

Matters Arising Report to Western Area Committee – February 2026

New actions/issues and progress with ongoing actions

No.	Item	Background	Actions/updates
1.	Bexon (Bredgar) Conservation Area Review.	Regular updates on the Bexon (Bredgar) Conservation Area Review have been given at Western Area Committee meetings.	A new Conservation Area for Bexon (Bredgar) is proposed to be designated. Public Consultation on the Bexon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan prepared by Place Services, concluded on 10 December 2025, and is now scheduled to be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 4 February 2026.
2.	Swale Local Heritage List	Regular updates on the Swale Local Heritage List have been given at Western Area Committee meetings.	The second round of the Local Heritage List 'invitation to nominate' closed on 31 October 2025. The Selection Panel met on Tuesday 13 January 2026 and has confirmed approximately 90 additional assets for inclusion on Swale's Local Heritage List. These are scheduled to be presented to the Policy & Resources Committee for ratification on 4 February 2026. The Panel also agreed that the next round of the Local Heritage List 'invitation to nominate' will take place in 2027.
3.	Area of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA)	Swale Borough Council currently does not have an ASCA. Since the adoption of the Heritage Strategy in 2020 and subsequent Action Plans wherein a number of Conservation Areas have been reviewed, it has been proposed that in order to better	Following an all members briefing in May 2024, it was agreed that a draft consultation document be prepared for approval by the Planning Committee, before undertaking public consultation.

		manage and maintain Swale's historic environment and heritage, targeted ASCA can prove beneficial for conservation areas with a commercial centre. Any designation needs to be based on public consultation and must follow specific legal steps, including consideration of the order by the Secretary of State.	The draft consultation document is currently progressing through the Council's approval process. It was presented to the PTPWG on 18 December 2025 and is scheduled for consideration by the Policy & Resources Committee on 4 February 2026. Subject to the Committee's approval, the public consultation is expected to take place in Spring 2026.
4.	Area Committees Review	Further to the Policy & Resources Committee agreeing the proposed recommendation that Western Area Committee meetings should take place in Swale House, Councillor Mike Baldock proposed that Western Area Committee meetings should take place in community venues in the Western Area. This was seconded by Councillor Monique Bonney and on being put to the vote was agreed.	As P&R had recommended a decision to Full Council, the matter was raised at Full Council and the 'vote' of the Area Committee brought to the attention of Council. At the Full Council meeting on 28 January 2026 it was agreed that Western Area Committee meetings should take place in community venues in the Western Area.
5.	Outcome of Area Committees Review	A review of Area Committees has taken place, councillors and officers were consulted for their views. The Member Working Group have reviewed the consultation responses, along with feedback from the sessions at Area Committee meetings. They agreed 14 recommendations went to the Policy & Resources Committee on 26 November 2025 and 13 January 2026 for consideration. On 28 January 2026 the recommendations went to Full Council for consideration.	Full Council agreed the following recommendations at their meeting on 28 January 2026, including the amendment to recommendation 4: 1) The name of Area Committees should be changed to "Councillors and Residents Forum". This will make the purpose of the meetings clearer. 2) As the December round of meetings are generally poorly attended, the frequency of

			the meetings to be reduced from 4 rounds a year to 3 rounds. 3) The summer round of meetings to provide a networking opportunity with refreshments, which will provide residents with the opportunity to interact with their ward councillor/s. 4) The Sittingbourne Area Committee meetings should be held in the Committee Room at Swale House. Swale House is easily accessible for those residents and provides a saving on room hire which could be used to fund the summer networking meetings. Western Area Committee meetings will take place at community venues in the Western area. 5) The venues for the Eastern and Sheppey Area Committee meetings should not move about as this has caused confusion in the past. Where possible the venue should remain the same for each Area Committee. 6) Ward councillors to be encouraged to lead on agenda items, this to be in agreement with the Chair in advance of the agenda being published.
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			7) Agenda items to be area specific, including items that are of interest to members of the public in their area. 8) The Public Forum item to be scheduled as early as possible on the agenda. 9) For certain items, members of the public and parish/town councils have the ability to vote/express/indicate a preference. It will be agreed by the Chair in advance which item/s this applies to and be made clear on the agenda. The potential outcomes of the vote will be explained to the public before a vote is taken. 10) Only ward councillors to vote to refer items to Service Committee Chairs. In this context, ward councillor means a Swale Borough Councillor who is a member of the relevant Councillor and Resident Forum. 11) The Matters Arising Report to incorporate a "You Said, We Did" section. 12) Communications to provide fuller explanation of items to be discussed and all ward councillors to take an active role in encouraging attendance. 13) To improve the sound quality for people attending remotely, an expansion
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			microphone to be purchased to use with the Owl Labs device at a cost of £249. 14) Chairs to meet before each round of meetings to review and forward plan. In particular this meeting will consider and agree future items that are suitable for the public vote/indication.
6.	Swale Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan Consultation (LCWIP) – comments raised	Members stated that comments were raised during the Highsted Park enquiry that should the plan be approved, the proposed walking and cycling routes would not be safe to use. Members also said that the Lower Road between Tonge and Teynham was a dangerous road for walking and cycling due to the high speed of some motorists driving along it. The Policy & Engagement Officer was asked to feed these comments back to the Active Travel Co-ordinator.	The Active Travel Co-ordinator advised that comments had been submitted via the public consultation about the speeds and safety of some of the more rural routes around Tonge/Lower Road etc. The feasibility designs of the routes have included what needs to be done to minimise these issues such as lower speed limits, as an example. Before any routes are taken to the stages of detailed design/implementation, further consultation is likely.
7.	Swale Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) – update following consultation	Public consultation was carried out to gather local views on the proposals. Engaging with people who walk, wheel, or cycle in Swale, as well as those generally interested in the Borough's future infrastructure, helped ensure the LCWIP reflects community priorities. The cycling and walking routes, updated following stakeholder engagement, were consulted on for six weeks during September and October 2025. The public were able to participate through an online consultation webpage, which included details	The public suggested adjustments to route alignments and interventions to maximise benefits, as well as ideas for new measures. The online consultation received the following volume of engagement: • 264 active users engaged with the consultation webpage • 311 comments were received across all feedback methods • 34 consultees completed the questionnaire

		of the LCWIP, an interactive mapping tool with all proposed routes and an accompanying questionnaire. In-person consultation stands were also put up at a number of locations around Swale with details of the proposals and feedback forms. Written feedback was also received throughout the consultation period. Feedback was sought on the proposed routes and interventions.	• 21 pins were left on the interactive mapping tools. As a result of this feedback, some routes will have some changes or additions and more interventions will be added to the maps. The routes will also be prioritised based on Active Travel England criteria before the LCWIP is finalised ready for Council sign-off. It is expected that this will be in March 2026.
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