Meeting of Medway Council

Members of Medway Council are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council for the business as set out in the agenda below

Date: Thursday, 23 April 2020
Time: 7.00pm
Venue: Civic Suite - Level 2, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR

Agenda

1 Apologies for absence

2 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests (Pages 9 - 10)

   Members are invited to disclose any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in accordance with the Member Code of Conduct. Guidance on this is set out in agenda item 2.

3 Record of meeting (Pages 11 - 18)

   To approve the record of the meeting held on 20 February 2020.

4 Mayor's announcements

5 Leader's announcements

6 Petitions

7 Public questions
A) Zeynep Mehmet of Chatham will ask the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

When will the Council do something about the increasing population of homeless people on Chatham High Street?

I'm sick of my child and myself having to walk through groups of severely drunk, swearing, shouting, begging and more recently shouting at the public “what are you looking at”.

People are looking with disgust at their drunken behaviour. I can't go shopping without feeling intimidated anymore.

B) Ben Rist of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Adults’ Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

I would like to ask Medway Council why the Conservative councillors deny food poverty happens.

Medway Labour, particularly Alex Paterson, has been doing work around campaigning against this but as someone who has to use soup kitchens to survive, it's astonishing that Medway Conservatives refuse to deny food poverty exists in Medway on a huge scale.

Will the Council now start to recognise that it exists and will they start funding efforts to stop people going hungry or will they continue with Rochester Castle Concerts which is not as life threatening as shortage of food?

C) Vivienne Parker of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

When are we going to get electric buses?

D) Bryan Fowler of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) have been reported widely as more likely to facilitate transmission of COVID-19. There are many HMOs in Medway.

How does COVID-19 inform Medway Council’s planning policies in this respect?
E) James Chespy of Gillingham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin, the following:

One sad requirement of the COVID-19 pandemic is the need for increased mortuary capacity. It is to be welcomed that this is being provided across Kent and Medway. However, it is concerning that the Leader of the Council is reported to have said Medway will not be making a contribution towards the cost of this increased provision.

Could the Portfolio Holder indicate that the authority will be making a contribution to this vital temporary cross border provision and how much it will be?

8 Leader's report

9 Report on Overview and Scrutiny Activity

10 Members' questions

A) Councillor Steve Iles will ask the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

Considering the poor use of Strood Market on a Tuesday will the Portfolio Holder bring back the well used Saturday market and if not please give your residents and myself a valid reason as to why you alone think it is not needed?

B) Councillor Sands will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

Given the news that in The Times of 9 February 2020 that the “£25 billion strategy to expand motorways and major A-roads over the next five years, has been shelved until later in the spring or even early summer”, according to the article, which says the move follows the Court of Appeal ruling against the expansion of Heathrow because "it failed to take account of the UK’s climate change commitments", I assume the Council and the Government will be reconsidering the HIF bid against climate change targets.

Is there an assessment of the effect of the infrastructure that would be produced by the implementation of the HIF bid infrastructure and the new housing development enabled by it?
C) **Councillor Johnson will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:**

Would the portfolio holder agree that, in the current crisis, Medway schools, their leadership teams, teaching and support staff, have shown absolute dedication to supporting the children and young people of Medway and that we should take this opportunity to thank them for their commitment to serving Medway, alongside thanking our equally dedicated and committed Youth Services, Early Years Providers and Children's Social Care Services?

D) **Councillor Andy Stamp will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:**

The Waste Industry Safety and Health (WISH) Coronavirus Guidance advises local authorities and contractors to protect the health and safety of employees, for example by implementing social distancing and by providing sufficient cleaning products in the cabs of refuse collection vehicles.

However, in Medway several aspects of the WISH guidance are not being observed, putting workers at unnecessary risk.

Which is more important, ensuring the Waste contract is followed to the letter, or protecting the health and safety of Medway Norse employees?

E) **Councillor Khan will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

Does the Leader of the Council agree with the Government in welcoming the contribution of trade unions in the CoVid19 crisis and condemn poor employers like those who would de-recognise trade unions with immediate effect?

F) **Councillor Maple will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

This Council has relatively low levels of reserves for a unitary authority of our size - with the combination of increased pressures due to the CoVid19 crisis and dramatically reduced income streams, what measures will the Council consider to deal with these challenges?
Councillor Murray will ask the Portfolio Holder for Adults’ Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

The COVID19 crisis and resulting need for lockdown and isolation has been particularly challenging for those with poor mental health.

Accepting that interim support using phones and online services have been put into place, does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that there will be an increased need for extra vigilance and support for the mentally ill health community once restrictions have been lifted and is he prepared to ensure that the Council's Resource Centre at Nelson Road can be fully utilised to help sufferers recover and resume their normal activities?

11 Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) New Routes to Good Growth - Project Delivery

This report provides an update on progress of Medway’s Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Bid – New Routes to Good Growth, which will provide much needed infrastructure to enable growth in and around the Hoo Peninsula.

The report asks Full Council to agree to delegate authority to the Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Legal Officer to carry out all non-executive pre- and post-commencement conditions, as detailed in the Exempt Appendix.

The report was initially considered by the Cabinet on 7 April 2020. Comments of the Cabinet are set out in section 3 of the report.

12 Addition to the Capital Programme: Street Lighting LED and Column Replacement Programme

This report provides details of the LED (Light Emitting Diode) and Column Replacement Programme and procurement exercise following consideration at the Procurement Board on 18 March 2020 and Cabinet on 7 April 2020 and seeks approval to add this scheme to the Capital Programme.

13 Byelaw Provisions Review

This report is a confirmatory report regarding the adoption of byelaws in relation to Pleasure Boats as the original records regarding their adoption cannot be located. It also addresses the update in legislation in relation to the byelaws for Skin Piercing.

14 Arrangements for 2020/21 Municipal Year

New Regulations issued in response to the Coronavirus pandemic The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 have removed the
requirement to hold an annual meeting and enabled local authorities to hold meetings remotely.

This report sets out some of the implications for the Council and the options available to Members with regard to the Annual Meeting, the appointment of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the appointment of Members to Committees and the approval of the 2020/21 schedule of meetings.

15 Approval of Reason for Absence of a Councillor from Meetings

This report asks the Council to approve the following reasons for failure by any Councillor to attend meetings because of the COVID-19 pandemic from 23 April 2020 – 8 October 2010 inclusive:

i) the protection of the health of the residents of the area or;
ii) the health of the individual Member.

This matter shall remain under review and a further report shall be presented to the Council meeting on 8 October 2020 if necessary.

16 Use of Urgency Provisions

This report provides details of recent usage of urgency provisions contained within the Constitution.

The report also provides an overview of decisions taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

17 Motions

A) Councillor Maple has submitted the following:

This Council recognises that Medway has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic - an unprecedented public health crisis.

This Council puts on record its thanks for the tireless dedication of all those front line workers and volunteers who have played a part in our community response to the pandemic.

This Council commits to taking all possible action, working with all partners, to ensure the relevant protections are in place for those front line workers and volunteers.

18 Exclusion of Press and Public

This report summarises the content of two exempt appendices which, in the opinion of the proper officer, will contain exempt information within one of the categories in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is a matter for the Council to determine whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of these documents.
Date: 15 April 2020

Reporting on the meeting

We would strongly discourage members of the public from attending this meeting in person in light of Government advice on social distancing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meeting will be livestreamed, details of which will be set out on the Council’s website:


Notwithstanding the advice set out above, members of the press and public are entitled to report on this meeting except where the public are excluded, as permitted by law. Reporting includes filming and recording of the proceedings and use of the internet and social media such as tweeting and blogging to report the proceedings. Guidance for people wishing to exercise this right is available on the Council’s website and in the public seating area at the meeting.

It is helpful if people wishing to film the proceedings could contact the Council’s media team in advance on 01634 332736 or by email to pressoffice@medway.gov.uk. Please sit in the front row or other designated area if you wish to report on the meeting. If you are attending and do not wish to be filmed or recorded please sit at the back of the public seating area.


Fire and Evacuation Procedures

Users of this meeting room are asked to note the following fire and evacuation procedures:

When you hear the continuous tone of the fire alarm, please make your way out of the building in an orderly manner. The nearest exit is through the sliding doors in this room onto the Mayor’s Lawn. Do not stop to collect personal belongings. Once outside the building, please make your way to assembly point no. 1. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so by Facilities Management staff.