

25 February 2021 at 7.00 pm

This meeting will be held virtually via Zoom,
and livestreamed here:

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Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee

Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Fleming; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Bayley
Cllrs. Abraham, Andrews, Clayton, Esler, Eyre, Hogarth, Maskell, McGregor, Nelson
and Waterton

Agenda

	Pages	Contact
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Committee held on 26 November 2020, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 4)	
2. Declarations of interest Any declarations not already registered.		
3. Actions from previous meetings (if any)		
4. Update from Portfolio Holder		
5. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit Committee (if any)		
6. Equality Policy Statement and Objectives	(Pages 5 - 14)	Lee Banks Tel: 01732 227161
7. Emerging Economic Development Strategy	(Pages 15 - 16)	Detlev Munster Tel: 01732227099
8. Update on Capital Projects	(Pages 17 - 18)	Detlev Munster Tel: 01732227099
9. Work plan	(Pages 19 - 20)	

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.

IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Bayley (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Andrews, Clayton, Esler, Eyre, Hogarth, Maskell, McGregor, Nelson and Waterton

55. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee held on 8 October 2020, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

56. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

57. Actions form previous meeting

There were none.

58. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman announced that Emilia Peters had been awarded “Rookie of the Year” by the Association of Democratic Services Officers, which was a fantastic achievement.

The Chairman advised that he had been involved in a meeting with other Kent Leaders and Chief Executives Scientists and Kent and Medway Health Officials to discuss the announcement of Kent being put into tier 3 following the end of the national lockdown on 3 December 2020 and the rationale. Despite being put into tier 3, it was encouraging to see that the District Level of confirmed cases were dropping in the District.

The Chairman went onto explain that tiers were determined by the overall infection rate, the numbers of those who were over 60, the number of cases rising and falling in the districts/boroughs, pressure on the hospitals and the positivity rate as a percentage of tests taken. The decision would be reviewed on 16 December 2020.

On 2 December the national lockdown would end and highstreets would be re-opening, with the four main Highstreets supported by EU funding and the council

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had agreed to support the re-opening with the revised parking scheme. In response to a question the Chairman advised that there was strict guidance for the use of the EU funding but there would be a plan for New Ash Green.

Members were advised that Council's projects were progressing with Swanley White Oak Leisure centre's groundworks complete and the swimming pool was being tanked. Funding was in place for 27-37 High Street, Swanley and a demolition contractor had been appointed. Work was continuing on Bevan Place and there was interest from Homes England. Conversations had also taken place with Locating Kent which brought companies into Kent for office space.

59. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

60. Customer Redesign

Members considered the report detailing the progress made on the customer redesign project which was designed and implemented to prepare for what the council assessed to be the future of local government. The Chairman and Head of Information and Customer Solutions gave a presentation which informed Members of the areas that were now included under Customer Solutions, these changes had resulted in other officers being available to deal with more complex queries.

Members discussed what exceptional customer service looked like, including which companies offered good customer service and what could be learnt from these organisations. In response to questions Members conversed whether 9am - 5pm was effective for residents and businesses and the opportunity to move services to 7am to 7pm. This would open the work place to more people and enable services to be reached by more residents. Members discussed the opportunity of putting additional services online and services still being available to access face to face.

The future of what working looked like was discussed and how this could take place going forward following the Coronavirus Pandemic including, working from the office and from home and ensuring that staff's wellbeing was maintained.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

61. Work plan

The work plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.52 PM

CHAIRMAN

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EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT & OBJECTIVES

Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee - 25 February 2021

Report of: Chief Executive

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by:

- Cabinet - 18 March 2021

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Peter Fleming

Contact Officer: Lee Banks, Ext. 7161

Recommendation to Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee:

- (a) To recommend to Cabinet that the Equality Policy Statement and Objectives are adopted; and
- (b) To recommend to Cabinet that a full review of the Equality Policy Statement and Objectives to take place on the publication of Census 2021 data.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- (a) The Equality Policy Statement and Objectives are adopted; and
- (b) It is agreed that a full review of the Equality Policy Statement and Objectives to take place on the publication of Census 2021 data.

Reason for recommendation: To comply with our obligations under the Equality Act (2010), based on Members' priorities.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The approval of an equality policy statement and objectives is within the Council's policy framework and is a matter for Cabinet. The Council has a strong record of ensuring our services are responsive to the needs of our residents and customers, whilst taking a proportionate response to implementing equalities legislation.
- 2 The Equality Act (2010) sets out a 'Public Sector Equality Duty' which requires public authorities to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations

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between different people when carrying out their day to day work - in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

- 3 The Equality Act (2010) sets out the nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.
- 4 As part of the duty, public authorities are required to prepare and publish one or more objectives and review these at least every four years. Public authorities are also required to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the duty.
- 5 There are five proposed equality objectives relating to our roles as a community leader, service provider and employer. It is recommended that the current objectives are adopted for 2021 only, and are subject to full review, including consultation with stakeholders on the publication of Census 2021 data later this year.
- 6 The new Census data, alongside any new data arising from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our communities, will provide a new baseline for assessing any inequalities in our District and allow the Council to adopt an action plan based on the most current information about our District.

Equality Policy Statement and Objectives 2021

- 7 The Council continues to take a proportionate approach to responding to our duties under the Equality Act (2010), reflecting the demographics of our communities. Public authorities are required to consider what they can do to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations.
- 8 In this regard, through the adoption of the proposed Equality Policy Statement and Objectives for 2021, the Council has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism.
- 9 A plain text draft of the proposed Policy Statement is provided as Appendix A to this report. To ensure the Policy Statement is widely accessible the content will be designed to be added directly to the Council's website pages, rather than as a Word or PDF document. An audio recording of the Policy Statement will also be created, in the same way in which the Council's In Shape magazine is also made available to residents.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

All public authorities are required to comply with the Equality Act 2010. If we do not publish equality objectives we will not be able to demonstrate what steps we are taking to tackle the inequalities faced by our residents and action may be taken against the Council by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Adoption of a policy statement and objectives for 2021, with the agreement to undertake a further review on the publication of Census 2021 data, will ensure focus on tackling inequalities within the context of our local priorities and demographics of our population.

Key Implications

Financial

Understanding the needs of people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010) will assist the Council in allocating resources to areas or services where it is considered to be a greater priority

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The Council is required to comply with the Equality Act 2010. Failure to do so may result in the Council not being able to demonstrate what steps it is taking to tackle inequalities and action being taken by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

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.

Conclusions

This report sets out priorities for addressing areas of discrimination and disadvantage, advancing equality of opportunity and demonstrates the Council's compliance with the Equality Act (2010).

Appendices

Appendix A - Equality Policy Statement and Objectives

Background Papers

None

Dr Pav Ramewal
Chief Executive

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Sevenoaks District Council

Closing the Gap

Working towards greater equality for all

Our Equality Policy Statement and Objectives

Draft

If you require this document in large print, please contact 01732 227000 or email equality@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Public sector equality duty

The Council is subject to the public sector equality duty (the equality duty). The equality duty is made up of a general equality duty which is supported by specific duties. The general equality duty requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and

Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

Rights and responsibilities

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for implementing this policy statement.

Senior managers will make sure their service areas comply with this document.

Each member of staff has responsibility to read, understand and implement this policy statement and to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Each Councillor has responsibility to read, understand and make sure their behaviour has regard for this policy statement.

Implementation of this policy statement will be monitored by the Strategic Management Team and progress will be reported to Cabinet.

Policy statement

We want people to have the opportunity to reach their potential and access services that meet their needs. We aim to take an inclusive approach in our roles as a community leader, service provider and employer. The commitments in this document apply to Councillors and staff and set standards for others who deliver services on our behalf.

As a community leader we will:

- Seek to understand the needs of all our residents by listening and responding to the views of our communities.
- Seek to make good decisions by taking in to account a range of views and information and being accountable for them; and
- Seek to help people to take part in community life and exercise their democratic rights.

As a service provider we will:

- Seek to help everyone to use the services to which are there for them;
- Seek to give information and advice in clear and suitable ways; and
- Review services to identify whether they are meeting people's needs.

As an employer we will:

- Select, appoint and promote individuals on the basis of merit;
- Encourage all staff to develop and reach their potential;
- Provide a safe and accessible workplace;
- Provide fair and open pay and reward systems; and
- Foster an inclusive culture where staff treat each other with dignity and respect.

To deliver our commitments we will:

- Update our equality information and progress against our equality objectives annually;
- Use equality impact assessments when making changes to our services; and
- Not put up with inappropriate or offensive language or behaviour to Councillors, staff or customers.

Equality information

Under the Equality Act (2010) we must publish information to show how we comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This must include information about people, who share a protected characteristic, who are our employees and people affected by what we do.

Information about our population from the 2011 Census is provided below. We collect information about the protected characteristics of people that use our services and our employees, only where this is relevant to what we do and the decisions we take.

Our population

Sevenoaks District has a population of 117,800 living in 47,020 households. The Office for National Statistics says that the district populations will increase by a further 13,000 by 2026.

Disability

The 2011 Census recorded that 13,404 households (28.5 per cent) in the District include people with a long-term health problem or disability. Of these, 2,651 households (5.6 per cent) include two or more people with a long-term health problem or disability.

17,091 people (14.9 per cent) in the District have their day to day activities limited a little or a lot by a long-term illness or disability. This is lower than the Kent average of 17.6 per cent and lower than the national average of 17.9 per cent.

The percentage of people with a disability remains similar to that recorded in the 2001 Census.

Age

The average age of the District's population is 41.7. This is slightly higher than the Kent average of 40.7 years and the national average of 39.6 years.

20.6 per cent of the District's population was aged over 65. This has increased from 17.2% in 2001.

Population forecasts suggest that 28 per cent of the District's population will be aged over 65 by 2033. This is in line with population forecasts for the Kent area.

Sex (gender)

51.6 per cent of the population is female and 48.4 per cent is male. There has been little change in these proportions since the 2001 Census.

Race

The 2011 Census recorded that 4,864 people (4.2 per cent) in the District are from a Black and Minority Ethnic background. This is lower than the Kent average of 6.9 per cent and the national average of 14.6 per cent.

Religion or belief

The 2011 Census recorded that 65.4 per cent of the population is Christian. This is the highest proportion of any district in Kent and higher than the national average of 59.4 per cent. 25.2 per cent of the population have no religion. Small proportions of the remainder of the population are Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and Jewish.

In adopting this Policy Statement, and assessing the impact on race, religion or belief, the Council has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation data was not captured by the last Census. Data from the Integrated Household Survey estimates that 1.6 per cent of adults in the UK identified their sexual identity as lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Pregnancy or maternity

There are 64.3 births per 1,000 of the population. This is higher than the Kent average of 62.4 and the national average of 62.1.

Marital or civil partnership status

The 2011 Census recorded that 54.5 per cent of the District's population are married. This is higher than the Kent average of 48.9 per cent and the national average of 46.6 per cent.

Gender reassignment

At present, there is no official estimate of the trans population. Gender reassignment data was not captured by the last Census.

Equality objectives

Under the Equality Act (2010) we are required to prepare and publish one or more objectives to show how we will achieve any of the things mentioned in the aims of the general equality duty.

Equality objective one

As a community leader, we will advance equality of opportunity by seeking to remove barriers to people with disabilities, and their carers, to participate in community life.

We have chosen this objective to further improve access to Sevenoaks by walking, cycling and public transport and taking measures to ensure people with disabilities, and their carers are supported and able to participate in community life.

Equality objective two

As a community leader, we will foster good relations by promoting understanding of issues affecting people with disabilities and older people.

Why we have chosen this objective as further understanding the whole community is a priority and that our work to deliver dementia friendly communities was working well. Councillors also said that improving disability awareness is a priority.

Equality objective three

As a service provider, we will advance equality of opportunity by improving access to leisure facilities and health activities for people with disabilities, younger and older age groups and men and women.

We have chosen this objective to continue to improve promotion of activities that help to tackle health inequalities, and to encourage local people to access the parks, open spaces and leisure facilities that are available to them.

Equality objective four

As a service provider, we will advance equality of opportunity by improving access to information about our services for people with disabilities and age groups.

We have chosen this objective to encourage further expansion and improvement of online services, whilst also ensuring that needs of people who do not use technology and need information in different formats is considered.

Equality objective five

As an employer, we will advance equality of opportunity by encouraging a broader range of people to apply for Council vacancies and apprenticeships.

We have chosen this objective to ensure that proactive and open recruitment policies are a priority and that we continue to make sure that we demonstrate that discrimination does not take place

EMERGING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee - 25 February 2021

Report of: Strategic Head of Property and Commercial

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Peter Fleming

Contact Officers: Strategic Head of Property Ext. 7099

Recommendation to Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee:

The report be noted.

Reason for recommendation: To update Members on the emerging approach for the Economic Development Strategy.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Economic Development Team has commenced to scope out the requirements of a new Economic Development Strategy (EDS). The current strategy expires this year.
- 2 Despite the need to refresh the current EDS, the economic landscape has potentially shifted due the pandemic and the UK's new trading position in the global market. As a result, there is a need to ensure the district puts in place appropriate initiatives and activities to support, diversify and expand its economic base.
- 3 There will be a presentation at the meeting, providing an overview of emerging thinking within the Council and setting out the approach to ensure a new EDS is achieved.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

None

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal or risk implications related to this report.

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 at this point, but further assessments will be undertaken as the strategy begins to take shape.

Conclusions

The report and presentation to be given to the Advisory Committee is to update the Committee on the emerging Economic Development Strategy.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Detlev Munster
Strategic Head of Property & Commercial

UPDATE ON CAPITAL PROJECTS

Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee - 25 February 2021

Report of: Strategic Head of Property and Commercial

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Peter Fleming

Contact Officers: Strategic Head of Property Ext. 7099

Recommendation to Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee:

The report be noted.

Reason for recommendation: To update Members on the ongoing work with the Council's capital projects/regeneration programme.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Council has been reviewing options for the development /regeneration of several sites within the District. Proposed options are still at an embryonic stage in many instances.
- 2 However, the Council has been successful in obtaining planning consent for several of its schemes (i.e. 27-37 High Street, Alder Way, and Russet Way) and has decided to proceed with the 27-37 High Street, Swanley scheme following the Council's success in obtaining a grant from the Getting Building Fund.
- 3 The Council has also reviewed its project management and governance approach and several key project management documents and processes have been refreshed to facilitate project governance and oversight.
- 4 A presentation at the meeting will provide a brief glimpse of the emerging capital projects. It is important to note, that many of the projects identified in the presentation are at various approval stages. Indeed, as concept development and prefeasibility work progresses, projects will be submitted to Cabinet and Council for approval.

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Other options Considered and/or rejected

None

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal or risk implications related to this report

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 relating to this report.

Conclusions

The report and presentation to be given to the Advisory Committee is for information purposes only to update Members on the Council's emerging capital projects.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

Detlev Munster
Strategic Head of Property & Commercial

Improvement and Innovation Advisory Committee Work Plan 2020/21 (as at 16/2/2021)

25 February 2021

- Rural Landowners
- Equality Policy Statement

24 June 2021

- Broadband

7 October 2021

- Budget 2021/22: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

25 November 2021

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