

<b>Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2023
<b>Report Title</b>	Kent County Council's Enhanced Partnership, Local Focus Group - nominations
<b>EMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
<b>Head of Service</b>	Joanne Johnson, Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. To select two members of the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group to attend the Local Focus Group, and to recommend this membership to Policy and Resources Committee.

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023, Policy and Resources Committee considered recommendations from the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group (PTPWG) regarding the establishment and membership of a Local Focus Group (LFG), related to Kent County Council's Enhanced Partnership.
- 1.2 Policy and Resources Committee agreed to set up the LFG, and to seek two nominations from the PTPWG to attend this group.
- 1.3 This report seeks to secure those nominations, and their recommendation to Policy and Resources Committee.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 KCC used to manage and run Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs) in each district. These meetings ceased to exist when Government started development of its National Bus Strategy.
- 2.2 The National Bus Strategy was launched in March 2021. £3bn was allocated and each area had to respond very quickly by developing a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). KCC sought input from districts and submitted its plan with an ask of £230 million across the county.
- 2.3 In April 2022, KCC received an indicative allocation of £35 million, mainly for identified capital schemes. They received £19m at the end of March 2023 to deliver a reduced set of initiatives and in July 2023, were told they had received a further £16m for 2024/25, subject to agreeing terms.

- 2.4 As part of the funding, Government requires that each area set up an Enhanced Partnership (EP). This is a statutory Board, without which KCC will not receive their funding.
- 2.5 There are also EP Scheme Monitoring Groups set up for East Kent, West Kent and Kent Thameside. Swale is part of East Kent and has one place at that meeting. KCC run and manage these meetings. They will be the group that monitors the schemes in that area linked to the BSIP.
- 2.6 EP Scheme Monitoring Groups will be high level and not cover any district issues. To fill that gap, KCC suggested EP Local Focus Group (LFG) meetings be set up in each district. They will send representatives but cannot resource them and so are asking districts to take on this role. These are not a statutory requirement of the funding.
- 2.7 At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023, PTPWG agreed to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee that Swale Borough Council set up an LFG which reports to the PTPWG, with member representatives from each of the four Area Committees, and the Chair and Vice-Chair of PTPWG.
- 2.8 At its meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> October, Policy and Resources Committee amended this recommendation to 'agreed nominated PTPWG representatives', meaning that the group need not necessarily be represented by its Chair and Vice-Chair.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 To select two members of the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group to attend the LFG, and to recommend this membership to Policy and Resources Committee.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 As the decision has been taken to establish the group and to include PTPWG representation, there are no viable alternative options.

### **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 Discussions have taken place with KCC about these proposals.
- 5.2 Proposals were considered by PTPWG on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023, and Policy and Resources Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Links to Priority Two, investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges by encouraging active travel and reduced car use, and addressing air quality issues.
Financial, Resource and Property	KCC have £35m for their BSIP across the county. It is not clear how much of that will benefit Swale specifically as funding is high level eg new EV fleet across the county. Officer resource/ time every 6 months to manage and attend meetings.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	There is no statutory requirement to set up EP LFGs, but the EP at KCC level is a statutory requirement No other implications identified at this stage.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	Environmental improvements from electric fleet introductions will help with reducing carbon emissions. This would be county wide. Improving air quality seen as a requirement in the BSIP.
Health and Wellbeing	The knock on effects from improved air quality impacts on health and wellbeing.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage

## 7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report: None

## 8 Background Papers

[Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group minutes – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023](#) 302

[Policy and Resources Committee minutes – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023](#) 363