
SITTINGBOURNE AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in The Sapling Room, The Appleyard, Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4DE on Tuesday, 21 June 2022 from 7.00 pm - 9.34 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Steve Davey (Chair), Mike Dendor (Vice-Chair), Tim Gibson, James Hall, Ann Hampshire, Ken Rowles, Ghlin Whelan and Tony Winckless.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Janet Dart, Charlotte Hudson and Adrian Oliver.

OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually): Billy Attaway.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Ken Ingleton (Virtually).

Jody Foster and Mark Foster, Ellie's Angels.

Mark Allinson, Restoration Project Manager and Gareth Maeer (Virtually), Director and co-founder of Raybel Charters CIC.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Derek Carnell, Simon Clark and Roger Truelove.

124 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

125 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Steve Davey, Mike Dendor and Tony Winckless all disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as Trustees of Milton Creek Country Park.

Councillors Steve Davey and Tony Winckless both disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as Trustees of the Milton Regis Society.

Councillors Steve Davey and Ken Rowles both disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as Trustees of Swale Media Arts.

Councillor Steve Davey disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of Sittingbourne in Bloom.

Councillor Steve Davey disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of Diversity House.

126 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 March 2022 (Minute Nos. 656 – 665) and the Meeting held on 18 May 2022 (Minute Nos. 31 – 32) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as correct records.

127 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members noted the progress on actions.

Entrance to the Skatepark and the Dophin Barge Museum

The Head of Housing & Community Services advised that proposals would be brought to the next meeting.

E-Scooters

The Chair explained that the Police had been invited to attend this meeting. The Police & Crime Commissioner had responded that it would be more appropriate for a district officer to attend. The District Commander for Swale responded to say that there were other forums that the Police regularly attended where the Committee's concerns could be raised. 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. 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.

Staplehurst Road

The Chair advised that the new Traffic Management Act would allow Local Authorities to prosecute certain offences. A consultation process would be undertaken where problem areas could be recommended. This would be implemented in 2023.

Bollards in Milton High Street

It was agreed Councillor Tony Winckless should pursue the matter of bollards in Milton High Street with the Conservation & Design Manager.

Local Heritage List

Councillor Mike Dendor asked about the criteria for placing a building on the Heritage List. The Head of Housing & Community Services said she would get a briefing out to Members.

128 SWALE LOCAL CYCLING & WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP)

The Active Travel Coordinator introduced himself and spoke about the Government ten-year walking and cycling initiative, the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), which was to help local authorities establish good cycling and walking routes. For a scheme to receive funding it needed to match the guidelines. The Active Travel Coordinator was writing a Swale LCWIP and he welcomed suggestions from residents and local organisations/groups.

There would be an online survey which would ask about trips that were currently made that could be taken by foot or cycle, and what the barriers were for taking such trips. There would also be workshops with community groups.

Some initial ideas were discussed which included:

- The problems with cyclists sharing pavements with pedestrians;
- planners needed to design safe walking and cycling routes in new developments;
- cycling routes should be clearly marked;
- some cyclists rode too fast;
- cyclist dismount signs were often ignored;
- A-frames in the High Street blocked pavements;
- the high rate of collisions in the Sittingbourne area;
- existing public rights-of-way could be used to get cyclists off the roads; and
- the new Highway Code rules for pedestrians and cyclists.

129 PUBLIC FORUM

Jackie Davidson spoke about two established public transport groups and requested the Area Committee assisted with publicising them to encourage more people to join. The Chair asked Mr Davidson to email him with the details and he would see what could be done to assist.

Jackie Davidson said buses were having trouble turning in two places. The Chair agreed to chase this issue up.

130 LOCAL ISSUES TO BE RAISED

Councillor Mike Dendor raised the issue of the Saxon Shore Way and suggested it could be traced. It was agreed that in his capacity of Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North, he would make enquiries with Kent County Council (KCC) and bring this back to a future meeting.

Councillor Tony Winckless suggested tourism boards should be installed outside Sittingbourne Railway Station so that visitors could see where different attractions were. The Chair advised this had been raised with Sustrans.

131 UPDATE ON WORK PLAN

The Chair introduced the Work Plan Proposal Report and explained that the Area Committees Review Working Group had met and recommended that funding be considered at the next meeting in September 2022 instead of the December 2022 meeting. It was therefore necessary to consider the Work Plan at this meeting so that the funding scheme would be ready to launch on 1 July 2022.

The Review Working Group also recommended that Heads of Service should be consulted to see if there were any existing projects that would benefit from additional funding to help achieve the projects earlier and benefit the Sittingbourne Area.

The third recommendation by the Review Working Group was that each Area Committee should decide how wide publicity should be carried out for the funding scheme.

Councillor Mike Dendor proposed that there should be limited publicity for the Sittingbourne Area Committee funding scheme. This was seconded by Councillor Tony Winckless and on being put to the vote was agreed.

Councillor Tim Gibson proposed that the Great East Hall shop feasibility should be the only priority put forward by Heads of Service for the Sittingbourne Area Committee to take forward in their work plan for 2022/23. This was seconded by Councillor Ken Rowles and on being put to the vote was agreed.

Members agreed to carry forward the criteria from 2021/22 to 2022/23 in which bids should demonstrate they would have a positive impact on the appearance, environment and facilities in the Sittingbourne Area. Members agreed that the following criteria be added “and improve social inclusion by consideration being given to organisations that provide specific support services to those with wider needs”.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Sittingbourne Area Committee funding scheme should only be publicised by emailing local organisations who may have bids that would meet the Area Committee’s criteria.**
- 2) That the Great East Hall shop feasibility should be the only priority put forward by Heads of Service for the Sittingbourne Area Committee to take forward in their work plan for 2022/23.**
- 3) That the Sittingbourne Area Committee’s criteria for assessing bids be “Bids should seek to improve the appearance, environment and facilities of the area and improve social inclusion by consideration being given to organisations that provide specific support services to those with wider needs.”**

132 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 next meeting should any Members be interested in joining an unofficial group.

133 RAYBEL PRESENTATION

Mark Allinson, the Raybel Restoration Project Manager, gave a presentation on the work of Raybel Charters and the project to restore the 100 year old Thames Sailing Barge, the Raybel. This restoration work was taking place at Lloyd’s Wharf, Milton Creek, Sittingbourne, close to where the Raybel was built and launched in 1920. The restoration project had provided shipwright training and community arts and heritage activities regularly took place. Mark Allinson advised there would be an open day on 30 July 2022 between 11 am and 3 pm.

Gareth Maeer, the Director and co-founder of Raybel Charters CIC (Community Interest Company), added that National Heritage Fund ended this year so they would be looking for further funding to continue the work.

134 ELLIE'S ANGELS

Jody and Mark Foster gave a presentation about Ellie's Angels, a not-for-profit community interest company who worked in partnership with schools, healthcare services and professionals raising awareness of the mental health and support needs of younger people.

Jody gave a very moving presentation telling the story of her daughter Ellie and how she set up Ellie's Angels and the mobile app 'better u' as a legacy in Ellie's name. The app provided a platform for young people to manage their mental health and provided links to professional organisations and charities.

Ellie's Angels would like to raise a further £80k to create a primary and special education needs version of the app.

Councillor James Hall said he hoped that Members would be supportive of this cause.

135 PARKINSON'S FUND RAISING

As Richard Coombe had sent apologies, Councillor James Hall spoke about Mr Coombe's Parkinson's fund raising walk from Big Ben in London to the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

136 MATTERS REFERRED TO AREA COMMITTEE BY SERVICE COMMITTEES

No issues were raised.

137 MATTERS REFERRED TO SERVICE COMMITTEES BY AREA COMMITTEE

It was agreed to refer the matter of Sittingbourne Area Committee needing better interaction with the Police to the Community Committee.

Chair

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel