KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NO:
Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services	24/00079

For publication

Key decision: YES
Key decision criteria. The decision will be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions.

Title of Decision: Sevenoaks Land East of High Street - Pre-Consultation and the next steps

Decision:

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services to:

1. Note the feedback from the community consultation exercise conducted by Sevenoaks District Council;

2. Support the objectives and principles of the regeneration of the Sevenoaks Town centre, subject to KCC's red line requirements, which includes the potential relocation of County Council services to new build facilities within a future scheme; and

3. Agree for Kent County Council to work with Sevenoaks District Council to progress the scoping of proposals and to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding which will establish the principles of collaborative working between the two authorities. It should be noted that a further Key Decision will be taken in respect of the consideration of any final business case and the implementation of any proposals.

Reason(s) for decision:
Kent County Council (KCC) has been engaging with Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) regarding SDC's ambition to regenerate the area to the east of the town centre in Sevenoaks. The project can only continue in its current form in collaboration with KCC, as the County Council is a key landowner and stakeholder.

The proposals involve the relocation of KCC services, including the library function, to an alternative new facility within a future scheme. This would potentially deliver more efficient and cost-effective buildings for KCC's estate, supporting Framing Kent's Future – Our Council Strategy 2022-2026. This new facility would mean that the KCC service are located in closer proximity to the existing High Street.

Approval is being sought to enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SDC which will establish the principles of a collaboration to explore the viability of proposals in the regeneration scheme.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
SDC in collaboration with KCC undertook a number of Sevenoaks High Street Regeneration pre-consultation events, which asked the community what should be considered as part of the regeneration project, including the potential re location of KCC services).

Pre consultation public engagement report

Prior to the pre-consultation events, Members in Sevenoaks were consulted on the concept of the Regeneration of Sevenoaks High Street and KCC's potential involvement on the 11 April 2024. Members were supportive of this concept, however noted that the project was in its early stages, and further information would be required prior to KCC's full engagement as the project progresses.

The proposed decision was discussed and considered by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 10 September 2024.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:
Following the pre-consultation events, the next stage will be to commission a feasibility to deliver a mixed-use scheme in collaboration with SDC, which will provide options and outline any alternative approaches that have been considered to determine the viability of the project.

A further key decision supported by a full business case will be sought prior to KCC committing to the project.

The main alternative is to do nothing – resulting in no partnership working with SDC on the project and the existing KCC library and services remaining within the current 1987 built building.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None.

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signed

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date