



Record of Cabinet decisions

Tuesday, 19 October 2021

3.00pm to 4.14pm

Date of publication: 20 October 2021

Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 28 October 2021

Present:	Councillor Alan Jarrett	Leader of the Council
	Councillor David Brake	Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services
	Councillor Jane Chitty	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation
	Councillor Phil Filmer	Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services
	Councillor Adrian Gulvin	Portfolio Holder for Resources
	Councillor Mrs Josie Iles	Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member (statutory responsibility)
	Councillor Martin Potter	Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools
In Attendance:	Neil Davies, Chief Executive	
	Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance	
	Teri Reynolds, Democratic Services Officer	

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Doe, Rodney Chambers OBE and Hackwell.

Record of decisions

The record of the meeting held on 28 September 2021 was agreed by the Cabinet and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Cabinet, 19 October 2021

Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor Filmer declared an OSI in relation to item 10 (Medway Norse Update) as he had been appointed as a Director of the Board. Councillor Filmer therefore withdrew for the discussion and decision on this item.

Other interests

There were none.

National Bus Strategy, Enhanced Partnerships and Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP)

Background:

This report set out the Council's proposed Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for Medway. It also detailed the National Bus Strategy which raised an expectation for local transport authorities to set up Enhanced Partnerships and to publish a local BSIP by the end of October 2021.

Engagement had taken place with key stakeholders and the outcome of that was set out at Appendix A. The proposed BSIP, was attached to the report at Appendix B.

Decision number: ***Decision:***

110/2021 **The Cabinet approved the publication of the Bus Service Improvement Plan, as set out at Appendix B, supported by evidence of engagement with key stakeholders, for submission to the Department for Transport by the 31 October 2021 deadline.**

Reasons:

To ensure Medway Council demonstrates its commitment to the principles outlined in the National Bus Strategy, securing existing funding allocations, and putting the Council in a position where it can bid for future funding to improve public transport in Medway.

Better Care Fund

Background:

This report provided an update on Medway's Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan for 2021-2022. The report explained that local areas were required to keep their existing BCF Plans (2017-2019) in place to cover the 2020/21 financial year, due to the response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Cabinet had agreed in March 2021 to further extend Medway's current BCF and S75 arrangements, to allow the services which sit within the BCF to continue to operate seamlessly until Government issue new planning guidance for 2021/22.

Cabinet, 19 October 2021

A new National BCF policy framework had since been published. The planning template, including national conditions for 2021/22, had also been released on 1 October 2021 for submission by 11 November 2021. A new BCF narrative plan had been developed, which was attached to the report at Appendix A and the report sought delegated authority to complete the BCF planning template and to agree any necessary extension of the new BCF plan and S75 in 2022/23, to cover possible delays in the release of BCF planning guidance for the coming financial year.

Decision number: **Decision:**

111/2021 The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority for the development and delivery of Medway's Better Care Fund programme to the Director of People - Children and Adults Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, the Assistant Director, Legal and Governance and the Director of Integrated Care Commissioning, Medway and Swale, on behalf of the Kent and Medway CCG.

112/2021 The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of People – Children and Adults Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, the Assistant Director, Legal and Governance and the Director of Integrated Care Commissioning, Medway and Swale, on behalf of the Kent and Medway CCG, to agree any necessary extension of the new BCF plan and S75 in 2022/23, to cover possible delays from Government in the release of BCF planning guidance for the coming financial year.

Reasons:

Enabling these delegations allows the services which sit within the BCF to continue to operate seamlessly until the Government issue new planning guidance for 2021/22 and will enable Medway's Better Care Fund programme to be developed and submitted by the 11 November 2021 deadline.

Medway Council Education Strategic Framework

Background:

This report provided two documents for Cabinet approval, the Medway Education Strategy 2021-2024 (Appendix 1) and the Medway School Effectiveness Strategy 2021-2024 (Appendix 2). These documents, alongside the Council's School Place Planning Strategy and the SEND Strategy, would together form Medway Council's education strategic framework.

The framework would seek to outline the role for the local authority:

Cabinet, 19 October 2021

As a result of the 2010 coalition Government's white paper, the Importance of Teaching, and how the Council intends to meet requirements;

To ensure school effectiveness aims, priorities and principles as well as operational arrangements for quality assuring, monitoring and evaluating and supporting and challenging schools.

A diversity impact assessment had been carried out and was attached at Appendix 3.

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 30 September 2021 and its comments were set out at section 6 of the report.

Decision number:

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in section 6 of the report.

113/2021 The Cabinet approved the Education Strategic Framework, as detailed within the strategies attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

Reasons:

The strategic framework allows the Council to set out how as an organisation it will look to enable the system to achieve the aims set out in the Council's strategy.

Annual Review of the School Place Planning Strategy 2018-2022

Background:

This report provided an update on the progress made against the School Place Planning Strategy 2018-22, highlighting areas of demand for school places, action taken and made recommendations to ensure that sufficient good quality school places were available.

The annual review report, and its recommendations were based upon the annual round of forecasting undertaken in April 2021, using the latest available data. It would be the last annual review of the current strategy, with a new School Place Planning Strategy being expected to be presented to Members in the Spring of 2022.

Cabinet, 19 October 2021

**Decision
number:**

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the excellent progress made against the School Organisation Plan and School Place Planning Strategy frameworks, which have ensured that the Council has met its duty and sufficient school places are currently available to meet demand.

114/2021

The Cabinet approved the commencement of a review of capacity and school organisation arrangements within Medway including the reorganisation of Published Admission Numbers (PANs) as a result of recent lowering birth rates, and the impact of local housing development to ensure that all areas have a sufficient supply of school places, whilst avoiding over provision a set out in paragraphs 6.5 to 6.6 of the report.

115/2021

The Cabinet authorised officers to undertake further feasibility studies and statutory consultations as necessary to ensure that plans are in place to meet demand as and where it emerges.

The Cabinet noted the ongoing work being undertaken to ensure sufficient Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision is available within Medway as set out in section 8 of the report.

The Cabinet noted the limited funding position for providing school places and to support officers' efforts in acquiring additional funding or identifying alternative means of ensuring sufficient and appropriate school places across all sectors continues to be available.

116/2021

The Cabinet approved the use of s106 funding to provide additional classrooms and facilities at Wayfield Primary School to accommodate bulge classes as set out in paragraph 6.24 of the report.

117/2021

The Cabinet recommended full Council to add £1,870,500 to the Capital Programme to complete the resourced provision projects at the Howard School, Strood Academy and Victory Academy together with the special school expansion at Bradfields as set out in paragraphs 8.11 to 8.13 of the report.

Reasons:

By approving the recommendations in section 15 of this report, the Cabinet will be ensuring that the Council meets its statutory duty to ensure sufficient good quality school places are available.

Annual Fostering Report

Background:

This report provided details of the work completed by the Fostering Service over the last year, how in-house fostering services had met the needs of Medway's looked after children and of the work which should be undertaken in the coming year. The report detailed the work for the financial year April 2020 to March 2021.

The annual report was considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 September 2021, details of which were set out at section 4 of the report.

Decision number:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out at section 4 of the report.

The Cabinet noted the Fostering Service Annual Report 2020-21.

Reasons:

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

Covid-19 Recovery

Background:

This report provided an update on the Council's recovery from the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) global pandemic, following a previous Cabinet report in March 2021. It outlined how the Council was using the opportunity to 'Build Back Better' and to identify opportunities for Medway to emerge stronger and more resilient from the pandemic.

The report had also been considered by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 August 2021 and its comments were set out in section 8 of the report. Appendix 1 to the report set out a briefing note in response to requests for further information made by the Committee.

Decision number:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny, as set out in section 8 of the report.

Cabinet, 19 October 2021

The Cabinet noted the overall approach set out in the report and the proposal to mainstream this activity into Business as Usual

Reasons:

To highlight the role that the Council has played in responding to Covid-19 as well as supporting the process in place for managing the restarting of services post lockdown and longer-term recovery.

Medway Norse Update

Background:

This report provided details of a mid-year review of the performance of the Joint Venture from the perspective of the Council client for the 2021/22 financial year. It was accompanied by an update on the Joint Venture's achievements and financial performance prepared by the Partnership Director at Medway Norse. The report provided a breakdown of performance for each service area covered by Medway Norse.

Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the contents of this report and its Appendix.

Reasons:

When the Cabinet agreed to establish the joint venture company it was also agreed that regular monitoring reports would be provided to Cabinet.

Gateway 1 Procurement Commencement: Recycling Resource Management Contract

Background:

This report sought permission to commence the procurement process for the Recycling Resource Management Contract. The contract, which would expire on 30 September 2022, directly impacted on Medway's kerbside recycling collection service as the disposal point handling an average of 64,000 tonnes of recycling per annum.

The Council had engaged a consultant support the procurement of the contract and a soft market test had been carried out to measure interest and gain views on current market conditions. The full report for this exercise and the financial analysis was included in the exempt appendix to the report.

Cabinet, 19 October 2021

This Gateway 1 report had been approved for submission to Cabinet after review and discussion at Procurement Board.

Decision number: **Decision:**

118/2021 **The Cabinet approved the commencement of procurement, as set out in the exempt appendix to the report, using the open procedure and for the contract length to be two years, with the option to extend for two years by mutual agreement.**

Reasons:

The preferred procurement route gives Medway Council confidence that they are getting the best possible deal through an open market competition and securing a contract ready for 1 October 2022 to meet its statutory obligations.

Gateway 1 Procurement Commencement: Advocacy Services to Meet the Needs of Birth Mothers Whose Children are on the Edge of or in Care (Repeat Removals)

Background:

This report sought permission to commence the procurement process for the of advocacy co-ordination to meet the needs of mothers whose children are on the edge or in care, so they can protect and care for themselves and their children.

The report detailed the types of support that the contract would provide to such families and gave details on the number of mothers and children that would fall within the service user cohort. It would create a wider strategy to reduce the numbers of children coming into care which would help to control spends and support the Council to meet its statutory obligations and ambitions.

The exempt appendix to the report contained financial analysis in relation to the proposals.

This Gateway 1 report had been approved for submission to Cabinet after review and discussion at Procurement Board.

Decision number: **Decision:**

119/2021 **The Cabinet approved the commencement of procurement to procure through an open tender an advocacy service aimed at women whose children are on the edge or in care (Option 4 to the report).**

Cabinet, 19 October 2021

Reasons:

This proposal is to make a more sustainable integrated model which will need some additional investment spread across multiple agencies, and a coordinator post to oversee the programme, but will provide some long-term sustainability of the approach and allow for outcomes to be monitored.

The funding would be staggered, with costs reducing year-on-year, and with a commitment to include the requirement in future contract re-procurements to absorb some of the costs and to formalise responsibilities (when contracts are due to be renewed). This approach means that specialists in the key vulnerabilities can work with the family (mental health, drug and alcohol, etc) and would operate in a similar way to the maternity continuity of care model that an individual will be introduced at the start to the small team that will be working with them and cases will be discussed in triage meetings.

The staggered approach would also give the system (Council/NHS/Police/VCS etc) a chance to embed this area of work as a priority gain with shared buy in and funding built into strategies to change working practices.

The benefits of the project will allow for initial piloting and the learning to inform the pathway, early identification of risks to better manage the growing demand for services and prevent more children coming into care. There will be mitigations to be put in place to address future funding and sources not open to the Council.

Building partnerships between the statutory and independent sector through a partnership agreement, governance, information sharing, risks sharing etc to use synergies to meet needs

.....
Leader of the Council

.....
Date

Teri Reynolds, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01634 332104
Email: democratic.services@medway.gov.uk