. The turnover of the social housing stock is dependent on the overall quantity of stock in the District and the number of vacancies arising. The reduced turnover in the existing social housing stock restricts our ability to help those on the Housing Register.
18. The table below shows the number of applicants on the Housing Register and the reduction in the number of social housing lets over a period of 10 years:

Year	Number on Housing Register	Number of Social Housing Vacancies
2013	2,018	275

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2014	557	372
2015	720	326
2016	634	268
2017	790	296
2018	735	325
2019	630	349
2020	634	241
2021	837	238
2022	757	211

### New Affordable Housing Delivery

19. The Council's Housing Strategy establishes our vision for housing in the Sevenoaks District to increase the number and range of affordable homes to meet the housing needs of our communities and the development of partnerships with registered providers, local landowners and private developers to enable the delivery of housing and maximise the delivery of new affordable housing.
20. The table below provides details of new build affordable housing delivery across the District by Registered Providers, including acquisitions by Quercus Housing during the last 5 years:-

Year	Number of Affordable Homes Delivered
2017-2018	49
2018-2019	71
2019-2020	206
2020-2021	22
2021-2022	16
2022-2023	26

21. The Council will continue to work to increase the number and range of affordable homes to meet the housing needs of our communities by:
- Ensuring that the emerging Local Plan contains policies that optimise the delivery of a range of affordable homes through the planning system
  - Review Council owned land for disposal and development of housing, including affordable housing
  - Continue the acquisition of homes for affordable housing through Quercus Housing
  - Continue to develop strategic development partnerships with Registered Providers

### **Other options Considered and/or rejected**

None.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

The temporary accommodation budget is adversely impacted all the while an applicant is staying in nightly paid temporary accommodation awaiting a permanent offer of social housing. Applicants residing in temporary accommodation provided by our Registered Provider partners is cost-neutral to the Council.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

To ensure the most effective churn of vacant social housing whilst also meeting our statutory obligations under the homelessness legislation, an applicant receives one offer only, as set out in the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Policy 2022-2027. Should a homeless applicant challenge the suitability of the social housing offered, their stay in temporary accommodation will be extended whilst the challenge is under review.

#### 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.

### **Conclusion**

The turnover of the social housing stock is dependent on the overall quantity of stock in the District and the number of vacancies arising. Waiting times are dependent on the number of vacancies arising and the number of applicants on the Housing Register who are eligible to bid for vacant properties.

The Council's Housing Service will continue to work with Registered Providers to ensure they are making the best use of the existing social housing stock and work with private sector landlords to provide suitable rehousing opportunities in the private rented stock, all contribute to easing pressure on the social housing stock and waiting times.

It is important that our Housing Register customers are kept informed of average wait times so that expectations are appropriately managed.

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### Appendices

### Background Papers

[Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Policy 2022-2027](#)

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People and Places

**HOUSING STRATEGY 2022 to 2027 – 1 YEAR ON**

**Housing and Health Advisory Committee - 7 November 2023**

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

**Status:** For Noting

**Key Decision:** No

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** the Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Perry Cole

**Contact Officer(s):** Alison Simmons, Extn 7272, Sharon Donald, Extn 7131

**Recommendation to Housing and Health Advisory Committee:**

To receive and note the report.

**Reason for recommendation:**

To raise awareness of the progress being made to deliver the priorities set out in the Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027.

**Introduction and Background**

- 1 Many people in Sevenoaks District benefit from good housing, and from being able to make choices about where they live that suit their working patterns and family life. Over recent years, housing in our area has become less and less affordable.
- 2 While the District has much to offer, the Council is not being complacent. COVID-19 has brought changes that affect how we all see our homes. It has driven a 'race for space', a desire for flexible home working spaces and a focus on the quality of our residential environments.
- 3 Strategic planning for the continued and effective provision of housing and related services in the Sevenoaks District is therefore a key priority. However, budgets are under pressure, with demand for our services on the increase. At the same time, we have to be realistic about the challenges that we face and prioritise the limited resources that we have. These and other factors, such as the growing and ageing population, are likely to increase the demand for services while simultaneously reducing resources. Nevertheless, the challenge and our intention remains to maximise the supply and quality of suitable homes across tenures, while supporting broader goals around health and wellbeing, tackling climate change and protecting the Green Belt

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- 4 The Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027 was adopted at Full Council in July 2022. The Strategy is a working document used by the Housing Service and other Council colleagues and external partners. The Strategy contains an action plan detailing how we will deliver our priorities. The Action Plan enables us to track our progress, report our successes, reflect on areas of concern and highlight the need for remedial action.
- 5 The updated year 1 Action Plan is attached at Appendix A.

### Successes

- 6 One year on from July 2022, we have made significant progress in addressing some of the key housing issues and have achieved the following successes:
  - 17 new affordable homes delivered for rent via Quercus Housing and 17 more homes in the pipeline.
  - New specialist accommodation secured by the Council in partnership with HfT – Stay Green House (mothers and babies) and West Kent Housing Association at Vine Court Road and Orchards Close (single homeless).
  - Secured capital funding of £2.8m towards the delivery of affordable housing as part of the Local Authority Housing Fund to support Ukrainian and Afghan households.
  - Designated Rural Area status conferred giving the Council the opportunity to secure additional affordable housing contributions.
  - 2 additional Registered Provider partners have come on board to deliver new affordable homes across the District, and this includes 14 homes at the former Egerton Nursery in Hextable.
  - Rural and Community led housing enabling service secured until April 2025 following the demise of the previous service provider.
  - Allocations Policy approved and implemented, giving much greater emphasis to assisting those with a strong local connection to the District.
  - Allocations Policy adopted by Council for Council owned Gypsy and Traveller sites.
  - Work underway to improve three pitches at the Council owned Gypsy and Traveller site in Hever Road, Edenbridge.
  - Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy approved.
  - Empty Homes Strategy approved and dedicated staff resource in place.
  - More than £1.6 million external funding secured to support home energy efficiency and net zero measures delivered via Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) 1 and 2. 14 homes have been improved as part of the HUG1 project with a target of a minimum of 60 homes to be improved by 2025 as part of HUG2.
  - During 2023, Private Sector Housing Officers responded to 48 Service Requests from customers on a range of housing standards in private rented properties. These included reports of damp and mould, overcrowding and lack of heating. Inspections are undertaken and customers are supported by officers to ensure action is taken to remediate any issues found.
  - Utilising the Better Care Fund, the Private Housing Team processed 250 housing assistance applications which have provided adaptations to support residents to live independently.
  - Changing Spaces social housing under occupation incentive scheme approved and officer appointed.



- Innovative use of funds to provide specialist fixed term posts within the housing department, eg Senior Private Sector Housing Officer – Housing Assistance, Empty Homes and Energy Efficiency.

### Concerns

- 7 The Council faces significant challenges as a consequence of key external factors, such as the lack of affordability, the small supply of affordable housing and the implications of inflation and the cost of living. The Housing Strategy can only be delivered in collaboration with partners, and we continue to nurture good partnerships to ensure that the priorities set out in the strategy are delivered.
- 8 Although the Strategy is only a year old, the financial landscape has radically changed during this time having a negative impact on delivery of the action plan. We have the following concerns:
  - Reduced levels of affordable housing secured through the S106 process – this is as a result of greater challenges to achieve viability of new developments owing to rising costs of raw materials, labour and private finance, alongside further pressures due to the requirement for Kent County Council (KCC) contributions to take precedence over the delivery of affordable housing.
  - Registered Provider partners are finding it challenging to deliver financially viable schemes of less than 50 affordable homes or are changing their business model, for example, Golding Homes is focusing its portfolio in Maidstone and is withdrawing from other areas including Sevenoaks District.
  - Reduced turnover in the existing social housing stock which restricts our ability to help those on the Housing Register.
  - Affordability in the private rented sector is particularly acute, with those on benefits limited because of the funding available for supporting housing costs. This is a factor in households being at risk of homelessness due to accommodation costs.
  - Lack of temporary accommodation in the District and the need for continued use of expensive, and far from ideal, nightly paid emergency accommodation.
  - The number of private sector landlords leaving the sector combined with Local Housing Allowance rates not reflecting private sector rental values which are continuing to increase.

### Other options Considered and/or rejected

None

### Key Implications

#### Financial

The financial impacts will be dependent on the remedial action taken to ensure delivery of the Action Plan or a review of the actions to be taken.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

None

## Agenda Item 9

### 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.

### **Conclusions**

Delivery of the Housing Strategy 1 year on, is progressing well with some notable successes, notably in terms of the delivery of affordable housing in the District though the 'massive small' ambitions of the Council's affordable housing company, Quercus Housing. The current financial climate remains challenging and where appropriate, remedial actions have been considered.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027 Year 1 Action Plan

### **Background Papers**

[Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027](#)

**Sarah Robson**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People and Places**



# Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy 2022-2027 Action Plan

## Year 1

**Key:**

- Year 1 = 7/2022 to 6/2023
- Year 2 = 7/2023 to 6/2024
- Year 3 = 7/2024 to 6/2025
- Year 4 = 7/2025 to 6/2026
- Year 5 = 7/2026 to 6/2027

**Theme 1: Developing the Sevenoaks District’s housing offer: building new affordable homes**

	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>How Measured</b>	<b>Achieved/Comments</b>
1.1	Ensure that the emerging Local Plan contains policies that optimise the delivery of a range of affordable homes through the planning system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure any additional S157 rural designations are implemented under existing Core Strategy policy SP3 and included in the new Local Plan</li> <li>Local Plan policies drafted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 – 12/2022</li> <li>Year 1 – 11/2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of designations approved by Cabinet and update made to AH SPD 2011</li> <li>Included in Regulation 18 consultation</li> <li>Local Plan adopted by Full Council (following examination)</li> </ul>	<p>Cabinet approved implementation of new Policy 2/2023.</p> <p>Informal Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation undertaken 11/2022 Second Regulation 18 consultation due 11/2023. Latest date for submission of Local Plan for examination is 8/2025.</p>
Page 74	Explore the scope for a managed increase in Quercus Housing’s (QH) delivery outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the QH Business Plan on an annual basis</li> <li>Seek Council approval to enable QH to undertake prudential borrowing via the Council to develop a long term pipeline of delivery projects</li> <li>Develop a Business Case for QH to apply for Registered Provider status with the Regulator for Social Housing and Homes England Investment Partner status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually</li> <li>Year 1</li> <li>Year 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised Business Plan adopted by QH Guarantor Board</li> <li>Council decision approves borrowing facility</li> <li>Appraisal report completed and presented to QH Guarantor Board for consideration</li> <li>If approved, applications submitted</li> </ul>	<p>Business Plan to Board on 1/2023.</p> <p>Up to £15m prudential borrowing approved by Council approved in the next 10 years. Secured funding of £2.8m from the Local Authority Housing Fund for 2022/23. Quercus Housing Guarantor Board 1/23 on reviewing risk assessment decided not to pursue RP or Homes England Investment Partner status at this time. Not applicable</p>

<p>1.3</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 75</p>	<p>Consider the full range of options for additional modest-scale housing activity – ‘massive small’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Council owned sites and disposals suitable for affordable housing</li> <li>Complete disposal of 2 sites to English Rural Housing Association (ERHA) for the development of local needs housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Year 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable housing delivered and acquired on Council led sites in the district by the Council and Quercus Housing</li> <li>Sites approved for disposal by Cabinet and, subject to planning and legal, sites disposed to ERHA</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2019, Quercus Housing has acquired 41 units for affordable housing 17 units were purchased from a Council led development at 27 29 High Street (Swanley) in 7/2023 The company is progressing the acquisition, subject to due diligence, of x1 unit in New Ash Green and x 8 units at Stangrove, the latter being a Council led development Quercus Housing is reviewing other Council led developments in the pipeline, subject to funding. Cabinet approved disposal of Sealcroft Cottages site but delayed due to neighbour encroachment Clarks Lane, Halstead disposal report to Finance and Investment Advisory Committee seeking permission to dispose 9/2023.</p>
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1.4	Consider a range of options to acquire and deliver affordable and specialist homes in in the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Business Case and financial/governance model for the Council to be set up as a Registered Provider and Homes England Investment Partner, to purchase, and where appropriate, undertake repairs, to provide specialist accommodation eg older persons'/disabled persons' housing, family sized homes and to deliver small S106 sites which, due to their size, are not of interest to other Registered Provider partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Case and financial model completed and submitted for consideration and approval</li> </ul>	A draft report has been submitted for review at officer level, however additional work is being undertaken to review the business model, notably in terms of how it would be core funded, as Homes England funding would only provide a small percentage of funding.
Page 76	Continue to develop relationships and encourage strategic development partnerships with Registered Providers (RPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility criteria established to facilitate working with additional RP's, including those seeking partnership status</li> <li>Bi-annual RP Forums held to share new ideas and best practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 and 2</li> <li>Year 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility criteria approved by Cabinet</li> <li>Additional RP partners secured</li> <li>RP Forums held</li> </ul>	<p>Cabinet approved criteria 9/2023. Town and County and Hyde have achieved partnership status.</p> <p>Forum held 1/23 Next Forum booked for 11/23 to tie in with Second Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation and draft Design Code.</p>
1.6	Continue to work with the Rural Housing Enabler (Rural Kent), Parish Councils and community groups to undertake a programme of local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assistance provided to facilitate delivery of new local needs housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 30 new local needs homes delivered during the Strategy period, subject to planning approval</li> </ul>	Permissions granted for Halstead and Chiddingstone, to deliver 18 new local needs homes during the Strategy period 1 further application for 10 homes in West

	housing needs surveys across the district and to facilitate the delivery of new rural exceptions housing where needs are identified				Kingsdown being assessed, issue of KCC education contributions impacting on viability Sealcroft Cottages and Clarks Lane, could deliver up to 4 new homes during Strategy period 32 homes in total RACE a new delivery vehicle for Rural Housing set up on 6/2023 following demise of ACRK.
1.7	Continue to work with the NHS and Kent County Council to understand the current and future housing needs of older people and other vulnerable groups that require housing with care, including a range of specialist housing types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a process to ensure previously adapted social housing (Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)) deemed fit for purpose, are allocated to those on the Housing Register who require adapted housing</li> <li>• Encourage specialist RP partners to work with the Council to deliver a range of new affordable housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 onwards</li> <li>• Year 1 onwards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process adopted</li> <li>• Increase in specialist RP partners delivering homes in the district</li> </ul>	Work underway with WKHA as part of their review of supported housing Emerald schemes A Changing Spaces Officer role has been recruited and will take forward this engaging with RP partners RP's Forum in 1/23 suggested referencing the Habinteg Standard for wheelchair housing within the template S106.
1.9	Seek to enable more housing, including affordable housing, through the diversification of provision, ie self and custom build housing, community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Housing Fund monies used to fund expert services at the Kent Community Housing Hub (KCHH) for a 2 year period, to facilitate their leading on community led housing and cohousing activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 to Year 3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service level agreement in place for 2 year period</li> </ul>	Community Housing Fund used to part fund RACE service.

	led housing, and cohousing schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with KCHH to draw up a project plan for an older persons' cohousing scheme, as per needs identified in a local housing needs survey</li> <li>• Continue to operate the Council's self-build register to monitor demand, and meet demand through the granting of planning permission for suitable plots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 and 2</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project plan drawn up</li> <li>• Annual monitoring of self-build plots</li> </ul>	<p>RACE to action Preliminary meeting 7/2023. Brief to be discussed at SMT.</p> <p>Continue to host a Self and Custom Build Register via Citizenspace consultation portal Granting period for Base Period 5 will close 10/2023, at which point an update to data on the granting of permissions to meet identified demand will be available.</p>
1.11	Consider adopting a local definition of affordability, based on local incomes and prices, to ensure no one in affordable housing pays more than 35% of their income towards housing costs unless the household voluntarily chooses to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include proposal in Local Plan Reg 18 consultation and, subject to support, include Local Plan and the AH SPD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing up to Year 3 – 12/2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy included in Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation Subject to support and outcome of examination, policy included in the Local Plan and AH SPD</li> </ul>	<p>Definition included in emerging Local Plan Regulation 18 informal consultation document in 11/2023.</p>
1.12	Ensure S106 affordable housing contributions are spent in a timely manner to provide more affordable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects identified and Chief Officer (People and Places) and Portfolio Holder approval sought within 12 months of receipt of the required level of S106 funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing enabled/homes delivered</li> </ul>	<p>Approximately £34,000 S106 funds remain uncommitted (9/2023).</p>



## Theme 2: Promoting quality and optimising range and suitability of new and existing homes

	Priority	Action	When	How Measured	Achieved/Comments
2.1	Engage with Registered Provider partners to encourage the inclusion of age appropriate homes within their development programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support RP partners by helping with site identification, planning process advice and funding of schemes</li> <li>Work with RP partners to deliver age appropriate housing, which conforms to Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) standards wherever practicable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age appropriate housing developments submitted for planning</li> <li>Age appropriate homes delivered</li> </ul>	Attempting to identify a new RP partner to take on permitted extra care scheme at The Dynes which is now under new ownership. Sealcroft Cottages and Clarks Lane approved for disposal, seek HAPPI standards on any new bungalows developed.
2.2	Include provisions in the emerging Local Plan to deliver accessible and wheelchair adapted housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies included in new Local Plan to ensure new homes meet the needs of older and disabled households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 – 12/2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies included in Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation and onwards</li> </ul>	Policy for wheelchair user housing (M43b) included in Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document scheduled for consultation 11/2023.
2.3	Consider the inclusion of a specific Older Persons' Housing Policy within the emerging Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reg 18 consultation version of Local Plan to include a specific Older Persons' Housing Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 – 12/2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Plan Reg 18 consultation undertaken</li> </ul>	Policy included in initial Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document and in the Second Regulation 18 consultation, scheduled for 11/2023.
2.4	Work with the NHS and Kent County Council (KCC) to understand the local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to update the needs data contained in the KCC Adult Social Care Accommodation Strategy -</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current and projected needs data agreed</li> </ul>	

	need for specialist/adapted/wheelchair standard/age appropriate housing and adopt Local Plan policies to secure its provision	District Profile May 2014, and for this to be reflected in emerging Local Plan policy			
2.5	Support older people to either stay living in their existing home or to find and move to a more suitable home, including co-housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Housing Register Allocation Scheme adopted, implemented, and publicised to older under-occupying social housing tenants</li> <li>• Implement Action 2.9 - Seek to introduce an enhanced rightsizing incentive scheme for social housing tenants</li> <li>• Implement Action 1.9 - Work with KCHH to draw up a Project Plan for an older persons' cohousing scheme, as per needs identified in a local housing needs survey</li> <li>• Implement Action 2.10 - Use Better Care Fund monies (BCF) to fund a dedicated hand-holding officer to deal with various challenges facing vulnerable residents and those facing fuel poverty, in the private sector, eg tackle poor housing conditions, promote energy efficiency/energy savings, and give guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 – 11/2002 onwards</li> <li>• Year 1 – 2/2023</li> <li>• Year 1 and 2</li> <li>• Year 1 – 4/2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity issued and ensuing Housing Register applications fast-tracked</li> <li>• Scheme approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• Project Plan drawn up</li> <li>• Officer funded through BCF in post</li> </ul>	<p>Changing Spaces Scheme approved, and officer appointed.</p> <p>Changing Spaces Scheme approved by Cabinet 12/2022.</p> <p>RACE to action Preliminary meeting 7/2023. Brief to be discussed at SMT.</p> <p>Guidance on downsizing opportunities will be driven by the Changing Spaces Officer (fixed term - DIYSO funded) and the Senior Private Sector Housing (PSH) Officer who will lead on housing assistance, energy efficiency (including fuel poverty) and empty homes.</p>

		on rightsizing opportunities			
2.6	Within the existing RP stock, seek to refurbish, extend, or repurpose existing dwellings to make better use of them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with WKHA and other RP partners to facilitate the best use of the existing stock, including the remodelling of social housing schemes that are no longer fit for purpose</li> <li>• Engage with Homes England to secure available grant funding to assist with remodelling</li> <li>• Review the methods used by RP partners to advertise vacant older persons' social housing and its condition at point of advertisement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning applications submitted for remodelling of stock</li> <li>• Grant secured</li> <li>• Methods reviewed and agreed changes implemented by RP partners</li> </ul>	<p>Engaging with WKHA regarding remodelling of Heath Close to deliver new shared ownership and affordable rented housing.</p> <p>Homes England have announced new funding for regeneration projects. Changing Spaces Officer to review.</p>
2.7	Where scheme viability permits, seek to showcase exemplar building standards in new homes built or acquired by the Council/Quercus Housing, in advance of Local Plan policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to all necessary approvals, take forward pilots to showcase all deliverable exemplar standards, eg HAPPI, <u>Passivhaus</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilots delivered</li> </ul>	
2.8	Review the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocation Scheme to support better matching of homes, including right-sizing, to needs to improve residents' lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocation Scheme 2022/2027 implemented</li> <li>• As part of the annual review of the Allocation Scheme, consider whether adopted policy (for prioritising housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 - 11/2022</li> <li>• Annually, each July</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme implemented and Housing Register refreshed in accordance with new Scheme</li> <li>• Scheme refined as required within permitted parameters</li> </ul>	<p>Allocations Scheme implemented 11/2022.</p> <p>Allocations Scheme to be reviewed with a report presented to Housing and Health</p>

		<p>need and the letting of homes) makes the best use of available social housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft bespoke Hever Road Traveller site Allocations Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 – 2/2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy approved by Full Council</li> </ul>	<p>Advisory Committee once completed.</p> <p>Policy approved by Cabinet 7/2023 and implemented.</p>
2.9	<p>Seek to introduce an enhanced rightsizing incentive scheme for social housing tenants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to agreement with partner RP's and approval of the use of S106 affordable housing commuted sum funding, a rightsizing incentive scheme (including an officer to coordinate the scheme), developed and submitted for approval</li> <li>• Subject to approval, promote scheme to those under-occupying, ensuring 100% of freed up homes are used to address the needs of the Housing Register</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 – 2/2023</li> <li>• From time officer in post</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• Promotional material in circulation</li> <li>• 100% nominations evidenced</li> </ul>	<p>Changing Spaces Scheme approved by Cabinet 12/2022 Changing Spaces Officer (fixed term - DIYSO funded) recruited to deliver the Scheme.</p> <p>Changing Spaces Officer recruited, and Scheme will go live from 11/2023.</p>
2.10	<p>Continue to maximise the use of BCF funding to provide adaptations for older people and people with disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use BCF to fund a dedicated hand-holding officer to deal with various challenges facing vulnerable residents and those facing fuel poverty, in the private sector, eg tackle poor housing conditions, promote energy efficiency/energy savings, hoarding and give guidance on rightsizing opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 – 4/2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer in post</li> </ul>	<p>Changing Spaces Scheme approved by Cabinet 12/2022 Changing Spaces Officer (fixed term - DIYSO funded) recruited Guidance on downsizing opportunities will be driven by the Changing Spaces Officer. Senior PSH Officer will lead on housing assistance, energy</p>

					efficiency (including fuel poverty) and empty homes.
2.11	Support owners of empty homes through the Council's membership of Kent No Use Empty, to create a downward trend in the number of long term empty homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of a dedicated Empty Homes Officer for a fixed term 2 year period</li> <li>• Development of a new Empty Homes Action Plan subject to the recruitment to the post</li> <li>• On a case by case basis, investigate the use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers or Management Orders, where necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1</li> <li>• Year 1</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empty Homes Officer in post</li> <li>• Empty Homes Action Plan approved</li> <li>• Case evidenced and CPO or Management Orders and funding approved by Cabinet</li> </ul>	<p>SMT 12/2022 approved creation of 22 month fixed term post of Senior Private Sector Housing Officer, with responsibility for empty homes and energy efficiency Officer in post from 8/2023.</p> <p>Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan approved by Cabinet 12/2022.</p> <p>Senior Private Sector Housing Officer will prioritise empty homes that are having a detrimental effect to the neighbourhood and consider enforcement options on a case by case basis.</p>

### Theme 3: Reducing homelessness and improving routes into permanent accommodation

	Priority	Action	When	How Measured	Achieved/Comments
3.1	Create a coalition of temporary and move-on accommodation landlords to provide sustainable, reliable, cost-effective temporary accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Kent Housing Group to ascertain emergency accommodation charges from private providers across the county and seek consistency</li> <li>• Review all emergency accommodation providers used by the Council and develop a preferred provider list</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 and 2</li> <li>• Year 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency of charging for temporary accommodation across Kent</li> <li>• List of preferred providers in place based on suitability/affordability</li> </ul>	<p>Temporary Accommodation Charging Schedule incorporated in the Annual Corporate review of Fees and Charges.</p> <p>Temporary Accommodation Review underway.</p>
3.2	Provide regular landlord forums to ensure relationships with local private landlords are strengthened and to maximise the potential for the placement of homeless households into long-term housing solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide regular Landlord Forum events for private sector landlords</li> <li>• Develop support pages for landlords on our website, to increase landlord engagement and to highlight any new incentives available</li> <li>• Investigate the provision of web alerts so that landlords are notified of updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-annually</li> <li>• Year 1 and ongoing</li> <li>• Year 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events held</li> <li>• Website updated and reviewed every 6 months</li> <li>• If feasible, web alerts implemented to subscribing landlords</li> </ul>	<p>Landlords Forum held in 6/2023 with the launch of the Sevenoaks Landlords Hub.</p> <p>Website under review following change in name of the landlords incentive offers to Sevenoaks Landlords Hub and launch of scheme.</p> <p>E-newsletter being developed to send to landlords bi-annually.</p>
3.3	Increase the engagement with Private Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Plan in place</li> </ul>	<p>Communications Plan under review following</p>

	through a Help to Let Plus service	<p>campaign to promote the scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host Landlord information events (in person and online) to promote the scheme</li> <li>• Develop and promote Case Studies of landlords signed up to the scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of landlords signed up to the Scheme</li> <li>• Number of properties available under the scheme</li> <li>• Number of tenancies sustained after 12 months</li> </ul>	<p>change in name of the landlords incentive offers to Sevenoaks Landlords Hub and launch of scheme. 10 new landlords have signed up to the scheme in the last 12 months.</p> <p>17 new properties available under the scheme in the past twelve months. 20 out of 27 tenancies sustained after 12 months.</p>
3.4	Identify and pursue the lease or purchase of suitable quality units of temporary accommodation in the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners and colleagues to develop business cases for the purchase or lease existing properties including empty properties or homes on new build schemes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased provision of temporary accommodation units within the District</li> </ul>	Stay Green House leased from HFT for 3 years to provide 6 units of move on accommodation for young mothers.
3.5	Optimise revenue available to create new services by monitoring funding opportunities and bidding for funding where this could fill gaps in service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review funding opportunities relating to the service area and customer needs, submitting bids as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding opportunities maximised</li> </ul>	DIYSO refunds approved to direct fund a fixed term Changing Spaces Officer.
3.6	Data technology updated to improve the early intervention and prevention of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with KCC as part of the Xantura One View pilot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of households where homelessness is prevented before 56 days</li> </ul>	83 households were prevented from becoming homeless between 7/2022 and 7/2023.

	homelessness and clearly demonstrate outcomes				Xantura Project on hold.
3.7	Through the Council's HERO team, make use of available funding to identify those likely to be affected by the rising cost of living, offering proactive advice and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation of Household Support Fund and other Government grants</li>   <li>• Host community roadshow events at community venues, including GP practices, to provide advice and signpost to help and support</li>   <li>• Ensure the Council's website is updated in light of new legislation/available funding, etc</li> <li>• Regular updates in In Shape magazine</li>   <li>• Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Citizens Advice to provide support and advice,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1</li>   <li>• Annually</li>   <li>• Bi-annually</li>   <li>• Bi-annually</li>   <li>• Bi-annually</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding stream launched and allocated</li>   <li>• Regular roadshows held in Swanley and Edenbridge</li> <li>• Housing and HERO data used to target resources to locations of known housing need in order to upstream homelessness</li> <li>• Regular liaison with all relevant stakeholders from across the District</li>   <li>• Website updated</li>   <li>• Updates given in 2 - In Shape editions per year</li>   <li>• SLA agreed</li> </ul>	<p>Energy Efficiency Project, awarded £6k, 1/2023 to 3/2023 assisted 24 households with a number of energy efficiency measures from the provision of radiator valves to door and window draught proofing. Drop in sessions held at 11 locations across the District. Dedicated single point of contact provided by HERO service for Care Leavers.</p> <p>Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Forum held quarterly with all stakeholders. Website updated.</p> <p>SLA reviewed and agreed.</p>



		including housing, benefits, and debt advice			
3.8	Enhance our joint working with our RPs and other partners, so that they support the Council to deliver additional units of temporary accommodation for homeless households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Action 1.5 - Bi-annual RP Forums held to share new ideas and best practice</li> <li>Additional units of temporary accommodation units for the Council's use provided by RPs from within their existing stock</li> <li>Delivery of Vine Court Road and Orchards Close in partnership with WKHA as part of the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP)</li> <li>Seek opportunities with new partners to provide interim accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi-annually</li> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Year 1</li> <li>Year 1</li> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RP Forums held and temporary accommodation needs highlighted</li> <li>Increased number of temporary accommodation units made available to the Council</li> <li>RSAP funding drawn down and homes delivered</li> <li>Accommodation occupied.</li> <li>Lease completed for 6 units of move-on accommodation at Stay Green House in Edenbridge.</li> <li>Number of units leased</li> </ul>	<p>Forum held 1/2023 Next Forum booked for 11/2023.</p> <p>Discussions underway with WKHA regarding additional the use of additional units. SLA being reviewed.</p> <p>Orchard Close and Vine Court Road agreements signed, and accommodation completed 9/2022. All units occupied.</p> <p>Stay Green House lease completed, and units occupied.</p> <p>20 units leased and occupied.</p>
3.9	Deliver and implement a new five year Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy in 2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption of a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023/2028</li> <li>Completion of Homelessness Review to support the Homelessness and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 and 2</li> <li>Year 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy adopted at Full Council</li> <li>Homelessness Review completed</li> </ul>	<p>Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy adopted by Full Council 2/2023.</p> <p>Review completed and considered by Cabinet 12/2022 and included</p>

		<p>Rough Sleeping Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launch of Multi-Agency Support Service for our most complex street homeless/vulnerable homeless</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Year 1</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of rough sleepers in the District identified at the mandatory annual count and additional Council led counts</li><li>• Number of rough sleepers and single homeless in settled accommodation</li></ul>	<p>in report to Full Council 02/2023.</p> <p>Annual Rough Sleepers Count completed in November 2022, when 1 rough sleeper was found. Commended by DLUHC for the completion of the annual rough sleepers count. 25 rough sleepers since identified through our services, of which 18 now in settled accommodation including Vine Court Road and Orchard Close. Vine Court Road and Orchard Close supported housing initiatives delivered in partnership with WKHA and DLUHC.</p>
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## Theme 4: Healthy people, homes and places

	Priority	Action	When	How Measured	Achieved/Comments
4.1	Improve the conditions of homes in the private sector, including those let by private landlords, with particular emphasis on those areas highlighted through Building Research Establishment (BRE) evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with landlords and the Landlords Forum to encourage take up of energy efficiency improvement works and retrofitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measures undertaken by landlords and take up analysed</li> </ul>	Results from thermal imaging camera lending scheme currently being reviewed and will form part of an action plan to promote energy efficiency within the private sector.
4.2	Increase awareness of council services and initiatives in relation to warm homes, energy efficiency and retrofit technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through targeted activity, ensure maximum uptake of <u>Home Upgrade Grant (HUG)</u> funding</li> <li>Implement Action 2.10 - Use BCF to fund a dedicated hand-holding officer to deal with various</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 - 4/2023</li> <li>Year 1 - 4/2023 and ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 95% of HUG funding taken up</li> <li>Officer in post and continuing, subject to funding</li> </ul>	<p>64% of HUG 1 funds taken up due to delays in receipt of funding and employment of officer</p> <p>14 homes had retrofit completed</p> <p>HUG 2 grant awarded to complete retrofit of 60 homes in period 4/2023 to 3/2025</p> <p>646 households to date have registered an interest in Solar Together and installation of measures is ongoing.</p> <p>Changing Spaces Scheme approved by Cabinet 12/2022</p> <p>Changing Spaces Officer (fixed term -</p>

		challenges facing vulnerable residents and those facing fuel poverty, in the private sector, eg tackle poor housing conditions, promote energy efficiency/energy savings, and give guidance on rightsizing opportunities			DIYSO funded) recruited. Guidance on downsizing opportunities will be driven by the Changing Spaces Officer. Senior PSH Officer will lead on housing assistance, energy efficiency (including fuel poverty) and empty homes.	
Page 90	4.3	Improve areas of high social and economic deprivation, including housing within the Council's ownership, and beyond, through an approach that improves the built environment and supports better education, employment, and housing outcomes for existing and future residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure provision is made for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to meet the needs of the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 – 12/2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant policies included in emerging Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation</li> </ul>	Site Allocation policies included in emerging Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document, scheduled for 11/2023, including Housing and Mixed Use, and Gypsy and Traveller site allocations to meet the identified need for the District over the Plan period up to 2040.
	4.4	Encourage developers to bring forward schemes that support our commitment for the council and its assets to be Net Zero by 2030, and our ambition for the district to be Net Zero by 2030. This includes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy formulated which assists in the reduction of carbon emissions and in achieving the Net Zero 2030 commitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 – 12/2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant policies included in emerging Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation</li> </ul>	Climate change continues to be a key theme within the emerging Local Plan and relevant planning policies are included in the upcoming Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document, scheduled

	supporting carbon-neutral and carbon-positive technologies in new homes, without diminishing the level of affordable homes provided				for consultation 11/2023. Net zero ambitions to be fed into co-housing project RACE to action Preliminary meeting 7/2023.
4.5	Introduce a new environmental sustainability standard for all our new developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new Quercus Housing, Quercus 7 and Council development to achieve high sustainability standards, wherever possible/viable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standard met and recorded in the Net Zero Action Plan report</li> </ul>	QH is currently developing a pipeline of potential acquisitions from Council led development (subject to viability), which have high sustainability embedded.
4.6	Collaborate with RPs to bring about the retrofitting of existing stock with zero carbon technologies, particularly with the least sustainable stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Action 1.5 – Bi-annual RP Forums held to share new ideas and best practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RP Forums held and retrofitting promoted and completed measures recorded in the Net Zero Action Plan report</li> </ul>	WKHA analysed data on stock and planning route to EPC Band C by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050, 1,804 out of 7,053 properties have an EPC below Band C and works have been identified improve the remaining. EPC works during last year include replacement windows, doors, boilers, over 250 homes fitted with air course hear pumps, remediation of defective cavity wall insulation, all voids have loft insulation

					checked and topped up if required. Next year, plans to run a small PV installation programme for homes with electric heating or no other way of improving the EPC banding to above a Band C. Moat will be continuing to implement retrofit measures. Have targets in place that underpin the retrofit works, including EPC ratings and net zero ambition.
Page 92	Reduce digital inequality and digital poverty by working with Registered Providers to improve opportunities for their residents to benefit from super-fast broadband	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a Digital inclusion project in partnership with Compaid and WKHA, providing devices, data, and training to homeless households.</li> <li>• Support the Health and Communities Manager and WKHA to work with KCC to scope a Community Wifi pilot project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1</li> <li>• Year 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of customer referrals to Compaid service</li> <li>• Project initiation completed in partnership with KCC</li> <li>• Project launched, subject to funding</li> </ul>	This externally funded project has ended but has helped over 110 customers to improve their digital literacy. We are looking for alternative funding options to continue the project. Unfortunately, due to the cost implications resulting for the feasibility work, KCC has confirmed it is unable to fund a Wifi project.
4.8	Support the Sevenoaks District Armed Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the needs of armed forces in the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy adopted</li> </ul>	Allocations Policy adopted 7/2022 and

	Covenant, ensuring veterans are able to access housing support and advice	<p>Allocations Scheme refresh.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single point of contact for housing advice for veterans leaving the Armed Forces</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nominated officer and elected member Armed Forces Champions</li> </ul>	<p>higher priority awarded to applicants from the armed forces Housing Advice Team Leader nominated as the Armed Forces Champion.</p>
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**ROUGH SLEEPER INITIATIVE UPDATE**

**Housing and Health Advisory Committee - 7 November 2023**

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

**Status:** For Noting

**Key Decision:** No

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023 to 2028

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Cole

**Contact Officer(s):** Alison Simmons, Extn 7272

**Recommendation to Housing and Health Advisory Committee:**

To receive and note the report.

**Reason for recommendation:**

To raise awareness of the progress being made to deliver the priorities set out in the Rough Sleeping Initiative.

**Introduction and Background**

- 1 As a Local Housing Authority, the Council has a duty to provide advice and assistance to homeless households and in certain circumstance, as a duty to secure suitable accommodation. These duties are set out in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness 2002 and 2017 Acts).
- 2 Single homelessness continues to see an increase due to welfare benefit changes, universal credit and the changes to the homelessness legislation setting out which people are classed as vulnerable, This increase has been recognised both nationally and across Kent.
- 3 The Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) is a grant programme provided by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to Local Authorities to provide local support for people living on the streets. The Government's objectives for RSI 5 are:
  - Prevention – activities to stop people sleeping rough for the first time
  - Intervention – Support for those currently sleeping rough to move off the streets
  - Recovery – Support for those who have slept rough to ensure they do not return to the streets

## Agenda Item 10

- Systems support – Systems and structures to embed change and monitor progress

- 4 The following areas have worked well in developing and establishing services and options to end rough sleeping in the Sevenoaks District:

### **Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy**

The Council completed the review of homeless services with partners and drafted the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy. Following consultation the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy was approved by Cabinet and full Council in February this year. The objectives of the Strategy are:

<b>PREVENTION</b>	Quality housing needs and standards - services dedicated to effective advice, holistic and informed assessment. Preventative casework - working alongside partners, to stop those seeking help from becoming homeless. Targeted preventions for the most vulnerable groups through the provision of agreed pathways into support. Strategic activities that seek to identify issues that drive homelessness across the District and apply remedies to reduce it.
<b>INTERVENTION</b>	Tackling rough sleeping - continue supporting the County wide approach to reducing harm and addressing associated multiple, complex needs. Partnership working - maximise the effectiveness of joint working and pathways for at risk groups. Temporary housing - provide a good quality, safe, secure, value for money accommodation portfolio and reduce the use of emergency placements.
<b>SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS</b>	Re-housing establish a range of sustainable housing and move-on options for rough sleepers, vulnerable and homeless households.  Support - deliver effective support services to help households maintain accommodation once housed.

The multi-agency Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Forum was launched as part of the consultation process for the review and drafting of the approved Strategy.

The Forum will continue to meet to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan.

### **Recruitment of Housing Pathway Coordinator**

The Housing Pathway Coordinator has developed the Council's partnership outreach rough sleeper service to create efficient pathways into housing for vulnerable people at risk of homelessness.

Following the completion of the homelessness assessment we have introduced the vulnerability assessments for customers to support with signposting to the appropriate services, these are booked in following the initial assessment so that the customer is not overwhelmed. This has proved successful in being able to obtain the information required to make informed decisions resulting in positive outcomes for the customer.

### **Introduction of the Housing and Community Hub and Drop Ins**

The Housing Pathway Coordinator has created a dedicated hub of local partners, integrating the prevention work of Council teams, voluntary and statutory agencies, to focus on upstreaming preventative activities and coordinate casework.

The Housing and Community Hub offers a one stop shop for customers to discuss any concerns they have with Council officers and local partners. The officers and partners provide advice and support to help customers resolve their issues and concerns they are experiencing in person.

The Housing and Community Hub is held monthly with a variety of local partners and organisations Citizens Advice, Porchlight, Kent County Council Young People's Services and the Council's HERO and Housing and Housing Benefit teams. The Hep C nurse attends to provide advice and tests and Dent Aid will be at the next Housing Hub. Dent Aid, a charity who provides dental care and oral health advice for people experiencing homelessness and other underserved communities.

Two drop in services have been set up in the District. A drop in service is run for customers who are homeless and require housing advice at the Swanley Link Library from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm every Tuesdays in collaboration with Porchlight. The service has been valuable to those who would like to see an officer in person locally as they are not able to travel to the offices in Sevenoaks due to financial and medical reasons.

### **Rough Sleeper Count**

The rough sleeper count completed with our partners was successful with the feedback we received from the independent verifier from Homeless Link. The verifier commended the Council's planning and execution of the count which was "evidenced in a flawless execution, creating a dedicated group of people working as a team willing to go the extra".

### **Relaunch of HERO**

The HERO service was relaunched to support Sevenoaks residents in the private rented sector and owner occupiers. The Service focuses on upstreaming preventative activities to assist residents before they hit crisis point and can provide support and advice when moving into accommodation.

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HERO provides personalised advice and support for:

- Saving money on fuel bills
- Support with households costs, including food
- Debt, rent or mortgage advice and support
- Welfare benefits
- Retraining and skills options, getting back to work
- Volunteering
- Referrals to community support services
- Referrals for Housing Advice

HERO officers work closely with the Housing Pathway Coordinator and draw up a HERO Action Plan with all residents that access the service and support them to work through the actions with them.

### **Provision of supported accommodation Orchard Close and Vine Court Road**

Completing the refurbishment of the West Kent Housing Association owned Vine Court Road and Orchard Close properties has provided supported accommodation for 11 customers with support services to be tenancy ready to enable them to access and sustain their accommodation with social and private landlords.

Support is commissioned through Look Ahead, who work with each person as an individual, supporting them to address their needs, take control and make forwards with their lives. This includes mental health, substance misuse or physical health needs, with many experiencing complex trauma and abuse, rough sleeping or relationship breakdown.

### **Partnerships**

Working with statutory and voluntary partners has been integral to mounting an effective local response to homelessness, and a wide range of dedicated partners have joined efforts to help prevent homelessness and provide support to vulnerable households.

- Commissioned services with Porchlight:
  - Assessment Resettlement Officer to support our homeless customers in emergency accommodation that have additional substance misuse needs. This officer is able to work very closely with these customers supporting them to engage with CGL, homeless service, housing register, GP, assisting with form filling, providing paperwork and referring to mental health teams as well as any other services identified.
  - Outreach worker who verifies rough sleepers, supports them into the office for face to face assessments, support them to access required paperwork, support them into extra services such as GP and mental health teams.

Porchlight's Team Leader is the Kent champion and trainer for the NRM for modern day slavery and human trafficking and the Council's point of contact.

- Partnered with Compaid offering digital online training gifting either a tablet or phone to enable our clients who are struggling to access the internet and navigate around benefits and house hunting.
- One You Kent Service Collaboration - once our homeless customers are settled into their move on accommodation, we are able to access the One You 'Healthy Lifestyles' service for tenancy settlement and any other health needs that are identified. One You are able to support with nutrition guidance, cooking classes and advice and support needed to take steps towards a healthier lifestyle.
- The Council struggled to commission a local service partner to deliver Social Prescribing support, notably due to voluntary and community sector services being oversubscribed from the ongoing pressures of the cost of living. We have therefore brought this service in-house. Our dedicated officer has established an ecosystem of connectors within primary care, voluntary and community groups and social and private landlords. The officer is able to provide a holistic, person-centred approach offering employment support, financial and digital inclusion, health and wellbeing and community support, including links to social and physical activities in the community.

5 The Council continue to face the following challenges:

### **Engagement with Customers**

Developing and improving the communication with customers to promote our services to those who need them and build trust within the communities of interest.

When trying to arrange to complete our holistic assessment with customers we have found that some have chosen not to engage with the Council and or Porchlight.

For the customers that we have been successfully working with we have found the following areas challenging:

- Lack of supported and affordable accommodation in the District to assist those with complex needs
- Customers have difficulties in registering with GP surgeries
- Very few opportunities to support customers back into work
- Customers have been unable to open Bank Accounts
- Increase in the number of Modern Day slavery cases and Domestic Abuse perpetrators applications

### **Emerging trend of hidden homeless**

Homelessness has been rising since 2018 as a result of welfare reform, the impact of COVID and the rising cost of living. Identifying the hidden homeless who cannot, or find it difficult to, access Council support when they most need it to prevent homelessness or rough sleeping. This may include people who find it physically difficult to attend the offices, those who do not know about our services or those who for other reasons feel they cannot access our services.

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### **Lack of Affordable Housing Options**

A lack of social housing and private rented affordable housing options within the District and accommodation for low income households. There is an overall affordable housing need for 423 homes per year, as set out in the Targeted Review of Local Housing Needs (TRLHN 2022). Between 2017-2021, the annual new delivery averaged at 87 homes having been impacted by the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

### **Customers with support/complex needs**

There is a high demand for supported housing for customers with complex support needs, and who require intensive support in order not to fail in accommodation and to sustain their accommodation.

There is a need for increased accommodation and support services in the District for people who sleep rough and or have complex needs.

### **Supported Housing within District**

The removal of the Kent Homeless Connect support contract by Kent County Council has significantly impacted on the provision of much needed supported accommodation and intensive support for rough sleepers with multi-complex needs and challenging customer base across the County.

In 2023-2024 Kent County Council have a further £50m savings to be made across their services which includes Social Care, Social Services and Mental Health Services which will have a further impact on the provision of much needed accommodation and support services for our customers.

### **Rising Cost of Living**

The rise in the cost of living has seen an increase in the number of approaches to the Council. The strong consumer demand for goods, rising energy prices and higher costs for businesses are reflected in higher prices within supermarkets, petrol stations and utility bills resulting in more customers reaching crisis point..

- 6 We have developed a 2023-2023 Ending Rough Sleeping Plan with a focus on the challenges detailed below:

- Engagement
- Gaps in local service pathways
- Lack of affordable private rented accommodation in the District
- High level of complex needs cases presenting and require intensive support whilst in emergency accommodation and when re-housed
- Support and deliver effective services to help customers maintain accommodation once housed
- Lack of supported accommodation within the District of Sevenoaks

### **Other options Considered and/or rejected**

None

## Key Implications

### Financial

All immediate activity summarised in the report and in the 2023-2025 Ending Rough Sleeping Plan are funded through the Government Rough Sleeper Initiative financial award to the Council.

### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

The Council has a number of statutory obligations in relation to homelessness as set out in the Housing Act 1996 and amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2002 and 2017 which extended existing and introduced new duties. The Council is required to produce and publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy in line with its obligations under the Homelessness Act 2002 and national Rough Sleeping Strategy (2018).

The interventions provided by RSI funding minimise or remove the risk of harm through providing timely, effective interventions to individuals who are, or at risk of, rough sleeping.

Funding under this initiative ensures there is not an additional strain on other Council resources, including but not limited to the core homelessness budget.

### 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.

## Conclusions

Delivery of the Rough Sleeper Initiative is progressing well with some notable successes, in terms of the delivery of services to single homeless households.

## Appendices

### Background Papers

[Policies, strategies and plans - Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023 to 2028 | Sevenoaks District Council](#)

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

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**Housing and Health Advisory Committee Work Plan 2023/24 (as at 20/10/23)**

**23 January 2024:**

- Sevenoaks District Health and Wellbeing Action Plan quarterly update
- Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Health and Care Partnership funding update

**June 2024**

- Review of Allocations Policy
- Housing standards in the private rented sector
- Sevenoaks District Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2024/25

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