

Record of Cabinet decisions

Tuesday, 10 February 2026

7.05pm to 10.12pm

Date of publication: 12 February 2026

**Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 20 February 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)

In Attendance: Richard Hicks, Chief Executive
Sunny Ee, Assistant Director Regeneration
Vanessa Etheridge, Democratic Services Officer
Lee-Anne Farach, Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive
Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance
Phil Watts, Chief Operating Officer

Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Van Dyke.

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Record of decisions

The record of the meeting held on 13 January 2026 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

5 public questions and 10 Member questions had been received and were taken in the order set out in Appendix 1 to the report. Where Members were absent, the Leader advised that questions would receive a written response so that the questions from those present could be addressed within the allotted time.

Responses

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

Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy (2026-2030)

Background:

The report presented the draft new Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy for Kent and Medway (2026-2030). The new Strategy was drafted in summer 2025 following more than a year of stakeholder engagement. The Strategy had been out to formal public consultation from 23 July to 6 October 2025, and a consultation report summarising the key findings from the consultation had been prepared and published online, along with a 'You Said, We Did' document which highlighted the changes made following analysis of the consultation responses.

It was noted that, prior to being circulated for partners to publish, there would be some final minor amendments to text, which would include adding the name of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) contact once confirmed, and correcting any typing or formatting errors only.

The report had previously been considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 20 November 2025 and by the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

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Committee on 4 December 2025 and the Cabinet thanked the Committees for their comments which were set out in sections 7 and 8 of the report.

It was noted that approval to adopt the Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy for 2026-2030 had been given at the Kent County Council's Adult Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee meeting on Wednesday 21 January 2026.

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 7 and 8 of the report.

13/2026 The Cabinet approved the draft Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy for Kent and Medway (2026-2030), as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to the final minor amendments to text as set out within the report, being made prior to publication.

Reasons:

Adoption of the 2026-2030 Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategy will shape the direction of the Kent & Medway Suicide Prevention programme's work for the next five years.

The Suicide Prevention Oversight Board, which includes representatives from Medway Council, Kent and Medway Mental Health NHS Trust, and the ICB (who fund this programme) are fully supportive of this proposal.

River Medway Strategy

Background:

The report sought approval to the River Medway Strategy, which had been developed following extensive consultation with key stakeholders with different interests in the use and future of the River Medway.

The Strategy recognised that the River Medway was an under-utilised asset and that there were key challenges to realising its potential. Medway Council and stakeholders had a common aspiration to overcome these challenges and maximise opportunities to make the most of the river economically, socially and environmentally to Medway's benefit. The River Medway Strategy provided a framework to enable this alongside the further development of the two allied Heat Networks.

The report had previously been considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 December 2025 and the

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Cabinet thanked the Committee for its comments which were set out in section 9 of the report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken and was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the outcome and comments of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 December 2025, as set out in section 9 of the report.

14/2026 The Cabinet approved the River Medway Strategy.

15/2026 The Cabinet approved funding of £106,165 (incl. on costs) for the first year and £78,895 for the following year to commence delivery of the River Medway Strategy, subject to this being agreed by Full Council as part of the 2026/27 budget.

Reasons:

The River Medway Strategy provides a cohesive, partnership led approach to maintaining and improving the environs of the River Medway. Approving it provides a framework for future work. It is necessary to agree some initial finance (as set out in this report) to commence that activity. It is planned that this initial finance will be replaced with external funding in due course.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27

Background:

The report set out the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) and sought the Cabinet's agreement to recommend to Council, a Council Tax Reduction scheme for the 2026/27 financial year.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken and was attached at Appendix 3 to the report.

Decision number: **Decision:**

16/2026 The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council, that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27 be adopted, reflecting income bands updated for the Consumer Price Index, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

17/2026 The Cabinet approved the revised Exceptional Hardship Payment policy which was a prescribed requirement within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

The Cabinet noted the impact of the Care Leavers Discretionary Council Tax Policy agreed in February 2023.

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Reasons:

The scheme continues to balance the need for supporting those currently in receipt of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) and the ability of the Council to fund the scheme within the current budgetary constraints.

Corporate Debt and Council Tax Discretionary Policies

Background:

The report sought approval of a revised Corporate Debt Policy, updated to reflect changes in practice and new technology. Approval was also sought to a new Vulnerability and Financial Policy to support the collection of Council Tax where the taxpayer was experiencing financial difficulty or was vulnerable.

Diversity Impact Assessments for both policies had been undertaken and were attached at Appendices 3 and 4 to the report.

Decision number: **Decision:**

18/2026 The Cabinet approved the revised Corporate Debt Policy as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, for implementation from 1 April 2026.

19/2026 The Cabinet approved the new Vulnerability and Financial Difficulty Policy, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

Reasons:

To support the collection of debt whilst accounting for the financial difficulty and vulnerability of taxpayers.

To promote a one Medway, collaborative approach to holistically support residents when they are challenged with vulnerability and/or financial difficulty and find themselves in debt to the Council.

Treasury Management Report 2025/26: Quarter 3

Background:

The report presented an overview of treasury management activity for 2025/26 Quarter 3.

The report had previously been considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2026 and the Cabinet thanked the Committee for all its work and for its comments which were set out in Appendix 3, circulated in the supplementary agenda.

Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Audit Committee, as set out in Appendix 3 within the supplementary agenda.

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The Cabinet noted the Treasury Management report.

Reasons:

In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management, there should be a report on treasury every quarter.

Treasury Management Strategy 2026/2027

Background:

The report presented the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for the 2026/27 financial year. The Treasury Management Strategy incorporated within it the Treasury Management Policy Statement, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy.

The report had previously been considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2026 and the Cabinet thanked the Committee for its comments which were set out in Appendix D, circulated in the supplementary agenda.

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

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Audit Committee, as set out in Appendix D within the supplementary agenda.

20/2026 The Cabinet agreed to recommend the Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27, as set out in Appendix A to the report, to Full Council for approval.

21/2026 The Cabinet approved the Treasury Management Practices, as set out in Appendix C to the report.

Reasons:

The Cabinet has the responsibility to make recommendations to Full Council on the approval of the Council's Treasury Management, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and has responsibility for the implementation of the Treasury Management Practices and associated schedules.

Revenue Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2025/2026

Background:

The report presented the results of the third round of the Council's revenue budget monitoring process for 2025/26. The Council's summary position was presented in section 5 of the report, with sections 6-10 providing the detail for each service area.

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**Decision
number:**

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the results of the third round of revenue budget monitoring for 2025/26.

22/2026

The Cabinet instructed the Corporate Management Team to implement further urgent action to bring expenditure back within the budget agreed by Full Council.

The Cabinet noted that officers had submitted an Exceptional Financial Support request to the Government seeking a further £9.9million in respect of 2025/26, in addition to the £18.184million incorporated into the budget.

23/2026

The Cabinet agreed to recommend that Full Council approve the use of £2.783million of capital receipts under flexibilities to fund transformational activity in Adult Social Care and Business Support.

24/2026

The Cabinet agreed to recommend that Full Council declassifies the following amounts currently held in earmarked reserves and transfers them to general reserves:

- £1,597,513 held in the Collection Fund reserve;
- £450,000 held in the severance reserve;
- £750,000 held in the SELEP reserve;
- £27,000 held in the unrepresented Cheques reserve.

Reasons:

Full Council is responsible for agreeing a balanced budget in advance of each financial year. The Cabinet is responsible for ensuring that income and expenditure remain within the approved budget, including instructing corrective action to prevent any forecast overspend from materialising.

Capital Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2025/2026

Background:

The report presented the results of the third round of the Council's capital budget monitoring process for 2025/26.

**Decision
number:**

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the results of the third round of capital budget monitoring for 2025/26.

The Cabinet noted the changes to the approved budget since Round 2 as set out in sections 10.1 to 10.2 of the report.

Reasons:

Full Council is responsible for agreeing the capital programme. The Cabinet is responsible for ensuring that expenditure remains within the approved programme,

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including instructing corrective action to prevent any forecast overspend from materialising.

One Medway Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan 2025-26 Q3 Update

Background:

The reported presented a review of the Council's One Medway Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan (FIT Plan) monitoring for Round 3 and was to be read in conjunction with the Revenue Budget monitoring for this period. This was the second year of the Council's journey to financial sustainability by producing and monitoring a FIT Plan.

Decision number:

The Cabinet noted the results of the third round of FIT Plan monitoring for 2025/26.

25/2026 The Cabinet instructed the Corporate Management Team to expedite any of the actions within the FIT Plan, where failure to do so might adversely affect the budget position.

Reasons:

Full Council is responsible for agreeing a balanced budget in advance of each financial year. Cabinet is responsible for ensuring that income and expenditure remain within the approved budget, including instructing transformation activities or corrective action to prevent any forecast overspend from materialising.

The FIT Plan, which is reviewed regularly at CMT, is one of the key tools for ensuring delivery of savings in the current financial year and implementing a range of key actions to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Medway Council.

Housing Revenue Account Capital and Revenue Budgets 2026/27

Background:

This report presented the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital and revenue budgets for 2026/27 and provided details of proposed rent and service charge levels for 2026/27. The report also contained the latest revised forecasts of the HRA Business Plan.

The report had previously been considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2026 and the Cabinet thanked the Committee for its comments which were set out in section 18 of the report.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken and was attached at Appendix 6 to the report.

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**Decision
number:**

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the outcome and comments of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in section 18 of the report.

26/2026

The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council:

- a) a proposed social rent increase of 4.8% (CPI of 3.8 plus 1%) for the social rent housing stock as set out in Appendix A to the report (based on 52 collection weeks) with effect from 1 April 2026. All new tenancies issued during 2026/27 to be set at either the formula rent or rent cap for social rent dwellings, whichever is lower;
- b) a proposed affordable rent increase of the lower of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate or 4.8% (CPI of 3.8 plus 1%) for the affordable rent properties as set out in Appendix B to the report (based on 52 collection weeks) with effect from 1 April 2026. All new tenancies during 2026/27 to be set at either 80% of market rent or the LHA rate for affordable rent dwellings, whichever is lower;
- c) a proposed rent increase of 4.8% to be applied to all garage tenure types with effect from 1 April 2026 as stated in section 5 of the report;
- d) to approve the service charges increases/decreases as set out in Appendix C to the report for 2026/27;
- e) to approve the revenue budget for the HRA service for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix D to the report;
- f) to approve the provision for the estimated repayment of debt, based on annuity-based payment as set out in section 7.3 of the report, on the HRA's outstanding debt for 2026/27;
- g) to delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Culture and Community or Chief Housing Officer to agree weekly rental values presented by the Head of Tenant Services for any in-year completed HRA acquisitions and/or new builds during 2026/27; and
- h) to approve the 30-year HRA Business Plan model as attached at Appendix E, to the report.

Reasons:

The Council is required to carry out a review of rents and notify tenants not less than 28 days prior to the proposed date of change. The Council is required under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to ensure that the Housing Revenue

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Account does not fall into a deficit position.

Proposed Capital and Revenue Budgets 2026/2027

Background:

The report set out the Cabinet's proposals for the Capital and Revenue budget for 2026/27. In accordance with the Constitution, this would be submitted to Full Council on 25 February 2026, the meeting convened to set the Council Tax.

The report had previously been considered by all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as summarised in Appendix 1 to the report and Appendix 1 part B as circulated in the supplementary agenda. The Cabinet thanked those Committees for their comments and took the opportunity to thank the Employment Matters Committee for its work too.

The Leader advised that new information had been received since publication of the report, as this report would be considered by Full Council unaltered, a short supplementary appendix would accompany it detailing the new information for consideration.

Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as summarised in Appendix 1 to the report, and Appendix 1 part B within the supplementary agenda.

27/2026 The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council that the net revenue budget summarised at Table 1 should be set at £523.752million, funded from a 4.994% increase in Council Tax for 2026/27 with the equivalent Band D figure at £1,934.33.

The Cabinet noted that on 28 January 2026, Employment Matters Committee recommended to Full Council:

- a) an increase for all staff on MedPay terms and conditions, in line with inflation, which included those on MedPay Performance, Progression Pay Scheme as well as those who were on the legacy scheme.
- b) To not return to NJC currently but keep negotiations open on this matter and do a joint piece of work on impact and cost assumptions.

28/2026 The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council a 3.5% increase for all staff on MedPay terms and conditions, which included those on MedPay Performance, Progression Pay Scheme as well as those who were on the legacy scheme, recognising that CPI increased to 3.4% in December.

29/2026 The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council the fees and charges as set out at Appendix 6 to the report.

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- 30/2026** The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy set out at Appendix 7 to the report.
- 31/2026** The Cabinet requested that the Chief Operating Officer calculate the formal requirements under sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for resolution by the budget Full Council meeting on 25 February 2026.
- 32/2026** The Cabinet agreed to recommend that Full Council approve the amendments to the Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief Policy at Appendix 9 to the report and noted a further update would be presented to Full Council in respect of the policy for Pubs following the announcement By HM Treasury of further support on 27 January 2026.
- 33/2026** The Cabinet agreed to instruct officers to continue to liaise with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to secure support through the Exceptional Financial Support scheme.

Reasons:

The Constitution requires that the Cabinet's budget proposals must be referred to Full Council for consideration and approval.

The Council is required by statute to set a balanced budget and set the Council Tax levels by 11 March each year.

One Medway Council Plan 2024-2028, 2026/27 Key Performance Indicator Refresh

Background:

The report presented the 2026/27 key performance indicator refresh for the One Medway Council Plan (OMCP) 2024-28.

The report had previously been considered by the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 January 2026 and the Cabinet thanked the Committee for its comments which were set out in Appendix 3, circulated in the supplementary agenda.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken and was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

Decision number: Decision:

The Cabinet noted the outcome and comments of the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in Appendix 3 of the report within the supplementary agenda.

The Cabinet noted the proposed changes to the key performance indicators that would be used to track performance of the One Medway Council Plan in 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1 and section 4.7. of

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the report.

The Cabinet noted that Council would be requested to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree new key performance indicators and interim targets where applicable as set out in paragraph 4.8 of the report.

Reasons:

The One Medway Council Plan (OMCP) 2024-28 sets the high-level objectives and direction for the Council and includes the performance indicators that will measure progress and outcomes. Agreement of the key performance indicators for the One Medway Council Plan will ensure continued delivery of the objectives and effective monitoring of performance.

Risk Strategy Annual Review

Background:

The report presented the annual review of the Risk Strategy, in accordance with the Council's Risk Strategy.

The report had previously been considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2026, and the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 January 2026. The Cabinet thanked the Committees for their comments which were set out in Appendix 3, circulated in the supplementary agenda.

Decision number:

The Cabinet noted the outcome and comments of the Audit Committee and Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Appendix 3 within the supplementary agenda.

34/2026 The Cabinet approved the 2026/27 Risk Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Reasons:

The establishment of a corporate framework for risk management is recommended by CIPFA and SOLACE and will complement and support the work already being carried out within each directorate to manage risks.

One Medway Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan 2025-26 Q3 Update

Background:

The report and appendices summarised performance in Quarter 3 2025/26 on the delivery of the One Medway Council Plan (OMCP) 2024/28 priorities. The report also presented the Quarter 3 2025/26 review of strategic risks.

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Decision number: **Decision:**

The Cabinet noted the Quarter 3 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.

35/2026 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.

Redevelopment of Brook Multi Storey Car Park

Background:

The report presented a Procurement Gateway 1 & 3 paper for consideration. As well as an addition of the £400,000 to be funded from Capital receipts to the relevant budget, it was noted that the Council had submitted a grant funding bid for £1.5m to the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF), a cross government initiative between the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and One Public Estate (OPE). The site had been declared surplus to requirements (Cabinet decision number: 49/2025). If successful, the bid would unlock the redevelopment of the Brook Multistorey Car park to deliver 100 residential units, in line with the Chatham Design Code.

It was noted that if the bid was successful, the funder required two milestones to be achieved: that the contractor be appointed by March 2026; and that the land be released by September 2027.

Decision number: **Decision:**

36/2026 The Cabinet approved the appointment of Medway Development Company (MDC) as Project Manager and Contractor to undertake the grant funded Brownfield Land Release Fund works, subject to a successful bid, as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

37/2026 The Cabinet approved the appointment of Medway Development Company (MDC) as Project Manager to undertake the residential design works up to Planning Application stage, subject to a successful bid, as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

38/2026 The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council to approve an addition to the Capital Programme of £400,000 funded from Capital receipts, to undertake the design works for the residential element up to Planning application stage and Project Management fees, subject to a successful bid, as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

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39/2026 The Cabinet noted that the Chief Operating Officer could add the Brownfield Land Release Fund Grant Funding to the Capital Programme under authority delegated to him in the Council's Employee Delegation Scheme, subject to a successful bid, as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report, and Full Council approval of 38/2026 above.

Reasons:

Subject to a successful bid, it is proposed that MDC is appointed as Project Manager and Contractor to deliver the BLRF works to bring forward the site. The teckal exemption would be utilised to appoint MDC as Project Manager and Contractor. Cabinet approval is required due to the value of the direct award (over £1 million) and the nature of the Brook Multistorey Car Park being a high-profile site. The funding requirements stipulate that a contractor needs to be appointed by March 2026.

If successful, the BLRF grant will fund the enabling works on site, however, to meet the land release milestone of September 27, the Council needs to develop the residential design up to a Planning application, and cover project management fees, requiring an addition of £400,000. Post award of a successful Planning application the site would transfer to MDC (subject to MDC Shareholder Sub Committee approval and best consideration being met) or an alternative developer.

If successful, the grant can only be accepted with the governance in place for an addition of £400,000 for the residential design and project management fees, as well as the appointment of MDC as Project Manager and Contractor. Without the redevelopment the council will need to continue to monitor and maintain an aging structure, within the next 5-10 years it is likely there will need to be significant expenditure to keep it operational.

South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Business Plan 2026-2029

Background:

The report sought agreement to the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Business Plan for 2026 to 2029.

An Exempt Appendix to the report provided the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Business Plan 2026-2029.

Decision number: **Decision:**

40/2026 The Cabinet approved the Business Plan for 2026-2029 for the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership, as set out in the Exempt Appendix to the report.

41/2026 The Cabinet agreed the contribution arrangements set out in section 2 of the Business Plan (attached in the Exempt Appendix) incorporating Registered Building Inspector (RBI) establishment growth plan,

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proposing a phased increase of one RBI per year over the next three years, as approved by South Thames Gateway Joint Committee on 11 December 2025 and the proposed contribution of £415,629.00 for 2026-2027.

Reasons:

The constitution of the Joint Committee requires approval of the Business Plan for the following year by the Cabinet of each Partner Authority.

Gateway 1 Report: All Age Service (Substance Misuse)

Background:

The report sought permission to commence the procurement of the Medway All Age Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Service Contract.

An Exempt Appendix 1 to the report provided further information in respect of the financial analysis.

Decision number: **Decision:**

42/2026 The Cabinet approved the procurement of an All-Age Substance Misuse Service as per the preferred option 5, competitive process, as identified in paragraph 7.1.5. of the report.

Reasons:

A competitive procurement process enables a thorough exploration of the marketplace, ensuring that the best possible offer is secured for the Medway community. It promotes value for money, innovation, and quality by encouraging providers to demonstrate how they can meet local needs effectively.

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Leader of the Council

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Date

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