

Year	Title	Recommendations	Outcome
2013/14	Parking Working Group	<p>Scrutiny Committee - 4 February 2014 - Minute 32</p> <p>The Chairman of the Parking Working Group introduced its final report and its proposed recommendations for Cabinet. The working group had met on a further 3 occasions since the interim report submitted to the Committee on 21 November 2013.</p> <p>He advised that the report was focused on possible improvements rather than any criticism of the existing position. It concentrated on Sevenoaks, in the town and near to the railway station, as these accounted for 61% of on-street parking revenues and 95% of off-street parking revenues. The Council had become dependent in its budget upon achieving a yearly increase of 3.5% in parking revenues but this created a perception of expensive parking and put some shoppers off coming to Sevenoaks. Parking played an important role in community and economic development.</p> <p>He highlighted that parking was not just the responsibility of the Council and he had attended a meeting of the Sevenoaks Town Partnership on the matter. Other councils worked with local supermarkets to provide Park and Ride services. It was important for the Council to work with its partners. There was a perceived shortage of 220 long stay spaces and 40 to 50 short stay, but identifiable demand was required before informed planning could take place.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development felt the report was a good example of how scrutiny can work. He asked whether it would have been helpful to have had input from Edenbridge Councillors although car parks there were not run by the Council. The Chairman of the Working Group agreed it would, especially given the high number of tourist attractions in the area.</p> <p>The Vice Chairman asked whether the Group had considered schemes for flat payments or schemes where refunds were</p>	<p>Cabinet - 6 March 2014 - Minute 83</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the Chairman of the Working Group had sent his apologies and that the Portfolio Holder would speak to the item on his behalf. The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development thanked the Scrutiny Working Group for all their work and commented that it had been interesting and helpful and would be factoring it into the long term strategy and commended the report to Cabinet.</p>

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		<p>provided if a certain amount were spent in local shops. The Group had not focused on details.</p> <p>A Member was concerned that half of the Council-provided off-street parking places in Swanley were at Bevan Place and that this site may become subject to a planning application for redevelopment into housing. She suggested that this car park be retained.</p> <p>A Member noted some neighbouring authorities provided parking free to visitors.</p> <p>Resolved: That the final report of the Parking Working Group be referred to Cabinet for consideration.</p>	
<p>2014/15 - 2015/16</p>	<p>Leisure Spending In Depth Scrutiny Working Group</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committee - 5 July 2016 - Minute 11</p> <p>Councillor Ball presented the report of the Leisure In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group that assessed the value for money provided to the Council by Sencio Community Leisure. The report considered the lease arrangements between the Council and Sencio, the support provided by the Council, the financial position of Sencio and recent investments and improvements made by the leisure provider. The Group had considered the performance of Sencio against leisure providers for other Kent local authorities in the context of value for money for the local authority. The report recommended that Cabinet be asked to review the payment of management and asset maintenance fees to Sencio. It also recommended that Cabinet be asked to consider whether it would be more effective for the Council's Health & Housing Team to undertake the outreach aspect of the Sports Development function, previously transferred to Sencio, while retaining part of the management fee. Members confirmed that they had considered the confidential appendices to the report but that they would not discuss that confidential information.</p>	<p>Cabinet - 15 September 2016 - Minute 27</p> <p>Cabinet discussed the reference from Scrutiny Committee and agreed that the report be referred to the Housing and Health Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report be referred to the Housing and Health Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Housing And Health Advisory Committee - 4 October 2016 - Minute 21</p> <p>a) Scrutiny Committee report on Leisure Value for Money across the District</p>

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		<p>Jane Parish, Chief Executive of Sencio, addressed the Committee and explained that the loss in 2015/16 had been due partly to the closure of the Wildernesse site, while still incurring staffing costs from the relocation and also due to accounts taking staff leave accrual into consideration. In 2015 Sencio had increased the level of maintenance carried out in areas the Council was responsible for under the lease.</p> <p>Members discussed the level of fees paid by the Council to Sencio since its establishment in 2004. Members noted that the management fee had decreased while the number of customers had increased. However Sencio had shown a loss in the last financial year and members of the Group suggested that more could be done when compared to other local authority operators.</p> <p>Members considered the recent investments and improvements made by Sencio, which included the purchase of 12 power-assisted exercise machines at White Oak Leisure, an updated Front of House system which would help increase online bookings, email renewal letters, website links to external partners (bringing commission to Sencio), an upgrade to the finance and payroll system and continued innovation to customers including “Smash Up” badminton and archery taster sessions. They noted that Sencio had made changes to drive up memberships and maximise income while reducing head office and other costs.</p> <p>Resolved: That</p> <p>a) the conclusions of the Working Group that Sencio did not offer value for money to the Council at this time, be noted, while noting the trend of improvement;</p> <p>b) Cabinet be recommended to</p>	<p>(Papers exempted in part under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, Sch.12A, para.3)</p> <p>At its meeting on 15 September 2016, Cabinet had referred a reference from the Scrutiny Committee for consideration to the Advisory Committee. Scrutiny Committee had asked Cabinet to review the management and asset management fees paid to SENCIO; consider whether the Council could more effectively carry out the outreach element of the Sports Development function while retaining part of the management fee; and in its consideration be advised that it may wish to take account of the further investment that SENCIO had been taking forward. The Advisory Committee considered all the papers that had been submitted to Cabinet and noted the further exempted information which had been circulated earlier in the day which was also tabled.</p> <p>Cllr. Brown, Vice Chairman of Scrutiny Committee and Chairman of Leisure In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group and Jane Parish, Chief Executive of SENCIO, were in attendance and addressed the Committee. Members asked questions of clarity.</p> <p>It was noted that the management fee was to be considered later under ‘Budget 2017/18: Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) (see Minute 24).</p> <p>Resolved: That</p>

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		<p>i) review the management and asset management fees paid to Sencio; and</p> <p>ii) consider whether the Council could more effectively carry out the outreach element of the Sports Development function while retaining part of the management fee.</p> <p>and in its consideration Cabinet be advised that it may wish to take account of the further investment that Sencio had been taking forward.</p>	<p>a) the management and asset management fees paid to SENCIO be considered (see Minute 24); and</p> <p>b) subject to any decision above, agree to review whether the Council could more effectively carry out the outreach element of the Sports Development function.</p> <p>Housing And Health Advisory Committee - 4 October 2016 - Minute 24</p> <p>The Chief Finance Officer presented the report which set out updates to the 2017/18 budget within the existing framework of the 10-year budget and savings plan. The report also presented proposals that had been identified which needed to be considered, together with further suggestions made by the Advisory Committees, before finalising the budget for 2017/18.</p> <p>The major message of the report was that the Council was able to remain financially self-sufficient.</p> <p>The budget agreed by Council in February included £100,000 of new savings or additional</p>

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			<p>income per annum and the Advisory Committees were being asked to make suggestions to Cabinet that would achieve the £100,000 required for next year. Two Member Budget Training sessions had recently taken place with the intention of increasing, or refreshing, Members knowledge of the budget process and to enhance the discussions that would take place at this round of Advisory Committees.</p> <p>The Chief Finance Officer reminded reminding Members that over £6m had already been agreed to be saved between 2011/12 and 2017/18 made up of over 130 items and over £10m had been saved since 2005/06.</p> <p>Members reviewed and discussed Appendix D which contained the growth and savings proposals put forward by the Portfolio Holder and Chief Officers, and the Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) in Appendix E. Consideration of the reduction in the SENCIO Management fee had also been considered as part of Minute 21 above.</p> <p>Members also considered and gave their individual ideas for growth and savings items. The Chief Finance Officer summarised the suggestions put forward and Members considered whether there was anything they wanted taken forward as potential growth or savings suggestions. It was discussed that potentially there needed to be a future further growth item in relation to the HERO service.</p>

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			<p>Public Sector Equality Duty</p> <p>Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty and that individual equality impact assessments had been completed for all Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) to ensure the decision making process was fair and transparent.</p> <p>Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the growth proposal identified in Appendix D applicable to the Advisory Committee (SCIA 6) be agreed; b) the savings proposals identified in Appendix D applicable to the Advisory Committee (SCIA 7) be agreed; and c) there were no further suggestions for growth and savings from the Advisory Committee at this time.
2016/17	<p>Property Investment Strategy Management Working Group</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committee - 30 March 2017 - Minute 39</p> <p>Cllr. Clack presented the report of the Property Investment Strategy In-Depth Working Group that considered whether the benefits of the Council’s Property Investment Strategy outweighed the risks. The report detailed the summary of work that that had been carried out by the working group including speaking with Ashford Borough Council, a case study on Suffolk House and speaking to the Leader. Conclusions of the working group and the recommendations were discussed including communication to</p>	<p>Cabinet - 20 April 2017 - Minute 88</p> <p>Members considered the reference from Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Resolved: That Officers be requested to move forward with the recommendations.</p>

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		<p>Members, the professionalism and competence of Officers, self-sufficiency plus and affordable housing.</p> <p>In response to questions Members were advised that Savills had been appointed as the Investment Advisors and would notify the Council if a property was coming up for sale. A Property Investment Strategy Update had been looked at by the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee and Finance Advisory Committee before going to Council on 25 April 2017 which was requesting that a further £25m be sought from external borrowing.</p> <p>Members discussed ‘self-sufficiency plus’ and how this could work through Quercus 7. It was also discussed how information could be shared regarding purchases and how the Scrutiny Committee could be kept informed on individual properties performance, it was discussed that the performance monitoring should include information on the strategy. Members discussed the suggested recommendations to Cabinet.</p> <p>The Chairman moved that recommendation within the report subject to the amendment of recommendation ‘(d) to explore possibilities of self-financing affordable housing and shared-ownership projects to help the less wealthy within the District’ be amended to ‘to explore the advantages and disadvantages of self-financing affordable housing and shared ownership projects to help the less wealthy within the District’.</p> <p>The motion was put to the vote and it was:</p> <p>Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that</p> <p>a) there be improved on-going communication with Members on progress with the exiting portfolio, the financial viability</p>	

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		<p>and returns being achieved, and details of new investments (as soon as it is appropriate to make Members aware);</p> <p>b) a single location be accessible to Members where all relevant information can be maintained and updated;</p> <p>c) in any month a purchase is made, an update be provided to Members, by the end of the same month (or within seven days, whichever is the latter) with details of the cost, source of financing and projected income; and</p> <p>d) the advantages and disadvantages of self financing affordable housing and shared ownership projects to help the less wealthy within the District be explored.</p>	
2018/19	Staffing Levels Working Group	<p>Scrutiny Committee - 13 November 2018 - Minute 18</p> <p>Councillor Brown presented the final report as Chairman of the In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group. The working group had been investigating the number of current vacancies and long term sickness absences across the Council. Meetings had been held with different Officers and an external recruitment agency. The Chairman noted that salaries were given as the primary reason by staff for leaving the Council, with competition from London and the private sector. Certain areas were identified as more problematic to recruit for, and Market Related Payments (MRPs) were offered in some circumstances.</p> <p>Members noted that free parking at the Council Offices should be reflected in the list of current staff benefits.</p>	<p>Cabinet - 10 January 2019 - Minute 59</p> <p>The Chairman presented the report from the Scrutiny Committee. At its October 2017 meeting the Scrutiny Committee resolved to set up a working group to look in more depth at matters relating to staffing within the Council. The group had a particular focus on recruitment, retention, and flexible working. While sickness has been covered during meetings, this is a substantial topic and was not the focus of the enquiry (for data on this topic, see Appendix E - sickness absence as of February 2018 and data in relation to occupational health).</p>

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		<p>Possibilities for increasing flexible working opportunities for staff were discussed including job share, working from home and 10am to 2pm shifts. It was hoped that these arrangements would appeal to parents returning to work and those living out of District. Members discussed widening the radius for relocation policy and considering commuting time in addition to distance.</p> <p>The possibility was discussed of introducing a shuttle bus for staff between the train station and the Argyle Road Offices, however Members felt this would not be appropriate and be at odds with the Council’s commitment to Health promotion.</p> <p>Staff referral schemes were considered to support recruitment whereby current staff could recommend friends and relatives and would receive financial incentives if their recommendation was appointed and successfully completed probation. It was suggested that the Council review where posts were advertised. This could include in local and general newspapers, on Social Media and local online forums including ‘mumsnet’ and ‘dadsnet’.</p> <p>Members discussed the current practice of staff being required to pay back training costs if leaving the Council within two years of training completion for a job in the private sector. It was considered if this could be increased to three years and expanded to also including moving to other Local Authorities. Options around tapered payback were discussed and Members supported full payback after one year with a lower percentage payback after the second and third years.</p> <p>Members enquired as to the cost of agency staff and requested further details on how these compared with full time staffing costs.</p>	<p>Resolved: That</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the report from the Scrutiny Committee and the recommendations as set out below, be noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Wider use of flexible working arrangements, particularly the 10-2 market/ job shares where those coming back to the work place can be extremely well qualified but do not wish to commute to London, and the ability to work from home; ii) Increasing the period where staff have to pay back the costs of training from 2 to 3 years, including where they move to another local authority as opposed to the private sector, as currently occurs; It is suggested for consideration that this is on a tapered basis. If an officer leaves within 1 year of completing training, the full training cost is repayable. The amount then tapers as a reducing amount over years 2 and 3. iii) Widen the radius for the relocation allowance (Currently 10 miles from District boundary);

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		<p>Action 7: Chief Officer Corporate Services to provide information on agency costs in comparison with that of full time staff for specific roles.</p> <p>Members agreed that the report should be referred to Cabinet following the inclusion of feedback from Committee Members.</p> <p>Resolved: That</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) delegated authority be given to the Chairman of the Working Group to make appropriate amendments to the report prior to submission to Cabinet; and b) subject to the amendments above the report be recommended to Cabinet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv) Review of structures, roles and responsibilities, and use of market related payments (reviewable every two years) - where finances permit; v) Improvement of the kitchen areas for staff; vi) Introduce a lower rate for car loans (Currently 2.55%); vii) Extend the period before which MRPs are reviewed; viii) Create a recruitment microsite for the Council to better advertise vacant posts and consider different places to advertise such as local press and social media (Linkedin, mumsnet etc.) ix) Review structures as part of the current Customer Redesign initiative, introducing career grades to support career development and succession planning; x) Encourage greater use of apprentices, funded through the apprenticeship levy.

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			<p>xi) Consider a referral payment to staff who introduce an individual who then successfully takes up a position within the council. To be paid once new member of staff has successfully completed probation or 6 months of employment without issue; and</p> <p>b) Officers to implement the recommendations, as appropriate, as operational decisions, and investigate and report back on the recommendations which were not.</p>
2019/21	CCTV Service	<p>Scrutiny Committee - 13 July 2021 - Minute 8</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Working Group for their report on the In-Depth Scrutiny of the Council’s CCTV Service.</p> <p>Cllr Pender presented the final report as Chairman of the In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group. The Working Group had considered the effectiveness of the Council’s CCTV service in supporting Community Safety and its impact on privacy. The Working Group had recommended that the cameras the Council currently maintained be assessed to establish whether there was a pressing need for them and that audio recording hardware of the cameras in the Council Offices be removed with most video surveillance also removed. Further recommendations and observations were set out within the report.</p> <p>Members asked questions of clarification. It was confirmed that the CCTV Code of Practice had been considered in producing the report, however the Code had been considered the minimum</p>	<p>Cabinet - 16 September 2021 - Minute 24</p> <p>a) In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group - CCTV</p> <p>Members considered the report from the Scrutiny Committee. At its November 2019 meeting the Scrutiny Committee resolved to set up a working group to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council’s CCTV Service in supporting the Community Safety Theme of the Council’s Plan and its impact of privacy. The working group considered the number and location of CCTV cameras provided across the District and their effectiveness in meeting the aims of the CCTV service the impact of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and recovery costs.</p> <p>Resolved: That</p>

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		<p>requirement in the protection of privacy by the Working Group. It was queried whether businesses or the police who used the CCTV service had been approached to help cover the costs of the service.</p> <p>Following questions on the benefits of CCTV to help find missing persons and deter crime, the Chairman of the Working Group advised that as addressed in the report, there were concerns that this was not sufficient justification to record all individuals in public spaces.</p> <p>It was moved by the Chairman and it was</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Resolved: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendices A, B and C of the report, on the grounds that likely disclosure of exempt information is involved as defined by Schedule 12A, paragraph 7 (information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime).</p> <p>Members considered and discussed the exempt information as set out in the exempt appendices.</p> <p>It was moved by the Chairman and it was</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Resolved: That the public no longer be excluded from the meeting.</p> <p>Members of the Working Group expressed concerns that there appeared to be little evidence to demonstrate benefits or disadvantages of the CCTV cameras for the Police. It was emphasised that cameras ought to only be in place if there was a “pressing need” for them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Further information be obtained to assist in justifying the pressing need for CCTV; b) the Council should not disable or remove the audio recording hardware from the cameras in the Council Offices but should ensure that it is made clear that an audio recording is made; and c) a request to third parties, such as the Police for them to recover costs of running the CCTV Service, be considered.

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		<p>The Head of Direct Services clarified that a log of what the operator was doing was maintained. Key performance indicators had been logged, but it was possible for more data to be recorded. The need for each camera had been regularly checked as required by the Code of Practice. Various factors relating to community safety had been considered during these checks, not just those relating to crime.</p> <p>It was moved by Cllr London and duly seconded that it be recommended to Cabinet that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) further information be obtained to assist in justifying the pressing need for CCTV; b) the disabling of the audio recording hardware of the cameras in the Council offices or the introduction of an audio activation method, be considered; and c) a request to third parties, such as the Police, for them to recover costs of running the CCTV service, be considered. <p>It was moved by Cllr Pender and duly seconded that part a) of the motion be amended to read “cameras maintained by the Council be assessed to establish whether there is a clear justification to demonstrate their pressing need”.</p> <p>Members debated the amendment.</p> <p>The amendment was put to the vote and it was lost.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Working Group expressed concerns that the disabling the audio recording was not sufficient and the software ought to be removed altogether. It was moved by Cllr Pender and duly seconded that part b) of the motion be amended to read “the</p>	

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		<p>audio recording hardware of the cameras in the Council offices and most video surveillance, be removed”.</p> <p>Members debated the amendment.</p> <p>The amendment was put to the vote and it was lost.</p> <p>It was moved by Cllr Pender and duly seconded that part b) of the motion be amended with the omission of “be considered” for it to read “the audio recording hardware of the cameras in the Council offices be disabled or an audio activation method be introduced”.</p> <p>The amendment was put to the vote and it was lost.</p> <p>Members considered and discussed the motion. It was expressed that the safety of staff at the Council Offices was a priority.</p> <p>The motion was put to the vote and it was</p> <p>Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) further information be obtained to assist in justifying the pressing need for CCTV; b) disabling the audio recording hardware of the cameras in the Council Offices or the introduction of an audio activation method, be considered; and c) a request to third parties, such as the Police, for them to recover costs of running the CCTV service, be considered. 	

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2021/22	Covid-19 Response Working Group	In Progress	