

AGENDA

SHEPPEY AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 14 September 2021

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Minster Working Men's Club, Liberty Hall, Union Road, Minster, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1HW

Membership:

Councillors Cameron Beart (Vice-Chairman), Richard Darby, Oliver Eakin, Simon Fowle, Angela Harrison, Ken Ingleton (Chairman), Elliott Jayes, Peter Macdonald, Peter Marchington, Lee McCall, Pete Neal, Padmini Nissanga, Ken Pugh and Bill Tatton.

Quorum = 4

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1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Chair will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures. The Chair will inform the meeting that: there is no scheduled test of the fire alarm during this meeting. If the alarm does sound, please leave the building quickly without collecting any of your possessions, using the doors signed as fire escapes, and assemble outside in Park Gatehouse Car Park. Await instructions before re-entering the building. Should anyone require assistance in evacuating the building, please make the Swale Borough Council Democratic Services Officers aware of any special needs so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.
 2. Confirmation of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

To confirm the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2021/22.
 3. Apologies for Absence
 4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships. The Chairman

will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interests (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the meeting while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the meeting.

5. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 15 June 2021 (Minute Nos. 65 – 75) as a correct record.

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| 6. Secondary School Provision | 5 - 6 |
| 7. Matters arising from previous meetings - Appendix 4 to follow | 7 - 32 |
| 8. Sheerness Marine Town and Mile Town Conservation Area Reviews | |
| 9. Eastchurch Aviation Memorial | |
| 10. Closed Churchyards | 33 - 34 |
| 11. Public Forum | |
| 12. Local issues to be raised | |
| 13. Update on Work Plan | 35 - 38 |
| 14. Monitoring Report - funding allocations 2020-21 | 39 - 42 |
| 15. Matters referred to Committee by Cabinet | |
| 16. Matters referred to Cabinet by Committee | |

17. Venue for next meeting

Issued on Monday, 6 September 2021

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of the Area Committees, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

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Secondary School provision in Sittingbourne and Sheppey - the Administration view

I am grateful to Kent County Council for engaging with Swale Borough Councillors on this topic.

It is a topic that matters to Swale Borough Council:

- Because we are concerned about the difficulties that many of our residents increasingly face in accessing places of choice for their youngsters.
- But also, because Secondary Education plays a vital role in meeting our aspirations for our young people, for the local economy and for our community.

School places:

- There is a problem of shortfall in capacity. It is hoped that this can be met by the opening of the North West Sittingbourne School, but it is not clear to us when this will happen and in the meantime many families face stressful dilemmas each year.
- But the situation is further complicated due to the Academy on Sheppey never reaching its Pupil Admission numbers because so many young people on Sheppey migrate each day to the mainland. This has put severe pressure on places on the mainland, with many Sittingbourne youngsters being offered unwelcome places on Sheppey. It is the administration's view that this is not equitable, nor is it good for the sense of community on Sheppey for so many youngsters to want to go elsewhere for their important education.

Meeting young people's and local needs:

- School places are not the only issue.
- The long term low academic outcomes at the Academy on Sheppey are a matter of concern. It obviously motivates the daily migration to Sittingbourne, and it leaves many young people low on skills and aspirations. We would support any moves to widen the opportunities for young people by providing an option of two schools. However, the future provision of schools is very much in the hands of the Regional office for Academy schools. A two-school solution is supported by the constituency MP.

Vocational and Further Education:

- This, and previous, administrations want to see a Further Education college in Sittingbourne, which would complement the good work being done at Sheppey College and provide more skills needed by young people and by the local economy.

- But we cannot secure Government support and funding because numerically we cannot make a case based on demand. That is because so many youngsters stay in their Secondary Schools after the age of 16. They would plausibly not do so if there were a Further Education college.
- That being the dilemma, the administration at Swale supports any moves to establish more and better vocational education in the schools.
- In supporting the 2-school solution on Sheppey, we would also support one of the schools having a strong vocational bias and close links to the Sheppey College.
- We would support any plans for the new school in NW Sittingbourne to have a strong vocational bias with further education provision for the post 16 age group.

Cllr Roger Truelove
Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Sheppey Area Committee meeting: 14 September 2021 – Matters arising

No.	Item	Action	Comments on updates
1	Connectivity across Sheppey	<p>The Council is currently undertaking a review of its Local Plan. One of the documents that is being developed alongside this review is a Transport Strategy.</p> <p>At the June meeting a briefing by the Public Transport Unit at Kent County Council provided an update on Sheppey bus service provision.</p> <p>A question was asked at the June meeting about transport issues on the Island. Previously a KCC forum dealt with these issues, if the forum is no longer in existence should the Area Committee take this on?</p>	<p>The Kent County Council forum that looked at connectivity across Sheppey, originally set up by Mike Whiting when he was the KCC Cabinet Member for Transport, is no longer in existence.</p> <p>Additionally, the Quality Bus Partnership has been suspended while KCC look at how to set up an Enhanced Partnership which will replace the QBP. The Chair suggests postponing this discussion until the December meeting, when more will be known about the focus of the new group</p>
2	Sheerness town centre regeneration	At the March meeting Cllr Bonney provided a verbal update on the restoration of the Grade II listed Sheerness clock tower, refurbishment of Master's House, Sheerness and the Sheerness High Street project.	Please see Appendix 1 and 2 for an update.
3	Restoration of war memorial, Sheerness	An update was given at the June meeting on the restoration of Sheerness war memorial. The first phase of the works is complete with the renovation of the paving area around the memorial. The foundations have been laid for the memorial wall and the order for the stones for the wall has now been placed. Collation of	Cllr Peter MacDonald provided the following update: "The project has progressed, all the names are now validated. Before the engraving starts, Albion Stone will prepare the layout & I will travel to Portland to see if their layout appears right. Assuming it is, they will then start the

No.	Item	Action	Comments on updates
		names for the wall continues to be undertaken by the Sheppey War Memorial Trust.	engraving. They will deliver all the stone blocks to site & their stone masons will erect the whole wall on the reinforced concrete foundation which is ready & waiting. On completion of the wall, the paving will then be completed & the site cleared. Provided there are no problems, the whole project should be complete well before this year's Remembrance Parade. It would then be appropriate for a Dedication ceremony & parade in April/May next year on the 100th Anniversary of the Dedication of our existing War Memorial. I would anticipate that all Services would want to attend. "
4	Post office provision	<p>At the December meeting the Chairman suggested Members liaised with local community groups to put a proposal together for a community post office in Queenborough and bring that back to the next meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>At the March meeting it was reported that the Town Council were exploring options as it had not been possible to apply for a community post office.</p>	The Post Office is now moving into Queenborough Stores in the High Street providing that they can get planning permission for the installation of a disabled access ramp.
5	Brown tourism signs	<p>To commence an audit of existing local brown signs in concert with parish and town councils.</p> <p>So far nothing specific has been identified, however, the Sheppey Community</p>	The Chairman proposes waiting for the Sheppey Community Development Forum to finish their review and then bring back to a later meeting.

No.	Item	Action	Comments on updates
		Development Forum are considering brown tourism signs as part of their review.	
6	Queenborough and Rushenden regeneration	<p>The Committee to prioritise which local issues should be added to future agendas for substantive consideration and discussion.</p> <p>The Chairman proposes bringing this back to a future meeting at the appropriate time.</p>	A tabled briefing paper (Appendix 4) prepared by Petra Clarke, Homes England, is to follow.
7	Child Poverty	A parish councillor asked for an update on what SBC were doing to combat child poverty on the Island. The Chair agreed to consult with officers and feedback at the next meeting.	Please see Appendix 3 for a briefing.
8	Green areas – Minster on Sea	A question was asked about the green areas in Minster on Sea, in particular Scrapsgate and the definition of boundaries and protection of wildlife.	<p>The Head of Environment and Leisure advised some of the field is cut as amenity cut which is short grass. The rest of the area is left as wild due to the further investigation of wildlife habitats. We continue to mow small pathways through the space to allow access over it.</p> <p>Environment Agency are soon due to undertake some works to Scrapsgate drain which may impact on access slightly.</p>
9	Changes to licensing rules	A question was asked at the June meeting about recent changes to licensing rules at SBC which make it very difficult for creative activities to take place in town centres.	The Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services advised that the revised Street Trading policy was adopted by General Licencing Committee and came into force on 1st April 2021, it was subject to the statutory

No.	Item	Action	Comments on updates
			consultation processes and is legally compliant with the relevant licencing legislation. The policy is not meant to hinder creative activities, but where trading is part of these activities then individual stall holders are required to be licenced. This is ultimately to protect the consumer and the event organiser who cannot be responsible for the quality and safety of individual stall holders products. The Licencing team are supporting Sheerness Town Council with advice and guidance.
10	Residents commenting on planning applications	At the June meeting a resident commented that public's concerns might not always be heard when a planning application was considered. The Chair agreed to take this up with officers with a view to providing information on the issues that could be considered in determining a planning application.	The Head of Planning Services has confirmed a briefing will be given at the December meeting.

Sheerness Area Committee

Capital Projects Team Update

Bench Refurbishment

The bench refurbishment programme was completed on 28th May. The ends of the benches have been painted Marine blue and the timber slats rubbed down and re-treated and/or replaced as required.



New Planters

The new timber planters were installed throughout the High Street on 4th June and the existing planters relocated to Beachfield and planted out by Sheppey matters community gardeners.



Clock Tower

The contract to Smiths of Derby has now been formally awarded and they are currently in the process of developing their plans and health and safety requirements with a view to dismantling and removing the clock tower at the end of September. The date has yet to be confirmed as this will be dependent on plant (craneage, haulage) and resource availability as well as Kent County Council in terms of permitting and road closure requirements.

UKPN are due to disconnect the permanent power feed to the tower on 14th September leaving the clock in a non-functioning state.

Once the clock tower is removed from site the current Heras fencing will be replaced with timber hoarding which will include historic and informative notice boards.

Time lapse photography is being planned for the removal and installation sequences as well as interviews with council staff and members and representatives from Smiths of Derby.

Concrete Balls and uprighters around the clock tower

The Capital Projects team are currently in discussion with KCC and with electrical contractor Prowired. It is currently being planned to schedule the replacement of the ball bollards and the installation of the new uprighters prior to the tower being re-erected if this is possible with the timber hoarding insitu.

Highway Asset Painting

Painting of the bollards commenced during week commencing 9th August. Sheerness town council highlighted some issues with the finish and the contractor carrying out works in accordance with the specification. This has been discussed with the contractor's senior management team and is being addressed.

The contractor is currently awaiting their MEWP licence and permits from KCC to enable them to start works on the lighting columns. This delay has been caused by payment not being received by KCC for the permits. A full post works survey will be carried out and any defects identified with the contractor.

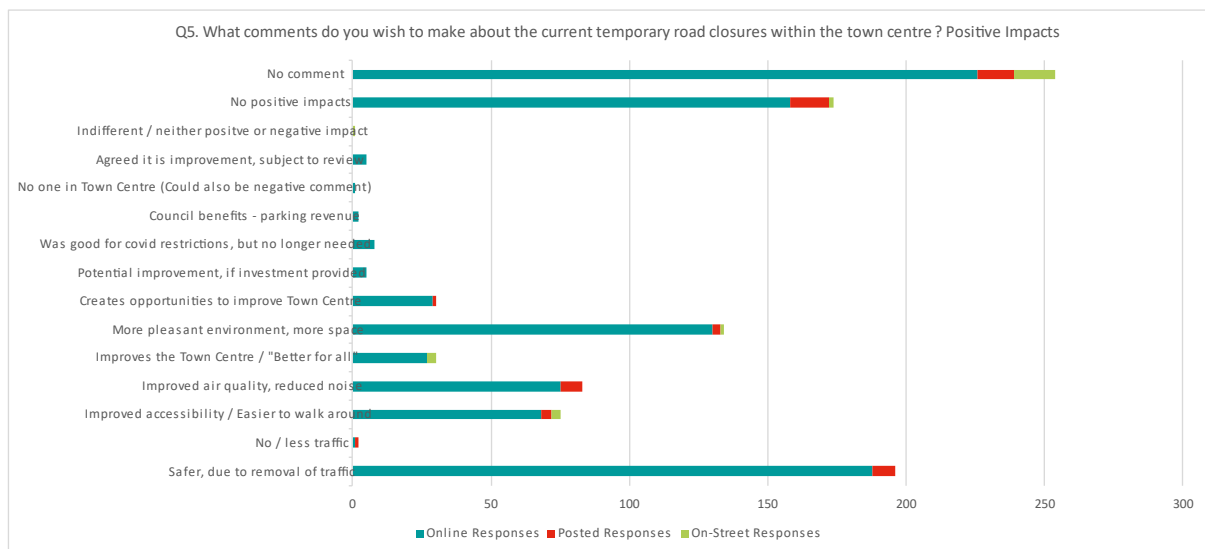
Sheerness Permanent Town Centre Informal Consultation

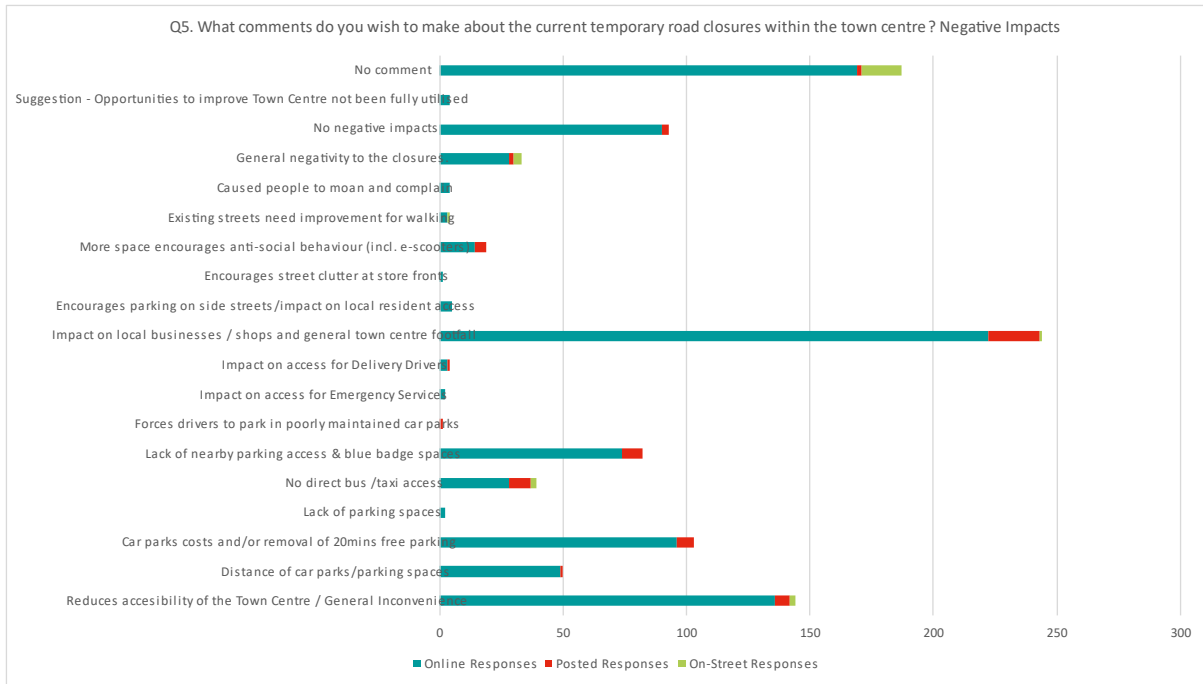
This detail below highlights the results from the analysis carried out following the informal consultation carried out for Sheerness between 21st May and 14th June 2021 to gauge stakeholders' views on the implementation of permanent road closures (please note the results for Sittingbourne and Faversham are included within the appendices).

The informal consultation took place as a posted, online and on-street survey between 21st May and 14th June 2021.

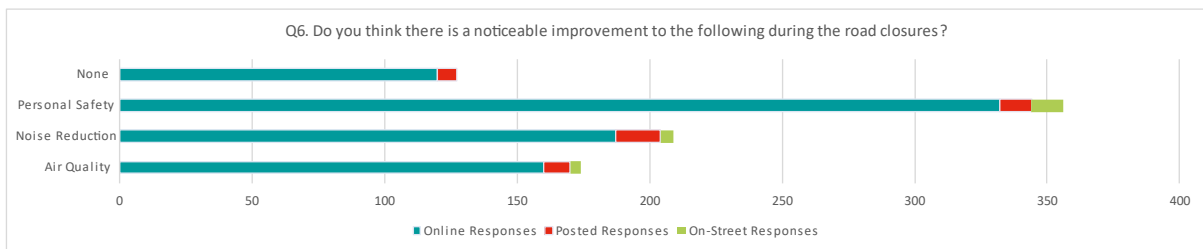
There was a total of 810 responses, of which 744 were online responses, 41 mail responses and 25 on-street responses.

- 71% of responses were a Swale resident, 5% were a business and 10% were a visitor.
- 64% travelled to the town by car/van and 25% travelled by foot.
- 56% travel to town 1-3 days per week and 31% travel to town 4-7 days per week
- 28% of responses consider themselves to have a disability with 77% of these stating physical/mobility limitations
- 47% of respondents had something positive to say while 65% had negative responses relating to the temporary closures. Key reasons raised in support of the closure included:
 - + Safer, due to removal of traffic (20%)
 - + More pleasant environment, due to more space (13%)
 Whereas key reasons raised against the closure included:
 - Impact on local businesses / shops and general town centre, footfall (24%).
 - Reduces accessibility / General Inconvenience (14%)

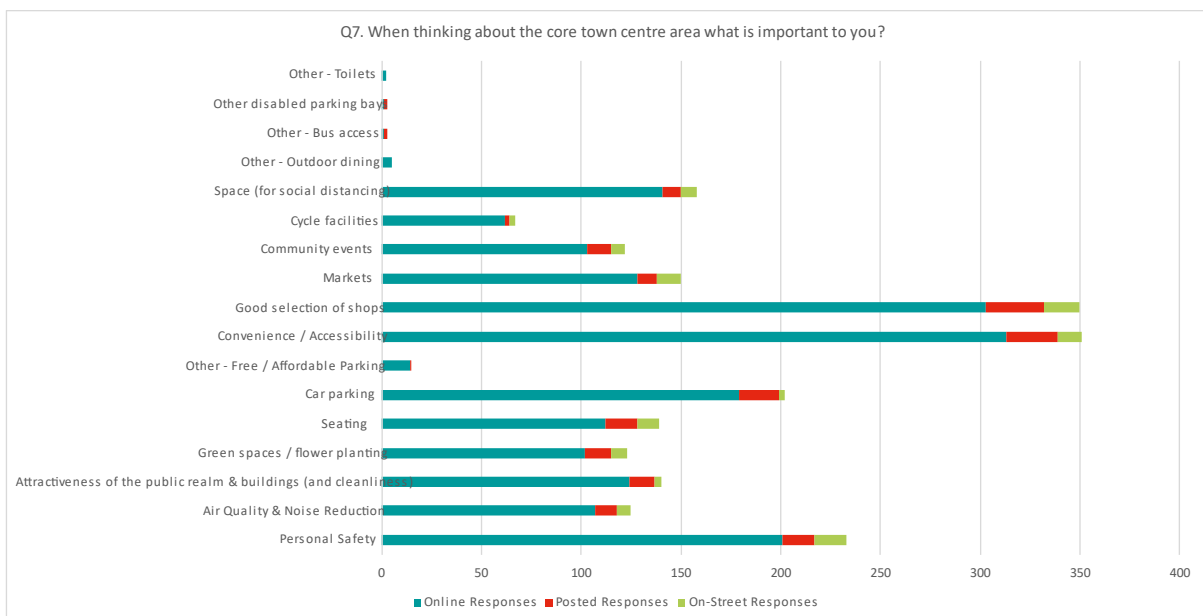




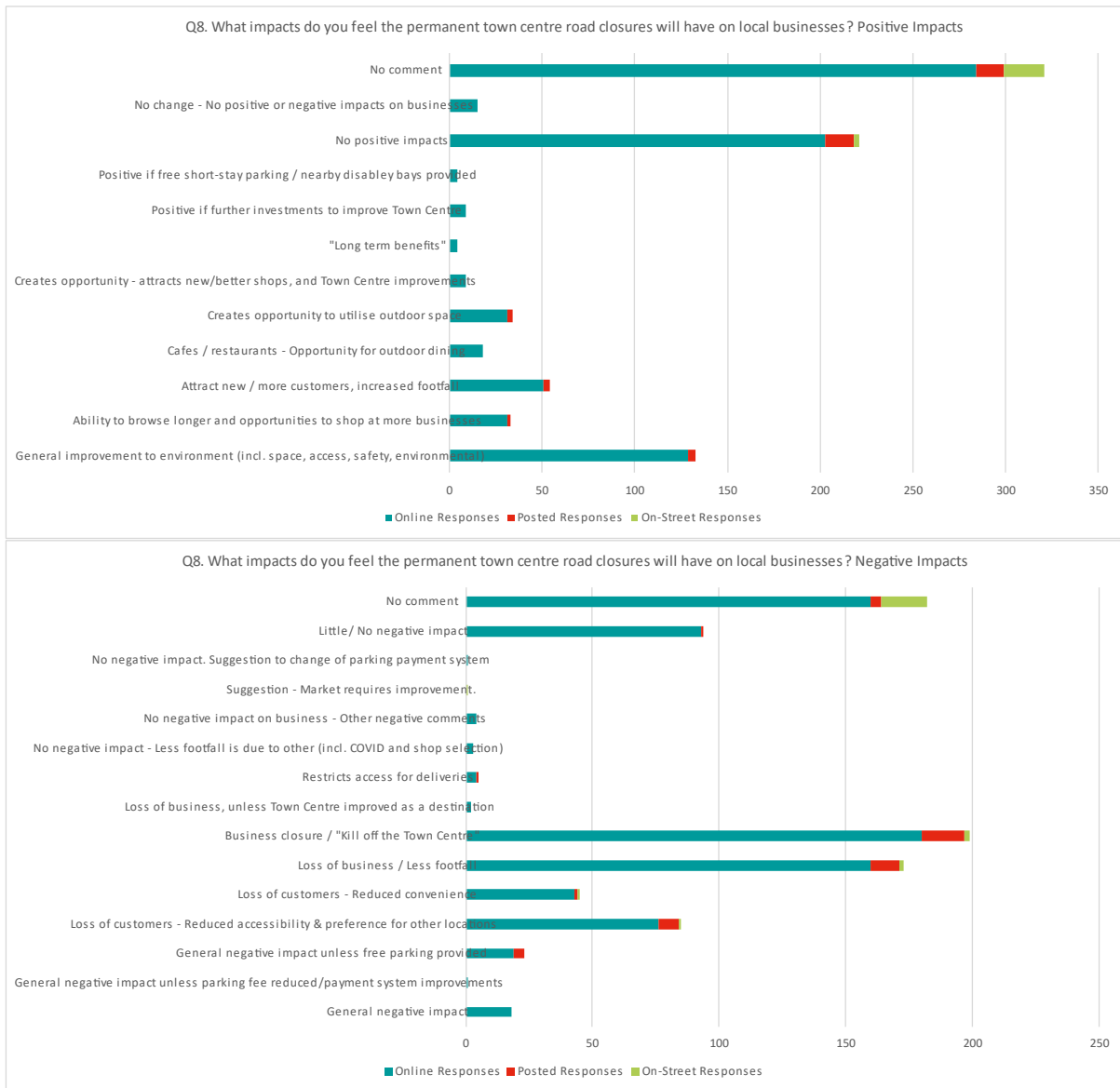
- As with Sittingbourne, people in Sheerness felt there were improvements in personal safety with the temporary closures in place.



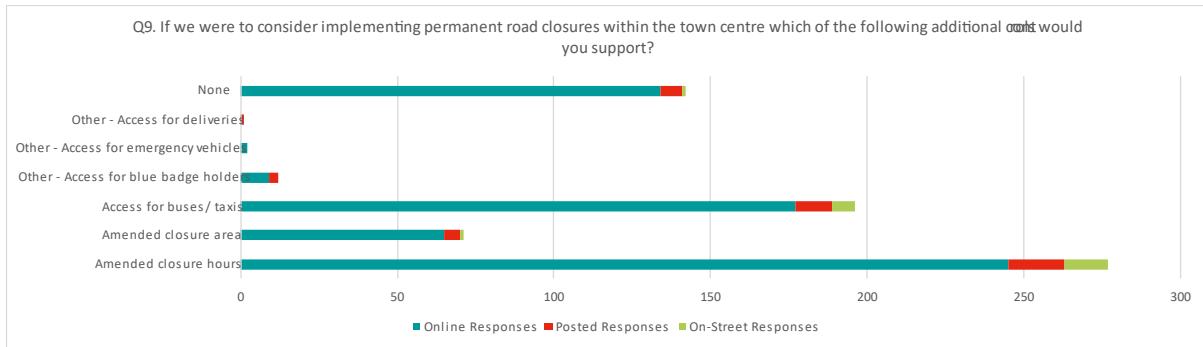
- There were clear themes that were important to people with regard to the town centre.



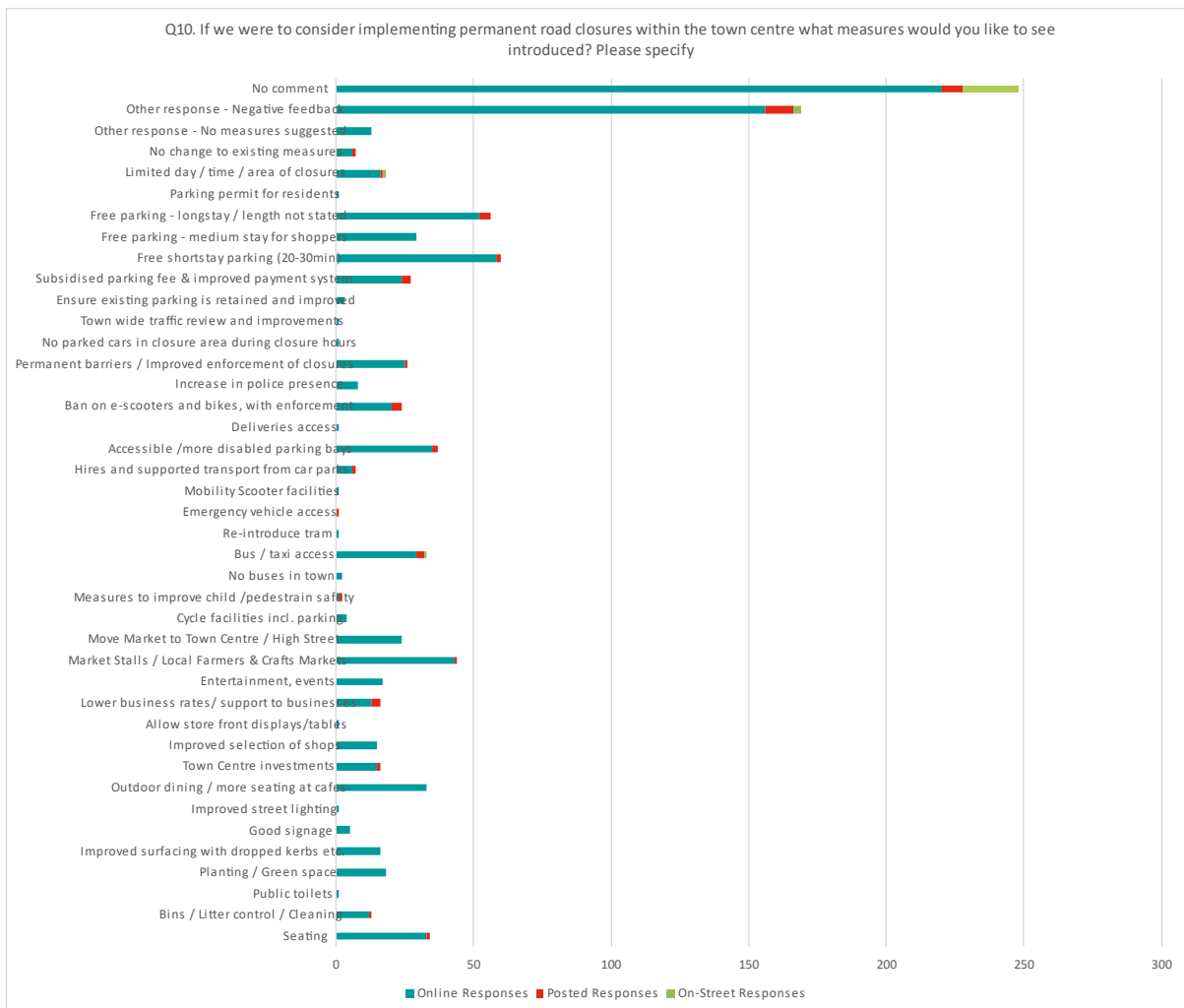
- However, people thought that there were both positives and negative impact to local businesses with the permanent closures in place.



- The key suggestion for additional controls for the permanent closures was amending the closure hours followed by access for buses/taxi's. Most people still indicated a preferred 10am-4pm closure period with 24hours coming second followed by 10am-2pm and then 10am- 3pm.



- Key suggestions to improve the permanent closures, should they be implemented permanently included:
 - Free parking - long stay / length not stated (5%)
 - Free short stay parking (20-30min) (6%)
 - Accessible / more disabled parking bays (4%)



- Out of 810 responses 41% were in support of the closure and 58% were against the closures in Sheerness. Of those in support, 59% said that the

introduction of permanent town centre road closures would encourage them to walk/cycle into town.

Next Steps

There are clear themes and key responses captured within the informal consultation analysis for Sheerness that Swale Borough Council will now focus upon, as part of the capital projects programme, to introduce improvements to the town centres.

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Sheerness Area Committee

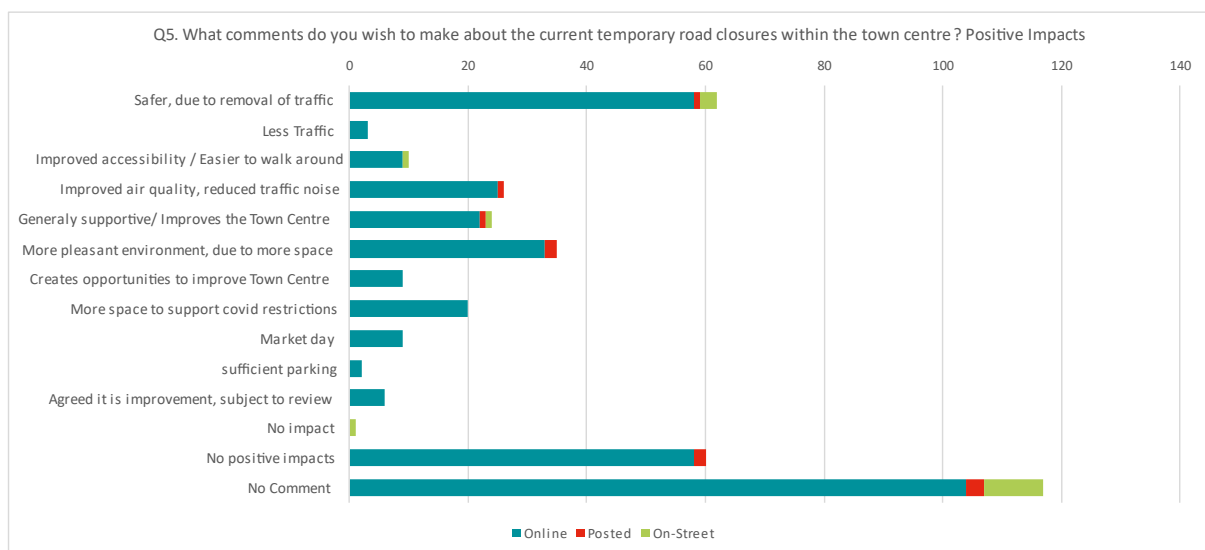
Appendices

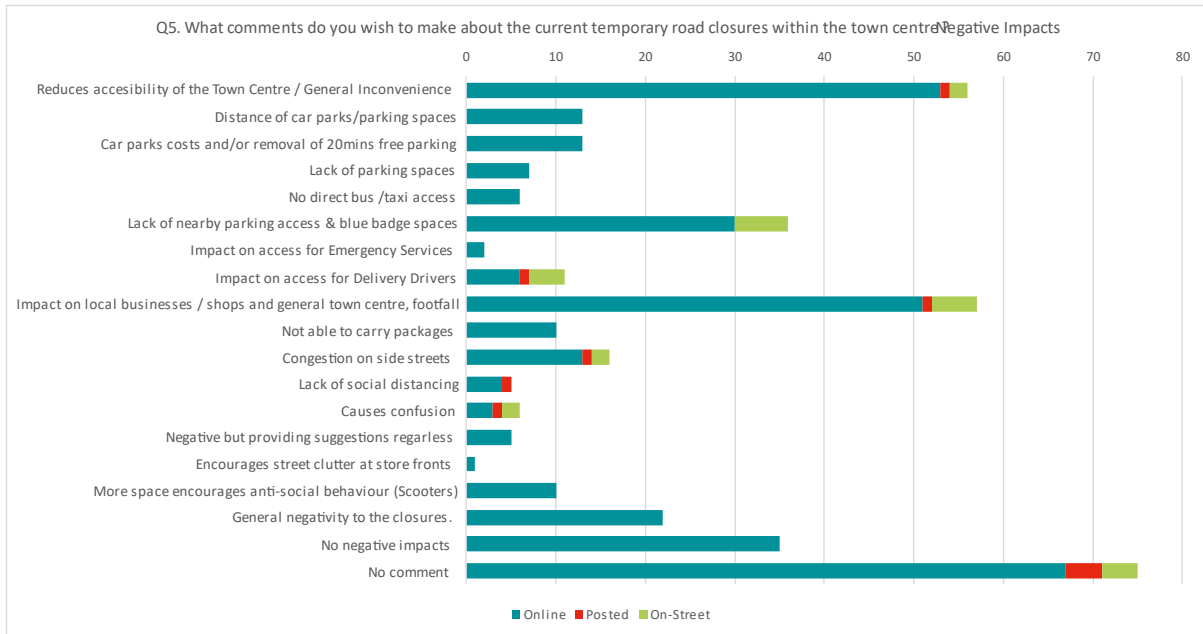
Results & analysis for the Informal Consultation for the town centre (Sittingbourne & Faversham) permanent road closures.

Sittingbourne

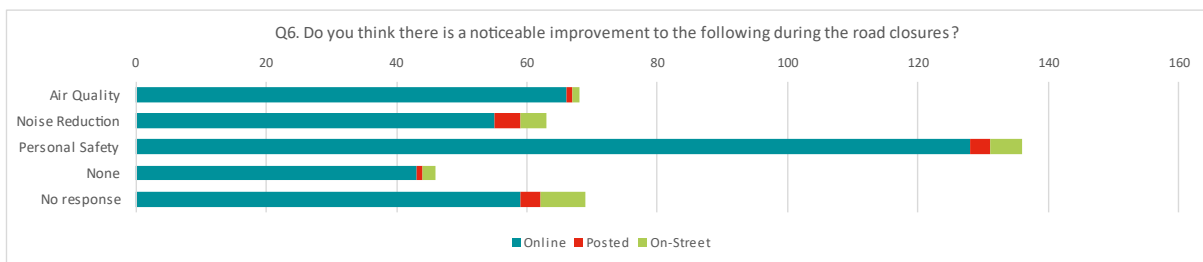
There was a total of 323 responses for Sittingbourne, of which 299 were online responses, 8 mail responses and 16 on-street responses.

- 76% were a Swale resident, 6% were a business and 7% were a visitor.
 - 55% travelled to the town by car/van and 34% travelled by foot.
 - 46% travel to town 1-3 days per week and 23% travel to town 4-7 days per week.
 - 17% of responses consider themselves to have a disability, with 60% of these stating physical/mobility limitations.
 - 45% of respondents had something positive to say while 66% had negative responses relating to the temporary closures. Key reasons raised in support of the closure included:
 - + Safer, due to removal of traffic (16%)
 - + More pleasant environment, due to more space (9%)
- Whereas key reasons raised against the closure included:
- Reduces accessibility / General Inconvenience (15%)
 - Impact on local businesses / shops and town centre, footfall (15%)

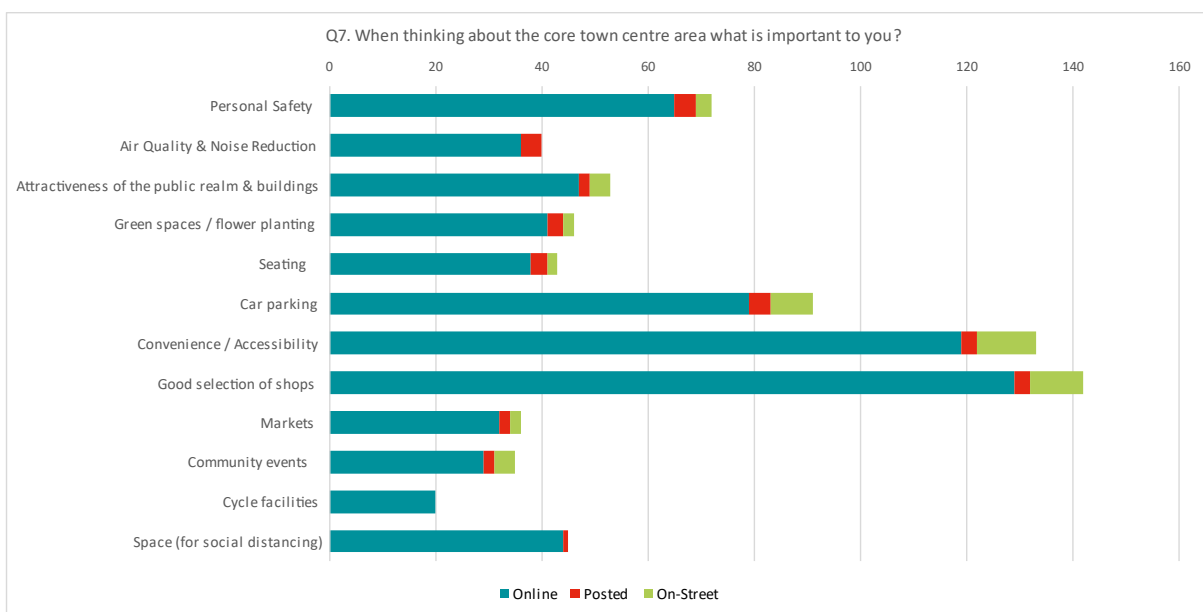




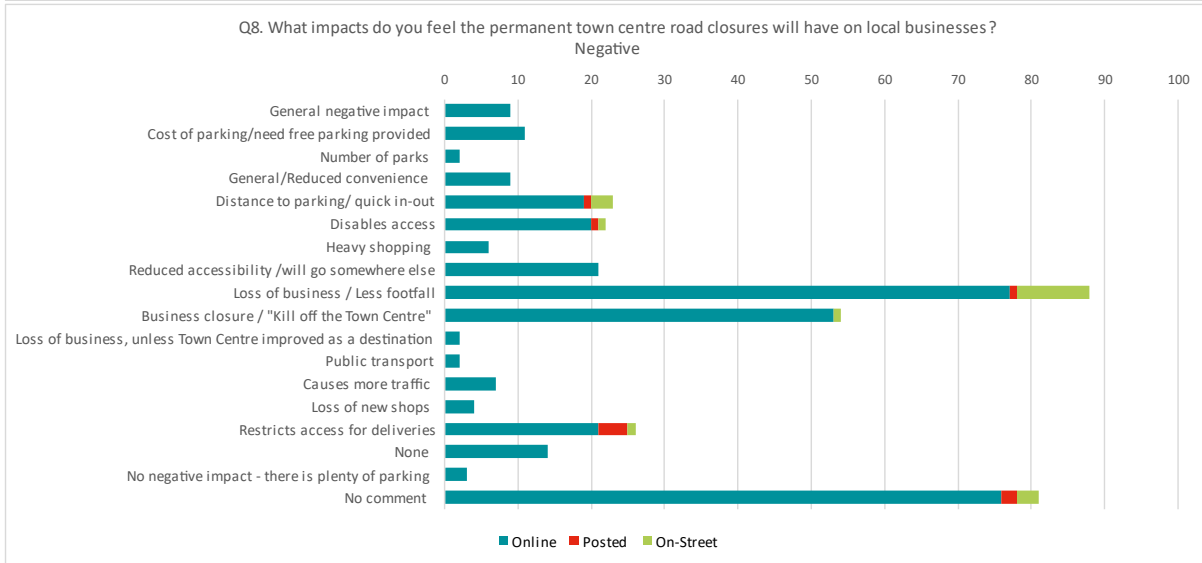
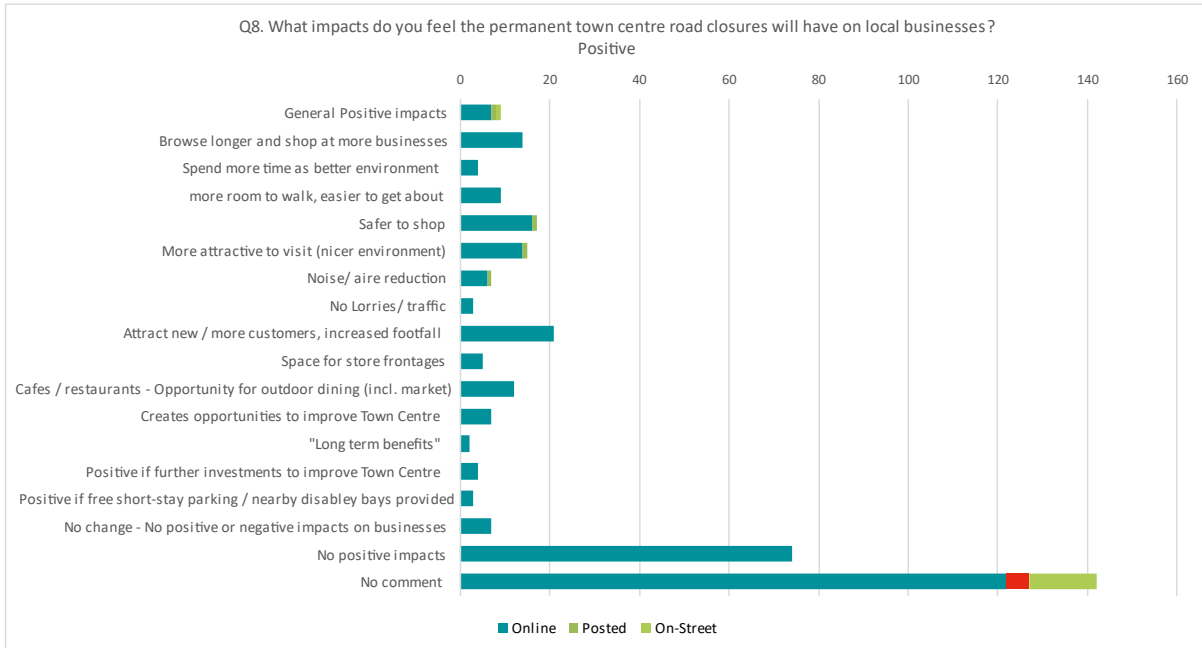
- People felt there were improvements in personal safety with the temporary closures in place.



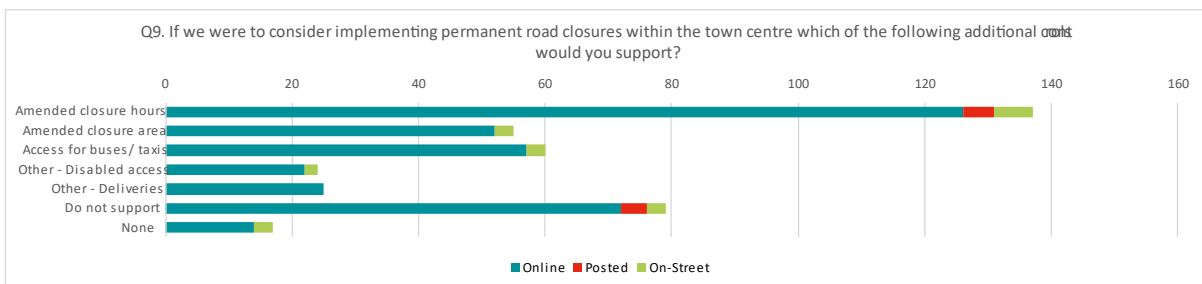
- There were clear themes that were important to people with regard to the town centre.



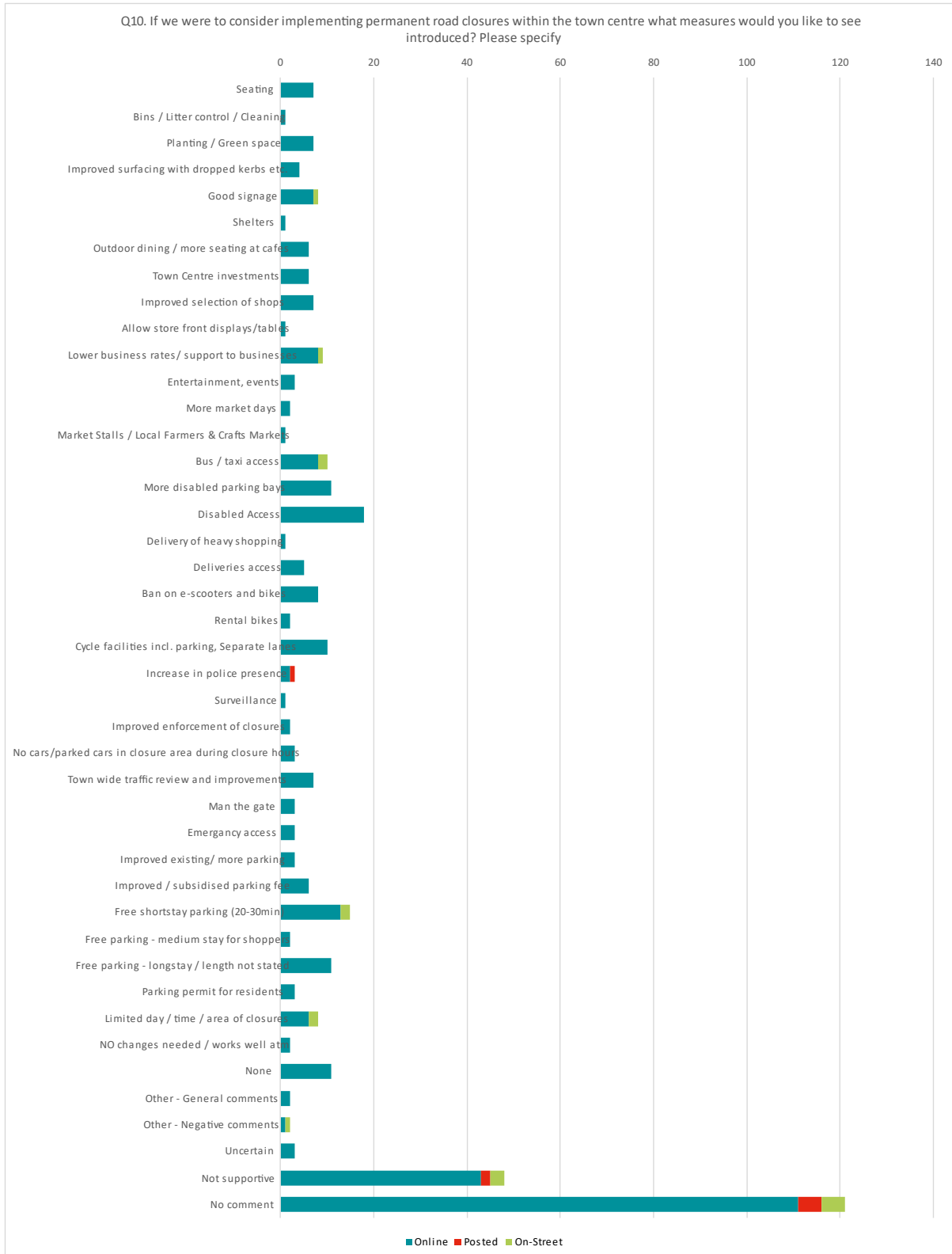
- However people thought that there were both positives and negative impact to local businesses with the permanent closures in place.



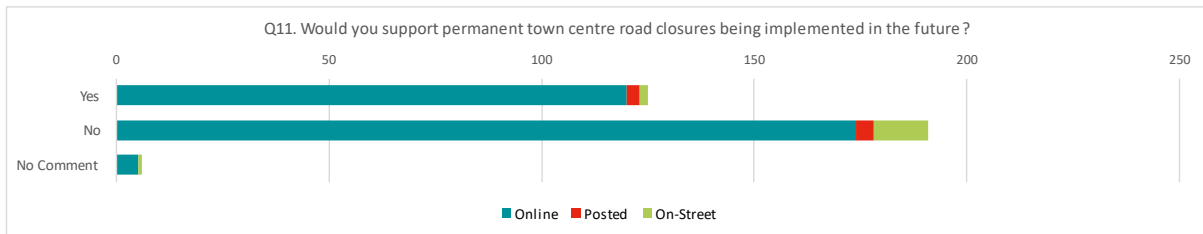
- The key suggestion for additional controls for the permanent closures was amending the closure hours however most people still indicated a preferred 10am-4pm closure period with 24hours coming a close second.



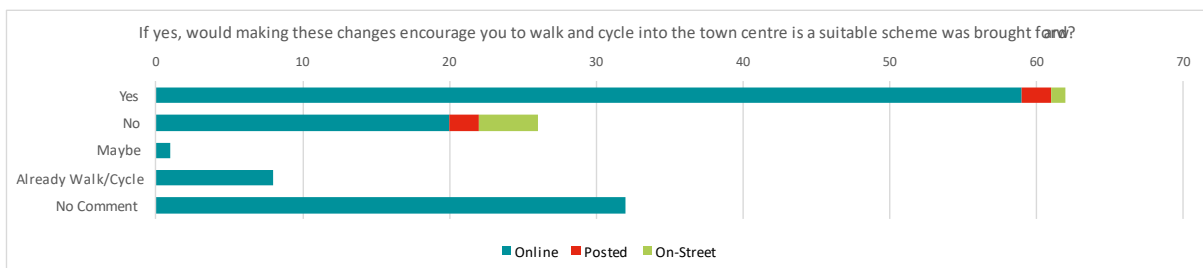
- Key suggestions to improve the permanent closures, should they be implemented permanently included:
 - Disabled Access (3% and 5%)
 - Free parking (20-30min) (4% and 3%)



- Out of 323 responses 39% were in support of the closure and 59% were against the closure in Sittingbourne.



Of those in support, 48% said that the introduction of permanent town centre road closures would encourage them to walk/cycle into town.



Faversham

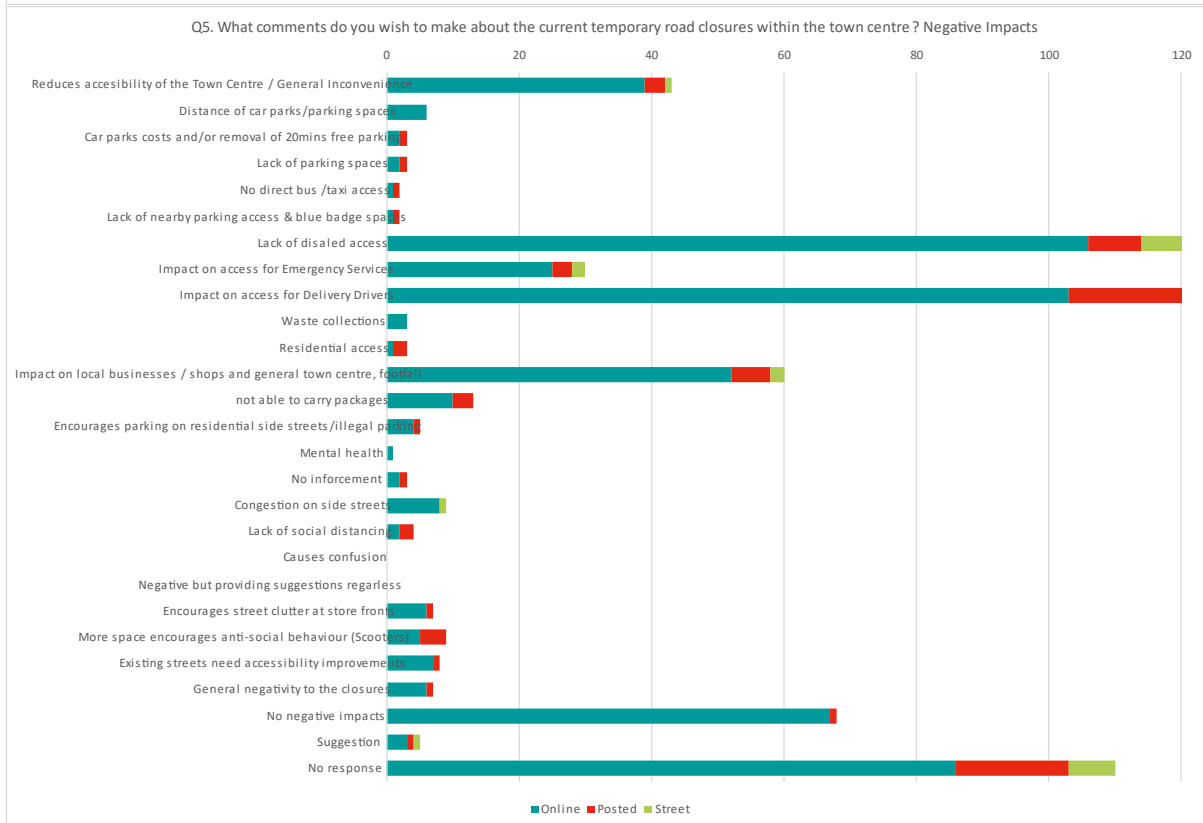
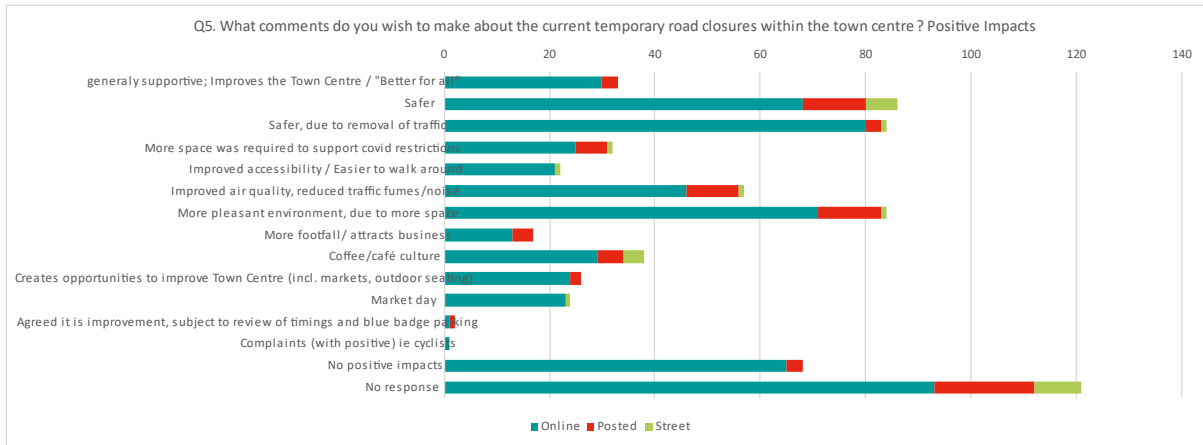
There was a total of 468 responses, of which 396 were online responses, 53 mail responses and 19 on-street responses.

- 68% of responses were a Swale resident, 9% were a businesses and 8% were a visitor.
- 37% travelled to the town by car/van and 51% travelled by foot.
- 46% travel to town 1-3 days per week and 41% travel to town 4-7 days per week.
- 19% of responses consider themselves to have a disability, with 69% of these stating physical/mobility limitations.
- 60% of respondents had something positive to say while 62% had negative responses relating to the temporary closures. Key reasons raised in support of the closure included:

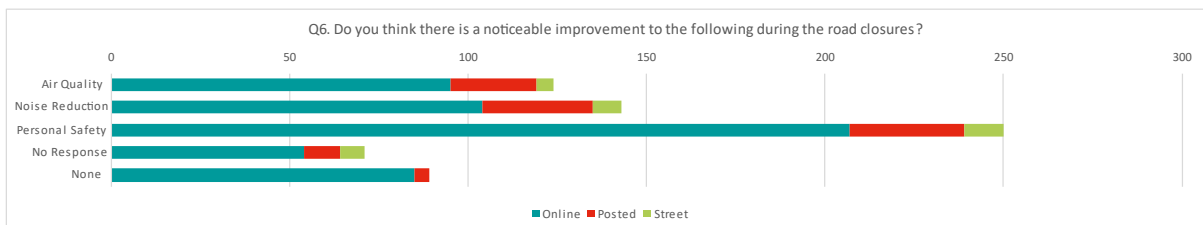
- + Safer, due to removal of traffic (24%)
- + More pleasant environment, due to more space (12%)

Whereas key reasons raised against the closure included:

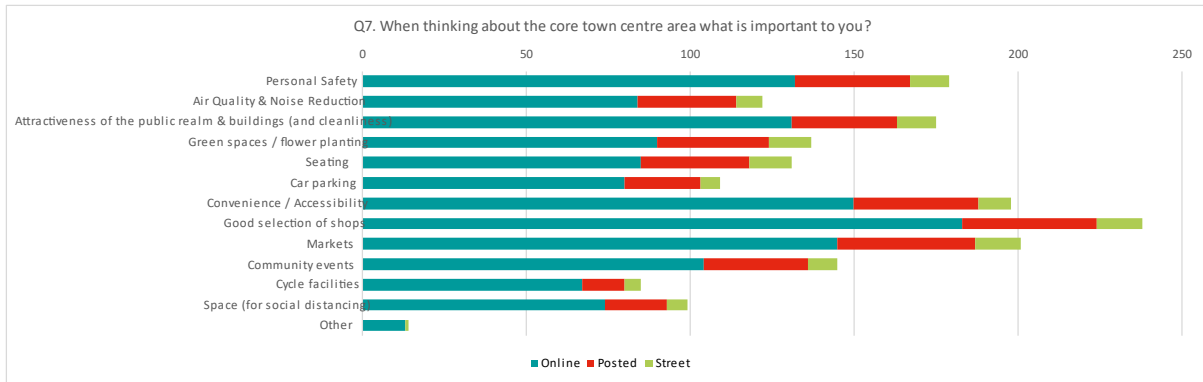
- Lack of delivery access (20%)
- Lack of disabled access (19%)
- Impact on local businesses and reduced footfall (9%)



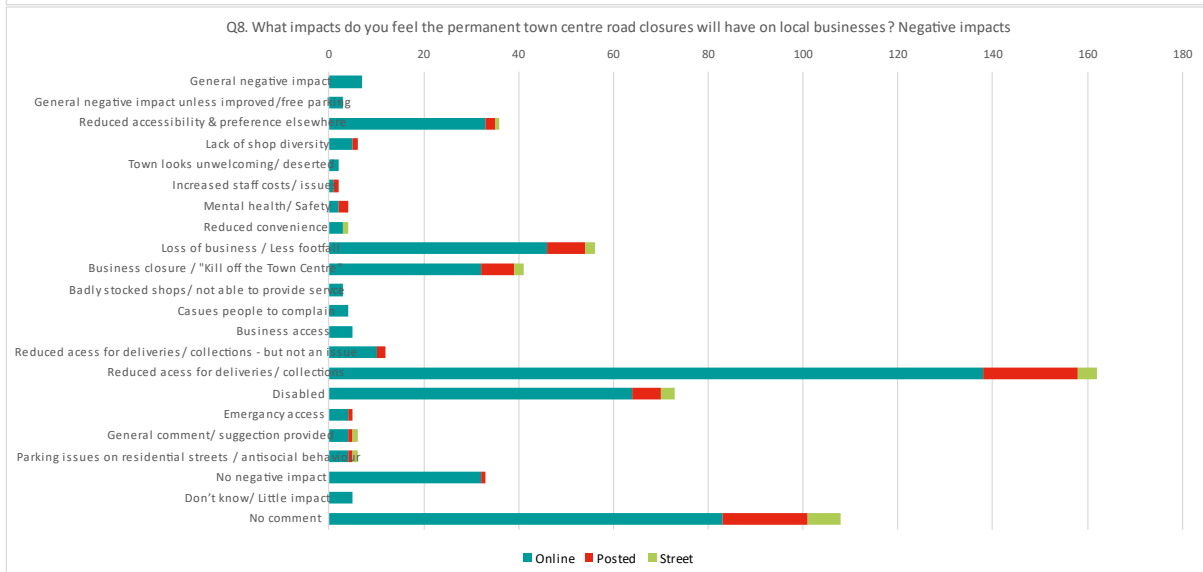
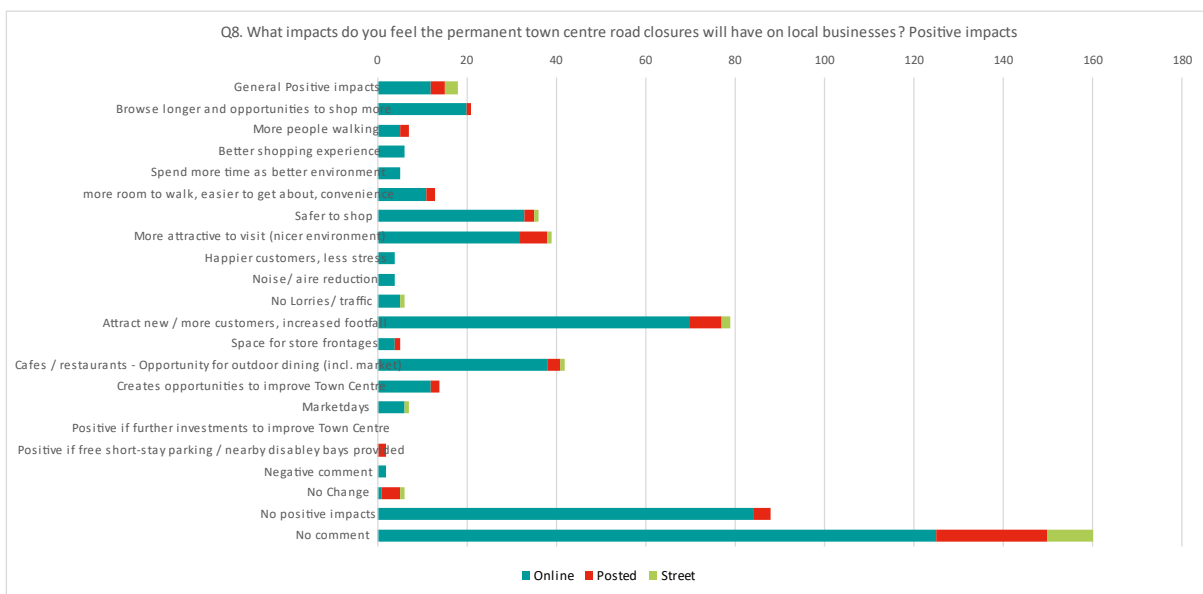
- As with Sittingbourne and Sheerness, people in Faversham felt there were improvements in personal safety with the temporary closures in place.



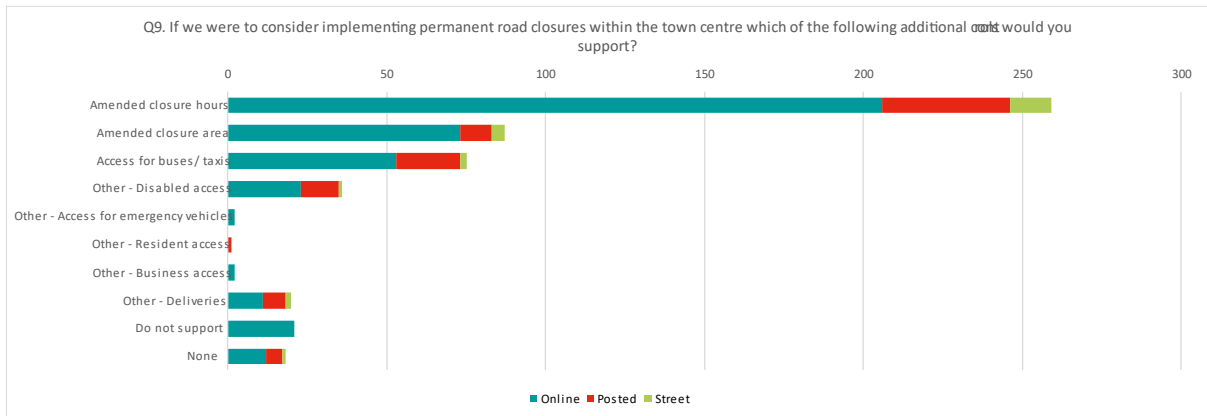
- There were clear themes that were important to people with regard to the town centre.



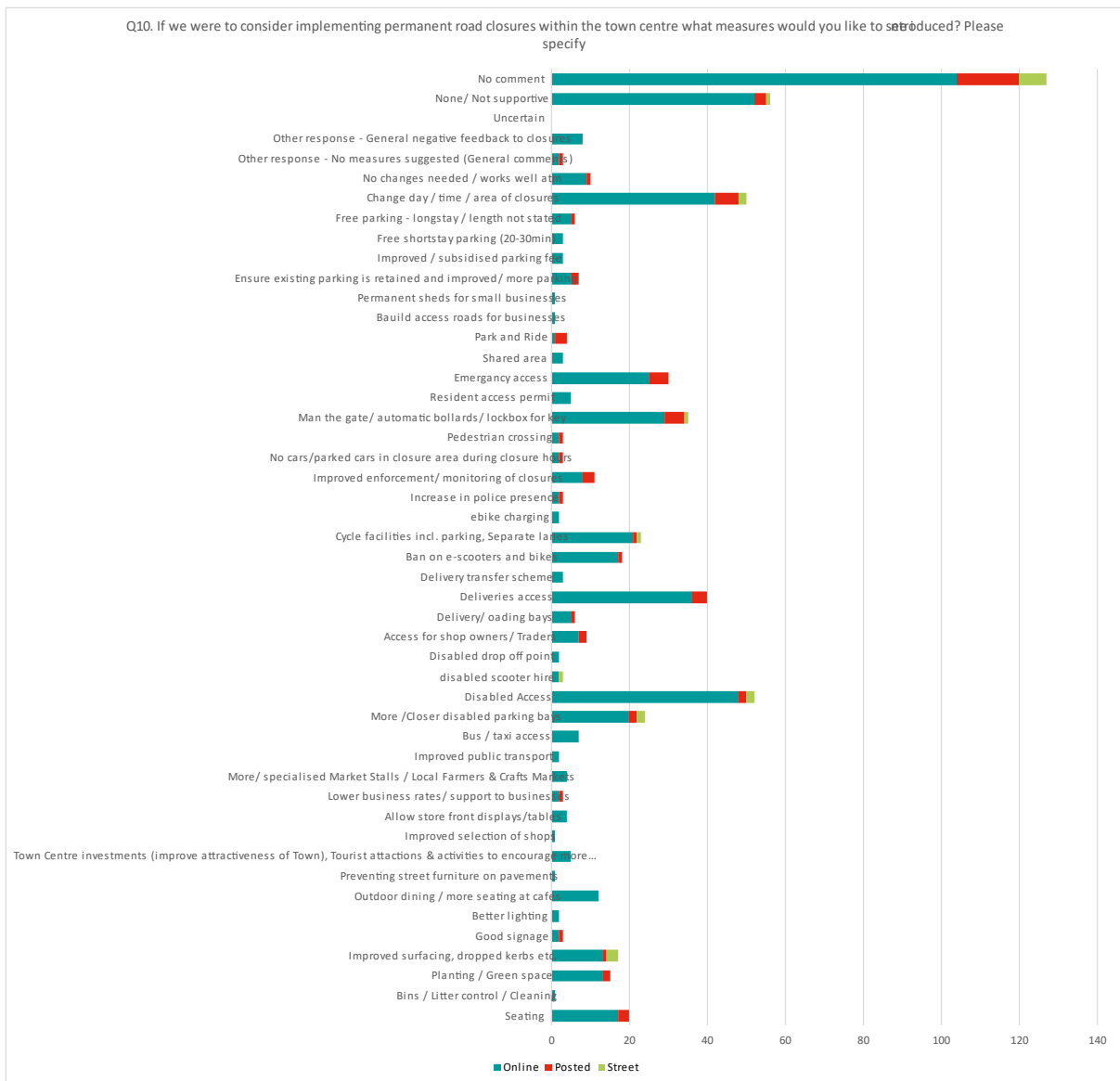
- However, people thought that there were both positives and negative impact to local businesses with the permanent closures in place.



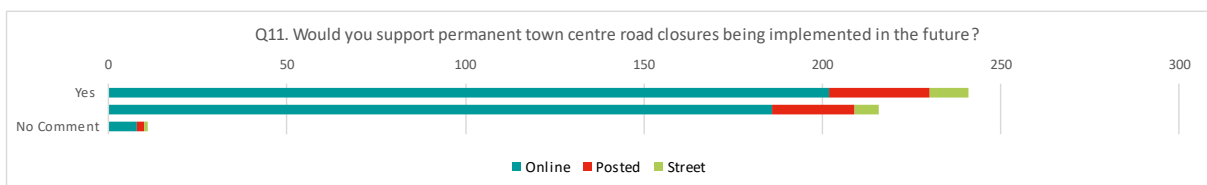
- The key suggestion for additional controls for the permanent closures was amending the closure hours. Most people still indicated a preferred 10am-4pm closure period with 24hours coming second followed by market days only.



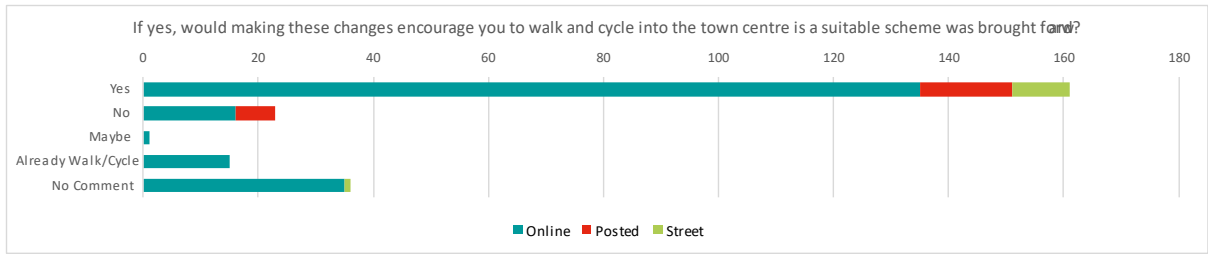
- Key suggestions to improve the permanent closures, should they be implemented permanently included
 - Disabled Access (8%)
 - Change day / time / area of closures (8%)
 - Deliveries access (6%)



- Out of 468 responses 51% were in support of the closure and 46% were against the closure



- Of those in support, 68% said that the introduction of permanent town centre road closures would encourage them to walk/cycle into town.



Briefing note: Child Poverty on the Isle of Sheppey

Presented to: Sheppey Area Committee

Date: Tuesday 14 September 2021

Time: 7:00pm

Purpose

The following briefing note provides oversight on the current (and future) provisions in place on the Isle of Sheppey for addressing and actioning rates of child poverty. This report has been specifically produced for Members of the Sheppey Area Committee to update on existing provision as well as to identify gaps in provision. Addressing child poverty is a complex socio-economic issue where a number of constitutive factors apply. As such, this report presents interventions towards alleviating child poverty rather than eradicating.

Introduction

This briefing note includes measures being taken by Swale Borough Council, as well those of Kent County Council (KCC), local statutory services, and groups/members of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). Early Years and Children’s Services are the responsibility of KCC and, as such, they feature prominently throughout this report. All data sets and publicly available records referenced in this briefing are up to date as of Friday 27 August 2021 (please refer to the *References* subheading for further information).

Low-Income Household Data

There are a total of 4,383 low-income households on the Isle of Sheppey; 3,051 of these households are individuals/families without children. The following table presents data specific to low-income households with 1 or more child on the Isle of Sheppey:

Area	Number of Low-Income Households with Children	Number of Children from Low-Incomes
Isle of Sheppey	1,332	2,744
Ward		
Minster Cliffs	79	160
Queenborough & Halfway	205	447
Sheerness	694	1,470
Sheppey Central	226	420
Sheppey East	128	247

Data collected from Policy in Practice – LIFT (Low-Income Family Tracker) Dashboards. Please refer to (PiP, 2021) in references for more information.

Current Provision

Swale Borough Council:

Swale Borough Council’s *Swale Deprivation Action Plan* has been developed to address levels of relative deprivation across the Swale borough through the initiation of cross-cutting and holistic programme delivery. The first action on this action plan is the rollout of digital inclusivity support across the Isle of Sheppey to provide connectivity and digital education to low-income and disadvantaged residents (with a keen emphasis

Sheppey Area Committee

on providing digital technologies to children from low-income households). A sum of £55,000 has been allocated for the delivery of this first action.

In addressing food poverty amongst Swale families, Swale Borough Council has provided Foodbank Grants (c. £30,000) to each of the major foodbanks stationed across the borough, including Family Foodbank at Seashells in Sheerness. Funding from SBC's Communities Fund (£10,000) has also been allocated towards the Sheppey Support Bus, an initiative run by the Sheppey Community Development Forum and Oasis Charity to delivery food support to low-income families across the Island.

Swale Borough Council is also addressing fuel poverty for residents across Swale through the appointment of a designated Fuel & Water Home Advisor (stationed at Children and Families Ltd.) as well as the workstreams of our Climate Change & Ecological Emergency Project Officers.

Funding from SBC's Improvement & Resilience Fund (£40,000) has also been allocated to Children & Families Ltd. for the delivery of a new one-year pilot project across the Isle of Sheppey aimed towards supporting children aged 0-7 that come from low-income households with essential Early Years provision.

In addition to the newly formed Community Development Team who have a focus on addressing child poverty and tackling levels of relative deprivation, Swale Borough Council are creating new (and strengthening existing) partnerships with a host of local VCSE groups, statutory services, businesses, and community leaders. This networking is establishing communication links between the Council and organisations with a direct focus on child poverty, as well as promoting joint-up inter-linking of external organisations with each other.

Kent County Council:

Through Early Years and Children's Services, KCC distributes action and intervention into rates of child poverty through a number of initiatives (see: KCC, 2021). These are available to families across the Isle of Sheppey and include:

- Free school meals
 - Universally available for all children in Year 2 or below.
 - Available for low-income families for children up to the age of 19.
- Kent Support and Assistance Service (KSAS)
 - Holistic support for low-income families, including food, fuel, finances, home essentials.
 - Home essentials in a crisis service available for emergency situations.
- Early Help (support for families)
 - Educational, emotional, and social needs support available for all children (and their families).
 - Child protection and safeguarding.
 - Child online safety and bullying support.
- Children in Care
 - Adoption, fostering and supported homes support.
- Children's Centres
 - Available for 0-5 years and include extensive childcare services (including training and employability support for parents).
- Youth Hubs
 - Includes support into counselling, early help, child welfare, health & wellbeing.
 - Hubs across the Island, as well as constituted groups that meet in social spaces.
- Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)
 - Partnership between KCC, NHS and Kent Police.
 - Promoting the welfare of children and run a number of activities and events across the county, including the Swale borough.

Statutory Services:

A number of multi-agency partnerships exist that include groups such as Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, NHS, etc. These serve to pull local communications together on child poverty, as well as a host of

Sheppey Area Committee

additional local and regional initiatives. The Local Children's Partnership Group is the lead partnership in the borough to addressing child poverty. In addition, taskforces (such as NHS One You and Kent Police's county lines workforce) target child poverty and exploitation across the county.

Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise Groups:

A host of groups from the VCS are engaging in addressing and actioning rates of child poverty across the Isle of Sheppey. Ranging from food and utilities support, to autism and underlying disability diagnoses, these groups provide exceptional support to children and their families. A number of Swale Borough Council's Member Grants and internal funds go towards supporting these initiatives.

Coronavirus Pandemic Provision

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, Central Government and KCC have drawn down allocations of funding specifically designated towards supporting residents impacted by coronavirus. These have included schemes such as:

- Everybody In – Temporary Accommodation Scheme.
- DEFRA Emergency Assistance Grant.
- COVID Winter Grant Scheme.
- KCC Self-Isolation Support Fund.

Whilst not explicitly designed for combatting child poverty, a number of these initiatives have included support to low-income families and ensured children from those homes received food, heating, and household essentials.

Future Provision

Swale Borough Council is committed to delivering a number of formally adopted strategies that tie into child poverty intervention and actioning. In addition to the *Swale Deprivation Action Plan*, the Council's *Healthy & Active Framework* and *Health & Wellbeing Improvement Plan* continue to engage with children and families. Swale Borough Council's corporate priority of tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone crosscuts a number of service areas and, as such, a host of Officers are addressing child poverty through their individual workstreams.

A number of UK Community Renewal Fund applications were made by groups across Swale. Whilst specifically aimed towards employability and access to training, long-term impacts from these can both directly and indirectly influence rates of child poverty; Swale Borough Council will be supporting groups in receipt of this funding.

A recent conception from KCC is the implementation of community Wi-Fi across areas of Swale where there are heightened levels of relative deprivation. Provision of this community Wi-Fi onto the Isle of Sheppey is in discussion and will be led by KCC over the coming months, tying into their county-wide digital poverty strategy. In addition, roughly 5,000 digital devices are being sourced for distribution to low-income families across Kent, and Swale Borough Council will be in receipt of a proportion of these for donation to Swale families.

References

PiP, Policy in Practice (2021) *LIFT Dashboard Dataset for Isle of Sheppey Households*. [Electronic Dataset]

Accessed through: <https://policyinpractice.co.uk/>

Last accessed: 26 August 2021.

KCC, Kent County Council (2021) *Education and Children*. [Internet Site]

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Closed Churchyard Report – Area Committees

Where a Church of England churchyard is closed to further burials in accordance with an Order in Council under the Burial Act 1853, responsibility for maintenance may, at the request of the Church, be transferred to the relevant local authority (Parish Council first and then Borough Council). The transfer is compulsory, not dependent on the condition of the churchyard in question, and not dependent on the local authority's ability to meet the additional maintenance costs.

The legislation requires a short time of statutory notice (3 months) although our policy is always to request an informal 12-month period to allow for suitable budgeting decisions. Quinquennial inspection reports are given to us by the Diocese.

Swale currently has 20 Closed Churchyards which are listed over the page. We also have 8 War Memorials and 2 other significant memorials that the Council is responsible for maintaining.

Urgent health and safety related works are covered under the Council's ongoing revenue budget; however, inspections often reveal works that could be undertaken to prevent future serious issues or to ensure heritage and conservation considerations are protected. These latter works often require specialists and are expensive. Recent inspections have shown possible works totalling over £1m.

Members may wish to allocate some of the Area committee funds to a closed churchyard in their area. This could be to achieve improvements or support community activities. For the Sheppey Area, a summary of the required works are as follows:

Site	Description of works	Estimated cost of works
Holy Trinity, Queenborough	Repairs to walls, paths, railings	£25,100
N Road Cemetery, Queenborough	Repairs to fence, wall and paths	£28,800
Minster Abbey	Repairs to walls and lychgate	£42,200
Union Rd Burial Ground, Minster	Refurbish railings	£8,600
Love Lane Burial Ground, Minster	Repair railings, paths and benches	£24,650

We are aware that there is a growing interest of volunteers to support their local community areas. Therefore, we are looking at opportunities to have 'Days of Action'. You may already have links to groups that are interested or use your engagement to promote opportunities

If you are interested in supporting this programme of works, please contact parks@swale.go.uk stating the churchyard you are interested in.

List of Sites:

Churchyards

- St Mary of Charity, Faversham
- St Peter's & St Paul's, Newnham
- St Peter's and St Paul's, Ospringe
- St Peter & St Paul, Lynsted
- Lynsted Burial Grounds
- Holy Trinity Burial Grounds, Sheerness
- St Catherine's Faversham
- All Saints, Graveney
- St Peter & St Paul, Boughton-under-Blean
- Murston Churchyard
- St Peter & St Paul, Borden
- St Michael & All Angels, Hartlip
- Holy Trinity, Milton
- All Saints, Iwade
- St Michael's, Sittingbourne
- Holy Trinity, Queenborough
- Minster Abbey
- North Road, Queenborough
- Union Road, Minster-on-Sea
- Love Lane, Minster

War Memorials

- Sittingbourne War Memorial, Central Avenue
- High Street Queenborough War Memorial
- Stone Street, Faversham
- Sheerness, Bridge Road
- Muston Memorial, Church Road
- St Peter's & St Paul's Ospringe War Memorial
- Milton Memorial, Holy Trinity Church
- Borden Memorial, St Peters & St Pauls Church

Other Significant Memorials

- Eastchurch Aviation Memorial
- Gun Powder Memorial, Love Lane, Faversham

Sheppey Area Committee – Priorities and ambitions proposal for 2021/22

Work plan – future items

After consulting with Committee Members, the following suggestions have been received to include in the work plan for the year 2021/22

- Connectivity across Sheppey – discuss a way forward once the it is know what the new KCC group that will replace the Quality Bus Partnership will be focusing on.
- Brown Tourism signs.
- Briefing by Planning on the issues that could be considered in determining a planning application.
- Closed Churchyards.

If the Committee are in agreement, the Chair will instruct the Area Committees Coordinator to schedule these items in for discussion.

Funding proposals

There have been a number of suggestions from Committee Members and groups within the Sheppey area for funding proposals, these are listed below:

- Sheppey District Scout hut at Imperial Avenue Minster on Sea (request from Mr Lucas via Cllr Lee McCall)
- Cllr Angela Harrison has requested the funding of benches in each of the two shelters overlooking the gardens by the leisure centre. She would like the benches sectioned, and understands this would cost in the region of £700 per bench, including installation. During the past year/18 months, an increasing number of residents are getting out and about taking exercise, but stopping points are not always easy to find. This would benefit visitors to Sheerness, but more importantly, it would benefit residents.
- Cllr Cameron Beart would like to see SBC connect more with the KCC Plan Bee project and wonder if we could bring forward a programme where we bring back our maintained public gardens. The Head of Environment & Leisure advised that SBC have reduced summer bedding to almost zero as it was expensive and had limited ecological benefits. We are however looking at planting up beds with longer lasting planting as part of the new GM contract and in line with the Climate and ecological emergency action plan.
- Cllr Cameron Beart said a few years ago there was a suggestion of a project to carry out works on the slipway on the shingle bank. Martyn Cassell advised that they had an engineering team at Canterbury look into it. As this is likely to cost more than the Area Committee can fund, the Chairman proposes referring this project to Cabinet.

- Cllr Cameron Beart would like Eastchurch Aviation Memorial maintenance included due to the international significance of this memorial and the fact it is a Grade II* listed structure.
- Cllr Cameron Beart suggested taking some of our area committee funds and creating a pot for those smaller projects that member's always ask officers for and get told they aren't in the budget - like new benches, bins, road signs, street furniture etc.

The Chair and Vice-Chair note that the majority of proposals seek to improve the appearance, environment and facilities of the area and therefore propose this should be the priority/ambition for the year 2021/22.

Criteria for funding applications:

To support this theme, the Chair and Vice-Chair propose that bids for funding submitted to the December meeting should demonstrate they will have a positive impact on the appearance, environment and facilities in the Sheppey Area.

Bids will also be considered that can demonstrate how the initiative or project will contribute to Swale's strategic priorities 2 and 3 as set out in the Corporate Plan as listed below

Priority 2: Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges;

2.1 Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.

2.2 Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues.

2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.

2.4 Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.

2.5 Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.

Priority 3: Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone:

3.1 Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.

3.2 Reduce health inequality by developing more productive relationships with local health partners and making health and wellbeing a central consideration in all relevant council decision-making, recognising especially the link between housing and health.

3.3 Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.

3.4 Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.

3.5 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

Scoring of applications:

In accordance with the procedure set out by the Area Committees Review Working Group and agreed by Committee Chairs, a three-step process will be carried out and all applications will be assessed by officers to check the following:

- they meet the criteria set out above;
- they do not cross over with other work being carried out by SBC or other organisations;
- there are no SBC financial/officer resource implications;
- the amount of funding requested is evidenced by quotations/estimates; and
- they do not include any of the exceptions listed below.

Exceptions to funding:

- *Individuals (or where the benefit of the funding will only benefit an individual)*
- *Party political groups or political activities. This includes any Parish Council (or group of), District Councils, or the Kent County Council where any funding would challenge or oppose the democratic functions of that Local Government. Or where such funding would be deemed to risk the reputational standing of Swale Borough Council.*
- *Church or Faith groups who are using the funding to promote religious activity.*
- *Schools and Academies cannot apply for funds towards capital costs; teaching materials; or curriculum delivery (although they may apply for funding towards initiatives or projects that support wider community benefit).*
- *Business/ companies which do not reinvest surpluses for community benefit.*

This Council will not fund any project or organisation that does not act responsibly, in line with the relevant laws and regulations.

Funds should not be used for business costs such as rent and utilities.

The applications will then be scored against the criteria and the area of impact and options for voting will be put to the Sheppey Area Committee to vote on at the December meeting.

Sheppey Area Committee meeting: Monitoring report on funding allocations awarded 2020/21

Fund allocation awarded	Project completed?	Progress report for incomplete project	Any underspend/overspend? If so how much?	If complete, any comments on how the area has benefitted
<p>SHEP001 – Queenborough TC - £1,876.24</p> <p>Castle site - Pye Play park access path.</p>	No	We are waiting on agreement to the placement of the path from Historic England being this is on the Castle Site.	N/A	N/A
<p>SHEP002 – Teddy Bear Day Care Sheppey Ltd - £7,000.00</p> <p>Neuro-linguistic programming practitioner and wellbeing garden.</p>	Partly	The garden work has started but due to a supply issue with building materials it has been delayed. We are hoping the first stage will be finished by the beginning of September.	N/A	N/A
<p>SHEP003 – Leysdown PC - £6,092.40</p>	Yes	N/A	No	The cameras are fully operational and have already assisted with a number of incidents

CCTV				including assisting in a search for missing child; and supporting with a number of assaults.
SHEP004 – Member Bid - £29,690.72 Reinstatement and extension of width of public footpath PROWZB50	No	Quote within budget and works ordered - to commence 16 th August.		
SHEP005 – Member Bid - £5,000.00 Solar Panels for Thistle Hill Community Centre	No	Other building issues have taken priority. A further update will be provided once the work has taken place.	N/A	N/A
SHEP006 – Member Bid - £4,496.04 The Glen improvements	No	Bench style agreed and ordered. arranged on site to agree position. Supplier has confirmed as follows: <i>'We are currently out of stock of some of the components required for your order so at this point we are unable to confirm specific delivery dates, however we</i>		

		<i>estimate that this may be another 2-4 weeks'</i>		
SHEP007 – Member Bid - £1,844.60 Thistle Hill Improvements	No	The bins are now in stock and are due to be placed by mid-August.		

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