

Cabinet – Supplementary agenda No.1

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on:

Date: 10 February 2026

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: St George's Centre, Pembroke, Chatham Maritime, Chatham
ME4 4UH

Items

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|------------|--|----------------------------|
| 4. | Questions to the Cabinet
Appendix 1, previously marked to follow, is now attached. | (Pages
3 - 6) |
| 9. | Treasury Management Report 2025/25: Quarter 3
Appendix 3, previously marked to follow, is now attached. | (Pages
7 - 10) |
| 10. | Treasury Management Strategy 2026 / 2027
Appendix D, previously marked to follow, is now attached. | (Pages
11 - 14) |
| 15. | Proposed Capital and Revenue Budgets 2026 / 2027
Appendix 1 Part B, previously marked to follow, is now attached. | (Pages
15 - 16) |
| 16. | One Medway Council Plan 2024-2028, 2026/27 Key Performance Indicator Refresh
Appendix 3, previously marked to follow, is now attached. | (Pages
17 - 18) |
| 17. | Risk Strategy Annual Review
Appendix 3, previously marked to follow, is now attached. | (Pages
19 - 22) |

For further information please contact Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer/Vanessa Etheridge, Democratic Services Officer on Telephone: 01634 332715/332115 or Email: democratic.services@medway.gov.uk

Date: 6 February 2026

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Public Question

(Relating to Agenda Item No.19, Redevelopment of Brook Multi Storey Car Park)

Question A – Bryan Fowler of Chatham, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment, Councillor Mahil, the following:

“The Cabinet papers indicate a determined approach to sell the Brook Car Park for housing.

Can the Portfolio Holder explain how this paper has been informed by both the recent strategic review of car parking (as mentioned by Councillor Paterson at the Cabinet on 21st October) and also the retail strategy for Chatham?”

Member Questions

(Relating to Agenda Item No.11, Revenue Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2025 / 2026)

Question B – Councillor Lammas will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“The Cabinet has responsibility for managing the budget. Can the Leader of the Council set out what assurances on spending the Cabinet has committed to HM Government in order to receive the millions of pounds of exceptional financial support he needed to balance his budget for 2025-26, as one of only 30 principal local authorities in England to receive that support out of a total of 317, stating if he will resign as Leader if he fails to balance his budget for a third time at the end of 2026-27 without exceptional financial support?”

(Relating to Agenda Item No.15, Proposed Capital and Revenue Budgets 2026 / 2027)

Question C – Councillor Perfect will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“The Leader of the Council has repeatedly claimed that he intends 2026/7 to be the final year of using exceptional financial support. How does he square this with the latest Medium Term Financial Projections (Appendix 8) showing an ever-increasing gap until Local Government Reorganisation?”

Question D – Councillor Hackwell, will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“Regarding the FIT plan, it should be noted that the Council has delivered 81% of the savings targeted in its Financial Improvement and Transformation plan but the dashboard (One Medway Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan 2025-26 Q3 Update) indicates only 32% of activities have achieved their targets. Can the Leader of the Council outline how the programmes and activities that are behind are being managed to recover and what the non-delivery risks to the 2026/27 draft position are?”

Question E – Councillor Tejan will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“Can the Leader of the Council please update the Council on what discussions he has had since the publication of the draft local government settlement with the Local Government Secretary, Ministers, or Members of Parliament, regarding the £8m worth of money which Medway was shortchanged by?”

Question F – Councillor Wildey will ask the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:

“Given the projected increase of costs in adult social care of a net £7.629million in 2026/27 and the surmounting pressures of residential nursing care, can the Portfolio Holder provide evidence and justification that the budget has space for the Vanity project that is the proposed Council run care home?”

Question G – Councillor Joy will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“With the £3.515 million increase in the Interest and Financing budget because of extra borrowing, has the Council prepared a budget that can withstand higher interests’ rates with their excessive borrowing and ensure services can be properly funded and managed for our residents?”

Question H – Councillor Filmer will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“The fairer funding review was around £8m less than Medway Council officers anticipated in the draft budget presented on 18th November, this has ramped up the overspend which is already relying on high levels of borrowing to keep the Council afloat. How does the Cabinet intend to mitigate the results of the fairer funding review within the 2026/27 budget?”

Public Questions

Question I – Raza Griffiths, of Chatham, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:

“Can the Council, which has stated its aspiration to develop a "modern transport network", detail what practical progress has been made against the timetable for the installation of the new Real Time Information system, as per the Bus Improvement Plan for 2025-26 and what remains to be done - in particular, regarding Chatham Bus Station's information systems?”

Question J – Elizabeth Kebbell, of Chatham, will ask the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:

“Medway’s population is continuing to grow, yet many residents already experience long waiting times and severely limited access to mental health support. How is the Council planning to ensure that future mental health infrastructure will be sufficient to meet need, and what planning is in place to address existing gaps for current demand?”

Question K – John Castle, of Chatham, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:

“Over the holiday period of 2025/2026 no brown bin collection occurred from Monday 22nd December to Monday 12th January, 3 weeks in total.

I appreciate that there are likely good reasons why this wasn't possible, however this is a long period of time and it's also a period where food waste could be higher than normal for many residents. I noticed that many residents where I lived put brown bins out every week in the expectation of collection.

Can the Council commit to shortening the period without brown bin collection in the future?”

Question L – Milo O’Connor, of Rochester, will ask the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:

“With evidence showing that pressures on GP appointment systems contribute to late cancer diagnoses, what specific measures is Medway Council implementing to help Medway GPs spot cancer earlier?”

Member Questions

Question M – Councillor Spalding will ask the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:

“Following reports the elective care centre planned for the former Debenhams site in Chatham designed to relieve pressure on Medway Hospital is not going ahead, can the Portfolio Holder please update the Council as to why this has occurred? In answering, the Portfolio Holder should state how much Medway Council money has gone into this project and why this possibility was not foreseen when Council involvement in this project was considered.”

Question N – Councillor Finch will ask the Portfolio Holder of Housing and Homelessness, Councillor Louwella Prenter, the following:

“Following the update from the Portfolio Holder at the last Cabinet meeting, could the Council provide a detailed breakdown of how the additional £533,000 received from central government to support homelessness and rough sleeping has been allocated?”

In giving the answer, the Portfolio Holder should confirm whether any of this funding has been or will be made available to local voluntary or community organisations supporting homelessness prevention and rough sleeping services in Medway”

Question O – Councillor Lawrence, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:

“At the Cabinet meeting on the 13th of January 2026, the Cabinet took the decision to award the FM Contract to 10 separate businesses. This change involves transferring 51 staff from Medway Norse to Medway Council. At the aforementioned Cabinet Meeting the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Teresa Murray, stated that Medway Norse Staff had been consulted on the changes and she further stated that Medway Norse had failed to provide regular updates on performance across the various contracts managed by Medway Norse. This is clearly untrue.

Can the Portfolio Holder please advise the difference in costs, salary, pension annual leave entitlements to Medway Council taxpayers for the 51 staff being transferred from Medway Norse on the assumption that these staff will be given Medway Council Staff Contracts of Employment? In giving his answer will he please advise when the consultation with Medway Norse staff began.”



Cabinet

10 February 2026

Treasury Management Report 2025/26: Quarter 3

Appendix 3

1. Audit Committee

- 1.1. The report was previously considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2026, the draft minutes are set out below.
- 1.2. The Head of Corporate Accounts introduced the report which was scheduled for consideration by Cabinet on 10 February. He reported that borrowing had increased by £71.8m during the first three quarters of the year, however, it remained below the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).
- 1.3. The Council continued to prioritise short-term borrowing on the advice of treasury advisors, with £487m scheduled to be repaid over the next three years. Interest rates remained at a higher level than expected, however, as rates fall the Council would consider opportunities to borrow over the longer term to smooth the debt maturity profile.
- 1.4. The Council remained in line within its upper limit of 50% of debt maturing in the next 12 months, and there are also regular debt maturities of around £10m per month so the Council can take opportunities afforded by any capital receipts received to repay rather than reservice debt.
- 1.5. Property investment values remained slightly below the original cost of investment; however values have risen during this financial year and the Council had benefited from dividends.
- 1.6. The Council requested redemption of funds from its investment in PATRIZIA on 26 September, however redemption requests within 10 working days of the end of the quarter are held over until the end of the following quarter so it was not possible for the redemption to take place before the end of quarter three. Subsequent to the request, redemptions were suspended until an extraordinary general meeting to consider the potential merger of the fund was considered on 6 March 2026. The Head of Corporate Accounts stated that it was likely that requests for redemption would be successful following

the extraordinary general meeting on 6 March. Though this could not be guaranteed at this stage.

- 1.7. The Head of Corporate Accounts added that the majority of monies from the Lothbury fund had now been received, with £129,000 of the £3.65m expected remained outstanding and the balance would be received shortly. Investment performance as a whole remained in line with peers.
- 1.8. The following issues were discussed:
 - 1.8.1. **Borrowing** – in response to a question what the key drivers for the increase in borrowing were, the Head of Corporate Accounts stated the increase in borrowing, reflected the ongoing schemes in the Capital Programme for example temporary accommodation costs were nearly £40m. In addition, Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) was required to balance the budget in 2025-26 and this was also shown in the borrowing figures.
 - 1.8.2. The Committee discussed the impact of the increased borrowing on revenue costs. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the 2025-26 budget was built on projections from Treasury advisors that interest rates would fall to around 4%. The Capital Programme was considered affordable at the time under those assumptions. However, PWLB rates had not fallen during the first half of the year as expected. This was in part due to the cost of gilts which were linked to PWLB loan rates. The higher-than-expected interest costs had created a budget pressure of £7m which would be reported in quarter monitoring.
 - 1.8.3. **PATRIZIA Fund** – A Member asked if the Council could change its mind and remain in the PATRIZIA fund should it wish to do so. The Head of Corporate Accounts stated that the Council could change its mind regarding redemption if it wished. The fund continued to perform well and this may encourage some investors to continue with the investment.
 - 1.8.4. The Chief Operating Officer added that if the Council wished to reverse its decision to seek redemption, a further decision would be required by Cabinet but his advice would be not to reconsider the original decision at this stage.
 - 1.8.5. It was asked if the Council had made a profit or loss on its property investments taking into account inflation. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the Council invested in property at a time when advice from CIPFA and government was to encourage commercial activity, this had subsequently been reversed following a number of high profile failures across the country, however taking all factors such as the value of the fund and dividends into account, the Council had made a profit on its commercial investments.
 - 1.8.6. **MDC Loans** – the performance of loans to MDC (Medway Development Company) was queried. The Chief Operating Officer explained there were two types of loans to MDC, the initial loan which was not secured against the

assets and was therefore charged at a premium rate. The subsequent loan was held against the assets so attracted a lower interest rate and was originally scheduled to be paid following sales of the properties purchased. The majority of development is nearly complete with Garrison Point 100% occupied and Chatham Wharf close to being fully occupied. However, the sales market was currently weak and the company had decided to pivot to the private rental market. As a consequence, loans would be repaid over a longer period, but the risk to the Council was significantly reduced.

1.8.7. It was asked whether the accounting requirements of loans provided to the MDC affected profitability. The Head of Corporate Accounts stated that those loans remained profitable to the Council when taking into account Minimum Revenue Provision and Interest Rates.

1.8.8. **Investment Risk** – The Independent Member asked if there was a mechanism to assess the risk associated with the companies the Council invested in. The Head of Corporate Accounts stated that the Council received regular updates on the risk of institutions the Council held monies with and would act on their advice.

1.9. **Decision:**

The Committee noted the treasury management report.

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Cabinet

10 February 2026

Treasury Management Strategy 2026 / 2027

Appendix D

1. Audit Committee

- 1.1. The report was previously considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2026, the draft minutes are set out below.
- 1.2. The Head of Corporate Accounts introduced the report, he highlighted that figures were based upon quarter two budget monitoring and any changes to the Capital budget would have consequential affects for the minimum revenue provision (MRP). It is envisioned that external borrowing would increase over the next three years.
- 1.3. The Debt Maturity profile shows debt repayment to peak over the next two to three years, before falling as the Council continues to prioritise short term loans on the advice of treasury advisors. The Council would continue to consider opportunities for significant receipts over the next period including disposal of assets which could be used to reduce debt. As interest rates fall the Council will look to spread the debt maturity profile.
- 1.4. The Head of Corporate Accounts added that the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) guidance had been updated in 2024, and the Strategy reflects these changes which specifically addressed the Council's position with regard to the MRP and loans to subsidiaries.
- 1.5. The following issues were discussed:
 - 1.5.1. Fixed term Interest Rates loans - in response to a question whether the Council had exceeded its upper limit for fixed term interest rate loans to subsidiaries, the Chief Operating Officer explained that the PSR loans Interest rate changed on an annual basis so was not a fixed rate, which meant the upper limit had not been breached as the fixed rate loan was £125m.
 - 1.5.2. **Economic Analysis** – The Independent Member requested further information regarding the economic analysis which had been undertaken to support the strategy and the risk to the Council. The Head of Corporate

Accounts stated that the Council treasury Advisors had provided an analysis of interest rates and the PWLB rate and this had informed the strategy. Advisors continued to provide regular updates on the economic outlook.

- 1.5.3. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)** – It was asked whether the Housing Revenue Account affected the CFR. The Head of Corporate Accounts stated the HRA had its own CFR limit, this was then combined with other borrowing to provide an overall figure for both borrowing and the CFR for the Council.
- 1.5.4. **Exceptional Financial Support (EFS)** – further information was requested in relation to what the effect of EFS borrowing would have on the strategy. The Head of Corporate Accounts stated that the EFS would be repaid under the MRP guidance. The guidance required payment of the EFS over two twenty years.
- 1.5.5. **Risk Management** – It was asked what steps had been undertaken to ensure the HRA strategy was affordable over the longer period. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the HRA business plan was produced with the assistance of consultants which took in a wide variety of market conditions and was subject to significant scrutiny on an annual basis.
- 1.5.6. A Member questioned whether it was prudent to borrow at current levels with Local Government Reform scheduled to take place over the next two years with a successor authority being responsible for the debt. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the benefits of the Capital Programme would accrue over the longer term so although there would be debts, there would also be significant assets for the successor authority. In addition, the benefits of the scheme would save on revenue spending in the future, for example the CareFor Medway project, the total costs of building and operational costs of the lifetime of the scheme were balanced with current costs if private sector costs remained the same. However, it was expected that private care costs would continue to rise so the scheme was affordable in the long term, in addition this scheme would ensure that Medway Council had an influence on the care market.
- 1.5.7. **Refinancing** – it was asked if the majority of debt was refinanced rather than repaid. The Head of Corporate Accounts stated that some debt was repaid when large receipts were received and where cash flow allowed, debt was repaid rather than refinanced. The Head of Corporate Accounts undertook to provide further information where debt was repaid rather than refinanced in future reports.
- 1.5.8. The Chief Operating Officer added that overall debt was rising, so debt was refinanced. Repayment was planned for the longer period which was managed under the MRP. A Member raised concern that the debt had increased by £80m this financial year and was planned to increase by £120m

next year. The Chief Operating Officer acknowledged this rise in debt, however it was linked to growth in the Councils assets.

1.6. **Decision:**

- a) The Committee noted the reports contents and submitted comments to Cabinet and recommendation to Full Council for approval.
- b) The Head of Corporate Accounts to include debt repaid and debt refinanced in future reports.

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Report back from other Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Draft Capital and Revenue Budget Proposals 2026/27

2.8 Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 29 January 2026

Discussion:

The Head of Revenue Accounts introduced the report which had been presented to the Committee in November and been updated to reflect the comments of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees which could be found at appendix 1 to the report. He added that the Local Government Finance settlement had been announced in December which was the first year of a multi-year settlement. The settlement was positive for Medway, however the benefits of the settlement would not be felt until years two and three of the settlement. In 2026/27 the Council would receive £8m less than was originally forecasted. The final settlements would be received by the Council shortly and incorporated into the report provided to Full Council.

The following issues were discussed:

Council Finances – The Chief Operating Officer was asked for his assessment of the Council's finances in light of the proposed £8m less income from central government than was forecast and the need for further Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) when it had been the aim of the administration for no further EFS to be sought. It was asked whether the positive forecasts previously provided had been unrealistic. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the budget gap had been reduced from £26m in November, however funding from central government was £8m lower than had been forecast.

The Chief Operating Officer explained that the forecast had been made with the help of advisors based on previous government announcements. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the modelling had correctly forecast a positive settlement for Medway, however the phasing of the settlement over the three-year period meant that there was a lower than anticipated level of funding in year one. When the Cabinet budget report was published in February, the three year projection would show increased funding to Medway to be received in years two and three of the settlement.

The Cabinet budget report, when published will highlight that, following significant work by Portfolio Holders and senior managers, the budget gap would be reduced to around £10.2m for the coming financial year. This gap would require an application for further EFS.

Current year budget Overspend – it was asked to what extent the overspend on the current year had impacted on the budget for the next financial next year. The Chief Operating Officer explained that there were two significant areas of overspend for the current financial year, being Treasury Management and Adult Social Care. Each year the budget was built on a set of assumptions, for Adult Social Care external factors such as the pressure on the NHS and its subsequent effect on adult

social care were greater than had been anticipated and that would impact next years budget. With regard to Treasury Management, whilst interest rates had fallen, the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rate had not fallen in line with predictions made by treasury advisors in November 2024. This had created a pressure in terms of higher interest rate costs and this pressure was expected to continue into the next financial year.

Capital Strategy – further information was requested regarding the Capital Strategy which included a number of schemes which were not reflected in the draft budget. The Head of Revenue Accounts stated further information would be published shortly in relation to the Capital Programme. Chief Operating Officer stated that the Capital Strategy outlined the Council’s aspirations to invest in its assets, however the Capital Programme only reflected these aspirations to the extent to which the Council could afford to undertake those schemes.

General Reserves – it was asked if the Council intended to grow its reserves in the next financial year. The Head of Revenue Accounts confirmed this assumption had been removed from the proposed budget and the medium-term financial outlook due to financial pressures the Council currently faced. The Chief Operating Officer added that increasing reserves remained an ambition however given the financial pressures it was not prudent to increase reserves at this time.

Further information was requested regarding how the budget gap for next year and the overspend for this year had been reduced. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the information was very detailed and advised Members to review the draft budget and monitoring reports which would be published as part of the Cabinet papers on Monday 2 February for further information.

Medway 2.0 in response to a question whether officers were confident the savings in budget identified in Medway 2.0 would be realised. The Chief Operating Officer stated that he was confident that the projected savings would be realised, and progress would be reported to this Committee during the year. In addition, Medway 2.0 featured within other savings made across the Council , but attributed to the relevant service departments.

Decision:

- a) The Committee is asked to note that Cabinet has instructed officers to continue to work with Portfolio Holders in formulating robust proposals to reduce the budget deficit for 2026/27 and to liaise with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to secure support through the Exceptional Financial Support scheme, should it be necessary.
- b) The Committee submitted comments and comments from the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees to Cabinet.



Cabinet

10 February 2026

One Medway Council Plan 2024-2028 2026/27 Key Performance Indicator Refresh

Appendix 3

1. Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - 1.1. The report was previously considered by the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 January 2026, the draft minutes are set out below.
 - 1.2. The Chief Information Officer introduced the report which outlined proposed amendments to the One Medway Council Plan for 2026-27. He highlighted that the majority of indicators remained unchanged, 24 amendments were proposed to reflect current performance, 11 indicators would be removed because data was no longer available or relevant and seven new indicators were proposed.
 - 1.3. The following issues were discussed:
 - 1.3.1. **Delegation of the Chief Executive** – the Committee discussed the proposed delegation to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to agree new key performance indicators. A Member raised concern that the delegation to Officers and Members to amend indicators could be used to provide a more favourable outlook for the Council. He added that in his view the ability to change indicators should be reserved to the Committee.
 - 1.3.2. The Chief Information Officer stated that changes to the indicators had been brought to the Committee for consideration to ensure transparency. The Chief Operating Officer stated that the report was considered as part of pre-decision scrutiny, so any comments by the Committee would be noted and if Members did not want the Chief Executive to have the delegation that could be voted upon at Full Council.
 - 1.3.3. The Chief Operating Officer added that the purpose of the delegation to the Chief Executive was to add new measures to reflect changes in priorities or schemes during the year. The delegation did not provide authority to the Chief Executive to remove targets, and performance was presented to the relevant Committees on a quarterly basis with complete transparency in relation to all targets.

- 1.3.4. A recommendation was proposed to note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's concern that the Chief Executive had a delegation to amend indicators. On being put to the vote, the recommendation was lost.
- 1.3.5. **Scrutiny and Review** – in response a to a question whether the development and scrutiny of key performance indicators reflected best practice, the Chief Information Officer stated that the development and scrutiny of performance was open and transparent and this reflected good practice.
- 1.3.6. **Business Creation** – It was asked for further information to support the amended target for KPI 2.2 Business creation which had been reduced from 8,000 to 4,000 new businesses over the Council Plan period. The Chief Information Officer undertook to provide a response from the service following the meeting.
- 1.3.7. A Member commented that there was not a specific indicator which related to the survival of small businesses and inward investments to the area's high streets, it was asked if further information could be provided as to how the Council measured investment into the high street and the survival of businesses. The Chief information Officer undertook to request a briefing note from the service on the current situation.
- 1.3.8. **Swimming** – in response to a question regarding the numbers of young people swimming and whether this had been affected by the decision to remove free swimming, the Chief Information Officer explained the target KPI 4.14 was to increase swimming by 5% year on year, to achieve the target of 15% of young people accessing swimming lessons by the by 2027/28. He would request further information regarding performance against this indicator from the service.
- 1.3.9. A Member requested further information in relation to littering in their ward. The Chief Information Officer undertook to request the service to provide that information following the meeting.
- 1.4. **Decision:**
- a) The Committee considered the proposed changes to the key performance indicators that will be used to track performance of the One Medway Council Plan in 2026/27 as set out in appendix 1 and section 3.7 and submitted comments to Cabinet.
 - b) The Committee noted that Council will be requested to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree new key performance indicators and interim targets where applicable as set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report.
 - c) The Committee requested further information regarding the performance in relation to ward level performance regarding littering.



Cabinet

10 February 2026

Risk Strategy Annual Review

Appendix 3

1. Audit Committee

- 1.1. The report was previously considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2026, the draft minutes are set out below.
- 1.2. The Chief Operating Officer introduced the report, he highlighted the Corporate Risk Management Group of senior officers which undertook oversight and review of the risk register had been reinstated and had considered the proposed amendments to the risk strategy. He highlighted the following changes to the strategy.
- 1.3. The Risk Register was now held on a single platform which was accessible to all relevant officers and held all known risks, from specific projects, through departmental risks to Council wide risks. The role of the Corporate Risk Management Group would be to review the Risk Register providing, advice and proposing mitigations.
- 1.4. The definitions for likelihood and impact had been reviewed and updated. This included a default time period for considering the likelihood of a risk event being set at 12 months, though longer could be considered in certain circumstances. In relation to impact it was proposed that the word catastrophic be changed to critical which provided a more objective view of the potential impact of a risk taking place.
- 1.5. The following issues were discussed:
 - 1.5.1. **Risk Platform** - in response to a question on what platform was the register managed, the Chief Operating Officer stated that it was held on a single live database which relevant officers would be able to update as required. The Corporate Risk Management Group would periodically review, provide challenge and consider potential mitigations to the risks presented to them.
 - 1.5.2. **Risk Management Group** – further information was requested for the reasoning to re-instate the Risk Management Group. The Chief Operating Officer stated that previously the group had too wide a remit, considering issues such as emergency planning and business continuity on a regular

basis which meant that the group was unfocused and included more junior membership. The re-instated group would be made of Corporate Management Team and would be focused solely on the risk register.

- 1.5.3. The Chief Operating Officer was asked for further information on the role of the group. The Chief Operating Officer explained that the group would review the risk register, offer challenge, propose mitigations to reduce risk and provide assurance to the Council that risk was managed effectively.
 - 1.5.4. **Impact definition** – a Member commented that they believed the definition of catastrophic represented an accurate view of the level of concern that should be held for some risks. The Chief Operating Officer stated he felt the term was too emotive, and critical was more objective without diminishing the level of risk that was present.
 - 1.5.5. **Role of the Audit Committee** – the Committee discussed whether the Audit Committee had a role in reviewing the Risk Register on the basis that the Committee needed to be assured that risk was managed effectively and the Committee had powers to review any documentation to provide that assurance.
 - 1.5.6. The Chief Operating officer stated that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees scrutinised the relevant part of the Risk Register for that Committee and Cabinet reviewed the register on a quarterly basis. It was the view of Officers that it would require a change in the Constitution to enable the Committee to review the Risk Register. He undertook to discuss the issue further with the Assistant Director of Legal and Governance and provide a formal response to the Committee following the meeting.
 - 1.5.7. **Identification of risk** – a Member commented that the Council could do more to consider whether it identified risk effectively. The Head of Internal Audit and Counter Fraud stated that identification of potential risks was completed at the service level, which enabled controls be put in place to mitigate the risk such as segregation of duties. In this way detection of risk was part of mitigation.
- 1.6. **Decision:**
- a) The Committee considered the 2026/27 Risk Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and submitted comments to Cabinet.
 - b) The Chief Operating Officer to discuss with the Assistant Director, Legal and Governance whether Audit could consider the Risk Strategy on a periodic basis and provide a response to the Committee following the meeting.

2. Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2.1. The report was previously considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2026, the draft minutes are set out below.

2.2. The Chief Information Officer introduced the report, he highlighted the principal changes to the strategy which include the re-establishment of the Corporate Risk Management Group

2.3. It was noted by Members that the Audit Committee had previously considered the report.

2.4. **Decision:**

The Committee considered the 2026/27 Risk Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and submitted comments to Cabinet.

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