

## Record of Cabinet decisions

**Tuesday, 15 December 2015**

**3.00pm to 4.00pm**

**Date of publication: 16 December 2015**

**Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 29 December 2015  
The record of decisions is subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet**

<b>Present:</b>	Councillor Alan Jarrett	Leader of the Council
	Councillor Howard Doe	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services
	Councillor David Brake	Portfolio Holder for Adult Services
	Councillor Rodney Chambers, OBE	Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships
	Councillor Jane Chitty	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation
	Councillor Phil Filmer	Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services
	Councillor Adrian Gulvin	Portfolio Holder for Resources
	Councillor Andrew Mackness	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
	Councillor Rupert Turpin	Portfolio Holder for Business Management

**In Attendance:** Neil Davies, Chief Executive  
Dr Alison Barnett, Director of Public Health  
Wayne Hemingway, Democratic Services Officer  
Richard Hicks, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture  
Perry Holmes, Assistant Director, Legal and Corporate Services/Monitoring Officer  
Julie Keith, Head of Democratic Services  
Phil Watts, Chief Finance Officer

### **Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mike O'Brien (Children's Services).

### **Record of decisions**

The record of the meeting held on 24 November 2015 was agreed and signed by the Leader as correct.

## **Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests**

### Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

### Other interests

There were none.

## **Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care Services**

### **Background:**

This report provided details of the recent Ofsted inspection of children's safeguarding and services for looked after children in Medway. The service was inspected by Ofsted over a four week period starting in September 2015 under a Single Inspection Framework (SIF) which incorporates safeguarding services, services for looked after children, care leavers and adoption services.

The report of the recent inspection was published on 27 November 2015 and found Medway Council's Children's Services "require improvement to be good". The independent inspectors had stated in the report that there were "no widespread or serious failures that leave children being harmed or at risk of harm".

It was noted that the Ofsted report included a set of recommendations which would support the Council in its aim to continue to improve services and become a good to outstanding Authority over the next two years.

**Decision number:**      **Decision:**

**The Cabinet noted the Ofsted report and its findings.**

### **Reasons:**

To formally report the Ofsted findings to Cabinet.

## **Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

### **Background:**

This report provided details of the outcome of the consultation process regarding proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). This followed Cabinet's agreement in August 2015 to the commencement of a twelve week consultation in relation to proposals to reduce the maximum CTRS discount from 75% to 65% (decision number 113/2015) and enhance the extended payments period from four to eight weeks (decision number 114/2015).

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The report provided details of and analysed the outcome of the consultation process, which took place between 8 September 2015 to 30 November 2015. It was noted that there were 920 responses received during the consultation period out of the 5,560 surveys sent and that there were 626 responses to the randomly selected residents across Medway out of a population of 263,925; this was considered sufficient to provide a representative sample of the residents' views on the CTRS proposals with a confidence interval of +-3.9%.

A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) had been undertaken on the proposals, as set out in Appendix B to the report. Details of the outcome of the DIA were set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

A copy of the survey questionnaire was attached at Appendix A to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to accept this report as urgent to enable the outcome of consultation on the proposals to be reported to Members at the earliest opportunity given it has major budgetary implications.

**Decision number:**      **Decision:**

**168/2015**      **The Cabinet recommended an amended Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) to Council for adoption on 21 January 2016 reducing the maximum discount from 75% to 65% and enhancing the extended payments period from four to eight weeks.**

### **Reasons:**

The amended scheme continues to balance the need for supporting those currently in receipt of CTRS and the ability of the Council to fund the scheme within the current budgetary constraints.

The majority of respondents to the consultation were in agreement with the amendments to the scheme.

### **Air Quality Action Plan**

#### **Background:**

This report provided details of the Air Quality Action Plan which had been developed in accordance with the Environment Act 1995 and the Council's Local Transport Plan.

A public consultation on the draft Air Quality Action Plan was undertaken between 8 June and 30 August 2015, and included consultations with internal departments and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Areas (DEFRA). As a result of the consultation exercise 108 surveys were completed and 19 individual letter responses were received. The analysis that had been undertaken on the data

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confirmed that the priorities the Council had identified within the plan were appropriate.

The Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 10 December 2015 and its views were set out in an addendum report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the proposals and this had highlighted that there was not likely to be any negative impact on any of the protected characteristic groups, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

**Decision number:**      **Decision:**

**The Cabinet noted the comments of the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

**169/2015      The Cabinet approved the Air Quality Action Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, to fulfil the Council's statutory duty under the requirements of the Environment Act 1995, subject to the following amendments:**

- i) Section 1.5 Reduction in NOx (Nitrogen Oxides) emission required – deletion of references to numbers of vehicles in High Street, Strood and Luton Arches (page 44 of the Cabinet agenda).**
- ii) Section 2.1 Action Plan Workshops – deletion of reference to bypasses (pages 45-46 of the Cabinet agenda).**

**The Cabinet noted that the Action Plan identified 12 actions to improve air quality, which range from transport/highway actions through to public education and advice. Some of these measures were already being implemented or progressed by the Council, so would not cause any additional burden on services.**

### **Reasons:**

Medway has a statutory duty under the requirements of the Environment Act 1995 to produce an Air Quality Action Plan and work towards implementing the measures within the Action Plan.

Approval of the plan was a positive step towards supporting the most vulnerable in our community as those groups are more adversely affected by poor air quality across Medway.

Approval of the Action Plan also provides Medway with some protection against infraction fines being passed down to the local authority by Central Government.

## **School Admission Arrangements 2017**

### **Background:**

This report provided details of the consultation on the co-ordinated admission schemes and arrangements for primary and secondary schools for September 2017. The schemes set out how the Local Authority will co-ordinate the processing of applications to schools. The Arrangements set out the relevant entry arrangements (oversubscription criteria and published admission numbers) for Community and Voluntary Controlled primary, infant and junior schools.

The report detailed the proposed changes for 2017 admissions, which consisted of minimal changes to the oversubscription criteria and an increase of the Published Admission Numbers of Bligh Infant School.

The report noted that the consultation period opened on Thursday 1 October 2015 and closed on Friday 13 November 2015 in accordance with the requirements of the School Admissions Code 2014 to consult for a minimum of 6 weeks. No consultation responses were received.

The Leader stated that although no formal responses were received, the Council had received some recent correspondence regarding the arrangements for summer born children. As a result of this correspondence, some further changes to the wording of the scheme on page 104 of the Cabinet agenda were proposed, as tabled at the meeting. These changes, which were consistent with the Schools Admissions Code and other ministerial guidance, would ensure that the arrangements were clear about parental rights.

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 8 December 2015 and its views were set out in an addendum report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the proposals, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

### ***Decision number:***      ***Decision:***

**The Cabinet noted the outcome of the consultation process and the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

**170/2015      The Cabinet approved the proposed 2017 admissions arrangements and schemes as set out in Appendix 1 to the report subject to the following amendments to the arrangements as set out in page 104 of the Cabinet Agenda:**

#### **Deferred start (second paragraph):**

**“Parents/carers who have been offered a September place may ask to defer their child’s admission until later in the**

school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year without losing the offer of a place.”

**Part-time attendance:**

“Parents/carers can also choose request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Similarly, parents can choose request that their child starts full time from the start of the academic year, even if the school would prefer phased part-time attendance to begin with.”

**Delayed start to the next academic year (within the second paragraph):**

“...If parents/carers wish to apply to do this they must should submit a written request along with evidence information clearly stating why this is in the best interest of their child. This may be on the basis of academic, medical, social, emotional or behavioural need or if the child is a premature child who would have fallen into a lower year group had they gone to full term...”

**Reasons:**

The Council is required to undertake a detailed consultation exercise prior to the determination of its school admission arrangements and schemes. The decisions take into account the responses from consultation.

**Local Plan: Authority Monitoring Report**

**Background:**

This report provided details of the annual Medway Authority Monitoring Report (MAMR) and included an assessment of development trends and wider social, economic and environmental indicators, together with progress on the preparation of a new Medway Local Plan.

The report provided highlights of the MAMR, further detail of which was set out in Volume 1 (Appendix 1 to the report).

An addendum report provided clarification of migration information set out in Volume 1 (page 143 of the Cabinet agenda). This corrected the international migration to Medway figure to “+1.5”.

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**Decision  
number:**

**Decision:**

**171/2015**

**The Cabinet approved the 2015 Authority Monitoring Report for publication.**

**Reasons:**

To comply with the duty to compile and publish a planning monitoring report.

**Recruitment Freeze**

**Background:**

This report presented information on a vacancy that officers had requested approval to commence recruitment for, following the process agreed by Cabinet on 7 January 2003 (decision number 9/2003).

Details of the post was set out within Appendix 1 to the report.

**Decision  
number:**

**Decision:**

**172/2015**

**The Cabinet agreed to unfreeze the following post, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report:**

**Business Support**

- a) Legal Support Assistant.**

**Reasons:**

The post presented to Cabinet will support the efficient running of the Council.

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**Leader of the Council**

.....  
**Date**

**Wayne Hemingway/Anthony Law, Democratic Services Officers**

Telephone: 01634 332509/332008

Email: [democratic.services@medway.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@medway.gov.uk)

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