

# Tonbridge Forum

Monday, 16 April 2018

## Kent County Council Services Update

### Did you know that many of KCC's meetings are webcast?

KCC broadcasts some of its council meetings live online, giving you the chance to see council decision making in action.

Webcast council meetings from the past year are also available to view [here](#).

( <https://kent.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts> )

### Guide to apprenticeships / 'Made in Kent'

Visit [Guide to apprenticeships](#) for careers advice and information about different types of jobs

(<https://www.kent.gov.uk/jobs/starting-your-career/be-an-apprentice/guide-to-apprenticeships> )

Apprenticeships are an excellent way to get work-based training, working with real employers, training on the job and working towards an industry-standard qualification.

The 'Made in Kent' campaign continues to encourage employers to register vacancies as numbers of young people registering for apprenticeships still exceeds placements.

### Lorry Watch

KCC works to mitigate the impact of freight in Kent and has introduced a scheme called Lorry Watch to tackle the issue of lorries using inappropriate rural routes in Kent. The scheme aims to support and empower local residents in areas where issues persist with the through traffic of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

The Lorry Watch scheme is run by local residents. Community volunteers record details of lorries that are suspected of using unsuitable roads or not sticking to the limits and restrictions. Once the information is collected, it is passed to Kent Police who can find the vehicle's registered keeper. If the vehicle is ignoring the legal limits and restrictions, the police contact the company and warn them that if they continue, it may result in formal action.

**Setting up a Lorry Watch.** Anyone can set up a Lorry Watch. You will need at least two volunteers for your Lorry Watch team and they must be aged 18 or over.

Contact Lorry Watch by emailing [freight@kent.gov.uk](mailto:freight@kent.gov.uk) or on 03000 41 81 81.

## **Kent and Medway Business Fund**

KCC is offering 0% loans between £50,000 and £500,000 to small and medium sized businesses in Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Dover, Gravesham, Maidstone, Medway, Sevenoaks, Shepway, Swale, Thanet, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells.

The scheme aims to deliver investment to business across Kent and Medway and is funded by loan repayments from our previous Regional Growth Fund schemes (Expansion East Kent, Tiger and Escalate).

Pre-applications are now open for the Kent and Medway Business Fund. Follow the link to find out more on who can apply and how to apply to the [Kent and Medway Business Fund](#).

## **Kent Fostering - Open your Heart**

KCC urgently needs people to provide children and young people with loving homes. KCC is recruiting 200 new foster carers and urgently needs to fill the remaining 120 vacancies. For more information please contact 03000 420 002 or visit <http://www.kentfostering.co.uk>

## **Kent Public Health Observatory (KPHO) <http://www.kpho.org.uk/>**

KPHO provides public health intelligence through data collection, analysis and interpretation. Its library gives access to knowledge, resources and evidence to support public health and social care.

It has a library based in Sessions House, Maidstone. Library membership is open to anyone who works in Kent County Council or public health in Kent and Medway.

Non-members are welcome to use the library for reference and study purposes, although there may be a charge for this facility. You can also subscribe to its weekly e-bulletin and receive a weekly summary of what's new with links to new reports, policy and resources organized by topic.

## **Fact and Figures about Kent**

The Kent County Council Strategic Business Development & Intelligence Unit provides regular monthly updates on unemployment in Kent and other facts and figures, including area profiles, economy and employment data, population and census data, equality and diversity data, children and young people' data, land and property data, energy and environment data and deprivation and poverty data. Visit: [Facts and Figures about Kent](#)

## **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. 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 2017/18**

As agreed at the Budget County Council meeting on 20 February 2018, KCC's Combined Member Grant scheme will open again on **1 April 2018 with £20,000** available to every County Councillor to fund both community and highway projects in their electoral division. Tonbridge & Malling County Councillors between them have a total of £140,000 to allocate in 2018/19.

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: [Community grants and funding](#)

## **Latest news at KCC**

### **Management changes in Adult Social Care**

**Penny Southern** has taken up the position of **Interim Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health**, replacing **Anu Singh**.

Over the last few weeks, Anu Singh has been in discussions about continuing in her role at KCC and has concluded that to do so will not allow her to strike the right balance between her home and career responsibilities. She has therefore reluctantly decided to prioritise her growing family and because of the current status of some key pieces of work within the Directorate that will impact on the future, KCC has agreed that she will leave straight away to allow us to put other arrangements in place to take these forwards.

Penny Southern will continue to work closely with Anne Tidmarsh and the rest of the management team to maintain the high levels of quality service being achieved and take forward the transformation agenda.

## **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 closed, 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**.)
- to view and comment on planning applications that the County Council determines please visit the **planning application site**.

**Current consultations:**

### **Early Years Payment Methods – 26 March to 27 April 2018**

The Early Education and Childcare statutory guidance for local authorities September 2017 from the Department for Education (DfE) recommends all authorities should consider paying providers monthly from 1 September 2018. KCC is now consulting all Early Years providers on whether to maintain the current method or move to monthly payment arrangements. KCC can provide one payment method from September 2018, so it is important that it understands the views of Early Years providers on which method would suit them best before it makes a decision. KCC encourages all Early Years providers to take part in the consultation.

[Click here](#) for more information on how to respond.

<https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/earlyyearspayments/consultationHome>

### **Post 16 Transport Policy for 2018/19 – 26 February to 8 April 2018**

Following last year's consultation, KCC has considered your comments and streamlined the 16+ Travel Card application process making it easier for learners to get their pass. This year KCC seeks your comments again on its policy and asks for your thoughts on its proposal to reduce the price of the Vacant Seat Payment Scheme so it is available at the same price as the Post 16 Travel Card.

There is a legal requirement for learners to stay in education, training or work until they reach 18 years of age, and as young adults there is an expectation they will contribute to the cost of their travel in most circumstances. While KCC is not directly funded to support any transport requirements for learners over the age of 16, KCC subsidises Post 16 Transport by £2.37m ensuring learners can access their schools and colleges. Your views are therefore important and will help KCC Members in making policy decisions about how best to use such funding.

[Responses](#) to the consultation will be analysed and considered before a final version of the policy is published at the end of May 2018.

## **KCC Media**

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

## Recent media releases

### ***HeadStart Kent – Big Conversation for Young People (28 March)***

More than 100 secondary school pupils from schools and colleges across Kent met together to join the 'Big Conversation' about mental health in young people on Wednesday, 21 March.

The event, organised by Big Lottery Fund-supported HeadStart Kent, gave students information on improving their mental health, with workshops leading up to a big debate. Workshops with a practical element gave an opportunity to try proven techniques to lessen anxiety. These included recognising how to build resilience, healthy relationships, the use of social media and yoga.

HeadStart Kent is funded by the Big Lottery Fund to support 10 to 16 year-olds to build resilience; which is defined by young people as the ability to be mentally strong enough to bounce back from the problems in life.

The programme is currently active in Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone and Hythe, Gravesham and Swale and rolls out to Maidstone and Thanet later this year and to Dover and Tonbridge and Malling next year.

There is a **Kent-wide Resilience Hub** available at [www.headstartkent.org.uk](http://www.headstartkent.org.uk) offering information, videos and tools for everyone to use, as well as activities and services for young people.

Young people can be involved with the design and delivery of the programme by joining local youth forums known as Speak Out groups. Anyone interested should email [HeadStart@kent.gov.uk](mailto:HeadStart@kent.gov.uk)

### ***KCC drastically reduces bus savings (12 March)***

Proposed reductions to subsidised bus routes in Kent have been drastically scaled back following positive talks with bus companies and the decision by KCC to reduce the required savings from £2.25 million to £455,000 in this coming financial year.

Subsidised bus services represent just 3% of the network in Kent. The remaining 97% of services are run by commercial or community operators.

Following discussions with bus companies Stagecoach and Go Coach, proposals to move a small number of services from public subsidy to commercially-operated routes, are expected to go out to public consultation in April.

These changes are designed to protect school services and ensure communities currently served by a subsidised route will not lose out, while providing necessary budget savings

Go Coach has proposed revisions to service 404 from Edenbridge to Sevenoaks/Plaxtol to Borough Green. The proposal would take the current mainstream home to school transport contract and convert it to a school-focused commercial service.

The second element is refocusing the current 404 on Edenbridge to Sevenoaks, dropping the Plaxtol to Borough Green which is already covered by another service.

It would also withdraw the Wednesdays-only 405 – again, covered by an existing service. The Go Coach proposals improve the connectivity between Edenbridge and Sevenoaks for off-peak bus users.

There will be full local consultation in April on the proposed changes.

The council is clear that no further changes to the subsidised bus network are proposed. More than £40 million of bus-related business is commissioned by Kent County Council. KCC's aim in holding **the Big Conversation**, is to maintain services, potentially improve rural access and deliver this at a lower cost.

Discussions will be held with parish councils, commercial and community transport providers, technology providers and ultimately culminate in a Rural Bus Summit in the summer which will bring everyone together to discuss the way forward.

### ***National Secondary School offer day (1 March)***

For the fifth consecutive year, more children than ever have applied for a place in a Kent secondary school, with a total of 20,731 applications received, an increase of more than 1,320 since last year.

Despite the huge increase in application numbers, 445 more Kent children will get their first preference of secondary school for September compared with last year. Over 95% of families will receive an offer from one of their four preferences.

Despite 16,677 children securing a school of their preference, unfortunately 765 will be disappointed as their school will be allocated by the Local Authority.

Families are advised this is the first stage of the school allocation process and a specialist KCC team is on hand to help with any queries. Between now and September there is likely to be considerable movement through waiting lists and the appeals process.

For further advice please email: [kent.admissions@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kent.admissions@kent.gov.uk)

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.*

