
WESTERN AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting held Via Skype on Tuesday, 2 March 2021 from 7.00 pm - 8.42 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Chairman), Monique Bonney, Roger Clark, Nicholas Hampshire, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Richard Palmer, Paul Stephen, Sarah Stephen and Corrie Woodford (Vice-Chairman).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Janet Dart, Jo Millard and Larissa Reed.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Cameron Beart, Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Carole Jackson, Denise Knights, Ken Rowles, Tony Winckless.

Parish Councillors Nicola Butlin (Borden PC), Brian Clarke (Bredgar PC), Roger Morgan-Brown, Louisa Roberts (Tunstall PC).

499 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mike Baldock disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as he sat on Borden Parish Council.

Councillor Monique Bonney disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as she sat on Rodmersham Parish Council.

Councillor Richard Palmer disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as he sat on Newington Parish Council.

Councillor Sarah Stephen disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as she sat on Tunstall Parish Council.

Councillor Alan Horton disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as he sat on Upchurch Parish Council.

500 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2020 (Minute No. 289- 297) were taken as read, signed and approved subject to the following amendment to Minute No. 295:

“that the request for £4,655 was a contribution towards payment for the fencing around the recreation ground, not the adult play equipment”

And that the following paragraph be added to Minute No. 291 Matters Arising:

“Members agreed that a report would be considered at a future meeting and that funding should be considered for a woodland management plan at The Meads Community Woodland and Rose Hill Wood.”

501 MATTERS ARISING

Members noted the progress on actions.

Referring to the tabled paper on Brown tourism signs, a Member suggested a sign at the roundabout at The Meads on the Grove Park side for The Henge and another near MacDonalds directing to Bobbing Church. A Parish Councillor said that a sign for Bredgar Railway could be considered in the future. In the discussion that followed, Members spoke about the process for installing signs.

A Member spoke on the tabled paper – Proposed Walking and Cycling Routes Project which centred on routes in South Sittingbourne. Previous work had focused on routes in Faversham, Swale East and Sheppey.

A Member gave a presentation on Friends Groups which included contacts for sources of funding. In the discussion that followed, Members asked questions and gave their experiences of setting up of similar groups. Democratic Services agreed to research the creation of groups and to circulate the power point presentation to Parish Councils.

502 PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised.

503 LOCAL ISSUES

No issues were raised.

504 NOMINATION FOR AREA COMMITTEE REVIEW WORKING GROUP

It was agreed Councillor Corrie Woodford and Councillor Paul Stephen would sit on the Area Committee Working Group.

505 FUNDING

The Chairman explained that out of the £40,000 allocated to the Western Committee for 2020-21, £14,925 had been allocated previously which left a balance of £25,075.

Two bids for funding had been received, the details of which were in the report.

Parish Councillor Graham Addicott from Hartlip Parish Council spoke in support of the application to purchase a kissing gate for erection on The Parkland, Lower Hartlip Road, Hartlip. Members spoke in support.

Members spoke in support of the request from Sittingbourne in Bloom to allocate funding towards the refurbishment of the Sensory Garden at King George V Playing Fields.

There was a discussion on the proposed funding for the walking and cycling routes project, as detailed in the tabled update. Members raised points including:

- there were few routes in the area;
- Visit Swale had seen an upturn, it was a good time to expand on what Swale had to offer;
- how would the work integrate with work carried out in 2018?;
- more details needed on the £13k costs required and on the whole project;
- was £13k enough?;
- promotion was needed and knowledge was scattered;
- was the project bigger than the Area Committee should consider?;
- needed a list of routes in the Western area;
- trails already published could be included; and
- information from local groups was vital.

Councillor Bonney directed Members to information on the Visit Swale website: www.visit-swale.co.uk/see-and-do/healthy-and-active-swale/sports-and-activities-in-swale/cycling-and-walking

In addition to the bids in the report, Members discussed funding for Brown Signs and the woodland management plan for The Meads and Rose Hill woodlands which had been discussed at previous meetings. The Chairman advised that the cost to purchase and install a brown sign was approximately £300.

Councillor Baldock proposed and Councillor Palmer seconded a proposal that the following funding be allocated to each project:

Kissing Gate at Lower Hartlip Road - £1,030.80
Refurbishment of Sensory Garden King George V Playing Fields - £7,085.41
Walking and Cycling Routes Project - £13,000
Brown Tourist Signs - £1,200
Woodland Management Plan - £1558.79

On being put the vote Members agreed.

Resolved:

That the £25,075 balance be awarded to projects in the following proportions:

- (a) Kissing Gate at Lower Hartlip Road - £1,030.80***
- (b) Refurbishment of Sensory Garden King George V Playing Fields - £7,085.41***
- (c) Walking and Cycling Routes Project - £13,000***
- (d) Brown Tourist Signs - £1,200***
- (e) Woodland Management Plan at The Meads and Rose Hill - £1558.79***

506 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY CABINET

No issues were raised.

507 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET BY COMMITTEE

A Member raised concern at the current general rundown state of the area and highlighted footpaths, litter in hedgerows and road signs as particular issues. She suggested Cabinet could address the issues with KCC. In the discussion that followed Members raised points including:

- there was already a well-established process to report issues on KCC website;
- member grants could be used to fund new street nameplates;
- suggested a village clean;
- the preparation for recent snow did not work and there was a lack of coordination; and
- budget constraints meant issues had to be prioritised.

In response to a Member's suggestion to respond to the Waste Contract consultation, the Chief Executive advised that the consultation was suspended and would be circulated to Members before being launched.

The Chairman said that KCC and SBC could coordinate litter picking and cleaning more effectively and general maintenance of paths and roads was required. He drew attention to the litter issue at A249 roundabout which was the responsibility of Highways England and these issues should be referred to Cabinet.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel