

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
11 January 2022

Subject: **District Visits Programme 2023**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: None

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This report outlines the programme of future visits to Kent districts in 2023 and a proposed new process for reporting key issues raised during these visits.

Recommendation The Cabinet Committee is asked to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the future visits programme and to agree to receive a dashboard at future meetings monitoring progress on matters raised.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2017 Members of this Cabinet Committee 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 outlines the programme of visits to Kent districts in 2023 and a proposed process for reporting key issues raised during these visits.

2. Programme of Further Visits

- 2.1 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 individual district.
- 2.2 The programme for 2023 will be affected by the Local Elections on 4 May, the pre-election period and post-election appointment of councilors to district Cabinets. The programme for 2023 currently stands as follows:

Maidstone	20 January 2023
Dover	Early March – date to be confirmed
Further district visits	To be arranged from June 2023

- 2.3 The Committee has in the past visited Swale, Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe, Dartford, Tunbridge Wells, Gravesham, Tonbridge & Malling, Sevenoaks and Thanet as well as the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation.
- 2.4 Subject to resource and to the Committee's recommendation(s) to the Cabinet Member, the the plan will be to restart this cycle of visits commencing later in 2023.
- 2.5 As previously recommended by the Committee, should places be available, invitations will be extended to the Chair and Members of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee.

3.0 Proposal for a new reporting process

- 3.1 Key issues/items raised by districts and/or by Members of the visiting Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee have been, until now, communicated within KCC with responsibility for further action lying with the appropriate KCC service officers. This approach has reflected the informal basis of the visits to date.
- 3.2 Committee has now sought written updates on actions taken following district visits. A new internal approach will be enacted following the January 2023 visit.
- 3.3 Reports to this Committee will now include actions taken in response to key issues from previous visits, presented as an ongoing dashboard that members of Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee can review at each meeting.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of coach hire is approximately £525 per visit.
- 4.2 The financial impact of any key issue will be assessed as and when they arise.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the future visits programme and to agree to receive a dashboard at future meetings monitoring progress on matters raised.

6. Contact details

Report Author

Rob Hancock
Programme Manager
Economic Development
03000 417 087
rob.hancock@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:

Stephanie Holt-Castle
Director
Growth & Communities
03000 412 064
stephanie.holt-castle@kent.gov.uk