

Council Priority: GROWTH

Maximising regeneration and economic growth

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETING

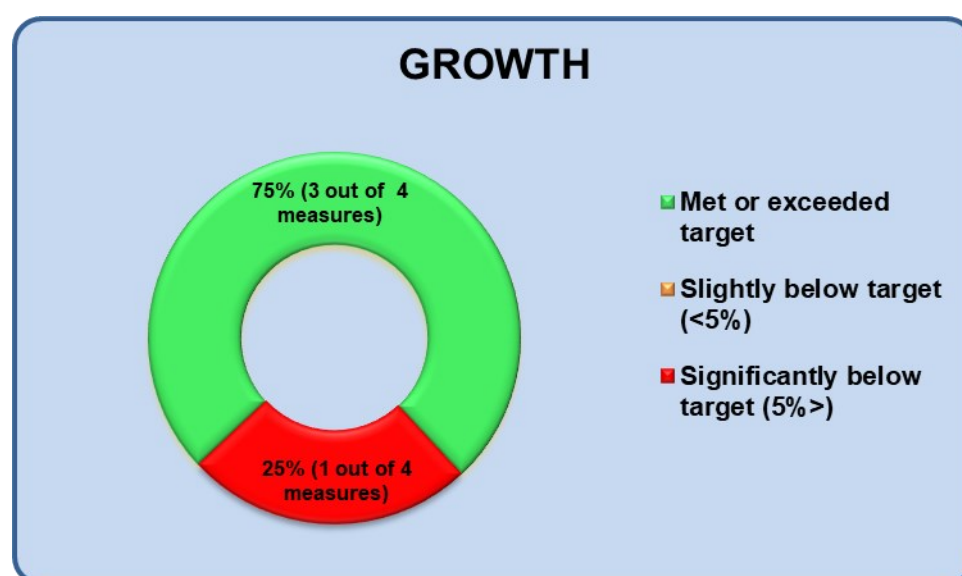
Performance: Quarter 4 2020/21

Key

Red	significantly below target (>5%)	Amber	slightly below target (<5%)	Green	met or exceeded target
IMP	Improved	DET	Worsened	Static	Static
Data	No target	NA	Not available	Not available	Not available
Short Trend	Since last qtr	Long Trend	Avg over last 4 qtrs	Avg over last 4 qtrs	Avg over last 4 qtrs

Council Plan measures: summary performance

There are 6 Council Plan measures that fall under the remit of this committee. We are reporting on 4 this quarter as data is not available for 2 measures.



Improved performance

- 75% (3 out of 4*) improved long term (average of previous 4 quarters)
- 75% (3 out of 4*) improved over the short term (since last quarter)

*where data available

Measures in target (green)

Code	Status	Measure	Long Trend	Short Trend
ECD13	Green	% of square footage let at Innovation Centre Medway (ICM)	IMP	IMP
MAE 3	Green	Achievement rate (pass rate)	IMP	STATIC
HC3	Green	No. of households with dependent children in B&B who have resided there for 6+ weeks at the end of the quarter	STATIC	STATIC
HC4	Green	Number of private sector properties improved because of the Council's intervention	DET	DET
ECD20	Green	% of square footage let in council owned business units	IMP	IMP
NI 156	Green	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	IMP	IMP
NI 154	Green	Net additional homes provided	IMP	IMP

Measures significantly below target (red)

Code	Status	Name	Long Trend	Short Trend
LRCC4a	Red	Number of jobs created and safeguarded (cumulative)	DET	DET
NI 117(16-17)	Red	The percentage of 16–17-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	DET	DET
MAE 2	Red	% Retention rate	IMP	DET

Measures not available this quarter

Code	Status	Name	Long Trend	Short Trend
GVAPJM	NA	GVA per job	NA	NA
NI 167 NEW	NA	Average journey time along 5 routes across Medway (mins per mile)	NA	NA

Strategic Risks

The quarter 4 20/21 strategic risk register is attached at Appendix 3. The register shows all strategic risks together with mitigation in place to minimise impact and likelihood. The risks pertaining solely to this council priority are shown below (full details in Appendix 3).

Reference	Risk Register Page (app 3)	Risk	Owner	Current residual risk score	L-likelihood I-impact
SR17	4	Delivering regeneration	Director of Place	BII	L - high I - major
SR35	43	Homelessness	AD Culture and Community	CIII	L - significant I - moderate
SR50	14	Delivering £170m Housing infrastructure fund programme	AD Regeneration	CII	L - significant I - major

The following risks pertain to all priorities:

Reference	Risk Register Page (app 3)	Risk	Owner	Current residual risk score	L-likelihood I-impact
SRO3B	17	Finances	Chief Finance Officer	AI	L – very high I - catastrophic
SR46	22	Medway's Economic Recovery from Covid19	AD Regeneration (Recovery Lead Officer for Medway Council)	BII	L - high I - major
SR32	27	Data and information	Chief Legal Officer	CII	L - significant I - major

Reference	Risk Register Page (app 3)	Risk	Owner	Current residual risk score	L-likelihood I-impact
SR36	30	Alternative service delivery models	Chief Legal Officer, Chief Finance Officer	BIII	L - high I - moderate
SR37	34	Cyber Security	Chief Finance Officer	CI	L - Significant I - Catastrophic
SR02	30	Business continuity and emergency planning	Director of Place, Chief Finance Officer	DII	L - low I - major
SR49	49	Income Reduction due to Covid19	Chief Finance Officer	BII	L - high I - major

Council Plan Outcome: A strong diversified community

Programme: Business investment

Council Plan Measures

ECD13 % of square footage let at Innovation Centre Medway (ICM)

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q4 2020/21	90.0%	100%	Green	Maximise	IMP	IMP
Q3 2020/21	90.0%	98.68%	Green	Maximise	IMP	IMP

Comments

The Innovation Centre Medway is 100% occupied with six new tenants, four leaving and one changing office size over the quarter.

ECD20 % of square footage let in council owned business units

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q4 2020/21	90.0%	92.56%	Green	Maximise	IMP	IMP
Q3 2020/21	90.0%	91.67%	Green	Maximise	IMP	DET

Comments

The four sites continue to perform well despite Covid-19.

The Innovation Studio Medway is 100% occupied with the vacant office being taken as a second office by one of the existing tenants. Containers let are 11 out of 17 with a small reduction due to one tenant who had temporarily taken on more storage due to Covid-19 handing back three containers.

Hopewell is 85% let with 19 out of 23 units taken. There is one prospective tenant going through the contract signing process and another likely to take a second unit.

Pier Road is 85% let with 24 of the 29 units taken. There is one tenant going through the contract signing process. Many of the unoccupied units have EPC related modifications required to make them suitable for letting.

GVAPJ M GVA per job - Medway

Annual	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
2019/20	NA	NA	NA	Maximise	NA	NA
2018/19	Data	52,333.00	Data	Maximise	IMP	IMP

Comments

This data is published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and is normally released in December each year in arrears. ONS reported in December 2021 that the publication date for 2019 data will not be available until May 2021. GVA data is only available up to 2018/19 from the Office of National Statistics.

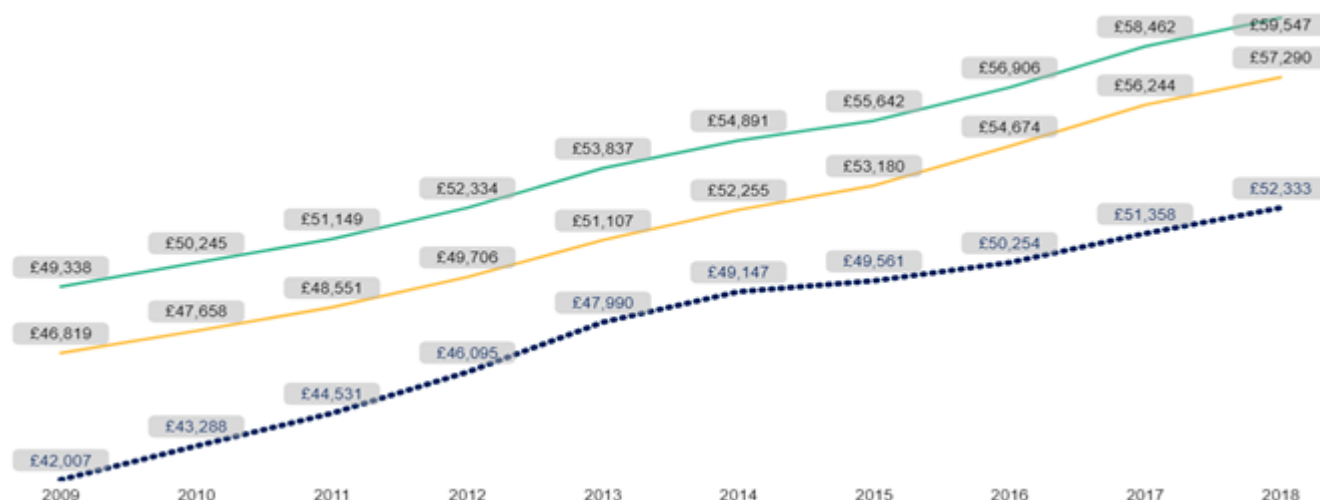
Given the volatility with the raw data and because the smoothed data is weighted, year on year comparisons should not be made. GVA per filled job is better considered over a longer period. Trends over a longer period are less likely to be the result of the volatility around any single year estimate and are more likely to be showing a change in the economic performance of Medway.

Actions

Medway GVA per job is currently 8.7% lower than England; a 1.6 percentage point improvement from 2009 where Medway was 10.3% lower. From 2014 to 2018, Medway's GVA per job has increased by 6.5%, which is below England (9.6%) and the South East (8.5%), however from 2009 Medway has increased by 24.6%, ahead of England (22.4%) and the South East (20.6%)

Benchmarking

● England ● Medway ● South East



Council Plan Projects

Ensure Medway's regeneration agenda delivers economic growth, increasing high-value businesses and high-quality employment, and creating jobs and inward investment.

During Q4, the Council implemented the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) to assist small businesses affected by all local and national lockdown restrictions since the 5 November 2020. The assessment, delivery and monitoring of the ARG scheme throughout Q4 has resulted in the delivery of 236 grant awards to local business, for a total value of £514,830.

Continue to encourage and help facilitate the growth of businesses in Medway

Since Q1 of this year the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce introduced a business Advice Line, which was supported by Medway and other Kent Local Authorities. Since the advice line's inception, a total of 1665 advice line support calls have been received from Medway Businesses, with 367 of these taking place in Q4. Predominately advice line calls were related to Covid-19, seeking general assistance with accessing available Government support and grants.

Development of Innovation Park Medway

Innovation Park Medway (IPM) is a significant redevelopment opportunity and has a vital role to play in Medway's economic future. A masterplan has been adopted (subject to Highways England response) to set the context for the development of up to 101,000sqm of high quality, innovative B1 and B2 commercial development in the high value technology, engineering, manufacturing and knowledge intensive industries. Medway Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council have each drafted a Local Development Order (LDO), which will offer a fast-tracked planning approvals process within 28 days, if adopted. Supported by a Design Code,

Environmental Statement and self-certification form, the LDO simplifies the planning requirements for future occupants.

Part of the North Kent Enterprise Zone, Enterprise Zone status runs until March 2022 and offers incentives such as business rates discounts to occupants. Medway Council has secured significant funding via the Government's Local Growth Fund (LGF) and Growing Places Fund (GPF).

IPM continues to be developed and is progressing well against programme, albeit slightly delayed due to Covid-19.

Officers carried out a successful tender exercise to procure and appoint a contractor to deliver the IPM infrastructure works. For the Northern site a construction contractor has been appointed to carry out the enabling infrastructure works for the Northern and Runway Park site. Officers are reviewing the tenders for the Southern site and will seek permission to appoint a separate contractor to carry out the infrastructure works for the Southern site.

The Local Development Order (LDO) has now been adopted by Medway and Tonbridge & Malling. Following liaison with Highways England (HE) and KCC Highways, a set of conditions relating to the impact on the Strategic Road Network were included in the LDO. This included the requirement for a Monitor and Manage Mitigation Strategy (M&M) to be undertaken and agreed with HE and KCC prior to the delivery and occupation of any buildings on site. A tender is currently live for a consultancy team to undertake the M&M strategy, with roles in both spatial and transport planning to ensure the team will liaise with HE and KCC to agree the way forward.

Officers are discussing marketing material with Harrisons and Locate in Kent and aim to start marketing in June once the approach to land disposal has been agreed.

SQW.co.uk (a company that specialises in economic and social development research), working in conjunction with Oxford Innovations, were commissioned in 2020 to develop the business case for the Gateway Building. This commission was split in to two stages (feasibility study, and financial modelling), with the first complete in May 2020. Stage 2 work is underway. The design of the Gateway Building is currently paused until this piece of work is concluded.

Airport works continue at pace, again a delay due to Covid-19 has occurred, however practical completion for all elements of works (including landscaping) is the 1 November 2021. The airport will have beneficial occupation as outputs are delivered and completed. The first output to be delivered is Hangar 3, to be followed by Hangar 5 in July 2021.

Council Plan Outcome: Resident with jobs and skills

Programme: Jobs, Skill and Employability

Council Plan Measures

NI 117(16-17) The percentage of 16–17-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q4 2020/21	2.6%	3.4%	Red	Minimise	DET	DET
Q3 2020/21	2.6%	2.60%	Green	Minimise	IMP	DET

Comments

Data is for February 2021. The rate of NEET 16- and 17-year-olds is 3.4%. This represents 220 young people.

Due to the cyclical nature of this measure comparisons are made to the position 12 months ago rather than from quarter to quarter.

In February 2020 3.2% of 16- and 17-year-olds, 199 individuals, were NEET. Year on year there has been a 7% deterioration in the proportion of young people who are NEET. There are currently 21 more 16- and 17-year old's who are NEET than a year ago.

The rate of NEET must be looked at in conjunction with the number of 16- and 17-year-olds whose activity is not known. Currently this is 3.7% which represents 238 individuals. In February 2020 there were 482 children whose activity was unknown this was 7.7%. As such, compared to last year this statistic has improved by 52%

The reduction in the number of not knowns will have been one reason for the increase in the number of NEETs. However, to contextualise the data the combined NEET/not Known percentage is now 7.1%, compared to 11% a year ago.

Benchmarking

Nationally the rate of NEET is at 2.9 % for February and has worsened by 5% compared to last year, slightly more slowly than the rate for Medway. It is 2.7% in the South East, having deteriorated at the same rate as the Medway rate.

The National rate of Not Knowns is 2.0% and the rate in the South East is 3.0%. Both of these have improved compared to last year 7% and 6% respectfully. However, Medway has improved at a much faster rate (52%)

Nationally the combined NEET/Not known percentage is 4.9% and in the South east it is 5.7%. As such, Medway is worse than both National and the South East. Kent's combined rate is 7.1%

Actions

The Service Continues to focus on providing opportunities for young people in the target groups and to work to build on the success already delivered in reducing the numbers of Unknowns.

LRCC4a Number of jobs created and safeguarded (cumulative)

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q4 2020/21	300	95	Red	Maximise	DET	DET
Q3 2020/21	225	76	Red	Maximise	DET	DET

Comments

In Q4, there have been two successful inward investments, (Frontier Management, 4FTE and Bluebell Physiotherapy 9FTE) achieved by our contracted inward investment agency Locate in Kent.

Action

Throughout Q4, we are now seeing a decrease in new workplace tenancies across a range of the Council managed workspaces, which had been anticipated after the latest Government restrictions were imposed in January.

In addition to this, a central focus of the Economic Development Team, throughout Q4 was the development and administration of Medway Council's Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Scheme. Through the ARG scheme, Central Government allocated Medway Council £7.9million to support businesses through future national lockdowns from December 2020 to March 2022. To date, 236 Grant awards have been delivered through this scheme to local businesses, totalling £514,830.33. The likely significant impact the implementation of this scheme may have on the creation and safeguarding of jobs during Q4 of this financial year, has not been reflected in the reporting above.

MAE 2 Medway Adult Education % retention rate

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q2 2020/21	94.0%	89.07%	Red	Maximise	IMP	DET
Q1 2020/21	94.0%	91.68%	Amber	Maximise	IMP	IMP

Comment

This PI is based on academic year rather than financial year. Data is shown for Q2 of Academic Year 20/21 (November 2020 – January 2021).

Although starts have reduced significantly in some areas (particularly in the community learning funded leisure type courses), retention has continued to be good. Despite

the issues around the current Covid-19 pandemic, retention at the end of Q2 is only 3% below the retention at the end of Q2 in the previous academic year.

Action

Managers and Tutors have worked hard, following Lock Down and the closure of Medway Adult Education Centres, to ensure that many of the learners have access to online and remote delivery. Tutors have had to be innovative and to respond very quickly to the challenges presented by new ways of delivering learning.

MAE 3 Medway Adult Education achievement rate (pass rate)

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q2 2020/21	96.0%	100%	Green	Maximise	IMP	STATIC
Q1 2020/21	96.0%	100%	Green	Maximise	IMP	IMP

Comments

This PI is based on academic year rather than financial year. Data is shown for Q2 of Academic Year 20/21 (November 2020 – January 2021).

The pass rate measures how many of the learners, who complete their course, achieve a qualification or their learning aim. There are significantly less enrolments with a known outcome, compared to the second quarter of previous year, as these are mainly community learning short courses which would have finished this early in the academic year and have been particularly affected by Covid-19. However, 100% of these learners achieved their learning goals. It shows that Medway Adult Education learners continue to achieve very high pass rates and demonstrates the excellent processes in place to support learners achieve their qualifications, or to achieve their learning outcomes in non-accredited provision (RARPA).

Action

Medway Adult Education's approach to improving performance is one of continuous improvement through a range of quality measures including monthly quality review meetings scrutinising KPIs, observations of teaching and learning, learner and partner evaluations, performance and development reviews, self-assessment reviews and quality improvement plans at Service and Programme level. These ensure the Service's overall excellent KPI rates are maintained. Medway Adult Education has maintained its Information, Advice and Guidance Matrix kite mark, and monitors the effectiveness of assessment processes, ensuring learner needs are met through differentiation, and additional learning support if required, enabling learners to reach their goals and is evidenced in the good pass and achievement rates and high learner satisfaction.

Council Plan Projects

Medway Adult Education (MAE) learning programme to boost local skills levels for those furthest from employment

The Work skills programme which targets employability skills and provides qualifications for learners who are unemployed, in receipt of benefits or who are wanting to improve their current employment prospects or progress in work has a refreshed offer which includes an e-learning qualification programme. The e-learning programme has expanded to include an increase qualification offer and is recruiting learners well.

However, the Work skills programme remains a challenging area of work due to the current situation with Covid-19 and centres being closed to face-to-face delivery due to Lock Down. Referrals from the Job Centre Plus (JCP) locally have increased with residents with poor English language skills being most new referrals. The National Career Service (NCS), after meeting with the Information, Advice and Guidance Coordinator, are referring learners to our programme offer. Regular marketing fliers are being provided to JCP and NCS to keep their staff informed of courses and qualifications being planned and available for recruitment of learners.

Support Medway Skills Board to champion skills development to all ages and to support lifelong learning

Providing people with the skills they need to be able to make a positive contribution to all levels of Medway's economic future is critical to delivering economic growth. Medway will need a pool of skilled and employable staff to ensure the long-term growth of high economic value contributors, such as the business likely to locate at the Innovation Park Medway. As Medway Council encourages existing businesses to grow and new businesses to move to Medway, it is vital that there is a suitable workforce ready to meet business need.

To do this effectively, two Medway Skills Boards have been established. An Officers Skills and Employability Board first met in August 2017 to begin defining emerging skills priorities, which were then discussed at the first Members Skills Partnership Board and has been established as a Cabinet Advisory Group. The group has overseen the development of the Skills and Employability Plan for Medway and will oversee the action plan delivery.

Many skills and employability projects have resumed, notably the Supported Employment Programme in August and Apprenticeship Advice Service in September. The Scaffolding project has received a funding extension and will be delivered in 2021.

Medway are heavily involved in the Kent and Medway Employment Taskforce which is responding to a growing employment crisis. The Taskforce action plan has been signed off and delivered against. To date as part of the Taskforce action plan, Kickstart is being promoted and coordinated, lobbying letters have been sent to government, encouraging the flexible use of Adult Education Budget and an event encouraging businesses to use their apprenticeship levy was held.

Medway Council has led as an example by taking on Kickstart placements. 50 vacancies have been created, with 37 advertised in the first tranche. The placements and wrap around support are being delivered in partnership by HR and Medway Adult Education.

The Skills and Employability plan will be reviewed in light of Covid-19 when data from the ending of furlough can be analysed.

Medway Adult Education has remained operating during lockdown, by delivering online. It is scheduled to reopen on the 6 April. Online learning continues to be well received, and the programme for 2021/22 will incorporate both online and face to face learning.

The redevelopment of Britton Farm Mall into a new Skills, Employment & Learning Hub continues to progress well and on schedule.

Council Plan Outcome: Preventing homelessness

Programme: Preventing homelessness

Council Plan measures

NI 156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q4 2020/21	350	301	Green	Minimise	IMP	IMP
Q3 2020/21	350	307	Green	Minimise	IMP	IMP

Comments

At the end of Q4 2021 there were a total of 301 households residing in temporary accommodation (TA) provided by the Council in line with its statutory responsibilities. This is a slight decrease from the 307 households that were accommodated at the end of Q3. Most households in TA will have children. Therefore, there is a correlation between the overall number of households in TA and the number of children in TA. The accommodation provided to families will usually be in the form of a self-contained property located in Medway.

Benchmarking

Recent benchmarking at the end of September 2020, showed the rate of households in temporary accommodation in Medway was 3.38 per 1,000 households, this is slightly lower than the national rate of 4.03. Further benchmarking has been undertaken to identify how Medway compares with other similar sized unitary authorities. In September 2020, the numbers in temporary accommodation Milton Keynes had a rate of 9.49 households per 1,000 households. Locally, Swale had a rate of 4.57 in the same time period.

HC3 No. of households with dependent children in B&B who have resided there for 6+ weeks at the end of the quarter

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q4 2020/21	0	0	Green	Minimise	STATIC	STATIC
Q3 2020/21	0	0	Green	Minimise	STATIC	STATIC

Comments

A snapshot at the end of Q4 2020/21 identifies that no families were in bed and breakfast accommodation. Additionally, throughout Q4 no families were placed into bed and breakfast for more than 6 weeks.

Action

Work is continuously underway to ensure that the use of bed and breakfast is kept to a minimum. This has been done by seeking more suitable temporary accommodation for households and using HRA properties as temporary accommodation. The Service has also reviewed its procedures to ensure that all cases with children or a pregnant are moved on from bed and breakfast within appropriate timescales.

HC4 Number of private sector properties improved as a result of the Council's intervention

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
Q4 2020/21	175	248	Green	Maximise	DET	DET
Q3 2020/21	175	280	Green	Maximise	IMP	DET

Comments

In Q4 we received 175 new requests for service. 248 private sector households were assisted in having their properties improved via Council intervention despite the restriction over Covid-19 on inspections. The Council have continued with its statutory services and targeted work with the taskforce and SOCP we will continue this through the coming year.

Nine new Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMO) licences have been issued in Q4 bringing a total of 208 licenced HMO throughout Medway. ten category one hazards, and 64 category two hazards have been identified in Q4. 26 category one hazards, and 97 category two hazards have also been alleviated throughout Q4 with either formal or informal actions. We have been successful in prosecuting three landlords two for operating unlicenced HMOs and one for non-compliance of an improvement notice. 38 enforcement notices have also been issued in Q4 and our first two Civil Penalty of intent have been issued to landlords who have failed to licence and maintain their HMOs. This action helps improve living conditions and raises the standards in the private sector rented accommodation.

Action

The Council continues to undertake its range of actions to improve accommodation in the private sector ranging from informal advice to enforcing legislation via the service of statutory notices. Throughout the quarter the most prominent hazards have been fire followed by, damp and mould excess cold and falls on stairs

Council Plan Projects**Help Medway's people get a foot on the housing ladder**

Last year the Council delivered a total of 333 affordable units and this year we have again exceeded target to deliver a further 216 units, featuring a range of 1-4 bed flats and houses for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership. The Council are also looking to increase the number of potential housing options.

All potential avenues are being explored to help people get on the housing ladder e.g. new key worker housing schemes, making effective use of the allocations policy and maximising the procurement of private rented properties through our Private Rented Sector scheme.

Prevent homelessness by providing targeted support to those who need it.

Work continues to ensure that HRA tenants are supported to mitigate the negative impact of welfare reform, to minimise rent arrears, evictions, and support tenant's financial well-being. Over the past year, the focus will be on supporting tenants who have been financially affected by Covid-19, especially tenants who are claiming benefits for the first time and new tenants

Review Housing Related Support (HRS) commissioning

The Council are currently undertaking a review of the current provision of Housing Related Support (HRS) and identifying any gaps, with the aim of reducing the number of those rough sleeping. Opportunities are currently being explored for joint work with children's services commissioning and aligning our tender activity with potential Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding, to ensure we meet the needs of Medway residents. We are looking to ensure that all commissioned services work in a Trauma Informed way to increase engagement of people with complex needs.

We are currently working with Category Management on the retender of these services. We will need to build in scope for future uplifts in line with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy as it is realised that the contract rates are too low to be competitive when benchmarked against Kent and bordering Out of London authorities. The Gateway 1 paper will go to procurement board on 21 April for approval to go out to tender. This will align with RSI tendering activity as we should be notified of what expectations there will be on us to provide additional services, and retender existing services, by May. We will also need to tender out an expansion of our current domestic abuse services following the needs assessment being carried out across April and May in line with the DA Bill 2020.

Shift the focus of the rough sleeping initiative

Through the 'everyone in' initiative, all people known to be sleeping rough at the start of the pandemic lockdown were accommodated (or offered accommodation). This was initially 20 people, but over time this grew to 40 rooms being available at any one time. Additional cases presented because of sofa surfing and identifying a number of preventative cases where people would have gone on to sleep rough. In total 70 people were accommodated or offered accommodation.

The Rough Sleeping Initiative team (RSI) has now moved back to a 'business as usual' approach and is working with those who have recently been accommodated, as well as those who have been identified as sleeping rough, or have not taken up offers of accommodation to date. We are working with partners across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors to identify vulnerable people at risk of eviction and so reduce the numbers of people returning to the street. The Housing Strategy and Partnerships Team facilitate a wide variety of partnership meetings and are launching a Services Mentoring Scheme. Additional offers of training are delivered by Housing Strategy team members to services external to Council departments directly as well as via 'A Better Medway Champion' courses.

From the start of the 'everyone in' request from government, to date the Council have accommodated 88 people who were rough sleeping. 50 of those are now in settled longer term accommodation.

The Council was awarded £239,000 from the Next Steps Accommodation Program to ensure there is capacity to house those sleeping rough in Medway, particularly as traditional night shelters are unable to open due to safety reasons.

The development of our variety of services has allowed a look at alternatives in the type of accommodation being provided, avoiding the need to exit people from service.

The Service has been working with the local hospital to increase understanding of people who are sleeping rough and to ensure that discharges are done in such a way to maintain people in accommodation rather than returning people to rough sleeping.

We have successfully moved on significant numbers of people from emergency accommodation following our implementation of the short-term Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) programme, which saw as many as 75 people accommodated at times via RSI and Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEPE) activity combined and are looking to bring this to a tapered closure between June and the end of July. We have been awarded £60,000 to successfully bring this to a close. We have bid for continuation of funding for our existing Rough Sleeping interventions and a prevention officer and employment scheme, in addition to bolstering our service with an enhanced 24-hour scheme. We expect to hear the outcome of our submission in May.

Ensure that the council maximises the opportunity to reduce homelessness through prevention and relief

The Council continues to ensure that the opportunities for the prevention and relief of homelessness are maximised for Medway residents. This includes through joint prevention working arrangements with internal partners such as Children's Services, and externally with local landlords and housing providers, to seek to sustain those tenancies of their tenants who are at risk of eviction.

During Q4, there have been 782 approaches for homeless assistance, compared to 575 for the same period in 2019/20. This is an increase and continues the substantial uplift in footfall seen in Q3. Overall footfall for the year stands at 2621, which is higher than last year's figure of 2499.

Previous data for accepted cases to the end of Q3 has indicated a 33% reduction in households with children approaching the council as being evicted, being accompanied by 39% increase in households (typically single persons or childless) being asked to leave by family or friends.

This trend is likely to continue until the current Govt stay on possession proceedings are lifted and there is more public confidence around the risks posed by Covid-19 to householders from excluded occupiers.

Of remaining concern is that Covid-19 has seen a large increase in arrears of housing payments with a February 2021 House of Commons briefing paper estimating that over 750,000 families were behind with their housing payments as of January 2021, 300,000 of which contained dependent children. In addition, there is currently a large backlog of possession cases awaiting administration by the courts, caused by the moratorium on eviction. Once these measures are lifted it is likely that this will feed into a significant increase in our approach figures during 2021/22 with many of these households meeting the threshold for TA. This represents a risk to our service.

Despite the challenges posed by Covid-19, during Q4 there have been 247 successful prevention/reliefs for homeless households. For cases accepted as being owed a homeless duty, the average success rate for the service is running at 58%. This is comparable to 2019/20 which saw an overall success rate for the year of 60%. This performance is being achieved by robust supervision and monitoring of staff prevention/relief activity, including proactive working with homeless households, and the maintenance of regular contacts with private and social landlords and supported providers to offer early intervention appointments and joint prevention working.

Working with landlords and agents to support households to sustain their accommodation and prevent homelessness

Work continues with landlords and tenants to offer support and prevent homelessness. This includes via the landlord helpline, joint working with social housing providers, and via using social media and the Council's website to promote our services. We have agreed arrangements with the County Court to display our leaflets and posters to promote our service to landlords and their tenants at threat of eviction and who are attending the court.

Landlords and agents are reporting to the Council that they have seen a significant increase in rent arrears during the pandemic which puts tenancies at risk.

CallB4UServe provides an important service to landlords for joint working to seek to prevent loss of tenancies and loss of tenancy income. Several mailshots have been sent during the year to 1100 landlords to raise awareness of the support that is available as well as promotions via social media.

During Q4 CallB4UServe helpline received 29 contacts from landlords compared with 18 for the first 2 months of Q3. This indicates some success in our efforts to increase awareness of our service. In addition, once initial contacts have been made via the helpline and relationships established, landlords will often contact the Private Rented Scheme (PRS) Team direct. For Q4 to end of February the Team dealt with 27 such enquiries.

The team also continues to reach out to social landlords, although response is variable with the most consistent being MHS. Further work will be undertaken to seek to improve engagement. Joint prevention appointments with MHS have been restarted when a tenant is at risk of eviction. Contact has also been made with the county court who have agreed to display details of our service in their reception area for those attending for possession hearings.

Maximising the number of Private rented Sector (PRS) properties available to us to prevent and relieve homelessness remains an essential service goal. Earlier in the year there were several initiatives to seek to increase supply, including mail shots to landlords and messages on social media; this will be repeated. As detailed above, performance in securing properties remains high.

Ensure that HRA tenants are supported to mitigate the negative impact of welfare reform.

The Welfare Team continue to work closely with tenants to maximise their benefits and ensure that rent is paid and budgeted for. Following the intervention from the team HRA tenants, during Q4, were awarded £22,923 in backdated benefits or DHP, of this £13,016 was paid directly onto the rent accounts. They also assisted in achieving £74,361 in annualised benefits for tenants, with £28,484 of this being paid directly onto rent accounts. The team continue to attend all new tenancy sign ups to identify those that require additional support and ensure that benefits are in place. This will enable officers and residents to understand the financial commitments involved in sustaining their own property as well as maximising any other financial support that may be available. A COVID-19 secure venue has been identified to be able to see tenants again out in the community and limit the need for going into people's homes. We are currently in talks to see when it is possible to start using this.

Ensure that rent arrears are maintained under the existing target of 1.65%.

Effective rent arrears prevention and control is a key performance indicator for the Landlord Services team. Maximising rental income is vital to support the services provided to tenants such as the repairs service and is vital in supporting tenants to avoid getting into rent debt.

Arrears at the end of Q4 are 1.37%, within target. This is a slight decrease from the end of Q3, which was 1.55%.

The team are continuing to face challenges with the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) and the pandemic, however, they have been keeping regular contact with customers, reminding them through text messages and e-mails to pay their rent and referring to the Welfare Team for tenancy support when required. This has proven to be productive and aid in reducing arrears.

There have been changes to the way that the UC Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) is processed, and this is now electronic and is processed every couple of weeks rather than every 6/7 weeks, this means that the funds are going into the rent accounts quicker, and arrears are not building, therefore assisting in the reduction of arrears.

Capital works programme

Following excellent recovery work from June - October 2020, in order to reduce risk we have suspended internal non-essential planned works. i.e kitchen, bathroom replacement which will impact on the delivery of this full programme. Contractors are supportive of this action, and ready to hit the ground running once the risk level is lower. Where possible external works will still be undertaken and progress in these areas has been excellent.

The service will be aiming to re-mobilise routine repairs and some capital works from 12 April 2021 with a view to restarting all works from May. The service will be working with Mears and BDS to ensure that work is caught up, where possible.

Repairs and maintenance contracts

The Mears contract extension has been signed and agreed, this confirms that Mears will continue to be the Council's repairs and maintenance service provider until September 2024. The contract extension is forecast to deliver annual savings of over £100k. The annual review of costs using Housemark benchmarking data was completed in December 2020. The report notes that overall maintenance performance was performing well in comparison with peer organisations.

Council Plan Outcome: Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway's residents

Programme: Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway's residents

Council Plan Measures

NI 154 **Net additional homes provided**

Annual	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
2019/20	1000	1130	Green	Maximise	IMP	IMP
2018/19	1000	647	Red	Maximise	IMP	DET

Comments

This performance is reported annually. The latest data has been published in the Council's Authority Monitoring Report in December 2020 and is available on the website.

The main findings from the Monitoring Report (December 2020) included the completion of 1,130 dwellings, which is a significant increase compared to 647 dwellings in 2018/19. The Government has provided Local Housing Need figures for each local authority. With effect from March 2020, it stands at a target of 1,662 dwellings per annum for the Medway area.

Council Plan Projects

Preparation of the new Medway Local Plan

The Local Plan 2021 to 2037 sets out a vision for future development in Medway to ensure that the growth needs of the area are met by providing homes, employment and commercial areas revitalising our town centres and protecting our natural and historic environment along with providing supporting infrastructure.

Officers are currently working on completing the evidence base to support the publication of the draft local plan. This includes work on Strategic Transport Assessment, Viability Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Waste Needs Assessment, Habitat Regulations Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Cumulative Ecological Impact Assessment. The updated Local Development Scheme was reported to Cabinet in August 2020. The draft plan is to be published in Summer 2021.

The Housing Test Delivery Plan (HTDP) proposes measures to contribute to increasing the amount and speed of delivery of new housing and sets out measures to continue housing delivery and understanding factors influencing delivery rates. The second HTDP was reported to Cabinet on 4 August 20 and published mid-August.

Increase the supply of accommodation available to Medway residents

During the year 2020/21 a total of 216 affordable units were completed exceeding the target of 204 and represents an investment of £24,840,000. The units are a mixture of affordable rented and shared ownership units ranging from 1 bed flats to 4 bed homes.

We continue to ensure that commuted sums* are utilised to provide additional affordable housing in Medway. One project with MOAT is now under way to deliver between 8-20 three bed social rented homes with another project at Lennox Wood now also progressing.

The HRA have recently drafted a Development Strategy along with detailed delivery report. The high level 3-year programme has been identified focusing on delivering 30-31 units per year over the next 10 years.

Tenders have been returned for phase 4 developments and visits completed with architect and options appraisal are in the process of being completed. Phase 4 works are due to start in May 2021.

*Commuted sums – on occasion, instead of providing affordable units within a development, the developer transfers money to the Council to assist with more of these units elsewhere.

HRA Development of new homes

The team continue to look and review potential sites for development.

Phase four works were due to start in December 2020 to deliver 28 units in the Twydall area, however the originally appointed contractor has now gone into administration. The project has been re-tendered and the recommendation for award is going to procurement board mid-March with a view to awarding early April and starting on site early May 21.

Several HRA owned garage sites have been revisited with an architect and options appraisals are in the process of being completed. If any of these sites are deemed as being viable then there may be an opportunity to add them into phase four. Norfolk Close may be added into phase 4 tender and has a planning application submitted which is yet to be determined.

The HRA is also in the process of exploring the possibility of purchasing some units from a local developer.

The HRA purchased block A at Ingram Court consisting of 17 units and these are due to be let by the end of March 2021. The site has a second block that is in the process of being determined by the Planning Service after the developer's application to increase the units from five to nine was not supported.

The developer has expressed an interest in working in partnership with the HRA to potentially work together on other schemes they have.

The possibility of the HRA purchasing Lennoxwood is also being explored. Aburound House which is owned by MDC is also being reviewed as a potential acquisition. A third Site at Jeffery Street is also being discussed and it is hoped that all three sites will be acquired to allow the HRA to deliver affordable housing schemes.

Explore the opportunities arising from the establishment of Medway Development Company Limited (MDCL)

MDCL continues to progress several schemes and explore opportunities that widen the benefits realised by the company, which are outlined below:

Britton Farm

As previously updated MDC has successfully delivered the conversion of the adjacent former supermarket into accommodation for the Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT). KMPT are now operational within their new premises and the building is now generating rent for the Council.

Following the successes of the KMPT scheme, a grant bid was developed in order to seek funding to create a new Skills hub facility adjacent to the KMPT occupied premises and also to transform a public realm area. The bid also included a request to provide funding towards the residential scheme to help unlock its delivery. MDC helped compile parts of the bid which has been successful enabling further regeneration investment within Gillingham.

White Road

MDC has delivered twenty new family homes with a modern innovative design and built using the latest modular construction techniques. The houses incorporate solar voltaic panels to generate electricity and are designed to maximise light into the homes. The layouts provide spacious accommodation which exceed the national space standards and the typical standards expected for affordable housing.

MDC has coordinated the sale of the development to MHS homes, generating a substantial capital receipt to the Council.

The project has also delivered enhancements to the adjacent Community Centre, including a new play area, fencing, trees and plants as well as tree planting to the school playing field behind the site. The completion of the scheme is expected to help mitigate anti-social behaviour that previously existed in this location and the new boundary treatments installed have increased the perimeter security for the neighbouring nursery, school and residential dwellings.

Whiffens Avenue

The proposed development of 115 homes has a modern contemporary design which has been carefully developed to be sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area.

The project is in construction and will enhance the historically significant Fort Amherst by removing vegetation to reveal its historic structures. The scheme will also lead to significant improvements to the adjacent Town Hall Gardens and the Military Road area that lies opposite the Brook Theatre.

Mountbatten House

This scheme has now been submitted to the Planning Authority. The project will see the conversion of Mountbatten House which will bring an empty building back into use alongside a new build extension where the former bus station ramps are located.

The project will deliver circa 165 homes as well as enhancements to the former bus station, taxi rank and public realm areas that surround the site. The scheme also has a rooftop restaurant which will be able to enjoy far reaching views across Medway.

Funding has also been approved through the Future High Streets Fund where MDC assisted the Council in developing the bid. The funding will be used to complete public

realm works to the Paddock area which lies opposite Mountbatten House as well enabling works for the Mountbatten scheme.

Chatham Waterfront – 170 housing units and with appropriate commercial development.

Planning permission has been granted to develop a high-quality, mixed-use development at the Chatham Waterfront site which will act as a driver for further regeneration in the area. The plans include 175 new homes, new commercial spaces for cafes, restaurants and offices alongside a new public realm to create a vibrant centre for Chatham.

The works continue to progress well on site which will lead to the construction of 182 new homes, new commercial spaces for cafes, restaurants and offices.

The piling works are nearing completion and the above ground works are expected to commence Spring 2021. The scheme will see a significant enhancement to Chatham and will transform the riverside area.

Encourage the delivery of homes to meet our targets – Rochester Riverside

- Phase 3 started on site with services under licence, land draw down for Phase 3 completed on 4 March 2021.
- Phase 1 and 2 properties on schedule for completion by Sept 2021.
- Planning Permission for the 2FE element of the school received 8 Feb 2021.
- 2FE School Development Agreement completed end of March 2021 for start on site April 2021.
- Phase 4 of the development to begin planning discussions in May 2021.

Encourage the delivery of homes to meet our targets – Strood Waterfront

The former Civic Centre site is currently undergoing a revised massing study being led by Medway Development Company. Following initial feedback, further detailed work is to be undertaken.

Support the delivery of 1,200sqm of commercial development at Rochester Riverside

The Commercial element of Rochester Riverside is progressing as planned with the Co-op and Costa in place along with the Travelodge Hotel.

The remainder of the commercial element for the scheme is not due to be delivered until summer 2021, an additional 9,000 square feet of commercial/retail space is expected to be delivered and is focussed on the station square.

Council Plan Outcome: Getting around Medway

Programme: Tackle congestion hotspots by transport and public realm improvements

Council Plan measures

NI 167 Average journey time along 5 routes across Medway (mins per mile)

Quarter	Target	Value	Status	Aim to	Long Trend	Short Trend
2019/20	4	NA	NA	Minimise	NA	NA
2018/19	4	3.14	Green	Minimise	IMP	IMP

Comments

Journey time data for Q4 and the calendar year 2020 is expected to be issued by the DfT later in 2021. This PI will be updated then once that data has been received and analysed.

Action

The future prosperity of Medway depends on the prospect of continuing economic growth. The provision of adequate infrastructural investment of new and improved roads is fundamental to enable economic development to come to Medway. In conjunction with these infrastructure developments is the need to meet the challenge of social and environmental objectives of cleaner air and providing a pleasant environment in which to live, work and learn.

Medway Council is committed to enable citizens, visitors, and business to move around Medway's road network easily and in the way they choose, i.e., car, public transport, cycling and on foot, encouraging sustainable transport where possible. The connectivity of transport hubs, leisure, shopping, and health facilities is at the forefront of our planning so that there is an integrated approach to travel throughout Medway.

Council Plan Projects

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Deliver Phase 1 of the Medway Tunnel Improvement Programme for 2020-21

Medway Council have secured £4.972 million ring-fenced capital grant from the Department for Transport (DfT) Challenge 2B Fund. This award is for essential capital infrastructure works required for the Medway Tunnel as well as funding for highway resurfacing and rebuilding of the retaining wall along Pier Road.

All works need to be completed by the end of financial year 2023- 2024 and will be delivered through the Highways Infrastructure Contract in programme phases.

Key work-streams delivered during Q4 include:

Ventilation Fans – The current system has had an analysis report produced and a fire assessment report has also been produced. They have been through a review and there are a few amendments to be made. Following this, the next stage is to produce the basis of design for the new ventilation and detection system.

Contraflow Gaps – One of the three gaps have been filled with permanent crash barrier and this was carried out at the March closure. The other two gaps are to be filled with a removable crash barrier. Estimate completion is September 2021.

Sump Gas Sampling System – Proposed design has been produced. It will now go through a review and then finalised.

VMS / SCADA / CCTV – A preliminary design report has been produced and initial comments have been received. Consultants are now moving onto outline design and specification works.

Pier Road Retaining Wall – The detailed design for the wall has now been completed and signed off. Final surveys and consultation with adjacent garages is ongoing. Estimated budget prices to be received Q1 2021/22.

Manhole Upgrade - The programme for upgrading all the manholes within the tunnel remit is progressing well. The new manholes come with a five-year guarantee, but the expected life is much longer than this.

Pumps and Sumps Refurbishment and Upgrade – Design scope has been agreed and initial reviews and proposals are being worked on before moving onto outline design details.

Council Plan Projects

Achieve Band 3 status for Highway Asset Management Self- Assessment via DfT

Department for Transport (DfT) introduced in 2015-16 a Self-Incentive Fund that requires Local Highway Authorities to measure through an annual self-assessment process how Local Highway Authorities manage the Highway Network in respect of:

- Asset Management (Policy & Strategy)
- Resilience

- Customer
- Benchmarking & Efficiency
- Operational Service Delivery

The Self-Assessment operates on a banding score of 1-3 with Medway currently assessed as a Band 3 Local Highway Authority with Band 3 being the highest banding score that can be achieved.

The value of participating in the DfT Self-Incentive Fund is:

- Maximising levels of DfT funding secured and by being and retaining a Band 3 score Medway Council secures additional funding of £353,000 per annum for carriageway resurfacing.
- Embedding Highway Asset Management principles into service planning and delivery to support strategic investment decisions.

Key work streams delivered during Q4 are:

- Medway's Highways Consultant has produced the second Lifecycle Planning report, which will be used to inform Highway Investment Levels against service performance targets. Final amendments are required considering recent alterations to capital funding allocations received from the DfT, prior to the report being presented to senior management.
- A biennial review of the Resilient Network has been completed. To take forward an external stakeholder resilient network consultation process in 2021/22.
- The Annual National Highways & Transportation Survey, which measures public satisfaction with Highways & Transportation, with final survey results reported and shared with senior management and Portfolio Holder.
- Framework for monthly audits of the 22 Self-Assessment questions developed. This has been delivered through asset management 'Deep Dive' meetings, whilst ensuring the evidence base for a Band 3 submission has been achieved.
- Highway Asset Management Delivery Plan adopted, to assist with delivering key asset management functions outlined within the Self-Assessment questions and Highways Code of Practice going forward

Project management and delivery of full LTP programme of schemes and projects for 2020/21 to budget and timescale

Medway Council receives £1.3m a year from Central Government to complete local transport project schemes. Projects for 2020/21 cover improvements to traffic management, traffic signals, road safety, cycling, accessibility, bus infrastructure, and rights of way.

With lockdown restrictions still in place across Q4 the management of the LTP programme of schemes continued with the necessary social distancing restrictions applying. For most of 2020/21, LTP meetings were held virtually, as were update and progress meetings on specific schemes. The supply chain and resourcing for individual projects saw some interruption still due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, despite these issues good progress was still made on a number of schemes, including the completion of the new crossing on Best Street/A230 which improved traffic movements for HGV and the public realm, and the continuation of improvement works at the Chatham Bus / Rail interchange which improved movements for buses and traffic flows. During the final part of Q4 officers worked on preparing proposed schemes for the LTP scheme list for 2021/22.

Streetworks - Permitting Programme

In 2017, Medway Council introduced a Permit Scheme, under the Traffic Management Act (2004) to manage works undertaken on the Highway Network. The main objective of the scheme is to work with works promoters to deliver a safe, efficient, and sustainable Highway Network for everybody, by aiming to minimise disruption to network users, whilst still allowing essential works and maintenance to be undertaken. It supports wider transport needs, businesses, and economic growth, whilst getting people into work and children to school. The scheme covers all works undertaken on “highway maintained at public expense” and works promoters must submit a permit for any intended work, which cannot be undertaken unless approved by the Street Works Team. It is the Network Officers job to co-ordinate works, to ensure the most effective traffic movement possible, whilst the work is ongoing and the New Roads and Street Works Act Inspectors undertake operational inspections of sites, for safety and compliance. During Q4:

- Work has continued as usual, allowing promoters to undertake their duties as normal and take advantage of a quieter than normal network due to Covid-19.
- 5508 permit applications were received of which 4606 (83.6%) were agreed.
- 143 Fixed Penalty Notices were served, which is low compared to the number of works being undertaken on the network, meaning that high levels of compliance are being achieved
- The rate of inspection pass was 91.54% (target 75%), with 1939 inspections undertaken
- MTFs Funding secured as part of Budget Setting (Feb 2021) to enable realignment of StreetWorks Income Target from 2021-2022. In addition, income performance significantly improved due to (1) windfall income through the Cityfibre Programme along with (2) Management Action resulted in a year end Income Shortfall of £198k against a predicted shortfall of £350K at the start of the year

Ongoing management and delivery of the LGF project for journey time and accessibility improvements on Medway City Estate

During Q4 responses to the tender for a works contractor were received and evaluated. Whilst a good response from the market was received, the winning contractor's price will add additional costs to the project budget because there was no way of knowing the prices submitted by the tenderers for the works before undertaking the tender process. Officers will work to ascertain where these costs can be budgeted from.

Work to clear the scrubland located at the area where the new retaining wall is to be located were successfully completed.

Work continues on the negotiations for land acquisition and the landowner was re-engaged towards the end of Q4. Officers hope to have the issue of land acquisition finalised in Q1 2021/22. Commencement of the works contractor on site will be dependent upon successful land acquisitions and engagement from statutory undertakers on the diversion / relocation of utilities and cabling.

S106 commitment for scheme delivery at Rochester Riverside

The construction of a new controlled pedestrian crossing linking Rochester Riverside with the city centre has now been completed. This includes the installation of new traffic detection equipment along this section of Corporation Street to improve the operation of the signals and regulate traffic flow. The review of the existing UTMC (Urban traffic Management Control) system, including vehicle detection, and bus lane controls is still to be undertaken. This will ensure the signal design is optimised. The outline design for new controlled pedestrian crossing at Blue Boar Lane concluded in Q4. Coordination with the development control officer has continued throughout the year seeking appropriate opportunities to secure further S106 support for infrastructure.

Make improvements to parking services

During Q4, several improvements to parking services were progressed. Contract renewal work on the Parking Process System software, and Parking Debt Collection contracts was progressed, working with colleagues in Category Management and Legal to ensure the most efficient process was followed to achieve the best value outcome. This work will continue into Q1 and Q2 21/22.

Across the year and Q4, 45 new Pay & Display parking machines were successfully installed across Medway. These will offer residents a more secure and efficient way of paying for parking at various sites, which should contribute to greater footfall in areas requiring it (post Covid-19) and an increase in parking income. Work also commenced at the Brook Multi Storey Car, installing new ANPR barriers and payment machines which offer an improved range of payment methods. Once completed this new infrastructure will make a vast improvement to the facilities in the Brook and will hopefully lead to improved footfall in Chatham High Street once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

Develop parking and permit scheme performance indicators in 2020/21

Following a full assessment of potential and current Performance Indicators for parking, officers proposed and retained all PIs relating to the number and type of parking permits applied for and issued across the borough. These PIs will be monitored and reported on going forward as they have been to date.