

## Members' Questions

### **Question A – Councillor Spalding will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, Councillor Paterson, the following:**

The condition of road surfaces in Medway remains at the forefront of public attention.

In some cases, potholes and deteriorating top surfaces are the result of water leaks which often continue for days despite being reported to Southern Water.

An example of this being the Allhallows Road between Lower Stoke and Allhallows. Other causes are overburdened wastewater and sewage facilities which Southern Water is aware of but does nothing about.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me how much money has been reclaimed by Medway Council from Southern Water to cover road surface damage that could have and indeed should have been avoided, but for the apparent failings of Southern Water?

### **Question B – Councillor Mrs Turpin will ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:**

Back in February this year, consultants engaged the community in Rainham to launch work on a new feasibility study for the town centre. This event included a number of Councillors, the MP and Cabinet Members.

A similar community consultation group was put together for the Hoo Peninsula - named the Hoo Community Infrastructure Framework, again using consultants. However, this engagement work excluded elected ward Members and Parish Councillors.

Can the Portfolio Holder explain the difference in approach taken, which snubbed elected Members for the Hoo Peninsula?

### **Question C – Councillor Finch will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, Councillor Paterson, the following:**

Over the past year, we've seen a surge in camera enforcement across Medway - including over 2,000 fines from the School Streets scheme and more than 3,000 from moving traffic offence enforcement. These clearly generate significant revenue for the Council. However, the red routes scheme, despite its £805,000 cost and rollout across five key roads, issued just 35 fines between May and November 2024.

Given this inconsistency in enforcement outcomes, can the Portfolio Holder confirm whether the Council intends to expand, repurpose or replace these schemes for schemes such as congestion or ULEZ-style charges or limiting how frequently residents can drive in certain areas, including undertaking a full public consultation?

**Question D – Councillor Vye will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, Councillor Paterson, the following:**

Residents in Rochester East and Warren Wood are fed up. They're dodging potholes, tripping over broken paving slabs, and wondering why their council tax isn't being reflected in the state of their streets. It's not just an inconvenience - it's a safety issue. The people I represent deserve answers, and more importantly, they deserve action.

The Labour-led Medway Council must finally take responsibility for the crumbling state of our roads and pavements across Medway - especially in Rochester East and Warren Wood - where potholes and broken footpaths are putting residents at risk every single day.

When will this Council stop the excuses and deliver the repairs our community desperately needs?

**Question E – Councillor Perfect will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:**

Can the Leader of the Council confirm whether he will be undertaking a public consultation with regards to the specific question of whether this Council will be proposing in November three or four councils for the region of Kent as part of the Local Government reorganisation process?

**Question F – Councillor Hackwell will ask the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment, Councillor Mahil, the following:**

With the increase in the National Living Wage and the lowering of the employers' national insurance contributions from £9,100 to the lower threshold of £5,000, that came into effect this month due to the Labour government's budget, many small businesses in Medway are starting to struggle.

Can the Portfolio Holder outline what measures are being taken to support local businesses in helping to create jobs in Medway and attract investment to improve the local economy?

**Question G – Councillor Tejan will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:**

Could the Portfolio Holder provide an assessment of how the recent changes to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) are expected to impact individuals with neurological conditions in Medway, given that we trust that the Council will support these individuals in navigating and mitigating any challenges arising from these changes?

**Question H – Councillor Wildey will ask the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:**

Medway NHS Foundation Trust has recently appointed a new Interim Chief Executive, following the departure of Jayne Black. Can the Deputy Leader please update the Council on engagement she has had with the new Interim Chief Executive, particularly around the outcomes of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) report?

**Question I – Councillor Lawrence will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:**

Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that the Prime Minister should apologise for breaking his promise not to increase Council Tax?

**Question J – Councillor Joy will ask the Portfolio Holder for Education, Councillor Coombs, the following:**

This administration has risen to praise the breakfast club for all at primary schools, with disturbing news that some of the piloting schools have dropped out due to funding not covering the cost. With other schools in Medway looking at what is funded (the food element, but just for one item and a drink), there has been no consideration of the required facilities to implement the clubs for the government target of 75% to be achieved, of the required staffing to deliver (meeting required ratios) and also the lost revenue to schools that currently have a chargeable service (providing food choices that does not limit what they can have).

With several schools maintained by the Council, what is the financial impact on delivering it, presuming that an area within Education and/or Children's Services will be cut to fund it?

**Question K – Councillor Gulvin will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:**

Can the Leader of the Council tell the people of Medway if the £40M of borrowing he and his administration have undertaken to balance the first two budgets is going to be reimbursed through increases in government funding or through increases in Council Tax?

**Question L – Councillor Etheridge will ask the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, Councillor Van Dyke, the following:**

Procurement Policy Note 009, 'Tackling modern slavery in Government supply chains', provides guidance, which applies to all central government departments and their executive agencies. Modern slavery is often a hidden crime involving one person denying another person their freedom. It includes slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking. To tackle these crimes, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the Modern Slavery Act) was introduced.

Therefore, will the Portfolio Holder guarantee, that the Government's £200 million purchase of solar panels from the Chinese Solar Power industry using forced labour - which is rife in the solar supply chain - will not be used on any Medway Council owned building, by including this within your annual report at the appropriate scrutiny committees and using Medway's influence to help ensure that no other neighbouring authorities also use these solar panels?

**Question M – Councillor Spring will ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:**

China released 11.9 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2023, making it by far the world's largest polluter that year. While most countries experienced dramatic emission reductions in 2020 due to COVID-19, China was one of only a handful of countries where emissions increased. They are still building coal, oil and gas power plants at an expanding rate.

Shipping goods from China to the UK is highly energy-intensive, as a single trip by a container vessel here can emit up to 900 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Meanwhile, Britain, which puts out just one per cent of emissions, is using China to build our clean energy so we can pretend to be clean.

As Medway's Green Champion, will you guarantee that by using your influence in Kent and neighbouring authorities, that our green initiatives and associated procurement is initially UK based?

**Question N – Councillor Anang will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways, and Enforcement, Councillor Paterson, the following:**

As the Councillor for Rainham North ward and a parent, I have been contacted by several concerned parents regarding road safety in and around Rainham Mark Grammar School. This follows a recent incident where a student was hit by a car near the school. Parents have indicated that this is not the first occurrence, and the school has stated that they have previously contacted the Council regarding the matter but have seen no action taken.

Given the severity of the issue and the continued risks to students, it is probable that the Council may have received communications from Rainham Mark Grammar School regarding this. Could the Portfolio Holder please confirm what steps, if any, are being considered or planned to address these concerns, such as the provision of a zebra crossing or other traffic calming measures?

**Question O – Councillor Cook will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, Councillor Paterson, the following:**

In addition to School Streets, what is the Council doing to keep children safe from traffic outside their schools?