

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Medway Council**  
**Thursday, 24 January 2019**  
**7.15pm to 11.30pm**

**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 Aldous, Avey, Bhutia, Bowler, Brake,  
Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers, OBE, Chishti, Chitty,  
Clarke, Craven, Doe, Fearn, Filmer, Franklin, Freshwater, Gilry,  
Godwin, Griffin, Etheridge, Griffiths, Gulvin, Hall, Howard,  
Mrs Josie Iles, Jarrett, Johnson, Joy, Kemp, Khan, Maple,  
McDonald, Murray, Opara, Osborne, Paterson, Pendergast,  
Potter, Price, Purdy, Royle, Saroy, Shaw, Turpin, Wicks and  
Wildey

**In Attendance:** Neil Davies, Chief Executive  
Wayne Hemingway, Principal Democratic Services Officer  
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  
Ian Sutherland, Director of People - Children and Adults  
Services  
Phil Watts, Chief Finance Officer  
James Williams, Director of Public Health

**735 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cooper, Hicks,  
Mackness, Stamp, Tranter and Williams.

**736 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

Councillor Mrs Diane Chambers declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because she is a landlord. She left the meeting during consideration of this item.

## Council, 24 January 2019

Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because he is a landlord. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Doe declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 (Leader's Report) in relation to discussion on MCG Ltd because he is a Director of Medway Commercial Group. (A dispensation agreed by the Monitoring Officer under section 6.17 of Part 4 – Employee Delegation Scheme of the Council's Constitution enabled Councillor Doe to remain in the meeting).

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.

Councillor Gulvin declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because he is a landlord. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Khan declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17B (Motion) as reference was made to her employer which had run a campaign for the Home Office relating to modern slavery.

Councillor Price declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because he is a landlord. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Shaw declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because she is a tenant. She left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Turpin declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because he is a landlord. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Wicks declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because he is a tenant. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

### Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor Gulvin declared an OSI in agenda item 14 (Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places) because he is a church warden of one of the churches being used as a polling station. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Opara declared an OSI agenda item 14 (Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places) because she is a Parochial Church Council (PCC) member of one of the churches being used as a polling station. She left the meeting during consideration of this item.

## Council, 24 January 2019

Councillor Wicks declared an OSI in any reference to the Waterfront UTC because he is a governor at the UTC.

### Other interests

Councillor Gilry declared an interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because she is a Committee member of Gillingham Labour Club which is a residential landlord of one dwelling. She left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Griffiths declared an interest in agenda item 17A (Motion) because he is a Trustee of Gillingham Labour Club which is a residential landlord of one dwelling. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

### **737 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 11 October 2018 was agreed and signed by The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway as a correct record.

### **738 Mayor's announcements**

The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway, on behalf of all Members, placed on record the Council's condolences to the family of Councillor David Carr who had sadly passed away on 19 January 2019. Councillor Carr had been elected to Medway Council in 2007 and had represented Rainham North Ward since then, being re-elected in 2011 and 2015. He was the Mayor in 2008-2009 and served as Chairman of three Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Employment Matters Committee as well as being a member of many other Committees and representing the Council on numerous outside bodies.

Councillors Kemp, Potter, Maple and Price paid tribute to Councillor Carr.

There followed a minute's silence.

The Mayor, on behalf of all Members, placed on record the Council's condolences to Councillor Jane Chitty and Councillor Pat Cooper who had both recently lost their husbands.

Councillor Price paid tribute to Tony Cooper.

The Mayor, on behalf of all Members, placed on record the Council's condolences to the family of Janice Bamber who had sadly passed away in November 2018. Janice had served as a Medway Councillor from 1997 to 2011 representing Hoo St Werburgh and Peninsula Wards and had also served as a Cabinet member.

Councillor Doe paid tribute to Janice Bamber.

The Mayor also reported the sad loss Dr John Beavis OBE in December 2018. John was a well-respected surgeon and had also served as a Councillor on

## Council, 24 January 2019

Rochester upon Medway City Council from 1995 to 1998. He was awarded an OBE in The Queen's New Year's Honours List for his services to victims of war and disaster.

Councillor Murray paid tribute to Dr John Beavis OBE.

Councillor Maple paid tribute to Steve Binks, Honorary President of Chatham Town FC, who had sadly passed away earlier in the month.

The Mayor reported the very sad and sudden death of Mr Kenji Kinoshita, the Chairman of Yokosuka City Council. Mr Kinoshita had visited Medway in June 2018. He also referred to the tragic death of Mr Paweł Adamowicz, the Mayor of Gdansk, who was murdered at a public event earlier this month.

There followed a minute's silence.

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

### 739 Leader's announcements

There were none.

### 740 Petitions

#### Public

A petition was submitted containing 410 signatures which which asked the Council to reject all applications for any large scale development in and around the important green lung of the Lower Rainham and Lower Twydall farmland and greenfields (including, but not limited to, the proposal for 1250 dwellings in the Pump Lane area, and proposals to the north of Rainham).

#### Members

Councillor Chitty submitted a petition containing 444 signatures objecting to planning application MC/18/2458 proposal of the building of 300 dwellings and the new road infrastructure on land to the North of Beaufort Road and the west of Gravesend Road Rochester.

Councillor Purdy submitted a petition containing 323 signatures which called for the Council to save Capstone Valley.

Councillor Potter submitted a petition containing 595 signatures (with more to follow) which asked the Council to reject all applications for any large scale development in and around the important green lung of the Lower Rainham and Lower Twydall farmland and greenfields (including, but not limited to, the

## Council, 24 January 2019

proposal for 1250 dwellings in the Pump Lane area, and proposals to the north of Rainham).

Councillor Wildey submitted a petition containing 721 signatures which stated that the undersigned were against any development on the area known as Capstone Valley, in this case along North Dane Way, bordering Capstone Country Park and the previous landfill area in the region of Shawstead Road.

### 741 Public questions

**A) John Williams of Rainham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin:**

“As you all know Council Tax is an unfair tax in any event, it is understood that it is a government requirement to impose this tax.

Surely increases should be shared more fairly and this could be done by dividing the required total increase by the number of households in the authority, therefore all pay a fair share of the increase, relieving those on fixed income and living in high banded dwellings of a greater increase than those on lower bands.

Has the Council considered this?”

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

**B) Elaine Thomas of Rochester asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:**

Following a stabbing in the Vines and an attack on Rochester Bridge at the end of last year, can the Portfolio Holder assure me and residents of Central Rochester that there is adequate operational CCTV cover in Rochester High Street and the surrounding area of the Castle, Cathedral and Vines?

Councillor Gulvin thanked Ms Thomas for her question. He stated that a review into the condition of the CCTV network was launched when it became clear that much of the equipment was failing due to its age. As a result, the Council had made provision to update equipment in a number of key locations across Medway, including Rochester. This improvement project was underway and it was anticipated that this would conclude in this financial year.

**C) Zoe Van Dyke of Strood asked the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, the following:**

“Last year the Council’s Conservative Cabinet adopted a fully detailed planning brief for Strood Riverside. The planning brief includes the area currently occupied by Kingswear Gardens housing estate that consists of affordable rented homes.

## Council, 24 January 2019

Why is the Council intent on encouraging Moat and Orbit Housing Societies to demolish their existing houses and flats, making residents face eviction, with no guarantee of being offered nearby alternative accommodation?"

Councillor Chambers thanked Ms Van Dyke for her question. He stated that Kingswear Gardens and other sites such as 1-7 Canal Road were included in the Development Brief to show how a collection of sites could be brought forward together. Current plans were for the Council to bring forward their sites independently of Moat and Orbit who owned Kingswear Gardens.

He stated that residents of Kingswear Gardens were included in the public consultation for the 2018 Development Brief, and once the process was complete all residents received a letter explaining that although Kingswear Gardens was included within the Brief, there were no immediate plans for the regeneration of this site. This was a message that was also relayed to residents throughout the consultation process by Medway Council.

He also stated that Orbit and Moat had informed Medway that the redevelopment of Kingswear Gardens was not currently in their plans and that no action would be taken without discussions with residents and their involvement in decision making. The concern of residents was fully appreciated and both organisations (Moat and Orbit) would continue to encourage their residents to put forward their views on future proposals for the surrounding areas.

**D) Dave Carman of Gillingham asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

"Shelter's recent national report recommended that 300,000 affordable rented homes need to be built each year in order to solve the housing and homelessness crisis and the latest Medway Matters in the #WeareMedway section on page 11 advertises affordable housing here.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me whether or not Medway is achieving its own targets for building affordable homes and whether he is prepared to increase the targets to match the need demonstrated in the Shelter report and commended by residents who took part in the #WeAreMedway sessions?"

Councillor Doe thanked Mr Carman for his question. He stated that the Council had a target to enable the delivery of 204 affordable homes per year. This year, the Council was expected to achieve between 220 and 250 homes.

He stated that before Shelter's report was published, the Council had adopted a new housing strategy that retained the target of 204 homes a year. The target was based on the likely delivery of all new homes in Medway and that the Council aimed to secure 25% of these homes as affordable housing.

At this stage, the Council did not intend to review its target, but sought to amend the target as the overall delivery of homes changed.

## Council, 24 January 2019

He also stated that he recognised there was a significant need for affordable housing and the Council would be continually working with the affordable housing providers, as well as looking at the options for its own Council stock, to increase the supply of affordable homes for Medway residents.

**E) Siju Adeoye of Gillingham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

“Brexit is now less than 100 days away yet the Leader of the Council has said that he does not feel the need to make preparations for the people of Medway.

Has he changed his mind and if so what preparations are being made to ensure Medway has a good future after we leave the EU?”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Ms Adeoye for her question. He stated that he had not changed his mind and that there was no question of this until the way forward was clear.

He stated that the recent chaos at Westminster had demonstrated quite clearly that nobody, be it the opposition which was busily political point scoring or indeed an unholy alliance of remainers which dominated Westminster had any idea what the future of Brexit would look like and neither did the European Union, other than the fact it wished to lock the UK into the European Union for all time.

He stated that this position vindicated his view. He stated that this administration had been making preparations for Medway’s future for the last 19 years and would continue to do so. Medway was in an infinitely better place than it was 19 years ago and ensuring a good future for Medway after it would leave the European Union.

He stated that he was confident that leaving the European Union would provide a good future for the UK and for Medway residents to return a Conservative administration in May would ensure that this would happen.

**F) Joanne Howcroft-Scott of Strood asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

“Is the Council concerned about Capstone Green half-finished housing project in Luton and Wayfield ward, which has been abandoned due to the building company declaring bankruptcy?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Ms Howcroft-Scott for her question. She stated that there had been an issue on this site between the land owner, an affordable housing provider and their contractor, which had then resulted in work stopping and the contractor leaving the site. She stated that the Planning team had met with the land owner and that different contractors were now on site and work was progressing on the development to deliver much needed housing.

**Council, 24 January 2019**

**G) Jordan Hartley of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:**

“After residents faced up to 133% increase in car parking charges in 2017/18, some residents will undoubtedly want to make use of public transport more frequently.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me how he plans to reduce fares on public transport to make it easier for local people to get around our towns and choose to leave their cars at home?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Mr Hartley for his question. He stated that approximately 95% of the bus network in Medway operated on a commercial basis, with operators setting the fares based on their company operating model. The Council supported the cost of bus travel by funding the Medway Youth Pass, which allowed young people to travel at a discounted rate on any local bus service. In addition to this, the Council provided the Medway Bus Pass, which gave older people, or people with specified disabilities, free off-peak bus travel.

He stated that the Council would continue to lobby and engage with all local bus and rail operating companies to support and help where it could. In addition to the Youth Pass and the Medway Bus Pass, the Council funded public transport infrastructure improvements and subsidised local bus services where they could not operate commercially, and there was a social need for the services.

**H) Alexa Chatfield of Rainham asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mackness, the following:**

“In 2015-16, 278,123 service users attended Sure Start centres.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me how many people have used the services since the new arrangements were put into place?”

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe answered this question on behalf of Councillor Mackness.

Councillor Doe thanked Ms Chatfield for her question. Early Years services were a pivotal part of the Council's Early Help offer. This provision continued to allow families to access the help they needed to handle those early challenges, help to tackle inequalities, and give children a healthy start.

Children's Services had locally based provision in four areas to provide support to children and their families. There were three types of provision, the first was Children and Family Hubs, then Wellbeing Centres and Community Outreach Venues.

Councillor Doe stated that in relation to the figures in the question, the Council held the following data: In 2015/16 the Council's figure was 277,586; in 2016/17



## Council, 24 January 2019

it was 215,995; and in 2017/18 it was 184,997 up to June 2017 only as statutory information was no longer required (after this point).

He also stated that as Council budgets had been reduced and the needs of families had changed, Councils have had to look for new ways to provide services and he gave some examples:

- families needing additional support were able to access services much quicker;
- families receive multiagency support when needed;
- Early Help Assessments had increased, further supporting Medway to tackle the families in greatest need and the feedback from families and partners accessing the provision has been positive.

He stated that health visitors and midwives continued to see families in the hubs and other settings under this new model. The centres had been placed in geographical areas meaning that a Hub, Wellbeing Centre or Outreach building should be accessible to individuals and their family, and in 2019 the Council would continue to grow the partnership model around the Children and Family Hubs.

He also stated that the introduction of the Government funded 30 hours of childcare in September 2017 for 3 and 4 year olds meeting eligibility also had a strong focus of children being ready for school. The Council had secured a DFE bid of £72,000 in 2018 to support the uptake and engagement of parents using the 30 hours funded childcare and to encourage more providers, in particular childminders, to offer the 30 hours places. As a result of this, in Medway, currently there were 135 private/voluntary and independent settings delivering the 30 hours and 107 childminders. The number of children taking a 30 hour place had almost doubled between Autumn 2017 and the Summer term of 2018 with over 1500 children taking a place in the summer term.

**I) James Braithwaite of Rochester asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

“Twice, since the Conservative Party became this Council’s administration, the Council has failed to adopt a Local Plan. In Strood North there are currently two planning applications for large scale housing on Metropolitan Greenbelt land.

Noting the number of green field housing developments that the Council has already given recent permission for, why should Rede Court and Brompton Farm Road residents have any confidence in this Council’s Conservative administration successfully seeing off these two planning applications?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Mr Braithwaite for his question. She stated that the first of the two applications referred to, on the corner of Brompton Farm Road and Stonehorse Lane, had been refused by the Planning Committee. This decision had been appealed and would be the subject of a public inquiry in April. The Council had appointed experienced Counsel and planning

## Council, 24 January 2019

consultants to strongly defend the Planning Committee's decision to refuse the application.

She stated that in relation to the second application, submitted by Parham's for 300 dwellings on land behind the fire station in Strood, she attended a public meeting two weeks ago along with 200 concerned local residents had attended. She had made clear her stance in relation to this application and how as Ward Councillor she would assist her residents in making the strongest case possible against this application. This site was not just green field but was part of the Green Belt which carried a very strong protection against its loss for development in both local and national planning policy.

She also stated that as part of the evolving Local Plan work, the Council had undertaken a review of the Green Belt within Medway to consider whether it still met its designated function. The outcome of this review was reported to Cabinet in December 2018, and set out that with only minor modifications, the Green Belt designations were still correct and continued to play a vital role for Medway.

**J) Simon Curry of Rochester will ask the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

"Will you apologise to the people of Medway for consistently failing to meet housebuilding targets for Medway?"

Councillor Chitty thanked Mr Curry for his question. She stated that the Council was doing everything it could to meet housing needs. The Council had granted planning permission for development on sustainable sites and the Council was bidding for external funding for the necessary infrastructure to facilitate development. In addition, the Council was undertaking flood protection work to enable delivery on Council land in Strood, and the Council had set up Medway Development Company to assist delivery on Council sites.

She stated that, in general terms, councils did not build houses, and despite all efforts, council housing targets had not been met because developers had not been building the houses they had planning permission for in the last ten years partly due to the economy and partly due to house builders not building out their planning permissions quickly enough.

She also stated that it was widely recognised within the development industry that the Council could not do any more than it currently was doing to assist the delivery of housing. The Council was recognised nationally as a can do authority, however, it was entirely down to the developers to build on sites they had planning permission for.

**Council, 24 January 2019**

**K) James Chespy of Gillingham submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:**

“What are you going to do to get a new job after you are defeated next May?”

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

**L) Sean Carter of Gillingham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin:**

“Why is the Council covering up fraud amongst its officers?”

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

**M) Vivienne Parker of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

“When does the Council hope to publish the Section 19 draft Local Plan?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Ms Parker for her question. She stated that the Council was planning to publish the draft Local Plan this summer, as set out in the latest Local Development Scheme, approved by Cabinet on 18 December 2018.

She stated that the Local Development Scheme showed the timetable and programme for preparation of the new Local Plan and was available to view on the Planning Policy pages on the Council website.

She stated that the Government laid down the regulations of how a Local Plan was put together. One of the unfortunate elements of this was that successive governments had moved the goalposts and had made it necessary for the Council to revisit its work and this was why the Local Plan had been such a long time in its preparation.

**N) Anthony Hill of Strood asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:**

“In October 2018, 651 crimes were reported across Strood and the Peninsula. With CCTV cameras across Medway, and in Strood, in various states of disrepair, when will Councillor Gulvin ensure that residents of Strood and the Peninsula benefit from an effective CCTV system ensuring the safety of business and residents?”

Councillor Gulvin thanked Mr Hill for his question. He referred to his earlier response and stated that a review into the condition of the CCTV network had been launched when it became clear that much of the equipment was failing due to its age.

## Council, 24 January 2019

He stated that as a result the Council had made provision to update equipment in a number of key locations across Medway, including Strood. This improvement project was underway and was anticipated to conclude this financial year.

**O) Hazel Browne of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:**

“Following a successful campaign by patients, ward councillors and local people the CCG has announced that contracts for GP surgeries at the Sunlight Centre and Twydall branch surgery can continue for the short term.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me what he is doing to secure the long term future for these important NHS facilities?”

Councillor Brake thanked Ms Browne for her question. He stated that he chaired Medway’s Health and Wellbeing Board and together with his colleagues he was committed to ensuring that all Medway residents had access to high quality, health and care services.

He stated that Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was responsible for the commissioning of GP services locally. The Health and Wellbeing Board and other Council committees, including the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, had made clear their concerns about this particular issue with NHS colleagues on a number of occasions.

The Council had reiterated the need for the NHS Medway CCG to facilitate the provision of primary care and GP services in these localities. The Council and the CCG were aware that the practices served some of Medway’s more disadvantaged communities and their healthcare needs must be adequately addressed.

He stated that on 7 January the NHS had published a new 10 year long term plan. This plan described the priorities and mechanisms by which the NHS would spend the additional £20.5 billion central government had allocated to the NHS in England to improve outcomes for the population.

The issue of the Sunlight Centre and Tywdall GP practices was not, however, simply about funding. Across Medway, the Council had been working with the NHS and other stakeholders to develop the ‘Medway Model’. Simply put, this would involve reshaping the way health and care services were configured to ensure that a wider range of services would be provided within Medway’s communities based around existing and planned Healthy Living Centres and also to empower people to take action to tackle issues that have a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. The objective was to offer people more flexibility in the ways in which they could access appropriate care, support, or treatment and therefore to improve the health of Medway residents.

NHS Medway CCG, working with NHS England, were committed to continue to carry out engagements with local people in 2019 about future plans for these

## Council, 24 January 2019

practices. Once this work had been completed, any decision on the future of these practices would be reviewed by the Council's overview and scrutiny function.

He stated that the Council would continue to work closely with NHS partners to shape the local care model for Medway. The Council's aim was to ensure that local residents would have access to high quality primary care services that met their needs.

**P) Ravinder Jassal of Chatham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

"I strongly oppose the development of Capstone Valley. I am concerned about the damage to local wildlife and the lack of existing infrastructure that would support such a development (such as schools, roads, GP surgeries, etc.), as well as the extra pressure this will likely place on the already struggling Medway Hospital.

Will the surrounding area of Princes Park receive any of the £170 million Housing Infrastructure Fund if Medway's bid is successful?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Ms Jassal for her question. He stated that he was pleased to see she was as opposed to the development in Capstone Valley as he was.

He stated that the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Bid was associated to the Hoo peninsula and it was a very specific targeted bid and none of the eventual proceeds from the Council's successful bid could be used for any other purpose than that which was set out in the bid. He added that if that was to happen, it would actually expose Capstone Valley to the development that was so strongly opposed. He also stated that the Council was right to pursue the funding bid it had put forward and to continue to do all it could to honour the wishes of elected Members to oppose any development in Capstone Valley.

**Q) Harinder Mahil of Chatham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

"Does the Leader of the Council know of any other individual in the history of local government (officer, elected member, or otherwise) apart from Councillor Gulvin, who was unaware of all of the responsibilities under his or her remit for two years, and was still allowed to keep their position after their incompetence was revealed?"

The Leader thanked Mr Mahil for his question. He stated that he was not a detailed student of Local Government and, therefore, could not answer that question.

He stated that with regards to competence, he did know many Labour run councils with much higher rates of Council Tax than Medway, which had three weekly collection of household waste and had closed many libraries and many

## Council, 24 January 2019

other services as well. Therefore, with regards to competence he stated he was pointing Mr Mahil in the right direction.

**R) Lia Mandaracas of Twydall submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake:**

"Baby weighing services have been significantly reduced over the last 6 months leaving new parents with less support for ensuring their babies and toddlers maintain a healthy weight and that good eating habits are established for the future.

What is the Portfolio Holder doing to ensure that this vital service is accessible to as many parents as possible?"

**S) Bryan Fowler of Chatham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE:**

"This is a question about the £1.4M revamp of Chatham Station. On the 29th November 2018 you were quoted in the Medway Messenger as saying "This project will make it easier for residents and visitors to access the station". It is disappointing to note that the sheets of A4 paper posted on windows around Chatham Station show that a key part of the project, widening the pedestrian access by means of a ramp to the bus stops, is now listed "as a potential future project".

Network Rail has stated the cost of this part has now exceeded the project budget and has been "de-scoped". Bearing in mind that planning permission has been given for this project by Medway Council, how can residents be confident that this essential part of a major regeneration project (safe pedestrian access over the raft) will ever be delivered?"

**T) Rob Heathfield, Chair of Friends of Rede Common submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin:**

"I'm sure you would agree with me that the dog attack on Rede Common in December was totally unacceptable, regrettably this is the second similar incident in six months.

What did Medway Council do between June and December and what further work will be happening to reduce risk of dog attacks?"

**U) Martin Rose of Rainham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty:**

"The decision to postpone consultation on Medway's draft Local Plan until summer 2019 is extremely disappointing.

## Council, 24 January 2019

The current situation places developers in a strong position to push ahead with piecemeal, unsustainable and undesirable applications, in the absence of a Local Plan. The Council's need to meet government housing targets further compounds this issue.

The South East is experiencing significant population growth and housing shortages, particularly in the affordable sector. An adopted, up-to-date Local Plan would protect our countryside in vulnerable areas such as the Capstone Valley and help ensure developers make appropriate contributions to much needed social infrastructure.

Medway Liberal Democrats believe this situation should be addressed as soon as possible, within this Council term.

Delaying to the summer avoids resolution of questions of where to build, and does nothing to protect the residents of Medway from undesirable and environmentally unsustainable development.

Please explain the reasons for the delay and which, if any, measures are being taken to expedite the process of adopting a Local Plan?"

**V) John Castle of Chatham submitted the following question to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:**

"Shelter have announced their figures for homelessness across the country. Medway has figures far higher than the rest of Kent, this should be a cause of concern, with over 600 children affected.

Medway Liberal Democrats believe these numbers hide many others in need of permanent houses. Some are in temporary accommodation, some are sofa surfing, others are in distressed circumstances fleeing from abuse. We believe the number of people needing accommodation is higher than the Shelter numbers.

Medway Council provides the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) for emergency housing in freezing temperatures. There is also an announcement of a government backed hub coming to Medway.

Medway Liberal Democrats believe that more action is needed to address the situation.

What actions above those mentioned earlier are the Council prepared to take?"

**W) Lindsey Burke of Rochester submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin:**

"It is my understanding that Medway Council owns and is responsible for the actual CCTV cameras and that MCG informed the Council that cameras were beyond repair and needed replacing. Yet the broken CCTV camera outside The

## Council, 24 January 2019

Crown Pub in Rochester has been broken since I reported it to the Council nearly a year ago.

As the Councillor who is responsible for the portfolio that includes CCTV can Councillor Gulvin explain why no action was taken to replace this broken camera and why Medway Council have allowed the CCTV cameras in Medway to fall into such disrepair?"

**X) Chris Spalding of Gillingham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:**

"A lack of foresight and planning prior to the opening of the new Amazon depot meant many lorries looking to deliver goods got lost due to a lack of road signs causing and continuing to cause misery for many Peninsula residents.

A meeting with Council officers at which Councillor Pendergast and I were to present a comprehensive plan that would have ended this chaos was cancelled by the Portfolio Holder so he could take the matter forward.

Would it not have been sensible to allow the meeting to go ahead and adopt or amend our plan rather than the Council wasting resources and council tax payers' money duplicating work that that already been done for free?"

**Note:** The Mayor stated that since the time allocation for public questions had been exhausted, written responses would be provided to questions R-X.

### 742 Leader's Report

#### Discussion:

Members received the Leader's Report, during which the Leader and Councillor Chisti paid tribute to Councillor Carr, and raised the following issues during debate:

- Regeneration schemes
- Gillingham FC shirt sponsorship
- Brexit
- Innovation Park Medway
- Kent and Medway Hyper Acute and Acute Stroke Services review
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Provision proposal
- Crime statistics
- CCTV provision
- NHS provision including GP surgeries and Medway Maritime Hospital
- Fly-tipping
- Roads maintenance
- Local Plan
- Local businesses
- MCG Ltd.



## 743 Report on Overview and Scrutiny Activity

### Discussion:

Members received a report on overview and scrutiny activity, during which Councillor Etheridge paid tribute to Councillor Carr, and raised the following issues during debate:

- Task Group on Employment Opportunities for 18-25 year olds (including apprenticeships)
- Annual scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership
- Task Group on the Impact of Social Isolation in Medway
- School Admission Arrangements 2020
- Kent and Medway Hyper Acute and Acute Stroke Services review
- Street Scene Enforcement procurement
- Call-in: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision proposal
- Waterfront University Technical College (UTC)
- Draft Housing Strategy 2018-22
- Medway Development Company
- CCTV provision.

## 744 Members' questions

### A) Councillor Osborne asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:

“A recent Overview and Scrutiny briefing note has confirmed that 90 out of 175 CCTV cameras in high crime or priority areas in Medway are not operational, in all or some capacity which negates their working.

As this is an abject scandal given the potential for missed evidence at a time of rising crime, did he at any point consider his position as Community Safety Portfolio Holder, given this egregious failure of this administration to monitor this contract effectively?”

Councillor Gulvin thanked Councillor Osborne and stated the answer to his question was “no”.

### B) Councillor Opara asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

“I warmly welcome national progress that has been made in bringing discussions about mental health to the forefront of public consciousness, however there is always more that can be done. Here in Medway, we are committed to delivering the very best service to all residents who need support.

Would the Portfolio Holder please provide an overview of the measures Medway Council has put in place to ensure vulnerable members of our

## Council, 24 January 2019

community are being given the necessary care to protect and improve their mental wellbeing?”

Councillor Brake thanked Councillor Opara for her question. He stated that improving and enhancing the mental wellbeing of residents was as important as addressing physical health problems.

He stated that anyone could be affected by mental health issues. Helping people who were experiencing difficulties early, was key to addressing any deterioration in their wellbeing. The Council led a strong mental wellbeing training programme in Medway. This gave frontline staff the skills and confidence to identify people experiencing mental health problems and support them to get help.

He stated that the Council had an extensive healthy settings programme, which enabled Medway schools and local workplaces to access mental health first aid training. This training gave individuals the tools to support colleagues who were experiencing challenges within the workplace.

He stated that increasing the resilience of the community, would in the long term, improve the ability of Medway’s residents to cope more effectively with the stresses and strains of life. The “five ways to wellbeing” programme the Council delivered, helped individuals cope with stress. By taking simple steps, for example, going out into open spaces more, people would learn how to deal with the pressures of life.

The Council’s social care team had implemented a ‘three conversations model’. This helped people identify things they can do for themselves. It promoted good mental wellbeing, focusing on an individual’s personal skills and their resources, putting them in control and focusing on the areas they might need support with to build and lead the best life possible.

For those who were experiencing mental health problems, there were a range of services with support tailored to people’s needs. As part of the Medway Model, Medway CCG had put in place support for people with mental health problems. Individuals could get help from their GPs and primary mental health workers. Medway also had a Talking Therapies service, which offered face to face or online therapy.

The Council’s Community Support Outreach Team and Mental Health Resource Centre provided specialist support to people with mental health problems in the community. This was in addition to a team of specialist Allied Mental Health Professions (AMHPs) to assess people who were in crisis to ensure that they would receive the treatment and ongoing support they require.

Councillor Brake also stated that the importance of good mental health was reflected in recent development of an adult mental health strategy for Medway. The Health and Wellbeing Board would oversee the delivery of this strategy over the coming years.

## Council, 24 January 2019

He concluded by stating that the Council would continue to work with its partners to improve the outcomes for local residents experiencing mental health issues.

**C) Councillor Joy asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:**

"I am sure the Portfolio Holder will join me in celebrating the phenomenal success achieved in the first season of Man vs Fat, undertaken by Medway Council at Strood Leisure Centre, which saw a record combined weight loss of 694.1kg for the 15 week season.

I am pleased that this initiative was both funded through our Public Health Team, and supported by the Medway Sports Team. The fight against obesity is a major challenge, which has been successfully hit head on through the Man vs Fat programme.

Following the start of a second season which is fully subscribed with a waiting list of over fifty people, I would like to know both whether there are any plans to start a second league within Medway (preferably in the East) and in doing so, due to this initiative being only for men, what other opportunities to improve health Medway Council provide for all other groups of people within Medway?"

Councillor Brake thanked Councillor Joy for his question and for highlighting a very successful public health project. He stated that he was extremely proud of the 80 Medway residents who took part in this pilot scheme and he congratulated them on their very successful weight loss. The Council was delighted with the results of the pilot and its impact. Man vs Fat had been added to the ever growing list of successful local interventions, to tackle the obesity challenge that Medway and the rest of the country faced.

He stated that Man vs Fat alone would not achieve the population level impact that the Council wanted and that success would only happen through a sustained series of actions by a wide range of local partners. Through the Medway Healthy Weight Network, the Council tried to encourage all Medway public, private, voluntary and academic organisations for their support. The Council took its role in creating a positive environment to support local people to maintain a healthy weight very seriously. The Council offered and delivered excellent weight management services. The Council's work on planning, active travel and recreational offers, had been recognised nationally as an exemplar for others to follow.

He stated that in terms of Councillor Joy's question about extending this programme, this was currently being explored by the public health team. Any investments made in new Public Health programmes would deliver the best possible impact on our population's health. This programme had clearly delivered excellent outcomes for those people who attended it and this would be factored into the decision making whether to launch a second league. He stated that he shared Councillor Joy's aspiration to continue this excellent initiative in Medway.

## Council, 24 January 2019

He also stated that work was underway to establish whether this type of initiative would work for women and in other sports. The Public Health Team was planning some pilot activity with the Council's sports colleagues and the effectiveness of this work would be evaluated. The Council was launching a consultation the following week with residents to ask what digital weight management products they would like to see implemented. This would ensure that the Council continued its national reputation as a local authority that led the way on tackling obesity.

**D) Councillor Bhutia asked the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin, the following:**

“Will the Portfolio Holder please outline what is being done to ensure that the Blue Badge application process is as streamlined and efficient as possible, as well as what measures are in place to ensure fraudulent applications and fraudulent abuse of the permits are detected, so that we can continue to ensure the best service is delivered to those that such permits are designed to help?”

Councillor Turpin thanked Councillor Bhutia for his question. He stated that the Blue Badge application process followed Department for Transport guidance and applications can be made via the Council's website or GOV.UK.

In 2018, applications became an online process, including the ability to upload supporting medical and benefit evidence and to pay the £10 fee – a simple one stop shop solution.

He stated that the online system routed customers to the parts of the application relevant to them, making it easier, quicker and overall less daunting than the previous long application form.

He stated that the Council had also ensured that there was a strong 'assisted digital' offer for those who were not able to apply online. This included an application over the telephone, entering details directly into the online system and the Council also offered a face-to-face service at Chatham Community Hub, where there was disabled parking available and a relatively flat route into the building.

He stated that eligibility checks at the time of application prevented fraud. These included requirements for proof of address; evidence of DWP benefits, and medical evidence. In addition, the process could also include a telephone or face to face interview with an Occupational Therapist to ensure the level of disability reached the thresholds set by the Department of Transport.

Turning to abuse of Blue Badges that had been issued, Councillor Turpin stated that the Council needed to distinguish between potential misuse, which was primarily when the badge holder was not present, and fraud. In the former case, this was mainly use of the badge without the badge holder present. The Council stayed in touch with blue badge holders to remind them of the terms

## Council, 24 January 2019

and conditions they had signed up to and the potential for the badge to be removed if misuse was persistent.

He stated that the Blue Badge was specially manufactured, with security features embedded so it was difficult to replicate. Notifications of deaths in Medway were regularly updated to the administration team to ensure Blue Badges did not remain in circulation after a badge holder had passed away.

He also stated that the parking service also had a key role to play, specifically patrolling disabled badge holder car parks and bays. There were random inspections in areas where misuse had been reported. The aim was to educate and stop members of the public from misusing blue badges.

**E) Councillor Pendergast asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

“Since he has seen fit to avoid answering this question within email communications over recent months, and given public concern a real tragedy could occur if emergency services are delayed or prevented as a result, can the Leader of the Council please tell me what contingency plans there are in the event of a traffic incident causing gridlock on the main route in and out of the Peninsula?”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Pendergast for his question. He stated that officers had undertaken a considerable amount of work in researching potential diversion routes on the Peninsula, in the event that sections of the A228 out to Grain became unavailable due to incidents or indeed planned works. This had enabled the Council to develop a diversion route strategy, which was subject to a consultation exercise with the Parish Councils last year. He expressed surprise that Councillor Pendergast had not been aware of this.

He also stated that the strategy focused on existing roads and broke the A228 down into various lengths. Each alternative route was assessed in terms of its suitability to act as a diversion route, and recommendations were made in relation to appropriate signage.

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

“I have sent you a copy of the report from Shelter over the affordable housing crisis that calls for action as social housing builds decline. The report, building for our future: a vision for social housing, recommends the government invests in a major 20-year housebuilding programme, which would offer a social home to millions who fail to qualify under the current system, including:

- 1.27m homes for those in greatest housing need – homeless households, those living with a disability or long-term illness, or living in very poor conditions.
- 1.17m homes for ‘trapped renters’ – younger families who cannot afford to buy and face a lifetime and insecure private renting.

## Council, 24 January 2019

- 690,000 homes for older private renters – people over 55 struggling with high housing costs and insecurity beyond retirement.

Former Treasury Minister Lord Jim O'Neill is one of the commissioners. He said: "There needs to be a profound shift to see social housing as a national asset like any other infrastructure. A home is the foundation of individual success in life, and public housebuilding can be the foundation of national success. It is the only hope the government has of hitting its 300,000 homes a year target.

The government's budget for capital expenditure is £62bn a year – our housebuilding programme would cost only a fraction and is well within its financial reach. With current spending on housing benefit shockingly inefficient, it's not hard to see what an investment in bricks and mortar could do to help solve the housing crisis and boost our economy."

The Leader will be aware the reference and numbers of 'trapped renters' is causing profound worries and distress to very large numbers of Medway residents and relates directly to the number of households on the Medway housing waiting list. Medway Council is well aware, but not taking any action, knowing the private sector is not building anywhere near the required number of affordable houses needed for Medway's increasing population. That mortgage costs of the cheapest properties are beyond the reach of the majority of people earning local salaries and housing developers are aiming their advertisement directly at London commuter markets with no homes for local people. The large housing developers are making grotesque profits, not putting in place necessary infrastructure and just walking away from local community problems and health inequalities they have directly created and leaving the lives of local people far worse. The Peninsula and other rural areas in Medway are examples where the developers are leaving the lives of local people far worse.

The actual capital investment by housing developers is in real terms minuscule and Medway Council is being held to ransom by large housing developers saying if they do not make sufficient profit they will just walk away and not build homes to meet Medway's 37,000 new housing target, increasing monthly by the government. I believe that Medway Council is not blocking every legal loophole used by developers to prevent sufficient numbers of affordable housing being built for the hard-working people living in Medway who are providing essential services on minimum wages including blue light services, nurses, local residents providing social care for increasing ageing population, local industry and retail shops employees, residents on nil hour contracts and those supporting the many small businesses in Medway earning minimum wages that are celebrated by the Leader as the backbone of Medway businesses and important for the local economy. Additionally, Medway also has also severe pressures from house owners near universities who are telling residents paying low affordable rents to leave so that properties can be converted into profitable student bedsits with rent guaranteed by student parents and supporting high market rents.

## Council, 24 January 2019

Can the Leader confirm he will be writing to all the MPs in Medway and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirming actions to be taken by Medway Council over the projected serious affordable housing crisis and additional social homes needed in Medway for households which currently fail to qualify for the reasons set against the 3 million additional homes programme headings identified in the Shelter report. It is assumed that the Local Plan will also address these housing crisis issues and one of the actions and solutions submitted in writing to Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government will be asking that Medway Council Private Housing Company be allowed to borrow money against Medway Council assets to build sufficient affordable homes for local people including the additional social homes for three group headings identified in the Shelter report. Such action would allow Medway Council to be seen as a bold leader in not viewing affordable housing and local homes for local people as a commodity that creates a housing crisis and social division, but as a human right that balances social and local community stability in Medway?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Freshwater for his question. He stated that the Council was continually working to understand the housing needs of Medway residents and would offer support where it was able to. He stated that the report that Councillor Freshwater had mentioned provided a view of the national challenges around housing, some of which were present in Medway. Implementation of the recommendations would require national changes to funding and policy, which the Council would continue to monitor.

He stated that, locally, a needs analysis had been undertaken to identify the number of affordable homes that Medway required and the actions that the Council would take, which were set out in the housing and homelessness prevention strategies. He stated that the Council recognised that the current demand for affordable housing outstripped the existing supply which was why the Council continually worked with developers, social housing providers and private landlords to generate supply.

He also stated that the policy for Medway Development Company (MDC), agreed by Cabinet, was that it would be commissioned to deliver residential property, in Medway's town centres and elsewhere, to make a revenue return for the Council. In so doing, MDC would deliver affordable units within the Council's affordable housing policy and later this year work would start on the first 369 units.

**G) Councillor Johnson asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mackness, the following:**

"Has the Chancellor of the Exchequer's allocation for schools, announced in October, for what he insultingly referred to as 'those little extras' when, in fact, local school budgets are under intense pressure, been received by the Council and distributed to Medway schools?"

## Council, 24 January 2019

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe answered this question on behalf of Councillor Mackness.

Councillor Doe thanked Councillor Johnson for his question. He stated that the additional funding promised to schools in October by the chancellor had not yet been received. Neither the announcement nor subsequent publications about the grant, made it clear when the additional funding would be received, but it was expected to be within the financial year.

He also stated that as soon as the additional funding was received it would be passed onto schools.

**H) Councillor Gilry submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin:**

“CCTV in Twydall was recently found to be out of action when a serious crime was committed. I, alongside other ward councillors have received assurances that repairs are being carried out to CCTV equipment but when I asked to see the cameras in operation I was refused access.

Now that the Portfolio Holder has been made aware he is responsible for CCTV, can he help me get the access to operating cameras I have requested to enable me to assure my constituents that their safety is no longer being compromised by broken equipment?”

**Note:** Councillor Gilry stated that since publication of the Agenda, all Members had been invited to the CCTV control room, therefore, this matter had been resolved.

**I) Councillor McDonald asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:**

“In recent months, there has been a marked increase in the number of residents complaining to the Council about the woeful lack of street cleaning across Medway. Residents have reported overflowing litter bins and streets not being swept for at least two months, despite being on weekly or fortnightly cleaning schedules.

Why are taxpayers having to foot the bill for a service which they are not receiving, and what is the Portfolio Holder doing to ensure that Veolia cleans up its act and the Council recoups the money paid for a service which hasn't been delivered?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Councillor McDonald for his question. He stated that the street cleansing service cleaned 4,469 streets per month that he was very proud of the excellent service that was provided.

He stated that his officers carried out regular street inspections to ensure that Veolia were cleaning to the acceptable standard, as per the Clean Neighbourhoods Act 2005. These inspections had shown that Veolia were



## Council, 24 January 2019

meeting those standards. He stated that if deficiencies were noted, they acted on them promptly and the standard of cleansing in Medway was perceived to be well above many other Kent authorities.

He also stated that his officers worked very hard with the public and elected Members to ensure all complaints were investigated and responded to. He also informed Members that if there were any individual cases that they required him to take forward to the team, I will be happy and willing to investigate.

**J) Councillor Khan submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty:**

“The Planning Committee are being forced to take decisions that they disagree with due to the repeated Tory failure to implement an up to date Local Plan.

How many more planning applications does the Portfolio Holder expect to see passed with similar views expressed by the Planning Committee?”

**K) Councillor Murray submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:**

“Medway Development Company’s current public proposals will lead to a reduction of just under 600 car parking spaces across Medway.

Although all Councillors want to see a reduction in car usage, is the Portfolio Holder concerned that this may have a further negative impact on our already struggling High Streets and town centres?”

**L) Councillor Maple submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:**

“At time of submission, it is widely anticipated that the meaningful vote in Parliament on Brexit will reject Theresa May’s deal. In December, the Leader of the Council said, for a number of reasons, he has no confidence in the Prime Minister.

If the outcome of the meaningful vote is as anticipated, does the Leader of the Council agree with me that it is in Medway’s best interests that the Prime Minister resigns?”

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

**745 Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

**Discussion:**

This report provided details of the re-adoption of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2019/20 and included details of the proposed changes, as set out in section 2 of the report.

The Cabinet considered this report on 18 December 2018 and agreed to recommend the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme (which will therefore be subject to annual uprating) to Council for adoption on 24 January 2019 (decision no. 161/2018).

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the Scheme, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin, supported by Councillor Joy, proposed the recommendation in the report.

**Decision:**

The Council approved the revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

**746 Additions to the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme**

**Discussion:**

This report provided details of a number of additions to the Capital Programme and Revenue Budget, following consideration by the Cabinet on 20 November 2018 and 18 December 2018.

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 in the report.

**Decision:**

The Council agreed to add the schemes set out in sections 3 to 11 of the report to the Capital Programme and the scheme set out in section 12 of the report to the Revenue Budget.

**747 Contract Letting - Exceptional Circumstances**

**Discussion:**

This report provided details of contracts awarded in accordance with the provisions of the current Contract Procedure Rule 1.8.2. The report stated that three exemptions had been granted during 2018.

## Council, 24 January 2019

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, supported by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, proposed the recommendation in the report.

### **Decision:**

The Council noted the contents of the report.

## **748 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places**

### **Discussion:**

This report provided details of the configuration and designation of polling districts and polling places and provided an update on the allocation of polling stations by the Returning Officer in preparation for the Local and Parish elections on 2 May 2019. Proposed changes to the locations of polling stations were detailed in section 3 of the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin, supported Councillor Joy, proposed the recommendations in the report subject to an addition to recommendation 7.2:

Approve the scheme of Polling Districts and Polling Places as set out in Appendix 1 subject to swapping the polling districts and places for Walderslade and Watling wards with each other, including the designation of a Polling District as the Polling Place in respect of Parliamentary elections and to designate the Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places as the Polling Districts and Polling Places for Local Government elections.

During discussion, it was noted that reference to the polling station at Foresters Hall (GGS1) in Appendix 1 should be corrected to read The Great Hall, Priestfields.

### **Decision:**

- a) The Council supported the proposals by the Returning Officer to designate polling stations as set out in paragraphs 3.3, 3.6, 3.9, 3.11 and 3.14 of the report and noted the designation of all polling stations recommended by the Returning Officer as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
- b) The Council approved the scheme of Polling Districts and Polling Places as set out in Appendix 1 to the report (subject to swapping the polling districts and places for Walderslade and Watling wards with each other, and the reference to the polling station at Foresters Hall (GGS1) being corrected to read The Great Hall, Priestfields), including the designation of a Polling District as the Polling Place in respect of Parliamentary elections and to designate the Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places as the Polling Districts and Polling Places for Local Government elections.

## Council, 24 January 2019

- c) The Council authorised the Chief Executive to designate an adjoining Polling District as the Polling Place where no suitable polling station is available within the original Polling Place.

### 749 Allocation of Committee Seats

#### Discussion:

This report provided details of position regarding the overall allocation of seats on Committees following receipt of notice from three Councillors that they no longer wished to be treated as members of political groups. An addendum report further updated this position following the sad passing of Councillor Carr on 19 January 2019.

Following consultation with Group Leaders and Group Whips the Council had been recommended to formally review the allocation of seats on Committees.

Councillor Kemp, supported by Opara, proposed the recommendations set out in the addendum report, subject to Councillor Gulvin being appointed to the Planning Committee only.

#### Decision:

- a) The Council reviewed the allocation of seats on the Committees of the Council and agreed the allocation of seats as set out in revised Appendix B to the addendum report, following the sad death of Councillor Carr and receipt of notice from Councillors Craven, Howard and Pendergast that they no longer wish to be treated as members of a political group.
- b) The Council agreed the changes to the membership of Committees and other bodies as set out in paragraph 1.5 of addendum report and paragraph 4.2 of the main report.
- c) The Council agreed to appoint Councillor Gulvin to the Planning Committee.
- d) The Council noted that the Licensing and Safety Committee will be asked to review the membership of its Sub Committees at its next meeting.

### 750 Schedule of Meetings 2019/2020

#### Discussion:

This report provided details of the provisional programme of meetings for the 2019/2020 municipal year, as set out in Appendix A, for recommendation to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 22 May 2019.

## Council, 24 January 2019

Councillor Kemp, supported by Councillor Joy, proposed the recommendation, as set out in the report.

### **Decision:**

The Council agreed a provisional programme of Council and Committee meetings for 2019/2020 as set out in Appendix A to the report for recommendation to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 22 May 2019.

## **751 Motions**

### **A) Councillor Khan, supported by Councillor Bowler, submitted the following:**

“This Council welcomes the campaign to end Section 21 – the clause in the Housing Act 1988 that allows private landlords to evict tenants without reason. We acknowledge the threat of a no-fault eviction causes insecurity and stress for Medway residents who rent privately and can discourage tenants from complaining about substandard housing.

This Council welcomes the action taken by the Scottish Government to restrict no-fault evictions. This Council agrees to write to the Housing Minister urging the government to abolish this unfair section of the Housing Act 1988. Further, this Council will urge our local Members of Parliament to support this campaign in Parliament.”

### **Decision:**

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

### **B) Councillor McDonald, supported by Councillor Paterson, submitted the following:**

“Modern slavery is a hidden issue; the Home Office estimated that in 2013 there were between 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK. This means that there is a chance that modern slavery is taking place here in Medway without our knowledge.

This Council welcomes the recognition of this issue by the Archbishop of Canterbury on his recent visit to Medway.

This Council notes the hard work of the Co-operative Party, local Government procurement teams, and NGOs to develop a new charter which aims to ensure there is no place for modern day slavery in the supply chains used by local authorities.

This Charter proposes that each council shall:

## Council, 24 January 2019

1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.
2. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.
3. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.
4. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
5. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
6. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
7. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.
8. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.
9. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.
10. Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.

This Council resolves to:

Support the Co-operative Party's Charter against Modern Slavery and ask the Cabinet to arrange the implementation of the Charter."

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, supported by Councillor Etheridge, proposed the following amendment:

**Paragraph 3, Line 1:** Delete 'the Co-operative Party, local Government procurement teams, and NGOs' and replace with 'multiple organisations'

**Paragraph 3, Line 2:** Delete 'which aims'

**Paragraph 4, Bullet Point 10:** After 'on the implementation of this policy annually.' insert 'This Council notes that it already has in place rigorous procedures in order to comply with the above Charter and prevent the inclusion of modern day slavery through any of the Council's supply chains. Such measures include:

1. Full time members of the Procurement team undertake the CIPS's online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply annually.
2. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 is included in the Council's standard documentation based on a pass/fail criteria for compliance.
3. The Procurement team use the Abnormally Low Calculator (ALC) to challenge low bids from contractors during the tender process, in line with Article 69 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

## Council, 24 January 2019

4. The Council includes in its tender documentation that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
5. The Council has a comprehensive whistle-blowing system, enshrined in the Council's Constitution and readily available on the Council's website. The need for contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy is also included in tender documentation.
6. All of the Council's corporate spend is channelled through the Category Management team, whereby all new areas of spend are benchmarked to ensure none are abnormally low and therefore require further scrutiny.
7. The Procurement team is aware and highlights when appropriate; Any risks identified concerning modern slavery for its suppliers, and refers them to the relevant agencies to be addressed; the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism and the referral of any of the Council's contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.'

**Paragraph 5, Line 1:** Delete everything after 'This Council resolves to:' and replace with 'Continue to uphold its high standards to ensure that this Council complies with the Charter.'

In accordance with Rule 12.4 of the Council Rules, a recorded vote on the amendment was taken.

For – Councillors Aldous, Avey, Bhutia, Brake, Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers OBE, Chishti, Chitty, Clarke, Doe, Etheridge, Fearn, Filmer, Franklin, Griffin, Gulvin, Mrs Josie Iles, Steve Iles, Jarrett, Joy, Kemp, Opara, Potter, Purdy, Royle, Tejan, Turpin, Wicks and Wildey (29)

Against – Councillors Bowler, Craven, Gilry, Godwin, Griffiths, Howard, Johnson, Khan, Maple, McDonald, Murray, Osborne, Paterson, Pendergast, Price and Shaw (16)

Note: Councillors Freshwater, Hall and Saroy were not present for the recorded vote.

On being put to the vote the amendment was carried.

On being put to the vote the new substantive motion was carried.

### **Decision:**

Modern slavery is a hidden issue; the Home Office estimated that in 2013 there were between 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK. This means that there is a chance that modern slavery is taking place here in Medway without our knowledge.

This Council welcomes the recognition of this issue by the Archbishop of Canterbury on his recent visit to Medway.

## Council, 24 January 2019

This Council notes the hard work of multiple organisations to develop a new charter to ensure there is no place for modern day slavery in the supply chains used by local authorities.

This Charter proposes that each council shall:

1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.
2. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.
3. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.
4. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
5. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
6. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
7. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.
8. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.
9. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.
10. Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.

This Council notes that it already has in place rigorous procedures in order to comply with the above Charter and prevent the inclusion of modern day slavery through any of the Council's supply chains. Such measures include:

1. Full time members of the Procurement team undertake the CIPS's online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply annually.
2. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 is included in the Council's standard documentation based on a pass/fail criteria for compliance.
3. The Procurement team use the Abnormally Low Calculator (ALC) to challenge low bids from contractors during the tender process, in line with Article 69 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
4. The Council includes in its tender documentation that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
5. The Council has a comprehensive whistle-blowing system, enshrined in the Council's Constitution and readily available on the Council's website. The need for contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy is also included in tender documentation.



## Council, 24 January 2019

6. All of the Council's corporate spend is channelled through the Category Management team, whereby all new areas of spend are benchmarked to ensure none are abnormally low and therefore require further scrutiny.
7. The Procurement team is aware and highlights when appropriate; Any risks identified concerning modern slavery for its suppliers, and refers them to the relevant agencies to be addressed; the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism and the referral of any of the Council's contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.

This Council resolves to:

Continue to uphold its high standards to ensure that this Council complies with the Charter.

**C) Councillor Maple, supported by Councillor Johnson, submitted the following:**

"This Council notes the Cabinet's incomprehensible and damaging refusal to publish adequate preparations for Brexit.

This is despite the cross-party recommendation from Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee to do so.

The Council has a clear duty to protect residents and businesses from the range of possible detrimental effects and to enable them to benefit from the range of potential positive outcomes.

Council calls on the Cabinet to review its original decision and therefore prepare and publish promptly and in detail a meaningful analysis of the threats and benefits to Medway of Brexit and detailed action plans to cover the range of possible outcomes."

**Decision:**

On being put to the vote the motion was lost.

**D) Councillor Pendergast, supported by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, submitted the following:**

"This Council requests that the Cabinet agrees that some tickets to Medway Council run events be donated to the charity Tickets For Troops and the Council encourages all users of Council theatres and facilities to likewise donate tickets in order that those whose service to this country is valued by all can enjoy such events free of charge as a token of our appreciation."

**Decision:**

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

**Council, 24 January 2019**

**Mayor**

**Date:**

**Julie Keith, Head of Democratic Services**

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