

15 June 2021 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

Published: 07.06.21

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## People & Places Advisory Committee

### Membership:

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Cheeseman, Perry Cole, Coleman, Collins, P. Darrington, Dyball, Edwards-Winser, Foster, Hudson, Parkin and Raikes

### 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. Appointment of Chairman		
2. Appointment of Vice Chairman		
3. Minutes To agree the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Committee held on 2 March 2021, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 6)	
4. Declarations of interest Any interest not already registered.		
5. Actions from Previous Meeting	(Pages 7 - 8)	
6. Update from Portfolio Holder		
7. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee (if any)		
8. Sevenoaks District Community Plan Annual Report	(Pages 9 - 36)	Kelly Webb Tel: 01732227474
9. Sevenoaks District Community Safety	(Pages 37 - 62)	Kelly Webb Tel: 01732227474

- |     |  |                  |                                  |
|-----|--|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 10. | <b>Partnership - Annual Report<br/>Work Plan</b>                     | (Pages 63 - 64)  |                                  |
| 11. | <b>Leisure provision in Sevenoaks District -<br/>external review</b> | (Pages 65 - 184) | Sarah Robson<br>Tel: 01732227129 |

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

#### Consideration of Exempt Information

Recommendation: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting when considering Appendices A, B, C and D of Agenda Item 11 above, on the grounds that likely disclosure of exempt information is involved as defined by Schedule 12A, paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

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](mailto:democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

**PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021 commencing at 5.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Collins (Chairman)

Cllr. Pett (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Cheeseman, Perry Cole, Coleman, P. Darrington, Dyball, Foster, Hudson, Parkin, and Raikes

Cllr. Firth was also present.

80. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the People and Places Advisory Committee held on 1 December 2020, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

81. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

82. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman, with the Committee's agreement brought forward consideration of Agenda 9.

83. Update on Volunteer Forum by Chair Angela Painter

The Chairman welcomed Angela Painter to the Committee who gave an update on the Volunteer Sector Forum since its relaunch in January 2020. Members were advised that unfortunately due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the first meeting was not able to take place in a physical meeting form, but was being conducted online initially weekly, then fortnightly and now monthly. The meetings last 1 hour and were for those in the voluntary and community sector to engage and be supported by each other. The meetings had developed over time and have been a place for sharing information, experiences and ideas, and for adapting services. Key note speakers had attended and breakout rooms for smaller discussions had regularly taken place.

In response to questions Members were advised that the Forum was valued by the different organisations and it was important that it kept on connecting people by being a partnership owned by the voluntary and community sector. The Sevenoaks District Services Directory was being updated, and each meeting had between 25 and 40 attendees. Each of the organisations had different experiences when it came to funding and some had benefitted through emergency funding from central government. Whereas others, in particular some smaller charities and organisations were finding it hard to access these funding streams. There was a need to be vigilant for funding streams and the Forum were looking to collaborate with businesses for a creative way of supporting the volunteer sector.

The Chairman thanked the Chair of the Volunteer Forum for her attendance and update.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

#### 84. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported that Town Centre Ambassadors would continue to be funded until 31 October 2021, helping to support the safe recovery of the district's high streets.

It was internet safety day on 9 February with over 20 primary schools and Orchards Academy secondary school involved in the virtual school assembly. The Council was working in partnership with Imago to mark Young Carers action day in March and also Carers week in June. An expression of interest for £300,000 external funding to support Community Engagement projects in Swanley had been submitted and it was hoped to receive the outcome of this shortly. Members were advised that the Public Realm work was continuing for artwork outside of the M&S building in Sevenoaks. Four artists had been shortlisted to develop their designs.

Work was continuing on White Oak Leisure Centre, with regular meetings taking place with Sencio and the new leisure operator. Orchard's Academy was taking the lead on an improvements programme to their sports hall and had provided additional funding to support the work. The Academy had submitted a CIL bid to support the improvement works and a decision would be made soon.

The Portfolio Holder advised that projects were underway in regards to Visitor Economy and this included a service level agreement with Visit Kent for the year and a new in-house tourism website that will launch on 26 March. The Place Campaign, with Pillory Barn was underway with the stakeholder engagement process starting. Work was also underway with projects for the Darent Valley Rail partnership and developing the cycling economy in Otford.

Members were also advised that within the West Kent Partnership the first cohort of 'Kick-starters' had started their work placements. Citizen's Advice would also be offering support to those who required help to complete the online census as paper copies would only be available if requested.

In response to a query the Health and Communities Manager advised that the internet safety assembly could be adapted for older people to view.

85. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

86. Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan 2021-22

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which set out Partnership activity aimed at addressing: serious and acquisitive crime, anti - social behaviour including environmental crime, domestic abuse, safeguarding, doorstep crime, and substance misuse. The Action plan was a multi-agency document and would be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Community Safety Partnership to ensure that actions would be on target. If changes were required to the targets Members would be updated.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions of clarification and following discussions on reports of anti-social behaviour the Health and Communities Manager agreed to share a list of some of the subjects discussed at the daily tasking meetings.

*Action 1: Health and Communities Manager to share with Members the subjects discussed at the daily tasking meetings.*

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: The report be noted.

87. Sevenoaks District Citizens' Advice Service Level Agreement (SLA)

The Community and Projects Funding Officer presented the report which set out details of the proposed Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Citizen's Advice in the District for the period 2021 to 2024 following expiry of the current SLA which ends on 31 March 2021. Quarterly monitoring meetings were held between officers and Citizen's Advice Officers and an annual review meeting. Suggested changes had been included in the draft SLA as set out in Appendix A, and related to the changed way of working for the Citizens' Advice including flexible meetings via telephone, email and virtual meetings with the aim to start face to face meetings

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People & Places Advisory Committee - 2 March 2021

as soon as possible, the split of payments and updates to the Housing Advice Service.

In response to a question Members were advised that details would be circulated regarding the payment splits for the different areas in the district.

*Action 2: For Community and Projects Funding Officer to circulate details to the Committee regarding payment split.*

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.

88. Community Grant Scheme Draft Allocations 2021/22 & recommended changes to Grant Scheme from 2022/23

The Community Projects & Funding Officers presented a report which set out information about the Community Grant Scheme and summarised applications received by the Council from voluntary organisations for funding during 2021/22, together with recommended grants. Members were advised that to make the online forms more user friendly and relative to the monitoring for successful applications, two separate forms for grants up to and including £500, and those over £500 to £5,000 were created.

The report also set out the recommendation to carry forward the projects and funding related to 2020/21 grants that had been affected by Covid-19 and changes for the Community Grant Scheme for 2022/23. Appendix C identified the maximum that would be allocated to each applicant should sufficient funding be returned, and as a result the maximum total allocation could be £54,146.

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.

89. Supported Internship Project at Sevenoaks District Council

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People and Places presented the report which outlined the background and operation model for Sevenoaks District Council supported internship project that commenced on 9 September 2019.

The three students from Broomhill Bank School with support from their Job Coach were able to gain valuable work experience in their placements, which have had a significant impact on their interns and their futures. As a result of the skills learnt, the interns are all attending college, studying courses directly linked to their work experience. The Interns overcame huge social fears and the Council benefited from receiving Autism awareness training.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions the Council was working with Broomhill Bank School to re-commence the programme in 2021. A recruitment and selection programme was being developed, which the young people apply to and interview for the intern position at the council.

Resolved: The report be noted.

90. Work Plan

The Work plan was noted with the addition of establishing a community lottery and Place Campaign to the Meeting on 15 June 2021.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 6.34 PM

CHAIRMAN

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Actions from the meeting held on 2 March 2021 (as at 20.5.21)			
Action	Description	Status	Contact Officer
Action 1	Health and Communities Manager to share with Members the subjects discussed at the daily tasking meetings.	An email was sent 20/5/21	Kelly Webb Ext. 7474
Action 2	For Community and Projects Funding Officer to circulate details to the Committee regarding payment split.	The Service Level Agreement states that 'The Provider means Citizens Advice North & West Kent and Citizens Advice Edenbridge & Westerham, acting together to provide a cohesive, District-wide, integrated service (CA))' Citizens Advice North Kent and Citizens Advice Edenbridge & Westerham have therefore been required to agree the amount each would receive in order to be able to deliver an integrated service. In the proposed agreement for 2021 to 2024 it was agreed to state this agreed split.	Jenny Godfrey Ext. 7112

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**SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**

**People & Places Advisory Committee 15 June 2021**

**Report of:** Chief Officer People & Places

**Status:** For Information

**Also considered by:** Cabinet - 8 July 2021

**Key Decision:** No

**Executive Summary:** This report looks at the work of the Local Strategic Partnerships Community Plan from April 2020 - March 2021.

**This reports support the Key Aim of: The Community Plan**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Lesley Dyball

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

**Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee:**

To consider the Sevenoaks District Community Plans Annual Report for 2020-21.

**Recommendation to Cabinet:**

To consider and note the Sevenoaks District Community Plans Annual Report for 2020-21

**Reason for recommendation:** To keep Members updated on the work of the Local Strategic Partnership

## **Introduction and Background**

Making it happen- *together* is the Community Plan for the Sevenoaks District. It sets out a 15-year vision that reflects what local people have told us is important to them in the District.

The vision is supported by a three-year plan, which sets out our priorities for action. The current three-year action plan covers the period 2019-22 and ends in March 2022.

This report summarises the work of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) over the last financial year (2020/21).

The report attached at Appendix A is a summary of the work that has taken place over the year.

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### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

Delivery of the Community Plan is through each agency's own resources. In some cases, work will be dependent upon external funding sources and appropriate funding bids will be made.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

#### 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. 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.

There are no negative impacts - the annual report applies to all.

### **Conclusions**

The Local Strategic Partnership Community Plan Annual Report highlights the work throughout 2020-21

#### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Sevenoaks District Community Plan Annual Report 2020-21

#### **Background Papers**

None.

**Sarah Robson**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer People & Places**

# Sevenoaks District Community Plan Annual Report 2020

This Annual Report is produced by Sevenoaks District Council on behalf of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) using data and information provided by partners



Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership

**making it happen**

*- together*



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## Introduction

Making it happen- *together* is the Community Plan for the Sevenoaks District. It sets out a 15-year vision that reflects what local people have told us is important to them in the District.

The vision is supported by a three-year plan, which sets out our priorities for action. The current three-year action plan covers the period 2019-2 and ends in March 2022.

This report summarises the work of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) over the last financial year (2020/21).

### **Our 15-year vision:**

- **Safe Communities:** A safer place to live, work and travel
- **Caring Communities:** Children are enabled to have the best start and people can be supported to live independent lives
- **Green Environment:** People can enjoy high quality urban and rural environments
- **Healthy Environment:** People have health lifestyles, access to quality healthcare and health inequalities are reduced
- **Dynamic Economy:** A thriving local economy where businesses flourish, where people have skills for employment and tourism is supported
- **Sustainable Economy:** People can live, work and travel more easily and are empowered to share

## **Our performance**

In order to measure success, we have set out a number of key success measures for each of the priorities set out in this plan.

At the end of the third year (April 2020–March 2021) of the 2019–2022 Action Plan, **96%** of key success measures in the plan were achieved, with 4% of measures not achieved.

## **The Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)**

The Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership co-ordinates the monitoring and delivery of the Action Plan. It is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

Sevenoaks District Council, Kent County Council, Sencio Community Leisure, Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, West Kent Housing, West Kent Extra, Moat Housing, Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Age Concern Sevenoaks and Tonbridge, West Kent MIND, Churches Together in Sevenoaks and District, Imago, Kent Police, Compaid, Go Coach.



## Safe Communities



### We want Sevenoaks to be a safer place to live, work and travel

Priority 1, 85% of actions in the Community Safety Partnership action plan achieved each year: Achieved

Priority 2, Keep overall crime amongst the lowest in the county and aim for an improvement in that position. Achieved

Priority 3, Maintain the low number of ASB incidents (no higher than 3<sup>rd</sup> in the county). Achieved

Priority 4, Road safety measures undertaken to prevent people from being killed or seriously injured on local roads.: Achieved

Priority 5, Enforcement action taken against dangerously or illegally parked cars.: Achieved.



## **Key Success Measures: Safe Communities**

### **Safe 1. 85% of actions in the Community Safety Partnership action plan achieved each year:**

The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership achieved 97% of actions set out in the Community Safety Strategy Action Plan during 2020/21.

The 2020/21 Action Plan focused on Domestic Abuse, Serious and Acquisitive Crime (including Organised Crime Groups, Emerging Trends and County Lines, which is a type of criminal exploitation where gangs and organised crime networks groom and exploit children to sell drugs), Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime, Safeguarding, Substance Misuse, Doorstep Crime and Scams including Cyber Crime.

This year the Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit (CSU) carried out 885 daily tasking's to address reports over the previous 24-hours, and made follow-up visits and calls to residents who reported issues and concerns.

The Community Safety Partnership continued to target repeat locations of concern to local people during 2019/20. The Partnership has over 35 projects in their action plan and schemes to address specific local community safety issues.

### **Safe 2, Keep overall crime amongst the lowest in the county and aim for an improvement in that position.**

During 2020/21, there were 1651 reports of victim based crime between 1 January 2021 & 31 March 2021. This is a decrease of 238 crimes compared to same period last year. At the end of the financial year, Sevenoaks District had the **third lowest number** of reported victim based crimes in the County.

### **Safe 3, Maintain the low number of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents (no higher than 3<sup>rd</sup> in the county)**

During 2020/21, Sevenoaks District had the third lowest level of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the county, with 2690 recorded incidents to Kent Police. Compared to previous year there has been a 68% increase (1088 reports). During the last three years, Sevenoaks District has maintained the low number of ASB incidents at no higher than the second lowest in the county.

Coronavirus has played a big impact on crime and ASB and has contributed to the decreases and increases. Certain crime types have seen a decrease such as shoplifting, vehicle crime and burglary linked in with lock down measures. The ASB saw a big increase with people causing ASB by breaking COVID-19 guidelines with some large gatherings in Towns and Beauty spots.

**Safe 4, Road safety measures undertaken to prevent people from being killed or seriously injured (KSI) on local roads.**

KCC have compared collisions during COVID 19 to the average from the years 2017/2018/2019 as this has been an unprecedented year. KSI's during lockdown were a lot lower than the average and this clearly picked up during May-June as traffic picked up. From July-September KSIs were above average but in October-November 2020 figures are lower. Pedestrian casualties have been well below the average but have started to see them creep up during July-August and during August -September there was an increase from average.

Speedwatch continued to operate in eight locations in the District. Speedwatch enables groups of volunteer residents to contribute to their community's safety and quality of life by helping reduce excessive vehicle speed.

**Safe 5, Enforcement action taken against dangerously or illegally parked cars.**

During 2020/21, there have been 4,937 enforcement actions taken against vehicles parked in contravention of parking restrictions/regulations. Due to COVID-19 over April-June 2020 there was a large reduction in enforcement action, with only 229 actions taken against illegally parked vehicles.

## Caring Communities

We want Sevenoaks to be a place where people can be supported to lead independent, fulfilling lives and where children and young people have the best start



### Your priorities for action

**Priority 1**, Increased number of people supported to live independently: Achieved

**Priority 2**, Reduced loneliness and social isolation through social prescribing schemes: Achieved

**Priority 3**, Sevenoaks Local Children’s Partnership Group (LCPG) to produce a set of indicators focused on LCPG priorities, with at least 75% of core indicators on target:

**Priority 4**, The number of positive outcomes where homelessness has been prevented: Achieved

**Priority 5**, Deliver the actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing Starts at Home” to meet the needs of vulnerable and low-income households and improve the condition of existing stock: Achieved

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**Priority 6, Improve opportunities for vulnerable people through the Community Grant Scheme; Achieved**

## Key Success Measures: Caring Communities

### Caring 1, Increased number of people supported to live independently.

Sevenoaks District Council's Private Sector Housing team work to support Sevenoaks residents to live independently by supporting them with grants. The Disabled Facility Grants are used for major adaptations to people's homes such as stair lifts and flush floor showers. During 2020/21 there were 56 of these grants given out, totalling £387,692 worth of works. This has enabled more residents across the District to live more independently.

Safe and Secure Grants are also given out by our Private Sector Housing Team. There have been 29 of these grants given out for 2020/21 totalling £33,235.72. There have also been £6,546.91 worth of Peabody Handyperson Service work for the year that includes 49 keysafes, 15 beds and mattresses, 2 grab rails, 1 rubbish clearance and a property deep clean.

**The West Kent Hospital Discharge Programme** supported by the Better Care Fund is a partnership project between Sevenoaks District Council, Peabody Home Improvement Agency and the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust. During 2020/21, 18 Hospital Discharge Grants were given out which totalled £14,817.06 worth of work.

Successes for 2020/21:

During 2020/21, 9 clients have been supported with goals surrounding "adequate housing" or to "be safe in your environment". These would have been supported with home adaptations to maintain safe and independent living.

A success from for the quarter January-March 2021 has been that through LAD1a Green Homes Grant have signed up 54 residents to improve the thermal efficiency of their park homes and currently in the process of signing up residents on other Park Homes for LAD1b Green Home Grant with a potential 70 residents benefiting from thermal insulation measures. In addition have assisted 130 residents with new heating and insulation measure through the Councils LA Flex Scheme.

## **Caring 2, Reduced loneliness and social isolation through social prescribing schemes.**

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is one of the most ambitious programmes across the NHS and local government to date. It creates a local budget to encourage the NHS and local government to work more closely together, placing people's wellbeing as the focus of health and care services.

During 2020/21 Better Care continued to provide around £100,000 of funding for an exciting partnership project aimed at supporting older people in Edenbridge and Swanley. The **"One You - Your Home"** project is a partnership project between Sevenoaks District Council and Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge. It provides a service for older people who are referred by GPs as needing more general support. The project employs two One You Advisers, who aim to remedy health and housing related issues, reduce demand on GPs, promote independence for customers and provide financial assistance in overcoming obstacles within the home environment.

**Your Home Service** continue to support clients across the Sevenoaks District in combating social isolation. For most of 2020/21 the Coronavirus had a major impact on the delivery of the Your Home service. For example, in January-March 2020 Your Home Advisors held appointments with 112 clients, of these 8 were referred for Community Activity and 4 set goals connected with socialisation. However, from April-June 2020 Your Home Advisors held appointments with just 17 clients, none of these were targeted to achieve a sociability based referral or goal. This was mainly due to the impact lockdown had on engaging with clients in a home setting. Appointments were limited to those of urgent need connected to home adaptation or debt/finance related issues. In addition, Age UK "Your Home" staff were redeployed to support the community coronavirus response efforts locally.

However, over the last year Your Home Advisors have held appointments with **over 274 clients** despite lockdown restrictions with some PPE in place. Most of these clients set goals centred around adaptations within the home to ensure personal safety.

A success from over the last year is that the Local GP commissioning of Social Prescription services; Involve & Imago, has presented the opportunity to redeploy our Your Home advisors from the Health Team into the Private Sector Housing team, allowing them to support the home adaptation, hoarding and filthy/verminous property work particularly for residents aged 50+.

### **Caring 3, Outcomes achieved on Sevenoaks District Local Children's Partnership Action Plan**

The Sevenoaks Local Children's Partnership Group continued to focus on the following priorities during 2020/21, including, secondary school attendance, emotional resilience and supporting families to make healthy lifestyle choices.

During 2020/21, Kent County Council's **Early Help Service** continued to support families who struggle with multiple and complex problems. The Service brings partners together to help families overcome these problems by working intensively with them to provide the stability and practical support they need to improve their lives.

During 2020/21, on entry to the programme, the four most frequent problems for these families were as follows:

- Children with mental health or emotional health and well-being concerns (25%)
- A child with 10% absences or more across the last three consecutive terms (21%)
- An adult who requires parenting support (19%)
- An adult with mental health or emotional health and well-being concerns (12%).

The Local Strategic Partnership continue to support Mental Health throughout the District and especially through COVID-19 and the pandemic a lot of services were held on line. West Kent & North Kent Mind delivered a number of 1:1 and group sessions over Zoom. They also released a lot of information and a tool kit on how to address mental health over Social Media. It is hoped that group sessions will start again following the Road Map.

Mental Health reports have seen an increase across the County through the pandemic. Release the pressure has been widely advertised. In August 2020 Sevenoaks District Council trained officers to become Mental Health First Aiders and have promoted Mental Health services through the Council and to partner agencies.

### **Caring 4, The number of positive outcomes where homelessness has been prevented.**

In March 2020, the Minister for Local Government and Homelessness wrote to all local authorities asking them to urgently accommodate all rough sleepers and focus on the provision of adequate facilities to enable people to adhere to the guidance on hygiene or isolation, including for those who are at risk of sleeping rough. Local authorities may use third party accommodation providers to comply with this request.

The Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing requested that when arranging move-on accommodation for people sleeping rough, local authorities:

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- explore sustainable options, including through partnerships with housing associations and in the private rented sector
- encourage people sleeping rough to stay with friends or family, ‘where appropriate and possible’
- where no move-on possibilities exist, provide short-term accommodation while looking into long-term options.

Our Housing Team having been working with local B&Bs and hotels to deliver on this request across the District and have been working with the HERO team to create positive outcomes when COVID-19 restrictions are fully lifted.

Our Housing Advice Team have continued to provide positive outcomes to prevent homelessness. For the past year, the team have supported 183 people with a positive outcome whereby homelessness was prevented or secured alternative accommodation. This has exceeded the target of 120 for 20/21.

A success from this year has been an email from MOAT explaining that a customer was in breach of a court order. They were going to evict the customer but wanted to give them one more opportunity to get help before they proceeded with the eviction. The customer had arrears of £1830.17. We completed a discretionary housing payment application and the customer was awarded £1,100.00 towards their arrears. We supported the customer to reduce their arrears further through budgeting their universal credit payment. We managed to reduce the arrears to £370.00, after which MOAT halted eviction proceeding.

### **Caring 5, Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing starts at Home” to meet the needs of vulnerable and low-income households and improve the condition of existing stock**

“Wellbeing Starts at Home” reflects Sevenoaks District Council’s belief that people’s home environment can have a significant impact on health. If our homes are over-crowded, isolated and under-occupied, badly maintained and full of hazards, cold and damp or unaffordable and causing debt - our health will suffer.

Sevenoaks District Council are still working with Parishes in Eynsford, Badgers Mount and Crockenhill to complete surveys to determine the needs of vulnerable and low income households.

In Eynsford, there has been a need identified for 8 new affordable homes and 8 homes for older people. Sevenoaks District Council have been working with Rural Housing Enabler and Eynsford Parish Council to try and meet this need, potentially via a local needs rural exceptions housing scheme. Whereas there has been only 1 affordable home identified in Badgers Mount, which can be met via a local lettings plan on a nearby major site.

West Kent Housing Association (WKHA) have applied for planning application for a local needs rural exceptions housing scheme at Mills Crescent and this result will be



determined in April 2021. Further S106 housing pots funding from developers have been awarded to WKHA to refurbish a property in Sevenoaks Town to provide accommodation for those with mental health needs and this will provide 7 bed spaces to those most in need. There is also further funding anticipated for 2021/22 to be provided by Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

### **Caring 6, Improve the opportunities for vulnerable people through the Community Grant Scheme**

The Community Grant Scheme funded by Sevenoaks District Council enables charities, community groups and organisations to apply for grants from £500-£5,000 for a specific project that helps the health and wellbeing of our residents. From those that applied for funding in 2019/20 over 70% of targets were met or exceeded and some funding was returned and carried forward for use in funding Community Grants for 2021/22. Two projects, a residential trip for vulnerable young people by West Kent Extra and alpaca/archery activity sessions by Kenward Trust have been carried forward to be completed in 2021/22.

Some examples of successes are: 1) DAVSS exceeding all targets and supporting a record number of residents experiencing domestic violence; 2) Eden CT supporting young people in Edenbridge via street working; outdoor groups and the 'Your Space' initiative that provided essential mental health support. 3) West Kent Mediation who trained mediators to work online supporting the increased numbers of referrals for neighbourhood and other disputes arising as a consequence of lockdown; 4) North West Kent Volunteer.

## Green Environment

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place where people can enjoy clean and high quality urban and rural environments



**Priority 1, Planning policies used effectively as monitored through the Local Plan to protect our high quality natural environment, including Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and biodiversity: Achieved**

**Priority 2, Use and enforce Planning Policies set out in the Local Plan to ensure new development is designed to a high quality and takes into account distinctive local character and impact on the environment: Achieved**

**Priority 3, Ensure new development is designed to a high quality and takes into account local character and the impact on the environment: Achieved**

**Priority 4, Recycling campaigns delivered: Achieved**

## **Key Success Measures: Green Environment**

### **Green 1, planning policies used effectively as monitored through the Local Plan to protect our high quality natural environment, including Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and biodiversity**

During 2020/21, Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan policies **successfully protected open and green spaces** in the District, ensuring that key developments in the District contributed to future open space provision.

Developments across the District have continued to be built in accordance with the adopted policy in the Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management Plan. Relevant Evidence Base documents also provide development guidance, and include the Green Belt Assessment, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans and Kent Biodiversity Strategy.

### **Green 2, Use and enforce Planning Policies set out in the Local Plan to ensure new development is designed to a high quality and takes into account local character and impact on the environment**

The Local Plan sets out the vision for future development across the Sevenoaks District and is used to help determine planning applications and other planning related decisions.

Sevenoaks District Council's Local Plan also includes policies which encourage development to reflect the distinctive local character of the area and exhibit high quality design. A Character Area Assessment for Edenbridge was adopted in March 2021. Three new assets have been added to the statutory list by Historic England. There have been no schemes taken to Design Review Panel within Quarter 4.

### **Green 3, Weekly refuse service collection maintained**

During 2020/21, Sevenoaks District Council successfully maintained its weekly refuse and dry recycling collection service. Sevenoaks District Council is unique in being the only Council within Kent to maintain a weekly service. It is also one of the few in Kent to retain an in house collection service.

The target for missed collections of waste per 100,000 populations 10.0 and the actual for this quarter is 7.4, which is a great achievement given the huge increase of waste weights being presented. The waste team have also had to travel further to Tunbridge Wells to tip, while Dunbrik was closed and deal with severe weather conditions.

### **Green 4, Recycling campaigns delivered**

During 2020/21, 98% of the District's waste was recycled or reused, and this has been helped by some successful recycling campaigns and initiatives, including:

- In partnership with the Kent Resource Partnership campaigns for recycling happened County-wide.
- The Green and garden waste services were advertised in this quarter via social media, website and Insite magazine.

West Kent Communities manages the Abacus furniture store in Sevenoaks and two others elsewhere in Kent. In addition to providing low cost furniture to those that most need it, the stores recycled **107 tonnes** of goods that would otherwise have gone to landfill



## Healthy Environment

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place where people have healthy lifestyles and where health inequalities are reduced



Priority 1, Produce new Health Inequalities Action Plan

Priority 2, 85% of success measured in the District Deal to be on target

Priority 3, Service improvements delivered through a health in all policies approach

Priority 4, Actions delivered in Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Strategy, Wellbeing Starts at Home, focused on supporting the Council's health outcomes and supporting people to remain independent

## **Key Success Measures: Healthy Environment**

### **Healthy 1: Produce new Health Inequalities Action Plan that supports the delivery of the Community Plan**

Sevenoaks District Council's and Kent County Council's "Health Deal - the future of health at a local level" is a ten-point plan which involves:

- Training staff on Making Every Contact Count and how to make appropriate referrals
- Working to establish a health in all policies approach; ensuring everything we do supports a health and wellbeing approach;
- Tackling the housing causes of ill-health through the work of HERO and SuperHERO service;
- Accessing new external funding to support delivery of the deal, including two successful Sport England funding bids;
- Improving health in workplaces in the District;
- Working in partnership with GPs;
- Making best use of open space and active travel, including promotion of led cycle rides in the district, and new quarterly health walk leader training;
- One You Advisers continuing to carry out mapping of the key health assets at the local level;
- One You Your Home Advisers now accessing GP data on GP systems;
- Successful annual dementia run delivered in 2018 with 500 participants.

The Health Inequalities Action plan has been redrafted and is currently with our design team. We are looking to reinstate the Health Action Team meetings to support the partnership delivery of the Health Inequalities Action plan. Unfortunately there have been delays in this work as a result of the coronavirus response.

### **Healthy 2, 85% of success measured in the District Deal to be on target**

**90% on target**, we are working on the implementation of Making Every Contact Count training locally, specifically we are working on Train the Trainer training to be able to upskill local partners and SDC staff to deliver local training and create a perpetual ongoing legacy of Making Every Contact Count within Sevenoaks District.

### **Healthy 3, Service improvements delivered through a health in all policies approach**

We have started communications with the Greensand Way Commons Project team to assess whether there are opportunities to implement and encourage more walking within the Greensand Way commons.

A significant portion of our time is being invested in reinstating previous One You services that had been paused as a result of COVID. This includes our Health Walk programme and Chair Based Exercise/Falls Prevention programme. We are trying to take this opportunity to build back better to ensure that services return whilst correcting any previous service delivery issues.

### **Healthy 4, Actions delivered in Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Strategy, Wellbeing Starts at Home, focused on supporting the Council's health outcomes and supporting people to remain independent.**

“Wellbeing Starts at Home” reflects Sevenoaks District Council’s belief that people’s home environment can have a significant impact on health. If our homes are over-crowded, isolated and under-occupied, badly maintained and full of hazards, cold and damp or unaffordable and causing debt - our health will suffer.

A number of planning permissions have been determined during the quarter which will provide new accessible affordable homes: Broom Hill, Swanley - all 24 homes meeting Building Reg standard M4 (2) and 3 affordable homes meeting M4 (3) - wheelchair housing; Tesco site, Sevenoaks - all 15 homes meeting M4 (2). These higher accessibility standards ensure homes will meet the needs of a wider range of applicants and therefore support independence.



## Dynamic Economy

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place with a thriving local economy, where businesses flourish, and people have skills for employment



Priority 1, Deliver actions against the key themes set out in the Economic Development Strategy (2018-21) for Growth and Investment, Infrastructure, Visitor Economy, Skill and Enterprise

Priority 2, Develop a digital inclusion strategy

Priority 3, Funding secured for business support programmes and rural businesses



## **Dynamic Economy: Key Success Measures**

### **Dynamic 1, Deliver actions against the key themes set out in the Economic Development Strategy (2018-21) for Growth and Investment, Infrastructure, Visitor Economy, Skill and Enterprise**

Sevenoaks District Council's Economic Development Strategy 2018-21 was agreed this year. This includes a key theme area relating of growth and investment in the district with an ambition to regenerate key market towns.

The Submission Version of the Local Plan includes policy EMP1 - Supporting a Vibrant and Balanced Economy. The Local Plan seeks to retain employment sites to support a vibrant and balanced economy. It also supports the development of new allocations and other new employment units for small to medium businesses in suitable locations.

The Economic Development team continue to deliver actions in the current Economic Development Strategy, as well as the West Kent Priorities for growth strategy. All actions remain on track to be delivered by the end of the Strategy period.

Community Development officers have also worked closely with a partner IMAGO, to deliver an Employability project to enhance the skills of Young Carers. This is a pilot project with six sessions based on CV writing, Interview Skills, UCAS applications and a Mock Interview. The participants at the end of the course will also be given a vast amount of opportunities that will help develop themselves for future employers.

### **Dynamic 2, Develop a Digital inclusion strategy with positive outcomes achieved**

Due to our partners Compaid, Age UK, West Kent Housing and other agencies offering support to digitally excluded individuals it has been determined that there is already good provision in the District. However, at the end of 2020 there was a bid submitted to the Local Government Association for a Digital Inclusion Pilot Project.

### **Dynamic 3, Funding secured for business support programmes and rural businesses**

SDC is the Gateway for Kickstart West Kent which provides employers with grant funding to employ a young person for 25 hours a week for 6 months. At 31 March 104 placements had been approved.

## Sustainable Economy

We want Sevenoaks District to be a place where people can live, work and travel more easily and are empowered to shape their communities



**Priority 1,** Projects delivered through the CIL infrastructure plan; Achieved

**Priority 2,** Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing Starts at Home” to provide a good mix of decent and affordable housing: Achieved

**Priority 3,** A new Transport Strategy for the District produced, which facilitates improvements to transport in the district: Achieved

**Priority 4,** Increase number of people who are helped to shape their local community: Achieved

## **Sustainable Economy: Key Success Measures**

### **Sustainable 1, Projects delivered and/or supported by CIL (Community Infrastructure Plan)**

A CIL Spending Board was held in March which awarded over £2 million to the following projects: Sports Hall and facilities at Orchards Academy, Extension to Kemsing Surgery, Otford Road Traffic Scheme, Wilderness Sports and Community facility, Weald Memorial Hall Maintenance and Renovations and the Knockholt Village Centre Refurbishment. Work is continuing on the following projects which were awarded CIL through previous CIL Spending Boards: Swanley Station, Fordcombe Village Hall, White Oak Leisure Centre, Edenbridge Health Hub and the Westerham Parking Project.

### **Sustainable 2, Deliver actions in the Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy, “Wellbeing Starts at Home” to provide a good mix of decent and affordable housing.**

The number of affordable homes finally delivered in 2020/21 was 22 homes. This reduced number arose because Moat's 10 unit scheme at Quinton Court, Sevenoaks, had a delayed completion to May 2021. Only 2 "genuinely affordable" homes were delivered. Two major developments secured planning permission during the quarter - Broom Hill, Swanley and the Tesco's site, Sevenoaks. These will deliver 39 new affordable homes, including 25 "genuinely affordable" homes, in future years. The affordable housing Provider has yet to be selected for either site.

### **Sustainable 3, A new Transport Strategy for the District produced, which facilitates improvements to transport in the district.**

The Council has produced a Sevenoaks District Transport Assessment (Dec 2018) and the Swanley Transport Study (May 2018) evidence base documents, to support the preparation of the emerging Local Plan. Developments continue to be in accordance with adopted policy.

### **Sustainable 4, Increase number of people who have helped to shape their local community:**

Due to COVID-19, Sevenoaks District created a new volunteering programme to help those most in need and partnered with 'Care for our Community' to deliver this. We worked with parish volunteer leads and 1,272 local volunteers to help over 1,674 residents with food shopping, prescription collections, someone to talk to, and dog walking. We have

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worked with partners West Kent Mind, Age UK and the NHS First Responder Service to deliver certain aspects of these requests as well.

Some volunteers have created community groups that have supported lonely residents with extra Christmas meals over the Christmas period and started litter picks for example the Clean Up Sevenoaks campaign. We are incredibly grateful to our volunteers across the District and hope that the creation of community groups continue.





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**SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**

**People & Places Advisory Committee 15 June 2021**

**Report of:** Chief Officer People & Places

**Status:** For Information

**Also considered by:** Cabinet - 8 July 2021

**Key Decision:** No

**Executive Summary:** This report looks at the work of the Community Safety Partnership from April 2020 - March 2021.

**This reports support the Key Aim of: Safe and Caring Communities**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Lesley Dyball

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

**Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee:**

To consider the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership's Annual Report for 2020-21.

**Recommendation to Cabinet:**

To consider and note the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Annual report for 2020-21.

**Reason for recommendation:** To keep Members updated on the work of the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership.

### **Introduction and Background**

In 2006, a review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police Reform Act 2002 led to a series of recommendations to strengthen and extend existing requirements through the experience gained from partnership working. This resulted in a new set of national minimum standards which came into force in August 2007.

The 1998 Crime & Disorder Act included the requirement to produce a detailed crime and disorder audit through consultation with key agencies and the wider community and to use the findings to identify strategic priorities and take action to address them. The new national standards placed a legal obligation on responsible authorities to comply with the specified requirements, one of which

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was the creation of an annual strategic assessment in place of the previous 3 yearly audit.

The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan 2020-21 was put in place for the year ended March 2021 and the report attached at Appendix A is a summary of the work that has taken place over the year to deliver that action plan.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

The cost of the action plan itself is minimal. Funding to implement the plan is provided by all partner agencies through their core budgets with additional funding from the PCC (Police & Crime Commissioner) and other external funding streams.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

National Standards require Partnerships to produce an annual action plan which is reviewed and updated annually. The requirement to produce an action plan to take forward a multi-agency approach to community safety stems from the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

#### 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. 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.

There are no negative impacts - the annual report applies to all. All victims of crime and anti-social behaviour are treated equally and fairly regardless of disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership, race, gender, carer status or religion and belief.

### **Conclusions**

The Community Safety Annual Report highlights the work of the Community Safety Partnership throughout 2020-21



**Appendices**

Appendix A - Sevenoaks District CSP Annual Report 2020-21

**Background Papers**

None

**Sarah Robson**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer People & Places**

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## **Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership**



Annual Report 2020-21

Produced by: Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership

April 2021

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## Introduction

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### Background

Community Safety Partnerships were set up under the 1998 Crime & Disorder Act. Their purpose is to bring together all of the agencies in an area who can have an impact on crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. In Sevenoaks District, the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership undertakes this role. Co-ordinated by the Council, its membership includes the Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent County Council, the Probation Service, Housing Associations and others. A full list of partners is given on page 18 of this report.

The Partnership has 3 key aims. They are to:

- Reduce and detect crime
- Reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime
- Strengthen community involvement

### 2020 Strategic Assessment

One of the Partnership's functions is to undertake an annual strategic assessment which identifies current and future community safety issues using evidence, consultation and analysis. It then puts in place a multi-agency action plan aimed at tackling the identified priority issues.

The 2020 Strategic Assessment includes a comprehensive analysis of crime and other data. This identifies local needs for 2021/22 to help the Partnership put in place its annual priorities and action plan. It was published early in April 2021 and our priorities for 2021-22 are:-

Domestic Abuse including stalking

- Serious & Acquisitive Crime (including Organised Crime Groups, Emerging Trends, County Lines)
- Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime
- Safeguarding (including Prevent, Mental Health, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), Vulnerable Adults and Protecting Children)
- Substance Misuse
- Doorstep Crime and Scams including Cyber Crime

### Annual Report

This Annual Report looks at what the Partnership and the Community Safety Unit (CSU) have achieved over the last financial year (1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021).

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The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership **achieved 97% of actions** in the Community Safety Strategy Action Plan during 2020/21.

## COVID-19 Impact

The Pandemic is having a huge impact on the community and partner organisations and changed the way we worked over this past year and will continue to do so.

The first lockdown happened on 23 March 2020 just as we were coming up to the end of the last financial year. In the first 3 days of lockdown the CSU continued to operate from their offices in Argyle Road and helped Sevenoaks District Councils People and Places Team who was working with Care in our Community to help get all the processes in place for the request for help scheme. In between attending Police businesses and patrolling the Town Centres, police colleagues helped SDC produce over 1400 volunteer lanyards that were sent out in 3 days.

The daily briefings continued firstly via a conference phone call, but within 2 weeks and with Police approval MS Teams was set up. Reports continued to come into the Council, Housing Associations, Community Wardens and Police. We were still able to continue a co-ordinated approach in helping residents reporting crimes, anti-social behaviour and community safety concerns. Many of which were regarding neighbour and noise nuisance, breaches of Covid-19 guidelines and mental health concerns.

Police and SDC staff have continued to operate from the CSU albeit on a rota basis with less people in the office. All monthly meetings continued via MS Team platforms.

Visits to residents and site visits also continued throughout the pandemic, in a safe way for staff and residents.

The CSU also helped with the delivery of business packs. PCSOs and SDC staff visited every shop in the four Town Centres delivering welcome back business packs this was done in June and December 2020.

Commissioned services were able to be delivered. DAVSS continued with all of their services apart from face to face during lockdown periods. However they extended their telephone hour's service from 8am-1pm to 8am-4pm and will continue to keep these times going forward. They also delivered training to more volunteers in July 2020. All other funded projects were able to be delivered whether via a media platform such as MS Teams or Zoom.

All detached youth work was able to continue. Kenward Trust delivered throughout the year as well as West Kent Extra. KCC Youth Teams were able to do some street based work, but also did a lot of work online holding sessions and promoting mental health services via Facebook, Twitter & Insta Gram.



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There were over 1000 calls relating to Covid-19 breaches, some of these were picked up under ASB as neighbour nuisance. Where breaches were evidenced, warning letters and fines were given out to residents and businesses.

The Annual Report will highlight areas that have been affected by Covid-19 and how partners have adapted and delivered on services.

### **COMMUNITY SAFTY PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21 – PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY**

#### **Anti-Social Behaviour including environmental crime**

The Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014 was implemented in 2014.

The Act replaced nineteen pre-existing measures with six new measures for tackling anti-social behaviour and providing protection for victims and communities.

**Between 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021** the legislation has been used as follows:

- No community triggers have been raised
- 0 Criminal Behaviour Order served but 4 CBO applications are awaiting court dates.
- 71 Community Protection Warnings were served
- 18 Community Protection Notice was issued
- 1 Community Protection Notice Breach that has been heard at court and defendant was convicted.
- 0 Closure Order
- 22 Warning Letters specifically for vehicle use were issued because of repeat calls generated by the Sevenoaks Town Car Park

In September 2020, following a restructure of the People and Places Team, the Anti-Social Behaviour Post was deleted, this was after a resignation of the Officer after a long period of sickness. All ASB cases continue to be dealt with mainly by the Community Safety Officer and supported by Health & Communities Manager.

The Police in the CSU also helped by attending visits and delivering letters on the Partnerships behalf. There were 97 reports of anti-social behaviour from residents. This is the same number as compared to the same period last year. These calls are separate to those that come into the CSU daily briefing.

The highest number of calls were concerning nuisance reported about groups of young people, neighbour nuisance and parking.

The Community MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) is designed to address medium and high risk victims, offenders and problem locations. The areas of work covered are:

- ASB including Disputes & Environmental Crime
- Hate related incidents
- Mental Health concerns
- Persistent offenders of crime and Disorder
- Vulnerable victims and locations including Child Sexual Exploitation, human trafficking, modern slavery and gangs
- Vulnerable adults and young persons
- Substance Misuse
- Low to Medium Risk Domestic Abuse

The meetings are chaired by the CSU Police Sargent and Vice Chair is the Community Safety Officer. This group consists of KCC Adult and Children's Services, Youth Offending Team, Probation, Housing Associations, Mental Health Services, Schools and Health Groups. On average the group discusses around 20 cases per month, of which 92% are removed within 6 months due to changed behaviour. This change is due to support and education as well as enforcement action taken.

**The group have issued 25 ASB Warning Letters, 9 ABA's and 5 ABA Breach Letters**

**The number of incidents of ASB recorded by Kent Police** in Sevenoaks District from 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021, was 2690 and is the second lowest level of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the county. Compared to previous year there has been a 68% increase (1088 reports). Coronavirus has had a big impact on crime and ASB and has contributed to the decreases and increases. Certain crime types have seen a decrease such as shoplifting, vehicle crime and burglary linked in with lock down measures. ASB saw a big increase with people causing ASB by breaking Covid guidelines with some large gatherings in Towns and Beauty spots.

**Op Mint ASB at Local Beauty Spots & Nitrous Oxide** was a partnership operation and was set up due to the increases of people starting to gather in local beauty spots causing ASB and use of Nitrous Oxide canisters. This started in May with excess amount of people visiting Knole Park and coming from outside the District to visit such as London, Surrey and other parts of Kent, this was during lockdown

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when Government measures were in place. Following these reports into the daily tasking and regular Police patrols to Knole and surrounding beauty areas such as Chipstead Lakes, Vine, Playing fields in Westerham, Kemsing Recreation Ground, Enfield Road, Penshurst Place to address issues a weekly Task & Finish group was set up on and continued until end of mid November 2020 to incorporate Halloween and Bonfire Night.

Although police resources are lower than what they used to be and PCSOs cover wider areas. Over 30 locations were identified by partners, Town and Parish Councils and residents where ASB was being reported. All partners were tasked to visit/patrol the sites this included SDC Officers, KCC Community Wardens, KCC Youth Team, West Kent Extra Youth Team, Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service and Kenward Trust who delivered a substance misuse youth service especially at Chipstead Lakes and The Vine.

The Vine and Sevenoaks Town Centre saw a big increase of young people gathering drinking excessively, drug use and causing ASB. Police ran joint operations most weekends over the time period with British Transport Police to deter young people from Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Redhill and South London attending locations.

We conducted a number of site visits with landowners and worked well with them to help secure their land.

The CSU updated all Town & Parish Councils and Councillors on the operations.

Actions taken were:-

Wildlife Cameras in place at some locations and CCTV signs

Extra Patrolling

Detached Youth Work

Substance Misuse Youth work

Film for parents

Kent Fire & Rescue Service Patrolling

Warning Letters issued either sent or hand delivered

Names and Car registrations collated and all owners written to regarding their behaviour.

In February 2021, the Health & Communities Manager attended the Landowners Forum to work with them in spring and summer 2021 due to the Governments Road Map as lockdown eases. A spring/summer action plan has been developed including promoting the countryside code of conduct alongside a communications strategy on this. Working with SDC Communications Team we have developed a number of posters for landowners and Town & Parish Councils to help remind visitors to parks/beauty spots to be respectful in parking, litter and adhere to Covid-19 guidelines. A weekly meeting with partners has been set up to address all the actions.

**PACT (Partners & Communities Together) Panel** meetings are held in Swanley, Edenbridge, West Kingsdown, Westerham and New Ash Green. The Panels consist of partner agencies including the District Council, Police, Housing Associations and local Town or Parish Councils, businesses and residents. Activities include youth projects, community litter picks and other actions to tackle local priorities. This can include Environmental Visual Audits which are joint walkabouts with residents, police, local housing officers and community wardens to tackle environmental issues.

There was one **Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs)** this year, in New Ash Green identified by a local groups.

**Mobile CCTV** has been deployed to target ASB and criminal damage. The CSP has 7 cameras. They were deployed across the District.

### Safeguarding

**Prevent** - The Counter Terrorism and Security Act received Royal Assent on 12 February 2016, placing the Prevent Programme on a statutory footing. Part 5 of the Act (Chapter 1 s. 26-35) places a general duty on all specified authorities to, when exercising their functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The three specific objectives of Prevent still stand and focus on:

1. Challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it;
2. Protecting vulnerable individuals to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support;
3. Supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

The CSU received 2 Prevent Channel Panel referrals this year. All were discussed at the appropriate county-based multi-agency panels, with no further outcome, but support was given. All referrals were of people aged under 18.

There were two Prevent Training Events with one specifically on COVID and how this is being used by Far Right Groups to promote protests. This was delivered by KCC Prevent Team to partnership agencies over MS Teams in January 2021.

**Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking** legislation confers a duty on Local Authorities who must ensure that we safeguard anyone reporting that they have suffered the above.

There has been joint visits with SDC Private Sector Housings Team, Planning Enforcement and Police where they believe modern slavery is taking place in properties. We have made 3 multi-agency visits to locations in response to reported concerns and have dealt with any issues arising. The visits revealed no signs of modern slavery or human trafficking and all those concerned had passports. We did however give housing advice to them and serve prohibition orders on property owners, as they were house of multiple occupancy.

Modern Slavery training took place in March 2021 ran by KCC for over 30 people from partner agencies.

**CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation).** Work has been ongoing and has been linked into the gang's work. CSE day was in early March 2021 and the CSU did a lot of online social media messaging. The Community Safety Manager is the CSE Champion for

the Community Safety Partnership and the District Council. Our partner agencies also have CSE Champions within their own organisations.

**Young People.** In 2020-21, the dedicated PCSO was unable to visit as many schools throughout the year due to Coronavirus, but when schools were open they visited them to address ASB, CSE, Safeguarding, Alcohol and Drugs and online bullying. They also attended a number of primary schools across the District and attended anti-gang workshops run by RRR (Reform Restore Respect).

Tuesday 9 February 2021, was National Internet Safety Day. Due to children being at home instead of visiting schools with a presentation on “fake news” and how to report concerns we produced and online assembly for teachers to deliver and adapted them for primary and secondary schools.

In March 2020 in partnership with KCC and West Kent Extra set up the Sevenoaks District Youth Assembly Forum, this followed an action at the Young Persons conference in November 2019. 5 Young people came forward and helped set this up, they thought of the name, designed a logo and had an action plan to address the priorities of young people. In June 2020 we held a soft launch with Cllr Lesley Dyball. The Forum have their own twitter and Insta Gram account. They have conducted a survey which has gone out to schools to get young people’s priorities. They also organised and led on the annual conference that was held via Zoom in November 2020.

**Vulnerable Adults** There have been a number of safeguarding referrals for older people and vulnerable adults. Again, there is a dedicated PCSO for Vulnerable Adults. The role is looking at all concerns for adults and repeat victims. One of the main safeguarding referrals is around self-neglect and victims of fraud (especially rogue trading). There are a number of support services in place and referrals receive a multi-agency approach as they are referred through to the Community MARAC process, which is also comforting for the resident, as they know that the issues are being listened to.

In January 2021 we delivered Loan Shark training to over 50 participants and over 2 sessions this was delivered by Birmingham City Council who cover our area!

**Mental Health** has been incorporated into the Community MARAC and a number of mental health cases have been raised and through partnership working specific services have been put in place.

Mental Health and especially through COVID-19 and the pandemic a lot of services were held on line. West Kent & North Kent Mind delivered a number of 1:1 and group sessions over Zoom. They also released a lot of information and a tool kit on how to address mental health over Social Media. It is hoped that group sessions will start again following the Road Map.

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Mental Health reports have seen an increase across the County through the pandemic. Release the pressure has been widely advertised. In August 2020 Sevenoaks District Council trained officers to become Mental Health First Aiders and have promoted Mental Health services through the Council and to partner agencies.

**Domestic Abuse**, Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021 there were 2,408 reports of Domestic Abuse to the Police. This was an increase of 145 reports (6.4%) compared with the previous year. The increase is always looked as a positive that victims are phoning in and reporting Domestic Abuse and that services can be put in place. Sevenoaks District has the lowest number of reports in West Kent and the County.

**Domestic Abuse Training** was held by Look Ahead in February 2021, they delivered MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) to over 40 people from various agencies and DASH (Domestic Abuse Stalking & Harassment) has been arranged for June and July 2021 as this training has to be done on a face to face basis.

**Domestic Abuse Voluntary Support Service (DAVSS)** supports any victim of Domestic Abuse who seeks help. Volunteers are trained to a high level to deal with all aspects of Domestic Abuse. They support victims including helping them through any court proceedings. The IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) service provided by DAVSS looks at high risk cases through the Domestic Abuse MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference). The Partnership works closely with DAVSS and helps to fund the service for low and medium risk cases. During the year, DAVSS supported **295** victims of domestic abuse in the Sevenoaks District, an increase of **8 (2.7%)** compared with the previous year. There were 13 male victims, a reduction 3. There **1644** calls to the helpline, a significant increase of 688 (72%) calls compared to the same period last year.

**The Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme (CDAP)** is a 29 rolling week programme covering 9 modules to help men tackle their abuse. The women and children of perpetrators are supported by a Woman's Support Worker. 2 men from Sevenoaks District attended the course in 2020-21. The sessions continued via a one to one Service and then in a group format over Zoom.

**The Freedom Programme** is designed to help women who have been a victim of or are affected by domestic abuse. It is a 12-week programme, which runs for two hours each week usually at various locations across Sevenoaks District, but this year all on Zoom. We delivered 5 3 day programmes and 2 evening programmes, attended by a total of 74 women.

**Recovery Tool Kit** sessions follow on from the Freedom Programme and we ran and 1 evening and 1 day session again by Zoom. 32 women attended the programme.



## Substance Misuse

The Kenward Trust provides sessions within schools and detached work to help young people understand the facts about substance misuse and help those misusing drink or drugs to change their behaviour. They run a number of initiatives using a mobile unit and interactive and visual tools to engage young people about the dangers of substance misuse, so that they will make informed and responsible choices. They are also tasked through the CSU daily briefings to attend “hot spot” locations to work with young people and identify and address substance misuse issues.

With PCC funding through the Partnership, Kenward Trust has worked with 1755 young people from 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021. Over the lockdown period Kenward Trust saw large numbers of young people since the easing of lockdown. Main areas Chipstead Lake, Vine, Greatness and New Ash Green. Chipstead Lake has seen very large numbers of young people especially over the hot weather where we engage young people who are swimming and causing some antisocial behaviour and causing local residents issues. Main substances that were used as being Nitro oxide, cannabis and alcohol.

The teams worked with young people to educate on social distancing especially around not sharing substances like cans of alcohol and bottles, cannabis joints and cigarettes. Kenward Trust spoke about the risks this could lead to by taking the virus home to parents and grandparents and maybe shielding or are at risk. Alcohol became easy to Access due to parents have been more alcohol at home over the period of lockdown. This led to young people finding it easy to get hold of alcohol. But the main age group could buy alcohol as they were over the age of 18. Cannabis is increasing again. Kenward Trust went back into schools at the beginning of October. Kenward Trust released a film and resource pack for schools and parents regarding substance misuse.

CGL (Change, Live, Grow), commissioned by the Kent Drugs and Alcohol Service, provide early intervention services. This includes breakfast clubs and specialist rehabilitation services. They also undertake home visits to those with children and mobility issues.

Addaction is commissioned by the Kent Drugs and Alcohol Service for young people’s services. This includes work around legal highs and preventative work.

## Acquisitive Crime incl Organised Crime Groups (OCGs), Emerging Trends and County Lines

OCGs are criminals behind organised crime often intimidate and create fear, which is intended to prevent the local community reporting what they see. Often the criminals don’t even have to try hard to do this - instead relying on word of mouth and reputation. Over the past year, Organised Crime has seen a more targeted

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approach by Partnerships. There were two OCGs within the Sevenoaks District, which are the same as previous years, however, due to the great partnership work these were reviewed by Kent Police and they removed the status of an OCG. However these 2 sites are still monitored at the monthly Serious Crime & Tactical Group, which is a monthly multi-agency meeting to address OCGs and serious crime. The most common crime types associated with these groups is organised theft.

### **Acquisitive Crime includes Burglary and Vehicle Crime**

There were 330 reports of Burglary Residential a decrease of 309 (48.4%) compared to the same period previous year. There was also a big decrease of Burglary Business and Community compared to the same period last year. There was 115 reports, 144 less reports (55.6%)

The CSU sent out over 480 personal torches alarms to residents following information in InShape Magazine and in response to identified trends.

### **Vehicle Crime**

There was also decreases in Theft of Motor Vehicles of 27.9%, or 90 crimes (233 in total) during the year and Theft from Motor Vehicles of 25% or 147 crimes (423 in total).

### **Doorstep Crime and Fraud incl Cyber Crime**

A new database had been set up, but due to Coronavirus there was a delay in starting this as the analyst was put on other KCC duties. KCC are now asking payment into this database and have offered options, we are awaiting the outcome of this.

The KCC Community Wardens have been inspirational in leading the way forward in gathering information, making the relevant referrals and working with the banks to make sure that any victim of a scam is protected.

The CSU are working hard in reinforcing to residents about scams and are working with Action Fraud to tackle this.

### Police & Crime Commissioner Funding (PCC)

The PCC funded Sevenoaks District CSP £34,218, the same as the previous year towards CSP projects. The table below sets out what the Partnership agreed in March 2020 to spend the funding on.

Organisation	Project Name	Amount
DAVSS	Support for Medium & High Risk Victims - Domestic Abuse	£10,000
Kenward Trust	Youth Diversionary & Targeted Youth Project against substance misuse	£12,000
Kent Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme	Support males through the CDAP programme	£3,000
Sevenoaks CSU	Internet Safety Day Feb 2021	£1,000
Sevenoaks CSU	CSU Crime Reduction initiatives	£1,000
ACE Programme	Children Programme Tackling DA	£3,493
Reform Restore Respect (RRR)	Gang Youth Project/Bullying	£2,225
Protection Against Stalking	Training sessions on Cyber crime and stalking	£1,500

### Community Safety Unit (CSU)

The CSU is located within the District Council's Communities & Business Team at Argyle Road, Sevenoaks. There are 3 Police Officers including a Sergeant, 3 dedicated PCSOs addressing Domestic Abuse, Vulnerable Adults and Vulnerable Young People. The Council's Health & Communities Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and Community Safety Officer as well as the KCC Community Warden Supervisor and the Business Crime Reduction Co-ordinator are also based within the CSU.

The CSU also has access to an additional Local Community Policing Team (CPT) which can be deployed to tackle local issues within the District. The CPT are based in Swanley but can be tasked by the CSU across the District.

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The CSU works closely with other Council teams - People & Places, CCTV, Environmental Health, Licensing, Social Housing, Revenues and Benefits Planning Enforcement, Planning, Building Control and the Customer Solutions Centre.

The CSU meets every morning to go through the previous 24 hours' ASB reports, Concern Calls and community safety issues from Police, SDC, Wardens, Housing Associations and other partners. There have been **885** daily taskings from 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020; this is an increase of 285 compared to previous year. All actions have been taken forward and dealt with and all residents/customers have been updated on the action taken, apart from those who approached the CSU anonymously or have said that they do not want feedback.

A lot of the cases have been complex, requiring a partner agency response. Many have been repeat callers dealing with issues such as mental health, neighbour disputes, harassment in the community and nuisance bikes (motor and pedal).

There have been over **816** follow up visits and calls made by partner agencies (Police, SDC, Community Wardens and Housing Associations) to all the residents who have reported issues and concerns. The other actions have been followed up but have either been reported back to organisations, town and parish councils or they have been anonymous so have not expected feedback on actions taken.

**Task and Finish Groups** have been established to provide intensive intervention by partner agencies when a number of reports have come in through the CSU Daily Tasking meetings relating to specific areas or to vulnerable people. During 2020-21, there were 21 Task and Finish Groups set up a rise of 3 more than last year

In addition to the Task & Finish group actions the CSU Sargent organised 6 nights of high visibility policing in the following areas - New Ash Green, Westerham, Sevenoaks Town, Hartley, West Kingsdown and Swanley.

This is with local Policing Teams, KCC Community Wardens and SDCs ASB Officer to address anti-social behaviour. There was also over **50** site visits conducted by the CSU to various locations across the District.

### Work of Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership 2020-21 by month

#### The Partnership month by month

In addition to the daily work of the Partnership and CSU, the following projects and successes took place.

### April 2020

- Regular patrolling of hotspot areas including Knole Park.
- All meetings moved onto virtual platform MS Teams so that CSU can continue to deliver important actions
- We had skeleton staff in the office to be able to take calls. Whilst we were not going out and completing house visits during this quarter. We were still working with our partner agencies to address community concerns.

### May 2020

- Community Wardens continue to deliver on safeguarding referrals which have increased for them, making home visits and working with banks to protect the most vulnerable.
- Op Mint was set up and weekly meetings were held with partners to address ASB and Nitrous Oxide
- Edenbridge and Swanley PACT meeting were held virtually via TEAMS.

### June 2020

- Police have been carrying out regular patrols and working with British Transport Police to deter a number of young people coming into Sevenoaks Town where ASB has been reported on the Vine.
- Over 20 locations were visited and 8 site visits took place to address ASB
- The Community Safety Officer held a Zoom meeting with Halstead Parish Council to discuss their concerns of nuisance motorbikes accessing the Former Broke Hill Golf Club site.
- Consultation discussions took place with KCC regarding their Doorstep Crime project.

### July 2020

- Soft Launch was held of the Sevenoaks District Youth Assembly Forum.
- Signage was sought for areas such as Peshurst Place, Chipstead Lakes and Enfield Road working with the land owners where people have been swimming in private lakes or rivers by trespassing on private land.
- The Community Safety Officer attended the Former Broke Hill Golf Club site along with the Crime Prevention PCSO, members of the Parish Council and landowner to discuss preventative measures that can be put in place to tackle the nuisance motorbikes accessing the land

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- The Community Safety Officer attended an OSARA Rave Plan meeting organised by Kent Police. This was to highlight potential Rave sites within the District that may be targeted by Rave organisers.

### August 2020

- Night time economy has re-commenced during this period with no reported issues or incidents
- Joint operation on vehicles at Hever Road, Edenbridge & visit to Oak View Stud Farm
- The Community Safety Officer attended a professional's meeting to discuss a vulnerable resident causing a number of issues for their neighbour's due to their complex medical needs.
- The Community Safety Officer attended the CSU PCSOs Sergeant's interview to represent the Community Safety Manager.
- The Community Safety Officer along with the Crime Prevention PCSO attended rural locations to meet with landowners to discuss their concerns regarding ASB increase on the land due to lockdown restrictions.

### September 2020

- Freedom and Recovery Tool kit - Domestic Abuse Support Programmes was held via Zoom with over 10 ladies participating on each programme
- Neighbourhood questionnaires was sent to an estate in Crockenhill
- The Community Safety Officer attended an OSARA meeting to discuss ASB issues in Edenbridge organised by Kent Police.
- The Community Safety Officer attend Manse Way, Swanley with the Crime Prevention Officer to discuss and install wildlife cameras in resident's gardens following reports of ball bearings being fired.
- The Community Safety Officer visited a resident to discuss reports being received regarding their behaviour.

### October 2020

- Site Visit to Eureka's in Fawkham to address Covid concerns
- Community Protection Warnings served to KCC and Receivers to address fly tipping on Barnfield Park/Attwood Field

### November 2020

- The Youth Conference was held via Zoom on 17 November, where 5 schools attended and was facilitated by young people that are members of the Sevenoaks District Youth Assembly Forum

- Op Mint came to an end and was really successful. Lockdown 2 also started at this time
- The Community Safety Officer attended the Domestic Homicide Review 38 Terms of reference meeting.
- The Community Safety Officer and Community Safety Manager attended the LOR Disorder meeting arranged by Southeast Rail regarding ASB at railway stations in the Sevenoaks District.

### December 2020

- Four Town Centre Ambassadors were appointed to work in Westerham, Sevenoaks, Swanley & Edenbridge. This funding was granted by Central Government until 31 March 2021. This is to help high streets reopen safely and to advise people visiting on any covid restrictions, making sure that they feel safe shopping.
- Delivered welcome back packs to some shops across Sevenoaks, Swanley, Westerham and Edenbridge

### January 2021

- Although we could not have our usual Development Morning. Partners helped draft 2021-22 Action Plan was drafted based on the Strategic Assessment Report.
- Prevent Training was delivered via MS Teams
- Loan Shark Training was delivered

### February 2021

- Tuesday 9 February 2020, was National Internet Safety Day. Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership (CSP), produced an assembly for teachers in primary and secondary school. Over 20 primary schools took this up and 2 secondary schools.
- Had an Unauthorised Traveller Encampment at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, this is the first one the CSU took the lead on, Notices were issued and due to crime associated with the group. Police were able to issue a Sect 61 for them to move on
- MARAC Training was delivered via Zoom

### March 2021

- Modern Slavery was delivered by KCC via MS Teams
- Discussions took place with Partnership agencies regarding the restriction lifting phases.

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- The Community Safety Officer attended the Sevenoaks Town Council Youth Forum.

Alongside all the above the CSU held their quarterly PACT meetings in Westerham, West Kingsdown, New Ash Green, Edenbridge and Swanley. There were also monthly Community MARACs, Serious Crime & Tactical Group, West Kent Domestic Abuse Working Groups and Daily Taskings.

The CSU also attend County meetings on Reducing Reoffending, Prevent, Kent Community Safety Managers, Safeguarding Leads, Threats Risks and Vulnerabilities, Online Safeguarding and Offender Management monthly meetings.

The CSU is very proactive on Social Media, our Twitter account has increased by 102 followers to 929 followers, and over 7000 tweets have been submitted up to end of March 2021

### Future Developments

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The Strategic Assessment was completed in December 2020 using data supplied by a variety of agencies. Based on this, our new 2021-22 Community & Safety Strategy & Action Plan will prioritise the following issues:

- Domestic Abuse including stalking
- Serious & Acquisitive Crime (including OCG, Emerging Trends, County Lines)
- Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime
- Safeguarding including Prevent, Mental Health, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation, Vulnerable Adults and Protecting Children)
- Substance Misuse
- Doorstep Crimes and Scams including Cyber Crime

Efforts will continue to promote community safety and help people to feel safer through existing local PACTS (Partners and Communities Together panels), feedback from the CSU and Community Awareness days.



## Glossary

- **ASB** - Anti-Social Behaviour
- **BCRP** - Business Crime Reduction Partnerships
- **BOTD** - Burglary Other Than Dwelling
- **CSE** - Child Sexual Exploitation
- **CSP** - Community Safety Partnership
- **CSU** - Community Safety Unit
- **KFRS** - Kent Fire & Rescue Service
- **KCC** - Kent County Council
- **MARACs** - Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
- **OCGs** - Organised Crime Groups
- **PACT** - Police and Community Together
- **PCC** - Police & Crime Commissioner
- **PCSOs** - Police Community Support Officer
- **SDC** - Sevenoaks District Council
- **TFMV** - Theft from a Motor Vehicle
- **TOMV** - Theft of a Motor Vehicle
- **YOS** - Youth Offending Service

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**People and Places Advisory Committee Work Plan 2021/22 (as at 18/03/2021)**

**15 June 2021**

- Annual Community Safety report
- Community Plan Annual report
- Leisure provision in the District

**5 October 2021**

- Budget 2021/22: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)
- End of Year Community Grants
- Community Plan - Annual Report
- Place Campaign
- 

**30 November 2021**

- 

**1 March 2022**

Removed from 15 June for a future date - Establishing a Community Lottery

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**LEISURE PROVISION IN SEVENOAKS DISTRICT - EXTERNAL REVIEW**

**People and Places Advisory Committee - 15 June 2021**

**Report of:** Sarah Robson, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Officer, People and Places

**Status:** For Decision

**Key Decision:** Yes

**Also Consider By:** Cabinet - 8 July 2021

**Executive Summary:** This report provides an update to Cabinet relating to the decision made on 15 December 2020 to commission Max Associates, an external leisure consultant, to review Sevenoaks Leisure Limited t/a Sencio Community Leisure (Sencio) business recovery plan and restructure proposal in light of any future requests for financial support. The resulting review includes analysis of Sencio's proposals and provides insight into whether the District has a fit for purpose leisure operator and model for its communities, with business resilience and future viability. This work will enable Members to make an informed decision around future options for supporting Council owned leisure facilities.

**This report supports the Key Aim of various elements of the Community Plan.**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Lesley Dyball

**Contact Officers:** Sarah Robson, Ext. 7129 and Kathryn Bone, Ext. 7176

**Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee**

- a) To note the report and appendices
- b) To consider whether or not to approve further financial support to Sencio, taking into account the significant risks and recommendations summarised in section 6.4 of Max Associates report (Appendix A)
- c) To recommend the following to Cabinet:

In the event that Sencio ceases to trade, that members delegate Authority to the Chief Officer - People and Places and Chief Officer - Finance and Trading to investigate an interim shorter term leisure operator for temporary leisure delivery to the community and enter into a contract subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for People and Places and Cabinet Member for Finance and Investments.

**Recommendation to Cabinet:**

- (a) To receive and note the report and appendices;
- (b) To consider whether or not to approve further financial support to Sencio, taking into account the significant risks and recommendations summarised in section 6.4 of Max Associates report (Appendix A);
- (c) In the event that Sencio ceases to trade, that members delegate Authority to the Chief Officer - People and Places and Chief Officer - Finance and Trading to investigate an interim leisure operator for temporary leisure delivery to the community and enter into a contract subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for People and Places and Cabinet Member for Finance and Investments.

**Introduction and Background**

1. Sevenoaks District Council (the Council) owns three leisure facilities and a golf course, operated and maintained under lease agreements with Sevenoaks Leisure Limited (SLL) (operating as Sencio Community Leisure). These facilities are:
  - Edenbridge Leisure Centre
  - Sevenoaks Leisure Centre
  - White Oak Leisure Centre
  - Lullingstone Park Golf Course
2. Sencio is a society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit and Societies Act 2014, registered with Inland Revenue for exempt charitable status. The organisation has been set up to benefit the community as a not-for-profit organisation.
3. The leisure sector across the country has been massively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nationally it is expected that the impact will be felt not only in the short term, but also for the medium to long term.
4. Councils across the country are working hard to keep supporting leisure providers and facilities during the coronavirus crisis. This includes introducing a range of emergency measures such as relaxing performance requirements, advance payments, waiving management fees and offering financial support. This is despite the impact coronavirus has had on councils' own finances and their ability to generate income.
5. The three national lockdowns introduced by HM Government in the UK in March 2020, November 2020 and January 2021 and Tier 4 restrictions in December 2020, to tackle the spread of Covid-19, enforced a mass closure of leisure facilities across the country. This has placed leisure operators

under the threat of insolvency as income streams effectively ceased, whilst continuing to incur essential costs relating to the maintenance of the facilities during closure, ongoing supplier and utility costs, furlough salary top-ups and essential staffing.

6. In February 2021, the UK Prime Minister announced Government's 'Roadmap out of Lockdown', which will support outdoor sport and leisure facilities (such as golf and outdoor pitches) reopening from 29 March, indoor leisure (including gyms and pools, but not exercise classes), most facilities will be able to take place indoors, includes indoor exercise classes and all outdoors sports from 17 May and all restrictions lifted from 21 June 2021.
7. Sencio has developed a Recovery Plan (see Appendix B) to support the move out of lockdown.

### Financial support

8. As a result of these unprecedented circumstances, leisure providers across the country have been seeking financial support from their local authority partners to subsidise these retained closure costs.
9. The District Council paid the Management Fee of £26,950 and Advantage payment of £20,000 to Sencio for 2020/21 up front. It has also delayed £88,000 of loan repayments from Sencio to the Council due between April 2020 to March 2021.
10. Sencio's Board of Trustees agreed at its meeting on 25 November 2020 to formally approach the Council for urgent financial support. Sencio notified the Council that it found itself in a position that without urgent financial support it would be unable to continue to trade from as early as 31 December 2020 and would be forced to cease operating the leisure centres and golf course.
11. At its meeting on 15 December 2020, Cabinet considered and approved Sencio's request for a grant of £300,000 as a result of the impact of Covid-19 on leisure, which would enable the three leisure centres to reopen on 2 January 2021. Cabinet approved for the grant payment to be paid in three equal monthly instalments, with the first being released in December 2020 and conditional on Sencio agreeing to reopen its leisure centres on 2 January 2021 and support and engage with the proposed consultancy work. Cabinet approved a further £30,000 to support the appointment of a consultant to review Sencio's business recovery plan and restructure proposal to help future proof their leisure operating model and organisational structures.
12. However, the UK Government announced that London, the South East and East of England would move into new Tier 4 COVID-19 restrictions from Sunday 20 December 2020, which would see the enforced closure of all leisure centres. Government reviewed the arrangements on 30 December 2020, with Kent remaining in Tier 4.
13. Unfortunately, Government announced on 4 January 2021 that England

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would be placed into a national lockdown, which has resulted in the district's leisure centres remaining closed and also forcing the golf course to close its doors to customers.

14. At its meeting on 14 January 2021, Cabinet considered an update to the Cabinet decision made on 15 December following the announcement of the further national lockdown. Cabinet approved the recommendation for the final two grant payments of £100,000 to Sencio to be reduced to £75,000 per month, paid in January and February 2021, to cover the monthly expenditure incurred by Sencio during the enforced closure and ensure the Council's buildings are maintained and essential monitoring checks, payments to utilities and suppliers and associated staffing costs are covered. If Kent moves into a lower tier enabling plans for the reopening of leisure facilities, the grant payment would be reinstated to the original monthly grant allocation of £100,000 for the remaining period. Cabinet approved for the grant to be funded from the General Fund Reserve.
15. The Council has also worked in partnership with Sencio to submit a funding bid to Government's National Leisure Recovery Fund (NLRF), administered by Sport England, to support the impact of the most recent lockdown and enable the reopening of leisure facilities. In early March 2021, the Council was notified that the joint funding bid had been successful and we would receive a £220,000 grant (based on the figures provided by Sencio) and a further £1,542 as part of a Monitoring and Evaluation Grant. On 10 March 2021, the Council was informed that there would be an increase to the initial grant and a further £15,104 in NLRF funding would be received. Payment of the grant was made in late March 2021.
16. Sencio has benefitted from receipt of £144,362.29 in Government business grants relating to the impact of Covid-19, which have been administered locally by the Council. It has also been assisted through Government's furlough scheme to cover staff wages (Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme), which is in place until 30 September 2021.
17. Despite receiving over £756,300 of public money, the trust faces a budget shortfall of £2 million, which includes a pre-Covid trading deficit.

### Consultancy work

18. Following the decision by Cabinet on 15 December, officers appointed Max Associates, a leisure consultancy team with a nationally recognised profile, to carry out the review of Sencio's business recovery plan and restructure proposal to help future proof their leisure operating model and organisational structure. The commissioning brief outlined the development of an independent report reviewing the current and future arrangements provided by Sencio for the management of the Council's leisure centres and golf course, alongside making recommendations to support the aims of:
  - Reviewing Sencio's Covid-19 Recovery Plan (and associated risk assessment), recommending how best to mitigate the continued impact of Covid-19 on income, service delivery, customer behaviour



and confidence and the need to adapt to changing Government guidance.

- Reviewing the current restructure proposal to ensure it provides Sencio with long-term operational and financial resilience.
  - Working with Sencio's board of trustees, making recommendations to the board as part of a skills audit to help support recovery and drive Sencio forward.
  - Reviewing the business operational model and offering to local people by considering sustainable opportunities and ensuring consistently high facility provision and service standards.
  - Providing a site by site financial appraisal, including income, expenditure and projected future usage considering longer term delivery of leisure services. This should be completed whilst taking into account that one leisure centre is due to be removed from the portfolio, the optimum timing of which should be identified as part of the appraisal.
  - Reviewing customer footfall and associated marketing and promotion of Sencio's current and future leisure offer.
19. The resulting report (Appendix A) from Max Associates provides Sencio with a review of each of these areas, outlining areas of strength and for improvement, alongside accompanying recommendations to assist them in their recovery and future planning.
20. Sencio's Board of Trustees has submitted a response (Appendix D) in response to the findings of the report undertaken by Max Associates, a leisure consultancy team with a nationally recognised profile.
21. The report provides a summary of the consultant's recommendations and identifies substantial risks in section 6.4, concluding that it would be sensible and likely that the Council should consider alternative management options to ensure any future funding decisions support the most appropriate and best value solution for the Council and the benefit of the local community.

#### **Other options Considered and/or rejected**

22. Given the significant risk of insolvency being faced by all leisure industry providers, some initial thought has been given to alternative management options. Max Associates recommends that the Council undertakes a review of the different management options available to enable the Council to make a decision based on an understanding of the associated financial and operational risks.
23. For example, the Council would need to consider operating the facilities in-house or commissioning a new operator with an established leisure portfolio.
24. An analysis of each option would need to be undertaken to understand risks, financial implications, contractual arrangements, service delivery and value for money.
25. The work undertaken by Max Associates and resulting report (Appendix A) has provided an opportunity to reflect upon the impact of the pandemic on

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the leisure industry and is a helpful tool for supporting a new approach to integrate more successfully, the leisure, health and well-being aspirations of our residents. It is already clear that the pandemic has changed the outlook of many people to the role of exercise in their lives.

### Key Implications

#### Financial

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the financial viability of the entire leisure industry which has seen its income streams stop and their financial facilities heavily utilised during the last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The financial implications are detailed within Appendix A, the largest of which is the ongoing viability of Sencio, their financial recovery plan and the subsequent ongoing management options.

In addition to the financial elements detailed in Appendix A consideration also needs to be given to the VAT impact on the ongoing management and the potential additional cost to the Council.

Finally, Sevenoaks District Council is the guarantor for Sencio's pension fund and as such may have a pension liability. Any potential pension liability is dependent on whether the ongoing management solution enables the employees to stay in the Pension Fund. Outstanding HMRC contributions provided by Kent Pension Fund as at 28 February 2021 are attached as Appendix C.

#### Legal Implications

Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.

Section 1 of The Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 provides that every statutory provision conferring or imposing a function on a local authority confers the powers on the local authority to enter into a contract with another person for the provision or making available of assets or services, or both (whether or not together with goods) for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority.

Section 93 of The Local Government Act 2003 provides that there is a general power to charge for any discretionary service such as leisure and cultural services.

Section 19 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows a local authority to provide either indoor or outdoor recreational facilities as it thinks fit and that includes the power to provide buildings facilities equipment supplies and assistance of any kind, either without charge or on such payment as the authority thinks fit.

Any advance to Sencio that members may elect to authorise must not offend the rules on state aid or subsidy control. During the current COVID-19 crises the allowable de minimis level of state aid to any undertaking must not exceed the sum of 800,000 euros.

In taking its next steps as authorised by Members the Council must ensure that it also complies with any existing arrangements in its funding and lease arrangements for the leisure properties with Sencio.

Other legal implications are as set out in 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.

### **Conclusions**

Despite the Council's own finances being hit hard, the authority has supported Sencio with £376,950 in the past year with grants and paying its annual management fees up front. It also agreed to delay loan repayments from Sencio to the Council of £88,000 up to March 2021.

Sencio has also benefited from a £235,000 grant from Sport England following a joint application with the Council and £144,362.29 from various business grants administered by the Council. It has also been assisted through Government's furlough scheme to cover staff wages (Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme), which is in place until 30 September 2021.

Despite receiving over £756,300 of public money, the trust faces a budget shortfall of £2 million, which includes a pre-Covid trading deficit.

Much of the considerations and options explored above are dependent on how Sencio perform in the short and long term, but also how they react to an insolvency situation.

If the Council chooses not to approve any further financial support to Sencio, based on the conclusion and risks to the Council set out in Max Associates report (Appendix A), the Council may be required to take steps to protect its leisure facilities. Sencio could also find themselves in the difficult position of becoming insolvent and the Council having to liaise with the Administrators.

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### **Appendices**

EXEMPT Appendix A - Max Associates Report (April 2021)

EXEMPT Appendix B - Sencio Reopening Plan (March 2021)

EXEMPT Appendix C - Outstanding HMRC contributions - KCC (as at 28 February 2021)

EXEMPT Appendix D - Sencio's response to Max Associates Report (May 2021)

### **Background Papers**

None

**Sarah Robson**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People and Places**

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