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Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

23 January 2024

Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Curry, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration

Summary

This annual report provides an account of the role of the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration. It details their ambitions for their areas of responsibility, how they have and will undertake political challenge and leadership and what their priorities and ambitions are for the year ahead.

1. Recommendations

1.1. The Committee are asked to note the report.

2. Budget and policy framework

2.1. The areas within the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and covered by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, as set out in the Council's constitution are:

- Emergency Planning
- Flooding
- Greenspaces
- Highways
- Local Plan
- Medway Norse
- Parking Strategy
- Public Rights of Way
- Public transport
- River Strategy
- Road Safety
- Strategic Regeneration and Planning Policy
- Street cleaning, recycling, waste collection, and waste disposal
- Traffic Management
- Transport Strategy

3. Background

- 3.1. I am delighted to have taken on Portfolio Holder responsibility for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration and would like to start by expressing my thanks to staff, partners and contractors from all sections of my wide portfolio for their continued dedication and commitment and in working collaboratively across the various services to deliver on so many subject areas.

The three key areas of my portfolio that I am devoting most of my time being :

- Front line services delivery
- Local plan
- Climate Action

This includes work towards delivering a new Medway Local Plan to meet the development needs of the population of Medway while protecting all that is wonderful and special in Medway such as the natural and historic environment.

- 3.2. The Planning Service is working with a changing and very challenging legislative context, including new and proposed reforms to the planning system introduced by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act: reforms to national planning policy.
- 3.3. The Council has recently completed a six week consultation period at 'Regulation 18' in advance of publishing the draft local Plan and finalising the plan's spatial strategy. The consultation focused on refreshing the vision and strategic objectives of the Plan and considers how growth needs could be positively met across the borough.
- 3.4. The emerging Local Plan needs to consider the current Local housing need, published in late March 2023, for 1667 homes per year. A 'Call for Sites' was launched in November 2022 and ran until February 2023. The work fed into the preparation of a Land Availability Assessment, which will help to inform a further assessment of potential development sites. This will be co-ordinated with a further iteration of the sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to prepare the draft plan in 2024.
- 3.5. The Planning Service has commissioned an updated Strategic Transport Model and Assessment, which are critical to determining the capacity to deliver local plan growth and mitigations needed. The outputs will inform the draft plan in 2024.
- 3.6. An assessment of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation has taken place and members have been briefed.
- 3.7. A River Frontages economic uses report has been completed and work is being co-ordinated with the River Strategy, led by the Regeneration team.
- 3.8. Work continues supporting Parish Councils and communities on the production of Neighbourhood Plans. The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted as part of the Council's Development Plan.

- 3.9. The Development Management team has received 553 applications in the first 6 months of this financial year (April - September), while this is down on the same period in 2022 (616 applications) this is a reflection of the current economic climate impacting on all Council's and is not a reflection on the attractiveness of Medway as a place to build and invest.
- 3.10. The team continue to perform exceptionally well, determining (within the 6 month period) over 90% of major applications, over 85% of minor applications and over 85% of other applications within target period against national targets of 60%, 70% and 70% respectively.
- 3.11. The quality of decisions is reviewed by Government and the threshold for designation on applications for both major and non-major development is 10% of an authority's total number of decisions being allowed on appeal. The most up-to-date Government data, which is for the 24 months to the end of March 2022, shows the number of decisions overturned at appeal for major applications is 1.6% and 1.1% for non-major applications.
- 3.12. A tree consultant continues to be employed to deal with the pressure of applications for work to protected trees to free up the Senior Tree Officer to focus on commenting on planning applications and other tree related issues particularly around bio diversity and climate change and to make sure that new developments come forward sensitively planned within the landscape protecting existing trees where appropriate and including significant proposals for new planting so beneficial for both climate change and health and wellbeing. The tree consultant has managed to completely reduce the backlog of TPO application work ensuring existing protected trees are well looked after and stable.
- 3.13. The Lead Local Flood Authority, within the Planning Service not only comments on planning applications in relation to surface water issues and sustainable drainage but also must respond appropriately to flood events and produce the necessary post event report.
- 3.14. Like most Planning Authorities and even private planning consultancies, there are extreme resource issues, and it is proving challenging to recruit and retain experienced planners and specialist officers. In order to best deal with these concerns and give us the best opportunity to retain our excellent staff and recruit appropriately to any vacancies, the service has undergone a re-structure this year. I am pleased to say that this has been successful. The Policy team is fully staffed for the first time in years while in the Development Management and specialist teams we have been able to retain and promote some exceptional staff.
- 3.15. Has approved the consultation of an updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

- 3.16. Medway's Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) sets out our overarching transport strategy and includes priorities and objectives for highway maintenance, active travel (walking and cycling), public transport, road safety and infrastructure capacity. The Council receives an annual capital grant from central government for delivering transport infrastructure improvements across Medway in accordance with these priorities.
- 3.17. An Electric Vehicle Strategy and a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan are in development and will be subject to consultation over the coming months. These documents will set out how the Council can guide the delivery of public charging infrastructure and provide a ten-year plan for the delivery of cycling and walking interventions. An updated Road Safety Plan will be published over the coming months as we continue our work to reduce the number of casualties on our roads.
- 3.18. In 2023, we secured over £700,000 of Government funding towards our Bus Service Improvement Plan for each of the next two years, which will supplement our existing public transport budgets. Residents and visitors will benefit from a series of service enhancements and initiatives to promote buses in Medway, which began with a free bus weekend in December.

In addition to our statutory responsibility for providing concessionary travel, we support the wider bus network by subsidising socially necessary journeys that give residents access to health, shopping, education and leisure facilities.

We have also received government funding for Active Travel initiatives, which we are using to deliver a programme of activities to encourage and promote walking and cycling. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan consultation is now under way from the 22nd Jan for 6 weeks – Council web site has the detail - www.medway.gov.uk/activetravel

- 3.19. In July 2023, the Council was granted powers under the Traffic Management Act for the civil enforcement of moving traffic offences. This has enabled us to progress our Safer, Healthier Streets initiative, which will come to fruition over the coming months. We will be installing Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras at several locations to enforce traffic restrictions such as 'no entry' signs, pedestrian only zones and yellow box junctions. Supporting the Police with enforcement will make our roads safer and less congested, in line with our transport and climate change priorities. The implementation of School Streets across Medway, with temporary access restrictions for vehicles at peak times, will create a safer environment for children and parents to travel to school, reducing parking problems and congestion for residents, improving air quality and promoting sustainable travel.
- 3.20. I oversee the management of 58 flat surface car parks and 2 multi storey car parks, and we will continue to ensure that parking is accessible, safe and secure for all users. There are now 34 electric vehicle charging points in our public car parks, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) payment systems have been implemented in Rochester to help us manage our car

parks efficiently. Car parking will be an important consideration in the development of our new Local Plan, as we seek to ensure that future growth can be accommodated, but at the same time recognise the importance of managing the traffic in our urban centres and how our approach to car parking could help promote sustainable travel.

- 3.21. I oversee the greenspaces service, delivered by over 100 Medway Norse employees. This includes management of the 8 green flag sites, 2 flagship country parks, 1900 hectares of green spaces, over 18,000 trees including some veteran historic species like the iconic Catalpa tree outside Rochester Cathedral. Increasing Medway's biodiversity is at the heart of the greenspace contract and Medway Norse have increased natural habitats and formal bulb planting throughout Medway, enhancing the gateway routes into Medway.
- 3.22. I oversee the street cleaning, recycling, waste collection, and waste disposal operations with an annual budget of £27m, services used by every Medway household, every week. Medway Council has a core statutory duty to provide these services.
- Street cleansing is an integral part of waste management, and the service operates 364 days a year, emptying over 1400 bins and cleaning its 'approximal 3000' streets using manual and mechanical techniques.
 - Medway are one of the few local authorities in the UK to retain weekly collections to all 119,977 homes, unlimited black sack waste and free garden waste collections.
 - Our three Household Waste Recycling Centres open 362 days/year are available exclusively to Medway residents and the booking systems ensures residents a guaranteed slot to recycle and dispose of their waste in a safe manner with an average of 977 slots available across 3 sites every day.
 - Over 100,000 tonnes of waste are transferred and recycled or recovered annually with 0.1% landfill and 36.7% recycled in 2022-23. 65 reprocessors transform Medway's waste into reusable and recyclable resources, and black sack waste into energy.

4.0 **Greenspace Development**

- 4.1 I have continued to support greenspace development including:
- 4.2 Successfully securing eight Green Flag Awards and a Green Heritage Award with good results. The eight Green Flag sites are Hillyfields, Gillingham Park, Broomhill Park, The Vines, Capstone Farm Country Park, Great Lines Heritage Park, Riverside Country Park and Ranscombe Farm Reserve, which is managed by Plantlife.
- 4.3 Medway's Priority Play scheme has seen capital improvements at five sites including Ballens Road, Laburnum Recreation Ground, Perry Street, Princes Avenue and Kingsfrith.

- 4.4 Section 106 contributions have also supported enhanced play provision at the Strand, Balmoral Gardens, Cherry Tree Open Space and Beechings Way (including Member Priority funds), as well as improved facilities at Copperfields Open Space and Great Lines Heritage Park footpaths.
- 4.5 Luton Millennium Green is being improved with Levelling Up Parks Funding and Section 106 contributions including a new orchard and larger play facilities.
- 4.6 An Open Space Study has been commissioned to review the quantity and quality of all of Medway's open spaces to help support the new Local Plan. This includes an action plan to increase the number of allotment plots to provide more growing spaces for Medway's residents.
- 4.7 Further Section 106 improvement projects currently in progress of being developed include Town Hall Gardens, Cozenton Park, Berengrave Local Nature Reserve, Watts Meadow, Temple Marsh and Riverside Country Park with work anticipated to be underway in 2024.
- 4.8 The Council continues to support 22 friends and volunteer groups, delivering tasks such as vegetation clearance, planting and litter picks. The groups also hold small community events, and 2023 was a particularly successful year for this. The groups are in a healthy position and MUGS (Medway Urban Greenspace Forum) continues to support the groups with regular meetings and activities. Each year we are supported by over 16,000 hours of valuable volunteer time to improve our green spaces.
- 4.9 Another successful Wild About Capstone event was held in September with over 2,000 visitors experiencing a wide range of attractions including kite flying, rural crafts and the return of the longhorn cattle.
- 4.10 A planning application has been submitted to turn the former golf course at Deangate into a Community Parkland which if consented will provide an exciting opportunity for wildlife and recreation acting as a gateway to explore the Hoo Peninsula. This application covers a total of 43.3 hectares within the former golf course boundary.
- 4.11 Temple Marsh is an existing open space within Medway that provides poor access and recreation for the new communities living in close proximity. Funding of £1m has been provided to the Council by Redrow to improve access and recreation within Temple Marsh, as part of a land equalization agreement. S106 monies are also available for the site.
- 4.12 Cabinet approval was gained in September 2023 to appoint a project officer to oversee the development of the site including the procurement of a Design and Planning Team to ensure a high quality approach to the sites development. This will also aid the environmental elements and implications of the Landfill and ensure the sustainable management of the site with respect to management, maintenance and community engagement.

4.13 **Rights of Way and Access**

I have continued to support access and recreation with the opening of Medway's second section of the King Charles III England Coast Path between Stoke Marshes and Riverside Country Park and the new Rochester Community Trail, a 9.5km long trail celebrating the rich heritage of Rochester as well as linking many of the open spaces in the area.

4.14 **Birdwise**

I am a new Member of the SAMS Management Board. The SAMMS mitigation is delivered via the Bird Wise North Kent project. This year the staff model has been amended to allow a year-round presence on site, allowing investment in staff and a reduction in time spent on annual recruitment and induction. This has benefited the project as public engagement between April and September this year has increased 73% compared with the same time last year. Birdwise has participated in events at Riverside, Capstone, Sun Pier, Hillyfields and Gillingham Park with 900 children taking part in organised nature trails. In October, the two-week Great Coastal Birdwatch saw the team lead twelve guided walks across north Kent with four in Medway, to showcase the importance of our coastline for protected birds. A1 interpretation panels have been designed to increase awareness of disturbance and encourage responsible behaviours and these are being installed at Cliffe Pools and Motney Hill early in the new year.

5.0 **Highways**

- 5.1 I oversee one of the largest and most valuable council managed assets, that has a replacement value of around £2billion. Medway's highway network is an essential link that serves every one of us, every day, connecting communities and businesses and encouraging economic growth, whilst being accessible for all modes of transport.
- 5.2 The Highway Asset Management Strategy was adopted last year and sets out how our highway service is delivered and how it supports Medway Council's wider policies and priorities. We are committed to informed decision making, which is demonstrated through adopting best practice and participating in the annual National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey, which measures public perception of the service we provide, allowing us to also benchmark against other Authorities. We use the data from the surveys alongside our own performance measures to continually improve our service.
- 5.3 Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Capital Funding is providing us with opportunities to create a new on-street EV charging infrastructure in Medway, that will not only serve our residents, but visitors to Medway and those travelling through it. This is a very challenging process, especially in narrow terraced streets within our town centres but this will give those residents without off-road parking the confidence to switch to EV, knowing there is a charger within no more than a few minutes away from where they live.

- 5.4 Our Highway Infrastructure Contractor Volker consistently met their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by achieving 98% of their performance targets throughout contract year 5. They have been awarded their third contract extension which takes the contract end date to 31 March 2025. Further extensions can be awarded if the performance targets are met, up to 31 March 2027.
- 5.5 The Volker Highways/Medway Council partnership has successfully achieved ISO 44001 for collaborative working for another year and continue to hold regular joint meetings to ensure compliance with the accreditation to retain it.
- 5.6 On 4 October 2023, the government announced £8.3 billion of additional highways maintenance funding over the period 2023 to 2024 and the next 10 years for local road resurfacing and wider maintenance activity on the local highway network. For Medway this means an additional £401k for the next two years with an additional £12.552M between 2023/24 and 2034.
- 5.7 We have continued to invest in our highway network to improve critical assets, including the recently completed bridge deck replacement of the road bridge at Stoke. The project value was more than £1m and was complex in terms of negotiating with Network Rail to reinstate the crossing point on their land to allow an alternative route for traffic on and off of the peninsula. By working alongside them, we were able to divert traffic so we could carry out crucial works that required a full closure on the bridge.
- 5.8 Over 25,500 lighting columns have been replaced or converted to LED which continues to produce significant energy savings, further achieved through the implementation of dimming regimes across the network. Lanterns are managed remotely using wireless technology enabling the team to monitor performance more efficiently. We are now looking to further reduce our energy costs by converting illuminated bollards and signs to LED as well.
- 5.9 Technological advances are being realised which can benefit the way the service is delivered to our residents which includes artificial intelligence. Route Reports utilises 4G mounted cameras in refuse and Inspector vehicles to identify defects on the highway network such as potholes and faded road markings which can then be reviewed and ordered for repair. This can in certain circumstances result in the service proactively repairing more defects before they are reported by members of the public and reduces the need for site visits, thus reducing fuel costs.
- 5.10 Innovation continues to play a key role in how we develop the way we do things to provide value for money and as well as undertaking trials of new products in the industry, we recently welcomed Velocity jet patching to Medway on 2 separate occasions to repair defects on our road network. During the initial 2-week trial, over 2,000 individual potholes were repaired at a quicker rate than traditional hand patching and at a fraction of the cost. It not only means we can repair more defects on the network in a shorter space of time, but it also benefits the contractor's workforce, reducing cases of hand, arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) through use of hand machinery over long periods of time. Whilst we can continue to look at innovation to drive

improvements, this will not address the investment backlog to bring the highway network up to condition where we are equal to or greater than the national average. Many years of underfunding and no further capital or revenue investment will result in more money being spent on doing less than we are currently doing, which will result in the ongoing deterioration of the highway network and critical assets. Long term capital investment is needed to target the backlog to improve condition performance, suppress deterioration and result in annual revenue savings across those critical asset groups due to less maintenance being required.

6. Providing political leadership and challenge

- 6.1 I am the vice Chairperson on the board of the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Programme. This involves the making space for nature strategy. The Director of Place is also on the board.

I am leading on the preparation of the new Medway Local Plan. This is a highly complex and sensitive aspect of the work of the Planning Service. The Chief Planning Officer and Assistant Director – Culture & Community regularly brief me on key challenges to agree actions. This has included the consultation on the Regulation 18 stage of the local plan in late 2023, input to the Lower Thames Crossing DCO Examination to ensure better mitigations for Medway and seeking a collaborative approach to addressing strategic highway issues at M2 Junction 1.

I am the Vice Chairperson of the Board of Making Space for Nature, a major part of the Kent and Medway Local Nature recovery Programme ([Local Nature Recovery Strategy \(LNRS\) | Kent Nature](#)) – ([Homepage | Making Space For Nature Kent](#)) with the Director of Place also on the Board with me.

- 6.2 There are fortnightly meetings between myself, the Chief Planning Officer and Assistant Director – Culture & Community, where the local plan, strategic transport and major development matters in Planning are reported and discussed.
- 6.3 I attended most of the consultation exhibitions arranged for the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation and chaired four stakeholder workshops on key issues for planning in Medway. I have also attended consultation events arranged for the Star Hill to Sun Pier Development Framework and Conservation Area appraisal consultations and Chatham Centre Design Code.
- 6.4 I have met with a range of staff in the Planning Service through the Local Plan exhibitions. I am also liaising with the Senior Tree Officer and stakeholders in reviewing Medway's Tree Policy, as well as working with the Chief Planning Officer on the review of the Planning Enforcement Policy.
- 6.5 I continue to work with the relevant planning officers in bringing forward neighbourhood Plans and in this respect Arches Local will move to referendum in early 2024 with significant public support and the comments from the examiner that the Plan has been an exemplar. Hoo and Chattenden

Draft Neighbourhood Plan will go out to consultation in early 2024 before moving to referendum itself. High Halstow Neighbourhood Plan has been withdrawn following the examiners report and will be amended and then re-submitted in 2024 for consultation.

- 6.6 I represent the Council on the Joint Advisory Committee for the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (now renamed Kent Downs National Landscape) and am proactive in working with the AONB unit to promote the interests of Medway. I support collaborative working with a range of external agencies and partners through the Local Plan consultation work. AONBs have recently been renamed National Landscapes - [Kent Downs National Landscape - Kent Downs](#)
- 6.7 I have been involved with the Medway Estuary and Swale Strategy (MEASS) meetings with the Environment Agency to guide improvements in existing flood defences.
- 6.8 Along with the Chairperson of the Planning Committee and other relevant portfolio holders I continue to meet with stakeholders in the development industry to hear the issues that they are facing and to help facilitate appropriate development and investment in Medway of the highest quality and delivering the infrastructure that is needed to meet our growth needs.
- 6.9 Similarly I meet with stakeholders in the local community to hear their views on development and what is needed and where to make that acceptable.
- 6.10 I have also met with communities impacted by recent flood events, with officers within the Council and staff from other bodies such as MHS and Southern Water to hear their concerns and to work with them on solutions to mitigate against future events.
- 6.11 Recognising the many demands on the Council's transport budgets and staff, I work with senior officers to carefully manage and prioritise our resources, focussing on locations where there is clear evidence of a need to improve road safety, traffic congestion and sustainable transport infrastructure, in line with our statutory responsibilities and Climate Change commitments. I also work with officers to identify and support external funding opportunities that will help us deliver our key transport objectives.
- 6.12 I take a strategic overview of the Council's sustainable transport activities, bringing together Climate Change, Public Health, Transport, Air Quality and other steering groups to facilitate the development, delivery and monitoring of Active Travel schemes and initiatives, including the promotion of behavioural change and the delivery of effective infrastructure.
- 6.13 I am pleased to represent Medway on the strategic board for the Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership, working collaboratively with Kent County Council and other key stakeholders to reduce the number of those killed and seriously injured on our roads.

6.14 I am overseeing the replacement of the weekly waste collection fleet (47 compacting refuse collection vehicles) and championed this procurement at Cabinet and full Council to seek agreement for the addition of £17million to the Council's capital programme, funded from borrowing to procure a Council-controlled waste fleet. Every opportunity to decarbonise the fleet will be explored in line with my portfolios Climate Change focus.

6.15 I am working closely with Medway Norse to improve the allotment facilities. Allotments are important community growing spaces and enhance health and wellbeing of Medway residents as well as supporting the climate change agenda. This year Medway Norse have begun to evaluate plots which historically have been too large and challenging for residents to maintain, and where appropriate, vacant plots are subdivided into manageable sizes for allotment users.

7. Championing the Interests of service users / Medway residents / Children and Young People

7.1 I continue to provide support throughout the Design code process. This includes community engagement with children and young people. The Planning team have been working together with the Child Friendly Team to understand the town from a young person's perspective, helping to inform the Design Code and create a vision for the future of Medway.

7.2 I chaired a residents meeting with the residents of Nelson Terrace following significant flooding on 1 September and have ensure that the residents are heard and understood.

7.3 I have arranged a meeting with the Local Flood Warden in Stoke to discuss the issues and the progress of the Draft Surface Water Management Plan to find a solution to the significant flooding they are facing.

7.4 I continue to work with stakeholders and communities that should have a voice in the growth of our area,

7.5 In July, I was delighted to join the Mayor of Medway at a celebration of our School Crossing Patrol service, which makes a vital contribution towards keeping our young people safe on their journey to school.

7.6 The Administration support weekly waste collections for Medway residents and I regularly meet with officers from waste services to stay abreast of technical and legislative developments which could improve the Council's recycling performance. I am heartened to see over 90% of garden waste is correctly recycled but, despite the efforts of the environmental engagement team, a significant quantity of food waste and recycling continues to be disposed of in black sacks, destined for incineration.

8. Support for key service areas

- 8.1 I have shown a leading role in the preparation of the new Local Plan, supporting the recent Regulation 18 consultation and liaising with officers on work on the key stages and issues of the plan.
- 8.2 I have shown leadership and support in the preparation of Star Hill to Sun Pier Development Framework and Conservation Area Appraisal consultation and Chatham Centre Design code, liaising with officers on work at key stages of the process.
- 8.3 In my involvement in the support for the re-structure of the service and meeting with key stakeholders from both the development industry and communities I continue to support the service and in the achievement of realising the goals of making Medway an even better place to live, work, learn and visit.
- 8.4 Medway Council has a core statutory duty to collect waste and recycling from domestic properties, keep streets free from litter and refuse and provide recycling centres. It is one of the few universal services provided to all 279,800 Medway residents and makes a tangible difference to the environment in which we live. There are more than 17 million waste collections annually in Medway.
- 8.5 I have instructed officers to keep me abreast of any development in the waste industry which I will champion at Cabinet and Council to drive the climate agenda forward, including waste strategy development and potential depot locations.
- 8.6 The annual review of waste contracts was presented to the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 November 2023. Members praised the waste services in Medway and asked for their thanks to be passed on to operatives and officers for their professionalism and dedication to the service. The report was for the contract year October 2022 to September 2023:
- Veolia Environmental Services – providing waste disposal services for residual and recycling waste.
 - Medway Norse – providing waste collection, street cleaning services and management of Medway’s Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- 8.7 The annual review of the Highways Infrastructure Contract will be tabled at the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2024, which will highlight achievements throughout contract year 5, covering the period 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023.
- 8.8 I am keen to increase the tree canopy and tree stock in Medway. Trees are a valuable amenity and provide shade, oxygen and wildlife habitats. Medway Norse manage over 18,000 trees across Medway which includes regular inspection and providing emergency response works. The Medway Norse

Greenspace contact includes managing the 5 cemeteries and this year have created wildflower meadows to increase biodiversity. Medway Norse work closely with volunteer and friends groups throughout Medway to support the upkeep of greenspaces, this includes weekly volunteer led education sessions led by the park rangers.

9.0 Also my portfolio covers Emergency Planning for which I have included a separate appendix which gives a brief overview of the work undertaken in this area.

10.0 Conclusion

I will continue to ensure that Frontline Services, Local Plan and Climate Response remain the key areas of priority in my portfolio which will help Medway to be an even greater place to live, work, learn and visit for years to come.

Our Local Plan will help Medway to grow sustainably by protecting the environment; addressing climate change; improving transport choices; growing local businesses and improving our community facilities. That plan will be integral in the processing of all planning applications and securing development in Medway that we can all be proud of.

I look forward to working with colleagues and partners to deliver a new Local Plan for Medway.

For additional information please see separate appendix for:

Appendix 1 - Emergency Planning information

Lead officer contact

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