

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Medway Council**  
**Thursday, 21 April 2022**  
**7.00pm to 11.10pm**

**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, Ahmed, Barrett, Brake, Buckwell,  
Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers, OBE, Chitty, Clarke,  
Cooper, Curry, Etheridge, Edwards, Fearn, Filmer, Sylvia Griffin,  
Gulvin, Hackwell, Howcroft-Scott, Hubbard, Jarrett, Johnson,  
Kemp, Khan, Lammas, Lloyd, Mahil, Maple, McDonald, Murray,  
Osborne, Paterson, Pendergast, Potter, Price, Purdy, Sands,  
Chrissy Stamp, Tejan, Thorne, Tranter, Mrs Elizabeth Turpin,  
Rupert Turpin, Van Dyke, Wildey and Williams

**In Attendance:** Neil Davies, Chief Executive  
Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance  
Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services  
Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer

**821 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Browne, Doe, Mrs Josie Iles, Opara, Prenter, Andy Stamp and Thompson.

**822 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor Gulvin declared an OSI in relation to agenda item No. 15 (Contract Letting - Exceptional Circumstances) as he is a Board Member of Medway Development Company Ltd (MDC). He relied on a dispensation granted by the Councillor Conduct Committee to enable him to take part in any discussions and votes thereon.

## **Council, 21 April 2022**

### Other interests

Councillor McDonald declared an interest in a response given to public question 7E as he is aligned to one of the organisations mentioned. Councillor McDonald remained in the room during the response.

Councillor Cooper declared an interest in a response given to public question 7E as Medway Voluntary Action was mentioned and Councillor Cooper is a befriender for this organisation. Councillor Cooper remained in the room during this response.

### **823 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 24 February 2022 was agreed by the Council and signed by The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway as correct.

### **824 Mayor's announcements**

The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway said that Members would be aware of the passing of two of the Council's Honorary Aldermen, Ted Baker and Tom Mason.

Alderman Baker had served continuously on Medway Council between 1997 and 2015 representing St Margaret's and Borstal and then Rochester West ward. Alderman Baker had served as Mayor of Medway twice and had been Deputy Mayor twice. In recognition of his significant contribution to Medway, he had been awarded the title of Honorary Alderman in October 2015.

Alderman Mason had represented Medway continuously for more than 40 years, having been first elected to the Frindsbury Extra ward on Strood Rural District Council, followed by the City of Rochester-upon-Medway Council and then Medway Council. He had also served as a Member of Kent County Council. He had previously served as Mayor of Rochester-upon-Medway on two occasions. In October 2021, he had been awarded the title of Honorary Alderman in recognition of his outstanding service.

The Mayor also announced that Brian Prodger, the husband of ex-Councillor Angela Prodger, had also recently passed away. Former Councillor Prodger had served as a Councillor on the City of Rochester-upon-Medway Council and then Medway Council. She had served as Mayor, with Mr Prodger having supported her as consort.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, said that Alderman Baker had been dependable, had a great sense of humour and had stood up for what he considered to be right for Medway. Alderman Mason had strongly held beliefs and views and would be much missed.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Maple, reflected that Alderman Mason had been dedicated to public service and to Strood. Councillor Maple echoed the Leader's comment that Alderman Baker had stood up for what he believed

## Council, 21 April 2022

was right and had been passionate about his Council work and the local community.

Other Members of the Council added their tributes.

A minute's silence was held in memory of Honorary Aldermen Baker and Mason and Mr Prodger.

### 825 Leader's announcements

The Leader of the Council advised of a proposal to grant the Freedom of the Borough to the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, on behalf of the Chatham Dockyard workforce. This would be in recognition of the outstanding service of this workforce at the time of the Falklands Conflict.

Although it had been suggested that the proposal be considered at the Annual meeting of Medway Council in May, this had not taken account of previous protocol that the Council would agree the intention to award freedom status at a Council meeting and then bestow that status at a Special Council meeting. The Leader had, therefore, instructed that consultations took place to ensure that freedom status could be appropriately granted and the protocol followed.

### 826 Petitions

#### **Public:**

A petition was submitted, which had been signed by 16 members of the public. This related to overgrown trees on Gillingham Green that overlooked Layfield Road and called on the Council to trim the trees in this area.

#### **Member:**

Councillor Price submitted a petition on behalf of members of the public. The petition, which had been signed by 26 people, related to the access road to the rear of Granville Road, Gillingham. The petition called on the Council to make repairs to potholes on the road and to improve drainage.

Councillor Cooper submitted a petition on behalf of members of the public. The petition, which had been signed by residents of Gillingham North ward related to the Sunlight Centre in Gillingham. The petition called on the Council to register the Sunlight Centre as an Asset of Community Value.

### 827 Public questions

**Question A - Alan Stockey of Rainham asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

“Given all the focus on air quality and the current concerning state in Four Elms Hill, I want to ask why there is no reference to air quality in section 11 of the

## Council, 21 April 2022

Climate Change Action Plan - Resilience, which currently focuses exclusively on flood and extremes of temperature?”

Responding on behalf of Councillor Doe, the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, thanked Mr Stockey for his question. He said that air quality was an important part of the Climate Change agenda and was included within the Climate Change Action Plan under Priority Area 6 - Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity. There were a number of measures under this priority area which ensured that the Air Quality Action Plan was delivered.

Councillor Gulvin said that the Climate Change Action Plan aligned with the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy, where air quality measures also sat under Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity.

**Question B - Louise Smith of Rochester asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

“I note with amazement that despite thousands of people being on the Medway housing waiting list, that properties in Chatham Waters and Rochester Riverside are currently being advertised in Hong Kong by Peel and Countryside Partnership. The Chatham Waters development was reported by the Medway Messenger on 2nd April.

It is therefore shocking that the position of this Council’s leadership is to lose hundreds and hundreds of quality jobs to build more properties to be bought by investors in the Southern Hemisphere not by Medway residents.

Will the Portfolio Holder confirm she still wants hundreds of jobs lost with the housing being bought by individuals overseas, depriving local people of both employment and homes?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Ms Smith for her question. She said that the matter was a commercial decision by the company concerned and that the firm had stated that it had created 199 new homes for Chatham residents.

It was understood that properties would be sold to a property investor and a company appointed by the investor as an agent to let and manage the properties. This would give control to ensure that these properties were occupied by local people.

Councillor Chitty understood that related planning issues would be considered by the Council’s Planning Committee.

**Question C - Karen Turner of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services – Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:**

“I am a teaching assistant in a Medway school. Support staff like myself have worked hard throughout the pandemic supporting the education of children and

## Council, 21 April 2022

enabling other key workers to continue doing their vital jobs. Medway Council has miscalculated holiday pay for term time only workers for many years, yet you are offering Medway staff (like myself) just half of what was given to Kent workers over the same issue.

Why did you clap us during the pandemic and now think we are only worth half of what our colleagues in Kent received?"

Responding on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter thanked Mrs Turner for her question. He said that the offer to compensate employees for changes made to term time holiday pay calculations had arisen due to a Supreme Court ruling involving a non-Medway academy trust. The court had made a ruling but there was no specific mechanism for providing additional funds in relation to past school budgets, which was why negotiations had taken place regarding the offer in Medway.

Kent County Council had offered actual back pay to their employees, whilst Medway had offered to pay the weekly pay at the current pay rate, which was more generous per person for most employees.

Kent's Schools Forum had been able to identify reserves of £9 million from the Government funded Designated Schools Grant to fund the offer. Medway did not have such reserves, but in any case, this was funding that would not now be spent on school provision. Further compensation would impact significantly upon schools' budgets and ultimately on education.

Councillor Potter said that the Medway offer was still more generous than the National legislative frameworks relating to holiday pay compensation.

**Question D - Vivienne Parker of Chatham asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

"What can the Council do to stop people waiting outside Balfour Infants School leaving their car engines running for up to 10 minutes, waiting for their children to come out?"

Responding on behalf of Councillor Doe, the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, thanked Ms Parker for her question. He said that the idling of car engines outside schools was an issue which had been raised previously with the Council and that an all schools email had been sent out in January 2022. This had provided schools with information they could send out to parents, including ideas for schools to help promote anti-idling.

Council Gulvin advised that the Council's Environmental Protection team had received funding through the DEFRA Air Quality Programme to undertake an anti-idling signage project in the Rainham Air Quality Management Area, which would commence during 2022. It was proposed that this would be rolled out

## Council, 21 April 2022

across other areas of Medway where idling had been identified as being an issue.

The approach being taken by Medway Council was one of education and promotion of the issues, following the guidance issued by the Department for Transport.

### **Question E - Satinder Shokar of Rochester asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

“The third sector has been taking on a greater burden due to the pandemic and will now also have the cost of living crisis presenting it with more and more challenges. The sector is already desperate for more funding, so this is a matter of great urgency.

Will the Council be able to help by increasing funding for these organisations?”

Responding on behalf of Councillor Doe, the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, thanked Mr Shokar for his question. He said that the Council had commissioned the Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) ‘Medway Better Together’ consortium contract, which would end in December 2023 and was currently under review as part of the procurement process. This would look at value for money and achievements to inform the new contract. The contract was made of five service lots which were part of a single contract.

The five lots were:

Lot 1 - Infrastructure support to voluntary and community services organisations in Medway, which had been awarded to Medway Voluntary Action (MVA).

Lot 2 - local Healthwatch, which had been awarded to Engaging Kent.

Lot 3 – welfare, debt and advice support service, which had been awarded to Citizens Advice Medway.

Lot 4 - carers information, guidance and support, young carers and carer support payments, which had been awarded to Carers First.

Lot 5 - support and information services for the visually impaired, which had been awarded to Kent Association for the Blind.

Councillor Gulvin said that the consortium had key objectives, which included supporting funding opportunities and sustainability for smaller VCS organisations. Since the award, MVA had supported the sector with over £4,648,989 in income generation and were now a single point of contact to address relevant issues, risks and opportunities on behalf of the Council. All VCS organisations were encouraged to seek support through MVA to secure funding, in addition to other sources of funding that might be available to them.

**Question F - Bryan Fowler of Chatham asked the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, the following:**

“In the recent Medway Matters magazine, it states how residents gave their views on proposals about how the Paddock area could be landscaped, including planting and a fountain.

What were the outcomes of the survey regarding the proposal to level the Paddock and to install a water fountain?”

In response to Mr Fowler’s question, Councillor Chambers said that the responses from the survey had highlighted strong support for the proposals. There would be changes incorporated into the landscaping, as the footpaths would be made more accessible by widening and reducing the gradients. Accessibility would also be enhanced by creating a new central open space, in compliance with the Equality Act. However, the majority of planting, lawn and tree areas, would be retained at the same level. There would be no overall increase in the area or amount of hardstanding in the new design from what already existed.

Councillor Chambers said that the majority of survey responses had supported the creation of a water feature and The Chatham Forum had supported the water feature from a business and retail perspective, provided it was maintained and anti-vandalism measures accommodated. The water feature would provide a focal point for the central open space, which residents had strongly supported in the survey.

There would be a public information event during summer 2022, to showcase the final designs of the Paddock.

**Question G - Kate Belmonte, on behalf of Medway Green Party, asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

“The Office for National Statistics, a non-ministerial Government Department, conducted the latest ten yearly National Census in 2021. The Census results have demonstrated, clearly and conclusively, that we only need half the houses currently being demanded by Central Government.

On 14 February 2022, our Housing Advisor, Bernard Hyde Dip Arch RIBA Dip, sent Councillor Jarrett a copy of a parliamentary briefing document, from the House of Commons Library, on 'calculating housing need'.

Is Medway Council, now planning to live in the real world of up-to-date population data or continue with housing proposals that risk our food security, precious green spaces and internationally protected nature reserves on the Hoo Peninsula?”

## Council, 21 April 2022

Councillor Chitty thanked Mrs Belmonte for her question. She said that the Council had put this question to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities over many years. The repeated response had been that housing need should be calculated using the Government's set standard methodology, which was based on the 2014 projections. This had been substantiated by decisions relating to planning appeals and inspections of Local Plans throughout the Country.

Councillor Chitty said that the only chance of Medway being able to produce a sound Local Plan would be by demonstrating how it could meet housing and growth needs, as identified using the Government's set methodology.

### **Question H - Kate Belmonte of Gillingham asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:**

"The air quality throughout Medway is regularly affecting the health of our residents, with readings often exceeding not only WHO limits but also our own governmental targets. There are a number of ways to tackle this health crisis but one of the definitive ways is to reduce the number of cars on our roads. Parents transporting their children to/from school using cars not only increases air pollution but also makes roads more dangerous for those families trying to reduce their carbon footprint and improve their physical health by walking/cycling.

In order to increase the number of parents, children and youths walking and cycling to/from school and thus reducing the number of cars on our roads, will the Council commit to introducing 20mph speed limit zones across Medway during the hours of 8am - 9am and 3pm - 4pm, thus making it safer for our citizens."

Councillor Filmer thanked Mrs Belmonte for her question. He said that the Council was committed to improving air quality for residents and future generations and this was reflected in its Climate Change Action Plan.

The Council would consider proposals for lower speed limits where it was appropriate to do so and where evidence suggested it would produce real benefits in terms of safety for all road users. The use of lower speed limits was just one of the tools available to support walking and cycling to school.

The Council promoted initiatives to encourage walking and cycling throughout the academic year and supported walk to school events in partnership with the KM charity. It also provided bikeability training to schools in Medway to promote safe cycling and it was very pleasing that ten Medway Schools had been recognised for their achievements at the Green School awards ceremony, held in November 2021. Councillor Filmer encouraged all Medway schools to promote active travel and the benefits to health and wellbeing it brought.



**Question I - James Braithwaite, on behalf of GMB Medway Branch, asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services - Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:**

"GMB term time only members have, by a significant margin, voted against Medway Council's pitiful offer of just two weeks compensation for miscalculation of holiday pay. Why are the Council insisting on imposing the offers and not returning to the negotiation table?"

Responding on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter thanked Mr Braithwaite for his question. He said that the GMB had undertaken a consultative ballot rejecting the compensation offered while Unison members had voted overwhelmingly to accept the Medway offer.

Given that trade union members had voted differently, it had been decided to go out to individual members of staff so that they could decide whether they wished to accept the compensation offer.

Councillor Potter said that the Medway offer was based upon affordability and was aimed at limiting the impact on current school budgets, bearing in mind that there was no specific mechanism to make payments from previous school budgets. However, the offer was still more generous than national legislative frameworks relating to holiday pay compensation.

**Question J - Bernard Hyde of Rochester asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

"In view of the latest very concerning report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, will Medway Council now work with their partners in the South Thames Building Control Partnership (Canterbury City Council, Gravesham Borough Council and Swale Borough Council) to bring forward the Future Homes Standards on all new buildings with immediate effect?"

The IPCC report clearly indicates that time is fast running out and we need to take action now, before it is too late."

Councillor Chitty said that as the current Chairman of the Building Control Partnership, she could give assurance that there had been considerable discussion between the partner authorities.

Council officers well understood building control issues in the context of climate change and recommendations made by the Government. However, Councillor Chitty did have concerns relating to developers who used independent contractors to undertake their building control work and would be interested in receiving any further comments that Mr Hyde might have.

**Question K – Phil Taylor of Gillingham submitted the following to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:**

Following Councillor Chitty's offer made at the Council meeting on the 7th October 2021 to use Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers at Chatham Docks, what steps have been undertaken by Medway Council to respond to the letter from Dentons, dated 25th November 2021 and the follow-up from Dentons on the 14th January 2022, both addressed to Councillor Jarrett and Chief Executive, Neil Davies, to investigate this opportunity?

**Note:** As Mr Taylor was not present at the meeting, the Mayor stated that he would receive a written response to his question, 7K, in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

**828 Leader's report**

**Discussion:**

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

- The impact of the war in Ukraine and the hosting of refugees in Medway.
- The Development of the Innovation Park Medway Northern and Southern sites.
- Development of the former Strood civic site and reinstatement of the Strood Community trail.
- The competition of Rochester Riverside phases 1 to 3.
- The New Healthy Living Centre in the Pentagon Shopping Centre.
- Progress on the Brook Theatre and St John's Church works.
- Progression of the Housing Infrastructure Fund project.
- The Children's Services improvement journey and progress being made.
- Concern about Covid-19 rule breaking by politicians at national level.
- The Medway Go children's activity programme that had run during the Easter holiday. This had started in 2021 and had received £1.1million of funding.
- Concerns about progress on the development of Medway's new Local Plan.
- The impact of high transport costs and the cost of electric car charging points.
- Success of the English Festival held at Riverside Country Park.
- Plans to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in Medway.
- Difficulties facing the health service in relation to funding, recruitment and the high cost of living.
- Pay of school term-time only staff.
- Workforce planning and the future availability of adequate numbers of staff to support public services.
- Concern about local provision of bus services.

## **829 Report on Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

### **Discussion:**

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

- The topic of the next Overview and Scrutiny Task Group. This would be GP Appointments and Access to Services, followed by Physical Activity.
- Concerns about progress being made in the development of Medway's new Local Plan and the impact of Government requirements.
- The Call in of a Cabinet decision in relation to proposals regarding the development of the Queen Street Car Park site.
- Promotions recently secured by Medway Rugby Club and Chatham Town Football Club.
- The high cost of living, the need for people to use foodbanks and concern that activities that had been accessible to all were now becoming unaffordable for many.
- The importance of the Council Tax Reduction scheme.

### **Decision:**

The Council noted the report.

## **830 Nominations of Mayor and Deputy Mayor 2022/23**

Councillor Griffin, supported by Councillor Hackwell, proposed that Councillor Aldous be nominated as the Mayor of Medway for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

On being put to the vote, the nomination of Councillor Aldous was agreed.

Councillor Buckwell, supported by Councillor Tejan, proposed that Councillor Barrett be nominated as the Deputy Mayor of Medway for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

On being put to the vote the nomination of Councillor Barrett was agreed.

## **831 Members' questions**

### **Question A - Councillor Murray asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

"Following Russia's declaration of war against Ukraine there has been a commendable and sincere outpouring of support from our community in Medway, with many generous donations for victims displaced by the war and volunteer groups working hard to coordinate collections, packing and transport.

Now that the government has put local councils at the centre of the scheme to offer sanctuary to Ukrainian refugees, can the Leader of the Council tell me

## Council, 21 April 2022

what steps he has taken to ensure that any refugees who may come to Medway will get the services and support they need?"

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Murray for her question. He said that Medway was proud that 59 Medway households had so far come forward to open up their homes to people who were fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. Whilst some guidance was awaited from the Government, the Council stood ready to support Ukrainians and sponsors through the process.

Over 30 households had either completed or booked for the required checks to take place. Sponsors were being informed of the process and provided support where necessary.

Regular meetings were held with senior officers to understand the issues and Councillor Jarrett had assembled a small group of Councillor colleagues and senior officers to meet on a fortnightly basis in order to review the issues and ensure good progress of the work.

The first priority had been to ensure that safeguarding issues were addressed. Work was being undertaken to ensure arrivals received the health and social care they needed and that children had access to schooling. Work was also taking place with community groups and Councillor Jarrett considered that the Council was doing as much as it could.

It was a vote of confidence from the Government that they had asked local authorities to help and Councillor Jarrett felt that central government would not have been able to deal with the pandemic in the way it had without having being able to call on the support of local authorities. He was, therefore, pleased to have been asked to take up this new challenge.

### **Question B - Councillor Maple asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

"Like many people I was shocked and appalled at the totally unacceptable treatment of 800 hard working women and men dismissed by a pre-recorded Microsoft Teams message. With our long-standing nautical history Medway stands in solidarity with the workers of P&O, who have been treated in such a manner.

The parent company, DP World, who have been happy to receive millions of pounds of government contracts, have treated those workers, who come from across Kent and Medway with utter contempt, whilst being happy to spend millions of pounds on sponsorship for golf and Formula One.

Will the Leader agree that until those workers are reinstated, that Medway Council will not deal with DP World in any way and in doing so will he and his Cabinet Member who represents Medway make representations through the SELEP to ensure that DP World are not given a penny more of public money, through schemes like Thames Port, until those workers are reinstated?

## Council, 21 April 2022

It is the right thing to do and absolutely what the Medway residents would expect their elected representatives to do.”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Maple for his question. He said that to his knowledge, the Council had not provided any funding to DP World and that the Council had always operated to high ethical standards.

Councillor Jarrett agreed that the treatment of these workers had been completely inappropriate, and he understood it had been illegal. It was therefore up to the relevant authorities to take action rather than Medway Council. Future procurement activities would take into account what was best for Medway to ensure that contracts awarded were legal and took into account appropriacy and ethical standards.

### **Question C - Councillor Van Dyke asked the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:**

“The most recent Kent PCC crime survey saw issues around women’s safety selected as the most important problem to the public (see pages 8-9 of the report). At a recent Full Council meeting, when the subject of women’s safety was brought up by myself, when I seconded our motion to try and secure new police offers for Medway, Councillor Gulvin tried to argue that the public’s perception of what the most pressing crime issues were in Medway was not in line with what Labour Group Councillors had said in the Council chamber.

In light of the new evidence from this survey, would Councillor Gulvin like to change his conclusions regarding how strong the feelings of the local public are on this subject?”

Councillor Gulvin thanked Councillor Van Dyke for her question. He said that women’s safety was an issue of deep concern to all, which was why the Community Safety Partnership, which Councillor Gulvin chaired, and the Medway Task Force, had successfully bid for a grant from the Home Office to help tackle this issue. This was as part of wider efforts to ensure Medway remained a safe place to live, work, learn and visit.

The previous Medway Community Safety Partnership survey had received nearly 600 responses, of which 72% were from women. The top five issues identified as problems in Medway had been drug dealing, driving carelessly or too fast, fly-tipping, dog-fouling and people being drunk or rowdy. Sexual offences and violence against women and girls had ranked 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> out of 22 issues identified.

Notwithstanding the survey results, Councillor Gulvin said that both he and the Community Safety Partnership took the issue of female safety in Medway very seriously. Funding received from the Home Office Safer Streets initiative had been used for a number of initiatives in Medway. These had included the Hollie Guard app for the victims of stalking behaviour and the Safe Spaces Scheme.

## Council, 21 April 2022

The Council had been working with Medway Sport to run fitness programmes exclusively for women and girls with the aim of promoting self-confidence. The Medway Task Force had engaged with female sex workers to assist with the safety issues they faced. Active Bystander training had been promoted in secondary schools and local businesses. This aimed to teach people how to intervene safely and in an appropriate way to challenge negative behaviours and to help those who had been a victim of these behaviours. Personal safety items had been distributed at community events and outside pubs and clubs at night-time.

Councillor Gulvin said that the Safer Medway Partnership, through funding from the Community Safety Partnership, had distributed 20 radios to police, hotels, taxi, bus companies, shops and bars, so that they could communicate with each other and CCTV operators to make Medway residents feel safer.

### **Question D - Councillor Khan asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:**

“What action has the Portfolio Holder taken to ensure that term-time-only school staff in Medway have a fair and just solution to their dispute by receiving a settlement that is as good as settlements by other local authorities?”

Responding on behalf of Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, thanked Councillor Khan for her question. He said that Medway Council had taken advice from the Local Government Association, which had stated that it was a matter for “each employer to determine, whether that be a local authority, a school governing body or an academy trust” and that each employer had local factors that had affected their situation.

Councillor Potter said that Medway Council officers had considered legislative frameworks, fairness and affordability when negotiating with trade unions. They had also worked closely with educational leaders to establish a collective approach across the area. To enhance this fairness, the services of ACAS had been secured and an ACAS mediator and conciliator had facilitated a number of meetings. This had led to the Council submitting a final employer offer, which would be presented as individual offers to affected Council employees in May.

ACAS would provide independent advice to employees as part of the process through webinars and 1:1 meetings. Schools and academies who were part of the Medway collective had decided to mirror the Council’s offer and processes, which were to ensure equitable offers across the educational sector in Medway. Councillor Potter concluded that the Medway offer was still more generous than national legislative frameworks relating to holiday pay compensation.

**Question E - Councillor Howcroft-Scott asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

“The number of households experiencing fuel poverty in Medway is rising. The cost of energy keeps increasing, which means our constituents need to spend more of their income on paying these bills. Many, especially people living in private rented accommodation, live in draughty homes, from which lots of heat escapes, and rely on heating systems that are old and inefficient. And because there is not much money to spare, it is difficult to make our homes more energy efficient, which would reduce our bills.

The general, cost of living is rising and this is also putting pressure on our communities finances so we have less money to go around. What is the Cabinet currently doing to support our communities struggling to make ends meet?”

Responding on behalf of Councillor Doe, the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, thanked Councillor Howcroft-Scott for her question. He said that the pressures that households were under in terms of increases to the cost of living were understood. The Council continued to provide a range of direct and indirect support, which included supporting people to access funding such as the Household Support Grant, discretionary housing payments and homelessness prevention funding. Specific support was provided through the Floating Support Service and Tenancy Sustainment team, which assisted people in accessing welfare support on a case-by-case basis. Additional support was commissioned from the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Council Gulvin said that any residents who were concerned should contact the Council or the Department for Work and Pensions to find out what help was available.

**Question F - Councillor Mahil asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, the following:**

“When it comes to pay negotiations for Medway Council workers, it is vital to have the contributions of HR staff, trade unions, the workers themselves and the Employment Matters Committee taken into account. Many from the above groups will have felt that the past years’ pay negotiations were not constructive, and that serious discussion was forsaken for the sake of a political stunt to ensure a last minute announcement. Will the Council be adjusting its approach in the future rather than rely on last minute grace and favour?”

Councillor Jarrett thanked Councillor Mahil for his question. He said that the Council had agreed the Medpay scheme in 2013 and that this had been supported by a formal process of negotiation with trade unions. The procedure for pay negotiations had been agreed by the trade unions and the Employment Matters Committee in 2013 and was detailed in the Protocol for Annual Pay and Conditions.

## Council, 21 April 2022

The Council had followed this procedure in its discussions with trade unions annually. The latest negotiations had followed the Protocol. Contributions had been considered and appropriately costed. Councillor Jarrett said that this had not been a political stunt or a last-minute deal and reflected that the final budget build had been completed at 5pm on the day of the Council's budget meeting. He noted that Councillor Mahil and his colleagues had voted against the proposed pay rise and said that they might like to consider this next time they asked a member of staff to do something.

### **Question G - Councillor Johnson asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

"In view of the Council's plan to tackle catastrophic climate change by implementing its Climate Change Action Plan, how has the Council reviewed its investments and those of the Local Government Pension Scheme to ensure that they are not contributing to fossil fuel companies or industrial agriculture?"

Responding on behalf of Councillor Doe, the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, thanked Councillor Johnson for his question. He said that Medway Council had very few treasury investments. As set out in the Council's Treasury Strategy, it had deposits in banks, a money market fund and some collective property funds. With the exception of the property funds, these were held to provide liquidity to facilitate the day-to-day operations of the Council. There was, therefore, no direct investment in fossil fuel or industrial agriculture.

The Council's only other investments were those contained within services, including regeneration assets and investment properties, mostly within the boundaries of Medway. It could not be determined what activities banks and money markets funded themselves or whether the properties held within the property funds were tenanted by organisations involved in such activities.

Councillor Gulvin said that Medway's pensions were part of the Kent Pension Fund, which was administered by Kent County Council. It had been confirmed that the Superannuation Fund Committee appointed external investment managers tasked with getting the best return for the 500 employers and 120,000 individual members of the fund. The Committee had a clear environmental, social and governance policy, but the Fund had advised that it would be breaching its responsibilities if it placed ethical restrictions on the external investment managers. Fossil fuel company shares represented a small proportion of the overall investments, just 2.33% of the Fund's total value of £7.75billion, and this proportion had already reduced substantially.

Councillor Gulvin said that in the latest review and update of the Medway Council Climate Change Action Plan, a new action had been added to "Explore joint working with Kent Human Resources network to influence investment of funds in pension scheme". This topic would be an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting of that group. Council Members were reminded that the cost of meeting any pension shortfall would fall to the council taxpayers across Kent and Medway.



**Question H - Councillor Curry submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Chambers OBE:**

“The Council Plan Performance Report makes it very clear that we have problems achieving key targets such as the delivery of the HIF, our regeneration programme and our climate change action plan. The consequences of this will have major impacts on our community, our economy and our environment.

Can the Portfolio Holder explain what action is being taken to address these issues?”

**Question I - Councillor Hubbard submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE:**

“The Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships attended the 22 March 2022 Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In his report, Councillor Chambers in Section 5.2 said, “The Rochester Bridge Trust (RBT) has confirmed that the flood defence wall should be moved back, so that the footings sit entirely on Medway Council land. A formal agreement with RBT has been requested.”

This is in relation to the River Wall that has been constructed, at great expense, around Strood Waterfront’s former Civic Centre site. Rochester Bridge Trust own the Rochester road bridges and the Rochester and Strood Esplanades. It seems that the new river wall has been built on part of the Strood Esplanade. I understand that the footings of the former Civic Centre building mark the land ownership boundary.

What is the expected cost to the Council to settle the requested formal agreement, which may include the rebuilding and relocation of the river wall?”

**Question J - Councillor Sands submitted the following to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:**

“Whilst many people I’m sure welcome the new look gym, with over 40 new pieces of top of the range fitness equipment and happy to have a spring cleaned Athletics track at Medway Park, this coupled with the multimillion pound new leisure centre at Rainham described by yourself as “having a focus on fun”. However, at the same time Deangate Sports Centre has been and continues to be systematically run down, Weeds growing within the athletics track, neglected pavilion with leaking roof, no public conveniences, fallen trees on the borders of the football pitches, football teams have to use sticky tape to hold football nets up. Fences around the tennis courts with large holes in and again these courts with weeds growing within.

## **Council, 21 April 2022**

Can the people of the Hoo Peninsula, who are rate payers of Medway Council, ever expect to be treated in the same way as the rest of Medway when it comes to leisure and health facilities or does this Cabinet just see the unique Hoo Peninsula, which is of national and international importance, an area with rich heritage and historical significance, as a place to be destroyed by unsustainable development?"

### **Question K – Councillor Paterson submitted the following to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:**

"Forty years ago, many families in Medway – including the families of some serving councillors – were awaiting the safe return of loved ones serving more than 8,000 miles away in the Falklands.

The war to liberate the islands was won and the Argentine fascist junta led by General Galtieri was defeated. But 255 servicemen did not return. Hundreds more came home wounded physically and scarred mentally.

Will the Deputy Leader join me and my Labour and Co-operative Group colleagues in paying tribute to those who worked in Chatham Dockyard at the time and whose war efforts were rewarded with the yard's closure by Margaret Thatcher less than two years later, to the bravery of our armed forces who served four decades ago, to those who never returned, to those who did return but whose physical or mental burden proved too great to bear and to those veterans who to this day will never forget what they saw?"

### **Question L – Councillor Adeoye submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:**

"In the latest example of levelling-up, how much will Medway receive from the new £1.2 billion national fund for improving bus services?"

We submitted a very comprehensive funding bid for improvements to bus services as part of our Bus Service Improvement Plan. Unfortunately, in keeping with many other authorities up and down the country, on this occasion, the Department for Transport did not award us any funding. Whilst this is very disappointing, we have demonstrated our commitment to improving bus services in Medway. Through our Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators, we will look to implement the parts of our plan that do not require new funding. We will also seek opportunities to bid for further Government funding, should it become available in the future."

### **Question M – Councillor Cooper submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles:**

"Given the disastrous record of this Government in planning the country's workforce over the past decade, what action has the Portfolio Holder taken to ensure that our three Medway MPs put pressure on the Government to ensure

## **Council, 21 April 2022**

a rapid improvement in this area to ensure a future supply of children's social workers for the country as a whole and for Medway in particular?"

**Question N - Councillor Price submitted the following to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:**

"Around 80 councils have banned the release of balloons and sky lanterns due to the danger they represent to wildlife as well as fire and other environmental hazards. These bans have been supported by the Marine Conservation Council. What action has the Portfolio Holder taken to consider a ban in Medway?"

**Question O – Councillor McDonald submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin:**

"The derelict building at the bottom of Marlborough Road at the junction of Marlborough Road and Brompton Road has been an eyesore for a number of years and creates a poor impression. What action has the Portfolio Holder taken to ensure that this site is swiftly improved?"

**Question P – Councillor Browne submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Hackwell:**

"Given the number of premises that have closed down in Gillingham, the market is an asset to the High Street. Not only does it provide variety for shoppers and increases footfall in the town centre but brings social benefits too.

How much income does Medway Council derive directly from the market and what percentage of this is being reverted in Gillingham Market and the High Street for the coming year?"

**Question Q – Councillor Prenter submitted the following to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:**

"After the shocking and illegal behaviour of P&O against the seafarers' work force who operate their ferries in UK, can the Portfolio Holder assure me that the Council will make it clear that Medway will not contract with any organisations who use the discredited Fire and Rehire tactics against their work force?"

**Question R – Councillor Edwards submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE:**

"What is the cost of providing free business litter kits to Medway businesses using Welcome Back Funding?"

## **Council, 21 April 2022**

### **Question S – Councillor Osborne submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Hackwell:**

“In 2013, the administration previously rejected the introduction of equal marriage in a Council motion. Can the administration confirm the number of civil ceremonies conducted between same-sex couples in Medway; and whether this should now be celebrated as a sign of social progress?”

### **Question T – Councillor Andy Stamp submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:**

“At the Full Council meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022, Councillor Filmer revealed that Medway Council has collected more than £244,000 in parking income since parking charges were introduced at the Strand on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018. This represents at least £70,000 per year on average, yet the annual budget provided to the Sport, Leisure and Tourism team for improvements at the Strand is just £5,000 per year.

Will the Portfolio Holder agree to ‘ringfence’ the parking income from the Strand to fund much-needed improvements at the Strand?”

### **Question U – Councillor Chrissy Stamp submitted the following to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett:**

“Numerous councils across the country have raised the Ukrainian flag outside their building in a visual demonstration of solidarity with the people of Ukraine. How many days has the Ukrainian flag been on display outside Gun Wharf?”

### **Councillor V – Councillor Lloyd submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE:**

“The Council is working on a River Strategy, supported by all Members. Within that strategy there will be policies to promote leisure river traffic, linking up existing piers, some of which will need investment to be brought back into use. Strood Pier, ideally located next to the railway station, is one of those piers that needs to be recommissioned. The Council, when it recently constructed the Canal Road river wall, blocked access to Strood Pier.

The Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships attended the 22 March 2022 Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In his report, Councillor Chambers in Section 5.3 said, “Discussions are underway to re-instate the Strood Community Trail, along with the installation of recovered historical Dragon’s teeth and an interpretive panel to detail their historical purpose.”

Reinstating the trail is accurately in the main the re-instatement of the lost pathway that links Canal Road to Strood Pier.

## Council, 21 April 2022

I understand that there are resource issues within the Council's Regeneration Team and Greenspaces Team that may result in the proposed re-instatement works not being delivered in this financial year. Can assurance be given that works will be carried out in 2022/3 financial year?"

**Note:** The Mayor stated that since the time allocation for Member questions had been exhausted, written responses would be provided to questions 10H – 10V.

### 832 Medway Youth Justice Plan 2022 - 2024

#### Background:

This report set out the Youth Justice Plan 2022 2024. The report stated that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, required Local Authorities to have a Youth Justice Plan, which would be updated annually to set out how youth justice would be delivered locally within available resources. The Plan followed guidance and headings provided by the national Youth Justice Board in April 2021, detailing best practice in the Youth Justice Plan's completion.

The report explained that the Youth Justice Plan was a strategic plan that formed part of the Policy Framework for Medway Council and approval of which was therefore a matter for Full Council

The report had been considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 March 2022 and by the Cabinet on 5 April 2022. 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 Education and Schools, Councillor Potter, 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 of the Cabinet, as set out at section 7 of the report.
- b) The Council approved the Medway Youth Justice Partnership Strategic Plan 2022 – 2024 attached at Appendix 1 to the report, including its priorities and themes and details of its consultation process (attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to the Strategic Plan).

### 833 Amendments to the Capital Programme

#### Background:

This report provided details of proposals to make a number of amendments to the Capital Programme as recommended by Cabinet on 8 March 2022. These amendments included an addition to the Capital Programme in relation to the Medway City Estate Connectivity Scheme and a number of removals from the Capital Programme of unspent budget, as set out in sections 3 to 6 of the report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

#### Decision:

The Council agreed to remove the schemes and unspent budget set out in sections 3 to 6 of the report from the Capital Programme, and to add £236,000 S106 funding to the Capital Programme, as set out in section 7 of the report.

### 834 Change to the Employee Scheme of Delegations

#### Background:

This report set out a recommendation to Council, which had been made by the Councillor Conduct Committee on 16 February 2022, to make an amendment to the Employee Delegation Scheme, within the Council's Constitution.

This amendment would enable the Monitoring Officer to consider and determine any requests for dispensations from Medway Members and voting and non-voting co-opted Committee members and to only refer requests for dispensations to the Councillor Conduct Committee for determination where the Monitoring Officer was minded to not grant a dispensation.

It was noted that the dispensations granted would be reported to the Councillor Conduct Committee on an annual basis.

Councillor Mrs Diane Chambers, supported by Councillor Fearn, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

#### Decision:

The Council agreed that the delegation set out at paragraph 6.20 of the Employee Delegation Scheme, within the Council's constitution, be reworded as follows:

*"To consider and determine any requests for dispensations from Medway Members and voting and non-voting co-opted Members in cases where the timing of a request would make*

## Council, 21 April 2022

*it impractical to convene a meeting of the Committee and to only refer requests for dispensations to the Councillor Conduct Committee for determination where the Monitoring Officer is minded to not grant a dispensation”.*

The revised paragraph 6.20 of the Employee Delegation Scheme to read as follows:

*To consider and determine any requests for dispensations from Medway Members and voting and non-voting co-opted Members and to only refer requests for dispensations to the Councillor Conduct Committee for determination where the Monitoring Officer is minded to not grant a dispensation.*

### **835 Contract Letting - Exceptional Circumstances**

#### **Discussion:**

This report provided details of thirteen contracts awarded during the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022, in accordance with the provisions paragraph 1.8.2 of the Contract Procedure Rules. The report stated that exemptions to Contract Procedure Rules to deal with the letting of contracts in exceptional circumstances, where it was in the best interests of the Council to do so, could be approved by the Monitoring Officer, provided that the exemption did not breach any UK Directive, Statute or Regulation.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

#### **Decision**

The Council noted the contents of the report.

### **836 Establishment of Committees, Appointments and Schedule of Meetings 2022/2023**

#### **Background:**

This report asked the Council to make a number of recommendations to the Annual meeting of the Council on 18 May 2022 regarding the committees and other bodies to be appointed for 2022/2023 and a programme of meetings.

The report set out that on 20 January 2022, the Council had agreed a draft schedule of meetings for 2022/2023. Subsequently, the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee had requested two changes to the scheduled of meetings for that Committee, as set out in section 4 of the report.

Councillor Kemp, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

## Council, 21 April 2022

### Decision:

- 1) The Council agreed to recommend to Annual Council on 18 May 2022:
  - a) The establishment of committees, sub committees and task groups, their size and the allocation of seats to political groups as set out in Appendices A and B to this report, together with terms of reference as set out in the Council's constitution;
  - b) That appointments should be made to Joint Committees, outside bodies and other bodies as set out in Appendix C (with nominees to be reported at the Annual Council meeting);
  - c) The timetable of meetings for the 2022/2023 municipal year as set out in Appendix D and;
  - d) Agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to vary the timetable of meetings during 2022/2023 including the cancellation or re-arrangement of meetings in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the relevant Committee Chairman and the Leader of the Labour and Co-operative Group, as necessary, in response to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.
  
- 2) The Council:
  - a) Nominated the Director of People – Children and Adults Services to the Board of the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board.
  - b) Authorised the making of an agreement with the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board to place the Director of People – Children and Adults Services at the disposal of the Board for the purpose of her designation as a Board Member with effect from 1 July 2022 at the earliest.
  - c) Agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Legal and Governance to agree the terms of the agreement between the Council and the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board.

### 837 Use of Urgency Provisions

#### Discussion:

This report provided details of recent usage of urgency provisions contained within the Constitution.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Hackwell, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.



**Decision:**

The Council noted the report.

**838 Motions**

**A) Councillor Brake, supported by Councillor Lammas, submitted the following:**

Councillor Brake 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 was considered as follows [change from the published motion is shown as strikethrough]:

"Medway Council commits to "Homes for Ukraine" initiative

Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 and has been ruthless in their military action, specifically towards the innocent civilians trying to live their everyday lives. The conflict has seen thousands lose their lives, including children, and over 3.9 million Ukrainians displaced across Europe - mainly women and children. These sights have been harrowing across the globe and as a Council we have a duty to support the Government "Homes for Ukraine" initiative.

This initiative will provide Ukrainian refugees a safe home to re-evaluate and plan their next move, which has been kindly offered by Medway residents.

This Council commits to:

- Inspecting volunteers' accommodation in line with Government regulations
- Vetting those who apply to house a Ukrainian family under the Homes for Ukraine initiative
- ~~Vetting where possible, refugee Ukrainian families~~
- Providing support to those refugees to get established in their new lives in Britain
- Distributing available Government funding to these families as soon as possible
- Providing support to those Medway residents who have volunteered their homes
- Thanking Medway residents for opening their homes to a Ukrainian family

Medway Council is fully committed to providing support where we can and ensuring every Ukrainian family who comes to Medway will have a safe space and receive any support they may need to adjust to life in the UK. We are also committed to ensuring Medway residents who have volunteered under the programme are provided with any support they may require, not least because of the immense kindness they have displayed. We pledge to continue this effort and show Medway as the welcoming Child Friendly city we know it to be."

## Council, 21 April 2022

### Decision:

On being put to the vote, the substantive motion was carried.

Medway Council commits to “Homes for Ukraine” initiative

Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 and has been ruthless in their military action, specifically towards the innocent civilians trying to live their everyday lives. The conflict has seen thousands lose their lives, including children, and over 3.9 million Ukrainians displaced across Europe - mainly women and children. These sights have been harrowing across the globe and as a Council we have a duty to support the Government “Homes for Ukraine” initiative.

This initiative will provide Ukrainian refugees a safe home to re-evaluate and plan their next move, which has been kindly offered by Medway residents.

This Council commits to:

- Inspecting volunteers’ accommodation in line with Government regulations
- Vetting those who apply to house a Ukrainian family under the Homes for Ukraine initiative
- Providing support to those refugees to get established in their new lives in Britain
- Distributing available Government funding to these families as soon as possible
- Providing support to those Medway residents who have volunteered their homes
- Thanking Medway residents for opening their homes to a Ukrainian family

Medway Council is fully committed to providing support where we can and ensuring every Ukrainian family who comes to Medway will have a safe space and receive any support they may need to adjust to life in the UK. We are also committed to ensuring Medway residents who have volunteered under the programme are provided with any support they may require, not least because of the immense kindness they have displayed. We pledge to continue this effort and show Medway as the welcoming Child Friendly city we know it to be.

### **B) Councillor Osborne, supported by Councillor Curry, submitted the following:**

Divestment Motion

Council notes:

- Medway Council, as part of the Local Government Pension Fund, has around £210 million invested in fossil fuels via the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## Council, 21 April 2022

- The United Nations Paris Agreement, reaffirmed at the 2021 Glasgow Climate Summit, commits our governments to keep the global temperature increase to under 2 degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, United Nations and the International Energy Agency show that preventing two degrees of warming relies on not burning the vast majority of all proven fossil fuels.
- The UN International Energy Agency (IEA) predicts that global oil demand will significantly fall by 2030, leading their Executive Director to refer to oil and gas companies as potential ‘junk investments.’ Action by governments to limit carbon emissions will ultimately leave fossil fuel reserves unburnable. It has been estimated that this asset bubble, known as the ‘carbon bubble’, may be over €1 trillion in Europe alone.
- Former Bank of England Governor Mark Carney warned that fossil fuel investments risk becoming “stranded assets” as investors exit the sector. “A question for every company, every financial institution, every asset manager, pension fund or insurer – what’s your plan?”
- Pension funds have a fiduciary duty to consider the material risks of continued investment in fossil fuels. Fiduciary duty is defined by the Law Commission as “ensuring that pensions can be paid, ensuring that this is undertaken at the best possible value”.
- Pension funds have a legal duty to treat members “fairly as between them”. That means taking seriously the longer-term interests of younger members who may be affected more by the climate transition.

This Council commits to:

1. Reviewing its Investment Strategy and developing and implementing a Responsible Investment Policy which rules out new investments in fossil fuel companies.
2. Calling on the Medway Council Trustee / Nominated Person on the Kent Superannuation Fund Committee to request divestment from fossil fuels through the development and adoption of responsible investment policies which:
  - a. Immediately freeze any new investment in the top 200 publicly-traded fossil fuel companies.
  - b. Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds within an appropriate timescale.

## Council, 21 April 2022

- c. Set out an approach to quantify and address climate change risks affecting all other investments.
  - d. Actively seek to invest in companies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimise climate risk.
3. Recognising that fossil fuel investments should be considered as part of the Council's "carbon footprint" and divesting our pension fund is one of the most impactful steps we can take to reduce our impact on our community and the world.

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

For – Councillors Adeoye, Cooper, Curry, Edwards, Howcroft-Scott, Johnson, Khan, Lloyd, Mahil, Maple, McDonald, Murray, Osborne, Paterson, Pendergast, Price, Sands, Chrissy Stamp and Van Dyke. (19)

Against – Councillors Ahmed, Aldous, Barrett, Brake, Buckwell, Carr, Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers OBE, Chitty, Clarke, Etheridge, Fearn, Filmer, Griffin, Gulvin, Hackwell, Jarrett, Kemp, Lammas, Potter, Purdy, Tejan, Thorne, Tranter, Mrs Elizabeth Turpin, Rupert Turpin, Wildey and Williams. (28)

**Note:** In addition to the Councillors named in the minutes of agenda item no. 2, apologies for absence, Councillor Hubbard was not present for the recorded vote.

### **Decision:**

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

**Mayor**

**Date:**

**Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services**

Telephone: 01634 332509

Email: [democratic.services@medway.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@medway.gov.uk)

**Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer**

Telephone: 01634 332715

Email: [democratic.services@medway.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@medway.gov.uk)