

Record of Cabinet decisions

Tuesday, 24 September 2019

3.00pm to 4.15pm

Date of publication: 25 September 2019

**Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 3 October 2019
The record of decisions is subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet**

Present:	Councillor Alan Jarrett	Leader of the Council
	Councillor Howard Doe	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services
	Councillor David Brake	Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services
	Councillor Jane Chitty	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation
	Councillor Phil Filmer	Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services
	Councillor Adrian Gulvin	Portfolio Holder for Resources
	Councillor Mrs Josie Iles	Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member (statutory responsibility)
	Councillor Martin Potter	Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools
	Councillor Rupert Turpin	Portfolio Holder for Business Management

In Attendance: Neil Davies, Chief Executive
Richard Hicks, Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive
Perry Holmes, Chief Legal Officer/Monitoring Officer
Teri Reynolds, Democratic Services Officer
Phil Watts, Chief Finance Officer
James Williams, Director of Public Health

Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE (Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships).

Record of decisions

The record of the meeting held on 3 September 2019 was agreed by the Cabinet and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

In relation to item 12 (Medway Development Company Ltd Update) and in any other reference, Councillor Doe declared an interest as Chairman and Director of Medway Development Company and relied on a dispensation granted by the Councillor Conduct Committee to enable him to take part in the discussion and vote on this item.

In relation to item 12 (Medway Development Company Ltd Update) and in any other reference, Councillor Gulvin declared an interest as Director of Medway Development Company and relied on a dispensation granted by the Councillor Conduct Committee to enable him to take part in the discussion and vote on this item.

Other interests

There were none.

Leader's Announcement

The Leader announced that he would be varying the order of the agenda. Item 8 (Housing Allocations Policy 2019) would be discussed first, followed by item 12 (Medway Development Company Ltd Update), Item 5 (Medway – City of Culture 2025) and Item 9 (Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Project – Additional Funding). The remainder of the items would be discussed in the order as on the agenda.

Medway Council Strategy

Background:

This report proposed the introduction of a new overarching Council Strategy; a more outcomes focused document than the current Council Plan, without all of the detailed performance measures and delivery plans explaining how the strategic objectives were to be met. The Strategy was intended to set the Council's vision and would be supported by the Council Plan which would continue to include the detailed performance measures and delivery plans.

The Council Strategy was presented to the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 August 2019 and its comments were detailed in section 3 of the report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been completed and was attached at Appendix 3 to the report.

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Decision number:

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out at section 3 of the report.

102/2019 The Cabinet recommended the proposed Council Strategy, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, to Full Council for approval.

103/2019 The Cabinet recommended to Full Council that the Council Strategy be added as a Policy Framework document and that paragraph 4.1 of Article 4 (The Full Council) in Chapter 2 of the Constitution be amended, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

Reasons:

The Council Strategy sets the high level objectives for the Council and will be underpinned by the Council Plan which includes the detailed performance measures and delivery plans explaining how the strategic objectives are to be met.

Medway - City of Culture 2025

Background:

This report set out Medway's aspirations to become the next City of Culture in 2025, the reasons why this was a great opportunity for Medway and the support required for a successful bid, including the requirement for the funding of a core bid team, which would be managed at arm's length from the Council in accordance with best practice for the bid to be led by community partnerships.

The Place Board, a partnership of local organisations working together to take forward the placemaking agenda for Medway, had proposed the bid for City of Culture in 2025, which was subsequently endorsed by the Medway Cultural Partnership. A local launch had been held at the Medway Mile event on 19 July, where the Leader announced Medway's aspiration to become the UK City of Culture in 2025.

The competition was expected to be officially announced by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport by the end of 2019. An Expression of Interest was then expected to be submitted in February 2021, followed by the submission of an initial bid expected in April 2021. A shortlisting process would follow, with around 4/5 cities being chosen for the last stage of the competition and a final decision was expected to be announced in December 2021.

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Decision number:	Decision:
104/2019	The Cabinet approved a bid for City of Culture status for Medway and agreed to encourage all Medway communities to back the bid.
105/2019	The Cabinet recommended to Full Council to approve the revenue funding of £205,000 to establish the City of Culture bid team to progress Medway's campaign, to be met from the Council's reserves.
106/2019	The Cabinet recommended to Full Council to formally express its support for the bid for City of Culture status for Medway.

Reasons:

The aspiration to secure City of Culture for Medway in 2025 is widely supported by our partners, businesses and our communities. The funding is required to serve as a catalyst for the bid, establishing a team to fundraise, consult and engage with Medway's communities, undertake research on health, employment data, cultural participation levels and health inequalities, producing a compelling case for Medway to be recognised as UK City of Culture 2025.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-2024

Background:

This report introduced the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2019-2024. The report made forward projections concerning the Council's budget requirement and the resources available to deliver its corporate priorities and objectives.

The report provided details of the financial challenges facing the Council over the next four years and the Council's strategy for delivering a balanced budget in the context of a reducing resource base.

The report stated that the Council faced a forecast deficit in 2020/21 of £5.956million, increasing to £17.327million by 2023/24 and it would seek to address this through the accompanying Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. Notwithstanding the service pressures impacting on the Council's budget requirement and the significant financial constraints imposed through Government grant reductions, the report stated that it must remain the Council's main strategic aim to achieve a sustainable budget without recourse to reserves.

The report set out the timetable for the Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget setting and it was noted that business and service planning would run concurrently.

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Diversity Impact Assessments would be undertaken and reported to Members as part of the budget and service planning process.

Decision number: **Decision:**

107/2019 **The Cabinet agreed the underlying aims of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).**

The Cabinet noted the forecast level of overall funding over the medium term; and the projected budget deficit identified in the MTFS.

108/2019 **The Cabinet agreed to bring forward proposals, through the financial planning process, to address this deficit.**

Reasons:

The Medium Term Financial Strategy is important in providing the framework underpinning the budget setting process and is presented to Cabinet in accordance with the timetable set out within the Constitution.

Capital Strategy

Background:

This report introduced the Council's Capital Strategy, which was attached at Appendix 1 to the report and set out the Council's priorities for capital investment to deliver its strategic aims and the process for formulating the capital programme.

The strategy had been prepared with regard to the updated CIPFA Prudential Code and sought to detail the framework within which decisions would be made in respect of capital expenditure and funding, and the principles to which the Council adhered to, in the context of the current capital budget. The current Capital Programme to 2023 totalled £295.9million.

Diversity Impact Assessments would be undertaken and reported to Members as part of the budget and service planning process.

Decision number: **Decision:**

109/2019 **The Cabinet agreed the Capital Strategy, setting out the Council's priorities for capital investment and providing a framework for formulating the capital programme for approval by Full Council in February.**

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Reasons:

The Capital Strategy sets out how the Council sets its priorities for capital investment and the process for formulating the capital programme, and is therefore an important part of the framework underpinning the budget setting process.

Housing Allocations Policy 2019

Background:

This report sought Cabinet approval of the revised Housing Allocations Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report. This was last reviewed in 2012 and since then there had been changes in legislation and additional Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance. Therefore, it had been necessary for the policy to be updated to reflect this and the current needs of Medway residents.

The policy was a statutory requirement and detailed who should be awarded priority for housing and how the units of accommodation would be allocated. As of 1 July 2019 there were 3,923 households registered for accommodation and of those 1,860 households had a priority that allowed them to bid for accommodation through the Homechoice system.

The Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at its meetings on 22 August 2019 and its comments were set out at section 7 of the report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been completed and was detailed at Appendix B to the report.

Decision number:

The Cabinet noted the comments made by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out at section 7 of the report.

110/2019 The Cabinet adopted the proposed Housing Allocations Policy, as attached at Appendix A to the report.

Reasons:

The Housing Allocations Policy is a statutory document and adopting the revised policy will ensure that it remains up to date and is able to respond to pressures locally.

Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Project - Additional Funding

Background:

This report updated the Cabinet on the risk that the decision for the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid could be delayed until November 2019 and therefore requested the Cabinet to recommend to Full Council the addition of £850,000 to the Revenue Budget, initially funded from reserves subject to the Council being awarded the HIF bid.

The report stated that the funding would enable the Council to continue programmed works to complete RIBA stage 3, which was a developed design, including coordinated and updated proposals which were required for outline-planning submission for the road scheme. It would also enable the Council to continue programmed works relating to GRIP 2, which was Project Feasibility for the rail scheme.

Decision number:

111/2019

Decision:

The Cabinet recommended to Full Council the addition of £850,000 to the revenue budget to:

- i) Continue programmed works to complete RIBA stage 3 (road scheme) and GRIP 2 (rail scheme) at risk until the end of December 2019, as detailed in paragraphs 3.5 – 3.12 of the report.**
- ii) Undertake other works at risk until the end of December 2019, as detailed in paragraphs 3.13 – 3.16 of the report.**

Reasons:

To enable the work to continue on the HIF Bid project to ensure that if successful with the HIF funding that Medway Council are still able to meet the March 2024 spend deadline currently required within the HIF funding agreement.

Treasury Management Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2019/20

Background:

This report presented the mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy 2019/2020, which had been approved by Full Council alongside the Capital and Revenue Budgets on 21 February 2019. This report would also be considered by the Audit Committee on 26 September 2019 prior to final consideration at Full Council on 10 October 2019.

The report included an economic update for the first part of 2019/2020; a review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement; Annual Investment Strategy; the

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Council's Investment Portfolio and Borrowing Strategy for 2019/2020; a review of any debt rescheduling undertaken during 2019/2020 and compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2019/2020.

Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the report.

Reasons:

In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management, there should be a review of the strategy at least half yearly.

Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report and Risk Register Review Quarter 1 2019/20

Background:

This report provided details of how the Council had performed during quarter 1 in 2019/20 against the Council's three priorities and the actions being taken to improve performance. There were 44 Council Plan measures for 2019/20, of which it was currently possible to report on 35 as two were data only and 7 were not available for the reporting quarter. The report also presented the quarter 1 2019/20 review of the Strategic Risk Register. No risks were proposed to be added or removed through the review and the revised Risk Register was attached at Appendix 5.

In summary, 23 out of 35 measures had met or exceeded target, 4 were slightly below target and 8 were significantly below target.

It was noted that this report would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during October 2019.

Cabinet Members highlighted a number of key issues during discussion.

Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the quarter 1 performance of the measures of success used to monitor progress against the Council's priorities.

112/2019 The Cabinet approved the revised Risk Register set out at Appendix 5 to the report.

Reasons:

Regular monitoring of performance by management and Members is best practice and ensures achievement of corporate objectives.

Medway Development Company Ltd Update

Background:

This report updated the Cabinet, as shareholder, about the first four residential developments being progressed by the Medway Development Company Ltd (MDC) including Chatham Waterfront, Britton Farm, Whiffens Avenue and White Road.

The report also provided an update on current pipeline of further projects and an updated Business Plan and proposed the creation of a private rental subsidiary of MDC.

This report was accompanied by an exempt appendix which set out information concerning the financial details of MDC Ltd, including its updated Business Plan; details of funding to date for the first four MDC projects; details of the pipeline of future MDC projects and two indicative financial appraisals, one for private rented and one for market sale.

Decision number:

Decision:

- 113/2019** **The Cabinet approved the updated Business Plan as set out in Exempt Appendix 1 to the report.**
- The Cabinet noted the report and the investment made by Medway Development Company Ltd (MDC) to date as set out in Exempt Appendix 2**
- 114/2019** **The Cabinet approved the creation of a fully commercial subsidiary of MDC to allow the construction and rental of private rented or shared ownership properties.**
- 115/2019** **The Cabinet approved the suggested pipeline of next projects for MDC and the prioritisation of Mountbatten House, as set out in Exempt Appendix 3.**
- 116/2019** **The Cabinet approved the cessation by MDC of work on the Hook Meadow Community Hub and residential scheme and instructed officers to submit a business case to a future Cabinet meeting for approval to progress the scheme as a Council capital project.**
- 117/2019** **The Cabinet approved the cessation by MDC of work on the smaller part of the Sir John Hawkins car park and instructed officers to submit a business case to a future Cabinet meeting for approval to progress the scheme as a Council capital project.**
- 118/2019** **The Cabinet approved the designation of the Chief Legal Officer as client representative for MDC.**

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119/2019 **The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to:**

Arrange for the following four sites:

- **White Road;**
- **Land to the north west of Britton Farm shops;**
- **Whiffens Avenue car park;**
- **Chatham Waterfront.**

To be developed and for the completed developments on them to be disposed of by way of either freehold transfers or leases on the best terms reasonably obtainable and to enter into all necessary legal agreements.

Reasons:

To continue the regeneration of Chatham as Medway's "city centre" with the provision of high quality housing, public realm and retail units.

Recruitment Freeze

Background:

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

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

Decision number: ***Decision:***

120/2019 **The Cabinet agreed to unfreeze the following post, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the main report:**

Children and Adults

- a) Leaving Care Personal Advisor.**

Reasons:

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

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Leader of the Council

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Date

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