

Public Questions

(Relating to Agenda Item No.11, Lidsing Supplementary Planning Document)

Question A – Matthew Croft, of Chatham, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:

“What are the specific matters of transport, environment and infrastructure services that Medway should speak up for to ensure Maidstone produce a really robust SPD that will mitigate harms and benefit Medway as much as the new development?”

Question B – Milo O'Connor, of Medway Green Party, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:

“I would like to ask about how the Council is working to ensure that this connection to Lidsing and Medway is delivered early in the development process so that the local road network in Medway is not overwhelmed by the building of Phase 1 of Lidsing.

In essence, how will you deal with the development's potential impacts on Medway residents, including nearby residents of Hempstead and Lordswood, who rely on the local road network for essential commutes and local services?”

Question C – Matthew Broadley, of Chatham, will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“With reference to the Lidsing Agenda item, there is growing anger with the chipping away of the "Green lung" of Medway, including the Capstone Valley.

With the upcoming local democracy review, how can we ensure that decisions such as this are being made by those who are most affected?”

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Question D – Pauline Davis, of Chatham, will ask the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, Councillor Paterson, the following:

“I work at a very busy NHS dental clinic. We are in the heart of Chatham, there is huge concern about rough sleepers, drug takers and sex workers in our car park. We have to clean up bodily waste and dirty needles, used condoms and filthy clothes and are subjected to vile behaviour. I am 72 years old and have worked in dentistry from 1969 and I cannot understand the lack of support we receive.

Who is responsible for helping us? The police are not interested, and it would be a massive waste of resources to call an ambulance, when there is clearly a drug-related incident.

We know where the drug dealers are but seem powerless to have any assistance to stop this vile behaviour.

Chatham was a town of great pride and now....”

Question E – Ralph Allison, of Twydall, will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“On 21st October 2025, Cabinet agreed to approve Councillor Maple's proposed flag flying policy, including a plan to fly the "progress pride" flag for the entirety of "pride month". This flag is not automatically permitted under planning law, so Council was required to seek planning consent, which it subsequently approved for itself, in order to fly it.

The diversity impact assessment to accompany the proposal, signed off by Bhupinder Gill (Assistant Director, Legal & Governance), failed to fully consider the protected characteristics that might be impacted by the policy, specifically it completely ignored the protected characteristic of sex. It also highlighted how "flags can become symbols of political ideologies or movements, which may not be universally supported" and also that "flying certain flags may be seen as taking sides, leading to public backlash or division".

The "progress pride" flag has been adopted by an ideological movement that seeks to impinge on the rights of women. It is the flag of a movement which has damaged many young peoples' bodies beyond repair. It is the flag wielded by masked men who shout down women who dare to assemble to speak out about violence against women and girls.

I wonder why the Council Leader then seeks to festoon Council properties with such a divisive flag.

And given that the Council Leader at the beginning of November said, on the subject of the Council removing Union Flags from street furniture, that the Union Flag has "become a sign of division and intolerance" which is now a clear case of double standards in my view.

Therefore, will the Leader of the Council withdraw the policy and its associated diversity impact assessment until both can be reviewed and made lawful?"

Question F – Katrina Crowhurst, of Gillingham, will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:

“After spending time reading all the tags on the shoes at every pair tells a story national movement, you spent time talking to us parents and volunteers, we appreciate that, thank you. I came home and wondered how you might have been impacted after reading some of the stories.

It is clear complete improvement is needed and that improvement needs to begin now. So, with that in mind, As the Leader of the Council I ask you how you plan to move forward with SEN support and education in Medway?"

Member Question

Question G – Councillor Lawrence will ask the Portfolio Holder of Education, Councillor Coombs, the following:

“Could the Portfolio Holder advise on the number of referrals to the Council for Persistent Absence? In giving her answer can she:

1. Cover the period September 2023 to July 2025.
2. Split the data between Primary School and Secondary School children.
3. Advise the percentage of cases that resulted in a fine.
4. The number of “repeat offenders”.
5. The number of cases that remain open and ongoing.”