

Medway Council
Meeting of Medway Council
Thursday, 18 July 2019
7.00pm to 10.47pm

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 Tejan)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor)
Councillors Adeoye, Ahmed, Aldous, Barrett, Bhutia, Bowler, Brake, Browne, Buckwell, Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers, OBE, Chitty, Cooper, Curry, Etheridge, Fearn, Filmer, Sylvia Griffin, Gulvin, Hackwell, Howcroft-Scott, Hubbard, Jarrett, Johnson, Kemp, Khan, Lloyd, Mahil, Maple, McDonald, Murray, Opara, Osborne, Paterson, Pendergast, Potter, Prenter, Price, Purdy, Sands, Andy Stamp, Chrissy Stamp, Thorne, Tranter, Mrs Elizabeth Turpin, Rupert Turpin, Wildey and Williams

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
James Williams, Director of Public Health

152 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carr, Clarke, Doe, Mrs Josie Iles, Steve Iles and Thompson.

153 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

Councillor Osborne declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in agenda 15B (Motion) because he works for the Leigh Academies Trust. He stated that he would leave the meeting during consideration of this item.

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Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor Gulvin declared an OSI in agenda item 13 (Deangate Ridge) (and any other possible references elsewhere in the Agenda) because he is a Director of Medway Development Company Ltd. He had a dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to this OSI.

Councillor Rupert Turpin declared an OSI in any references in the Agenda to Medway Norse (Chairman) and Medway Commercial Group Ltd (Director). He had a dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to this OSI.

Other interests

Councillor Sands declared an interest in question 10Q because he is a member of the Deangate Community Partnership. He stated that having taken advice from the Monitoring Officer there was no need for him to leave the meeting for this item.

154 Record of meeting

The records of the meetings held on 25 April 2019 and 22 May 2019 were agreed were agreed and signed by The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway as correct.

155 Mayor's announcements

The Mayor informed Members of the following events:

Friday 23 August (3pm) – Charity Garden Party on the Mayor's Lawn at Gun Wharf;

Friday 11 October – Charity Quiz Night will be held at the Corn Exchange.

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

The Mayor asked Members to only interrupt another Member while they were speaking if there was a genuine point of order or point of personal explanation to be made. To facilitate this, he had arranged for a copy of the Council Rules to be provided to every Member as he would be asking for anyone raising a point of order to stipulate which Council rule they were referring to. He stated that it was his intention to enable all Members to speak at Council meetings with minimal interruption.

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.

156 Leader's announcements

There were none.

157 Petitions

Public

There were none.

Members

Councillor Prenter submitted a petition containing 156 signatures which called on the Council to take action against vehicular access to Beechings Playing Fields by installing a height barrier and any other suitable barriers needed to prevent vehicular access.

158 Public questions

A) Zi Fincham of Gillingham asked the Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Wildey, the following

“Regarding the closure of Sunlight Centre Surgery - the CCG agreed and promised the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (twice) that all Sunlight Surgery services will be reinstated until at least 2020. DMC, as per the CCG's intentions, has taken control of the surgery. However, instead of keeping their promises they are reducing services and withholding them.

For example:

- No new patients allowed to sign on – despite DMC’s promise this is not the case;
- Walk in service being removed from the Sunlight surgery – despite CCG promises this would not happen – notice texted to patients on 24th May with effect from 1st June - forcing patients needing same day GP appointments to be directed to other surgeries - such as St Mary’s Island;
- The telephone system for Twydall and the Sunlight (and presumably the other DMC surgeries) have been centralised at St. Mary’s Island – so patients of each surgery cannot directly contact their surgery;
- There have been many problems with repeat prescriptions being issued on time or at all – with patients, for example my husband and I waiting up to a week for repeat prescription provision;

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- Patient prescriptions being issued from St Mary's Island, The Pentagon, Balmoral Gardens, surgeries that DMC also run (as my own repeat prescriptions can evidence) – suggesting that personal data is being shared between the surgeries without patient knowledge, agreement or consent which suggests a data protection breach;
- No patient (as far as I am aware) has been asked if they are happy or in agreement with their personal medical data being shared with any surgery other than the one they are registered with – for example, I have not been approached with information of this nor my agreement or consent been sought;
- My surgery file, and that of my husband, should both hold letters written approximately 2 years ago (perhaps more), specifically stating that we do not agree to the sharing of our medical data with anyone other than those treating us directly (meaning the GP we are registered under), should only be done after we have given our specific consent, and only after we have received and agreed prior a satisfactory request and explanation of the reason for wishing to do so – DMC should be aware of these, and others' similar letters – yet DMC appear to be ignoring such specific wishes;
- No services have been reinstated as promised at the Sunlight Surgery – such as phlebotomy clinic/ Asthma clinic/ small injuries clinic – all existing at the Sunlight Surgery before 1st April 2019;
- The Surgery Manager put in place by DMC from 1st April 2019 has now left and another member of staff has been appointed as Assistant Practice Manager (as informed in answer to the FOI letter) - but to date this information has not been publicly notified or advertised to patients of the surgery in any shape or form; (I have as of today's date, 3rd July, just received an email from the Assistant Practice Manager introducing herself and inviting me to a meeting – taken long enough. I have confirmed acceptance, asking for provisional dates I can take to the other PPG members as I do not feel it appropriate to meet with DMC on my own. I am not comfortable representing as a lone representative of the Sunlight PPG);
- No proper and secure assurance and reassurance of services information has been supplied to the Patient Participation Group so that the PPG can disseminate to patients as to surgery services despite DMC's promise to meet with the PPG;
- Lack of GP availability – the Surgery always tell patients 'one doctor is off sick' to explain why only one doctor (locum) is working – yet DMC acknowledge in response to the FOI they are still (three months later) 'actively recruiting staff' – which indicates this patient information is untrue;

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- There has been a merger of St. Mary's Island Surgery and Sunlight Surgery which no one knew about or agreed to; and there has still to date been no notification of such merger to the PPG or any other person outside DMC and the CCG;
- The role of the CCG in monitoring DMC (despite a senior CCG employee's personal assurance to me of 'robust monitoring') and the requirement for the CCG to consult on proposed changes appears to be dismally failing – the same employee admitted to me at a recent PPG Chairs meeting she had 'no knowledge of what DMC were doing at the Sunlight Surgery' when confronted with some of the above assertions. This same employee has made these same assertions and given the same emphatic assurances on two other separate occasions previously when I attended meetings with two separate individuals – one a colleague PPG member, the other a Medway Health Campaign representative – both of whom can unequivocally vouch for my assertions re the Sunlight surgery and those statements I assert were made to me.

I have also submitted a freedom of information request to DMC to find out details of the contractual relationship between the CCG and DMC, however, very little has been answered – the majority of the answers sought in the FOI letter have been withheld as DMC state the information is "commercial and in confidence". This information needs to be made available to help understand how and what services are being provided and will be reinstated.

Taking all of the above into account, it is my strongest belief that the CCG's actions to date, via DMC and the contractual agreement they refuse to disclose details of, are deliberately, surreptitiously, engineering their original intention to ultimately ensure the closure of the Sunlight Centre Surgery – whilst also, deliberately, breaching data protection rules as enshrined in the Human Rights Act – '...data protection laws are underpinned by a respect for fundamental human rights...'.

Therefore, given the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny (HASC O&S) Committee reports on the proposals for the Sunlight Centre Surgery in August 2018 and October 2018, will the HASC O&S Committee continue to investigate this matter in accordance with the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013?"

Councillor Wildey thanked Ms Fincham for her question. He stated that the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee had determined that the proposal to reduce the number of GP operating sites in Gillingham from five to three was a substantial change to the health service. Therefore, there was now a duty on the Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to consult fully with the Committee and take its comments into account before it implements change.

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He stated that in October 2018, following feedback from stakeholders, the CCG advised the Committee that a decision had been taken, in the short term, to procure services for all five GP sites in Gillingham and undertake further engagement with patient and stakeholders before taking a final decision on the number of sites for the future.

The CCG had advised the Committee that public and patient engagement would commence after May 2019 and that no service change would take place before April 2020. It had also given an undertaking that it would update the Committee at regular intervals throughout the process.

He stated that any changes to GP provision in Gillingham would form part of the Medway model, an approach which aimed to transform local services, including providing additional capacity and capability within primary care.

The Committee was also being kept advised of the wider Kent and Medway transformation plans. These plans would inform the development of existing and future Primary Care Services in Medway. The Council was playing a key strategic role in this process, including helping to shape how local health and care services will be delivered throughout Primary Care Networks. He advised that the changes in Gillingham needed to be considered in that context.

He stated that in answer to Ms Fincham's question, the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee was expecting to be kept informed by the Clinical Commissioning Group and to be able to comment as the proposals for the future of GP services in Gillingham were developed.

He concluded by stating that he would refer the other more personal and specific concerns raised in Ms Fincham's question to the CCG and would ask them to respond directly to her, with a copy to him if she agreed, as the Committee could not deal with complaints on matters such as data protection that were specific to individual patients.

B) Victoria Roberts of Lordswood submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:

"How are you planning to help the environment in Medway and encourage our citizens to do the same?"

Note: As Miss Roberts was not present at the meeting, she would receive a written response to her question in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

C) Paul O'Neill of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

“Air pollution in Gillingham is worse than in London, according to figures released by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, state "the report from the WHO clearly shows the impact air pollution is having on the health”.

Air pollution in summer increases heart-attack risk, with warmer temperatures mixing with particulate air pollution & ozone to produce dangerous levels with unsafe levels of harmful particles in the air around our Towns. Medway Liberal Democrats are calling on the Council to play a leadership role in improving environmental standards by adopting sensible & consistently applied planning policies in line with the environment & help to protect the Town's circulatory and respiratory health.

What measures are the Council taking which improves urban air quality across Medway?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Mr O'Neill for his question. She stated that the World Health Organisation figures, which had been published for 2018, showed levels of PM10 in Gillingham to be 19ug/m3 compared to 23ug/m3 in London and for the PM2.5 in Gillingham to be 12ug/m3 compared to 12ug/m3 in London, as such she stated that she disagreed with Mr O'Neill's opening statement.

She stated that Medway was very proactive in addressing air quality and currently had four Air Quality Management Areas and the Air Quality Action Plan, which was approved by Cabinet in December 2015, outlined 12 key measures which aimed to reduce transport emissions and good progress had been achieved since then, such as:

- Air Quality Planning Guidance had been developed and implemented across Medway. This ensured that air quality impacts of developments were considered and mitigated;
- The Council promoted walking and cycling initiatives such as 'Walk on Wednesday', school crossing patrol service, Medway Big Ride, and Medway Health Walks;
- Promoting the use of public transport and working with bus operators to ensure that the bus fleets did not add to air pollution;
- In June 2018, Medway Council had launched its Air Quality Communications Strategy;
- Medway Council sponsored two of the KM Green Schools Awards.

She also stated that the Council was currently in the process of producing an Air Quality Action Plan for the Four Elms Hill Air Quality Management Area and that a public consultation would be undertaken on this document later in the year.

D) Trevor Coote of Rainham submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty:

“Whilst appreciating the Council's desire to build more homes and concrete over the Medway towns, in exchange for development money, do they not feel that with all the developments currently underway in Rainham, the addition of 1250 homes and the motor vehicles and people that will accompany them, that this sudden influx will destroy the semi-rural nature of the area for the current residents and future generations?”

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

E) Jo Barrett of Middle Stoke asked the Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, the following:

“It has been reported during the Stoke Primary School Campaign that on 20th May Councillor Pendergast was advised Medway Council was "one hundred percent" unaware of the Leigh Academy Trust's proposal to merge Stoke Primary School and Allhallows Primary School.

There is an email confirming neither Councillor Filmer nor Councillor Jarrett knew anything about the merger.

On 22nd May Councillor Potter stated in an email Medway Council had received the consultation letter on Monday 20th May but there had been no pre-consultation with the Local Authority.

On 7th June Leigh Academies Trust wrote to Councillor Potter referring to “Several productive meetings we have already had with officers and politicians in Medway about the proposal this academic year”.

Who is not telling the truth?”

Councillor Potter thanked Ms Barrett for her question. He stated that the Council had formally objected to the proposals by Leigh Academies Trust to close Stoke Primary School. He stated that he was pleased to say that the previous day the minister, Lord Agnew, announced that he had dismissed the proposal to close the school. He thanked Lord Agnew for listening to the Council, ward Councillors, the Member of Parliament and most importantly the parents and the community on this matter.

He stated that in terms of how Leigh Academy Trust had conducted the process, they had not engaged with him prior to the consultation, nor the other elected Members mentioned in the question. Officers had stated Leigh Academies Trust had engaged at an officer level to discuss the two schools in outline. Councillor Potter stated that he had not been privy to this but officers stated they had recommended that Leigh Academies Trust should engage with Portfolio Holders and ward Members prior (to the consultation) on this matter.

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However, this advice had not been heeded as the Council did not receive the formal proposals prior to the consultation with no pre-consultation on the formal proposals. This led to the Council writing to Leigh Academies Trust, following the consultation announcement, to seek more information about the proposal.

Councillor Potter also stated that in a hastily arranged meeting following the announcement of the consultation, he had said to Leigh Academies Trust that there should have been full engagement with the Council on this matter with a pre-consultation on the proposals, bearing in mind the significance of their decision to close Stoke Primary School.

F) Shane Waterman of Rochester asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

“Dickens Festival Organisation

At this year’s Festival, we noted that a number of the readings and performance events within the Festival had been scheduled to either start at the same time, or overlap.

This caused audiences to drop significantly to an extent to which they were embarrassing to both audience members and performers alike.

The worst examples were Gerald Dickens’ own performance, which attracted an audience of just 25 people (it is normally a packed house!) and a reading of The Mystery of Edwin Drood, which overlapped, had an audience of just five people.

Given that it is understood the Festival is being expanded somewhat to mark the 150th Anniversary of the death of Charles Dickens and is likely to attract a much larger number of visitors who will want to attend reading and performance events, the scheduling of these is going to be all the more important.

My contacts within the theatrical world tell me that the performers were deeply unhappy about the effect on their events this year, and despite the significance of 2020, some are already considering not offering their services.

What assurances can the Council give that far more attention will be paid to the scheduling of these performances for the 2020 Festival?”

The Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor, Turpin, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Doe.

Councillor Turpin thanked Waterman for his question. He stated that there were more than 50 scheduled readings and performance events on each day of this year’s Dickens Festival. He stated that whilst the Council endeavoured to avoid clashes, such a packed programme did mean that events would overlap and unfortunately it was not possible to know which events would be of particular interest to each visitor.

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Councillor Turpin stated that the availability of performers or those giving talks also had to be recognised. Such was the case with the Edwin Drood lecture, which the Council was unable to confirm until nearer the festival date, and needed to work around the lecturer's limited availability.

He pointed out that the Council had received excellent feedback on this year's festival, not least from Gerald Dickens himself, who took the time to send a message to the events team to thank them "for such a successful festival this year."

He stated that this left the Council extremely well placed for next year's Dickens 150 commemorations, to extend the ambition to put Medway on the map nationally and internationally, for such a famous son of Medway, as Charles Dickens was probably Medway's most famous former resident.

He stated that officers were working with a number of external partners and would be developing a programme which fully reflected the importance of Charles Dickens, both during his lifetime and also to modern audiences.

He concluded by stating that the 2020 Dickens Festival on the weekend of 13/14 June 2020 would, therefore, be integral to the 150th anniversary commemoration, and the Council would look forward in the future to sharing the detail of what was planned.

G) Kate Good of Lower Stoke asked the Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, the following:

"Can you, as Portfolio Holder, confirm that all the terms of the Lease for Stoke Primary School, for which Medway Council is the Landlord, such as submitting plans and getting permission for any alterations to the building, have been complied with since the School became an Academy?"

Councillor Potter thanked Ms Good for her question. He stated that the Council as the Planning Authority, would be responsible for receiving, reviewing and deciding any development plans and/or change of use for the school site. He stated that he could confirm the Council had not received any plans in relation to this school site.

H) James Chespy of Gillingham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

“Whilst I understand the gift of the Mayoralty lies with the ruling group, I would like to respectfully suggest to the ruling Conservative Group and to the Leader of the Council that the issue of the Mayoralty be dealt with on a cross party basis.

Therefore, I would ask that the Council returns to a points based system based on seniority.”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Mr Chespy for his question. He stated that Mr Chespy had asked a similar question at a Council meeting this time last year and that he had been given a clear answer then, specifically that the Council’s arrangements for the election of Mayor were consistent with the law.

He also stated that there was a report on this issue at item 14 on the agenda, therefore, given Mr Chespy’s interest in this matter, he trusted that he would stay to listen to the debate later in the meeting by which time all would become clear.

I) Vivienne Parker of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“What is the Council doing to create safe cycle routes around Medway?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Ms Parker for her question. He stated that in short the answer to her question was “lots”. In 2015, the Council had secured £2.5million government funding for improving cycling infrastructure in Medway. The Council had used this to create over 13 kilometres of new cycle routes, mainly off carriageway, and improved nearly 3 kilometres of existing cycle routes. This included widening of paths to allow cyclists to use them safely, improved signage and upgraded pedestrian crossings to include facilities for cyclists. The Council had also constructed a ‘Pump Track’ in Gillingham, which was a great way for the whole family to enjoy cycling. The Council would continue to explore opportunities to add to and improve Medway’s cycle routes and facilities, and make sure that new housing developments are cycle friendly.

He also stated that the Council was promoting cycling wherever possible through the annual Cycling Festival, and in just a few days’ time (Sunday 21 July) Medway would play host to the British Cycling Championships. The Council also offered cycle training from an early age through the Bikeability programme, which helped to ensure the next generation would be equipped with the skills for safe cycling.

J) Alan Wells of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“Investing in Medway’s cycling infrastructure

Many forward-thinking councils across the country are using Government grants, income from development and their own resources to invest in local cycling infrastructure and campaigns to promote cycling.

Medway Council has a responsibility to adopt a robust green infrastructure plan for Medway. As traffic congestion adds to Medway’s emissions each year and reduces local productivity, cycling - especially at peak hours - would help reduce emissions and ease congestion across Medway.

The Council should rise to the challenge and set about improving cycling provision across our Towns, to encourage green transport methods and promote a pro-cycling strategy for Medway.

What, if any, measures are the Council taking to improve provision for cycling across Medway?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Mr Wells for his question. He stated that the Council had adopted a Cycle Action Plan in 2016, which set out the strategy for expanding and improving the cycle network to improve air quality, reduce congestion, and the Plan also encouraged increased physical activity and healthy lifestyles.

He stated that since the Council had adopted the Plan, it had delivered over 13 kilometres of new cycle routes, and improved 3 kilometres of existing cycle routes as well. The funding for these improvements had been secured from government grants and section 106 contributions from new developments. The Council also allocated a proportion of the annual Local Transport Plan grant to deliver cycle improvements. This year, the Council had supported Southeastern in its bid for the Government funding to provide facilities for cyclists using Chatham Station. The bid had been successful and Southeastern would be funding to create a new purpose-built, state of the art cycle hub, which includes electric charging points, stands for different styles of cycles, pumps and tools.

He also stated that as part of this investment, the Council had installed cycle counters on a number of routes, which told the Council that the number of people cycling in Medway was increasing. He concluded by stating that the Council would be exploring further opportunities to add to and improve Medway’s cycle routes and facilities, and to continue to make sure that new housing developments would be cycle friendly.

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K) John Castle of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

“The recent consultation on the siting of Hyper Acute Stroke Units (HASUs) in Kent concluded that Medway would not be included among the 3 sites. This decision is being challenged by a Judicial Review.

Medway Liberal Democrats believe this decision was reached by a deeply flawed process where the goalposts were changed during the consultation to put Medway at a major disadvantage. We believe this position is supported by all major political parties in Medway.

What measures are Medway Council taking to ensure the case for siting a HASU in Medway is heard during the forthcoming Judicial Review?”

Councillor Brake thanked Mr Castle for his question. He stated that there was cross party support for the Council to challenge, by whatever appropriate means necessary, what was believed to be the fundamentally unsound decision made by the Joint Committees of the Clinical Commissioning Groups in 2018 that the siting of three Hyper Acute Stroke Units (HASUs) in Kent and Medway, should not include one in Medway at the Medway Foundation Trust Hospital.

He stated that after taking appropriate legal advice, the Council had first pursued the statutory process available to it. This had involved the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee referring the Kent and Medway stroke services decision to the Secretary of State, putting forward Medway's case.

He stated that this had been followed by a personal intervention from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, who had met with the Secretary of State, Matt Hancock, to make strong representations on Medway's behalf. This had been supplemented by further meetings with the Minister, by Medway's local Members of Parliament, who had also made clear their concerns about the HASUs decision. Those representations had been sufficient for Mr Hancock to subsequently refer the Kent and Medway stroke services decision to an Independent Review Panel. The outcome of this review was awaited.

He stated that in the meantime, two judicial reviews had been lodged by other people at the High Court, challenging the process followed to come to the Kent and Medway stroke services decision.

The Council had been named as an “interested party” in one of those judicial review proceedings and that meant that the Council could support the generic points of challenge and also make Medway-specific points, not least that the HASUs decision was fundamentally unsound to the extent that it ignored the compelling health case for a HASU to be sited in Medway.

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L) Chris Spalding of Gillingham asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

“On 24 January this year Council unanimously carried Councillor Pendergast’s motion that the Cabinet agrees for some tickets to Council run events be donated to Tickets for Troops.

How many tickets to events including the Castle Concerts have been donated so far?”

The Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor, Turpin, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Doe.

Councillor Turpin thanked Mr Spalding for his question. He stated that responsibility for troops was taken very seriously. The Council delivered over 30 days of free festivals and events each year, appealing to a wide variety of audiences, including the Armed Forces Day itself, so there were a lot of events which any member of the armed forces or veterans could attend for free. He felt that the offering from Medway did set it apart from other areas in that the events were free for all to attend.

He stated that most of the performances that were staged at the Central and Brook Theatres were run with third parties on a hire/split arrangement which precluded the Council from giving away free tickets to any group, as the Council was contractually obliged to sell them at the agreed price.

However, the Council had engaged with Tickets for Troops on a number of occasions through Medway’s Theatres (five pairs of tickets for Tinder the Comedy and five free tickets for the Jungle Book). Tickets were also offered at around half price for Sensational 60s.

He stated that for this year’s Castle Concerts, the Council had offered a local regiment a substantial discount on the Rudimental concert and 15 pairs of free tickets had been donated for the Soul Night.

He concluded by stating that the Council was very proud of Medway’s military heritage, and the Council was doing a great deal across the piece, not just through Tickets for Troops, to demonstrate that.

159 Leader's report

Discussion:

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

- Festivals and events including Armed Forces Day, English Festival, Sweeps Festival, Dickens Festival, National Circuit Championships (cycling) and review of Castle Concerts
- Transfer of waste contract from Veolia to Medway Norse
- Green Flag Awards
- Regeneration schemes
- Climate change emergency
- Cornwallis Avenue – site for school provision
- Medway Commercial Group Ltd
- Travellers sites clean ups
- Strood development works
- Medway Public Health Awards
- Hospital discharges
- Dementia Action Alliance
- St. Nicholas Church of England Infant School proposed prescribed alterations
- Gordon Academies proposals
- Medway Youth Awards
- CCTV provision
- Access to GP services
- Recycling.

160 Overview and scrutiny activity

Discussion:

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

- Voluntary and community sector
- Scrutiny of risk and commercialisation
- Sponsorship of Gillingham FC
- New Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities
- Tackling racism in Medway
- Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) update
- South East Coast Ambulance Update
- Suicide prevention update
- Update on CCTV audit
- Household Waste Recycling Centres: Response to Kent County Council policy change

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- Strood development works
- Members' induction programme
- Medway Commercial Group Ltd
- Medway Youth Awards
- Medway Children and Young People Talent Show
- Health scrutiny
- GP merger proposals in Rochester
- Healthcare.

161 Members' questions

A) Councillor Johnson asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:

"In view of the central importance of rural schools to the long-term prosperity and resilience of rural communities, and in view of the loss of community resources such as the support given to families through children's centres, would the Portfolio Holder agree that the proposal by the Leigh Academy Trust to amalgamate Stoke and Allhallows Primary Schools is potentially damaging to the prospects and wellbeing of young people and the viability of this community?"

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles.

Councillor Potter thanked Councillor Johnson for his question. He stated that he was sure that Councillor Johnson would agree that all schools played an important role in community life, and that was particularly true of Medway's rural schools.

He stated that with regard to the Stoke proposals, the Council had formally objected to the proposals outlined from Leigh Academy Trust and he was pleased that Lord Agnew had dismissed the proposals.

B) Councillor Cooper asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:

"At a recent Council meeting it was admitted by the administration that the closure of Sure Start Children's Centres in Medway had resulted in a reduction of 100,000 visits by Medway families.

Which of the services provided by the Children's Centres have seen a reduction in use and what has been the impact on families of the loss of these vital services?"

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles.

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Councillor Potter thanked Councillor Cooper for her question. He stated that 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 need to handle those early challenges, help to tackle inequalities, and to give children a healthy start. Medway Children's Services had locally based provision in four areas to provide support to children and their families. Different groups, clinics and classes ran from the different buildings and there were three types of provision here in Medway:

- 1) Children and Family Hubs;
- 2) Wellbeing centres;
- 3) Community outreach venues.

He stated that he was pleased to say that the Medway Children and Family Hub model had been praised by Ofsted in their recent inspection.

He stated that the Lead Member had visited every Children and Family Hub and had met with families, partners and professionals and the Council was committed to providing services to ensure children and families were getting the support they needed in the most appropriate way, within the resources available.

Furthermore, the Government had introduced funded childcare for 3 & 4 year olds of up to 30 hours from September 2017 and the Council had a strong focus ensuring that these places were taken up and that these children were supported in terms of being ready for school.

He stated that, in addition, the Council had secured a Department for Education 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 to offer the 30 hours places. The number of children taking up a 30 hour place had almost doubled between Autumn 2017 and the Summer term of 2018 and this had continued to grow with over 1,500 children taking a place in the summer term. The Council had ensured the team now had an outreach officer to give sustained support to both providers and parents in engaging with Government funded childcare and education.

Since January 2018 the Council had worked very hard to engage parents in using their entitlements for funded early years childcare and education and this had resulted in continued increases for children in Medway receiving a two year funded childcare place.

C) Councillor McDonald submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty:

“Medway cab drivers were given an assurance at the Full Council meeting in April 2019 that the Council would seek independent legal advice to challenge Uber's assertion that Medway can be regarded as part of Greater London permitting their drivers to operate here. There is now a Council proposal to use Cornerstone Chambers who employ a QC who has acted for Uber.

Does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that this decision reneges on the promise to seek independent advice and jeopardises the success of the Medway drivers' challenge?”

Note: Councillor McDonald withdrew this question at the meeting as the matter had been dealt with.

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

“Residents were recently shocked to find out that from 1 August Medway Council would no longer be providing free car parking for users of the Medway Park leisure centre. This is despite Medway Conservatives' recent manifesto commitment to freeze car parking charges until 2021.

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm if their manifesto promise has in fact been broken, or whether he has done a U-turn and has now decided to keep parking free for Medway Park users after all?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Councillor Stamp for his question. He stated that the current car park refund system for users of Medway Park sports centre continued to operate.

E) Councillor Prenter asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:

“Following the increasingly regular incursions by travellers on Beechings Playing Fields in Twydall ward and indeed other parts of Medway, is the Portfolio Holder prepared to investigate a more sustainable approach to prevention like that taken by other Authorities such as Merton Council who have successfully pursued an innovative approach which prevents public nuisance and saves money in the longer term?”

Councillor Gulvin thanked Councillor Prenter for his question. He stated that the Council had looked into all the options available to local authorities, and other local authorities had placed injunctions on public spaces. However, in the most recent case heard in the High Court, the judge had refused to grant a final injunction banning travellers from stopping on public land in Bromley.

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He stated that the Council had been hit particularly hard this year in terms of the number of incursions in Medway. The Council had worked hard in ensuring that it used the existing law promptly, such as section 77 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, this was to direct unauthorised campers to leave; if unauthorised campers failed to comply with the section 77 direction, the Council would then use section 78 of the same Act, to go to court and secure an Order which allowed for their removal. The Council would continue to enforce this legislation robustly and the Community Safety Team attended sites of unauthorised encampments first thing on the morning of the incursion, to ensure the Council could obtain the quickest legal response.

He stated that in addition to enforcing prompt legal action, the Council was progressively making sites which were occupied more difficult to access illegally. This was being done incrementally in order to reduce the unnecessary expenditure, and to prevent parks and open spaces looking like some latter day Checkpoint Charlie.

He concluded by taking the opportunity to publicly thank the members of the Community Safety Team, particularly the Anti-Social Behaviour officers for the excellent work they were doing, in extremely trying circumstances, and he also thanked the team from Medway Norse who cleared up the often unspeakable mess that had been left behind by the travellers as they did an exceptional job.

F) Councillor Chrissy Stamp asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“Medway residents will be alarmed at the findings of the recent BBC War on Plastic series which uncovered evidence suggesting that multiple local authorities have been dumping unrecyclable plastic waste in Malaysia.

Will the Portfolio Holder publish Veolia’s system of traceability and ensure that they and any future recycling and household waste contractors dispose of their unrecyclable waste responsibly?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Councillor Stamp for her question. He stated that the findings of the recent ‘War on Plastic’ report were very alarming. Reports of this nature, whilst important, could cause damage to the public perception of recycling and he stated that he would like to see more reports and programmes celebrating the positive steps that were being taken across the waste industry.

He stated that he wanted to assure Medway residents that their waste was being treated properly and he asked them to continue to use the excellent recycling services available here in Medway.

He stated that all waste collected was traceable as reported on the Waste Data Flow system, the statutory reporting instrument for Local Authority collected waste. This publicly accessible system held information on tonnages collected in Medway and where it was sent, based on information provided to the Council by all waste contractors.

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He also referred to the End Destinations report, which was available on the Council's website, first published during 2017/18. The End Destinations report for 2018/19 was due to be published by the end of quarter 2.

He concluded by stating that he could assure Councillor Stamp that Veolia took its code of conduct very seriously and every end destination (whether in the UK or abroad) was visited and audited by Veolia to the highest standard, to ensure the materials that consumers recycle were actually recycled or disposed of properly through a fully trackable system. Veolia (along with all contractors) only worked with Environment Agency accredited and licensed facilities.

G) Councillor Osborne asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

“At a recent Audit Committee the recent Governance Statement for our organisation stated that last year the budget reported a £2m loss (outturn) and that this was managed internally by an off-budget contribution from a pilot scheme that is not repeated in this budget year.

Given scenario testing had occurred by the budget build can the Leader explain why he confirmed this pilot scheme as off budget sheet and whether or not, taking into account the contribution, his budget was actually balanced taking into account budgeted revenues and expenditure?”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Osborne for his question. He stated that in 2017 Local Authorities had been invited to pilot a new 100% business rates retention scheme during 2018-19. Along with Kent County Council and all the Districts in Kent, Medway Council had been successful in bidding for this pilot.

The pilot scheme had been for the financial year 2018/19 only, with pilot authorities retaining 100% of business rates income in the period but forgoing some existing grants, principally Revenue Support Grant (RSG). The pilot scheme had been anticipated to result in an increase in income for the participating local authorities, but had been only guaranteed to be no worse than cost neutral for participating authorities.

He stated that for Medway Council, in return for being allowed to retain 100% of business rates income, RSG of £12.3million had been forgone and £4.5 million 'top-up' grant, had been superseded by a £27million 'tariff' payment. At the time of setting the budget for 2018/19, there had been considerable uncertainty over the level of additional business rates growth that would be retained under the pilot, not least because it was dependent on the business rates collected by all thirteen rates collecting authorities in Kent. As such, to ensure the Council had set a prudent budget, the budgeted income from business rates for the year had been set at the guaranteed level.

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He also stated that there had been no guarantee that participation in the one year pilot would have led to participation in any future pilots, and indeed the Kent and Medway bid to pilot 75% business rates retention in 2019/20 had not been successful. As such, if the Council had made any increase to its base budget as a result of the one year pilot scheme, it would have been necessary to cut those budgets in 2019.

He concluded by stating that it had been quite reasonable to take this view and this had led to a balanced budget.

H) Councillor Hubbard asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:

“Former Chief Inspector at Ofsted Sir Michael Wilshaw has said that government is “misleading” the public with its claim of giving schools record levels of money, warning that progress made in boosting standards is in jeopardy unless funding goes into schools.

Indeed, the Institute for Fiscal Studies has shown that school funding has slumped by 8% since 2010; 99 Medway schools have suffered cuts to their funding with an average projected loss of £222 per pupil.

Is the Portfolio Holder happy to see this loss of vital support to schools and to the young people of Medway?”

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles.

Councillor Potter thanked Councillor Hubbard for his question. He stated that the national funding formula guaranteed for minimum pupil funding of £3,500 for primary places and £4,800 for secondary places. However, there were always challenges with budgets and he was pleased to report that school leaders within Medway continued to manage their budgets in an effective and creative manner which ensured young people continued to get the education they deserved.

I) Councillor Adeoye asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:

“My council case work indicates that arrangements for young service users in the care of Children’s Social Services transitioning to adulthood and requiring continued care of Children’s Services up on to age 25 are poor and difficult for families to navigate.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me whether she is prepared to review Transition and make improvements?”

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles.

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Councillor Potter thanked Councillor Adeoye for her question. He stated that transition to adulthood could be a difficult time for all young people and particularly for children who had received Child Care Services. Medway's Children and Adults Services had been working closely together to ensure that the transition pathway was smooth and easy to negotiate. The Council had recently formed a new Transition and Review Team and this team aimed to co-ordinate the transition of young people who were aged 16 to 18. The team would ensure that a timely assessment was completed to establish if the young person met the criteria for adult services under the Care Act with the aim to ensure the young person was aware of the care package they would receive as an adult, prior to turning 18.

He stated that training had been provided to all Independent Reviewing Officers regarding the new process and procedures.

He concluded by stating that all young people who were leaving care would also be supported by the Leaving Care Team until they were 25.

J) Councillor Mahil asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:

“The previous Portfolio Holder attempted to reassure worried parents of Abbey Court Special School that there was sufficient accommodation for their children despite strong evidence to the contrary.

Given that those children will be shortly be starting in year seven, what arrangement has been made and for how long will this be sustainable?”

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles.

Councillor Potter thanked Councillor Mahil for his question. He stated that officers had worked closely with Abbey Court School and he could confirm that all the children currently in year 6 at Abbey Court School had been offered places in year 7 from September 2019. They would also be joined by some new pupils in year 7. These places had been confirmed to parents in early March 2019.

He stated that there had been some adaptations completed at the school and some of the new year 7 pupils would be taught at the Primary School site. Parents were fully aware of this arrangement.

He also stated that the Council was currently working with the school to make arrangements for the current year 5 when they transition to year 7 in September 2020. He concluded by stating that the Council was working to ensure that there were sufficient special school places in Medway.

K) Councillor Howcroft-Scott asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

“Residents in Luton and Wayfield who live around the Russell House site are very worried about MHS proposals to convert this facility into a Foyer development for vulnerable young people. Russell House is in an area of high crime and anti-social behaviour and concerns were expressed at a recent PACT meeting when an undertaking was made by MHS to carry out an impact assessment for the local community regarding the development plans. To date nothing has happened.

Will the Portfolio Holder for Housing support local people in ensuring that the impact assessment is carried out and mitigating actions put in place before any development takes place?”

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Doe.

Councillor Gulvin thanked Councillor Howcroft-Scott for her question. He stated that he could assure Councillor Howcroft-Scott that Councillor Doe would certainly support members of the local community in ensuring that an impact assessment was carried out, with any actions appropriately implemented.

L) Councillor Curry asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

“Earlier this year the Council agreed to declare war on climate change. This shows a strong commitment by us all to stop the actions that lead to the decline in the quality of our environment including air quality, polluting chemicals and loss of biodiversity.

Sadly, across the whole of Medway we have seen an increased use of glyphosate based herbicides in many of our greenspaces and parks.

These herbicides are being used to control weeds, which are simply wildflowers, around the base of sign posts and along verges, and they have also been sprayed around trees.

Across the country we have seen a sharp decline in so many species of invertebrates, including bees and butterflies. There has also been severe declines in the species that feed on them including amphibians and birds. By their very nature herbicides are poisons used to kill plants and their impact through the food chain on all species is not fully understood, but there are obvious links.

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The main reason for the use of these chemicals in our parks and gardens is to tidy up weeds, which are the wildflowers so important to our local biodiversity.

Does the Council agree that the time has come to stop using harmful chemicals in the places where our children play, where we walk our pets and which we value so much for our environment?"

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, answered this question on behalf of Councillor Doe.

Councillor Gulvin thanked Councillor Curry for his question. He stated that each year the Council undertook planting to help improve the environment, and in the last winter months 100,000 crocus bulbs had been planted across Medway. The Council had worked successfully with Kent Wildlife Trust for many years in numerous ecology projects around Medway and created 1000s of square meters of wild flowers and natural grass for wildlife. The Council was currently working with partners, such as Plant Life and Kent Wildlife Trust to develop projects, such as mini meadows on highway verges that would enhance the biodiversity across Medway.

He stated that the Council, in keeping with most local authorities, undertook spraying of assets, tree bases and fence / wall lines as a way of reducing the risk of damage by strimming, in keeping with the Health and Safety Executive guidelines. The Council regularly reviewed any chemical spraying in line with regulations to ensure it was working safely and was compliant with regulations.

He stated that a Glyphosate-based weed killer was used, approved for use in public areas. This was absorbed into the plant and killed both the green leaves and roots of the weeds. This chemical was absorbed through the green leaves, killed only the plant and was neutralised on contact with the soil. Glyphosate, when applied in the diluted form as by the Council, had an extremely low toxicity to animals and posed minimal risk to humans or pets which accidentally came into contact with the substance.

He concluded by stating that the use of chemical herbicide was carefully controlled by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and that all commercial available chemicals had been subject to vigorous testing and were approved for sale by DEFRA.

M) Councillor Browne submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty:

“The proposed development of 1,250 new houses off Pump Lane will have a serious impact on services in Twydall. Residents understand the need for more housing but want assurances that there will be additional infrastructure to support the new homes and are worried about possible loss of green space.

Can the Portfolio Holder assure me that the Pump Lane development will only go ahead if the required infrastructure is in place?”

Note: Councillor Browne withdrew this question at the meeting given the level of opposition to the proposed development.

N) Councillor Khan asked the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin, the following:

“There has been a lot of national controversy recently regarding Crematoriums charging extra money from mourners if they go over their allotted time at the service - some by as little as 14 seconds.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me whether mourners are subject to additional charges at Medway Crematorium?”

Councillor Turpin thanked Councillor Khan for her question. He stated that in answer to her question, the Council would never charge mourners extra for going 14 seconds over.

He stated that there was provision in the fees for overrunning a service but he had spoken to the manager and he had not recalled a single time when those fees had been applied.

He stated that if there were any problems with an overrunning service it would not be ideal because it might impact on a following service and it might inconvenience the mourners of the second service so in that situation the Council would liaise with the Funeral Directors and see what the issues were. However, there had never been a persistent problem with a particular Funeral Director so it had not been necessary to take the matter further.

O) Councillor Bowler submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:

“The streets of Rochester East ward are looking increasingly untidy with weeds growing out of gutters, pavements and public alleyways. My complaints have resulted in assurances that weed killer has been sprayed but then the dead vegetation is not cleared away.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me why the contractor is allowed to give such a poor service to council tax payers and what he is prepared to do to improve the service?”

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

“Why is Medway Council discriminating against residents, especially some older people and those on low incomes, who do not have mobile phones by failing to provide alternative arrangements for paying parking fees when machines which accept cash are broken?”

Q) Councillor Pendergast submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:

“With Deangate Ridge back on the agenda, when it comes to considering any right to bid, what view does the Leader of the Council take of the failure of those running Deangate Community Partnership (DCP), which includes those holding or having held public office, to provide full disclosure of committee minutes, bank statements, financial records and other documents so the members of DCP can see exactly what happened to the money they donated?”

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

“After the decision to close Deangate Ridge Golf Club because of its apparent loss making, one year on and we find the security cost for this closed leisure facility is £2,730 per week (£142,000pa) with the still undocumented business rates and ground maintenance costs to be included. These costs were not considered thoroughly in the business case study in conjunction with the loss of the community amenity that Deangate so obviously provided.

Was the decision to close Deangate preconceived by Members in an attempt to provide residential development land to meet the allocation of new homes and officers asked to build a business case to support this decision?”

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

162 Pentagon Centre Update and Mountbatten House

Discussion:

This report provided an update on the acquisition of the Pentagon Centre and informed Council of Cabinet’s decision on 9 July 2019 to take the necessary steps to acquire the sub-lease of Mountbatten House in accordance with the constitutional requirement that Cabinet decisions relating to land and property transactions over £500,000 must be reported to the next Council meeting for information.

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The report also sought approval of a virement of up to £3M for the purchase of Mountbatten House and the addition of this scheme to the Capital Programme.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, supported by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendation in the report.

Decision:

The Council approved the virement of up to £3M from the remaining funds in the £45M Pentagon Centre acquisition and improvement budget, for acquiring Mountbatten House either by agreement or after a Compulsory Purchase Order with compensation and the associated costs and to add this scheme to the Capital Programme.

163 Innovation Park Medway Delivery and Investment Plan

Discussion:

This report provided details of Cabinet's decisions on 9 July 2019 in relation to the approval of the Delivery and Investment Plan and associated decisions relating to the appropriation of land for planning purposes and disposal of land, in accordance with the constitutional requirement that Cabinet decisions relating to land and property transactions over £500,000 must be reported to the next Council meeting for information.

The report also sought approval to the capital, resourcing and revenue requirements as set out in the Delivery and Investment Plan which would ensure sufficient investment would be made to deliver Innovation Park Medway as a high quality, innovative employment site.

An exempt appendix provided financial details set out in the Delivery and Investment Plan.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration, Inward Investment and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, proposed the recommendations in the report.

Decision:

- a) The Council approved the capital, resourcing and revenue requirements as set out in section 8 and Appendix 5 of the Delivery and Investment Plan set out in Appendix C to the report.
- b) The Council approved, in the first instance, the addition of £14.5M to the capital programme for the landmark building scheme as set out in paragraph 3.11 of the report.

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- c) The Council noted that approval will be sought for further additions to the capital programme as the remaining two detailed schemes set out on section 7.1 of the Delivery and Investment Plan set out in Appendix C to the report are formulated.

164 Deangate Ridge

Discussion:

This report provided details of Cabinet's decision on 9 July 2019 to recommend the Council to approve revenue funding to complete initial investigation surveys as well as a high-level capacity study to establish the approach and quantum of development on the Deangate Ridge site based on three options, as set out in section 3 of the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration, Inward Investment and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, supported by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, proposed the recommendations in the report.

Decision:

The Council approved the provision of up to £150,000 from revenue reserves, to complete initial investigation surveys as well as a high-level capacity study to establish approach and quantum of sustainable development as outlined in section 3.5 of the report.

165 Proposed Changes to the Rules for the Nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Discussion:

This report provided details of proposed changes to Council Rule 20 in the Constitution which related to the procedure for the nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. This followed a proposal made at Annual Council on 22 May 2019 which sought to make changes to the Council Rules and as such the matter had been taken forward without discussion for debate at this Council meeting, in accordance with Council Rule 16.2.

The proposed changes to Council Rule 20, as specified in section 5 of the report, sought a return to the points based system for the nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Maple, supported by Councillor Murray, proposed the recommendation set out in the report.

Following discussion, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by Councillor Etheridge, proposed that the vote be taken. This was agreed.

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

For – Councillors Adeoye, Bowler, Browne, Cooper, Curry, Gulvin, Howcroft-Scott, Hubbard, Johnson, Khan, Lloyd, Mahil, Maple, McDonald, Murray, Osborne, Paterson, Pendergast, Prenter, Price, Sands, Andy Stamp and Chrissy Stamp (23)

Against – Councillors Ahmed, Aldous, Barrett, Bhutia, Brake, Buckwell, Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers OBE, Chitty, Etheridge, Fearn, Filmer, Griffin, Hackwell, Jarrett, Kemp, Opara, Potter, Purdy, Tejan, Thorne, Tranter, Mrs Elizabeth Turpin, Rupert Turpin, Wildey and Williams (26)

Decision:

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

166 Motions

A) Councillor Maple, supported by Councillor Tranter, submitted the following:

“Council welcomes the proposal of a bank holiday to recognise the 75th anniversary for VE Day on Friday 8th May.

Council notes with concern the disruption to much loved events like Sweeps festival due to the proposal to not have a bank holiday on Monday 4th May.

Council requests that the Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to call on government to hold bank holidays on both 4th and 8th May 2020.”

Decision:

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

B) Councillor Pendergast, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, submitted the following:

“Following events concerning Stoke Primary School, this Council requests the Cabinet to commit to keeping rural and village schools open for the benefit of the local communities in so far as its powers allow.”

Following discussion, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Turpin, proposed that the vote be taken. This was agreed.

Decision:

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

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Mayor

Date:

Julie Keith, Head of Democratic Services

Telephone: 01634 332760

Email: democratic.services@medway.gov.uk