

Members' Questions

(Relating to Agenda Item No.5, Local Government Reorganisation)

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

Given the Cabinet recently instructed the Corporate Management Team to take all action necessary to reduce the Council's overspend, can the Leader of the Council please explain how spending further taxpayer money (which otherwise would represent a saving on the Council's current projected £10m overspend) on his dead plan for Local Government Reorganisation represents best value for Medway taxpayers?

Question B – Councillor Hackwell, will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

At the meeting of the Kent Leaders meeting a democratic voting system was used to select the two options to take forward with KMPG as the preferred Kent options. The administration is pursuing their scheme outside the preferred options which will cost money that simply put Medway has not got. In the recent Council's Medium-Term Outlook 2025-2030 it was stated that the projected budget shortfall for 2026/27 is £29.942 million, escalating to a cumulative £191.257 million over the medium term.

How can it be justified spending any council funds on this vanity project when all the directorates are being asked to not leave any stone unturned to identify any savings they can?

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

The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott PCC wrote to the Leader of the Council making clear that the Medway option for Local Government Reorganisation would require wholesale changes to the current Kent Policing model. Can the Portfolio Holder please clarify when he consulted with Kent Police on the Medway option and how the Police were able to inform this proposal?

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

Can the Deputy Leader please explain when and how health partners were consulted in relation to the Medway option for Local Government Reorganisation?

Question E – Councillor Joy, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor Price, the following:

Under the Medway option for Local Government Reorganisation, the plans would see huge changes to social care delivery across the county. Can the Portfolio Holder please update on his input into the Medway option, particularly as it relates to children's services?

Question F – Councillor Filmer, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Climate Change, Councillor Curry, the following:

Under the Medway option for Local Government Reorganisation, the plans would require wholesale change to a number of existing local planning authority (LPA) boundaries. Can the Portfolio Holder please update with his engagement with other LPAs across Kent on the Medway option, detailing how these discussions informed the option proposed?

Question G – Councillor Lawrence, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment, Councillor Mahil, the following:

Can the Portfolio Holder please set out what steps he took to consult with the business community on the rejected Medway plan for Local Government Reorganisation? In giving his answer can he set out why he thinks his plan would be better for business given the negative impact of the Labour Chancellor's policies which has seen unemployment rise in Medway by more than ten percent.

Question H – Councillor Brake, will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

Consultation should be at the heart of everything Medway does. The Leader of the Council claimed at the start of his administration that he would always seek to ensure everyone in Medway was part of decision making. Nobody appears to have been consulted on the Medway option for Local Government Reorganisation – not other Council leaders, the opposition, the working group, or even the Leader's own group. Can the Leader please confirm why he decided to proceed with this plan without consulting anyone else?

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

Can the Leader of the Council explain how he consulted with his group on the Medway option for Local Government Reorganisation, specifying the timeline around these discussions?

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

Given the Leader's plan for Local Government Reorganisation was met by fierce opposition from many Kent Local Government Leaders on a cross-party basis, and the Cabinet paper makes clear there is a risk in pursuing the dead Medway option, can the Leader please explain how proceeding at Cabinet tonight won't further damage his and the Council's reputation across Kent?

Question K – Councillor Anang, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture and Leisure, Councillor Gurung, the following:

Given the huge changes that the Medway option will make to the cultural life of Medway, can the Portfolio Holder please update on how she engaged with local cultural institutions on the Medway option, detailing how this informed the proposals?

Question L – Councillor Barrett, will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

Given the Medway option plan set out within the Cabinet report will seek to use urgency provisions to speed up procurement, can the Leader of the Council please explain his proposed strategy for engaging a strategic partner to deliver the Medway option? In giving his answer can he please detail how this will comply with the procurement act and the best value requirements as set out by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Question M – Councillor Lammas, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Education, Councillor Coombs, the following:

Given the Medway option for Local Government Reorganisation potentially will see consequential changes to the education authority boundaries, can the Portfolio Holder please provide details of her consultation with local schools, academies, higher and further education providers in relation to this option?

Public Question

Question N – Matthew Johnson, of Snodland, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, Councillor Paterson, the following:

Serious, violent crime is on the rise in Medway. On Aug 25th a woman was violently sexually assaulted at knife point down Saunders Street in Gillingham. Will Medway Council work with the Police and release crime data relating to nationality?