



# AGENDA

**Thursday 19 January 2023 at 6.00 pm**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS**

## Agenda

- 1 Attendance**  
(Members will be checked-in as they enter the meeting – please ensure you use your real, full name. A draft attendance list will then be circulated after the meeting. Please advise the Secretary of any errors or omissions in the draft list.)
- 2 Membership Changes** (Page 4)
  - a) Changes of representatives
  - b) New membership applications
- 3 Updates from Member Organisations**  
(Please advise the Secretary before the meeting if you wish to raise a topic under this agenda item.)
- 4 Special Expenses**  
Presentation by Lee Colyer, Director of Finance, Policy and Development, TWBC and Cllr Christopher Hall, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance.
- 5 Co-Working and Civic Centre**  
To Be Confirmed
- 6 Update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund/Levelling Up** (Pages 5 - 6)  
Update from Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, TWBC.
- 7 Town Centre Area Plan (including Parking and Transport)**  
Update from Sharon Evans, Principal Policy Planning Officer, TWBC and Hilary Smith, Economic Development Manager, TWBC.
- 8 Update from the Borough Council**  
Update from Cllr Justine Rutland (Cabinet Member for Tunbridge Wells Town and Local Areas)
- 9 Reports from the Town Forum Working Groups** (Pages 7 - 11)
  - a) Strategic Planning Working Group
  - b) Transport Strategy Working Group
  - c) Water in the Wells Working Group
  - d) Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group
  - e) Finance and Other Issues Working Group
- 10 Urgent Business or Topics for Future Meetings**

## **11 Future Meetings**

- 30 March 2023



Meeting of the Town Forum on 19 January 2023

## **Membership Changes**

### **a) Changes of representatives**

Julia Soyke is now the substitute representative for Tunbridge Wells Older People's Forum, previously David Wakefield. Michael Holman remains the primary representative.

### **b) New membership applications**

None

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update Note for RTW Town Forum – January 2023

The Council was informed on 6 December 2022 that its UKSPF Investment Plan (IP) had been approved (having been submitted 1 August 2022). The Council has since signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) and has received the Year 1 funding (2022/23), totalling £91,387.

Because of the slippage in timescales for sign-off by DLUHC, it has been agreed that if necessary Year 1 project spend can be rolled over beyond March 2023.

The following Year 1 projects were included in the Investment Plan and are in the process of being signed off by the UKSPF Local Partnership Group and TWBC Members:

- **Royal Tunbridge Wells Streetscene Improvements:** small scale improvements to the streetscene in key locations in Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre.
- **Sherwood Lake Improvements:** a programme of improvements to the Sherwood Lakes area (boardwalk, entrances, habitats) increasing accessibility to a public space within a priority community.
- **Creative Tunbridge Wells:** Establishment of a sector-led partnership that will support the cultural and creative economy in Tunbridge Wells, facilitating its growth and its outreach, to increase social and economic benefits across the borough.
- **Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Community Kitchen:** supporting vulnerable members of our local communities in the east of the borough through a volunteer-led café initiative, providing a warm space, food and drinks.
- **Community Grants Programme:** a grants programme to support community groups or town & parish councils to deliver small scale improvements including upgrades to community facilities, local green spaces, streetscene features, events and a range of other community projects.
- **Visit Tunbridge Wells:** Delivering a 3-year marketing plan to support tourist destinations and businesses in the borough through both physical and digital promotion and campaigns.
- **West Kent Business Support Programme:** A programme providing 1-2-1 mentoring and small-scale financial support to start-up and newly formed micro-businesses across the borough. This is a West Kent Partnership project working with TMBC and SDC.

The projects listed above will either be led by TWBC officers, or by an agreed partner organisation (in which case a grant agreement will be required).

An application form has been prepared for the Community Grants Programme and a call for projects from Parish/Town Councils and other community organisations (if appropriately constituted). It is expected that further information about this programme will be ready for distribution week commencing 16 January 2023.

Further details of the Year 1 projects (some of which will also continue into Years 2 and 3) is set out in the table below:

Contact details: [hilary.smith@tunbridgewells.go.uk](mailto:hilary.smith@tunbridgewells.go.uk), Economic Development Team, TWBC

# Agenda Item 6

Project Name	Allocated Budget	Match Funding	Jan – Mar 2023 Milestones
<b>Royal Tunbridge Wells Streetscene Improvements</b>  Project Lead: TWBC	<b>Total £100,000</b> (Y1) £15,000 (Y2) £35,000 (Y3) £50,000	<b>Total £15,000 – RTWT BID</b>  (Y1) £15,000 (Y2) Possible BID match (Y3) Possible BID match	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agree scheme with TWBC Streetscene Team</li> <li>- Procure street furniture</li> <li>- Delivery of agreed project(s)</li> </ul>
<b>Sherwood Lakes Improvement Scheme</b>  Project Lead: Kent High Weald Partnership	<b>Total £20,000</b> (Y1) £20,000	No Match Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sign Grant Agreement</li> <li>- Undertake Community Engagement</li> <li>- Delivery of works</li> </ul>
<b>Creative Tunbridge Wells</b>  Project Lead: TWBC	<b>Total £85,000</b> (Y1) £15,000 (Y2) £35,000 (Y3) £35,000	<b>Total £23,800 from Art Council England</b>  (Y1) £9000 (Y2) £14,800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appoint Development Lead</li> <li>- Set up CTW Working Groups</li> <li>- Develop programme of project/events</li> <li>- Commence preparation of Creative Economy Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Cranbrook &amp; Sissinghurst Community Kitchen</b>  Project Lead: Cranbrook & Sissinghurst PC	<b>Total £17,000</b> (Y1) £17,000	<b>Total £3600</b> (Y1) £3600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sign Grant Agreement</li> <li>- Deliver Community Kitchen service</li> <li>- Close of project</li> </ul>
<b>Community Grants Programme</b>  Project Lead: TWBC	<b>Total £58,500</b> (Y1) £12,500 (Y2) £23,000 (Y3) £23,000	Total – not known but project contributions likely from Parish & Town Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote Grants Programme to Parish &amp; Town Councils</li> <li>- Appraise submitted applications</li> <li>- Completion of agreed projects</li> </ul>
<b>Visit Tunbridge Wells Marketing Programme</b>  Project Lead: TWBC	<b>Total £35,000</b> (Y1) £5,000 (Y2) £15,000 (Y3) £15,000	<b>Total £33,000 from TWBC Economic Development</b>  (Y1) £11,000 (Y2) £11,000 (Y3) £11,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appoint filming agency</li> <li>- Complete filming</li> <li>- Post film on vtw website and social media platforms</li> </ul>
<b>West Kent Business Support Scheme</b>  Project Lead: West Kent Partnership	<b>Total £54,500</b> (Y1) £4,500 (Y2) £25,000 (Y3) £25,000	<b>Total £109,000 from SDC and TMBC (West Kent Partnership)</b>  (Y1) £9000 (Y2) £50,000 (Y3) £50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Procurement of delivery partner by SDC (for WKP)</li> <li>- Promotion/marketing of programme to local entrepreneurs/businesses</li> </ul>



Meeting of the Town Forum on 19 January 2023

## **Reports from the Town Forum Working Groups**

### **a) Planning Working Group**

Update from Mark Booker

### **b) Transport Working Group**

Update from Jane Fenwick

### **c) Water in the Wells Working Group**

Update from Michael Holman

### **d) Finance Working Group**

Update from David Wakefield

### **e) Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing Working Group**

(Formerly Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group)

Update from Stuart Anderson

## Tunbridge Wells Town Forum Strategic Planning Working Group

### Update report for the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

The only matter of significance to report on the planning front is the reply from TWBC to the Planning Inspector in relation to the latter's serious concerns as to the soundness of the draft Local Plan.

These mainly relate to the **Tudeley development** where the Inspector cast doubt about the feasibility of the development in a number of aspects and seemed to invite the alternative of deleting the development from the Plan. TWBC's response appears to show a determination to proceed with Tudeley and to overcome the Inspector's concerns by researching and adducing further evidence in relation to the perceived necessity of Green Belt use and attempting to deal positively with the other concerns, for example by working harder to achieve a railway station on the development, together with better bus and active travel links, which might meet objections received from Tonbridge and Malling District Council.

With regards to the proposed **Five Oak Green Bypass** needed as part of the Tudeley scheme, the central issue appears to be whether there is sufficient evidence to be confident that the bypass is likely to come forward in an environmentally acceptable manner and for it to be deliverable. Consultants are being asked to look at information on design, land-take, relative land levels, likely traffic volumes, necessary structures and earthworks, and lighting, and to advise on whether this provides a reasonable prospect that the issues raised by the Inspector in relation to air quality, safety and noise, notably in relation to the proposed primary school, can be satisfactorily addressed with suitable safeguarding requirements. Evidence on the affordability of the proposed bypass, essentially from the development of Tudeley Village, was set out at the hearings and in the Council's viability evidence but will be reviewed in the light of any further design work and further consideration of different development scenarios in the Plan.

In relation to development at **Paddock Wood**, The combined implications of excluding all development from land currently identified as being within a higher risk flood zone and of providing sufficient secondary school capacity in an accessible location presents a substantial new challenge to the Council's proposals. Responding further to meet the Inspector's concerns will take some time and will inevitably delay completion of the Local Plan process.

There is little on Royal Tunbridge Wells itself, the Inspector having raised few concerns but as regards **Hawkenbury Recreation Ground** (Policy AL/RTW 19), it is agreed that it would be appropriate to consult further on road widening needed and re-provision of parking spaces.

Any further proposed changes to the Draft Local Plan will be subject to public consultation and it seems likely that the process will continue throughout 2023 and possibly beyond.

Mark Booker Acting Leader Strategic Planning Working Group 15.01.23

## TWG report to the RTW Town Forum on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

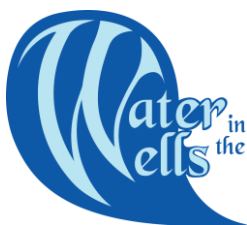
Members: Jane Fenwick (chair), David Scott, Katharina Mahler Bech, Chris Ferguson Gow, Peter Lidstone, Carol Wilson, Lorna Blackmore, Ian Rennardson and Adrian Berendt. Met on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023

1. **Update on 20mph scheme** townwide: It was resolved to speak to the transport spokesmen for each political party and KCC councillors to ensure active support for an all town 20mph scheme. AB had recently met representatives from Warwick Park about installing 20mph in addition to its existing speed calming measures.
2. **Active Travel:** PL will ask for an update from KCC on their proposed bus priority and cycle route plan for Pembury Road. He reported some success in bids from Active Travel England for some 21 schemes across Kent attracting £500,000 'capability funding'. The 3 schemes for TW include the Pembury Road bus priority plan and cycle route; LTNs in St Johns and St James areas; and new unpaved cycle paths on Commons land adjacent to existing pedestrian paths on Major York's Road and A264 Mount Ephraim to link Rustall to the town centre. Use of Commons land is a significant development for the growth of Active Travel.
3. **Town Centre Area Plan:** TF chair Don Sloan is to request that the TF management team has a preview of the TCAP before its expected publication in early February.
4. **Buses:** Concern was expressed about published route reductions and their impact on passengers particularly on the early and late services. It was suggested that TWBC should reconsider licensing Uber taxi service to provide a cheap alternative option.
5. **Parking statistics:** The TWG discussed the data on utilisation and income of the MSCPs in RTW provided by TWBC's John Strachan. It reflected the reduced use of MSCPs due to changed work and retail environments. AB has undertaken a detailed analysis of the car park income and return on investment which he will discuss with Lee Colyer and John Strachan, and DS.  
DS advised that the Great Hall car park which is one of the TWBC assets expected to be sold for redevelopment is suffering from 'concrete cancer' and will result in major structural issues in future. There is also concern that the higher weight of electric and increased dimensions could require fewer but larger parking spaces and have structural issues in future. DS argued that the move to electric vehicles is not the solution for all circumstances. Instead, there could be a mix of options such as lighter vehicles for in town use, larger vehicles for mid-range journeys, and shorter and more frequent trains for longer distance and commuter journeys.  
More Car Club vehicles are coming to new sites in RTW including Amhurst Road in St John's, Good Station Road in the town centre, and Warwick Park at the Pantiles end. DS advised that AXA is financing one Club Car under a S106 agreement.
6. **Hawkenbury:** Proposed growth of staff numbers at AXA's building in Hawkenbury could create more parking pressures in the village. JF will contact Cllr Rutland to ask that AXA prepares a full transport plan to mitigate employee parking in local streets.
7. **AOB:** Multiple road works for utilities and to repair damage is creating traffic jams were noted. Residents are urged to report potholes to Kent or East Sussex.
8. **Joint Transportation Board:** 30<sup>th</sup> January Town Hall





## ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM



WATER IN THE WELLS WORKING GROUP

### REPORT TO THE TOWN FORUM 19 January 2023

**Current membership:** Bob Atwood, John Cunningham, Jane Fenwick, Michael Holman (Chair), Mike McGeary, Altan Omer, David Scott, Alastair Tod, Pat Wilson.

We have held no formal meetings since the Town Forum on 24 November but have been in touch by e-mail and phone as necessary.

Over the past weeks, several of the town's water features have been without water flowing from beneath. (Most likely turned off as a safety measure following the cold snap at the end of last year.) Plenty of water descending from above, though!

1. **Former ABC Cinema:** Following planning approval on 16 November last year, all artist's view pictures in the local press have continued to show the planned water wall in the courtyard, clearly visible from Mount Pleasant.
2. **Chalybeate Spring:** The blue hoardings round the left-hand basin remain in place. One can, however, monitor the water flow in the right-hand basin which is still open to public view. The gate to the basin remains locked. Work on the refurbishment of the well and Dippers Hall is not expected to start before Easter.
3. **The Potteries – Pantiles 1887:** Currently no water, whether on account of routine maintenance, a recurring fault or a continuing safety measure following the cold snap, I have been unable to discover.
4. **Former Arriva Bus Depot, St John's Road:** All indications are that construction is progressing at a steady pace and the water wall on St John's Road remains firmly in the plan. As with the Chalybeate Spring on the Pantiles, it is impossible to see what is going on behind the blue hoardings at street level.
5. **Grosvenor and Hilbert Park:** The Friends have provided funds to purchase a bottle-filling station. This is now in store with the Parks Department ready for installation in the spring at the beginning of the new financial year. It will be installed close to the Dorking Road entrance, near the site of the fine Victorian cast-iron fountain demolished in the last war. (See pictures over.)
6. **St John's Park and Meadows:** The Parks Department carried out initial planting round the magnificent Chilstone's tazza before last year's snow. We expect final planting to be completed in the spring, and the plaque shortly to be put in place.

I cannot be at the Meeting on 19 January, but members of the Working Group will be happy to answer any questions and provide additional information.

(13 January 2023)

*(Michael Holman, Chairman, 'Water in the Wells'. 07799456524; E-mail: michaeldekholman@gmail.com.)*

