

Record of Cabinet decisions

Tuesday, 13 January 2026

7.02pm to 9.30pm

Date of publication: 15 January 2026

**Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 23 January 2026
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 Louwella Prenter	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness
	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
Adam Bryan, Director of Place
Celia Buxton, Assistant Director, Education and SEND
Vanessa Etheridge, Democratic Services Officer
Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance
Phil Watts, Chief Operating Officer

Leader's Announcements

The Leader welcomed everyone and wished them a happy New Year. He took the opportunity to acknowledge a longstanding parish councillor, Bill Budd, who was stepping down after more than 25 years of service at St Mary Hoo. Formal

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appreciation was expressed on behalf of the Cabinet for his longstanding contribution to the community.

The Leader reported that two Ofsted reports had been published since the previous meeting. The first related to Parklands Care Home, which achieved its third consecutive “Good” rating. Improvements in staff retention and service delivery had been acknowledged. The second report had followed a focused visit concerning arrangements for Children in Care. Councillor Price as Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services thanked all staff involved and the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee for effective scrutiny. Councillor Murray highlighted the vigilance of staff in the monitoring of unregistered homes.

It was confirmed that these matters would be referenced in the forthcoming Leader’s Report to Full Council.

Apologies for absence

There were none.

Record of decisions

The record of the meeting held on 16 December 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

It was noted that this was the last time under the trial period for questions. A report would be going to full Council later in the month to seek approval to make the changes permanent by amending the Constitution as necessary.

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

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Responses

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

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2026 to 2029

Background:

The report provided the Cabinet with details of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2026 to 2029 announced by the Government on 17 December 2025.

The Provisional Settlement was built on the Fair Funding Review 2.0 and included a reset of the business rates retention system from 2026/27, accompanied by the phased introduction of new Revenue Support Grant allocations over each year of the multi-year settlement and the gradual phasing out of legacy grant funding allocations. Overall, these changes would benefit Medway and the Core Spending Power would increase above the average rate, by 16.2% from 2024/25 to 2026/27 and by 31.9% from 2024/25 to 2028/29.

Although the settlement headlines were positive for Medway, a significant increase in funding had already been assumed as part of the draft budget. The announcements and their impact on Medway's 2026/27 budget were summarised in the report and amounted to a potential decrease in funding for the Council of £7.920million compared to the assumptions in the Draft Budget presented to the Cabinet on 18 November 2025.

Whilst additional funding was welcomed, it was clear that the Provisional Settlement alone would not be sufficient to meet the pressures on statutory services and close the Council's projected budget gap for 2026/27, without further support from the Government through the Exceptional Financial Support scheme.

The report also provided details of the impact on other grants.

Decision number: **Decision:**

01/2026 The Cabinet noted the implications of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in formulating its 2026/27 budget proposals.

Reasons:

The provisional levels of funding announced are a fundamental component of the 2026/27 budget, and their announcement is a further stage in the process to prepare a balanced budget for the coming financial year.

Creation of the Horsted Valley Local Nature Reserve

Background:

The report sought Cabinet approval to develop proposals to formally designate the Horsted Valley as a Local Nature Reserve. The designated area would include Luton Millennium Green, Daisy Banks, Coney Banks, Barnfield, Bishop's Hoath Woodland, Snodhurst Bottom, Ridgeway Bank and Horsted Farm (Upper Horsted Valley).

It was anticipated that the necessary documentation would be completed by the end of April 2026 to enable formal consultation with Natural England to be undertaken. Natural England had been made aware of Medway's aspiration for the Horsted Valley through informal consultation.

Decision number: Decision:

02/2026 The Cabinet approved the formal submission for the Horsted Valley to be declared a Local Nature Reserve, in accordance with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and following consultation with Natural England.

Reasons:

Declaring a local nature reserve will protect and conserve a vital greenspace running through the heart of medway, recognising its environmental importance and enabling the development of greater opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy and engage with its natural heritage and biodiversity.

Revocation of the Pier Road, Gillingham and High Street, Rainham Air Quality Management Areas

Background:

The report sought approval to revoke the Pier Road, Gillingham and High Street Rainham Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) to satisfy the requirements of the Environment Act 1995 and the accompanying statutory guidance.

The revocation of the AQMAs due to compliance with the air quality objectives was welcomed as a positive step forward for progressing priorities 3 and 4 of the One Medway Council Plan 2024.

Decision number: Decision:

03/2026 The Cabinet approved revocation of the Pier Road, Gillingham and High Street, Rainham Air Quality Management Areas.

Reasons:

To satisfy the requirements of the environment act 1995 and the accompanying statutory guidance.

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Pride in Place Impact Fund

Background:

The report sought approval of the Pride in Place Impact Fund delivery programme and requested delegated authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment, to deliver the Pride in Place Impact Fund programme.

Medway Council had been allocated £1.5 million capital grant funding from the Pride in Place Impact Fund. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government had set out three main priorities for the fund which included improvements to community spaces, public spaces, and high streets and town centres. Funding had to be fully committed by 31 March 2027, which allowed 14 months for delivery from January.

Decision **Decision:** **number:**

04/2026 The Cabinet approved delivery of the £1.5m Pride in Place Impact Fund capital grant programme to March 2027, in line with Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government timescales.

05/2026 The Cabinet delegated authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment, to deliver the Pride in Place Impact Fund programme.

Reasons:

Approval of the Pride in Place Impact Fund programme will enable delivery, benefitting Medway's residents, communities and businesses, in line with the Council's overarching regeneration priorities.

Any uncommitted spend by March 2027 will need to be returned to MHCLG, and the council would lose the PIPIF opportunity to invest in improvements to our high streets, town centres, community and public spaces.

"The Power of Sleep - a Wake-up Call" Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2024-2025

Background:

The report advised the Cabinet of the statutory requirement for Directors of Public Health to produce an annual public health report, which was a professional statement about the health of the local community. This 2025 report explored the role that sleep played in health and wellbeing and the impact that it had on a range of factors that influenced health: both direct impacts such as making it harder to engage in healthy behaviours; to indirect impacts through employment and productivity. It provided initial findings of work to understand sleep in Medway and the potential impact in health inequalities. It also outlined some ways to improve

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sleep and reduce the adverse effects of poor sleep and set out how simple measures could be added to existing public health interventions to address the problem.

The report had been previously considered at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 20 November 2025 and by the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 December 2025. The Cabinet welcomed their comments, which were set out at sections 8 and 9 of the report.

Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the comments made by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 25 November 2025 and by the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 December 2025 the draft minutes of which were set out at sections 8 and 9 of the report.

The Cabinet noted the Annual Public Health Report 2024-2025.

Reasons:

Directors of Public Health have a duty to publish an annual report on a topic relating to the health of the population in their area.

2026-27 Provisional Funding Formula for Mainstream Schools and Academies

Background:

The report advised the Cabinet that Officers had been formulating the 2026-27 funding arrangements for schools and academies and recommended changes to Medway's local mainstream schools and academies funding formula. It was noted that the Schools Forum would meet on 14 January 2026 to discuss, consider and make final recommendations on the 2026-27 Final Funding Formula. The Cabinet was being asked to approve the methodology set out within the report to balance the funding formula budget to the funding received from government for 2026-27.

This report also sought delegated authority to enable the Final Funding Formula to be submitted to the Department for Education to avoid the need for the Cabinet to consider the Final Funding Formula at its meeting on 10 February 2026 which would avoid further delay in submission to the Department for Education.

Decision number: **Decision:**

06/2026 The Cabinet agreed to instruct officers to implement the 2026-27 Provisional Funding Formula for mainstream schools and academies, as set out in section 5 of the report and noted that the Schools Forum, on 14 January 2026, would be considering recommending approval of the final funding formula to Cabinet.

07/2026 The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of People, Children and Adults Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder

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for Education, to agree and implement the 2025-26 Final Funding Formula for mainstream schools and academies, following the Schools Forum meeting due to be held on 14 January 2026, agreeing to recommend approval of the 2026-27 Provisional Funding Formula for mainstream schools and academies, as set out in section 5 of the report.

Reasons:

The local authority is required to implement the funding formula changes for 2026-27 in accordance with the regulations and to inform the department of education.

Gateway 3 Contract Awards - Corporate FM Contracts

Background:

The report sought Cabinet approval to award the procurement of the Corporate Facilities Management (FM) Contracts. The new Corporate FM Contracts were scheduled to begin on 1 April 2026, bringing the current FM agreement with Medway Norse to an end. The Gateway 3 reports for each of the 10 new FM contracts had been approved by the Procurement Board on 18 December 2025 and the detail of each contract was contained in Appendices A to J attached to the cover report. Each Appendix also had an exempt appendix providing further information in respect of the financial analysis for each contract.

Diversity Impact Assessments had also been undertaken for each contract and were attached to each Appendix to the report.

Decision number: **Decision:**

08/2026 The Cabinet agreed to award the following contracts as detailed in Appendices A to J to the report [and set out as decision No.s 08a/2026 to 08j/2026], as they had been evaluated as the most advantageous against the Council's award criteria as per the evaluation spreadsheets contained within section 3.1 of the Exempt Appendices of Appendices A to J to the report:

08a/2026 FM Electrical Services Contract to Phosters (FM) Ltd, as set out in Appendix A to the report;

08b/2026 FM Heating and Ventilation Services Contract to Re-Gen (M&E Services) Ltd, as set out in Appendix B to the report;

08c/2026 FM Fire Safety Services Contract to RGE Services Ltd, as set out in Appendix C to the report;

08d/2026 FM Water Compliance Services Contract to Envirocure Ltd, as set out in Appendix D to the report;

08e/2026 FM Asbestos Compliance Services Contract to Riverside Environmental Services Ltd, as set out in Appendix E to the report;

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- 08f/2026** FM Lift Maintenance Services Contract to Wemaintain, as set out in Appendix F to the report;
 - 08g/2026** FM Cleaning Services Contract to Pacific Support Services Ltd, as set out in Appendix G to the report;
 - 08h/2026** FM Security Services Contract to Chase Security Services Ltd, as set out in Appendix H to the report;
 - 08i/2026** FM Grounds Maintenance Contract to Canvins Group, as set out in Appendix I to the report; and
 - 08j/2026** FM Building Fabric Services Contract to Topcoat Construction Ltd, as set out in Appendix J to the report.
- 09/2026** The Cabinet agreed that the above awarded contracts be aligned with the FM Service contract budget and noted that these budgets had been established based on historical expenditure within the 2024/25 Medway Norse FM Contract, and a pricing exercise undertaken by a qualified Quantity Surveyor consultant.

Reasons:

The Corporate FM Contracts are a suite of 10 specialist contracts, all to commence on 1 April 2026, and are for a maximum of 7 years on a 3+2+2 basis. The initial contract will commence on 1 April 2026 and end on 31 March 2029, with extensions available via approval to 31 March 2031 and a final possible extension period to 31 March 2033.

The approach allows establishing the new contracts through the new FM service delivery model and allows flexibility in line with wider local government changes in the future. In the first year of the new contract, comprehensive asset data will be collected, and associated planned preventive maintenance (ppm) regimes will be reviewed in collaboration with the appointed contractor. This process will ensure that the scope and value of ppm works for subsequent years are accurately defined, using the initial tender price submissions as a reference point.

Property Review and Future Management of Heritage Sites

Background:

The report informed the Cabinet of the outcome of the consultation with English Heritage in respect of Upnor Castle which had been agreed by Cabinet on 11 March 2025, and made recommendations about the future of Temple Manor, Rochester Castle, and Upnor Castle.

An Exempt Appendix to the report provided further information in respect of financial information in respect of the three heritage properties.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken and was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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The report had been published separately to the main agenda in Cabinet Supplementary Agenda No.1. The Cabinet agreed to accept this report as an urgent item because it was necessary to seek approval to the proposals at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the timelines set out in section 5 of the report, could be met.

Decision number: **Decision:**

- 10/2026** The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place to renew the Local Management Agreement in respect of Rochester Castle ensuring that Rochester Castle would remain under the management of Medway Council.
- 11/2026** The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place to make the necessary arrangements to hand back Upnor Castle and Temple Manor to English Heritage, including terminating the Local Management Agreement in respect of the two assets, so that English Heritage took on the full management.
- 12/2026** The Cabinet authorised the Council's legal department to conclude the resultant contractual documents.

Reasons:

To reduce running costs, to generate a capital receipt, to bring Temple Manor into more intensive use and to hand back Upnor Castle to English Heritage, which is better placed to manage this property.

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Leader of the Council

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Date

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