

PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

Present: Cllr Collins (Chairman)

Cllr Cole (Vice-Chairman)

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

Cllr Osborne-Jackson was also present.

34. Minutes

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

35. Declarations of interest

There were none.

36. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

37. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder presented a progress update to the Committee.

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

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

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

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

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

38. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

39. Community Grants Scheme 2022/23

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

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

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

In 2021/22, the grants awarded through the Community Grant Scheme enabled voluntary organisations to support 80,377 volunteer hours in the Sevenoaks District, which represented an economic benefit of £1.53 million.

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

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

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

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

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

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

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

40. Public Realm Commission Annual Update

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Resolved: That the report be noted

41. Sevenoaks District Council Safeguarding Policy 2022-2025

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

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

The main aims of the policy were to:

- Raise awareness of the duties and responsibilities for children, young people and adults at risk of harm
- Encourage good practice among staff, elected members, volunteers and contractors, to safeguard children and adults at risk who receive Council services
- Provide clear guidance on procedures to be adopted if it is suspected that an adult, young person or child may be at risk of harm

The Committee discussed the report.

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

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

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

42. Voluntary Sector Forum Barometer Survey Results

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

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

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

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

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

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

43. Citizens Advice Financial Split

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

The Committee discussed the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

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

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

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

23

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

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

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

Members discussed the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

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

45. Work Plan

The work plan was noted with the following additions:

14 June 2022

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

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 08:06PM

CHAIRMAN

