

Agenda

Sittingbourne Area Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 12 December 2023
Time 7.00 pm,
Venue: Committee Room, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne ME10 3HT*

Membership:

Councillors Derek Carnell (Vice-Chair), Shelley Cheesman, Simon Clark, Tim Gibson, James Hall, Mark Last (Chair), Charlie Miller, Angie Valls, Karen Watson, Tony Winckless and Ashley Wise.

Quorum = 3

Pages

Information about this meeting

*Members of the press and public can listen to this meeting live. Details of how to join the meeting will be added to the website by 11 December 2023.

Recording and Privacy Notice

Swale Borough Council is committed to protecting the security of your personal information. As data controller we process data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

This meeting may be recorded. The recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy and may be published on the Council's website. By entering the chamber and by speaking at a meeting, whether in person or online, you are consenting to being recorded and to the recording being published.

When joining a meeting online, your username will be visible to others in attendance. In joining the meeting you are consenting to us processing your username. You may use a pseudonym as your username but the use of an inappropriate name may lead to removal from the meeting.

If you have any questions about how we look after your personal information or your rights under the legislation, please email dataprotectionofficer@swale.gov.uk.

1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Visitors and members of the public who are unfamiliar with the building and procedures are advised that:

- (a) The fire alarm is a continuous loud ringing. In the event that a fire drill is planned during the meeting, the Chair will advise of this.

- (b) Exit routes from the Committee Room are located on each side of the room, leading to the stairs opposite the lifts.
- (c) In the event of the alarm sounding, leave the building via the nearest safe exit and gather at the assembly point on the far side of the car park. Do not leave the assembly point or re-enter the building until advised to do so. Do not use the lifts.
- (d) Anyone unable to use the stairs should make themselves known during this agenda item.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends.

The Chair will ask Members if they have any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) or disclosable non-pecuniary interests (DNPIs) to declare in respect of items on the agenda. Members with a DPI in an item must leave the room for that item and may not participate in the debate or vote.

Aside from disclosable interests, where a fair-minded and informed observer would think there was a real possibility that a Member might be biased or predetermined on an item, the Member should declare this and leave the room while that item is considered.

Members who are in any doubt about interests, bias or predetermination should contact the monitoring officer for advice prior to the meeting.

4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2023 (Minute Nos. 251 – 261) as correct records.

5. Policing in Sittingbourne

6. Community Safety

7. Milton Regis Conservation Area Review

8. Public Forum

9. Enhanced Bus Partnership - Swale Local Focus Group 5 - 8

10. Matters arising from previous meetings 9 - 12

11. Local issues to be raised

12. Matters referred to Service Committee Chairs for consideration

Issued on Monday, 4 December 2023

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 Cabinet, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Sittingbourne Area Committee	
Meeting Date	12 December 2023
Report Title	Kent County Council's Enhanced Bus Partnership, Local Focus Group
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson, Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the content of the report2. Nominate a representation from the Sittingbourne Area Committee to sit on the Swale Local Focus Group3. Feedback any bus related issues that can be raised at the first Local Focus Group end January/ beginning February 2024

1 Background

- 1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) used to manage and run Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs) in each district. These consisted of KCC and Swale Borough Council (SBC) members, KCC and SBC officer reps, and the commercial bus operators in Swale. They were used to raise local issues, discuss planning applications that may have impact and any highway and / or parking related items. Whilst it was not a statutory requirement, it was resourced and administered by KCC. These meetings ceased to exist when Government started development of its National Bus Strategy.
- 1.2 In March 2021, Government launched its National Bus Strategy which was the blueprint nationally to help improve infrastructure, bus travel, air quality and so forth. £3 billion of funding was allocated and each area had to respond very quickly by developing a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). KCC sought input from districts (Swale did respond) and submitted its plan to Government with an ask of £230 million across the county for various scheme improvements.
- 1.3 In April 2022, KCC received an indicative allocation of £35 million from the Department of Transport (DfT). This was very prescriptive and mainly for capital schemes. There was no revenue funding allowed to keep existing projects going. The influence that districts can have over the BSIP and any spend of the funding is limited. Projects have already been identified by KCC in the BSIP.
- 1.4 KCC received £19m at the end of March 2023 to deliver a reduced set of initiatives within its BSIP. This included £100k of fare initiatives that were delivered over the summer county-wide (e.g. Big Kent Weekend) and also £2.5m of network improvements.

- 1.5 In July 2023, KCC were told they had received a further £16m to deliver BSIP initiatives for 2024/25.
- 1.6 As part of the funding, Government requires that each area (KCC) set up an Enhanced Partnership (EP). This is a statutory Board, without which KCC will not receive their funding. KCC have established their EP Board which is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure at KCC. It is an officer-led meeting, high level and strategic. There are no representatives from districts. The bus operators do have representatives (including Chalkwell).
- 1.7 There are also EP Scheme Monitoring Groups set up for East Kent, West Kent and Kent Thameside. Swale is part of East Kent and has one place at that meeting. They are still developing and haven't met consistently as yet. KCC run and manage these meetings and it is anticipated these will run twice a year. They will be the group that monitors the schemes in that area linked to the BSIP.
- 1.8 EP Scheme Monitoring Groups will be high level and as such will not cover any local district issues. KCC feel that this will leave a gap. To fill that gap, KCC are suggesting EP Local Focus Group (EP LFGs) meetings be set up in each district. They are happy to send representatives but cannot resource it like they used to for the QBP and so are asking districts to set up and resource them. These are not a statutory requirement of the hierarchy.
- 1.9 KCC envisage that the EP LFGs are a replacement for the previous QBP meetings in that they are a way of local issues from the bus companies being raised. The idea would be that they are held every six months and be informal. A standard agenda would include local bus network issues and aspirations, planning and development updates, parking enforcement issues and any other items for Swale such as active travel and air quality. Representatives at these meetings will be district councils (leading and chairing the meetings), KCC Public Transport, KCC Planning and Transport Development, Primary Bus Operators, and district council officers from planning, parking, active travel, environmental health. They would be operational, and officer-led.
- 1.10 It has been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee to set up a Local Focus Group. That this is kept high level, meets twice a year and is managed by the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods chairing and coordinating the group. KCC would lead on the updates on the BSIP at the forum. SBC would be a conduit, or enabler bringing partners together as opposed to leading or delivering any work directly. Then the resource pressure it is believed would be manageable. All attendees would be actively made aware, and reminded, of SBC's restricted role.
- 1.11 Given the interest locally in bus infrastructure, it is proposed that issues to be raised are requested from each Area Committee prior to the LFG, with feedback at each Area Committee after the LFG has met (twice-yearly).
- 1.12 It is anticipated that the first LFG meeting will be held end Jan/ beginning February 2024.

- 1.13 Given the focus on infrastructure in the BSIP, it is proposed that the Planning and Transportation Working Group is the conduit for any feedback into the council. Two members of PTWG will attend the LFG as member representation, as well as representatives from each Area Committee who can provide local voice.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 Note the content of the report.
- 2.2 Nominate a representation from the Sittingbourne Area Committee to sit on the Swale Local Focus Group.
- 2.3 Feedback any bus related issues that can be raised at the first Local Focus Group end January/ beginning February 2024.

This page is intentionally left blank

Sittingbourne Area Committee: Progress on matters arising - December 2023

No.	Item	Background	Update on actions
1.	Sittingbourne Tennis Club	<p>A report concerning the proposed improvements to Milton Rec & King George's PF tennis courts was considered by the Area Committee at the December 2022 meeting and the Lawn Tennis Associations proposals were supported by Members.</p> <p>A report on the Tennis Court Improvement Project was taken to the Community Committee on 1 March 2023. The designated usage of courts from multi-use to tennis only at Milton Recreation Ground was agreed. It was also agreed that there would be a sinking fund commitment and ongoing maintenance responsibility as part of the bid for funding from the LTA and that the Council applied for improvement funding from the LTA.</p>	All resurfacing works are now complete. All fencing works are completed. Access control has been fitted to Milton and will be fitted end of November 2023 to King George's. There has been a delay in lining works due to the weather. Temporary lining is being considered in the short term. The website and payment process is being finalised
2.	Sports facilities in the area	The Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) went to the October 2023 Community Committee. Following that any Sittingbourne specific actions can be reported to the Area Committee.	The final draft has been reviewed and feedback is with the consultants.
3.	Heritage issues	The Conservation & Design Team have been providing regular updates on the following:	The Sittingbourne Conservation Area is now adopted.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sittingbourne High Street Conservation Area Review; and • Milton Regis Conservation Area Review. 	Milton Regis Conservation Area Appraisal review is out for public consultation due to conclude by 22 December 2023.
4.	Periwinkle Water Mill Site	Regular updates have been given on this project.	In view of the sole tender quote which came in at the end of last year significantly over the anticipated budget, the Conservation & Design Team has been in the process of exploring an alternative procurement option given the need to keep the project within budget. In liaison with project advisors East Kent Engineering Partnership and the Council's Health, Safety & Risk Officer, the team has concluded it is feasible to eliminate structural interventions to limit project costs by combination of site management and warning signage/info, in order to help ensure that the project can be delivered within budget. Officers were previously waiting for an estimate for the landscaping works from the Council's term landscape contractors for green spaces, having already received a favourable estimate from a separate contractor for the general building and metalwork fabrication/installation needed. However, the term landscape contractor has advised it is not in a position to be able to carry out the proposed landscaping works, so we now have an updated quote from the Council's term building contractor for the landscaping works (in addition to the building related work), which is reasonable, this being based on the landscaping works being carried out by a subcontractor. Landscaping works being carried out by the Council's term

			<p>building contractor (albeit in the form of it managing a specialist subcontractor) is outside the scope of the Council's contract arrangement with the company. Due to very significant work pressures and the higher priority needing to be attached to development management related work, officers are still in the process of applying for the waiver which would need to be agreed to allow officers to effectively work around this issue. If the waiver is agreed, as anticipated, then subject to the funding from the Heritage Strategy Reserve fund and Sittingbourne Society still being available, taking into account other heritage related work priorities, it is expected that works should be able to commence in March or April 2024, with the landscaping works being the last element of work to be carried out, to coincide with the spring planting season.</p>
5.	Swale Local Heritage List	Updates have been given at previous meetings on the Swale Local Heritage List.	The Selection Panel for finalising the received Nominations is scheduled for Wednesday 29 November 2023. Invitations have been sent out.

This page is intentionally left blank