

Medway Council
Meeting of Medway Council
Thursday, 22 July 2021
7.00pm to 11.05pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next Full Council meeting

- Present:** The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway (Councillor Aldous)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Carr)
Councillors Adeoye, Brake, Buckwell, Carr,
Rodney Chambers, OBE, Chitty, Cooper, Doe, Gulvin, Howcroft-
Scott, Hubbard, Mrs Josie Iles, Jarrett, Johnson, Kemp, Khan,
Murray, Osborne, Pendergast, Potter, Prenter, Purdy, Sands,
Chrissy Stamp, Rupert Turpin and Wildey
- In Attendance:** Neil Davies, Chief Executive
Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services
Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance
Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer

169 Apologies for absence

During this period, it was informally agreed between the two political groups, due the Coronavirus pandemic, to run Medway Council meetings with a reduced number of participants. This was to reduce risk, comply with Government guidance and enable more efficient meetings. Therefore, the apologies given reflect that informal agreement of reduced participants.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ahmed, Barrett, Bowler, Browne, Curry, Mrs Diane Chambers, Clarke, Etheridge, Filmer, Griffin, Hackwell, Lloyd, Mahil, Maple (who was absent due to having been contacted by NHS Track and Trace), McDonald, Opara, Paterson, Price, Andy Stamp (who was absent due to having been contacted by NHS Track and Trace), Tejan, Thompson, Thorne, Tranter, Mrs Elizabeth Turpin and Williams.

170 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

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Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

171 Records of meeting

The records of the meetings held on 22 April and 5 May 2021 were agreed by the Council and signed by The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway as correct.

172 Mayor's announcements

The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway said that Members would be sadly aware of the recent passing of two current Councillors, Councillor Steve Iles and Councillor Tashi Bhutia. It was devastating that two colleagues and friends had been lost in such a short period of time.

Councillor Steve Iles had passed away on Thursday 17 June 2021. He had been elected to Medway Council in 2015, representing Strood North and was re-elected in 2019.

Councillor Iles had served as Mayor of Medway in 2018 to 2019 and as Deputy Mayor twice in 2015 to 2016 and in 2019. He had also served as Mayor's consort supporting Councillor Mrs Josie Iles during her term as Mayor in 2013 to 2014.

Councillor Bhutia had passed away on Tuesday 6 July 2021. He had served on Medway Council from 2009-2011 for Luton and Wayfield ward and then again for Princes Park from 2015 and was re-elected in 2019.

The Mayor said that Councillor Iles and Councillor Bhutia would both be sorely missed by their colleagues and by the wider community.

Paying tribute, the Leader of the Council said that he had considered Councillor Iles a friend and ally. He had a great sense of humour and had suffered with illness for a long period which sadly had taken him at a young age. The Leader paid tribute to how Councillor Steve Iles had supported Councillor Mrs Josie Iles in her challenging role as Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and to the latter, in particular, for how she had dealt with her loss.

Councillor Bhutia had been the nicest, most genuine person that the Leader had met. Councillor Bhutia had been a Ghurka with an exemplary service record. He was a well-respected great friend and a unique individual who had worked particularly hard on ward matters.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Murray, said that it was particularly difficult to have lost two Councillors in service over such a short

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time and she commended Councillor Mrs Josie Iles for her bravery and attendance at the Council meeting. Councillor Murray said that Councillor Steve Iles had been a cheerful and friendly presence, part of the local community, who would also be remembered for his work at Morrisons in Strood. He had faced his illness with good humour.

Councillor Murray said that Councillor Bhutia had possessed passion for his work on the Council's Planning and Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny committees. He had also been committed to the Medway Diversity Forum, which he had chaired.

Other Members of the Council added their tributes to Councillor Steve Iles and Councillor Bhutia. Councillor Iles was described as a principled person who was keen to share his experience and offer advice. He was a friend who could always be relied upon and had a dry sense of humour. Both Councillors were described as being true gentlemen, who were passionate about their beliefs.

Responding to the tributes offered by Council Members, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles thanked everyone for their kind words, condolences and cards and flowers she had received. She thanked everyone who had expressed concern during Councillor Steve Iles' hospitalisation and rehabilitation. He had been determined to get better but there had been too many challenges. Although his loss had been sudden and she missed him terribly, she was comforted that Councillor Steve Iles was now at peace.

The Mayor announced that former Councillor, Peggy Saxby, had passed away in May 2021. She had served on Rochester-Upon-Medway City Council between 1976 and 1995, having represented St Margaret's and Borstal Ward and served as Mayor during her time as a Councillor. A Member paid tribute to her stating, amongst other things, that she had been passionate about Rochester and had served Medway well.

The Mayor announced that Gabriel Lancaster MBE had passed away earlier in July 2021. Mr Lancaster had been lifetime President of the Chatham Memorial Synagogue and had close ties to the Council, leading the Annual Service of Remembrance held at Gun Wharf for a number of years, as well as acting as Mayor's Chaplain on a number of occasions. He had also been a keen supporter of Love Music Hate Racism and Workers' Memorial Day.

A Member paid tribute to Mr Lancaster and stated that his passing was a sad loss to the whole community.

A minute's silence was held in memory of all those who had recently passed away.

The Mayor announced that she would be hosting a Garden Party and Afternoon Tea on 7 September in support of the Mayoral Charities. Tickets would be available from the Mayor's office.

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Announcements were concluded by the Mayor welcoming Medway's new Assistant Director - Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer, Bhupinder Gill, to the meeting. Mr Gill had started working for Medway at the beginning of July 2021.

173 Leader's announcements

The Leader of the Council said that the arrangements for the Council meeting were an improvement on what had been possible previously. The Leader was due to soon meet the Leader of the Opposition to discuss future meeting arrangements and it was hoped that meetings would soon be able to return to how they had been held before the pandemic.

174 Petitions

Public:

There were none.

Member:

There were none.

175 Public questions

The Mayor stated that as Council Member and public attendance at the meeting was reduced due to COVID-19, it was proposed that everyone who had submitted a public or Member question would have their question answered during the meeting, irrespective of whether they were present.

The Mayor, supported by Councillor Kemp, proposed that Council rules 8.6 and 9.1 be suspended for the duration of the meeting.

Decision:

The Council agreed to suspend Council rules 8.6 and 9.1 for the duration of the meeting.

A) **Ben Hammond of Chatham asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

"Firstly I'd like to congratulate the Council for their support of Plantlife's "No Mow May" campaign. After declaring a climate emergency in April 2019, this seems like a sensible thing that can be done as it has allowed a wider range of wild grasses and flowers to thrive, providing a vital food source for bees, hoverflies and butterflies. Letting grass grow can produce enough nectar for ten times as many bees.

In recent days we have seen several announcements regarding the future of No Mow May. Starting with Councillor Rupert Turpin's comments on a local

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Facebook group that this year has "gone too far" and "it won't happen again" to Councillor Jarrett then stating in an article that No Mow May would not go ahead again, to now rolling that statement back somewhat to say it "will not be scrapped altogether". The original statement that it would be scrapped included a poll on the Kent Online article (73% in favour of some form of the scheme) and subsequent petition (179 signatures at time of writing) set up, which clearly shows many local residents wish for some form of the initiative to continue albeit with some easy changes made such as ensuring road junctions and roundabouts remain cut.

Can you confirm that a review will be in place as to the success of the 2021 initiative with a view to continuing this next year and into further years in a changed format to 2021, with results shared and improved communication to residents as to the reasoning behind the scheme?

Climate change is a serious issue we must tackle that is not going away and I think it's only pertinent that we wait to establish the facts behind the success (or otherwise) of the initiative before making such broad-brush statements as seen on social media and in the local press in future."

Councillor Doe said that he was pleased that Mr Hammond supported Medway's climate change measures. He said that for future campaigns, there needed to be a comprehensive communications approach beforehand to ensure that residents understood the rationale behind the approach and how this linked to the overall climate change agenda.

B) Terri Pargetor of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:

"The recent stabbing of Julia James and Sarah Everard and of course the Wembley stabbings of Bibaa Henry and her sister Nicole Smallman has shocked us all, especially impacting on us women. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Could Medway Council confirm what measures have been taken by this council to make our Medway streets safer for women and girls, including how much of the Medway Share of the 45 million promised by the Government in the Safer Street Fund has been earmarked specifically for extra CCTV and street lighting?"

Councillor Gulvin said that his thoughts and prayers were with the families of these victims, particularly as Julia James' funeral had taken place earlier in the day.

Medway had received £111,000 in Safer Street funding, this had been bid for by the Medway Task Force and had to be spent in one designated Lower Super Output area within Gillingham. £15,144 of this was spent on the development of a rapid response camera for one year. This had now been replaced by a permanent camera.

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Councillor Gulvin said that Medway had a comprehensive and efficient CCTV system and said that if Ms Pargetor contacted him after the meeting, he would be happy to arrange a visit for her to see the control room.

The Community Safety Team worked closely with Medway's partners, including Kent Police, to keep Medway safe, together with the excellent work of the Medway Task Force, who were bidding for further Safer Streets funding, with a specific focus on continuing to keep Medway's streets safe for women and girls.

Councillor Gulvin advised that the Government had just published a paper on tackling violence against women and girls and that this would be considered when the Community Safety Plan was next refreshed.

C) John Drake of Rochester asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

"I welcome the Council's Climate Change Action Plan but am confused by the claim that Medway Council is 'only' responsible for 1.4% of Medway's emissions, as I am unable to see any figures relating to public transport, specifically bus usage across Medway, which although operated by a private company is heavily subsidised by Medway's residents and should really be included as a Council related emission. Arriva's electric trial bus service is much appreciated but I would like to know what the current emissions generated by the Arriva bus services are across Medway?"

Councillor Doe said that the Climate Change Action Plan stated that in 2018/19, the Council's carbon footprint represented just 1.4% of the total direct emissions in the Medway area. The scope of this assessment included emissions for which the Council was directly responsible. These were known as direct emissions, such as those from Medway's estate and operations, such as electricity for Council-owned buildings and street lighting. The assessment also included indirect emissions such as those from staff business travel and water usage. Emissions from public transport, however, did not fall into the scope of this assessment.

Councillor Doe said that the Action Plan recognised that the Council had a pivotal role to play in providing local leadership to support and encourage others in Medway to reduce their carbon emissions. An action included in the Plan was to maintain positive relationships with local bus operators, with a view to establishing a 'Bus Improvement Plan' and introducing data to include fleet comparison and journey time information.

D) Ben Rist of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

"Will Medway Council support mental health non-profit organisations with basic costs due to the pandemic?"

Councillor Brake thanked Mr Rist for his question. He said that although the Council had not provided additional funding to mental health organisations

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during the pandemic, it continued to support the Voluntary and Community Sector, including those who delivered mental health services. Examples included Porchlight for the 'Time To Change' initiative, which was focused on reducing stigma in the community associated with mental health, The Sunlight Development Trust who delivered the 'Men In Sheds' programme, aimed at reducing isolation by offering a community space for people to connect and support each other, and additional resource had been allocated to the Mental Health Matters service who provided the 'Release The Pressure' telephone helpline. This operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to help anyone in need of support.

Medway had commissioned services that supported mental health, either directly or indirectly, including the wellbeing navigation service (IMAGO), Carers Services (Carers First), Citizens Advice Bureau, and Kent Association for the Blind.

MEGAN were commissioned to provide opportunities for people experiencing mental health issues to share their views and experiences. They offered peer support through group attendance and raised awareness of mental health and wellbeing to combat stigma and discrimination.

Councillor Brake said that Medway Community Healthcare also offered mental health and wellbeing at schools through the school nursing service, while Medway Council had commissioned Medway Voluntary Action to support not-for-profit groups and organisations to provide safe and sustainable support to local communities in Medway. This provided guidance and support across a wide range of areas, from community start-up and governance through to recruiting and retaining volunteers.

E) Adam Dyjak of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

"At the bottom of Church street next to the Strand there has been a large derelict plot of land for nearly 10 years. Why has no construction taken place and being left as a waste land?"

Councillor Chitty thanked Mr Dyjak for his question. She said that the site referred to in the question was the former Green Dragon in Church Street. The property had closed many years previously and had been beginning to fall into disrepair. The Council's Planning team had worked with various property owners either to look at re-use and refurbishment of the building, or alternatively to demolish and redevelop the site.

The building had been demolished a few years ago, and following a number of planning applications, the current owner had secured permission for the construction of a flatted development in June 2020. He had now cleared all the necessary pre-commencement planning conditions and it was understood that he intended to commence construction in a few weeks' time.

F) Vivienne Parker of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

“Given that it is unfair to expect the Council to grant new planning consents for housing when there are so many empty houses in Medway, what is Medway Council going to do about empty new houses like the Hamiltons, Capstone Green and Berengrave Gardens?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Ms Parker for her question. She said that the Government was very clear as to the formula that should be used for calculating the housing need for all councils and was also clear that all councils should have a five-year housing land supply based on that formula. For Medway, that meant a significant number of properties had to be delivered every year and the Council had to continue granting planning permission for the development of sites that were considered sustainable to meet its five-year housing land supply and its housing need. If the Council did not do this, the Government would take action to increase delivery, most likely through the granting of appeals.

In terms of the three sites referred to in the question, the Planning team had been working with the previous owner of the Hamiltons to try to address the issues they had in completing the development. The site had now been sold at auction and the Council was attempting to make contact with the new owner to progress completion.

In relation to Capstone Green, Councillor Chitty said that the landowner, London and Quadrant Housing Association, had required their contractor to leave the site. Since that time, they had been undertaking remedial works and were now continuing with the development, as had been approved, with a number of houses shortly due for occupation.

At Berengrave Gardens, the developer, Linden Homes, had slowed delivery during part of 2020, but was now accelerating construction once more.

G) Bryan Fowler of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

“There are regular Saturday morning litter picks organised by a local small business in the Heritage Action Zone, Old High Street Intra at the borders of Rochester and Chatham. Unfortunately, Medway Council has continued to fail to respond to repeated requests since May 2021 (in person, by website and email notifications) from residents and local River Ward Councillors to remove fly-tipped rubbish in Gundulph Road. Why is Medway Council not supportive of removing town-centre fly-tipped rubbish?”

Responding on behalf of Councillor Filmer, Councillor Rupert Turpin thanked Mr Fowler for his question. He said that he would like to thank Mr Fowler and others who reported fly tipping that had been dumped by inconsiderate individuals. Councillor Turpin stated that fly tipping was a criminal act and that Medway’s Enforcement team reviewed every report. The Council took the

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issue seriously and priority was given to known hot-spots and high-profile locations, such as town centres.

Councillor Turpin apologised for the delay in this case and advised that Council staff had visited the area on 14 July 2021, removing all waste left in the area. Gundulph Road had been added to the Council's known "hot spots", and visits would be made whenever the team was in the area.

H) **Stuart Bourne of Rainham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

"Homophobic attacks are happening across the country and right here in Medway. Only last month there was a story of a couple from Chatham being tormented for 2 years for being gay. Considering how an important role the Council has in promoting and protecting the LGBT+ community in Medway, it is shocking that during Pride month there were only two social media posts, it was not mentioned at all in Medway Matters, and no flag raised in support both physically or on social media.

Why is that?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Mr Bourne for his question. He said that Medway Council took its role in supporting and protecting the LGBT+ community very seriously, working with the community to provide advice, guidance and support. For 2021, the Council would be supporting Medway Pride Festival, which due to COVID-19 restrictions was not able to take place during Pride month in June and was now planned to take place on 21 August at Rochester Riverside, supported by Countryside and Hyde Housing, as well as many other Medway organisations.

Medway Pride would be part of an exciting summer events programme that Medway was running or supporting and it was hoped that residents from across Medway would support and enjoy all that was on offer.

I) **Kate Belmonte of Gillingham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

"I am writing this question on behalf of myself, as a disabled member of your community, and all those from within our community who are also disabled.

I have over the years missed out on more meetings and events than I can count. This all changed in 2020 when all of a sudden, meetings I had previously been unable to attend were finally fully accessible, not because of an understanding, acceptance or appreciation of all those with disabilities, but because Covid meant that "normal" people were unable to attend physical meetings.

Our democracy, our institutions, our centres of learning opened their doors to all. So when Luke Hall MP wrote to Medway Council in March advising them that they no longer needed to provide remote meeting access, what he did was

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publicly slam a door in the faces of millions of individuals up and down this country who cannot physically attend council meetings, including those with young children, shift workers and those without transport or the funds to use our over-priced privately owned 'public' transport. I expressed my concerns with MP Rehman Chishti and he has forwarded the response he received from the Council, which does not set the standard for Medway, so I would like to ask the Leader of the Council:

Will you pledge to livestreaming all future publicly accessible Council meetings thus ensuring that all members of our community can easily and freely access our Council's democratic decision-making process something, which is of the greatest importance to our community?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Ms Belmonte for her question. He said that the comments made in the questions relating to her personal circumstances and those of the wider disabled community had been noted.

Councillor Jarrett confirmed that Medway would be livestreaming all of its publicly accessible meetings on a permanent basis from this point forward, with the decision having been made in advance of the question having been received.

J) Chris Spalding of Gillingham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

"The Leader of the Council labelled the 'No Mow May' scheme 'poorly thought out and poorly implemented' yet Medway Council went ahead with it to the detriment of residents when it came to road safety because Medway Norse, despite assurances to the contrary, did not fulfil its obligations.

The Medway Tunnel was purchased for £1 without anybody thinking about the long-term costs.

No prior thought was apparently given to the number of lorries from Amazon that would use the London Medway commercial site yet Medway Council went ahead with it to the detriment of residents in Hoo and other Villages.

A lack of thought and foresight has seen residents in rural villages plagued by mosquitoes this year.

Areas of Medway suffer from flooding because of a lack of forward thinking.

People throughout Medway suffer from poor planning when it comes to road closures for works with those in Hoo being the latest to suffer.

Medway Norse was given the waste collection contract and then it was discovered a depot for the vehicles was required landing council tax payers with a £9 million cost for a new site.

When will Medway Council become proactive instead of reactive?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Mr Spalding for what he considered to be multiple questions. Although it was not possible to provide multiple answers in the time available, he said that Medway Council was very proactive, being a half billion-pound organisation running over 140 services across Medway.

Councillor Jarrett considered it easy for those not involved to criticise actions taken. He said that innovations brought forward had been for the betterment of Medway and that had included the purchase of Medway tunnel, when there was no other option. The alternative would have been the closure of the tunnel.

K) Marilyn Stone of Rochester, asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

“Within your recently adopted Climate Change Action Plan and in the recent edition of Medway Matters you state that Medway Council is 'only' responsible for 1.4% of Medway's emissions. I cannot see any inclusion of the emissions being generated by Waste Disposal, which although subcontracted out should really be included as a council related emission as it's a direct service provided to residents. I note that 49% of our waste is currently being disposed of via 'waste recovery' i.e by incineration. What is the carbon footprint of the entire waste disposal process?”

Councillor Doe said that the Climate Change Action Plan stated that in 2018/19, the Council's carbon footprint represented 1.4% of the total direct emissions in the Medway Council area.

The Council had not yet included areas of indirect control, such as school transport and waste disposal, but had included a commitment in the Action Plan to undertake a further assessment of indirect emissions and expected to start that work during 2021. An action had also been included to ensure that Medway Norse would be contracted to report on and implement a year-on-year reduction in the carbon dioxide emissions per tonne of waste collected, and households visited.

176 Leader's Report

Discussion:

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

- The rebuilding of Splashes Leisure Centre and the determination to complete this.
- Development and investment taking place in Medway at sites such as Chatham Waterfront, Chatham Park, the Skills and Employability Hub and Rochester Riverside.
- Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) progress, the £113 million investment, the first HIF consultation and expectations / concerns in relation to HIF,

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particularly the need for appropriate infrastructure to support development.

- Concern about Chatham Docks, including debate over whether there would be job losses.
- Medway's expression of interest to be a City of Culture.
- Concern about the service provided by Medway Norse in parks and green-spaces.
- COVID-19 recovery and the need to remain alert to avoid putting the NHS at risk.
- Delivery of continued improvement to Children's Services including the multi-agency hub, the timely completion of Child Protection enquiries and new ways of working.
- Support provided to children and vulnerable families and the role of schools in providing this during the Pandemic.
- The role of Cabinet Advisory Groups, in particular the Corporate Parenting Board.

177 Report on Overview and scrutiny activity

Discussion:

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

- Provision of inpatient mental health facilities and whilst welcome that new provision was being planned, concern about services moving out of Medway.
- Concern about rising waiting lists for operations and the pressure this was putting on other services.
- The proposed closure of the University of Creative Arts (UCA) Medway campus.
- The difficulty in getting GP appointments, including lack of face-to-face appointments and the disparity of services across Medway.
- The launch of the Medway Early Help Strategy, including a launch meeting attended by 140 people and linkages to the Medway Parenting Strategy.
- The Oasis Restore Secure School and the development of a 16-19 Academy.

Decision:

The Council noted the report.

178 Members' questions

A) Councillor Pendergast asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

"Funds that provide new infrastructure are definitely welcome.

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However, the way people work and travel has changed dramatically since the HIF funds were announced.

The rail scenario is unworkable sending people to Gravesend rather than providing benefits to the shops and businesses in Strood.

The current road plan is flawed and will lead to more traffic coming off the Peninsula and congestion particularly in Strood.

Does the Leader of the Council agree that given the significant changes to day-to-day and future living that have happened due to the pandemic, the time is right for a complete rethink on the entire HIF project even to the point where the rail option is removed and that money added to the road funding?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Pendergast for his question. He said that the delivery of infrastructure was vital to ensure that Medway would be well placed to meet challenging local housing targets set by Government. The HIF project had been secured to deliver both key transport and environmental infrastructure, and importantly, this would come forward before potential new housing at Hoo.

The Council was making good progress towards delivering the road and rail infrastructure required to address the predicted growth and was able to demonstrate that the right infrastructure would be in place at the right time.

HIF's on-going road designs had been developed using the Council's detailed knowledge of the pre-COVID-19 traffic patterns, but it was too early to be able to predict or evidence any post-Covid changes in people's travel patterns.

Councillor Jarrett said that on-going rail designs would continue to support tested rail travel options, such as providing a passenger service for those wanting to either commute to London or via the North Kent Line or access other stations across the network. COVID-19 resilience was being assessed and that would be factored into the final scheme.

Given the challenging housing targets set by Government, HIF provided welcome and much-needed funding to ensure that the necessary infrastructure would be in place in advance of those homes being built.

In relation to the "Medway Curve", the Council had discussed this with Southeastern Railway, who had determined that there was no current demand for this, nor could they foresee any and that it would require a huge subsidy from Medway Council. Councillor Jarrett reminded Council Members that the Council had entered into a legally binding Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) with the Government.

B) Councillor Andy Stamp asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

“In last week's Medway messenger Councillor Jarrett said he had not seen the guidelines from Plantlife (the national wildlife charity) about managing No Mow May and he didn't know whether Norse had used them either.

Can the Leader explain why he sanctioned a new initiative intended to improve biodiversity without bothering to find out how it should be implemented in order to properly protect both residents and wildlife?”

Councillor Jarrett said that the subject was complex. He had met with the Plantlife Chief Executive, Ian Dunn, approximately two and half weeks previously. This two-hour meeting had discussed biodiversity issues across Medway.

Councillor Jarrett said that there was more to biodiversity than long grass but he acknowledged that the scheme had been poorly thought out and poorly implemented. A scheme would be brought forward next year that would take account of biodiversity. It would also take account of amenity needs and values across Medway and road safety, which had been an issue in relation to the previous scheme. Hygiene factors would be considered, such as, how people would find and pick up dog mess in long grass and remove it in a clean and safe way. The impact of dog faeces on human health should not be underestimated and neither should environmental factors, such as litter picking.

Councillor Jarrett said that biodiversity was very important, which would be understood by those who had read the Council's Climate Change Action Plan. He stated that it was very easy for people to make cheap political capital of such issues.

Medway was taking its climate change responsibilities very seriously and was also taking biodiversity very seriously. Councillor Jarrett said that the Chief Executive of Plantlife had told him that Plantlife would not promote No Mow May without accompanying measures and that was what Medway Council would also be doing.

C) Councillor Khan asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

“At the last meeting of Rural Liaison Committee, Members were told that the Council had not lodged a formal challenge or objection to the current government targets to build 30,000 new homes in Medway. Given the concerns many residents have expressed over the lack of proper social and transport infrastructure to support new homes, can the Portfolio Holder explain why no attempt to challenge the targets has been made?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Councillor Khan for her question. She said that the statement made in the question was misleading. The briefing to Members of the Rural Liaison Committee had indicated that the Council would be the following

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Government expectations on the use of the Standard Method for calculating Local Housing Need.

The Council had lodged robust objections to a Government consultation, held in 2017, on the proposals to bring in this Standard Method. Councillor Chitty said that the minutes of Cabinet meetings held in September and October clearly recorded the Council's strong objections. The Government had subsequently introduced the Standard Method for calculating Local Housing Need and this was confirmed in the National Planning Policy Framework and supporting Planning Policy Guidance.

The Government had consulted on the use of an alternative methodology for calculating housing need in 2020, which would have resulted in a lower level of need in Medway. However, those changes were not taken forward, and in December 2020, the Government confirmed the use of the existing methodology, with some amendments for larger urban areas.

Robert Jenrick had made it very clear in a statement in December 2020 that the Government would be delivering on its manifesto pledge of 300,000 dwellings a year by the mid 2020's. He stated that Local Housing Need was not a ceiling to growth and encouraged local authorities to exceed their housing needs. The Government had confirmed the standard method in 2020.

National Planning Guidance made it clear that there was expectation that the standard method would be used. Any other method would only be used in exceptional circumstances and would be scrutinised closely at Local Plan Examination by the Planning Inspector. The use of any other method would also face significant challenge at Examination by developers and the land promoters.

Medway Council was committed to establishing the new Local Plan.

D) Councillor Johnson asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

"Has the Leader met the Vice-Chancellor of the University for the Creative Arts to explore options for the retention of the UCA Rochester campus and, if he hasn't, could he explain why not?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Johnson for his question. He said that he had not met the Vice-Chancellor as he met with leading partners on an 'as and when required basis'. This had not been possible in this case because the news had come as a surprise.

Medway's Deputy Chief Executive had been liaising directly with UCA on a regular basis since the announcement had been made in early May, as had been stated at the recent meeting of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In that meeting, the Deputy Chief Executive had set out the contacts he had made with partners to seek solutions with the intention of retaining a UCA presence in Medway. Regular

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contact had been maintained with the Vice-Chancellor since May, and Medway's MPs had also met with him to discuss options and how they could help.

Councillor Jarrett said that an all Member meeting with the Vice-Chancellor had taken place on the evening of 20 July, but that the due to other Council business, he had been unable to log in to the meeting until near the scheduled end time, by which time the meeting had concluded. Based upon notes from the meeting, there appeared to be a possible suggestion from the Vice-Chancellor that Medway Council should fill the funding gap, however, higher education funding was a central Government matter. Councillor Jarrett also had a quote from the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Maple, who had apparently said at this meeting that "HE [Higher Education] is not a local government thing."

Councillor Jarrett said that Medway would do all it could to facilitate the retention of the UCA either in its current, or in a different form. There was opportunity for there to be a substantial UCA presence in Medway going forward, whether on the existing site or another one. However, the UCA had to be willing to have that dialogue and it was a shame that overtures from a potential partner had seemingly gone unanswered for a number of weeks. However, Medway would continue to do all it could. This did not necessarily mean that the Leader of the Council would undertake all meetings personally, as there were highly trained, highly competent officers available, but he would do so where necessary.

E) Councillor Adeoye asked the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, the following:

"Has Councillor Chambers met the Vice-Chancellor of the University for the Creative Arts to explore options for the retention of the UCA Rochester campus and, if he hasn't, could he explain why not?"

Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE said that the Leader of the Council had covered most of his response in his answer to the previous question but that he would provide his prepared answer. The Deputy Chief Executive had been taking the lead on this issue and had been liaising directly with UCA on a regular basis since the closure announcement in early May 2021, as had he, Councillor Chambers, as the Chairman of the Medway Learning Partnership, the Partnership being a coming together of representatives of all the universities in Medway and the higher education sector. This considered how these groups could assist each other in any issues they had at a particular time, with the Partnership meeting twice each year. At most of these meetings, all the universities and further education providers were represented.

Councillor Chambers considered it rather ironic that, on the day of the announcement by the UCA, there had been a meeting that morning of the Medway Learning Partnership, which the UCA had given apologies for. However, there had been an opportunity for the announcement to be brought

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forward and the other universities in Medway should have been informed about the decision. The decision had not been announced until late in the evening and had been embargoed until 10am the following so that nothing could be said until after this. Councillor Chambers concluded that it was difficult to negotiate with parties when they continued to say that their decision was irreversible.

F) Councillor Chrissy Stamp asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

“What economic impact will the potential closure of the Medway campus of the University for the Creative Arts have on Medway and what action has the Portfolio Holder taken to mitigate that impact?”

Councillor Chitty said that she was disappointed that the decision had been made by the University of Creative Arts (UCA) to close its Medway campus from September 2023, and that the Council had made a number of attempts to support the Vice-Chancellor at UCA to find alternative premises in Medway.

Medway’s resilience had been demonstrated previously and there was confidence that this would be the case once again. Medway would still have three thriving universities, more than many cities across the country and Medway maintained the largest further education provision in the County at MidKent College. Prior to the Pandemic, Medway’s economy had witnessed meteoric growth. Just over 10 years ago, Medway’s economy had been valued at £3.3bn; the last 4 years had seen that grow from £4.8bn, to £5.2bn, to £5.6bn to £5.9bn currently and it was anticipated that trajectory would continue following the Pandemic.

G) Councillor Hubbard asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

“The cost of air pollution to the country is well documented, and current estimates put this at around £16 billion a year! The cost to individual lives is perhaps less well publicised, but we have seen the effects in the number of people with compromised lungs suffering in the ongoing COVID crisis.

The Council’s 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report from June last year states that:

“An AQAP for Four Elms AQMA is currently being produced, however this has been delayed with permission by Defra to coincide with the release of the new Medway Local Plan. A draft plan is expected to be available for consultation late 2020.”

This draft plan is not now expected until late 2021. The proposals in the Hoo Development Framework will lead to significant increases in the number of cars using the Four Elms Hill. This coupled with the loss of the rail link into Strood from Sharnal Street and the lack of any proper plans for sustainable transport in relation to the new developments at Hoo is inevitably going to lead to even worse air pollution issues in this part of Medway.

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Can the Portfolio Holder please let us know what the Council plans are for reducing air pollution in this and other areas of our community?"

H) Councillor Murray asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

"As the vaccine programme continues to demand resources and staffing, patients from many areas in Medway are struggling to obtain GP appointments in a timely way and experiencing unacceptably long waits for the phone to be answered at their local surgery. Primary care services are now under huge pressure in the aftermath of Covid and an already fragile, under resourced system is in danger of collapse.

Will the Portfolio Holder join me in writing to the Secretary of State for Health and Care asking that he makes resourcing for primary care an urgent priority?"

I) Councillor Maple asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

"Plantlife, which led the No Mow May campaign, produced a Good Verge Guide with clear advice on maintaining road safety while allowing the grass to grow. It says:

"When implemented, the practical steps outlined in this guide will help to maximise flowering plant diversity on our verges and the subsequent benefits for invertebrates and other wildlife. These guidelines recognise that roads must be kept safe for all users, and that cutting safety cuts, sightlines and junctions are a priority and must be carried out to ensure safety."

The public reaction to the campaign has been overwhelmingly positive, as the people of Medway really do care about our collective environment and tackling the climate emergency.

In response to my question at Business Support O & S on improving the communication around No Mow May and ensuring the work in June and July is dealt with adequately you said "The concept is deeply flawed, and it will not happen again next year as far as I'm concerned, as far as this administration is concerned. It was poorly thought through, the consequences weren't thought through and it was a rush to a biodiversity wheeze."

Do you still plan to scrap No Mow May next year?"

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

"The Labour and Co-operative Group have been consulting on ideas for the new Splashes. These include extensive local community facilities, a health and wellbeing centre, and new facilities for Cozenton Park, linking the indoor with the outdoor.

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Now that plans for the redevelopment of the Splashes Leisure Centre are being drawn up can the Portfolio Holder reassure us that there will be full consultation across both parties and most especially with the local community?"

K) Councillor Prenter asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

"Following the Freedom of Information request to the University for the Creative Arts, which states that Medway Council officers and at least one Councillor were made aware of the challenges faced by the Rochester campus as early as 2018, why did Medway Council not take immediate action to safeguard the long-term benefits of retaining it?"

L) Councillor Mahil asked the Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, the following:

"The proposed closure of the Medway campus of the University for the Creative Arts will have a major impact on education and skills in Medway, particularly the loss of 280 FE students.

What action is the Portfolio Holder taking to mitigate the loss of that provision, which is notable for its diversity, creativity and its capacity to raise aspirations?"

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

"In light of the cross-party consensus behind the initial bid for City of Culture status, and the revelation that Lancashire County Council has withdrawn its bid due to a £22m underwriting commitment, can the Leader confirm the total figure Medway Council has underwritten for the Medway bid and whether this might represent an operational risk to our future financial position?"

N) Councillor Cooper asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

"I have noticed that there seem to be a lot more use of e-scooters recently in Medway, especially in pedestrian areas. I have had residents tell me that they have become a nuisance. Some of these riders do not wear helmets and are uninsured. They have complete disregard for pedestrians, and the number of accidents involving pedestrians has increased. Sadly, we have even seen the tragic news of fatalities as a result of collisions with motor vehicles.

How is the Portfolio Holder ensuring that Medway residents are fully aware of the laws concerning e-scooters, what authority is there with regards to enforcement of the current laws and what provision is the Council putting into place to make sure that residents are safe, as well as fully aware of the laws, and their consequences?"

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O) Councillor Paterson asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

“In April 2018 Lloyds Bank closed its Rochester High Street branch. This impacted on businesses and individuals across Rochester. To then see Lloyds Bank then using the image of Rochester High Street to promote the recovery is embarrassing.

Does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that if Lloyds truly wants to help the recovery of Rochester High Street they should install a free to use ATM in the High Street?”

P) Councillor Howcroft-Scott asked the Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Wildey, the following:

“I am increasingly supporting constituents who are in a telephone queue for nearly 2 hours trying to speak to their doctor’s surgery. In many instances, residents are being cut off from the queue as it is too long. When questioned about this the practice management have blamed telephony errors but these have still to be rectified. While we appreciate that there is a high volume of calls due to the pandemic the waiting time is often in excess of an hour.

Alternatives have been suggested including using internet services such as ‘idoctor’ but these services are inaccessible to many of my residents, especially the elderly who we should not expect to be technologically literate in order to get a doctor’s appointment. How does the Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee feel about this and what steps can be taken to ensure that all residents have decent GP access?”

Q) Councillor Curry asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

“The Labour and Co-operative Group fully support the Council’s bid for the City of Culture in 2025 and City Status bid.

Does the Leader continue to share the concerns raised at the recent overview and scrutiny committee about Medway potentially losing out due to the Government’s levelling-up agenda?”

R) Councillor Sands asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:

“I’ve read with great interest the comments of your fellow ward Councillor in Kent online on 17th June with reference to his concerns about possible 650 houses planned for the Gibraltar Farm area. His worries about whether there would be enough GPs to meet the demands of those house building numbers and of the impact on pre-existing health infrastructure and about our hospital bursting at the seams, stating every person that moves to our area is a

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potential Medway Hospital patient, I'm sure you agree with your ward colleague.

As these are the same concerns of the residents of the Hoo Peninsula where the plan is for 12,000 houses which would, should it happen, will completely overwhelm our local health services and overrun Medway Hospital.

With this in mind, can you ensure the people of the Peninsula, that they can count on both of your support when it comes to objecting to such unsustainable housing numbers on the Peninsula?"

Note: The Mayor stated that since the time allocation for Member questions had been exhausted, a written response would be provided to questions 10G – 10R.

179 Youth Justice Plan - Refresh 2021- 22

Background:

This report provided details of the annual update of the Youth Justice Plan, which set out how youth justice would be delivered locally within available resources.

The report stated that the Plan had been refreshed from last year and co-produced with the Youth Justice Partnership (YJP) and influenced by national research and evidence of effective practice and had taken examples across National Partnerships.

The report had been considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2021 and by the Cabinet on 13 July 2021. The comments, recommendations and decisions of the Committee and Cabinet were set out in sections 6 and 7 of report respectively.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken in relation to the Plan, details of which were set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

Decision:

- a) The Council noted the comments from the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out at section 6 of the report and the decision made by the Cabinet, as set out at section 7 of the report.
- b) The Council approved the Medway Youth Justice Partnership Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023 attached at Appendix 1 to the report, including its

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accompanying delivery plan (attached at Appendix A to the Strategic Plan).

180 School Organisation Proposals 2021

Background:

This report provided details of a number of projects at schools across Medway to provide necessary additional capacity to ensure that the supply of good quality school places was maintained.

The report had been considered by the Cabinet on 13 July 2021, with the Cabinet having approved the projects as set out in section 6 of the report. Due to additions to the Council's Capital Programme being matters for Full Council, the Cabinet also recommended to Council an addition to the Capital Programme to fund the St Nicholas CE Infant School expansion agreed by Cabinet [Decision No. 85/2021 refers].

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

Decision:

The Council agreed to add up to £1.2 million to the 2023/24 Capital Programme to fund the expansion of St Nicholas CE Infant School, as set out in paragraphs 3.20 to 3.29 and paragraph 9.5 to the report.

181 Re:Fit Programme Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)

Background:

This report provided details of the Re:Fit programme; a building retrofit and energy generation programme which would provide considerable revenue savings and deliver on the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration. This would be achieved by an 'invest to save' model where the Re:Fit Framework contractor, Scottish and Southern Energy – SSE, would guarantee the savings.

The report set out that the Re:Fit Programme comprised a number of phases, with Phase 1 works due to commence this summer 2021.

The report had been considered by the Cabinet on 13 July 2021, with the Cabinet having approved the Re:Fit Programme and made the related decisions, as set out in section 5 of the report. Due to additions to the Council's Capital Programme being matters for Full Council, the Cabinet also recommended to Council the addition of up to £8.5 million to the Council's Capital Programme, funded from Prudential Borrowing to deliver phases 2 to 4 of the Re:fit programme [Decision No. 63/2021] refers.

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The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, supported by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

Decision:

The Council agreed the addition of up to £8.5 million to the Council's Capital Programme, funded from Prudential Borrowing, to deliver phases 2 to 4 of the Re:fit programme.

182 Community Governance Review - Review of Parish Electoral Arrangements

Background:

This report set out matters for consideration regarding the conduct of a Community Governance Review (GCR) and sought approval of the terms of reference and other administrative matters associated with the review.

The report stated that it was proposed to conclude the CGR and submit recommendations back to Full Council in July 2022, allowing a 12 month period from the date the Council approved the Terms of Reference.

The Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Rupert Turpin, supported by Councillor Buckwell, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

Decision:

- a) The Council approved the establishment of an informal cross-party Member and officer working group as set out in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.8 of the report to undertake a Community Governance Review of Parish electoral arrangements.
- b) The Council agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Legal & Governance to conduct the Community Governance Review in consultation with an informal cross-party Member and officer working group as set out in paragraph 4.4 to 4.8 of the report and to report back the outcome of the Review to Council.
- c) The Council agreed that the rules for the appointment of substitute Councillors for the working group be as set out in paragraph 4.6 of the report.
- d) The Council agreed that the appointment of Councillors to serve on the working group should be made by the Chief Executive in accordance with the wishes of the relevant Group Leaders and Group Whips.

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- e) The Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review attached to this report as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- f) The Council noted the likely maximum spend for the purpose of the conduct of the Community Governance Review, as set out in paragraph 8.1 of the report.

183 Findings from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Background:

This report provided Council with the findings of a recent investigation undertaken by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) that related to both Housing and Children's Services. The report confirmed that the Council had complied with all the recommendations set out in the LGSCO's report, including further training.

As required by the LGSCO, the Cabinet had considered the Ombudsman findings on 4 May 2021 (attached at Appendix A to the report), which identified fault that had caused injustice and set out a range of recommendations for the Council. The Cabinet had noted the Ombudsman findings.

The report had also been considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2021 and the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 July 2021. The comments of these Committees were set out in sections 4 and 5 of report respectively.

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

Decision:

- a) The Council noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out at sections 4 and 5 of the report.
- b) The Council noted the report, including the update set out in section 6 of the report and the Ombudsman's report attached at Appendix A.

184 Use of Urgency Provisions and a Constitutional Matter

Background:

This report provided details of recent usage of urgency provisions contained within the Constitution. It also set out an error that had been made in the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 July 2020.

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The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

Decision:

- a) The Council noted the report with regards to the use of urgency provisions set out in the report.
- b) The Council noted that minute no. 101E/2020 (Full Council 16 July 2020) was recorded incorrectly and that it should have indicated that the motion was agreed.

185 Motions

A) Councillor Johnson submitted the following:

Councillor Johnson proposed an alteration to his previously submitted motion. In accordance with Council Rule 11.4.1, the meeting's consent was signified without discussion, therefore, the altered motion, supported by Councillor Jarrett was considered as follows [changes from the published motion are shown in bold]:

"University for the Creative Arts: Motion to Council

This council notes with concern the proposal by the University for the Creative Arts to close its campus in Medway and to cease Further Education provision across all its campuses, including its FE provision in Medway. This move will result in the loss of approximately 150 highly-skilled and well-paid jobs, the loss of 280 FE students and the loss of 1,000 HE students in Medway. This council:

- Recognises the central role played by the UCA and its predecessors in the economic, cultural and educational life of the Medway area since the nineteenth century
- Recognises the key role played by the creative sector in the Medway economy and in Medway's cultural life
- Appreciates the vital contribution of the UCA to Medway's bid for City of Culture
- Understands the importance of education in the creative arts to raising the aspirations of Medway residents, particularly our young residents, and to enhancing skill levels.

Council acknowledges that the loss of the UCA in Medway will have an unacceptable impact on our future and therefore resolves to undertake all possible **practical** measures to ensure that there is a continued and significant presence of the UCA within Medway, including:

- Urgently **help in** identifying appropriate accommodation and facilitating its use by the UCA

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- ~~Vigorous~~ pursuing options, including investment options, for partnerships with Medway Council and others that will ensure that the UCA remains in Medway
- **Working with partner organisations to find a HE solution that will give the UCA every opportunity of retaining a presence in Medway**
- Urgently engage with MPs and government to identify a resolution that safeguards the UCA's vital contribution to Medway's economy, educational provision and the diversity and creativity of our cultural life."

Decision:

Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was carried:

University for the Creative Arts

This Council notes with concern the proposal by the University for the Creative Arts to close its campus in Medway and to cease Further Education (FE) provision across all its campuses, including its FE provision in Medway. This move will result in the loss of approximately 150 highly-skilled and well-paid jobs, the loss of 280 FE students and the loss of 1,000 HE students in Medway.

This Council:

- Recognises the central role played by the UCA and its predecessors in the economic, cultural and educational life of the Medway area since the nineteenth century.
- Recognises the key role played by the creative sector in the Medway economy and in Medway's cultural life.
- Appreciates the vital contribution of the UCA to Medway's bid for City of Culture.
- Understands the importance of education in the creative arts to raising the aspirations of Medway residents, particularly our young residents, and to enhancing skill levels.

Council acknowledges that the loss of the UCA in Medway will have an unacceptable impact on our future and therefore resolves to undertake all practical measures to ensure that there is a continued and significant presence of the UCA within Medway, including:

- Urgently help in identifying appropriate accommodation and facilitating its use by the UCA.
- Working with partner organisations to find a HE solution that will give the UCA every opportunity of retaining a presence in Medway.

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- Urgently engage with MPs and government to identify a resolution that safeguards the UCA's vital contribution to Medway's economy, educational provision and the diversity and creativity of our cultural life.

B) Councillor Chitty, supported by Councillor Potter, submitted the following:

"Local Involvement in Planning Decisions

This Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications."

Councillor Osborne, supported by Councillor Chitty proposed the following amendment:

"This Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications.

Add: The Council asks the Chief Executive to write to the three Medway Members of Parliament – Kelly Tolhurst, Rehman Chishti and Tracey Crouch – to inform them of this motion and to oppose the "Developers Charter" Planning Bill and for the letters and any responses to be published for residents."

Amended motion reads:

"This Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications.

The council asks the Chief Executive to write to the three Medway Members of Parliament – Kelly Tolhurst, Rehman Chishti and Tracey Crouch – to inform them of this motion and to oppose the "Developers Charter" Planning Bill and for the letters and any responses to be published for residents."

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

For – Councillors Adeoye, Aldous, Brake, Buckwell, Carr, Rodney Chambers OBE, Chitty, Cooper, Doe, Gulvin, Howcroft-Scott, Hubbard, Mrs Josie Iles, Jarrett, Johnson, Kemp, Khan, Murray, Osborne, Potter, Prenter, Purdy, Chrissy Stamp, Rupert Turpin and Wildey (25).

Against – None (0).

Abstain – Councillor Pendergast and Sands (2).

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Decision:

Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was carried:

This Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications.

The council asks the Chief Executive to write to the three Medway Members of Parliament – Kelly Tolhurst, Rehman Chishti and Tracey Crouch – to inform them of this motion and to oppose the “Developers Charter” Planning Bill and for the letters and any responses to be published for residents.

Mayor

Date:

Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services

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