

Western Area Committee meeting: Progress on Matters Arising – 31 August 2023

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
1.	Youth provision in villages	<p>At the June 2021 meeting the lack of youth provision was raised as an issue. 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>Members noted at the June 2023 meeting the final report from VIBE following their face-to-face 'meet-ups' with young people in the Western Area. The report concluded young people did feel safe but they were bored and wanted more places to play, either by improving local play areas or provision of youth clubs. Members asked what VIBE would be doing to take this forward. Some Parish Councils said they were not aware that the VIBE team had visited their areas.</p> <p>The Head of Housing & Community Services said she would follow up with Brogdale CIC to see what their plans were to take these findings forward.</p> <p>The Head of Housing & Community Services said she would check that all areas listed had been included.</p>	A verbal update will be given at the meeting.
2.	Bredgar and Hartlip Conservation Area Reviews.	The Area Committee requested that quotes be obtained for Conservation Area Reviews for Bredgar and Hartlip.	The six-week public consultation for both the documents concluded on Monday 7th August 2023. A report is

		<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>Members requested that officers presented the review to the Western Area Committee in the Autumn of 2023, in addition to the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group.</p>	<p>being prepared and will be presented to Planning and Transportation Policy working group on 19th September 2023 and to Policy and Resources Committee on 18th October 2023. It is envisaged that the adopted versions of both the Conservation Areas will be published on Swale Borough Council website by end of 2023.</p> <p>A fuller update will be provided under item 5.</p>
3.	<p>Donation to foodbanks that provide a service to residents in the Western Area.</p>	<p>Members agreed to allocate £10,000 of the 2022/23 funding to The Swale Foodbank and The Bus Shelter Foodbank. Both foodbanks agreed to meet the conditions and £5,000.00 was transferred to each of them:</p> <p>At the June 2023 meeting the Sittingbourne Foodbank reported they had provided 170 food parcels across the Western Area and had so far spent £3,641.40 of the £5,000 allocated.</p> <p>The Bus Shelter Foodbank reported in June 2023 they had issued 42 food parcels in the Western Area.</p>	<p>The Swale Foodbank Project Manager advised that all the funding has now been spent. They were able to provide 261 food parcels to the residents in the areas allocated for this funding, the busiest being Borden & Grove Park and Hartlip, Newington & Upchurch. The Project Manager asked for her thanks to be passed on to Western Area Committee for the funding.</p> <p>Once the Bus Shelter Foodbank update is received, it will be passed on to Committee Members.</p>
4.	<p>Supporting residents to reduce their energy costs</p>	<p>Area Committee members considered a proposal to help households in the Western area with reducing their energy costs. SBC provided a Fuel and Water Home Advisor Service, managed by the Swale charity Children</p>	<p>The Fuel and Water Home Adviser advised that over the summer requests for energy advice and products have been low. The</p>

		<p>and Families. One of the services provided by the Advisor was to give households advice on ways to reduce their use of energy and thereby reducing costs. As part of the service, energy efficient packs were given out which contained items like radiator reflectors, draft excluders, LED light bulbs and timers. The content of the packs were tailored to the needs of the household. Each pack costed approximately £50. The proposal was to allocate funds to the Fuel & Water Home Advisor Service via the charity Children and Families so the Advisor could provide energy efficient packs to households in the Western area.</p> <p>Western Area Committee agreed to allocate £4,523.13 to the Fuel and Water Home Advisor Service, via Children and Families, to provide homeowners with energy efficient packs to be given out after advice was given.</p> <p>A leaflet was produced for Area Committee Members and Parish Councils to distribute to residents.</p> <p>At the June 2023 meeting it was reported that £2,235 of funding had been spent on energy saving products to households across the Western area.</p>	<p>remaining funding will be used to buy new energy packs in October 2023 and it is hoped to get them out to residents in the Western Area over October to December.</p> <p>As soon as the packs are ready, Members will be advised so they can promote them further in their Wards.</p>
5.	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>The Monitoring Officer advised that it is a function of Annual Council and Council to appoint to outside bodies, not Area Committees.</p> <p>At Annual Council the report said that as not all the information was ready</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 and the Meads Woodland Friends Group.</p> <p>A Member asked why the Meads Woodland Management Friends Group went to Annual Council as an Outside Body appointment.</p>	<p>at that time to formally appoint to the Meads, it would go to a later Council meeting. Both Rose Hill Woodland Friends Group and the Meads Woodland Friends Group will be going to the October 2023 Council Meeting.</p>
6.	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 consulted with the Area Committee and Parish Council to consider potential routes.</p>	<p>The Active Travel Coordinator advised the four walks and two rides were launched at an event at Newington Village Hall in July to which all Western Area Committee Members and Parish Councillors were invited. The Swale Trails also featured in Swale Matters. The printed map leaflets have been distributed to various locations including 34 High Street and Faversham VIC.</p> <p>The downloadable versions of the maps are available on Visit Swale and have been sent to Explore Kent. The walks are live on the Go Jauntly app.</p>

			When the Explore Kent and subsequent Kent Connected work is complete, we will start a media and social media campaign. We now have a template for creating more Swale Trails in the future.
7.	Heritage issues	<p>Cabinet adopted a Heritage Strategy and Action Plan on 18 March 2020. The Action Plan contains a programme of Conservation Area (CA) reviews.</p> <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 	<p>The Conservation & Design Team have provided the following update for all four CA reviews:</p> <p>The adopted versions of the Conservation Area appraisal documents are now published on the Swale Borough Council website, along with the links to the latest maps of the Conservation Areas. All formalities regarding notifications to local residents, the parish council, local newspaper, and the London Gazette are complete.</p>
8.	Fulston Manor School - students parking	A Member raised the issue of Fulston Manor School students parking at a dangerous junction at the Eden Village estate, Sittingbourne. Although there was provision for them to park at the school, they preferred not to as the gate was locked during the day. The issue was causing some anti-social behaviour problems. It was agreed that the Chair of Western Area Committee would write to Fulston Manor School regarding this matter asking that they were firm with pupils throughout the next academic year.	A letter has been sent to Fulson Manor School. No response received to date.
9.	Access to library of photographs	During the update on the Walking and Cycling Project, the Active Travel coordinator mentioned the	Swale Borough Council is working on establishing a library of images

		photographer commissioned had a bank of about 300 photographs of the Western Area. A Parish Councillor asked if these could be made available for community groups to use in their own promotions.	accessible to organisations in Swale. The tender is now live and the work started in August 2023. The photographs of the Western area will be included in the library of images.
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