



Direct Dial/Ext: 03000 417 387
e-mail: james.clapson@kent.gov.uk
Ask for: James Clapson
Date: 13/5/24

Dear Member

CHILDREN'S, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 16 MAY 2024

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Thursday, 16 May 2024 meeting of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee, the following report(s) that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda Item No

8a **24/00026 - The Locality Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion (Pages 1 - 18)**

This report is to replace the report in the published agenda pack as it contained an error.

15 **24/00045 - KCC CLS Accountability Agreement (Pages 19 - 42)**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Watts', is written over a faint circular stamp.

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel

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From: Rory Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education
Christine McInnes, Director of Education and SEN

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee
16 May 2024

Subject: 24/00026 – Adoption of the Locality Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion

Key decision:

- It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions AND
- It involves expenditure or savings of £1m or more

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: **CYPE DMT 27 March 2024**

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: **All electoral divisions**

Summary: The aim of this report is to set out:

1. Context
2. How the Locality Model will support children and young people with SEN
3. Consultation analysis
4. KCC's response to consultation findings, including planned activity
5. Next steps

Recommendation(s):

CYPE Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision to adopt the Locality Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion in Kent

Editor's Note: This report is one in a suite of four reports to CYPE Cabinet 16 May 2024 and should be read in conjunction with these documents.

- Kent SEND transformation projects
- The Locality Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion (this report)
- Proposals for the Review of Special Schools
- Specialist Resource Provision Review

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In May 2023, at Kent County Council's (KCC) Children Young People and Education (CYPE) Cabinet Committee, the **Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE)**¹ was set out as KCC's strategy for 2023-28.

¹ Link at 10.1

CATIE's Priority Two is to "Provide additional intervention and support with engagement and integration", which aims to develop community working and implement structures that support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Kent.

- 1.2 Due to local pressures, and responding to the developing national position, KCC has been working hard on improving the standards achieved and progress made of children and young people with SEND in Kent. As part of this work a **public consultation on the proposal of a Locality Model for Special Educational Needs (SEN) Inclusion in Kent**² was undertaken between 29 November 2023 and 24 January 2024. The consultation related to proposals on provision for children and young people of statutory school age (aged 5-16-year-olds) in mainstream primary and secondary schools, and for children attending sixth form in state funded schools, a Locality Model for inclusion.
- 1.3 The aim of this report is therefore to set out:
- The context
 - How the Locality Model will support children and young people with SEN
 - Consultation analysis
 - KCC's response to consultation findings, including planned activity
 - Next steps

2. Report detail

Context

- 2.1 As defined in the report '**Kent SEND transformation projects**' The Locality Model has been developed to respond to the CATIE Strategy, and other stressors within the current system. In delivering structures that will facilitate local schools and relevant professionals working together, the Locality Model will increase local knowledge, improve decision-making through greater collaborations, and improve the timely identification of resources required to support children and young people with SEN.
- 2.2 Research by the **Department for Education (DfE)**³ shows that more consistent and effective support in mainstream schools leads to positive outcomes for children and young people and helps parents to have greater confidence in the mainstream offer for their child. The Locality Model requires KCC, schools, the NHS, and other SEN service providers to work together more effectively, in geographically based Clusters, to secure such improvements. The Locality Model aims to enable SEN support, and services, to be accessed more easily and delivered in a new, more sustainable way. KCC believes this will help pupils to thrive at school, be valued, visible, and supported to feel that they are included in their local communities, and are better prepared for a happy, healthy, and productive adulthood.
- 2.3 Kent schools currently operate individually; making decisions involving pupils with SEN without much opportunity to make these collaboratively, to moderate the thresholds used, or to make decisions across groups of schools. The current system for allocating High Needs Funding (HNF) encourages this approach and does nothing to support those schools that would prefer to take a

² Link at 10.2

³ Link at 10.3

more collaborative or strategic approach to supporting the needs of children with a similar profile of needs through, for example, commissioning support across a group of schools. This has led to the inconsistencies found in mainstream SEN inclusion and provision, as identified in the area inspection (2019) and re-visit (2022). Some pupils in Kent are potentially placed in specialist provision who would be educated successfully in mainstream settings in other local authorities, or in other mainstream schools within the county.

- 2.4 The Locality Model directly aligns with KCC's strategic vision for children, young people, and families, as set out in '**Framing Kent's Future**'⁴ (Priority 1: Levelling up Kent). This explains that: 'We will maintain improvement support services for all Kent schools, including maintained schools and academies, to maintain Kent's high-quality education system'. The Locality Model will implement structures that are designed to increase the inclusion of children and young people with SEN in mainstream schools, so they can be educated with, and are able to access the same opportunities to education as their peers wherever possible. The aim is for children and young people with SEN in Kent to receive early and timely support. Greater numbers of children and young people are able to have their needs met within mainstream settings, or should they need specialist provision, that wherever possible, they can access this locally, close to where they live.
- 2.5 Under the Locality Model structure, available resources will be discussed by groups of schools and other SEN, education, and healthcare professionals in the local area, to determine where resource and High Needs Funding (HNF) allocations would be best directed. The final decision to allocate HNF will remain with KCC, but by discussions occurring locally, KCC aim to make better use of resources. This activity is expected to support KCC its Safety Valve aims to achieve financial sustainability in the longer term. This would align with priorities set out in '**Securing Kent's Future**'⁵, the next step on from Framing Kent's Future, agreed at Cabinet in October 2023.
- 2.6 The process for developing the Locality Model was iterative, and alternative options were considered within the development process; to ensure the direction is right for Kent. The professionals involved in developing and defining our options consisted of KCC staff from education, finance, and SEN, alongside leaders of education from KCC mainstream primary and secondary schools (selective and non-selective), single and multi-Academy Trusts, special schools, and free schools. The following meetings and forums were used as part of the development process: headteacher briefings and workshops, school funding forum, High Needs sub-group meetings, LIFT Executive meetings, CATIE Steering group meetings, Specialist Teaching and Learning Service workshops, Kent Parents and Carers Together (PACT) meetings.
- 2.7 Three main options were considered:
- to maintain the current system
 - to implement a Tariff system⁶
 - to implement a Locality Model

⁴ Link at 10.4

⁵ Link at 10.5

⁶ Tariff system: a set of rules and funding levels

- 2.8 Option one was discounted as an impracticable solution; it is not currently performing well in Kent, there is current inconsistency in mainstream SEN inclusion and provision, along with a lack of effective monitoring systems and accountability. Ofsted have stated, poor standards are achieved, and progress made, by too many pupils with SEN under the current system.
- 2.9 Option two could have been viable but was discounted due to its identified limitations. A tariff system for mainstream would provide clear and transparent arrangements with a prescriptive allocation of resources but tends to be used in conjunction with individual funding allocations for children with EHCPs, rather than for wider operations and funding of SEN Support Services. The elements of inflexibility it would bring were also considered too restrictive for SEN support services, and unsupportive of innovative use of resources for mainstream if used on its own.
- 2.10 Option three was viewed as the best path for KCC to explore and define and develop further with partners. Research finds that more consistent and effective support in mainstream schools leads to positive outcomes for children and young people. Local authorities who make substantial use of peer moderation and mainstream collaboration have found that doing so improves consistency and is a useful source of advice and support. The Locality Model is designed to improve the quality of the mainstream education offer in Kent, through early and accurate identification of need, high quality teaching of a knowledge-rich curriculum, and timely access to specialist health and care support, as well as alternative provision placements where they are needed.
- 2.11 Proposals for the Locality Model were agreed following intensive collaboration with schools, settings, and other key stakeholders, and then put out to consultation with parent/carers, young people, all professional stakeholders, and all members of the public.
- 2.12 Following consultation, subsequent analysis of feedback, and defining KCC's response to consultation feedback (section 2.25 to 2.28), the Locality Model is now presented to Cabinet as the means through which KCC will implement improved SEN inclusion in mainstream education.

How the Locality Model will support inclusion

- 2.13 The Locality Model creates structures for SEN support and services to be accessed and delivered in a new way, making better use of local education, health and SEN expertise. The Locality Model requires KCC, schools, the NHS, and other SEN service providers to work together more effectively, in geographically based Clusters, to secure improvements. KCC believes this will help all pupils to thrive at school, be valued, visible, and supported to feel that they are included in their local communities, and are better prepared for a happy, healthy, and productive adulthood.
- 2.14 Research by the DfE has found local authorities that make substantial use of peer moderation and mainstream collaboration show improved consistency in decision-making and find it a useful source of advice and support. KCC's current process, with its dependence on individual decisions regarding resources, means there are few opportunities for peer support and challenge, and therefore missed opportunities for wider improvement in mainstream

support provision. The Locality Model sets in place the structures (Clusters, meetings, guidance and support) that allow for peer moderation to happen on a consistent basis.

- 2.15 Adopting concepts of 'predictable' and 'exceptional' needs, which would sit in a continuum of support in Kent, will provide a framework for consistent decisions to be made, making these decisions for children and young people more reliable and transparent. The consultation response clearly showed the importance of an agreed language within the continuum and communicating consistently in a clear and understandable way to all relevant parties, this is addressed in KCC's response to the consultation feedback. The introduction of a Kent SEN continuum, linking with the Special School Review and working collaboratively across these two projects will create a solid foundation for SEN support in Kent. 'Predictable' and 'Exceptional' needs are being defined, with agreed terminology, in collaboration with mainstream, special schools and specialist resource provisions via a series of engagement events. Questionnaires were sent to all mainstream and Specialist Resource Provisions (SRP) and the data collected in the special schools' review have all been collectively analysed to create a continuum for SEN that reflects Kent needs.
- 2.16 By having a virtual 'Team around the Cluster' the Locality Model will provide the professional support and resources needed, to ensure a greater proportion of children and young people with SEN can access a high-quality, inclusive education, within a mainstream setting in their geographical area (where this is appropriate to their needs).
- 2.17 Headteachers, with the support of other members of the Cluster, would be responsible for collaboratively driving local SEN mainstream improvement. They would do this through implementing a school-to-school improvement process, and by influencing the way in which their Cluster's available collective resource and other resources for 'predictable' needs would be used.
- 2.18 The Locality Model will support KCC to use the HNF more effectively, in close collaboration with local schools and other SEN professionals. To do this KCC will make an amount of shared resource available to each Cluster (from the HNF Block), to meet 'predictable' needs of SEN support services. Financial modelling would be used to stabilise current spending. This shared resource, rather than much smaller amounts of money attached to individuals, will allow schools to explore many options, which can be used more creatively and would bring the advantage of economies of scale to purchasing support provision. KCC would remain responsible and accountable for administration of these shared resources. A Tariff system will be developed for 'exceptional' needs, informed by the continuum for SEN, ensuring money from the HNF Block can be allocated responsively and sustainably via evidence-based decision-making.
- 2.19 By implementing the Locality Model, with peer moderation at its core, there will naturally be greater transparency about the levels of funding involved, and the levels of investment schools should be making themselves (through their delegated/notional budgets), to develop expertise and capacity to support children and young people with SEN in mainstream schools. The Locality Model will help to strengthen these expectations and ensure that the mainstream offer

is more consistent in Kent. A stronger emphasis and greater transparency on schools' use of their notional SEN budgets will support schools to recognise needs that should be met from their delegated budget.

2.20 Clusters will include both primary and secondary schools to ensure they have a clear role in supporting transition arrangements for pupils. This will be achieved through a greater focus on SEN cross-phase collaborative planning within and between Clusters. Schools will have greater knowledge of levels of need and interventions that have been effective at earlier education stages, with the aim of ensuring all children who can be educated in a mainstream setting are enabled and supported to do so.

Consultation analysis

2.21 A summary of engagement with the consultation webpage and material during the consultation period can be seen below:

- 13,993 visits to the consultation webpage by 11,963 visitors
- Organic posts had a total of 644 clicks through to the consultation webpage and had a reach/impression of 66,202
- Paid Facebook posts had a reach of 58,299, 1,997 clicks on the link to the consultation webpage, 200,051 impressions and 132 shares

2.22 The public consultation received 832 responses, considered a good response rate for a consultation of this kind, and showing how important the subject is for parents, education professionals and others in Kent. Analysis of respondents showed the following broad split:

Parents [of children still in education]	440 (52%)
Education professionals	340 (40%)
Neither	66 (8%)

2.23 The consultation questionnaire invited respondents' views on the proposals. It contained both closed questions (based on a five-point Likert scale) and open questions. The full evaluation can be found in the **Consultation Analysis Report**⁷. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that the proposed Locality Model would drive improvements to mainstream education and inclusion in the county, 59% believed they would not. The 2 highest quoted reasons for this were that mainstream education is not suitable for all students with SEN and that not enough information was given in the consultation documents for people to form an informed view on the proposals.

2.24 The feedback from the consultation highlighted the key areas we need to focus on to ensure we design a system that works for children and young people with SEN and their families. KCC's response to the consultation feedback has been documented and is included with the Consultation Analysis Report, setting out how KCC will address issues raised. The Locality Model is presented to Cabinet with the Special Schools Review and the Specialist Resource Provision as part of a joined-up approach to embed system-wide change.

⁷ Link at 10.6

KCC's response to consultation

2.25 There are four main approaches to be taken to the majority of issues raised, these are:

1. Where concerns or comments have been based on misconceptions or misunderstanding, these can be directly addressed and responded to, or where there are already plans in place to address these concerns.
2. Where we have taken on board feedback and need to accelerate planned work to provide further information to consultees.
3. Where we have taken on board the comments relating to utilisation of existing local structures and concerns around the shape and capacity of teams that would work around proposed Clusters. We also intend to use the introduction of the "This is Me" project that has been running successfully across five primary schools in Tunbridge Wells, into Maidstone, working with schools and the NHS, utilising a Cluster-based approach. KCC is also partnering with NASEN to develop the cluster operational model with a key focus on maintaining strong current practice. The learning from both these approaches will inform the detailed operating model.
4. We will consult with schools on the detailed operating model and supporting guidance.

2.26 The highest quoted concern of the consultation was that 'mainstream education, based on inclusion, is not suitable for all students with SEN (with concerns raised about any increase in its use)'. KCC response:

This is recognised by KCC. The development of thresholds will provide guidance on the levels of support and type of provision a child is most likely to require. Without transparent thresholds, there is likely to be inequity in provision and decision-making. The majority of local authorities have clear published thresholds. We have accelerated the work on the definitions and thresholds in order to provide more detail to schools, education professionals and parents and expect to have these ready in order to consult further over the summer period.

2.27 There was a strong feeling, and the second highest element of feedback received, that 'not enough information has been given for [me] to be able to form a view on the proposals (more thinking is required)'. KCC response:

This consultation was intended to be about the principle of a Locality Model only. The next stage is to work in partnership to design and test the detail. This will be through:

The delivery of the "This is Me" project, working with schools and health partners across Maidstone, using the suggested Cluster groupings to also explore utilising structures already in place at a local level (also raised in the consultation responses). KCC is also partnering with NASEN to develop the cluster operational model with a key focus on maintaining strong current practice. The focus will be on addressing parental anxiety around their child's SEN and will be supported on the ground by Primary Care Navigators. The intention is to commence this project by early summer 2024. This project will enable the testing of what could be the terms of reference for Clusters, and

the infrastructure required to enable Cluster working (including Team Around the Cluster).

Over summer 2024, we also intend to run Area-based workshops with schools and key partners to develop the continuum of provision which will form the basis of the Cluster Model.

- 2.28 Another concern raised by the consultation was the use of the terms 'predictable' and 'exceptional' and a lack of a full definition in the consultation documentation. We acknowledge that these actual terms may not be helpful and need re-thinking, but it is crucial that we develop transparent and accessible thresholds across the range of SEN needs to inform decisions around the most appropriate support. Also, so that education providers, those who work with them, and families, are all clear on expectations and the support a child should be receiving related to their needs and ensuring that those children with the most complex needs are able to secure a place in a Kent special school.
- 2.29 KCC are continuing to define these concepts, including agreeing the language used, as they form an essential part of the Locality Model and a Kent SEN continuum. The below graphic sketches out how we envisage the thresholds fitting in with the Locality Model, as well as the Special School and SRP initiatives.
- 2.30 KCC's full response to the feedback provided from the consultation can be found in Appendix Two.

Next Steps

- 2.31 Following full analysis of the consultation feedback and KCC's response, we are confident in the changes made to the proposals that were consulted on, and would like to implement the Locality Model, alongside a Kent SEN continuum, associated Tariff system and financial arrangements. The next steps for KCC are:
- Agree the Kent SEN continuum (to include all types of settings i.e. mainstream, specialist resource provision, alternative provision and special)
 - Set up Clusters (operational guidance to include purpose, governance, roles, and responsibilities with a focus on outcomes)
 - Complete financial modelling for allocation of cluster budgets across the county
 - Agree a tariff system that supports the Kent SEN continuum and financial sustainability
 - Identify and align all support services
 - Consult with schools on Clusters operational guidance
 - Establish and agree moderation procedures
 - Establish and agree information flow/sharing
 - Create and implement a communications plan (including communications with parents/carers)
 - Implement system-wide change for SEN in Kent, aligning with the Special School Review and the Specialist Resource Provision projects.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Kent currently spends approximately £45m per annum on specific high needs allocations to mainstream schools to support individual children with SEN (this excludes funding for children attending Specialist Resources Provisions in mainstream schools which totals over £20m per annum). Approximately 40% of the high needs funding allocations are for SEN support services for individual children and the remainder is for children with an EHCP. In addition, the council commissioned a further £8m of SEN support services in 2023-24. This is funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), a specific ring-fenced education grant from the Department of Education.

3.2 The next stages of the project will define the cluster budgets and the amount of funding to be retained to fund the Tarriff model for children with “exceptional” needs. This tariff funding model is expected to be aligned across the continuum of provision to ensure continuity and correlation of funding and resources available to children educated in either a mainstream or special school.

3.3 Kent’s Safety Valve agreement with the DfE⁸ states:

“The authority agrees to implement the DSG management plan that it has set out. This includes action to:

3.1. Implement a countywide approach to ‘Inclusion Education’, to further build capacity in mainstream schools to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), thus increasing the proportion of children successfully supported in mainstream education and reducing dependence on specialist provision

3.7. Ensure there is sufficient and consistent capacity across the county to support children with severe and complex needs in their local area where possible

3.8. Develop a school/area-led approach to commissioning of SEN support services (Locality Based Resources), to better respond to the needs of children and young people with SEND”

(page 2 and 3 DfE Dedicated Schools Grant ‘Safety Valve’ Agreement: Kent)

3.4 Kent must implement a sustainable approach to HNF to meet the DfE Safety Valve agreement and to ensure financial sustainability in this area moving forwards; the Locality Model will build the robust governance and monitoring processes required to implement the necessary new approach.

4. Legal implications

4.1 Legal advice on the consultation was sought from Legal Services and the comments and suggestions from Bevan Brittan were incorporated into the final consultation documents.

4.2 Local Authorities must follow government guidance on the **Children and Families Act (2014)**⁹, the distribution of their **High Needs Funding Block**¹⁰ and work under the **SEND Code of Practice 2015**¹¹, these guidance documents were used in the development of the Locality Model proposed.

⁸ Link at 10.7

⁹ Link at 10.8

¹⁰ Link at 10.9

¹¹ Link at 10.10

5. Equalities implications

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) that has been updated in February 2024 can be found in Appendix Three

6. Risk and Other Factors

- 6.1 It was a risk that the various initiatives progressing within SEN could have a detrimental impact leading to unnecessary confusion in the system. However, urgency for improvement dictated the need for all initiatives to progress. Work was ongoing to ensure these interdependencies were individually recognised and supported, but now by aligning and presenting the Locality Model, the Special School Review and Specialist Resource Provision projects we can more clearly illustrate the system-wide view of our SEN proposals. By co-ordinating the work that is underway to develop local clusters, thresholds (that will inform expectations of the different types of educational settings in Kent in a continuum of service delivery for the education system, and the types of settings, with a focus on improved outcomes for children and young people with SEN), and special school recommendations, we can cohesively improve education inclusion in Kent.
- 6.2 The Locality Model structure is designed to add greater transparency to the High Needs Block and allow more creative use of current resources, its implementation supports KCC's Safety Valve Agreement with the DfE.
- 6.3 The focus on outcomes for children and young people and the expectation that all schools engage with this model will support our improvement through the APP reporting. In order for the structure to be embedded it is proposed that there is a transition period between April 2024 and September 2025.
- 6.4 Risks will be continually monitored and mitigated throughout the implementation phase and the development of a robust operating model, detailed guidance, templates for decision making and monitoring will all contribute to minimising risk.

7. Governance

- 7.1 Christine McInnes - Director of Education and Special Educational Needs will inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 To address the number of existing needs identified in Kent at this time, we believe the adoption of a Locality Model for mainstream inclusion, alongside implementing a Kent SEN continuum, and the progression of the Special School Review and SRP initiatives, will improve outcomes for children and young people with SEN.
- 8.2 With actions taken forward from the KCC response to the Locality Model public consultation, we believe the necessary steps will be taken to alleviate public and professional concerns on the model as it was initially presented.
- 8.3 The next report in this series of four is the Proposals for the Review of Special Schools.

9. Recommendation(s):

- 9.1 **Cabinet Committee** - The CYPE Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member Education and Skills on the proposed decision to adopt a Locality Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion in Kent.

10. Background Documents

- 10.1 CATIE Strategy 2023-28 - <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/special-education-needs/inclusion/countywide-approach-to-inclusive-education>
- 10.2 Public consultation on Locality Model information - www.kent.gov.uk/localitymodel
- 10.3 High needs budgets: effective management in local authorities. Research report - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1084458/DFE_HN_Budget_case_study_report.pdf
- 10.4 Framing Kent' Future - <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/framing-kents-future>
- 10.5 Securing Kent's Future - <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s121235/Securing%20Kents%20Future%20-%20Budget%20Recovery%20Strategy.pdf>
- 10.6 Public Consultation Analysis Report - www.kent.gov.uk/localitymodel
- 10.7 DfE and Kent Safety Valve Agreement - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1143013/Kent_Safety_Valve_Agreement_2022_2023.pdf
- 10.8 Children and Families Act (2014) - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6>
- 10.9 HNF 2023 to 2024 Operational Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-funding-arrangements-2023-to-2024/high-needs-funding-2023-to-2024-operational-guide>
- 10.10 SEND Code of Practice - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

11. Contact details

Report Author: Siobhan Price,
Assistant Director, School Inclusion
Email: Siobhan.Price2@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director: Christine McInnes,
Director of Education and SEN
Telephone: 03000 418913
Email: Christine.mcinnnes@kent.gov.uk

12. Appendices

Appendix One - The Locality Model Consultation Analysis Report can be found here: <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/locality-model-for-special-educational-needs-inclusion>

Appendix Two - **KCC's response to Locality Model Consultation**

Appendix Two - KCC’s response to Locality Model Consultation

Responses to consultation on proposals to establish a new Locality Model for the provision of Special Educational Needs in Kent.

The consultation period ran from 29th November 2023 to 24th January 2024. 832 responses were received. The most frequently mentioned issues are detailed in the table below with commentary of how KCC intends to take the comments on board and respond to any concerns. There are four main approaches to be taken to the majority of issues raised:

1. Where concerns or comments have been based on misconceptions or misunderstanding, these can be directly addressed and responded to, or where there are already plans in place to address these concerns.
2. Where we have taken on board feedback and need to accelerate planned work to provide further information to consultees.
3. Where we have taken on board the comments relating to utilisation of existing local structures and concerns around the shape and capacity of teams that would work around proposed Clusters. We also intend to use the introduction of the “This is Me” project that has been running successfully across five primary schools in Tunbridge Wells, into Maidstone, working with schools and the NHS, utilising a Cluster-based approach. KCC is also partnering with NASEN to develop the cluster operational model with a key focus on maintaining strong current practice. The learning from both these approaches will inform the detailed operating model.
4. We will consult with schools on the detailed operating model and supporting guidance.

Category of comment/concern	No. of mentions	Response	Action Area 1 to 4
Mainstream education, based on inclusion, is not suitable for all students with SEN (with further concerns raised about any increase in its use).	261	This is recognised. The development of the thresholds will provide guidance on the levels of support and type of provision a child is most likely to require. Without transparent thresholds, there is likely to be inequity in provision and decision- making. The majority of local authorities have clear published thresholds. We have accelerated the work on the definitions and thresholds in order to provide more detail to schools, education professionals and parents and expect to have these ready in order to consult further over the summer period.	2
Not enough information has been given for me to be able to form a view on the proposals. (More thinking is required.)	115	Agree. This consultation was intended to be about the principle of a Locality Model only. The next stage is to work in partnership to design and test the detail. This will be through:	3

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The delivery of the “This is Me” project, working with schools and health partners across Maidstone, using the suggested Cluster groupings to also explore utilising structures already in place at a local level (also raised in the consultation responses). KCC is also partnering with NASEN to develop the cluster operational model with a key focus on maintaining strong current practice. The focus will be on addressing parental anxiety around their child’s SEN and will be supported on the ground by Primary Care Navigators. The intention is to commence this project by early summer 2024. This project will enable the testing of what could be the terms of reference for clusters, and the infrastructure required to enable Cluster working (including Team Around the Cluster). Over summer 2024, we also intend to run Area based workshops with schools and key partners to develop the continuum of provision which will form the basis of the Cluster Model. 	
Various ‘Cluster management-related’ concerns – time to run; impact on workloads; additional bureaucracy; complexity of meetings; impact on key staff (head teachers and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator [SENCOs]) etc.	112	See response in relation to issue above.	3
Concerns about the definitions of ‘predictable’ and ‘exceptional’, including their impact on young people.	100	We acknowledge that these actual terms are not helpful and need re-thinking, but it is crucial that we develop transparent and accessible thresholds across the range of SEND needs to inform decisions around the most appropriate support and also, so that education providers, those who work with them and families are all clear on expectations and the support a child should be receiving related to their needs and ensuring that those children with the most complex needs are able to secure a place in a Kent special school.	2
There should be more local specialist	98	The current Kent Sufficiency Plan	1

school places – either in special schools or in special resource centres.		<p>identified the need for more special schools and bids were made to the DfE as part of the Safety Valve process. We were awarded two special schools, one for Dartford/Swanley (240 places) and one for the coastal Herne Bay/Whitstable (120 places) areas. A new 120 place Special School and a 60 place special school satellite will also be opening on the Isle of Sheppey.</p> <p>The Plan also identified a lack of pathways from primary SRPs to secondary mainstream with SRP provision in 7 of Kent's 12 districts. District workshops will be taking place during late spring and early summer to identify options for delivery. We also have underutilisation of some SRPs and are therefore looking at where designations may need to be changed or expanded to meet areas of need that are more in demand, so that we make best use of the provision that we already have.</p>	
This is really about reducing the cost of SEN provision/saving money from the HNF budget.	87	This is about making best use of the High Needs funding we receive and targeting it so that it has the most impact on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. It is intended to enable localities to respond more appropriately and flexibly to SEND needs within and across their group of schools.	1
Considerable training will be needed for all school staff (and others) if this is to work.	82	Agreed. Considerable training is already being delivered for staff in schools, but a detailed implementation plan to include training specific to operating a cluster model and the implications of that will be developed.	3&4
The funding models (KCC to Clusters, and Clusters to schools) need to be transparent, consistent, and to be fully developed and explained.	80	Agree. Work on the funding model across the continuum of need is underway and the allocations and systems and processes for the utilisation of funding at a cluster level will be developed and training and support provided. The intention is that all should be transparent, from SEN thresholds and expectations of levels of support, to decisions taken and utilisation of funding and the impact it is having.	3&4
Other concerns			
Do not move children currently in		It is not the intention of the Locality Model to move children who are	1

specialist provision into mainstream		currently in special schools into mainstream.	
The lack of sufficient professional support services to deliver a reasonable Team Around The Cluster (TATC) service – respondents pointed out that many therapies etc. were already in short supply in particular localities and/or countywide, and could not see how the proposed Model would improve matters		<p>This is to be tested in the Area workshops and through the <i>This is Me</i> project in Maidstone. It may be that current resources have to be targeted in a different way than currently, but we will only identify this through more detailed work with schools, other professionals working with schools and families and health services, NHS colleagues and services.</p> <p>Utilising funding at a cluster level in a different way over time could enable clusters to purchase in additional resource targeted to the profile of needs of the children in that cluster who require specific support.</p>	3
How existing services operating in the TATC space would fit into the new structure and processes.		<p>This will be tested over the summer as we work with Inclusion Champions and Kent Association of Leaders in Education (KALE) so that schools can access existing services quickly and easily thus avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy.</p> <p>It will also be explored in practice through the delivery of the <i>This is Me</i> project in partnership with the NHS to be run in Maidstone based on the suggested cluster groupings of schools.</p>	3
Whether the other (mainly health-related) services could, and if they could (in theory) would (in practice), engage in the ways that the Model required of them.		<p>This is to be tested over the summer and autumn. A Section F review of therapies is being undertaken currently that will report in 2025. Meanwhile a qualified provider list is being produced to help inform schools and potential clusters that may be prepared to purchase in specific support utilising High Needs funding.</p>	3
More fundamentally whether an education-related SEN system should be based on a health-related PCN structure, and the associated practical difficulties (from an education perspective) – in particular the impact on multi academy trusts [MATs] and disruption to any existing networks – that would arise if it were		<p>A number of concerns regarding where the borders would be that split the Clusters were raised during the consultation .</p> <p>The clusters should not preclude any school or group of schools from continuing with relationships with other schools that have been established over many years for good reasons. It may be that in some instances clusters may wish to work together on a specific issue. This would be for them to decide.</p> <p>MATS will be fully involved in the testing of the model to ensure that schools in a MAT that are in different clusters will not face challenges in engaging fully and</p>	3&4

		accessing support when required. The second phase of consultation on the operating model will include specific discussions with MAT CEOs and their SEND leads.	
The proposed size of the Clusters – for many respondents they would be too large at 8 to 14 schools making them, for various reasons, too difficult to operate and manage.		This will be kept under review, but smaller clusters will be more challenging to support and resource.	3&4
Concerns around how unpredicted “in-year” events might be funded when allocations have already been made to clusters		The Area workshops will also look at the relationship between LA level and Area level resource and support and cluster level resources. It is acknowledged that there may be particular needs or situations that would require consideration for support at an Area level and large-scale unpredictable events that may require an alternative response at an LA level.	2
There is no dispute resolution		We will encompass this in the operating guidance that will be consulted on with schools and MATs.	3&4
Concerns around bureaucracy and pressure on schools /SENDCOs in running of the cluster-based model.		It is acknowledged that support will be required to run the clusters. This will be tested out over the summer.	3&4

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From:

Rory Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 16th May 2024

Subject: 24/00045 KCC CLS Accountability Agreement

Key Decision : Overall service value exceeds £1m and affects more than two Electoral Divisions

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All divisions and Members.
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1>)

Summary: There is a DfE requirement for an Annual Accountability Statement identifying a limited number of key targets for future delivery, as part of the contractual annual Accountability Agreement

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider, endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as set out in the PROD.

1. Introduction

1.1 Accountability Agreements were introduced by the DfE in the 2023 to 2024 academic year and consist of a 2-part document setting the overall expectations of providers (including local authorities delivering more than £1 million of post - 16 provision) in return for funding. The agreement focusses on what colleges, designated institutions and local authorities deliver in the year ahead and how they intend to support local, regional, and national needs. These annual Statements should in all cases be informed by providers' longer term strategic plans and ambitions and (for those institutions within scope) the actions and outcomes from the Local Needs Duty.

1.2 Part 1 of the agreement is the 'accountability framework'. DfE are using it to set out National Skills Priorities as well as the essential terms and conditions that providers need to meet in return for funds. Part 1 identifies required levers to

ensure the effective management and assurance of public funds, the protection of learners as well as requiring sound governance.

- 1.3 Part 2, the 'annual Accountability Statement' is a provider document that is owned by KCC/ CLS as the provider and should set out a small number of outcome targets for areas of curriculum that providers are planning to change for the coming year. These targets reflect contributions to priorities outlined in Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), being led by Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) working with employers, providers and local stakeholders including MCAs, local authorities, and other agencies and to National Skills Priorities listed below. Local authority learning organisations within scope should make reference to their tailored learning provision, particularly where this meets local skills needs.
- 1.4 The content of the annual Accountability Statement is scrutinised and agreed by CLS 'Client Group', consisting of representation from relevant internal departments, prior to being submitted for sign off.
- 1.5 Providers must submit their next annual Accountability Statement to the DfE by 30 June 2024.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The annual accountability statement is required to secure the majority of the revenue funding needed to support the operation of Community Learning & Skills service (CLS, is also supplemented by fee income). This funding is also conditional on meeting additional criteria. CLS aims to be a self-funded service, with direct costs, funded from either the ESFA funding and supplementary fee income. The strategic aims of the ESFA funding is changing and will require the Council to consider changes in services provided which is expected to lead to a short term deficit, where costs will be higher than income received, as the service changes to meet the new requirements.
- 2.2 The ESFA funding contracts covered by the accountability statement are the Adult Skills Fund, comprising Tailored learning and Adult Skills core, Free courses for jobs and the 16-19 Education contract. The annual value (indicative for 24/25) of these contracts is £ 9,520,878 and are broken down as follows:
 - Tailored Learning £6,705,376
 - Adult Skills Core £1,995,762
 - Free Courses for Jobs £90,296
 - 16-19 Education £729,444
- 2.3 The tailored learning funding is a fixed grant which is intended to support the Council in delivering its agreed identified learning aims which are set in line with the ESFA strategic aims of the grant. The amount of funding received for the other funding categories is dependent on either the number of specific qualifications achieved by learners, or the number of learners taking part in specific courses.
- 2.4 In the case that the ESFA does not receive a suitably authorised accountability statement, funding will not be provided to KCC. The accountability statement

constitutes a contractual obligation and as such the ESFA makes clear that failure to comply will result in payments being frozen.

- 2.5 Without this funding the service would either need to be funded by the Council's general fund (i.e. council tax) or the service would need to cease.

3. Legal Implications

- 3.1 KCC does not deliver the CLS services pursuant to specific statutory powers or duties. KCC is required to deliver the CLS services in exchange for funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency ("ESFA").

4. Equalities implications

- 4.1 None identified.

5. Data Protection implications

- 5.1 DPIA was not considered necessary due to the lack of personal / sensitive information.

6 Other corporate implications

- 6.1 The changes to KCC CLS will support priorities for several other functions and departments for the Council.
- 6.2 Adult Social Care & Health –targets support health and wellbeing outcomes
- 6.3 Growth, Environment & Transport – working in partnership with them to achieve their goals.
- 6.4 Public Health – working in partnership with them to achieve their goals.

7 Governance

- 7.1 The Corporate Director, through the Officer Scheme of Delegation, will inherit authority to sign off future Accountability Statements, in consultation with the Cabinet Member of Education and Skills.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The proposed decision will ensure compliance with DfE contractual obligations, and so ensure continued release of funding to KCC CLS.

Recommendation(s):

The Children’s, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider, endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as set out in the PROD.

9. Background Documents

- [DfE external document template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

10. Appendices

Appendix 1. CLS Accountability Statement
Equality Impact Assessment

11. Contact details

Report Author: Jude Farrell	Director: <i>Sarah Hammond</i>
Job title: Interim Head of Service	Job title: Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education
Telephone number: 03000 419533	Telephone number: 03000 411488
Email address: jude.farrell@kent.gov.uk	Email address: sarah.hammond@kent.gov.uk

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND SKILLS

Annual Accountability Statement 2024/25

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Purpose

The purpose of Kent County Council's Community Learning and Skills Service is to provide and secure learning opportunities for Kent's residents which will: engage and build confidence, prepare them for further learning and employment; improve essential skills in areas such as English, ESOL, maths, digital skills; equip parents/carers to support children's learning, and improve health and wellbeing to develop strong, integrated communities.

Strategic Aims

Support the Kent economy

Support the most vulnerable children and families in our county

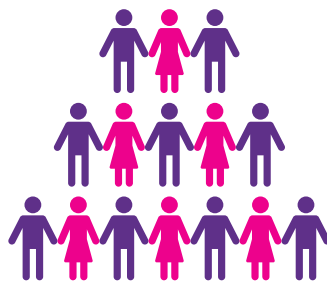
Promote healthy, creative, and active communities

Offer an inclusive curriculum which widens participation

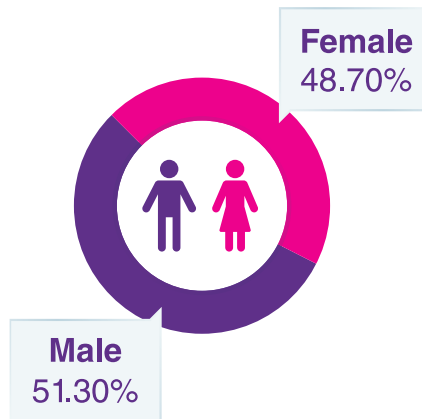
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Kent

Resident Population



1,593,200



Kent is divided into 12 local authority districts, with Medway Unitary Authority located within it.

Kent borders London boroughs, which has implications for workforce travelling to work in London, and is the Gateway to Europe.

Kent has a greater proportion of young people aged 14 years and under and of people aged 50+ years than the England average. But it also has an ageing population with the number of 65+ years old forecast to increase by 40.7% between 2022 and 2040, yet the proportion of population aged under 65 is only forecast to increase by 12.3%.

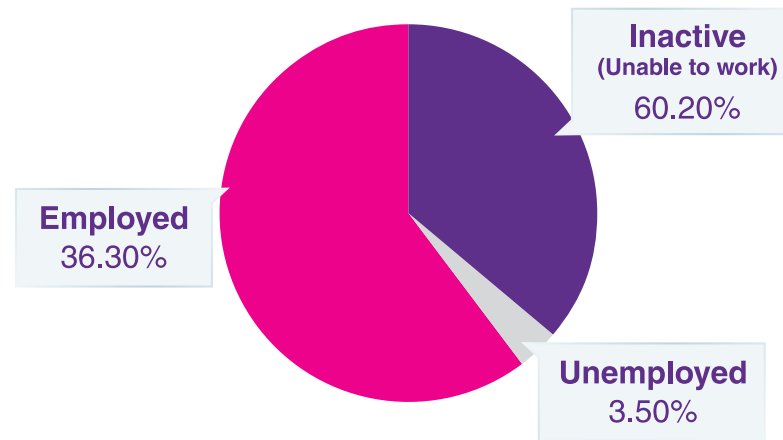
Economic activity of working age residents (16 – 64)

The number of people who were unemployed in Kent in February 2024 was 33,635 which is 7.7% higher than last year. The unemployment rate in Kent is currently 3.5%, this is below the GB average rate of 3.8%.

Youth unemployment (18-24) in Kent is 5.3%, which is slightly above the national average of 5.2%.

Thanet has the highest rate of youth unemployment in the South East at 9.9%.

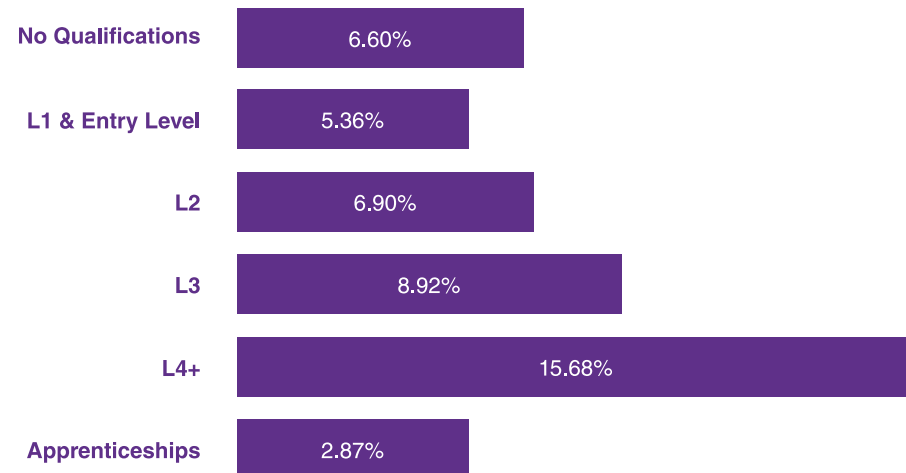
In Kent, unemployment has increased for both males (+5.7%) and females (+10.4%) since last year. Currently 4% of males and 3% of females are unemployed.



Qualifications

32% of Kent's population aged 16 to 64 is qualified to at least level 2+. This is lower than both the national average of 43% and the figure for the South East as a whole of 45.2%.

The percentage of Kent's population aged 16 to 64 with no qualifications is 6.6%, this is just above the national figure of 6.5% and significantly higher than the South East figure of 5%.

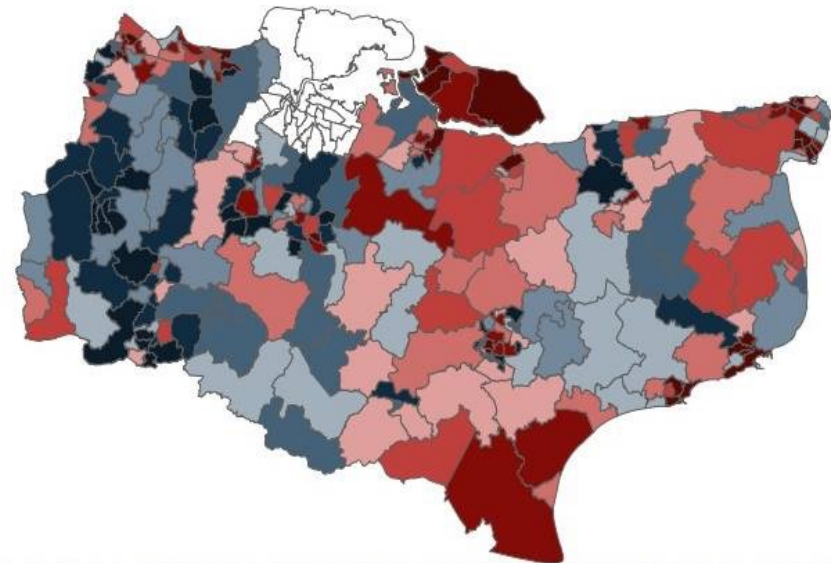


Deprivation

The number of Kent LSOAs that are within the 10% most deprived LSOAs in England between the IMD2019 and the previous IMD2015 remains at 51. Thanet continues to rank as the most deprived local authority in Kent. Gravesham has experienced the largest decrease in deprivation relative to other areas.

District	Weighted IMD Score Per District	KCC Districts IMD Rank
Thanet	31.31	1
Swale	27.08	2
Folkestone & Hythe	24.15	3
Dover	22.16	4
Gravesham	21.41	5
Dartford	18.81	6
Ashford	18.55	7
Canterbury	16.80	8
Maidstone	16.80	9
Tonbridge and Malling	13.33	10
Sevenoaks	12.44	11
Tunbridge Wells	11.31	12

KCC IMD Deciles for 18+ Population per Ward
 KCC Wards IMD Decile ● 1 ● 2 ● 3 ● 4 ● 5 ● 6 ● 7 ● 8 ● 9 ● 10



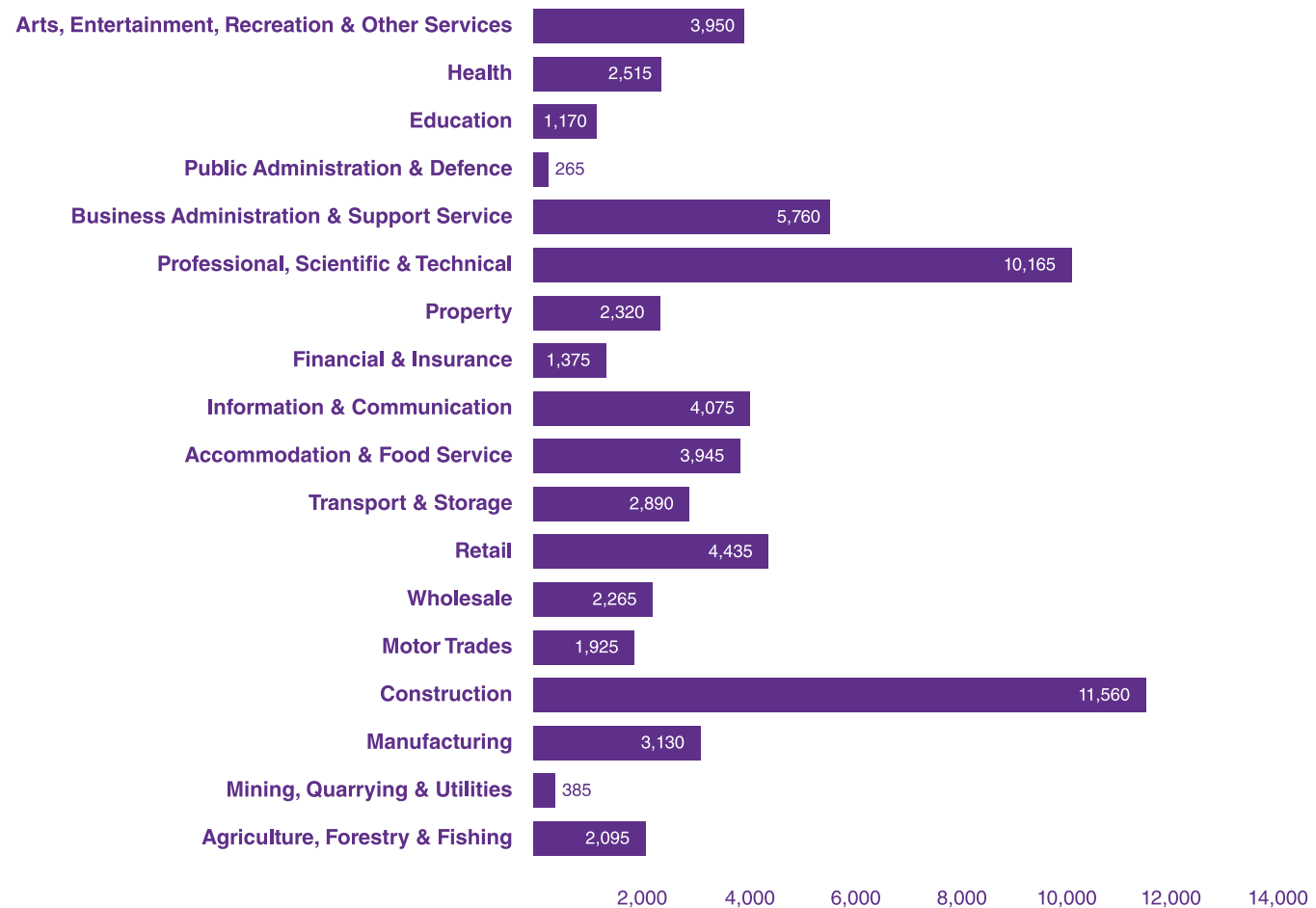
The deciles are based on the ranking of the 271 KCC wards (2019) according to their IMD Score (calculated from LSOAs), with a higher score indicating greater deprivation. The top decile (1) contains the most deprived 10% KCC wards, whereas the bottom decile (10) contains the least deprived 10% KCC wards.

Business in Kent by industry

There are over 60,000 enterprises in Kent employing 647,300 people. 12.5% of people in Kent were self-employed.

Most enterprises in Kent (89.7%) are classed as micro businesses and employ 9 or fewer people. 9.4% are classed as small (10 to 49 people), 1.4% medium (50 to 249 people) and 0.3% large (250+ people).

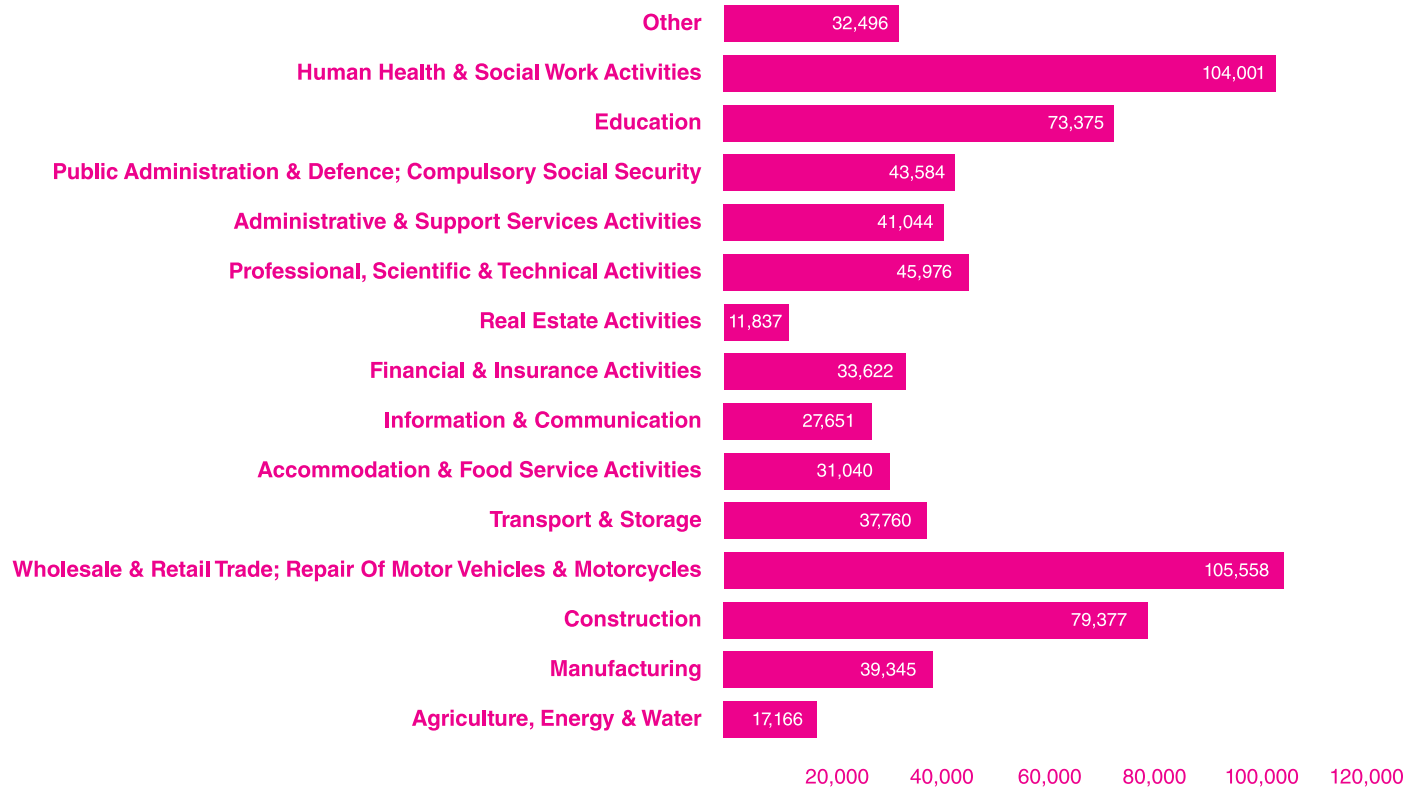
The biggest number and percentage increase in jobs was in Arts, entertainment & recreation (+4,500 jobs, +36%).



Employees in Kent by industry

Employee jobs in Kent have increased by 1.8%, (+11,200 jobs) over the last year. This is a lower increase than the regional average of +3.1% and the national average of +3.1%.

Kent has a larger proportion of jobs in 8 industrial sectors than seen nationally. The biggest differences were in wholesale and retail trade (Kent 16.3%, GB 13.9%).



Broadband in Kent

The average internet speed in Kent is 114Mbps, this is 1% lower than the UK average (116 Mbps.) The median download speed is 56 Mbps, 8% lower than the UK median (60 Mbps). The average upload speed is 18 Mbps, which is 0.89% lower than the UK average. Most people's internet connections are rated 'fast', however, 30% of the population are considered to have 'slow' or 'very slow' internet connections.

(Information from Fair Internet Report 2024)

Public Health in Kent

With Kent having some of the most (bottom 10%) socially deprived areas in England, there is a correlation to health in the county. The prevalence of obesity among primary school children is double in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived. Additionally, England's chief medical officer's annual report 2021 highlighted that coastal communities have some of the worst health outcomes in England. With 350 miles of coastline, Kent is home to a number of these communities further impacting health in the county. In the most deprived areas, female life expectancy is 6 years lower, and for males 8 years lower.

Within Kent, 25% of residents reported having a form of disability or long-term health condition and 9% of Kent's population provide some level of unpaid care.

30% of suicides in the county are impacted by domestic abuse and with the growth in the aged 85+ population, forecasted to be 30,000 by 2036, a 50% increase since 2018, there are many health challenges facing Kent.

Skills Demand

At national level, The Growth Plan 2022 sets out new measures for economic growth including helping the unemployed into work and those in jobs secure better paid work.

The Skills White Paper (January 2021) set out how further education will reform so it supports people to get the skills the economy needs. Focusing post-16 skills on this core mission will increase productivity, support growth industries and give individuals opportunities to progress in their career.

At local level, The Kent and Medway Economic Framework set out three overarching objectives to support the development of an economy that is more "productive, sustainable and inclusive". In 2023 the new Kent and Medway Local Skills Improvement Plan was launched and identified the following sectors key to Kent & Medway skills needs:

Construction

Manufacturing & Engineering

Fresh Food & Food Production

Health and Social Care

Education

Alongside these, the sectors **Transport & Logistics** and **Creative Industries** will have future skills needs.

These skills are principally focused on employers' requirements, however, social, technological and policy change will drive demand for new skills across the economy. Two main transformational changes were identified:

Decarbonisation: the UK's commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 is a key driver of investment in low carbon technologies. This will impact the whole economy: ultimately, all businesses will need to become low carbon businesses and therefore, developing skills associated with decarbonisation will be key.

Digitalisation: with rapid advances in digital technology and advanced digital capabilities, digital skills are a priority, with the need to ensure digital skills are embedded across the board and to improve digital skills within the existing workforce.

Community Learning and Skills

Kent County Council's Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Service contracts with the Department for Education (via the Education and Skills Funding Agency) to annually deliver learning opportunities to all parts of the County, through our programmes for adults, Apprenticeships and Study Programmes.

For the academic year 2024-25, CLS will deliver a wide and diverse range of courses, from pre-entry to Level 5, under the following categories:

Skills & Employment



Family Learning



Health & Wellbeing



CLS also leads on the delivery of the Department for Education's 'Multiply' programme, working with multiple referral and delivery partners across Kent. Multiply aims to increase the numeracy skills and confidence of ten distinct cohorts of adults without Level 2 qualifications in numeracy.

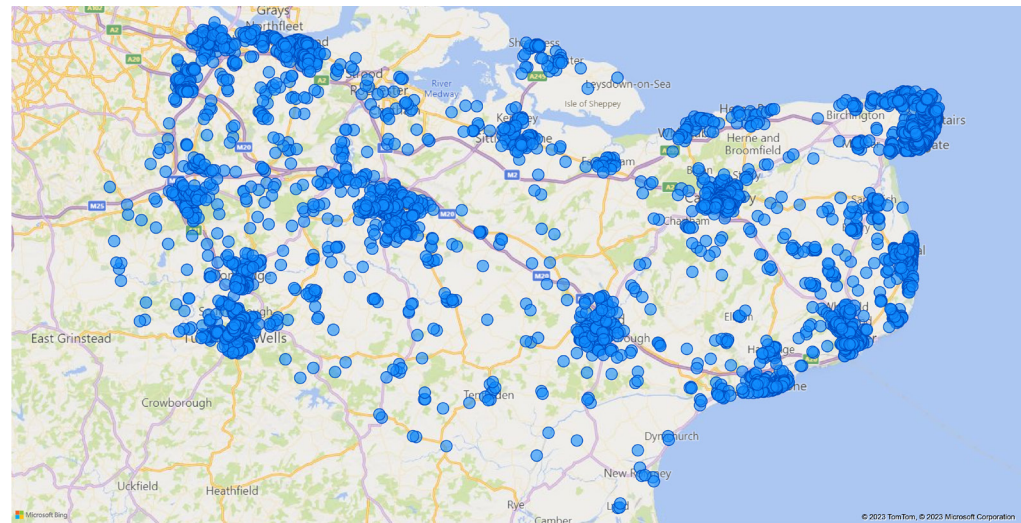
CLS deliver from 16 main centres across the County.

As well as from community venues, children's centres, schools and faith centres.



- 1. Ashford
- 2. Broadstairs
- 3. Canterbury
- 4. Dartford
- 5. Deal
- 6. Dover
- 7. Folkestone
- 8. Gravesend
- 9. Maidstone
- 10. Margate
- 11. Sevenoaks
- 12. Sheppey
- 13. Sittingbourne
- 14. Tenterden
- 15. Tonbridge
- 16. Tunbridge Wells

Spread of learners by postcode



Community Learning and Skills: 2024-25

Strategic Priority and Aims

Measurable Outcomes

Contribution towards National, Regional and Local Priorities for Learning and Skills

CLS will continue its core delivery including English, maths and ESOL; programmes for Counselling, AAT and Early Years; a small creative and languages offer; Multiply and a small Apprenticeship offer. For academic year 24/25, CLS will focus on the priorities identified below.

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Strategic Priority 1: Support the Kent Economy

- Increase delivery of Study Programmes for Young People across Kent, including those with EHCPs and UASC, to reduce NEETs and provide positive progression into FE or employment. Offer high quality sub-contracted delivery where appropriate (subject to Cabinet decision).

250 NEET learners complete Study Programmes which include employability skills, English, Maths and a work experience placement. Positive outcomes include employment, a traineeship, apprenticeship or a college placement.

55 learners with EHCPs will complete Supported Internships, including appropriate work experience.

100 UASC will complete ESOL study programmes which support language development to progress to further learning and/or other positive outcomes.

KCC Priority (Framing Kent's Future 2022-26): Levelling Up Kent:

To support the Kent economy to be resilient and successfully adapt to the challenges and opportunities it faces over the coming years, work with partners to develop a skills system for Kent that delivers skills that are resilient to changing workforce needs and opportunities and supports people to higher level skills.

Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Support and grow our workforce

Pathways for All

- Make a concerted effort to improve the outcomes for young people from our post-16 provision
- Enable a wider range of provision to be locally accessible
- Improve provision below Level 2 and provide good pathways into further learning at higher levels
- Support young people's mental health

Strategic Priority 1: Support the Kent Economy

- Using funding, including Tailored Learning funding, work with local partners including Public Health, DWP, Chamber of Commerce, NCS, providers, Housing Associations and 3rd sector to increase delivery to those furthest from the labour market, to support positive steps towards employment and other positive outcomes, with particular focus on LSIP priorities. Offer high quality sub-contracted delivery where appropriate (subject to Cabinet decision).

3,000 hard to reach adults will take part in engagement activities as a first step to their employability journey.

5,000 learners will complete employability programmes which move them closer to, into or up in work.

500 adult learners with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) will complete courses to develop independence, skills and confidence.

KCC Priority (Framing Kent's Future 2022-26): Levelling Up Kent:

To support the Kent economy to be resilient and successfully adapt to the challenges and opportunities it faces over the coming years, work with partners to develop a skills system for Kent that delivers skills that are resilient to changing workforce needs and opportunities and supports people to higher level skills.

Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Support and grow our workforce

Kent & Medway Skills & Employment Group plan, 2024

Local Skills Improvement Plan Kent and Medway, 2023

Strategic Priority 2: Family Learning

- Utilising Tailored Learning funding, support families so children thrive, in conjunction with other KCC departments, schools and children's centres, deliver a programme of family learning to increase parents/carers' skills, their understanding of how their children are educated and appropriate parenting. Increase the number of courses which support understanding of particular Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Increase the number of men accessing courses.

2,100 parents, guardians, children and other family members from schools and other community partners, focusing on identified areas of deprivation, benefit from family learning programmes.

1,200 adults benefit from Parenting Courses.

KCC Priority: New models of care and support

To support the most vulnerable children and families in our county, ensuring our social work practice supports manageable caseloads, reflective learning, joined up safeguarding and effective corporate parenting arrangements.

Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Give children and young people the best start in life

Strategic Priority 3: Health and Wellbeing

- Utilising Tailored Learning funding, work with Public Health and other relevant local partners to increase health, wellbeing and resilience outcomes for Kent's residents.

500 learners will complete engagement activities which support them to adopt positive physical and mental health and thereby to live and age well, and be resilient and independent.

5,000 learners benefit from programmes designed to improve mental and physical health and wellbeing through accessing programmes designed to develop social, cultural, creative, intellectual and physical skills.

5,000 learners report a feeling of improved resilience as a result of their courses, helping them to better manage their own wellbeing, and where appropriate performance in the workplace (DWP Retention in Employment).

350 learners, including older learners, develop Essential Digital Skills and attend other IT courses which reduce isolation, help them access services, develop skills for work and stay safe online.

KCC Priority: Infrastructure for Communities

To work with our partners to hardwire a preventative approach into improving the health of Kent's population and narrowing health inequalities

Integrated Care Strategy, 2024

- Tackle the wider determinants to prevent ill health
- Support and grow our workforce
- Grow our skills and workforce

Public Health Framework ambitions:

- Starting well, living well, aging well
- 5 ways to wellbeing

Approach to Developing the Plan for 2024/25

The aims, objectives and targets identified in this statement are the result of a high degree of engagement and interaction between CLS and key stakeholders across the County.

It complements and underpins the priorities identified in Framing Kent's Future: Kent County Council's overarching strategic statement, as well of those of its constituent directorates for Adult Social Care and Health; Children, Young People and Education; Growth, Environment and Transport as well as Chief and Deputy Chief Executive's Departments.

It has also actively engaged and interacted with a wide range of stakeholders external to the Council. These include local schools and colleges, Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, third sector agencies operating in the County and agencies such as Department for Work and Pensions.

Furthermore, it is also the product of widescale engagement with Kent's residents, as employers and employees, trainees, apprentices, parents, volunteers and its past, present and future learners.

Finally, it supports the overall direction of travel identified by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Ofsted (in its Education Inspection Framework) and national governmental priorities, such as those identified in its Levelling Up agenda.

Annual accountability statement

On behalf of Kent County Council, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on XXXXXX 2024.

The plan will be published on the Council's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link: www.communitylearningandskills.co.uk

Rory Love
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, KCC

Key documents

Framing Kent's Future - Our Council Strategy 2022- 2026:
www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/framing-kents-future

Pathways for All:
<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/college-sixth-form-employment-and-training/kent-16-to-19-review-pathways-for-all>

Kent and Medway Local Skills Improvement Plan:
<https://kentemployerskillsplan.org/kent-medway-lsip-2023/>

Kent and Medway Skills and Employment Group plan:
https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/116706/Kent-and-Medway-Employment-Plan.pdf

Public Health Framework:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-health-outcomes-framework>

Kent Public Health Annual Report 2021:
https://www.kpho.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/138270/Kent-APHR-2021-Coastal-Communities.pdf

Kent and Medway Integrated Care Strategy:
<https://www.kmhealthandcare.uk/about-us/vision-and-priorities/kent-and-medway-integrated-care-strategy>

The Growth Plan 2022:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-growth-plan-2022-documents/the-growth-plan-2022-html>

Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/601980f2e90e07128a353aa3/Skills_for_jobs_lifelong_learning_for_opportunity_and_growth__web_version_.pdf

Kent and Medway Economic Partnership:
<https://www.kmep.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/03/Kent-Medway-Economic-Framework-Web-Version-March-2024.pdf>

Multiply Prospectus:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1068822/Multiply_Investment_Prospectus.pdf

CLS Ofsted report 2020:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/42/52836>

Contact us

03000 41 22 22

www.communitylearningandskills.co.uk

www.kentadulthoodeducation.co.uk

www.kenttrainingandapprenticeships.co.uk

**COMMUNITY
LEARNING
AND SKILLS**



cta
kent training and
apprenticeships



KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Rory Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NUMBER:

24/00045

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
 - the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
 - significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

KCC CLS Accountability Agreement

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

1. APPROVE the Annual Accountability Statement; for submission to the DfE; and
2. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children's, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, to take the relevant actions as necessary to implement the decision, including future annual sign off and submission of the Annual Accountability Statement

Reason(s) for decision:

The decision is required to meet DfE requirement for an annual Accountability Statement, as part of the contractual annual Accountability Agreement.

The 'annual Accountability Statement' is a provider document that is owned by KCC/CLS as the provider and should set out a small number of outcome targets for areas of curriculum that providers are planning to change for the coming year. These targets reflect contributions to priorities outlined in Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), being led by Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) working with employers, providers and local stakeholders including MCAs, local authorities, and other agencies and to National Skills Priorities listed below. Local authority learning organisations within scope should make reference to their tailored learning provision, particularly where this meets local skills needs.

The content of the annual Accountability Statement is scrutinised and agreed by CLS 'Client Group', consisting of representation from relevant internal departments, prior to being submitted for sign off.

Providers must submit their next annual Accountability Statement to the DfE by 30 June 2024.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

To be considered by the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 16th May 2024.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

- N/A

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

.....
signed

.....
date

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title	CLS Accountability Agreement
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Responsible Officer	[Q04_ResponsibleOfficer]
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Type of Activity

Service Change	Yes
Service Redesign	No
Project/Programme	Project/Programme
Commissioning/Procurement	No
Strategy/Policy	Yes
Details of other Service Activity	No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate	CYPE
Responsible Service	CLS
Responsible Head of Service	Jude Farrell
Responsible Director	Christine McInnes

Aims and Objectives

Accountability Agreements focus on what colleges, designated institutions and local authorities deliver in the year ahead and how they intend to support local, regional, and national needs. These annual Statements should in all cases be informed by providers' longer term strategic plans and ambitions.

Part 1 of the agreement is the 'accountability framework'. DfE are using it to set out National Skills Priorities as well as the essential terms and conditions that providers need to meet in return for funds. Part 1 identifies required levers to ensure the effective management and assurance of public funds, the protection of learners as well as requiring sound governance.

Part 2, the 'annual Accountability Statement' is a provider document that is owned by KCC/ CLS as the provider and should set out a small number of outcome targets for areas of curriculum that providers are planning to change for the coming year. These targets reflect contributions to priorities outlined in Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), being led by Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) working with employers, providers and local stakeholders including MCAs, local authorities, and other agencies and to National Skills Priorities listed below. Local authority learning organisations within scope should make reference to their tailored learning provision, particularly where this meets local skills needs.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?	Yes
It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?	Yes
Is there national evidence/data that you can use?	Yes
Have you consulted with stakeholders?	Yes
Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?	
KCC has engaged with the following organisations:	

- Kent and Medway Employment Taskforce
- Kent Invicta Chambers
- DWP
- Kent Association for Training Organisations
- Department for Education
- Further Education Colleges and other training providers in Kent
- National Careers Service delivered by CxK
- Internally within Kent County Council – GET, Public Health, TEP
- Some employers

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?	No
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Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?	Yes
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Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients	Yes
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Staff	Yes
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Residents/Communities/Citizens	Residents/communities/citizens
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Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?	Yes
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Details of Positive Impacts

Staff – increase in work opportunities, skills development and opportunities.

Service users/clients/communities - Increased opportunities to access courses and develop skills, particularly in local areas, to support positive progression into and within work, for Health and Wellbeing, to support Families and widen participation.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?	No
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Details of negative impacts for Age

Not Applicable

Mitigating Actions for Age

Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age	Not Applicable
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20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?	No
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Details of Negative Impacts for Disability

Not Applicable

Mitigating actions for Disability

Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Disability	Not Applicable
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21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex

Are there negative impacts for Sex	No
Details of negative impacts for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Sex	Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race	
Are there negative impacts for Race	No
Negative impacts for Race	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Race	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race	Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief	No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief	Not Applicable
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	Not Applicable

27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities	
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities	Not Applicable