

Matters Arising Report to Eastern Area Committee

New actions/issues and progress with ongoing actions

No.	Item	Background	Actions/updates
1.	Community tensions	Concerns were raised about a significant increase in community tensions within the Faversham area. This escalation was directly linked to the “Raise the Colours” campaign and the placement of various flags on local lampposts and buildings. There had been reports of increased levels of intimidation and racism which was causing distress to some members of the community, particularly those from ethnic minority backgrounds. The hostile atmosphere was also affecting the community's reputation. The following actions were agreed and completed shortly after the meeting: • The Head of Housing & Community Services would check with Planning Enforcement to see if breach of Planning action could be taken where flags were placed in conservation areas and if Section 215 notices could be issued to deal with the matter via littering legislation. • The Chair would ask the SBC Leader to write to the KCC Leader, the Kent Police	Letters were sent as agreed to the Police and Crime Commissioner and to the Community Safety Partnership. The Community Safety Partnership discussed the tension issues at great length at their meeting in October. Initial actions included reviewing advice, support and training available to officers and Members in relation to managing community tensions. Research is also being undertaken with other locations deemed good practice, along with contacting MHCLG as the lead Government department for this issue. Individual agencies, including Swale BC have also developed their own action plan and are continuing to coordinate appropriate actions. Swale Community Safety Partnership have agreed that community cohesion will be added as a cross-cutting theme to its list of priorities. Actions to be delivered will be worked up over the next two months as part of the refresh of the CSP Plan.

		and Crime Commissioner and local Member of Parliament requesting a coordinated and robust response to the community tensions. • The Chair refer the matter of community tensions to the CSP and request that they in turn report to the Chair of the Housing, Health & Communities Committee Chair. • The Chair write to Kent Police and Crime Commissioner and local Member of Parliament requesting a coordinated and robust response to the community tensions.	
2.	Reconnecting our Ancient Woodlands proposal.	At the September 2025 meeting Cllr Terry Thompson gave a presentation on the Reconnecting our Ancient Woodlands proposal. He said that he had been working with local MPs, councillors, wildlife groups and landowners, to develop a proposal to reconnect the ancient woodland from Kings Wood and Perry Wood, north-eastward to the Blean Woodland Nature Reserve and east Blean at Hoath, to connect essential wildlife habitats and re-create a landscape-scale forest in east Kent. Councillor Thompson said he was seeking written support for this project from Eastern Area Committee, the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee and SBC.	Initial discussions with Greenspaces and Planning officers have taken place with Cllr Thompson to better understand the implications of this proposal. Additional maps have been supplied to assist officer understanding. We note the update from Kent Downs National Landscapes that any final decisions rely on Natural England, who have since confirmed no boundary reviews will be completed at the current time. We will therefore continue to engage and keep awareness with Cllrs as details emerge.

		It was agreed that Eastern Area Committee refer this matter to the Chair of the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee to consider providing written support for the Reconnecting our Ancient Woodlands proposal.	
3.	Litterlotto App	An SBC councillor asked if it was possible to have the Litterlotto App in Faversham. The way it worked was if anyone took a picture of litter as they placed it in a bin and submitted it on the app, they had a chance to win a prize.	This has been considered by officers and councillors previously. It requires a cost to the Council to sign up, somewhere in the region of £6,000 per year and was deemed not to be good value for money with our limited resources.
4.	Whiting Crescent	The Councillor for St Anne's Ward asked if it would be possible to install goal posts on the green at Whiting Crescent, Faversham instead of play equipment as they would not require much maintenance and it would provide a facility for older children.	The Green Spaces Officer meet with the Councillor for St Anne's Ward on site and agreed the position for the equipment to the rear of the open space away from housing. They agreed that standard posts would not be suitable but the team have a used MUGA frame which could be fitted when renovated. Faversham Town Council have agreed to fund the total cost of project. Contractor has been engaged and will install the unit in once ground conditions allow.
5.	Taxi-rank, Faversham Railway Station	A Faversham Town Councillor said that enforcement of the taxi-rank at Faversham Railway Station was not taking place. It was suggested that the public should have a drop-off area.	The Engineering Manager reports that this location has had a history schemes discussed/trialled at Joint Transportation Board, but the ongoing resident parking issues in the vicinity have generally meant that new proposals have not been taken forward.

		It was agreed to refer the matter to the Chair of the Swale Joint Transportation Board to request that the whole area was reviewed. The request to review the area around Faversham Railway Station was discussed at the Swale Joint Transportation Board Chair's briefing. It was agreed that this was an enforcement issue and should be referred directly to the Head of Environment & Leisure for action not an agenda item for the JTB	Option 1 is what we currently do. Number 2 may still not be feasible: Option 1– Enforcement – Issue of Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) would be a first step. The use of the PCN might stop the use of the rank by other members of the public. However, outside the hours of enforcement, no action can be taken against the transgressors. We currently use our 15,000 patrol hours with the contractor to cover all restrictions across the Borough and our car parks, so cannot have a constant presence in any one location. Option 2 – use of CCTV cameras and imposition of fine for those who park on the Taxi rank. The use of CCTV cameras for moving traffic offences is governed by KCC and not well tested across the county yet. This may be something that new unitary authorities look at in future. The SMT representative will provide some stats at the February 2026 Eastern Area Committee meeting.
6.	Conservation Area Reviews	The Conservation & Design Team report progress on the following Conservation Area Reviews to the Area Committees: • Faversham - Preston Next Conservation Area • Faversham- Town Conservation Area	Faversham - Preston Next Conservation Area - The Conservation Area appraisal was presented to the Policy & Resources Committee on the 7 February 2024, where in it was unanimously agreed to adopt the proposed document along with the proposed Boundary changes. The adopted document is now published on the Swale Borough website and notifications to the properties within the conservation

		• Cellar Hill & Greenstreet Conservation Area • Graveney Bridge, Graveney Church and Graveney Goodnestone Conservation Area	area have been sent, and press notification to London Gazette and Kentish gazette were published on 14 August 2025. Faversham- Town Conservation Area - The Conservation Area appraisal was presented to the Policy & Resources Committee on the 20 of March 2024, where in it was unanimously agreed to adopt the proposed document along with the proposed Boundary changes. Next step is to finalise the document with the proposed changes and send notifications to the properties within the conservation area and to London Gazette. It is envisaged that the final adopted document will be updated on the SBC website by Spring 2026. Cellar Hill & Greenstreet Conservation Area - The Conservation Area with extended boundaries is now adopted, the latest map of the conservation area is published on the SBC website, with the final adopted document to be published imminently. Graveney Bridge, Graveney Church and Graveney Goodnestone Conservation Area Review - The public consultation on Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan document concluded on 10 October 2025. The findings of the public consultation are
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			scheduled to be presented to the March 2026 Policy & Resources Committee.
7.	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 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. 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.	The draft consultation document has now been approved by the Policy & Resources Committee on 4th February 2026. The public consultation is scheduled to commence from Mid-March 2026.
8.	Swale Local Heritage List	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 confirmed 90 additional assets for inclusion on Swale's Local Heritage List. These were ratified by the Policy & Resources Committee for on 4 February 2026. Data for these 90 additional assets is being organised to be published on SBC website by late spring. The Selection Panel also agreed that the next round

			of the Local Heritage List 'invitation to nominate' will take place in 2027 as part of Heritage Strategy Action Plan -3.
9.	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 an 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. 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,
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			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 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.
10.	Public Toilet Facilities Public Consultation	The public toilet consultation was carried out based the recommendations in the July Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee report. The public consultation lasted 12 weeks was opened to Swale residents, visitors, community groups and businesses to ensure as many people could take part. Everyone was encouraged to share their honest opinions, particularly from representative groups such as those with a disability, older people, families with young	There were over 800 consultation responses; 60 of which were paper submissions and 752 online. All the feedback from residents, visitors, Area Committees, Community groups, Town/Parish Councils, letters and petitions have been collated and were presented at the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee on 12 November 2025 along with recommendations. Swale Borough Council Councillors agreed to new proposals to transform public conveniences.

		children or those who are pregnant. There were also posters in all the public toilet facilities, posters in all Council offices along with paper forms, advertised on the Swale website and social media, shared with the local press, Area Committee presentations and directly contacting representative organisations (such as, Swale CVS, Age UK, Swale Seniors Forum, Freedom Centre and others).	These new proposals expect to generate saving that can be used to ensure that the Council maintains financial stability and continue to deliver statutory services for our residents. Residents can now expect several public conveniences to be managed by Town and Parish Councils who are able to effectively keep public conveniences open and respond to local demand. We will also be working with local businesses to allow residents and visitors to use their toilet facilities free of charge. To participate businesses must be inclusive well-placed businesses with convenient operating hours, who will in turn receive contributions towards upkeep. To help residents and visitors be better informed about the locations of publicly accessible toilets, there will be information added to the Swale website and updated regularly. This will enable residents and visitors to plan their journeys more effectively, whether shopping, socialising, or visiting local attractions. Unfortunately, to achieve the expected savings, the toilets in poorest condition, most costly to operate and based on public options have to be closed. These are the Forum, Milton Regis and Whitehouse. In turn, in order to improve the condition of remaining toilets, while improving energy and water efficiency where applicable will be funded through the use of existing external
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			grant funding like the UK Shared Prosperity Fund or the Council's reserves/capital funding
11.	Swale Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	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 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.	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 • 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.
12.	Swale Local Bus Forum	A Faversham Town Council councillor suggested that they should have a representative sitting on the Swale Local Bus Forum. It was agreed that the local representative would be asked to feed this request back.	The Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods advised that Faversham Town Council can feed issues to the Swale Local Bus Forum via the Eastern Area Committee representative, Councillor Alistair Gould.