

Agenda

Western Area Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday, 27 November 2025

Time 7.00 pm

Venue: The Committee Room, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock, Monique Bonney, Ann Cavanagh, Lloyd Chapman, Roger Clark, James Hunt, Chris Palmer, Richard Palmer, Paul Stephen (Chair) and Sarah Stephen (Vice-Chair).

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 26 November 2025.

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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. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the meeting held on 9 September 2025 (Minute Nos. 274 – 283) as correct records.

4. 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.

5. Budget 2026/27

6. Local Government Reorganisation (Government wants us to deliver your services differently)

7. Community Governance Review (potential changes to arrangements for town and parish councils)

8. Public Forum

9. Matters arising from previous meetings 5 - 10

10. Swale Bus Partnership Forum 11 - 14

11. Local issues to be raised

12. Matters referred to Service Committee Chairs for consideration

Issued on Wednesday, 19 November 2025

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 democraticservices@swale.gov.uk. To find out more about the work of this meeting, please visit www.swale.gov.uk.

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

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Matters Arising Report to Western Area Committee

New actions/issues and progress with ongoing actions

No.	Item	Background	Actions/updates
1.	Bexon (Bredgar) Conservation Area Review.	A new Conservation Area for Bexon (Bredgar) is proposed to be designated. Regular updates have been given at Western Area Committee meetings.	Bexon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan prepared by Place Services, is currently out for 8-week public consultation, scheduled to end on 10 December 2025.
2.	Swale Local Heritage List	The Selection Panel met on 17 October 2024; 278 nominations were presented out of which 150 were shortlisted to be designated as Swale's Local Heritage. The proposed designation list was presented to the Policy & Resources Committee on 27 November 2024, wherein it was unanimously agreed to designate the shortlisted assets with addition of one more asset- taking the total to 151 designated assets on Local Heritage List. The majority of mapping work on SBC GIS system and associated data organisation that includes photo and brief description of each asset is now complete and published on the SBC website.	At the Selection Panel meeting there were several deferrals. Also, the team have identified a few geographical gaps in terms of current nominations and wish to include some recommendations emerging from Conservation Area appraisal work. As such, an additional call for 'invitation to nominate' Local Heritage assets concluded on 31 October 2025, with the Selection Panel meeting estimated to be held before Christmas 2025, subject to Historic England's availability. Following that, it is anticipated the list would be updated every three years following a call for nominations and Selection Panel. The next one being scheduled for 2028. In addition to the above, a protocol for urgent designation of assets on Local Heritage was adopted at the June 2025 Policy & Resources committee.
3.	Area of Special Control of	Swale Borough Council currently does not have an ASCA. Since the adoption of the Heritage Strategy in 2020 and subsequent	The draft consultation document is estimated to be ready by winter of 2025.

	Advertisements (ASCA)	Action Plans wherein a number of Conservation Areas have been reviewed, it has been proposed that in order to better manage and maintain Swale's historic environment and heritage, targeted ASCA can prove beneficial for conservation areas with a commercial centre. Any designation needs to be based on public consultation and must follow specific legal steps, including consideration of the order by the Secretary of State. Following an all members briefing in May 2024, it was agreed that a draft consultation document be prepared for approval by the Planning Committee, before undertaking public consultation.	
4.	Area Committees Review	A review of Area Committees is currently underway and Area Committees were consulted during the summer round of meetings. The public, councillors and officers were consulted for their views.	The Member Working Group have reviewed the consultation responses, along with feedback from the sessions at Area Committee meetings. They have agreed 14 recommendations which are going to the Policy & Resources Committee on 26 November 2025 for consideration.
5.	Public Toilet Facilities Public Consultation	A Public Toilet Facilities consultation was carried out to seek views on proposals for the future provision of facilities.	The public toilet consultation was carried out based the recommendations in the July Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee report. The public consultation lasted 12 weeks was opened to Swale residents, visitors, community groups and businesses to

			ensure as many people could take part. Everyone was encouraged to share their honest opinions, particularly from representative groups such as those with a disability, older people, families with young children or those who are pregnant. There were also posters in all the public toilet facilities, posters in all Council offices along with paper forms, advertised on the Swale website and social media, shared with the local press, Area Committee presentations and directly contacting representative organisations (such as, Swale CVS, Age UK, Swale Seniors Forum, Freedom Centre and others). There were over 800 responses; 60 of which were paper submissions and 752 online. All the feedback from residents, visitors, Area Committees, Community groups, Town/Parish Councils, letters and petitions have been collated and were presented at the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee on 12 November 2025 along with recommendations. Swale Borough Council Councillors agreed to new proposals to transform public conveniences. These new proposals expect to generate saving that can be used to ensure that the Council maintains financial stability and continue to deliver statutory services for our residents.
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			Residents can now expect several public conveniences to be managed by Town and Parish Councils who are able to effectively keep public conveniences open and respond to local demand. We will also be working with local businesses to allow residents and visitors to use their toilet facilities free of charge. To participate businesses must be inclusive well-placed businesses with convenient operating hours, who will in turn receive contributions towards upkeep. To help residents and visitors be better informed about the locations of publicly accessible toilets, there will be information added to the Swale website and updated regularly. This will enable residents and visitors to plan their journeys more effectively, whether shopping, socialising, or visiting local attractions. Unfortunately, to achieve the expected savings, the toilets in poorest condition, most costly to operate and based on public options have to be closed. These are the Forum, Milton Regis and Whitehouse. In turn, in order to improve the condition of remaining toilets, while improving energy and water efficiency where applicable will be funded through the use of existing external grant
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			funding like the UK Shared Prosperity Fund or the Council's reserves/capital funding
6.	Swale Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	A public consultation was carried out to assist with the development of a Swale-wide Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan. Area Committees gave their feedback at the September 2025 round of Area Committee Meetings.	The LCWIP consultation closed on the 26th October 2025 with a total of 82 engagements ranging from paper responses, comments on map pins and on-line completions of the questionnaire. Currently, the feedback is being collated and analysed by consultants. Once this is done, necessary amendments will be completed and the report will go back to Committee for feedback. When the Committee is happy with the final report, this will then form part of the Council plan and can be cited for funding bids to start to design the routes in the LCWIP. A thank you to all that took the time to complete this complicated consultation.

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SWALE LOCAL BUS FORUM

Meeting held on Wednesday 15 October 2025 from 2.00pm, via Teams

Present:

- Chris Webber (CW) - Stagecoach
- Dan Bruce (DB) – KCC
- David Morton (DM) - Stagecoach
- Cllr Dolley Wooster (DW)
- Emma Wiggins (EW)
- Cllr Karen Watson (KW)
- Luke Naylor (LN) – KCC
- Roland Eglinton (RE) - Chalkwell
- Stephne Pay (SP) – KCC
- Tony Winckless (TW)
- Emma Casambros (Stagecoach)
- Ian Harrison – SBC
- Katherine Jones (Stagecoach)

In Attendance: Sharon Dormedy (SD) Minutes

Apologies:

- Cllr Alastair Gould (AG)
- Tim Lambkin (TL)
- Cllr Mike Baldock (MB)

NO	ITEM	ACTION
1.	Welcome, Introduction and Apologies	
1.1	Apologies received from Alastair Gould.	
2.	Minutes of Local Bus Forum – 29 July 2025	
2.1	The minutes from the meeting on 29 July 2025 were agreed and the following updates given on outstanding actions.	
2.2	3.6 KCC colleagues had been passed concerns regarding home school appeals and budget. SP and DW to liaise after meeting regarding home to school transport for pupils from the Island to Faversham.	
2.3	6.2 KW advised feedback from Sittingbourne Area Committee related more to access on trains, rather than buses and ensuring dementia friendly timetables available. KW will consult with KCC following meeting.	
2.4	6.3 Ian Harrison in attendance and will update on S106 funds for bus services during the meeting.	
3.	KCC General Updates	
3.1	Dan Bruce presented the general update for KCC: New Chair to Enhanced Partnership Board – Spencer Dixon and introductory meeting held in August 2025 with future meeting being scheduled. Further round of full meetings of scheme boards expected for December linked to expected funding.	

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	• Visual breakdown of Capital/Revenue and BSIP Funding Position • Kent BSIP Delivery Headlines including: ○ Real time information – Phase 1 roll out being progressed ○ QR Codes installation programme commenced in September ○ Testing on Information Portal - finalising work to improve information and link into live information • Grants ○ District Shelter Grant – submissions being accessed ○ Community Transport Grant – closing end of September ○ Urban Bus Grant – Closing end October • Swale Initiatives including : ○ Bus Priority – Feasibility ○ Fares and Ticketing – Multi-Operator Ticketing Trial ○ Fares – KTS & Other promotions ○ Fares – SME Grants ○ Fares – Swale PlusBus scheme ○ Infrastructure – RTI 23/24 ○ Information – QR Codes ○ Information – Passenger Information Portal ○ ANPR Cameras – Great Easthall ○ Network – Service Support – 334 ○ Network – Service Support – 360 (Summer 2025) ○ Infrastructure – RTI 24/25 ○ Highways – Bell Rd / Sittingbourne Bus Hub ○ District Bus Shelter Grant ○ District Urban Bus Improvements Grant ○ Sheppey : Summer Sunday Service Pilot	
3.2	SP updated on the bus subsidy and services supported by: • KCC Travel Saver Capacity • KCC Bus Subsidy • BSIP Revenue Support – support 62 contracts. SP summaries the 7 services in the Swale area which would not operate without BSIP funding. SP confirmed if spare grant monies became available a criterion to priorities bus funding is applied.	
3.3	SP summarised the future ambitions for the network and the 2025-29 Delivery Plan	
3.4	RE advised the Summer Sunday 360 initiative had been successful and well used with approximately 700 journeys through the summer. RE confirmed the	

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	service of one bus a day operating every two hours on a Sunday, would not have been possible without funding.	
3.5	SP advised as at the start of the new September term, Travelmaster are the main network operator for school transport and timetables remain unchanged.	
3.6	TW highlighted the need for a 347 Sunday service from Kemsley to Sittingbourne town centre. SP this was an aspiration we all shared but not possible due to needing subsidy and unfortunately not available. EW suggested considering for future trial if funding or external funding became available.	
4.	Bus Companies Update	
4.1	RE highlighted roadworks as the biggest single issue facing local bus companies especially Grovehurst/Key Street. The closure of Blue Bell Hill also had a big impact and incredibly difficult to manage.	
4.2	RE had attended two Area Forums where good engagement had taken place and well received. Network Rail were also present at the meetings.	
4.3	CW had not been able to attend the last Sittingbourne Area Committee but happy to attend in future if needed.	
4.4	As RE from Chalkwell, highway works remain the biggest issue.	
5.	SBC Updates	
5.1	IH updated on latest S106 Agreements being drafted in the Borough including Highted, Winterborne and Bobbing and advised RE had been included in discussion along with KCC leading to assist in securing funding for bus route development. Any questions relating to specific sites should be referred to IH.	
5.2	Not relevant to any specific S106, DB feedback the importance of advising of costs, aspirations and challenges to support cases for future funding.	
5.3	RE had inputted into all major schemes with the developer. which had been an incredibly lengthy process and RE hoped would help shape and improve future bus services provision.	
5.4	IH – weekly lists are provided to Members and Members can approach Officers at early stage to discuss application and S106 questions relating to future bus provisions etc.	
5.5	EW updated the meeting on the recent announcement of the successful Pride in Place funding for Sheerness East and the future creation of a Community Board to develop the project plan. EW would welcome engagement from stakeholder if bus infrastructure included. If any further information is needed on the Pride of Place funding please contact EW.	
6.	Area Committee Feedback	
6.1	DW – Feedback on comments received from the Sheppey Area Committee including:	

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	- School transfer issue, already discussed - Wheel chair users, access to bus stops needs improving. - Wrap around services, to hospitals, Maidstone could be improved.	
6.2	TW – Feedback from Sittingbourne Area Committee: - Evening Bus services needed - Additional Sunday Service needed – already discussed during meeting.	
6.2	AG submitted a question on behalf of Boughton Parish Council regarding the bus service towards Canterbury with students and pensioners not being able to get on busses due to congestion. CW will investigate and update AG	CW/SD
7.	AOB	
7.1	EW – To enable Stagecoach to monitor and fully investigate, complaints or issues should be logged by contacting https://www.stagecoachbus.com/help-and-contact/forms/complaint-form or calling : 0345 241 8000	
Next meeting: - Schedule for January 2026		