

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Regeneration, Community and Culture**  
**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday, 3 April 2012**

**6.00pm to 10.30pm**

**Record of the meeting**

**Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee**

**Present:** Councillors: Bright (Chairman), Griffin, Griffiths, Adrian Gulvin, Hicks (Vice-Chairman), Hubbard, Juby, Mackinlay, Maisey, Osborne and Stamp

**Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Pat Gulvin (Substitute for Councillor Etheridge)  
Hewett (Substitute for Councillor Turpin)

**In Attendance:** Marc Blowers, Head of Housing Management  
Councillor Rodney Chambers, Leader  
Councillor Pat Cooper  
Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture  
Angela Drum, Head of Legal Services  
Tim England, Head of Safer Communities  
Stephen Gaimster, Assistant Director Housing, Development and Transport  
Matthew Gough, Head of Strategic Housing Services  
Richard Hicks, Assistant Director, Customer First, Leisure, Culture, Democracy and Governance  
Anna Marie Lawrence-Lovell, Performance Manager  
Andy McGrath, Assistant Director, Front Line Services  
Phil Moore, Head of Highways and Parking Services  
Caroline Salisbury, Democratic Services Officer

**969 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 31 January 2012 was agreed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

**970 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Etheridge and Turpin.

**971 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances**

There were none.

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**972 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Griffiths declared a personal interest to any reference to Medway Community Healthcare, as he is a non-executive director.

Councillor Adrian Gulvin declared personal interests in agenda item 8 (Community Safety Plan 2012-2013) as he is a council appointed Member of the Fire Authority and also that his brother is manager of the Youth Offending team. He also declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 (presentation on housing services) as he is a private sector landlord.

Councillor Pat Gulvin declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (Community Safety Plan 2012-2013) as her brother-in-law is manager of the Youth Offending team.

Councillor Hewett declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (Community Safety Plan 2012-2013) as he is a council appointed Member of the Fire Authority.

Councillor Mackinlay declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (Community Safety Plan 2012-2013) as he is a council appointed Member of Kent Police Authority. He also declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 (presentation on housing services) as he is a private sector landlord.

Councillor Stamp declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Member's Item: ownership and maintenance of retaining walls) as he works full time for the Environment Agency.

**973 Attendance of the Leader of the Council**

**Discussion:**

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Rodney Chambers), in his role as Portfolio Holder of inward investment, strategic tourism promotion and regeneration, gave a presentation to the committee which included:

Inward investment

- inward investment through the private sector would be vital if the council wished to proceed with the regeneration programme, as there would be very limited money from central government
- the council had helped to secure 600 new jobs and was seeking to unlock up to 17,000 jobs to 2026
- more than 50 companies now used the Innovations Centre which was 85% occupied
- promotion to encourage businesses to locate in Medway was a priority and £50,000 had been put aside in the 2012/2013 budget for this purpose
- a new lower Dartford crossing would also help investment into the area with the increased accessibility to Medway.

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### Tourism

- tourism was now worth £290 million to Medway's economy
- whilst Medway's bid for City Status was unsuccessful, it helped to raise the profile of the area and generated positive coverage
- a new Tourism Strategy was being developed.

### Regeneration

- discussions continued with Tesco on the regeneration of the eastern end of Chatham High Street
- construction had begun on Rochester Riverside with £4.4 million made available by central government for highway investment in the site
- work was on-going on the western gateway to Medway Park with £11 million spent on regeneration of this area from Gillingham High Street. The re-development of Gillingham railway station was also nearly completed
- planning consent had been given to continue the next phase of development at Victory Pier
- proposals for development at Kingsnorth and Lodge Hill continued and plans would be submitted to the council shortly
- a priority was to develop hotel accommodation to give people the ability to stay in Medway whilst visiting its many attractions.

The committee asked a variety of questions, including:

- what changes did the Leader foresee for Medway over the next 20 years?

The Leader responded that his vision was to create a 'whole community', which meant that residents were happy to live, work and play within the area they lived in. He also wished to bring more employment to the area, in particular keeping residents within Medway for their work, rather than them commuting to London.

- how was infrastructure to be funded in the future?

The committee was advised that the only option would be to work with private investors.

- how could the council better use its assets, such as Rochester and Upnor castles?

In response, Members were informed that Medway's historic assets would be part of the marketing campaign mentioned in the introduction. A Tourism Strategy was also being developed.

- what was gained from the £13,000 spent on the city status campaign and did the council lose the city status bid because it referred to itself as a city prior to the decision being made?

The Leader advised that the submission from the council was very strong but the government had decided to choose a submission from each part of

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the country, rather than on the strength of individual submissions. However, it had raised the profile of Medway and £13,000 would not have brought a fraction of a similar high-profile marketing campaign. With regard to the marketing of Medway as a city, Councillor Chambers advised that it had shown Medway's aspiration and also, one of the successful bids had called itself a city council for a number of years prior to their bid.

- what was the current situation on the World Heritage status bid?

The committee was advised that as Medway was the only bid ready for submission, the UK organisation had decided not to make any bids during 2012. However, Medway remained the first tentative bid for next year.

- clarity was requested with regard to the £4.4 million fund made available from the government.

The Leader responded that this money was in the form of a loan from the government but following dialogue with the government, in co-ordination with other Local Authority colleagues, he was confident that the loan would be interest-free.

- what was the breakdown of the 600 jobs created, for example full-time, part-time or temporary employment? Were these created by existing companies in Medway or by new companies locating here?

The Leader undertook to provide this information to the committee.

- what was the council's position with regard to the relocation of Gillingham Football Club?

Councillor Chambers clarified that he had always wished to see the club remain in Medway. The council could, and had previously, facilitated negotiations over possible new sites. The council had also paid towards two feasibility studies, which showed its commitment to help relocate the football club. He added that it would be wrong of the council to disregard defined planning policies in order to relocate the new ground. However, in the future, there could be reasons for an exception to be made depending on the particular circumstances. He undertook to provide Members with further information on this matter.

- what small to medium enterprise schemes had the council recently applied for, such as the Regional Growth Fund and the Mary Portas High Street innovation fund, as other Local Authorities in Kent had recently secured this type of enterprise funding?

Councillor Chambers responded that both the Medway City Estate and Gillingham Business Park had been developed as Enterprise Zones. There was only one senior tier authority allocation within an area and due to the closure of Pfizers pharmaceuticals in Thanet, the grant had been part of

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infrastructure proposals to that site, as it had an influence on the greater of economy of Kent. The government would shortly announce another initiative and Medway might be part of a North Kent Gateway application.

- why was the Christmas market not taking place in Rochester in 2012?

The committee was informed that this was a private venture that had not been commercially successful, despite the record number of visitors. The council would not consider taking on such a financial burden.

- did the Leader agree with the adoption of a new road to be created by Aldi in Strood to allow a better flow of traffic?

Councillor Chambers responded that if a private developer wanted to build a road which would help with traffic congestion, he would be willing to work with them and adopt the road as part of the public highway.

- when the Leader had been held to account last year, he had given a lot of praise to the Medway Renaissance team (which was to be disbanded on 31 March 2011) and gave assurance that remaining regeneration projects were on time and on budget. Since then, it had emerged that this was mis-leading information, as the programmes had run over-time and over budget. What reflection did the Leader have on this situation?

Members were advised that at the time Councillor Chambers had no reason to disbelieve what officers told him. The legacy document produced by the Renaissance team contained this data and at a Members presentation, everyone was told that the projects were on time and on budget.

- Airport capacity in the UK and the consultation about a possible new airport in the south east.

The Leader advised that the consultation about a new airport in the south east had been delayed until after May 2012. He assured Members that the council would make a submission strongly opposing this, as it had done previously in 2002/2003 when there was a proposal for an airport at Cliffe. He understood that the future consultation would not be site specific. He also advised that the Local Enterprise Partnership had embarked on a consultation exercise outlining the case for expansion of airport capacity in the south east but this would not include proposals for an airport at Grain or in the estuary but would include Stansted, Gatwick, Northolt, Manston and Southend. This document would be available next week.

- What was the future of various empty buildings in Chatham, including Victory House, Mountbatten House and the Colonial Buildings (also known as the 'Big Blue')?

The committee was informed that these buildings would be included in the future marketing of Medway, mentioned previously, and should be a

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particular selling feature for companies with their Head Offices currently in London. He suggested that there may need to be dialogue with the owners about the leases and rents expected on these properties and whether, in the current economic climate, these should be reviewed.

**Decision:**

The Leader of the Council was thanked for his presentation.

**974 Presentation on housing services**

**Discussion:**

The Assistant Director, Housing, Development and Transport began the presentation explaining that housing services had transferred from the Business Support directorate to the Regeneration, Community and Culture directorate on 1 April 2012 and, in accordance with the council's Constitution, this would now be in the remit of this committee.

The Head of Housing Management and Head of Strategic Housing gave a presentation of the main services provided by their teams, which included:

Five key standards to meet covering all aspects of the service

- Tenant involvement and empowerment standard
- The home standard
- The tenancy standard
- Neighbourhood and community standard
- Value for money standard.

As a landlord service the council provided

- Repairs and Maintenance – all works are contracted out and approximately 800 orders raised a month
- Tenancy and Leasehold Management – includes management of arrears, estate inspections, void management, letting of property, tenancy enforcement and anti-social behaviour. Since April 2011, tenant arrears had fallen by over £75,000 as a result of targeted campaigns
- Estate Services (Caretaking – which residents pay for via a service charge)
- Sheltered Housing – 8 schemes (280 flats) staffed with a manager
- Resident Involvement.

Strategic housing services provided

- Housing Advice and Options – includes money and debt advice, HomeBond (rent deposit scheme), domestic abuse advice and Sanctuary Scheme, measures mortgage arrears, interventions/mortgage rescue referrals, mediation and conciliation and negotiation or legal advocacy for private rented tenants
- Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation – 390 new applications made from April 2011 – February 2012

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- Allocations
- Disabled Adaptations
- Private Sector Housing - currently around 93,739 privately owned homes in Medway
- Housing Strategy - 160,000 homes in Medway made up of around: 86% Private sector and 14% Social rented (7% Medway Housing Society (MHS), 4% Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and 3% Council Stock).

Members asked questions and made comments which included:

- What did the council do about problem tenants, particularly with anti-social behaviour, and what methods and approaches were available to the council to remove them, if necessary

Members were advised that the council would talk to the relevant tenant and try and resolve the particular issue that had been raised but the challenge was to involve other residents to give witness statements that they were willing to follow up through court action. The council did have an introductory tenancy scheme which would result in a secure tenancy through good behaviour.

- with a large number of housing providers in the area, could the council act to consolidate smaller provision with others to have a bigger, overall effect?

The Head of Strategic Housing advised that the council worked with 25 providers and that some had transferred their units to larger Housing Associations. The units with smaller numbers were usually provided for specific services, for example units with disabled facilities or for domestic abuse.

- why did the council only award a secure (long-term) tenancy and not any short-term tenancies?

Officers advised that flexible tenancies were only a recent option which the council did not have plans to use in the foreseeable future. The Tenant Scrutiny Panel was concerned that people would not look after their properties and gardens if they knew they would only be living there for a few years.

- how quickly did the council intervene in rent arrears?

The Head of Housing Management replied that the council intervened on the first week of rent arrears, as it was easier to help clear a small debt rather than let it get too difficult for the customer to deal with. The customer would be signposted to where they could get advice and how to set up a payment agreement etc.

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- service charges for the caretaking service - a lot of tenants were on housing benefit, did it cover payment of this service charge?

Members were advised that housing benefit covered some services but not the caretaking service. Officers added that this would soon be reviewed and options considered, as the charge did not currently cover the cost of the service.

- what would be the impact on the domestic abuse and sanctuary service due to the Supporting People funding reduction?

The Head of Strategic Housing responded that the majority of the work came from the housing budget and was supported through the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and would carry on unaffected. The Supporting People fund supported some schemes with challenging clients and there was an on-going review, so officers were not yet aware of any implications to the current service.

The committee asked that Members were kept informed of potential changes due to the reduction of the Supporting People budget with regard to housing services and that officers consider how best to address this in order that Members of this committee could keep a sufficient overview of the situation.

- was the change to the benefit system and the current economic climate factored in to future analysis, particularly for debt?

The Head of Strategic Housing advised that the situation was already challenging and would only increase with the change to the benefit system. The affect on the council would be demonstrated by how many householders would have the ability to deal with these changes themselves or not and the number of householders the council would need to help was currently unknown.

- what powers were available to the council to prevent sub-standard properties owned by private landlords?

Members were advised that the legal standard of provision was quite low and often the expectations of the tenant were much higher than the legal requirement. The council had a duty at the highest level of risk but the number of properties at this level was very limited. During the past year 385 properties had been issued with an enforcement notice to remedy various situations.

**Decision:**

The committee:



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- (a) thanked officers for the presentation and the answers provided to Members' questions;
- (b) requested officers to look into how best to keep Members informed of the potential changes due to the reduction of the Supporting People budget with regard to housing services.

**975 Member's Item: ownership and maintenance of retaining walls**

**Discussion:**

Councillor Stamp introduced this item and showed photographs to the committee to illustrate the issues he raised with regard to the retaining wall on the A289 Gillingham bypass. He explained that he had concerns about the budget information provided in the report and asked for clarification on the following points:

- did the £250,000 budget also include the cost of inspecting the 150 highway retaining walls the council maintained?
- was the £200,000 - £300,000 fund in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) budget (currently used for the retaining walls along the river at The Esplanade) a recurring cost or could it be freed for maintenance use on retaining walls?
- were there other sources of funding, such as monies from a section 106 legal agreement from the Victory Pier development to be used for works of this type?
- could the future Community Infrastructure Levy be used for maintenance works?
- how did other Local Authorities deal with problems such as this?
- could the council introduce a policy to control and regularise the maintenance of retaining walls and also signpost the public to help and advice on this matter?

Officers responded to the issues raised by Councillor Stamp advising that the £250,000 revenue budget did include the cost of inspecting 150 walls across Medway with not much left to improve the condition of the walls. Most of the maintenance work was paid for from the LTP budget, or in extreme cases, paid for by the council when it responded to an incident. The £200,000 - £300,000 set aside for structural repairs had historically been ring-fenced to maintain the Esplanade wall, as there were no other available routes for residents to access their properties and without regular maintenance it would collapse into the river.

The committee was informed that s106 legal agreement funding and the future Community Infrastructure Levy would only allow for those monies to be spent on new structures caused by and required for the new developments. It could not legally be spent on something that was already in the location that required maintenance.

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Members were also advised that other Local Authorities with similar terrain, such as Kent, Surrey and Derbyshire, were in exactly the same position as Medway as they were unaware of the extent of their liability in the same way as members of the public and reacted to incidents and information from the public.

In response to future maintenance work, budgets and a policy for retaining walls, officers advised that they had previously considered whether it would be practical to undertake a survey across Medway and then establish whether those walls were in council or private ownership but this was a mammoth task as there were thousands of walls in Medway and this would require too much officer time and money. Following this, the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture had requested that officers bi-annually inspect the list of 150 known walls with the worst 21 walls set as a priority for future maintenance works, as they would have a serious impact on the highway were they to fall.

The committee discussed the retaining wall at Pier Road, Gillingham and whether vibration from the building of this major highway had worsened the condition of the wall, together with whether it was in private or council ownership. Officers advised that they believed that the wall was built prior to the development of the houses situated above the wall and therefore was in private ownership. A member of the public, Ms Robinson, addressed the committee advising that she had documentation to prove that the wall was built in 1924 and the first property was not built until 1929 and so the wall had not been built to protect the houses. Officers responded that in cases where development was expected, the land would have been built into an embankment (with a retaining wall) to support the houses. Ms Robinson responded that her documents showed that the wall had been built to facilitate the highway. Following a request for clarification by Members, officers advised that the council had powers to undertake the required work and surcharge the owners of the properties behind the wall but would prefer to reach an amicable agreement.

Councillor Stamp asked officers to consider the Pier Road and Lower Woodlands Road walls a priority due to their proximity to the A289 and the economical implications for the council should the wall collapse and the road have to be closed.

A proposal was put forward to request officers to continue to pursue the powers available for on-going work at the Pier Road retaining wall and identify the ownership of the wall. Members of the Labour group suggested that the proposal should be extended to request officers to seek to identify ownership and condition of all of the retaining walls in Medway. On being put to the vote the original proposal, set out below, was agreed.

**Decision:**

The committee agreed to:

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- (a) thank officers for the comprehensive report and answers provided to Members' questions;
- (b) request officers to continue to pursue the powers available for on-going work at the Pier Road retaining wall and identify the ownership of the wall, including to contact Ms Robinson in order to review the documentation she had offered.

**976 Community Safety Plan 2012-2013**

**Discussion:**

The Head of Safer Communities introduced the report informing the committee that the landscape for Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) was likely to change significantly over the next few years, following the elections for the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) in November 2012. The PCC and the CSP would have a reciprocal duty to have regard to each other's priorities and work in co-operation with each other to tackle community safety issues.

In previous years there had been a requirement to produce three-year plans, with an annual review, following a strategic assessment of crime and disorder within the area. The regulations had recently been relaxed, and, in recognition of the changing outlook, this year's plan had been drafted to reflect a single year of operation.

The previous year's highlights included a 12% reduction in night-time economy related crime and anti-social behaviour achieved through focused, joined up working between the partner agencies. There had also been a 14% reduction in reported flytipping, achieved through tough enforcement and there had also been excellent reductions in young people entering the criminal justice system. However, a particular area of concern was the steady rise in incidents of domestic abuse. The lead on this area of concern has recently passed to Safer Communities and officers would work to establish baseline targets to support victims and target offenders.

The committee's discussions included the following:

- enforcement, or removal, of the Alcohol Control Zone in Gillingham
- work with multi-national retail companies over the display of, and access to, alcohol
- duties of Community Officers being too varied and not concentrated on their local role
- increase in targets for fixed penalty notices
- Licence to Kill campaign
- lack of funding to continue the services of the SoS bus and the continued services of the street pastor scheme in Rochester High Street
- how the public and local communities were engaged in compiling the priorities for the partnership

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- the future of funding for community safety issues in Medway following the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner in November 2012.

The committee requested further information on the demographic representation of the various areas within Medway and equality of issues represented at the community engagement event at the Strand Leisure Park in Gillingham. Members also asked how the priorities identified at the event were taken forward into this year's plan. The Head of Safer Communities advised that to be certain of a completely demographic feedback it would require a series of events across Medway and the budget was not available for this. All the statutory authorities had been represented at the event and it had been advertised, and held as, a "fun day" which attracted people to the event who then responded to more serious topics with open-ended questions for them to respond to.

A Member voiced his concern that it would have excluded people who were at work as it was a daytime event and if this was used as a regular method of public engagement, officers should continually look at how it could be improved upon in order to give evidence to the priorities identified for the plan. The Head of Safer Communities responded that this was not the only way information was obtained for the priorities, as a strategic assessment was also carried out with information provided by all the partners in the CSP.

With regard to Priority 7 – reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Road Traffic Collisions (page 32 of the agenda) Members recommended that as the figures in Medway dramatically exceeded the national targets, it should be evidenced in the plan to demonstrate how well it was performing in this area, as currently it was being undersold.

Following the launch of the Medway Community Alcohol Partnership in Rainham last year, Members asked where the evidence base was for prioritisation of areas covered by this partnership and would it be extended to the Luton area which was previously denied an Alcohol Control Zone? Officers responded by stating that the Rainham area was seen as an easily containable pilot project and that Luton is already flagged to be included in the scheme in the future.

**Decision:**

The committee agreed to:

- (a) thank officers for the report and for their responses to Member's questions;
- (b) request that officers give continued thought to how to engage a more varied demographic from across Medway to its statutory community safety engagement event in the future;
- (c) refer its comments and the draft Community Safety Plan 2012-2013 to the Cabinet meeting on 17 April 2012.

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**977 Quarter 3 Council Plan monitoring 2011/2012**

**Discussion:**

The Performance Manager introduced the report advising that it allowed Members to monitor the progress of the Regeneration, Community and Culture Directorate for quarter 3 (October to December 2011) in achieving the outcomes agreed in the Council Plan. Following feedback and review, corporate performance reporting had been simplified and would no longer include a lengthy narrative report.

For the Council Plan performance, 36 key performance indicator measures of success could be rated:

Green – 24 measures have achieved or outperformed the target (67%)

Amber – 3 measures are below target but within acceptable variance limits (8%)

Red – 4 measures are outside acceptable variance limits (11%)

There were 4 performance measures which were not rated as they were 'data only' and 1 that could not be reported this quarter but had been included for information.

The highlights for quarter 2 included:

- efforts to reduce unemployment in Medway had continued with 50 apprenticeships created this quarter, which meant that in three months 50 local people had been able to find apprenticeships of 12-18 months duration with local small businesses for the first time
- Love Medway developments this quarter included advertising the Love Medway campaign on the fire engines from Gillingham Fire Station and a Community Champion scheme had been set up at St Mary's school, pupils, elected by their peers, would use the website to report issues they or other pupils had seen
- satisfaction with buses and road and pavement maintenance remained above target
- the opening of Chatham Waterfront bus station and closure of the Pentagon bus station had significantly improved the quality of bus services
- Leisure services had achieved the Customer Service Excellence accreditation.

Areas requiring development included:

- results from the latest tracker survey showed a small dip in satisfaction with the Community Officers. A focus group had been held in December 2011 where specific questions were posed to try and establish the reason for the low satisfaction scores. Although the full details had not yet been received, the headlines were as follows:
  - only a few respondents were aware of the community officers work

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- the awareness of service provision included work not undertaken by community officers around anti-social behaviour and Alcohol Control Zones enforcement
- the group felt, as a whole, the services provided were very worthwhile. However, there was a feeling that the service was under promoted and there was a lack of awareness on how to contact the service
- The Black Minority Ethnic (BME) respondents' awareness of the service was even lower, although they were positive about the service provided. They suggested the use of social media to promote the service and take positive actions with the various BME groups to increase awareness
- it was clear that respondents confused community officers with PCSOs and thought would be given about how the service was made distinct as well as how to raise awareness. The current tracker survey question was not helpful and only served to confuse respondents.
- the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting – although during quarter 3 showed a result under target of 40%, the council was on target for the year. During quarter 3 there was a drop in the recycling rate as it is a seasonal trend as the growing season had ended
- the performance had dropped in the indicator ‘% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality’ from 36% in quarter 1 to 30% in quarter 3. The Council had been successful in securing funding from the EU and Big Lottery Fund in order to assist social regeneration and disadvantaged neighbourhood's projects. In all cases these projects would require work with community groups and residents or the setting up of community panels in order to decide specific priorities for project delivery. These initiatives should help to strengthen the participation and increase the percentage.

Members commented that the final indicator (% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality) target of 32% was an appalling vision for the council, especially as this was about resident's perception of their influence. The projects mentioned above related to Chatham, so would only impact on that area and so what was being done more generally to raise this perception across the whole of Medway? Officers responded that the tracker results were from a cross-section of residents across Medway and a telephone interview of 400 residents also covered the whole of Medway. However, officers agreed to look into this further and re-visit the reasons underpinning this indicator.

With regard to the indicator ‘% of people who think Medway Council helps people travel easily around Medway’, Members commented that the council had set the standard too low if it thought that 52% of people satisfied with this indicator was reasonable.

Members commented that they did not find the data provided useful, as there was no value to compare against in 2010 and no comparison data to other Local Authorities for Members to assess. The Assistant Director, Front Line Services, advised that the national framework of indicators was removed 18 months ago, which made comparison with other authorities hard and there was a lack of trend analysis data as much of the data had changed. Some indicators

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that the council used did not feature in the Council Plan but would feature in directorate or individual Assistant Director plans.

The committee discussed whether it would be useful to be given the questions asked that related to each indicator and the weight given on the validity of the answers. Members also believed that a telephone survey might not be the best way to achieve the information requested from residents. Members requested a Briefing Note on this matter.

**Decision:**

The committee agreed to:

- (a) note the outcomes achieved against the priorities in the Council Plan;
- (b) request that further in-depth information and analysis is provided in a future report on the following areas:
  - NI4 - % of people who think they can influence decisions in their locality
  - IT2 - % of people who think Medway Council helps people travel easily around Medway
  - LRCC4 – number of jobs created and safeguarded;
- (c) request a Briefing Note detailing the various surveys used to support the results for the Council Plan indicators and also including information on the demographics of who is asked, the questions set and the weight given on the validity of the answer.

**978 Work Programme**

**Discussion:**

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report advising that there were no new items on the Council's Forward plan in the remit of this committee and that the remaining housing reports from the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny work programme would be transferred to this committee's work programme, as set out in paragraph 5.4 of the report.

A Member, with reference to discussion at the Audit Committee on 29 March 2012, asked that the Chairman of both Audit and this committee discuss with officers the suitability of this committee scrutinising the current situation of Medway's markets, when appropriate.

The committee was also asked to consider the underspend of £500,000 on concessionary bus passes. Officers responded that the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee had previously asked for a Briefing Note on this and offered to circulate this to all Members for information.

A Member raised the matter of the drought orders shortly to be imposed by Southern Water and asked the committee to review a previous scrutiny task group's recommendations from 2007 in relation to the recommendations to

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Southern Water at that time and also in relation to where the council stood with regard to future development in the area.

**Decision:**

The committee agreed to:

- (a) note the transfer of housing services to the remit of this committee from 1 April 2012;
- (b) note the transfer of the remaining housing reports to this committee's work programme;
- (c) request that the Chairman of both the Audit Committee and this committee discuss with officers the suitability of this committee scrutinising the current situation of Medway's markets;
- (d) request that a Briefing Note asked for by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee with regard to the £500,000 underspend of the concessionary bus fares budget is circulated to all Members of the council for information;
- (e) add to the work programme a review of "The future provision of water in Medway" task group scrutiny review from 2007 in relation to the recommendations to Southern Water at that time and also in relation to where the council now stood with regards to future development in the area.

**Chairman**

**Date:**

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