

Regeneration, Culture and Environment

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 October 2025

Task Group: Air Quality Public Transport and Active Travel

Report from: Adam Bryan, Director of Place
Dr David Whiting, Director of Public Health

Author: Stephanie Davis, Democratic Services Officer

Summary

The report asks Members to consider the draft final report of the in-depth Air Quality, Public Transport and Active Travel Task Group. The Committee is asked to consider the findings and recommendations of the Task Group. This report is due to be considered at the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 October 2025 and by Cabinet for approval on 18 November 2025.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Committee is asked to consider the report as set out at Appendix 1 and provide any comments.
- 1.2. The Committee is asked to approve the content and recommendations of the report that falls within the remit of the Committee and refer it for consideration by Cabinet on 18 November 2025.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. Under Chapter 4 of the Constitution (Part 5 – Overview and Scrutiny Rules - paragraph 21.1 (xviii), each overview and scrutiny committee has the responsibility to appoint time limited Task Groups to undertake in-depth reviews within the overall programme of reviews agreed each year by the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to make recommendations to the Council, Leader and Cabinet as appropriate. The topic of this review is within the remit of this Committee.

3. Background

- 3.1. In June 2011 the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to exercise a more pro-active role than previously in prioritising the programme of in-depth scrutiny review work. This followed a Council decision that a maximum of three reviews or themed meetings can be undertaken

annually across all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees, in light of shrinking capacity across the organisation. This represented a shift from the previous position of multiple Task Groups with no fixed timelines running at any one time.

- 3.2. In line with best practice, the Committee also decided to adopt a more systematic approach to the selection of topics, with nominations submitted by each Committee, taking into account suggestions and advice from Directors and Deputy / Assistant Directors.
- 3.3. The Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 26 October 2023 agreed to select this topic for an in depth scrutiny review. Due to the breadth of the topic, the Task Group identified three strands to focus on and agreed on Air Quality, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and Asthma.
- 3.4. The Membership of the Task Group included Councillors Bowen, Brake, Crozer, Filmer, Jackson and McDonald.

4. Scope of the Review

- 4.1. The Task Groups Terms of Reference were as follows:
Air Quality – how the wider Council services contribute to air quality ambitions and reporting.

Public Transport and Active Travel – Principles of how Public Transport and Active Travel can contribute to better air quality in Medway

Public Health – Asthma (which we know is exacerbated by poor air quality)

- 4.2. To support consideration of the Terms of Reference the Task Group agreed a number of key lines of enquiry which can be found at Appendix 1 to this report.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations of the Task Group

- 5.1. The recommendations of the Task Group are presented at sections 10.15, 17.4 and 22.2 of Appendix 1 to this report.

6. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
The recommendations are not carried out	The report and recommendations are in addition to other work that is taking place to tackle this issue and the recommendations	The recommendations are aimed to enhance the work already being undertaken to improve the issues identified in the	BIII

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
	in this report may not be prioritised or undertaken	three strands of work and have been written in a way that compliments some of the work and actions already being undertaken.	

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely B Likely C Unlikely D Rare	I Catastrophic II Major III Moderate IV Minor

7. Climate change implications

- 7.1. The Councils Air Quality Action Plan complements the Climate Change Action Plan in many areas and there are expected co-benefits for public health and the environment in tackling air quality and climate change in a co-ordinated manner.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. Any service improvements as a result of the recommendations of this report will need to be delivered from within existing budgets. The work of the Task Group was supported by Democratic Services and officers from the Children and Adult Services and Regeneration, Culture and Environment Directorate.
- 8.2. There is a small budget held by Democratic Services to meet some of the cost associated with the reviews undertaken by the task groups. The only cost associated with this review was for the cost of the consultant involved in the stakeholder event. This cost was shared with Regeneration Culture Environment Directorate.
- 8.3. The work of this Task Group was framed to complement rather than duplicate work already underway.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations.

Lead officer contacts

Michael Edwards, Head of Transport and Parking
michael.edward@medway.gov.uk

James Flower, Senior Public Health Manager
james.flower@medway.gov.uk

Stuart Steed, Environmental Protection Officer
stuart.steed@medway.gov.uk

Stephanie Davis, Democratic Services Officer
stephanie.davis@medway.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1 Air Quality Public Transport and Active Travel
Appendix 2 Diversity Impact Assessment

Background papers

None