

**REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**- 14 DECEMBER 2023**  
**Quarter 2 2023/24**

**Strategic risks relevant to this committee**

Live or Managed risk	Risk Ref	Risk	Inherent Risk Score	Q2 22/23 Current Risk Score	Q3 22/23 Current Risk Score	Q4 22/23 Current Risk Score	Q1 23/24 Current Risk Score	Q2 23/24 Current Risk Score	Movement	Definition (Current score) (L-likelihood) (I-impact)	Owner	Portfolio	Link to Council Plan
L	SR17	Delivering regeneration	BII	BII	BII	BII	BII	BII	→	L – likely I – major	Director of Place	Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration	Growth
L	SR46	Medway's Economic Recovery	BII	BII	BII	BII	BII	BII	→	L – likely I – major	Assistant Director Regeneration	Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment	Growth
L	SR36A	Medway Development Company Ltd	BI	NA	NA	NA	CII	CII	→	L - unlikely I – major	Assistant Director Regeneration, Chief Operating Officer	Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration	Growth

Full details of strategic risks relevant to this committee can be found in Appendix 3.

## Performance by outcome

Key

<b>Red</b>	Significantly below target (>5%)	<b>Amber</b>	Slightly below target (<5%)	<b>Green</b>	Met or exceeded target
<b>DET</b>	Deteriorating	<b>STATIC</b>	Static	<b>IMP</b>	Improving
<b>Short term</b>	since last quarter	<b>Long term</b>	average last 4 quarters	<b>Goldilocks</b>	Optimum performance is in a target range

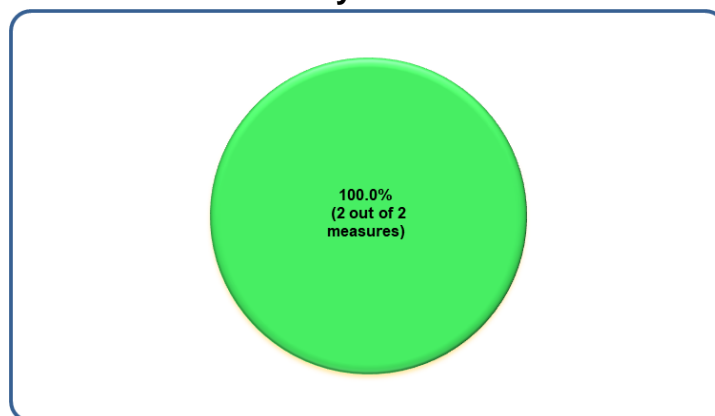
### Council Priority: **GROWTH**

#### Maximising regeneration and economic growth - growth for all

**Outcome: A strong diversified economy**

**Programme: Inward investment and business growth**

#### Performance Summary



The total number of measures is 3  
 1 measure is data only [GVAPJ M]  
 2 measures met their target [ECD13; ECD20]

Both the green measures are deteriorating long term [ECD13; ECD20]

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
ECD13	Percentage of square footage let at Innovation Centre Medway (ICM)	Maximise	98.53%	90.00%	Green	DET	DET

**Comments:**

- The Innovation Centre Medway (ICM) has 98.53% occupancy with 54 of the 55 offices occupied. There has been little change in office occupancy through the quarter.

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
ECD20	Percentage of square footage let in council owned business units	Maximise	90.14%	90%	Green	IMP	DET

**Comments:**

- Overall, the occupancy level is at 90.14% versus a target of 90%.
- The Innovation Centre Medway (ICM) continues to perform well with 98.53% occupancy and 54 out of 55 offices occupied. There is an interested new prospective tenant for the recently vacated office. There has been little change in the quarter.
- The Innovation Studio Medway (ISM) continues to perform well with 100% occupancy of all 15 offices and 17 storage containers. One office and two storage containers were vacated over the quarter with new tenants found.
- Hopewell Drive is also performing strongly with 100% occupancy of all 23 units. One new tenant has been found over the quarter. It should be noted a unit will become vacant in October and a new tenant is being sought.
- Pier Road activity levels have risen considerably with 63.15% occupancy, with 19 out of 29 units occupied. One extra unit has been occupied in the quarter. There are very promising signs on filling the vacant units, with one application at its final stage prior to occupancy and five of the vacant units now being under offer. The remaining four units are being marketed.

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
GVAPJ M	GVA per job – Medway (21/22 annual)	Maximise	£57,245.00	Data	Data	IMP	IMP

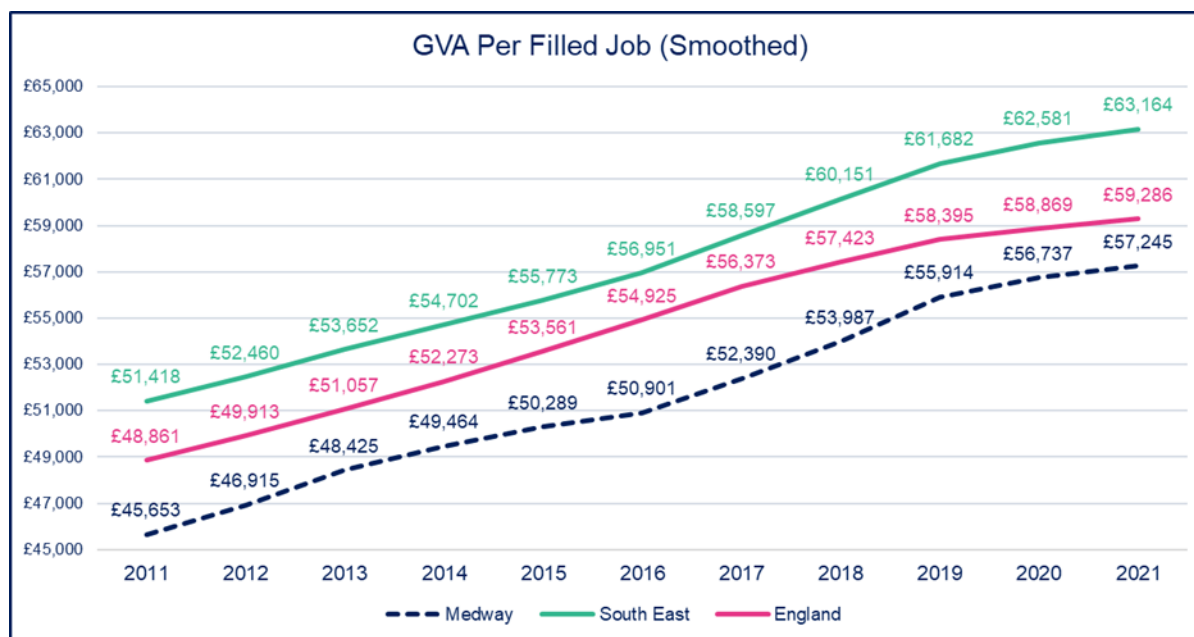
**Comments:**

- The data is published by The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and was previously released annually in December. Since Covid19, there have been delays at the ONS and the latest release of this data (2021) was in July 2023. The next release date for the 2022 data is yet to be announced.

- Given the volatility with the raw data and because the smoothed data is weighted, year-on-year comparisons should not be made. Gross Value Added (GVA) per filled job is better considered over a longer period. Trends over a longer period are less likely to be the result of the volatility around any single year estimate and are more likely to be showing a change in the economic performance of Medway.

### Benchmarking:

- Medway's Gross Value Added (GVA) per filled job for 2021 is £57,245, which is 3.4% below that of England (£59,286). However, in 2011, Medway was 6.6% below England, so for 2021, Medway has become closer to England by 3.2 percentage points over these 10 years.
- From 2016 to 2021, Medway's GVA per filled job has increased by 12.5%, which is a higher percentage change than that of the South East (10.9%) and England (7.9%). Medway has also seen a higher rate of change over 10 years at 25.4%, compared to the South East (22.8%) and England (21.3%).



**Projects for this outcome:****To ensure that the delivery of space and resources to enable innovative business growth and practice sits at the heart of Innovation Park Medway:**

- The North Kent Enterprise Zone was designated by the Government in Autumn 2015 and came into operation on 1 April 2017, with six sites in Ebbsfleet Garden City, Maidstone, and the Innovation Park Medway (IPM). The IPM project set out to remodel the operational Rochester Airport to enable up to 60,000m<sup>2</sup> of innovative new office and industrial space to the north-west and south of the airport. The site offers outstanding transport and digital connectivity, access to world-class research and development facilities and highly skilled talent through the cluster of Kent and Medway-based universities.
- The IPM project has been awarded significant external funding, with £9.619m of Local Growth Fund (LGF) grant allocated via the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and the £650,000 loan from the Growing Places Fund (GPF). Based on a business case which demonstrated that the cost of borrowing to fund the council's direct development of a landmark six-storey building on the northern site could be met from the rental income, the council has previously agreed to add £14.5m to the scheme. The council was awarded £400,000 towards the Runway Park through the Getting Building Fund (GBF), however the bid through the second round of Levelling Up Funding to contribute approx. 50% to the cost of the building, in light of changing market conditions around the demand for serviced accommodation, rising costs and rising interest rates, was not successful.
- Progress has been made to date on realising the plans for the site, with planning achieved for elements of the Southern Site, enabling works nearing completion on the Northern Site and interest from potential occupiers. We are now reviewing the development approach for the various sites which make up IPM in partnership with key stakeholders.

**IPM: Southern and Northern sites:**

- The Planning Service has validated the self-certificate and approved it for S1.3. Architect and consultants are discharging the conditions. The self-certificate application for S1.1 was submitted at the end of September with a decision due 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**Northern Site:**

- Infrastructure and Public Realm works are almost complete, however there are some defects with the paving which the contractors are currently rectifying at their own cost. Further work may also be required for some landscape and drainage elements, including tree planting. Once reviewed, a package of next steps will be agreed and implemented.
- Site security is being scoped and costed for when FM Conway leave site in the next few months. The site will be fully closed, so this provision will be in place to prevent anti-social activity as well as ensuring health and safety across the site.

**IPM: Local Development Order (LDO):**

- Following legal advice, work is now underway to revise the Innovation Park Medway (IPM) Local Development Order (LDO), Masterplan and Design Code. A programme has been developed with anticipated formal adoption of the revised documents in March - May 2024.
- As part of the revisions to the LDO, the evidence base documents require updates. Quotes are being obtained and consultants will be appointed at the appropriate time.
- The IPM Delivery team, jointly with Local Planning Authority Officers, is engaging with Master Planners to review the Northern site plot layout, taking into consideration varying heights and B1 and E(g) use class split. This is expected to be complete by December 2023.

**IPM: Management and maintenance strategy:**

- Based on legal advice, the Innovation Park Medway (IPM) team is not pursuing the creation of a separate management company for IPM, as Medway will retain the freehold. The team continue to work closely with Avison Young on producing a final strategy and updated service charges.

**IPM: Sustainable development:**

- Medway Council has submitted a bid for £189,300 Getting Building Fund (GBF) investment, which will allow for optimisation of sustainable travel provision for Innovation Park Medway (IPM) Southern site. This is key to minimising traffic generated by the IPM development.
- If successful the funding will be used predominantly for capitalised cost of travel co-ordination, including a review of the existing IPM Travel Plan and support for businesses to produce individual Travel Plans, as well as some of the build costs to deliver the sustainable elements associated with sustainable travel.
- Officers are currently in discussions with a renewable energy provider to explore sustainable energy solutions across IPM with a focus on solar power and providing potential occupants with an option to enter into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to get competitive rates on energy cost.
- Further exploration may require a procurement exercise within the wider renewable energy market for a more competitive response and officers will seek advice from the Category Management team before progressing.
- In addition to this, we are looking at income generating energy solutions.

**Continue to encourage and help facilitate the growth of businesses in Medway (Business premises provision):**

- The Innovation Hub has finished design phase with a design and build tender underway. Construction completion and handover is expected in Q4 2023/24 as planned.

- A contract extension to the end of Q4 2023/24 has been granted for Locate in Kent to continue to work with Medway Council to promote employment sites.

#### **Support Business for Medway, the local economic partnership:**

- Business for Medway has expanded and is gaining a reputation with representation at several networking events. Two Medway MPs attended the last meeting on 8 September in Gillingham with the next meeting being planned.

#### **Facilitate delivery of Medway 2037:**

- A final draft of Medway 2037 set of Strategies, including Medway 2037, Town Centre Strategy, Innovation Strategy, and Skills & Employability Plan are going to the Cabinet meeting in October. Once approved for publishing, fully accessible desktop versions will be publicly available online by the end of the year. Work on the River Strategy is underway and will go to Cabinet separately once completed.

#### **Dissemination of Medway 2037 and implementation of the Delivery Plan:**

- Medway 2035 was the core Regeneration Strategy for the council. Its recent revision reflects significant changes since it was considered by Cabinet in December 2018 (Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) award, climate change emergency declaration, Brexit, Covid19, child-friendly city commitment, and so on).
- Medway 2035 has been refreshed to align with the emerging Local Plan, to become Medway 2037. Medway 2037 Strategies include Medway 2037, Skills and Employability Plan, Innovation Strategy, Town Centres Strategy, and River Strategy, and align with other relevant strategies such as the Climate Change Action Plan, Culture Strategy, Tourism Strategy, and Sport Strategy. Priorities include destination and placemaking, town centres, inward investment, business accommodation and digital connectivity, sector growth and improving employability. Cross-cutting themes include climate change and net zero, innovation, and growth for all.
- The Medway 2037 Strategies, apart from the River Strategy which will be sent under separate cover, are being considered by Cabinet in October. Once approved for publication, a fully accessible desktop version will be made publicly available online. A consolidated Delivery Plan has been developed and will be kept in-house to measure the progress of the actions within the Strategies.

#### **To deliver a comprehensive business support package which supports both business creation and growth (contracted business support):**

- 79 enquiries were made via the Economic Development team for specific support. Most could be signposted to the Kent and Medway Growth Hub for further support while 20 required intensive assistance from the Economic Development team.
- The application stage for the 2023/24 Scale Up Programme have opened with assessment and onboarding due in Q3 23/24.

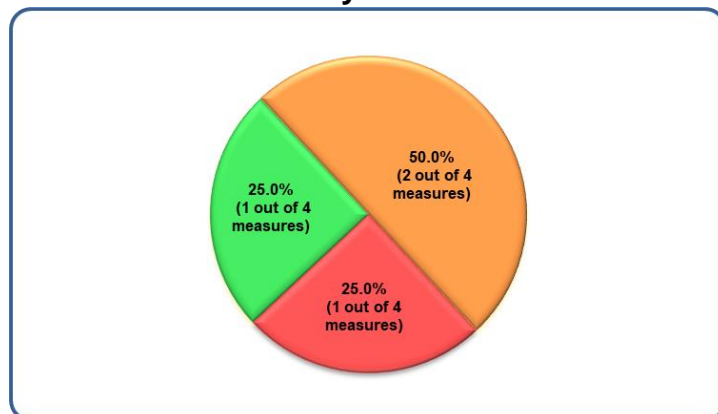
- One new business was onboarded onto the Growth Entrepreneur Programme and one already on programme successfully entered the NatWest Accelerator Programme.
- A total of 15 Partners for Growth grant applications were submitted and assessed with three awarded grants.
- There were eight attendees at a start-up bootcamp delivered by The Kent Foundation.
- There was a total of 75 attendees between two sessions of High Street Digitalisation Social Media Training.
- There was only one attendee at the first NatWest Support Workshop. This will be addressed with better advertising in future.
- A total of 110 intensive assists were provided to local businesses.



## Outcome: Residents with jobs and skills

### Programme: Jobs, skills, and employability

#### Performance Summary



The total number of measures is 4  
 1 measure met its target [NI 117(N&U)]  
 2 measures were slightly below target [LRCC4a; MAE 3]  
 1 measure was significantly below target [MAE 2]

The amber measures are deteriorating long term [LRCC4a; MAE 3]  
 The red measure is deteriorating long term [MAE 2]

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
LRCC4a	Number of jobs created and safeguarded (cumulative)	Maximise	87	90	Amber	DET	DET

#### Comments:

- A total of 87 jobs were created or protected in Q2; three were retained at Hopewell Drive, 80 were retained and four created at Borg Warner supported by Locate in Kent.

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
MAE 2	% retention rate (Q4 22/23 academic year)	Maximise	88.64%	94%	Red	DET	DET

#### Comments:

- This performance indicator (PI) is based on academic year rather than financial year. The data for the 2022/23 academic year is now complete. Q4 academic year 2022/23 looks at the period May 2023 to July 2023. Data has been extracted from the EBS Management System.

- The retention rate for the 2022/23 academic year is 5.36 percentage points (pp) below the challenging target of 94%, at 88.64%.
- There are many factors that have impacted learners which have caused them to withdraw. In normal times, adults face significant barriers to participating in learning even where the cost of courses are free; lack of information and guidance, lack of time, childcare and travel costs prohibit participation. This academic year has been exceptional, and learners have been impacted by train, bus and teacher strikes which affected attendance and subsequently led to withdrawals. Learners have also been affected by the cost-of-living crisis which has led not only to lower numbers enrolling on paid for courses but also learners on lower wages taking on more shifts or second jobs to support their home lives. Adult learners have a choice on whether they participate in learning or not and often the situation at home becomes more of a priority.
- However, Q4 of the academic year has seen a reduction in learners withdrawing with only 18% of all withdrawals throughout the year. November and March have been the points of the year where the number of withdrawals has been at their highest. This reflects previous years as it is a month or so after most courses start with the reason for withdrawing, where known, predominantly being the pressure of study.
- Medway Adult Education (MAE) has been working hard to ensure attendance and retention improve in the new 2023/24 academic year. Learners are informed at their Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) meetings and on their enrolment learning agreement that they are expected to attend 85% of sessions and complete the course. We have clearer processes on following up on unattendance, with referral processes either back to IAG to see if a different course is more appropriate or to Learner Services for pastoral support.
- MAE has a Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF) available for eligible learners on Adult Skills courses to support with course related costs that may be a barrier to learning, for example travel or childcare costs. Tutors have been reminded the fund is available and to refer learners to it. The IAG and Learner Support team has also visited each eligible classes to inform the learners directly that the fund is available and how they can contact them if finances are becoming a barrier to learning.

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
MAE 3	Achievement rate (pass rate) (Q4 22/23 academic year)	Maximise	95.13%	96%	Amber	DET	DET

**Comments:**

- This performance indicator (PI) is based on academic year rather than financial year. The data for the 2022-23 academic year is now complete. Q4 academic year 2022/23 looks at the period May 2023 to July 2023. Data has been extracted from the EBS Management System.
- The pass rate measures the percentage of learners who complete their course, achieve a qualification or their learning aim. Most recent figures show that Medway Adult Education (MAE) learners continue to achieve very high pass rates and

demonstrates the excellent processes in place to support learners achieve their qualifications, or to achieve their learning outcomes in non-accredited provision (RARPA – Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement).

- The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) overall pass rate is 92%. This is 2 percentage points (pp) lower than 2022/23. These results have been reviewed and moderated and have increased from 89% since this data was last submitted on 1st October 2023. The summer examination process for ESOL qualifications encountered an accumulation of administrative problems which has led to results being lower than anticipated. These problems have been reviewed and there is a robust action plan in place to ensure we do not encounter them in 2023/24.
- Mathematics and English have an overall pass rate of 80% with Functional Skills Mathematics results being lower than expected with Level 2 (L2) obtaining a pass rate of 44% and Level 1 (L1) obtaining a pass rate of 83%. However, this is higher than the national average published by the examination board with a L2 pass rate of 37% and a L1 pass rate of 38%.

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
NI 117(N&U)	The percentage of 16–17-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training or whose status is 'not known'	Minimise	3%	7%	Green	IMP	IMP

#### Comments:

- Data is to August 2023, the latest published data.
- Not in education, employment, or training (NEET) and Not Known data is cyclical and should not be compared quarter to quarter.
- Progress has continued. In August 2022 the rate of NEET and Not Knowns was 4.2%; it is now 3%.
- This year the NEET and Not Known cohort is 209, whilst a year ago it was 275. Currently 172 are NEET, compared to 233 last year and 37 are Not Known compared to 42 in 2022. It is usual for the numbers of NEET to rise when the number of Not Knowns falls as some of those whose activity become known are NEET. Medway has now moved into the first quintile (top) for local authority (LA) performance.

#### Benchmarking:

- Nationally 7.0% of 16- and 17-year-olds are NEET or Not Known. This is worse than in Medway but is a decrease compared to August 2022 (10%).
- The rate of NEET and Not Known in the South East is currently 5.9%, worse than Medway. In 2022 the South East was at 16.9%. This is anomalous as Surrey is reporting 95.3%, which is skewing the regional result.
- Medway is now better than both National and the South East.

**Actions:**

- The service and the performance teams work collaboratively to track, record, and monitor the destinations of Medway's young people using data supplied by schools. All schools routinely share their data and further work will continue to strengthen the importance of meeting deadlines. Those Not Knowns remaining are manually being tracked using internal and external data sources. Improved relationships with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have enabled a manual tracking procedure to take place, whereby young people on work programmes and claiming benefits have been identified and support levels adjusted. Continued close working relationships with training providers support the tracking of casual entrants into education.
- Further in-depth work will be conducted to ensure that targeted young people known to the Youth Offending, Looked After and Special Educational Needs teams will strengthen the identification and marking of this cohort, ensuring that support can be focused.
- Data cleansing has impacted the reporting positively, ensuring that the marked cohort is correct.

**Projects for this outcome:****Deliver the Medway Adult Education learning programme to boost local skills level for those furthest from employment.:**

- The Medway Adult Education (MAE) curriculum has been carefully reviewed and revised in conjunction with local stakeholders on a regular basis to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community and is accessible to those furthest from employment.
- One approach to meeting these needs has been to take learning into the heart of the communities we serve and to deliver engagement activities with learners who may be considered the hardest to reach. Strategies for this have included working with community partners such as housing associations, charities, and faith groups to understand their clients' needs and to offer interventions that enable them to take their first steps towards adult learning. The service has recently extended the number of venues for the digital access courses to include a beginner's course at All Saints Church in All Hallows to meet the needs of a rural community. Feedback from learners indicates they are now more confident in using mobile technology to make healthcare appointments and to search for information using the internet.
- The service has successfully delivered Multiply courses in creative subjects which aim to engage learners without mathematics qualifications to improve basic mathematics skills whilst also learning creative skills. For example, in pottery workshops learners were taught how to correctly cost items they make so that they can make a fair return on selling items should they wish to do so.
- MAE works closely with local partners such as Job Centre Plus (JCP) and REED In Partnership, to support those furthest from employment. Information, advice, and guidance is targeted at those furthest from employment, with development of English and mathematics skills at the forefront of those discussions. Learners can access information about English and mathematics courses at Chatham JCP and REED offices. The team has also attended local careers events to share information about courses available with those looking for work.

- Moving forwards, in the next quarter, MAE plans to continue delivering the Fifty Plus Programme, which focuses on supporting adults aged 50 and above who have experienced long-term unemployment or are looking to retrain. The service will also continue to develop partnerships with community groups to engage with adults, who for various reasons may be economically inactive, and to encourage adults and their families to experience the benefits of learning for life.

**To support the framework of action in the Skills & Employability Plan for Medway:**

- A new Supported Internship forum has been created to develop an action plan to further Supported Internships in Medway and to utilise funds received from the National Team for Diversity & Inclusion. It is creating a bank of promotional videos, organising an employer event and a parent and young person event.
- A skills plan is being devised with key further education (FE) and higher education (HE) partners to provide high quality skills support to businesses coming into the Innovation Park Medway (IPM).
- Project Search is being supported in Medway, with nine interns due to start at Amazon, Medway.
- The first Medway focused Independent Training Provider Forum launched with 17 attendees.
- The team is supporting young people at particular risk of being not in education, employment or training (NEET) with mentoring through the Student Support Group.
- The team is providing continued professional development (CPD) for job coaches at Job Centre Plus (JCP), which is being offered monthly.
- Almost 200 businesses have signed up to our business pledges, aiming to support education.

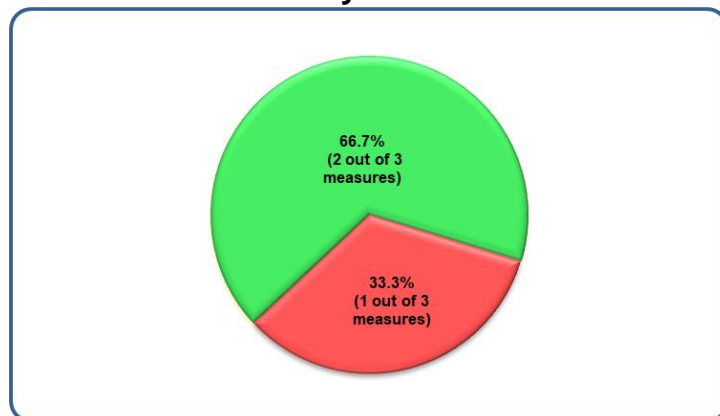
**Number of jobs created and safeguarded.:**

- A total of 87 jobs were created or protected in Q2 – three were retained at Hopewell Drive, 80 were retained and four created at Borg Warner supported by Locate in Kent.

## Outcome: Preventing homelessness

### Programme: Preventing homelessness

#### Performance Summary



The total number of measures is 3.

2 measures met their target [HC3; HC4a]

1 measure was significantly below target [NI 156]

1 of the 2 green measures is deteriorating long term [HC4a]

The red measure is deteriorating long term [NI 156]

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
NI 156	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	Minimise	457	400	Red	DET	DET

#### Comments:

- At the end of Q2 23/24 there were a total of 457 households residing in temporary accommodation (TA) provided by the council in line with its statutory responsibilities. This figure is higher than the 400 households that were accommodated at the end of Q1. The majority of households in TA will have children. Therefore, there is a correlation between the overall number of households in TA and the number of children in TA. There are six households in TA now that have come from the Homes for Ukraine or Family Scheme processes as follows:
  - ❖ 'Family scheme route: accommodation arrangements/relationships have broken down' - 2,
  - ❖ 'Homes for Ukraine sponsorship route: accommodation arrangements/relationships have broken down' - 1,
  - ❖ 'Homes for Ukraine sponsorship route: accommodation not available or not suitable on arrival' - 3.
- The accommodation provided to families will usually be in the form of a self-contained property located in Medway.

**Benchmarking:**

- The rate of households in TA in Medway is currently 3.45 per 1,000 households – this is slightly lower than the national rate of 4.35 (latest benchmarking figures March 2023).
- Further benchmarking has been undertaken to identify how Medway compares with other similar sized unitary authorities. Locally, Swale had a rate of 5.93 per 1,000 households in the same time period.

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
HC3	Number of households with dependent children in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation who have resided there for 6+ weeks	Minimise	0	0	Green	STATIC	STATIC

**Comments:**

- A snapshot at the end of Q2 23/24 identifies that no families were in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation. Additionally, throughout Q2 no families were placed into bed and breakfast for more than six weeks.
- Work is continuously underway to ensure that the use of B&B is kept to a minimum. This has been done by seeking more suitable temporary accommodation (TA) for households and using Housing Revenue Account (HRA) properties as TA. The service has also reviewed its procedures to ensure that all cases with children or a pregnant woman are moved on from B&B within appropriate timescales.

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
HC4a	Number of private sector properties improved as a result of the Council's intervention (cumulative)	Maximise	496	400	Green	IMP	DET

**Comments:**

- This performance measure has replaced the 'HC4: Number of private sector properties improved as a result of the Council's intervention' performance measure. The new performance measure, HC4a, shall reflect on cumulative figures.
- The Private Sector Housing (PSH) team continues to work with tenants living in inadequate dwellings that fail to meet the minimum standards, and properties that fail to meet the tenants' needs that could potentially have serious consequences for health and wellbeing. We continue to work with landlords to improve the standard of accommodation in the private sector throughout 2023/24.

- During Q1 and Q2 23/24, 496 private sector households were assisted to improve their properties through council intervention. In Q2, 26 category 1 hazards and 178 category 2 hazards have been identified, with 24 category 1 and 171 category 2 hazards being either reduced or removed from the residential properties in the same quarter. These figures are rolling so will increase and decrease through the months. These hazards have been removed by either formal or informal actions.
- 28 enforcement notices have also been issued throughout this quarter in terms of hazards identified. Damp and Mould continues to be statistically significant hazards with 45 hazards of Damp & Mould being identified in Q2. The PSH Licencing team continue to face challenges with maintaining Homes of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) licencing. We have successfully recruited to the vacant HMO license post which over the coming months will reduce the time taken to issue licences. The planned inspections of mobile homes units will continue in 2024/25. This will enable us to continue to comply with current legislation.
- 53 Disability Facility Grant (DFG) applications have been approved. The adaptations from these grants can restore the use of the home so that our clients can regain or retain their independence and carry on living in the community.

#### **Projects for this outcome:**

#### **Reducing the number of those rough sleeping - Ensure that the council maximises the opportunity to reduce homelessness through prevention and relief:**

- The high levels of demand for homelessness assistance experienced by the Housing Solution and Reviews team has continued sharply upwards throughout Q2, with a current monthly average of 410 approaches to the end of August compared to the monthly average for 2022/23 of 319. The team remains successful in preventing and relieving homelessness within Medway, although this has been negatively impacted by the high caseloads currently experienced across the team and workflow being impacted whilst officers became familiar with the service's new database system. Despite these challenges, the team's current success rate stands at 56% of all those households owed a homeless duty having their housing problem successfully resolved.
- In support of the team's prevention/relief activities they continue to maintain a number of successful initiatives, including proactive partnership working with local and private sector landlords, and other council teams, working with these to maximise support and income for clients at risk of eviction and thus sustain tenancies where possible. The team also works closely with colleagues in the Rough Sleepers team to resolve homelessness for those rough sleeping.

Collaborative working across the Housing service continues apace with a view to establishing a private sector leasehold scheme to increase the supply of accommodation available to the council in the private rented sector. Weekly review meetings are being held to discuss and monitor progress, with external fact-finding meetings with partners having already been undertaken. The Rehousing Manager is leading on this initiative, with support from the Housing Solutions and Reviews Manager. Enquiries have been, and continue to be, undertaken with several similar schemes, with a view to enabling the council to determine what options will be best to adopt. Reflecting this, the deadline to complete an outline proposal has been increased until December 2023.



**To support people and vulnerable families to access housing:**

- Opportunities to increase available accommodation continue to be sought (e.g., bids already delivered or submitted and in progress). Further funding possibilities will continue to be explored for vulnerable groups and close work with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is ongoing around making sure that Medway residents' housing and support needs are understood (with the expectation that this is reflected in grant determinations).

**Help Medway's people get a foot on the housing ladder:**

- Through joint work across the Medway Housing team, funding has been brought in which has enabled four flats to be purchased, with support funded as well, for people with a history of sleeping rough. A bid with mhs homes has been submitted for the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP) to Homes England and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), which if successful will provide funded support to a 30-bedroom foyer for vulnerable young people.

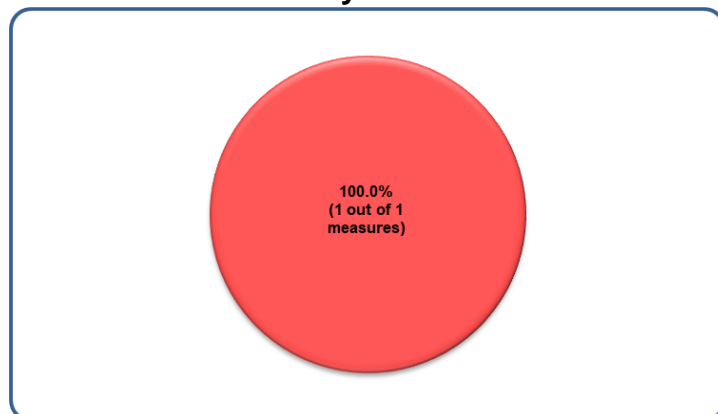
**Working with landlords and agents to support households to sustain their accommodation and prevent homelessness:**

- The Housing Solutions and Reviews team is actively working to promote and maintain joint prevention working arrangements with several social landlords in the area. Early interventions enable sustainment of tenancies for tenants who are at risk of eviction. The team also actively, and successfully, works with private sector landlords to sustain tenancies at risk, providing practical and financial support and assistance via our landlord helpline, and via contact with the Private Rented Sector (PRS) team.
- As previously reported, a meeting was held in June between the managers of contributing housing services to discuss how to progress the arrangements for the re-establishment of the landlord forum.

## Outcome: Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway's residents

Programme: Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway's residents

### Performance Summary



The total number of measures is 1  
This measure was significantly below target [NI 154]

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
NI 154	Net additional homes provided (21/22 annual)	Maximise	1102	1586	Red	IMP	IMP

### Comments:

- In 2021/22 1,102 units were completed, maintaining the run over the previous years of delivering over 1,000 dwellings; it was the second highest number of homes delivered in a year in Medway since it became a unitary authority in 1998. However, it was still 484 dwellings below the requirement of 1,586.
- The requirement since 1 April 2022 is to deliver 1,675 dwellings.
- This information is updated in December each year.

### Projects for this outcome:

**Work with landowners and developers to promote the delivery of housing on appropriate sites in Medway to meet our housing targets and vision for Medway's successful growth:**

- The Planning Service continues to work with landowners and developers to promote the delivery of housing on appropriate sites in Medway to meet its housing targets and support the council's vision for successful growth in Medway by meeting regularly

with developers and landowners, engagement in the preparation of the new local plan and wider policy documents, and by implementing the planning protocol in partnership with other Kent authorities.

- The Planning Service regularly meet with individual developers and landowners. Consultation events are held as required as part of the process for the preparation of the new Local Plan.
- The Planning Service continues to work with Neighbourhood Planning Groups to progress plans to examination.
- The Head of Planning has met with several developers to discuss specific projects and complex applications during the quarter. The annual forum with developers has been organised to take place in November 2023.

#### **Preparation of the new Medway Local Plan:**

- Work continues on preparation of the new Local Plan which will set out the vision for Medway's growth. It will provide direction for investment in homes, jobs and services, and policies to protect and enhance what makes Medway special and to ensure that the growth is supported by the required infrastructure.
- Key stages of the local plan as set out in the Local Development Scheme are as follows:
  - ❖ Consultation on Regulation 18 Q2 23/24 – This commenced on 18 September 2023 and finishes on 31 October 2023.
  - ❖ Publication of Regulation 19 draft plan Q4 23/24
  - ❖ Submit plan for independent examination Q1 24/25

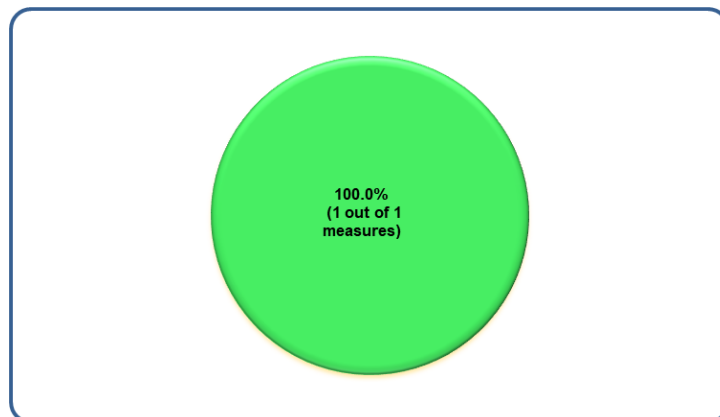
#### **Future Hoo:**

- The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), alongside Homes England have withdrawn the £170m Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) grant. Medway Council has now stopped work on the original proposed investment in six road schemes which were designed to improve the Peninsula's links to the rest of Medway, reduce congestion, and improve air quality, alongside investment in public access to open spaces and options to improve public transport.

## Outcome: Getting around Medway

Programme: Tackle congestion hotspots by transport and public realm improvements

### Performance Summary



The total number of measures is 1  
This measure met its target [NI 167]

This measure is deteriorating long term [NI 167]

PI code	PI name	Aim to	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend	Long Trend
NI 167	Average journey time along five routes across Medway (minutes per mile) (2022 calendar year)	Minimise	2.97	4.00	Green	DET	DET

### Comments:

- This performance indicator (PI) is a measure of journey times across the five key highway corridors into the centre of Medway. It measures the average minutes per mile across five key routes over the Monday to Friday 8am to 9am term time peak. It has a target of 4 minutes per mile. The PI is calculated using data supplied once a year by the Department for Transport.
- The last tranche of data was received during Q1 23/24 and covered the calendar year 2022. The result for all four quarters in the 2022 calendar year was well below the 4 minutes per mile target, with the lowest figure, 2.64, recorded in Q2. This marks the 24th consecutive quarter that the service has achieved their target, with the last time the target not being met being over five years ago now, a reflection of all the successful traffic management and sustainable transport projects delivered by the service.

**Projects for this outcome:****Maintain Band 3 status for the Highway Asset Management Self-Assessment via the Department for Transport (DfT) (DfT Self-Incentive Programme (Band 3 Award)):**

- For 2023/24 we have received the Full Band 3 allocation, which has been combined with the Needs Element of the Highway Maintenance Block funding. We are now working to our 2023/24 Asset Management Delivery Plan which supports our evidence base for continued funding.

**Continue to provide key maintenance and upgrades for the Medway Tunnel (Medway Tunnel Improvement Programme - Phase 4 Delivery):**

- Quarterly maintenance closures continue to take place, with the most recent being 4-8 September 2023 where a live tunnel emergency exercise was undertaken. Works completed to date as part of the Tunnel Project include a sump gas sampling system, contraflow gaps and manhole upgrades/replacement.
- Ongoing works include the Pier Road retaining wall, communications upgrade and the A289 carriageway resurfacing. Future works as part of the tender due out later this year will include ventilation fans, CCTV, pump and sump refurbishment, traffic signal integration and LED lighting upgrades.

**Develop a range of strategies for addressing identified congestion hotspots in Medway, including improvements to traffic signal infrastructure and programming:**

- During Q2 23/24 officers have continued to progress a range of projects and strategies to help keep Medway moving and address congestion hotspots. This includes a combination of highway alteration traffic projects, traffic signal site maintenance/improvement/optimisation and real-time information sharing infrastructure.
- A key junction improvement at Mierscourt Road, Rainham, on the arterial A Road network forms part of congestion reduction layout alteration project work for this year. This project is now at the detailed design stage. This is expected to continue during Q3. Project milestones will emerge following completion of the detailed design process, and at this time delivery is anticipated during 2024. In addition, investigative design work at the intersection of the A229 City Way and A230 Maidstone Road (Horsted Gyratory) has developed sufficiently to assess the estimated costs for the scheme. This will inform the strategy that is taken at this location. This is expected to receive attention during Q3.
- Traffic signal site optimisation happens continually through a combination of ongoing network review, fault monitoring/site interrogation, and stakeholder engagement. Faults are identified and addressed on a daily basis to ensure Medway's traffic signal installations are performing as intended, minimising congestion as a result of sub-optimal signal operation. In Q3 and Q4 it is anticipated that a route review covering the A2 corridor through Strood (High Street and Commercial Road) and Rochester (Corporation Street) will be commissioned supporting the wider route optimisation for this key link. This route includes the

ongoing development of Rochester Riverside and this workstream aligns with the securing of funds as part of that development to ensure the signal strategy for this route remains current.

- To support the council's response to real-time traffic volumes and incidents on the network a programme is in place to return some of the previously non-operational Variable Message Sign (VMS) infrastructure stock to working order. The VMS stock allows real-time information to be shared with road users, optimising route choice and supporting efficient use of the road network in real-time. This workstream has progressed during Q2, with repairs and site investigations continuing into Q3.
- Workstreams in this area have been impacted by the loss of a staff member. The recruitment process was progressed during Q1 as planned. This process has been unsuccessful and therefore will be repeated. Resources have been prioritised within this area to ensure that core traffic signal activities continue.

**To deliver a package of highways interventions in support of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid:**

- The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), alongside Homes England have withdrawn the £170m Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) grant. Medway Council has now stopped work on the original proposed investment in six road schemes which were designed to improve the Peninsula's links to the rest of Medway, reduce congestion, and improve air quality, alongside investment in public access to open spaces and options to improve public transport.
- The council will continue to work with residents, parish councils, community groups and members of the Hoo consortium of landowners and housebuilders to come forward with alternative solutions for Hoo, focusing on improving the wellbeing of all residents by providing sustainable transport, access to open spaces, employment opportunities and new homes. This work will also form part of the process of adopting a new Local Plan for Medway.