










## Our Promise 1 – Providing Value for Money




We will...	Our progress...	Status
<p>Improve our website and make more services available online</p>	<p>The Council has continued to improve content on its current website, including the provision of a new and improved tool to help residents find their bin collection dates and the ability to search for planning applications from the homepage. A tab has also been added to the homepage to ensure residents can more quickly find the details of their local Councillors.</p> <p>Alongside this the Council has committed to purchase, develop and implement a new website that will enable it to deliver on its ambition for providing more services on line with an improved focus on the customer.</p> <p>Purchase of the new website should be completed in the coming months with the new site live in 2015.</p>	
<p>Move towards a paperless office, making us increasingly efficient</p>	<p>The Council has been working hard to reduce its use of paper. Since the project started in August 2013 it is estimated that the volume of excess paper removed from the building totals 0.75 million pages.</p> <p>In August 2014 the Council launched its electronic invoicing system. Known as 'Key it Once' all invoices received are scanned on receipt and distributed to colleagues across the organisation electronically for approval. This has drastically reduced the amount of paper circulated and held around the building and is improving the speed at which invoices are processed and paid.</p> <p>The process to introduce electronic document management systems (EDMS) to further services across the Council continues. EDMS systems will improve the efficiency of services and improve the Council's information management.</p>	



We will...	Our progress...	Status
Invest in land and buildings that can increase our income	<p>In July 2014 full Council approved the Investment Strategy. This document has set the criteria on which investments will be made and identified a sum of funding that can be used to invest in land and buildings that will generate returns in line with the approved Strategy.</p> <p>Work continues to identify suitable investment opportunities that will enable the Council to generate income.</p>	
Continue to investigate working in partnership and sharing our services with others	<p>In October 2014 the Sevenoaks District Council and Tonbridge &amp; Malling Borough Council shared Building Control Service will commence.</p> <p>Shared services and Partnerships in Licensing, Revenues and Benefits, Audit and Anti-Fraud, Environmental Health continue to perform strongly and deliver significant savings and increased resilience to the Council.</p>	
Raise income from letting out vacant office space	<p>The Council currently generates rental income from sharing its office space with Kent Police, Moat Housing and Kent County Council.</p> <p>This provision has increased during the course of 2014, generating additional income.</p>	

We will...	Our progress...	Status
<p>Be prepared to borrow at low rates of interest to enable investments that generate good levels of return</p>	<p>The ability to borrow to fund Council investments has been approved in principle by full Council and will be considered on a case by case basis when opportunities are identified.</p> <p>The Council has submitted a planning application to develop a new car park at the site of the existing Buckhurst 2 car park in Sevenoaks town. To finance this project the Council will seek to borrow the necessary finance from the Public Works Loan Board at a relatively low rate of interest.</p> <p>The car park project has been identified to deliver a community benefit and will not generate an income return for the Council. It is forecast that all income raised from the new car park will be sufficient to meet loan repayments in addition to the costs of running and maintaining the car park.</p>	




## Our Promise 2 – Keeping the District Safe

We will...	Our progress...	Status
<p>Tackle anti-social behaviour, including fly-tipping and graffiti</p>	<p>The District Council usually receives between 150 and 200 calls to the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer per year. This year to 17<sup>th</sup> September there have been 91 reports. There have been 24 referrals to the multi-agency Task Group, which is consistent with previous years. Our target is to achieve at least an 80% satisfaction rate on individual cases and to achieve an improvement in behaviour in 80% of cases referred to the Task Group. These targets have been consistently met or exceeded for the year to date.</p> <p>The number of fly-tipping incidents reported to the Council averaged 77 per month in 2013/14. To the end of July 2014 there has reduced to an average of 74 per month. Between April and June there was one successful prosecution of an individual fly tipping in the District. To deter fly-tipping and increase the likelihood of prosecution signage and cameras have been placed in targeted areas.</p> <p>We have received 7 reports of graffiti this financial year to date with 100% being cleaned. This is a reduction on last year when 25 reports were received in the same period and 100% cleaned.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">        </p>

We will...	Our progress...	Status
Support victims of crime, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour	A Domestic Abuse Action Plan is in place with actions that support victims. The Plan was 84% on target at the end of the first quarter. 26 victims were referred to the Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service. 75 higher risk victims are supported through Multi-Agency arrangements. The Community Safety Partnership has supported the Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators' programme and the Freedom Programme, a programme for victims. The Community Safety Unit assesses risks to vulnerable victims of crime and anti-social behaviour on a case by case basis through a Risk Assessment process and puts in place necessary support.	
Work in partnership to assist the "Troubled Families" project in the District	Following difficulties with recruitment and retention of staff by the commissioned provider, almost all staff are now in place and engaging with families. We have exceeded our target for the number of families identified and 48% of families have been turned around in terms of meeting the improvements in attendance, reduction in crime and ASB and progress into work. At this stage, we calculate that we will be able to meet the target of 75% of families turned around by end of January 2015 provided there are no further provider difficulties and that we continue to make progress. We have just heard that Churches Together will shortly start their planned input to our programme which is a volunteering scheme for families on a step down basis.	
Deliver a low crime rate across the District	In the first quarter there were 1,327 crimes, a reduction of 94 crimes or 7% compared with the same period last year.	

We will...	Our progress...	Status
Tackle speeding vehicles and improve safety for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists	<p>Our objective is to involve communities in initiatives to address speeding and other safety issues. Speedwatch continues to operate. Speedwatch training for new volunteers was held in July.</p> <p>As part of Child Safety Week all speedwatch volunteers took information/advice to their communities to highlight road safety.</p>	
Work positively with young people to reduce bullying and help them feel safe	<p>A campaign to promote E-safety among school children has taken place to increase safety and reduce the number of victims of e-bullying. This has included visits to schools and use of promotional publicity. A presentation regarding this work was given to County colleagues.</p>	

### Our Promise 3 – Collecting rubbish efficiently and effectively

We will...	Our progress...	Status
Continue to collect your rubbish and recycling each week	The Council continues to honour its commitment to collect both residual waste and certain dry recyclables every week. The Council has an exceptionally low level of missed collections, less than 10 in every 100,000 collections [0.01%], and where they are missed 94% are collected the next working day. The cost of waste collection equates to £47/household/year.	
Continue to replace our oldest refuse vehicles with new ones that are more efficient and better for the environment	There is a rolling programme of replacing refuse freighters after they have reached the end of their economic life. The new freighters are specific to individual collection needs, are more fuel efficient and create less harmful emissions.	
Seek ways to increase the amount of rubbish that is recycled and composted.	<p>The Council continues to promote the benefits of recycling and composting and has recently been awarded £31,200 by the Kent Resource Partnership to raise awareness of the Council's recycling schemes and encourage greater participation and increased capture rates of recyclable material.</p> <p>36.4% of all waste collected this year has been recycled or composted, which is an increase of 3.5% since last year.</p> <p>The Council has also seen strong growth in the number of residents using the garden waste service with 560 new households signed up this year. There are now almost 7900 compost permits issued throughout the District. All garden waste collected is recycled in to compost.</p>	



Increase the amount of your waste that is used to generate electricity


Currently the amount of residual waste that is used to generate electricity stands at over 80%. This is an increase on last year.











## Our Promise 4 – Protecting the Green Belt

We will...	Our progress...	Status
<p>Review our Planning Service and seek to make the decision process as consistent and transparent as possible</p>	<p>Since September last year, we have been making changes in line with The Development Control Improvement Plan to ensure that the decision process is consistent and is as transparent as possible. In particular we have revised the weekly list, revised the pre-app weekly list, reviewed the language we use in reports and all correspondence to ensure it is understandable and free of jargon, updated validation guidance, reviewed performance indicators so they focus on quality as well as speed, reviewed the pre-app service and are revising our approach to planning enforcement which includes the preparation of a new enforcement plan.</p> <p>In addition to this officers are also attending appeals reviews, to ensure that that the decisions made on applications are appropriate and are in line with decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate. In particular this training has helped officers ensure that our interpretation of National Guidelines and our own policy is correct.</p> <p>We have also provided training to members in regard to development in the Green Belt, to help them understand the relevant policies and also to understand the implications of permitted development in regard to Development in the Green Belt to ensure that there a consistent approach to planning decisions whether the decision is delegated or made by the Planning Committee.</p>	
<p>Work with Town and Parish Councils that wish to adopt Neighbourhood Plans</p>	<p>The Council is currently working with ten Town and Parish Councils to assist with their adoption of Neighbourhood Plans, including the designation of six neighbourhood areas.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the first Neighbourhood Plans will be adopted in 2015/16 by Hextable and Ash-cum-Ridley Parishes and Edenbridge Town.</p>	



<p>Review our Statement of Community Involvement and clarify how people can get involved in shaping local planning policy</p>	<p>The Council updated its Statement of Community Involvement and it was subject to public consultation in summer 2014. It is anticipated that it will be adopted by the Council in November 2014.</p> <p>The Statement of Community Involvement details how the Council will engage with local people and organisations in the development planning process, both in planning policy and development management.</p> <p>An SCI was first adopted by the Council in 2006 and the updated version refreshes that document, to bring it up to date with current consultation methods, particularly in relation to electronic communication.</p>	
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## Our Promise 5 – Supporting and developing the local economy


We will...	Our progress...	Status
<p>Bring a share of £5.5m of funding to Sevenoaks District to help current businesses with zero or low interest loans to grow their business</p>	<p>Through the Escalate programme the Council has successfully bought its share of £5.5m of funding to support businesses looking to grow with zero or low interest loans.</p> <p>To date 2 loan applications totalling £300k have been approved and a further 6 projects are being progressed with a total value of approximately £600k. Further schemes are lower in the pipeline and the Council continues to promote the scheme across the District to ensure eligible businesses are able to access this opportunity.</p>	
<p>Consider our own initiatives to bring broadband to parts of the District that major suppliers are unable to prioritise</p>	<p>Cabinet considered a report in April 2014 setting out six options that the Council could take forward in seeking to bring improved broadband connection and speeds to the District.</p> <p>It was concluded that the most appropriate approach with the resources available is to assist local communities in taking advantage of the BDUK and RCBF rollout and continuing to develop the relationship with BT and assisting in delivery of the BDUK and RCBF projects. At the same time the Council will continue working with small network providers to encourage them to invest in the District.</p>	
<p>Promote the District as an excellent place for businesses to locate and grow</p>	<p>A District-wide prospectus has been produced and will be used to promote the District through land agents, websites and business support groups. Work is now commencing on a product to help promote Swanley as a business location and to raise the profile of the town.</p>	

We will...	Our progress...	Status
Bring £450,000 of funding to the District to help local businesses improve their energy efficiency and reduce their overheads	From Housing Policy perspective there was a highly successful joint bid with DBC and called Warmer streets and this includes businesses. SDC has now identified which two streets for housing and location for the businesses which have to be near the boundary of DBC like Horton Kirby and South Darenth. There will be grant funding to increase energy efficiency with some funding from house owners and tenants. Workshops for businesses wishing to improve energy efficiency have also been run across the District.	
Develop a consistent programme of business support	£60,000 funding was achieved to set up access to free business support for the West Kent Business Support Programme. This includes free advice for home businesses, rural businesses and general advice for SMEs as well as workshops for groups of businesses.	
Continue to support tourism and the rural economy	<p>Regarding the West Kent Leader programme we have submitted a bid for the next programme which has involved a lot of consultation and fact finding with a Business plan. We should know results in December 2014.</p> <p>The most recent data available (2011) showed that the annual value of tourism to the local economy was £232million, a 3.69% increase over 2009. The next figures will be available shortly. A new accommodation providers' forum has been set up with the District Council providing information about accommodation to enquirers through the Contact Centre and through electronic information in the reception. Visit Kent has advertised 39 accommodation providers and 74 events in the District and included Sevenoaks as a priority in two of its three magazines. The District has been featured in publications across the South East and has been advertised in Dutch, French and German publications and websites. The Sevenoaks destination website page receives 4,962 views.</p>	

## Becoming financially self-sufficient

We will...	Our progress...	Status
<p>Improve efficiency and cost effectiveness of the services we provide by working in partnership with others, increasing income, reducing running costs and finding new ways of working with a dynamic approach to financial management.</p>	<p>The Council continues to work in shared services for Licensing, Environmental Health, Revenues and Benefits and Audit and Anti-Fraud. From October this year a shared Building Control Service will be launched with Tonbridge &amp; Malling Borough Council. Shared Management arrangements also exist in CCTV and Parking</p> <p>Partnership working continues to be a strong feature of the Council's Housing Service and the Communities &amp; Business section in areas such as Community Development, Community Safety and Health. Our partnership arrangement allow us to make best use of limited resources and in cases such as the HERO project allow the Council to generate an income to support the running of the service.</p> <p>The Council continues to make savings in its running costs. This has included exercises to become paper-less, introducing electronic invoicing through the Key It Once project and successfully introducing online forms for temporary event notices in the Licensing team.</p>	
<p>Buy and build new assets that help improve the way we provide services and at the same time generating a return on our investments. To support this strategy we will use our available reserves and take advantage of low interest long term borrowing.</p>	<p>The Council is making good progress towards the building of a new car park at the current Buckhurst 2 site in Sevenoaks. The project has been identified to meet a community need and will generate sufficient return to meet the costs of the build.</p> <p>An Investment Strategy was approved by Council in July 2014 and potential development opportunities are being considered.</p> <p>The formation of a Trading Company is currently being investigated by Officers with the aim of increasing the scope of opportunities to raise</p>	

	income from potential investments.	
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We will...	Our progress...	Status
<p>Place an even greater emphasis on providing better customer service through channel shift and improved access to our services.</p>	<p>Providing the very best levels of customer service continues to be a high priority for the Council. Opportunities to increase the ways in which customers can choose to do business with us, primarily through more web enabled services are being actively developed.</p> <p>The Licensing team have had considerable success from their introduction of online forms, and relatively small improvements to the website with improved information on rubbish and recycling collection times and faster access to planning applications is resulting in less telephone contact as residents are able to find information in ways that are more convenient to them.</p> <p>Options to provide an improved website, with even greater customer focus are being investigated and the results will be reported back to Members in due course.</p>	
<p>Invest in attracting, generating and supporting business, particularly through the development of broadband across the District.</p>		