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TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TONBRIDGE FORUM

Monday, 16th April, 2018

Present: Cllr N J Heslop (Chairman), Cllr C P Smith (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr O C Baldock, Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr P F Bolt, Cllr V M C Branson and Cllr F G Tombolis.

Together with County Councillor Mr M Payne and representatives from:

Society of Friends	Tonbridge Rotary Club
Tonbridge Art Group	Tonbridge Sports Association
Tonbridge Civic Society	Tonbridge Theatre and Arts Club
Tonbridge Line Commuters	Tonbridge Town Team
Tonbridge Lions Club	University of the Third Age and
Tonbridge Music Club	Women's Institute

Councillor H S Rogers were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D J Cure, Mrs M F Heslop, R D Lancaster, M R Rhodes, Miss G E Thomas, Mr R Long, The Bridge Trust, Kent Police (Tonbridge) and Tonbridge District Scout Council

TF 18/1 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

TF 18/2 UPDATE ON ANY ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES

The following updates were provided:

TF 17/9 (5) Chairman Announcements

The Chairman advised that positive feedback had been received regarding the new round table format trialled at the last meeting. However, further feedback was requested on the frequency and number of meetings and responses were invited by the end of May. A further update would be given at the next meeting of the Tonbridge Forum.

TF 17/15 Tonbridge Music Club – Recent Activities

Tonbridge Music Club (Mrs Rena Pope) was pleased to report that since the last meeting of the Forum the future of the organisation was more secure as a new Committee Membership had been successfully

established. A number of musical events were planned for the coming year and arrangements were already in hand for Christmas 2018.

TF 18/3 QUESTION FROM THE LOCAL MEMBER FOR TRENCH WARD

In advance of the meeting Councillor Georgina Thomas had requested an update regarding the cycle path/access near the Slade School. Unfortunately due to other commitments Councillor Thomas was unable to attend the meeting to provide greater detail around the original question.

A response from Kent County Council would be progressed out of meeting and Forum Members would be advised accordingly.

TF 18/4 UPDATE ON TONBRIDGE STATION IMPROVEMENTS AND HIGH STREET REVIEW

The Senior Schemes Manager (Jamie Watson) summarised the progress on the improvements to Tonbridge Station. It was reported that significant work was being undertaken on a detailed design and this would be shared with Members and the public once finalised.

Particular reference was made to Southeastern's proposed cycle hub on Barden Road. This had resulted in design work being required on the junction with Vale roundabout. In addition, separate works were necessary to ensure that cyclists remained safe while accessing the hub and a contraflow cycle lane was proposed.

There were also plans to try and retain the kiss and drop layby outside the station, remove the right hand turn into Priory Road and provide a traffic signalled junction at Waterloo Road granting pedestrian access.

To minimise disruption to traffic it was intended to commence construction at the start of the summer holidays 2018. However, a final programme/timetable for the works had not yet been established.

With regard to the recent review of the High Street it was noted that the on-line public consultation had ended on 4 March 2018. Members were reminded that the aim of the scheme was to provide a more attractive environment for pedestrians, reduce congestion and encourage business to the town.

Unfortunately, the public responses to the consultation illustrated negative feedback towards the project and particular concerns had been expressed regarding online bus stops, the location of bus stops and their use by 'idling' buses.

Overall, there had been a variety of responses but the overwhelming view was that bus stops represented a significant challenge. In response, Kent County Council would continue to explore ways to

improve traffic flows in the town and whether there was the potential to convert the loading bay/layby into a bus stop.

Tonbridge Civic Society commented on the improved appearance of the High Street and thanked Kent County Council for the significant investment into the Town. However, they asked that consideration be given to the structure of bus stops, potential improvements to the unattractive buildings, granite steps and cobbles alongside the station.

It was noted that these buildings were owned by Network Rail and regular lobbying was undertaken by the Chairman and the Borough Council to encourage improvements to the area.

A number of points were raised by the Forum related to improved signage to divert traffic along the Bordyke and away from the High Street, the raised table in the High Street being repeatedly mistaken for a pedestrian crossing, the impact on cyclists of online bus stops and the traffic delays caused by online bus stops.

In response, Mr Watson explained that:

- The aim of the scheme was to encourage traffic away from the High Street and the County Council would review the signage again.
- The raised table in the High Street was a traffic calming feature intended to encourage drivers to consider their environment.
- Whilst the need to improve cycle facilities was recognised the current configuration of the High Street meant it might not be possible to retain all lay-bys.
- The use of appropriate materials would be considered carefully to provide an attractive environment and ensure longevity.
- Bus operators had responsibility to ensure that their timetable did not create 'idling' issues and there was ongoing engagement with service providers to resolve this issue.

Finally, it was reiterated that the County Council would give further consideration to maintaining the free flow of traffic through the town and explore options around the online bus stops. A further update would be given at the next meeting of the Forum in September.

TF 18/5 TONBRIDGE FAIRTRADE TOWN

Tonbridge Town Team (Howard Porter) and the Economic Regeneration Officer (Jeremy Whittaker) set out proposals aimed at making Tonbridge a Fairtrade town.

The benefits of becoming a Fairtrade town were outlined and included:

- A positive contribution towards sustainable development
- Positive benefit to the local community
- Increased engagement with some larger retailers
- Promotional opportunities for Tonbridge

Initial interest to the proposals had been expressed from retailers and community groups between November 2017 and January 2018, with a resolution to support Fairtrade Tonbridge passed by the Borough Council in February 2018.

Promotional activities had been undertaken during Fairtrade Fortnight in February/March 2018 and Fairtrade produce had been introduced at the monthly Tonbridge Farmers Market in March.

A number of next steps to be undertaken were set out and included:

- Continuing to work through the application process
- Encouraging more local businesses and community organisations to get involved

It was reported that a Steering Group would convene for the first time later this month (April 2018) and Borough Councillor Frixos Tombolis had agreed to act as Chairman. A final application would be submitted in 2018.

Members fully supported the proposal especially as there was evidence that Fairtrade initiatives increased tourism, motivated staff and was a brand that was easily recognised and trusted by the public. It was also suggested that consideration be given to supporting 'Direct Trade' which was often viewed as complementary to Fairtrade certification.

In response, it was explained that once Fairtrade certification was achieved there was no reason why 'Direct Trade' could not form part of this initiative.

The community aspect of the initiative and the need to involve local workplaces and organisations was emphasised. Volunteers willing to participate were asked to contact Tonbridge Town Team for more information.

TF 18/6 KENT POLICE UPDATE

This item was WITHDRAWN from the agenda as Kent Police were unable attend for operational reasons.

TF 18/7 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

The Kent County Council Community Liaison Officer (Anne Charman) reported on a number of County initiatives and consultations. A Kent County Council Services Update report setting out more details was attached to the agenda for information.

Particular reference was made to a number of key messages and these included:

- Many Council meetings were broadcast live and provided residents with the opportunity to watch how decisions were made. Meetings from the past year were available to view online at the Kent County Council website.
- The Guide to Apprenticeships and Made in Kent campaigns offered careers advice, information about different types of jobs and continued to encourage employers to register vacancies as numbers of young people registering for apprenticeships were exceeding placements.
- The deadline for applying to the Kent and Medway Business Fund, which offered zero % loans between £50,000 and £500,000 to small and medium sized businesses was 30 April 2018.
- The Combined Member Grant Scheme 2018/19 had opened on 1 April with £20,000 available to every County Councillor to fund both community and highway projects in their electoral division. Anyone interested should contact either County Councillors Michael Payne or Richard Long, although it was noted that requests for and pressures on funding were already significant.
- Everyone was encouraged to register to the Kent Public Health Observatory which provided information on public health based on data collection, analysis and interpretation.
- More than 97% of children across Kent had been allocated one of their chosen primary schools, with 97% getting their first preference. As a result, only 3% of families would be allocated a school they did not name.

Finally, all Kent County Council consultations could be viewed online at:

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti>

Kent County Councillor Payne also reported on the refurbishment of Tonbridge library, the opening of the Nexus School in Upper Haysden Lane, reiterated the pressures on the recently opened Combined

Member Grant fund and encouraged everyone to use the online fault reporting tool for any problems on the roads and footways.

TF 18/8 TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

The Chairman (in his role as Leader of the Borough Council) provided an update on key points relevant to Tonbridge. The headline messages set out in the presentation would be available online and circulated with the Minutes. However, in summary these included:

- Keep Kent Clean and litter picks: A significant number of events had taken place in Tonbridge during March and April and all volunteers who had participated were thanked.
- Street Monitors and Flood Wardens would join forces for a big rubbish clearance at Sovereign Way Car Park on 12 May.
- Plans were in place to recruit a One You 'your home' advisor to be based at Warders Medical Centre.
- Tonbridge Area Churches were running litter picking events for young people over the 6 week summer holiday.
- External funding had been secured from developer contributions and there had been investment and improvements made to a number of facilities including Haysden Country Park, Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground, Remembrance Gardens cycle way and Tonbridge Town Lock.
- Full time pay and display parking had been introduced around Tonbridge Castle Grounds car park to meet ongoing demand for public parking.
- Tonbridge Swimming Pool had received an industry standard QUEST award and was one of only 12 facilities who had received this rating. It was noted that both the Swimming Pool and Larkfield Leisure Centre had achieved this outstanding result and were in the top 2% nationally.
- The Borough Council had adopted a scheme in 2017 to pass on support to local businesses affected by the revaluation of business rates.
- The Borough Council was working in partnership to create a business hub for small and start-up businesses at the Castle Lodge and business engagement events had been established to help support local businesses.

- Support had been given to Tonbridge Creates to deliver a pop up shop on Tonbridge High Street at Angel Walk.

In response to a query regarding the introduction of car parking charges around Tonbridge Castle, the Chief Executive explained that these changes were to maximise the spaces available for public parking provision. The visitor spaces for those using the Castle offices were being retained.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

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Fairtrade Tonbridge

Howard Porter

Tonbridge Town Team

Jeremy Whittaker

Economic
Regeneration Officer,
TMBC

April 2018



**We are a
Fairtrade
Town**



What is Fairtrade?

- A trading partnership that seeks greater equity in international trade.
- Offers better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalised producers and workers.
- Fairtrade products are sold in over 22 countries
- Support from companies such as M&S, Waitrose and Tate & Lyle.
- Helping to make international development a local issue are over 600 Fairtrade Towns in the UK and more than 2,000 across 18 countries worldwide.

Why Fairtrade Tonbridge?

- Positive contribution towards sustainable development.
- Initial research from Tunbridge Wells and Edenbridge highlights positive local community benefits.
- Great way to engage some of the larger retailers.
- Promotional opportunities for the town, and a good excuse for more events!

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Fairtrade Tonbridge

A five stage application process to becoming a Fairtrade Town:

- 1. Local council passes a resolution supporting Fairtrade.**
- 2. A range of (at least four) Fairtrade products are readily available in the area's retail outlets and served in local catering outlets.**
- 3. Local workplaces and community organisations support Fairtrade and use Fairtrade products wherever possible.**
- 4. Media coverage and events raise awareness and understanding of Fairtrade across the community.**
- 5. A local Fairtrade steering group is convened.**



Progress to Date

November 2017-January 2018 – Initial interest from retailers and community groups

February 2018 – Resolution to support Fairtrade Tonbridge passed by Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

February/March 2018 – Fairtrade Fortnight: Promotional activities

March 2018 – introduction of Fairtrade produce at the monthly Tonbridge Farmers Market



Next Steps

- Continue to work through the application process.
- Steering Group convening for first time later this month.
- Look to encourage more local businesses and community organisations to get involved.
- Aim to submit the application in 2018.



Thank You for Listening.



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Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Services Update

The Great British Spring Clean (GBSC) is a national campaign led by Keep Britain Tidy. The Kent Resource Partnership which represents the 13 Kent Councils have launched several new campaigns including [#KeepKentClean](#) which we ran in conjunction with GBSC. This had huge impact on our social media pages with a 'reach' which connected, informed and inspired over 103,000 people.

The following slides highlight a number of activities taking place in Tonbridge.



Spring Clean Events in Tonbridge – March/April 2018 Stats

Organisation	Location	Date	Volunteers (n)	sacks collected
TGS Duke of Edinburgh Award	Tonbridge	March / April	1	12
River Church Tonbridge (TACT)	Tonbridge	March/ July TBC	60	TBC
Sussex Road Primary School 'Flower Power' Litter Pickers	South Tonbridge (Judd)	Monthly patrols	12	7
Somerhill Green Community Litter Pick	South Tonbridge (Vauxhall)	Regularly	8	8
Woodland Walk Mgt Committee	Tonbridge	Sat 14 April 2018	10	TBC (20)
Haysden Country Park Volunteers	Tonbridge	Sat 3 March 2018	16	16
Tonbridge Street Monitors	Tonbridge	Sat 31 March 2018	2	3
Barden Road Litter Blitz	Tonbridge	Sunday 4 March 2018	25	14
Tonbridge Canoe Club	Tonbridge	Sunday 4 March 2018	35	32
McDonalds	Tonbridge	Wed 4 April 2018	20	14
McDonalds	Tonbridge	Ongoing	20	20
Tonbridge (Medway) MVCP	Tonbridge	Ongoing	15	30
Various locations	Walking Litter Picks	Ongoing	8	
TOTAL SACKS				156
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS			232	

Some stand out achievements are the ongoing commitment from the Franchisee of the two McDonalds outlets in the town. Led by Surjit Manger and his Assistant Manager, Christina McGath they garnered their 108 strong workforce to take part in two community litter picks over the Easter break in partnership with Kent Police (the two new Tonbridge PCSOs) and ongoing daily cleanses in the vicinity of the Sportsground, High Street, Tow Path, Town Lock and Cannon Lane.



McDONALD'S IN YOUR COMMUNITY

At McDonald's we recognise our responsibility to protect and preserve the environment for future generations to come.
That is why for over 30 years, our restaurants have carried out daily litter patrols.



We also work together with local communities to help reduce the effect that litter has on the environment.
We will be holding a litter picking event soon and would welcome anyone who would like to help. By working together, we can make a real difference.

Our next Litter Event:

WHEN:	APRIL 4th 2018 11am -3PM
WHERE:	RIVER LAWN ROAD & PLAYGROUND

If you would like to get involved or if you have any suggestions on where we can hold a future event, please speak to a manager.

Love where you Live 



Interest has been received from young people as individuals wishing to fulfil their 'Service' element of the Duke Of Edinburgh Awards from Tonbridge Girls Grammar School and Hillview School by doing weekly litter picks over a 3/4 month period.

Equally we have a young litter hero from Sussex Road Primary School, Miss Charlotte Flower who as part of her Eco Club is running weekly litter picks around Sussex Road with her young friends. The Head Teacher of Sussex Road Primary School has also set up a new litter picking group around the new development 'Somerhill Green' who are doing monthly events.



As always the failsafe groups from Gold 'Environmental Champions Award' Winners Tonbridge Canoe Club in partnership with Medway Valley Countryside Partnership and Haysden Country Park Volunteers are keeping the river rubbish under control. Historically removing over 22 trolleys from the River Medway in one event.

Great British Spring Clean– March 2018



The volunteer Street Monitors for which we have 88 registered in Tonbridge have reported ad-hoc events and disposing of the waste in their own black residual waste bins and some even recycling the litter found at their local recycling site and / or green box.

On 12th May Street Monitors and Flood Wardens will be joining forces for a big rubbish clearance at Sovereign Way Car Park.

Additionally the One You Team have recruited and trained up new Health Walk Leaders across the Borough, many of whom are keen to combine these 'Health Walks' with litter picking on the go, which we fully support and encourage.

We have received 35 referrals from Tonbridge Medical Practice, Warders and Hildenborough and Tonbridge Medical Group since the One You campaign began in October 2017. About 10 of these are live with fantastic changes being made to people's lifestyles including weight loss, people quitting smoking, cutting back on alcohol, housing adaptations being made to those who need more support etc.

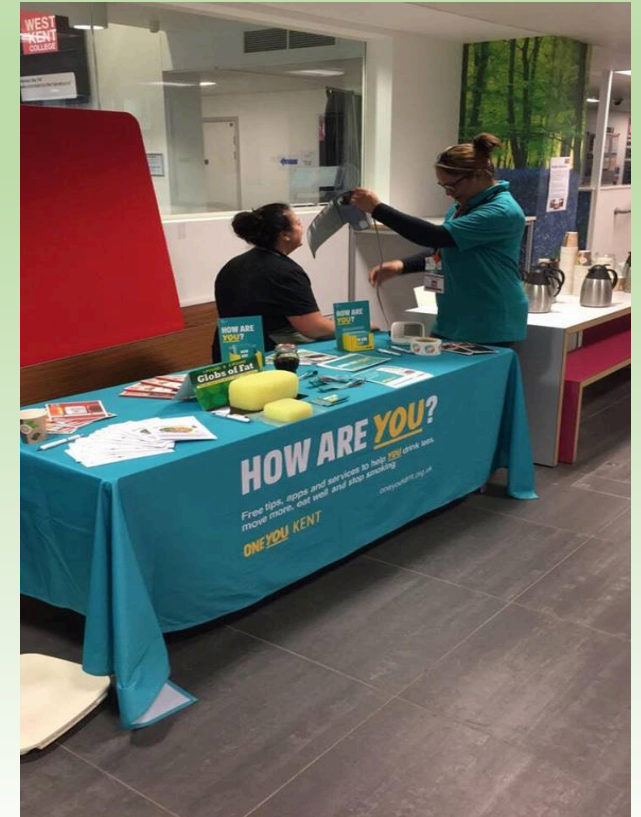
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The One You team hosted a Wellbeing Day at West Kent College (Hadlow College Group) as part of our Workplace Wellbeing programme. We saw over 80 members of staff from across the Network for wellbeing checks and advice for their own wellbeing. You can find out more by trying the [One You Kent quiz](https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/one-you-kent) for yourself. Three individuals were referred to their Doctor for further support. <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/one-you-kent>



Plans are in place to recruit a One You 'your home' advisor who will be based at Warders Medical Centre and will be required to see those residents who present at the doctors most frequently for home and One You assessments.

Lastly the TACT (Tonbridge Area Churches Together) are running summer events, litter picking events for young people with an estimate of 60 volunteers over the 6 week summer break.



Our facilities continue to be improved through our success in securing external funding from developer contributions and grant sources. Improvements made include:-

Haysden Country Park

- **Play area improvements**
- **Café area**
- **Barden Lake path improvements**
- **Pond dipping platform path improvements**



**Haysden Country Park
Play Area**



**Haysden Country Park Pond
Dipping Platform Improvements**



**Haysden Country Park
Café Area
Improvements**



Barden Lake Revetment

- **Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground – new baseball facility, tennis academy, river revetment works**
- **Tonbridge Cemetery – path extension**
- **Tonbridge Castle river wall revetment**
- **Angel Centre gym refurbishment – all equipment replaced and facility refurbished**



Tonbridge Baseball Club



Tonbridge Tennis Academy

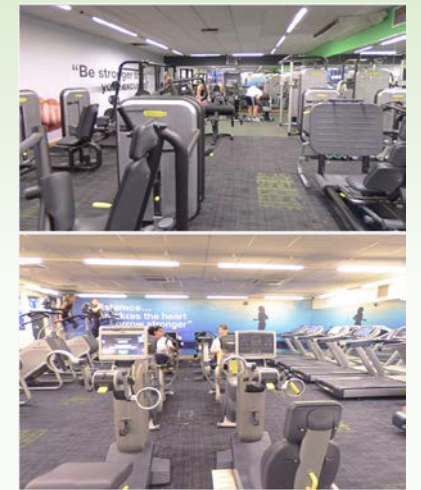
- **Introduction of full time pay & display parking around the Castle Grounds Car Park to meet on-going demand for public parking around the Castle**

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- **Tonbridge Town Lock – full refurbishment of the site including flood protection works and new boating facilities**
- **Tonbridge Memorial Garden wall – following previous refurbishment works to the memorial gardens, works have been progressed to the wall.**
- **Remembrance gardens cycle way – upgraded / installed new lighting to ensure the area is appropriately lit.**



Remembrance Garden cycle way lighting



Angel Centre Gym Refurbishment

There are a number of improvements planned including:-

- **Haysden Country Park - car park extension, woodland sculptures, sewage work improvements, volunteers container**
- **Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground – cycle path improvements**
- **Tonbridge Cemetery – refurbishment of chapel including roof works and re-carpet**

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Tile Barn Farm



Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground Cycle Route

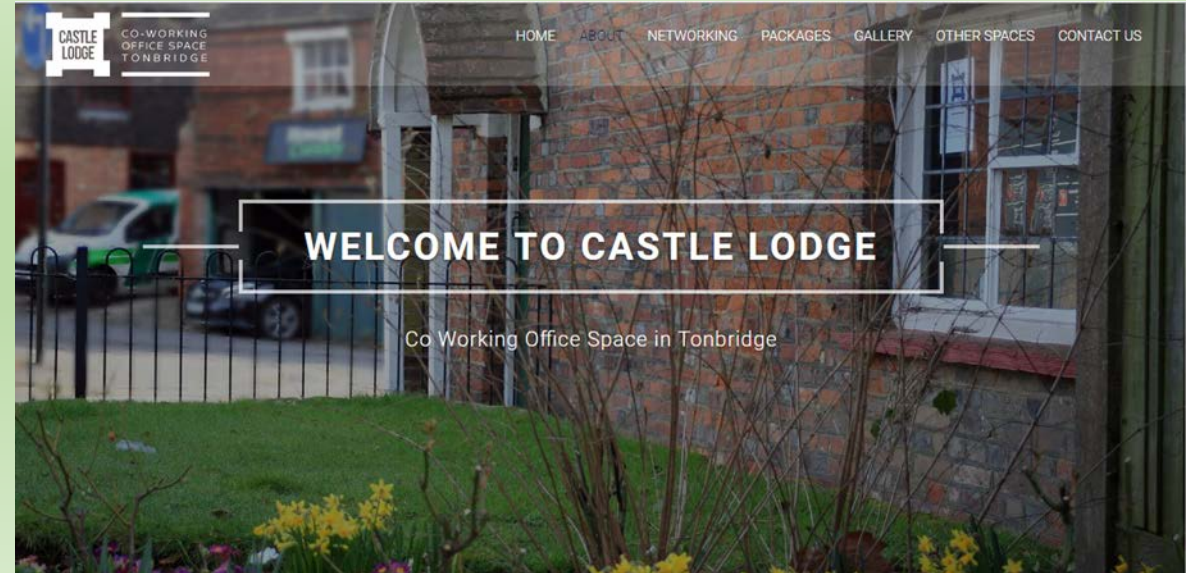
The Chancellor in the March 2017 Budget announced that the Government would provide £300m nationally to support those businesses most affected by the revaluation of business rates due to take effect from April 2017.

In 2017/18 TMBC received an allocation of £338,000, and will get an allocation of £164,000 in this financial year 2018/19.

TMBC adopted a scheme during 2017 in order to pass on the support to local businesses affected by the revaluation. In Tonbridge, 68 separate business have benefited.

The council is working in partnership with the operators of 'The House' in Tunbridge Wells to create new flexible co-working space for small and start-up businesses:

- Help to mitigate, in a small way, against the loss of office accommodation in Tonbridge Town Centre. Aims to improve business survival rates. Create a support network for people starting up a new business.
- Offers opportunities for seminars and information events that are specifically geared towards start-ups.
- Opens late Spring 2018.



The council has supported 'Tonbridge Creates' to deliver a pop-up shop on Tonbridge High Street at Angel Walk:

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- Re-animating an empty High Street unit.
- Providing something different on the High Street and encouraging additional footfall.
- Giving small local businesses an outlet to promote and sell their products.
- Supporting a range of community activity

TONBRIDGE CREATES IS
COMING

*Join us for the launch of
Tonbridge Creates*

Friday 23rd Feb 2018
8 Angel Walk
5:30pm - 7pm

Please RSVP to Louise
Tonbridgecreates@hotmail.com
07813 067 228

The council has established business engagement events to help support local businesses:

- Enabling the council to talk to businesses about the issues they face.
- Highlighting support (grants/loans/advice) that is available.
- Giving businesses an opportunity to talk to each other.
- Next business meeting 24 April 2018.



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