

30 November 2023 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

Published: 22.11.23



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People & Places Advisory Committee

Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Bulford; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Dyball

Cllrs. Alger, Barnett, P. Darrington, Edwards-Winser, Granville, Gustard, Hogarth, Hudson, Manamperi and Cathy Morgan

Agenda

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

	Pages	Contact
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Committee held on 3 October 2023, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 8)	
2. Declarations of interest Any interest not already registered.		
3. Actions from Previous Meeting (if any)		
4. Update from Portfolio Holder		
5. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee (if any)		
6. Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)	(Pages 9 - 44)	Alan Mitchell Tel: 01732 227483
7. Public Spaces Protection Order Consultation results - The Vine, Sevenoaks	(Pages 45 - 88)	Kelly Webb Tel: 01732 227474
8. Public Spaces Protection Order - London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road	(Pages 89 - 118)	Kelly Webb Tel: 01732 227474

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|-----|--|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 9. | Citizens Advice Service Level agreement 2024-2027 | (Pages 119 - 134) | Kelly Webb
Tel: 01732 227474 |
| 10. | Voluntary Sector Barometer Survey | (Pages 135 - 158) | Kelly Webb
Tel: 01732 227474 |
| 11. | Interim Leisure Operator - Monitoring report | (Pages 159 - 186) | Sarah Robson
Tel: 01732 227129 |
| 12. | Work Plan | (Pages 187 - 188) | |

EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

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

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

PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2023 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Dyball (Vice Chairman in the Chair)

Cllrs. Alger, P. Darrington, Edwards-Winsor, Granville, Gustard, Hogarth and Hudson

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Bulford, Manamperi and Cathy Morgan

Cllrs. Bulford, Lindop and Manston were also present via virtual media platform, which does not constitute attendance as recognised by the Local Government Act 1972.

12. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the People & Places Advisory Committee held on 20 June 2023, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13. Declarations of interest

There were none.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman, with the Committee's agreement, brought forward consideration of agenda item 9 - Care Leavers Support.

14. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

15. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

16. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder updated the Committee on recent highlights within her Portfolio, and advised that since the last Advisory Committee there had been 20 family fun days and she was grateful to the team for the work put into organising these. The family fun days provided lots of different activities which over 2500

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People & Places Advisory Committee - 3 October 2023

families attended. The Committee was shown a short video from the Family Fun days.

She further advised that it had been a busy few months with the Community Mobilisation programme and promoting its Better Together Hub, which had helped get people back into work and training; supported resident and community groups to set up activities in their local areas and supported town and parish councils to establish a network of warm and safe spaces, as part of our Cost of Living support. In order to help community groups and organisations get access to grant funding, two funding events were scheduled to take place.

The support for Homes for Ukraine Scheme continued and many residents in the District had opened their homes to families seeking asylum. The Council continued to work with Kent County Council alongside the hosts and guests. A consultation went out to guests and hosts at the end of the month to ask their views on the scheme as well as feedback on the help required, from housing advice, access to support including digital skills, English as a Second Language (ESOL), training and skills. Two evening event will be held to provide advice on housing, mental health and wellbeing and employment on Monday 16 October in Sevenoaks and Thursday 2 November in Swanley.

Silver Sunday will run from 1 October until December and our booklet has been sent to all Councillors encouraging Members to attend some of the events, as there was a wide range of activities from tea dances to walking groups on offer. The Supported Intern Scheme with Broomhill Bank was going from strength to strength with three new interns joining the Council in September

The new Kent Police Neighbourhood Policing model went live on 7 June. The main changes included an increase in Police Constables and Beat Officers, who will not only have more on-street visibility, but powers of arrest and enforcement. It was hoped by next summer the full quota of 12 Beat Officers and neighbourhood task team would be in post.

Working with neighbouring councils Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling, alongside Kent Police, the first partners meeting was held to discuss Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) in Public Spaces. An action plan had been devised and the group would be meeting again in November. The Council were also working on the 16 days of action against violence against women and girls, which would start in November and a conference was being organised in support of this. Invitations would be sent out in due course.

In closing, the Committee was advised that there was a round table discussion on shoplifting across the District on 9 October with Police, PCC and its host Laura Trott MP.

17. Care Leavers Support

The Chief Officer, People and Places presented the report which set out the statutory corporate parenting responsibilities and funding arrangements for care leavers under Kent County Council (KCC) whilst outlining the support provided through Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) to its customers, including care leavers. It also broke down the number of care leavers in Kent, by district.

The report also detailed the other organisations who had signed up to the Care Leavers Covenant. She noted that only councils with the statutory duty as corporate parent had signed up to the Care Leavers Covenant. Nationally, no lower tier Borough and District Councils had signed up.

She advised that following KCC's Cabinet meeting on 12 September, the KCC Cabinet had agreed to end supported accommodation on a care leavers 19th birthday. At present this support had been until they were 21 years old or 25 years in some circumstances. The removal of this support service was due to budget efficiencies. This change could have a significant impact on SDC in that the care leavers could be served with an eviction notice and would likely present to local housing authorities, which would not only impact staffing resources, but also homelessness budgets.

Members discussed the report and some concerns were expressed that KCC were reducing their support to 19 year olds and the risks, including officer and financial resources that this could have on SDC. Members noted that SDC was in a good position with support that it offered but questioned how the Council would be affected by signing the covenant and whether it was possible to sign the covenant without committing to all the requirements associated with it.

In response to questions Members were advised that care leavers should have a personal adviser provided by KCC to support them and KCC received funding from central government to enable their care leaver offer under their statutory obligations. SDC did not receive any funding to offer bespoke care leaver support. She advised that signing up to the Covenant, the Council would need to demonstrate that it is able to meet the Covenant's pledges. This would take away vital staff resources from helping customers directly.

Members were advised that a key concern and risk is SDC are the only District Council signatory in Kent, such a commitment could present a significant resource burden on SDC, with care leavers from across Kent being signposted into the Sevenoaks District. This would likely reduce and detract from the meaningful support we currently have in place for care leavers. This risk is heightened in light of KCC's significant budget pressures and efficiency proposals, which includes services being reduced or removed.

The Chief Officer, People & Places advised that in the previous month 156 customer enquiries had been made to the HERO team, many with complex issues, including health, employment, benefit advice and debt advice and these customers would be impacted if resources were taken away for paperwork. SDC's Housing, Energy, Retraining Officers (HERO) Team were a single point of contact for any care leavers who were in the district.

In response to further questions Members were advised that it was KCC's responsibility as the corporate parent to assist care leavers into training and employment. Sevenoaks District Council provides details of all its current vacancies to KCC and were looking at developing a recruitment policy to ensure that care leavers and veterans are provided with an opportunity for interview, should they meet the criteria.

In summing up the Chairman advised that the report was thorough and detailed and discussion had raised comments on signing up and the additional workload it could put on SDC resources. Details had been provided regarding the level of support that already existed for care leavers across the district and the work that SDC undertook to support the care leavers with wrap around support.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) The statutory corporate responsibility and associated Government funding assigned to KCC to support care leavers, be noted;
- b) To date, the Care Leavers Covenant had been signed up to by councils with a statutory responsibility and associated funding for children's services and care leavers, be noted;
- c) That the support provided by SDC to its customers, including care leavers, through existing service provision and resources, be acknowledged;
- d) That the Council should not become a formal signatory of the Care Leavers Covenant, noting there were risks and resource implications (staffing and budget) to the Council in meeting the Charter's five pledges; and the report, be noted.

18. Community Plan Update

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which set out the work of the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) Community Plan from April 2022 to March 2023. She advised that the plan set out a vision that reflected what local people had told the Council was important to them in the District. The vision was over a period of 10 years (2022- 2032) and was supported by a three-year plan which detailed the priorities for action. The current three year plan would end in March 2023.

The document was partnership based and the LSP group met on a quarterly basis with local businesses, community organisations and statutory organisations who

delivered part of the plan. This year there were four new initiatives the put forward for “our place, our economy, our business and out community.” There were 25 actions in the plan with a target of 85% for green indicators. At the end of the first year 93% had been achieved. The missed targets due to data from third parties not being forthcoming, but since then conversations have taken place at data regarding the number of young people not in education or employment should now be coming through. One target was missed, as Kent County Council did not roll out the Community Wi-Fi in St. Mary’s ward in Swanley due to the cost implications. This has been changed on the plan going forward. Overall the results were positive and the partners had continued to deliver across the District.

Members discussed the report, noting that broadband issues had been ongoing with KCC for a number of years, and highlighting the opportunity for Community broadband as set up in Underriver. It was also noted that the report highlighted a number of positives.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the report be considered and noted.

19. Community Grant Scheme 2022/23 Update

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which set out the monitoring information about the Community Grants delivered in 2022/23. In total 18 Community grants were awarded totalling £49,800, and the full list of projects, services and activities funded were detailed in Appendix A to the report.

Members were advised that each grant was awarded with a set of conditions, within these conditions there were requirements to provide key performance indicators, description of any changes made when delivering the project, service or activity and any lessons learnt. Members were informed that on occasions it was necessary for a project to be amended due to reasons outside any Organisations control and this had been built on following the experience of delivering schemes through Covid, where an adjustable approach was undertaken.

The Committee was advised that as part of the change for Community Grants for 2024/25, social value engine which would assist with monitoring tangible costs and quantifying the wider social, economic and environmental outcomes. Members’ attention was brought to the case studies which highlighted the benefits of the Community Grants.

In response to questions Members were advised that if a bid was unsuccessful then feedback was provided where the scheme may have fallen down and suggestions for where other funding may be sought from. The form was available online, but a paper copy could be filled in. Members were advised that Parish and Town Councils could sign up for funding emails from the Council and updates could also be provided as part of the Clerks forum. The scheme was once again open for applications.

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Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the report be noted.

20. Community Mobilisation Programme

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report and presented which provided an update on the community mobilisation work that had been carried out across the District, and highlighted a number of successful projects and case studies. Members were advised that the main aims for the project was to help the community to help themselves, the Council having an online community platform, gain more volunteers, help the community to deliver local projects and to help the community to get connected.

Better together built on the ‘hands on’ projects that had been created during the pandemic in neighbourhoods and was helping to provide practical support, skill development, online directory, community toolkit and more and this was all detailed on the new website, www.bettertogethercommunity.org.uk As part of the continued work, Community Mobilisation grants was launched in March 2023 until the end of 2025, as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) which would support individual and new/existing community groups. Currently Round 1 of the 2023-24 funding had finished with 7 projects being funded and Round 2 of the funding due to open in January 2024.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the update of the Community Mobilisation work be noted.

21. Work Plan

Members were advised that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural Prosperity Fund updates, and Economic Development Strategy would be considered by Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee and the changes to the work plan were noted:

30 November 2023

Interim Leisure Operator - Monitoring report

Public Spaces Protection Order Consultation results

Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

Voluntary Sector Barometer Survey

5 March 2024

Community Grants 2024/25

Citizens Advice Service Level agreement 2024-2027

Sevenoaks District Community Safety Action Plan

Broomhill Bank School Internship Update.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.40 PM

CHAIRMAN

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

People and Places Advisory Committee – 30 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
- Housing and Health Advisory Committee – 7 November 2023
- Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee – 23 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.

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

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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.

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- 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

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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

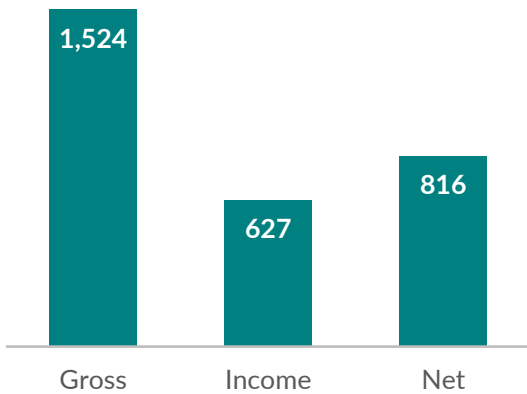
Service Dashboard

Portfolio for People & Places

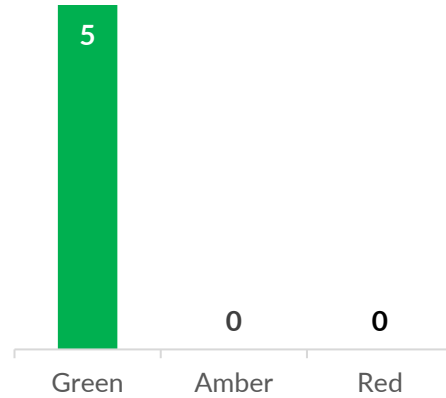
The services we provide

Community Plan, community safety, town centres, tourism, West Kent Partnership, community grants, safeguarding, youth, parishes, leisure activities, 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

- Proactive Community Safety, 92% of the action plan delivered or on target.
- Community grants of £153k awarded to local groups across our District.
- Better Together community mobilisation website launched.
- 689 residents (working age and pensioners) received financial support for utility costs as part of the Household Support Fund.
- New White Oak Leisure Centre outperforming performance targets.
- Successful funding bid to the Swimming Pool Support Fund to support our leisure centres with rising utility costs.
- West Kent Partnership secured funding from the Rural Prosperity Fund to provide business support in the District.


Challenges & Risks


- Reduction in Government funding to support communities.
- Delivering the priorities and actions identified in the Economic Development Strategy, Community Plan & Community Safety Action Plan.
- Ageing leisure centre assets in Sevenoaks and Edenbridge.
- Increased demand on Council and voluntary sector services to support vulnerable customers and cost of living pressures.
- Funding for our Community Mobilisation programme ends in mid-2024.
- Increased demand on the Council and local services to support refugees and the Homes for Ukraine scheme.


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Performance Report – People & Places Advisory Committee


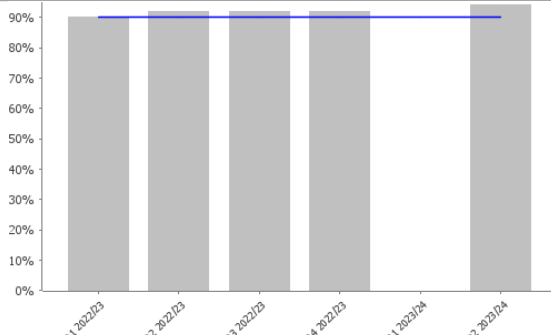

Key:

 Green – Performance is at or above target

 Amber – Performance is less than 10% below target


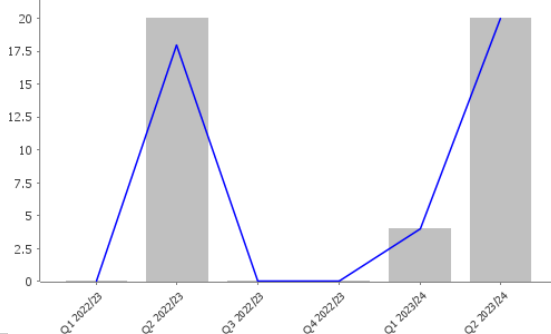

 Red – Performance is 10% or more below target

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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_CD 01	Percentage of actions in the Sustainable Community Action Plan achieved	94%	90%		 <table border="1"> <caption>Performance Chart Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Value (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1 2022/23</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2022/23</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3 2022/23</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2022/23</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2023/24</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2023/24</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Value (%)	Q1 2022/23	94%	Q2 2022/23	94%	Q3 2022/23	94%	Q4 2022/23	94%	Q1 2023/24	94%	Q2 2023/24	94%	94%	90%	
Quarter	Value (%)																					
Q1 2022/23	94%																					
Q2 2022/23	94%																					
Q3 2022/23	94%																					
Q4 2022/23	94%																					
Q1 2023/24	94%																					
Q2 2023/24	94%																					

Agenda Item 6

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 02	Percentage of performance of organisations awarded grants on target (over £500)	95%	80%	✔		95%	80%	✔
LPI_CD CS 01	Percentage of Community Safety Partnership actions achieved	92%	90%	✔		92%	90%	✔
LPI_CD CS 02	Percentage of responses to reports of Anti Social Behaviour within 25 working days	100%	100%	✔		100%	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 CS 03	Number of Family Fun Days delivered throughout the District	20	20			24	24	

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People and Places 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)
Revenue			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
People & Places	AWP	All Weather Pitch	0	(5)	(5)	(5)	0	0
People & Places	COMMDEV	Communities	132	0	132	132	0	7
People & Places	COMMDEVSERV	Communities	0	(6)	(6)	(6)	0	0
People & Places	COMPLAN	The Community Plan	39	0	39	39	0	0
People & Places	GRANTSORGS	Grants to Organisations	201	0	201	201	0	0
People & Places	LEISCON	Leisure Contract	731	(401)	330	295	(35)	0
People & Places	LEISCONINT	Leisure Contract - Interim	0	0	0	1,338	1,338	0
People & Places	LEISDEV	Leisure Development	15	0	15	15	0	0
People & Places	POLICECRCOM	Police & Crime Commissioners (PCCs)	36	(36)	0	0	0	0
People & Places	STAFFCOM	Admin Expenses - People & Places Commu	19	0	19	19	0	0
People & Places	YOUTH	Youth	57	0	57	57	0	0
Strategic Head Commercial and Property	TOURISM	Tourism	55	(20)	35	35	0	0
Strategic Head Commercial and Property	XWKEAN	West Kent Enterprise Advisor Network	99	(99)	0	0	0	0
Strategic Head Commercial and Property	XWKLSP	West Kent Partnership	59	(59)	0	0	0	0
			1,443	(627)	816	2,119	1,303	
*Whole service = 10, Major part = 7, Minor part = 2, None = 0 (Includes support services)								

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Year	SCIA No.	Description	2011/12 - 2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	Later Years £000	Total £000
		Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee				
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)		
		Development and Conservation Advisory Committee				
2022/23	9	Development Management: additional application fee income (reversal of temporary savings item)	(25)	25		
		Finance and Investment Advisory Committee				
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)	
		Housing and Health Advisory Committee				
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)		
		Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee				
2023/24	1	Apprenticeship Levy (reversal of temporary growth item)	55	(55)		
		People and Places Advisory Committee				
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			
		Total Savings/additional income	(8,192)	27	0	(8,165)
		Total Growth	3,704	(1,031)	(455)	2,218
		Net Savings	(4,488)	(1,004)	(455)	(5,947)

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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
Expenditure											
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
New growth	0	2,988	(2,376)	(150)	0	0	0	100	100	100	100
New savings/Income	0	(200)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Net Service Expenditure b/f	18,533	21,712	19,548	19,649	20,189	20,689	21,191	21,879	22,392	23,117	23,782
Financing Sources											
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
Total Financing	(18,538)	(20,991)	(17,491)	(17,725)	(18,137)	(18,663)	(19,244)	(19,801)	(20,371)	(20,984)	(21,552)
Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit	(5)	721	2,057	1,924	2,052	2,026	1,947	2,078	2,021	2,133	2,230
Contribution to/(from) Stabilisation Reserve	5	114	(371)	(370)	(580)	(636)	(638)	(751)	(674)	(765)	(841)
Unfunded Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit	0	835	1,686	1,554	1,472	1,390	1,309	1,327	1,347	1,368	1,389
Cumulative Unfunded Budget Gap (surplus)/deficit											13,677

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
Growth: Additional Expenditure or Reduced Income				
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.
Growth Total	2,428	18,267	1,827	
Savings: Reduced Expenditure or Additional Income				
	£000	£000	£000	
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.
Savings Total	- 1,593	- 4,590	- 459	
NET TOTAL	835	13,677	1,368	

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New Savings/Additional Income Items Agreed by Managers: People & Places Advisory Committee

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

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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)
24/25	5	Utilise internal resource rather than external consultants to monitor community plan	24/25	Y	(2)	(20)	(2)
Total					(6)	(60)	(6)

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New Growth and Savings/Additional Income Proposals: People & Places Advisory Committee

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SCIA Year	No. Growth	Description	Year	Ongoing	2024/25 Impact £000	10-year Budget Total Impact	10-year Budget Per Annum Impact £000
Sub Total					0	0	0
Savings/Additional Income							
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)
Net (Savings)/Growth Total					(11)	(110)	(11)

Agenda Item 6

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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 CDGRNT S	(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)

SERVICE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Medium

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

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.

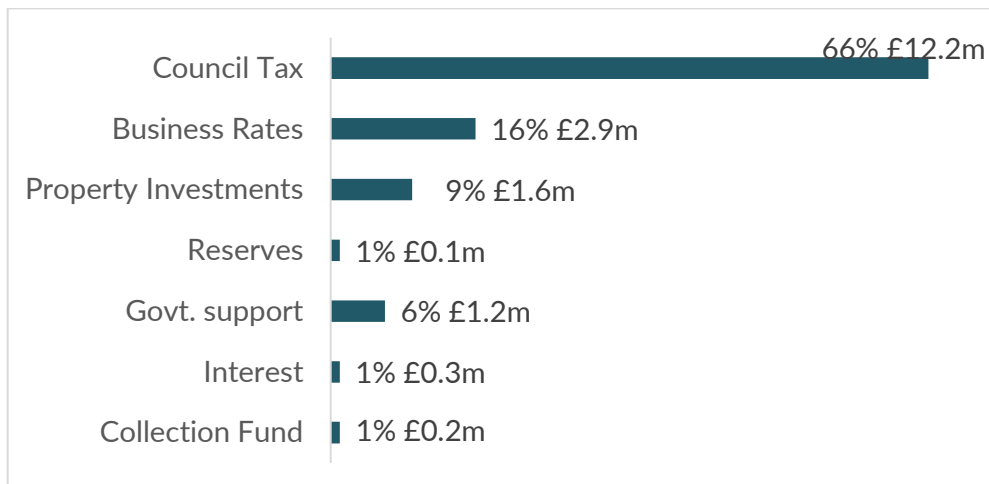
What's important to us:

- 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

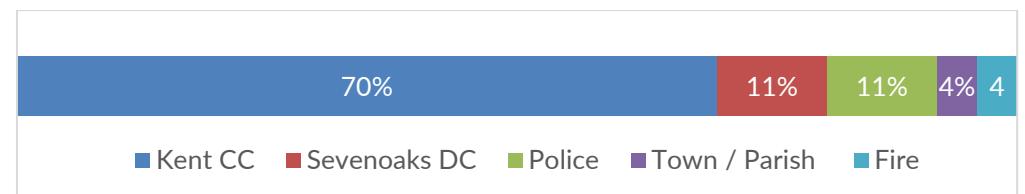
WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM (also income from services is £12.6m)



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

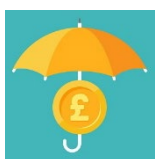
Financial self-sufficiency



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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**PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER – THE VINE, SEVENOAKS
PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 30 NOVEMBER 2023**

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

Status: For Approval

Also considered by: Cabinet – 14 December 2023

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: On 13 July 2023, Cabinet agreed to consult the public on a proposal to introduce a new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). The creation of bespoke PSPOs provides officers and partners (Kent Police) with an additional tool on top of existing powers and legislation to tackle specific issues of antisocial behaviour. The consultation responses show there is public support for all measures, whilst providing an insight into the views of the public as well as Government's recommended position when implementing PSPOs. This report summarises the results of the statutory public consultation and seeks approval for the introduction of the PSPO measures and Order.

This report supports the Key Aim of: The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Plan and Community Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Lesley Dyball

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

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

- a) To note the contents of the report and the outcome of the statutory 6-week public consultation.
- b) To support the recommendation to Cabinet for the implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and its two measures at The Vine, Sevenoaks and surrounding grass areas for a period of up to 3 years.

Recommendation to Cabinet

- c) To note the contents of the report and the outcome of the statutory 6-week public consultation.
- d) To approve the implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and its two measures to address ASB at The Vine, Sevenoaks and surrounding grass areas for a period of up to 3 years, with effect from 5 February 2024.

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Introduction and Background

1. Officers from agencies including Sevenoaks District Council, Sevenoaks Town Council, Kent Police, Kenward Trust, West Kent Housing Youth Services have used data, evidence and professional judgement to develop this proposed PSPO and have considered all issues/areas against the stated test process. Over many years there has been reoccurring Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Underage Drinking, Drug Use and Criminal Damage at the Vine, usually occurring from April to June. However, this year has seen ASB, criminal damage, underage drinking (alcohol) and drug misuse. Following the fireworks evening at The Vine a number of pupils from local and out of area schools have been arranging meet ups at the Vine. These meet ups have been mainly on a Friday evening and has consisted on some evenings up to 200 young people congregating on The Vine.
2. From 5 November 2022 to 6 May this year, there were 31 reports to Police regarding The Vine and a further 11 reports to the Community Safety Unit. Although this may not seem a lot of reports, each report has recorded over 50-100 gathering on the Vine, reports have been fighting, underage drinking, intimidation, drug use, criminal damage, rubbish including smashed glass in the grass and public disorder.
3. A Task & Finish Group was set up and continues to meet up to look at the actions around the Vine. A neighbourhood survey was sent out to local residents in March 2023. 12 surveys were returned identifying the following concerns:-
 - ASB – large gatherings of young people
 - Drug Use
 - Damage to the Pavilion
 - Underage Drinking
 - Intimidation and feeling unsafe
 - Injuries to dog paws due to smashed glass
 - Adverse effect on residents, businesses and visitors
4. Sevenoaks Town Council raised this at their two youth council meetings who agreed that the PSPO should be put in place.
5. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 placed a new duty on the Council to tackle Anti-social Behaviour (ASB), working co-operatively with the Police, social landlords and other agencies. The Act put victims at the heart of the response to ASB and was intended to give professionals the flexibility they needed to deal with any given situation.
6. Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) were one of a number of new tools contained within the Act and were intended to deal with a particular nuisance

or problem in a particular area that was detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. They were designed to ensure the law-abiding majority could use and enjoy public spaces, safe from anti-social behaviour.

7. Councils are responsible for making the PSPO, although the Police also have enforcement powers. District Councils take the lead in England with county councils undertaking the role only where there is no district council. The power is not available to parish councils or town councils.
8. The PSPOs have replaced dog control orders, designated public place orders (also known as Alcohol Control Zones) and gating orders.

The requirements of a PSPO

9. The Council can make a PSPO on any public space in its own boundary area. The definition of a public space is wide and includes any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission, for example a shopping centre. It does not just apply to land owned by the District Council but to any open space anywhere in the district (even land owned by parish councils or Kent County Council).
10. Before making a PSPO the Council must consult with the local police. This is an opportunity for the Police and Council to share information about the area and the problems being caused as well as to discuss the practicalities of enforcement. In addition, the owner or occupier of the land should be consulted as well as community representatives as appropriate.
11. PSPOs are not about stopping responsible people from using publicly accessible land and this PSPO is not to exclude young people attending The Vine, but to provide Local Authorities and other Local Government departments with the means to help deal with persistent issues, which can be damaging to local communities.
12. In addition to the specific statutory consultation requirements, the Council has to adhere to the publication requirements which form part of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Publication of Public Spaces Protection Orders) Regulations 2014 ("The regulations"). These specify both advertising requirements and the need for notification to be placed on land affected.
13. The test for a PSPO is designed to be broad and focus on the impact anti-social behaviour is having on victims and communities. A PSPO can be made by the Council if they are satisfied on reasonable grounds that the activities carried out, or likely to be carried out, in a public space:

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- have had, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality;
- is, or is likely to be, persistent or continuing in nature;
- is, or is likely to be unreasonable; and
- justifies the restrictions imposed.

14. The Statutory Guidance for frontline professionals on the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 advises that

'the council should give due regard to issues of proportionality: is the restriction proposed proportionate to the specific harm or nuisance that is being caused? Councils should ensure that the restrictions being introduced are reasonable and will prevent or reduce the detrimental effect continuing, occurring or recurring. In addition, councils should ensure that the Order is appropriately worded so that it targets the specific behaviour or activity that is causing nuisance or harm and thereby having a detrimental impact on others' quality of life. Councils should also consider whether restrictions are required all year round or whether seasonal or time limited restrictions would meet the purpose.'

15. In relation to groups hanging around/ standing in groups/ playing games, the guidance advises as follows

'It is important that councils do not inadvertently restrict everyday sociability in public spaces. The Public Spaces Protection Order should target specifically the problem behaviour that is having a detrimental effect on the community's quality of life, rather than everyday sociability, such as standing in groups which is not in itself a problem behaviour.'

Where young people are concerned, councils should think carefully about restricting activities that they are most likely to engage in. Restrictions that are too broad or general in nature may force the young people into out-of-the-way spaces and put them at risk. In such circumstances, councils should consider whether there are alternative spaces that they can use.

People living in temporary accommodation may not be able to stay in their accommodation during the day and so may find themselves spending extended times in public spaces or seeking shelter in bad weather. It is important that public spaces are available for the use and enjoyment of a broad spectrum of the public, and that people of all ages are free to gather, talk and play games.'

16. A single PSPO can include multiple restrictions and requirements in one order. It can prohibit certain activities, such as the drinking of alcohol, as well as placing requirements on individuals carrying out certain activities, for instance making sure that people walking their dogs keep them on a lead.

17. Should the PSPO be implemented, the Council will work with the Police to ensure that front-line officers are aware of the power and how to use it, to maximise the impact of the PSPO.
18. A breach of the PSPO is a criminal offence, which can be dealt with, either by way of a fixed penalty notice (FPN) or prosecution. If prosecuted, an individual could be liable for a fine.
19. The maximum duration of a PSPO is three years but they can last for shorter periods where appropriate. At any point before expiry the council can extend a PSPO by up to three years if they consider that it is necessary to prevent the original behaviour from occurring or reoccurring. If a new issue arises in an area where a PSPO is in force the council can vary the terms of the order at any time. This can change the size of the restricted area or the specific requirements or restrictions. As well as varying the PSPO, a council can also seek to discharge it at any time.

Results of the Public Consultation for the proposed PSPO for The Vine, Sevenoaks

20. In accordance with the statutory guidelines the Council consulted with the Chief Officer of the police as well as the local policing body for the affected areas, and they have confirmed their agreement to the introduction of the PSPO.
21. Following agreement by Cabinet on 13 July 2023 to carry out consultation on the introduction of new Public Spaces Protection Order the public consultation formally opened on Monday 14 August 2023 and closed on midnight on Sunday 24 September 2023. The public were asked to provide views on the introduction of two measures to address ASB that can have a detrimental effect on the local community.
22. Public consultation was carried out in a number of ways to give the public as much opportunity to express their views and included:
 - Access to all documentation and an online questionnaire via the Council's website
 - Access to hard copies of documentation and downloadable paper copies of the questionnaire that could be posted to the Council (or emailed)
 - Consultation with key stakeholders such as Kent Police, Town Council, Youth Services and Kenward Trust
 - Communication via face book, twitter and the Council website
23. There were 253 responses received in total and all from the online questionnaire.

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24. The PSPO consultation results are presented as a general overview with recommendations and individual tables of results provided in more detail under this. The outcome presented an overwhelming support for the PSPO. There is further information in Appendix 1.
25. Local Government Association (LGA) guidance for councils suggests that the consultation process should assess the appropriate balance for any proposed new measures ensuring they are supported and appropriate. The public consultation undertaken by the Council demonstrates that the public support both proposed measures. These are:
 - i. Action 1: 83.4% of the responses supported *Engaging in anti-social behaviour which is likely to cause harassment alarm and distress to those persons in the locality.*
 - ii. Action 2: 83.4% of the responses supported *Not returning to the area within 24 hours after being asked to leave.*

This equated to 244 of the responses of the 253.

26. In terms of the written comments added to the questionnaires a, views included general support for the proposals, although there were some concerns over young people having nowhere to go, ASB spilling into other nearby areas, stopping young people attending the vine, adding alcohol to the PSPO.
27. PSPOs are not the answer for everything – Councils and partners will still need to continually review issues, considering whether there are easier and more effective tools for dealing with ASB, such as; Community Protection Warnings (CPWs), Community Protections Notices (CPNs), targeted responses to individuals with multi-agency support from the Community Safety Unit.
28. When introducing a PSPO, it should be noted that the most robust Orders directly address the detrimental behaviour, rather than activities which may not in themselves be detrimental or which target characteristics that might be shared by some of those responsible (or with the wider public). The Home Office's statutory guidance reiterates that PSPOs should be used responsibly and proportionately, only in response to issues that cause anti-social behaviour, and only where necessary to protect the public.

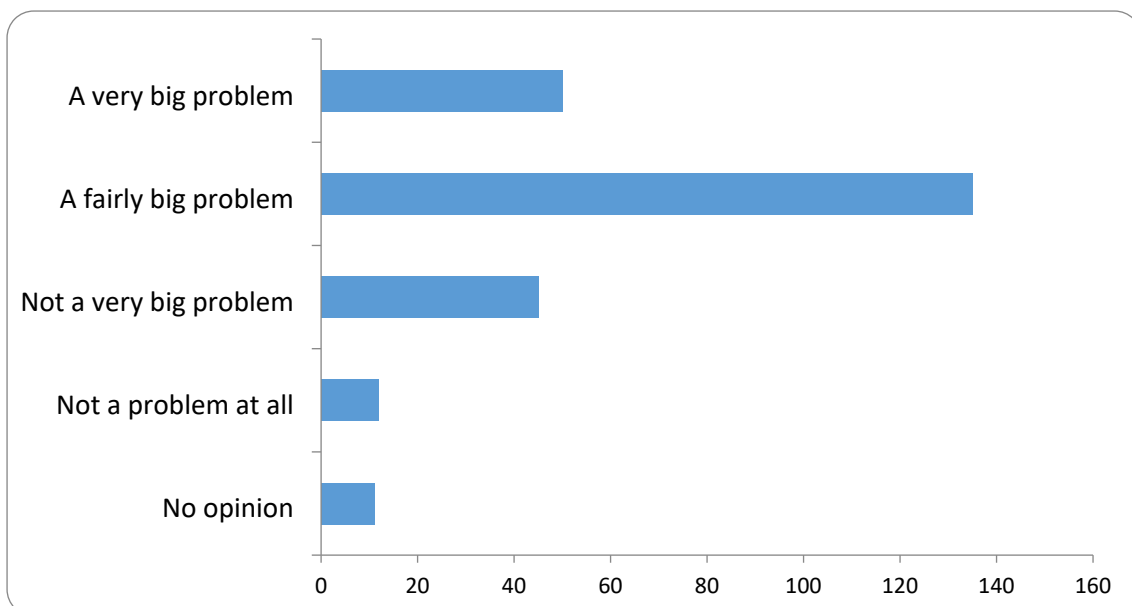
Other options considered and recommendation

- 29. The Council could chose not to pursue a PSPO. However, based on the public consultation responses and given the length of time that the behaviour has been ongoing and the detrimental effect the behaviour is having on local residents and businesses, this is not a recommended option.
- 30. It is therefore recommended to bring the PSPO and its two measures into place for the area (The Vine) as listed in the consultation document. However, it should be noted that appropriate interventions will be always be carried out in the first instance to address the issues concerned e.g. through education, prevention, accessing support services, carrying out proactive projects and Community Safety operations to address the issues and using the most appropriate tools, powers and legislation as appropriate when enforcement is required.
- 31. To strengthen the communications messages around the proposed measures and to set out in detail the protocols around the use and implementation of the PSPO, new signage will be installed along with ongoing media and communications.

Public Consultation Feedback

- 32. This section highlights some of the public consultations responses. The full public consultation feedback is included as part of Appendix A
- 33. **Q3: Thinking about The Vine overall how much of a problem do you think anti-social behaviour (ASB) causes in the area? Is it...**

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



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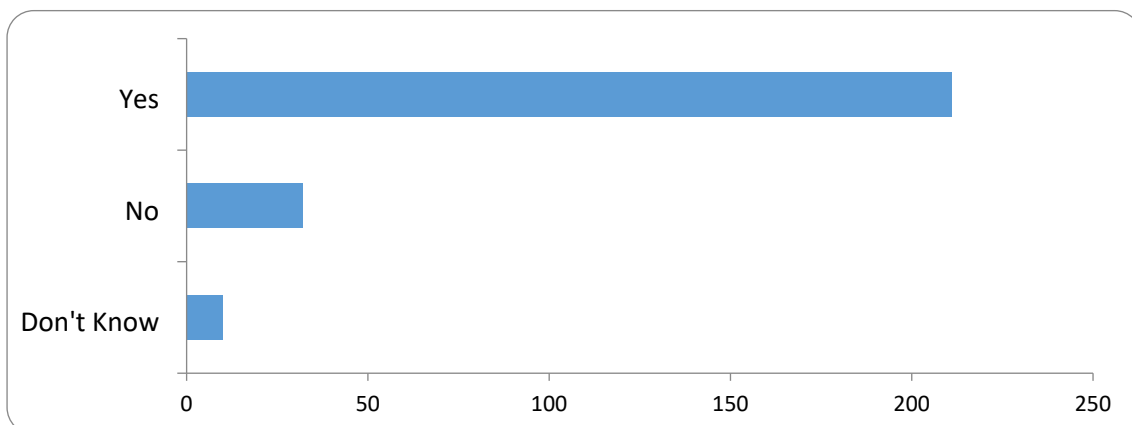
Option	Total	Percent
A very big problem	50	19.76%
A fairly big problem	135	53.36%
Not a very big problem	45	17.79%
Not a problem at all	12	4.74%
No opinion	11	4.35%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

34. Q7: The following activities would be prohibited by the proposed PSPO:

- i. Engaging in anti-social behaviour which is likely to cause harassment, alarm and distress to those persons in the locality.
- ii. Returning to the area within 24 hours after being asked to leave.

Do you support the activities proposed above?

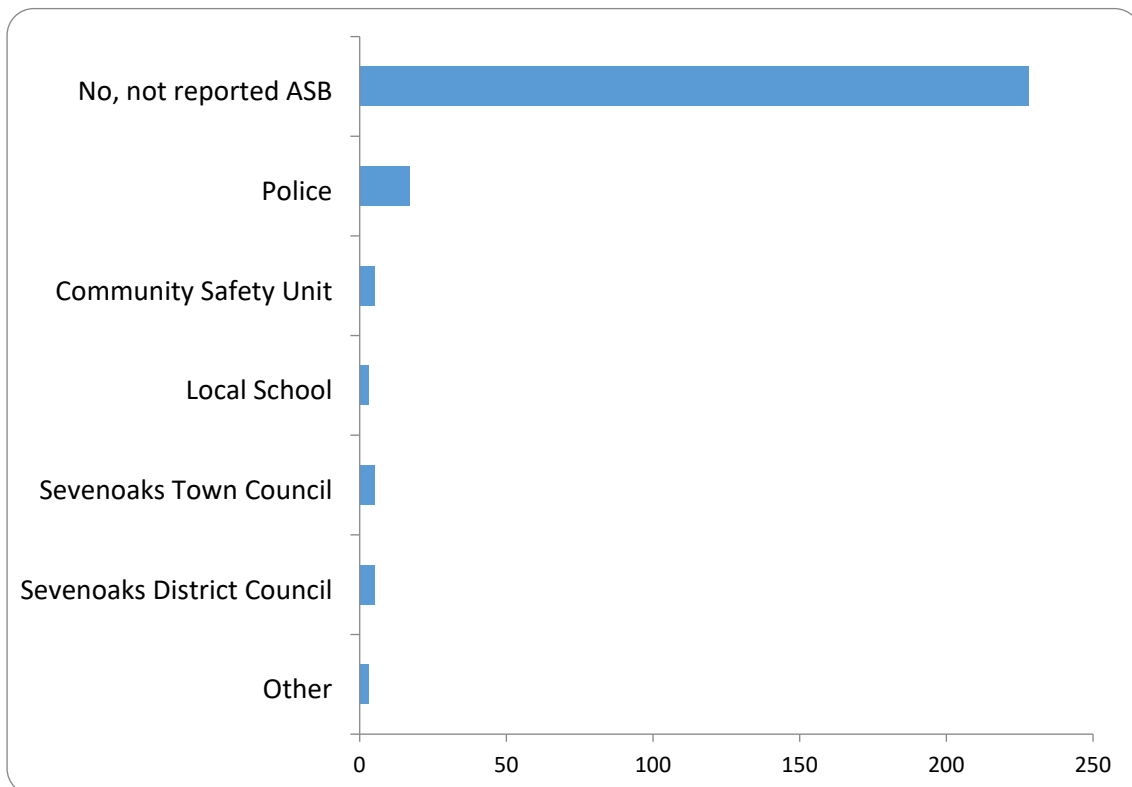
There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	211	83.40%
No	32	12.65%
Don't Know	10	3.95%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

35. Q4: Have you reported ASB regarding The Vine and who did you report to?

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



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Option	Total	Percent
No, not reported ASB	228	90.12%
Police	17	6.72%
Community Safety Unit	5	1.98%
Local School	3	1.19%
Sevenoaks Town Council	5	1.98%
Sevenoaks District Council	5	1.98%
Other	3	1.19%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

The 3 'other' comments were:

- Not at The Vine, but in Bat and Ball
- Councillor
- Discussed problems with CSU at SDC.

Application of the PSPO

36. The LGA guidance on PSPOs states that used proportionately and in the right circumstances, PSPOs allow local areas to counter unreasonable and persistent behaviour that affects the quality of life of its residents. They can send a clear message that certain behaviours will not be tolerated, and help reassure residents that unreasonable conduct is being addressed. It would be the responsibility of the relevant authorised officer to decide the most appropriate and proportionate response to any antisocial behaviour encountered.
37. In conclusion, whilst PSPOs provide a useful tool for addressing ASB there will be alternative ways of dealing with issues on a case by case basis and this will be the case for both the measures in the PSPO as well as those excluded from it. The PSPO will act as another tool for authorised officers to use and will help with education messages and positive interventions. The next stage will be to work with the relevant Council departments and Kent Police to develop the

relevant protocols as these will clearly define which agency (whether Council officers or the police) will help to educate, prevent and enforce elements of the PSPO and in what circumstances and how.

38. Examples of how alternative methods can be used for both the measures included and not included in the PSPO are described below:
39. The use of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs) can be used to address the ASB associated with on public land and the existing Given the number of comments received as part of the public consultation, where there was misinterpretation of the use of the PSPO for example on street drinking, many comments were still received e.g. around picnicking and peaceful use of alcohol, there needs to be stronger and clearer communications messages given out on what the PSPO exactly is being used for and to emphasise the types of ASB being addressed.
40. In terms of performance measures, as FPNs are the action of last resort, we will also collect data in terms of how the Council and other agencies (Kent Police etc.) use proactive engagement, education, warnings or signposting to support services in support of the PSPO. In addition, the regular use of these types of interventions through monthly multi-agency meetings of the Community MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) will add to the performance information. Whilst the numbers of FPNs will be collected, these will inevitably be low in comparison to interventions that may be used to prevent the unwanted behaviour recurring, in line with our Enforcement Policy. Any evidence obtained by the Police must be provided to the Local Authority as the prosecuting authority where a decision will be made by Legal Services in partnership with CSU (as per the National Policing Guidelines on the prosecution for Breaches of CPNs and PSPOs).
41. Where concern has been expressed by the public on resourcing enforcement, clear protocols will be developed with relevant partners and where appropriate, authorised Council officers are trained and supported to promote education messages and prevention interventions, alongside enforcement.

Duration of a PSPO

42. The maximum duration of a PSPO is three years, however, they can last for shorter periods where appropriate. Whilst a PSPO is in place, the Local Authority can extend it by up to three years if deemed necessary to prevent the original behaviour from occurring or recurring. They should also consult with the local Police and any other relevant community representatives. If approved, this PSPO will be reviewed in two years to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

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Summary of timelines

43. The latest timeline for the process is set out below:

- 24 September 2023 - consultation ends and information to be collated.
- 30 November 2023 – People & Places Advisory Committee
- 14 December 2023 – Cabinet decision to on whether the PSPO is granted and order signed off.
- 5 February 2024 - New PSPO implemented in place and communications plan in place and new signage designed based on the feedback.
- January 2026 - PSPO will be reviewed after 2 years, but can remain in place for up to 3 years

Key Implications

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

The power to make a PSPO is contained in section 59 of the 2014 Act. A local authority can only make a PSPO if it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the conditions set out at paragraph 1.2.3 have been met.

In deciding whether to make/ extend/ vary or discharge a PSPO, the Council is required to have particular regard to the rights or freedom of expression and freedom of assembly set out in Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Once the final PSPO measures are agreed the PSPO will need to be published in accordance with the regulations made by the Secretary of State.

The Council needs to ensure that the powers are used in a reasonable, consistent, appropriate and proportionate manner and must comply with the consultation requirements set out in this report.

The area that the PSPO covers must be considered as part of the consultation and data collection, as the Council must evidence that there is a significant nuisance or problem in a specific area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life.

If we do pursue a new PSPO it will be important to ensure that its scope and the process for introduction is in accordance with the powers and requirements of the 2014 Act. Any challenge to a PSPO would have to be made by an interested person by way of an application in the High Court for permission to seek a Judicial Review. That application must be made within six weeks of the PSPO being made. An interested person is someone who lives in, regularly works in, or visits the restricted area.

A person who receives an FPN due to a breach of PSPO can also challenge the validity of the order. This means that only those who are directly affected by the restrictions have the power to challenge. This right to challenge also exists where an order is varied by a council. Interested persons can challenge the validity of a PSPO on two grounds. They could argue that the council did not have power to make the order, or to include particular prohibitions or requirements.

In addition, the interested person could argue that one of the requirements (for instance, consultation) had not been complied with. When the application is made, the High Court can decide to suspend the operation of the PSPO pending the verdict in part or in totality. The High Court can uphold the PSPO, quash it, or vary it.

The Council will have to take measures to mitigate against these risks by, for example, embarking on a full consultation process, publishing the proposed order and map and putting in place measures to publicise the PSPO through street signage and an intention to publish the final Order on the Council website in accordance with the act.

The PSPO only significantly affects communities living or working in one ward of the Sevenoaks District. It is therefore not a key decision and is not subject to call in, which means that it can be implemented immediately.

Financial implications

There are limited capital or revenue implications associated with this report. The primary cost if we were to proceed with a PSPO would be installing new signage through the proposed PSPO zone and would be met from existing budgetary provision and also from the land owner (Sevenoaks Town Council. This will cost approximately £500-£1000. There may be a staffing resource implication for the District Council for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices and the work associated with this.

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

Wellbeing

If we were to work towards introducing a new PSPO this will enable the Council and its partners to utilise additional powers to tackle street based anti-social behaviour

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within the selected area, helping to increase quality of life and wellbeing in the area affected.

Conclusion

The Council has a duty to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area and work towards delivering the objectives of the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Plan. The implementation of any PSPO has been supported by the public consultation and will assist with meeting these requirements of the Community Safety Plan by providing the Council and Police with additional powers to tackle the issues identified. This report seeks Cabinet approval to implement a PSPO at The Vine, Sevenoaks.

Appendices

Appendix A - Full Consultation Results

Appendix B - Proposed PSPO Order

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People & Places



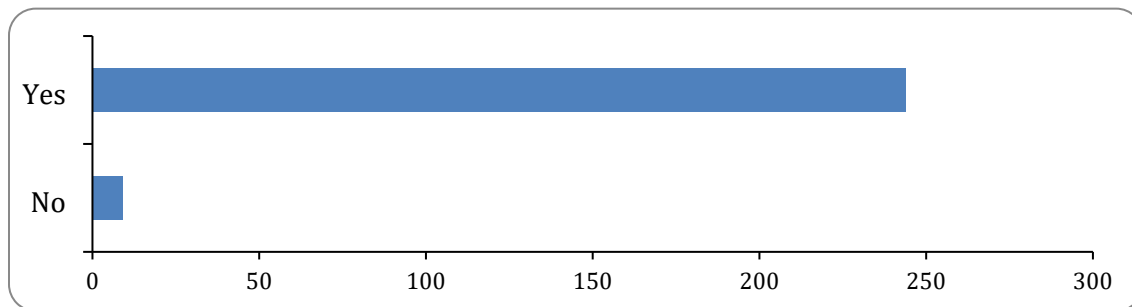
Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) - The Vine, Sevenoaks

The activity ran from 14/08/2023 to 24/09/2023

Responses to this survey: **253**

1: Are you a resident of Sevenoaks District?

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.

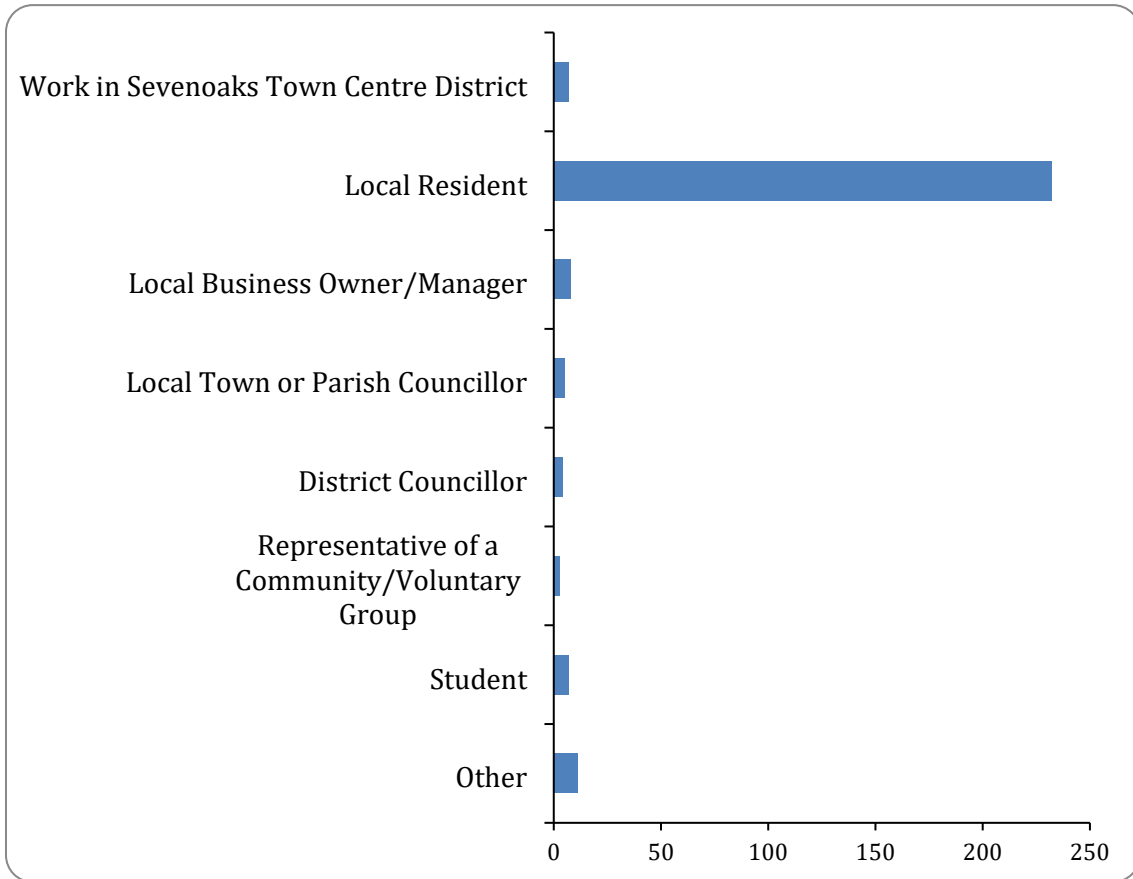


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	244	96.44%
No	9	3.56%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

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2: Who are you responding as?

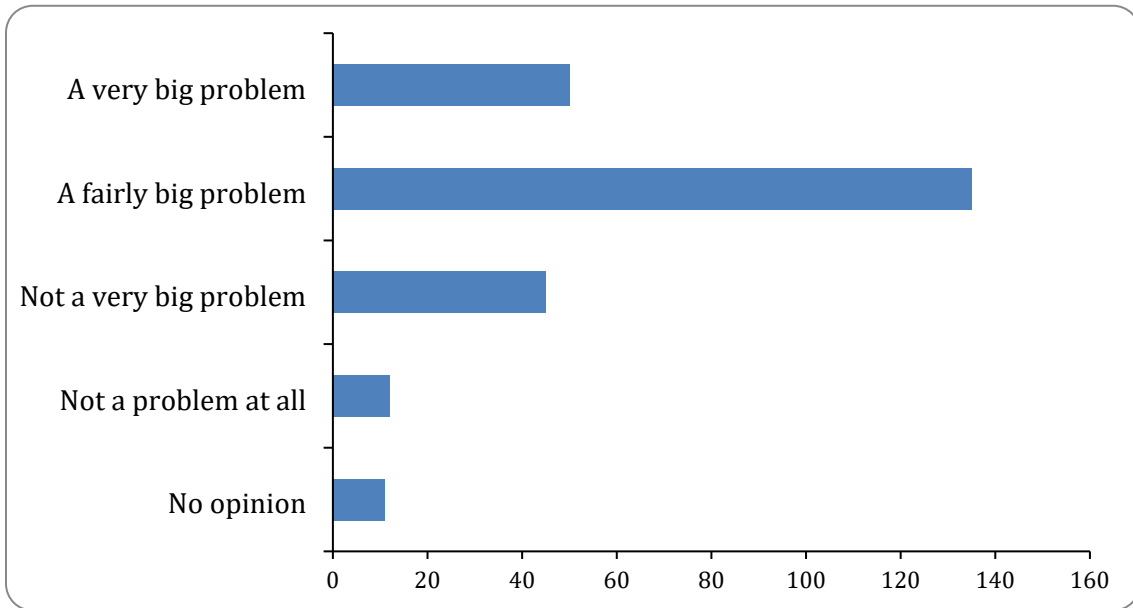
There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Work in Sevenoaks Town Centre District	7	2.77%
Local Resident	232	91.70%
Local Business Owner/Manager	8	3.16%
Local Town or Parish Councillor	5	1.98%
District Councillor	4	1.58%
Representative of a Community/Voluntary Group	3	1.19%
Student	7	2.77%
Other	11	4.35%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

3: Thinking about The Vine overall how much of a problem do you think anti-social behaviour (ASB) causes in the area? Is it...

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.

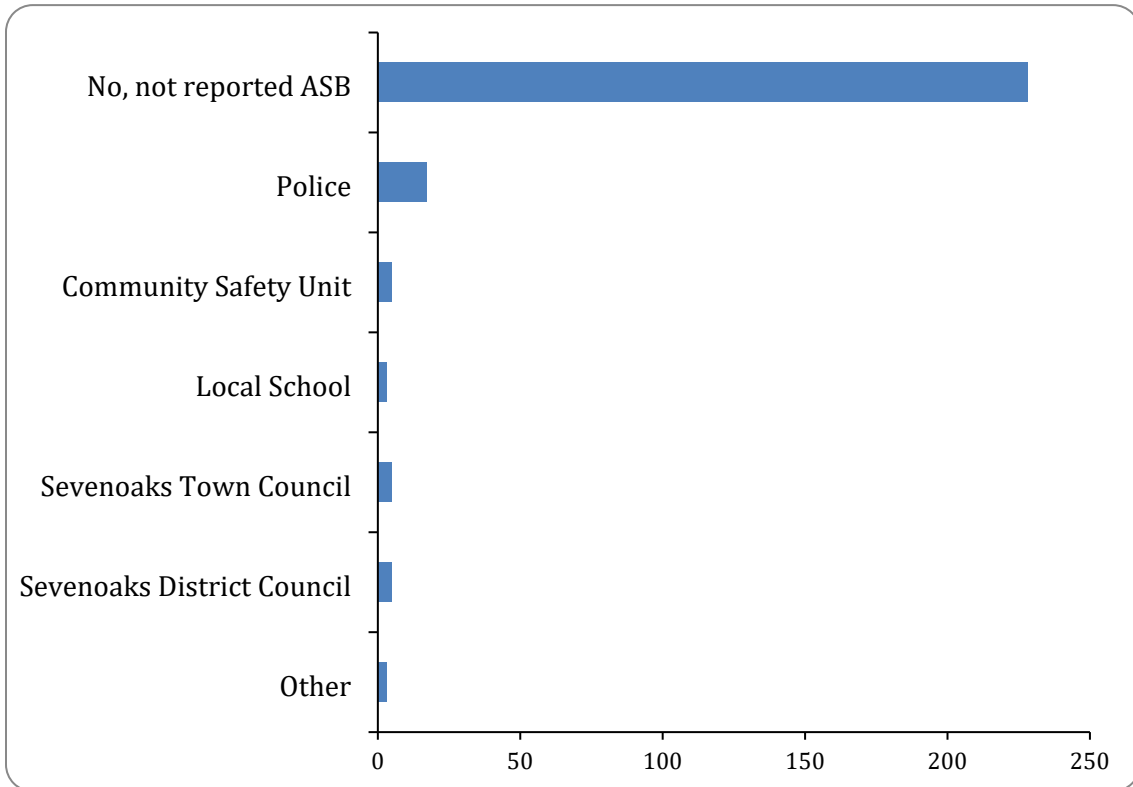


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Not a very big problem	45	17.79%
Not a problem at all	12	4.74%
No opinion	11	4.35%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

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4: Have you reported ASB regarding The Vine and who did you report to?

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
No, not reported ASB	228	90.12%
Police	17	6.72%
Community Safety Unit	5	1.98%
Local School	3	1.19%
Sevenoaks Town Council	5	1.98%
Sevenoaks District Council	5	1.98%
Other	3	1.19%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

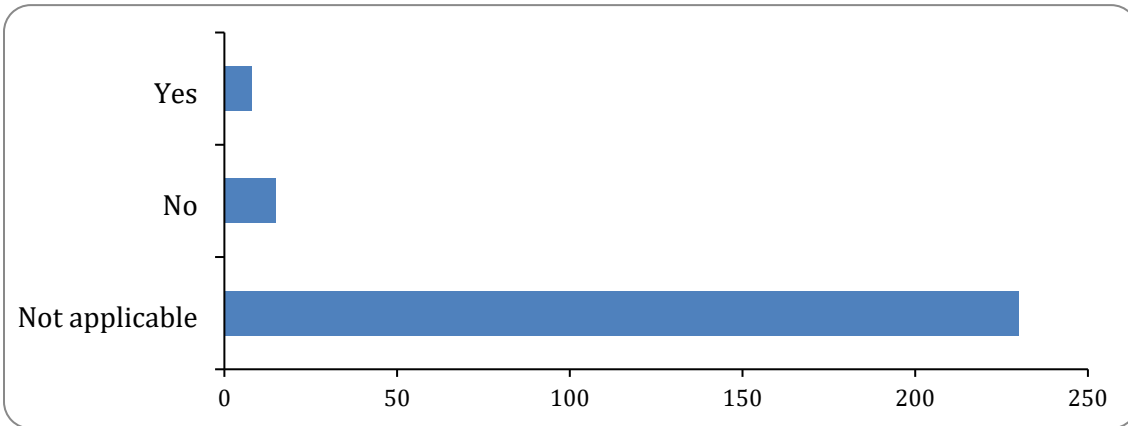
If you have selected other please specify

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.

Not at the vine but in Bat and Ball
Councillor
Discussed problems with CSU at SDC.

5: Do you feel you received a satisfactory response after reporting concerns?

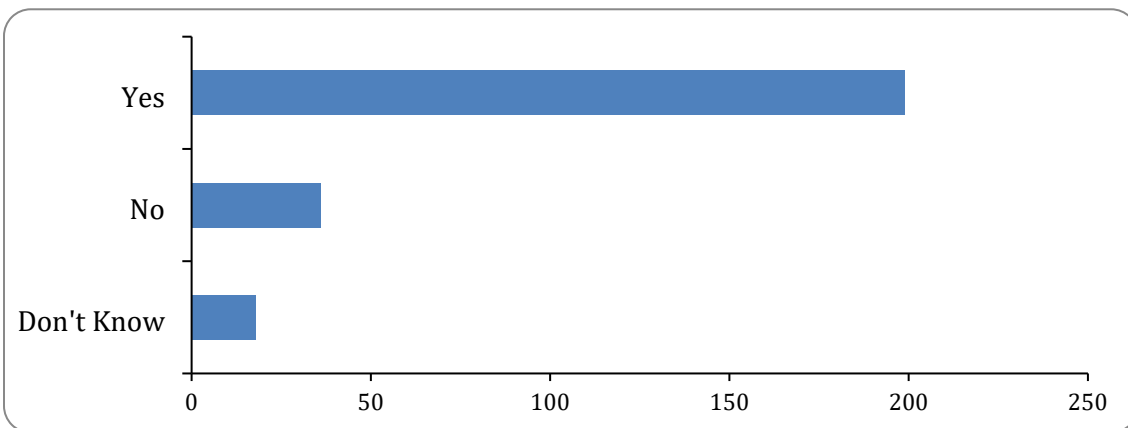
There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	8	3.16%
No	15	5.93%
Not applicable	230	90.91%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

6: Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to deter Anti-social behaviour (ASB) at The Vine, Sevenoaks?

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	199	78.66%
No	36	14.23%
Don't Know	18	7.11%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

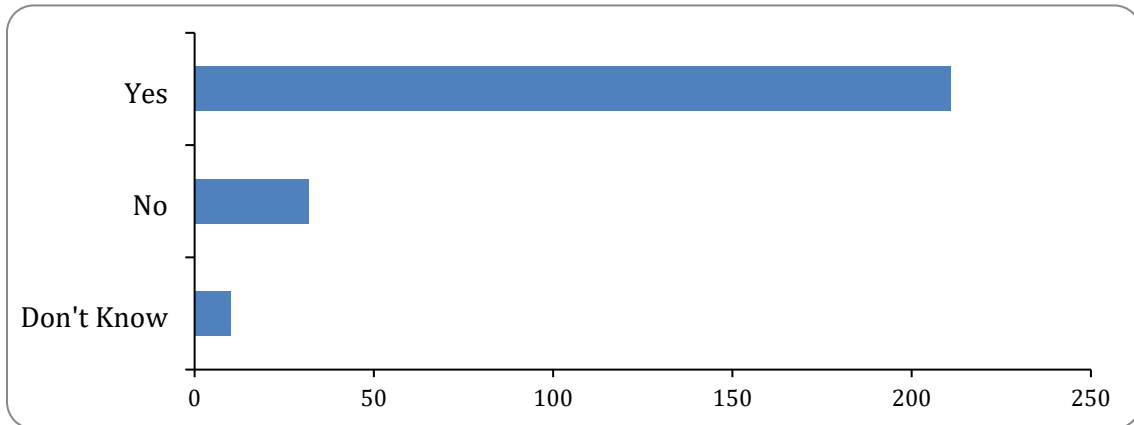
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7: The following activities would be prohibited by the proposed PSPO:

- i. Engaging in anti-social behaviour which is likely to cause harassment, alarm and distress to those persons in the locality.
- ii. Returning to the area within 24 hours after being asked to leave.

Do you support the activities proposed above?

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	211	83.40%
No	32	12.65%
Don't Know	10	3.95%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

8: Are there any other activities relating to ASB, which you would like to see included in the PSPO for The Vine, Sevenoaks?

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.

These could be included in the first point above, but I'd like specifically for the following to be called out: public drinking and leaving broken glass and metal bottle caps behind; the playing of amplified music by anyone without specific permission; and vandalism of the cricket pitch equipment and enclosure. I see all of this almost every week.

Please add prohibitions on:

Playing amplified music or making other loud noise after 10 PM. This should be included so that there is no debate over whether this behaviour is anti-social. It should also be clear in the order that noise before 10 PM may also be covered by the prohibition on anti-social behaviour.

<p>Setting off fireworks.</p> <p>Leaving rubbish or disposing of it improperly. Rubbish, broken glass, and metal from bottle caps and cans is a big problem.</p>
<p>7 is not worded well. I think 'activities' in the question should read action. I do not support the listed activities: I do support their prohibition.</p> <p>Any activity which affects the enjoyment of others of the Vine should be prohibited, especially noise or rowdyism. Currently, there is no restraint on either.</p>
<p>Drinking</p>
<p>Underage drinking , vaping and smoking to be stopped</p>
<p>Banning of alcohol use on The Vine Banning of playing loud music Restriction in the numbers comprising large groups</p>
<p>I would like the council to take measures to ensure that buildings are not damaged ie restricting the access to the roof of the vine</p>
<p>No alcohol after specific hours and no laughing gas or no gases prohibited</p>
<p>Offenders banned from the area</p>
<p>BBQ Racism</p>
<p>Climbing on the building and on to the roof being included as anti-social behaviour. Damaging the cricket square. Drinking alcohol on The Vine, after a certain time curfew (unless has been purchased from Vine clubhouse) - I.e. something in place that deters late night drinking on the vine.</p>
<p>A ban on public drinking should be brought in.</p>
<p>Damage to property and public spaces (eg flowers, ponds, leaving toilets in an unusable state)</p>
<p>Bicycles (not toddlers on kid's bikes) should be banned though I don't know if this is a problem really.</p>
<p>Bicycles (not toddlers on kid's bikes) should be banned though I don't know if this is a problem really.</p>
<p>Believe these steps should be taken at first and then reviewed after a period of time.</p>
<p>Drinking and littering should be punishable by ban and fine</p>
<p>As residents of the locality, we have been witness to instances of antisocial conduct that arise when groups of adolescent individuals congregate near the vineyard. Our fellow residents on St. Botolphs Road have encountered instances of property damage, and it is our unequivocal endorsement that the implementation of a public space order be pursued without reservation.</p>
<p>I'd just like to have some sort of definition of what constitutes ASB - for example I might see children having a happy noisy kick around as a good healthy activity but someone who lives right by the Vine might see it as a noise nuisance.</p>
<p>The previous question is ambiguous. I support blocking all of the ASB activities proposed above</p>
<p>Realistically, a PSPO will do nothing. There are sometimes hundreds of kids on The Vine - trying to disperse this is borderline impossible.</p>
<p>More protective measures should be put in to protect the buildings - too many</p>

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occasions kids are on the roof of the pavilion causing damage.
You realistically need police offers manning each Friday and Saturday evening in the summer.
Police to be supported by everyone and for the police to be tough with those who are causing disruption and/or breaking the law.
Leaving trash everywhere
loud music
Drug-taking/ supplying. Vandalism
Also to included at Bat and Ball station
No smoking
There is a lot of underage drinking and soft drug use going on. So I think those behaviours should be addressed
I'm not in favour of ASB.
ASB at 'The Vine' has not directly affected me personally. I do have concerns with the amount of rising ASB generally within the district.
Suffolk way car park + area outside the leisure centre is also problematic on top of the vine
Large gatherings (whether anti-social or not) should be dispersed
Drug taking /selling of drugs
I do not feel there should be large groups gathering for parties and drinking on the Vine.
Sort out greatness skate park too
Safety for all, but more importantly a deterrent to those who could follow the bad behaviour
I have seen people sitting with trolleys stacked with cases of lager - I assume to sell to underage people. This needs to stop.
Underage drinking, drug dealing
Yes dropping litter
Ban on alcohol on the Vine unless at an organised event (eg Beer festival). This would help with the litter problem as well. Question 7 is badly worded - I presume that you mean do I support the ban on the activities listed, not the activities themselves!?
Groups of teenagers on grass, smashing bottles, climbing on the roofs and being intimidating to passers by.
I have seen underage children purchase alcohol from shop by the lights.
Drug dealing Alcohol Littering
Large crowds of teenagers from out of town, drinking, using nox canisters etc and harassing locals.
Teenagers need a place to gather. I don't know whether the Asb is caused by locals or people travelling in to sevenoaks from surrounding areas to cause trouble. If the latter then this should be policed rather than restricting locals.

Just being present
Existing police powers for dispersement should be enough assuming the police are present
Throwing objects Loud music Littering Fighting Shouting and screaming after 8pm Drinking alcohol
Under age drinking
With the expansion of off road buggies and Quad bikes getting cheaper areas like the Vine are going to seem attractive to invade; I therefore think a sign banning such vehicles with a hefty fine should be displayed.
Drinking alcohol in public areas other than recreational spaces. For example on roads, public transport.
Leaving litter (particularly drugs paraphernalia, drink bottles etc.)
Destruction to property
It will be hard to enforce 24 hour ban. Is it possible to stop drinking outdoors?
Drinking alcohol and taking legal highs
The definition of ASB appears to be comprehensive, but I would suggest identifying drinking alcohol as an activity.
I feel as a Senokian having lived my life close to The Vine I found it really sad that this situation. In my youth there were Police patrolled all the open spaces twice an evening. If they found young couples in the huts we were told to leave in no u certain terms, lack of Police presents surely is a factor.
Please Ensure it includes land to the East of the Vine (bordering Seal Hollow Road) the Pavilion Gardens and land to North of and around the War Memorial. Otherwise, for the notices issued by the CSU in Spring 2023 relating to the Vine ASB the gangs of youths exit the Vine and linger on these adjacent areas which they deem to be 'safe'
Drug taking and drinking
It isn't just the vine, it also occurs up and down at Botolphs road between the vine and the train station as it appears those coming in from outside of Sevenoaks are often the offenders and create an unpleasant environment on the road that connects these two points.
Graffiti.
People should not be permitted to let off fireworks or play loud music
They should also be required to move on after 11 pm
Inclusion of Holly Bush Park/ area We have noticed that the kids in the vine are simply now moving down to the holly bush park area - music and groups in the evening and we have had graffiti to the house on holly bush lane and litter / fly tipping of shopping carts etc in the park area
I would like to see citizens of all ages treated with dignity and respect at all times
Police support needed on St Botolphs road after these gatherings (after gcse and a levels finish and results days)
Cameras put up at the vine

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Ensure whole Vine area is included, not just the cricket pitch.
No alcohol allowed on the vine when there is no event taking place
Underage drinking. Large gatherings
Drinking alcohol Loud music
Exclusion zone on bonfire night and roundtable fireworks night
Removal of their alcohol and / or drugs
I would like proof of anti-social behaviour before such drastic measures
Please can we just police the Vine area on the weekend nights, walking into and back from town for/after a drink or something to eat is fairly intimidating when these groups congregate.
Fines for littering and underage drinking
No. This is an intermittent problem for which there are existing tools for dispersal. Cooperation between authorities and agencies has proved effective when done well.
Police presence to enforce
Noise disturbance and mess
Aggressive behaviour
Meeting in groups over 5 people after 8pm
The problem of drugs has to be addressed as this results in even worse behaviour, anything the police can do to deal with this would be appreciated. Support for the police from local shops selling alcohol in bulk to young people would also help, possibly reminding of the age limits for selling it would also help!
Not to cause damage to property or the ground at the Vine.
Many of the issues are caused by kids travelling into Sevenoaks from other areas by train. When the police disperse groups of youths, the problems just move to other areas. This needs to be considered. Can the order include the confiscation of alcohol from people without ID?
Many of the issues are caused by kids travelling into Sevenoaks from other areas, often by train. When the police do disperse people, the problems often move to other areas and this needs to be considered. More than once, we have seen resulting disruption of rail services.
Damage/vandalism and especially anti-social behaviour affecting the nearby residents in a lovely area.
No apart from general noise, litter , intimidating nature of groups gathering and walking and blocking pavements and roads near the vine
There should be no PSPO, there should be police or wardens to reassure young people who meet on the vine. Youth is not catered for in Sevenoaks.
A
Alcohol drinking
Try to put in place some measures to deter youths from hanging out there later in the evenings so constant patrolling of area and an easy community reporting of real time issues would help
Excessive noise/music in evenings from youths gathering even when not behaving badly
I do not think is a PSPO is appropriate
Partying and drinking in the Vine

Littering! Noise esp after 11pm. Concerned that the anti-social activities may move to Judd place. Can that be included please?
The above proposals are vague, presumably in order to cover as many aspects of ASB as possible. I assume cycling, littering (including gas canisters), drug taking, and damage to the cricket pitch (howsoever caused) are included in the term antisocial behaviour.
Police patrol
No. But does the remit of this PSPO limit community events such as the lions club beer festival and cricket match enjoyment?
Regular police presence in Sevenoaks town centre from Thursday and over the weekend
I don't like the idea of giving Councillors powers to fine. We need more police officers, not to empower Councillors.
Noise
Most teenagers are just having fun socialising with friends. I live by the Vine & it's nice to see everyone meeting up on Friday eves. It's only a few that ruin it. Young people need somewhere to meet - they'll move on s'where else if it's not the Vine. Obviously aggressive or rude behaviour & drugs are not acceptable but I hope young people will still be able to enjoy meeting up there in the future - just without those who have spoilt it.
Ban on drug/gas taking Littering
No open alcohol and those breaching the order be searched for illicit drugs. The smell of cannabis is appalling and the behaviour is terrible.
The size of groups congregating to be controlled
Alcohol and other substances banned.
Consumption of alcohol
Sevenoaks town should not allow shops that sell alcohol and/or vapes near the Vine
The definition given above is quite wide and would cover excessive noise and rowdy behaviour. Also there are no toilets open on the vine in the evening so the kids often go on to private property in the surrounding areas to relieve themselves.
The seating area in the wood just off The Vine on the opposite side of Holly Bush Lane is also subject to anti-social behaviour and underage drinking. This wooded area should also be included in the PSPO.
Checks on under age drinking
No alcohol
No drugs
Fly tipping and binge drinking in public spaces. Littering public spaces with beer cans etc.,
A lockdown on vaping/drinking and checking the local off licenses aren't selling underage.
Unknown
Driving of vehicles with noise exhausts.
Why the focus on the Vine? There's regular anti-social behaviour in the Riverhead area, with little or nothing done to manage it.
I think the proposals if followed through should be effective

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Riding bikes carelessly on the paths and green.
Damage to trees and plants
Damage to the physical environment specifically
Dogs
Dogs off their leads
I think the question above is confusing. I fully back any actions taken to stop anti-social behaviour. I think those outlined should suffice as long as police attend when called.
Drinking Drugs Vandalism Violence
Prevent large gatherings of youths
Drinking alcohol outside of a formal / organised event.
Littering and damage to property
What happens when they move off the vine and cause trouble elsewhere?
underage drinking
Music to have a time and volume restriction.
Bikes and e-scooters being ridden on pavements.
If it is considered necessary installing cctv could be a deterrent
Littering and Barbeques
These young people need somewhere to go and a way to entertain themselves in a way that is safe for everyone. Just making them leave one area is going to create a problem in another. Find ways to get the youth occupied and entertained in other ways. Perhaps they don't have the cash to do any activities themselves, perhaps their parents didn't teach them how, not everyone is lucky with their parents. Just to view them as monsters without offering alternative is not helpful.
That should be sufficient though a ban on drinking on the Vine might be considered.
Large groups gathering making a lot of noise and being abusive.
No or Don't Knows x 116 responses

9: Please write down any further comments you may have about the PSPO.

There were 253 responses to this part of the question.

I fully support anything that will allow the majority of the public to use this space without having a dog's paw cut by glass, without having to see (and eventually help pay to fix) vandalism, without being subjected to other people's loud music, and without fearing large groups of people suddenly turning up and acting rowdy.
I wholly support some action. The Vine is one of the Town's greatest assets. It is to be enjoyed by all residents and visitors. Further, local residents, who are prepared to accept 'legitimate' evening events at the cricket club, should not be expected to have to contend with noise levels which intrude on the enjoyment of their own homes.
Welcome it
Stopping underage activities

<p>Alcohol plays a large part in the anti-social behaviour on The Vine, particularly with large groups of young people.</p>
<p>The playing of loud music which is a common occurrence during the summer months from both small and large groups is a major problem for residents and for other visitors' quiet enjoyment of the area.</p>
<p>Litter is also a problem. The Council are good are clearing this but consideration should be given to more bins on the area.</p>
<p>It should not impact the use of the space by younger children wishing to play</p>
<p>The Vine should be a peaceful area for residents and visitors.</p>
<p>It is important that people respect the right of the people of all colour, religion and age</p>
<p>It is a great idea</p>
<p>The children gather there as there are no other safe spaces for them to go. This also needs to be addressed. Also better lights and cctv on the vine might help also.</p>
<p>The young people causing problems on the Vine do not represent the behaviour of most of the teens in the community, and should not be allowed to tar the reputation of the majority.</p>
<p>Some Parents seem to avoid responsibility for the actions of their youngsters: I think they should be subjected to a 'meeting' with the officials concerned so they can be 'made aware'.</p>
<p>Some Parents seem to avoid responsibility for the actions of their youngsters: I think they should be subjected to a 'meeting' with the officials concerned so they can be 'made aware'.</p>
<p>Fully support making the town a safer space</p>
<p>Good plan - hope it works for Sevenoaks</p>
<p>We are talking about managing children.</p> <p>I see no need to give the Police extra powers in order to preserve calm on the Vine. I am sure that if the Police were to turn up when there is unruly behaviour, the unruly behaviour would abate.</p> <p>I am also clear that the solution to this is not to do with policing. It is to do with looking at the causes of the problem and - in particular - fining other activities for the children to do.</p> <p>I am against using a PSPO to manage children's behaviour.</p>
<p>The time and money devoted to this proposed PSPO would be better spent funding recreational and community activities at other venues in the vicinity that would be of interest to teenagers, so they had some other things to do and places to go, rather than congregate on the Vine. A PSPO should be a last resort, not the first choice, otherwise Nimbyism will simply transfer the perceived problem elsewhere.</p>
<p>I am the County Council Representative for Sevenoaks Town. No resident has written to me concerning this issue. But I am aware of some of the issues that have occurred. They seem to have been dealt with adequately within current provisions. I am concerned that if the order is enforced we are simply going to displace the problem</p>

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and not provide a solution. I would be happy to work with all stakeholders to find such a solution.
I need more information - for example while I would definitely not want young people dealing drugs in the area I wouldn't want to stop teenagers just 'hanging out' with their mates - better on the Vine even if they are a bit noisy and maybe even drop a bit of litter than trying to sneak into a pub underage.
Tougher action needs to be taken to stop all ASB in the town. Including targeted shoplifting but youths & general intimidating behaviour of a handful of young people beyond the Vine. Stopping the proliferation of vape shops & off licenses would help
See above
Fully support this - Sevenoaks is a wonderful place but can easily go downhill if allowed to by not being tough with ASB issues.
well done
The opening of a vape and alcohol shop across the road is encouraging the anti-social behaviours and shouldn't have been allowed.
I believe that the police already have adequate powers to deal with misbehavior at The Vine. This has been demonstrated in recent weeks. The bigger picture is whether there is enough police in the town to nip this type of behaviour in the bud.
Unsociable behaviour by teens at Bat and Ball station.
Twice reported youngsters on the roof of Bat and Ball station
Vi haven't experienced any ASB but I'm generally only in town in the daytime
Surely anti-social behaviour and underage drinking is already illegal and law enforcement has the requisite powers to enforce this.
If the children aren't on the vine they will be somewhere else and the vine is probably a safer place than most.
This sounds like a politicised effort and I would rather see positive efforts than victimisation.
Consideration should be given to providing spaces and facilities where teenagers can get together and socialise in the local community. I'm worried this order would just move the problem to somewhere else and doesn't address the underlying issues.
Ridiculous policy - no real ASB happening in sevenoaks
Suffolk way car park + area outside the leisure centre is also problematic on top of the vine
Lots of areas by Suffolk way car park are poorly lit
The pavement on the vine side of the street and the vine itself is poorly lit makes the whole situation way more intimidating.
Only effective if the area is policed between 7pm and 10pm
I support the application on behalf of those Residents who regularly use or live close to the Vine.
Pandemic summer of 2020 the Vine was a wonderful space for local teenagers to meet. It was a post lockdown open space refuge for many young people from the local market town of Sevenoaks.

<p>Subsequently it has become a magnet for south London teens who walk there from Sevenoaks station. This has changed the atmosphere and sadly the lovely Vine is not the haven it was.</p>
<p>I have always found the Vine to be a peaceful place to sit and enjoy the surroundings in the past and would not hesitate walking through it at night. I avoid the area in the evenings now especially on the weekends as feel intimidated by large non cricket gatherings. I am also concerned about the damage on the Vine and the cost to us as a community in the clearing up of the mess left.</p>
<p>This has been going on since I was a child and I'm nearly 50 the skate park at greatness is just as awful, we need more policing these areas, kids are drinking, smoking weed and then causing havoc, stealing people's bikes and scooters then trashing them</p>
<p>Great for something to be done to deter it</p>
<p>Whilst I agree that some of the behaviour has been unacceptable - my daughter has also met friends there on a summers evening. There are very few facilities in Sevenoaks for the young people and the vine feels a safer place to meet than tucked away in Knole park</p>
<p>I think it is very positive that the police are taking this action</p>
<p>More needs to be done, ASB will just occur in another location</p>
<p>A good idea.</p>
<p>It seems to me that the police have had sufficient powers to deal with the trouble so far. The Vine is this year's gathering place and we know where they are likely to be. If this order was implemented they would simply move elsewhere. The problem will probably diminish as the weather gets worse</p>
<p>Think it's about time something's done</p>
<p>It's more needed at Bat and Ball station and station road Greatness And Tesco riverhead car park</p>
<p>Speeding cars on both sides of Vine also are a harassment.</p>
<p>Its bit necessary to disperse well behaved kids, they need somewhere to hang out, but when kids come looking for trouble, that needs to be dealt with and deterred.</p>
<p>Applying restrictions to one area will just move the problem elsewhere. Better to address the causes.</p>
<p>Again being seen to be present</p>
<p>Potentially it will just spread ASB to other areas in the district.</p>
<p>This is pointless unless you provide decent leisure and social facilities and spaces for young people to congregate. What is available right now is derisory yet you charge a huge amount of council tax.</p>
<p>Common sense policing is all that is needed. Sometimes it's just an explanation and a hint that is needed - sometimes it's much more it's just dependent on the culprit. I have every confidence in the policing I have seen.</p>
<p>One person alone may not be sufficient.</p>
<p>We need proper policing and punishment</p>
<p>The proposed PSPO is long overdue at the Vine. Putting it in place sends a clear message that the Police and the Council mean business. It also sends the message that if a PSPO can be applied to The Vine it can be applied anywhere.</p>
<p>We in Sevenoaks would like a Station open in the town</p>

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See above
There is a lack of policing almost entirely on Friday and Saturday evenings and nights which is resulting in the anti-social behaviour. This needs to be addressed through presentation of the police.
I have answered 'don't know' to questions 6 and 7 as I live opposite Holly Bush recreation ground and am worried that your PSOP will move the ASB further my way. If you included Holly Bush in this PSPO then I think it is a good idea, for both areas. I have recently had my front wall daubed with paint as has my neighbour, we live on Holly Bush Lane opposite the vehicular entrance to the recreation ground. We feel alarmed and distressed by young people congregating in this entrance.
Inclusion of Holly Bush Park/ area We have noticed that the kids in the vine are simply now moving down to the holly bush park area - music and groups in the evening and we have had graffiti to the house on holly bush lane and litter / fly tipping of shopping carts etc in the park area
Risk moving problem from a fairly confined space to other locations across Sevenoaks then having unhappy groups walking around less secure areas
This measure will tend to demonise young people. I believe that there are sufficient existing police powers to mitigate occasional criminal behaviour
The biggest problem is the local teenagers (and others who get the train to Sevenoaks and walk up the hill) who congregate at the vine and drink smoke vape drugs. They can be fairly intimidating and leave lots of rubbish. A few months ago, after gcse exams had clearly finished, we had a group walking back to the station and one boy ran into our drive (St Botolphs road) and tried to kick our front door down as a dare.
It's a good idea and about time
This is obviously in relation to young people gathering there at the weekend. Please can we think more inclusively and try to find a way to entertain these youngsters rather than deter them. There is literally nothing in Sevenoaks for teenagers under the age of 18. After lockdown, the majority are just looking for a place to hang with their friends. Can we please find a way to support them to do this safely?
I feel sad this is required and hope another area in Sevenoaks doesn't now have the same problem.
Trouble is also caused by people walking down Dartford Road towards St John's Hill on a Friday & Saturday night: litter in gardens, pulling up estate agent signs, removing bricks from a neighbour's wall.
Great idea and important for the area
It will need to be policed properly More CCTV cameras are needed down there
If it is only applied to the Vine, would the people causing the behaviour not be expected to target other local open spaces, such as Hollybush Rec and Greatness Rec, where it will be less immediately visible but just as unwanted?
The ASB is caused by drinking alcohol and smoking weed so they need to be made to surrender what they have on them. This will discourage returning.
This is outrageous & where is the proof of such anti-social behaviour before enforcing such drastic measures
Living within a short walk of The Vine, I've never seen any anti-social behaviour so if any does occur it's likely very rare. If there is any anti-social behaviour then the current tools available to the local police will suffice. The Tory MP Trott is likely to follow her

<p>government's lead in using this as an excuse for suppression or restriction of enjoyment of open spaces by the wider community, and this is simply a low common denominator method of trying to win votes in the next election.</p>
<p>How will it be policed?</p>
<p>Making an issue of complete non-issue</p>
<p>I am unclear how consultees can respond to the proposal without more detail. Residents are being consulted without knowing the methods, penalties, implications of the order. What restrictions would there be on the use of the space? What would trigger action? Would it criminalise young people? How does this deter ASB? Is there evidence that such orders are effective? This consultation is too broad brush and risks damaging consequences to the young people whose socialising is being addressed.</p>
<p>Rubbish is left every weekend. Disgraceful mess</p>
<p>ASAP</p>
<p>This is a good idea but young people do need an alternative safe space where they can positively engage such as the switch in Maidstone. They need a cool place to hang out not the place under the stag! But somewhere new and inviting with young mentors that engage with them but also let them enjoy the space independently.</p>
<p>Any additional support in order to assist the police who have to deal with this issue should be supported, they cannot deal with this on their own - parents must be involved also - perhaps some kind of sanction might encourage them to take more interest in the behaviour of their children.</p>
<p>The council should not have the power to enforce any fines or enforcement they are not under oath.</p>
<p>We should let young kids such as teenagers enjoy their social time. Unfortunately, there no places in Sevenoaks for the kids. Just because they sit in the evening on the Vine it doesn't mean they're the troublemakers. Make some space for young generation please.</p>
<p>I personally passed over or by the Vine 4-5 times weekly in last 20 Years that I live here and I have never experienced any problem.</p>
<p>Many thanks</p>
<p>The same issues impact Hollybush Park area also and this needs to be taken into account as well.</p>
<p>The same issues impact the Hollybush Park area and this should be included within the scope of the order.</p>
<p>I assume the police would have (or already do have) the power to confiscate alcohol from people who do not have ID?</p>
<p>Everything should be protected around this area of The Vine. Respect is what is required here, both for the memorial at The Vine, the walled gardens with seats for people to use - somewhere peaceful away from the hurly burly of traffic and parking etc. This area represents the town of Sevenoaks, its character, the trees etc. A quiet place to sit in and enjoy, or watch the cricket. Anti-social behaviour should not be tolerated here.</p>
<p>If this is enacted, the anti-social behaviour will move elsewhere, probably to Knole Paddock rugby club where it will be even less visible.</p>

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<p>A concern that there is nowhere else suitable for young people to meet in sevenoaks. I understand that they want to congregate and socialise and for many this is harmless fun but for some I have a concern that there seems to be a large number of underage youths drinking alcohol, vaping, and smoking</p>
<p>Definitely not needed. If people are breaking the law then arrest or caution them. Young people need a place to meet friend that is not a family home. They also need a toilet after 6pm! They will be driven into Knole Park where there can be no adult help to hand. They are youths who live here and cannot be at risk of a record or being vilified for meeting friends on the Vine. Adults did it on round table's beer festival!</p>
<p>No but I am concerned that activity may move to the Plymouth Drive rugby pitches as has been seen before.</p>
<p>Good idea</p>
<p>I think this is a great initiative and should be considered for other areas in the district too</p>
<p>Large gatherings and behaviour have deteriorated enormously in 2023 and causing major disruptions to residents around the vine. New local shop it's also selling alcohol/e-smoking stuff to under-age youths fueling disorder.</p>
<p>I do not think is a PSPO is appropriate</p>
<p>Good idea</p>
<p>Teenagers are anti-social when they stay at home on social media and they're anti-social when they go out and socialise. What do you want?</p>
<p>A PSPO for the Vine is long overdue. This historic heart of the town, which used to be treated with respect, has been disgracefully abused over the past few years, especially during Covid lockdowns. Those who live nearby have my particular sympathy.</p>
<p>Punish and fine parents</p>
<p>I believe that this could and should be resolved by a strong presence of the police. Two or more very visible police patrolling the Vine all evening for as long as it takes. The trouble makers would eventually drift away. This is what the police are for. If SDC need to help fund "extra" police presence this would be acceptable.</p>
<p>Can we have some clarity on what constitutes "anti-social behaviour which is likely to cause harassment, alarm and distress to those persons in the locality?"</p>
<p>I would like to see a clearer definition of what actions may be considered As anti-social. Children should be allowed to gather there and socialise as it is a public space. I worry the residents would view innocent gatherings and socialising as anti-social even if no harm was caused. I do appreciate that there have been clear problems but I would be interested to know to what extent just using the public space would fall under this umbrella</p>
<p>I appreciate it may be a different aspect however I do see the aspect of creating space(s) for young people in Sevenoaks to be able to meet - which in turn potentially can keep things more in "check". I have found that it is not just at The Vine young people are beginning to congregate but at other "spots" around town. Again this is an "extension" of the discussion around anti-social behaviour which I do agree needs to be addressed and handled along the lines as outlined in the proposal.</p>
<p>Much ado about nothing?</p>
<p>We need more police officers to deal with anti-social behaviour. Not Councillors issuing fines.</p>
<p>An excellent idea</p>

<p>Please ensure that individuals under the age of 18 who take part in the antisocial behaviours covered by the PSPO, and their families, are given relevant support to ensure the behaviours do not reoccur. The young people in this area need more emotional and relational support than they are currently being given. We are not going to be able to eliminate the behaviours unless we address the underlying causes- and that requires full family support, not just a warning or conviction from the police.</p>
<p>Do you have a plan for where the youth of Sevenoaks should go to spend their time?</p>
<p>If you don't, then the proposed PSPO is an even more stupid idea than it first appears.</p>
<p>I am totally unsupportive of this proposed approach.</p>
<p>Good if it means it's clear what is acceptable & what is not</p>
<p>Is there a danger that asb will be displaced from the Vine to other areas eg Knole Park, car parks in town centre, station etc. what will be done to monitor and ensure that this doesn't happen or if it does that it is dealt with.</p>
<p>If they breach these orders, can criminal proceedings be made please!</p>
<p>It would be nice to have a safe space for teenagers developed in the area.</p>
<p>Will it move the kids somewhere else. Many come from out of area.</p>
<p>I think this is totally unfair and unnecessary. Sevenoaks offers young people no indoor or outdoor spaces in which to socialise, something which is critical to their well-being. To restrict access to the Vine would be to restrict their mental health so I am completely opposed to this. Let's support our young people rather than limit them.</p>
<p>I feel anti-social behavior is becoming increasingly problematic and having measures in place to curb it are essential.</p>
<p>I think this is a disgrace and perhaps you ought to consider how you can support the youngsters by providing spaces for them to socialise whether indoors or out. Our youngsters need to be able to have the ability to socialise safely and respectfully so a real consideration should be a what can we do for them attitude, not to brandish them as a nuisance.</p>
<p>I would like to hear how this can be achieved by the council and the police.</p>
<p>I do think that teens should be able to enjoy outdoor spaces in reasonably sized groups and I don't think that the terrible behaviour of a few should spoil the enjoyment of local spaces for others as there are very few areas for teens to go</p>
<p>It's a shame that some feel its ok to behave like this, when many young people of the area would love to use the space just to meet friends...and relax!</p>
<p>Or use the space for a specific activity aimed at teens... eg festival/ concerts/skills hub?</p>
<p>An alcohol free zone</p>
<p>There should be a stricter control on shops that agree to sell alcohol and/or vapes to under aged students</p>
<p>How will it be enforced? The problem gatherings seem to occur randomly on Friday evening with the occasional Saturday evening. There are periods when there are no large problematic gatherings.</p>
<p>This proposal really concerns me both as a resident and a parent. It worries me about power like this being given to local Councillors. I really don't think we have a huge issue with anti-social behaviour and in instances where it occurs I feel it is more appropriately dealt with by the police who are trained properly and have an understanding of the law.</p>

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<p>Whilst I agree that the ASB needs to be dealt with, I just hope that it won't stop all teenagers from using the space responsibly. It would be a shame if the behaviour of a few ruin it for everyone else. But enabling it to be a safe space to be used would be good. I currently wouldn't let my children go there at the moment due to the reputation of what has been going on.</p>
<p>I support the pspo but there is a lack of suitable places and activities for young people to meet and do in the sevenoaks area. The introduction of a pspo should be part of a wider plan to improve facilities for young people in the area.</p>
<p>Gypsies must be prevented from staking pitches in public spaces.</p>
<p>It can be a very threatening space even as an adult. We have stopped using it for our evening dog walks.</p>
<p>Why the focus on the Vine? There's regular anti-social behaviour in the Riverhead area, with little or nothing done to manage it.</p>
<p>It would be reassuring if a councilor/member of the police responded to this statement.</p>
<p>Good luck!</p>
<p>I think it needs careful and firm policing.</p>
<p>Hope it's successful. Then you can look at sorting out the behaviour in Riverhead Tesco car park.</p>
<p>No reason not to have it as a tool to use</p>
<p>Any kid found to be causing anti-social behaviour shouldn't just be asked to leave, they should be arrested and only released once their parents have collected them and given a warning.</p>
<p>I fully back protecting the Vine which is an important historical and social space for the town. When large gangs of disruptive young people congregate that it deters other users and often they leave litter and even damage to the area.</p>
<p>Report back to parents and have them take responsibility for their child's behaviour</p>
<p>It's a great idea and important to make residents feel safe. Also important for the security of local businesses.</p>
<p>The key is to provide the CSU and the Police with the flexibility to apply common sense for the Community so that they can't hide behind small print leading to delay and inaction frustrating the Community they serve.</p>
<p>It should cover the multistory car park/gym car park/playing field next to gym which also collects similar activity</p>
<p>Need to see more of a presence in all areas of the District</p>
<p>I encountered no anti-social behaviour and only vaguely heard of any. But I do get my dog off the lead on the cricket ground and so do countless dog walkers. This is the only place near we can let them run freely. A PSPO would take away that freedom. Does the basic law not give power to the police to prevent anti-social behaviour without needing a PSPO? Is the problem really that big? Isn't this just going to displace the problem to another location in Sevenoaks instead of addressing it?</p>
<p>It is unfortunately, in these difficult times to consider all possible ways to help in making Sevenoaks a safer place in which to live.</p>
<p>This should cover the disgraceful damaging activities which youths do on the green. But shouldn't prevent dog walkers letting well trained dogs off of lead on cricket</p>

ground where so many dogs play together when no cricket on. Such a shame to be banning dogs off lead in so many places
Please can we continue to let our dog off the lead
A super above
Disturbance anywhere at night when residents are trying to sleep affects quality of life. Not only that it will also put people from living in the locality. It is therefore unfair to ignore the problems as they will only increase.
Ensure the people are disbursed and do not return and are arrested and punished if they ignore the order
Ensure the situation is policed accordingly
Unfortunately it is a shame it is necessary
No or N/A x 107

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ORDER

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

SECTION 59

PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER

This order is made by the SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL (the 'Council') and shall be known as the **Public Spaces Protection Order, The Vine, Sevenoaks 2023**.

PRELIMINARY

1. The Council, in making this Order is satisfied on reasonable grounds that:

The activities identified below have been carried out in public places within the Council's area and have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, and that:

- the effect, or likely effect, of the activities:
- is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature,
- is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
- justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.

2. The Council is satisfied that the prohibitions imposed by this Order are reasonable to impose in order to prevent the detrimental effect of these activities from continuing, occurring or recurring, or to reduce that detrimental effect or to reduce the risk of its continuance, occurrence or recurrence.

3. The Council has had regard to the rights and freedoms set out in the European Convention on Human Rights. The Council has had particular regard to the rights and freedoms set out in Article 10 (right of freedom of expression) and Article 11 (right of freedom of assembly) of the European Convention on Human Rights and has concluded that the restrictions on such rights and freedoms imposed by this Order are lawful, necessary and proportionate.

THE ACTIVITIES

4. The Activities prohibited by this Order are:

- i. Engaging in anti-social behaviour which is likely to cause harassment alarm and distress to those persons in the locality
- ii. Returning to the area within 24 hours after being asked to leave.

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THE PROHIBITIONS

5. A person shall not engage in any of the Activities listed at paragraph 4(i) and 4(ii), anywhere within the Restricted Area known as “The Vine, Sevenoaks” and marked on the map at Schedule 1 of this order and labelled “The Vine Restricted Area and surrounding grass areas”.
6. This Prohibition is subject to the Exception stated below.
7. Not to return within 24 hours after being asked to leave.

THE REQUIREMENT

8. A person who is believed to have engaged in a breach of this Order is required to give their name and address to a police officer, police community support officer or other person designated by the Council.

THE EXCEPTION

9. Nothing in this order shall apply to a person who is consuming alcohol on premises listed in section 62 of the 2014 Act, the full text of section 62 appears at Schedule 2 of this Order.

DEFINITIONS

10. In this Order the following words or phrases are defined as follows:

‘Anti-social behaviour’ means conduct that has caused or is likely to cause nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to any person.

‘Authorised Officer’ means an employee or agent of the Authority who is authorised for the purpose of giving directions under this Order.

‘Council’ means Sevenoaks District Council.

‘Restricted Area’ means the The Vine and surrounding grasslands, Sevenoaks as shown on the maps at Schedule 1 of this order and labelled “The Vine, Sevenoaks Restricted Area” and shaded with a red boundary line.

'2014 Act' means the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

PERIOD FOR WHICH THIS ORDER HAS EFFECT

11. This Order is made on **insert date** and will come into force at midnight on **insert date** and will expire at midnight on **insert date**.
12. At any point before the expiry of this three-year period the Council can extend the Order by up to three years if they are satisfied on reasonable grounds that this is necessary to prevent the activities identified in the Order from occurring or recurring or to prevent an increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities after that time.

Dated **insert date**

**THE COMMON SEAL OF
SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL**
was here unto affixed in the
presence of:

Martin Goodman
Head of Legal Services
Authorised Signatory



insert seal

WD/374

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THIS ORDER?

CRIMINAL OFFENCE

Section 67 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime, and Policing Act 2014 says that it is a criminal offence for a person without reasonable excuse:

- (a) to do anything that the person is prohibited from doing by a public spaces protection order, or
- (b) to fail to comply with a requirement to which the person is subject under a public spaces protection order.

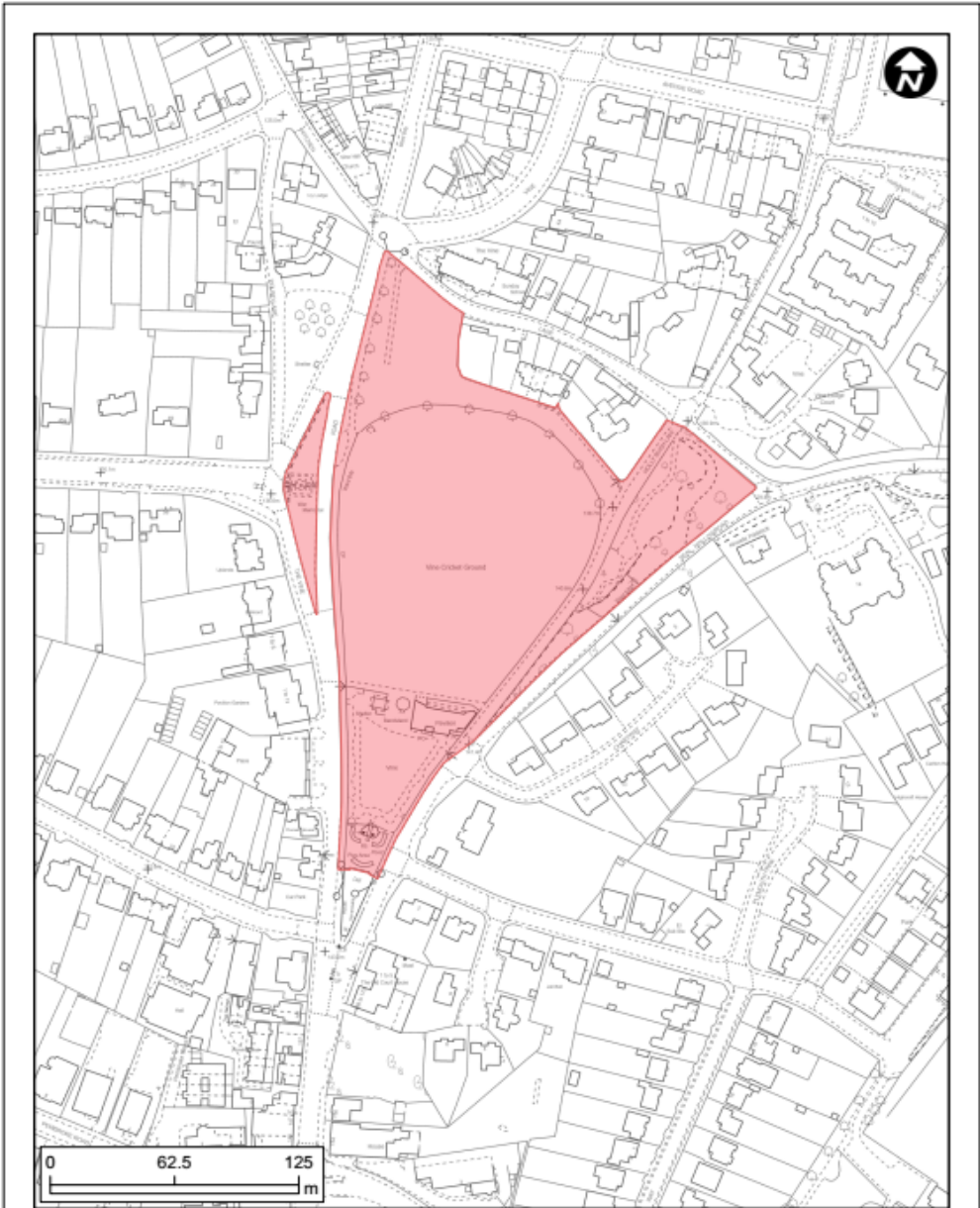
PENALTY


A person who is guilty of an offence under this Order shall be liable to a £100.00 Fixed Penalty Notice, or upon summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 (currently £1000) on the standard scale.

APPEALS

Any challenge to this order must be made in the High Court by an interested person within six weeks of it being made. An interest person is someone who lives in, regularly works in or visits the Restricted Areas. This means that only those who are directly affected by the restrictions have the power to challenge. The right to challenge also exists where an order is varied by the Council. Interested persons can challenge the validity of this order on two grounds: that the Council did not have the power to make the order, or to include particular prohibitions or requirements; or that one of the requirements of the legislation has not been complied with. When an application is made the High Court can decide to suspend the operation of the order pending the court's decision, in part or in totality. The High Court has the ability to uphold or quash the order or any of its prohibitions or requirement

Map of the Vine and Grass Areas - PSPO Outline



 © Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 100019428	The Vine	Scale: 1:2,500 @ A4 Date: May 2023
	Any Aerial Imagery is © Copyright Getmapping PLC or © Copyright Getmapping PLC and Bluesky Ltd	

Map generated from SIC GISMO.
Produced by the GG Team, Sevenoaks District Council

Schedule 2 - LEGISLATION

Offences

67 - Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Offence of failing to comply with order

- (1) It is an offence for a person without reasonable excuse—
 - (a) to do anything that the person is prohibited from doing by a public spaces protection order, or
 - (b) to fail to comply with a requirement to which the person is subject under a public spaces protection order.
- (2) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale

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**PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER - LONDON ROAD, HALSTEAD, ORPINGTON
BY PASS BADGERS MOUNT AND THE M25 SPUR ROAD**

People & Places Advisory Committee 30 November 2023

Report of: Chief Officer People & Places

Status: For Approval

Also considered by: Cabinet

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: The Community Safety Unit working alongside Kent Police, Met Police and Bromley Council would like to propose a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for 3 years at London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road. The area proposed is managed by KCC Highways. This report is for the 4 week public consultation to go ahead online that then the proposed PSPO would then go through the Councils Committee process. The roundabout comes under Bromley.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Community & Corporate Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Dyball

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

Recommendation to (title of committee):

(a) (if only one recommendation then delete (a))

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee

To approve the report for the consultation to take place

Introduction and Background

- 1.1.1 The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 placed a new duty on the Council to tackle Anti-social Behaviour (ASB), working co-operatively with the Police, social landlords and other agencies. The Act put victims at the heart of the response to ASB and was intended to give professionals the flexibility they needed to deal with any given situation.

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- 1.1.2 Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) were one of a number of new tools contained within the Act and were intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a particular area that was detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. They were designed to ensure the law-abiding majority could use and enjoy public spaces, safe from anti-social behaviour.
- 1.1.3 Councils are responsible for making the new PSPO. District Councils will take the lead in England with county councils undertaking the role only where there is no district council. The new power is not available to parish councils or town councils.
- 1.1.4 The PSPOs have replaced dog control orders, designated public place orders (also known as Alcohol Control Zones) and gating orders.

1.2 The requirements of a PSPO

- 1.2.1 The council can make a PSPO on any public space in its own area. The definition of a public space is wide and includes any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission, for example a shopping centre. It does not just apply to land owned by the District Council but to any open space anywhere in the borough (even land owned by Parish Councils or Kent County Council).
- 1.2.2 Before making a PSPO the council must consult with the local police. This is an opportunity for the police and council to share information about the area and the problems being caused as well as to discuss the practicalities of enforcement. In addition, the owner or occupier of the land should be consulted as well as community representatives as appropriate.
- 1.2.3 The test for a PSPO is designed to be broad and focus on the impact anti-social behaviour is having on victims and communities. A PSPO can be made by the council if they are satisfied on reasonable grounds that the activities carried out, or likely to be carried out, in a public space:
 - have had, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality;
 - is, or is likely to be, persistent or continuing in nature;
 - is, or is likely to be unreasonable; and
 - justifies the restrictions imposed.
- 1.2.4 The Statutory Guidance for frontline professionals on the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 advises that

'the council should give due regard to issues of proportionality: is the restriction proposed proportionate to the specific harm or nuisance that is

being caused? Councils should ensure that the restrictions being introduced are reasonable and will prevent or reduce the detrimental effect continuing, occurring or recurring. In addition, councils should ensure that the Order is appropriately worded so that it targets the specific behaviour or activity that is causing nuisance or harm and thereby having a detrimental impact on others' quality of life. Councils should also consider whether restrictions are required all year round or whether seasonal or time limited restrictions would meet the purpose.'

- 1.2.5 In relation to groups hanging around/ standing in groups/ playing games, the guidance advises as follows

'It is important that councils do not inadvertently restrict everyday sociability in public spaces. The Public Spaces Protection Order should target specifically the problem behaviour that is having a detrimental effect on the community's quality of life, rather than everyday sociability, such as standing in groups which is not in itself a problem behaviour.'

Where young people are concerned, councils should think carefully about restricting activities that they are most likely to engage in. Restrictions that are too broad or general in nature may force the young people into out-of-the-way spaces and put them at risk. In such circumstances, councils should consider whether there are alternative spaces that they can use.

People living in temporary accommodation may not be able to stay in their accommodation during the day and so may find themselves spending extended times in public spaces or seeking shelter in bad weather. It is important that public spaces are available for the use and enjoyment of a broad spectrum of the public, and that people of all ages are free to gather, talk and play games.'

- 1.2.6 A single PSPO can include multiple restrictions and requirements in one order. It can prohibit certain activities, such as the drinking of alcohol, as well as placing requirements on individuals carrying out certain activities, for instance making sure that people walking their dogs keep them on a lead.
- 1.2.7 The maximum duration of a PSPO is three years but they can last for shorter periods where appropriate. At any point before expiry the council can extend a PSPO by up to three years if they consider that it is necessary to prevent the original behaviour from occurring or reoccurring. If a new issue arises in an area where a PSPO is in force the council can vary the terms of the order at any time. This can change the size of the restricted area or the specific requirements or restrictions. As well as varying the PSPO, a council can also seek to discharge it at any time.

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1.3 The proposed PSPO for London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road

1.3.1 Officers from agencies such as Sevenoaks District Council, Kent Police, Met Police and Bromley Council have used evidence and professional judgement to develop this proposed PSPO and have considered all issues/areas against the stated test process. Over the past 18 months following other PSPOs introduced in areas such as Dartford and Southend car meets have unfortunately moved into the Sevenoaks District/Bromley Border of Hewitts Roundabout and London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road.

1.3.2 From 1 October 2022 to 12 October 2023 there have been 20 reports to Police regarding car meets and nuisance vehicles at London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road and the CSU have received over 15 reports including 6 in the last 2 months. The incidents occur sporadically and late at night into the early hours making the Policing of the location difficult.

1.3.3 From Met Police, especially Hewitts Roundabout they have supplied the following:-

With regards to reports this is a tricky one due to it being on the border of KENT and the way the 101/999 calls are routed and also the different locations given by everyone that calls in. Going back through emails and the What's app group we set up with the local residents I would take an educated guesstimate based on the following.

Despite the Met seemingly closing down the larger gatherings due to the operations our team has put together there is still a hard-core few who attend this location on a regular basis.

Based on our intel apart from a short period in the summer when they were completing the road works we have received a steady flow of calls and reports to the location mainly on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday evenings.

Met Police have had approx. 260 calls from multiple residents

Met Police have issued 172 - Section 59s and 232 CPWs to drivers and passengers all with restrictions not to return to the area. This is based on video footage sent in and also officers in attendance.

Met Police and Bromley Council have been trying to get a Camera installed for many months but seem to have hit a wall over ownership of the lampposts and weight of the cameras, plus power supply issues.

Both Kent and Met Police do routinely deploy units to visit the area on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

- 1.3.4 A multi-agency meeting was set up to address the concerns that was raised by residents reporting to Sevenoaks District Council, Kent Police, Met Police and Bromley Council. A report of issues was sent to Bromley Council and Sevenoaks District Council by a resident which is attached as Appendix A and includes the area concerned.
- 1.3.5 We would need to do a public consultation for a 4 week period if the agreement to do this goes ahead and this would be online.
- 1.3.6 The restrictions proposed for the PSPO are to include:
- 1.3.7 a) Engaging in, promoting, encouraging or assisting in the carrying out of any anti-social behaviour connected to the use of a mechanically propelled vehicle including but not limited to a car cruising event* (see definition below) in or on London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road. The activities include but are not limited to:
- a) (1) Sounding horns or playing loud music
 - (2) Revving engines
 - (3) Causing danger to other road users (including pedestrians)
 - (4) Causing damage or risk of damage to property
 - (5) Exceeding the permitted speed limit or racing
 - (6) performing stunts (including but not limited to performing doughnuts, skidding, handbrake turns, wheel spinning)
 - (7) Being verbally abusive, swearing or intimidating members of the public.
 - (8) Causing obstruction of a public highway or publicly accessible place (whether by moving or stationary vehicles or otherwise)
 - (9) Parking on a footway
 - (10) Sudden and harsh acceleration and braking
- b) Engaging in, promoting, encouraging, or assisting in the use of mechanically propelled vehicle which causes or is likely to cause danger to the public in or on London Road, Halstead, Orpington by Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road

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c) (1) Promoting, organising, or publicising the occurrence of Car Cruising* to take place in or on London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road (including but not limited to the use of email, the internet, social media, or any publication or broadcast medium); or

(2) attending any meeting in or on a London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road either as a mechanically propelled vehicle owner, driver, passenger or spectator where a reasonable person would consider that Car Cruising was taking place or was likely to take place.

1.3.8 *Definition of Car Cruising Event*

**Although most people attend these meetings in their cars, the definition of car cruising relates to any 'mechanically propelled vehicle, whether intended or adapted for use on a road'. Therefore, meetings using off road motorbikes or quadbikes are also included.*

It is two or more mechanically propelled vehicles collecting on the public highway or a publicly accessible place and those people associated with the collecting vehicles acting in an anti-social way. It can be either planned or unplanned.

Anti-Social Behaviour includes:

- Obstructing highways, residential or business properties
- Dangerous driving or inconsiderate driving
- Excessive noise caused by an engine, horn or amplified music
- Verbal abuse, swearing or intimidation of members of the public

1.4 Enforcement processes and penalties

1.4.1 It is an offence for a person, without reasonable excuse, to:

- do anything that the person is prohibited from doing by a PSPO
- fail to comply with a requirement to which the person is subject under a PSPO.

1.4.2 If a person fails to adhere to the PSPO they may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). Where the FPN is not paid within the required timescale, court proceedings may be initiated.

- 1.4.3 Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued by authorised District Council staff and that the fixed penalty notice fine be set at £100, with immediate effect.

Summary of timelines

1.4.4 The latest timeline for the process is set out below:

- 30 November 2023 – People & Places Advisory Committee
- 14 December 2023 – Cabinet decision to on whether the consultation is granted
- If granted 15 December – Consultation Goes live until 4 January
- 5 March 2024 – People & Places Advisory Committee
- 14 March 2024 – Cabinet decision to on whether is granted and order signed off.
- 1 April 2024 - New PSPO implemented in place and communications plan in place and new signage designed based on the feedback.
- April 2026 - PSPO will be reviewed after 2 years, but can remain in place for up to 3 years

Key Implications

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

- 1.4.5 The power to make a PSPO is contained in section 59 of the 2014 Act. A local authority can only make a PSPO if it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the conditions set out at paragraph 1.2.3 have been met.
- 1.4.6 In deciding whether to make/ extend/ vary or discharge a PSPO, the Council is required to have particular regard to the rights or freedom of expression and freedom of assembly set out in Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 1.4.7 Once the final PSPO measures are agreed the PSPO will need to be published in accordance with the regulations made by the Secretary of State.

Financial

Although there are no direct costs associated with the establishment of the PSPO, there will be a resource implication for the District Council for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices and the work associated with this.

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.

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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

Wellbeing

This document supports wellbeing and looks at this throughout the document.

Conclusions

For the Committee to approve the report and to approve that the 4 week consultation takes place from 15 December 2023.

Appendices

Appendix A - Report from Residents

Appendix B - Map outline of proposed area

Appendix C - Draft Survey

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People & Places

Request for Anti-social behaviour case review / Community Trigger

Car Cruising

BR6 7QS TN14 7DX

- COURT ROAD, CHELSFIELD
- A21 / HEWITTS ROUNDABOUT / M25 J4 SPUR ROAD
- COURT ROAD, BADGERS MOUNT / LONDON ROAD / CROW DRIVE / POLHILL



Request to:

- London Borough of Bromley Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
- Sevenoaks District Council Community Safety Unit

Request by:

- [REDACTED] (author of this document)

email: [REDACTED]

Tel: [REDACTED]

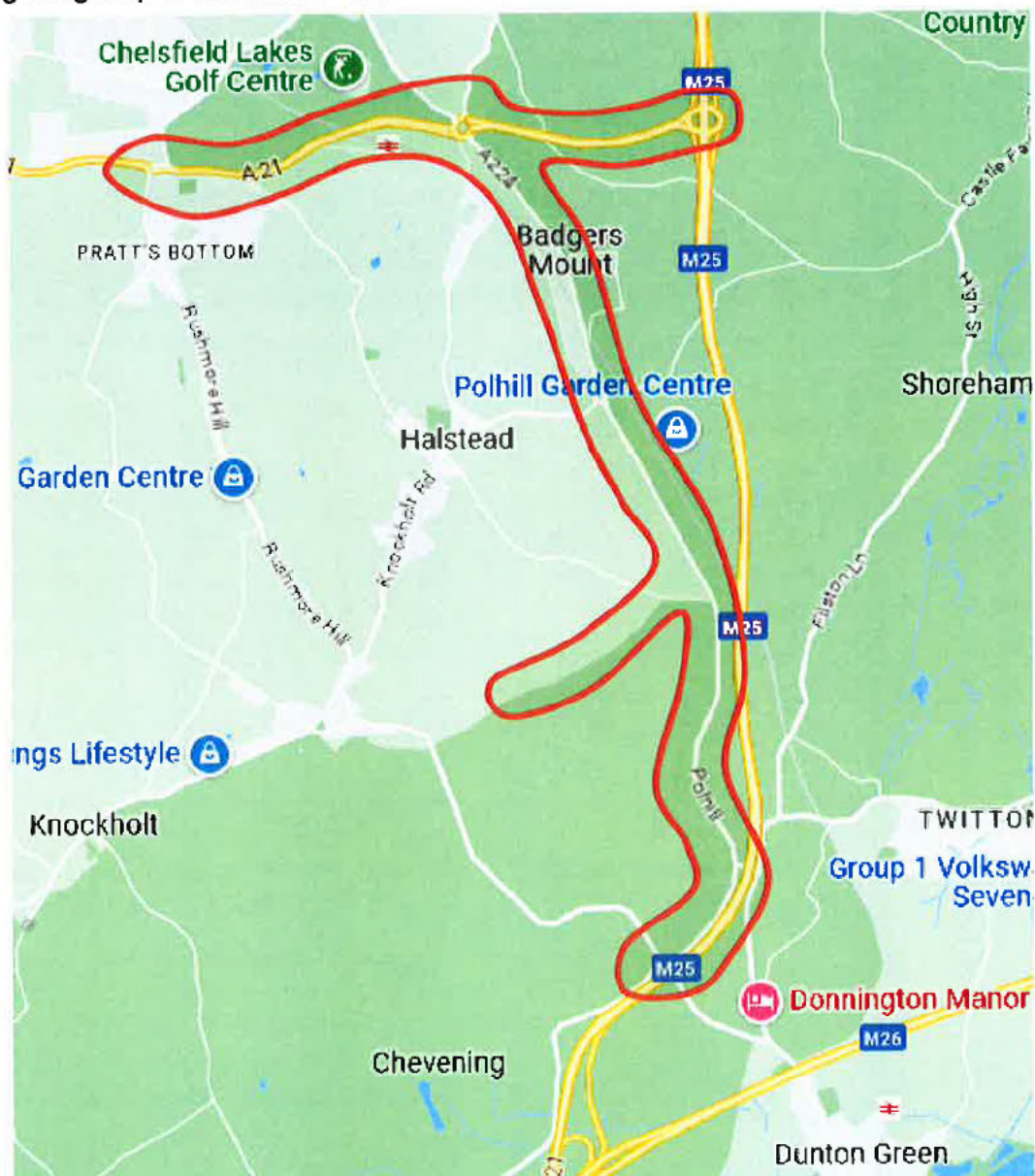
Introduction

Background

The issue of cars and bikes speeding around this area has been around for some years. Since late 2021 / early 2022, the problem increased to such proportions that there are organised Car Meetings centred around Hewitts roundabout late at night, typically between 23:30hr and 03:00hr if not dispersed. They occur up to three times a week, usually with over 100 cars and many spectators on the roads. The events are a high risk to the safety of the general public due to the careless driving of those taking part. Several people avoid driving in the area at night out of fear of being caught up in the action. The

noise of cars with modified exhausts and engines whose fuel-air mix is adjusted to make it run roughly and backfire, is highly intrusive and is causing a detrimental effect on the local residents' wellbeing causing stress and lack of sleep.

This request for an Anti-social behaviour case review / Community Trigger has been unanimously supported by the Parish Councils and Residents' Associations of Halstead, Badgers Mount, Knockholt, Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom.



Car cruising area outlined in red

Community Action to date

The Metropolitan Police (Met) gave a presentation to our local communities of Halstead, Badgers Mount, Knockholt, Pratts Bottom and Chelsfield in February 2023 to inform of the growth of car meets in the London area.

A leaflet advising how to report these incidents was distributed to the communities of Halstead, Badgers Mount, Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom. Halstead Parish Council (HPC) intends to meet with the Kent Police Commissioner in the near future.



Police Action to date

The Met engaged with and provided advice to Kent Police who now also attend meetings which disperse the meetings.

In February 2023, the Met contacted their local Traffic Management Officer to request a mobile motorway matrix board on the Hewitts roundabout to flash up warning signs around car meetings of plain clothes officers on patrol and seizure of vehicles.

In June 2023, the Met increased patrols together with Kent Police and is in contact with the local Neighbourhood Policing Team. Met Police traffic vehicles are tasked with patrols in the area from 1700-0100hr. Other traffic cars respond outside these hours.

The Police stress the importance of reporting incidents at the time, as only then can they be aware of them and know the impact on the community. Patrol units endeavour to attend but this depends on how the call is graded and what other calls are outstanding.

The Met's Road Safety Engineering Unit worked with the council and the contractors;

the new road surface on Hewitts roundabout is a high friction surface course (68PSV), chosen to prevent drifting at the location.

The Met advised HPC in June 2023 that London Borough of Bromley (LBB)-installed CCTV cameras would be installed on selected lamp-posts for the best views. They would be monitored 24 hours a day from LBB's control room. The cameras would record meetings gathering and LBB would pass the information to the Met's Proactive Safer Roads Team for investigation. The lamp-posts identified are the responsibility of TfL who has not responded to requests for permission to use them. LBB has offered the use of one of theirs which they believe would provide an acceptable view. The Met has also contacted LBB's Road Safety Team and is in regular contact with Kent Police regarding the situation. As at September, there appears to be no progress regarding the CCTV and the matter is ongoing.

The current situation

As at September 2023, car meetings continue unabated with measures taken so far appearing not to have had the desired effect. The most recent incidents were on 26/27 August and 3 September. At a meeting of around one hundred cars in July, about thirty registrations numbers were captured by an observer. All those car owners were served with Section 59 notices. Cars have been observed racing at high speed, side by side on Crow Drive.

Four sample incidents of car cruising have been reported by email to LBB ASB and SDC Community Safety units and the Met with a view to requesting a Community Trigger.

Speeding, loud vehicles are not restricted to night time car meetings. There is a trend for tuning engines and modifying exhausts that means that a growing number of cars are illegal in configuration and noise levels (over 72db). The noise of these cars causes stress to local residents and happens day and night on the major roads in the area.

The Request for a Anti-social behaviour case review / Community Trigger

Evidence

The Anti-social behaviour case review / Community Trigger is a process to ask the local council or other agencies to review the response to anti-social behaviour incidents that have been reported.

By means of this document, a multi-agency review of how this issue is dealt with is now requested.

As mentioned above, four sample occurrences have been reported to the Councils and the Met for incidents on 10, 13, 15 June, 1/2 July, 21/22 July, 26/27 August and 3 September 2023. Please see Appendix 1 for transcript of the emails to LBB and SDC following these events, together with photographic evidence captured at the time.

Despite local residents being urged to report car meetings to the Council and Police, a disappointing number actually do, possibly due to the fact that the situation has not improved many months after they first tried reporting. Calls to the Police on 101 regularly mean a wait of 20-30 minutes and some people are reluctant to call 999 or report to various agencies after the event.

When events occur, local residents seem keen to report them on social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Next Door. In the absence of large numbers of residents reporting incidents to the agencies, please see some snips of social media comments in Appendix 2.

Possible action to be considered – feedback from other district councils

Some other district councils have effective injunctions in place, banning car cruising. LBB and SDC could do likewise. However, these require a lot of resource and expense and may still fail in court. Southend City Council has found that a Public Space

Protection Order area, that enables on-the-spot fining of £100 to the offender, has so far proved more effective than their three year injunction but these too require appropriate resourcing to capture vehicles' registrations.

Action Requested

These car cruising events take place in an area that spans two local councils in different districts, LBB and SDC. This causes difficulties in the collection of evidence as this may be split between the two districts. It has also led to delays in police attending, or not attending at all, especially when the police call advisor responds that the event is not in their area but will "pass the message on to the neighbouring police force".

Events have been reported to both Councils and the Met, who have "adopted" the area as lead agency, working with Kent Police.

As mentioned above, it would be appreciated if several courses of action are considered for investigation, including:

- Multi-agencies from both districts to work together
- Prompt installation of CCTV cameras around Hewitts roundabout
- Installation of matrix board on Hewitts roundabout
- Apply for injunction banning car cruising
- Place a Public Space Protection Order on the area, and consider its resourcing and operation

Appendix 1

Emails sent to Anti-Social Behaviour Unit of London Borough of Bromley and Community Safety Unit of Sevenoaks District Council

REPORTING OF SAMPLE INCIDENTS OF CAR CRUISE MEETINGS

First email 16 June 2023, reporting incidents on 10, 13, 15 June 2023

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Jun 16, 2023 at 6:58 PM
To: community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk, community.safety@bromley.gov.uk
Subject: Anti-Social Behaviour - Car Cruising - Hewitts roundabout and Surrounding Area

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am sending this email to both Sevenoaks and Bromley Councils as the anti-social behaviour we have been experiencing for more than a year spans both councils, the issue straddling the boundary between the two districts.

Since 2021, but mainly since Spring 2022, there have been car cruising meets centred around the Hewitts roundabout at the end of the spur road off the M25 J4. These meets typically take place around midnight and, if not dispersed by the Police, will continue until around 3 am. The cars are very loud with tuned engines to make them backfire, there are typically over 100 of them and they race on the A21 from Pratts Bottom to the Hewitts roundabout. From there, either towards Orpington or Badgers Mount on the A224 or up the spur and on to the M25. Some continue from Badgers Mount to Polhill and as far as Morants Court roundabout towards Dunton Green.

We are in contact with Met Police since last Winter and provide evidence where possible to their Proactive Safer Roads Team. Several residents call the Police when a meet is occurring.

The Met Police have flagged this area as a hotspot for this ASB and are working with LBB to install CCTV cameras and warning notices on the roundabout. We are aware that the Met Police is liaising with Kent Police to encourage them to patrol the area.

The reason I am writing this email now is partly due to the fact that the meets are becoming more frequent, two or three times a week (in fact 10, 13 and 15 June just this week), and that is in addition to the individual loud backfiring cars that race up and down the A-roads at all times of day and night.

Most importantly though is the safety and wellbeing of the local communities of Halstead, Badgers Mount, Knockholt, Dunton Green, Chelsfield, Pratts Bottom and Orpington. It is terrifying if one inadvertently finds oneself being over and under-taken by these cars when innocently using the roads. I have heard that some people will not drive into the area at night now and someone who was too scared to pull out on to the roundabout due the cars racing round. The residents' wellbeing is affected as, not only is the noise horrendous, it also causes lack of sleep - even when the event is finished some cannot sleep due to the stress. I have heard from several people that they are at the end of their tether and really cannot take this much longer. I am one of those people. I know I am not the only one who tries to get to sleep in the quietest room in the house (in my case the dining room, under the table!) - we should not have to do this.

I know I represent our communities when I request that you do whatever possible to stop this ASB. Others in our communities may also contact you. We are monitoring this issue and may inform you every time there is a car meet so you can appreciate the scale of the problem. If we feel nothing is being done to resolve the matter, we may use the Community Trigger to request multiple agencies review this case. I truly hope it will not need to come to this.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I would welcome your comments.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Second email 3 July 2023, reporting incident on 1/2 July 2023

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Jul 3, 2023 at 12:08 AM
To: [REDACTED] community.safety@bromley.gov.uk, community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Subject: Re:Anti-Social Behaviour - Car Cruising - Hewitts roundabout and Surrounding Area -Second Email 2 July 2023

This email is the second one to report the same ASB in our area. Loud cars racing around the Hewitts roundabout area day and night is becoming the norm with the late-nighters going on till 2:30 am and the early-mourners starting around 4:30 am.

But to report "the same ASB" I am reporting organised late night car cruising, where groups of people gather and spectators and their cars block the carriageways, in addition to highly dangerous driving. This occurred again last night from around midnight and was still going on at 2:35 am today 2 July. I am aware that there were 999 calls made to the police at midnight as there was risk to life in the manner of the drivers' behaviour. At that time there were about 15 cars that were waiting around for others. Normal meetings in this area attract about 100 cars. It seems the police were unable to attend on this occasion, or at least for more than two and a half hours.

The effect is that residents of parts of Halstead and Badgers Mount are unable to sleep due to the noise and stress, plus the fear of using the roads late at night and the worry that there will be a horrendous accident where innocent drivers could be seriously injured, or worse.

I would be grateful if you would record this as a second occurrence of the same ASB as reported in 16 June 2023 for the purpose of building up a log for use when we utilise the community trigger to request a review of how this issue is dealt with.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Third email 23 July 2023, reporting incident on 21/22 July 2023

Subject: Re:Anti-Social Behaviour - Car Cruising - Hewitts roundabout and Surrounding Area - Third Email 23 July 2023

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 23/07/2023, 08:22
To: community.safety@bromley.gov.uk, community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Dear Sir, Madam,

This is my third email to report the same ASB in the same area, Car Cruising in the Hewitts roundabout and surrounding area. I have described the incidents and their effect on the community in my previous emails and the purpose of contacting you is to add to the log of same ASB as those reported on 16 June and 2 July to use towards utilising the Community Trigger to request a multi-agency review on how the issue is dealt with.

The most recent incident took place on 21/22 July 2023 from around 23:15 hr on 21 July. About 100 cars gathered around Hewitts restricting the approaches and spectators lined the verges and roadsides. The police were contacted by several local residents and two Met Police patrol cars dispersed the meeting at 00:08 hr on 22 July. Police ref: 94-220723.

LBB has stated that a camera will be temporarily fitted to a lamppost in order for the location to be monitored and the police contacted as soon as a gathering begins to form but I have not heard of any progress of this matter.

I would be grateful if you would record this as a third occurrence of the same ASB in the same location for the purposes of initiating the Community Trigger.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Agenda Item 8

Fourth email 16 September 2023, reporting incidents on 26/27 August and 3 September 2023

Subject: Re:Anti-Social Behaviour - Car Cruising - Hewitts roundabout and Surrounding Area - Fourth Email 16 September 2023

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 17/09/2023, 00:55

To: community.safety@bromley.gov.uk, community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Dear Sir, Madam,

This is my fourth email to report the same ASB in the same area, Car Cruising in the Hewitts roundabout and surrounding area. I have described the incidents and their effect on the community in my previous emails and the purpose of contacting you is to add to the log of same ASB as those reported on 16 June, 2 July and 21/22 July 2023 to use towards utilising the ASB Case review / Community Trigger to request a multi-agency review on how the issue is dealt with.

The most recent incidents took place on 26/27 August from around 23:30 hr and 3 September 2023 from around 01:30 hr. The police were contacted by several local residents and I believe the councils have already been informed after the events. One resident driving home reported that she was nearly hit by one of the cars on 27 August. The Met Police were not able to attend on 3 September as they were attending a road traffic accident on the A2 at the time.

Unfortunately, I was not able to drive to the location to gather evidence on either of these latest two occasions.

I would be grateful if you would record this as a fourth occurrence of the same ASB in the same location for the purposes of initiating the ASB Case review / Community Trigger, which will follow in the near future.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



M25 spur road



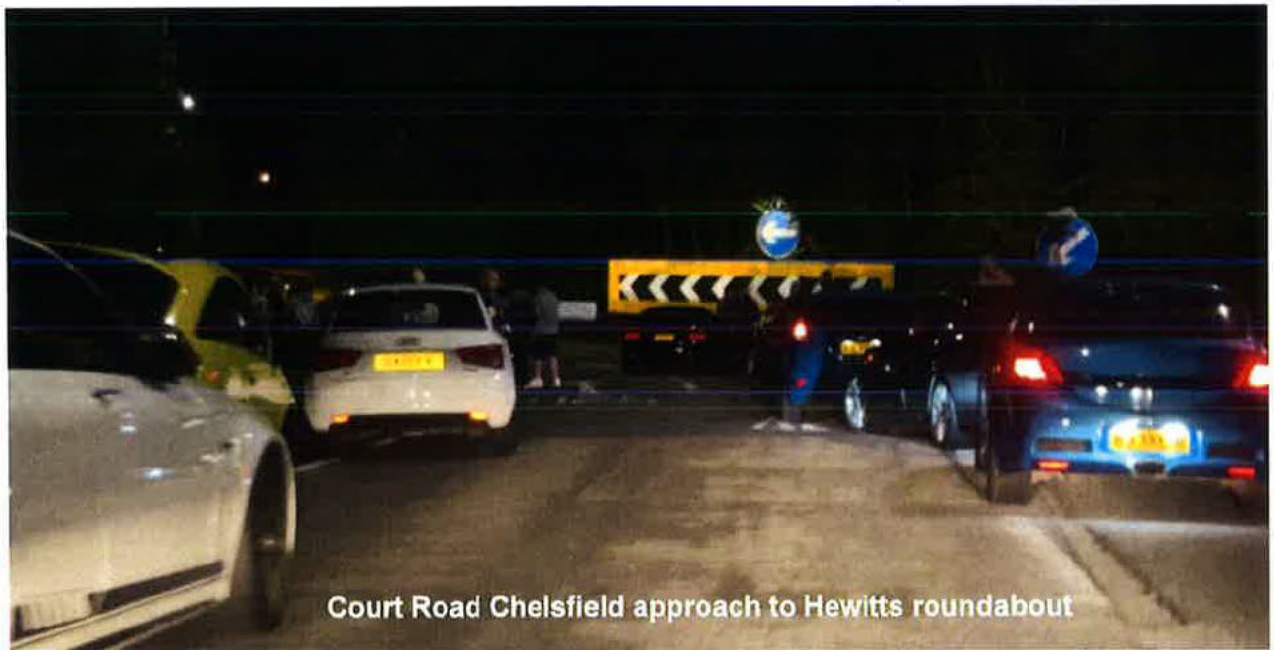
Hewitts roundabout towards Court Road Chelsfield exit



Court Road Badgers Mount approach to Hewitts roundabout



Hewitts roundabout towards Court Road Chelsfield exit



Court Road Chelsfield approach to Hewitts roundabout



M25 Spur road. Dispersal of cars towards M25 following arrival of police patrol (01:30hr)

Appendix 2

Emails, social media posts and comments during car cruising incidents.

Below are snips from emails and social media platforms, Facebook, WhatsApp and Next Door. The content below is far from exhaustive but demonstrates the general attitude and frustration of the local communities.

Most of the posts are from the last six months but a few date as far back as October 2022 to demonstrate the length of time that this anti-social behaviour has been commented on amongst local residents.

Laura Trott MP ●
9 Feb · 🌐

UPDATE ON CAR RACING AT JUNCTION 4 M25 SPUR ROAD

I have received a number of emails recently from concerned locals about dangerous car racing meetings taking place on the border of the London Borough of [#Bromley](#) and [#Halstead](#), at Junction 4 of the M25 spur road leading to the Hewitts roundabout.

Following the emails I raised the concerns with the police, and am pleased they have now started attending the race meetings to put the drivers off from taking part. Whilst I am still hopeful the events will cease, I am happy to follow up with the police over any further reports of issues, so do not hesitate to get in touch.

The brilliant Parish Council have also arranged for the Metropolitan Police to speak to local residents about this issue on Wednesday 22 February 2023, 7:00 pm at the Parish Room, Church Road, Halstead, TN14 7HG. At this meeting they will explain the car culture of noisy exhausts, vehicle modifications and number plate offences, and give an insight into the Police's tactics and operations to protect public spaces and stop these offences. Please do attend if you are interested.

Halstead, Knockholt & Badgers Mount Community ...

Top contributor [REDACTED]

Another night of no sleep, I would hate to need to drive on that Rd at night, so scary.

👍👎🗨️ 7 23 comments

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment 📧 Send

[REDACTED]

1y Like Reply 1 🍊

[REDACTED] yes it's the current "must have" trend to make the engine run so lean that it backfires. It's moron little boys who are inadequate and this is the only thing they can think of that might impress. Doesn't do any good to the engine either and I hope the engine blows up.

1y Like Reply 1 🍊

Write a reply...

[REDACTED]

I came through hewitts roundabout at about 12:45 last! There was about 20-30 cars all parked up and looked like they were racing on the strip towards the M25!

K [REDACTED]

Anyone else fed up with the illegal street racing at the end of Court Road? ...happening across police boundaries that they are reluctant to do anything. They go from Court Road to Hewitts Roundabout quite often; I hear them in Otford (it just sounds like extra loud motorway traffic here)...

[REDACTED] 1 July · 🌐

Just phoned in a car meet to 999, not sure how long it was going on but there were about 15 cars parked/waiting when we passed through just now. I could hear in the background noise from the control room that someone else was also reporting it.

👍 You and 1 other 5 comments Seen by 14

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00:17

North Crofton · 20w · 🌐

Just drove round Hewitt roundabout coming towards Orpington and there must be around 50 cars parked at all the exits of the roundabout, along the street, up in the banks and even in the middle of the road with the young drivers standing in the street. A young guy in a gold BMW nearly forced me off the road trying to overtake me at speed on the inside. Looks like kids have found a new place to hang out, be careful if driving anywhere near there!

👍👎👤 17 neighbours Like Comment Share

See 10 previous comments

Halstead

Please report this, there was a meeting not long ago about this happening. The police need to know every time before it really is too late and some gets killed!!

19w ❤️ 1 Like Reply Share

North Crofton

I have to say that anyone who uses public open roads to to race any vehicle is asking for trouble. I was a motorcycle racer in the 1970's and raced for 10 years on circuits and on the roads (Closed) The isle of... See more

19w ❤️ 1 Like Reply Share

Badgers Mount

Here we go again with the midnight racing 🏎️ why are the police not stopping these idiots?

5 comments

👤 Angry Comment 📄 Send

👤 You and 5 others

Top comments ▾

👤

I did hear sirens so hopefully they are doing something to stop it

18w Like Reply 1 🗨️

👤

Most probably be back tonight. They all need hefty fines.

Subject **FW: FW: Car Racing Hewitts roundabout**

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 01 June 2023 16:01

To: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: FW: Car Racing Hewitts roundabout

Hi [Redacted]

I got back from holiday late last night. My daughter left our house at about 11.15 pm. She went up wheatsheaf hill to go to Orpington. She was unable to get on the roundabout. She said there were four BMW cars sliding and wheelieing round and round the roundabout This is so dangerous and we cant even use our own roads. My daughter said that when she was staying at our house she was sleeping in the back bedroom but could very plainly hear the cars at night.

I wonder if you would like to add this information to your files.

Best wishes

[Redacted]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Halstead, Knockholt & Badgers Mount Community

8 h 🗨️

Is anyone doing anything about the Cars screeching on the roundabout?????

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment

Rules

So they were at it again last night 🏎️🏎️🏎️ and still nothing is being done.

[Redacted]

👤 Top contributor

Nearly got hit by it .

8 h Like Reply

👤

Call 999 and report it as dangerous driving

7 h Like Reply

00:19

K North Crofton · 20w ·

Problem is the police seem unwilling or unable to put a stop to these people.

19w Like Reply Share

N West Chislehurst ·

It's the boy racers - they meet there all the time. I can hear them racing from my house and get woken up all the time by them. It's only a matter of time before they kill someone with their stupidity and dangerous driving.

19w Like Reply Share

J Perry Hill ·

At least they're meeting on a road that is designed for driving at an increased or increasing speed.
as opposed to a built-up area.

They did re-introduce brands hatch Wednesdays, but the minority ruined it for the others... in terms of behaviour.

The car scene is big once again, and as someone previously said, there are no facilities where your joe average can go and race/drift their cars regularly.

I'm not condoning their behaviour, only stating that i can understand why they do it.

00:20

A Halstead ·

Police Sergeant Mark Wells is giving a presentation on Wednesday 22nd February at 7pm in The Parish Room, Church Road, Halstead to discuss what the police are doing and why this is such a problem in London.

28w 2 Like Reply Share

Cheshfield ·

the only question I want answered is how they plan on stopping it.

24w 8 Like Reply Share

A Halstead ·

25w Like Reply Share

A Halstead ·

wrote to Kent Constabulary, who forwarded my email to the Met, who said they had notified a local police action group. That was last October and still the racing continues. Shall I meet you on Wednesday to find out?

00:34

Orpington Gossip 2.0 ·

21 Oct 2022 ·

Please be careful at the top of Court Road by the farm and roundabout there are lots of cars and police. Looks like illegal street racing.

Like Comment Share

1

1 share

Top comments ▾

Apparently this happens every week!!

25w Like Reply

C Olford · 18 Feb

The noise from the cars racing up and down around Hewitts Farm and surrounds could be heard in Otford last night. We need to write to Gareth Bacon and Laura Trott to ask Met and Kent Police respectively to do something about it. They can be contacted on their websites. Everyone needs to do this. The thing that...

P Orpington Town Centre-Priory Gardens · 8 Apr

Anyone else fed up with the illegal street racing at the end of Court Road? @Marie Driving at 100 MPH at Hewitt's Farm Roundabout is simply impossible. The tyres on practically any vehicle will simply not grip the road at all at that speed.

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██████████
A few cars parked up near the round about again. My son's just asked them to move their F**** cars as he couldn't even get past them as they were blocking the road coming from the Bo Peep. Has been reported.

I heard loud cars tonight but sadly that's the norm these days now the A21 dual carriageway Hewitts-bound starts at the bottom of the hill giving drivers more road for them slam their foot down on the gas and reach a higher speed before the roundabout.

Mon 7 Aug

██████████
I've heard them since 14:00hrs today. Went out but yet again I could not locate them. On a good note, our 5am phantom seems to have disappeared but we now have a 15:00hrs idiot m-f. Starts on top of Rushmore hill and spends an hour just being anti social driving

00:23

Chelsfield Park · 21w · 🌐

Anyone else fed up with the illegal street racing at the end of Court Road? It's a regular occurrence but the Police and local authorities seem to be completely uninterested in stopping it! It's on again tonight and has been since around 11.30, now 01.16 with no sign of it stopping. Totally fed up with my sleep being disturbed, but more importantly, it won't be long before someone is killed or seriously injured by these idiots. Reported it again to the Police but may as well not bother. Has anyone else reported it?

10 neighbours Like

See 22 previous comments

██████████ Author · Chelsfield Park
I understand that were at it again last night (Friday 21/4) but I took a sleeping pill and put some ear plugs in so didn't hear anything

00:22

Chelsfield Park · 21w · 🌐

██████████ · Goddington Park
A couple of weeks back I was driving home very late and ended up on the "racetrack" how I am still alive still to tell the tale I really don't know.

I had to come off M25 to go along to courts road.
There were lots of cars doing excess of 100 mph+
No concern for the "normal" road user.

I am out late next Saturday so rather than take a chance, I will go home via swanley

██████████ Author · Chelsfield Park
that must've been very scary for you, how they haven't killed or seriously injured an innocent road user with their reckless behaviour is beyond me. They best thing to do if you experience something like this is to report it.

██████████ · Goddington Park
yes it was.
Even with 30 years driving experience you don't expect the last part of your journey home to be on a race track.

I have reported, and will continue to do so if I come across it again.

Sunday

Yet again lots of racing. Tried 101, pointless long delays as operators dealing with emergencies. All previous reporting appears to vanish into a black hole. Clearly the police do not have the resources to deal with the asb. Any ideas on next steps?

Try 999. I hear them too refer to Met police proactive safer roads team. Hewitts roundabout BR6 7QS. I really don't want to have to drive over there now to get evidence.

Thanks [redacted] likewise. Went out earlier at 17:00 as they were warming up but too much traffic to id specific vehicles. It just seems we are wasting our time with the police and their inappropriately named "proactive" safer road team.

North Crofton · 20w · 🌐

Just drove round Hewitt roundabout coming towards Orpington and there must be around 50 cars parked at all the exits of the roundabout, along the street, up in the banks and even in the middle of the road with the young drivers standing in the street. A young guy in a gold BMW nearly forced me off the road trying to overtake me at speed on the inside. Looks like kids have found a new place to hang out, be careful if driving anywhere near there!

17 neighbours Like Reply Share

Goddington
That's not new. Been like that for ages, sadly.
20w Like Reply Share

Foots Cray & North Cray
Where's the police?! Surely that dangerous and illegal
20w 8 Like Reply Share

West Chelsfield
Accident by Locks Bottom Esso garage roundabout A21. Police and road blocked (edited)

South Hayes

It has been going on to my knowledge since at least last September if not before. The police have been looking at it but it involves two different police forces, Kent and the Met as it is in part of the M25 slip road. We found ourselves in the middle of a race and it was really frightening.

20w Like Reply Share

Author · North Crofton
It's just a matter of time before there's a serious accident
20w 3 Like Reply Share

Goddington Park
and sadly it will be an innocent motorist that gets caught up in it.
20w 5 Like Reply Share

Author · North Crofton
that's always the way

South Orpington

Sounds like an illegal road race coming up... let the Police know...

20w Like Reply Share

Cockmannings
They have been using the roundabout for ages
20w Like Reply Share

Halstead
Please report this, there was a meeting not long ago about this happening. The police need to know every time before it really is too late and some gets killed!!
20w 1 Like Reply Share

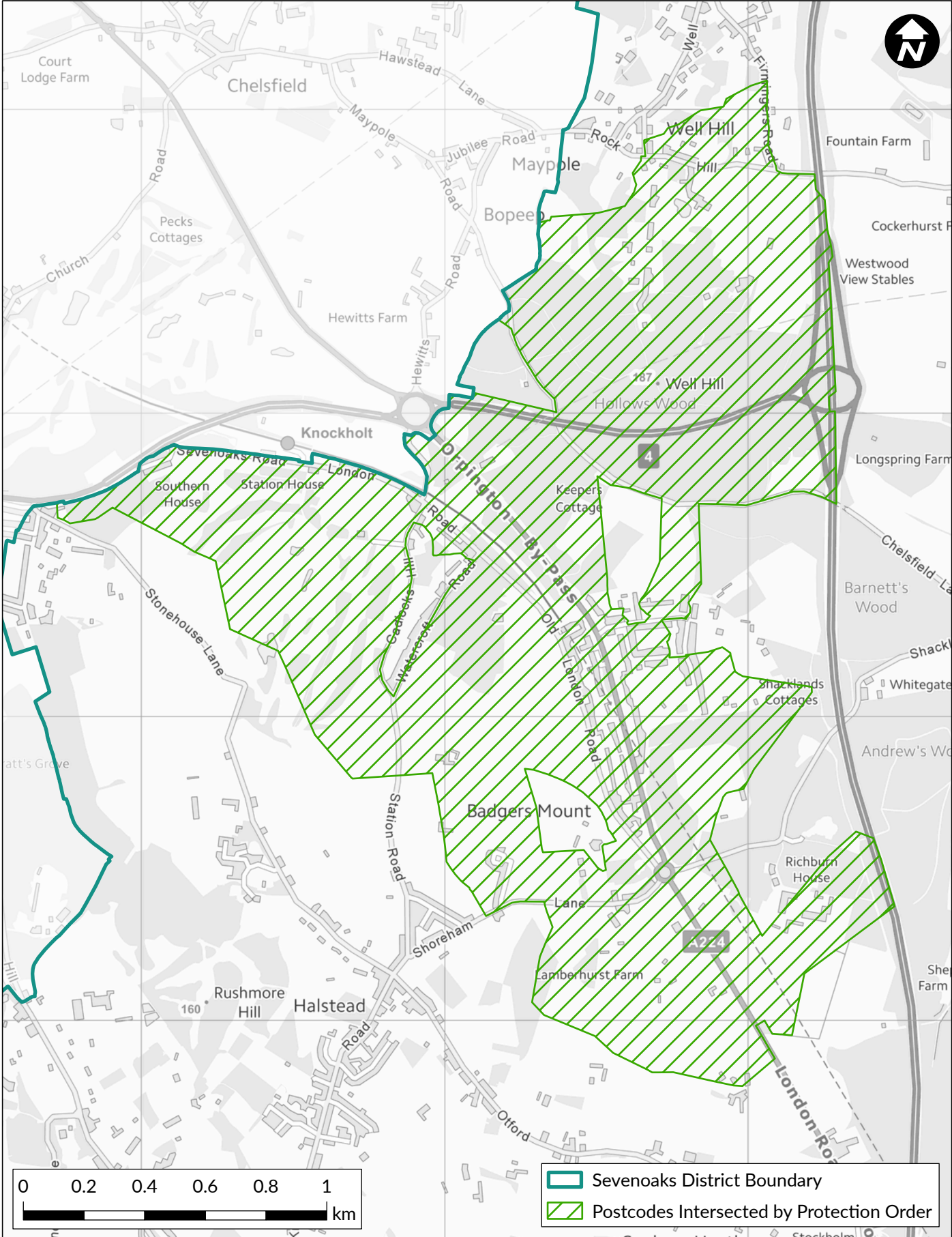
North Crofton
I have to say that anyone who uses public open roads to race any vehicle is asking for trouble.

Halstead
Been going on for months !!!
20w Like Reply Share

Crofton Heath
My daughter-in-law reports them every time it happens, nothing is ever done. They race each other.

West Chelsfield

It's the boy racers - they meet there all the time. I can hear them racing from my house and get woken up all the time by them. It's only a matter of time before they kill someone with their stupidity and dangerous driving.
20w Like Reply Share



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Ordnance Survey AC0000822250

Public Spaces Protection Order

Badgers Mount

Postcodes Intersecting Public Spaces Protection Order Roads

Scale: 1:17,000 @ A4
Date: October 2023

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Consultation Draft Questions Public Spaces Protection Order

Sevenoaks District Council is considering making a Public Spaces Protection Order to address the excessive level of noise, nuisance, annoyance, danger or risk of harm or injury caused by motor vehicles to members of the public at London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road. The Council is responding to residents in Halstead and Badgers Mount. Your feedback would be appreciated

Q1 Do any of the following activities caused by a motor vehicle create excessive noise, nuisance, annoyance, danger or risk of harm to you? *(Respondents will be given 3 choices of answer: YES (frequently); YES (occasionally); NO*

- Motor cycles, quadbikes and other mechanically propelled vehicles that are ridden off road on land other than a road (e.g parks, woods and countryside)
- Gathering and/or Causing obstruction on a public highway or in a publicly accessible place or private land, whether moving or stationary for the purpose of displaying vehicles
- Speeding
- Driving in Convoy
- Racing
- Performing Stunts
- Sounding Horns (as to cause public nuisance
- Revving Engines
- Wheel Spins
- Playing Music (as to Cause public nuisance
- Recording any of the listed activities on any device
- Using threatening, intimidating behaviour towards another person
- Creating excessive noise
- Creating a danger or risk of injury to road users including pedestrian
- Creating significant public nuisance
- Creating significant annoyance to the public
- Committing any traffic offence covered by legislation
- Congregating to spectate the above activities
- Engaging in any other activity that a reasonable person would consider to be “car cruising”.

Q2 If there are other activities related to noise, nuisance, annoyance, danger or risk of harm caused by a motor vehicle, please specify them below;

Q3 If you have answered, yes to the above question, then please indicate below the day and time of day when excessive noise, nuisance, annoyance, danger

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or risk of harm from motor vehicles is an issue

(Respondents will be able to specify the day: Monday - Thursday; Friday; Saturday; Sunday along with a time period: being sub-divided (06:00 - 09:00; 9:00 - 12:00; 12:-16:00; 16:00-19:00; 19:00-23:00; 23:00-06:00.

- Q4 Do you think there is a need for the Council to control excessive noise, nuisance, annoyance, danger or risk of harm caused by motor vehicles by using a Public Safety Protection Order?
(Respondents will be given 3 choices of answer: Yes; No; Don't Know
- Q5 The proposed control zone will cover London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road: what is your view on the size of the proposed control zone?
(Respondents will be given 3 choices of answer: Its about right, it covers the area of where the issue is; It's too large; It's too small)
- Q6 Do you agree with the below proposed restrictions for the PSPO
- 1.1.1 a) Engaging in, promoting, encouraging or assisting in the carrying out of any anti-social behaviour connected to the use of a mechanically propelled vehicle including but not limited to a car cruising event* (see definition below) in or on London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road. The activities include but are not limited to:
- a) (i) Sounding horns or playing loud music
 - (ii) Revving engines
 - (iii) Causing danger to other road users (including pedestrians)
 - (iv) Causing damage or risk of damage to property
 - (v) Exceeding the permitted speed limit or racing
 - (vi) performing stunts (including but not limited to performing doughnuts, skidding, handbrake turns, wheel spinning)
 - (vii) Being verbally abusive, swearing or intimidating members of the public.
 - (viii) Causing obstruction of a public highway or publicly accessible place (whether by moving or stationary vehicles or otherwise)
- b) Engaging in, promoting, encouraging, or assisting in the use of mechanically propelled vehicle which causes or is likely to cause danger to the public in or on London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road

c) (i) Promoting, organising, or publicising the occurrence of Car Cruising* to take place in or on London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road (including but not limited to the use of email, the internet, social media, or any publication or broadcast medium); or

(ii) attending any meeting in or on a London Road, Halstead, Orpington By Pass Badgers Mount and the M25 Spur Road either as a mechanically propelled vehicle owner, driver, passenger or spectator where a reasonable person would consider that Car Cruising was taking place or was likely to take place.

- Q7 If you have any other comments about the restricted area please state them below
- Q8 If you have any further comments regarding noise and nuisance caused by a motor vehicle then please state them below
- Q9 What is your postcode?

The survey will also have the approved equality questions included.

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SEVENOAKS DISTRICT CITIZENS' ADVICE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 30 NOVEMBER 2023

Report of: Chief Officer People & Places

Status: For Approval

Also considered by: Cabinet 14 December 2023

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This report sets out details of the proposed Service Level Agreement for Citizens' Advice in the District and seeks approval for funding to support their work over the next three years.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Community & Corporate Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Dyball

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

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the draft Service Level Agreement for 2024-27 be approved.

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee

That the report be noted.

Introduction and Background

1. The existing three-year Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Citizens' Advice North & West Kent and Citizens' Advice Edenbridge & Westerham was approved at the Cabinet meeting on 18 March 2021 with a subsequent approval of financial changes to the SLA on 1 March 2022.
2. The SLA three-year agreement started on 1 April 2021 and will finish on 31 March 2024.
3. Quarterly monitoring meetings are held between officers and Citizens' Advice Offices and an annual review meeting is held between the Portfolio Holder and Deputies, Chief Officer People & Places, Citizens' Advice Trustee Chairs and Managers.

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4. The information required from Citizens' Advice for quarterly meetings is set out in Schedule B of the Service Level Agreement 2024/27 and that required for the Annual Review Meeting is set out in Schedule C. The annual review period was historically from October to September each year but for this new three-year agreement will be from April to March each year. Review meetings and the Annual Review Meeting will be adjusted accordingly.

Details of Service Level Agreement (SLA) 2024-27

5. Discussions regarding the three year SLA to cover the period 2024-27 have taken place during 2023.
6. Suggested changes have been incorporated into the draft SLA set out at Appendix A. The key changes are set out below:
 - Some updates to the Housing Advice Service to account for changes in regulation.
 - Inclusion of a list of areas of the district that each of the Citizens' Advice covers.
 - The annual review period was historically from October to September each year but for this new three-year agreement will be from April to March each year. Review meetings and the Annual Review Meeting will be adjusted accordingly.
 - A provision has been added to allow for the Council to adjust the payment sums included by giving a minimum of three months' notice in writing to the Citizens' Advice. The Citizens' Advice will respond with any resulting changes in their service and a variation to the SLA will be agreed.

Key Implications

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

Financial

7. The level of grant for the SLA in 2024-27 in the Council’s budgetary financial plan is £98,540 per year for the General Advice Service and £18,000 per year for the Housing Advice Service and these sums are included in the draft SLA.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

8. This is a Service Level Agreement as opposed to a contract that has contractual liabilities. Accordingly, this is a statement of what is expected from Citizens’ Advice and the Council with a requirement for the Citizens’ Advice to provide performance data on the level and nature of advice given to clients.

9. The SLA covers statutory obligations, including Child Safety, Equalities and Safeguarding policies.

10. The SLA includes a requirement on the Citizens’ Advice to maintain an up-to-date risk assessment relating to the provision of the service and make this available to the Council.

Equality Assessment

11. Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through this report directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and does not vary between groups of people. The results of this analysis are set out immediately below.

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The SLA includes obligations on the Citizens’ Advice to comply fully with the Council’s commitment to ensuring that the service is non-discriminatory and that clients can access the service taking account of

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Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
		any vulnerability or other specific housing needs.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	The SLA provides for the Citizens' Advice to work to reach and promote its services to those most in need. The Council will work with the Citizens' Advice to achieve this.
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		No negative impacts identified

Conclusions

This paper asks that you approve the Citizens' Advice Service Level Agreement for 2024-27.

Appendices

Appendix A - draft Citizens' Advice SLA 2024-27

Background

N/A

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People & Places

Service Level Agreement between Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and
Citizens Advice (CA) – 2024-27

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1.0 Scope of the Agreement

- 1.1 This Agreement establishes the relationship between the **Purchaser** and **Provider** in the provision of independent advice and information Service and Housing Advice.
- 1.2 **The Purchaser** means Sevenoaks District Council (SDC), its employees and any person authorised to act on behalf of SDC.
- 1.3 **The Provider** means Citizens Advice North & West Kent and Citizens Advice Edenbridge & Westerham, acting together to provide a cohesive, District-wide, integrated service (CA).
- 1.4 **Clients** are residents and people working in the Sevenoaks District seeking information or advice and, for independent Housing Advice, any person who has ties to the District and falls within the scope of the Housing Advice eligibility conditions set out in Schedule A. It is recognised that the Provider may be required to provide a service to other callers but that is outside the scope of this Agreement.
- 1.5 **The Service** is the provision of the following, according to the Service Standards and other arrangements set out in this Agreement:
 - a) **General Advice Service:** free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to residents of the District on a wide range of issues including, but not exclusively, benefits, housing, money advice, employment, consumer relationships and relationship breakdown in line with the membership standards of Citizens Advice.
 - b) **Housing Advice Service:** a specialist approach to provide debt counselling and mortgage arrears advice and to prevent homelessness where possible. Eligibility conditions are set out in Schedule A. The definition of homelessness is taken from s.175 Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, an extract of which is attached at Schedule D.
- 1.6 **Period of the Agreement:** This is a three-year Agreement that will start on 1st April 2024 and finish on 31st March 2027 unless it is terminated or varied in line with the terms and conditions set out in this Agreement.

2.0 Service Standards

- 2.1 The Provider will operate to the requirements of the Advice Service Alliance and will comply with the Advice Quality Standards.
- 2.2 The Provider will provide a service to Clients using means that include email, face-to-face sessions (by appointment and/or 'drop in'), telephone and video calls. The Provider will ensure that the service is available via a combination of these means to Clients between 09:30 hrs to 15:30 hrs Monday to Friday. In accordance with Section 4, the Provider will keep under review the best means for assisting Clients and adapt as necessary. The Service will not be offered during the two weeks over the Christmas and New Year period or on Bank Holidays.
- 2.3 Clients requiring Housing Advice will be assisted within two working days of their approaching the Provider.
- 2.4 For Housing Advice, the Provider will keep a record of all discussions with the Client including the type of advice provided as set out in Schedule A to enable a seamless service to be provided to the Client.
- 2.5 The Provider will notify the Purchaser of the agreed hours and means of access in April of each year. Any changes to the hours of access will be undertaken only after consultation with

the Purchaser, unless it is for a part of the service funded wholly by other funders. This consultation must be undertaken in advance of any public notice of intention to make such changes.

- 2.6 The Provider will maintain an appropriate core of volunteer trained advisers covering the District.
- 2.7 The Provider will advertise the Service in local communities, Sevenoaks District Council premises, Sevenoaks District Council's website and from time to time in conjunction with the District Council, in "In Shape" magazine.
- 2.8 The Provider will consult the Purchaser annually about the content of a uniform client satisfaction survey which the Provider will undertake on an annual basis for each year of the Agreement, using a minimum random sample of 150 Clients evenly distributed between the three locations.
- 2.9 Where appropriate CA and SDC will share training sessions which benefit the CA staff and Housing officers and are cost effective.
- 2.10 The Provider will acknowledge the financial support of SDC in all its publicity and will display the District Council's logo in a prominent position at each of the three offices.
- 2.11 The Purchaser and Provider will work together to attract external funding for the work of the CA.

3.0 Policies and Safeguarding

- 3.1 The Provider will ensure that policies are in place so that the Service complies with existing and future legislation. This should include an Equal Opportunities Policy together with appropriate monitoring of BME groups to ensure fairness and equal access among those eligible for the Service. The Provider should embrace Sevenoaks District Council's Equality Scheme.
- 3.2 The Provider will ensure that the Service is covered by a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy, will adhere to Citizen Advice's Safeguarding Policies, that all staff have read and understand the Policy and that appropriate enhanced level DBS checks are in place. The Provider will have regard to the District Council's Safeguarding Policies.
- 3.3 The Provider will maintain an up-to-date risk assessment relating to the provision of the Service and make this available to the Purchaser.
- 3.4 The Provider will make arrangements to insure professional negligence, public and employers' liability.
- 3.5 The Provider will make available copies of the policies including safeguarding policies mentioned in this section if requested by the Purchaser.

4.0 Performance Review and Monitoring

- 4.1 Monitoring will be carried out on a quarterly basis with an annual service review. Payment for years 2 and 3 will be dependent upon the Provider's successful delivery of the Agreement in years 1 and 2.
- 4.2 The Provider will provide the Purchaser with a combined quarterly monitoring report by 21st of July, October, January and April of each year using the report headings set out in Schedule B, relating to the quarters April-June, July-September, October-December, January-March.
- 4.3 The Provider will provide the Purchaser with information for the annual service review by the end of May each year using the report headings set out in Schedule C.
- 4.4 The Provider agrees to meet the Purchaser quarterly to review progress.

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5.0 Payment and Financial Conditions

5.1 The Purchaser will pay the Provider in advance by April 10th the sums set out below subject to the variation terms in this Agreement and the Provider's satisfactory performance in delivering this Agreement.

Year	General Advice Service	Housing Advice Service	Total £ per year
2024/25	£29,562 for Edenbridge £68,978 for Sevenoaks and Swanley	£6,000 for Edenbridge £12,000 for Sevenoaks & Swanley	£116,540
2025/26	£29,562 for Edenbridge £68,978 for Sevenoaks and Swanley	£6,000 for Edenbridge £12,000 for Sevenoaks & Swanley	£116,540
2026/27	£29,562 for Edenbridge £68,978 for Sevenoaks and Swanley	£6,000 for Edenbridge £12,000 for Sevenoaks & Swanley	£116,540

5.2 If the Purchaser needs to adjust the sums set out above it will provide a minimum of three months' notice in writing to the Provider. The Provider will respond with any resulting changes in The Service and a variation to this Agreement will be agreed and signed.

6.0 Contact Officers

6.1 The Purchaser's Contact Officers are as follows:

General Advice Service:

Sarah Robson, Chief Officer – People & Places

Kelly Webb, Health & Communities Manager

Housing Advice Service:

Alison Simmons, Head of Housing

6.2 The Provider's Contact Officers are as follows:

Citizens Advice Edenbridge

Colin Jones, Trustee

Sian Hiller, Chief Officer

Citizens Advice North & West Kent

Louise Bryant, Chairman

Angela Newey, CEO

7.0 Termination of the Agreement

- 7.1 If either party to this Agreement wishes to withdraw from the Agreement, at least 12 months' notice must be given in writing. Where termination is the result of the Provider not fulfilling the terms of the Agreement, a minimum of 6 months' notice should be given.
- 7.2 If the Provider cannot meet the commitments as set out in the Agreement, it will notify the District Council's Chief Officer for People & Places immediately the issue is identified. The Purchaser will review together with the Provider the ability to continue in the Agreement.

8.0 Undertaking

- 8.1 I agree to provide the Service identified in the Service Specification, and to meet the terms and conditions contained in this Agreement.

Signed

Chair, on behalf of the Trustee Board of Citizens Advice Edenbridge & Westerham

Date

Signed

Chair, on behalf of the Trustee Board of Citizens Advice North & West Kent

Date

Signed

Chief Executive, Sevenoaks District Council

Date

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Schedule A

A1 The Scope of the Housing Advice Service

- i. To provide an effective independent Housing Advice service to people who are eligible for Housing Advice as set out in A2 below. The principal aim of the Housing Advice Service is to prevent homelessness.
- ii. Where appropriate, in order to prevent homelessness, to undertake debt counselling and/or mortgage arrears advice and assist with budgets which may include negotiating on the client's behalf with external organisations.
- iii. To assess prevention duty owed and households eligibility and suitability for Sevenoaks Landlords Hub enabling households to secure affordable and safe private rented sector accommodation
- iv. To sign post suitable households for sheltered and extra care housing schemes provided applicants are eligible to join Sevenoaks District Council housing register.
- v. To signpost homeless or potentially homeless clients to relevant agencies. This will include, for example, advising and supporting people to advise/support those who are homeless or facing homelessness to contact Sevenoaks District Council as managers of the housing register, or suggesting contact with the Home Improvement Agency to have disabled adaptations undertaken with support.
- vi. To share information relating to specific cases where an applicant provides written permission/authorisation to the Council or Citizens' Advice in advance of the request.
- vii. To comply fully with Sevenoaks District Council's commitment to ensuring that the service is non-discriminatory and that clients can access the service taking account of any vulnerability or other specific housing needs. This includes consideration of reasonable preference categories (as defined in Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996) and protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), as well as clients being provided with a Statement of Choice through the Kent Homechoice System ([Further information available at Kent Home Choice](#)).

A2 Eligibility for the Housing Advice Service

- i. Eligible applicants must be:

People who will be homeless within 56 days of approach **or**

People who are potentially homeless within a maximum of 3 months of approach

and

Live or work within the District **or** can demonstrate that they have lived here for a continuous period of 3 years **or** applicants or close relatives must demonstrate a need to be rehoused in the District to provide or receive significant and ongoing care and support **or** are at risk of violence or harassment in another District.

A3 When the Provider refers a Client to the Purchaser for Housing Advice the following information is to be provided where possible

- i.** household composition, including gender, Date of Birth, nationality and National Insurance Number
- ii.** applicant's housing requirements
- iii.** applicant's special needs where they have been identified with the applicant
- iv.** applicant's request for low cost home ownership (if applicable)
- v.** applicant's financial details particularly savings and income details
- vi.** applicant's local connection to the District, using the information upon which the Client's eligibility for the Housing Advice Service is based.
- vii.** relevant medical information (if applicable)
- viii.** applicant's relevant past history, e.g. past evictions, debt problems, etc.

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Schedule B

Performance data required for quarterly monitoring

- B1 Number of advertised hours of opening each week for advice in Edenbridge, Westerham, Sevenoaks and Swanley.
- B2 The number of Clients assisted this quarter.
- B3 The number of issues raised this quarter.
- B4 A breakdown of those listed in B2 by type of enquiry, level of enquiry and ward of residence.
- B5 Percentage of the number of Clients who have received the Service and who are from Black and Minority Ethnic groups.
- B6 The total number of trained advisers, recorded on the last day of each quarter.
- B7 The number of benefits appeal, employment appeal and legal appeal cases opened this quarter.
- B8 A breakdown of how those set out in B2 were assisted, i.e. the number of telephone calls; emails; video calls; face-to-face sessions. Include a statement about any changes made to the means of delivering the service to Clients with reasons.
- B9 Exception reporting: Dates on which the full Service was not available in the District, excluding weekends, bank holidays or in the two weeks over Christmas.
- B10 Exception reporting: Number of Housing Advice Clients who could not be assisted within 2 working days of their approaching the Provider.
- B11 Total number of Housing Advice Clients benefiting from the Housing Advice Service.
- B12 A quarterly spreadsheet report showing issues leading to Actual or Threatened Homelessness, setting out: Citizens Advice office, short description and AIC elements completed as relevant for the case.
- B13 A quarterly spreadsheet report showing Clients at risk of Actual or Threatened Homelessness, setting out: Citizens Advice office, short description and AIC elements completed as relevant for the case.
- B14 Outcomes sheet setting out the number of cases where it is estimated that homelessness has been prevented for Clients and their households included in B12 and B13.

Schedule C

Information required for annual review by end May

- C1 A copy of the most recent Citizens' Advice Membership confirmation, updated every three years, including the CLS Quality Mark.
- C2 The results of the annual uniform customer satisfaction survey, which should separately identify Clients of the Housing Advice Service.
- C3 Total number of people assisted 1 April to 31 March.
- C4 Total number of Clients (see 1.4 for definition of 'Client') receiving the Service (see 1.5 for definition of the Service) 1 April to 31 March.
- C5 A synopsis of the publicity materials produced during the year with one example copy provided.
- C6 Copies of the most recent annual accounts
- C7 The average number of paid staff hours per week during the year
- C8 The number of voluntary staff hours worked during the year.
- C9 A summary of any changes in the way the Service has been delivered during the year.
- C10 A summary of any proposed changes to the Service in the ensuing year.
- C11 A statement of how the Service has assisted in the delivery of Sevenoaks District Community Plan objectives during the year.
- C12 A copy of the budget for the ensuing year.

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Schedule D

The definition of 'homelessness'

Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, s175 Homelessness and threatened homelessness:

(1) A person is homeless if he has no accommodation available for his occupation, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, which he—

(a) is entitled to occupy by virtue of an interest in it or by virtue of an order of a court,

(b) has an express or implied licence to occupy, or

(c) occupies as a residence by virtue of any enactment or rule of law giving him the right to remain in occupation or restricting the right of another person to recover possession.

(2) A person is also homeless if he has accommodation but—

(a) he cannot secure entry to it, or

(b) it consists of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where he is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it.

(3) A person shall not be treated as having accommodation unless it is accommodation which it would be reasonable for him to continue to occupy.

(4) A person is threatened with homelessness if it is likely that he will become homeless within 56 days.

(5) A person is also threatened with homelessness if –

(a) a valid notice has been given to the person under the Housing Act 1988 (orders for possession) in respect of the only accommodation the person has that is available for the person's occupation, and

(b) that notice will expire within 56 days.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 amends Part 7 of the 1996 Act to strengthen the support available to victims of domestic abuse. The Act extends priority need to all eligible victims of domestic abuse who are homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse. The 2021 Act brings in a new definition of domestic abuse which housing authorities must follow to assess whether an applicant is homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse.

Schedule E

Areas of Sevenoaks district each of the Citizens Advice covers

CANWK	EWCA
Ash and New Ash Green	Cowden and Hever
Brasted, Chevening & Sundridge	Edenbridge North and East
Crockenhill and Well Hill	Edenbridge South and West
Dunton Green and Riverhead	Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway
Eynsford	Penshurst, Fordcombe and Chiddingstone
Farningham, Horton Kirby and South Darenth	Westerham and Crockham Hill
Fawkham and West Kingsdown	
Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount	
Hartley and Hodsoll Street	
Hextable	
Kemsing	
Otford and Shoreham	
Seal & Weald	
Sevenoaks Eastern	
Sevenoaks Kippington	
Sevenoaks Northern	
Sevenoaks Town and St John's	
Swanley Christchurch and Swanley Village	
Swanley St Mary's	
Swanley White Oak	

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**SEVENOAKS DISTRICT – VOLUNTARY SECTOR BAROMETER SURVEY
PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 30 NOVEMBER 2023**

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

Status: For Information

Also considered by:

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: The cost-of-living crisis has affected individuals and households and the Voluntary Sector Forum were keen to learn more about the impact of rising costs on voluntary sector organisations in the Sevenoaks District. The Voluntary Sector Forum was established to enable voluntary sector organisations to maximise their potential to benefit Sevenoaks District residents so we know how important the health and sustainability of the sector is.

We therefore undertook a third barometer survey in June - July 2023 (the two earlier barometer surveys were undertaken in May and September 2021). This time we aimed to track the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the voluntary and community sector in the Sevenoaks District. This report presents the findings of the survey, and, where possible, compares and contrasts findings with the two barometer surveys from 2021.

This report supports the Key Aim of: The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Plan and Community Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Lesley Dyball

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

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

- a) To note the contents of the report

Recommendation to Cabinet

Agenda Item 10

Introduction and Background

COVID-19 has had a major impact on the voluntary and community sector both nationally and locally. The cost-of-living crisis is affecting individuals and households and we wanted to learn more about the impact on voluntary sector organisations in the Sevenoaks District.

Sevenoaks District Council established the Sevenoaks District Voluntary Sector Forum in April 2020 as a response to the pandemic. The Forum continues to thrive and these barometer surveys help to more formally outline and then discuss the impact of both COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.

In May 2021 and then again in September of the same year the Forum undertook barometer surveys to quantify the impact of COVID-19.

The Voluntary Sector Forum, chaired by Chris Munday and Julie Philips, agreed to undertake a third barometer survey in June/July 2023, to track the continued impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the voluntary, community sector in the Sevenoaks District. A slightly revised set of questions were agreed with some comparisons and contrasts remaining between this third survey and the earlier two.

The result of this survey provides a sample of the sector's health and the impact of the cost-of-living pressures in the district and provides information for the Council, Kent County Council (KCC) and others including decision makers and potential funders. Appendix 1 is the report that will be circulated for this purpose. Note the use of the VS Forum's newly created logo.

Kent-wide VCSE Chair & Director of Grants and Impact at Kent Community Foundation, Natalie Smith, also added a question (question 16) relating to strategic and infrastructure support. The responses will be used to help inform the delivery of the KCC Infrastructure Fund (see paragraph 10 for more information).

Citizen Space was used for this third survey and was extremely easy to navigate both for the set up and those completing the form. Previously, Survey Monkey had been used.

Survey results

There were 10 responses (the Forum usually has between 12 and 20 organisations regularly attend) as compared to 17 responses for the September 2021 survey and 26 responses for the May 2021 survey.

Whilst similar themes from the May 2021 results remain prevalent, there seems to be emerging the need for the Voluntary Sector Forum to provide the sector with links to support, guidance and training on:

- Demand for services. The demand for many of the services being offered by the voluntary sector has increased as a direct result of the impact of the cost-of-living on the individuals and households.
- Volunteer & staff recruitment and retention.
- Support with leadership development.

- Increase in running costs: there has been an increase in cost of insurance, consumables, venues, energy and staff has impacted significantly with some organisations closing services that are no longer financially viable.
- Fundraising: regular donors from the past have stopped or reduced their regular donations. Competition for funding has increased. The funding available is mainly short-term and this does not support long-term sustainability.

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

It should be noted that the Council continues to support the voluntary and community sector in the District through the provision of its Community Grants scheme, the Local Strategic Partnership Community Wellbeing Fund, funding available through the UK Shared Prosperity Funding, Community Safety Partnership grants and Service Level Agreements. The Council regularly shares funding opportunities with the sector and is running two free Funding Information events. More recently, KCC has awarded grants to organisations to deliver Kent-wide initiatives as part of Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Funding. The Forum invited these organisations to present at their September session and links are being forged and developed to help support the District's voluntary sector with mentoring, funding, volunteer and staff retention, business development and training. The answers to all the questions (including the strategic support focused one – question 16 – see paragraph 6 above) have been shared with the Kent-wide VCSE to assist with the development of appropriate support, guidance and training.

Results in detail

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

- Objectives – Questions 1 and 2
- Financial Position – Questions 3 to 5
- Impact on Services – Questions 6 to 8
- Key Issues – Questions 9 to 15
- Strategic Support – Question 16
- VS Forum – Questions 17 to 20
- AOB – Question 21

Objectives – Questions 1 & 2

Question 1: What impact has the rising cost of living had on how you can achieve your organisation's objectives? Please note that the earlier two surveys in May and September 2021 asked: What impact did COVID-19 have on your ability to meet your objectives?)

	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
No Impact	7.69%	11.76%	10%

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Moderate Impact	23.08%	23.53%	60%
Significant Impact	69.23%	64.71%	30%

What impact has the rising cost of living had on how you can achieve your organisation's objectives?

- Harder to retain staff. More residents in need and struggling to pay rent and fees.
- We are seeing a reduction in the success of grant applications, and also a reduction in the number of grant applications we can apply for as more funders are asking for applications that focus on the cost of living.
- Existing funding rates frozen at best but the costs of delivering the service continue to increase and demand continues to rise significantly.
- We are winning a smaller proportion of funding bids. If we are successful we are securing part-success which doesn't always help us deliver. Competition for funds has increased. We are seeing increased costs of delivering services. In fact we have had to close services that are now no longer viable due to increases in consumables, energy, labour.
- Regular donors from the past have either stopped or reduced their regular giving to ad hoc.
- Fewer appropriate grants - focus is much more on specifics to do with costs of living.
- We are having to work far harder to recruit volunteers and raise funds.
- More competition for funding pots. Short term funding does not support long term sustainability. The demand for our services has risen.
- The rise in cost of living has impacted everything we do, with people having to be more careful than ever about spending funds and considering whether parents would be able to afford particular activities

Question 2: Are you able to meet your objectives set for 2023/24? (Earlier two surveys asked: Are you able to meet your objectives set for 2021?)

	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
Yes	42.31%	70.59%	70%
No	15.35%	29.41%	10%
Other	42.31%	Option Not Provided	20%

Financial Position - Questions 3 to 5

Question 3: What was your financial position between September 2021 and now (June/July 2023)?

	Financial Position Pre COVID-19	Financial Position March to	Financial Position October 2020	Financial Position May 2021 to	Financial Position between

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	(Asked May 2021)	September 2020 (Asked May 2021)	to May 2021 (Asked May 2021)	September 2021 (Asked September 2021)	September 2021 and June/July 2023
Healthy	50%	34.62%	30.77%	52.94%	20%
Moderate	46.15%	61.54%	57.69%	41.18%	40%
Poor	3.85%	3.85%	7.69%	5.88%	20%
Other	0%	0%	3.85%	Option Not Provided	20% no answer

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Question 4: How have rising costs impacted your organisation meeting your core costs (e.g. rising utility, rent and staffing costs)?

- Significantly higher utility costs
- Much higher staff costs
- Much higher maintenance and development costs
- Increase in venue rents
- Forced to look elsewhere to obtain additional funding to meet increased costs.
- We are using reserves to cover deficits.
- Volunteer turnover is higher as volunteers cannot give a much time or need to find paid employment.

Question 5: What impact has the cost of living had on your ability to raise income through fundraising and grants?

No impact	20%
Moderate impact	50%
Significant impact	30%

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

- We have restarted our Fundraising works as a result of the increase in costs.
- There is still funding available and we were recently successful in our bid for funds to replace all our computers/IT - this has in turn made us much more efficient and better able to cope with the rising demand for our services. We were able to approach new funders and access short-term funding for very specific projects: covering the start-up cost of our online service; the cost of supplying singing masks for the return to in-person sessions.
- We have managed to get some Lottery Funding to combat loneliness and isolation to run a valuable new project during lock down which was of great benefit.
- Labour costs higher, competition greater, funders offering part-funding, funders focussed on lots of short term initiatives which doesn't help sustainability. Less public funding so fewer donations.
- Trusts and foundations application have gone through the roof in terms of applicants. e.g. one trust has informed us that they have funding for 20 applications and receive 400- 500 applications.
- There is more competition for funds from other organisations, which may be seen as providing more fundamental services.

- Finding appropriate specific grants is harder.
- Local businesses have either ceased trading or are finding things more challenging so cannot support local charities in the same way.

Impact on Services – Questions 6 to 8

Question 6: To what extent have you modified your services because of the increase in cost of living (since September 2021)?

	To what extent have you already adapted your services because of COVID-19? (Asked in May 2021)	To what extent have you modified your services because of the ease of restrictions (since April 2021)?	To what extent have you modified your services because of the increase in cost of living (since September 2021)?
Not at all	3.85%	5.88%	50%
Made moderate changes	30.77%	41.18%	40%
Made significant changes	57.69%	52.94%	10%
Other	7.69%	Option Not Provided	Option Not Provided

Please tell us about the main adaptations you have made:

- Our core model gives us the flexibility to easily reduce/increase services as funding allows. We have seen an increase in families seeking access for support and have increased grant applications/fundraising to help cover costs to keep up with demand. This also allows us to easily reduce costs during more quiet times so that funds are not wasted when we have a quiet week.
- Focussed on 2 key areas of delivery and closed specific services.
- It is not appropriate to impact our disabled participants - we have to absorb the costs and generate more funds ourselves to ensure we can continue to provide the levels of opportunities we can in the timeframes we have.
- The demand for our services is increasing so adaptations have focussed on how we control or mitigate costs. We reviewed our building with landlord to look at works to improve insulation and reduce heating costs. We installed VOIP to reduce telephone costs.
- Reduced hours that helpline is open.
- Now only have part-time staff.

Question 7: In the period since September 2021 with the increase of cost of living what demand on your service have you experienced?

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	In the period since April 2021, when restrictions have eased, what demand on your service have you experienced?	In the period since September 2021 with the increase of cost of living what demand on your service have you experienced?
A decrease	17.85%	0%
About the same	35.29%	40%
An increase	47.06%	60%

Question 8: What is the expected demand on your services over the next 12 months?

	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
A decrease	0%	0%	0%
About the same	19.23%	29.41%	20%
An increase	80.77%	70.59%	80%
N/A	0%	Option Not Provided	Option Not Provided

Key Issues – Questions 9 to 15

Question 9: Have you found that your clients have changed what they are looking for and wanting from your service?

	September 2021	June/July 2023
Yes	23.53%	50%
No	76.47%	50%

Please state examples.

- Not sure about the connection, but I feel we are seeing more complex cases and seeing younger infants.
- Many more people desperately looking for ways to increase their income - more benefit checks requested and more demand for help to apply for non means tested disability benefits as a way to increase income.
- We are receiving more crisis calls from people in mental distress. We have seen significant deterioration in mental health resulting in increased suicide attempts,

suicide ideation, anti-social behaviour and increased substance abuse as well as increases in safeguarding issues.

- Service users are still seeking emotional support and key issues remain the same but heightened due to the impact of the cost of living.

Question 10: Where service users' needs have changed what impact has this had on your organisation in terms of new issues to address?

	September 2021	June/July 2023
No Impact	50.00%	20%
Moderate Impact	42.86%	60%
Significant Impact	7.14%	0%
Not Applicable	Option not provided	20%

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

- We have started a listening service for families that need additional support as they transition to becoming a new family.
- We fund children whose parents cannot pay any or all of the cost and the higher the cost, the more children fall into the category. This clearly has an impact on what we can plan.

Question 11: What has been the impact of cost of living on the digital exclusion of your clients? (Note the September 2021 survey asked What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the digital exclusion of your clients?)

	September 2021	June/July 2023
No impact	25%	60%
Moderate impact	25%	30%
Significant impact	50%	0%
Not Answered		10%

Question 12: Has there been a change in the number of people who volunteer for your organisation in the last 12 months'?

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	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
Decreased	53.85%	52.94%	40%
Stayed the same	34.62%	35.29%	30%
Increased	11.54%	11.76%	30%

Question 13: As a leader/manager within your organisation, what has been the impact of recent months on your own mental wellbeing?

	September 2021	June/July 2023
No Impact	23.53%	20%
Moderate Impact	58.82%	60%
Significant Impact	17.65%	20%

Please share with us if you are able to meet your own emotional and physical wellbeing AND any examples of how you do this that you would be prepared to talk about at a future Voluntary Sector Forum.

- As part of our work, staff and volunteers have the opportunity to receive supervision regularly and as needed.
- Increased workloads and increased risks across the organisation which include clinical risk, reputational risk, financial risk and the risk of closure. This has resulted in stress/anxiety attacks, anxiety and loss of confidence.
- I absorb the pressures and extra work so my volunteer team can get on with their specific tasks using their area of expertise. It has increased my workload and reduced time to devote to my own family which they regularly comment on. With everyone a volunteer it is not appropriate to require more of those who do not offer to assist or answer pleas for additional help with certain tasks or on specific days.
- We need more volunteers. Without them I find I do more and this is having a significant impact on my personal life. Seeing friends and other hobbies have significantly reduced

Question 14: Have you seen any concerns for the wellbeing of your staff and volunteers relating to the increase in the cost of living? Please share examples, for example, increased pressure of work, pressure on their own household finances, recruitment and retention etc.

- More pressure on staff. Staff under greater pressure in their own finances. Very difficult to recruit and match expected salaries.

- Volunteers want to help clients - difficult for them if they are unable to help as there is so little that can be done for many clients struggling to manage on a very low income.
- Challenges around whether they can afford to carry on working due to the increased cost of child care, fuel, food.
- Increased pressure on their time and availability. They are all under similar pressures from cost of living and its impact not only on them but on their family and some require support in the same way we support our service users.
- Pressure on volunteers to secure paid employment.

Question 15: Have you seen any concerns for the wellbeing of your service users, relating to the increase in the cost of living?

Yes	80%
No	20%

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

- Really just a general concern over the costs related to having a new baby, going back to work earlier than planned etc.
- Many clients struggling to manage to balance their budgets due to the increased cost of living. Some staff have shown reluctance to come in to the office preferring to work from home. Where we can we have accommodated that.
- Increase in substance/alcohol use.
- Individuals have raised concerns about travel costs particularly those having to use taxis everywhere and therefore they have cut back on activities, seeing friends and potentially not taking part in the extra activities we may be running and inviting people to.
- Heat or eat
- People are worried every day about everyday things. They seem to have no peace in terms of what's coming next.
- We've had families with no heating in the winter and two families where the mum ended up in hospital over the Christmas period as a direct result of poverty. One where the house was too cold and the baby ended up in hospital and the other collapsed after weeks on a very small amount of daily food.

Strategic Support – Question 16

Question 16: What are the main priority areas for your organisation/group in terms of strategic support?

- Diversifying income

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- Robust financial practice
- Recruiting new volunteers to help meet rising demand as well as finding additional sources of income to help fund both increased costs and increased demand.

VS Forum – Questions 17 to 20

Question 17: How would you rate the Voluntary Sector Forum?

Not useful	0%
Sometimes useful	30%
Useful	50%
Extremely useful	20%

Please share examples:

- Sharing ideas with others who have already gone through a situation or circumstance you are facing is invaluable - reinventing the wheel is not healthy or helpful, particularly with everyone challenged on time. If we are truly focussed on enabling the best opportunities and support for those in our communities then the synergies from shared discussion and ideas must be taken advantage of. The Forum provides a focussed time to do this, as well as learning about things each person may not have come across or had time to read up about, try etc.
- It is interesting to see what is happening around and about, but most of the services relate to adults of various sorts and so Scouts are a bit out on a limb.
- I have not attended a meeting yet however the information coming from the meeting is useful

Question 18: Is a monthly Voluntary Sector Forum sufficient?

Yes	90%
No	10%

If you answered 'No' how often would you like to have the Forum?

- It's hard to say as its unclear what practical value is gained in terms of increased collaboration and sharing of best practice.

Question 19: What would you like to see more of in the Voluntary Sector Forum?

- Tackling issues together, not just presentations and updates from other organisation but working on system solutions.

- More focus on the key issues that are common and clear challenges in the voluntary sector e.g. tackling the decline of formal volunteering, Volunteer Retention.
- More outside expert speakers
- Co-operation between the charities

Question 20: What would you like to see less of in the Voluntary Sector Forum?

No answers submitted.

AOB – Question 21

Question 21: Is there anything else you would like to add?

- Thank you to those who run the Forum and engage with different organisations to open up a wealth of contacts and ideas to those able to participate on the Forum

Key Implications

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

None

Financial implications

None

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

Wellbeing

Conclusion

To note the report

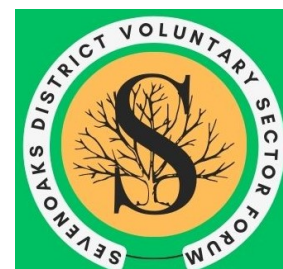
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Appendices

Appendix A - VS Forum Barometer Survey

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People & Places



**Sevenoaks District Voluntary Sector Forum
Barometer Survey Results from June/July 2023**

Executive Summary: The cost-of-living crisis has affected individuals and households and the Voluntary Sector Forum were keen to learn more about the impact of rising costs on voluntary sector organisations in the Sevenoaks District. The Voluntary Sector Forum was established to enable voluntary sector organisations to maximise their potential to benefit Sevenoaks District residents so we know how important the health and sustainability of the sector is. We therefore undertook a third barometer survey in June - July 2023 (the two earlier barometer surveys were undertaken in May and September 2021). This time we aimed to track the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the voluntary and community sector in the Sevenoaks District. This report presents the findings of the survey, and, where possible, compares and contrasts findings with the two barometer surveys from 2021.

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

- Objectives – Questions 1 and 2
- Financial Position – Questions 3 to 5
- Impact on Services – Questions 6 to 8
- Key Issues – Questions 9 to 15
- Strategic Support – Question 16 provided by Kent-Wide VCSE
- VS Forum – Questions 17 to 20
- AOB – Question 21

Objectives – Questions 1 & 2

Question 1: What impact has the rising cost of living had on how you can achieve your organisation’s objectives? (Earlier two surveys asked: What impact did COVID-19 have on your ability to meet your objectives?)

	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
No Impact	7.69%	11.76%	10%
Moderate Impact	23.08%	23.53%	60%
Significant Impact	69.23%	64.71%	30%

What impact has the rising cost of living had on how you can achieve your organisation's objectives?

- Harder to retain staff. More residents in need and struggling to pay rent and fees.
- We are seeing a reduction in the success of grant applications, and also a reduction in the number of grant applications we can apply for as more funders are asking for applications that focus on the cost of living.
- Existing funding rates frozen at best but the costs of delivering the service continue to increase and demand continues to rise significantly.
- We are winning a smaller proportion of funding bids. If we are successful we are securing part-success which doesn't always help us deliver. Competition for funds has increased. We are seeing increased costs of delivering services. In fact we have had to close services that are now no longer viable due to increases in consumables, energy, labour.
- Regular donors from the past have either stopped or reduced their regular giving to ad hoc.
- Fewer appropriate grants - focus is much more on specifics to do with costs of living.
- We are having to work far harder to recruit volunteers and raise funds.
- More competition for funding pots. Short term funding does not support long term sustainability. The demand for our services has risen.
- The rise in cost of living has impacted everything we do, with people having to be more careful than ever about spending funds and considering whether parents would be able to afford particular activities

Question 2: Are you able to meet your objectives set for 2023/24? (Earlier two surveys asked: Are you able to meet your objectives set for 2021?)

	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
Yes	42.31%	70.59%	70%
No	15.35%	29.41%	10%
Other	42.31%	Option Not Provided	20%

VS Forum Barometer Survey June/July 2023 - Appendix 1

Financial Position – Questions 3 to 5

Question 3: What was your financial position between September 2021 and now (June/July 2023)?

	Financial Position Pre COVID-19 (Asked May 2021)	Financial Position March to September 2020 (Asked May 2021)	Financial Position October 2020 to May 2021 (Asked May 2021)	Financial Position May 2021 to September 2021 (Asked September 2021)	Financial Position between September 2021 and June/July 2023
Healthy	50%	34.62%	30.77%	52.94%	20%
Moderate	46.15%	61.54%	57.69%	41.18%	40%
Poor	3.85%	3.85%	7.69%	5.88%	20%
Other	0%	0%	3.85%	Option Not Provided	20% no answer

Question 4: How have rising costs impacted your organisation meeting your core costs (e.g. rising utility, rent and staffing costs)?

- Significantly higher utility costs
- Much higher staff costs
- Much higher maintenance and development costs
- Increase in venue rents
- Forced to look elsewhere to obtain additional funding to meet increased costs.
- We are using reserves to cover deficits.
- Volunteer turnover is higher as volunteers cannot give a much time or need to find paid employment.

Question 5: What impact has the cost of living had on your ability to raise income through fundraising and grants?

No impact	20%
Moderate impact	50%
Significant impact	30%

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VS Forum Barometer Survey June/July 2023 - Appendix 1

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

- We have restarted our Fundraising works as a result of the increase in costs.
- There is still funding available and we were recently successful in our bid for funds to replace all our computers/IT - this has in turn made us much more efficient and better able to cope with the rising demand for our services. We were able to approach new funders and access short-term funding for very specific projects: covering the start-up cost of our online service; the cost of supplying singing masks for the return to in-person sessions.
- We have managed to get some Lottery Funding to combat loneliness and isolation to run a valuable new project during lock down which was of great benefit.
- Labour costs higher, competition greater, funders offering part-funding, funders focussed on lots of short term initiatives which doesn't help sustainability. Less public funding so fewer donations.
- Trusts and foundations application have gone through the roof in terms of applicants. e.g. one trust has informed us that they have funding for 20 applications and receive 400- 500 applications.
- There is more competition for funds from other organisations, which may be seen as providing more fundamental services.
- Finding appropriate specific grants is harder.
- Local businesses have either ceased trading or are finding things more challenging so cannot support local charities in the same way.

Impact on Services – Questions 6 to 8

Question 6: To what extent have you modified your services because of the increase in cost of living (since September 2021)?

	To what extent have you already adapted your services because of COVID-19? (Asked in May 2021)	To what extent have you modified your services because of the ease of restrictions (since April 2021)?	To what extent have you modified your services because of the increase in cost of living (since September 2021)?
Not at all	3.85%	5.88%	50%
Made moderate changes	30.77%	41.18%	40%
Made significant changes	57.69%	52.94%	10%
Other	7.69%	Option Not Provided	Option Not Provided

VS Forum Barometer Survey June/July 2023 - Appendix 1

Please tell us about the main adaptations you have made:

- Our core model gives us the flexibility to easily reduce/increase services as funding allows. We have seen an increase in families seeking access for support and have increased grant applications/fundraising to help cover costs to keep up with demand. This also allows us to easily reduce costs during more quiet times so that funds are not wasted when we have a quiet week.
- Focussed on 2 key areas of delivery and closed specific services.
- It is not appropriate to impact our disabled participants - we have to absorb the costs and generate more funds ourselves to ensure we can continue to provide the levels of opportunities we can in the timeframes we have.
- The demand for our services is increasing so adaptations have focussed on how we control or mitigate costs. We reviewed our building with landlord to look at works to improve insulation and reduce heating costs. We installed VOIP to reduce telephone costs.
- Reduced hours that helpline is open.
- Now only have part-time staff.

Question 7: In the period since September 2021 with the increase of cost of living what demand on your service have you experienced?

	In the period since April 2021, when restrictions have eased, what demand on your service have you experienced?	In the period since September 2021 with the increase of cost of living what demand on your service have you experienced?
A decrease	17.85%	0%
About the same	35.29%	40%
An increase	47.06%	60%

Question 8: What is the expected demand on your services over the next 12 months?

	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
A decrease	0%	0%	0%
About the same	19.23%	29.41%	20%
An increase	80.77%	70.59%	80%
N/A	0%	Option Not Provided	Option Not Provided

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VS Forum Barometer Survey June/July 2023 - Appendix 1

Key Issues – Questions 9 to 15

Question 9: Have you found that your clients have changed what they are looking for and wanting from your service?

	September 2021	June/July 2023
Yes	23.53%	50%
No	76.47%	50%

Please state examples.

- Not sure about the connection, but I feel we are seeing more complex cases and seeing younger infants.
- Many more people desperately looking for ways to increase their income - more benefit checks requested and more demand for help to apply for non means tested disability benefits as a way to increase income.
- We are receiving more crisis calls from people in mental distress. We have seen significant deterioration in mental health resulting in increased suicide attempts, suicide ideation, anti-social behaviour and increased substance abuse as well as increases in safeguarding issues.
- Service users are still seeking emotional support and key issues remain the same but heightened due to the impact of the cost of living.

Question 10: Where service users' needs have changed what impact has this had on your organisation in terms of new issues to address?

	September 2021	June/July 2023
No Impact	50.00%	20%
Moderate Impact	42.86%	60%
Significant Impact	7.14%	0%
Not Applicable	Option not provided	20%

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

- We have started a listening service for families that need additional support as they transition to becoming a new family.

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- We fund children whose parents cannot pay any or all of the cost and the higher the cost, the more children fall into the category. This clearly has an impact on what we can plan.

Question 11: What has been the impact of cost of living on the digital exclusion of your clients?

	September 2021	June/July 2023
	What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the digital exclusion of your clients?	
No impact	25%	60%
Moderate impact	25%	30%
Significant impact	50%	0%
Not Answered		10%

Question 12: Has there been a change in the number of people who volunteer for your organisation in the last 12 months'?

	May 2021	September 2021	June/July 2023
Decreased	53.85%	52.94%	40%
Stayed the same	34.62%	35.29%	30%
Increased	11.54%	11.76%	30%

Question 13: As a leader/manager within your organisation, what has been the impact of recent months on your own mental wellbeing?

	September 2021	June/July 2023
No Impact	23.53%	20%
Moderate Impact	58.82%	60%
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Please share with us if you are able to meet your own emotional and physical wellbeing AND any examples of how you do this that you would be prepared to talk about at a future Voluntary Sector Forum.

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- As part of our work, staff and volunteers have the opportunity to receive supervision regularly and as needed.
- Increased workloads and increased risks across the organisation which include clinical risk, reputational risk, financial risk and the risk of closure. This has resulted in stress/anxiety attacks, anxiety and loss of confidence.
- I absorb the pressures and extra work so my volunteer team can get on with their specific tasks using their area of expertise. It has increased my workload and reduced time to devote to my own family which they regularly comment on. With everyone a volunteer it is not appropriate to require more of those who do not offer to assist or answer pleas for additional help with certain tasks or on specific days.
- We need more volunteers. Without them I find I do more and this is having a significant impact on my personal life. Seeing friends and other hobbies have significantly reduced

Question 14: Have you seen any concerns for the wellbeing of your staff and volunteers relating to the increase in the cost of living? Please share examples, for example, increased pressure of work, pressure on their own household finances, recruitment and retention etc.

- More pressure on staff. Staff under greater pressure in their own finances. Very difficult to recruit and match expected salaries.
- Volunteers want to help clients - difficult for them if they are unable to help as there is so little that can be done for many clients struggling to manage on a very low income.
- Challenges around whether they can afford to carry on working due to the increased cost of child care, fuel, food.
- Increased pressure on their time and availability. They are all under similar pressures from cost of living and its impact not only on them but on their family and some require support in the same way we support our service users.
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Question 15: Have you seen any concerns for the wellbeing of your service users, relating to the increase in the cost of living?

Yes	80%
No	20%

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

- Really just a general concern over the costs related to having a new baby, going back to work earlier than planned etc.
- Many clients struggling to manage to balance their budgets due to the increased cost of living. Some staff have shown reluctance to come in to the office preferring to work from home. Where we can we have accommodated that.

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- Increase in substance/alcohol use.
- Individuals have raised concerns about travel costs particularly those having to use taxis everywhere and therefore they have cut back on activities, seeing friends and potentially not taking part in the extra activities we may be running and inviting people to.
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- People are worried every day about everyday things. They seem to have no peace in terms of what's coming next.
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Strategic Support – Question 16

Question 16: What are the main priority areas for your organisation/group in terms of strategic support?

- Diversifying income
- Robust financial practice
- Recruiting new volunteers to help meet rising demand as well as finding additional sources of income to help fund both increased costs and increased demand.

VS Forum – Questions 17 to 20

Question 17: How would you rate the Voluntary Sector Forum?

Not useful	0%
Sometimes useful	30%
Useful	50%
Extremely useful	20%

Please share examples:

- Sharing ideas with others who have already gone through a situation or circumstance you are facing is invaluable - reinventing the wheel is not healthy or helpful, particularly with everyone challenged on time. If we are truly focussed on enabling the best opportunities and support for those in our communities then the synergies from shared discussion and ideas must be taken advantage of. The Forum provides a focussed time to do this, as well as learning about things each person may not have come across or had time to read up about, try etc.

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- It is interesting to see what is happening around and about, but most of the services relate to adults of various sorts and so Scouts are a bit out on a limb.
- I have not attended a meeting yet however the information coming from the meeting is useful

Question 18: Is a monthly Voluntary Sector Forum sufficient?

Yes	90%
No	10%

If you answered 'No' how often would you like to have the Forum?

- It's hard to say as its unclear what practical value is gained in terms of increased collaboration and sharing of best practice.

Question 19: What would you like to see more of in the Voluntary Sector Forum?

- Tackling issues together, not just presentations and updates from other organisation but working on system solutions.
- More focus on the key issues that are common and clear challenges in the voluntary sector e.g. tackling the decline of formal volunteering, Volunteer Retention
- More outside expert speakers
- Co-operation between the charities

Question 20: What would you like to see less of in the Voluntary Sector Forum?

No answers submitted.

AOB - Question 21

Question 21: Is there anything else you would like to add?

- Thank you to those who run the Forum and engage with different organisations to open up a wealth of contacts and ideas to those able to participate on the Forum.

INTERIM LEISURE CONTRACT – MONITORING REVIEW

Cabinet – 14 December 2023

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People and Place

Status: For Decision

Also considered by:

- People and Places Advisory Committee (30 November 2023)

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report provides an update on the performance and monitoring of the interim leisure operator contract with Everyone Active for the period April to September 2023. The interim contract relates to the Edenbridge and Sevenoaks Leisure Centres and Lullingstone Park Golf Course.

This report supports the Key Aim of: the Community Plan and Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Sarah Robson and Kathryn Bone (x7219)

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee

To consider Everyone Active's performance in delivering the interim leisure operator contract for the period April – September 2023 and to recommend a) to b) below to Cabinet.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- To note the performance of Everyone Active in providing leisure facilities and services for the community and visitors of Sevenoaks District for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.
- To agree for officers to bring a report to Cabinet providing an update on the provision and procurement process for the leisure facilities currently being managed under the interim leisure operator contract.

Reason for recommendation: Managing contractor performance is essential for delivering the interim leisure contract objectives and targets. Working jointly with Everyone Active to review performance regularly is essential in delivering high quality services to residents and value for money.

Agenda Item 11

Introduction and Background

- 1 Sevenoaks District Council (the Council) owns three leisure facilities and a golf course, which are operated and maintained under contracted lease agreements.
- 2 The new White Oak Leisure Centre has been operated under a 15-year leisure operator contract with Sports & Leisure Management Ltd (operating as Everyone Active) since 12 February 2022.
- 3 In March this year, the leisure trust, Sencio, ceased to trade when its management team and Board realised the trust could no longer meet its financial liabilities and obligations. As the contractual leaseholder of the Edenbridge and Sevenoaks Leisure Centres and Lullingstone Park Golf Course, Sencio closed public access to the buildings on Friday 17 March 2023, effectively ceasing to trade.
- 4 The first priority for the Council was to ensure the buildings could be reopened to the public at the soonest possible date to mitigate the impact of the closures on the community, the operation of the plant within the centres and the income receivable.
- 5 A detailed mobilisation plan was developed by officers, with members of the public being kept informed via the Council's website, a dedicated leisure inbox and regular communications.
- 6 Council approval was provided on 4 April 2023 to appoint an interim leisure operator to oversee the Council's leisure facilities at Edenbridge Leisure Centre, Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and Lullingstone Park Golf Course for a period of two years (or until the procurement of a new operator is completed).
- 7 A Deed of Variation was approved to the existing White Oak Leisure Centre contract with Everyone Active in order to support the earliest reopening of the leisure facilities. This meant the contract could operate within an agreed management contract and service specification document.
- 8 A budget of up to £1.83 million was approved by Council to support the interim contract, operations, maintenance and safety of Council owned leisure facilities at the three sites.
- 9 Deep cleans of the three facilities were conducted by Everyone Active, alongside a backlog of urgent compliance, health and safety testing, plant failures, repairs and redecoration works not completed by Sencio in their final few months of operations, to ensure the facilities could be safely reopened to the public.
- 10 The variation of contract with Everyone Active completed on 26 April 2023, with Lullingstone Park Golf Course reopening in late April and the two leisure centres on 1 May 2023.
- 11 Everyone Active started from a nil trading position and has therefore had to rebuild the leisure operations, resourcing and its customer base from nothing. Due to Sencio entering into liquidation, any staffing, contractor, membership, customer and club data could not be legally transferred to a new operator under data protection regulations. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, a

cautious approach should be taken to comparing performance between the two operators at the point of Everyone Active re-opening the facilities.

- 12 The resulting interim operator contract with Everyone Active runs from 26 April 2023 to 25 April 2025 on an open book accounting basis. Open book accounting is a procurement method, where contractors are reimbursed based on providing transparent records of the costs they have incurred. However, the trading risk remains with the Council.
- 13 Working on this basis enables the Council to work with the leisure operator in order to reconcile between the forecast and actual trading position each month. The net cost of the service is borne by the Council. Therefore, any deficit or surplus is apportioned to the Council.
- 14 The Council is also responsible for monthly utility, asset maintenance and repairs costs. As interim leisure operator, Everyone Active requires an allocation towards their central costs.
- 15 Managing Everyone Active's performance is essential for delivering the contract. The Council's leisure services are outsourced and officers have ensured a process of working with Everyone Active to monitor these services is in place. This includes monthly contract management meetings and fortnightly repairs and maintenance reviews between the Council and Everyone Active teams.
- 16 Working jointly with Everyone Active to review performance regularly is essential and enables the Council to measure the leisure operator's performance to highlight and resolve operational issues. It also helps manage risk more effectively and improve performance through action planning. The contract monitoring is measured against the contract's key performance indicators, which includes customer satisfaction, usage, attendance and memberships, alongside budgetary performance data (income and expenditure) and the Council's satisfaction as client.
- 17 Any proposed expenditure by Everyone Active over a £5,000 limit is considered by Council officers in consultation with the Chief Officer – People and Places before it can be approved. Any proposal for investment, for example, new plant, machinery or gym equipment is made via a Business Case, outlining how any investment impacts the two-year open book forecast.
- 18 A performance review of the interim contract will be presented to members via the People and Places Advisory Committee and Cabinet on a six-monthly basis during the 2-year interim contract period. This is the first of such reports.
- 19 It should be noted that Everyone Active attends the Council's Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis to provide a contract and performance update, including the Annual Balance Scorecard for all the sites it is currently contracted to manage and operate.

Annual Performance requirements

- 20 The following items are assessed annually:
 - The Authority's (Sevenoaks District Council) outcomes

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- Annual Balance Scorecard
- Quality management accreditation
- Annual service plan
- Physical Activity and Wellbeing Plan
- Marketing Plan
- Participation targets
- Benchmarking services

Service performance requirements

21 There are ten elements to the service performance requirements:

- Cleaning
- Environmental and energy management
- Customer service
- Catering and vending
- IT systems
- Property database
- Maintenance of buildings, plant and equipment
- Grounds maintenance
- Physical activity and wellbeing development
- Reporting
 - Major incident reporting
 - Other reporting

Performance standards and reporting requirements

22 Everyone Active is contracted to ensure that there is in place at all times a clearly defined responsibility chain for implementing, monitoring and reviewing service delivery.

23 For the duration of the interim report, the following reporting schedule has been contractually agreed between Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and Everyone Active (EA) and includes:

Report Title	Frequency	Submission Date	RAG rating
Customer report, open book update and forecast and performance monitoring report	Six-monthly	Within fourteen days of the end of each period. <i>Presented to People and Places Advisory Committee (PPAC) and Cabinet.</i>	Green
Annual contract and performance report	Annual	Within one month of the start of the second Contract Year and annually thereafter. <i>Presented to Scrutiny Committee.</i>	Amber
Outcomes report and scorecard	Annual	Within one month of the start of the second Contract Year and annually thereafter.	Amber
Fire Risk Assessment	Annual		Green
Electrical Certificates	Annual		Green
Legionella Report	Quarterly		Green

- 24 Everyone Active attends monthly, quarterly and annual meetings with officers to discuss the performance of the facilities and to agree progress. The Portfolio Holder is updated on a monthly basis, as well as when matters may arise. Everyone Active attend People and Places Advisory Committee on a six-monthly basis and Scrutiny on an annual basis.
- 25 Centre monitoring visits consist of a mixture of scheduled and unscheduled visits by a Council officer. The officer will record any issues or faults witnessed on the visit, reporting them to Everyone Active’s management team, requesting details on the plan for rectification.

Six monthly performance monitoring report

- 26 The six monthly performance monitoring report requires Everyone Active to submit the following as a minimum:

Six monthly open book monitoring report
Open book forecast and actuals (see Appendix A)
Membership data
Member segmentation
Health and safety management
Major incident management
Maintenance of buildings, plant and equipment overview
Customer feedback
Community and sports activity
Health and wellbeing plan activity
Marketing Plan activity

- 27 The six monthly performance monitoring report is presented to People and Places Advisory Committee and Cabinet.

Key achievements – first six months

- 28 Key achievements and initiatives to date include:
 - Mobilisation and reopening of leisure centres and the golf course within 5 weeks of Sencio, the previous operator, ceasing to trade and entering liquidation.
 - During the above 5 weeks, Everyone Active offered all Sencio members free access and use of Everyone Active’s facilities, notably White Oak Leisure Centre, at no cost to the customer or the Council.
 - Lullingstone Park Golf Course opened on 22 April, with just the 18-hole Castle course available to play. On the opening day, the course welcomed its first fixture hosted by Lullingstone Park Golf Club with over 50 golfers playing across the day with 66 new members joining the course on a membership. The greenkeepers and course staff worked as quickly as possible to ensure the course was brought back up to the standard expected and reopened the 9-hole Valley course on the

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20 May. On early May Bank Holiday, Everyone Active reopened the Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centres. The Centres opened with a community open day with free access to the facilities and activities on the day. 341 new fitness members and 141 swimmers were welcomed across Edenbridge and Sevenoaks on day one

- After a mix of traditional, social media and web marketing, new and returning customers were able to join for no joining fee throughout the first quarter.
- Staff transformation programme to minimise impact of closed centres and existing Everyone Active staff relocated and brought in to provide additional support and experience.
- Health and safety compliance procedures in place, up to date and regularly monitored.
- Strong health and fitness membership and swim school growth from reopening.
- Improvements to enhance the customer journey by allowed users to book classes and sessions via Everyone Active's mobile app.
- Cosmetic redecoration and gym equipment replacement at Edenbridge and Sevenoaks Leisure Centres to improve the look and feel of the facility to customers.
- Investment to increase gym equipment range at Edenbridge.
- New partnerships developed with local businesses, launching new fitness classes and personal training programmes alongside promotions.
- Sporting Champions scheme launched in the Edenbridge and Sevenoaks areas to support talented athletes the opportunity to make use of training support and mentoring sessions to further their burgeoning careers. Successful applicants receive a free annual membership to use our Everyone Active centres as well as receiving monitoring and support from Olympic athletes.
- General Managers and Partnership Managers remain very approachable and willing to help in all situations.
- Everyone Active's frontline team work well with Council officers and always support their work where required. This includes adjustments to general operational working.
- The Council's Asset Maintenance team has complimented Everyone Active's provision of an experienced and qualified asset maintenance team, which is providing support to review all essential repairs and works to be undertaken over the period of the interim contract period.
- Teams continue to work well to deliver joint projects including major works or funding applications, especially on carbon reducing schemes and building projects.

- Sevenoaks District Council negotiated the utility contracts from the Sencio supplier to the Council's contract.

Areas for improvement – first six months

- Recruitment and training of lifeguards in the first month resulted in swimming sessions and lessons taking time to recover. However, in April and May, Everyone Active hosted National Pool Lifeguard Qualification Courses across all three leisure centres. They also provided funded spaces for those looking to start their career in leisure and working for Everyone Active.
- Everyone Active's green keepers worked hard to bring the course up to a high standard. The team worked as quickly as possible, but with the length of the facilities closure and the lack of essential maintenance in that time it took longer than expected to bring the course up to standard. This impacted initial expenditure and ongoing costs.
- Timely receipt of finances to enable Council officers to track the Open Book accounts against the forecast plan provided as part of the £1.83m support package approved by Council.
- Some concerns remain regarding the Buildings Maintenance System and Air Handling Unit at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, which impact water temperatures (pool and showers), which are currently being investigated.
- Everyone Active has developed a swimming strategy, as the numbers attending swimming lessons, specifically at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, is much lower than they would expect to see.

Other impacts on contract performance and delivery

- 29 The Cost of Living crisis, notably rising energy costs for gas and electricity, has impacted contract delivery and created a significant economic and financial impact across the national leisure sector, particularly on sites with public swimming pools. Energy prices have been rising at an unprecedented rate, members of the public, government, councils, and business are all feeling the impact.
- 30 Sencio's utility supplier delayed the transfer of their account to the Council's contract, at the standard rate tariff, which came at the expense of the Council in the first 4 weeks of the new contract. Our Legal team intervened to progress the successful transfer under the Council's energy contract at more favourable tariffs.
- 31 Officers are working closely with Everyone Active to support with reducing this impact as much as possible. Following the Government's announcement of the Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF), the Council submitted a funding application to Round 1 to help alleviate cost pressures in this financial year relating to rising utility and chemical costs associated with operating public swimming pools. Our funding bid for £482,739 supported c.90% of the uplift in costs (the maximum funding bid per authority was £500k) to support the Edenbridge, Sevenoaks and White Oak centre pools.

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- 32 Due to the funding being over-subscribed, we were informed in mid-September this year, that £131,556 would be awarded, but only in support of Sevenoaks Leisure Centre's swimming pool offer.
- 33 A second tranche of funding was announced to support capital projects supporting energy efficiency projects for swimming pools. The deadline for funding submissions was 17 October 2023, with our bid for £700,000 submitted in support of solar panels at White Oak and pool covers for Edenbridge and Sevenoaks. Both bids were backed and supported by the MPs Laura Trott and Tom Tugendhat.
- 34 Officers and Everyone Active are continuing work to mitigate the rising energy costs by implementing measures across the centres to reduce levels of consumption. Initiatives already introduced alongside good housekeeping has resulted in reductions in electricity and gas consumption.
- 35 Since assuming the interim contract, Everyone Active has had to deal with a significant backlog of compliance, health and safety testing, plant issues and repairs not completed by Sencio in their final few months of operations. Much of the cleaning and repair works left outstanding by Sencio continues to have an ongoing impact on the leisure facilities, as they have become more complex and costly due to plant and equipment being previously left to deteriorate.

Membership segmentation, fees and utilisation data

- 36 The table below outlines member segmentation at Edenbridge and Sevenoaks Leisure Centres as at 30 September 2023.

Edenbridge Leisure Centre

Total Users/Members Category Analysis	Male	Female	Unknown
Young people throughput 5-10 years	60	66	3
Young people throughput 11-18 years	212	212	2
60+ throughput	247	439	0
80+ throughput	29	24	0
Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	9	10	0
Total Users	1568	2513	23

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre

Total Users/Members Category Analysis	Male	Female	Unknown
Young people throughput 5-10 years	81	94	0
Young people throughput 11-18 years	660	542	2
60+ throughput	322	457	1
80+ throughput	18	29	0
Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	14	23	0
Total Users	2542	3480	47

Membership fees

Membership fees - monthly	Everyone Active	Sencio
– Fitness and Swim Direct Debit Members (Any access to Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, White Oak Leisure Centre and national Everyone Active sites providing memberships at £34.99 and under)	34.99	47.00
– Fitness and Swim Direct Debit Members (Edenbridge Leisure Centre)	29.99	47.00

- 37 Concession membership is priced at £29.99 per month at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and £24.99 per month at Edenbridge Leisure Centre with exactly the same accessibility as headline rates (see table above).
- 38 Everyone Active memberships are valid across all of Everyone Actives 200+ sites. Members within Sevenoaks District are already taking advantage of this benefit.
- 39 Everyone Active started from a nil trading position and has had to rebuild the leisure operations, resourcing and its customer base from zero. Due to Sencio entering into liquidation, any staffing, contractor, membership, customer and club data could not be legally transferred to a new operator under data protection regulations.
- 40 Everyone Active usage figures at Edenbridge Leisure Centre and Lullingstone Park Golf Course are encouraging and have seen a positive uplift in visits and memberships. Whilst Sevenoaks Leisure Centre usage figures have also seen an increase, it should be viewed in the context of many users moving to private gyms when Sencio ceased to trade. Users will be tied into lengthy contracts, which will present them returning until their contracts expire. It will therefore be of interest to compare membership and usage figures at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre in 12 months time.

Headlines

- 41 Lullingstone Park Golf Course and Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centres opened on 26 April and 1 May 2023 respectively, therefore the Quarter 1 figures reflect two months of trading.

Headlines: Edenbridge Leisure Centre

Note: all performance figures are currently up to 30 September 2023.

- Edenbridge Leisure Centre had an overall total usage of 19,685 visits in Quarter 1 and 54,222 visits in Quarter 2.
- Health and Fitness recorded 4,340 visits in Quarter 1 and 10,509 in the following quarter.
- Swim recorded 10,093 visits in Quarter 1, compared to 32,313 in Quarter 2.

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- Dry side activity recorded 313 visits in Quarter 1, with 6,259 visits in the following quarter.
- The centre had a total of 253 leavers across the two quarters, with the main reasons including relocation outside of the District, leaving for university and faulty equipment.

Headlines: Sevenoaks Leisure Centre

- Sevenoaks Leisure Centre had an overall total usage of 23,695 visits in Quarter 1, compared to 77,358 visits in Quarter 2.
- Health and Fitness recorded 5,987 visits in Quarter 1 and 14,607 in the following quarter.
- Swim recorded 12,608 visits in Quarter 1, compared to 44,790 in Quarter 2.
- Dry side activity recorded 633 visits in Quarter 1, with 12,062 visits in the following quarter.
- The centre had a total of 291 leavers across the two quarters, with the main reasons including going on holiday, leaving for university and fluctuating pool hall temperature.

42 Headlines: Lullingstone Park Golf Course

- Lullingstone Park recorded an overall total usage of 4,570 visits in Quarter 1 and 11,635 visits in Quarter 2.

Fitness Membership Base	Quarter 1 Apr-Jun 22/23	Quarter 2 Jul-Sep 22/23
Edenbridge Leisure Centre		
– Fitness Direct Debit Members	840	1184
– Fitness Paid in Full Members	43	75
– Leavers during quarter	65	124
– Total Members	818	1259
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre		
– Fitness Direct Debit Members	927	1448
– Fitness Paid in Full Members	122	200
– Leavers during quarter	42	149
– Total Members	1,007	1648

Swim Fitness Membership Base	Quarter 1 Apr-Jun 22/23	Quarter 2 Jul-Sep 22/23
Edenbridge Leisure Centre		
– Swim Fitness Direct Debit Members	47	60
– Leavers	0	7
– Total Members	47	60
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre		
– Swim Fitness Direct Debit Members	115	141
– Leavers during quarter	0	17
– Total Members	115	141

Swimming Lessons	Quarter 1 Apr-Jun 22/23	Quarter 2 Jul-Sep 22/23
Edenbridge Leisure Centre		
– Direct Debit Members	159	245
– Leavers during quarter	8	24
– Total Members	151	245
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre		
– Direct Debit Members	210	349
– Leavers during quarter	12	25
– Total Members	198	349

Golf Attendance	Quarter 1 Apr-Jun 22/23	Quarter 2 Jul-Sep 22/23
Lullingstone Park Golf Course		
– Adults	4,322	10,518
– Juniors	19	51
– Seniors	229	1,066
– Total	4,570	11,635

Golf Memberships	Quarter 1 Apr-Jun 22/23	Quarter 2 Jul-Sep 22/23
Lullingstone Park Golf Course		
– Monthly Members	182	203
– Paid in Full Members	11	12
– Total	193	215

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Comparative membership data

Membership Type	Sencio Jan 2023			Everyone Active Sep 2023		
	SLC	ELC	LPGC	SLC	ELC	LPGC
– Fitness	2,054	948		1,682	1,221	
– Resident Card Holders	235	134		298	212	
– Swimming Lesson	277	257		324	227	
– Golf			257			214

- 43 The new year and notably January is the busiest and most income generating month for the leisure industry. The comparative data provided in the table above shows the membership data for January (Sencio) against the most recent September data provided by Everyone Active.
- 44 Everyone Active continues to review where it is performing well and where it has seen a drop by considering what is working well, customer feedback, its marketing plan, competing leisure offers and trends in the leisure sector, alongside any asset or maintenance issues.

Clubs and community organisations

- 45 The reopening of the leisure facilities has seen the return of the following clubs and organisations return:

Edenbridge Leisure Centre

- Gymspire Academy Ltd
- Oaks Martial Arts
- Piranhas Swim Club
- Holcot Charitable Trust
- Emfitmassage
- Atlantis Entertainment Kent - Roller Disco
- Hever Primary School
- Edenbridge Primary School

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre

- Atlantis Entertainment Kent - Roller Disco
- Fusion Cheerleaders
- Dad's 5-a-side Football
- Sunday Badminton
- Rugby Tots
- Sevenoaks Swim Club
- 7Oaks Tri Club
- The Granville School
- Oaks Martial Arts
- Little Kickers
- Lady Boswells School

- Sevenoaks Shoshinkan Aikido
- Weald Primary School
- Sevenoaks Primary School
- Dunton Green Primary School
- White Tiger Martial Arts
- Dia Giles Pole Fitness
- Russell House Primary School
- Seal Primary School
- Sevenoaks Son's Basketball
- Baby Ballet

46 Everyone Active has also attracted new users to the facilities including:

Edenbridge Leisure Centre

- Edenbridge Cricket Club - Ladies
- Involve Kent

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre

- Shin Sei Do Karate Club
- Leigh Primary School

47 Sadly, some clubs and organisations have not returned since Sencio closed its doors in March this year, including:

Edenbridge Leisure Centre

- Edenbridge Spitfires FC

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre

- Charlton Athletic
- Sevenoaks Day Centre
- Halstead Primary School
- Sevenoaks Prep Primary School
- St Thomas' Primary School

The reason for not returning is due to clubs and organisations immediately securing an alternative venue to continue their activity upon Sencio closing its doors in March.

Annual Balance Scorecard: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

48 In line with the contract variation, the KPIs will have annual targets to assess the contractor's performance.

49 The first set of KPI targets are set at the end of Year 1 and then reviewed and reported on an annual basis so that areas of success and concern can be raised, discussed and actioned accordingly.

50 Given Everyone Active started from a zero position, on the back of the recovery from the pandemic, it would be hard to estimate KPI's each month, especially during the initial 6 months where the speed and extent of the recovery was largely unknown. However, they are still required to record their performance in the first year, as this is imperative for the open book

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monitoring and two-year forecast. Setting the targets at the end of year one will give all parties a meaningful baseline to work from.

- 51 The Annual Balanced scorecard consists of annual KPI targets, including membership and usage, satisfaction levels, reductions in water, electricity and gas consumption, accidents and incidents, staff vacancies and budgetary and income performance etc.

Customer Satisfaction

- 52 Since Everyone Active's commencement of the interim contract, much of the positive feedback now focuses on how clean the centres are, the helpfulness of staff, the leisure offer provided and the ability for customers to use their membership across all Everyone Active sites both in and outside the Sevenoaks District.
- 53 The highest positive feedback included value for money, cleanliness, staff helpfulness and improvements to the facilities including new parking system.
- 54 Initial booking issues, lack of food and beverage offer (at Sevenoaks) and pool temperature at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre had the highest negative comments in the first few months of opening.

Customer satisfaction	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
	Apr-Jun 22/23	Jul-Sep 22/23
Number of customer feedback reports	25	32
Number of customer complaints	13	12

- 55 Everyone Active gathers customer feedback via its online feedback facility <https://www.everyoneactive.com/legal-policies/feedback-policy/>. Any feedback drops directly into their Single Customer View platform where it is recorded against a customer's account and passed onto relevant department manager to respond to.
- 56 The Single Customer View platform collects membership data, feedback and attendance to create intelligence for marketing and PR campaigns.
- 57 Customers can provide onsite feedback to the Customer Service Advisors or Duty Managers, which is added to a customer's account and drops into their Single Customer View platform where it is recorded and passed onto relevant department manager to respond to.
- 58 Meet the Manager sessions are held every quarter where customers can meet with the leisure facility's General Manager and department heads to raise any concerns directly.
- 59 An Annual Customer Satisfaction survey is sent out to Everyone Active's database to engage customers in providing satisfaction ratings and feedback.
- 60 Everyone Active also receives feedback via social media, notably Facebook, which is reviewed and responded to by Everyone Active's social media champion.

Community and sports activity

- 61 Everyone Active has dedicated Community Development Manager (CDM) whose focus is to develop participation opportunities for a diverse range of target groups that included:
- Children and young people
 - Older people
 - Woman and girls
 - Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups
 - Concession users
- 62 In addition, the CDM will work closely with the Council's Health and Communities team to develop the target activities, sports and programmes identified in the Everyone Active Health and Wellbeing Plan that supports the goal of the Council's own Health and Wellbeing Action plan.
- 63 Community Open Days were well attended with a range of exercise classes, gym sessions, swimming sessions and sporting activities on offer. Also in attendance were Gold medal winning Team GB Olympians and modern pentathletes Kate French MBE and Joe Choong. The two Olympians visited both leisure centres and got involved with the activities on offer as well as posing for photos with customers throughout the day. The feedback from the community was very positive and highlighted the importance of reopening these facilities to the local communities.
- 64 Colleague recruitment day held on 20 April to ensure the facilities were fully staffed prior to reopening. Everyone Active welcomed former employees from the facilities previous operator as well as people looking to start a career in leisure. The day was well attended and saw the majority of employees that previously worked at the facilities rehired and join Everyone Active, bringing with them invaluable experience of the facilities and knowledge of the customers and local community. Many of Sencio's staff sought new employment once Sencio closed its doors. However, over 80% of ex-Sencio staff have since been employed by the Everyone Active team.
- 65 Everyone Active has become a member of the Sunflower Network, a simple tool to help people voluntarily share that they have a disability or condition that may not be immediately apparent – and that you may need a helping hand, understanding, or more time. Everyone Active aims to make sport accessible to everyone and to maintain a healthy balanced lifestyle. Customers and staff that visit or work at any Everyone Active Centre can choose to wear the sunflower to discreetly indicate that they may require help, time or kindness.
- 66 In May, Everyone Active commenced a new Leisure Team Member Apprenticeships with Lifetime across all three Leisure Centres. The apprenticeship includes fitness instructing, lifeguarding, swim teaching and leading group activity sessions.

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- 67 Following the reopening of Sevenoaks Leisure Centre changes were made to how customers access parking at the centre. Free parking is still available, although now via a cash free system with customers redeeming two hours free parking by registering their vehicle details on a tablet at the reception desk. Edenbridge parking remains free of charge.
- 68 Throughout April to June, Everyone Active has sought to recruit more level 2 swimming teachers to join its team in Sevenoaks Leisure Centre to help grow swimming lessons throughout the week. There is currently a nationwide shortage of swimming teachers and Everyone Active continues to recruit new teachers as well as upskill existing colleagues.
- 69 In May, Everyone Active held Personal Trainer events to promote the benefits of a training session with an Everyone Active Personal Trainer and how customers can use them to enhance their fitness journey by learning more about their health, body and fitness and setting achievable goals. To promote the benefits of personal training, Everyone Active offered 4 sessions for the price of 3 saving customers up to £37.
- 70 The popular Roller Disco sessions run by Kent Roller Disco returned to Sevenoaks Leisure Centre every Saturday and once a month at Edenbridge Leisure Centre. These sessions were historically well attended and were sorely missed during the closure of both centres.
- 71 On the first weekend of opening, Sevenoaks Leisure Centre hosted 7-Oaks Tri Clubs annual triathlon event. The event ran very smoothly and team successfully delivered its first event since re-opening.
- 72 Everyone Active has joined the Sevenoaks Town Council Sports Strategy Group and attended the first meeting of the reformed group.
- 73 Sevenoaks Leisure Centre hosted two club Championship Gala swimming events in September, which were well attended by competitors and spectators.
- 74 Edenbridge Leisure Centre hosted a Macmillan Coffee morning raising over £200 for cancer support.

Health and Wellbeing Plan

- 75 Everyone Active understands the important role it plays in delivering increased participation across the leisure service in Sevenoaks District Council.
- 76 It has a Health and Wellbeing Action Plan in place, which aligns with the Council's own Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, whilst taking into consideration key national, regional and local objectives outlined by stakeholders such as Sport England and Community Leisure UK.
- 77 Everyone Active's plan will strive to deliver and increase participation through the following themes:

- Wider determinants of health
- Health behaviours
- Places and Communities
- Volunteers/workforce
- Community projects
- Funding

78 Activity in the first two quarters included:

- Provided a concessionary rate to increase the opportunity for disadvantaged groups to access facilities.
- Fitness teams offered a basic health MOT including blood pressure, basic exercise advice and signpost to classes and activities.
- Swimming crash courses held throughout school holidays
- Parent and baby swimming lessons run throughout the day and weekends.
- Promoted activities and events to increase over 65s memberships. Introduced a social activity once a week for those over 65 to attend
- Used Sport England #ThisGirlCan campaign to promote all women only activities within the centre; Get back to Netball, Zumba, Bootcamp, Athletics.
- Provision of a free 12-week exercise referral programme for people referred to the leisure centre through GP services.
- Promoted all EA challenges such as 'Swim the Channel'.
- Provide sessions working with partners where appropriate to offer adult social care activities such as walking football, walking netball etc.
- Held a 'swimathon' event.
- Provided opportunities for local residents to get into employment, including an apprenticeship programme, work experience and volunteering.
- Re-established links with local schools to create a pathway between school, Everyone Active coaching programmes and club access.
- Provided discounted and fully funded qualifications and courses including National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ), Swim England teaching qualifications and sports coaching courses.
- Promoted Sporting Champions Programmes, supporting a minimum of 6 local talented athletes each year.
- Created a funding tracker to monitor all successful and unsuccessful bids. Everyone Active supported the Council to submit bids to the Swimming Pool Support Fund for revenue and capita funding.

Marketing Plan

79 Everyone Active has put in place a Marketing Plan, which aims to help understand the customer in order to deliver the best possible service. The Marketing Plan sets out the marketing strategy for the interim contract.

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- 80 Everyone Active has the following vision, mission and values that form the fundamentals of managing Sevenoaks District Council's leisure facilities. These are:
- **Vision:** To be everyone's first choice for activity.
 - **Mission:** To get everyone doing 30 minutes of activity 5 days a week, two of which are in our contracts and online.
 - **Values:** Inclusive, Supportive, Progressive and Progressive
- 81 Everyone Active partnered with The Revenue Club to implement a dynamic pricing model at Lullingstone Park Golf Course to increase casual usage. Dynamic pricing is based on customer demand, competition and other factors. This partnership has increased usage across the golf course during off-peak hours. Taster sessions and the promotion 'Reward Yourself' increased golf memberships over the summer period.
- 82 Everyone Active ran a £1 Joining Fee promotional offer during September, which was promoted through Royal Mail leaflet drops in targeted post code areas (based on centre usage by members) in the first two weeks of the month. The campaign also made use of social media platforms and Google ad.
- 83 The campaign generated an additional 369 fitness sales in September combined between Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and Edenbridge Leisure Centre.
- 84 Throughout July and August, Everyone Active offered Free Guest Passes to generate membership leads. Social media platforms were used to promote improvements in the gyms and free month membership was offered to members to generate referral.
- 85 Everyone Active membership at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and Edenbridge Leisure Centre grew by 715 memberships between Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 as a result of these targeted marketing campaigns.
- 86 Everyone Active offered free water confidence sessions and a number of crash courses at Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centres throughout the summer holidays. This has resulted in 111 new swimming lesson joiners in September.
- 87 Everyone Active has implemented a targeted Swimming Lesson strategy to continue to grow its 'Learn to Swim' programme across the Sevenoaks District.
- 82 The Everyone Active website and social media sites are regularly updated, alongside leafletting and promotional activities and taster sessions, including regular articles in the Council's district wide magazine InShape.

Health and Safety management

- 88 Operational documentation has been set up under Everyone Active's internal Health & Safety Management policy. This covers Risk Assessments, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH), and Safe Systems of Work. The Management team has an on-site Site Safety Co-ordinator to

manage and oversee the day to day issues that arise under the direction of the Contract Manager and the Regional Health, Safety and Quality Manager.

Major incident management

- 89 During the Quarters 1 and Quarter 2, Everyone Active had nil reportable incidents (RIDDOR), but has seen 36 minor accidents reported in Quarter 1 and 46 minor incidents in Quarter 2, which are reviewed and include bumps, bruises, sprains and cuts.
- 90 Edenbridge Leisure Centre averaged at 0.6 accidents per 10,000 visits for Quarter 2 2023-24. The corporate target is 5.0 accidents per 10,000.
- 91 Sevenoaks Leisure Centre averaged at 1.6 accidents per 10,000 visits for Quarter 2 2023-24. The corporate target is 5.0 accidents per 10,000.
- 92 White Oak Leisure Centre averaged at 3.5 accidents per 10,000 visits for Quarter 2 2023-24. The corporate target is 5.0 accidents per 10,000.
- 93 Lullingstone Park Golf Course averaged at 0 accidents per 10,000 visits for Quarter 2 2023-24. The corporate target is 5.0 accidents per 10,000.

Maintenance of buildings, plant and equipment overview

- 94 Everyone Active has developed their own internal system (EQMS) to report all maintenance concerns and rectifications moving forward. Further meetings have been scheduled to go through any training and details required with the Facilities Management team at Sevenoaks District Council.
- 95 The system logs defects, provides a detailed history of each issue raised and acts as a property database for programmed maintenance.
- 96 As part of the ongoing programme of maintenance Everyone Active and agreed contractors have undertaken the below:
- Pool/spa chemical and bacterial sampling (Legionella)
 - TMV, CWST, Calorifier and shower descaling (Legionella)
 - Lift Servicing
 - Lift LOLER
 - Pool hoist service
 - Pool hoist LOLER
 - Pool Pod Service
 - Pool Pod LOLER
 - Pool Plant Service – Filters, Balance tank, UV, air blower, pumps and dosing unit
 - Air Condition and Air Handling Units
 - Automatic doors service
 - Boilers service
 - Pressure vessels service
 - CCTV service
 - Building alarm service
 - Fire alarm service

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- Fire extinguishers service
- Evacuation chair service
- Disable panic alarm service
- Emergency lighting service
- FAT
- PAT
- Fixed wire wet/dry service
- Lighting protection
- Thermal imaging
- Mansafe system
- Sport and play service
- Timing equipment service
- Fitness equipment service
- Pool view service
- Pool inflatable service

- 97 The Planned and Preventative Maintenance (PPM) schedule has been uploaded to Everyone Active's system and is updated regularly with access given to the Council. An in-house maintenance engineer carried out number of maintenance tasks.
- 98 The table below shows the key actions proposed for the next 6 months in terms of repairs and maintenance.

Action for Q3-Q4	Site
Air Handling Unit testing and repairs – main pool, outdoor units	ELC, SLC
Air Conditioning Unit repairs - gym	ELC, SLC
Condensate pump – gym	ELC
Electric overdoor heater – reception	ELC
Extract grille – studio and sports hall	ELC
PCB Fascia board	ELC
Water heater – drainage and cleaning – kitchen	ELC
Gas pipework	ELC
Heating coil – deep clean, compartment bulb replacement - gym	SLC
Extract motor replacement – gym WC	SLC
Extract motor replacement – café	SLC
Plant repairs	LPGC

Future investment proposals

Item	Site
Gym equipment replacement - subject to business case	ELC
Gym equipment replacement - subject to business case	SLC
Food and beverage offer - subject to business case	SLC

Appointment of a Future Operator

- 99 The current interim contract with Everyone Active ends in April 2025.
- 100 It is likely the Council will use the UK Leisure Framework to undertake the longer term operator tender. However, we will need to understand if it is still compliant given the imminent legislative changes to public procurement. The time this takes to complete cannot be underestimated. Work will need to commence in late 2023/early 2024 and generally follows a three stage process:
- Selection Questionnaire (SQ), to demonstrate applicants' experience and ability to meet SDC's minimum technical and functional requirements in respect of delivering the contract;
 - First Stage Tender, applicants invited to submit detailed solutions (ISDS); and
 - Final Tender, applicants invited to submit final tenders (ISFT) following a period of dialogue.
- 101 At SQ stage applicants are permitted to express interest in the contract and are required to submit information regarding their organisation, capacity, financial standing and history with similar schemes. They will need to meet a specified minima and where more than four applicants are left then only the four highest scoring would proceed. The four highest scoring applicants would then be shortlisted and invited to submit tenders by ISDS.
- 102 In order to assess the tenders, officers will be guided by the results of a Members' consultation event, which will importantly include a discussion on where to set the predetermined weighting between Commercial and Quality.
- 103 Applications are then appraised by the evaluation team (including officers, Cabinet members and external legal and leisure consultancy representation) using a detailed scoring system that demonstrates each of the bidders':
- Viability of their financial model
 - Proposed amendments to the contract
 - Ability to meet the Council's strategic outcomes
 - Operational performance and building maintenance proposals
 - Pricing policies

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- Use of Information Technology
- Environmental and social responsibility policies
- Staffing and volunteering proposals
- Mobilisation

- 104 The preferred operator would then enter into a bespoke Leisure Operating Contract with the Authority.
- 105 A key concern is the period of the new contract. For example, the operator contract for the new White Oak Leisure Centre is for an initial period of 15 years with an option, at the agreement of the parties, for a further period of five years giving a total possible term of 20 years. As a brand new facility, the White Oak Leisure Operating Contract is a full repairing lease with clear asset maintenance systems and targets that gives the Council assurance that the new facility will be maintained to a high standard.
- 106 However, the leisure facilities at both Edenbridge and Sevenoaks, which have served generations of the District's residents, are heading towards the end of their serviceable life, which has accelerated in the past 12 months due to lack of investment, cleaning and repair by Sencio's management team. The ongoing and expected asset maintenance options for the centres, modernisation and decarbonisation will all come at significant cost to the Council.
- 107 Options will need to consider whether to extend the existing contract variation for a further period (say 1 year), invest in the existing buildings, replace with a new modern centre (which would require a shorter term contract, rather than the 15 year contract at White Oak Leisure Centre), do nothing or even possibly close a leisure centre. All of these come at a cost, whether financially or to the social fabric of a community.
- 108 Each option will differently impact the duration of the contract, the cost to the Council and the impact on the community. Members will need to carefully consider the options. A report will be presented to members in the new year reviewing the future leisure service provision to deliver a procurement process which secures the optimal arrangement for the Council.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

- 109 The Council has no statutory obligation to provide sport, leisure or recreation, services and facilities. However, at its meeting of 4 April 2023, Council approved to appoint an interim leisure operator to oversee the Council's leisure facilities for a period of two years or until the procurement of a new operator is completed. Members delegated Authority to the Chief Officer – People and Places and Chief Officer – Finance and Trading to investigate an interim leisure operator and enter into a contract subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for People and Places and Cabinet Member for Finance and Investment.
- 110 The Council will commence its procurement exercise for a permanent operator in early 2024 and is considering tender options and contract timescales.

Key Implications

Financial

In April this year, Council approved funding of up to £1.83 million to support the interim contract over the next two years. This will be borrowed from earmarked reserves in the short-term and will need to be repaid. A solution to repay the reserves will need to be agreed before the conclusion of the 2024/25 budget setting process.

Legal Implications

The Deed of Variation provides the contractual legal framework for the support package and means through which the Council would enforce the terms upon Everyone Active. The Deed of Variation has been signed to make the legal obligations of both parties as clear as possible to mitigate against future disputes on these matters and facilitate the continued delivery of the services.

The Council harnesses the expertise of its leisure service provider to use their commercial and operational acumen to deliver and manage a facility at optimum cost ensuring the best commercial return. Leisure contract risks are assessed by officers and kept under regular 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.

Wellbeing

The Council has no statutory obligation to provide sport, leisure or recreation, services and facilities. This is unlike many other demand driven legally mandated services, such as planning, housing, licensing and environmental health, which we do have a legal duty to provide. However, it recognises the importance of having these facilities, their contribution to health and wellbeing and what they mean to our communities.

Conclusions

The variety and complexity of the services provided by Everyone Active demonstrate the size and scale of the task to meet thousands of customer needs and expectations. The leisure industry continues to struggle post pandemic and with the cost of living, alongside rising utility and operational costs.

A key concern highlighted by Everyone Active is the lack of investment, cleaning and maintenance undertaken by the previous operator, which has served to exacerbate small issues into large and costly problems involving plant and machinery, building fabric and systems and equipment.

Agenda Item 11

This report highlights that the first two quarters have seen positive performance from Everyone Active as interim operator, notably as it started from a zero trading position following the liquidation of Sencio.

Everyone Active has put in place a staff recruitment and development programme, whilst working with local partners to develop more activities to the community. It is currently identifying commercial opportunities in fitness, swimming, alongside a food and beverage offer.

Everyone Active has seen some encouraging and positive return rates at the Council's leisure facilities, with a particular noticeable higher than average return at Edenbridge Leisure Centre. The improvements made on site by both Everyone Active and the Council has had a positive impact on the visiting public and satisfaction.

Appendices

Appendix A – Income and Expenditure (exempt)

Background Papers

Extraordinary Council (4 April 2023), Response to Sencio Community Leisure Insolvency Position – Sevenoaks District Council Leisure Sites

<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=121&MId=3045&J=2>

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People and Places

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People and Places Advisory Committee Work Plan (as at 21/11/23)

5 March 2024

- Community Grants 2024/25
- Sevenoaks District Community Safety Action Plan
- Broomhill Bank School Internship Update

Summer 2024

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