

Tonbridge and Malling Parish Partnership

17th May 2012

Kent County Council Service Updates

1) KCC Member Grants 2012/13

The 2012/13 KCC Member Grant Schemes are now available for application this year there is over £130,000 in total available, and for the first time the forms will be able to be completed and submitted online (available from June)

Contact your local County Councillor or Community Engagement Officer (contact details below) to further discuss any project you would like them to support and for more details on the Terms and conditions and application process.

www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/have_your_say/community_engagement/local_member_grants.aspx

2) Make Kent Quicker

Kent County Council is leading a £43 million project to transform Kent and Medway's broadband infrastructure. By bringing together public funding and provider investment, at least 90% of Kent's properties can get superfast broadband services by 2015, with the remaining 10% having access of at least 2Mbits/s. The £10 million that Kent County Council is investing in this upgrade has been matched by £9.87 million from the Government.

Current broadband speeds vary considerably across Kent, with some rural areas having poor or limited provision at present. Within the Borough the following areas have exchanges that need upgrading to deliver fast Broadband;

- Aylesford
- Hadlow
- Fairseat
- Hildenborough
- Plaxtol
- Wateringbury
- Shipbourne

We need to encourage as many people as possible in and around the above areas to register their support for superfast broadband, particularly in those areas where, as things stand, superfast broadband is unlikely to be made available.

In Tonbridge and Malling we have received around 500 votes of support so far but are still looking to increase this number in May/Early June to ensure Kent and our local exchanges are prioritised when upgrading to super fast broadband

To register your support, go to www.makekentquicker.com

3) Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2012-17

The county council wants to make sure there are sufficient, high quality places available to children and young people in Kent by expanding good quality schools, securing investment in new ones and providing additional places in the areas where there is growth in numbers. To help get an idea of what is required in the next few years, a wealth of data, provided by district councils, health service and others, has been sifted through. Known as the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2012-17, a draft has been published this week to give everyone the opportunity to pore over the estimates and give their views on the draft plan.

To see the Plan and take part in the consultation, please follow this link:
www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision.

4) Future Library services

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.

A Joint Advisory Panel (JAP) has been formed to look at future Service options. The first JAP will be held on the **31st of May** and will consist of representatives from KCC, TMBC and the Parish Councils that currently have a library. This group will continue the local debates, inviting views and ideas, and comment on the developing plans. These plans will help KCC develop forward looking and sustainable library services, at the heart of local communities, which meet local needs.

5) Tonbridge and Malling Diamond Jubilee Street parties proving popular in T&M

Communities across Tonbridge and Malling are coming out in force next month to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Kent was one of the top local authorities in the country last year for street parties held to mark the Royal Wedding and the popularity has continued with the Jubilee celebrations. Kent County Council has so far received and approved 18 applications for street parties across the Borough, and is hoping thousands of residents will be able to celebrate the historic occasion with their neighbours. Across Kent there will be over 140 street parties to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

The deadline for street party applications is tomorrow Friday 18 May.

Organisers can fill in an application form online by visiting www.kent.gov.uk/streetparty, or by calling 08458 247 800.

6) Mark Dance is Kent's new Cabinet Member for Regeneration

Kent County Council Member Mark Dance has been appointed as the council's Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development.

He was elected to Kent County Council in 1997, joining KCC's Cabinet for the first time in July 2007, until June 2009, with an education brief. Mark's specific area of responsibility was operations, resources and skills, where he was responsible for an annual revenue budget of £1.414 billion and oversaw the billion-pound 'Building Schools for the Future' capital programme.

Mark also chairs the KCC Members' Sport Olympic and Paralympics Group. This has given him a valuable insight into the investment entering the county through Olympic pre-training camps and tourism and the massive Paralympics event at Brands Hatch.

Mark paid tribute to his predecessor Kevin Lynes, who died suddenly last month:

"Kevin was a powerhouse of energy and I will continue with vital efforts to achieve the best possible outcomes for businesses in Kent and the regeneration of the county."

7) Bold Steps for Education - Kent's vision for the future

Kent County Council has launched its vision for the future of education in the county to help improve the lives of thousands of children and young people.

Called *Bold Steps for Education*, it sets out aspirations for Kent to be the best place for children and young people to grow up, learn, develop and achieve. From tots to teens and beyond, the plan shakes up school targets and focuses education and skills to meeting the needs of the Kent economy now and in the future.

Bold Steps for Education outlines the actions education will take to support the aims of the wider Bold Steps for Kent strategy. It contains a host of specific targets designed to improve the educational outcomes for Kent's young people. Our vision is for Kent to be the most forward looking area in England for education and learning so that we are the best place for children and young people to grow up, learn, develop and achieve.

Headteachers and other education partners were involved in preparing the plan. They have backed the ambitious improvements in children and young people's educational achievements - and in the quality of Kent schools, early year's providers and post-16 learning and skills providers. By 2015, schools will have been set a series of targets to help make sure pupils get the most from their school years.

For more information; www.kent.gov.uk/news_and_events.aspx

8) Bold Steps for Aviation - New Kent Proposals

Bold Steps for Aviation sets out for the first time how Kent County Council proposes how the UK can meet its aviation needs through the connection of Gatwick and Heathrow with an airside high speed rail link; better use of Manston and Lydd Airports and other regional airports, including London City, Southend, Stansted, Luton, Southampton and Birmingham; and improved connections of these regional airports with London.

In doing so it recommends:

- The construction of an airside high speed rail link connecting Gatwick and Heathrow.
- Improved rail connectivity of other regional airports (Manston, Lydd, London City, Southend, Stansted, Luton, Southampton and Birmingham) with London, Gatwick and Heathrow.
- Further development of Manston Airport, other existing regional airports in the South East (Lydd, London City, Southend, Stansted, Luton and Southampton) and those with good connections to London (Birmingham).
- Capacity growth at Gatwick through the addition of a second runway after 2019.
- Any proposals for a Thames Estuary airport are not progressed any further.
- No action is not an option but action to address capacity issues must be taken quickly; rather than depending on an estuary airport that will take years to develop and may not even succeed, better use of our existing hub and regional airports NOW will ensure that the UK retains its premier position as a hub airport.

More information can be found at

www.kent.gov.uk/news_and_events/news_archive/2012/may/aviation_policy.aspx

Additional Note: Look out for Trading Standards case involving company from Tonbridge, which will be featured in BBC 1's Fake Britain on 23 May at 9:15am.

For more information please contact:

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