

Medway Council
Meeting of Medway Council
Thursday, 11 October 2018
7.00pm to 10.42pm

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 Steve Iles)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Tejan)
Councillors Avey, Bhutia, Bowler, Brake, Carr, Chishti, Chitty, Clarke, Cooper, Doe, Fearn, Filmer, Franklin, Freshwater, Gilry, Griffin, Etheridge, Griffiths, Gulvin, Mrs Josie Iles, Jarrett, Johnson, Joy, Kemp, Khan, Mackness, Maple, McDonald, Murray, Opara, Osborne, Paterson, Pendergast, Potter, Purdy, Shaw, Stamp, Tranter, Turpin and Wildey

In Attendance: Neil Davies, Chief Executive
Richard Hicks, Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive
Perry Holmes, Chief Legal Officer/Monitoring Officer
Julie Keith, Head of Democratic Services
Carrie McKenzie, Assistant Director - Transformation
Stephen Platt, Democratic Services Officer
Ian Sutherland, Director of Children and Adults Services
James Williams, Director of Public Health

421 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Aldous, Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers OBE, Craven, Godwin, Howard, Price, Wicks and Williams.

422 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Before he called on Members to declare any interests, the Mayor placed on record that item 15 on the agenda related to dismissal procedures for the Head of Paid Services, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer. The report sought agreement to procedural and constitutional arrangements required by law and as such there was no conflict of interest arising for those officers present, who would remain at the meeting for the discussion.

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Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

Councillor Griffiths declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in any reference to Medway Community Healthcare (MCH) because he is Deputy Chairman of MCH. He stated that he would leave the meeting should there be any specific discussion on MCH. He left the meeting during consideration of item 8, Leader's report and Item 16 (A), motion on the review of stroke services, as MCH provided in reach and step up services. He also left the meeting during item 9, report on overview and scrutiny activity, as the Sunlight Centre, Gillingham was discussed and MCH provided a service to the centre.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor Mackness declared an OSI in any reference to Medway Commercial Group (MCG) Ltd because he is the Chairman of the MCG Board. He stated that the Councillor Conduct Committee had granted him a dispensation on 18 April 2018 to speak and vote on matters relating to this OSI.

Other interests

There were none.

423 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 19 July 2018 was agreed and signed by the Worshipful The Mayor of Medway as a correct record.

424 Mayor's announcements

With the support of all Members of the Council, The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway placed on record Members' condolences to the family of the Reverend Peter Marchand, who had sadly passed away in September. Peter had been the Mayor's Chaplain for Councillor Tranter during 2016/17; Councillor Tranter commented that Peter had a deep and unshakeable faith and he had served the people of Medway all his life. His wisdom, prayers and support had been invaluable and he would be very sadly missed.

The Mayor informed Members of the following events:

Tuesday 6 November (7pm) - a special show to commemorate the centenary of the Armistice called "In Flanders' Fields" at Rainham Oasthouse Theatre.

Thursday 29 November (7pm) - Quiz Night at Strood Yacht Club.

He stated that further information was available from the Mayor's Office.

The Mayor asked Members to speak clearly into the microphones to ensure people in the public gallery could hear and he reminded those present that the meeting was being audio recorded and the recording would be made available

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on the Council's website. In addition, he asked Members to provide written copies of any amendments to the top table first.

425 Leader's announcements

There were none.

426 Petitions

Public

Paul Chaplin submitted a petition containing 72 signatures which called on Medway Council to review the chicane layout and design a suitable road layout for the future in Lower Rainham Road near the junction with Berengrave Lane.

Members

Councillor Stamp submitted a petition containing 105 signatures which requested that the CCTV in Gillingham High Street be repaired.

Councillor Maple referred to an e-petition which had been hosted on the Council's website which requested the Council to change the parking restrictions in Walderslade Village from 1 hour no return to 2 hours. The lead petitioner had received a response to the e-petition and she had indicated that she would like the matter referred to a future meeting of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

427 Public questions

A) Martin Rose of Rainham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:

"Lower Rainham will see more housing in the near future, generating potentially thousands of extra road trips every day. Currently the area is relatively poorly served by public transport, forcing many new residents to drive.

With this in mind, more is needed to address safety and congestion, and enhance comfort for pedestrians and cyclists on Lower Rainham Road. Footways are not provided or are too narrow. Pot holes in the road and design of the speed cushions can pose a hazard to cyclists.

Lastly, at the junction with Berengrave Lane, the chicane causes a pinch-point which can cause some drivers to undertake hard braking and rapid acceleration.

As the local population grows, a design is needed which encourages walking and cycling whilst maintaining the vital road link.

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Will the Council review the road layout and seek to provide a design more suitable for meeting the needs of the area in the future?”

As Martin Rose was not present at the meeting, he would receive a written response to his question in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

B) Alan Wells of Chatham submitted the following question to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:

“Long-established prides such as Brighton and London attract hundreds of thousands of visitors every year – there is a strong argument to bring rainbow-coloured joy to the Medway Towns, raising awareness for the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender (LGBT+) community.

Canterbury currently hosts the biggest Pride event in Kent; Faversham, Margate, Folkestone and Tunbridge Wells also hold Pride events. A Pride event held annually in Medway would be an example of our Towns at their best, coming together as one to celebrate the contribution of the LGBT+ community in the Towns.

Pride events, which are held all over the world, celebrate the lives of LGBT+ individuals, and recognize the struggles these communities face. Gay pride or LGBT+ pride is the positive stance against discrimination and violence toward LGBT+ people to promote their self-affirmation, dignity, equality rights, increase their visibility as a social group, build community, and celebrate sexual diversity and gender variance.

Planning for a Pride event should be transparent and be inclusive of all communities and venues in the Medway Towns that support the LGBT+ community. Supporting Pride in Medway promotes diversity for the Medway Towns and states clearly whatever your sexual orientation or gender, Medway is open and welcomes you.

Would Medway Council support holding a Pride event in Medway?”

As Alan Wells was not present at the meeting, he would receive a written response to his question in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

C) Shirley Bliss of Chatham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:

“As a small business in Walderslade I’m concerned with the increased enforcement of people who are parking in the 1 hour zones.

Would the Council urgently consider changing the timing to two hours as this will mean many customers will be able to carry out their business without fear of a penalty notice?”

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As Shirley Bliss was not present at the meeting, she would receive a written response to his question in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

D) Rav Jassal of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“Will you resign from your Portfolio if the weekly waste collection is scrapped and a fortnightly collection is introduced between 2019 & 2023?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Mrs Jassal for the question and for the confidence she had in a Conservative administration being re-elected at the next election.

He stated that the waste system in Medway had been developed over the years and was probably one of the best in the country with satisfaction figures in the high 90%^s. It was a legacy that the Conservative administration would leave and it would carry on next year. The contract that would be taken forward at the end of next year was a like for like contract on the same basis as the current contract.

Councillor Filmer said that he understood Mrs Jassal’s concerns but stated that Councils such as those in Wigan, Bury, Oldham and Salford had three-weekly collections and were all Labour run administrations. He concluded that the waste contract was probably best kept in the hands of Medway’s Conservative administration.

E) Olu Obadare of Chatham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

“Will you resign as Council Leader if the weekly waste collection is scrapped and a fortnightly collection is introduced between 2019 & 2023?”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Mr Obadare for his question. He referred to Councillor Filmer’s answer to the previous question and stated that he could not think of a better answer. He also said that he was pleased that Mr Obadare, the Labour Group and Labour supporters recognised that the Conservative party would win the election in May 2019 and the party would continue to run the Council as it had done since 2000.

He stated that he was shortly due to work on a Peer Review with Bury Council, referred to by Councillor Filmer in his response to the previous question and he would be interested to see how that Labour run Council operated a three-weekly collection of residual waste.

Councillor Jarrett expressed the view that there should be a call for resignations from the Labour group which had consistently opposed all of the Conservative administration’s plans to improve Medway. It had opposed plans to create more jobs, for example, at the Innovation Park, Medway and to create more affordable homes funded by various sources. He asserted that the Labour group was doing everything it could to make sure Medway came to a grinding halt.

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Councillor Jarrett invited Mr Obadare to ask a question at the next Council meeting asking if the Leader of the Labour group would resign for the reasons he had stated.

F) Tony Scudder of Rochester asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“I love Medway and want as many people as possible to visit. Unfortunately if people come to Chatham and park in the council run Brook car park it is highly likely they will never come back. On one social media thread about this car park people have said things like:

“It’s filthy, smelling strongly of urine and hasn’t been refurbished in decades”

“The lack of hygiene in the stairwell is negligent at best”

“The whole car park is a disgrace, parked there one day with my granddaughter to find I’d parked beside half a dozen discarded used syringes”

Along with many other comments using language not appropriate for a Council agenda.

When will the Council recognise the failure over many, many years to deal with this car park in an appropriate way and look to improve it moving forward both as regards the physical car park and dealing with some of the wider social issues which lead to some of the anti-social behaviour?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Mr Scudder for his question and stated that the car park was cleaned each day by the Council’s Street Cleaning Contractor and that this included the removal of needles. The car park was also subject to security patrols to address the persistent issues of anti-social behaviour that occurred at the car park.

In addition, in partnership with the Chatham Town Centre Forum, the Council had commenced a programme of refurbishment of the car park stairwells with the first phase being the red stairwell that was scheduled to be completed by the end of October. The Council was also looking at options to lock the stairwell overnight to reduce incidences of anti-social behaviour that occurred.

G) Bill Lewis of Chatham submitted the following question to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:

“Medway is a tremendous place and has some fantastic historic icons – however one thing missing from its cultural offer is a Medway Museum of Modern Art – a permanent home for the outstanding work and history of Medway’s cultural offer over the past 100 years.

Would you and relevant officers be willing to meet with me and other interested parties to explore this fantastic potential addition to our cultural offer?”

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As Bill Lewis was not present at the meeting, he would receive a written response to his question in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

H) **Paul Chaplin of Rainham submitted a question to the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake:**

“Council may be aware that I have been running a campaign to reinstate a mental health facility in Medway. Our petition, presented to the Department of Health, contained over 1,200 signatures which were obtained during street stalls held throughout the Medway Towns, and two public meetings.

Statistics tell us that 1 in 4 of us are expected to suffer a mental health episode at some point, with a population of 270,000 in Medway, that means up to 67,500 Medway residents could be at risk, and although treatment is available, there is no local unit for them to go to for help

Will Medway Council write to the Department of Health supporting our initiative to reinstate a local mental health unit in Medway?”

As Paul Chaplin was not present at the meeting, he would receive a written response to his question in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

I) **Alan Wood of Rainham asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:**

“A recent FOI request to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has shown that in 2012 a grant of £50,000 was awarded to Medway Council for the Guildhall Museums Opening the Doors to Access and Learning project, part of which was for the creation of the learning zone in the Conservancy Board Building which is now being sold.

As part of the FOI request, HLF have stated that the following terms are still in force for this project until 1 June 2019.

“You must continue to own the Property (if any) and keep exclusive control over what happens to it. Other than as permitted under paragraph 11, you must not sell, let or otherwise dispose of the Property or any part of it or interest in it without getting our permission first. We may add certain conditions if we give approval. If you do dispose of the Property you must receive the full market value for it.”

Therefore, if due diligence has been performed and HLF have officially been notified of the sale, can the Portfolio Holder for Resources categorically confirm that there have been proper independent valuations undertaken to assess the building's full market value, no conditions imposed or financial claw-back liable to the tax payer?”

Councillor Gulvin thanked Mr Wood for his question. He stated that, for the sake of clarity, the Council was not selling the Guildhall Museum nor any part of it. It was selling the adjacent Conservancy Board building.

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He advised that Council officers had been asked to make arrangements for the “discovery zone” to be re-located at the Guildhall and Eastgate House now that the Conservancy Board Building was closed, pending its sale at auction later this month.

Councillor Gulvin stated that sale at public auction was the tried and tested method of demonstrating that a sale had taken place at market value.

He did not anticipate any claw-back by the Heritage Lottery Fund, who had been notified of the imminent sale of the Conservancy Board Building.

J) James Chespy of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

“What is the Council doing for re-accreditation as a White Ribbon Campaign accredited organisation and how does the Council plan to mark White Ribbon day on November 25th of the year?”

Councillor Brake thanked Mr Chespy for his question. The Council had signed up to the White Ribbon Campaign three years ago and had achieved much in this time including senior leaders and Members becoming White Ribbon Ambassadors and working through the Council's Procurement Strategy to promote local services to also become ambassadors for preventing violence against women and girls.

Through the Community Safety Partnership the Council had been reviewing progress and discussing reaccreditation. There had been a discussion at the last meeting where partners considered if there should be reaccreditation or if the Council should look to sign up to different Domestic Abuse campaigns that highlighted other at risk groups such as men as victims. Since the Council had signed up to White Ribbon many of its statutory partners, such as the Police, Fire and Rescue and the Clinical Commissioning Group had also signed up to the White Ribbon so it had been agreed that the Council would seek reaccreditation but would also take the opportunity to raise awareness of other Domestic Abuse campaigns wherever possible.

The Public Health Directorate would be working to develop the reaccreditation plan next year. As the Council had so many local White Ribbon Ambassadors it would use White Ribbon Day to raise awareness and promote the message to end Domestic Abuse. In the summer the Council ran a very successful social media campaign to highlight the increased risk of Domestic Abuse during the Football World Cup. This campaign reached over 37,000 local residents. The Council would look to use a targeted social media campaign to once again draw attention to this important message.

K) Anthony Hill of Strood asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

“What actions have Cabinet Members taken to ensure that Medway residents are not negatively impacted by changes of moving from Operation Stack to Operation Brock?”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Mr Hill for his question. He stated that Cabinet had ensured that an officer of the Council attended the Strategic Freight Group, the Kent Corridor Coordination Group and Operation Fennel Group which were all considering options for both Operation Stack and Operation Brock.

Operation Brock and Operation Stack were two distinctly separate operations: Operation Stack was the “stacking of goods vehicles” on the M20 and Operation Brock was using the London Bound carriageway of the M20 as a contraflow between junction 8 and 9.

Officers were maintaining a watching brief and the Council would be seeking to minimise any potential impact for the future for Medway residents.

L) Lia Mandaracas of Twydall asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“Residents and businesses have raised concerns about the cleanliness of Chatham High Street.

Could the Portfolio Holder confirm the last time Chatham High Street had a deep clean and when it will next take place as people want to see positive action on all of Chatham High Street not just the £4 million spend (plus however much it will cost to correct the spelling mistake on the steps) from the train station to the bus station?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Ms Mandaracas for her question. He stated that Chatham High Street was last deep cleansed with street washing equipment in 2015, but the Council would continue to meet its obligations to keep the High Street free of litter and debris with daily mechanical sweeping and litter picking as part of the street cleansing contract.

The Council was working with the Chatham Town Centre Forum to investigate other options in the future to contribute to street washing of the town centres.

428 Leader's report

Discussion:

Members received the Leader’s Report and raised the following issues during debate:

- Stroke services
- Innovation Park Medway

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- Festivals
- Council Tax
- CCTV
- SEND Free School Bid
- Rochester Airport Ltd / Rochester Airfield
- Medway Maritime Hospital

429 Overview and scrutiny activity

Discussion:

Members received a report on overview and scrutiny activity and raised the following issues during debate:

- Proposed closure of GP surgeries in Gillingham
- GP provision
- Review of Kent and Medway Hyper Acute Stroke Services
- Progress of the Impact on Social Isolation Task Group
- Flooding in Luton
- Medway University Technical College
- SEN home to school transport
- Call in of decision on the proposed sale of the Conservancy building, Rochester High Street
- Grammar schools
- The Sunlight Centre, Gillingham

430 Members' questions

A) Councillor Freshwater asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

"The Leader of the Council is aware that all Peninsula residents, children, workers, and visitors in order to get to their home or place of work are being forced to travel through Four Elms Air Quality Management Area where nitrogen dioxide levels exceed the legal standard for air quality and, in my opinion, is substantially increasing.

Residents do not trust Medway Council or proposals set out in the new Local Plan as the A228 Peninsula Highway already looks like the M25 and no works have started on the £11.1million improvements to Four Elms Roundabout or other roundabouts approved by the Council 4 years ago to improve traffic flow and reduce toxic air pollution for the Four Elms roundabouts.

The Peninsula has already suffered substantial increases in air pollution from 4,000 new houses built/approved that will generate 28,000 additional daily vehicle movements. There will also be substantial additional air pollution from thousands of white van movement from Ikea and Amazon warehouses and additional HGVs from increasing commercial businesses.

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Peninsula residents believe that Medway Council does not demonstrate in any way that they care about their health or the adverse impact of invisible high levels of nitrogen oxide from increasing numbers of vehicles is having on the general health of the Peninsula population especially the young, elderly and the weak.

That the cumulative effects of air pollution from new housing developments is not being properly considered by Medway Council or the Planning Committee. The residents' concerns are:-

(a) Predatory developers in order to reduce 106 and mitigation payments are not providing proper or detailed information or Environmental Impact Assessments to the Council or the Planning Committee that shows the cumulative projected effects of air pollution for all new developments is having on the health of Peninsula residents.

(b) That the Planning Committee when considering Peninsula planning applications has not been given information to properly assess the cumulative effects of vehicle pollution from any new housing development proposals with regard to the Four Elms Air Quality Management Area as required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

(c) The Local Plan is silent and makes no proper mention that 12,000 new homes programmed for the Peninsula will result in additional daily car journeys of up to 84,000 (based on the Planning rule of thumb of seven vehicular movements per dwelling per day).

Taking into consideration paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above which all have substantial and consequential health implications for Peninsula residents, can the Leader confirm the current evidence based 5 yearly air pollution projections for nitrogen dioxide from vehicles until 2035 being used for the Local Plan for Peninsula scenarios?"

Councillor Jarrett stated that work was continuing on the development of the new Local Plan and the evidence base to support that. There was a significant amount of work being undertaken that would inform the justification for any allocations within the Local Plan and which would set out the infrastructure that was required to support that growth. That included work on strategic transport assessment, air quality, health, sustainability appraisals, education, habitat regulations, open space and leisure employment.

It should be recognised that Medway was growing and the population was increasing. The Council must plan for that growth and provide the housing along with the employment and other services that were necessary. That growth must be planned in a sustainable way to help Medway realise its potential as a 21st century waterfront university city, with an amazing historic and natural environment. A great place to live, work, learn and visit.

The evolving Local Plan placed an emphasis for that growth on the regeneration of Medway's town centres and waterfront areas. However, that

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would not meet all the needs of Medway's growing population and there was a need to look at the Peninsula, along with some limited suburban expansion, to help meet those needs, in a sustainable way.

The Peninsula did have a role to play and indeed that is recognised by public responses to consultations on the Local Plan work thus far.

The need for supporting infrastructure had always been recognised by this Council. The 2003 Local Plan proposed some growth on the Peninsula, which was included in Councillor Freshwater's housing figures, but this was on the basis of improvements to the A228. This work had been completed, thereby supporting the growth proposed at that time.

Work was continuing on the Local Plan and it was anticipated that the draft plan would go out to consultation with the evidence base to support it. As part of that evidence base there would be health impact assessments, strategic transport assessments, and air quality assessments – all of this was feeding into the plan.

The recent approvals given by Planning Committee and on appeal, did not relate solely to the Peninsula, but there were significant approvals in Rainham, Capstone, and importantly within the Council's regeneration sites in Chatham, Rochester and Strood. Yes there had been recent approvals on the Peninsula which equated to just under 1000 dwellings, not 4000 referred to by Councillor Freshwater. The Council had also just refused an application for 550 dwellings at Chattenden.

Air quality was an important consideration for all these applications. Monitoring results in the Four Elms Hill AQMA did not show increases in nitrogen dioxide concentrations. The three year trend at the Council's two long term monitoring sites showed levels were as they were, or slightly better than when the Council started monitoring in 2015.

Air quality assessments for applications coming forward on the Peninsula were required to consider cumulative impacts.

B) Councillor Joy asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:

“The delivery of Medway Council's transformation programme, and the resultant expected savings of this programme, form a key component for both this Council's ability to explore new and more efficient ways of working and ultimately to meet the requirements of the 2018/19 Budget.

Will the Portfolio Holder please provide a detailed update regarding the progress of the transformation programme, as well as the current forecast for immediate target achievement?”

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Councillor Gulvin thanked Councillor Joy for this question. He stated that a road map of projects was developed for the three year programme and the following had been achieved:

- Medway.gov.uk website delivered within 3 months. The SOCITM rating improved from 1 star to 3 stars out of 4 with top marks achieved in some areas.
- Blue Badge online application process launched.
- Bulky waste online application and payment process launched.
- Leadership Academy launched with managing change training for staff.
- Office 365 being implemented across the Council.
- First new eforms going live from August 2018.
- Online joining process for leisure memberships launched.
- Customer Contact and Business Administration Support Service reviewed with new model earlier this month.
- New leadership and structure was in place which ensures effective decisions were being made at pace based on a “return on investment” business case model.
- Transformation strategy and governance procedures put in place.
- Project road map produced and implemented showing project progress and savings identified/achieved.
- Specialist consultants appointed to lead the transformation programme for Children and Adults.

With a return on investment approach, clear strategy and roadmap; alongside effective employee communication and engagement the Council had confidence the savings for 2018/19 were on track. £3.5m has already been delivered and further savings of £1.5m would be achieved this year, totalling £5m.

Tranche 1 of the programme laid the foundations for Medway to become a Smart Council by establishing online channels and creating an improved website.

A mobile working solution was also implemented to enable social workers within Children and Adults Services to input information directly in to back office systems by using smart technology. This removed the requirement to complete paper forms, return to the office and then re-input the information.

Tranches 2 and 3 were focused on encouraging residents to use the online services provided during tranche 1. It was anticipated that residents would quickly realise the benefits of the digital channels as they would be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Residents would receive proactive updates as their issue was progressed, they would have access to a customer account where they could access all relevant Council information about them, and they would ultimately receive a quicker service.

For those residents who were unable to access services digitally the Council's hubs and libraries were geared up to help. The Council had achieved much

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with its Transformation Programme, and was looking at the business case for further investment to continue its journey of change into future years

Councillor Gulvin took the opportunity to thank all Council staff who had engaged with this programme with such enthusiasm.

C) Councillor Opara asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

“As I am also the owner of a recently launched business here in Medway, I have a particular understanding of both the challenges faced by new start-ups and the need for the Council to do everything in its power to attract and nurture new SME businesses - which form the backbone of our economy.

Would the Portfolio Holder please provide detail of exactly how Medway Council is supporting and encouraging new business start-ups in Medway?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Councillor Opara for her question. She stated that, as Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Economic Development, she had always recognised the needs of new businesses setting up in Medway. In the 20 years since Medway Unitary Authority was formed, it had continued to provide good quality advice and assistance with funding and flexible workspace.

The Council’s start up service was tendered every 3 years and was currently delivered by Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce and included an initial on-line or telephone advice service. For those individuals wishing to proceed, there were 3 half day business planning workshops held at Innovation Centre Medway. In addition to the workshops, confidential one to one advice was provided by appointment with professional business advisors.

Medway individuals setting up a full time business could then apply to the Council for a start-up grant of £500, or if taking commercial premises up to £1,000. Businesses that had traded for at least 2 years could apply for Partners for Growth interest free loans of circa. £10,000 where there was a shortfall in traditional funding sources, for example Banks.

Businesses making the first step into commercial premises could choose from four Council managed workspace sites including Innovation Studios and The Innovation Centre. These offered flexible “easy in/easy out” accommodation including offices and small workshops totalling 130 units. There was also a virtual tenancy service and MyDesk where an individual could set up and rent a single desk.

Recent figures from the Office of National Statistics showed that the business birth rate and 5 year survival rate in Medway figures was in excess for the South East and the UK. Councillor Chitty said that this was very much something to be proud of and she knew the questioner had experienced the benefits of these.

D) Councillor Bhutia asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“I understand that other Local Authorities such as Kent County Council are considering charging for the disposal of materials such as soil, rubble and plasterboard at disposal centres.

Will the Portfolio Holder please outline whether this is likely to have an impact on Medway’s own waste disposal service, and if so what this impact will be?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Councillor Bhutia for his question. He stated that Kent County Council had recently started a consultation on charging for DIY waste at their sites. If this was agreed, it was likely to come into effect from April 2019.

The Council had responded to this consultation strongly opposing any charge for DIY waste due to the impact it would have on Medway HWRC sites and the Medway tax payers.

If this policy change went ahead this would have a detrimental effect on Medway sites. As Medway sites currently had an unrestricted usage policy, for any residents of Medway or Kent, it was likely that more Kent residents would naturally migrate towards Medway sites. As had been seen following the recent temporary closure of Pepperhill, this would increase the Council’s operational and disposal costs and put significant pressure on sites that are already at capacity.

The Council was looking at a number of options if this should go ahead, including a permit scheme for Medway residents only. The Council was awaiting the outcome of the consultation.

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

“In light of future Council forecasts on road conditions across Medway, can the Portfolio Holder confirm what proportion of all Medway roads will be requiring maintenance (potholed), and the financial shortfall required to repair these roads, for the years up to 2027 in an annualised table?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Councillor Osborne for his question. He said that Medway, like all Highway Authorities, faced significant budget challenges to maintain service standards. However, it was important to note that on the last reporting cycle to the Department of Transport (DfT) in 2017/18, the Council’s A & B main roads and C link roads performed better than the national average.

Using the DfT approved Life-Cycle Toolkit, the results of which were presented to the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in August, the total levels of investment required over the next ten years to maintain current service standards for roads was forecast at £19

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million with the total proportion of the highway network requiring this investment being 242km.

At Councillor Filmer's request, a table showing this breakdown for the next ten years to 2027 was circulated to Members at the meeting.

F) Councillor Cooper asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following question:

"Could you confirm who has used the 4 VIP tickets in September and October for Gillingham Football Club Home Games allocated to Medway Council as part of the sponsorship deal and how they were selected?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Cooper for her question. He stated that the VIP tickets were offered to valued partners of Medway Council from a wide variety of sectors in order to thank them for their support and foster positive relations and continued partnership in the future, by giving guests the chance to experience one of Medway's excellent sporting assets. This was one way of achieving that.

Demonstrating this, the attendees for September and October were as follows:

On 8 September – Bob Russell from Copper Rivet Distillery and his guest Gordon Henderson MP, the MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey and Geraldine Allinson from Kent Messenger Group and her husband.

On 22 September – Ashley Hook from MHS Homes and Andy Rogers from KPMG.

13 October – Simon Mutter from BAE Systems and his guest.

27 October – Yet to be allocated.

G) Councillor McDonald asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

"The Red Box Project is already operating in around half of secondary schools in Medway - will the Portfolio Holder take this opportunity to thank this charity and the volunteers for their tremendous efforts in tackling period poverty in Medway?"

Councillor Brake thanked Councillor McDonald for his question. He stated that he was happy to take the opportunity to thank the Red Box charity and its volunteers, as he thanked all active charities, big or small, who made valuable contributions to communities across Medway in all aspects.

The Health and Wellbeing Board discussed the issue of period poverty on 11th September 2018. The Board received an in depth report on this issue, which it appeared was not as challenging for Medway as it is in other areas of the country. He regretted that I could not confirm how many schools the Red Box

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Project was working with locally. He understood that, when contacted by officers wishing to involve Red Box in the research in preparation of this excellent report, no response had been received from the charity.

One of the actions arising from the valuable discussion that was had by the Health and Wellbeing Board was that the Council would be moving forward and engaging with the multiple charities involved in this area, and so he very much looked forward to the Red Box's involvement and engagement in this endeavour.

In addition, the Health and Wellbeing Board had asked the Director of Public Health to review the information available to signpost young people to existing support for those who may need it. The public health team was fully engaged with schools across Medway and Councillor Brake was confident that the Council had the right approach.

H) Councillor Stamp asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:

"Many residents and businesses have raised repeated concerns about the broken and out of action CCTV cameras across Medway - when will the Council confirm the timescale for the reported review of CCTV cameras?"

Councillor Gulvin thanked Councillor Stamp for his question. He stated that Medway's CCTV cameras were periodically reviewed to assess performance and to review the needs of the Council and the Police. MCG carried out regular maintenance of the cameras to respond to any defects. The Council was currently in the process of carrying out the latest review in conjunction with MCG and the Police, to inform a business case for future CCTV provision.

I) Councillor Bowler submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin:

"Who will have the final say on the future of CCTV cameras in Medway - the democratically elected councillors in Medway or the unaccountable Medway Commercial Group?"

J) Councillor Johnson submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mackness:

"Governors Services was a valued offer to all those who volunteer in our schools across Medway. This service was passed from Medway Council to Medway Commercial Group.

Who took the final decision to axe this service in Medway - democratically elected councillors in Medway or the unaccountable Medway Commercial Group?"

K) Councillor Maple submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin:

“In papers for the recent Audit Committee it states regarding Medway Commercial Group governance and accounting “There has been a weakness in the Council’s financial and performance monitoring of MCG” with the audit opinion of Needs Strengthening.

Bearing in mind this is a company set up by the Council, what action plan is in place to resolve this urgently?”

L) Councillor Shaw submitted the following question to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:

“In light of this Council’s commitment at last Full Council to mark the centenary of women’s suffrage, can the Portfolio Holder confirm how many statues of women, excluding those of mythical figures, there currently are in the Medway Towns?”

M) Councillor Khan submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:

“Recognising that this year marks 100 years of women’s suffrage, would the Council work with the community and others to mark the achievements of Vera Conway Gordon (NUWSS Rochester Hon. Secretary) in the form of a commemorative statue?”

N) Councillor Paterson submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake:

“Can the Portfolio Holder tell me how many known drug users there are in Medway, broken down by ward?”

Note: The Mayor stated that since the time allocation for Members’ questions had been exhausted, Members would receive written responses to questions I to N.

431 Innovation Park Medway Growing Places Fund (GPF) Project - Addition to the Capital Programme

Discussion:

This report provided details of the Innovation Park Medway Growing Places Fund (GPF) project which would allow essential enabling works to be completed on the southern site. A final Business Case was submitted to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) at the end of April 2018. Following review by the Independent Technical Evaluator, the Business Case was presented to SELEP Accountability Board, which approved the funding award on 14 September 2018.

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The Cabinet considered this report on 25 September 2018 and its comments were set out in section 4 of the report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Educational Attainment and Improvement, Councillor Potter, proposed the recommendation set out in the report.

Decision:

The Council approved the addition of £650,000 to the Capital Programme, for the Innovation Park Medway southern site enabling works project, as set out in section 2 of the report, the loan to be repaid from the eventual capital receipt on disposal.

432 Animal Licensing Fees and Charges

Discussion:

This report provided details of the proposal to set fees and charges for animal licensing in line with new legislation (The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018), which had come into effect on 1 October 2018.

These activities included selling animals as pets, providing for or arranging for the provision of boarding for cats or dogs, hiring out horses, dog breeding and keeping or training animals for exhibition.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, supported by Councillor Joy, proposed the recommendation set out in the report.

Decision:

The Council approved the fees and charges for animal licensing, as set out in paragraph 3.3.b of the report and Appendix 1 to the report.

433 Treasury Management Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2018/19

Discussion:

This report provided details of the mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management.

The report had been considered by the Cabinet on 25 September 2018 and the Audit Committee on 27 September 2018 and their comments were set out in sections 9 and 10 of the report respectively.

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The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, proposed the recommendation set out in the report.

Decision:

The Council noted the comments of the Cabinet and the Audit Committee and noted the contents of this report.

434 Director of Public Health - Integration within Children and Adults Services and Change of Reporting Line

Discussion:

This report provided details of the proposal to move the post of Director of Public Health to report to the Director of Children and Adults Services, achieving greater integration within the people services directorate. The report also recommended deleting the post of Assistant Director – Commissioning, Business and Intelligence, and allocating important functions contained within this role to the Director of Public Health.

The report stated that staff affected by these proposals had been fully consulted and supported all of the proposals contained in this report. Additionally, Medway CCG, now part of the Medway, North and West Kent Accountable Care Partnership have also been consulted and were similarly supportive.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, proposed the recommendations in the report.

Decisions:

- a) The Council agreed that the role of Assistant Director – Commissioning, Business and Intelligence is deleted from the establishment.
- b) The Council agreed that the Director of Public Health and his Public Health team are transferred to the Children and Adults Directorate, incorporating the commissioning function from the deleted Assistant Director – Commissioning, Business and Intelligence into this service and agreed that the other aspects of the deleted Assistant Director role are also transferred and allocated as explained in the report (paragraph 2.4 of agenda item 14 refers).
- c) The Council agreed that the title of the Director of Children and Adults Services is changed to become Director of People – Children and Adults Services.
- d) The Council agreed the budget transfer between Business Support and the Children and Adults directorate to reflect the movement of Public Health services.

435 Statutory Officers Dismissal Procedures

Discussion:

This report provided details of proposals for new arrangements for dealing with disciplinary action against the Council's Statutory Officers (Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer) in order to comply with statutory requirements, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

The procedures set out in the report had been developed to meet the requirements of legislation which now stipulated that the Council could only take a decision to dismiss these officers after the views of an Independent Persons Panel had been considered. In addition, the report also provided details of the roles for the Employment Matters Committee, Disciplinary Appeals Committee and the Independent Persons Panel in the process.

The Employment Matters Committee considered the report on 5 September 2018 and its comments were set out in section 8 of the report.

Councillor Kemp, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin, proposed the recommendations set out in the report subject to the following corrections and additions:

- a typing error in paragraph 14.1 (e) which should cross refer to paragraph 9.3.3 in the report rather than 9.3.4;
- paragraph 14.1 (h) should refer to a subsequent addition to the Employment Rules as well as to the scheme of delegation.
- the appointment of Councillor Mrs Diane Chambers, Councillor Kemp and Councillor Shaw to the new Disciplinary Appeals Committee;
- inclusion of consultation with the Opposition Group Spokesperson on the Employment Matters Committee in the delegation to the Chief Executive set out in paragraph 9.3.3 so the first sentence of the delegation will now read as follows:

“In cases of urgency the Head of the Paid Service may suspend the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer, following consultation with the Chairman of the Employment Matters Committee **and the Opposition Spokesperson**, where practicable whilst an investigation take place into alleged misconduct.”

- with reference to the advice in paragraph 9.3.4 of the report an additional recommendation that the Council agrees that if there was an urgent need to suspend the Head of the Paid Service, a meeting of the Employment Matters Committee should be convened as soon as practically possible for that purpose.

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Decision:

- a) The Council agreed to extend the terms of reference of the Employment Matters Committee, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- b) The Council agreed to appoint a Disciplinary Appeals Committee and agreed its terms of reference, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and agreed the Committee should comprise three Members of the Council appointed on a politically proportionate basis (Cons 2: Lab 1 – Councillors Mrs Diane Chambers, Kemp and Shaw).
- c) The Council agreed to appoint an Independent Persons Panel, agreed its terms of reference, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and agreed that it should comprise three Independent Persons.
- d) The Council agreed to pay a fee to Independent Persons appointed to the Independent Persons Panel equal to the agreed rate paid in respect of their role in advising a Council on Councillor Conduct issues.
- e) The Council agreed to amend the Employment Rules, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report and also in paragraph 9.3.3 of the report.
- f) The Council agreed to amend the Employee Delegation Scheme as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, including agreeing to delegate to the Head of Democratic Services authority to invite and appoint members to serve on the Independent Persons Panel as set out in paragraphs 5.7-5.9 of the report.
- g) The Council agreed that where the Employment Matters Committee is considering allegations regarding disciplinary matters relating to the Designated Statutory Officers that, for consistency, unless a Member is unavoidably indisposed or conflicted, the same Members shall comprise the Committee until the matter has been dealt with fully and that the same principle shall apply to the Disciplinary Appeals Committee.
- h) The Council agreed to delegate to the Chief Executive the authority to suspend the S.151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer in cases of urgency, as set out in paragraph 9.3.3 of the report, the first sentence of which is amended as follows, and to also agree the subsequent addition to the Employee Delegation Scheme and the Employment Rules, as detailed in paragraph 9.3.3 of the report.

“In cases of urgency the Head of the Paid Service may suspend the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer, following consultation with the Chairman of the Employment Matters Committee and the Opposition Spokesperson, where practicable whilst an investigation take place into alleged misconduct.”

- i) The Council agrees that if there was an urgent need to suspend the Head of the Paid Service, a meeting of the Employment Matters Committee should be convened as soon as practically possible for that purpose.

436 Motions

A) Councillor Brake, supported by Councillor Wildey, submitted the following:

“This Council notes the critical role Medway Maritime Hospital plays in the delivery of stroke treatment for over 500,000 people across Medway and Swale, currently caring for the largest number of stroke patients in Kent and Medway.

This Council further notes that new proposals made by Kent and Medway NHS would exclude Medway Maritime from becoming one of three new 24/7 hyper acute stroke units (HASU), despite the hospital’s inclusion in three of the five options initially presented for consultation.

Council formally opposes any proposal which would not see Medway Maritime Hospital become a HASU, on the grounds that:

- Representations from Medway Council made at multiple levels and including formal responses to the consultation, submitted in order to represent the interests of Medway’s residents, have been given insufficient weight;
- The likelihood that removing all specialist stroke services from Medway Maritime Hospital, will contribute to increasing health inequalities in Medway. This is in light of the mortality rate for cardiovascular disease deemed preventable in Medway (for persons aged under 75) is statistically worse than the England average (53.7 deaths per 100,000 population Medway, 46.7 deaths per 100,000 population England);
- The probability that removing all specialist stroke services from Medway Maritime Hospital, will put lives at risk. Medway has one of the largest and fastest growing populations in the South East. Local residents will need to be transported to one of the 3 HASUs in Kent. Given that every second is crucial when it comes to initial treatment of stroke, and bearing in mind the specific and distinct geography of Medway, with its river and additional constraints transporting Medway residents who have had a stroke, or suspected stroke to HASUs will be challenging;
- It is unacceptable, and undermines this Council’s agenda to improve health inequalities, that services designed to provide for residents across Kent and Medway will not see a single site placed within Medway itself.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Write to the Kent and Medway NHS leadership responsible for commissioning stroke services to encourage serious reconsideration of the current proposals;
- Write to the three Medway MPs to ask that they join the Council in opposing the current proposals;
- Ensure this issue is thoroughly discussed and debated within all appropriate forums to protect the interests of all present and future patients treated at Medway Maritime Hospital – including, but not limited

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to, the Medway Health and Wellbeing Board and the Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board;

- Request the Leader to make representations to the Chairman of the South East Clinical Senate, seeking a robust review by the Clinical Senate, of the methodology and evaluation process used to inform the selection of the preferred option for HASUs in Kent and Medway (taking into account this Council's concerns)."

Decision:

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

B) Councillor Maple, supported by Councillor Khan, submitted the following:

"This Council notes with great concern the proposal to introduce voter identification (Voter ID) requirements in polling stations through the use of pilots at local government elections in 2019.

This Council meeting further notes that:

- The Electoral Commission has warned that 3.5 million electors do not have photo ID;
- There exist financial barriers to obtaining photo ID (passport: £85, provisional licence: £34/43);
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission have warned that these proposals risk disenfranchising marginalised groups in society, including ethnic minority communities, older people, trans people, and people with disabilities;
- Statistics published by the Electoral Commission show that in 2017 there were just 28 allegations of impersonation which resulted in one conviction;
- The Cabinet Office has revealed that rolling out Voter ID nationwide would increase the cost of each general election by as much as £20 million. This equates to £700k for each allegation of polling station fraud last year;
- Local authority election teams are already facing huge financial pressures after eight years of austerity.

This Council believes that:

- Requiring Voter ID will disenfranchise those who cannot afford ID;
- Requiring Voter ID risks disenfranchising marginalised groups;
- The projected cost of a Voter ID scheme is prohibitive from a local government perspective;
- Voting fraud is a serious offence, but the introduction of Voter ID is a disproportionate measure.

This Council resolves to:

- Not take part in any pilot scheme for Voter ID;

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- Oppose plans to carry out further pilots that will introduce restrictive ID requirements at local elections in 2019;
- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Cabinet Office expressing the concerns of the council as set out in this motion, and asking them to halt the Voter ID pilots until such point as it can be proven that no voter will be disenfranchised;
- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to our local MPs expressing the Council's concerns and to seek their views on the proposal."

Decision:

On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

Mayor

Date:

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