

T&M Parish Partnership
1st March 2012
Kent County Council Service Updates

1) KCC Grants Update

Tonbridge and Malling County Councillors recommendations for funding projects under the Small Community Capital Grant & Local Schemes Grants are now complete and funding is currently being issued to organisations.

Following huge demand the following projects and schemes were been successfully awarded funding from KCC members for Tonbridge and Malling in 2011:

Project	Organisation
Swimming Pool Renovation	Borough Green Primary School
Play Area Boundary Fencing	Hadlow Parish Council
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	Wouldham Parish Council
Tyrolean Rendering Replacement	Hospital of the Holy Trinity Aylesford
Play Equipment for Nevill Park	Snodland Town Council
Door Entry and Computer Project	Tonbridge Citizens Advice Bureau
Toilet Facilities	Mereworth Parochial Church Council
Music@Malling Event	Music at Malling
Kitchenette Installation	St James Centre
Scout Hut Development	Blacklands Scout Group
Refurbishment of Toilets	West Malling Village Hall
Performing Arts Group Project	Chip Productions
Ditton Heritage Centre - Toilet Renovation	Ditton Heritage Centre
Playing Field Improvements	East Peckham Parish Council
Malling Schools Community Band Project	Eynesford Concert Band
District Campsite Improvements	Malling District Scouts
Teenage Gymnastic Club	Weald of Kent Gymnastics Club (Tonbridge)

Kent County Council met on the 9th of February to agree its budgets for the next year and allocations for grant streams for 2012/13 will be announced shortly.

2) Kent Big Society Fund opens for business

Applications are now being welcomed to a new £3million fund to support social enterprises as they improve the economic, social and environmental life of Kent and its residents.

The money has been made available by Kent County Council after it was agreed that a one-off budget allocation totalling £5million would be made available. With this latest £3million being used for supporting social enterprises, the remaining £2million has been set aside to tackle youth unemployment through the Kent Employment Programme, expected to be developed later this year.

Launched by Kent County Council in partnership with the charity Kent Community Foundation, the Big Society Fund will help social enterprise at a time when finance from high street banks and grant funding from the public sector is increasingly difficult. The £3million will be made available via Kent Community Foundation over the next three years. Loans available will normally be between £10,000 and £100,000 and the repayments will be fed back into the fund to continue to provide new loans to other organisations.

The county-based charity the Kent Community Foundation has many years' experience of managing funds for the benefit of the Kent community. Any additional donations into the Big Society Fund from private individuals and businesses will be eligible for tax relief and gift aid. KCC and KCF hope to also attract money from philanthropic and other sources to help support the fund.

More information and applications can be made online at www.kentcf.org.uk/loan_funding.html.

3) Kent gives Diamond Jubilee street parties a boost

Communities across Kent are being invited to start planning street parties for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee this summer.

Kent was one of the top local authorities in the country last year for street parties held to mark the Royal Wedding. Kent County Council is planning to build on this success, so that thousands of residents will be able to celebrate the historic occasion with their neighbours.

Kent County Council Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, Bryan Sweetland, said: "We are once again waiving charges for street parties on quiet residential roads and cul-de-sacs. This 'can do' relaxed approach will allow people to organise a Diamond Jubilee celebration with neighbours in a traffic-free street, giving children the chance to play freely for a change.

"Organisers only have to complete a simple online form. In addition, there is no charge for processing applications, or for road closure signs that we will provide. This means parties in quiet residential roads and cul-de-sacs can be held for free. We hope residents in Kent will seize the opportunity to celebrate this historic occasion."

Party organisers can apply for a road closure over any day during the extended four day holiday from Saturday 2 - Tuesday 5 June. The deadline for street party applications is Friday 18 May. Organisers can request an application form online by visiting www.kent.gov.uk/streetparty, or by calling 08458 247 800.

4) KCC Youth Services Consultation - Update

The consultation regarding the proposed changes to KCC Youth Services closed at the end of October. Over 700 consultation responses were received (either completed questionnaires or open correspondence via letter/email) a report and summary of the consultation findings have now been published and can be found here: http://www.kent.gov.uk/education_and_learning/kent_youth_service/kys_consultation_survey.aspx

In January 2012, the KCC Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities made a formal decision to proceed with the implementation of a new model of service delivery that will combine the best of KCC's work through the delivery of a core KCC offer of open-access youth work alongside local commitment, energy and creativity supported by a newly created commissioning fund.

A final decision by the Cabinet Member on the detail of delivery at district/borough level has been deferred until April and further discussions and endorsements' via Locality Board (or joint district forum) are being sought. Meetings are ongoing between KCC, TMBC and partners and will continue over the next few weeks.

5) Kent welcomes a call for more foster carers

Kent County Council is backing a Fostering Network campaign for new foster carers. The fostering charity estimates that 8,750 new foster families need to be found across the United Kingdom during the next 12 months. Between April 2011 and March 2012, KCC set a target to recruit 120 new foster carers and is on course to achieve this. KCC's Fostering Service offers a range of benefits including comprehensive training and generous allowances, along with supervision and on-going support.

Jenny Whittle, KCC Cabinet Member for Specialist Children Services, said: "I welcome any opportunity to celebrate the work of our 700 foster carers and invite those considering fostering to come forward. Our recruitment campaigns have been successful in recent years but I am keen to attract more carers

across Kent, particularly in north and west Kent and Dover, so that we can keep children as close as we can to their family home.”

People interested in fostering can telephone 0845 330 2968 or visit www.kent.gov.uk/fostering

6) Kents GCSE results getting better all the time!

Last summer's record-breaking GCSE results have been confirmed in official government figures released in January 2012.

Kent's secondary schools have improved year-on-year, with the number of students gaining five or more A* to C grades increasing by 3.2 percentage points to 82.5% - three percentage points above the national average. With 59.4% of pupils achieving five A* to C, including English and maths (up 2.6 percentage points on 2010), Kent schools continue to raise standards and provide good outcomes for the majority of pupils at 16. Tonbridge Grammar school ranked 15th best nationally in 2011.

The Department for Education has published the most detailed set of tables today, giving parents more information than ever before. In the next few years, schools will be challenged to raise standards in the core subjects of English, maths and science, and make sure that disadvantaged students - those on free school meals and looked after children - get better outcomes.

For detailed info on each school in the district visit www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/

7) Vote for Better Broadband

KCC are committed to securing better broadband for businesses and communities in Kent. Our ambition is for 90% of homes and businesses to have superfast broadband access by 2015, and for everyone to have access to a service of at least 2mb. Kent County Council and the Government are investing over £20 million to help make this happen.

However, to achieve our ambitions, we also need broadband providers to invest. This requires us being able to demonstrate the demand for better broadband. The greater the demand, the more broadband providers will be prepared to invest in Kent. It only takes five minutes to register your demand and it could make a great difference, so please register now and encourage your neighbours to get involved.

www.kent.gov.uk/community_and_living/community_grants_and_funding/community_broadband.aspx

8) Library services for the future

People across Kent will shortly be asked to help Kent County Council and Tonbridge and Malling District Council plan new and better ways to run local libraries. KCC know the vital role libraries play in different communities and are determined to work with local people to deliver an excellent service for future generations. Kent has one of the largest library services in the country and KCC wants residents to get involved and take part in transforming it for the future.

The Key drivers for change are:

- Modernise and improve to meet changing demand
- Meet our statutory obligations
- Deliver significant revenue savings

KCC is committed to listening to everyone and will work with local representatives to make sure everyone is heard. Discussions are now starting between KCC and the District Council and full information toolkits are being finalised to ensure that all of the information is available regarding current statistics, stock and costs to inform discussion and debate over how we deliver these services in the future. These packs are due to be made publically available w/c 5th March via www.kent.gov.uk KCC Members and Kent Libraries Service will be organising a joint working group over the next couple of months and will be working with TMBC and representatives from our Parishes where there is library provision currently.

9) Youth Opportunities Fund 2012/13 Launched

The Youth Opportunity Fund is designed for young people. Therefore, at least 4 young people **must** be involved in the project, from the initial idea, completing this application form and the development of the project/ activity. YOF is funded through the Early Intervention Grant and therefore, a number of specific groups of young people have been identified as having faced barriers to accessing youth provision. Decisions about awarding this funding will also be made by a panel of young people from the local area.

Helpful Guidance:

- At least 4 young people have completed and signed off the application form
- Application is supported & signed off by named adult
- At least 75% of the young people benefitting from the project are aged 13 - 19 years (or up to 25 years for young people with learning difficulties or other disabilities)
- Provide a clear breakdown of costs and evidence of the costs.
- All funding awarded must be spent by 31st March 2013.

What can be funded?

It is important this fund benefits as many young people as possible.

Funding will only be awarded for costs up to £250 per young person directly benefitting from the project. Young People can apply for equipment for their projects, activities, trips, residential activities etc. YOF Funding cannot be used to pay for everyday staffing costs. Staffing costs can be applied for up to £9/hour for the specific project; this project must be additional to what is normally on offer to young people.

Deadlines for 2012/13:

- Midday Thursday 5th April 2012
- Midday Friday 7th September 2012

For more information and an application form please contact Claire Trainor (KCC Youth participation worker) Claire.trainor@kent.gov.uk

For more information on any of these subjects please contact:

James Harman

KCC Community Engagement Officer (Tonbridge and Malling)

james.harman@kent.gov.uk

01622 694195

