

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Medway Council**  
**Thursday, 20 April 2023**  
**7.00pm to 9.38pm**

**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 Barrett) Councillors Adeoye, Brake, Browne, Buckwell, Carr, Mrs Diane Chambers, Rodney Chambers, OBE, Chitty, Clarke, Cooper, Crozer, Curry, Doe, Edwards, Fearn, Filmer, Sylvia Griffin, Gulvin, Hubbard, Mrs Josie Iles, Jarrett, Kemp, Khan, Lloyd, Hackwell, Howcroft-Scott, Johnson, Lammas, Maple, McDonald, Murray, Opara, Osborne, Paterson, Potter, Prenter, Price, 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  
Richard Hicks, Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive  
Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer

**772 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ahmed, Etheridge, Mahil, Purdy, Andy Stamp and Thompson.

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

Disclosable pecuniary interests

Councillor Osborne declared an interest in agenda item No.12 (Additions to the Schools Capital Programme) and in Motion A of agenda item No.17 (Motions) as he is an employee of Leigh Academies Trust. Councillor Osborne left the room during discussion and determination of the items.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor McDonald declared an interest in agenda item No.12 (Additions to the Schools Capital Programme) and in Motion A of agenda item No.17 (Motions) as he is the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Howard Academy

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Trust. Councillor McDonald left the room during discussion and determination of the items.

Councillor Murray declared an interest in Motion A of agenda item No.17 (Motions) as she is a Medway Council appointed trustee of Rochester Girls' Grammar School Charity. Councillor Murray left the room during discussion and determination of the item.

Councillor Cooper declared an interest in agenda item No.12 (Additions to the Schools Capital Programme) as she is a governor of Rivermead School. Councillor Cooper left the room during discussion and determination of the item.

Councillor Curry declared an interest in agenda item No.12 (Additions to the Schools Capital Programme) as he is the Vice Chair of Governors at Luton Primary School. Councillor Curry left the room during discussion and determination of the item.

Councillor Howcroft-Scott declared an interest in agenda item No.12 (Additions to the Schools Capital Programme) and in Motion A of agenda item No.17 (Motions) as she is the Vice Chair of Governors at Victory Academy, Holcombe Grammar School and New Horizons Children's Academy. Councillor Howcroft-Scott left the room during discussion and determination of the items.

### Other interests

There were none.

### **774 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 23 February 2023 was approved and signed by The Worshipful Mayor of Medway as correct.

### **775 Mayor's announcements**

The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway thanked all serving Councillors who were standing down at the local elections being held in May 2023, some of whom had also served on Medway's predecessor authorities.

The Mayor also remembered the four serving Councillors who had passed away during the previous four years, Councillors Tashi Bhutia, Nick Bowler, Steve Iles and Mick Pendergast.

### **776 Leader's announcements**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, said that he had made an error, which he regretted, by accusing the Medway Labour Party of boycotting Armed Forces Day. He stated that, in fact, a number of Councillors had declined to attend events in commemoration of the Battle of Medway in protest at the closure of Sure Start Children's Centre and replacement of them with larger hubs.

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The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Maple welcomed the Leader's announcement and said that Medway Labour would never boycott Armed Forces Day.

### 777 Petitions

#### Public:

There were none.

#### Member:

There were none.

### 778 Public questions

**Question A – Toni Oliver, of Chatham, asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

“What is being done to make the owners of the site at Dock Head Road machine shop structure clean up the site?”

It's currently overgrown and an eyesore for the area. It has planning permission, I understand, with restrictions on it but it has been on and off and in this state for approximately 4 years now and is getting worse!”

Councillor Chitty thanked Ms Oliver for the question. She said that Medway Council was working with the current owners of the site and structure to clear outstanding conditions attached to their planning approvals and to implement their most recent permission. There had been a delay due to the significant increase in construction costs associated with material and labour. This meant that the owners had to change their scheme to ensure it was financially deliverable and respected the historic character of the site. It was hoped that implementation would start shortly.

**Question B – Tracey Wilson, of Strood, submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin:**

“Why is there no public toilet facility in Strood any more?”

We own the site of the Salon/Mortuary/Micropub next to Asda carpark entrance. The Public now think we must provide all the water, soap, electricity and toilet paper that should be funded by the Council. We are fed up with it.”

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### **Question C – Andrew Sweeting, of Chatham, submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:**

“The speed limit on Pear Tree Lane has recently been reduced from 50mph to 40mph, though there have been very few accidents on this road over the last few years.

Yet there is a clear need for the same restriction to be put in place on Ash Tree Lane after all the accidents we have had on this road, the last one taking out many of the concrete bollards at the edge of the road, yet it still remains at 60mph.

The width of this road is also a major contributing factor to the accident rate as many of the bends are not suitable for cars to be traveling at high speeds.

Would it not be beneficial for road safety for the junction of Beacon Road onto Ash Tree Lane to be modified to give better vision when turning out to go up Ash Tree Lane, as this has also caused many accidents in the past and to reduce the speed limit on Ash Tree Lane to 50mph?”

### **Question D – Ben Rist, of Gillingham, submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin:**

“At the Council meeting on 19 January 2023, during agenda item 8 Leader’s report, Councillor Gulvin misled the questioner asking about investment in Gillingham by claiming a new mental health service was in Gillingham, which is untrue. Britton House is just Canada House that moved and is not new. When are we going to get the Mental Health Services we need in Medway such as a Therapeutic Community, a Section 136 Suite and a Psychiatric Unit?”

### **Question E – Vivienne Parker, of Chatham, asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:**

“What is the Council going to do about people driving the wrong way down Brake Avenue, Chatham? I and other people have nearly suffered a car accident meeting people driving the wrong way.”

Councillor Filmer thanked Ms Parker for the question. He said that the one-way section of Brake Avenue was enforced by ‘No Entry’ signs and road markings at the junction with King George Road. Councillor Filmer was very sorry to hear that Ms Parker had experienced near misses due to drivers ignoring these signs. He said that these drivers were committing a moving traffic offence, which at the present time could only be enforced by the Police. These concerns would be passed on to the Police and they would be asked to observe the junction.

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### **Question F – Chris Spalding of Gillingham, asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

“In the Spring Budget on 15 March 2023, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a one year fund of £63.3 Million being made available for publicly owned leisure centres with swimming pools.

This fund is being managed by Sport England and allows local authorities to apply for funding for leisure centres with swimming pools that face immediate cost pressures, including operational and maintenance costs, as well as energy bills.

£40 million is being made available for capital investment to improve the energy efficiency of such public facilities while the remainder comes in revenue grants.

Can you confirm Medway Council has applied for money from this fund for Hoo Sport Centre, including how much has been asked for?”

Councillor Doe thanked Mr Spalding for the question. He said that it was the Council’s intention to bid for funding from the recently announced swimming pool support fund but that no bid could yet be submitted as Sport England was working with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on the fund criteria and application process.

### **Question G – Jon Castle, of Chatham, asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults’ Services, Councillor Brake, the following:**

“Numbers published recently have highlighted that some GP surgeries have very high numbers of patients registered. In particular, St Mary’s Island Surgery has over 34,000 patients, one of four practices across Medway with more than 20,000 patients registered.

Does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that this data shows both an unsustainable number of patients registered at some practices in Medway and a chronic lack of GPs in Medway?”

Councillor Brake thanked Mr Castle for the question. He said it was nationally, regionally and locally accepted that more general practitioners were needed to meet the needs of a growing population. In Medway, the Council had been working with the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB), which had responsibility for the commissioning of primary care, to highlight local issues impacting on the care and support available and provided to patients in primary care.

There were a number of programmes currently in place to attract and employ more GPs in Medway. There was also a specific GP and Primary Care Strategy that had recently been developed by the Kent and Medway ICB to help deliver additional GP capacity and improve services locally.

Councillor Brake said that work would continue with NHS partners to enable local people to access the care and support they required within Medway.

**Question H – Ben Pranczke, of Gillingham, submitted the following to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty:**

“As this is your final Full Council, would you like to take this last opportunity to apologise for wasting £130,000 on a Japanese peace roundabout which nobody can access when that money could and should have been spent on improving Gillingham High Street?”

**Note:** As Mrs Wilson, Mr Sweeting, Mr Rist, and Mr Pranczke were not present, the Mayor stated that they would receive written responses to their questions, 7B, 7C, 7D and 7H respectively, in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

**779 Leader's report**

**Discussion:**

Members received the Leader's report. The following issues were discussed:

- The provision of Front Line services, including the maintenance of weekly refuse collections.
- The Council's response to the Covid pandemic.
- Growth of the local economy, which was now worth nearly £6billion Gross Value Added and the regeneration work led by the Council across Medway.
- Regeneration in Medway such as Britton Farm, White Road and Mountbatten House.
- The continued improvement journey in Children's Services
- Development of the Integrated Care Board Joint Forward Plan and of a new Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- The establishment of a Combatting Drugs Partnership.
- Medway being the first area in the South East to be awarded the status of Health Determinants Research Collaborative.
- Tourism in Medway which was worth £360million annually and supported 7,000 jobs.
- The development of Innovation Park Medway.
- Development at the former Civic Centre site in Strood and at Rochester Riverside.
- Applications submitted for Brownfield Release funding for the former Debenhams building and Mountbatten House in Chatham and the Strood former Civic Centre site.
- 90% of the new homes at Garrison Point, Chatham had been sold.
- Public Realm Round 2 public engagement work regarding design of the Paddock.
- The Council's bid to the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- £400,000 of funding which had been awarded to Medway from the Rural Economic Prosperity Fund.
- The refurbishment of six play areas.
- Housing Infrastructure Fund progress.

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- Concern about how close to the Council's budget setting the Government had announced public health funding.
- Development on the Hoo Peninsula and the impact on wildlife habitats
- Difficulty recruiting staff in areas such as environmental health and building control.
- Enhancements made to leisure provision in Medway.
- The importance of climate change work and promoting biodiversity.
- Development of the Medway Local Plan and concern that this had not been delivered.
- Arts Council recognition of Medway as a major place for their investment.
- The work of the Corporate Parenting Board for Children in Care.

### **Decision:**

The Council noted the report.

## **780 Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

### **Discussion:**

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

- Medway schools – the quality of and investment in Medway schools, the academisation process, grammar school expansion and partnership working.
- The development of Innovation Park Medway including the business opportunities and high value jobs being created in Medway.
- The Housing Infrastructure Fund and the enablers to the Council being able to successfully deliver the project.
- The importance of overview and scrutiny and the role of the press, including the Local Democracy reporter.
- Concern about the difficulties the Council had faced in the development of a new Local Plan.
- The work of the GP Access Task Group and the further engagement that was due to take place with GPs.
- The development of the Better Care Fund Plan.

### **Decision:**

The Council noted the report.

**781 Members' questions**

**Question A – Councillor Edwards asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty, the following:**

“Vibrant High Streets are key to Medway’s economic success. Yet even our more successful High Streets are plagued by empty buildings that sit idle and do not contribute to the local economy.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me how many empty retail properties there are on High Streets in Medway, including how many of those are owned by Medway Council?”

Councillor Chitty thanked Councillor Edwards for the question. She said that Medway’s high streets were important for economic growth and that was why hard work had taken place to secure significant external funding to invest in high streets and why millions were being invested in Chatham as the city centre. Vacancy rates for Medway’s town centres were all below the national average, as set out in table below [the table was displayed onscreen to those present at the Full Council meeting or watching online].

Jan-23	Total Occupied	Total Unoccupied	Total No of Units	Occupancy Rate %	Vacancy Rate %
Rainham	158	4	162	97.5	2.5
Gillingham	173	19	192	90.1	9.9
Chatham	304	41	345	88.1	11.9
Rochester	210	20	230	91.3	8.7
Strood	142	9	151	94.0	6.0
Total/Average	987	93	1080	91.4	8.6

National (Q3 22)					13.9
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Councillor Chitty said that Chatham’s vacancy rate was skewed due to the preparatory work underway to accommodate the Healthy Living Centre and Innovation Hub on the first floor of the Pentagon Shopping Centre. The Council had also acquired the former Debenhams building and had commercial agents marketing the site.

Apart from the Pentagon Centre, the Council also owned 20-26 High Street, Gillingham and 1-19 Twydall Green, Gillingham, all of which were currently occupied.

Medway continued to be proactive in the regeneration of its high streets, continually seeking funding opportunities and directly intervening where possible. Councillor Chitty concluded that Medway’s high streets were performing above the national average and acknowledged the businesses that worked hard to establish thriving town centres.



**Question B – Councillor Johnson asked the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Lead Member, Councillor Mrs Josie Iles, the following:**

“Given the financial and other pressures on the Early Years Sector in Medway, driven by a dysfunctional market, ‘free’ places that are not fully funded, ownership and governance structures that sometimes do not support effective provision, and staffing challenges caused by the government’s poor record on workforce planning, what measures has the Portfolio Holder taken personally to support this sector which is so vital for families in Medway?”

Councillor Mrs Iles thanked Councillor Johnson for the question. She said that the Council’s Early Years Sufficiency Team supported early years providers and ensured the Council fulfilled its statutory duties and commitment to high quality Early Years provision.

The service worked to secure sufficient childcare for working parents and secure Early Years provision according to eligibility criteria. They also provided information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents and information, advice and training to childcare providers.

Medway currently had over 235 childcare providers. The team worked with all settings, monitoring the quality and sufficiency of childcare places available to local families. Through a quality early education, children were supported to have the best start in life. Early Years forums and briefing sessions were provided throughout the year to support Early Years providers.

The number of childcare and education providers that had engaged with the Council had increased, with 29% of providers taking up the offer of free advice and support.

The Early Years Sufficiency Team allocated the Government’s child care funding to Early Years providers and in total allocated approximately £20m of government funding to providers locally. In March 2023, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced funding for childcare for children from 9 months and for two year olds, outlining that from April 2024 parents would be able to access 15 hours of funded childcare and from September 2024, this could be accessed for children from 9 months of age. The Early Years Forum was in communication with providers, some of whom had expressed concern regarding the financial implications of this change. Further advice and guidance would be given to providers as the Department for Education issued more detailed guidance.

Councillor Mrs Iles said that as Portfolio Holder, she continued to push the big issues that were affecting most councils nationally and ensured that she maintained awareness of everything happening within children’s services.

Councillor Mrs Iles had been a significant advocate of children and family hubs, which provided outstanding services, such as drop-in sessions for parents and children, activities such as baby groups, self-weigh and stay and play sessions. They also provided ante-natal classes, baby clinics, links with local schools and

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voluntary agencies, information and advice about breastfeeding, speech and language and parenting health issues.

### **Question C – Councillor Curry asked the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, the following:**

“It is my understanding that the current deadline for the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to be spent is spring 2025.

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm that this is the case, that the Council will meet this deadline, explaining what the consequences are for Medway if not?”

Councillor Chambers said that Medway, together with a number of the larger HIF schemes across the country, was in discussions with Homes England regarding its various schemes. This was a result of the global recession and high inflation rates impacting on construction costs and constraining public expenditure.

As had been widely trailed, and in the light of consultation, the Council was proposing to pause its plans for rail and was exploring the potential for alternative transport options to improve access for residents travelling on and off the Peninsula.

Councillor Chambers said that the reframing of the programme and Homes England’s deliberations, would inevitably impact on the current timelines for delivery and that formed part of the discussions.

A report would be brought to Cabinet when the Government had provided a clear view on Medway’s proposals.

### **Question D – Councillor Van Dyke asked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following:**

“During the pandemic the use of our greenspaces across Medway increased significantly, and this pressure on these areas’ invaluable spaces has continued.

Why does the Portfolio Holder feel that by not increasing the greenspaces budget, it is appropriate to cut the funding in real terms to one of our most important community resources?”

Councillor Doe thanked Councillor Van Dyke for the question. He said that he completely agreed the importance of Medway’s greenspaces and that they provided an invaluable resource for the community. Greenspaces were very popular; it was a testament to the quality and nature of the sites available in Medway. Medway had eight green flags for excellence and it was hoped that figure could be improved in the in the future.

In 2021, Medway had spent £4.6million on greenspaces, in 2022, the figure was £4.9million and for 2023, £5.1million. However, it was not possible to judge

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performance purely on the amount of money spent as how funding was spent and invested was also important.

Councillor Doe said that steps had been taken to overhaul the way in which greenspaces work was delivered, including making it more ecologically sound. There was reasonable public satisfaction with the condition of greenspaces which compared favourably to other areas.

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

“The state of Medway’s roads has now become a standing joke, with them being described as Swiss Cheese and suitable for plastic ducks! This has an impact not just on the condition of people’s vehicles but on the overall economy and reputation of Medway.

Can the Portfolio Holder please tell us what are the plans to rectify this very serious infrastructure problem, not just for the immediate future, but for the long term?”

**Note:** As Councillor Mahil was not present at the meeting, the Mayor announced that he would receive a written response to his question in accordance with Council Rule 8.6.

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

“We have seen many areas coming forward across the UK with enhanced free school meals provision above the current statutory minimum.

Could you explain why Medway doesn’t have such provision in place?”

Councillor Mrs Iles thanked Councillor Howcroft-Scott for the question. She said that approximately 11,000 children in Medway currently received Free School Meals (FSM) during the school term.

Councillor Mrs Iles noted that the Mayor of London had announced that all London primary school children would receive FSMs as a one-off for the 2023/24 academic year. Enhancing FSM provision for all children and young people in Medway, in a similar way to the extended provision in London primary schools, would require significant additional funding, which the Council was unable to accommodate within its current budget position.

Medway Council continued to work with the school catering contractors to ensure that children and young people were receiving and would continue to receive, healthy nutritious meals and were working within the Food Plan and government guidelines.

Medway also spent approximately £2.5million on provision for FSM-eligible children during the school holidays through the Household Support Grant.

**Question G – Councillor Murray asked the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following:**

“Why did the Portfolio Holder wait until the election period to order a pothole blitz and leave residents all over Medway struggling with unsightly and dangerous potholes for the last 4 years?”

Councillor Filmer thanked Councillor Murray for the question. He said that Medway had repaired over 39,000 carriageway defects and undertaken resurfacing schemes on 74 carriageways and 38 footways during the previous four years.

The ‘Pothole Blitz’ had been introduced to tackle the volume of new defects appearing on the public highway following the previous winter, in order to ensure that the network remained safe and accessible.

Around £4million would be invested in Medway’s roads in 2023, utilising both capital and revenue budgets and Department for Transport incentive funding. The Council’s robust regime of highway inspections would continue to ensure the network remained as safe and accessible as possible.

**Question H – Councillor Maple asked the Portfolio Holder for Adults’ Services, Councillor Brake, the following:**

“As the Local Government Association rightfully said it was disappointing that the 2023/24 Public Health Grant was only published on 15<sup>th</sup> March, long after this Council set its budget. Across the country there has been £770 million real terms reduction in funding between 2015/16 and 2022/23.

With inflation currently running at around 10%, does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that the below inflation 3.2% increase will mean even greater pressure on our already under-resourced Public Health team in Medway, whose role is crucial to trying to reduce the persistent health inequalities in Medway?”

Councillor Brake thanked Councillor Maple for the question. He said that there had been a significant delay in the Government announcing the Public Health Grant for 2023/24 and the figure announced in March 2023 had been a lower than anticipated uplift of 3.2%. The Public Health Grant also needed to offset pay pressures resulting from NHS pay awards for staff working in a range of NHS services commissioned by Public Health.

The saying ‘prevention is better than the cure’, reinforced the value of having well resourced public health services to support Medway’s population. Investing in Public Health approaches that would enable people to live longer and healthier lives, had been shown to reduce the costs of providing NHS, social care and other services.

Although constraints had been placed on public health budgets at a national level, additional funding had been provided to councils for drug and alcohol treatment, start for life programmes and through the new Integrated Care Board arrangements. These were focussed on addressing health inequalities.

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Councillor Brake, said that as Portfolio Holder, he would work with the Director of Public Health to ensure the Medway Public Health Team continued to work in partnership across all sectors to implement policies and initiatives that improved the health and wellbeing of all those who lived worked and visited Medway.

Councillor Brake thanked the Director of Public Health and his team for their hard work and the Public Health programmes they delivered.

### **782 Appointment of Director of Place and Designating the Director of People (Children and Adults Services) as Deputy Chief Executive**

#### **Background:**

This report asked Full Council to approve the appointment of the Director of Place, following consideration by the Appointments Committee on 17 April 2023.

An addendum report had been published on the day of the Council meeting setting out the decision of the Appointments Committee and the outcome of the executive notification procedure.

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

Members of the Council offered their congratulations to the successful candidate.

#### **Decision:**

- a) The Council approved the appointment of Adam Bryan, as agreed by the Appointments Committee, as the Director of Place.
- b) The Council agreed the proposal explained in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 of the report, that the Director of People (Children and Adults Services) be also designated Deputy Chief Executive.

### **783 Additions to the Schools Capital Programme**

#### **Background:**

This report set out proposals to ensure that appropriate levels of good quality mainstream and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) school places would be available through to 2027. It requested that the projects be approved, and that the Cabinet recommend to Full Council for them to be added to the Education Capital Programme.

The report set out proposed mainstream projects worth £19.44million and SEND projects worth £16.2million. The report advised that the mainstream proposals, together with occasional bulge classes at other schools on a rota

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basis, including the two new free schools, should ensure that Medway would have sufficient primary and secondary school places for the foreseeable future. In relation to the proposed SEND projects, these were a mix of special school expansions and new resourced provision attached to mainstream schools. This would ensure that the most appropriate provision was in place to meet the pupil need.

The report had been considered by the Cabinet on 4 April 2023, the outcome of which was set out in section 7 of the report.

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

### **Decision:**

The Council approved the addition of the following to the Capital Programme:

- i) £19,447,199.09 to provide sufficient mainstream school places, as shown in table 1 of the report and the funding available as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.
- ii) £16,599,649.00 to provide sufficient SEND school places, as shown in table 2 of the report and the funding available as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

## **784 Capital Addition - Enforcement of Moving Traffic Offences**

### **Background:**

This report sought approval of an addition to the Council's Capital Programme of implementation costs associated with the enforcement of Moving Traffic Offences in Medway. This followed Cabinet approval in October 2022 of an application to Government for enforcement powers and Cabinet and Council approval of the revenue impacts in the budget report in February 2023.

This report explained that the budget report considered by the Cabinet and Council in February 2023 had not reflected the implementation costs required to enable the enforcement of these offences as an addition to the capital programme, funded by borrowing, and therefore it was necessary to formally approve this scheme for addition to the Capital Programme.

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

### **Decision:**

The Council approved the addition of £2,019,488 to the Capital Programme, funded from borrowing, to meet the costs of implementing the enforcement of Moving Traffic Offences in Medway.

**785 Contract Letting - Exceptional Circumstances**

**Background:**

This report provided details of two contracts awarded during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, in accordance with the provisions paragraph 1.8.2 of the Contract Procedure Rules which were effective for the period covered by the report.

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 Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

**Decision:**

The Council noted the contents of the report.

**786 Integrated Care Partnership Joint Committee - Terms of Reference**

**Background:**

This report set out a proposed amendment to the Integrated Care Partnership Joint Committee's Terms of Reference to enable a representative of Kent Police to attend meetings in a non-voting capacity.

The proposed revised Joint Committee's Terms of Reference were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, Councillor Brake, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

**Decision:**

The Council agreed the revised Integrated Care Partnership Joint Committee's Terms of Reference, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

**787 Use of Urgency Provisions and Change to the Constitution**

**Background:**

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

The report also set out a proposal to update the Council's Employee Delegation Scheme with regards to the Assistant Director, Legal and Governance's

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delegated authority. There was currently a delegated authority in place in respect of legal proceedings for executive functions. The report proposed that this be extended to cover non-executive functions, i.e., those that were the responsibility of the Council, for example, planning matters. This was set out as a tracked change at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jarrett, supported by Councillor Kemp, proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

### **Decision:**

- a) The Council noted the use of urgency provisions as set out in sections 3 and 4 of the report.
- b) The Council approved the update to the Employee Delegation Scheme, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

## **788 Motions**

### **Motion A – proposed by Councillor Potter and supported by Councillor Mrs Josie Iles**

“Support for Grammar Schools in Medway

Medway Council has a proud record of delivering quality school places to meet the needs and abilities of all children in Medway.

The Council notes that despite the challenge of a growing school age population we are joint first, nationally, as a provider of good and outstanding school places. This has been delivered with combined investment in school capital projects totalling over £140m from Council funding and directly through Department for Education led projects.

- In the primary phase over 3500 primary school places have been created at schools and new build projects.
- There have been over 3000 mainstream secondary school places created through school expansions and two new secondary schools.
- Over 600 selective places have been created by expanding existing grammar schools.
- In the SEND sector, 586 additional school places have been provided with projects such as the Abbey Court new build and additional provision at Bradfields. This has been complimented by new resource provision units in mainstream schools.

The Council also notes the continuing programme of capital projects that are underway and scheduled across all phases, including the expansion of Hundred of Hoo Primary to 2 form entry, further SEND resource provision units



## **Council, 20 April 2023**

at various mainstream schools, and the construction of the Maritime Academy and the Inspire Special School.

Medway Council recognises the importance for education provision to meet the needs and abilities of all of our children and young people. This includes the provision of selective education in Medway and this Council recognises the excellent role Medway grammar schools play for our most academically gifted children regardless of income or background, especially when it comes to narrowing the attainment gap.

The Council further notes the work that has been undertaken with our grammar schools to change admission policies to prioritise grammar assessed children on distance, not on score, in order to better prioritise local children within the remit of the Admissions Code. The Council also approved the proposals for three Medway Grammar schools to change from single sex to co-educational, these proposals are now awaiting approval by the Regional Director. If approved, this will provide greater flexibility in the school admissions process and will better enable the use of school places for local children.

This Council acknowledges the challenge to maintain a minimum of 25% grammar provision in Medway against the prospect of future population growth, in particular that coming forward and proposed in Hoo. As stated above, significant work has already been undertaken in order to address this increase in population, including through the expansion of existing grammar schools. However, this Council also acknowledges there are concerns amongst grammar school heads that existing schools are now reaching or are close to ideal capacity. As there is no grammar provision west of the river, most children living there who attend a grammar school in Medway will travel to the schools in Rochester and Chatham.

In light of the above this Council commits to:

1. Continue to explore the options for grammar school annexe provision in Medway so the Council can continue to meet the local demand for school places across all phases, abilities and needs.
2. Write to the Government to seek formal approval, in principle, for grammar school annexe provision in Medway.
3. Write to all three Medway MPs requesting they raise the case for grammar school annexe provision in Medway with the Secretary of State for Education.”

### **Decision:**

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

## **Council, 20 April 2023**

### **Motion B – proposed by Councillor Maple and supported by Councillor Khan**

“Council notes that for the first time at a Medway Council election voters will be required to produce photographic identification to be able to participate on 4 May. Council encourages all residents without photographic identification to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate by 5pm on 25 April 2023.

Council further notes Medway Council, like all English councils holding elections on 4 May, will be collecting statistics on how many voters are rejected at polling stations for not having photographic identification. Currently the only people allowed access to that information is the Electoral Commission and the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

No person in Medway will currently be allowed to know how many people in Medway have been stopped from voting due to not having photographic identification.

Council agrees to write to Michael Gove MP & Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE to change Rule 40B(7), Schedule 1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 to allow councils to publish the figure from each ward of voters who are rejected for not having photographic identification.”

#### **Decision:**

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

**Mayor**

**Date:**

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