

Western Area Committee meeting: Progress on matters arising – 1 December 2022

No.	Item	Background	Update on actions
1.	Bredgar and Hartlip Conservation Area Reviews.	<p>The Area Committee requested that quotes be obtained for Conservation Area Reviews for Bredgar and Hartlip.</p> <p>These were considered at the September 2022 meeting and it was agreed to allocate £8,400 for Peter Bell to carry out the CA reviews and that the Graphics Officer would be producing the documents.</p>	<p>The Conservation & Design Team have advised that the review work for the Bredgar & Hartlip Conservation Areas will be commissioned in the new year. This would need to be confirmed with the consultant if he has capacity and will need to be confirmed with the finance department if the consultant can be awarded a contract.</p> <p>This way the allocated funds can be spent by May 2023, however, due to the resource crunch and a number of other projects (AP1) being higher priority, the Conservation & Design Team recommend that the officers present the review work to Planning and Transport working group/committee for adoption in the Autumn of 2023.</p>
2.	Walking and cycling project	<p>In March 2021 funding was allocated to a walking and cycling project in the Western area. The Active Travel Coordinator attended the June 2022 meeting and there was a discussion on potential routes.</p>	<p>Please see Appendix 1 for an update by the Active Travel Coordinator.</p>

		A virtual workshop took place on 18 October where the Active Travel Coordinator received input on potential routes from Area Committee Members and Parish Councils.	
3.	Bus services	<p>A resident of Bredgar raised an issue about reduced funding for bus services and how this impacted residents in villages. She said that there was no incentive for residents to use buses which would reduce the number of cars on the roads.</p> <p>Cllr Bonney commented that Kent County Council (KCC) did not take the opportunity to use the Kent Science Park Section 106 funding to make a subsidised bus service viable by providing a timetable that would have benefitted the residents in the villages.</p> <p>Members moved a motion that the Chair of the Western Area Committee write to KCC about the effect the cuts to bus services would have on residents living in villages in the Western Area and request that the timetabling and routes of remaining services were reviewed as they were not viable.</p>	A letter has been sent to KCC (see Appendix 2).
4.	Brown tourism signs	<p>It was agreed at the September 2022 meeting to reverse the allocation made in 2020/21 for applications for brown tourism signs to be installed in the Parish of Bobbing as they had been rejected by KCC.</p> <p>Members moved the motion that that the Chair of the Western Area Committee write to KCC expressing Members' disappointment about the rejection of the applications and explained that the Committee felt the criteria was unhelpful.</p>	A letter has been sent to KCC (see Appendix 3).

5.	Refurbishment of King George V Toilet Refurbishment	Cllr Sarah Stephen brought a proposal to the September 2022 meeting to consider the refurbishment of the King George V toilet. The Western AC agreed to allocate £5,054 to this project. They requested that an alternative hard-wearing wall covering as an alternative to white roc be used.	The Buildings Manager advised that the project is planned to take place during the winter months when King George Park would be less busy. The contractor has been asked to investigate an alternative wall covering instead of white roc, as per the Area Committee comments. A further update will be provided at the February 2023 meeting.
6.	Conservation issues including ponds.	David Carey the Pond Warden attended the Western Area Committee meeting in September 2022 to talk about conservation issues including ponds. It was suggested that the Area Committee work with Mr Carey on a funding proposal to support the pond wardens and bring it back to the December 2022 meeting.	A funding proposal will be discussed under agenda item 8.
7.	Donation to foodbanks that provide a service to residents in the Western Area.	<p>Members agreed to allocate £10,000 of the 2022/23 funding to foodbanks that cover the Western area.</p> <p>The Swale Foodbank was recommended by officers. Members asked for the Bus Shelter Foodbank to be approached as well. For the foodbanks to receive funding they would need to meet the conditions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members would like the funding to benefit residents who live in the Western area rather than other parts of Swale. They hope this is possible as the foodbanks operate a voucher scheme so it should be possible to identify where people live. The Western area covers the following wards 	<p>The Swale Foodbank and the Bus Shelter Foodbank have both agreed the conditions and £5,000 has being transferred to them.</p> <p>Monitoring reports will be provided at the February 2023.</p>

		<p>(Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow, Borden and Grove Park, Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch, The Meads, West Downs and Woodstock).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of residents in the villages do not have cars and bus services have been either reduced or removed. Members asked if some of the funding be used to deliver food parcels either to residents houses in the Western area or to pick up points in the villages. 	
8.	Proposal to support residents having difficulties purchasing alternative heating products.	Members requested that officers work on a funding proposal to bring to the December 2022 meeting which would support residents who were having difficulties purchasing alternative heating products.	A funding proposal will be discussed under agenda item 8.
9.	Rose Hill & Meads Woodland Management & Work Plans.	<p>In March 2021 the Area Committee allocated funding to develop management plans. These had now been completed by an external consultant and there were £2,158.00 of funding remaining. The plans indicated if the tasks should be carried out by a contractor or a volunteer group.</p> <p>Two Friends groups have been formed, Rose Hill Woodland Friends Group and The Meads Woodland Friends Group. It was agreed that a Borough Councillor would sit on each Friends Group and they should provide annual updates to the Western Area Committee.</p>	<p>Funding has been transferred to the Rose Hill Woodland Friends Group.</p> <p>Awaiting bank details for the Meads Woodland Friends Group.</p>
10.	Heritage issues	Cabinet adopted a Heritage Strategy and Action Plan on 18 March 2020. The Action Plan contains a programme of Conservation Area (CA) reviews.	Please see Appendix 4 for an update on progress.

		<p>The Area Committee agreed to fund CA reviews for the areas below which are outside of the planned programme of reviews in the Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rodmersham Church Street • Rodmersham Green • Milstead • Tunstall 	
11.	Youth provision in villages	<p>At the June 2021 meeting the lack of youth provision was raised as an issue.</p> <p>Amanda Turner the Kent County Council (KCC) Youth Hub Delivery Manager and Rebecca O'Neill the Commissioned Provider of Youth Provision for KCC, attended the June 2022 meeting to talk about youth provision in the Western Area.</p> <p>At the request of the Area Committee a project proposal was taken to the September 2022 meeting for VIBE youth workers to engage with young people. The proposal was agreed by Members and it was also agreed to run the project twice at a cost of £6,930 in total.</p> <p>The KCC Divisional Member for Swale West will look into the issue of Section 106 money being absorbed into KCC. Cllr Baldock requested a full list and will report back at the December meeting.</p>	<p>The funding has been transferred to Brogdale CIC. Updates on the progress of the project will be reported at the February 2023 meeting.</p> <p>Please see Appendix 5.</p>