

Medway Council
Meeting of Medway Council
Thursday, 26 April 2012
7.00pm to 9.53pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next Full Council meeting

Present: The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway (Councillor Baker)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Maisey)
Councillors Bowler, Brake, Bright, Carr, Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers, Clarke, Colman, Cooper, Doe, Etheridge, Filmer, Christine Godwin, Paul Godwin, Griffin, Griffiths, Adrian Gulvin, Pat Gulvin, Hewett, Hicks, Hubbard, Igwe, Iles, Irvine, Jarrett, Juby, Kearney, Kemp, Mackinlay, Mackness, Maple, Mason, Murray, O'Brien, Osborne, Price, Purdy, Rodberg, Royle, Shaw, Smith, Stamp, Tolhurst, Turpin, Wicks and Wildey

In Attendance: Neil Davies, Chief Executive
Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults
Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture
Mick Hayward, Chief Finance Officer
Wayne Hemingway, Democratic Services Officer
Richard Hicks, Assistant Director, Customer First, Leisure, Culture, Democracy and Governance
Perry Holmes, Monitoring Officer
Julie Keith, Head of Democratic Services
Jane Ringham, Head of Elections and Member Services
John Staples, Media Manager

1015 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 23 February 2012 was agreed and signed by the Mayor as correct.

1016 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chishti, Chitty, Craven, Gilry, Harriott and Watson.

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1017 Declarations of interest

The Worshipful the Mayor of Medway, Councillor Baker, declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Armed Services Covenant) as he had served in the Royal Marines.

Councillor Cooper declared a personal interest in any discussion on the NHS as family members worked for the NHS. She also declared a personal interest in any discussion on schools as she was a Community Governor.

Councillor Paul Godwin declared a personal interest in agenda item 13 (Community Safety Plan 2012-2013) as he was a Member of the Kent Police Authority. He also declared a personal interest in paragraph 4.35 of agenda item 9 (Report on Overview and Scrutiny Activity) as he was a Non Executive Director of the Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust.

Councillor Griffiths declared a personal interest in any discussion on Medway Community Healthcare as he was a Non Executive Director of the Medway Community Healthcare Interest Company.

Councillor Igwe declared a personal interest in any discussion on the NHS as he worked as a Mental Health Nurse.

Councillor Juby declared a personal interest in any discussion on Medway Maritime Hospital as two members of his family worked there.

Councillor Mackinlay declared a personal interest in agenda item 13 (Community Safety Plan 2012-2013) as he was a Member of the Kent Police Authority.

Councillor Mason declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Armed Services Covenant) as he had served in the Royal Air Force.

Councillor O'Brien declared a personal interest in any discussion on the NHS as members of his family worked for the NHS. He also declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Armed Services Covenant) as he had served in the Royal Navy.

Councillor Royle declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Armed Services Covenant) as he had served in the Royal Air Force.

Councillor Shaw declared a personal interest in any discussion on schools as she was a School Governor.

1018 Mayor's announcements

The Mayor welcomed Perry Holmes to his first Council meeting as the interim Monitoring Officer.

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He stated that he had no other announcements except to welcome Tony Dance, one of the Independent members of the Standards Committee and to remind Members that Council meetings were now recorded to assist in producing an accurate record of supplementary questions and answers to questions.

He reminded Members to ensure that written copies of any amendments were provided to the Head of Democratic Services and that copies were brought up to the top table first.

1019 Leader's announcements

There were none.

1020 Petitions

Councillor Igwe presented a petition containing 131 signatures which requested the Council to make representations to the Primary Care Trust to retain Marlowe Park Surgery, Strood, in the community.

Councillor Maple presented a petition containing 30 signatures which requested the Council to provide alley gates to the rear of 1-71 Blenheim Avenue, Chatham.

Councillor Osborne presented a petition containing 440 signatures requesting the Council to scrap the parking meter in the car park for Luton Library.

1021 Public questions

(A) Edward Richmond's question to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, regarding how much Medway Council has spent on Chatham Town Football Club over the last 15 years, was withdrawn because Mr Richmond was unable to attend the meeting. He asked that the question be deferred until the Council meeting on 26 July 2012.

(B) Jon Primett of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following question:

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm the current legal status of Luton Millennium Green?

Councillor Doe responded by stating that in February 1998, Medway Council's predecessor authority granted a 1000-year lease to the Trustees of Luton Millennium Green, so that it could use this Council owned site as a Millennium Green. The Trust was disbanded in 2004 and was removed from the Charities' Register. Unfortunately the lease of the Millennium Green was not formally surrendered and as such the land is still registered at the Land Registry as being leased to the Trust.

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He stated that Medway Council had maintained the land since the Trust was disbanded and was working towards formally terminating the lease with the Millennium Green Trust which was legally complicated by the fact that the tenant no longer existed.

He explained that the site was designated as protected open space, an area of Local landscape importance and a site of Nature Conservation Interest in the Local Plan and officers were currently seeking feedback from the community on the future uses and investment in the site, to ensure its importance as an open space continued to be recognised into the future.

Jon Primett asked whether the Portfolio Holder considered it viable to restore the site to its former status, with a good play area and as a valuable facility in what was a deprived area.

Councillor Doe confirmed that it was the council's aim to greatly improve the green. He stated that it was a very large area and the council's funds were currently limited in the new projects that could be undertaken but he wished to work with the local community, over a number of years, in order to bring the site up to a Green Flag standard. However, this would take time and resources and the project would have to be prioritised along with other projects for the resources available.

(C) Lewis Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question;

Is the Council satisfied that by offering the Medway Youth Pass, they are doing enough to help Medway families with their children's school travel costs, even though the most that a family will save is just £2 per month if using Arriva Buses, because the minimum bus fare is £1.20 for a single journey, £2.40 for a return journey, £12 for a weekly bus pass, or £48 for a monthly bus pass, when using the Kent Youth Pass?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that working within the current financial climate, the Council was doing what it could to support families and children with transport. This year the Council had launched the Medway Youth Pass, which expanded the half price bus fares to include weekends, and the Council's policy was to move towards a Freedom Pass in a sustainable and affordable way. In addition, in recent years the Council had expanded the Yellow Bus scheme which offered dedicated bus services to Medway's schools and the Council continued to offer transport to children who attended their nearest appropriate school and lived over the minimum distance.

However, Councillor Filmer explained that the bus companies were responsible for their own charging policies. The Council was currently holding discussions with Arriva and Nu-Venture to see if more could be

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done and if they would allow holders of the Medway Youth Pass to be used on their all day, weekly and monthly season tickets.

Lewis Bailey asked the Portfolio Holder whether two manifesto pledges in the last two elections had been broken?

Councillor Filmer responded that the manifesto commitment was to work towards a Freedom Pass and that work was currently ongoing.

(D) Emma Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Does the Council offer any help or support with travel costs to families who have two or more children who each use more than one bus to travel to school, and therefore receive no benefit whatsoever from using the Medway Youth Pass; or does the Council think that it is reasonable for that family to pay in excess of £50 for each child, every four weeks for their bus passes; that is, £100 every four weeks for two bus passes for two children; or £150 for three bus passes for three children, etc?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that in addition to the Medway Youth Pass, children who attended their nearest appropriate school and lived over the minimum distance were eligible for free home to school transport. If the child was under eight years old the minimum distance was two miles and if the child was over eight years old the minimum distance was three miles. Children aged between eight and 11-years-old from low income families would also qualify if they lived more than two miles from their nearest appropriate school.

The Council also had the Yellow Bus scheme which offers dedicated bus services to Medway's schools.

Councillor Filmer stated that whilst the Council was sympathetic to the transport needs of children, it was constrained by the current financial situation which meant that the Council had to save 25% of its budget over four years.

Emma Bailey asked the Portfolio Holder if the overspend on Chatham Bus Station would have been better spent on funding an equivalent to the Kent Freedom Pass for the children of Medway?

Councillor Filmer responded that no-one started a project with the intention of an overspend, so this was not relevant.

(E) Amelia Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

What does the Council intend to do in the immediate future to help the majority of children who do not benefit at all from using the Medway

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Youth Pass, because they have to use more than one bus to travel to school, and therefore find it cheaper to buy an adult-priced bus pass, because Arriva Buses do not issue a cheaper equivalent child bus pass?

Councillor Filmer stated in many circumstances the Medway Youth Pass did help parents and students, but in other situations the discounts offered by the bus company, who were responsible for their own charging policies, may be more applicable to the students' circumstances.

Councillor Filmer repeated that the Council was currently holding discussions with Arriva and Nu-Venture to see if they would allow holders of the Medway Youth Pass to be used on their all day, weekly and monthly season tickets.

(F) Venetia Iga of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Why is it more expensive when using Arriva Buses, to buy a "child bus pass", which restricts travel to stated buses only for that particular journey, and cannot be used on any other buses within either the Medway Zone or Inner-Medway Zone; than it is to buy an adult bus pass, which offers unrestricted access to all Arriva buses in the whole of either the Medway Zone or Inner-Medway Zone?

Councillor Filmer responded by repeating that the bus companies were responsible for their prices but the Council was working very hard to see what more could be done to assist young people in Medway.

(G) Lorna Barker of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Does the Council think that it is reasonable, for example, that in order to take advantage of the Medway Youth Pass, children are expected to board school buses as early as 7am in the morning; and then to stay on those buses for sometimes up to an hour or more before arriving at schools; for example in Gillingham, some 11 and 12 year old children are expected to walk past Gillingham Station or Gillingham Football Ground on dark winter mornings, to catch the bus which leaves the Arriva Bus Garage at 7am, because the bus does not pass through Gillingham Town Centre but travels to Rainham Mark, then through to Wigmore, Parkwood, Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, Luton, North Dane Way, Lordswood Shopping Centre, Princes Park (Morrisons), Huntsman's Corner, Walderslade, Mid-Kent College, and Thomas Aveling School, before finally at the Rochester Grammar Schools?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that the Route 657 departed the bus station in Nelson Road, Gillingham at 7am and was scheduled to

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arrive at the Rochester Grammar Schools at 8.10am. It was a commercially run service operated by Arriva, who determined the specific route. He stated he was willing to raise any concerns the questioner had with the bus operators directly.

As a possible alternative, there were frequent services between Gillingham Town Centre and Chatham Waterfront Bus Station. From Chatham, route 145 ran every 10 minutes between Chatham and Warren Wood, with a short walk from Warren Wood to the Rochester Grammar Schools.

Lorna Barker stated that if a child had to use two buses to get to school, to get to Chatham and then another bus onto their grammar school, then the Medway Youth Pass was not effective and they would need to buy an adult pass instead. She asked what the council could do to help parents?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that the Council was in discussions with the two bus companies concerned to overcome this issue.

(H) Jordan Iga of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Is the reason that children are expected to catch a school bus at 7am in the morning, and to stay on that bus for up to an hour or more, because the Council provide too few buses to cover too large an area, resulting in bus journeys being unreasonably long, and, by the end of the journey, often over-crowded?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that the vast majority of buses were provided and operated by the bus companies on a commercial basis without subsidy from the Council. The Council did subsidise certain routes at a cost of approximately £1 million where they were not commercially viable and where no bus service would be provided if the Council did not offer a subsidy. This was a subsidy given to bus operators who provided the buses and service themselves. Councillor Filmer asked the questioner to let him know the services he was referring to and to which schools and he would investigate further the issues which the questioner had raised.

(I) George Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Is the Council aware that if a child in Medway travels to school using two buses, the cheapest option for them is to buy an adult-priced bus pass which costs £50 for four weeks, and that that price applies to all children in primary and secondary school, from the age of five, up until their sixteenth birthday?

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Councillor Filmer responded by stating that the bus companies set the prices not the Council but the Council was discussing with them what could be done to make it more affordable for children and parents.

George Bailey asked whether this would take place before he went to school in September?

Councillor Filmer stated that he would be as quick as he could but could not promise by September.

(J) Jon Primett of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm how road resurfacing that was supposed to happen in 2011/12, e.g. The Fairway, has been moved to the budget year 2012/13, and whether he believes the Council should be more transparent with the public on timescales on resurfacing?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that the road-resurfacing programme for planned works generally consisting of two procedures, conventional surfacing and microsurfacing. The Fairway, given in the example, fell into the second category.

Of the 2011/12 programme, £1.2 million of conventional surfacing was completed during the summer. However due to the availability of the specialist contractor required for Microsurfacing, it was agreed that the microsurfacing programme for both the 2011/12 and 2012/13 programmes would commence in March 2012 and run over into April to pick up both financial years programmes, making better use of the specialist contractor. This work would be completed by 30 April.

Jon Primett asked the Portfolio Holder for his comment on the widely-held view that the resurfacing budget was prioritised by the prestigiousness of the area, that is, with the poorer areas having lower priority for the resurfacing budget?

Councillor Filmer responded that the priority for resurfacing was based on the conditions of the road. All Councillors had been sent an annual list of roads due to be re-surfaced for the past three to four years and reiterated that the condition of the roads was the only determining factor.

(K) Lewis Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Can the Council please explain why is it that students and staff at Medway Universities pay at least one-half of the prices that children who live in Medway pay for their travel passes, and they have access to the whole of the Kent Area; whereas Medway children, who pay the full adult price for their bus passes, do not have access to the whole of

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the Kent Area, but to either the Medway Zone only or to the Inner-Medway Zone only?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that the concession for university students and staff was arranged between the universities and the bus company directly, the Council had no involvement nor did it put any funds towards it.

Lewis Bailey asked whether the Council believed that children on free school meals, who could not afford to pay for them themselves and hence were given them for free, should go to their nearest school, which may not be the best school for them, purely based on bus travel?

Councillor Filmer responded he had answered the question regarding entitlements earlier in the evening.

(L) Emma Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Does the Council think it is fair that of three children sitting in the same classroom in a Medway school, the child that lives in Medway could be paying the highest cost for their travel to school (a difference of at least £350 per year); even though the distance travelled could be far less than that travelled by the other two children, because the Medway child uses Arriva bus passes and/or the Medway Youth Pass, whereas the other children might use either PlusBus scheme or the Kent Freedom Pass?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that working within the current financial climate, the Council was doing what it could to support families and children with transport and the Council's policy was to move towards a Freedom Pass in a sustainable and affordable way. Given the reductions in public finance the Council could not currently afford this, as it would cost at least an additional £2.5 million a year to introduce the Kent scheme, which was the equivalent of increasing council tax by 2.5% and the Council currently had the lowest council tax in Kent.

Councillor Filmer reiterated that the bus companies were responsible for their own charging policies, but the Council was in discussions with Arriva and Nu-Venture to see if they would allow the Medway Youth Pass to be used on their all day, weekly and monthly season tickets.

Emma Bailey stated that whilst she appreciated there was regret over the Chatham Bus Station overspend, would the Council tell her who had been held responsible for the overspend of several million pounds, which was approximately the same amount of money as that just quoted by the Portfolio Holder to fund the bus pass, and what action

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was being taken as if this happened in industry the person responsible would be sacked.

Councillor Filmer stated that the regeneration programme was not under his remit but his understanding was that money that was ringfenced for a regeneration project was not transferable to another project, such as bus fares.

(M) Amelia Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Why do I have to pay the same price as my parents for an adult bus pass to travel to school, whereas a child in other parts of Kent can buy a substantially reduced child bus pass?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that bus fares were a commercial decision by the local bus operators and the Council was working very hard with the bus companies to ensure as much could be done as possible to assist Medway's young people.

(N) Venetia Iga of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Why do children have to pay for their travel to school, making Medway the most expensive town for children's travel in Kent, whereas in London, children's travel is free, and in the rest of Kent, cheap travel is available for £100 per year when using the Kent Freedom Pass?

Councillor Filmer responded by reiterating that the Council's policy was to move towards a Freedom Pass in a sustainable and affordable way and this year the Council had expanded its current offer with the Medway Youth Pass. However, given the reductions in public finance, the Council could not currently afford a scheme which would cost an additional £2.5 million a year, which was the equivalent of increasing council tax bills by 2.5%. Currently the Council had the cheapest council tax in Kent, which was on average £130 less.

Medway Council also traditionally received less than other similar sized unitary authorities in funding from the government. For example Brighton and Hove, which had a similar population size, received £390 per resident, compared to Medway's £304 and Kingston upon Hull received £534 per person.

Whilst the Council was sympathetic to the transport needs of children, it was constrained by the current financial situation which meant that the Council had to save 25% of its budget over the next four years.

(O) Lorna Barker of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Is the Council aware that PlusBus monthly passes, which include bus and train travel, are calculated on a “calendar month” basis, and offer much cheaper travel, than the monthly Arriva Bus passes for adults, which are calculated on a four-weekly basis, and can be used on buses only?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that PlusBus was only available to passengers who hold a rail ticket for a journey to the destination in question, and could not be bought on its own. Nor was it sold for journeys within the PlusBus area (so it could not be purchased as an add-on to a rail journey wholly between Strood and Rainham).

The price was set by the bus companies who accepted the ticket. It was commonplace across the UK for the price to be lower than locally available bus tickets, as it was recognised that people had already paid for a rail journey.

Locally, it was worth noting that the monthly and annual Medway PlusBus tickets were more expensive than Arriva's Inner Medway Zone ticket, but cheaper than the whole Medway Zone. However, the latter covered a larger area than Medway PlusBus; for example including the whole of the Isle of Grain, while PlusBus was only valid as far as Hoo.

Lorna Barker asked whether last year's uncollected council tax amounted to over £5 million and whether this could have paid for the Medway Youth Pass scheme, if had been collected?

Councillor Filmer stated that he did not know the figures that had been quoted.

(P) Jordan Iga of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Could the Council please tell me the numbers of people who have expressed that they would like to use, or have previously used, public transport to travel to school, the number of children who do not use public transport to travel to school, and the reasons given why they do not use, or are no longer using public transport to travel to school – particularly buses?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating that each January a school census was carried out which also asked about transport to school. In January 2012 the voluntary responses indicated that there was higher walking and car usage at primary schools, whilst just under 20% of secondary school pupils travel by bus compared to less than 1% of primary school pupils.

(Q) George Bailey of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Can the Council please tell me if they have surveyed the number of children who use, are expected to use, or have expressed an intention to use, public transport to travel to school, and what type of transport they do use, are expected to use, or have expressed an intention to use?

Councillor Filmer responded by reiterating that the Council carried out a school census on an annual basis and this looked at how children travelled to school. The overwhelming majority of children walked to school, however, in January 2012 the voluntary responses indicated that there was higher walking and car usage at primary schools, whilst just under 20% of secondary school pupils travel by bus compared to less than 1% of primary school pupils.

George Bailey asked if his mum was unable to fund his travel to the Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School in September, would the Council suggest that he seek alternative schooling that he could walk to?

Councillor Filmer responded that if he was given the circumstances he would look into it further.

1022 Leader's report

Discussion:

Members received and debated the Leader's report, which included the following:

- City Status
- Year of Celebration
- Tourism
- Thames Estuary Airport
- Medway Regeneration
- 46 Green Street, Gillingham
- Improving Performance at Key Stage 2 – Review by the Effective Challenge of Underperformance Task Group
- Better for Less.

1023 Overview and Scrutiny Activity

Discussion:

Members received and debated a report on Overview and Scrutiny activities, which included the following:

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- Powers to bring empty properties back into use and a review of long-term empty properties
- Draft Council Plan 2012/2013
- Improving performance at Key Stage 2
- Changes in overnight short breaks / closure of Preston Screens
- Proposed merger of Medway NHS Foundation Trust with Dartford and Gravesham Trust
- Mental Health acute in-patient beds review
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Future provision of water in Medway
- Ownership and maintenance of retaining walls
- Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact being held to account (Love Medway App)
- Marlowe Park Medical Centre, Strood
- Airport Proposals.

1024 Nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2012/2013

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Councillor Brake, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, proposed that Councillor Hewett be nominated as the Mayor of Medway for 2012/2013 the municipal year.

On being put to the vote this nomination was agreed.

Councillor Mackness, supported by Councillor Turpin, proposed that Councillor Iles be nominated as the Deputy Mayor of Medway for the 2012/2013 municipal year.

On being put to the vote this nomination was agreed.

1025 Members' questions

1026 Councillor Igwe asked the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

Since the recent threatened closure of Marlowe Park Medical centre in Strood South ward, what systems have you put in place to ensure that such problems – which could impact on the health of residents – do not recur elsewhere in Medway?

Councillor Brake responded by stating that following the very serious concerns raised by the local ward councillors regarding the failure to notify the Medway Council of the proposed closure of Marlowe Park Medical Centre, NHS Kent and Medway has provided assurances that in future information related to any potential closures of surgeries will be provided. In turn, details will be circulated to all members of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, together with the Ward Members and the Portfolio Holder.

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He stated that the Council was right to have an expectation of early notice from the NHS when significant changes to health services in Medway were under consideration. The Council needed to be told in good time so that the Council could express its views and take part in any consultation. Councillors needed to be aware of any proposals about changes envisaged at ward level so they could deal with enquiries and concerns raised with them by local residents.

Councillor Brake stated that under the new Health and Social Care Act, which the Labour Party had opposed, there was greater scope for partnership working with the Health and Wellbeing Board, where the Council would be better informed about proposed health changes in Medway and more involved in commissioning decisions.

Councillor Igwe asked that given the communication errors that ensued during the Marlowe Park centre which was still there, it was very unfortunate that the Portfolio Holder never made any official statement to the public with regard to the fiasco of how everything was managed. Councillor Igwe asked if in future things like this were going to happen, that the Portfolio Holder highlighted it even before it went into the public domain?

Councillor Brake responded by stating that he was unclear on the point that Councillor Igwe had raised because as he had said there had been discussions with the NHS regarding this particular issue. Councillor Brake stated that he had been assured that any changes to the health service in Medway would be dealt with by way of immediate advice to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Ward Members. This was clear from the meeting he had attended.

He expressed the view that Overview and Scrutiny Members had done themselves proud at its recent meeting where they were able to, in their own right and in their own way, actually explain in a very forceful manner the failings of the NHS when they did this particular work with Marlowe Park centre.

1027 Councillor Murray asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

Given that a recent survey has shown that 56% of adults in Medway do not participate in any sport or regular active recreational activity, can the Portfolio Holder tell me what he is doing to change this in a positive way to improve public health and wellbeing, and to try to secure a real Olympic legacy for the Medway towns?

Councillor Doe responded by stating that the aim was to encourage as many people as possible to engage in active and healthy lifestyles with all the benefits that would bring. He referred to the survey which was part of the Sport England Active People survey introduced under the last Labour Government and designed to provide an annual measure of sport and active recreation in local authorities throughout the country and was flawed.

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In March this year, no less a sporting figure than Lord Coe stated: "I'll be open, I'm always loathe to take at face value the surveys delivered by organisations that have singularly failed in the past." When in Opposition, Sports and Olympics Minister Hugh Robertson said: "This survey is a classic example of what is wrong with Sport England." And the BBC sports editor blogged: "The existing Active People survey is deeply flawed".

That is why, in 2009, the Council commissioned its own survey, based on the Active People questioning, but with a sample size four times larger than that used by Sport England and with a range of face-to-face and telephone interviews.

The results were reported to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with the headline figures indicating there were more than three times more people participating than those being reported by Sport England through the Active People survey. That figure rose to 68% of the adult population when the question was rephrased to ask about 90 minutes of sport and active recreation per week. These findings were taken to Sport England but their answer was that they had a system operating and they were not planning to change it.

So the Council had been stuck with Sport England surveys for a number of years and in the absence of an alternative he understood why Councillor Murray used this to frame her question.

Councillor Murray asked if Councillor Doe's answer to her question was "nothing", and sought clarification on the survey that he had quoted. She stated that she had taken part in this survey at the Strand, Gillingham at the time with her grandson.

Councillor Murray stated if what Councillor Doe had said was correct, this meant 132% of people participated in active recreational activity which could not be correct. Therefore, she stated that he was not doing anything, he was blaming someone else and that his figures did not stack up at all.

Councillor Doe stated that Councillor Murray had misinterpreted the figures and it would be helpful to the Member to actually indicate what the Council was doing to encourage sport, as it was very important that the public should understand this.

(Councillor Murray, as a point of information, stated that if 56% of adults did not participate that left 44% who did and Councillor Doe said that his figures showed that three times as many people as shown in this survey participated in active leisure that made 132%).

Councillor Doe stated that they were not looking at the same figures and he preferred to rely on his as his were right.

- When Medway Park had been developed compared to when it was the old Black Lion the Council had an annual throughput of 255,000 people. In the last ten months the numbers going through the door of Medway

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Park had increased to 584,000 people, which was a pretty good success story.

- The Council had introduced free swimming for under 11s and over 60s
- There was the Medway Mile event which was in its sixth year and was actually likely to get more than 2,500 participants this year and probably nearer to 3,000.
- There was the Medway Festival of Sport which again was a roaring success so much so that it had to be split into a Winter and Summer Festival of Sport.
- The Council had increased school sport which was why the Council was funding all junior schools in Medway to be able to deliver coaching sessions in ten of the most popular sports.
- The Council had established a range of new disability sports clubs including wheelchair rugby league, goldball, bokia, athletics, wheelchair football and basketball and our Medway Primary School Curriculum and Medway Coaching Academy both received National Inspire Parks from London 2012.

Councillor Doe stated that he could provide further examples and that the Council was working extremely hard and the Council gave every encouragement to everybody to participate in sport and it showed that the efforts were highly successful and that it was the opposition's job to knock everything which was done.

1028 Councillor Cooper asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

The government reforms to Housing Benefit are going to have a significant impact on a large number of private sector tenants in Medway, and are likely to lead to an increase in the number of bedsits and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

What new measures have been put in place by Medway Council's private sector housing team to ensure tenants are protected from these changes?

Councillor Doe responded that the changes to Housing Benefits meant that single people aged between 25 and 34 who were previously eligible to claim benefit which would have covered the cost of a self-contained flat were now eligible for assistance that would cover the cost of a single room in shared accommodation.

This meant that the demand for shared accommodation would and was increasing and the Council had already seen the number of licensable Houses in Multiple Occupation increase by 10% to 110 over the last 6 months. These additional units were currently being inspected and Licensed.

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He stated that the Council was very vigorous in the inspection of all properties it was legally obliged to inspect. The Council also endeavoured to look at the various smaller properties for which the Council did not have a statutory license to inspect but this was obviously quite an undertaking and the Council was doing this as far as resources would allow.

Officers in both the Housing and the Housing Benefits Services were working closely to support and inform those people that were likely to be affected by the changes. A range of steps were being taken to respond to this situation. This had included writing to all those affected advising of the proposed changes in October 2011 to explain the reduction would apply to them and what measures they should take to help themselves. They were also offered advice on negotiation with their landlords, gaining advice from the housing team and or short-term discretionary housing benefit payments.

Prior to the reduction taking place a further letter was sent and if the client was considered as vulnerable then extra resources were put into contacting the client or their support worker.

Work by the Housing Service with some landlords had meant that some landlords had shown a willingness to still let self contained flats to under 35s and to take a small reduction on the rent – especially as the Housing Benefit could now be paid direct to secure or retain a tenancy.

He stated that the Council was doing all it could and that the Council also liaised closely with Citizens' Advice Bureau and other housing providers to make sure of this and at the Strategic Housing Group which met to oversee this. He also stated that the Council would continue to look at this. The Council would try to do everything possible to assist people.

Councillor Doe stated that he realised change was very painful but it was important to realise that this change came as part of wide ranging changes and reforms the aim of which was to decrease the overall level of benefits paid and to see that those not in employment were not in a better financial situation than those who were working.

Councillor Cooper asked in relation to the 25-34 year old category, was the Portfolio Holder confident that Medway Council had the resources to cope with the predicted rise in homelessness as a result of the so called Bedroom Tax which had been introduced for single tenants aged 25-34 who would now only be entitled to a bedsit or studio flat. Would the Council be forced to rehouse them in costly bed and breakfast accommodation?

Councillor Doe stated that it was impossible to give undertakings about an unknown level of demand but that the Council would keep both the resources and the work constantly under review and that it was a subject of his regular discussions with officers. He would expect that they would come to him if there were extra resources needed, hopefully on a short-term basis.

1029 Councillor Juby asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

In view of the strain on water resources in our area, and the fact that all houses will soon be water metered, why is the council only installing baths in their bathroom renovation programmes and not showers?

Although the bath taps may have a shower attachment, there is a growing increase in the elderly and disabled population and removing baths and installing wet rooms is a costly exercise. Also the taps/shower heads require a tank full of water to be heated instead of a cost effective electric shower unit which minimises both water and energy consumption. A wet room or shower as standard (as now in much privately owned or rented property) would be a long-term cost effective solution.

I recognise that family housing may require a bath, but bungalows and ground floor flats would be particularly suitable for showers only.

Councillor Doe responded by stating that this type of issue would normally be dealt with at the Asset Management Group. Evidence suggested that generally tenants preferred to have a bath rather than a shower.

The provision of wet rooms was more expensive than provision of baths with showers over them. A wholesale approach to provision of wet rooms would adversely affect the whole planned replacement programme reducing the number of bathrooms, kitchens, doors etc being replaced each year and installations of electric showers also impacts on the responsive repairs budget.

In terms of the tenants themselves electric showers were not necessarily the most economical as all new boilers installed were combination boilers which provided instant hot water as and when required without having to heat a whole tank and running costs would be less than using an electric shower.

However, Medway recognised that with the increase in the elderly and disabled population and increasing pressures of fuel poverty, baths were not always suitable for residents and the Council was investigating cost effective options which fell short of a full Occupational Therapist (OT) assessed wet room, which was expensive, but provided facilities which could be used by mobility restricted as well as fully ambulant residents where required and/or gave a more practical shower facility over the standard bath.

Councillor Doe stated that there were a variety of options which could be discussed with the Asset Management Group and also at a forthcoming Tenant Consultation meeting to discuss proposals for the planned and capital works programme 2012/13. The options included things like extending the tiling around baths and providing a longer shower attachment and also providing an electric shower so there were a number of alternatives. These could be debated at length within the Asset Management Group but the Council was very sensitive to the need to both do what tenants want the Council to do, to try

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to save water wherever possible and to actually make sure that the Council got value for money for the Improvement Programme.

1030 Councillor Murray asked the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

Two private care homes in Medway are in trouble this month: The Grange care home in St Mary Hoo has been told to make urgent improvements by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and Sherwood House has gone into receivership in my ward (she informed Members since she had submitted the question that Sherwood House had closed and the residents, some 14 of them many in advanced states of dementia, some of them having been there for 20 years, had to be moved).

Given his recent decision to privatise the three remaining publicly owned care homes in Medway, and in light of this recent news – is he confident that the Council will remain able to step in to protect vulnerable residents when private providers fail?

Councillor Brake responded by stating that the Grange Care Home was not in trouble. Post-inspection, an improvement notice was issued by the Care Quality Commission relating to one quality standard. Medway Council and the Care Quality Commission had worked together to ensure that the provider was clear about what they need to do and the matter was being addressed. He had visited the Grange Care Home earlier this week in the company of the Council's Assistant Director for Adult Social Care, David Quirke-Thornton, and was pleased to meet not only the owner and the members of staff but also the residents. The home was full of happiness and he commended the Grange Care Home team for the work they did.

With regard to Sherwood House, this had gone into administration because the owner breached planning permission for an extension resulting in action being taken against him. This was totally avoidable and most disappointing. He had let the residents, relatives and staff down. The Council had been working with the administrators to try to facilitate the care home being sold as an ongoing concern. Sadly this had not been achievable and plans were in place for the residents to move to Park View, a unit at Charing House. He was pleased to advise that Charing House had offered several members of staff from Sherwood House a job, which was good news for them, but more importantly this would really help with the transition of the elderly residents and aid continuity of care. Medway Council Care Management and Commissioning would ensure that residents and their relatives were well supported throughout the move and would be on hand do deal with any queries or concerns.

Councillor Murray asked whether Councillor Brake could assure her that in the tendering process for the Council care homes or ex Council care homes as they were soon to be, that the Portfolio Holder would ensure that any company with a notice to improve or poor accounting history or any company related to either of the companies mentioned this evening would be excluded from the tendering process.

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Councillor Brake responded by stating that this was a complex question, and that in a tender process, all companies would be open to submit any tender that they wish or any other services that they might be asked to tender for. Of course once that information comes in it would then be necessary to actually go through the absolute detail of every company that makes a submission to ensure that the Council got the very best for Medway. He stated that to give an assurance on any of the points raised would be at this stage an impossible task to do and whilst he was absolutely convinced that the Council's staff would go through the proper process, he could not give assurances on each and every one of the points Councillor Murray had raised.

1031 Councillor Stamp asked the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth, Councillor Chitty, the following:

In light of the recent announcement that Medway Council will receive a government grant of £100,000 to revive Medway's ailing High Streets, which High Street(s) will benefit from this funding, how will the funding be used and will the Council be matching it with any additional resources?

Councillor Jarrett, on behalf of Councillor Chitty, responded by stating this was additional new funding from the coalition government to help improve the vitality of high streets but because it was a new fund the Council needed to be certain what the government requirements were that were attached to it. Once the Council was certain of that a decision would be made on how and where to spend the money. With regard to match funding, this would be reviewed at the same time.

Councillor Stamp asked in light of the answer to the question, given the fact that Gillingham and Chatham High Streets had the highest proportion of empty shop units in Medway, the latest figures being 12.5% and 12% of units empty respectively, if government funding and requirements allowed, was it the Council's intention to prioritise funding for those two town centres over the other three main ones?

Councillor Jarrett responded by stating the Council would need to keep an open mind on that. The Council actually had five town centres and he thought that it would be wrong at this stage to prioritise those purely on empty shops alone and there were a number of issues that need to be addressed. Empty shops was clearly one, other aspects to do with anti-social behaviour and things like that and how the Council improved its high streets all had to be taken into account but the key thing was the government's expectations on how the money would be spent.

1032 Councillor Osborne asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

Can the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Phil Filmer, confirm that despite the latest £1.2m overspend on the Stoke Crossing, that the directorate's road resurfacing

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budget is to be cut by £250,000 in the budget year 2012/13 when compared with 2011/12?

Councillor Filmer responded by stating the £250,000 was provided as one off capital funding for the 2011/12 financial year in response to the bad weather experienced in the winter preceding the budget. This funding was one-off funding streams to address extraordinary damage to the road infrastructure on a national scale. It was therefore disingenuous to say that this is a cut to the recurring, resurfacing budget.

Councillor Osborne asked if the Portfolio Holder agreed with the chair of Grain Parish Council, Councillor Chris Buckwell who was a former Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, that the money for the Stoke crossing could have been better spent elsewhere?

Councillor Filmer responded by referring to the Council papers, the highway revenue budget appendix 2(B) in the Council report 23 February on the first line, for 2012-13 the figure was £6.541m compared to the equivalent for 2011-12 baseline of £6.532m. Therefore there was an increase, not a cut, it was actually a £9,000 increase,

Regarding the chairman of Grain Parish Council, whom he had known for many years and had been a ward councillor with, Councillor Filmer stated that they did differ on various things and had their own opinions.

Councillor Filmer stated that an overspend was only projected at this stage and if Councillor Osborne knew the history behind the bridge it was not down to the work and the pricing the Council did, it was actually down to the pipeline agency and the gas wanting to divert the pipes which they did not want in the first place.

Regarding the history behind the A228 and the reasons the Council had been doing this work, this was the fifth phase of safety works for the A228. The Councillors who had been here a long time would know it used to be called the killer road by the papers. He referred to the current accident figures compared to previous figures and given the Council had been given ring-fenced funding from the government to construct this bridge which would carry fleets of trucks and bypass ditches he asked what was the price of one life.

1033 Councillor Osborne will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact, Councillor O'Brien, the following:

Can the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mike O'Brien, confirm that the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) is the source for funding for the additional Luton CCTV units announced on 4 April, and whether he actually had the authority to allocate this money, prior to the BLF Panel meeting?

Councillor O'Brien responded by stating he had held detailed discussions with local residents and ward members in Luton and Wayfield and he had agreed

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with the Assistant Director for Frontline Services to arrange for the installation of additional CCTV cameras in consultation with Ward Councillors.

While Police statistics did not indicate high levels of antisocial behaviour in the Luton Road area, he acknowledged that there may have been under-reporting of issues. Furthermore, local residents had been consistent in saying that they would feel more reassured were there to be more CCTV in the area. The cameras would help the Council to understand whether or not there was a more significant problem than had been reported.

He stated to residents that the funding for the CCTV was secure and he was delighted to say that the first of these cameras at the eastern end of the High Street was now up and working. However, CCTV cameras could only cover a finite area, and he repeated his earlier advice, which was that members of the public should always report incidents of anti social behaviour to the Police via the 101 number. If such incidents were not reported, then there was no reliable evidence on which to base decisions about where resources should be deployed.

Councillor Osborne stated that three locations for fixed cameras had been confirmed so he did not quite understand that response but moving forward would Councillor O'Brien support the moves by the Luton Ward Councillors for an alcohol control zone to be extended along Chatham High Street onto Luton Road so that anti-social behaviour that is alcohol driven could be reduced even further.

Councillor O'Brien responded by stating that he would be referring to how the Council dealt with alcohol in his report on the Community Safety Partnership later on. He reminded Councillor Osborne to be a bit more temperate in his language both on his website and his leaflets about alleged problems in the Luton and Wayfield area. He drew his attention to the fact that there was a lot of effort being put in by both Medway Council and its partners in Medway Police in his particular ward, he had a fantastic Neighbourhood Team down there, a fantastic community officer on behalf of Medway Council working down there and as a result of that there had been an overall crime reduction in Luton and Wayfield this year of -7.6%.

1034 Armed Services Covenant

Discussion:

This report provided details of the Armed Services Covenant which recognised the contribution of the armed services and the activities being undertaken with those forces and other partners in Medway by way of a partnership group. The Government had published a new Tri-Service Armed Forces Covenant which set out a new relationship between the Government, voluntary and charitable bodies, civil society, local government, and those serving in the armed forces and their families. The Covenant covered a wide range of services and issues, including issues such as healthcare, education and housing. The proposed Covenant for Medway was attached at Appendix A to the report.

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In addition, the Government had also launched a Community Covenant Grant in which the Ministry of Defence would allocate up to £30million over four years. The general premise of this fund is that it would be to support projects, at a local level, which would strengthen the ties or the mutual understanding between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in which they live. The report provided details of the proposed activities under the Community Covenant and the organisations which had confirmed that they would wish to formalise that support by signing the Covenant.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Rodney Chambers, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendations set out in the report, including a minor amendment to page 100 of the agenda that the Mayor of Medway (at the time of signing) be included as a signatory on behalf of Medway Council.

Councillor Cooper proposed a minor amendment to request that Brompton Westbrook Primary School be a participating organisation.

With the consent of the Council, Councillor Rodney Chambers and the seconder confirmed that in accordance with paragraph 11.4.2 of the Council rules in the constitution, he was happy to incorporate this in the motion and that Brompton Academy also be requested to be a participating organisation.

Decision:

- (a) The Council approved that Medway co-ordinates the development of an Armed Services Covenant and encouraged as many organisations as possible, including Brompton Westbrook Primary School and Brompton Academy, to sign that document to show their support for the Armed Services community in Medway, and that the Mayor of Medway be included as a signatory, on behalf of Medway Council.
- (b) The Council noted that a community partnership is being developed between Medway Council and the Royal Engineers with a view to developing a programme of activity and enable publicity of existing initiatives as well as the development of new plans as appropriate.

1035 Community Safety Plan 2012-2013 (Policy Framework)

Discussion:

This report provided details of the Community Safety Plan 2012/2013. The Plan was required under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which placed obligations on Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, also known as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), to produce a Community Safety Plan to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder, combat substance misuse, and reduce re-offending.

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The report stated that the regulations governing the formulation and implementation of the Plan had been amended resulting in the Community Safety Partnership being required to consult with the community, prepare a strategic assessment, and prepare and implement its plan for its area on behalf of the responsible authorities.

The report provided details of the seven priorities together with key performance against those priorities.

The report had been considered by both the Regeneration, Community and Culture Committee on 3 April 2012 and Cabinet on 17 April 2012 and their views were set out in the report.

It was noted that a Diversity Impact Assessment screening form was attached at Appendix 2 to the report, which showed that a full Diversity Impact Assessment was not required.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact, Councillor Mike O'Brien, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendation set out in the report.

Decision:

The Council approved the Community Safety Plan 2012-2013 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

1036 Anti Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing Policies

Discussion:

This report provided details of proposed changes to the Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing Policies which had both been reviewed to take account of the Bribery Act 2010, best practice and the opportunity had also been taken to clarify wording and for some general revision.

The proposed changes to the Policies had been considered by both the Audit Committee on 29 March 2012 and the Employment Matters Committee on 11 April 2012 and their views were set out in the report.

Diversity Impact Assessment screening forms were carried out on the revised policies, as set out in appendices 2 and 4 to the report and it was noted it was not necessary to undertake full assessments.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact, Councillor Mike O'Brien, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendation set out in the report

Decision:

The Council approved:

- (i) The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and;
- (ii) The Whistleblowing Policy as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

1037 Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer

Discussion:

This report provided details of the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report for the period 2011 to March 2012 including an update on Member conduct issues, the work of the Standards Committee and the work of the Monitoring Officer. The report also provided details on the future of the standards regime following changes introduced under the Localism Act 2011.

The Standards Committee considered this report on 20 March 2012 and its views were set out in the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact, Councillor Mike O'Brien, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendation set out in the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact thanked the Independent Members who had served on the Standards Committee.

Decision:

The Council noted the report and the comments from the Standards Committee.

1038 Addition to the Capital Programme

Discussion:

This report provided details of an addition to the existing Capital Programme for the Improvements to Medway Crematorium Stage 2 Project for the provision of new cremators, mercury abatement equipment together with better car parking arrangements and the enlargement of two chapels, both of which are intended to improve the facilities for visitors.

The Cabinet agreed the Gateway 3 Procurement Tender Process Review and Contract Award on 17 April 2012 as set out in the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Rodney Chambers, proposed the recommendation in the report.

Decision:

The Council approved the addition to the existing Capital Programme for the Improvements to Medway Crematorium Stage 2 project as detailed in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

1039 Pier Road Depot, Gillingham

Discussion:

This report provided details of the proposal to declare surplus the Pier Road Depot, Gillingham and/or lease it, so that the property could be let and/or sold. It was noted that Veolia had made its own property arrangements, so no longer needed to use the Pier Road Depot and had terminated its lease with effect from 28 March 2012.

The Cabinet considered this report on 13 March 2012 and its views were set out in the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Rodney Chambers, proposed the recommendation in the report.

Decision:

The Council agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance to declare surplus the Pier Road Depot and dispose of it (together with a right of way between the site and the public highway) and/or lease it (together with a right of way between the site and the public highway).

1040 Members' Allowances - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Discussion:

This report set out the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following Council's decision on 24 February 2011, that the Independent Remuneration Panel be recommended to reduce Members' Allowances by 5%, saving £39,000. It was noted that the complexity of the issues and the timing of the Local Elections resulted in delays in the Independent Remuneration Panel making its' final recommendations and therefore bringing them to the Council until this stage.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Rodney Chambers, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

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Decision:

- (a) The Council agreed the Basic Allowance paid to all Councillors should be reduced by 3.26% to £8,730.86 per year and be index-linked to officer pay awards for the next four years.
- (b) The Council agreed that the Allowances payable to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be reduced by 3.26% as follows: Mayor £13,267.60 and Deputy Mayor £6,685.23 and that they be index-linked to officer pay awards for the next four years.
- (c) The Council agreed that the levels of other Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) should be as follows, and be index-linked to officer pay awards for the next four years on the basis that savings of £13,758 are also achieved from the non-payment of one Basic Allowance and the SRA to the Leader of the Opposition Group with more than 10% of Members:

POSITION	£	BENCHMARK %	
Leader of the Cabinet	20,148.37	110	Plus 50% of Cabinet portfolio holder SRA
Deputy Leader	14,653.36	80	Plus 50% of Cabinet portfolio holder SRA
Cabinet Portfolio Holder (8)	10,990.05	60	
Ruling Group Whip (group more than 50% of members)	1,831.64	10	
Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Committee (4)	9,158.35	50	
Vice Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Committee (4)	3,663.34	20	
Overview & Scrutiny Spokespersons (group more than 20% of members) (4)	5,495.01	30	
Chairman of Audit Committee	5,495.01	30	
Chairman of Planning Committee	7,326.68	40	
Vice Chairman, Planning Committee	3,663.34	20	
Opposition Group Leader (more than 20% of members)	9,158.36	50	
Deputy Opposition Group leader (more than 20% of members)	3,663.34	20	
Opposition Group Whip (more than 20% of members)	915.83	5	
Opposition Spokesperson Planning Committee (more than 20% of members)	3,663.34	20	
Opposition Group Leader (more than 10% of members)	4,426.23	25	Not currently payable

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- (d) The Council agreed that the current provisions in the Members Allowances' Scheme whereby those in receipt of more than one SRA from Medway and/or the Kent Police or Kent Fire and rescue Authorities, should have the second and any subsequent Medway SRA discounted by an appropriate amount remain unchanged.
- (e) The Council agreed that the SRA to members of the Licensing Hearing Panel be at the rate of £31.75 per day and be index-linked to officer pay awards for the next four years.
- (f) The Council agreed that the Members' Allowance scheme be adjusted to include a payment of £31.75 per day to members of 1982 Panel Hearings and be index-linked to officer pay awards for the next four years.
- (g) The Council agreed that the Members' Allowance Scheme be amended to (a) adjust the maximum hourly rate to be claimed for dependents' and carer's allowance to £3.57 and that this be index-linked annually to the average Medway registered childminder rate for a maximum of four years; (b) adjust the maximum payable in any 24 hour period for conference attendance to £64.26 (representing 18 hours), and this be index-linked annually to the average Medway registered childminder rate.
- (h) The Council agreed that the current subsistence and travel rates in the Members' Allowances Scheme remain at the current level, and that as currently, they are not uprated annually in line with the officers' pay award for the next four years.
- (i) The Council agreed that the changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme take effect from 1 May 2012.

1041 Establishment of Committees, Appointments and Schedule of Meetings 2012/2013

Discussion:

This report set out the position regarding the overall allocation of seats on committees in advance of the Annual Meeting of the Council on 16 May regarding the committees and other bodies to be appointed for 2012/2013 and a programme of meetings.

Councillor Kemp, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendations in the report.

Decision:

- (a) The Council agreed to recommend to Annual Council and the Joint meeting of all Committees on 16 May 2012:

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- (i) the establishment of committees, sub committees and task groups, their size and the allocation of seats to political groups as set out in paragraph 3.5 above and in Appendix A, together with terms of reference as set out in the Council's constitution;
 - (ii) that all the serving Independent and Parish Council members of the Standards Committee should be re-appointed for the remaining life of the Committee, noting that Mr Tony Dance has already served on the Committee for two four year terms as set out in paragraph 3.9 of this report;
 - (iii) the establishment of an ad hoc committee to consider the removal of Council appointed school governors as and when necessary and to waive political balance in respect of this Committee;
 - (iv) that appointments should be made to Joint Committees, outside bodies and other bodies as set out in Appendix B (with nominees to be reported at the Annual Council meeting) and;
 - (v) the timetable of meetings for the 2012/2013 municipal year as set out in Appendix C to this report.
- (b) The Council agreed to authorise the Head of Democratic Services to consent to a request from the Trustees of Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School that the Council should in future be able to nominate one person to serve as a Trustee on that Charity instead of four as set out in paragraph 3.8 of this report.

1042 Motions

There were none.

Mayor

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