

Western Area Committee meeting: Progress on Matters Arising – 8 June 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>Please see Appendix I for the final report on this project from Brogdale CIC.</p>
2.	Bredgar and Hartlip Conservation Area Reviews.	<p>The Area Committee requested that quotes be obtained for Conservation Area Reviews for Bredgar and Hartlip.</p> <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>The Heritage Consultant agreed to undertake the work within the allocated budget, and the Conservation & Design Team would organise a site walkabout with the consultant and key stakeholders, including parish councils.</p> <p>The Director of Resources advised that as the work was commissioned and ongoing, Swale Borough Council (SBC) were committed to pay for the works. Therefore, it can be paid for when the work is complete after of May 2023.</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>The Conservation & Design Team advised that draft documents for both the Conservation Area Appraisals have been received. The Conservation Officer is liaising with the consultant regarding the final document. Estimated date for start of public consultation is 12th June 2023.</p>

3.	Refurbishment of King George V Toilet Refurbishment	<p>Cllr Sarah Stephen brought a proposal to the September 2022 meeting to consider the refurbishment of the King George V toilet. The Western AC agreed to allocate £5,054 to this project.</p> <p>The Buildings Manager advised that the project was completed in March 2023 and photographs were circulated to the Area Committee Members.</p>	Project complete, no further action.
4.	Flooding in rural areas	<p>Councillor Mike Baldock raised the issue of flooding in rural areas. Due to changing weather patterns, drains were not able to cope and this was now a problem for some residents in the Western area. Members felt that this matter was beyond Kent County Council (KCC) and should be taken up with the Government as a proper funding package was needed to deal with the issue.</p> <p>This matter was referred to the Environment Committee Chair who in turn took it to the Environment Committee on 2 March 2023 when the Committee's endorsement was provided for Councillor Julian Saunders to write to Central Government.</p>	<p>See Appendix II for letter sent by Environment Committee Chair to central Government.</p> <p>Appendix III is the response received.</p>
5.	Donation to foodbanks that provide a service to residents in the Western Area.	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 has been transferred to each of them:	The Sittingbourne Foodbank have provided 170 food parcels across the Western Area wards which translates into feeding 506 people since this funding cleared in their account on 11th November 2022.

			<p>In total They have spent £3641.40 of the allocated £5000 and expect to have spent all of it in the next few months.</p> <p>An update has not yet been received by the Bus Shelter Foodbank. As soon as it arrives, it will be circulated to all Area Committee Members.</p>
6.	<p>Proposal to support residents having difficulties purchasing alternative heating products.</p>	<p>Area Committee members considered a proposal to help homeowners in the Western area with reducing their energy costs. SBC provided a Fuel and Water Home Advisor Service, managed by the Swale charity Children 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>The Fuel and Water Home Adviser has confirmed that £2,235 of the funding allocated has been spent on energy saving products to households across the Western area. The households supported have received energy saving products and or energy advice. Also, eligible households were referred to access</p>

		<p>A leaflet was produced for Area Committee Members and Parish Councils to distribute to residents.</p>	<p>food and HSF support.</p> <p>The Fuel and Energy Adviser asked of Area Committee Members and Parish Councils could continue to make residents aware of the advice and energy saving produces available. Paper copies or PDF of the flyer promoting this service can be obtained from the Policy and Engagement Officer.</p>
7.	<p>Rose Hill & Meads Woodland Management & Work Plans.</p>	<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>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. Awaiting bank details for the Meads Woodland Friends Group.</p>	<p>The bank details for the Meads Woodland Friends Group have been received so the funds have been transferred.</p>

8.	Impact of improvement works at Stockbury roundabout	<p>Members spoke about the impact of the improvement works at Stockbury roundabout (M2 Junction 5) on the villages and roads in the surrounding area and considered a better approach was necessary for future slip road closures. It was agreed that the Chair would write to KCC, Highways England and the Police explaining the issues and asking what could be done to reduce the impact of the works.</p> <p>It was agreed that Area Committee members would email the Policy & Engagement Officer with specific issues that were being experienced in their Wards. The Chair would use this information when writing to KCC, Highways England and the Police.</p>	<p>The Chair wrote to Kent County Council, Highways England (HE) and the Police about the impact of the works at Stockbury roundabout and asked what could be done to reduce the resulting congestion.</p> <p>A response has been received from HE, please see Appendix IV.</p>
9.	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 will provide an update on this project under item 6</p>
10.	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 	<p>The current position of the four Conservation Area Reviews is set out below:</p> <p>The adopted version of the Conservation Area appraisal document is now published on the</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tunstall	Swale Borough Council website, along with a link to the latest map of the Conservation Area. All formalities regarding notifications to local residents, the parish council, local newspaper, and the London Gazette are complete.
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