

## Public Question

(Relating to Agenda Item No.19, Redevelopment of Brook Multi Storey Car Park)

**Question A – Bryan Fowler of Chatham, had submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment, Councillor Mahil:**

“The Cabinet papers indicate a determined approach to sell the Brook Car Park for housing.

Can the Portfolio Holder explain how this paper has been informed by both the recent strategic review of car parking (as mentioned by Councillor Paterson at the Cabinet on 21st October) and also the retail strategy for Chatham?”

In the questioner’s absence, Councillor Mahil advised that the Chatham Design Code stated that “Chatham will be designed for people, reducing current dominance of cars and associated infrastructure”. It also looked for a combined approach with “vehicle use and car parking that complements active and public transport” and a vision for streets designed to “reduce overall car dominance” (p34, Chatham Centre Design Code).

He advised that the removal of a structure that was past its reasonable life and which also significantly detracted from the area would make way for redevelopment which would enhance Chatham and the Brook as a place to live and visit, and improve the street scene, revitalising the Town Centre. The demolition was therefore consistent both with the design code and the emerging Local Plan work.

He advised that the importance of car parking provision in Chatham was recognised, and that there needed to be appropriate provision to meet the needs of the revitalised and enhanced Town Centre and particularly the emerging nighttime economy including restaurants and theatres. He acknowledged that the Council required a new parking strategy which addressed potentially substantial changes in supply and demand while reducing the risk of parking supply decline becoming a barrier to the town’s growth. The new parking strategy would explore options including new parking capacity, but also alternative solutions to support town centre accessibility, ensuring that economic activity and population growth can be sustained.

## Member Questions

(Relating to Agenda Item No.11, Revenue Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2025 / 2026)

**Question B – Councillor Lammas asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple, the following:**

“The Cabinet has responsibility for managing the budget. Can the Leader of the Council set out what assurances on spending the Cabinet has committed to HM

Government in order to receive the millions of pounds of exceptional financial support he needed to balance his budget for 2025-26, as one of only 30 principal local authorities in England to receive that support out of a total of 317, stating if he will resign as Leader if he fails to balance his budget for a third time at the end of 2026-27 without exceptional financial support?"

The Leader stated that he was sure that Councillor Lammas had been paying very close attention to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings over the past few years and that he would be aware that exceptional financial support had a number of safeguards and controls in place. The Chief Operating Officer met very regularly with very senior officials at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and the Leader himself had met with ministers and others. In the very first meeting with MHCLG it had been made clear, that the previous administration had left Medway Council's finances in a grave situation. The current administration and officers, continued to work hard, and this could be seen from the report on the agenda that night, the phenomenal amount of work in just a few short weeks from where the Council had been to where it was now. He advised that there were announcements being made, including, the fact that it was proposed to put council tax up by 4.994%. However, it should be noted that in Worcestershire, a council run by the Reform UK party, council tax was being raised by 9%.

(Relating to Agenda Item No.15, Proposed Capital and Revenue Budgets 2026 / 2027)

**Question C – Councillor Perfect had submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple:**

"The Leader of the Council has repeatedly claimed that he intends 2026/7 to be the final year of using exceptional financial support. How does he square this with the latest Medium Term Financial Projections (Appendix 8) showing an ever-increasing gap until Local Government Reorganisation?"

Response:

Firstly, I think it's important to recognise that almost all local authorities include some, as yet, unidentified savings targets in their medium term financial plans. The difference is the degree of transparency in the presentation. Some will purport to have formulated a medium term financial plan which balances the revenue budget year on year, however when one unpacks the detail, some of the savings assumed in balancing these annual budgets are fairly speculative and represent targets for officers to achieve rather than actual plans. This administration has chosen to be open regarding the extent to which it has not yet formulated savings plans to close the remaining gap over the medium term, however in the context of a half a billion pound gross spend and relative to the position that has been reported in previous years, this gap is fairly small.

I am confident that the work that has been undertaken over the past two years, to focus on prevention and demand management, through right-sizing our services, investing in our staff and investing in transformation programmes such as Medway 2.0, will put us on a path to achieve long term sustainability. This investment would not have been possible without exceptional financial support and instead the Council would have been compelled to make cuts to staffing and other short-term savings.

**Question D – Councillor Hackwell had submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple:**

“Regarding the FIT plan, it should be noted that the Council has delivered 81% of the savings targeted in its Financial Improvement and Transformation plan but the dashboard (One Medway Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan 2025-26 Q3 Update) indicates only 32% of activities have achieved their targets. Can the Leader of the Council outline how the programmes and activities that are behind are being managed to recover and what the non-delivery risks to the 2026/27 draft position are?”

Response:

The One Medway Financial Improvement and Transformation Plan (FIT Plan) provides full transparency on how the Council is delivering savings, generating income, and avoiding costs.

The FIT Plan records *actuals*, not forecasts. An activity is only marked as complete once the full-year target has been achieved or exceeded. This is why 32% of activities are showing as fully achieved at Q3, which is good progress at this point in the year. Overall performance is strong and many other activities are on track. In fact, almost half of all activities are already above 75% of their annual target.

Progress is monitored closely. The Corporate Management Team reviews the FIT Plan regularly, and Cabinet receives quarterly reports alongside the revenue budget monitoring to give a complete and transparent picture of performance.

Where activities are behind, we are using the FIT Plan to identify issues early and act. Some of the challenges are outside the Council’s control, but the process allows timely intervention. For example, although a number of Adult Social Care activities are not yet delivering their FIT Plan savings, they have still generated nearly £3 million in cost avoidance, which will support the budget for 2026/27 and beyond.

As with any ambitious plan, there may be some activities that do not achieve their full target, and there will be areas that over-achieve the target. This does not create a direct risk to the 2026/27 draft budget because that budget was built using detailed service-level insight, informed by the FIT Plan performance and budget monitoring.

We are now refreshing the FIT Plan for 2026/27. Services will review all targets, carry forward where appropriate, and set new ones to support delivery of next year’s budget.

**Question E – Councillor Tejan had submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple:**

“Can the Leader of the Council please update the Council on what discussions he has had since the publication of the draft local government settlement with the Local Government Secretary, Ministers, or Members of Parliament, regarding the £8m worth of money which Medway was shortchanged by?”

Response:

Whilst I understand the need for a politician to do politics, I do hope that Councillor Tejan in his role as Chairperson of perhaps the most important Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Council, understands council processes. We haven't been short changed by any amount. It would be irresponsible to wait until the provisional local government settlement is in place to start trying to model what that might look like and plan a budget around it accordingly. It just so happens that in our modelling the tapering of the fair funding formula, which is undoing the damage caused by his party, isn't as weighted in the first year of a multi-year settlement as we had tried to predict.

**Question F – Councillor Wildey asked the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:**

“Given the projected increase of costs in adult social care of a net £7.629million in 2026/27 and the surmounting pressures of residential nursing care, can the Portfolio Holder provide evidence and justification that the budget has space for the Vanity project that is the proposed Council run care home?”

Councillor Murray stated that Councillor Wildey had himself been present at the Cabinet meeting in July and later at the Full Council meeting, when the rationale for the project had been presented and where he had had an opportunity to comment. She stated that she was not sure she actually understood the basis for his question, as on the one hand he was reminding everyone about the overspend, compelling demand and legacy left by his administration who had sold off all the Council's care homes and left the current administration in a position where there was no opportunity to save people if they were made homeless by a failure in the private sector, and on the other was calling the project a vanity project which she found outrageous and disgraceful. It was a project that would save money in the end and set a gold standard for social care in Medway that would work well with the market, not against it. Providing safe and good quality accommodation for people with complex dementia needs and others who required reablement and to move on from hospital. Therefore she suggested that the next time he asked her a question and called something that was a project for the whole of Medway a 'vanity' project, he needed to think very carefully about the phrases he used.

**Question G – Councillor Joy had submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple:**

“With the £3.515 million increase in the Interest and Financing budget because of extra borrowing, has the Council prepared a budget that can withstand higher interests’ rates with their excessive borrowing and ensure services can be properly funded and managed for our residents?”

Response:

The Interest and Financing Budget is calculated using a set of assumptions for the following financial year which includes, the projected borrowing requirements for the capital programme, EFS and loans to our subsidiaries. We will then project borrowing costs such as interest and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) based upon expected average interest rates in line with those provided by our Treasury Management advisors MUFG. Other elements included within the overall budget will be interest income from investments and this will also include interest from loans made to our subsidiaries. Again, we will base our projections upon likely interest rate levels for cash and money market fund investments. Property fund investments will also be calculated but these are not linked to interest rates, but the performance of those funds. Whilst we cannot be sure as to how the economy and therefore interest rates will perform during the next financial year, our budget projections are based upon specific data provided to us projecting interest rates, both Bank of England Base Rates and PWLB rates and believe that the budget set, has been calculated using the most robust data available at the present time. Capital schemes requiring borrowing have been costed to ensure they provide the best value for money for the residents of Medway but due to the nature of schemes such as invest to save, the investment invariably has to come first with savings to follow in future years.

The ratio between our interest and financing costs and the Council’s budget requirement is circa 4.7%.

**Question H – Councillor Filmer had submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maple:**

“The fairer funding review was around £8m less than Medway Council officers anticipated in the draft budget presented on 18th November, this has ramped up the overspend which is already relying on high levels of borrowing to keep the Council afloat. How does the Cabinet intend to mitigate the results of the fairer funding review within the 2026/27 budget?”

Response:

In forecasting the impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 on Medway Council’s finances over the three years of the settlement, our advisors (Pixel) were pretty much spot on. Unfortunately, the eventual phasing of the settlement over the three year period was slower than we had anticipated and I suspect that tapering was ultimately influenced by fierce lobbying from those local authorities who were destined to lose out as a result of the Fair Funding Review, for example inner London boroughs. That meant that in the first year, Medway did not receive the increase in resources originally predicted and had mitigated this with a further request for exceptional financial support, however in years two and three, as the

redistribution of funding resulting from the review unwinds, it will become easier for Medway Council to set balanced budgets without further recourse to EFS. Furthermore, I am confident that the work that has been undertaken over the past two years, to focus on prevention and demand management, through right-sizing our services, investing in our staff and investing in transformation programmes such as Medway 2.0, will put us on a path to achieve long term sustainability. This investment would not have been possible without exceptional financial support and instead the Council would have been compelled to make cuts to staffing and other short-term savings.

## Public Questions

### **Question 1 – Raza Griffiths, of Chatham, asked the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:**

“Can the Council, which has stated its aspiration to develop a "modern transport network", detail what practical progress has been made against the timetable for the installation of the new Real Time Information system, as per the Bus Improvement Plan for 2025-26 and what remains to be done - in particular, regarding Chatham Bus Station's information systems?”

In response, Councillor Curry advised that the Council had been working to modernise and improve the Real Time Information (RTI) system across Medway as part of the bus service improvement plan. The detailed procurement and commissioning work required had now been completed, to replace the current outdated and unreliable screens and this work would be presented to Cabinet in March.

The plan was to install 34 new RTI screens, including full upgrades at Chatham Waterfront Bus Station, with new summary screens on Platforms A and B, and replacement individual screens on Platforms C and D. A further 28 new screens were planned for key bus stops across Medway. These new units would provide accurate real-time arrival information, improved 4G connectivity for greater reliability, and integrated CCTV to enhance passenger safety.

Once Cabinet approval had been secured in March, the remaining steps would include finalising implementation arrangements with delivery partners and commencing the phased installation programme. Once completed, this programme would significantly improve the passenger experience across Medway and help support a more reliable, attractive bus network for residents.

Councillor Curry added that he thought the idea of having cameras there as well was really important from a public safety point of view to make people safe and secure, particularly in the evenings that when they were catching buses.

Raza Griffiths asked the following supplementary question

“My supplementary question is would you like to attend a community rally on the 21 February in the Baptist Church in Crow Lane to tell people more about this.”

Councillor Curry accepted the invitation and advised that he would do his best to attend.

**Question J – Elizabeth Kebbell, of Chatham, asked the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:**

“Medway’s population is continuing to grow, yet many residents already experience long waiting times and severely limited access to mental health support. How is the Council planning to ensure that future mental health infrastructure will be sufficient to meet need, and what planning is in place to address existing gaps for current demand?”

In response, Councillor Murray stated that it was an important question and she hoped that the questioner would gain some comfort and information from the answer. She advised that commissioning responsibility for mental health treatment services sat with NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) with services delivered by a range of partners including Kent and Medway Mental Health Trust (that used to be KMPT). These organisations were held to account by the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and indeed by the Council when meeting the senior officers of those organisations.

Mental health services and infrastructure extended beyond the NHS services, however, with the adult social care service providing critical support to residents with mental health needs. There was a range of public health and mental well-being services, and the children partnership commissioning team also lead and commissioned a wide range of children and young people mental health services. In fact, there was a special day for children, for children's mental health, that Thursday at Lordswood Leisure Centre with lots of schools coming along. There was an excellent local voluntary sector who provided a wide range of infrastructure and support services for Medway residents.

The Council commissioned the ‘Release the Pressure’ helpline and had recently increased the capacity of the ‘Men in Sheds’ project because mental well-being was a core component of the Council’s workplace health programme support. The Council also supported the set up and running of the two safe havens and a newly established crisis house in Medway.

Councillor Murray advised that a key aspect of planning for future resident needs was through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This year, the Council had contributed to a collective Kent and Medway Needs assessment for mental health services that considered existing service provision and made recommendations to commissioners and the system partners.

In line with the Government's ten-year Health Plan, Neighbourhood Health would play a key role in improving the health of the population. Mental health was an important consideration and through the Council’s Director of Public Health and Assistant Director of Adult Social Care, the Council had two senior representatives on the Kent and Medway Neighbourhood Health Board.

Elizabeth Kebbell asked the following supplementary question:

“One of the safe havens at the Sunlight Centre has opening hours and is only open until 6:30pm. Are there any plans to increase that so that it is 24 hours, the same as the one at Medway Hospital?”

Councillor Murray advised that it was hoped that funding could be found to continue to increase capacity, although there were not any guarantees at the moment. The safe haven at Medway Hospital was being redeveloped and would be a much nicer building in a safer area, as currently, whilst inside was a nice welcoming space, the outside actually looked a bit hostile at the moment. Therefore, she was relieved that the hospital had found some money to make it a more comfortable space. She also advised that the Council's mental health cafes and other means of support were there throughout other hours of the day but took the point on board and agreed to look into it.

**Question K – John Castle, of Chatham, asked the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry, the following:**

“Over the holiday period of 2025/2026 no brown bin collection occurred from Monday 22nd December to Monday 12th January, 3 weeks in total.

I appreciate that there are likely good reasons why this wasn't possible, however this is a long period of time and it's also a period where food waste could be higher than normal for many residents. I noticed that many residents where I lived put brown bins out every week in the expectation of collection.

Can the Council commit to shortening the period without brown bin collection in the future?”

In response Councillor Curry advised that Christmas waste services were reviewed every year in order to try and make improvements, and he thought this had been one of the best years. The volume of waste collected over the Christmas period was about 50% higher than it was at any other time and was a significant amount and drain on the normal resources of the Council which is why it was necessary to make changes and do a different collection regime over the Christmas period.

In short, yes, he could say that the Council would be reviewing the Christmas 2026/2027 waste collection schedule with a view to reducing the duration of the suspension of brown bin collections.

John Castle asked the following supplementary question:

“I believe that from April of this year, there will be mandatory recycling for flats across Medway and this will only increase the situation. I think this is a good thing because it will increase the overall volume of recycling in Medway, but it could also mean that there's even more collections over the holiday period.”

Councillor Curry agreed with this assertion and advised that detailed plans were in place to introduce a new collection regime towards the springtime. He also advised that as part of a wider waste management strategy the Council were looking at how recycling levels could be significantly boosted over the next couple of years.

**Question L – Milo O’Connor, of Rochester, asked the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray, the following:**

“With evidence showing that pressures on GP appointment systems contribute to late cancer diagnoses, what specific measures is Medway Council implementing to help Medway GPs spot cancer earlier?”

In response, Councillor Murray stated that it was an important question and one that accorded with the Government's latest pledge to make sure that four out of five cancer sufferers survived more than five years. She advised that there was a lot of work going on in Medway, and even though the Council was not directly responsible for this area, the public health team was working with the health system to improve cancer diagnosis and outcomes for Medway residents in several ways.

Firstly, they were analysing data on and promoting cancer screening locally. Screening was important as it provided an evidence based way to diagnose cancer early and improve survival rates. For example, Medway's public health team had recently analysed data on bowel cancer screening, revealing that uptake was lower among people living in the more deprived areas of Medway and in the younger part of the eligible group, aged 50 to 56. The team were working with GPs to identify and overcome barriers to this simple screening, particularly relating to health literacy.

Secondly, the public health team worked with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to help identify inequalities and areas for improvement in the healthcare services provided in Medway, which included cancer pathways. As part of the National Cancer Plan for England announced last week, there would also be opportunities for new initiatives to reduce inequalities in cancer screening, diagnosis and outcomes in Medway through the Health and Wellbeing Board, which she chaired. These would include work to improve knowledge and awareness of cancer symptoms, so residents attend their GP at the right time. Further information and statistics would be sent to the questioner after the meeting.

Milo O’Connor asked the following supplementary question:

“Studies from the British Medical Journal suggests that triage based appointments can hinder reciprocal relationships with GPs and therapeutic relationships and this can weaken the ability to spot cancer diagnosis. Is there anything else that's specific in that area, optimising the triage based appointment so it can facilitate a quicker diagnosis in plan at the moment?”

Councillor Murray replied that one of the things that the Health and Well-being Board did was hear from the ICB commissioners who were responsible for GP services and she said that she would ask them if they thought there were any problems with triage based diagnosis. She had not personally heard that there was a conflict with that, but if that was the questioner’s experience and he had read information about it, she would be pleased to pick that up.

The questioner advised that he did know people who had had trouble and greatly suffered, so it would be good if that could be checked out.

The following further information was sent to questioner after the meeting:

Cancer screening data for Medway:

<b>Cancer screening type</b>	<b>Medway</b>	<b>England</b>	<b>Period</b>
Breast	72.2%	71.7%	2025
Bowel	71.3%	72.9%	2025
Cervical 25-49 years 50-64 years	69.7% 73.9%	66.1% 74.3%	2024

Source: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/cancer%20screening>

Cancer deaths in Medway:

134.3 per 100,000 for under 75s, which is second highest in the South East (just behind Portsmouth)

Source: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/3/gid/1938132696/pat/6/par/E12000008/ati/302/are/E06000035/iid/40501/age/163/sex/4/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yr/1/cid/4/tbm/1>

Recent announcements in relation to cancer inequalities and early diagnosis:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-fund-to-tackle-cancer-screening-inequalities-and-save-lives>

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/698315a35a7e802e96d343a4/national-cancer-plan-for-england-delivering-world-class-cancer-care.pdf>

P31 “Action 11. We will increase awareness of cancer risk factors and cancer-specific health literacy. A more active role for the citizen depends on higher health literacy – and more equal health literacy between different socio-demographic groups. This is not currently the case. Survey data from Cancer Research UK consistently shows socio-economic inequalities in cancer knowledge and beliefs. Men and people from deprived backgrounds are less likely to recognise cancer symptoms and there are different levels of knowledge about genetic risk and preventable risk factors. As such, from this year, Cancer Alliances will partner with local Health and Wellbeing Boards and the wider cancer community to co-design targeted local awareness campaigns, and to signpost people to support services. The Neighbourhood Early Diagnosis Fund will be used to reduce inequalities for people in deprived areas and among ethnic groups with lower early diagnosis rates.”

## Member Questions

### **Question M – Councillor Spalding had submitted the following question to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Murray:**

“Following reports the elective care centre planned for the former Debenhams site in Chatham designed to relieve pressure on Medway Hospital is not going ahead, can the Portfolio Holder please update the Council as to why this has occurred? In answering, the Portfolio Holder should state how much Medway Council money has gone into this project and why this possibility was not foreseen when Council involvement in this project was considered.”

Response:

The Council explored opportunities to deliver additional healthcare facilities in partnership with the Medway NHS Foundation Trust on the former Debenhams site, this was formally concluded in October 2025. The NHS determined that, due to funding constraints, the proposal was not financially viable and therefore could not proceed.

Although the Council was supportive of the Medway NHS Foundation Trust’s proposal, it also explored alternative options during negotiations to ensure progress could continue at pace. This approach was taken to maintain momentum and ensure the site could still play a key role in our wider regeneration ambitions for Chatham.

Following the NHS’s withdrawal, the Council was now moving forward with plans for a mixed-use scheme, potentially incorporating both commercial and residential development. We are currently assessing the most effective delivery route to maximise the site’s economic, social, and placemaking benefits.

In terms of financial commitments, the Council secured £730,000 of One Public Estate (OPE) funding to undertake enabling works that support future residential development on the site; these works are now close to completion. In addition, £39,000 of capital funding has been spent on professional fees, including project management and design work required to oversee the enabling phase. These enabling works were necessary regardless of which development option was pursued and were not specific to the Hospital Trust’s proposal.

The Council’s involvement in the earlier NHS proposal was based on the information available at the time. The subsequent change in NHS funding availability was outside the Council’s control. Our focus now is on ensuring the site is brought forward in a way that delivers long-term value for Medway’s residents and supports the continued regeneration of Chatham town centre.

**Question N – Councillor Finch had submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder of Housing and Homelessness, Councillor Louwella Prenter:**

“Following the update from the Portfolio Holder at the last Cabinet meeting, could the Council provide a detailed breakdown of how the additional £533,000 received from central government to support homelessness and rough sleeping has been allocated?”

In the questioner’s absence, Councillor Louwella Prenter advised that a written response would be sent, however she took the opportunity to thank Councillor Finch for highlighting the additional funds received from the Labour government.

Response:

The funding received for homelessness is split into £425,534 for homelessness and rough sleeping and £107,964 for improving the experience of living in temporary accommodation for children. This has covered the last two quarters of the current financial year, and several projects will continue into 2026/27.

In terms of the breakdown of the use of rough sleeping and homelessness funding, this breaks down as follows:

- £262,834 on emergency off the street accommodation, including the winter night shelter, assessment centre and B&B for people who have been barred from the shelter;
- £80,700 for longer term supported housing, including specialist drug and alcohol treatment accommodation; £18,000 on additional staffing hours and on call; £39,000 for additional day engagement, including breakfast clubs and day centre hours to increase engagement with services; £25,000 earmarked for the development of a one stop shop once suitable venue sourced. (Combined total £425,534)
- Over £100,000 of the above total has been allocated to local Charity and Voluntary and Community organisations.

The funding for children in temporary accommodation is allocated to:

- £50,964 moving and furnishing new properties;
- £20,000 improving communal spaces;
- £20,000 travel and transport with focus on school attendance.
- £7,000 education and welfare; £10,000 physical activity, sports and leisure. (combined total £107,964).

**Question O – Councillor Lawrence, had submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, Councillor Curry:**

“At the Cabinet meeting on the 13th of January 2026, the Cabinet took the decision to award the FM Contract to 10 separate businesses. This change involves transferring 51 staff from Medway Norse to Medway Council. At the aforementioned Cabinet Meeting the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Teresa Murray, stated that Medway Norse Staff had been consulted on the changes and she further stated

that Medway Norse had failed to provide regular updates on performance across the various contracts managed by Medway Norse. This is clearly untrue.

Can the Portfolio Holder please advise the difference in costs, salary, pension annual leave entitlements to Medway Council taxpayers for the 51 staff being transferred from Medway Norse on the assumption that these staff will be given Medway Council Staff Contracts of Employment? In giving his answer will he please advise when the consultation with Medway Norse staff began.”

Response:

The 51 staff transferring from Medway Norse - this is now 47 from the last updated list from Medway Norse - will do so under TUPE regulations. This means that their existing terms and conditions will remain the same when they move across to Medway Council.

Salaries, annual leave entitlements and other contractual terms will transfer as they are, so there will be no additional salary costs arising from the transfer. However, should any staff member be on alternative pension arrangements, they can automatically transfer into Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), should they wish to do so, and this may result in additional employer contributions. We cannot provide an estimate at this time, as we are still working through this process. Furthermore, this detail will require input from our Medway Norse colleagues, therefore we will provide this information as soon as practical.