

# Medway Council Strategy



PEOPLE

PLACE

GROWTH

# Introduction



Providing Medway residents and businesses with support and opportunities to grow remains a key priority.

We are dedicated to ensuring residents have opportunities to reach their full potential and the 14,000 local businesses continue to benefit from Medway's growing economy.

Despite the ongoing financial challenges we face as a local authority, we strive to continue providing high-quality services, as well as value for money.

Our transformation programme has made it easier for residents to deal with council services online. We have improved the online support we provide and more services are available on our website, from reporting a problem to paying council tax quickly and securely.

The population is growing and we have responded to this by investing tens of millions of pounds in Medway's schools to provide more places. Medway provides an excellent choice of schools for children of all ages and abilities. It is also home to four universities and other higher educational centres, giving people the opportunity to develop their skills.

To meet the local demand for new homes, as well

as central government's challenging housing target, we are working closely with developers on plans to achieve this. Medway's residents have a great choice of new accommodation, including affordable options to choose from and in fantastic locations. We are also working hard to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place to support new housing developments.

Medway's ongoing, monumental regeneration programme is set to benefit future generations and provide growth for all, as well as help Medway's town centres thrive. Our aspiration is for Medway to become a leading waterfront university city by 2035.

We also remain dedicated to providing the best possible support to our most vulnerable residents and we work closely with partner agencies to ensure specialist advice and support is available to help people live independently.

Medway has a lot to offer both its residents and visitors, from the award winning parks to the free events and festivals. We are also fortunate to have two theatres, a wealth of leisure facilities and a choice of places to eat and drink, including many set alongside Medway's waterfront.

Medway is a place we can all be proud of - it provides great opportunities to live, work, learn and visit, and we are committed to ensuring Medway's future remains prosperous.

**Cllr Alan Jarrett,**  
Leader, Medway Council





Our vision:  
**MEDWAY**  
 Waterfront university city:  
 connecting innovation,  
 people and place;  
 driving growth for all

# Our priorities

We believe that concentrating our resources in these areas will lead to a better quality of life across Medway.

## PEOPLE

Supporting residents to realise their potential

Healthy and active communities

Resilient families

Older and disabled people living independently in their homes

All children achieving their potential in schools

## PLACE

Medway: A place to be proud of

A clean and green environment

Put Medway on the map

## GROWTH

Maximising regeneration and economic growth - growth for all

A strong diversified economy

Residents with jobs and skills

Preventing homelessness

Delivering new homes to meet the needs of our residents

Getting around Medway

This council's vision and priorities as set out in this strategy will be delivered by the **Council Plan** and other key strategies including the **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy**, **Local Plan** and **Medway 2035**.

# What we want to achieve

## PEOPLE Supporting residents to realise their potential

Outcome

Why this is important



Healthy and active communities

We want to support all of our residents, especially young people, to realise their potential through the provision of services and initiatives that will help Medway become an even healthier and safer place to live.



Resilient families

Improving everyone's health and reducing inequalities, developing and improving Children's Services and continuing to strengthen our Early Help offer will support families to give their children the best start in life.



Older and disabled people living independently in their homes

We will support the people of Medway to live full, active lives; to live independently for as long as possible, and to play a full part in their local communities. We will continue to strengthen our arrangements to safeguard vulnerable adults.



All children achieving their potential in schools

We will raise aspiration and ambition through raising standards in schools, improving the percentage of children in schools that are good or outstanding and engaging with young people. Implementing the actions of the School Improvement Strategy will improve the quality of leadership, governance and teaching and help all children to achieve their potential in school.

# PLACE

Medway: A place to be proud of

## Outcome

## Why this is important



A clean and green environment

We want Medway to be a place that local residents and businesses are proud of. Maintaining a clean and green environment, enabling residents, visitors and businesses to move around Medway easily by tackling congestion hotspots will enhance the public realm and street scene.



Put Medway on the map

Built around our culture, tourism and regeneration strategies, including Medway 2035. By building on what makes Medway unique - the river, our heritage and sporting legacy - Medway on the Map promotes Medway as a great place to live, work, learn and visit.

# GROWTH

Maximising regeneration and economic growth – growth for all.

## Outcome

## Why this is important



### A strong diversified economy

We want to ensure that Medway's regeneration drives economic development to encourage new and existing businesses to grow in Medway, which will benefit local residents through the creation of the new jobs and homes they need. By attracting high tech and science based businesses to relocate and grow in Medway, we are creating high skilled employment opportunities for our graduates; to retain local talent and create a strong mixed economy.



### Residents with skills and jobs

We will work to promote jobs, skills and employability by equipping people with the skills needed to secure opportunities in Medway's future economy. The Medway Skills Board, established in 2017, and Medway Adult Education learning programme, will boost local skills levels for those furthest from employment.



### Preventing homelessness

By adopting a council wide approach we will support people and vulnerable families to access housing and get a foot on the housing ladder. Working with landlords and agents will support households to sustain their accommodation and prevent homelessness.



### Delivering new homes to meet the needs of our residents

We will work to deliver new homes to meet the needs of Medway residents, through a council-wide approach. Progressing Medway's local plan and working with developers will enable housing development on appropriate sites to meet our Medway's successful growth.



### Getting around Medway

Tackling congestion hotspots through transport and public realm improvements will enable residents, visitors and businesses to move around Medway easily.

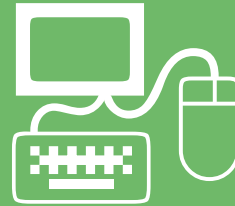
# Ways of working

By working in the following ways we will continue to deliver services that meet our communities' expectations and manage our resources effectively.



## Giving value for money

We are committed to delivering efficient and effective services for Medway residents, businesses and visitors.



## Finding the best digital innovation and using it to meet residents' needs

We are committed to transforming the way we provide services, the way we operate and the way we interact with residents.

We will take advantage of the opportunities provided by digital technology to make it quicker and easier for customers to access our services.



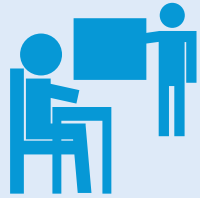
## Working in partnership where this benefits our residents

We cannot achieve our vision for Medway on our own. We will continue to work with partners to deliver the services that matter most to our communities.



# Key facts

As a unitary authority we provide all of the council services in Medway.



Medway has improved in the local authority ranking for overall pupil absence rates and is now ranking **better than national average**



**96.2%** of long term community services delivered via a personal budget; higher than the 89.7% national figure



More than **85%** of our schools have an Ofsted rating of good or better

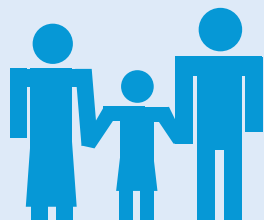


Supporting **189** care leavers to achieve positive outcomes within the community and wider

## PEOPLE

Supporting residents to realise their potential

**Delayed transfers of care remain low.** Medway has been identified as an authority others can learn from



Biggest improvement in **health visiting coverage** in South East



New single point of access, new child development team and routine smoking screening for all **new mothers**



Our children's home, The Old Vicarage is rated by Ofsted as **Outstanding**





**7 green flags awarded**  
– the national standard that recognises well managed green spaces



**Lowest council tax**  
in Kent



Over **30 days**  
of free festivals



**2,097** greenspaces  
volunteering days

## PLACE

Medway: A place to be proud of

**28%** of Medway is **internationally important** for biodiversity and landscape



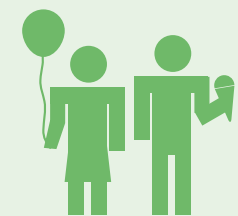
**1,462,715 visits**  
to Medway sports centres

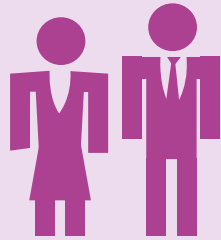


**519 miles** of roads maintained

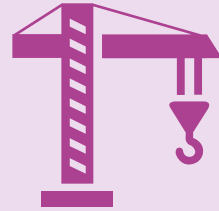


**5 million** visitors supporting **6,500 jobs**





**Innovation Park Medway**  
(IPM) estimated to bring  
£95m to £142m per annum  
to Medway's economy



Construction has begun at  
**Rochester Riverside**  
– Medway's flagship  
regeneration programme



Medway's economic  
growth rate **4% higher**  
than national average

## GROWTH

Maximising regeneration and economic growth  
– growth for all

Local economy = **£5.3billion**,  
– up **2.9%** from 2015.  
Higher than South East average



Planning permission granted  
to develop a high quality,  
mixed use development at  
**Chatham Waterfront**  
– a driver for further regeneration



**£37 million rail  
stations** regeneration is  
breathing new life into the  
surrounding areas






**Key Stage 4 attainment**  
in schools is on par with national  
(National Secondary 46.6 and  
Medway 46.0)



# Opportunities and challenges

Understanding local, regional and national challenges and putting in place innovative solutions ensures a resilient and sustainable Medway.

Opportunity/challenge	Benefit/solution
 <p><b>Our funding is changing as a result of continued reductions in central Government funding.</b></p>	<p>As the balance of funding shifts away from Government grants and towards greater reliance on local taxation, this presents local authorities with both a challenge and an opportunity. More homes and inward investment by business can increase the council's tax base, but also brings with it increased demand for services and infrastructure.</p>
 <p><b>The continued transfer of schools to academy trusts has an impact on the funds available for the core functions of maintained schools and our avenues to drive improvement. Funding is forecast to reduce dramatically over the next four years.</b></p>	<p>We continue to encourage schools to work in partnership with other schools in their locality to drive performance.</p>
 <p><b>Changes in legislation, extending our responsibilities for children with special needs and disability (SEND) to 25 years old, has increased the number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in place and the number of children entitled to Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport. This represents a significant funding pressure.</b></p>	<p>We have reviewed our SEN Transport policy and established a Portfolio Holder led task group to manage demand and reduce unit costs to mitigate this pressure.</p> <p>We will work with schools and academies to facilitate a more inclusive culture that keep children with SEND in mainstream education.</p>



**As well as an ageing population, with the number of people over 85 projected to increase by 85% by 2030, the number of adults with long-term and multiple health conditions and disabilities who are living longer is expected to increase.**

Our strategic approach continues to focus on supporting people to live independently for as long as possible. In recent years we have developed additional community based provision such as Home First, to support people back home when discharged from hospital, and additional Extra Care schemes, a community based alternative to residential care. Joint strategies and commissioning plans with the NHS have been developed to ensure we continue to develop the right type of provision to meet future needs.



**Continuing to improve our services for children and families in Medway in light of increasing demand and challenges in recruiting and retaining social work practitioners.**

Invest in and support our staff and managers to deliver quality work, and develop strong partnerships to improve outcomes for children and families.



**Medway: UK City of Culture 2025**

Our aspiration to be UK City of Culture in 2025 will create a legacy and sense of belonging; boosting local pride within our communities. Enhancing our cultural and creative offer, raising our creative ambitions and aspirations will improve health and wellbeing whilst supporting the economic regeneration that arts and culture bring. New creative and stakeholder partnerships will increase business engagement, create new employment opportunities and, the provision of creative and cultural skills through schools, our college and our Universities, will support our young people.



**Changes in legislation and demographic growth in the area are increasing pressure on the provision of support and accommodation for people who may be homeless; in particular the net migration flow to Medway from London has increased in recent years.**

Our Homelessness Prevention Strategy was adopted in August 2017 and sets out a range of actions that demonstrate how the council intends to intervene. A revised strategy is being developed for 2019/20.



**Medway is the largest conurbation in the South East, outside London. The population of around 280,000 is predicted to grow further increasing the demand on public services. Demographic growth in the area is increasing pressure on housing, employment and effective infrastructure including flood protection, roads, health and water capacity.**

We are transforming the way we work to make sure that we deliver services in a way that meets the changing needs of our residents. We are delivering more services online, working with communities to help them to do more for themselves, and exploring new and innovative ways of delivering services.

Our extensive regeneration programme, as outlined in Medway 2035, ensures the tremendous pace of regeneration in Medway continues. Our Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies the services and services needed to deliver sustainable and successful growth. Our Local Transport Plan includes our plans for improving transport by tackling congestion, improving public transport services and improving journeys to school and work.

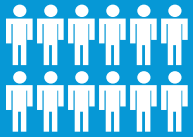


**A £170million Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to unlock sustainable development potential on the Hoo Peninsula. The fund is a government capital grant programme to help deliver homes across England.**

We have been set a challenging housing target by central government and this fund, if successful, would help us achieve it.

We would use the funding to help transform the Hoo Peninsula, including significantly improving the roads and rail connections.

As well as delivering major road improvements along the Peninsula Way, including a new road connecting to the Wainscott bypass, we will use the HIF funds to build a new passenger rail station at Sharnal Street (connecting local communities to both to Strood and London), and to strengthen the Peninsula's countryside and open spaces.



**Kick starting growth through alternative delivery models and providing the right infrastructure for residents and businesses to thrive.**

Innovation Park Medway (IPM) is an important opportunity to help shape the economic future of Medway. Our ambitions for the IPM are to attract high value businesses, improve the number and quality of jobs, retain and increase the local skills base, strengthen links between educational institutions, establish the IPM as a preferred destination and partner for local business and to promote Medway's brand and image. To date the IPM project has been awarded significant capital investment including £8.89 million funding through the Local Enterprise Partnership. In July 2019 Council also agreed to add £14.5m to the capital programme to fund the construction of a landmark building on the site, to be funded from future business rates income.

Medway Development Company Limited (MDC) has been created to help meet our ambitious housing delivery targets. MDC provide consultancy, predominantly to the council, to turn land assets into viable residential schemes delivering regeneration and investment returns. This will also support the delivery of the council's ambitious regeneration programme, such as the prestigious Chatham Waterfront site, which will be attract high profile development and maximise benefits for Medway. The council has approved investment of £120 million in the first 12 sites identified for development, with MDC being commissioned to consider two further sites. Planning permission has been granted to build in excess of 300 units at four initial sites, White Road, Britton Farm, Whiffens Avenue and Chatham Waterfront. Work has started on two of the four sites, with the other two due to start by Autumn 2019.

