

# **Tonbridge Forum**

## **Monday, 12 September 2016**

### **Kent County Council Services Update**

#### **Key points from Report by Leader of the Council – Full Council May 2016**

- In relation to the proposed road repair blitz, Mr Carter announced works would start in mid-June. The vast majority of these works would be carried out by small and medium sized civil engineering companies on a district by district basis.
- Mr Carter referred to the White Paper, 'Education Excellence Everywhere' and the small victory in the removal of the enforced academisation from the potential education bill referred to in the Queen's Speech. He stated that it was now necessary to find a way forward that made sure there was not a two-tier educational and financial system which favoured multi-academy trusts but penalised community schools. There was a need to ensure the Education Support Grant allowed KCC to continue to provide school improvement and support services to the nearly 400 schools that still remained in the community schools category.
- In relation to next year's budgetary problems, Mr Carter referred to the unidentified savings of some £50m. Good progress was being made and he suggested that, with the agreement of opposition leaders, there could be a mini budget session at the September County Council meeting (please note September's Full Council meeting has been cancelled and the next meeting will be held in October). If these savings are agreed they could potentially start to be taken in year rather than waiting until February 2017 to identify the savings.
- Mr Carter referred to a very good facilitated discussion on devolution with all district leaders and Medway which suggest there was agreement to progress what hopefully will be an ambitious devolution submission to government. He explained there was an acceptance by district leaders that in Kent and Medway, we did not want the imposition of a directly elected major. This view accorded with the vast majority of County Councils.
- Mr Carter talked about the Apprenticeship Levy. The County Council would have to contribute £4.5m into the levy and the Personnel Committee would consider how this could be used to ensure that there was a significant increase in the number of Kent County Council apprenticeships, including those in KCC's supply chain. This year Kent would have 3000 16-18 year olds in modern apprenticeships, which was one of the highest in the country.
- Mr Carter stated that it was important for health partners and social care to work closely together on community health and preventative services that reduce hospitalisation and get people out of hospital into step-down care and back behind their own front door as fast as possible. This could also save money.
- In response to a reference made to the Young Person's Travel Pass, Mr Carter stated that his was the most generously supported school transport system in this country outside of London. KCC has chosen to fund an additional £8m to help parents get their young people to and from school. Despite the state of the public finances of this country and the

considerable part local government had to play to restore those public finances, he was still hoping to maintain the Young Person's Travel Pass at an affordable cost to parents.

## **Sign up to KCC's new mailing list and receive the latest council news in your mailbox**

By subscribing to KCC's free emailing service residents can receive important Kent County Council information and news as it becomes available. A valid email address is required and will be used only to provide information on topic preferences subscribed to. For more information visit: [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)

## **KCC Highways – report a problem on the road or pavement**

KCC Highways, Transportation and Waste welcomes feedback from its customers and has designed a fault reporting tool so that residents can quickly and easily let us know about any problems on the roads and footways or about any equipment such as streetlights, that may not be working.

**If you wish to report a fault visit:** [www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults)

From here can be viewed all known issues, any planned works, report multiple issues, upload photos as well as track any existing enquiries. KCC no longer offers a generic email service as the improved online fault reporting tool has been designed to ensure all of the information is captured so that faults are responded to quickly. Residents can still call to report any complex or urgent matters on 03000 418181 and speak to one of KCC's trained highway specialists.

## **Potholes – KCC is busy repairing potholes across Kent this summer**

KCC is spending an extra £3 million on pothole repairs this year, which includes £1.4 million from the Government.

KCC's highways crews are working hard to improve the quality of road surfaces and make road travel safer and are doing this alongside KCC's [planned work](#) to repair roads.

In **Tonbridge and Malling** 422 miles of road has had £183,962 spent on repairs since 1 June 2016. To view the latest figures for your local area visit <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/roads/potholes>

## **KCC Combined Member Grant Scheme 2016/17**

KCC's Combined Member Grant scheme will open on 1 April 2016 with £20,000 available to every County Councillor to fund both community and highway projects in their electoral division. Tonbridge & Malling County Councillors have a total of £140,000 to allocate in 2016/17.

The County Councillors have used their grant allocations in past years to support a wide range of organisations and projects, from sports clubs and arts groups to charities and social enterprises to

Parish and District Council projects. The feedback from applicants and local people has been universally positive and has helped a number of projects receive additional or match funding as a result.

For more information on the Combined Member Grant scheme, please contact your local County Councillor or Anne Charman, KCC Community Liaison Officer.

KCC also produces a monthly publication 'Inside Track' which provides information on funding opportunities at a county and national level. For a copy of Inside Track or information on other funding opportunities visit: <http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/community-grants-and-funding>.

## **Consultations - have your say, your views count**

You can view all KCC consultations online at: <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti>

**Signed up to the KCC Consultation Directory yet?** It only takes a few minutes to register and gives a full list of past, current and planned consultations and provides an opportunity to feedback on local services and policies. It enables KCC to contact residents when an activity is due to take place or to receive feedback for a particular consultation or involvement activity when it is published on KCC's website.

(Please note there are separate lists for **Traffic Regulation Orders** and **Start of Works Notices** and for **Public Rights of Way Notices**.)

### **Local Transport Plan 4 – Delivering Growth without Gridlock: 8<sup>th</sup> August to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

Kent County Council (KCC) has a legal duty to produce a Local Transport Plan. This document demonstrates to Kent's residents and local businesses our strategies and priorities to make sure transport is playing its part in making Kent a great place to live, work and do business.

The Plan highlights our priority schemes that are nationally important, such as a new Lower Thames Crossing and a solution to Operation Stack, as well as priority local schemes across Kent. Investment in our infrastructure is vital to boost Kent's economy and support a growing population.

To find out more and to take part visit website [www.kent.gov.uk/localtransportplan](http://www.kent.gov.uk/localtransportplan) or visit KCC's County Hall, district council offices, Gateways and libraries which will have a reference copy of the LTP4 draft and consultation questionnaires.

### **KCC Equality and Human Rights Policy & Objectives: 2016 – 2020: extended until 30 September**

Kent County Council (KCC) would like to hear your views on its proposed draft Equality and Human Rights Policy and Objectives document which will help it to tackle discrimination and promote fairness and equality for our service users, staff and local residents.

To find out more visit: [www.kent.gov.uk/diversity](http://www.kent.gov.uk/diversity). You can respond to the consultation via an [online questionnaire](#) or print off the consultation document and questions and return it to us free of charge using the following address: Equality Objectives Consultation, Freepost LRA Consultation.

KCC will publish the final version of its Equality and Human Rights Policy and its Equality Objectives after this consultation.

## KCC news

To view the latest news and releases from KCC visit KCC's Media Hub at <https://kccmediahub.net/>

### Recent media releases

#### ***Your County Matters***

From investing £4.2bn into key infrastructure, to safeguarding more than 150,000 vulnerable young children, or covering 86% of England's landmass, counties matter.

County Council's Network (CCN) new campaign, Your County Matters, will ensure county authorities are at the forefront of the debate on devolution and public sector reform.

Launched as part of CCN's Future of County Public Services programme, the campaign will put forward a positive, solution-based case for our members, showcasing their ability to drive forward county devolution and public sector reform at size and scale.

It will emphasise how important the delivery of county services are economically and socially to our local communities, seeking in particular to demonstrate to the new Government, MPs, and national stakeholders that upper-tier authorities are the critical bodies for delivering devolution and service transformation in non-metropolitan areas.

Drawing on research commissioned as part of the future of county public services programme, CCN will produce a Your County Matters report later this summer ahead of the Party Conferences.

For more information on any of these subjects please contact:

**Anne Charman**, KCC Community Liaison Officer

[anne.charman@kent.gov.uk](mailto:anne.charman@kent.gov.uk) or 07717 665893

*KCC's **Community Liaison Team** covers all 12 district council areas in Kent supporting local County Councillors in their role as community leaders and administering their grants. The team works closely with partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, to help ensure Kent's residents and local community groups are kept well informed about KCC's services and are given the opportunity to influence decisions.*

