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**Reference**

**81**

**Organisation**

**PHE Work shop**

**On Behalf Of**

**Type of Consultee**

**Government/Public Body**

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## **Medway Local Plan Consultation, PHE South East response, February 2016**

### **Issues**

- We would want to see the plan demonstrably link evidence of need in the JSNA and Health & Wellbeing Strategy to plans for development and adaptations to the built environment, services and facilities.

### **Housing**

- It would be helpful to see evidence of data linking seasonal excess deaths in older people and respiratory conditions in infants and young children with plans to improve the quality of private and social housing stock – particularly addressing issues of damp and affordability.

### **Economy**

- With regards to future proofing the Medway Local Plan, we would encourage consideration of the potential for local economic partnerships to build public health outcomes routinely into plans to foster economic growth.

### **Tourism**

- We would welcome any actions which support opportunities for visitors and residents to be more physically active and to spend more time in the natural and built environment, in light of the evidence for benefits to physical and mental health this can bring.

### **Retail, commercial leisure & town centres**

- We would encourage consideration of equitable access to commercial physical environments that facilitate walking, cycling and mobility.
- Consideration needs to be given to the impact of street furniture in such settings to enable older people and families with young children to safely navigate through the commercial space.
- Consideration should also be given to regular opportunities for older people, young families and people with disabilities to be able to sit safely in public spaces.
- Ensuring that there are regular opportunities for people to access clean, safe toilets, which is an important factor that can limit accessibility particularly for older people.
- We would applaud any additional opportunities to extend leisure facilities which encourage affordable active lifestyles, such as children's play areas and skate parks. This should be considered alongside opportunities through the built environment to increase walking and cycling.

### **Environment**

- It is positive to see Medway's recognition of the need to protect and enhance the natural environment in light of the benefits it can provide in the form of providing open space to relax, exercise and learn. We would support the suggestion in s11.10 to consider opportunities to promote greater access to the river and would

encourage consideration of how to maximise opportunities for promoting active travel whether through walking or cycling and greater use more generally of open spaces by the whole population.

### **Build environment**

- With regards the characteristics that make a place good to live, in addition to the promotion of active travel through enabling greater levels of walking and cycling and the additional points raised under 'Retail, commercial leisure & town centres' section above, we would note the importance of designing space that promotes social interaction, considers walkability, promotes active travel, ensures adequate street lighting to improve safety and the perceptions of safety and takes in to account the value of green space and natural light in fostering mental wellbeing.
- New buildings should ensure public health considerations are born in mind such as through designs that promote the use of stairs rather than lifts through lay out and signage.

### **Rural issues**

- A key issue is ensuring families and individuals are connected with communities, facilities and services. Therefore consideration should be given to supporting access to regular and affordable public transportation, integrated with opportunities for active travel elements where feasible.

### **Infrastructure and services**

- We commend the inclusion as a key objective for the plan the promotion of a healthier Medway and opportunities to support healthier lifestyle choices through access to nutritious food, walking, cycling and exercise as engagement in community life.
- Similarly we commend the intentions to provide secondary care services in community and home settings and promote availability of telecare services. Consideration should be given to ensuring equitable access for the whole eligible community.

### **Social and community infrastructure**

- We would emphasise the importance of the insights and recommendations within this section, particularly regarding the need to ensure plans take in to account changing demographics and the implications of this to community needs.

### **Open space**

- It is positive to see Medway's recognition of the importance of open space as a community resources and the benefits that this can deliver and we would encourage full consideration of opportunities to maximise opportunities for this through the plan, for the benefit of local people's physical and mental health.

- Given the strong evidence of growing rates of childhood and adult overweight and obesity, we could strongly encourage Medway to secure existing facilities which support physical activity and to seek opportunities to address shortfalls.

### **Air Quality**

- The plan should consider traffic management in the AQMA to reduce NO<sub>x</sub>, such as reduced speed areas, emission control for commercial vehicles, location of charging points for electric vehicles and/or other similar controls.

### **Waste**

- We would support initiatives to increase the recycling rates both for household and commercial streams.
- We would encourage plans to manage the waste processing as close to its source as possible, and to explore all options of waste treatment as well as relocation of existing waste transfer stations

### **Sustainability and climate change/Flood risk**

- We would encourage the plan to consider the effects of localised flooding, particularly surface water flooding.

### **Transport**

- We would support plans to enable regular and safe walking and cycling for local people through development and adaption of pathways, cycle routes, signage and traffic management that supports safer cycling throughout Medway.
- We would also encourage plans which aim to reduce community severance through traffic calming, and redesign of road systems in and around neighbourhoods.