

Lead officer:	Katherine Bescoby
Decision maker:	Council
People involved:	Electoral Services
Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Governance Review for Sheerness. • The review was started following receipt of a petition signed by 635 electors to set up a town council. • The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 does require the Council to undertake a review and to have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government regarding community governance reviews. • The statutory guidance sets out the process to follow, which involves the Council agreeing terms of reference and undertaking consultation, but does not set out how the consultation should be undertaken. • The decision as to whether to set up a new town council is to be made by full Council, taking into consideration the result of public consultation and the statutory guidance referred to above.
Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The CIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	Council 13 June 2018
Summary of the decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council is required to carry out a review in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and to have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government. 2. Key action is to undertake the required CGR process in accordance with legislation and statutory guidance. 3. It is not for officers to predict the outcome of this review, but to ensure that the review has been undertaken in accordance with the agreed terms of reference and with regard to the guidance. 4. The criteria of the 2007 Act is that any new town council will be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area, and effective and convenient, and will have a positive impact on community cohesion. 5. There are approximately 8000 electors in Sheerness and a population of 11,938.
Information and research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. • Include sources and key findings. • Include information on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation, Government Guidance, Association of Electoral Administrators, Kent Association of Local Councils – to guide the process • Results of consultation have differed in that in the first consultation there was a positive response to set up a town council, whilst the second consultation has shown the opposite view. • It is important to consider the socio-economic make up of Sheerness. In the 'Key Data for Swale' report produced in 2006 (prior to the boundary changes), Sheerness West and East are recorded as being two of the most deprived wards in Swale. There are also other factors such as literacy, disability (including people with visual impairment), and electors whose first language may not be English to consider. The Council's Corporate Equality Scheme 2016 – 2020 states that the percentage of people aged over 50 with a long term health problem or disability varies across the Borough

	<p>with 44.4% in Sheerness ward, the highest in Swale. (KCC website includes census data on residents whose language is not English, but this is by district rather than at ward level). https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent/equality-and-diversity-data#tab-3</p>
<p>Consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has there been specific consultation on this decision? • What were the results of the consultation? • Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? • Can any conclusions be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics? 	<p>Yes. There have been two stages of consultation. The first stage was mainly a ballot paper style questionnaire to all electors, letters to households, website, social media, and interested parties including KCC.</p> <p>The results of this were reported to Council on 21 March. There were 1406 questionnaires completed in support and 569 against setting up a town council.</p> <p>An appendix was included with the report to Council as there were some examples where people had indicated they did support a town council, but the comments that had been added were not in support of a town council (and vice-versa).</p> <p>Council agreed draft recommendations for further consultation, to set up a town council comprising of 9 members. The response to the consultation was by email and letter, with 1 in support of setting up a town council and 905 against setting up a town council.</p> <p>The results will be presented to the Council to consider, and Council will be asked to make a decision (giving reasons) as to whether to set up a town council or to maintain the status quo.</p>

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?	
Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's PSED Technical Guidance .	
Aim	Yes/No
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	NO
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	NO
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	NO

Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.		
When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.		
Characteristic	Relevance to decision High/Medium/Low/None	Impact of decision Positive/Negative/Neutral
Age	None	Neutral
Disability	None	Neutral
Gender reassignment	None	Neutral
Marriage and civil partnership	None	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	None	Neutral
Race	None	Neutral
Religion or belief	None	Neutral
Sex	None	Neutral
Sexual orientation	None	Neutral

Other socially excluded groups ¹ : Literacy, deprivation and English not as a first language	None	Neutral
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<p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish. There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see PSED Technical Guidance). <p>Advise on the overall equality implications that should be taken into account in the final decision, considering relevance and impact.</p>	<p>Summarise this conclusion in the body of your report:</p> <p>The report to Council will be presenting the consultation results and asking the Council to make a decision on whether to set up a town council or not, and the Council will need to give a reason for the decision.</p> <p>This impact assessment is about the Community Governance Review rather than the impact of setting up a town council which could be seen to foster community cohesion, although there would be additional charge to residents in a deprived area.</p>
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Timing

- Having 'due regard' is a state of mind. It should be considered at the inception of any decision.
- Due regard should be considered throughout the development of the decision. Notes should be taken on how due regard to the equality duty has been considered through research, meetings, project teams, committees and consultations.
- The completion of the CIA is a way of effectively summarising the due regard shown to the equality duty throughout the development of the decision. The completed CIA must inform the final decision-making process. The decision-maker must be aware of the duty and the completed CIA.

Full technical guidance on the public sector equality duty can be found at:

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/PSD/technical_guidance_on_the_public_sector_equality_duty_england.pdf

This Community Impact Assessment should be attached to any committee or SMT report relating to the decision. This CIA should be sent to the Website Officer (Lindsay Oldfield) once completed, so that it can be published on the website.

¹ Other socially excluded groups could include those with literacy issues, people living in poverty or on low incomes or people who are geographically isolated from services