

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  
10 May 2022

Subject: **Members' Recent Visit to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council**

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 Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (T&MBC) 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 and regeneration opportunities and challenges within each of the Kent districts.
- 1.2 This report summarises the main outcomes of Members' visit to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council on 25 March 2022.

## 2. Visit to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

- 2.1 The visit to T&MBC on 25 March was arranged with the full support of T&MBC senior officers of the Council who provided a briefing about the economic development, regeneration and community infrastructure opportunities and challenges for the district which are listed below.
- 2.2 The key issues identified during the visit were:
  - Flood Defence - Leigh Expansion and Hildenborough Embankment Scheme
  - Flooding in the Borough is nationally significant
  - Road Capacity - Blue Bell Hill (M2 Jct 3) and issues arising from Lower Thames Crossing.

- Sustainable Transport Measures – A20 improvements to footways and cycling infrastructure and routes around Tonbridge.
- Education – additional primary provision in Borough Green/Wrotham and Aylesford/Ditton.
- Lack of skills and training provision in the Borough and west Kent
- Health – existing pressure on GP surgeries and from projected growth.
- Adult Social Services – need for greater C3 accommodation and C2 for mental health and older people.
- Sports Recreation and Open Space – decreased by around 6%.
- Biodiversity – strengthening the Green Infrastructure and Ecological Network.
- Utilities – power network is under stress in terms of the resilience of the network and the amount of generation capacity.
- Potential to review the buildings and site containing KCC Library, Adult Education and Youth Service provision on, and adjacent to, Tonbridge High Street.

2.3 The key projects currently underway or in development are:

- Tonbridge Town Centre
- Peters Village
- Panattoni Park Aylesford
- Centenary Village (RBLI)
- East Malling Research
- Borough Green Gardens
- Bushey Wood (Land at Eccles)

2.4 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.

2.5 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 and community and infrastructure within each district.

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

|            |               |                                     |
|------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sevenoaks  | 20th May      | (instead of 25 May)                 |
| Thanet     | 1st July      | (instead of 30 June)                |
| Maidstone  | 15th July     | (no change)                         |
| Canterbury | 2nd September | (instead of 21 <sup>st</sup> April) |

3.3 The Committee has already visited Swale, Ashford, Folkestone, and Hythe, Dover, Dartford, Tunbridge Wells, Gravesham, and Tonbridge & Malling as well as the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation albeit these date back to 2017 to 2019.

3.4 These visits could again be scheduled back in, subject to Cabinet Committee's

preference, stretching 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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