

From: Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee
22 September 2022

Subject: **Members Recent Visit to Thanet District**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: None

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This report is in two parts. It summarises the outcomes of the recent visit by KCC Members to Thanet District and outlines the programme of future visits to other Kent districts in 2022.

Recommendation: The Cabinet Committee is asked to reflect on the visit, and make any recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the future visits programme.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the November 2017 meeting of this Cabinet Committee, Members agreed that officers arrange a programme of informal visits to Kent districts. The objective was to provide an opportunity for Cabinet Committee Members to gain an understanding of the economic development, regeneration, community and infrastructure opportunities and challenges within each of the Kent districts.
- 1.2 This report summarises the main outcomes of Members visit to Thanet District on 1 July 2022.

2. Visit to Thanet District

- 2.1 The visit to Thanet District on 1 July was arranged with the full support of senior officers of Thanet District Council. The Council Leader, Ash Ashbee and Acting Deputy Chief Executive Chris Blundell, their Council colleagues and members of the senior management team gave a comprehensive briefing of economic development, regeneration and community infrastructure opportunities and challenges for the district which are listed below.
- 2.3 The key issues identified during the visit were:
 - Town centre regeneration in Margate and Ramsgate.
 - Housing including empty homes and land for affordable housing.

- Road network improvements and planning for sustainable transport.

2.4 The key projects currently underway or in development are:

i) Margate Town Deal with Investments of £22.2million

- Scaling Margate’s Creative Production and Skills Projects
- Coastal Wellbeing Projects
- Active Movement and Connections Projects
- Diversifying Heritage Assets Projects

ii) Ramsgate Future - The Town Investment Plan

- High Street Heritage Action Zone Funding Secured £0.6m
- Future High Street Fund Funding Secured £2.7m
- Levelling Up Fund Funding Secured £19.84m

Successful Regeneration Funding bids in the last 2 years total £53,183,272

In addition, Members were asked to note what is needed to continue this work:

- Ongoing commitment to the No Use Empty campaign
- Support with proposals for a further selective licensing designation
- Continued support with planning for sustainable transport
- Partnership approach to the release of public sector land for affordable housing
- Recognition across the public sector that good housing conditions help reduce the costs of health and social care

2.5 The highlights of the visit are detailed more fully in Appendix 1 to this report. These will be followed up by officers as appropriate and with the relevant organisations.

2.6 Presentations made on the day are available from the author of this report.

3. Programme of Further Visits

3.1 Further Member visits to Kent districts are being arranged in collaboration with district and borough officers. The format for each visit involves a day-long tour of the principal economic development, regeneration, community and infrastructure within each district.

3.2 The visit programme for 2022 had to be amended recently and is now:

Maidstone (Postponed)	To be re-arranged for autumn 2022
Canterbury	2nd September
Swale	To be re-arranged for autumn 2022
Further district visits	To be arranged for 2023

3.3 The Committee has in the past visited Swale, Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe, Dover, Dartford, Tunbridge Wells, Gravesham and Tonbridge & Malling, Sevenoaks

as well as the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation albeit these date back to 2017 to 2019.

- 3.4 These visits will be continued for a new cycle, subject to resource and to Committee's recommendation to the Cabinet Member, into 2023.
- 3.5 As agreed by the Committee, should places be available, invitations will be extended to the Chair and Members of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The cost of coach hire is approximately £525 per visit.

5. Recommendation

Recommendation: The Cabinet Committee is asked to reflect on the visit, and make any recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the future visits programme.

6. Contact details

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