

Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting: 6 September 2022 – Matters arising

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
1.	Entrance to skate park and Dolphin Barge Museum	<p>The Head of Housing and Community Services advised that conversations had taken place between Swale Borough Council (SBC) and the organisations regarding widening the access so everyone could have appropriate access. A meeting was scheduled to discuss further.</p> <p>It was agreed that proposals will come to the September 2022 meeting.</p>	The Head of Housing and Community Services advised a meeting has been arranged with key parties to progress design and implementation.
2.	Sittingbourne town centre regeneration scheme	<p>Implementation of this scheme has been regularly reviewed by the Council’s Scrutiny Committee for many years. It was proposed that the Committee receive the same written report that the Scrutiny Committee receive.</p> <p>However, as the project has reached practical completion there are no further update reports. The Policy and Resources Committee will oversee the continuing financial model.</p>	The Chair will provide a verbal update.
3.	Sittingbourne Tennis Club	<p>It was reported at the September 2021 meeting there were still ongoing issues regarding the legal agreement to be finalised. The Club would like to take on the toilets and facilities at Milton Recreation Ground, an SBC officer was looking into the lease arrangements and would report back.</p> <p>The Leisure & Technical Services Manager advised the agreement hasn’t progressed as it has</p>	Swale Borough Council have had an initial meeting with the LTA regarding potential funding. Lighting towers have been structurally tested (awaiting report) ahead of potential new lighting project. A meeting with club is to be confirmed.

		<p>been agreed with the club to hold it back while the LTA and Government funding (£30m) is being worked out. The club is being kept up to date with news and interest has been logged with the LTA to apply for funds to resurface the courts as well as at King Georges.</p>	
4.	Engagement with the Police	<p>Invitations had been extended to the Police and Crime Commissioner and the District Commander for Swale to attend a Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting. These had been declined as the Police said there were other forums that they regularly attended where the Committee's concerns could be raised.</p> <p>The Chair advised that as the Sittingbourne area was unparished, it was not possible to attend any of those forums. A request for a Sittingbourne Area Committee Member to sit on Swale Kent Association of Local Councils would be submitted.</p> <p>The Head of Housing & Community Services advised that the Police were carrying out a Neighbourhood Policing Review which would cover engagement and this issue would be raised as part of Swale Borough Council's (SBC) consultation response.</p>	<p>The Head of Housing and Community Services advised a questionnaire was circulated to all Members to capture issues and feedback on the neighbourhood policing review. All feedback has been passed onto Kent Police.</p> <p>The Communities Committee has appointed 2 Members to sit on the Swale Community Safety Partnership, both reps from the Committee are also members of Sittingbourne Area Committee and can raise strategic issues through that mechanism.</p>
5.	E-scooters	<p>The Police advised that 42 people were educated around the correct use of e-scooters between January and March 2021. Those that have continued to ignore this advice had been dealt with by way of S.59 warning or seizure.</p>	<p>A verbal update will be given at the meeting.</p>

		A Committee Member challenged the wording in the report on education by the Police on the 'correct use of e-scooters' as legally e-scooters should not be used. The Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North will be raising this matter again with the Police.	
6.	Kemsley Arms	A Committee Member referred to the excessive planning delays in getting the site developed. The Head of Housing & Community Services has raised this with officers to seek updates.	An update will be provided at the meeting.
7.	Bus services	<p>At the December 2021 meeting a member of the public commented on bus services, in particular route 347 only having one bus instead of two. Residents were not able to use the new facilities in Sittingbourne without a reliable bus service. Stagecoach had said they would not come to Sittingbourne without a depot. The Head of Housing & Community Services said that a meeting was due to take place with KCC, SBC and the bus operators and she would raise this matter at the meeting.</p> <p>The Quality Bus Partnership isn't currently meeting. The Council did submit a response to the bus consultation, raising concerns about the reduction of bus services in the Swale area.</p> <p>The Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North commented KCC do not control bus companies so do not "close" routes or services. However, they have for many years provided discretionary subsidies to keep some routes and services open.</p>	No further updates at this time.

		Due to severe budgetary pressures on all departments and necessity to maintain front line services such as Social Care, Education, Highways, etc, KCC have been left with no choice other than to reduce discretionary subsidies.	
8.	Creekside Plan	<p>At the December 2021 meeting, the Chairman advised that he had spoken with charities about developing an overarching project to rejuvenate the Wharf. He already had a number of ideas from the charities and was in discussion with the Legal Team about forming a group and taking this forward. The Chair circulated the ideas to the Area Committee Members.</p> <p>The Head of Housing & Community Services advised there had been a few operational issues but once these were resolved, the wider plan for the site could be considered.</p>	No further update at this time.
9.	Heritage issues	<p>The Sittingbourne High Street Conservation Area Review and Milton Regis Conservation Area Review.</p> <p>The Senior Conservation & Design Manager will provide an update at the September 2022 meeting.</p>	Please see Appendix 1 for an update.
10.	Improvements to lighting in Milton Regis area	It was noted that the clock had been reinstated in Milton Regis and the Chair would be exploring how lighting in the area could be improved.	The Chair advised that he is awaiting a reply from Kent County Council.

		At the March 2022 meeting the Chair advised he and the Milton Regis Society were looking to resolve this with KCC as soon as possible.	
11.	Swale Borough Council website	<p>A Member raised concerns about the difficulties residents and Councillors experienced when trying to navigate the Swale Borough Council website. Some items appeared to be 'buried' and took a number of steps to find.</p> <p>The Communications Manager advised three surveys will be carried out, one each for councillors, officers and the public. Officers are currently checking the questions in the surveys before they go live to make sure they will provide valuable insight.</p>	<p>The Communications & Policy Manager advised that following the Member survey, 8 responses were received which are being assessed.</p> <p>The next step is to conduct a survey with officers and the public.</p>
12.	Periwinkle Water Mill Site	At the June 2022 meeting an update was given on the current situation. The Senior Conservation & Design Manager advised that the tendering process was due to commence early July 2022. The design work still needs to be carried out for the planned heritage interpretation and site information signage.	Please see Appendix 1 for an update.
13.	Options for Roman Square & Square opposite Swale House	<p>At the September 2021 meeting the Chair advised that he spoke to the occupants of Roman Square and the Working Group about brightening up the area.</p> <p>The Roman Square sign at the junction with the High Street is being painted as part of the Phase 2 works that are currently in progress.</p>	<p>The Chair advised he has received no further update.</p> <p>The Chair also advised he has been invited to be on the panel for the UKSPF.</p>

		Future spend on the greening initiative has been deferred while officers consider whether funds available can be increased via UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).	
14.	Sports facilities in the area	<p>At the June 2021 meeting the Chair suggested reviewing sports facilities in the Sittingbourne area to see if any required work.</p> <p>The Head of Environment & Leisure advised that the Built Facilities strategy work is well underway with assessments of all facilities across the Borough undertaken and they are now working on the analysis. The next stage will be stakeholder consultation later this summer. Schedule for completion of the work is Dec/Jan.</p>	Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) has reached Stage B - Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation phase which includes colleagues in Planning.
15.	Local Heritage List	At the March 2022 meeting The Senior Conservation & Design Officer explained that a process and timeline for making nominations to the Local Heritage List was being finalised. It was hoped to publish the nomination process on the website by early May 2022.	Please see Appendix 1 for an update.
16.	Saxon Shore Way	A Member raised the issue of the Saxon Shore Way and suggested it could be traced. It was agreed that the Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North would make enquiries with (KCC) and bring this back to a future meeting.	A verbal update will be given at the meeting.
17.	Town Centre Volunteer Group	The Chair spoke about the lack of parish council representation in the Sittingbourne area and suggested setting up a Town Centre Volunteer Group which would carry out tasks to improve the area. The Chair planned to flesh out the idea for	The Chair will give a verbal update on this item.

		the next meeting should any Members be interested in joining an unofficial group.	
18.	Swale Media Arts Centre lease.	<p>At the June 2022 meeting the Interim Property Services Manager advised the lease had been agreed and signed by both parties and will complete immediately with the Deed of Variation. The lease term was effective from 29th July 2021 for a term of 5 years without review. The lease is subject to a rent-free period from date of lease commencement.</p> <p>A number of outstanding works of repair have been agreed which will be undertaken through the Council's property department.</p> <p>.</p>	A verbal update will be given at the meeting.