

Public Questions

Question A - Raza Griffiths of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

Having a decent public transport is the sign of a good, forward thinking city. At the moment the people of Medway get a terrible deal from its main bus provider Arriva. It is critically important to:

1. Have information which is accessible, accurate, up to date and for the right bus routes.
2. Change the law to give local people the ability, through their council, to take back control of their bus routes as we have seen in both Manchester and Scotland.
3. Get Arriva to have a system of refunds which is fair, transparent and easy to access when services go wrong, as they frequently do.

Could the Portfolio Holder explain what powers, if any, the Council currently has to ensure that bus companies, which provide an essential service, are delivering an adequate service?

Question B - Simon Buckingham, of Chatham, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:

I am aware of the actions of a specific private company going around with a Council logo on their uniform using, what some may consider to be "bully boy tactics". I have been assisting an elderly resident who has been unfairly fined by this organisation.

Does the Portfolio Holder accept that the tactics of District Enforcement, when they are not hanging out at the private Medway Motorway Services fining individuals, are likely to reduce people wanting to go to town centres?

Question C - Damola Animashaun of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:

I want Chatham Town Centre to succeed. I'm very concerned to hear service charges for those businesses in the Pentagon are increasing by more than double inflation. This follows the previous year's increase also being well above inflation.

What does the Portfolio Holder say to a business considering moving out of the Pentagon due to this increase?

Question D - Caroline McGrath, of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

Every other road in Medway has potholes. I drive down these roads trying to avoid the big potholes and to try and avoid damage to my vehicle.

When is Medway Council going to address all these potholes?

Question E - Paul Everitt of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, the following:

Why isn't more being done with Medway Maritime Hospital?

Building more apartments more flats and houses, population growth getting bigger, but the hospital hasn't changed that much. Most of the hospital was built in the 1900s.

The people of Medway deserve an up to date hospital.

Question F - Julian Sutton, on behalf of the Medway Green Party, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member), Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:

Hoo Village, and indeed much of the rest of the peninsula, has suffered from the distressing effects of noisy and speeding motorbikes, quad bikes and cars for some years. It is easy to blame the youngsters for these problems, but what else is being offered for their recreational activities!

It is obvious that the quality of life for many peninsula residents is seriously affected by this anti-social behaviour. The noise of the motorbikes (some without licence plates or the rider not wearing a helmet) is deafening. This behaviour also makes the peninsula less safe and reduces the quality of peninsula residents' lives.

It is a bigger problem than the Police can or wishes to deal with on its own. It will take a multi-faceted approach and, whilst we may wish for it to be, it is unlikely to be solved over-night. It will take investing in a long term coordinated plan to engage with the young population of the peninsula.

It is hoped that the Council has directed increased funding to Youth Workers and clubs to engage with the youngsters over recent years and that facilities are being planned to be constructed, ahead of further house building.

Therefore, what measures are the Council employing to engage with the young peninsula population, such as clubs and recreational activities?

If we do not change what we are doing, the problem will not go away.

Question G – Kevin Fowle of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Hackwell, the following:

Can I request that the Weedswood part of my King George Road address be removed and the original Walderslade historical designation and the title deeds be reinstated. My property and those of a lot of King George Road from Walderslade Road to Brake Avenue existed long before the construction in the 1950's of the Weedswood council estate. It and Wayfield are distinct areas, built as social housing.

Question H – Peter Bonney of Strood will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

According to a recent report by the World Health Organisation the area of Central Strood bounded by the A2, Gordon Road and B2002, has at least twice the acceptable levels of pollution by Nitrogen Oxide (NO2) and Particulate Matter (PM2). This is caused by excessive traffic, especially when it is standing still or very slow moving.

The A2 is not coping with the heavy weight of traffic heading towards the Bridge and so it constantly comes to a standstill. This is mostly caused by the totally inadequate crossroads at Gun Lane which needs a complete redesign.

Building huge numbers of flats and houses in Rochester along Corporation Street, Rochester Riverside and recently announced plans for more at Bardell Wharf can only be exacerbating the problem.

The heavily polluted area in Strood concerns houses, three junior schools, four infant schools, three nurseries and two large old people's homes all of whom are particularly susceptible to these pollutants and, incidentally, the schools are partly responsible for the high traffic levels in the area with the twice daily school run causing traffic jams and appalling driving behaviour within the residential area.

A residents' traffic survey carried out in 2019 highlighted the rat running problem and a petition was handed in to solve the problem but despite this nothing has happened. A 20mph speed limit was deemed unnecessary.

Let me restate the fact that, according to the World Health Organisation, the area has pollution which is at least twice as high as the acceptable level of traffic-based pollution. The area is overwhelmed by rat running through a street network, which is totally inadequate for that sort of traffic level. The traffic is the source of the pollution.

What does the Council intend to do to correct the problem?

Question I – Stuart Bourne of Rainham will ask the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

On 21st July 2022 I asked a question to Councillor Doe at a Council meeting regarding the 13,842 trees that were planted and how many were currently still alive. Councillor Doe failed to answer the question because he said ‘a full assessment has not been completed’. It is now nearly 6 months later. What is the current status of the assessment and the trees?

Question J - Vivienne Parker of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:

I note the amount of waste being deposited from the Kent County Council area at our household waste recycling centres.

Are Medway Council charging Kent County Council for this?

Question K - Stuart Bourne, on behalf of the Medway Liberal Democrats, will ask the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

The cost of living crisis and record increases in people’s energy bills are forcing many people in Medway into having to choose whether to heat their homes or put food on the table. Many inspiring organisations, charities and churches across Medway are opening their doors as warm banks to help those in need. We would like to thank them all for their kind generosity in this time of economic crisis.

What is the Council doing to coordinate these efforts to ensure that there is a warm bank in every part of Medway and that people are made aware of them?

Question L - John Castle of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Hackwell, the following:

Flood warnings are currently not issued directly by Medway Council, instead relying on third parties to issue such warnings.

Given the frequency of flood warnings within Medway Council, especially the riverside communities, would the Council commit to publicising flood warnings affecting Medway?

Question M - Alan Collins-Rosell of Gillingham will ask the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

Many people I've spoken to in Rainham are suffering greatly under the cost of living crisis. With skyrocketing energy bills, many are switching off their heating to save what little money they have.

I've already seen some great charities and churches, like St Margaret's Church in Rainham, open their doors and act as warm banks for people in need. But they can only do so much. One suggestion to assist people in need is to use the empty spaces in the Healthy Living Centre in Rainham as a warm bank, now that the cafe isn't operating, to act as a place for people to keep warm, recharge their phones or find out how they can be financially supported.

Does the Council have any plans to work with people at the Healthy Living Centre to implement this, or, if not, is there an alternative location being planned?

Question N – Nina Gurung of Gillingham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin, the following:

I know from speaking to local residents they are concerned about community safety. There is reported consultation to reduce overall numbers of uniformed personnel on the streets of Medway.

Does the Portfolio Holder believe that consulting on having less uniformed personnel on the streets will make local people feel more safe?

Question O – Alan Stockey of Rainham will ask the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:

Medway Council recently responded to questions put by the Medway Environmental Action Network (MEAN) concerning the Council's progress in engaging and influencing its primary contractors, key partners and Joint Ventures with regards to their combined carbon emission reductions across Medway.

If as has been stated, the Council's own carbon footprint is assessed as being 1.4% of the Medway total footprint, can the Council please provide a breakdown of the residual (98.6%) footprint, specifically illustrating their top 10 specific influence priorities in terms of their primary contractors, key partners and joint ventures?

We assume that this will be based upon the Council's assessment of carbon emissions incurred in delivery of services to Medway, unless an alternative method has been used to prioritise it.

Question P - Bryan Fowler of Chatham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, the following:

We are seeing the effects of Permitted Development Rights legislation being used for building projects in Medway. Planning Committee Councillors have expressed their dismay at how this bypasses consideration by this Committee.

As Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration, can you explain what Medway Council is doing to reduce the harm being caused by Permitted Development Rights?