

# Record of Cabinet decisions

**Tuesday, 12 January 2021**

**3.02pm to 4.17pm**

**Date of publication: 13 January 2021**

**Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 21 January 2021  
The record of decisions is subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet**

<b>Present:</b>	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 Rodney Chambers, OBE	Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships	
	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	
	<b>In Attendance:</b>	Neil Davies, Chief Executive	
		Jade Hannah, Democratic Services Officer	
	Perry Holmes, Chief Legal Officer/Monitoring Officer		

## **Apologies for absence**

There were none.

## **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, advised Cabinet Members that agenda item 6 (Rainham Community Hub) had been withdrawn from the agenda.

## **Cabinet, 12 January 2021**

### **Record of Decisions**

The record of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 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)

There were none.

#### Other interests

There were none.

### **Medway Cultural Strategy 2020-2030**

#### **Background:**

This report provided details of the Medway Cultural Strategy 2020-2030. The report stated that this was a ten-year Medway-wide partnership strategy. It was a shared ambition for the future, built on extensive engagement across Medway and demonstrated how important culture was to Medway's future, enabling everyone to have the opportunity to take part in, or contribute to cultural life.

The report explained that consultation took place from November 2019 to September 2020. Stakeholders included the cultural sector across Medway and Kent, the education sector, community organisations, residents who engage, residents who do not engage, potential sponsors, funders and local businesses. Full details were set out in section 5 of the report.

The report also explained that the Strategy would be accompanied by an action plan to show how, as a partnership, the Strategy would be implemented. The action plan would be led by the Creative Medway Compact and driven by the Creative Medway Working Groups, bringing together projects, programmes and opportunities that matched the shared ambition and vision of the Strategy.

The Strategy had been considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2020, details of which were set out in section 14 of the report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the Strategy, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

## Cabinet, 12 January 2021

**Decision number:**

**Decision:**

- 1/2021**      **The Cabinet noted the comments of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and agreed to adopt Medway's new Cultural Strategy set out at Appendix 1 to the report and the Creative Medway governance and delivery model set out at section 11 of the report.**
- 2/2021**      **The Cabinet agreed to appoint the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services to the Creative Medway Compact as the Local Authority representative.**
- 3/2021**      **The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services to contribute to the development of and agree the terms of reference of the Creative Medway Compact when appropriate on behalf of the Council as a partner to it.**

**Reasons:**

Only in becoming a committed partner can the Council fully participate and contribute to the delivery of the strategy and governance model, enabling us to embed culture within our priorities, securing Medway's cultural and creative landscape for present and for future generations.

### **Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy**

**Background:**

This report provided an update on the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (KMELES) and sought its formal adoption by the Cabinet.

The report explained that the Strategy had been produced by Kent County Council following a public consultation period during July-September 2019. Medway Council, along with all other Kent local authorities, was invited to participate and responded to the consultation on the Draft Strategy and engaged further in an Implementation Plan workshop at the end of 2019.

Following the evaluation of comments received during the consultation process, a final Draft Strategy was produced with 10 high level priorities identified for action. The Strategy was further reviewed and amended during May 2020 to account for Covid-19.

The report noted that the Strategy had been approved by the Kent Chief Executives Group and Kent Leaders Group with the Leader as co-signatory. The Strategy was

## Cabinet, 12 January 2021

formally launched by Kent County Council at the Kent and Medway Net-Zero Conference on 27 November 2020. Local authorities across Kent were now being asked to take the Strategy through their own internal processes for formal adoption.

The report explained that the Strategy would inform the Council's emerging Climate Change Action Plan.

The Strategy had been considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2020, details of which were set out in section 6 of the report.

**Decision number:**      **Decision:**

**4/2021**      **The Cabinet noted the comments of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out at section 6 of the report and agreed to adopt the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy.**

### **Reasons:**

Approving the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy will support the Council's emerging Climate Change Action Plan and contribute to the Council's actions to address the Climate Change Emergency declared by Council in April 2019.

The Strategy identifies a list of high-level priorities which will ensure that Kent and Medway will achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

### **Rainham Community Hub**

This agenda item was withdrawn.

### **Options Paper for Medway Children's Assessment Unit**

#### **Background:**

This report outlined the options available to Medway Council to develop an Assessment Unit to support with the reunification of children back with families or into more suitable and longer-term arrangements.

The report explained that due to the high levels of vulnerability of the young people undergoing assessment, one Assessment Unit would support no more than 4 young people at a time. The unit would be run as a children's home and there would be a methodology behind the support programme to the young people that would run on a cyclical basis. The home would be staffed by a wrap-around multi-professional support team and additional support brought in as required by the care plans for the young people.

## Cabinet, 12 January 2021

The options were considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 January 2021, details of which were set out in an addendum report. The addendum report also provided an analysis of the Committee's recommendation.

During the discussion of this item, the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member) explained that the preferred option was to progress 4b, as this option would meet the requirement to deliver an Assessment Unit at pace and would offer the greatest flexibility.

**Decision number:**      **Decision:**

**The Cabinet noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

**5/2021      The Cabinet agreed to proceed with option 4b, as set out in section 3 of the report and in doing so agreed to:**

- **commence procurement of a four-bed Children Assessment Unit for 14-17 year olds at the Old Vicarage site;**
- **delegate authority to the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), to acquire two alternative units and obtain all necessary consents for their use for the future provision of the service, for the purposes as set out in paragraph 3.4.8 of the main report;**
- **delegate authority to the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to declare surplus and to dispose of the Old Vicarage site, on best terms reasonably obtainable, once the property is no longer needed;**
- **delegate authority to the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to lease the Old Vicarage and the two new properties as part of the letting of the outsourcing contracts;**
- **recommend to Full Council that it adds £1,500,000 to the capital programme to fund the purchase and related fees and costs for the purchase and conversion of the 2 alternative properties.**

## Cabinet, 12 January 2021

### Reasons:

Option 4b delivers the most cost-effective service in the shortest timeline while placing the management of our vulnerable and complex children in the hands of experts well-resourced to do the job, by operating two units after a two-year period.

Option 4b builds in the opportunity to improve outcomes for a larger number of Medway's young people over time, whilst delivering value for money and the greatest cost savings of the options examined. It offers a long-term opportunity to contribute towards savings in public money and protect the Council from reputational risk.

### School Admission Arrangements 2022

#### Background:

This report provided details of the outcome of the consultation on the coordinated admission schemes and arrangements for primary and secondary schools for September 2022.

Section 3 of the report outlined the proposed changes to admissions arrangements.

The proposed changes to the 2022 secondary admission arrangements were:

- the revision of dates to fit the 2022/23 admission timeline.
- supporting medical information to be provided directly to schools rather than via Medway Council. The schools consider this information and rank applicants rather than Medway Council.
- The addition of an additional day to the Medway Test 2022.

The proposed changes to primary admissions 2022/23 were:

- the revision of dates to fit the 2022 admission timeline.
- the layout of the Supplementary Information Form has been amended to conform with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
- supporting medical information to be provided directly to schools rather than via Medway Council. The schools consider this information and rank applicants rather than Medway Council.

The report explained no responses to the consultation had been received.

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

**Decision number:**

**6/2021**

**Decision:**

**The Cabinet agreed the amendments to the admissions arrangements for 2022 as set out in section 3 of the report**

## Cabinet, 12 January 2021

and approved:

- a) **The co-ordinated scheme for admissions to secondary schools 2022 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.**
- b) **The co-ordinated scheme for admissions to primary schools 2022, incorporating the admissions arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools set out at Appendix 2 to the report.**

### Reasons:

Approving the proposed admissions arrangements would ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty to comply with admissions legislation.

### Council Tax Reduction Scheme

#### Background:

This report provided details of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) 2021/2022 for Cabinet's consideration ahead of final consideration and approval by Full Council on 21 January 2020.

The report stated that the April 2021 allowances were not due to be announced until January 2021 and would be included in the Council report. However, the uprating intentions for 2021/22 had been announced and were included at Appendix 1 to the report. Other than the annual uprating, there were no proposed changes to the CTRS for 2021/22.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the proposals, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

***Decision number:***      ***Decision:***

**7/2021**              **The Cabinet agreed to recommend the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme (which will therefore be subject to annual uprating) to Council for adoption on 21 January 2021.**

### Reasons:

The scheme continues to balance the need for supporting those currently in receipt of CTRS and the ability of the Council to fund the scheme within the current budgetary constraints.

The Council's Council Tax Discretionary Relief scheme provides additional support in the case of hardship.

## Cabinet, 12 January 2021

### Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2021/22

#### Background:

The Cabinet accepted this report as urgent to enable consideration of the matter at the earliest opportunity given that the final budget proposals would be submitted to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting on 2 February 2021.

This report provided details of the provisional local government settlement announced by the Secretary of State on 17 December 2020. It also provided updated assumptions in relation to locally raised taxes.

The report explained that the Council Tax referendum limit had remained at its historic level of 2%, however the Adult Social Care precept had been extended for a further year, allowing upper tier authorities the flexibility to increase Council Tax by a further 3% above the referendum limit. Medway's Draft Budget assumed that Council Tax would be increased by 1.994%. However, this report now assumed the Council would avail itself of this flexibility and increase the Council Tax by 4.995%.

Concerning business rates, the report explained that the widely anticipated review of the Business Rates Retention scheme and plans to reset the baseline from next year had once again been deferred, whilst the Government continued to focus on other, more pressing issues. In the meantime, the 50% business rate retention scheme would continue in its existing form and Medway remained a top-up authority.

The report also provided details of the impact on other grants, set out at sections 6 to 12 of the report.

During the discussion of this item, the Leader of the Council clarified a typographical error at paragraph 13.1 of the report. The date should read 17 November 2020.

#### ***Decision number:***      ***Decision:***

**The Cabinet noted the implications of the provisional settlement in formulating its 2021/22 budget proposals.**

#### Reasons:

These provisional levels of grant are a fundamental component of the 2021/22 budget, and their announcement is a further stage in the process of preparing a balanced budget.

### Annual Adoption Report

#### Background:

This report provided details of the Adoption Agency's Annual Report, which covered adoption performance over the last year and provided an update on the work of the team.



## Cabinet, 12 January 2021

This report also included information about the Adoption Partnership South East, the newly formed Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) with Kent County Council and the London Borough of Bexley. The report noted that future annual reports on the work around adoption would be produced by the Head of the Adoption Partnership South East.

The annual report was considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 December 2020, details of which were set out at section 9 of the report.

***Decision number:***      ***Decision:***

**The Cabinet noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out at section 9 of the report and noted the Annual Adoption Report.**

### **Reasons:**

Statutory guidance requires adoption agencies to report on adoption agency activity in the last year.

### **Annual Fostering Report**

#### **Background:**

This report provided details of the work completed by the Fostering Service over the last year, how in-house fostering services had met the needs of Medway's looked after children and of the work which should be undertaken in the coming year.

The report noted that a further annual report would be produced in May 2021 which would detail the work for the financial year and this report would be produced annually in May in subsequent years.

The annual report was considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 December 2020, details of which were set out at section 17 of the report.

***Decision number:***      ***Decision:***

**The Cabinet noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out at section 17 of the report and noted the Fostering Service Annual Report 2019-20.**

**Cabinet, 12 January 2021**

**Reasons:**

The National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2011) require that Fostering Agencies report the activity of the fostering service to its governing bodies.

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**Leader of the Council**

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**Date**

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