

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 November 2022

Subject: **Members' Recent Visit to Canterbury 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 Canterbury 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 Canterbury on 2nd September 2022.

2. Visit to Canterbury District

- 2.1 The visit to Canterbury on 2nd September was arranged with the full support of senior officers of Canterbury City Council. The Council Leader, Ben Fitter-Harding, Barbara Flack, Member for Place and Peter Davies Director of Strategy & Improvement and their 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 and which are listed below.

2.3 The key issues identified during the visit were:

- Low wage economy
- Polarised age profile
- Congestion and air quality in the city and parts of our towns
- High future housing needs targets
- Impacts of Operation Brock on road networks
- Rapidly changing high street
- Stodmarsh and waste water discharges
- Increasing need for bus lanes and bus gates in the city

2.4 The key opportunities are:

- Levelling up agenda - two bids submitted
- A new hospital in Canterbury
- An ambitious Local Plan focussed on sustainable growth
- Resurgence in 'staycation' market
- New green investment - hydrogen and solar
- Taking back control - waste and housing services
- Modal shift - cycling, park and ride, walking
- Securing our green spaces for future generations

2.5 The main projects recently completed or in development are shown in Appendix 1.

2.6 In addition Members were asked to note where KCC's support is required:

- Lobby for the new hospital in Canterbury
- Enable the delivery of a visionary Local Plan for the district
- Deliver the infrastructure improvements to our road networks
- Eastern movement corridor and city circulation plan
- Harbledown road improvements
- A2 new slips and Brenley Corner improvements
- Sturry Road bus lane
- Plan and fund (with dev contributions) two new secondary schools on the coast
- Lobby for a speedy resolution to the Stodmarsh issue
- Support the delivery of KCC elements of our LUF bids and ambitions
- Support Network Rail and Southeastern railway and station improvements

2.7 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.

2.8 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:

Swale
Maidstone
Further district visits

1st or 15th December 2022 TBC
20 January 2023
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 and Thanet 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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