

Statement on changes to community navigation and wellbeing services in east Kent

Social Enterprise Kent (SEK), as the lead provider of Community Navigation and Wellbeing services in east Kent, together with our valued VCSE partners, deeply regrets the need to reduce elements of our provision and make a number of staff redundancies following recent budget decisions by Kent County Council (KCC).

We fully recognise the exceptionally challenging financial circumstances that KCC is facing. Years of increasing demand, escalating costs, and sustained pressure on statutory services have placed the Council in an almost impossible position. We sympathise with the difficult decisions Councillors and officers are being required to make, and we understand that these choices are not taken lightly.

However, it is important to be clear that the upcoming reductions to Community Navigation and Wellbeing support are a direct result of these external financial pressures. They do not reflect any failing on the part of Social Enterprise Kent, our delivery partners, or our dedicated staff teams. The service has consistently achieved strong outcomes, supported thousands of residents, and demonstrated the vital role that community-based VCSE organisations play in improving wellbeing and preventing the escalation of need.

The loss of funding means we can no longer sustain the same level of provision going forward. We know this will be deeply concerning for the people who rely on the service, and it is equally distressing for the staff and partners who work tirelessly to support them. Together with our VCSE partners, we are committed to managing this transition as responsibly and compassionately as possible. We will ensure that all affected service users receive clear communication and, where appropriate, are signposted to alternative sources of support.

Changes to the services will happen slowly over the next 3 months (December – February), with the new, reduced service operating from 1st March 2026.

Social Enterprise Kent remains firmly committed to the communities of Kent. We will continue to champion the importance of early help, prevention, and community-based support, and we will work proactively with KCC and other stakeholders to explore future funding opportunities wherever they arise.

For more information about this decision please contact KCC on 03000 417 421 or via email innovationandpartnerships@kent.gov.uk

