

Record of Cabinet decisions

Tuesday, 26 August 2025

7.00pm to 9.51pm

Date of publication: 28 August 2025

Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 5 September 2025
The record of decisions is subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet

Present:	Councillor Vince Maple	Leader of the Council
	Councillor Teresa Murray	Deputy Leader of the Council
	Councillor Tracy Coombs	Portfolio Holder for Education
	Councillor Simon Curry	Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration
	Councillor Nina Gurung	Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture and Leisure
	Councillor Harinder Mahil	Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment
	Councillor Alex Paterson	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement
	Councillor Adam Price	Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (including statutory responsibility)
	Councillor Zoë Van Dyke	Portfolio Holder for Business Management
In Attendance:	Richard Hicks, Chief Executive	
	Mark Breathwick, Assistant Director, Culture and Community	
	Lee-Anne Farach, Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive	
	Vicky Nutley, Head of Legal Services	
	Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer	
	Phil Watts, Chief Operating Officer	

Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Louwella Prenter.

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Leader's Announcements

The Leader announced that since the last meeting of Cabinet, the Council had published maps and proposals for Kent and Medway Local Government Reorganisation options. Councillor Mahil and David Holloway, the Head of Data and Design were thanked for their work on this. It was considered that all proposals were compliant with the criteria set out by Government. The final decision would be made by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Reorganisation ministers and the Deputy Prime Minister. Public feedback on the proposals was welcome and this would be particularly sought at the Medway Matters Live event in October. A Council cross party working group set up in relation to the proposals had met earlier on the day of the Cabinet meeting. The final decision on which proposals to submit to Government would be made by Cabinet in November following an advisory meeting of Full Council.

There had been recent discussion about the issue of flag flying, both locally and nationally. The Leader said he had taken pride at seeing Rochester Castle and Gun Wharf display various flags recognising the history and future of the country. He considered Medway to be a progressive, forward thinking community which he was proud of. Significant positive feedback had been received in relation to flag flying by the Council. The Ukrainian flag had recently been flown at Gun Wharf to show solidarity with Ukraine as it marked its Independence Day. The Leader also stated that it was not acceptable for people to be breaking rules in relation to flag flying and putting themselves or others at risk.

Record of decisions

The record of the meeting held on 29 July 2025, was agreed by the Cabinet and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

Questions to the Cabinet

Three public questions and four Member questions had been received and were taken as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

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It was noted that full responses would be reported for information at the next meeting.

Medium Term Financial Outlook 2025-2030

Background:

Katey Durkin, the Council's Chief Finance Officer, who would shortly be leaving the Council, was thanked for her excellent work and support of the administration.

This report set out initial projections of the Council's income and of the cost of services for 2026/27 and across the medium term.

The report set out that the Medium Term Financial Outlook 2024-2029 presented to the Cabinet in August 2024 indicated a potential budget gap for 2025/26 of £28.844million, or £45.147million excluding Exceptional Financial Support (EFS). This cumulative projected gap rose to £114.205million across the medium term. During the following months the projections were refined based on the latest activity data, challenging costs and reassessing the trends projected. That work had reduced the potential gap to £26.177million by the time the Draft Budget was presented to the Cabinet in November 2024.

The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement resulted in an increase of £10.833million to the Council's resources compared to the Draft Budget projections. The Government agreed in principle to the Council's EFS request and the final budget for 2025/26 was balanced with £18.484million through a capitalisation direction.

Alongside the 2025/26 Budget, in February 2025 Council agreed an updated set of medium term projections for 2026/27 and beyond. These represented growth on the net budget requirement of £25.208million, while funding was projected to grow by £33.536million. There was therefore a projected budget gap of £10.070million, however an error in the calculation omitted £1.484million of expenditure from that gap, which should have been £11.554million.

Due to an administrative error the report in the main agenda pack did not contain the first page of the report, which included the recommendations. A version of the report that included this missing page had been published within Supplementary Agenda Number 1.

Decision number:

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the projected budget requirement, the Council's resource assumptions, and the resultant projected budget shortfall for 2026/27 of £29.942million and a cumulative £191.257million shortfall over the medium term.

110/2025

The Cabinet instructed Directorate Management Teams to continue to work with Portfolio Holders to identify savings and income

generation proposals to balance the 2026/27 budget.

111/2025 The Cabinet recommended to Council the declassification of £1.597million from the Collection Fund Adjustment Reserve to increase the General Reserve balance.

Reasons:

The Medium Term Financial Outlook (MTFO) provides the framework that underpins the budget setting process for 2026/27 and beyond.

Annual Review of the School Place Planning Strategy 2022 - 2027

Background:

This annual review showed areas of demand and made recommendations to ensure that sufficient school places would be available.

The report set out that Medway Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. The School Place Planning Strategy describes the principles, methods, and challenges of this duty.

The proposals in the annual review follow the School Place Planning Strategy Principles. They also support the Council Plan sub-priority to “Ensure all children and young people access a high-quality, inclusive education.” Delivery of any approved proposals would be through available funding in the Education Capital Programme.

On 27 March 2025 the Department for Education had announced that Medway would receive £25,497,189 of Basic Need funding for the period 2026 to 2028. They also announced £4,837,957 of High Needs Provision Capital for 2025/26.

***Decision
number:***

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the progress made, which had ensured the Council had met its duty, and sufficient school places were available.

112/2025 The Cabinet recommended to Council the addition of the school projects marked as “new”, as listed in paragraph 9.2 of the report, to the education capital programme.

113/2025 The Cabinet recommended to Council the additional funding for the school projects marked as “additional funding”, as listed in paragraph 9.2 of the report.

114/2025 The Cabinet approved commencement of the design and tender processes for the projects listed in paragraph 9.2 of the report, which would follow the Council’s Gateway procedures or approved

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funding agreements, at the appropriate time for each project.

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| 115/2025 | The Cabinet approved the change of designation of the remainder of the Cornwallis Avenue site, currently allocated as cemetery extension, for education use, as set out in paragraph 8.6 of the report. |
| 116/2025 | The Cabinet approved the allocation of that land to the Maritime Academy Trust under a standard academy lease to be utilised for Danecourt secondary phase, as set out in paragraph 8.7 of the report. |
| 117/2025 | The Cabinet approved a commitment to borrow up to £16.21 million to cover the potential shortfall in available funding, to create and establish a Danecourt Secondary School, as set out in paragraphs 8.8 to 8.15 of the report. |
| 118/2025 | The Cabinet approved the current Inspire Academy site, when vacated, for use for The Beeches Free School, as set out in paragraph 8.16 of the report. |
| 119/2025 | The Cabinet authorised the Director of People to commence the relevant statutory processes required for expansions and new schools at the appropriate time, as set out in paragraph 9.2 of the report. |

Reasons:

Approving the recommendations in section 1 of the report will ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places, and the most effective and appropriate use of public funds.

The Proposed Changes to the Education Travel Assistance Policy and Post-16 Transport Policy Statement – Outcome Following Consultation

Background:

This report outlined the outcomes of the consultation period on the Council's proposals to make changes to the Education Travel Assistance Policy (ETAP), and Post-16 Transport Policy Statement with effect from 1 September 2025 and 1 September 2026, respectively.

The ETAP set out what the Council must do to facilitate travel to school and set out the eligibility criteria for granting that support.

The changes proposed aimed to improve customer understanding, awareness, and overall experience. Various sections, wording, and phrasing had been added or modified within the policies to clarify specific aspects or to provide information where this was previously missing. Amendments had also been made to the policies to

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more accurately reflect the statutory guidance from the government's Department for Education (DfE).

The report had previously been considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 August 2025, the comments of which were set out at section 7 to the report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment was set out at Appendix 6 to the report.

Decision number:

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out at section 7 of the report.

120/2025

The Cabinet agreed the updated Education Travel Assistance Policy – Mainstream and the Education Travel Assistance Policy – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), with effect from 1 September 2025, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

121/2025

The Cabinet agreed the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement, with effect from 1 September 2026, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

122/2025

The Cabinet agreed that recommendation 1.2 [Decision No. 120/2025] was considered urgent and therefore should not be subject to call in.

Reasons:

The Education Travel Assistance Policy is developed within a national legal framework that sets out what local authorities must do to facilitate travel to school and sets out eligibility criteria for granting that support. The proposed actions maintain the Council's position of working within the national legal framework.

The duty placed on the Council in respect of the provision of travel assistance to post 16 students requires a transport policy statement to be prepared and published in each year, by 31 May, detailing the provision being offered to SEND Post 16 young people.

Annual Fostering Report 2024-25

Background:

The purpose of this report was to provide a summary of the business and operations of Medway Fostering Service during the financial year 2024-2025. It included relevant data on the service's performance and activities, as well as updates on the

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functioning and progress of the Fostering Panel. Additionally, the report outlined the developments that had taken place in the Service throughout the year, as well as planned initiatives for the upcoming 2025-2026 period.

The Council's Fostering Service provided safe, regulated foster care placements for children in care and contributed to improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children. The key priority for the service was to ensure that all children who were in the care of Medway Council, whether the arrangement was short or long term would be cared for in loving, secure and stable families.

The report has previously been considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 August 2025, the comments of which were set out in section 7 of the report.

***Decision
number:***

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out at section 7 to the report.

The Cabinet noted the Fostering Service Annual Report 2024-2025.

Reasons:

The National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2011) require that Fostering Agencies report the activity of the fostering service to its governing bodies.

Get Kent and Medway Working Plan

Background:

The report set out that in the Get Britain Working White Paper, the Government had made a commitment to support all areas to develop local Get Britain Working Plans and to convene local partners to work together to deliver these. Plans were intended to set out an analysis of the economic inactivity challenge in each local area and highlight the actions that could be taken to improve outcomes for the local population and local employers.

A Diversity Impact Assessment was attached at Appendix B to the report.

***Decision
number:***

Decision:

123/2025

The Cabinet approved the Get Kent and Medway Working Plan and agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place for any required amendments.

Reasons:

The Get Kent & Medway Working Plan fulfils the brief from government, exploring key themes that can be barriers to economic activity. It takes an evidence driven approach with a clear action plan for next steps to help increase economic activity. Consultation has taken place with a wide variety of stakeholders and partners. Other partner organisations – Kent County Council, the Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board and Job Centre Plus will be taking the plan through their own approval processes.

Kent and Medway Integrated Work and Health Strategy

Background:

This report provided an overview of the development of the Kent and Medway Integrated Work and Health Strategy developed between May 2024 and June 2025. It sets out the process, engagement and feedback.

The Strategy had the aim of integrating and improving support for people and employers with the goal of helping people with long-term health conditions and disabilities to start, stay and succeed in work.

The development of the Strategy started with an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) workshop focused on work and health. This workshop brought together a number of stakeholders, including Medway Council. Themes explored included skills development, employer perspectives, mental health, community support and in-work support for people and employers.

A Diversity Impact Assessment was set out at Appendix 4 to the report.

The report had been previously considered by the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 August 2025, the comments of which were set out in an addendum report within Supplementary Agenda Number 2.

**Decision
number:**

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in the addendum report.

124/2025

The Cabinet approved the Kent and Medway Integrated Work and Health Strategy 2025 -2030, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

Reasons:

The Kent and Medway Integrated Work and Health Strategy has been developed collaboratively by partners in Medway Council, Kent County Council and NHS Kent and Medway ICB in conjunction with a wider range of partners across the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System (ICS). It is a key contributor to national policy of supporting people into meaningful work which plays an important part in good

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physical and mental health and wellbeing along with being key to economic development in Kent and Medway.

Local Transport Plan – Consultation and Engagement Management Plan

Background:

This report set out the proposed approach for engaging residents, stakeholders and partners in the development of a new Local Transport Plan for Medway and sought approval to commence the first phase of engagement in the Autumn.

Medway's current Local Transport Plan (LTP), adopted in 2011, ran to the end of 2026. To comply with the Council's statutory duty under the Transport Act 2000, a new LTP needed to be prepared for the 15-year period that followed. This would set out a long-term strategy for transport in Medway, incorporating existing transport plans and strategies and supporting wider policies and strategic objectives around economic growth, health, climate change, and social inclusion.

To support the development of the new LTP, a Communications and Engagement Management Plan (CEMP) had been prepared. It outlined a structured approach to engaging residents, businesses, partners and community groups that was intended to capture the needs, aspirations and lived experiences of Medway's communities.

Decision number:

Decision:

125/2025	The Cabinet approved the Communications and Engagement Management Plan as the basis for stakeholder engagement in the development of Medway's new Local Transport Plan.
126/2025	The Cabinet agreed to commence engagement in the Autumn of 2025.
127/2025	The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, to make any minor amendments to the Plan as required during the engagement process.

Reasons:

To ensure that the development of a new Local Transport Plan for Medway is informed by a structured and inclusive engagement process with residents and stakeholders.

Note: There was a five minute meeting adjournment following this agenda item for a break.

Climate Change Action Plan 2025-2028

Background:

The report set out the third update to the Climate Change Action Plan since the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency in 2019. The Plan aligned with the One Medway Council Plan priority 'enjoying clean, green, safe and connected communities.'

The actions within the Plan aimed to reduce carbon emissions in line with the One Medway Council Plan objective to achieve net zero by 2050 and increase resilience against the impacts of climate change for both Medway Council and Medway 'the Place'. The Plan had been refreshed to reflect the Council's current approach to climate action.

The report also provided details of the UK City Net Zero Declaration, to which Cabinet approval was sought to enable the Leader of the Council to sign the declaration.

The report had previously been considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 June 2025 and by the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 June 2025.

A Diversity Impact Assessment was set out at Appendix 4 to the report.

***Decision
number:***

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment and Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out at sections 8 and 9 of the report.

128/2025

The Cabinet agreed to adopt the refreshed Climate Change Action Plan and Action Plan Tables, as set out at Appendix 1 and 2 to the report.

129/2025

The Cabinet agreed that the Leader of the Council sign the UK City Net Zero Declaration, as detailed in section 4 and Appendix 6 to the report.

Reasons:

To continue to meet the requirements of Full Council's climate emergency declaration, made in 2019.

**The One Medway Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register
Review Summary - Quarter 1 2025/26**

Background:

The report set out the One Medway Council Plan (OMCP) Performance Monitoring Report and Strategic Risk Summary for Quarter 1 2025/26.

The OMCP 2024/28 set out the Council's priorities and the performance indicators used to monitor performance and also presented the Quarter 1 2025/26 review of strategic risks. The indicators within the Plan were refreshed annually, with the last refresh having been agreed at Full Council on 27 February 2025.

There were 41 Council Plan measures reported for Quarter 1. In summary, 22 of the measures met or exceeded target, 8 were slightly below target and 11 were significantly below target.

The report was also due to be considered by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees during October 2025.

***Decision
number:***

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the Quarter 1 2025/26 progress of the performance indicators used to monitor progress of the Council's priorities, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

130/2025

The Cabinet agreed the Strategic Risk Summary, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

Reasons:

Regular monitoring of performance and risks by management and Members is best practice and ensures achievement of corporate objectives.

Gateway 1 Project Commencement/Options Appraisal: Provision of Residential and Nursing Care for Older People (Aged 65+)

Background:

This report sought permission to commence the procurement of the contract for the provision of Residential and Nursing Care for Older People (Aged 65+).

Ensuring that the most vulnerable in the community are cared for and supported was one of the most important roles of the Council. Priority 1 of the One Medway Council Plan was Delivering quality social care and community services.

Under the Care Act 2014 local authorities had a statutory duty to support vulnerable people assessed as being eligible for adult social care support. One way in which

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local authorities did this was by commissioning Residential and Nursing Care providers to deliver care and support to their residents.

A Diversity Impact Assessment was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

**Decision
number:**

Decision:

131/2025

The Cabinet agreed to pursue the procurement of the Residential and Nursing Care for Older People (Aged 65+) contract as per the preferred option identified in paragraph 7.2.4 of the report, following legislation contained within the Procurement Act 2023.

Reasons:

The new Residential and Nursing Care for Older People (Aged 65+) contract will deliver a service that will enable the following:

- Aim to reduce the need to spot purchase or individually contract for complex/specialist care for older people (Aged 65+). This will be achieved by reviewing the current bandings to reflect an individual's mental and physical level of need rather than a diagnosis of dementia).
- To standardise services across Medway Council and Kent County Council and create a clearer understanding between authorities about the services commissioned through the alignment of specifications for example in terms of provider quality, KPI's and performance. This considers the Local Government Reorganisation proposals.
- Creates comparative services for providers who operate across the Kent and Medway border, contributing to greater market management on a collective basis.
- Supports the national and local principles of social care and health integration.

Gateway 1 Project Commencement/Options Appraisal: Recycling Resource Management (RRM) procurement

Background:

This report sought permission to commence the procurement of the Recycling Resource Management (RRM) Contract.

The RRM contract had initially been procured through an open tender process, divided into two lots to encourage market competition. The Cabinet had agreed to award both lots to Veolia Environmental Services, with the contract commencing on 1 October 2022 for a duration of two years. The contract had subsequently been extended for two years, up to 30 September 2026.

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It was estimated that the RRM contract would process 156K tonnes of recycling over the duration of the current contract. This contract had no further extension options built in and it had become necessary to identify a solution to ensure the continued provision of statutory services provided through this contract.

The report recommended a procurement strategy to ensure a solution would be in place by 1 October 2026 for a period of up to three years with the option to extend for a further three years.

**Decision
number:**

Decision:

132/2025

The Cabinet agreed to pursue the procurement of the Recycling Resource Management (RRM) contract as per the preferred option identified in paragraph 7.8.9 (Option 8 – Competitive Procurement) of the report.

Reasons:

The decision to re-tender this contract is driven by the need to ensure the continued delivery of statutory services, as outlined in paragraph 6.2 of the report.

The preferred procurement route, detailed in paragraph 7.8.9 (Option 8 – Competitive Procurement), has been selected to ensure compliance with legal obligations, encourage market engagement, and provide access to the full supplier market. A competitive tendering process is expected to incentivise suppliers to submit proposals that offer both value and innovation.

The chosen procurement procedure, as set out in paragraph 7.8.9.1 (Open Single-Stage Procedure), is considered the most appropriate for this contract. The clearly defined service requirements make this approach straightforward to manage, while also enabling Medway to retain full control over the procurement process. This method supports transparency, fairness, and adherence to all relevant legal and regulatory standards.

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Leader of the Council

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Date

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