

Record of Cabinet decisions

Tuesday, 22 September 2026

7.00pm to 8.54pm

Date of publication: 24 September 2026

Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 2 October 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 Zoë Van Dyke	Portfolio Holder for Business Management

In Attendance: Richard Hicks, Chief Executive
Stephanie Davis, Democratic Services Officer
Lee-Anne Farach, Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive
Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance
Gillian James, Assistant Director, Culture and Community
Phil Watts, Chief Operating Officer

Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Price.

Record of decisions

The record of the meeting held on 25 August 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

Councillor Mahil declared an interest in agenda item No.5 (Articles on the Highway Policy) as he was a holder of a Pavement Licence holder relating to a property that would be affected by the Policy. Councillor Mahil left the room during discussion and voting on this item.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

Questions to the Cabinet

4 public questions and 6 Members' questions had been received. Questions were taken in the order set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Responses

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

(Having declared an interest, Councillor Mahil left the meeting during consideration of the next item.)

Articles on the Highway Policy

Background:

The report presented the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Articles on the Highway Policy and sought Cabinet approval to adopt and implement the final policy. The policy replaced the previously agreed but unimplemented 2016 policy and provided a modern, legally robust framework for managing A-boards, shopfront displays, minor articles and temporary obstructions on the public highway.

The Medway wide policy formed part of wider actions being taken to improve the public realm in Medway.

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

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<i>Decision number:</i>	<i>Decision:</i>
132/2026	The Cabinet approved the final Articles on the Highway Policy, set out at Appendix 3 to the report, for implementation and noted that future fee levels would be updated annually through the Council's Fees and Charges process.
133/2026	The Cabinet agreed the 2016 Placing Objects on the Highway Policy was formally superseded.
134/2026	The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Head of Highways, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, to finalise the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Regulatory Services.
135/2026	The Cabinet agreed that the Policy be published and communicated to traders, residents and stakeholders, with implementation commencing from 1 April 2027.

Reasons:

To implement a modern, enforceable and legally aligned policy that protects pedestrian safety and accessibility.

To ensure compliance with statutory duties under section 130 of the Highways Act 1980 to prevent unlawful obstruction of the highway.

To provide clarity for traders and residents and support consistent enforcement across Medway.

To mitigate corporate risk by ensuring the policy is legally defensible following full public consultation.

(Councillor Mahil returned to the meeting before consideration of the next item.)

Continuation of the Grow in Kent Visitor Economy and Inward Investment Service

Background:

The report sought approval for the Council to continue its contribution to the jointly delivered, with Kent County Council, Grow in Kent service, incorporating the Visit Kent and Invest Kent functions. The service supported visitor economy growth, inward investment, business engagement and placed promotion across Kent and Medway.

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It was noted that the continuation of the current model beyond March 2027 would maintain momentum, support economic growth, protect stakeholder relationships and ensure continuity pending local government reorganisation and devolution arrangements. Performance would be managed through an agreed annual Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework and governance arrangements between Medway Council and Grow in Kent.

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

<i>Decision number:</i>	<i>Decision:</i>
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136/2026	The Cabinet approved the continuation of Medway Council participation in the Grow in Kent service.
137/2026	The Cabinet approved the continuation of Medway Council financial contributions under existing arrangements.
138/2026	The Cabinet authorised the Director of Place to implement the decision and oversee ongoing partnership arrangements.
139/2026	The Cabinet approved the Key Performance Indicator framework, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and the associated performance monitoring arrangements.

Reason:

The service supports economic growth, attracts investment, promotes Medway as a destination and provides continuity during a period of local government transition.

Medium Term Financial Outlook 2026-2031

Background:

The report set out initial projections of the Council's income and cost of services for 2027/28 across the medium term. The Council continued to face severe and unprecedented financial challenges driven primarily by demand-led pressures in Adult Social Care, Children's Services and financing costs. Current projections indicated a budget gap of £65.858 million in 2027/28 rising to £359.314 million across the medium term. Without significant savings, service transformation and further government support, the Council would be unable to deliver a sustainable balanced budget over the planning period.

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The Council had been transparent with residents on the issues with finances by ensuring access to all reports and information on its budgetary position and engagement with CIPFA and MHCLG.

Medway continued to experience exceptional challenges with Adult Social Care costs and whilst the financial costs were not limited to this area of service, this remained the biggest financial challenge. The leadership teams continued to explore different measures to do things differently and reduce spend whilst maintaining the quality of services provided to residents.

It was noted that measures were being taken to balance statutory and non-statutory responsibilities, as well as managing demand which continued to rise. Letters had been sent lobbying central government for fair funding for Adult Social Care which had been historically structurally underfunded.

Decision number:

The Cabinet noted the projected budget requirement, the Council's resource assumptions, and the resultant projected budget shortfall for 2027/28 of £65.858 million and a cumulative £359.314 million shortfall over the medium term.

140/2026 The Cabinet instructed the directorate management teams to continue to work with Portfolio Holders to identify savings and income generation proposals to balance the 2027/28 budget.

Reason:

The Medium Term Financial Outlook provides the framework that underpins the budget setting process for 2027/28 and beyond.

Private Sector Licensing (Additional & Selective Licensing Schemes)

Background:

The report sought approval to formally commence the proposed Additional Licensing Scheme in the following wards (Chatham Central & Brompton, Fort Pitt, Gillingham North, Gillingham South, Luton and Watling) and Selective Licensing Scheme in the recommended wards (Chatham Central & Brompton, Fort Pitt, Gillingham North, Gillingham South, Luton, Strood North & Frindsbury and Watling). This was following the statutory consultation process as outlined in Section 56 (3) (a) for additional licensing and Section 80 (9) of the Housing Act 2004.

The Cabinet had originally considered a report on 4 August 2026 where a number of decisions had been made in relation to additional and selective licensing schemes (decision nos. 104-106/2026). The Cabinet's decisions had been contingent on the

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requirement to publish a notice within the designated areas within seven days of the designation being confirmed (Section 83 of the Housing Act 2004 refers).

Unfortunately, this requirement had not been fully complied with, meaning the Cabinet's decisions made on 4 August 2026 were no longer effective, which was why the report had been resubmitted.

Since the publication of the main report an addendum report had been submitted within Supplementary Agenda No.1, which made a number of corrections to the main report and recommendations.

The expected commencement period on the previous report had been November 2026, it would now be 4 January 2027 following Cabinet approval, (Section 82 (4) required that the date of the selective licensing scheme must be no earlier than three months after the date on which the designation is confirmed).

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

<i>Decision number:</i>	<i>Decision:</i>
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The Cabinet noted the outcome of the consultation process detailed in the Consultation Report (June 2026), which provided evidence of the representations received from stakeholders, landlords, letting agents/management and residents, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

The Cabinet noted the Council's responses to comments and representations received during the public consultation, as set out in Appendix B to the report.

141/2026	Under s.80 Housing Act 2004, (which allows local housing authorities in England to designate areas for selective licensing to improve social or economic conditions) the Cabinet agreed to the designation of a Selective Licensing Scheme in the nominated wards (Chatham Central & Brompton, Fort Pitt, Gillingham North, Gillingham South, Luton, Strood North & Frindsbury and Watling).
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142/2026	Under s.56 Housing Act 2004 (which allows local housing authorities to designate areas for additional licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)) the Cabinet agreed to the designation of an Additional Licensing Scheme in the nominated wards (Chatham Central & Brompton, Fort Pitt, Gillingham North, Gillingham South, Luton and Watling).
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143/2026	The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director
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for Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness, to make changes to the proposed administration, implementation and enforcement of the schemes where necessary and to ensure that all statutory notifications were carried out in the prescribed manner for the designations and to take all necessary steps to provide for the operational delivery of the licensing schemes.

144/2026 The Cabinet agreed that decisions 141, 142 and 143 were considered urgent and therefore should not be subject to call in.

Reason:

To ensure that Cabinet has considered all options and consultation findings before deciding on whether or not to proceed with (a) new five-year discretionary Licensing Scheme/s.

Procurement Strategy 2025-2030 Update Report

Background:

The report summarised the performance of the first year of the 2025-2030 Procurement Strategy. The report set out that the Strategy had been approved by Cabinet in September 2025. A good level of progress had been made against the actions set and Appendix A to the report details that, as well as what else could be done.

The report was previously considered by the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 August 2026 and the minutes of this meeting were set out in section 7 of the report.

Decision **Decision:**
number:

The Cabinet noted the comments of the Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in section 7 of the report.

145/2026 The Cabinet noted the progress made to date and approved the continuation of the Procurement Strategy actions, as detailed in Appendix A to the report.

Reason:

The Procurement Strategy aligns to both internal ambitions and the national procurement statement. Continuation of the Strategy actions allows the organisation to measure and track progress in key areas of procurement.

Public Space Protection Order Renewal - Nuisance Vehicles

Background:

The report covered the outcomes of the public consultations carried out seeking views on the introduction of a Medway wide PSPO to address anti-social behaviour (ASB) from vehicles. Public Spaces Protection Orders ('PSPOs') had been introduced by section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (this section had come into force on 20 October 2014). PSPOs were an order created in relation to areas within the local authority's jurisdiction, where activities took place that were, or were likely to be, detrimental to the local community's quality of life. PSPOs imposed conditions or restrictions on people within that area. A Breach of a PSPO was an offence punishable by a fixed penalty notice and/or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

The report had been previously considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 August 2026, the minutes of which were set out at section 9 of the report.

Since publication of the report the Council's monitoring officer had advised that this was an executive function and did not need to be referred to Council for a decision.

Decision number: ***Decision:***

The Cabinet noted the comments of and the recommendation to Cabinet, from the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in section 9 of the report.

146/2026

The Cabinet approved the renewal of the Medway wide Public Space Protection Order to tackle nuisance vehicles and any variations, in accordance with s59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

The Cabinet noted that the renewal of the Public Space Protection Order should help to continue to significantly reduce incidents of vehicle related anti-social behaviour across Medway over the long-term and improve the quality of life for residents, visitors and local businesses.

Reason:

The extension of the PSPOs should help to significantly reduce incidents of relevant anti-social behavior (ASB) in the areas over the long-term and improve the quality of life for residents, visitors and local businesses.

Temporary Accommodation Placement and Suitability Policy

Background:

The report sought agreement to adopt a new Temporary Accommodation Placement and Suitability Policy. The policy itself would provide transparency and structure to the way that the Council provided temporary accommodation with a view to ensuring compliance and minimising legal challenge.

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

<i>Decision number:</i>	<i>Decision:</i>
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147/2026	The Cabinet agreed to adopt the Temporary Accommodation Placement and Suitability Policy, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report.
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Reasons:

The policy provides clarity and transparency in the way that the Council provides temporary accommodation.

Having and following a transparent policy will mitigate the risk of legal challenge.

Gateway 1: Procurement of Housing Related Support Services

Background:

The report sought permission to commence the re-procurement of the Housing Related Support Services contract.

Exempt Appendix 1 set out the breakdown of the financial analysis in respect of the procurement project.

<i>Decision number:</i>	<i>Decision:</i>
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148/2026	The Cabinet agreed to pursue the procurement of Housing Related Support Services (Supported Housing, typically for vulnerable cohorts within Medway's population who may not be deemed in priority housing need), as per the preferred option 4 identified in paragraph 7.2.5 of the
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report.

Reasons:

The recommendation is made on the basis that the previous Housing Related Support Services were commissioned in 2021 and ran from April 2022. The contract extension comes to conclusion on 31 March 2027, and to ensure that Medway is able to provide commissioned supported housing for vulnerable residents, a procurement exercise is required to commence in autumn 2026.

Medway has a range of supported housing which ranges from services which provide a statutory duty (housing related support for people fleeing domestic abuse, as per the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, to those who may not meet thresholds for homelessness or adult social care provision at point of entry into services but are deemed to be vulnerable and at risk of meeting thresholds if action is not taken to prevent escalation of need.

Should the contract end without further procurement activity, this would cause significant burden on Housing Services to provide alternative accommodation for those currently residing in supported accommodation. Loss of this service creates an ongoing additional barrier for single people moving out of temporary accommodation.

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Leader of the Council

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Date

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