

# TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL

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The Town and Hundred of Tenterden



A Corporate Member of the Cinque Ports

Cllr. C. Bell  
Kent County Council  
C/o Members' Desk  
County Hall  
Sessions House  
Maidstone, Kent  
ME14 1XQ

24<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Dear Cllr. Bell,

**Re: Funding for Tenterden Social Hub via Imago**

Tenterden Town Council has recently been made aware of the change in the KCC funding algorithm for charitable organisations such as Tenterden Social Hub. The Hub provides critical services to the vulnerable sector of our society and surrounding area for a wide range of essential services under one roof. This allows economy of scale to provide cost effective services which would not be possible if a smaller number of providers existed.

This funding subject was the main topic at last night's Annual Town Meeting in Tenterden, attended by a cross section of our community.

A Tenterden Social Hub representative, explained to all those present the dire situation in which it finds itself due to the removal of the existing funding arrangements. The services provided are based on the town and surrounding village's demographics and tailored to the needs of the most vulnerable members of the community. The representative continued to say that without a very quick solution, the Hub would no longer be financially viable and would go into insolvency.

It was highlighted that they had received in the last 24 hours a KCC funding proposal, which unfortunately is a mismatch with the services provided and would not solve the sustainability issue.

Ivy Court GP Surgery added last night by saying that the impact on the town's vulnerable society would be catastrophic if the Hub collapsed. It is also our understanding that local NHS Hospitals have commented on the cost savings they have made due to the care services provided by the Hub.

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It would be fair to say the audience last night were stunned and angry that such a situation could arise.

We do not understand why KCC or its administrator Imago has changed the algorithm that takes away funding from our most vulnerable residents requiring specific services.

The Town Council request, as a matter of urgency, a solution to the Hub's financial crisis undeniably not of its making. Specifically, we would request emergency funding to keep the Social Hub afloat, whilst KCC review its funding algorithm to ensure it is aligned to the critical social needs of Tenterden and surrounding villages. Thereafter, a long-term enduring funding model is agreed to ensure the long-term viability of the hub and to ensure it is not to close permanently.

It should be borne in mind that the Hub is not now able to successfully apply for grants, due to their precarious financial position.

Tenterden Town Council would be very willing to offer our premises for meetings between KCC, Tenterden Social Hub and Ivy Court Surgery, to ensure the needs are understood and the best way forward for KCC to fund these crucial services.

We do not have time on our side and urgently request a meeting with the relevant parties this week.

We have copied in Tenterden Social Hub representatives Roy Isworth and Lindsay Franklin, and Kent County Council's Tenterden representative Cllr. Mike Hill. In addition, we have copied in our local MP Damian Green and Ashford Borough Council's Tenterden Ward Councillors so that they understand the seriousness of the situation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

*Debbie Baines*

**Debbie Baines**  
**Town Clerk**