

Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting: 21 June 2022 – Matters arising

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
1.	Entrance to skate park and Dolphin Barge Museum	The Head of Housing and Community Services advised that conversations had taken place between Swale Borough Council (SBC) and the organisations regarding widening the access so everyone could have appropriate access. A meeting was scheduled to discuss further.	The Head of Housing and Community Services will give a verbal update.
2.	Sittingbourne town centre regeneration scheme	<p>Implementation of this scheme has been regularly reviewed by the Council's Scrutiny Committee for many years. It was proposed that the Committee receive the same written report that the Scrutiny Committee receive.</p> <p>However, as the project has reached practical completion there are no further update reports. The Policy and Resources Committee will oversee the continuing financial model.</p>	The Chair will provide a verbal update.
3.	Bomb shelter at Trotts Hall	<p>At the September 2021 meeting the Chair advised he met with Richard Emmett regarding the bomb shelter at Trotts Hall Gardens and there could still be evidence of a shelter there. More investigations would take place.</p> <p>The Chair will be contacting Richard Emmett to see if there has been time scheduled to proceed with a ground resistivity examination.</p>	The Chair will provide a verbal update.
4.	Sittingbourne Tennis Club	It was reported at the September 2021 meeting there were still ongoing issues regarding the legal	No further update.

		<p>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 the agreement hasn't progressed as it has been agreed with the club to hold it back while the LTA and Government funding (£30m) is being worked out. The club is being kept up to date with news and interest has been logged with the LTA to apply for funds to resurface the courts as well as at King Georges.</p>	
5.	E-scooters	<p>The Police advised that 42 people were educated around the correct use of e-scooters between January and March 2021. Those that have continued to ignore this advice and been dealt with by way of S.59 warning or seizure.</p> <p>A Committee Member challenged the wording in the report on education by the Police on the 'correct use of e-scooters' as legally e-scooters should not be used. The Head of Housing & Community Services agreed to raise this with the Police.</p>	<p>The Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North will be raising this matter again with the Police.</p> <p>The Police & Crime Commissioner, Matthew Scott and District Commander for Swale, Chief Inspector Junior Dann both declined an invitation to attend the June 2022 Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting to discuss this and other matters.</p> <p>It is hoped to have a representative from the Police in attendance at the September 2022 meeting.</p>

6.	Kemsley Arms	<p>A Committee Member referred to the excessive planning delays in getting the site developed. The Head of Housing & Community Services agreed to raise this with officers.</p> <p>The Head of Planning advised that officers met with the applicant on Thursday 14 April 2022, and await confirmation from the applicants with regard to agreeing Section 106 payments and agreement to conditions regarding car parking / open (amenity) space.</p>	<p>Cllr Mike Dendor has provided an update – Appendix 1.</p>
7.	Bus services	<p>At the December 2021 meeting a member of the public commented on bus services, in particular route 347 only having one bus instead of two. Residents were not able to use the new facilities in Sittingbourne without a reliable bus service. Stagecoach had said they would not come to Sittingbourne without a depot. The Head of Housing & Community Services said that a meeting was due to take place with KCC, SBC and the bus operators and she would raise this matter at the meeting.</p>	<p>The Quality Bus Partnership isn't currently meeting. The Council did submit a response to the bus consultation, raising concerns about the reduction of bus services in the Swale area.</p> <p>The Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North commented KCC do not control bus companies so do not "close" routes or services. However, they have for many years provided discretionary subsidies to keep some routes and services open. Due to severe budgetary pressures on all departments and necessity to maintain front line services such as Social Care, Education, Highways, etc, KCC</p>

			have been left with no choice other than to reduce discretionary subsidies.
8.	Staplehurst Road	<p>At the December 2021 meeting a member of the public mentioned problems at Staplehurst Road where motorists were turning right when it was left turn only. As there was no enforcement there was no deterrent.</p> <p>the Chairman advised that the Community Warden will look into the matter of motorists turning right when it was left turn only.</p>	<p>The Chair will provide a verbal update.</p> <p>The Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North commented that plans to enact Traffic Management Act 2004 Part 6, permitting civil enforcement by local authorities (KCC) to for moving traffic contraventions, including use of approved cameras - expected to start enforcement early 2023, BUT only at approved sites where action is deemed to be needed according to Highway stats (similar to process required for installation of cameras).</p>
9.	Creekside Plan	At the December 2021 meeting, the Chairman advised that he had spoken with charities about developing an overarching project to rejuvenate the Wharf. He already had a number of ideas from the charities and was in discussion with the Legal Team about forming a group and taking this forward. The Chairman circulated the ideas to the Area Committee Members.	The Head of Housing & Community Services advised there had been a few operational issues but once these were resolved, the wider plan for the site could be considered.
10.	Bollards in Milton High Street	A Member commented that the Conservation & Design Manager had advised he was reluctant to	The Chairman agreed to follow up on this.

		install bollards in Milton High Street as it would spoil the appearance of the area.	
11.	Replace damaged rail and bollard	The Area Committee allocated £893.28 to replace the damaged rail and bollard at Milton High Street.	Please see Appendix 2
12.	Improvements to Milton Regis High Street	The Area Committee allocated £9,649.25 to carry out improvements to Milton Regis High Street (including installing planters and baskets).	Please see Appendix 3
13.	Heritage issues	The Sittingbourne High Street Conservation Area Review and Milton Regis Conservation Area Review.	The Senior Conservation & Design Manager will provide an update at the September 2022 meeting.
14.	Improvements to lighting in Milton Regis area	<p>It was noted that the clock had been reinstated in Milton Regis and the Chairman would be exploring how lighting in the area could be improved.</p> <p>At the March 2022 meeting the Chairman advised he and the Milton Regis Society were looking to resolve this with KCC as soon as possible.</p>	The Chair will provide a verbal update.
15.	Swale Borough Council website	<p>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. It was agreed that the Chairman would refer this matter to Cabinet.</p> <p>The Communications Manager advised three surveys will be carried out, one each for councillors, officers and the public. Officers are currently checking the questions in the surveys before they go live to make sure they will provide valuable insight.</p>	The Communications Manager advised that the questions in the surveys are being finalised and hope to go live soon.

16.	Periwinkle Water Mill Site	At the March 2022 meeting an update was given on the current situation. The Senior Conservation & Design Manager advised that a mid-range cost option was being considered for the remedial works for the structural concerns. There were still issues with the clearing of greenery due to land ownership issues.	Please see Appendix 4.
17.	Options for Roman Square & Square opposite Swale House	<p>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.</p> <p>At the December 2021 meeting the Chairman reported that some work had been done and new planters had been installed in the area opposite Swale House. Work on greening the High Street was being looked at and if any Committee Members had ideas could they please email the Chairman.</p>	<p>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 Capital Projects Manager is also meeting with KCC highways officers in the High Street on 15th June so will see if they can make any highway improvements to Roman Square.</p> <p>Future spend on the greening initiative has been deferred while officers consider whether funds available can be increased via UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).</p>
18.	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 Leisure & Technical Services Manager advised that we have recently commenced a full review of our Built facilities Strategy (BFS) and we will be reviewing all areas in the coming months.</p>	The Head of Environment & Leisure advised that the Built Facilities strategy work is well underway with assessments of all facilities across the Borough undertaken and they are now working on the analysis. The next stage will be stakeholder

		It was agreed to bring this back to a future meeting once Members had been able to look at facilities in the area.	consultation later this summer. Schedule for completion of the work is Dec/Jan.
19.	Local Heritage List	At the March 2022 meeting The Senior Conservation & Design Officer explained that a process and timeline for making nominations to the Local Heritage List was being finalised. It was hoped to publish the nomination process on the website by early May 2022.	The Senior Conservation & Design Manager will provide an update at the September 2022 meeting.
20.	Swale Media Arts Centre lease.	A written update was provided at the June meeting.	The Interim Property Services Manager has provided an update – see Appendix 5.

Items to bring back to a future Area Committee Meeting:

	Item	Background	Comments on progress
21.	Signage around the town centre	The Chairman had circulated a schedule of signage around the town centre and invited members to comment on whether they thought any needed changing.	There has been no feedback on this from members. The Chair proposes waiting until the signage in the town centre has been finalised and then bring it back to a future meeting to see if there are any gaps.

22.	Brown tourism signs	<p>To commence an audit of existing local brown signs - Cabinet adopted a Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan on 28 October 2020. This includes a medium-term action to undertake a wayfinding audit of signage and identify any gaps. The delivery partners identified for this action are: SBC; town and parish councils; Visit Swale; Kent Highways; and local businesses.</p> <p>The Brown Signs audit for the borough is not underway as yet as it is programmed in for a later stage of delivery of framework Year 4 (currently in Year 2). This is to enable other actions to take place which will identify and support the businesses and develop the offer. We will then be in a stronger position to identify where signs are required and also where the signs are no longer appropriate.</p>	The Chair will bring this back to a future meeting.
23.	Closed Churchyards	The Conservation and Design Manager explained that over £1 million of works needed to be carried out across Swale on closed churchyards to ensure they were maintained for heritage and health and safety reasons but the Council did not have this funding.	It was agreed to bring this back to a future meeting.