

AGENDA

SITTINGBOURNE AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday, 23 February 2023

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Derek Carnell, Simon Clark, Steve Davey (Chair), Mike Dendor (Vice-Chair), Tim Gibson, James Hall, Ann Hampshire, Ken Rowles, Roger Truelove, Ghlin Whelan and Tony Winckless.

Quorum = 4.

Pages

Information about this meeting

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- (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.
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- (d) Anyone unable to use the stairs should make themselves known during this agenda item.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. 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.

4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 December 2022 (Minute Nos. 512 – 522) as correct records.

- 5. Kent County Council Community Services Consultation 5 - 6
- 6. Bus Services
- 7. Matters arising from previous meetings 7 - 16
- 8. Public Forum
- 9. Matters referred to Area Committee by Service Committees
- 10. Matters to be referred to Service Committee Chairs for consideration

Issued on Wednesday, 15 February 2023

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 DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of the Area Committees, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

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

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Kent County Council Community Services Consultation

Kent County Council (KCC) has launched a public consultation on its Community Services which runs from 17 January to 26 March 2023.

The consultation proposes changes to the way we use our buildings to deliver some of our community services. We invite your feedback on our proposals as part of this consultation.

Why are we proposing changes?

The Council has experienced big increases in costs and has less money to spend. So we need to look ahead and do things differently to make sure we can still help residents in the years to come. Whilst ensuring effective support for residents who need our services, we need to:

- tackle the rising costs of maintaining our many buildings
- find savings, so we can balance the budget
- reduce our carbon footprint to meet our Net-Zero ambitions.

What services are included in the proposals?

Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, Public Health Services for Children and Families, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Community Learning and Skills, and Gateways.

What are we proposing?

- Having fewer permanent buildings, meaning that some of our buildings would close - we want to keep buildings in areas where they are needed the most
- Co-locating more of our services, meaning more than one service would be available from some of the buildings you might visit
- Continuing to deliver some services by outreach, which means they do not take place in a dedicated or permanent space, but move around to when and where they are needed
- Ensuring residents can continue to access services and information online.

Our proposals have been designed by considering where there is greatest need for our services.

Find out more and share your views

Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation to find out about the proposals for your area. You can respond to the consultation by using the online questionnaire (or download the Word version).

On our website you will also find a list of our drop-in events where you can come along to talk about the proposals and ask your questions. In Swale the drop-in events are:

- Sheppey Gateway at Sheerness Library, 38-42 High Street, Sheerness, ME12 1NL Monday 27 February 10am-1pm
- Milton Court Children's Centre, Brewery Road, Milton Regis, Sittingbourne, ME10 2EE Thursday 23 February 4-8pm

KCC's Kent Communities Programme Team

communityservicesfeedback@kent.gov.uk

Summary of buildings in Sittingbourne potentially affected by KCC proposals:

(Detailed explanations can be found in the consultation document, page numbers indicated below.)

KCC proposals for co-locating services (**page 41**):

Proposed Community Hub Location	Co-located Services
Sittingbourne Library	Family Hub and Library

This table shows each of the buildings we propose to retain and which we propose to leave. Buildings that we have indicated to 'Remain' are proposed to become Family Hubs (**page 52 - 60**).

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Grove Park Children's Centre, Sittingbourne	Leave	Woodgrove Children's Centre	1.4
		Milton Court Children's Centre	1.6
		Murston Children's Centre	2.6
Milton Court Children's Centre, Sittingbourne	Remain		
Murston Children's Centre, Sittingbourne	Remain		
New House Youth and Sports Centre, Chalkwell Road, Sittingbourne	Leave	Milton Court Children's Centre	0.6
		Murston Children's Centre	5.2
		Bysing Wood Children's Centre	8.8
Woodgrove Children's Centre, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne	Remain		

Community learning and skills (Adult education) - fixed buildings and future proposals are (**page 98**):

Current Buildings	Proposal
Sittingbourne Adult Education Centre	Remain

Sittingbourne Area Committee: Progress on matters arising - 23 February 2023

No.	Item	Background	Update 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 SBC and the organisations regarding widening the access so everyone could have appropriate access.</p> <p>The Head of Housing and Community Services advised a meeting had been arranged early October 2022 with key parties to progress design and implementation. Unfortunately, the meeting had to be rearranged due to organisations not being able to make the original date.</p>	An update will be provided when available.
2.	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 that a recent meeting with Tennis club has taken place. LTA meetings have resulted in confirmation of financial requirements from SBC, this has been escalated top senior officers for consideration and will then go to the Community Committee for discussion. Milton is currently deemed as 'multi-usage' this would need to be changed for LTA funding to proceed.</p>	A report concerning the proposed improvements to Milton Rec & King George's PF tennis courts has been considered by the Area Committee at its last meeting and is due to be further considered at the next Community Committee.

3.	Kemsley Arms	<p>The KCC Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North advised that Planning officers were recommending refusal of the application and therefore it had been called into Planning Committee to determine. He commented on issues relating to non-communication by SBC Planning and the length of time to get to this point.</p> <p>The Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods along with the team met the developer about the scheme. The scheme is not viable as it stands and the meeting explored options that may be available to help make it viable and these were left with the developer to pursue.</p>	<p>The viability is still being worked through by the developer. The independent assessor advises that the scheme is just viable for a rented scheme over a 40-year period; and could provide S.106 contributions of £132,000. This is still short of the requested S.106 contributions of £171,975.94. We are currently waiting for applicant to pay for the independent assessment, when this has been done discussions will be able to continue further.</p>
4.	Bus services	<p>The Chair and Councillor Tony Winckless would be meeting with Jackie Davidson to discuss his concerns about bus services. He said he would be inviting representatives from the bus services to attend a future Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting. Kent County Council (KCC) Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North, Councillor Mike Dendor, said that more would be known about which services would be cut when the KCC budget was agreed in February 2023.</p>	<p>To be discussed further under a separate agenda item.</p>
5.	Improvements to lighting in Milton Regis area	<p>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.</p>	<p>The clock contractors advised there were no lights in the clock drum prior to the project. After checking their system there is no reference to lighting within the clock drum, and no reference on</p>

		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.	their work schedules or job spec sheets. As regards muffling the hour strike, they do not have anything to muffle the strike but can offer equipment that silences the strike during the night.
6.	Options for Roman Square & Square opposite Swale House	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. 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. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funding for Sittingbourne Town Centre of £60k has been agreed for 2024/25. There needs to be some preliminary work for the greening initiative.	The Economic Development & External Funding Manager advised the UKSPF funding for 2022/23 was finally confirmed and received in January 2023. Given delays, Government has indicated that it will be possible to rollover funding received for 2022/23 into the 2023/24 financial year, although, the guidance is awaited. Officers are developing the detailed eligibility for the grant programmes funded through the UKSPF for discussion with a Member Working Group prior to the Grants being made available.
7.	Swale Borough Council website	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. The Communications & Policy Manager advised the next step is to conduct a survey with officers and the public. Discussions are ongoing to achieve this in a meaningful and cost-effective way.	No further progress to report. Due to a vacancy there is a resource issue in the Communications & Policy Team.

8.	Swale Media Arts Centre Lease	Councillor Ken Rowles gave an update on events that had taken place at the Swale Media Arts Centre. He advised the lease has not been received having been told by SBC properties it is with their solicitors.	<p>The following is an update from Councillor Ken Rowles:</p> <p>In January 2023 the centre was closed for building, the visitors centre THE COMMUNITY HUB within the Gallery is now completed ready for the grand opening next month.</p> <p>The board are awaiting the notice for transferring from the CIC to a CIO this will aid us to get more funding from various groups.</p> <p>This month has seen a diary of events that have involved the community on Mondays for six weeks we have Zero to Hero an arts and craft drop in 10.30 am to 12.30 pm that is free. The exhibition in the gallery is HEARTFELT with artist working with hearts for Valentine's Day we have our Swale Film Makers group meetings with one on Tuesday 21st and on Saturday 25th. An evening with ALLO ALLO star Vicki Michelle at the Avenue Theatre for 40th celebration and 100 years of BBC profits for SMAC.</p> <p>Will still await the signed lease from Swale properties.</p>
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9.	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 (BFS) work is well underway. Consultants are working through recently provided planning details to conclude next stage of review. Stage B completed. The intention is to take the findings to the Community Committee in the new year.</p>	Consultants are finalising a draft report which is targeted to be with Swale Borough Council by the end of January 2023
10.	Town Centre Volunteer Group	<p>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.</p> <p>the Chair advised that many of the planned tasks had been cancelled due to the weather.</p>	Any updates to be reported to the Area Committee.
11.	Great Easthall Pond	Councillor Ann Hampshire spoke about the sad news of children losing their lives after playing on ice on a lake in Solihull. A discussion took place on what could be done about the safety of ponds in Swale. It was agreed that the Chair of the Sittingbourne Area Committee write to the Swale Kent Fire and Rescue Service to see what sessions they could hold to educate children and parents about safety around ponds.	A letter has been sent to the Kent Fire & Rescue Service. This has been acknowledged and the request passed to the KFRS Education/Safety Team to see what they can do.

12.	Coombe Drive	<p>A resident raised the issue of vandalism taking place in the alleyway at the back of houses on Coombe Drive, Sittingbourne. Residents had requested that the alleyway be shut and had raised this with SBC.</p> <p>Swale Borough Council has been working with other agencies including Kent Police, Network Rail and Optivo regarding the criminal damage and other anti-social behaviour being experienced by residents adjacent to this alleyway. One measure being considered by Swale BC is a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) that would enable us to gate this alleyway. In order to comply with the legislation to undertake this, we have to have in place a level of evidence to prove that the behaviour being experienced is persistent and that we have also tried a range of less restrictive measures. We are also currently review the costs to implement such a gating scheme and how this could be funded before moving to any next steps.</p>	<p>The Community Safety Manager reported that Swale Borough Council are continuing to work towards a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to seek to gate this alleyway. Having consulted with the Police on this proposal, a formal consultation with the public will shortly commence. Once this is completed, the Council will be able to make a decision on whether to implement this PSPO.</p>
13.	Nellie's Alley	<p>Councillor Ken Rowles raised the issue of the bollard installed to stop vehicles using Nellie's Alley, Sittingbourne between 7 am and 5 pm on Saturdays. He asked who should hold the key and be responsible for removing the bollard at 5 pm on Saturdays. The Area Committee agreed that the Policy and Engagement Officer should take away an action to investigate with SBC officers and report back to the Area Committee.</p>	<p>ACPOA have agreed to lower the bollard at 5 pm on Saturdays and a key has been handed over. However, they do not have the capacity to raise the bollard at 7 am on Saturdays. Work is ongoing to resolve the issue of raising the bollard at 7 am.</p>
14.	Heritage issues	<p>The Sittingbourne High Street Conservation Area Review and Milton Regis Conservation Area Review.</p>	<p>The Sittingbourne High Street Conservation Area Review</p>

			<p>The adopted version of the Conservation Area appraisal document is anticipated to be published on SBC website later this week, adoption notifications to local residents and the parish council will be sent out soon after.</p> <p>Milton Regis Conservation Area Review</p> <p>Some base mapping for survey work produced and an initial walkover carried out to consider possible boundary revisions. It is clear that existing KCC document, although dated, can be used as basis for the provision of the required up-to-date appraisal and management plan document. It is anticipated that this work will need to be undertaken by an external heritage consultant and drafting of brief has begun.</p>
15.	Periwinkle Water Mill Site	At the December 2022 meeting an update was given on the current situation.	<p>The Conservation & Design Team is in the process of exploring an alternative procurement option given the volatility of tendering market and the need to keep the project within budget. In liaison with project advisors East Kent Engineering Partnership and the Council's Health, Safety & Risk Officer, the team is looking to eliminate structural interventions to limit project</p>

			costs by combination of site management and warning signage/info, in order to help ensure that the project can be delivered within budget.
16.	Local Heritage List	At the September 2022 meeting the timescales for the publication of the nomination process were advised.	Listing criteria adopted; Procedure document and listing criteria to be published on SBC website shortly; and Invitation for nominations to be actioned shortly.
17.	Active Travel Fund update	At the December 2022 meeting, the Active Travel Co-ordinator gave an update on the Sittingbourne Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 proposals.	Please see Appendix 1 for an update.

Matters Arising – Appendix 1

SITTINGBOURNE AREA COMMITTEE

Subject	Active Travel Update
Lead Officer	Adrian Oliver, Active Travel Co-ordinator

Thank you to everyone who has continued to provide input and support for active travel in Sittingbourne.

The Sittingbourne Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 proposals were submitted to Kent County Council, competing with 87 other schemes. Unfortunately, the Sittingbourne proposals didn't make the Short List.

Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 was finally officially announced on Sunday 5th February, some five months later than expected and very different from the funding previewed in July 2022. Tranche 4 is no longer a £470m capital and £250m revenue multi-year fund, but a one year £200m construction fund. At this point, Swale Borough Council still has one bid in the process.

On 8th February, we received confirmation that Swale Borough Council has been awarded £40,000 from the Active Travel Capability Fund 2022/23.

Work on the Boroughwide Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan continues, and there is an Active Travel Drop-In event on Wednesday 15th March between 3pm & 7pm at the Swale Media Arts Centre, 34 High Street, Sittingbourne. Everyone is welcome - individuals and representatives from organisations & businesses - to come along and talk to us about walking, wheeling & cycling issues across Sittingbourne and tells us what needs doing to enable more people to move about the area under their own steam.

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