

## COUNCIL

25 APRIL 2013

### PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive

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#### Summary

To set out the public questions received for this meeting.

#### 1. Background

1.1 Section 8.3 of the Council Rules, as laid out in the Council's constitution, sets out the rules for the receipt of public questions as follows:

- At any one meeting no person may submit more than two questions and no more than two questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation. Members of the public who have not submitted questions before will be given priority over those who have, and second questions will only be dealt with when all first questions have been dealt with. Any questions that have not been dealt with within the time limits will receive a written reply after the meeting.

1.2 The questions received for this meeting are set out in below in the order they were received, allowing for the rules above.

#### 2. Public questions

2.1 **Chris Roome, a governor at Abbey Court School, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Wicks, the following:**

Will Medway Council confirm that it will be making a bid for funding to the DfE under the recently announced Targeted Basic Need Programme and that the bid will include a proposal to fund the rebuilding of Abbey Court Special School on a single site?

2.2 **Wendy Black, a parent at Abbey Court School, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Wicks, the following:**

Abbey Court is a highly successful school with two consecutive Ofsted inspections recognising it as "outstanding" the most recent of which was

achieved under the new more rigorous assessment procedures.

Will the Council acknowledge the school as a beacon of excellence and will the Portfolio Holder outline to me as a parent his understanding of the additional benefits beyond the day to day education experiences for the child that can accrue to the parents and family of a child attending Abbey Court?

**2.3 Samuel Naraine, a pupil at Abbey Court School, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Wicks, the following:**

Me and my friends may have disabilities but we have rights too. We want our school to be equal to all the other schools in Medway, why isn't it?

**2.4 Rachel Garrick of Rochester will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Wicks, the following:**

Could the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Les Wicks explain, following on from the recent report by OFSTED, which rated all the areas of Child Protection Services in Medway as 'inadequate', why the Council published incorrect information on its website, stating some areas were rated as 'good' or 'adequate', and that no children were to be at immediate risk, a contradiction to the report's findings?

**2.5 Derek Munton, Chairman of the Medway Pensioners Forum, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Councillor Brake, the following:**

Medway Council are supporting the Medway Pensioners' Forum by underwriting our meeting costs 5 times a year and also by printing and distributing the Forum's newsletter 6 times each year.

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm that Medway will continue in this backing to encourage the work of the Forum protecting the interests of older people and as a method of supporting older people to maintain health in body and mind?

**2.6 Sue Groves MBE of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

Could the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Doe confirm how many of the Council's public computers have accessibility software, such as Dragon and Jaws, which ensure people have equal access to the Internet, given that, as the Government moves many of its services online, last month's National Audit Office report showed a significant number of people, particularly those over 65 and disabled people, will need additional support to access these services?

**2.7 Rachel Garrick of Rochester, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Wicks, the following:**

Could the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Les Wicks admit to failing vulnerable children, and outline a clear response to the recommendations made in the OFSTED report?

**2.8 Sue Groves MBE of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:**

Could the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Filmer outline what plans are in place to improve the accessibility to public transport, particularly fully accessible taxis, for disabled people in Medway, following on from the recent survey by the Leonard Cheshire Trust, which highlighted the issues facing disabled people using public transport, and the evidence provided to the Transport Select Committee on 15 April 2013?

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**Background papers**

None