

Western Area Committee meeting: Progress on Matters arising – 31 August 2021

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
1.	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. It has been suggested by the Cabinet Member that the Area Committee may want to fund CA reviews for areas which are outside of the planned programme of reviews in the Action Plan.</p> <p>In December 2020, the Western Area Committee agreed that £6,270 be allocated to a firm of consultants to undertake CA reviews in Rodmersham, Milstead and Tunstall in line with a quote submitted to members. At the June meeting the Conservation and Design Manager reported they should be adopted early December.</p> <p>The Conservation & Design Manager carried out an assessment to ascertain whether there is any scope for a CA at Iwade and will submit a report to the Area Committee at the September meeting</p>	<p>A verbal update will be provided by the Conservation & Design Manager.</p>

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2.	Conservation issues, including ponds	<p>SBC only has details of the ponds which it manages directly. There is a strategic and heritage, conservation and tourism need for information, including ownership, condition and management of the ponds in the area.</p> <p>Both the Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group and Kent Fire and rescue have confirmed they are happy to work with Swale Borough Council to pull this information together for Swale.</p> <p>This will be considered as part of the wider environmental work and prioritisation of work programme. No work is currently underway on ponds.</p>	Bring back to a future meeting.
3.	Phoenix House	Swale Borough Council have commissioned a survey to understand the immediate needs of voluntary organisations in terms of hiring space and office base in the Sittingbourne area. Another survey has been carried out to identify space available in other community assets in the area, where it may be possible to match organisations. The final results of the survey will be shared with the Area Committee once received.	The surveys are attached to this report, Appendices 1 and 2.

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4.	Run down state of the Western Area	<p>A Member raised concerns about the current general rundown state of the area and highlighted footpaths, litter in hedgerows and road signs as particular issues.</p> <p>Most of the issues raised were the responsibility of KCC and there are well-established processes to report issues on their website. There are also member grants to fund new street nameplates. Village cleans can be arranged for specific areas.</p> <p>At the June meeting the Head of Environment and Leisure advised that Highways England are responsible for major strategic routes which includes the motorways and in the Western area the A249. Officers met with Highways England in June regarding the A249/Western end issues which the Cabinet Member for Environment will attend.</p>	<p>The Head of Environment and Leisure reported a meeting was held in June with Highways England and their contractor Sheppey Route Limited who are responsible from the bridge just past Stockbury roundabout down to Peel Ports entrance. Officers and 2 x Cabinet members attended.</p> <p>There had been three major litter picks within the last 6 months, but they recognised that continuous cleansing was required due to the increased volume.</p> <p>We also commented on Stockbury roundabout itself which is looked after in-house by Highways England and required some cleanses.</p> <p>We also agreed to greater sharing of information. Enforcement cameras will be looked at and the contractor dashcam footage may be able to be used in prosecutions of vehicles committing littering offences.</p>
5.	Noise from the M2 and other roads	<p>A Member raised an issue on behalf of Hartlip Parish Council regarding noise from the M2 and other roads. It was suggested the Environmental Response Team be consulted to see if they have received any reports.</p>	<p>The Head of Environment and Leisure consulted the Environmental Response Team and advised they have received no reports of road noise.</p> <p>Cllr Mike Baldock reported that he had spoken to Highways England to see if the spoil from the</p>

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		Bredgar Parish Council will check to see how they dealt with a similar problem some years ago.	Junction 5 improvements could be used to dampen the sound.
6.	Youth provision in villages	As part of the considerations for priorities and ambitions going forward for the Western Area Committee Meeting, the lack of youth provision in villages was raised as an issue. It was agreed to bring a briefing note back to the next meeting to see what can be done going forward.	Steph Carbutt the Community Services Officer has drafted a briefing note, see Appendix 3
7.	Agricultural Bill	A Parish Councillor asked if the Area Committee could advise where guidance can be found on the Agricultural Bill so that parish councils can engage with land-owners.	Cllr Richard Palmer is making enquiries with KALC to see what guidance is available. Additionally, the Swale Area Committee of KALC is looking into this and is hoping to report back in due course.