

Tonbridge and Malling Parish Partnership Panel

Thursday, 17 November 2016

Kent County Council Services Update

Key points from the Report by Paul Carter, Leader of the Council to Full Council on 14 July 2016

- There are a number of 16-18 year olds who are disenfranchised from the job market having left school without achieving 5 A to C grade GCSEs, including English and Maths, and feeling failures with low self-esteem. Mr Carter expressed the view that the education establishment was too prescriptive with a one size fits all academic national curriculum. He believed that independent careers advice and guidance should be provided to 14-16 year olds, with real curriculum choices of applied vocational courses, which would enable young people to explore their full potential. He stated that the post 16 Skills Plan would help but it was still fixated on putting up barriers to employment and entry into apprenticeships until those young people had obtained 5 A to C grade GCSEs, including English and Maths. Many young people who may not be academically able wanted a job and a wage and the current system was working against them.
- Referring to health and social care integration through the Sustainable Transformation Plan, Mr Carter stated that Local Government had much to offer health partners in the delivery of effective and efficient services. He hoped that the role of Local Government would be strengthened allowing closer work with health partners, including sharing Local Government's experience of delivering effective and efficient services at much less cost.
- In relation to a compulsory dispersal system for unaccompanied asylum seekers, Mr Carter had recently written to Mr Brokenshire, Minister for Security and Immigration (current post-holder now Mr Robert Goodwill), to suggest that there should be a time limit on the voluntary system prior to a dispersal system being enforced, if necessary. This would enable Kent to reduce the number of unaccompanied asylum seekers down to three or four hundred plus the remaining 18+ year olds that would have to remain in Kent while they went through the asylum process.
- Regarding devolution, Mr Carter was of the view that there would be empowering of local government by Westminster and Whitehall. He referred to the example of public health and the inroads made into influencing and shaping the health and social care interface. He reminded Members that Local Government had a massive agenda and spent 25% of the public purse every year and was optimistic that Kent would receive additional funding to integrate health and social care, through a well thought out Strategic Development Plan.

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

Snodland Library

Snodland Library will be closed from Monday 17 October until Tuesday 20 December 2016 for planned refurbishment. It will re-open on Wednesday 21 December.

KCC apologies for the inconvenience this may cause.

For more information contact: snodlandlibrary@kent.gov.uk

Kent Fostering - Open your Heart

KCC urgently needs people to provide children and young people with loving homes, particularly for:

- older children aged 13 to 18
- siblings
- disabled children
- unaccompanied asylum seeking young people

Find out about the benefits, payments and all the support Kent County Council can provide you. For more information please contact 03000 420 002.

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

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.

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**.)

A26 Cycle Route – 4 November to 18 December

Kent County Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council are working together to promote active travel and the greater use of cycling, especially for local journeys.

Find out about proposals for improving the A26 cycle route between Tonbridge (Brook Street junction) and Tunbridge Wells (Grosvenor Road junction) and tell us your views.

If you require any further information about the proposals before responding to the consultation, please email andy.moreton@kent.gov.uk.

Improving access to Tonbridge Station – 31 October to 11 December

Kent County Council has secured £500,000 from the Local Growth Fund, allocated by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership to improve the area outside Tonbridge Station. Tonbridge station is the busiest station in Kent with over four million customers using the station in 2014/15.

Working with Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Network Rail and Southeastern, KCC is aiming to improve the space providing more room for pedestrians and to link the design to the recently improved High Street.

The scheme aims to improve the safety of pedestrians, particularly when crossing the roads at peak times and encourage more sustainable modes of travel such as buses, cycling or walking.

There are four consultation drop-in events where members of the team will be available to answer questions in the Council Chamber at Tonbridge Castle on:

Saturday, 12 November: 11am - 3pm

Saturday 19 November: 11am - 3pm

Thursday 24 November: 2pm - 7pm

Monday 28 November: 3pm - 8pm

KCC Draft Budget Proposals 2017/18 – 13 October to 27 November 2016

KCC needs to identify £108.3m for its 2017/18 budget and is proposing a Council Tax increase of **1.99%**. The Government also allows KCC to include a further **2%** increase to fund extra spending on adult social care. This is called a [social care precept](#).

This would mean KCC's proportion of the Council Tax charge on a Band C property would rise from £1007.60 in 2016/17 to £1,047.84 in 2017/18.

These Council Tax changes, which include new households, would raise an extra **£27.9m** towards closing the gap. However, there will still be an **£80.4m** shortfall between the amount of money KCC has and the amount it needs to spend to continue to deliver services.

KCC is asking for your views on its budget proposals and how it can close the remaining gap before its 2017/18 budget is finalised in February 2017.

For more information visit:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/budget-201718>

KCC news

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

Recent media releases

Kent parents encouraged to get young children vaccinated against flu this autumn - With nursery and school terms well underway parents and guardians of children aged two to seven, are being encouraged to get the free flu vaccination for their children.

Kent's young artists' work on show - A competition for young artists across the county reaches its climax with an exhibition of their work at County Hall, Maidstone. The annual John Downton Awards for Young Artists commemorate the work of John Downton, the celebrated Kent artist, poet and philosopher, who was born in Erith in 1906. Each year, students from schools and colleges across Kent are invited to participate in the awards; giving young artists aged 11-18 the opportunity to exhibit their work, possibly for the first time in their careers.

Admission is free to the exhibition, which will run from Monday 24 October to Tuesday, 3 January, at the County Gallery, Sessions House, County Hall. The gallery is open Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm. Winners will be announced at an awards evening on Thursday, 10 November.

Winter service launched – ready for action - As temperatures continue to drop, Kent County Council has now rolled out its gritters which will remain in operation until March. The county's 64 gritter trucks are now on standby for when the temperatures plummet and staff are keeping a close eye on 13 weather stations which determine when gritting needs to take place

New Smartcard for Kent launches allowing pay-as-you-go travel - A pay-as-you-go travel card has been launched in Kent today, allowing passengers to pay for their bus travel without having to scabble around for change.

The Connected Kent and Medway smartcard has been designed as a joint initiative between Kent County Council and Medway Council and will be available for use from Monday, September 26.

The pay-as-you-go card closely resembles the capital's Oyster card in that it can be topped up online, at certain libraries or in person on the bus. It will initially be accepted on seven operators: Nu-Venture, Autocar, Chalkwell, ASD, County Connect, Farleigh and Go-Coach.

For more information on any of these subjects please contact:

Anne Charman, KCC Community Liaison Officer

anne.charman@kent.gov.uk 03000 416923 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.*

