

COUNCIL

14 APRIL 2011

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive

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Summary

To set out the public questions received for this meeting.

1. Background

1.1 Section 8.3 of the Council Rules, as laid out in the Council's constitution, sets out the rules for the receipt of public questions as follows:

- At any one meeting no person may submit more than two questions and no more than two questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation. Members of the public who have not submitted questions before will be given priority over those who have, and second questions will only be dealt with when all first questions have been dealt with. Any questions that have not been dealt with within the time limits will receive a written reply after the meeting.

1.2 The questions received for this meeting are set out in below in the order they were received, allowing for the rules above.

2. Public questions

2.1 **Kelly Tolhurst of Borstal will ask the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth, Councillor Chitty, the following question:**

What are the Council's initiatives to support businesses in Medway?

2.2 Paul Rai of Strood will ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following question:

Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services give an update on the Free Swimming initiative announced at the Budget meeting on 24 February 2011?

2.3 Isaac Igwe of Strood will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

Conservative Councillors in Strood South ward have implied in a recent publication that if Council-subsidised bus routes are not used, they will become unprofitable and services are in danger of being withdrawn.

What does the Portfolio Holder regard as an unprofitable bus route and should profit be the determining factor in providing vital public services?

2.4 Wendy Purdy of Gillingham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

A recent survey by Which magazine reported that Medway's car parking charges are amongst the cheapest in Kent. Can the Portfolio Holder confirm that this is true?

2.5 Josie Iles of Strood will ask the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer, the following question:

How much money is the Council proposing to invest in repairing potholes over the next financial year?

2.6 Naushabah Khan of Gillingham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Wicks, the following question:

Given that 3,314 students received the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for the academic year 2009/2010 in Medway, how many fewer 16-19 year olds will receive grants through the government's 'enhanced learner support' scheme, which has a budget of only £180 million compared to the £540 million for EMA?

2.7 Chris Irvine of Rochester will ask the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Deputy Leader, Councillor Jarrett, the following question:

Thanks to the Conservative led government, Medway Council has been able to freeze Council Tax this year. Are there any plans to repeat this excellent scheme?

2.8 Tristan Osborne of Rochester will ask the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Councillor Mason, the following question:

Given the cuts announced to care for the elderly in the Medway Conservative budget, can I ask how many fewer people will receive free Council care as a result of the Council cuts in 2011/2012 when compared with 2010/2011?

2.9 Tony Jeacock of Rainham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe, the following question:

Can the Portfolio Holder please tell me how much the Council will save in 2011/2012 by removing the Empty Homes and Efficiency Team Leader and two full-time employed Empty Homes and Efficiency Officers?

2.10 Tristan Osborne of Rochester, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Wicks, the following question:

Given the lack of clarity in the Tory budget over the funding of Sure Start; can the Portfolio Holder clarify the figure in cash terms for Sure Start provision in 2010/2011 and in the current budget for 2011/2012 and whether this has been an increase or decrease in cash terms and by how much?

2.11 Tony Jeacock of Rainham will ask the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Deputy Leader, Councillor Jarrett, the following question:

Now that the courts have ruled under the 'Advertising Standards' that Medway Council must remove any referenced logos and other unauthorised references to "Medway City Council" from their stationery and to desist from newly applying it elsewhere, can the Portfolio Holder tell me the total cost of putting the said references and logos in place in the first instance and the subsequent disposal of all such headed stationery?

Background papers

None

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