



Summons to and
Agenda for a
Meeting on
**Thursday, 14th July,
2022**
at **10.00 am**



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
SESSIONS HOUSE
MAIDSTONE

Wednesday, 6 July 2022

To: All Members of the County Council

A meeting of the County Council will be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ on Thursday, 14th July, 2022 at **10.00 am** to deal with the following business. **The meeting is scheduled to end by 4.30 pm.**

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2022 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record **(Pages 1 - 16)**
4. Corporate Parenting Panel - Minutes for noting **(Pages 17 - 26)**
Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February and 13 April 2022 – for noting.
5. Chairman's Announcements
6. Questions
7. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)
8. Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services **(Pages 27 - 44)**
9. Review of the Headstart Programme **(Pages 45 - 84)**
10. Local Transport Plan 5 (LPT5) Update **(Pages 85 - 94)**
11. End of Year Performance Report - 2021/22 **(Pages 95 - 148)**

12. Annual Report on Urgent Decisions (Pages 149 - 160)
13. Pension Board - review of Terms of Reference (Pages 161 - 174)
14. Motions for Time Limited Debate

Motion 1

Motion for Time Limited Debate – Devolved Government for Kent

Proposer: Mike Baldock
Secunder: Antony Hook

Background information provided by the Green & Independent Group

The recent Levelling Up White Paper has formalised the Government's purported desire to devolve more power and responsibility to local authorities, recognising that local communities need to be empowered to deliver substantive and sustainable change based on local democratic priorities.

The Welsh Parliament, Scottish Parliament, London Assembly and Northern Ireland Assembly have produced substantial change in their areas by devolving legislative powers to the people through their elected representatives.

Kent has a strong distinctive identity, sense of place and set of opportunities and challenges that warrant constitutional recognition and greater autonomy.

The creation of a Kent Assembly, with legislative powers, will increase local control and ensure that directly elected representatives have more power to deliver policies that reflect the needs of Kent residents.

Motion

The County Council resolves;

to establish a cross-party working group to oversee a feasibility study into devolved government for Kent, based on an elected assembly with legislative powers similar to the powers of other devolved parliaments and assemblies.

Motion 2

Motion for Time Limited Debate – Play Streets

Proposed by: Kelly Grehan

Seconded by: Alister Brady

Introduction:

In 2016, the World Health Organisation published a report on 'Ending Childhood Obesity'.¹ It stressed how childhood experience can have an important influence on life-long physical activity habits. In short, what we experience as a child will impact – positively or negatively – on how active we are for the rest of our lives. NHS guidelines state that children aged 5-18 need an hour each day of what they call 'moderate to vigorous physical activity' to remain healthy and well.² However, evidence shows that a staggering 80% of UK children³ are not getting the required level of exercise, and that this is fuelling all kinds of growing health problems in children, including clinical obesity and mental ill-health - and this is before we even begin to consider the impacts of the pandemic on activity levels.

Background information provided by the Labour Group:

- A child's right to play is enshrined in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.⁴
- Research shows that play is fundamental to children's physical, social, mental and emotional development, as well as to their immediate happiness and wellbeing.⁵
- A great way of encouraging children and young people to play outdoors is to create a 'play street'. A play street is an event where a road is closed off to traffic for a few hours on a regular basis so that children have a safe space to play freely.
- Legislation such as the 1874 Town Police Clauses Act and the 1984 Road Traffic Regulation Act can reasonably be used as a basis for implementing play streets.
- With council permission and general consensus from neighbours, residents legally close the road to through-traffic, using 'Road Closed' signs and cones (in this respect,

¹ World Health Organisation, 'Ending Childhood Obesity' – available here:

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/204176/9789241510066_eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

² National Health Services (NHS), 'Physical activity guidelines for children and young people' – available here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-guidelines/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people/#:~:text=Children%20and%20young%20people%20aged%205%20to%2018%20should%3A,a%20day%20across%20the%20week>

³ Science Focus, '85% of UK children are not getting enough exercise, WHO report finds' – available here:

<https://www.sciencefocus.com/news/85-per-cent-of-uk-children-are-not-getting-enough-exercise-who-report-finds/>

⁴ United Nations, 'Convention on the Rights of the Child' – available here: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child#:~:text=Article%2031,-1.&text=States%20Parties%20recognize%20the%20right,cultural%20life%20and%20the%20arts.>

⁵ American Academy of Pediatrics, 'The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds' – available here: <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/119/1/182/70699/The-Importance-of-Play-in-Promoting-Healthy-Child?autologincheck=redirected>

⁵ American Academy of Pediatrics, 'The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds' – available here: <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/119/1/182/70699/The-Importance-of-Play-in-Promoting-Healthy-Child?autologincheck=redirected>

the model is not too dissimilar from the way in which the Jubilee street parties were organised). Residents still have vehicle access and can leave their cars parked on the road. Volunteer stewards (usually residents) stand at each end of the street and walk in front of any moving vehicles to keep it safe.

- The minimum cost of implementation is the administrative duty of processing the temporary road closure applications, and the setting up of the scheme. Additional costs may be incurred for the provision of road signs and cones. Costs are generally kept to a minimum by encouraging residents to sign a reasonable indemnity clause rather than insisting on public liability insurance.⁶ Indeed, it is important to note that the risk of liability remains low – according to ‘Playing Out’, the community group which kickstarted the original idea, no liability claims have been made as a result of a playing out session, with over 1,200 streets having played out across the UK (as of winter 2021).⁷
- The Local Authority itself is not responsible for the event, although it should be noted that neither public liability insurance nor an indemnity clause would indemnify the Local Authority from anything that it may be negligent of, such as faulty pavements.⁸
- Nonetheless, 91 councils are now actively supporting the playing out model and many have specific street play policies in place.⁹
- Research undertaken by the University of Bristol has shown that at play street sessions children are three to five times more active than they would be on a ‘normal’ day after school.¹⁰
- Playing out in the street allows children to make new friends of different ages and backgrounds, while also allowing them to get to know some of the adults in their street.
- Research has also shown that play street sessions lead to increased community connection and belonging. This has made a real difference to residents, both during and after Covid.

⁶ Playing Out, ‘FAQs for Local Authorities’ – available here: <https://playingout.net/play-streets/info-for-councils/faqs-local-authorities/>

⁷ Playing Out, ‘Insurance for street play – some thoughts’ – available here: <https://playingout.net/play-streets/info-for-councils/legislation-and-liability/public-liability/>

⁸ Playing Out, ‘Legislation and Liability’ – available here: <https://playingout.net/play-streets/info-for-councils/legislation-and-liability/public-liability/>

⁹ Playing Out, ‘All Active Areas’ – available here: <https://playingout.net/nearby-you/localauthoritydirectory/?showall=1>

¹⁰ University of Bristol, ‘Why temporary street closures for play make sense for public health’ (Play England: 2016) – available here: https://playingout.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Play-England_Why-temporary-street-closures-make-sense-for-public-health.pdf

Motion:

The County Council resolves:

- To undertake a feasibility study to assess the benefits and risks of implementing play schemes across the county;
- To assess whether or not the implementation of such a scheme could be cost-neutral, possibly through sponsorship by local businesses or through Member Grant funding; and
- On the proviso that the above conditions are met, the Executive should roll out a pilot scheme within the next 12 months.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Watts', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 26 May 2022.

PRESENT: Mrs L Game (Chairman), Mr G Cooke (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr D Beaney, Mr C Beart, Mrs C Bell, Mr T Bond, Mr A Booth, Mr A Brady, Mr S R Campkin, Mr T Cannon, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mrs P T Cole, Mr P Cole, Mr N J Collor, Mr P C Cooper, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr D S Daley, Ms M Dawkins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr M Dendor, Mr R W Gough, Ms K Grehan, Ms S Hamilton, Mr P M Harman, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr A Kennedy, Rich Lehmann, Mr B H Lewis, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Ms J Meade, Mr J Meade, Mr D Murphy, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mrs L Parfitt-Reid, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr H Rayner, Mr O Richardson, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr D Robey, Mr D Ross, Mr A Sandhu, MBE, Mr T L Shonk, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr R J Thomas, Mr D Watkins, Mr A Weatherhead, Mr S Webb, Mr J Wright and Ms L Wright

ALSO PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

65. Apologies for Absence
(Item 1)

The General Counsel reported apologies from Mr David Brazier, Sir Paul Carter, Mr Ian Chittenden, Mrs Margot McArthur, Mrs Karen Constantine, and Mr Mark Dance.

Mr Sweetland said apologies had also been received from Mr Conrad Broadly and Mr Jeremy Kite. Mrs Sarah Hamilton would be arriving late to the meeting.

66. Election of Chairman
(Item 2)

- (1) Mr R Gough proposed, and Mr P Stepto seconded that Mrs L Game be appointed Chairman of the County Council.

Agreed unanimously

- (2) Thereupon Mrs Game took the chair, made her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, and returned thanks for her election.

67. Election of Vice-Chairman
(Item 3)

- (1) Mr P Cooper proposed, and Mr A Marsh seconded that Mr G Cooke be appointed Vice-Chairman of the County Council.

Agreed unanimously

- (2) Mr Cooke made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and returned thanks for his appointment.

68. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda
(Item 4)

Mr Streatfeild declared a non-pecuniary interest under Item 9 – *Strategic Statement* - and said a family member was in receipt of an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP).

Later in the meeting Mr Webb declared a potential interest under Item 12 – *Superannuation Fund Committee – proposed name change* - as he was in receipt of a Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) pension.

69. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2022 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record
(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2022 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following corrections:

- (1) The addition of the word “not” in paragraph 31 on page 9 of the Minutes:

“Finally, Mr Gough responded to Dr Sullivan’s point about devolution. He said the Council was the strategic authority providing a wide range of services across the whole of Kent but this did ***not*** mean it would seek to do everything or hold back devolution. He said his focus as Leader was working closely with district colleagues, and the voluntary and community sector. Mr Gough said if there was a challenge to the Council delivering it, it would be the financial pressure already experienced before and made worse by the current crisis.”

- (2) Mr Sandhu be included as present in the Minutes.

70. Chairman's Announcements
(Item 6)

Texas School Shooting

- (1) The Chairman asked Members to join her in remembering the families and friends of the victims and all those affected by the tragic shooting at Robb Elementary School in Texas, and said it was a terrible heart-wrenching crime.

Ukraine

- (2) The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, expressed her sympathy and concern for the continued war against the Ukraine, the horrific devastation that had been caused, and the escalating humanitarian crisis that had been created and which had affected millions. She said the Council remained focussed on supporting the Ukraine and was actively working with partners to provide immediate assistance to any Ukrainian nationals arriving in Kent and would endeavour to ensure they received the warmest welcome to the county.

Matt Dunkley Retirement

- (3) The Chairman paid tribute to Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, who was retiring from the Council in May 2022. Mr Dunkley joined KCC as the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education on 27th November 2017. Mr Dunkley was a past President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and was the Director of Children's Services at East Sussex County Council for 8 years. He lived and worked in the USA and Australia and was Interim DCS with Norfolk County Council for 9 months, where he led the service out of Ofsted intervention, before joining Kent.
- (4) The Chairman said Mr Dunkley, during his time with KCC, had led a major restructure of children's services, realigning Early Help and Children's Social Work into one service, and bringing the Disabled Children & Young People's Service from Adults into Children's services, ensuring vulnerable children and families received consistent and seamless support regardless of their needs. Mr Dunkley led the directorate through the pandemic, during which time frontline staff continued to regularly visit vulnerable children and families and in the final month before his retirement he had overseen an Ofsted inspection of children's services.
- (5) The Chairman asked Members to join her in thanking Mr Dunkley for his service to the County and the Council and wished him all the very best for the future.

Andy Tait Retirement

- (6) The Chairman paid tribute to Andy Tait, Democratic Services Officer, who after many years' service at KCC, was retiring in June 2022. She said Mr Tait had been a stalwart member of Democratic Services for nearly four decades and started work at the Council on 1 April 1985.
- (7) Throughout his service, Mr Tait had brought the highest standards of good governance and fairness in supporting meetings, working to support all Members of the Council to fulfil their democratically elected roles.
- (8) The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, thanked Mr Tait for his service to KCC and wished him well in his retirement.

Virtual School Kent Award

- (9) The Chairman was delighted to announce that Virtual School Kent had become the first virtual school to be awarded the National Nurturing Virtual School Programme Award. The NurtureUK award followed the school's completion of the National Nurturing Schools Programme and recognised the high-quality whole school nurturing approach demonstrated by the school.
- (10) The Chairman said the award was an endorsement of the extensive work Virtual School Kent had done to ensure that the six principals of Nurture were embedded throughout its everyday practice and in how young people, partners and staff were supported.
- (11) The Chairman asked Members to join her in congratulating all those involved in Virtual School Kent on this fantastic achievement.

Opening of Allington Household Waste Recycling Centre

- (12) The Chairman attended, at the beginning of May, the opening of the new Household Waste Recycling Centre at Allington, with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Miss Susan Carey. The new centre was a large and very modern site with space for over 70 cars, providing a much-needed local resource for residents of Kent.
- (13) The Chairman was delighted to inform Members that the Household Waste Recycling Centre had won a national award, coming first in the category of 'Best Use of Design and Technology in a Waste Management Facility' at the Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management.
- (14) The Chairman asked Members to join her in congratulating the KCC Waste Management Team and the Council's FCC partners on their success.

Kent Day

- (15) The Chairman was pleased to announce that today, 26 May 2022, was Kent Day, a day to celebrate the beauty and history of the county and 26 May was chosen as it was the Feast Day of St. Augustine, who settled in the Kingdom of Kent in 597AD and who founded Canterbury Cathedral and became the first Archbishop.
- (16) The Chairman asked Members to join her in celebrating the county of Kent on this very special day.

70 Hours for 70 Years

- (17) The Chairman was pleased to announce that the Vice-Chairman and her had completed their volunteering for the initiative to mark the jubilee by volunteering in the community. The Chairman was pleased to say that Members had delivered just over 60 hours of volunteering during May and thanked everyone who had contributed volunteering hours to date.

Chairman's Charities

- (18) The Chairman was pleased to inform Members that having continued to support Mrs Allen's charity for the 2021/22 Chairman's year, over £2,000 had been raised for Kent Foster Care Association.

- (19) The Chairman announced that she had chosen to support two charities during her year as Chairman and they were Kent Association for the Blind and Oasis Domestic Abuse Service.
- (20) The Chairman invited Eithne Rynne from Kent Association for the Blind and Deborah Cartwright from Oasis Domestic Abuse Service to introduce the charities and the work that they did.

71. Questions
(Item 7)

- (1) The General Counsel responded to a query from a Member regarding answers from Cabinet Members.
- (2) In accordance with Sections 14.15 to 14.22 of the Constitution, 8 questions were asked, and replies given. A record of all questions put and answers given at the meeting is available [online](#) with the papers for this meeting. Questions 10 and 11 were not put in the time allocated but a written answer was provided.

72. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)
(Item 8)

- (1) The Leader updated the Council on events since the previous meeting.
- (2) Mr Gough said the Strategic Statement (Item 9) and the development of the Kent & Medway Integrated Care System (Item 11), which would have normally formed part of his report, were later items on the agenda. He also noted that some of the points he planned to address related to points that were raised in Questions (Item 7) earlier in the meeting.
- (3) Mr Gough said he was pleased to celebrate Kent Day and said it was appropriate that, the day before, so many people had gathered in Canterbury Cathedral for a service in celebration of the life of the former Chairman of the Council, Mrs Ann Allen. He said it was a great occasion and expressed his gratitude to the Civic Office for their organisation of the event. He said it was a privilege to share the celebration with Mrs Allen's family and expressed his gratitude, on behalf of himself and Members, for having been part of the celebration.
- (4) Mr Gough referred to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and said the Council was one of the first authorities in the country to waive road closure fees to facilitate street parties. He said the Council had received 595 street party applications of which 575 had been approved. He said details of additional activities due to take place to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee were available on the Council's website.
- (5) Mr Gough said the Council continued to be extremely active on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and said 3,106 applications from Ukrainian nationals had been matched to 1,255 sponsors in Kent. He said the County, District and Borough Councils were working hard to complete the relevant checks and he recognised the strain on capacity this was having. 1,272 of the £200 welcome payments had been made so far to Ukrainian guests and the first batch of £350 thank you payments

was being made at the end of May 2022. Mr Gough commended the significant response that had been seen by the county and by public authorities in responding to the crisis. Mr Gough noted the growing pressures of rematching and in year school admissions and recognised the efforts of the Council in building up capacity and seeking to respond rapidly. Mr Gough said the Council had received nearly 6,500 expressions of interest to host Ukrainian guests from Kent households and acknowledged this could amount to, for example, 4,500 children entering the school system. Mr Gough said, alongside the Ukrainian crisis, the Council faced additional major changes and issues including the Asylum Dispersal System and the continuation of the Afghan Relocation Service.

- (6) Mr Gough said inflation and the economic crisis continued to be a major risk to the Council and there would be a continued focus on financial reporting and the monitoring of budget plans. Mr Gough recognised the pressure of the economic crisis on residents and reiterated the point he made in response to a Member's earlier question about focusing on both immediate and sustained long term support.
- (7) Mr Gough said it had recently been confirmed by the Kent Resilience Forum that Operation Brock would remain in place until after the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend. Mr Gough acknowledged that Operation Brock was a traffic management system which sought to deal with something much deeper than a traffic management problem. Mr Gough said the issue required a comprehensive approach which recognised it as national infrastructure and a national issue, and this would be taken up with central government.
- (8) Mr Gough said the Queen's Speech on 10 May 2022 included several bills of considerable importance to the Council and included The Levelling up and Regeneration Bill. He acknowledged the importance of the infrastructure levy and said the detail would be seen in the regulations. He said it was a critical issue for the Council and played an important part in the Council's Strategic Statement.
- (9) Mr Gough said the Schools Bill encouraged schools to become academies and to join multi academy trusts. Mr Gough said this remained an important area for the Council and Mrs Shellina Prendergast, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, and Ms Christine McInnes, Director of Education, had engaged directly with the Department for Education. He said the Schools Bill was part of a set of wider initiatives across education, including the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) green paper and ongoing reform in the areas of skills, qualifications and post 16 education. He said on 28 April 2022 the Council launched its 16-19 Review and Action Plan which linked in with the Council's commitment to work with partners to ensure a better set of options for the young people of Kent. Mr Gough also noted the importance of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, chaired by Josh McAllister and published on 23 May 2022, and said in many ways the programme for change reflected the Council's existing focus and priorities including Early Help and the development of the Family Hubs Model.
- (10) Mr Gough said the adult social care reforms set out in the People at the Heart of Care white paper continued to highlight significant concerns in relation to the adequacy of central government's financial support, which he said had the potential to destabilise both the Council's finances and the provider market. Mr Gough said Mrs Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, and he had written to Kent MPs setting out the Council's concerns and asking for their support.

- (11) Mr Gough said he and Miss Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment, had joined the Chairman for the opening of the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Allington and commended those involved in achieving the award. He said the Amelia Scott building in Tunbridge Wells opened on 28 April 2022 and combined a museum, art gallery, library, registration service and adult education service, and was an impressive piece of joint working between the Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. He said funding had also been secured through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and Mr Gough paid tribute to the work of Mr Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services, and his team on the completion of the project.
- (12) The Leader concluded his report by saying this remained a time of intense activity and although he had tried to cover a large amount, there would be further matters to address in items later in the agenda.
- (13) The Leader of the Labour Group, Dr Sullivan, responded. She wished Members a happy Kent Day, Her Majesty the Queen a happy Platinum Jubilee, and all the people in Kent who were taking part in street party celebrations an enjoyable day. Dr Sullivan echoed the comments made by the Leader and the Chairman regarding the service of thanksgiving for Mrs Allen and said she felt it was very beautiful and fitting for someone who had given so much of her life to public service. Dr Sullivan thanked the staff involved for organising the event.
- (14) Dr Sullivan referred to the cost-of-living crisis and criticised central government's allocation of narrow criteria, tight deadlines, limitations to funding and increased data reporting. She felt this was not the way local government should be run in terms of providing help to communities and said central government should be called upon to fully fund local government and allow the Council to decide on how best to deliver support to the county. Dr Sullivan stressed the importance of providing a universal preventative approach and referred to the increased numbers of children living in poverty. She questioned why families, who had never lived in poverty before, should have to wait to be determined as vulnerable before they received support. She said many families had never had to choose between heating and eating before and there were many with more than one job. Dr Sullivan said the problem was exasperated for families on fixed incomes such as pensioners, and she asked for long term sustainable funding to be brought back to local government.
- (15) Dr Sullivan joined the Chairman in expressing her outrage and support for the Ukrainian crisis. She said she was heartened to see the support offered by Kent residents and noted the fantastic spirit of Kent residents wishing to host Ukrainian refugees. Dr Sullivan said many people had had their lives turned upside down by the loss of family members, communities, and homes. She hoped that further support would be provided by central government to support the refugees who had arrived in Kent.
- (16) Dr Sullivan said, in relation to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, she was disheartened that central government wanted to create another layer of bureaucracy further removed from local people. She said it was disheartening to see that combined authorities, or an elected mayor or governor, were an option and welcomed further devolution on a local level. Dr Sullivan welcomed the infrastructure levy and agreed with the Leader that further detail was necessary. She said money for the immediate vicinity of the development took priority over that of the wider community.

- (17) Dr Sullivan referred to the Schools Bill and said she was pleased to see the step back towards more local government control of the education system. She was pleased to hear that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and the Director of Education were engaging with the Department for Education.
- (18) Dr Sullivan agreed with the Leader that Operation Brock was a national problem which affected the county of Kent on a local level and noted the importance of ensuring that the national ports' trade infrastructure needs were met.
- (19) Mr Hook, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, thanked everyone involved for the moving and fitting service for Mrs Ann Allen, and commended the tribute given at the service by Mr Kite.
- (20) Referring to the cost-of-living crisis Mr Hook said this was perhaps the biggest issue that currently faced families in Kent. Mr Hook asked the Leader and the Conservative Group to consider the introduction of a windfall tax on energy companies and suggested Value Added Tax (VAT) be cut by 2.5%. He said this could save the average family £600 per year.
- (21) Mr Hook said it had been fantastic to see the warmth and generosity of Kent families supporting Ukrainian refugees and said Ukrainian refugees who wished to stay after the war would be welcomed as part of the richly diverse society in Kent. Mr Hook endorsed what was said by the Minister of State, Lord Richard Harrington, who had called for the scheme to be widened to people displaced by other conflicts.
- (22) Mr Hook referred to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, and the issue of local government reorganisation, and suggested more power and resources to fill obligations be devolved from central government to a local level. He said those obligations should be decided by the democratic priorities of local people and he hoped there would be unity in resisting the idea of a directly elected mayor or governor. Mr Hook said power was better exercised by an assembly of elected councillors and a constitutional convention would bring together all civil society to form devolution on their terms.
- (23) Mr Hook said Operation Brock was a total disaster and had resulted in queues of 25 miles and humanitarian relief organisations providing support to stranded drivers. Mr Hook said hard right politicians in central government who talked about Brexit and Singapore on Sea had led P&O to make the job redundancies. He said Operation Brock was also driven by the extra paperwork, caused by Brexit, needed by exporters and importers. He said Switzerland and Norway did not have these problems at the borders because they had the European Economic Area Agreement, and said Operation Brock was due to Brexit.
- (24) Mr Hook referred to the Schools Bill and said it was a centralisation of power in government that had been condemned by Ken Baker and Estelle Morris and was the very opposite of the localism needed.
- (25) Mr Hook said World Environment Day would be celebrated on 5 June 2022 and noted there would be terrible consequences if net zero was not achieved. Mr Hook referred to PRIDE month in June 2022 and said he hoped the PRIDE flag would be flown over County Hall and Members would support PRIDE events in their divisions.

- (26) Mr Stepto, Leader of the Green and Independent Group, responded to the Leader's report. He said, in reference to the cost-of-living crisis, that more than 2.1 million people had been forced to turn to food banks over the past year and the hike in energy prices had meant families were having to choose between heating and eating. Mr Stepto referred to the increased cost of private renting and the shortage of affordable homes and social housing, and the effect it would have on communities and young people wishing to rent or buy. Mr Stepto suggested that the government reversed the £20 cut to Universal Credit, a windfall tax be applied to energy companies, and authorities provided support to retrofit and refurbish homes to make them more energy efficient and cheaper to run.
- (27) Mr Stepto said he had had the privilege of meeting some of the Ukrainian refugee families who had recently arrived in Tonbridge, and he was proud of the kindness of the host families and the organisations, including the Council, who were supporting them.
- (28) Mr Stepto referred to the Levelling up and Regeneration Bill and welcomed the devolution of powers from central government. However, he said he understood that the Bill included clauses which allowed, through secondary legislation, the creation of new parts of the planning system and said this would reduce scrutiny and may have a fundamental impact on community rights. Mr Stepto said the Bill also lacked transparency due to the failure to consolidate planning law over the past 32 years, and the Bill contained amendments to amendments on the amendments. Mr Stepto said there were no new measures to address climate change nor were there measures that might enable communities to deal with the cost of living crisis. Mr Stepto welcomed the infrastructure levy and the change to the current system and commended the aim to enhance the transparency of developer contributions and to reduce complexity and uncertainty.
- (29) Mr Stepto said he was disappointed at the plan in the Schools Bill to turn all schools into academies by 2030. He said there was no sound research evidence to support the claim that academies produced better outcomes than local authority schools. However, Mr Stepto welcomed the proposal that councils should be allowed to set up their own multi academy trusts but noted the downside of this could mean increased targets, a longer school week, more testing and more Ofsted visits, which would all add to teachers' workloads.
- (30) Mr Stepto said, according to the Local Government Association (LGA), the proposals set out in the SEND green paper would help improve the way that SEND support was delivered. He said this was encouraging for Kent given the rise in numbers of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in the county. He questioned whether the paper addressed the current lack of funding and training, the shortage of Teaching Assistants and support staff, and the unaffordability of nursery care for many families.
- (31) Mr Stepto said, his colleague Mr Mark Hood, attended the visit to Allington Household Waste Recycling Centre and was impressed by the intention to incorporate a re-use site in the future. Mr Stepto said a repair café in Tonbridge had recently been established that helped people extend the life of household goods.
- (32) Lastly, Mr Stepto said he was pleased to note the opening of the Amelia Scott in Tunbridge Wells and said it was the kind of energy efficient civic centre building he would like to see across Kent. He noted that Amelia Scott was a suffragist who

participated in the types of demonstrations which the Police Bill aimed to criminalise.

- (33) The Leader thanked the group leaders for their comments and said he felt there was agreement between them on several issues. Mr Gough recognised the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis and the scale of the challenge, and said it was something which had been growing for a long time. He referred to the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic which saw the sudden increase in universal credit demand and people losing their jobs or being furloughed. Mr Gough said the Ukrainian crisis caused inflation to become a more significant problem, and increased food and energy prices pushed the cost-of-living crisis to a much higher level. Mr Gough acknowledged Dr Sullivan's point regarding support for pensioners and said an element of the Household Support Grant was focused on supporting pensioners, and the Council had sought, over the last couple of years, to ensure pensioners were claiming the pension credit to which they were entitled.
- (34) Mr Gough said that the group leaders were all in agreement with the county's positive response to the Ukrainian crisis. He recognised the pressures of recruitment to ensure capacity for carrying out checks and to deliver support as effectively as possible. He commended the commitment of the Minister of State, Lord Richard Harrington, and Mr Gough said he recognised the scale of work that was required, and he would continue to push for what was of greatest concern to the Council.
- (35) Mr Gough responded to points made regarding the Schools Bill and said he thought there was an aspiration for schools to become academies. He said there was a big focus on schools joining multi academy trusts and when schools joined together effectively, they could be very strong and deliver well. He noted it was not as easily done as had sometimes been suggested and the effectiveness of multi academy trusts was critical to address. Mr Gough agreed with Mr Stepto, that there were welcome elements in the SEND green paper but questioned whether it was an overall solution to the problem. He said it was important the Council continued, as agreed at a recent Cabinet meeting, to address SEND issues within the county.
- (36) Mr Gough responded to points made about the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, and the role of county deals, and said he recognised the importance of continuing conversations with central government regarding Kent's specific needs and said some of that would be addressed later under Item 7 (Strategic Statement).
- (37) Finally, Mr Gough responded to points made on the infrastructure levy and agreed that the details of the regulations would have a big impact on the county. He said that the key questions were whether it would raise more money than the existing structure, particularly the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and how closely the infrastructure delivery strategies would link to what had been spent on local infrastructure from the levy. He said he felt this was something that would need to be pushed extremely hard in the weeks and months to come.
- (38) RESOLVED that the Leader's update be noted.

73. Strategic Statement
(Item 9)

(1) Mr Gough proposed, and Mr Oakford seconded the motion that

“The County Council approves the ‘Framing Kent’s Future: Our Council Strategy 2022-2026’.”

(2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 1 to the vote and the voting was as follows:

For (50)

Mrs L Game (Chairman), Mr G Cooke (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr D Beaney, Mr C Beart, Mrs C Bell, Mr T Bond, Mr A Booth, Mr A Brady, Mr S R Campkin, Mr T Cannon, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mrs P T Cole, Mr P Cole, Mr N J Collor, Mr P C Cooper, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr D S Daley, Ms M Dawkins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr M Dendor, Mr R W Gough, Ms K Grehan, Ms S Hamilton, Mr P M Harman, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr A Kennedy, Rich Lehmann, Mr B H Lewis, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Ms J Meade, Mr J Meade, Mr D Murphy, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mrs L Parfitt-Reid, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr H Rayner, Mr O Richardson, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr D Robey, Mr D Ross, Mr A Sandhu, MBE, Mr T L Shonk, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr R J Thomas, Mr D Watkins, Mr A Weatherhead, Mr S Webb, Mr J Wright and Ms L Wright

Against (4)

Mr M Baldock, Mr S R Campkin, Rich Lehmann, Mr S C Manion

Abstain (14)

Mr A Brady, Mr D S Daley, Ms M Dawkins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms K Grehan, Mr P M Harman, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr B H Lewis, Ms J Meade, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan

Motion carried.

(3) RESOLVED that the County Council approve the ‘Framing Kent’s Future: Our Council Strategy 2022-2026’.

74. Chief Executive Operating Model
(Item 10)

(1) Mr Gough proposed, and Mr Sweetland seconded the motion that

“The County Council:

1. Agrees the recommendation from Personnel Committee to introduce a Chief Executive Officer post and operating model.
2. Approves the job description for the Chief Executive Officer as set out in Appendix 1. This includes the statutory responsibilities of Head of Paid Service.

3. Notes that David Cockburn will transition into the Chief Executive Officer role with effect from 1 July 2022, having determined the necessary support infrastructure to enable the requirements of the revised CEO role and model to be delivered.
 4. Agrees changes to two other posts in the top tier structure as outlined in section 3 of this report and shown at Appendix 2.
 5. Agrees the job descriptions for the roles of Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development shown at Appendices 3 and 4.
 6. Agrees the proposed changes to the Constitution shown at Appendix 5.
 7. Notes that the introduction of the new operating model will be cost neutral.”
- (2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 1.
- (3) RESOLVED that the County Council:
1. Agrees the recommendation from Personnel Committee to introduce a Chief Executive Officer post and operating model.
 2. Approves the job description for the Chief Executive Officer as set out in Appendix 1. This includes the statutory responsibilities of Head of Paid Service.
 3. Notes that David Cockburn will transition into the Chief Executive Officer role with effect from 1 July 2022, having determined the necessary support infrastructure to enable the requirements of the revised CEO role and model to be delivered.
 4. Agrees changes to two other posts in the top tier structure as outlined in section 3 of this report and shown at Appendix 2.
 5. Agrees the job descriptions for the roles of Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development shown at Appendices 3 and 4.
 6. Agrees the proposed changes to the Constitution shown at Appendix 5.
 7. Notes that the introduction of the new operating model will be cost neutral.

The Labour Group, Liberal Democrats Group, and Green and Independents Group asked for their abstentions against part 4 of the recommendation to be noted in the minutes.

75. Health and Care Partnership - Kent & Medway Integrated Care System
(Item 11)

- (1) Mr Gough proposed, and Mrs Bell seconded the motion that
- “The County Council approves the draft Terms of Reference for the Integrated Care Partnership Committee as found at Appendix 2.”
- (2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 1.

RESOLVED that the County Council approves the draft Terms of Reference for the Integrated Care Partnership Committee as found at Appendix 2.

76. Superannuation Fund Committee - proposed name change
(Item 12)

This Item was taken after Item 9.

Mr Webb declared a potential interest as he was in receipt of an LGPS pension.

- (1) Mr Oakford proposed, and Mr Chard seconded the motion that
“The County Council agrees:
 - (a) That the name of the Superannuation Fund Committee be changed to Pension Fund Committee; and
 - (b) That the terms of reference of the Committee in the Constitution be amended to refer to the Pension Fund instead of the Superannuation Fund.”
- (2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 1.
- (3) RESOLVED that the County Council agrees:
 - (a) That the name of the Superannuation Fund Committee be changed to Pension Fund Committee; and
 - (b) That the terms of reference of the Committee in the Constitution be amended to refer to the Pension Fund instead of the Superannuation Fund.

77. Treasury Management - Q3 Update
(Item 13)

This item was taken after item 12 and before Item 10.

- (1) Mr Oakford proposed, and Mr Cooper seconded the motion that
“The County Council notes the report.”
- (2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 1.
- (3) RESOLVED that the County Council notes the report.

78. Motions for Time Limited Debate
(Item 14)

Motion for Time Limited Debate 1 – Public Rights of Way cross party working group:

- (1) Mr Sole proposed and Mr Hook seconded the following motion for time-limited debate:

“The County Council agrees:

- To the establishment of a cross party working group to consider how best to maintain the Public Rights of Way network;
- That the output of the working group will be considered by the responsible Executive Members for progression via any necessary formal governance arrangements; and
- That update reports on the activity of the working party be provided to the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee not less than once per annum while the working group remains in operation.

The working group’s remit will include (but not be limited to):

1. Establishing, with local input, a list of priority routes for quicker review and resolution of problems.
2. Reviewing options for directly funding parish and town councils to attend to issues in their areas, whilst ultimately retaining the statutory duty to maintain.
3. Review options for sponsorship or adoption of routes by community organisations, individuals, and businesses.
4. Review targets for acting on reported faults and look into ways of improving updates with those making reports.
5. Provide clear information on vegetation cutting schedules and identification of KCC and private gates, stiles etc.
6. Seek to improve access by considering ways of speeding up the replacement of stiles with gates, recommend targets for doing so, and look at ways of helping landowners in making required changes.”

- (2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the substantive motion set out in paragraph 2 to the vote. The voting was as follows:

For (17)

Mr M Baldock, Mr S R Campkin, Mr P C Cooper, Ms M Dawkins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr P M Harman, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr A Kennedy, Rich Lehmann, Mr B H Lewis, Ms J Meade, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan, Mr R J Thomas

Against (45)

Mrs L Game (Chairman), Mr G Cooke (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr D Beaney, Mr C Beart, Mrs C Bell, Mr T Bond, Mr A Booth, Mr A Brady, Mr S R Campkin, Mr T Cannon, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mrs P T Cole, Mr P Cole, Mr N J Collor, Mr P C Cooper, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr D S Daley, Ms M Dawkins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr M Dendor, Mr R W Gough, Ms K Grehan, Ms S Hamilton, Mr P M Harman, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr A Kennedy, Rich Lehmann, Mr B H Lewis, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Ms J Meade,

Mr J Meade, Mr D Murphy, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mrs L Parfitt-Reid, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr H Rayner, Mr O Richardson, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr D Robey, Mr D Ross, Mr A Sandhu, MBE, Mr T L Shonk, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr R J Thomas, Mr D Watkins, Mr A Weatherhead, Mr S Webb, Mr J Wright and Ms L Wright

Abstain (0)

Motion lost.

Motion for Time Limited Debate 2 – Home to School Transport

- (1) Mr Lehmann proposed, and Mr Baldock seconded the following motion for time-limited debate:

“This Council commits to changing the approach to providing free school transport so that if a child is accepted by their nearest Grammar school, KCC will consider it the nearest ‘appropriate school’ for the purposes of awarding home to school transport.”

Mr Watts clarified a point about the equality act.

- (2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the substantive motion set out in paragraph 2 to the vote. The voting was as follows:

For (19)

Mr M Baldock, Mr S R Campkin, Mr P C Cooper, Ms M Dawkins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms K Grehan, Mr P M Harman, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr A Kennedy, Rich Lehmann, Mr B H Lewis, Ms J Meade, Mrs L Parfitt-Reid, Mr T L Shonk, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan

Against (40)

Mrs L Game (Chairman), Mr G Cooke (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr D Beaney, Mr C Beart, Mrs C Bell, Mr T Bond, Mr A Booth, Mr A Brady, Mr S R Campkin, Mr T Cannon, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mrs P T Cole, Mr P Cole, Mr N J Collor, Mr P C Cooper, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr D S Daley, Ms M Dawkins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr M Dendor, Mr R W Gough, Ms K Grehan, Ms S Hamilton, Mr P M Harman, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr A Kennedy, Rich Lehmann, Mr B H Lewis, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Ms J Meade, Mr J Meade, Mr D Murphy, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mrs L Parfitt-Reid, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr H Rayner, Mr O Richardson, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr D Robey, Mr D Ross, Mr A Sandhu, MBE, Mr T L Shonk, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr R J Thomas, Mr D Watkins, Mr A Weatherhead, Mr S Webb, Mr J Wright and Ms L Wright

Abstain (2)

Mr T Cannon, Mr S Holden

Motion lost.

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CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL – 16 FEBRUARY 2022**NOTES of a meeting held using Microsoft Teams.**

PRESENT: Dirk Ross (Chairman), David Beaney, Dan Bride, Tom Byrne, Ian Chittenden (substitute for Trudy Dean), Gary Cooke, Alison Farmer, Lesley Game, Stephen Gray, Kelly Grehan, Sarah Hamilton, Sarah Hammond, Sarah Howell (substitute for Tony Doran), Margot McArthur, Nancy Sayer, Tracy Scott and Caroline Smith.

ALSO PRESENT: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, and Karly Muchmore, VSK Apprentice.

IN ATTENDANCE: Matt Dunkley (Corporate Director of Children Young People and Education), Jo Carpenter (Participation and Engagement Manager, Virtual School Kent), Maureen Robinson (Management Information Unit Service Manager), Christy Holden (Head of Strategic Commissioning, Children and Young People's Services), Theresa Grayell (Democratic Services Officer, Clerk) and Hayley Savage (Democratic Services Officer, Support Clerk)

1 Apologies and substitutes

Apologies for absence had been received from Rob Barton, Julianne Bayford, Charmaine Chapman, Trudy Dean, Tony Doran, Sophia Dunstan, Shellina Prendergast and Sharon Williams.

Ian Chittenden was present as a substitute for Trudy Dean and Sarah Howell as a substitute for Tony Doran

2 Chairman's Announcements

1. The Chairman announced that he intended to review the role and working practice of the Panel. He also hoped to involve a wider range of people and would be looking into how the Panel could work more closely with the 12 districts in Kent, perhaps by linking via Members who served on both District and County Councils.

3. Notes of the briefings of the Panel held on 15 September and 8 December 2021

1. These were accepted as sensible summaries of the proceedings. There was nothing arising from them.

4. Performance Scorecard for Children in Care

1. Maureen Robinson introduced the report and highlighted key areas of performance. She explained that the way of recording the number of initial health assessments (IHAs) completed on time had changed, and that future reporting would be of a 12-month rolling total. In November 2021, 94% of citizen children in care but only 25% of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) had their IHAs completed within the target time. As the cohorts of young people included in categories were small, for example, the number of young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), there was a narrow margin between a red and green

rating. Maureen, Sarah Hammond and Matt Dunkley then responded to comments and questions from the Panel, including the following:-

- a) asked to what extent staff shortages contributed to performance, and what could be done to minimise the impact, Sarah explained that there was no shortage of adoption social workers and that the adoption process was started by prospective adopters rather than by staff. The current delays in cases being heard were caused by waiting lists at courts and by more complex cases, for example, adoptions of sibling groups. Delays were largely out of the control of the Council; and
- b) Nancy Sayer added that Kent had to complete a larger number of IHAs as the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) had been slow in transferring children to other local authorities, which would otherwise have taken on the responsibility of undertaking IHAs for those children. Some had moved on in the NTS before they could attend their Kent appointment, and those appointments could not always be reallocated to other young people, losing some capacity. In setting appointments, no differentiation was made between citizen children and UASC; they were allocated strictly on a first-come, first-served basis. Medical staff carrying out IHAs also had other workloads so could offer limited IHA appointments, and limited transport facilities, for example, from the Millbank centre, affected the ability of young people there to attend appointments. Sarah suggested that one way to help ease the problem would be to list the NTS cohort separately to show a more detailed picture. Nancy added that every effort was made to make the process as brisk as possible but this did not show up in the way data was currently reported.

2. It was RESOLVED that the performance data set out be noted, with thanks.

5 Participation Team update

1. Jo Carpenter introduced Karly Muchmore, who had joined the team as a new apprentice, and advised that there would shortly be more vacancies in the team, including for a young person who had experience of, and could support other young people going through, the adoption process. It was planned also that more young people would join the Children Who Care group of sons and daughters of foster carers. The week of 7th to 11th February had been National Apprenticeship Week.

2. Tom Byrne showed a video of young people enjoying half-term engagement events and activities, which was welcomed by Panel members, as the team's films had been on previous occasions, as an excellent way of seeing the activities provided and the obvious enjoyment and benefit they brought to so many young people. Asked how well events were spread, and offered opportunities, across the whole county, Jo advised that it was difficult to suit everyone in all areas. The team was trialling some Saturday morning 'taster' session to encourage young people to try something new, as part of the Reconnect programme, with a hope that they would then be interested to join future events in their area.

3. Karly told the Panel about her experiences of being a Virtual School Kent (VSK) Apprentice since joining the team in July 2021. She had attended and helped organise participation events and had taken part in interview panels. This involvement had encouraged her to leave her comfort zone and she had enjoyed the new challenges this had brought. She said she had had a good supportive social worker when she had been in care, who had helped her to look ahead and think about what she wanted to do in the future, and from this experience she was now sure that she wanted to go into social work as a career.

4. Asked if all apprentices completed their training, Jo advised that, in the 10 years that the scheme had run, almost all of the 32 young people had completed their training successfully. Those who had not completed it had found that it was not the right thing for them or had many other things going on in their lives at that time and felt unable to focus on or commit to it sufficiently. Some starting an apprenticeship had not known at the time what they wanted to do and had been able to learn skills which would help them to build an idea of their strengths and weaknesses and decide what work they might want to do in the future. New Apprentices joined the team at different times and those who were more experienced could help and support newer ones.

5. Asked if care leavers were made aware of the wider apprenticeship options available in the Council, Jo advised that they were always told about other opportunities and, pre-covid, a corporate parenting 'roadshow' would engage all directorates to make them aware that care leavers would be seeking opportunities. Caroline Smith added that a big Apprenticeship event for care leavers would take place on 11 April, at which employers would be able to engage with young people who may be interested in joining them.

6. Regarding other future activity, Jo set out plans for the 16+ Awards on 21 July, which Members were invited to attend, and plans for Easter holiday activities.

7. It was RESOLVED that the update be noted, with thanks.

6 Challenge Card Update

1. Jo Carpenter introduced the report and set out progress on past challenges and a new challenge about care leavers being able to join the housing register in any district of the county. Sarah Hammond set out the process for registering and said that the aim was for a young person to be able to be 'a resident of all 12 districts'. Matt Dunkley added that 'twin hatter' Members who also served on district councils could help by championing the project and encouraging all district housing departments to take the same supportive approach to care leavers.

2. The Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, Sue Chandler, said that she was also a twin hatter and had supported the establishment of such a project for some time, and she warmly welcomed and accepted the challenge set out in the report. She undertook to liaise with the Panel Chairman, the Council Leader and twin hatter Members to move this forward.

3. Another twin hatter pointed out that some districts would not be keen to be compelled to consider an application from any care leaver across the county as they would compete with local people for very limited housing stock, particularly for social or affordable housing.

4. The Panel's support for the challenge was welcomed as it affected many young people and finding suitable accommodation was often raised by care leavers as a problem and a major source of anxiety. Currently, many young people had their housing applications rejected as they had not lived in an area long enough to be eligible.

5. It was RESOLVED that the progress of former challengers be noted, and the new challenge be welcomed and supported.

7 Verbal Update by the Cabinet Member

1. Sue Chandler welcomed Karly and thanked her for her contribution to her first Panel meeting. She also thanked the participation team for another excellent report and video. She then gave an update on the following issues:-

Young People's Mental Health Week – the 'Grow Together' project sought to help young people to build their emotional resilience by considering and highlighting the resources and support the Council could offer them, including the work of the Kent Resilience Hub, Thrive bubbles and signposting and support to access services delivered by other providers.

'Reachable Moments' project – a pilot project was being run in Ramsgate by the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital, to engage at first hand with young people who were experiencing violence and support them to seek mediation. Dan Bride advised that the funding available for this project would end in 2022 but could be extended for three more years. The project involved the Police, the Youth Justice service and other partners. The VRU also had new funding to undertake needs analysis work, and it was suggested that they be asked to attend a future meeting of the Panel to talk about their work.

'Moving Forward' care leavers' project – also a pilot project running in Thanet, providing support and assistance to young people in two age groups – those aged 16/17, as they transitioned to adult services, and those aged 18-25 as they prepared to leave care.

Nurture accreditation – VSK had achieved this prestigious accreditation and was the first virtual school in the UK to do so. This was a very significant achievement and Tony Doran and his team were warmly congratulated. It was hoped that the Kent team could help virtual schools elsewhere in the country to strive for and achieve this accreditation.

Reconnect Digital Inclusion Support Offer – this sought to establish an access pathway for young people aged 14-18 who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), to support them back into learning. Each would be given their own

electronic device and a 4G router, for which they could apply via the Digital Kent website.

2. It was RESOLVED that the update be noted, with thanks.

8 Corporate Parenting Annual Report November 2020 - November 2021

1. Caroline Smith introduced the report, which was dedicated to the memory of former Panel Chairman, Ann Allen, as she had been instrumental in establishing it. Caroline highlighted the key milestones covered in the report, including the Christmas gift appeal for all care leavers, which had exceeded its total to raise £23,000, with a very large donation being made by Gallagher Ltd, a local building company. It was hoped that next year's campaign could start earlier and be spread wider to raise even more money.

2. It was hoped that Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 could be marked by issuing every young person in care in Kent with a meaningful memento of this unique historic event.

3. It was RESOLVED that the Panel note and welcome the annual report and their responsibilities as corporate parents.

9 Missing Episodes - Performance Report

1. Dan Bride introduced the report, which was welcomed and commended for its content and clarity, and highlighted key areas of work. She emphasised that missing episodes among citizen children were rare and that most young people who had missing episodes were UASC and mostly young men. Most missing episodes were for one day or less but needed to be logged as such, even if a young person were just late coming home. The very few longer missing episodes raised more concerns. These were all among young male UASC. Young people returning from being missing were asked to take part in a return interview, as part of nationally issued guidance, and although participation in these was not compulsory, more interviews now took place than did previously.

2. A Panel member who had previously worked as a probation officer spoke of her experience and suggested that shops and cafes could be made aware of the issues faced by young people who go missing and be asked to look out for any young person causing concern. They could be supplied with leaflets to hand to a young person, setting out some guidance and a contact number to call for support. Dan added that a new multi-agency initiative called Community Shield sought to provide safe spaces for young people to go to, where they could be met by a trained and vetted support worker. This was welcomed, and she undertook to share details of the scheme with all Panel members so they could share them across the county.

3. Dan responded to comments and questions from the Panel and advised that:
 - a) more information was now recorded than previously about the nature and causes of missing episodes. They could take many forms, including

staying out beyond curfew to see friends or a boyfriend/girlfriend without permission or the approval of carers;

- b) a 'buddy' for young people who often go missing and have complex and deep-seated reasons for doing so could offer a first contact in a crisis and could start to help them talk about and work through difficult feelings;
- c) professionals, including the Police, who find and speak to young missing people are reminded that the issue at hand is, first and foremost, one of safety and concern for the young person's welfare and wellbeing; and
- d) the idea of a pocket-sized 'contact card' which could be easily and discreetly packed and carried was welcomed and would be explored as a project with the VSK Apprentices, so young people could have input into its content and design.

4. It was RESOLVED that the update be noted, with thanks.

10 Virtual School Kent (VSK) Annual Report

- 1. Panel Members were asked to email any questions and comments about this report direct to the report author for a response.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL – 13 APRIL 2022

NOTES of a meeting held using Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT: Dirk Ross (Chairman), Rob Barton, Julianne Bayford, David Beaney, Dan Bride, Charmaine Chapman, Gary Cooke, Tony Doran, Alison Farmer, Stephen Gray, Margot McArthur, Nancy Sayer, Tracy Scott, Caroline Smith and Sharon Williams.

ALSO PRESENT: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services.

IN ATTENDANCE: Matt Dunkley (Corporate Director of Children Young People and Education), Jo Carpenter (Participation and Engagement Manager, Virtual School Kent), Sharon Howard (Assistant Director, Disabled Children and Young People's Service), Chris Nunn (Senior Management Information Officer), Christy Holden (Head of Strategic Commissioning, Children and Young People's Services), Joel Cook (Democratic Services Manager) and Theresa Grayell (Democratic Services Officer, Clerk).

1 Apologies and substitutes

Apologies for absence had been received from Lesley Game, Kelly Grehan, Sarah Hamilton and Sarah Hammond. There were no substitutes.

2 Chairman's Announcements

1. The Chairman added to his comments made at the previous meeting about strengthening the role of the Panel and working more closely with the 12 districts in Kent, perhaps by linking via Members who served on both District and County Councils, to support activity between Panel meetings.

3. Performance Scorecard for Children in Care

1. Chris Nunn introduced the report and, with Matt Dunkley and Caroline Smith, responded to comments and questions from the Panel, including the following:-

- a) asked if any areas of performance were still affected by covid, and if there was anything the County Council could do to address these, Matt advised that the areas in which performance caused most concern were, as previously, health assessment for children in care and adoption proceedings. Both of these areas continued to experience delays unrelated to covid issues. Caroline advised that most delayed adoption proceedings were already in progress but had been delayed by the need to request more information. As they were already in progress, there was no option to move them to any other court in the county which might have a shorter backlog; and
- b) asked to what extent the longstanding challenges with the Judiciary continued to affect the backlog of adoption cases, Caroline advised that the rate of cases heard, pre-covid, had been good, so the issues with the Judiciary had been largely overcome. In the last year, almost 100 adoption

cases had been heard. Asked for a comparison of the number of adoption plans and actual completed adoptions, Caroline advised that this data was recorded and could be supplied to the Panel at its next meeting. Matt advised that there were three areas of possible delays for adoption hearings – the Judiciary, problems securing legal representation and logistical problems around arranging virtual or in-person meetings. Work was ongoing with Invicta Law to improve the first two, and a possible next step to address backlogs would be to lobby the President of the Family Division, Lord Justice McFarlane.

2. It was RESOLVED that the information set out in the report and given in response to comments and questions be noted, with thanks.

4 Disabled Children and Young People’s Service Briefing about Children in Care

1. The Assistant Director of Disabled Children and Young People’s Service, Sharon Howard, introduced the report and emphasised that children with disabilities made up only a small percentage of Kent’s children in care but had complex care needs. The report set out the facilities available for them, for example, short breaks and specialist foster carers for disabled children. Sharon presented two case studies of children and described the services they had accessed to meet their needs. Sharon and Caroline Smith then responded to comments and questions from the Panel, including the following:-

- a) asked about the challenges in attracting specialist foster carers and adopters for disabled children, Sharon advised that the team campaigned by visiting special schools and regular open days, by using Facebook, and was reviewing the premium paid to foster carers to cover additional costs of looking after disabled children. Support services for such foster carers were bespoke, wrap-around and available 24 hours a day. Apart from the right caring skills, potential foster carers needed to have sufficient space in their homes to accommodate a disabled child’s physical needs, and suitable adaptations could be costly and take time to make. Christy Holden and Sharon Williams added that the team was working with the Kent Housing Group to help foster carers and adopters to adapt their properties; and
- b) asked about the NEST respite programme and the cost-effectiveness of using an external service rather than trying to provide it in-house, Sharon advised that the 6-bed NEST unit in Hextable was run by Clinical Commissioning Group colleagues.

2. The Chairman stated his intention to visit teams in all areas of the county to meet staff and see their work at first hand.

3. It was RESOLVED that the information set out in the report and given in response to comments and questions be noted, with thanks.

5 Participation Team update

1. Jo Carpenter introduced the update report and told the Panel of the busy programme of Easter events currently going on. Three apprentices would shortly be moving on from the team after completing Level 3 NVQ in Public Service Delivery. Cheyenne Ali would be moving on to work as a Youth Development Officer at a charity and Charmaine Chapman and Alex Gordon would be staying with the County Council to work in business support and as a support worker at Millbank, respectively.

2. Rob Barton and Charmaine Chapman updated the Panel on recent activities and engagement events and showed films of young people enjoying February half-term events. In one activity, young people had been asked what made them happy or sad, and what would help them feel better when they were feeling down. The Chairman thanked Rob and Charmaine for another excellent film and congratulated the team on their work.

3. Matt announced that he was also moving on as he would retire from the County Council at the end of May. He thanked those departing apprentices for their work and the support and encouragement they gave to other young people in care and leaving care and wished them good luck for the future. He asked Charmaine to say what was the most important thing she had learnt as an apprentice and what was the most important thing a corporate parent could do to support young people in their care. Charmaine said she had learnt that adults really care about young people and asked them just to carry on showing this care. Jo added that the two apprentices staying with the County Council would be able to use the skills they had learnt to benefit the Council and could continue to spread the message about the value of the corporate parenting role to other young people in the care system.

4. The Chairman asked how new apprentices would be identified when vacancies arose in the team, if there was a waiting list and if young people were 'talent-spotted' for the role. Jo advised that to get young people into apprentice roles in the County Council, there would need to be sufficient suitable entry-level jobs for them to enter, but it seemed reasonable to give young people leaving care the first pick of apprenticeships. Matt added that the Council did all it could to help young people leaving its care to find suitable employment but would review its pathways to ensure that the experience was as good as it could be and that everything that could be done was being done.

5. It was RESOLVED that the update be noted, with thanks.

6 Verbal Update by the Cabinet Member

1. The Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, Sue Chandler, congratulated the apprentices who were moving on from the Participation team and said she was pleased that some at least would be staying with the County Council. She also praised the quality of the film shown of participation events. She then gave an update on the following issues:-

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Green Paper – this had been launched on 5 April, identified three main challenges and sought greater inclusion of

mainstream schools in SEND provision as well as greater investment in SEND services. There was much consultation to be undertaken and it would take time for new work to come to fruition, but the Green Paper was a step in the right direction.

Reconnect – the County Council’s Reconnect programme had been listed as a finalist for both the Local Government Chronical and the Municipal Journal awards, which recognised the hard work and dedication of the Reconnect team. She recorded her thanks to all staff involved in this great achievement.

Spirit of Triangle Awards – these would be held in person this year, and it was always a great pleasure to meet the winners, their families and foster carers and hear their thoughts and hopes for the future.

Education, Training and Employment event – this would take place on 28 April and would give Members an opportunity to look at real life case studies and talk about opportunities available to young people.

Visit to Sandwich Junior School – this visit, with the Panel Chairman and County Council Chairman, had included the planting of a ‘green canopy’ of trees to mark Her Majesty the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. The aim was to plant 1,800 trees across the county during the Jubilee year, one for every child in care in Kent. Young people would care for and nurture the trees to ensure they reached maturity.

2. Sue advised the Panel that this was Matt’s last meeting of the Panel before his retirement at the end of May. She thanked him on behalf of the children and young people of Kent for his huge contribution to making their experience of the care system as good as it could be. He would be greatly missed. Matt responded to say that Kent’s children and young people in care were in good hands and would thrive.

3. Sue was asked how the success of the Reconnect programme and the skills and lessons learn from it could be used elsewhere in the Council’s work. Kent had been lucky to have had one-off funding at the time to launch the project, and it would need to continue now with less funding. Sue advised that much partnership work had been involved in it and this had been very valuable. It was hoped that work could continue, with an assessment of how it could be delivered with reduced funding. Reports on progress and performance could be reported to the Children’s, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee and the Scrutiny Committee.

4. Asked about the effect of the covid pandemic upon the mental health and wellbeing of young people and how and when the full impact of this might be able to be measured, so that needs could be assessed and met, Sue agreed that this was an issue of most concern. Mental health issues and progress on support initiatives would be monitored by Clinical Commissioning Group partners as part of the integrated health system and reported to the Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee.

5. It was RESOLVED that the updates be noted, with thanks.

From: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services
Sarah Hammond, Interim Corporate Director Children, Young people and Education

To: County Council – 14 July 2022

Subject: OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in Kent under the Inspecting Local Authority Children's services (ILACs) framework took place over a 3 week period in May 2022. Kent's last inspection in 2017 found Kent was providing "Good" services to children. This meant that any further inspection under the ILACS framework should have taken place over two weeks. In February 2022, Kent was informed by Ofsted that in accordance with a change in policy, when inspected, a full standard 3 week inspection would take place, taking into account special circumstances for "Good" authorities. The size of Kent qualified for such special circumstances and so Kent was subject to the most rigorous inspection framework involving seven Ofsted inspectors reviewing all aspects of the Council's statutory safeguarding, corporate parenting and family support functions. On 5th July 2022, Ofsted published their ILACs report rating Kent County Council 'Outstanding' for overall effectiveness in providing children's services.

Recommendation(s):

County Council is asked to NOTE the content of the report and the significant work of all the staff who contributed to this very positive outcome.

1. Outcome of the Inspection

- 1.1 On 5th July 2022, Ofsted published their ILACs report rating Kent County Council 'Outstanding' for overall effectiveness in providing children's services—the highest grade that can be awarded. The report is attached as appendix 1.
- 1.2 Within this overall rating, Ofsted graded KCC's children's services against three judgements:
- I. The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families – Outstanding
 - II. The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection – Good
 - III. The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers – Outstanding

2. Summary of the Ofsted report, including quotes directly from the report

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: - Outstanding

- 2.1 Ofsted found that in the face of the pandemic and high numbers of unaccompanied minors, “support for vulnerable children in Kent improved over a sustained period of time. Social work practice is consistently good and often better, meaning children are well protected and cared for”.
- 2.2 “The politicians in Kent County Council are committed to championing the needs of children and this is backed by sound financial investment. Alongside the director of children’s services and his senior management team, the lead member for children’s services and the head of paid services keep themselves well appraised of key challenges and service issues, exercising appropriate oversight and scrutiny. Council departments and sectors work together to ensure all their services positively impact on children who need the council’s support”.
- 2.3 “The local authority provides appropriate steer and brings strong leadership to the local multi-agency safeguarding partnership”. “The focus on learning from serious incidents persisted and is clearly evidenced”.
- 2.4 “Leaders successfully secured a whole-county housing protocol across the 12 district councils. However, leaders accept that the individual response to children aged 16 and 17 who are facing homelessness is an area which requires further work”.
- 2.5 “Leaders across Kent County Council demonstrate they are ambitious parents to children in their care”. “The recently appointed chair brings genuine care and passion to the role and a new perspective which builds on the successes of the previous chair”.
- 2.6 “The council routinely seeks to learn from children through online surveys, complaints and other mechanisms to hear their views”. “The Children in Care Council is routinely consulted and children are assured their voices are listened to”.
- 2.7 “Senior leaders and managers have access to an extensive array of performance information and data reports” and “quality assurance activities effectively shape organisational change and refresh practice, policy and learning”. “There is a strong focus on and a commitment to workforce development”.
- 2.8 “Workforce pressures in Kent present extreme challenges for senior leaders and managers. Leaders accept caseloads are too high in parts of the service and are not sustainable”. They take steps to alleviate workload pressures. Support strategies include “redirecting non-case-holding staff, assistant social workers and early help practitioners to provide consistent support with social work tasks”.

- 2.9 “All staff who spoke to inspectors were rightly proud of the work they do and proud of the progress they make with children and families to improve their situations. They speak highly and very positively about working in Kent, they ‘love’ working for Kent, and they feel supported by their colleagues and valued by managers. Most say they are provided with regular, reflective individual and case supervision, which helps them drive forward plans for children and explore the challenges and barriers which may prevent progress being made”. Staff feel they have “excellent training and opportunities for further development and career progression. Many staff have worked for Kent for many years”.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: – Good

- 2.10 Workers from the Early Help and social work teams spend time getting to know the children they work with; they try to understand the difficulties they and their parents are facing to come up with a good plan to support them.
- 2.11 When families need help with the care of their children, or there are worries about the safety of a child, they get good help and support from children’s social care services.
- 2.12 Workers are good at contacting family friends and other family members who are important to children to see if they can help to support children and their parents. This support often helps children to remain in their own family and be supported by people they already know.
- 2.13 Inspectors observed workers do their best for children. Children are regularly visited by their workers to see how they are and to talk about things that are important to them. Social workers work together with children’s carers and others to ensure children feel safe and live in homes which meet their needs
- 2.14 Unaccompanied Asylum- Seeking Children are given somewhere to live, they are provided with good care and support to help them to settle in this country and to make good progress. Even when capacity is reached, Kent still has a strong focus on vulnerability of the young people.
- 2.15 Elective home education is a trend rising over time – appropriately robust measures are in place for contacting families who elect to home educate, providing support when needed and monitoring over time. When it is in the best interest of the child, they provide appropriate support and challenge to return children to school.
- 2.16 Although Ofsted did not identify any inadequate experiences of children’s services or that required improvement during the inspection, individual responses to some children aged 16 and 17 who were potentially facing homelessness is an area which requires further work. This in addition to high social work caseloads which ultimately prevented Kent being awarded Outstanding for this category.

The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers – Outstanding

- 2.17 Ofsted found that “children come into Kent County Council’s care when this is the most appropriate plan for them. For most children, this happens in a

planned and timely way. Children are supported to live in homes, including adoptive homes, with their brothers and sisters when this meets their wishes and is in their best interests". "Most children leave care in a positive and planned way, either through achieving permanence or returning home to live with their parent".

- 2.18 "Children's need for long-term stability and emotional security is well understood and embedded in the culture of children's social work teams. Children's long-term living arrangements are considered early and permanence planning arrangements keep permanence plans on track and enable children to understand they can stay and feel settled where they live".
- 2.19 "Review meeting records are addressed and written to the child. There is a strong commitment to ensuring review meetings are tailored individually to each child. Children spoke about being able to chair their review meetings, with feedback including this 'sometimes works well and sometimes doesn't work so well'. Children told inspectors their reviews and other meetings frequently take place at school during lesson time, which meant that they sometimes missed lessons they really like".
- 2.20 "Children are only placed in unregistered placements if the authority is not able to find appropriate placements which are registered to meet these children's complex needs. These arrangements are rightly considered as unlawful and highly monitored by senior leaders, with higher levels of visiting and support as efforts are made to promote and ensure registration or move children on".
- 2.21 "Disabled children and young people who are in the care of the local authority are provided with exceptional support from their social workers, whose care and commitment shines through their work".
- 2.22 "Kent routinely employs care experienced adults as young apprentices in the council's participation service. Several young people have successfully completed their apprenticeships and are now in employment with the service. The impact they have is a particular strength of the council".
- 2.23 Care Leavers:-Passionate and committed workers who know their young person, making a positive impact on other lives building relationships with their young person. Workers are invested in young people's success. UASC Care Leavers: great support with their immigration status, in terms of their application and ensure interpreters are involved. Support is tailored to their needs. Workers share the frustration around the immigration status of the young people
- 2.24 Fostering services:- Inspectors praised the approach used to support our foster carers, with mentoring, training, skills to foster and good incentives. This is a very respectful and empowering way to develop people's skills, leading to strong retention of carers and a high number of children placed within KCC placements.
- 2.25 Adoption partnership: Inspectors noted good governance, regular feedback and really positive progress in the establishment of the partnership. The

service was assessed as being integrated, with more diversity, greater skills and knowledge, and a bigger pool of adopters now available.

- 2.26 Virtual School Kent:- Driven by sense of purpose, robust strategic relationships with SEN (special educational needs) service and with schools. Schools talk positively about the support they get from VSK.

3. Impact

- 3.1 Kent County Council is one of only 20 Local Authorities from a cohort of 154 in England to acquire an “Outstanding” rating. This is a very significant achievement and places Kent County Council firmly within the upper fifth of high performing authorities. This achievement is the culmination of more than 10 years’ work, which has taken our Children’s Services from Inadequate in 2010 to Outstanding in 2022. The impact for the safety and wellbeing of Kent’s children is very significant and provides a substantial platform from which the Council and the CYPE Directorate can now respond to other existing challenges and new Government ambitions for Children and Young People moving forward.
- 3.2 The Council should be proud of the work of all the staff who contributed to this very positive outcome.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 There are two specific areas of development in relation to Social Work caseloads and children aged 16 and 17 who are facing homelessness which will be taken forward. An action plan will be produced by November 2022, although work has already begun in addressing both areas with over 60 newly qualified social workers joining the council over the next two months.
- 4.2 Whilst delighted with the outcome of the May Inspection, Children’s Services will continue to strive for improvement, consolidating areas of strong practice to ensure all children in Kent consistently benefit from high quality social care and early help support when it is required.

5. Recommendations:

- 9.1 County Council is asked to NOTE the content of the report and the significant work of all the staff who contributed to this very positive outcome.

10. Background Documents

None

11. Contact details

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Inspection of Kent County Council children's services

Inspection dates: 9 to 20 May 2022

Lead inspector: Margaret Burke, Her Majesty's Inspector

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding

Children are at the centre of Kent County Council's culture and practice. This has enabled more of its children to benefit from services which are of a consistently good standard, resulting in positive outcomes for them and their families. Outstanding practice is evident for children in care and care experienced young people as they clearly benefit from the support they receive and make good progress.

Senior leaders have taken effective action in the areas identified at the last inspection in 2017. Progress is evident in all the areas identified for improvement, but further work is required to strengthen the response to homeless young people aged 16 and 17 years. Senior leaders have also taken the required steps to make improvements in the areas identified at the focused visit in 2019, strengthening the responses to children at the 'front door' of their services and ensuring children are quickly directed to the most appropriate services. More recent challenges relate to high social work caseloads in some frontline teams. Steps are being taken to manage and reduce the negative impact of this rise on Kent's children and their families and on the staff who work closely with them.

The work to improve services continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders successfully managed additional pressures, adjusting services effectively to ensure they continued to serve children and their families. Staff have been supported to manage the impact of the pandemic on them personally and to continue to manage changes to their working practices.

Kent children's services have had to respond to the unparalleled numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving in the county. The management of this additional workload has resulted in senior leaders contributing significantly to the national response while also continuing to manage local services effectively across a large county council with 12 districts. At times, the local and national demands have been challenging to balance. Senior leaders and frontline staff have responded well to these exceptional pressures on service delivery. As a result, the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children Kent County Council takes responsibility for are well cared for and services for all vulnerable children in Kent have continued to improve.

What needs to improve?

- The practice of conducting visits to children during school hours, resulting in them missing lessons.
- Manageable caseloads and workload support for social workers and their managers.
- The response and the quality of assessment of need for young people aged 16 and 17 years who present as homeless.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: good

1. Children and their families have access to a good range of early help support services. Early help practitioners base their work on the development of purposeful relationships and creative direct work to gain a sound understanding of the child's voice, wishes and feelings within their family network. Most families are swiftly supported through strength-based interventions to build resilience and make changes to improve their children's and family's experiences. Effective communication with other professionals ensures children's progress is reviewed, and support is refined to best meet their needs. As intervention concludes, a structured framework of moving forward plans provides families with guidance and information to continue to help themselves. When progress is not evident or circumstances change, the interface between early help and statutory social work services is clear and work is appropriately transferred between services to ensure a prompt response.
2. The response to requests for help from children's social care is effective. Children's needs and concerns about their welfare are identified and responded to swiftly by practitioners in the front door and the out-of-hours services. Thresholds are appropriately applied, and there is evidence of thorough management oversight and guidance at this stage, leading to timely and effective follow-up action for the vast majority of children. The work in the front door of services is supported by strong and supportive practitioner relationships within the team and with partners including health, education and police. These positively inform initial decision-making and the management of risk of harm.
3. When there are concerns about risk of harm to children, these are urgently responded to by the multi-agency network, with thorough exploration of

immediate risk and concerns. This leads to children being promptly and appropriately safeguarded. Children are seen and spoken to, and appropriate steps are taken to gain parental consent and to ensure parents are kept updated.

4. Since the last inspection, leaders have successfully secured the agreement of all 12 district councils for a whole-county housing protocol for homeless 16- and 17-year-olds. Despite considerable progress in this area, there are still some children aged 16 and 17 facing homelessness who do not receive a timely or effective response. The assessment of their circumstances does not routinely explore or take into consideration all their needs and circumstances to ensure that appropriate support is provided at the earliest opportunity.
5. Social workers undertake a range of assessments to understand the needs and experiences of children and their families and to help inform plans to positively progress change in their situation. Assessments are informative and dynamic, with good consideration of historical information, need and risk. They are helpfully explicit in highlighting worries, concerns and strengths. While children's individual identity needs are described in their assessments, more is needed to ensure they are explored sufficiently and lead to tangible actions to meet these needs within their plans. Plans for children are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes and progress. These then inform and guide meaningful multi-agency work with families. Stronger examples of plans seen were written directly to children, with clarity about goals; weaker plans mostly related to child in need arrangements, and did not explore all needs identified by the assessment and lacked clarity regarding action. While system sign-off by managers indicates their oversight of records, managers' comments, guidance and steer are not always evident on these forms.
6. The work of the children and families social work teams is generally of good quality. Children make progress and their situations improve through sensitive, intensive and focused work with families. Families are helped to identify support and make the changes needed to meet their children's needs. Social workers demonstrate strong engagement with children and their families, persisting even when working with parents in challenging situations.
7. There is generally good consideration of the work that needs to be done and the progress that needs to be achieved during the pre-proceedings stages of the Public Law Outline and in the Family Drug and Alcohol Court. In both, families receive intensive support to enable them to provide ongoing care for their children. Social workers also actively consider all viable options. Family group conferencing is regularly used to support purposeful planning and consideration of help from wider family and friends' networks. If children's circumstances do not improve within set timeframes and children are unable to remain at home, there is full exploration of family members who are willing and able to provide care.
8. Most children are seen regularly by social workers or support workers. Their workers show personal warmth and use a wide range of direct-work tools to assist and support children, including those who are very young, to express

their views. Parents who spoke to inspectors were unanimously positive about their engagement with social workers and the support they receive.

9. Many social workers in the children's social work teams, disabled children, and young people's teams, including some workers in their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), currently have high caseloads. Some social workers indicated that their workload is manageable and most say they are well supported by their line managers and teams. Social workers acknowledged that high caseloads impacted on their ability to carry out some of the additional tasks they would like to do with families and to sustain and maintain up-to-date children's case records. For most children, the higher caseloads carried by their social workers have not had a direct negative impact on their experiences. However, it is fully acknowledged by leaders that high levels of complex and demanding case work are not sustainable for social workers and their managers. Workers generally receive regular supervision, which supports them and their work. While management oversight of frontline practice and decision-making is stronger and more consistent in work where there is evidence of significant concern and risk, it is not regular or effective enough to oversee all case work and avoid drift in plans for a small number of children.
10. Social workers have a good understanding of domestic abuse, substance misuse and poor mental health, recognising the risk, harm and the possible impact on children. Appropriate and timely action is taken to protect children in these families. The impact of long-term neglect and trauma on children's development is well understood and workers make good use of the multi-agency network, referring families to specialist services that work effectively with victims and perpetrators to keep children safe.
11. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that children in private fostering arrangements are safeguarded effectively. The impact of COVID-19 has resulted in reduced numbers of children in these arrangements, and the range of private fostering awareness-raising activity continues. Clear arrangements for notification, backed by specialist advice and support, ensure that private fostering assessments include all the required safeguarding checks and keep children's welfare at their core. Children are visited in line with requirements, permanence is considered throughout and these arrangements are routinely reviewed within timescale.
12. When children go missing, most receive a clear and timely response. Following their return, children are offered an opportunity to talk to either their own social worker or a worker from the adolescent or early help team, when the reason for going missing is explored and support offered. For a small number of these children, not enough professional curiosity is shown in these discussions, and they are not thorough enough in the consideration of risks and influences.
13. By working in partnership with leading academics and authorities since the last inspection, Kent County Council has made considerable improvements to responses, services and support to children at risk of contextualised harm. Children who are identified as being at risk of contextualised harm are well supported by the adolescent team and county-wide services, who are

responsive in times of crisis, offering flexible opening times, including working at evenings and weekends. The adolescent team workers fully consider risks and influences for these children, enabling them and others to better manage risk and minimise harm while supporting the child and their family. The range of support on offer is tailored to children's needs, and might include telephone support, direct work with young people or outreach. For some children, it simply involves taking them to school. The response has enabled children to be supported earlier, thereby avoiding further harm and resulting in improved outcomes for many.

14. Appropriately robust measures are in place for making contact with families who elect to home educate, providing support when needed and monitoring over time. When it is in the best interests of the child, they provide appropriate support and challenge to return children to school.
15. The number of pupils identified as not in full-time education in Kent is higher than the national average. This partly reflects the thorough approach taken, with a deliberate decision made to keep children's names on records, rechecking whether they are still out of education when all avenues have been exhausted. Officers have clear and suitably rigorous approaches to securing appropriate education for those who need it.

The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers: outstanding

16. Children come into Kent County Council's care when this is the most appropriate plan for them. For most children, this happens in a planned and timely way. Children are supported to live in homes, including adoptive homes, with their brothers and sisters when this meets their wishes and is in their best interests.
17. Clear processes and systems support the referral and coordination of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children transferring into the care of Kent County Council. Vulnerable children are identified and urgent concerns prioritised in collaboration with the Home Office, increasing safety and reducing risk for these children. Following referral to Kent, newly arrived unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are provided with support in line with their individual needs and accommodated in a timely way. Oversight of referrals, need and risks for this group of children, to ensure safety, child-focused services and placement planning, is successfully coordinated at both an operational and strategic management level.
18. Children's need for long-term stability and emotional security is well understood and embedded in the culture of children's social work teams. Children's long-term living arrangements are considered early and permanence planning arrangements, which are reviewed regularly by the professional network surrounding the child, keep permanence plans on track and enable children to understand that they can stay and feel settled where they live.

19. Social workers get to know the children they support and form positive relationships with them. They see children regularly and talk with them about things that are important to them. Social workers are persistent in maintaining relationships with children who live in homes outside the Kent County Council area. Independent reviewing officers (IROs) also maintain effective oversight of children out of area and monitor their progress, in addition to chairing their reviews.
20. Good attention is given to the cultural and identity needs of children in care, and these are thoughtfully and sensitively addressed. Social workers know how important family time is to children in care and skilfully plan ways in which arrangements can be promoted and managed safely in line with children's wishes, creating enduring support networks and family links.
21. Children's review meetings explore children's holistic needs and how being in care meets these needs. IROs lead high-quality reviews which, with their robust oversight and scrutiny of children's plans, actively prevent drift and delay. Review meeting records are addressed and written to the child. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that review meetings are tailored individually to each child. Children spoke about being able to chair their review meetings, with feedback including that this 'sometimes works well and sometimes doesn't work so well'. Children told inspectors that their reviews and other meetings frequently take place at school during lesson time, which meant that they sometimes missed lessons they really like.
22. When a child may need to move to a new home, their individual needs are well understood, enabling suitable well-matched placements to be identified for them to move to. Children are extremely well supported by their social workers through periods of transition and placement moves to ensure they secure the most well-matched long-term home. When possible, children are age-appropriately involved in assessing the suitability of their new carers.
23. Family group conferences provide the backbone to Kent's commitment to exploring homes for children within their extended family and friend networks. This enables social workers to find suitable homes, and for some children avoids the need to come into the authority's care. Kent's work with its connected carers is a strong area of practice, with thoughtful and sensitive assessments undertaken with those offering their homes to children. Fully assessed connected carers retain the same status and support given to other foster carers. Ongoing support, fees and allowances continue for carers on staying together plans when they secure special guardianship orders, enabling many children to exit care and secure permanence and security in familiar environments.
24. Adoption is appropriately considered if this is the right plan for children. Children are sensitively prepared and supported on their journey to adoption. Adopters are very positive about their training, preparation and support for them and their children. A small number of children have experienced delay in being supported with life-story work, but the quality of the life-story work when undertaken is of a high standard.

25. There is regular senior management scrutiny and oversight of those children and young people with complex needs who are placed in unregistered or unregulated settings.
26. Children are only placed in unregistered placements if the authority has not been able to find appropriate placements which are registered to meet these children's complex needs. These arrangements are rightly considered as unlawful and highly monitored by senior leaders, with higher levels of visiting and support as efforts are made to promote and ensure registration or move children on.
27. The vast majority of children in care we spoke to say that they feel safe where they live. Most children in care live in homes where they are supported to do well. Kent has higher than national numbers of children in its own provision, many of them in the care of experienced and long-standing foster carers. Positive experiences and progress are evident for many of Kent's children in care. Many children gain stability and feel part of their carer's family, re-engage in education and now have trusted support.
28. Foster carers are universally positive about their support, including from children's social workers. This also includes working with the virtual school, which is supportive, responsive and helpful in signposting carers towards enrichment activities that match children's interests and needs.
29. Disabled children and young people who are in the care of the local authority are provided with exceptional support from their social workers, whose care and commitment shines through their work. Children are supported to remain in contact with their family even when they do not live with them. Written notes of visits show lovely rich communication with children using a wide range of styles, including some as basic as touch and reading facial expressions. This communication helps build strong trusting relationships. Children's needs are championed to ensure that they get the best care and support.
30. Most children leave care in a positive and planned way, either through achieving permanence or returning home to live with their parent. Decisions regarding children being placed with parents are made following a full assessment, when this is the best option for the child. These children are seen regularly by their social workers. Arrangements are kept under review to ensure that they continue to meet children's needs and to consider the discharge of the care order.
31. Children's health needs, including up-to-date dentist and optician appointments, are well considered, despite delays caused by the pandemic. Children are supported to enjoy interests and encouraged to take up hobbies. Children told us they would like more sensitivity shown in language used, particularly at school, or in relation to anything that might show that they are in care, such as wearing a council lanyard on visits out with them and in meetings at school during school hours.
32. Virtual school leaders are driven by a sense of purpose and ambition for children in care in Kent. They are the first virtual school to be awarded the

National Nurturing Schools programme award, which recognises practice that is central to their work. They are supported by a well-considered infrastructure of workers that helps to provide consistency across the county. Their work to offer training and support to schools around relevant issues such as trauma is a particular strength. Schools are positive about the high quality of support they and their pupils receive from the virtual school.

33. Personal education plans are fit for purpose, although leaders recognise where they could be more explicit, for example in capturing the voice of the child and the foster carers. Through strong support, most pupils are on track to achieve appropriate academic outcomes.
34. Care experienced young people receive ongoing and regular support that helps them to make progress. Personal advisers (PAs) invest time in building relationships with the young people they support. PAs know the young people they work with well, and for many young people these supportive relationships are maintained until they reach the age of 25. The Lifelong Links service is used by young people to make contact or safely re-engage with extended family members and other significant people they have lost contact with, to develop these relationships and build networks that will extend beyond their time in care.
35. PAs demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of cultural identity and responding to young people's individual needs. They recognise the importance for many young people, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, of living in communities which reflect their faith, culture and language, and respond positively to these needs.
36. Trusted and reliable relationships are at the core of the support provided to care leavers. Care experienced young people are supported to be proud of their achievements and to celebrate their passions and hobbies. PAs are passionate and speak with sensitivity about the challenges some care experienced young people have faced and how they have overcome these.
37. Pathway plans contain the young person's voice and demonstrate their involvement in creating their plans. A strength-based focus draws out positive elements and strengths for young people, as their needs are identified and are pulled together into a relevant plan of support.
38. Skilfully tailored packages of support help redress the impact of early trauma and limited educational opportunities. This support enables care experienced young people to continue to develop their skills and confidence and to access work and education opportunities. Performance data confirms Kent has higher numbers of care experienced young people than other areas who have successfully gained entry to college, university degree courses or employment, despite sometimes significant gaps in their educational history.
39. Most young people are living in appropriate accommodation, including staying put arrangements. There are various accommodation options available, which range from shared accommodation or supported lodgings to housing from a core group of providers. However, the quality of these placements varies. When

it is known that a young person's accommodation no longer meets their needs, they are supported to find alternatives. There are still recognised challenges in some districts which prevent care experienced young people from having timely access to public housing post-18. The authority continues to seek ways to address this.

40. Care experienced young people continue to be supported after the age of 21 by PAs who provide an invaluable degree of emotional and practical support. This includes ongoing support to unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, those who are parents and need additional support, and young people who have additional vulnerabilities and health needs. Care experienced young people in custody are also supported well and have regular contact and visits from PAs.
41. Kent routinely employs care experienced adults as young apprentices in the council's participation service. Several young people have successfully completed their apprenticeships and are now in employment with the service. The impact they have is a particular strength of the council.

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: outstanding

42. Despite the significant challenges created by the pandemic and the exceptional circumstances created by the need to safeguard and care for high numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, support for vulnerable children in Kent has improved over a sustained period of time. Social work practice is consistently good and often better, meaning children are well protected and cared for.
43. The politicians in Kent County Council are committed to championing the needs of children, including vulnerable children, and this is backed by sound financial investment. Alongside the director of children's services and his senior management team, the lead member for children's services and the head of paid services keep themselves well appraised of key challenges and service issues, exercising appropriate oversight and scrutiny. The council promotes corporate problem-solving and shared responsibility for its services. Council departments and sectors work together to ensure all their services positively impact on children who need the council's support.
44. Strategic and operational partnership working across the county council is a strength. Effective strategic plans form the foundations for practice and multi-agency working. Clear lines of accountability and effective governance arrangements track the operational impact services make for children. These arrangements include ongoing negotiations with strategic partners and government departments in order to continue to secure the best arrangements for Kent's children. This is well evidenced through Kent's negotiations with the Home Office to promote appropriate arrangements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in its area.

45. The local authority provides appropriate steer and has brought strong leadership to the local multi-agency safeguarding partnership, although there have been some recent challenges with consistency of membership and business support. Despite these challenges, the focus on learning from serious incidents has persisted and is clearly evidenced. For example, the recent work on non-accidental injuries in babies under one has led to service improvements and practice changes to ensure the safety of these children. Tackling child exploitation and child sexual exploitation is also high on the partnership's agenda. Services have been developed through partnership work with the University of Bedfordshire and peer reviews, leading to the development of an extensive multi-agency safeguarding response. Senior leaders, managers and partners track progress and outcomes for exploited children, and robust multi-agency frameworks underpin practice.
46. Leaders have successfully secured a whole-county housing protocol across the 12 district councils. However, leaders accept that the individual response to children aged 16 and 17 who are facing homelessness is an area which requires further work.
47. Leaders across Kent County Council demonstrate that they are ambitious parents to children in their care. The corporate parenting role is well embedded within the council. The recently appointed chair brings genuine care and passion to the role and a new perspective which builds on the successes of the previous chair. The pandemic did not deter the council from celebrating the successes of its children in care as it continued virtually with its annual awards ceremony to celebrate their achievements. Surprised and delighted children received unexpected visitors at their door with gifts, with photos and video taken to capture these moments and provide invaluable memories.
48. Children's participation is well promoted within the council. The council routinely seeks to learn from children through online surveys, complaints and other mechanisms to hear their views. Five distinct children and young people's groups cover different age ranges and include a group for foster and adopter family birth children, and together make up an active Children in Care Council. The Children in Care Council is routinely consulted and children are assured that their voices are listened to. Participation and engagement are supported by the very active, creative and vibrant participation team. Their reach is extensive, influencing local, regional and national agendas. The use of challenge cards has successfully led to corporate changes, generated by children and care experienced young adults.
49. Senior leaders and managers have access to an extensive array of performance information and data reports. These reporting frameworks are well established, and regularly scrutinised and tracked. They provide leaders, managers and workers with a comprehensive overview and insight into all aspects of work and performance across children's services.
50. Senior leaders use well-established quality assurance activities effectively to shape organisational change and refresh practice, policy and learning. The views of children and families are regularly sought, with over a third of service

users now responding to these processes. Staff use the opportunity to reflect on their practice, using appreciative inquiries to further understand the impact of their work with children, staff and within the organisation. While quality assurance processes are embedded and are a strength, they continue to evolve. Leaders have recognised the need for further fine tuning to provide additional practice challenge and to ensure that practice information and performance data correlate and provide consistent messages.

51. There is a strong focus on and a commitment to workforce development. Kent has a practice framework and culture which is based on shared values and behaviours. This is implicit in its workforce and learning events and is embedded and well understood by practitioners across the workforce. Through the academy, mandatory e-learning and a range of organised internal and external training events, staff and external partners have access to information, training and tools to strengthen them in their work to support children and their families. Area learning events and the child outcome analysis programme are among the range of organised activities which provide senior leaders with opportunities to hear staff give their views on issues that affect them in their work. Views which are heard are reflected, when appropriate, in future learning and service development.
52. Workforce pressures in Kent present extreme challenges for senior leaders and managers. Leaders accept that caseloads are too high in parts of the service and are not sustainable. Senior leaders report that caseloads began to rise in December 2021. They have taken and continue to take steps to alleviate workload pressures. In January 2022, leaders commissioned a review to help to better understand social work caseloads and distribution across the authority. This led, in April 2022, to an additional £1.4 million a year being allocated to increase the number of social work posts. The whole council has extended support and agreed special arrangements for children's services to exercise greater flexibility in sourcing locum staff. Additional peripatetic agency social work teams have recently been recruited to support work in key districts under the most pressure. Other support strategies have included redirecting non-case-holding staff, assistant social workers and early help practitioners to provide consistent support with social work tasks, including visits to children. Leaders are monitoring the impact on children and the welfare of and workforce pressures on their staff, and managers are adjusting their responses to ensure they are all well supported.
53. All staff who spoke to inspectors, including those with higher caseloads, were rightly proud of the work they do and proud of the progress they make with children and families to improve their situations. They speak highly and very positively about working in Kent, they 'love' working for Kent, and they feel supported by their colleagues and valued by managers. Most say they are provided with regular, reflective individual and case supervision, which helps them drive forward plans for children and explore the challenges and barriers which may prevent progress being made. Staff, including those in their ASYE, feel they have excellent training and opportunities for further development and career progression. Many staff have worked for Kent for many years.

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From: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

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

To: County Council – 14 July 2022

Subject: Review of the Headstart Kent Programme

Classification: Unrestricted

Future Pathway of Paper: Children's, young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 19 July 2022

Summary:

HeadStart Kent (HSK) has been an ambitious, Kent-wide programme which has influenced local and national learning about children and young people's emotional wellbeing. This report describes what has worked well, what impact has been made, and how the learning has secured the programme's legacy.

Fully funded by the National Lottery, Communities Fund, the programme has taken strategic steps in facilitating system change in schools and through community approaches to young people's mental health. This has been demonstrated by HSK providing tools, training, and resources to develop the workforce who support young people, and by ensuring a partnership approach and that coproduction with children and young people is embedded and championed throughout the system.

Building collaborative relationships whilst competently and efficiently delivering the programme has enabled HSK to succeed. Local and countywide sustainability planning and the sharing of evidence around 'what works' has enabled key elements of the programme to continue. Finally, the report identifies those elements of the programme where further support is required.

Recommendation(s):

The County Council are asked

- To note the success of the Headstart programme and the legacy of continued support for the mental wellbeing of children and young people in Kent

1. Introduction

- 1.1. HeadStart Kent was a six-year, £11.25 million programme, set up and funded by The National Lottery Community Fund to develop approaches which would support young people to build their resilience so they can cope with the everyday pressures they may face throughout their lives.
- 1.2. The mission of HeadStart Kent was that *“by 2020 (amended to 2022 as a result of Covid) “Kent’s young people and their families will have improved resilience, by developing their knowledge and lifelong skills to maximise their own and their peers’ emotional health and wellbeing; so, to navigate their way to support when needed in ways which work for them.”*
- 1.3. HeadStart Kent has focused on building a sustainable system where every young person in Kent should be able to say with confidence:

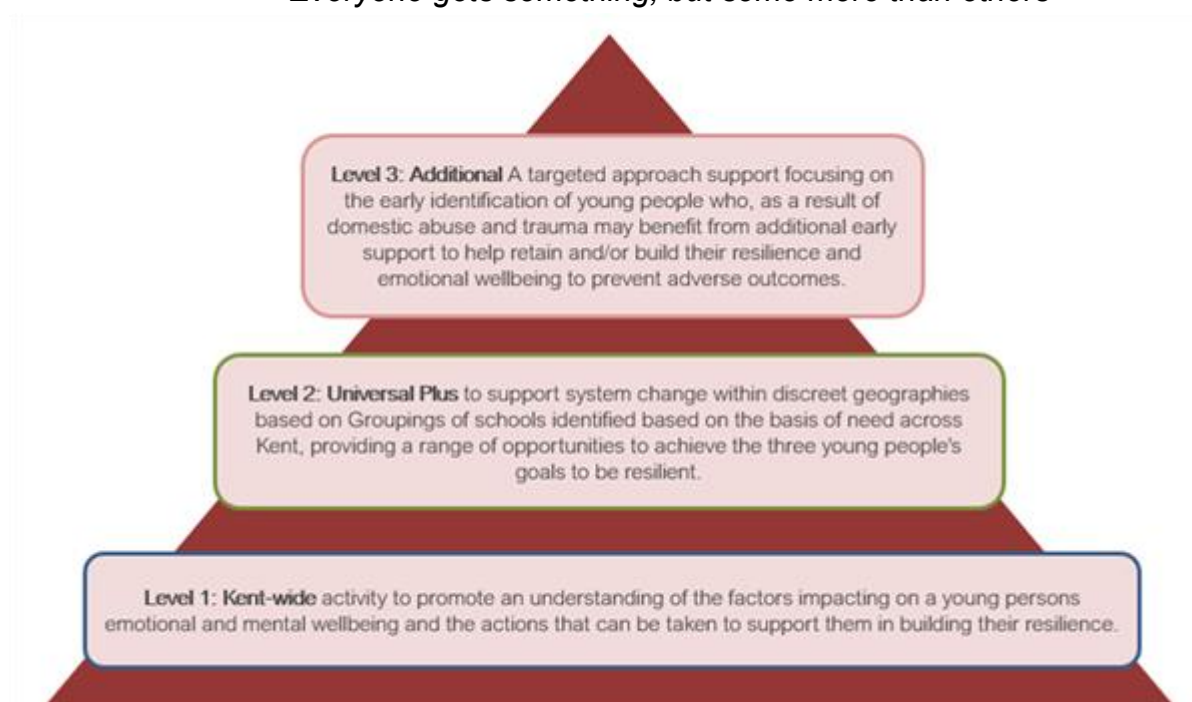
“People around me understand wellbeing and how to promote it.”

“My overall wellbeing is not impacted by the pressure to achieve and to ‘be perfect.’”

“There is always someone for me to talk to.”

- 1.4. The programme has been underpinned by a detailed Theory of Change, which operated at three levels. There were different activities at each level, but they worked together to create a whole system-wide approach to improve the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people.

‘Everyone gets something, but some more than others’



2. Context

- 2.1. Children and young people's mental health needs have increased. Data shows that in 2021 one in six children aged 6 to 16 years old had a probable mental disorder, an increase from one in nine children in 2017.¹
- 2.2. Research commissioned by the Department of Education (DfE)² in January 2022 showed that half of secondary school staff felt that pupil mental health was their biggest challenge. In interviews, school leaders explained that social and wellbeing concerns were an even bigger issue than 'lost learning', with wellbeing seen as a priority to address before academic interventions could be used effectively.
- 2.3. The pioneering national Wellbeing Measurement Framework survey of over 30,000 young people (aged 11 to 16) collected as part of the national HeadStart programme by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and University College London (UCL) Evidence Based Practice Unit³ is informing the national discussion around young people's emotional wellbeing. The research has highlighted the link between mental health difficulties, lower academic attainment, and persistent absence from school. It also finds that pupils excluded from school consistently have higher levels of behavioural problems, difficulties with peers and attention difficulties than their peers. The survey has been administered online by school staff. Kent's young people totalled between 30-70% of those nationally surveyed annually.
- 2.4. The profile of young people who took up HSK support were:
 - average age was 13.5 years old
 - 57% were female and 43% were male
 - 11% were ethnic minorities⁴ vs 9% in Kent's population
 - 30% had Special Educational Needs and Disabilities vs 15% in Kent's population
 - 31% were eligible for Free School Meals vs 20% in Kent's population
 - 33% lived in the most deprived areas in Kent⁵
 - 8% experienced domestic abuse⁶

3. What has worked well

- 3.1. HeadStart was a 'test and learn' research programme, so learning about what was and was not working was very important to the development of programme.
- 3.2. Appendix 1 HeadStart Kent Learning from the Local Evaluation⁷ is a summary of the key learning from the local research over the past six years. All evaluation reports are available on the [Kent Resilience Hub Research and Evaluation pages](#).
- 3.3. The key successful elements of the programme were:
 - The Kent Resilience Hub and MoodSpark websites

¹ [Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2021: Wave 2 follow up to the 2017 survey](#), Mental Health of Children and Young People Surveys, NHS Digital

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1045471/School_Recovery_Strategies_year_1_findings.pdf

³ [About HeadStart and the Learning Team | Evidence Based Practice Unit - UCL – University College London](#)

⁴ 5% unknown ethnicity

⁵ Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Kent & Medway top 20% of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019

⁶ A domestic abuse incident was received from the police by HeadStart and sent to the young person's school

⁷ <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/headstart-kent-learning-from-local-evaluation/>

- Work with schools; particularly through whole school approaches and the Kent Award for Resilience and Emotional Wellbeing
 - Workforce development through staff training
 - The establishment of safe spaces in schools and the community
 - Coproduction and Participation with young people and families
 - Pay It Forward and Talents and Interests grants
 - Kooth online support and counselling
 - Mentoring support
- 3.4. The successful approaches were:
- The HeadStart Team and their approach
 - The multi-level partnerships which were developed
 - The programme adaptations and responsiveness to changing need.

4. Reach and sustainability

- 4.1. The universal elements of the programme will be sustained through the [Kent Resilience Hub](#) and [Moodspark](#) websites which provide information, knowledge, useful tools, resources, advice for schools, communities, practitioners, parents and young people and promote a shared language across the system. To date there have been 105,071 Moodspark webpage views and 217,990 Kent Resilience Hub views.
- 4.2. 52,532 young people have benefitted from support in HSK schools. The school resilience toolkit and Award for Resilience and Emotional Wellbeing enables a whole school approach to be embedded in schools. 86% of Kent Schools are signed up to the toolkit and 53 schools have received the Award so far. The responsibility of the school toolkit is now with Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) Public Health School Nursing Service. This toolkit, alongside HeadStart support through training, development of participation, safe spaces, peer mentoring and having resilience conversations with young people enables a school to ensure young people are kept emotionally well, and to be able to respond early when there is an emerging need.
- 4.3. 6,721 school staff and professionals have accessed the HSK training offer. The demand for training both for school and community staff beyond districts has remained consistent during the lifetime of the programme.
- 4.4. Participation, coproduction, and engagement of young people has been a key success of the programme, and this has underpinned all activities. 2,785 young people participated in activities and helped coproduce and lead elements of the programme.
- 4.5. Providing young people with the opportunity to lead empowers them and improves their confidence, which better equips them for adult life. Increasing the emphasis on coproduction in policy and decision making ensures that intervention design and delivery meets the needs of young people. This has been demonstrated by the steps HSK have taken to ensure coproduction is embedded and championed throughout the system.
- 4.6. ICS will retain the HSK participation workers. They will continue to support Kent Youth County Council (KYCC), Kent Youth Voice, local SpeakOut groups, UK Youth Parliament, Try Angle Awards, Youth Charter implementation, Coproduction training,

as well as supporting the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in delivering Emotional Wellbeing programmes. This team will work alongside Virtual Schools Kent, the Violence Reduction programme and the SEND Improvement programme.

- 4.7. The HSK programme legacy continues to secure funding for two additional participation workers from the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) whose focus is developing the voice of young people, parents, and carers with lived experience of the mental health system.
- 4.8. Pay It Forward grants enable young people to help others, in turn helping to improve their own wellbeing. 225 grants of up to £1,000 each have funded wellbeing, environmental and intergenerational projects. The grant applications are assessed by groups of young people on their potential to improve the wellbeing of others.
- 4.9. Young people requiring additional support were identified by practitioners who worked alongside young people using a resilience conversation tool. This was based on an evidence-based resilience framework and was adapted throughout the lifetime of the programme to meet young people's and practitioners' needs. Schools feel this is one part of the programme they want to continue to use.
- 4.10. Much of the activity for the additional support for young people has involved the HSK participation workers, HSK Senior Early Help workers and through additional funding to commission partners. There was a significant improvement⁸ in the wellbeing of the young people that successfully completed the support.
 - The iCan service, supported 242 young men aged 13-16 who had witnessed, or experienced domestic violence. The service applies a trauma informed approach and aims to develop a greater capacity to defend against the adversity associated with domestic violence in childhood. As part of the programme legacy The iCan programme materials⁹ will remain freely available for practitioners.
 - Intensive Mentoring support, which was taken up by 1,120 young people, adopts evidenced strengths-based approaches to supporting vulnerable children, young people, and their families. Additional funding from Reconnect has extended the service across the county until October 2022.
 - A Volunteer Mentor is a positive role model who is there to guide and advise, striving to meet set goals to help young people achieve their potential. Trained adult volunteers from the community have worked with 748 young people for a period of up to 6 months. Additional funding from Reconnect has extended the service across the county until October 2022.
 - 826 young people have benefited from Talents and Interest grants, which aim to improve and sustain young people's emotional wellbeing by promoting and enabling them to have access to enjoyable, creative and purposeful opportunities. It aims to promote community engagement, a sense of belonging and self-worth. Additional funding from Reconnect has extended the service across the county until October 2022 and has enabled a wider age range of children and young people to access these opportunities.
- 4.11 Young people, families, schools and community staff highly value the support they received through Mentoring and through Talents and interest grants as they

⁸ Appendix 1 HeadStart Kent Learning from the Local Evaluation <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/headstart-kent-learning-from-local-evaluation>

⁹ <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/resources/ican-programme/>

have been tailored to their interests and needs, with the offer of choice and flexibility in how they were supported.

5 HeadStart System Influence

- 5.1 HeadStart Kent has helped strategic leaders to recognise the importance of good emotional and mental health for our children. The Kent and Medway Local Transformation Plan (LTP), which is a partnership plan led by Kent and Medway, has adopted the national Thrive Framework¹⁰ which describes the range of emotional and mental health provision available. The model places an emphasis on children, young people and their families being empowered through active involvement in decisions about their support. The legacy of the programme will support the implementation of Thrive across Kent.
- 5.2 The priorities outlined in the LTP for 2021/22 aims to further develop an integrated system of support which will enable the transition from HeadStart to Thrive activity. HSK has contributed to the 'Getting Advice and Getting Help' Quadrants.
- 5.3 Mental health support teams were established through the 2017 Green Paper for transforming children and young people's mental health to provide extra capacity for early intervention and ongoing help for mild to moderate mental health needs. Kent and Medway have successfully applied to deliver 21 teams focusing on areas and schools with the greatest need. Each team is to reach a population of 7,000 5-19 olds. HSK will continue to lead the recruitment and engagement of Kent schools as well as project managing the implementation of the service in partnership with the CCGs and NELFT. The introduction of Designated Senior Mental Health Leads in Schools is a national initiative and training is available.
- 5.4 Further to this initiative and a response to a request from HSK schools, the HSK community of practice legacy is that it will be extended across the county and will be resourced by the CCGs and co-delivered with partners.
- 5.5 Over the last two years, and three lockdowns, the HeadStart programme continued to successfully integrate its learning and evaluation to support the development of a system that works together as a cohesive mental health and wellbeing offer for children, young people and their families. HSK led a collaboration to develop guidance and resources for schools in Kent and worked closely with the CCG's and commissioning to extend, at pace, the online support and counselling service across Kent and Medway. The HSK team have been agile and quick to learn and adapt.
- 5.6 The DfE 'Wellbeing for Education Return' (WER) project launched in September 2020 with the expectation that schools would engage in wellbeing training enabling them to support staff and students coming back into school during the pandemic. The programme has been led by HSK and delivered in partnership and The Education People on behalf of KCC. In total 215 schools have engaged with WER training.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The key legacy of the HSK programme is the partnerships, learning, standard setting and which supports a system wide response to mental health and wellbeing. HSK has provided the evidence of the importance of the emotional wellbeing system to continually collaborate to ensure young people and families access the right support for their needs.

¹⁰ <http://implementingthrive.org/>

- 6.2 Much of the HSK resources, tools and materials have been secured for future use, which will ensure the legacy of the programme which will continue to benefit young people’s resilience and emotional wellbeing within schools, community, with their peers online.

7. Recommendation(s):

The County Council are asked to:

- To note the success of the Headstart programme and the legacy of continued support for the mental wellbeing of children and young people in Kent

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HeadStart Kent Learning from the local evaluation

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About this booklet



HeadStart was a 'test and learn' research programme, so learning about what was and wasn't working was very important to the development of programme from the beginning.

Where things weren't working as well as hoped, they could be adapted to make them better based on what people were feeding back and saying.

This booklet pulls together key learning from the local research that was carried out over the past six years in one place to give a summary of what was found.

Evidence was gathered from lots of different people and in various ways. Some people took part in interviews or focus groups and others may have answered a survey.

Lots of routine data, like the names of young people accessing support, were also collected to build a picture of what was happening.

All the local evaluation reports are available on the [Kent Resilience Hub Research and Evaluation pages](https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/about-headstart-kent/research-and-evaluation/)¹

¹ <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/about-headstart-kent/research-and-evaluation/>



About HeadStart Kent

HeadStart was a six-year, £11.25 million programme, set up and funded by The National Lottery Community Fund which aimed to provide resources to develop approaches that support young people to build their resilience to cope with everyday pressures they may face throughout their lives. Being resilient means you can 'bounce back' when you face difficulties.



The mission:

“Young people and their families will have improved resilience, by developing their knowledge and lifelong skills to maximise their own and their peers’ emotional health and wellbeing; so to navigate their way to support when needed in ways which work for them.”

Children and young people in Kent, together with their parents, told HeadStart what they needed in place to build their resilience.



My wellbeing is not impacted by the pressure to achieve or 'be perfect'

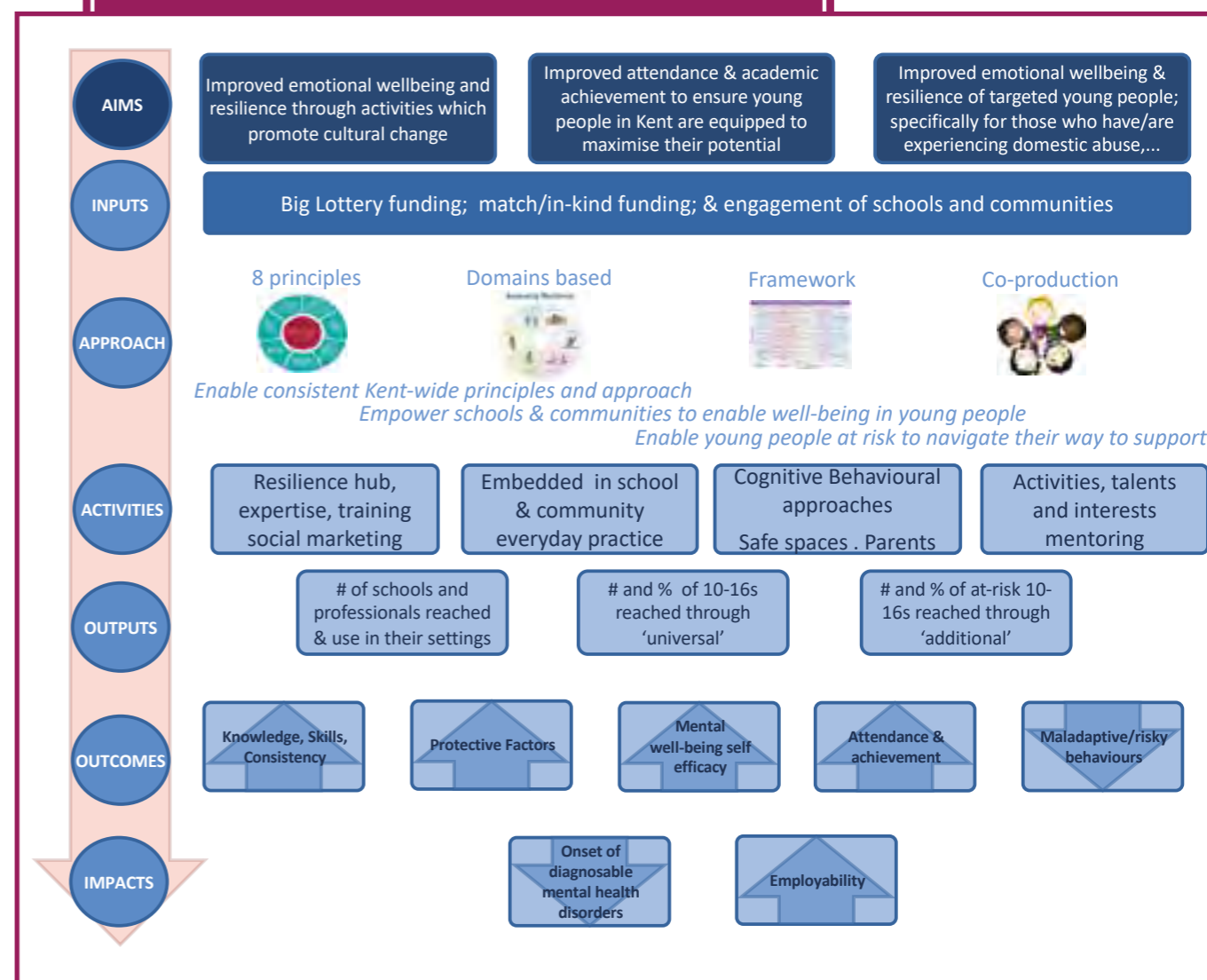
There is always someone for me to talk to

People around me understand wellbeing and how to promote it



About HeadStart Kent

Below is a summary of the aims, inputs, approaches, activities, and outputs to achieve their short term and longer-term outcomes.





About HeadStart Kent

The programme operated at three levels. There were different activities at each level, but they worked together to create a whole system-wide approach to improve the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people.

Everyone gets something, but some more than others



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Level 3: Additional A targeted approach support focusing on the early identification of young people who, as a result of domestic abuse and trauma may benefit from additional early support to help retain and/or build their resilience and emotional wellbeing to prevent adverse outcomes.

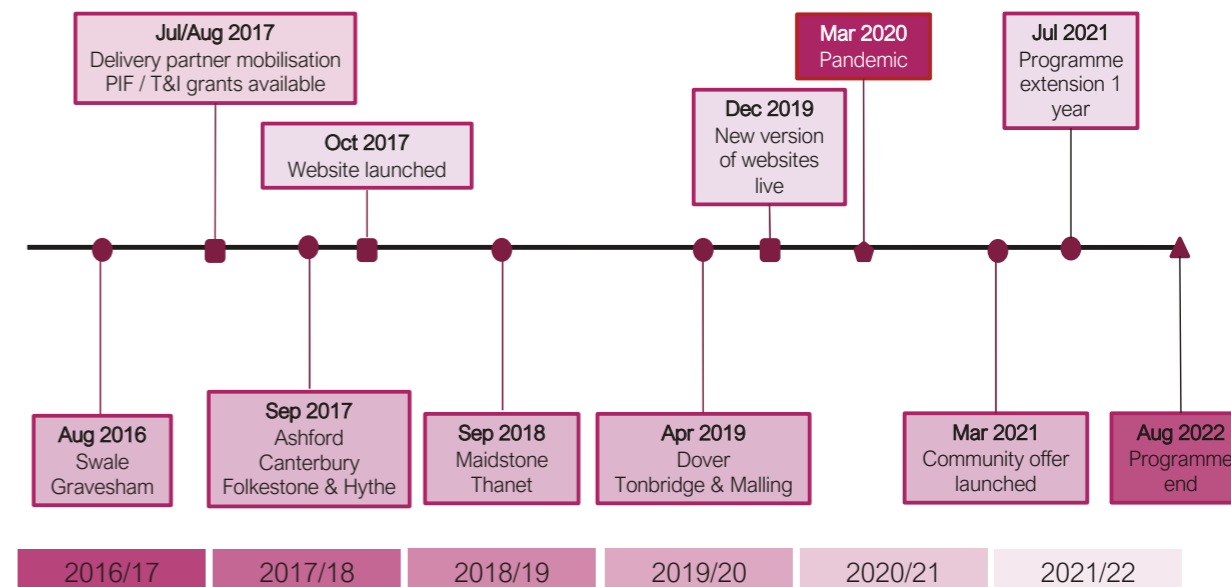
Level 2: Universal Plus to support system change within discreet geographies based on groupings of schools identified on the basis of need across Kent, providing a range of opportunities to achieve the three young people's goals to be resilient.

Level 1: Kent-wide activity to promote an understanding of the factors impacting on a young persons emotional and mental wellbeing and the actions that can be taken to support them in building their resilience.



About HeadStart Kent

The HeadStart team worked intensively with schools in nine district areas, called groupings, for 18 months in a phased approach. Staff training and access to additional support for young people were provided during this time. The starting month for each grouping is shown in the timeline below, along with other key activities for the programme.





Who did HeadStart Kent help?

From the beginning of the programme in 2016 up to March 2022, HeadStart has helped lots of people by providing access to training, funding, resources, and services focused on young people's emotional wellbeing and resilience.



Young people

Page 58

52,532

benefitted from support in schools

1,308

trained as peer mentors

2,785

participated in activities and some helped coproduce the programme

4,046

had a resilience conversation

15,197

accessed online support and counselling

25,422

accessed a safe space in school

3,509

were 'kept in mind' by notifying their school of an incident of domestic abuse, which may have led to support provided by the school.



Who did HeadStart Kent help?

598

supported by family focused work

1,120

were supported by an intensive mentor

225

Pay It Forward grants were planned and delivered

748

supported by a volunteer mentor

825

received a Talents & Interests grant

242

supported by an iCan mentor



Based on the 2020 mid-year Census population estimates, Kent had **138,400** young people aged 10 to 16.



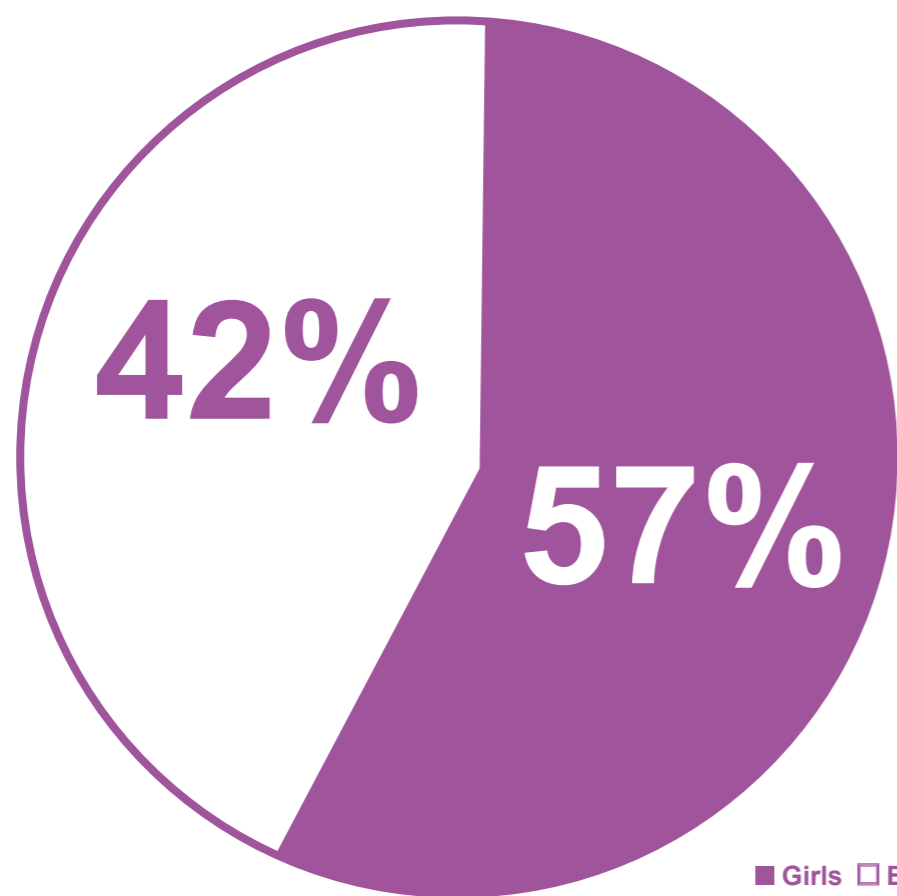
Who did HeadStart Kent help?

Young people taking up HeadStart support

11%
ethnic minorities²
vs 9% in the overall
Kent population

average age
13.5
years old

Page 59



² 5% unknown ethnicity



Who did HeadStart Kent help?

Schools and organisations benefitting

121

secondary schools

394

primary schools

38

other school settings
(like colleges)

59

statutory organisations
(like Kent County Council,
Kent Police or the NHS)

143

private sector
organisations (like
privately run sports clubs
or dance studios)

330

community and
voluntary organisations
(like charities, trusts or
community centres)

53

schools received the
Award for Resilience and
Emotional Wellbeing



Who did HeadStart Kent help?

Training provided

3,851

school staff
trained

2,770

other
professionals
trained

1,021

mindfulness

1,747

Youth Mental
Health First Aid

1,954

mental health
online

852

resilience and trauma
(including resilience
conversations)





Who did HeadStart Kent help?

Parents and carers

514

trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid or the Wellbeing Toolkit

578

were supported with their child through the transition to secondary school or by HeadStart Senior Early Help workers

24,983

accessed the parents resilience webinar on the Kent Resilience Hub



Who did HeadStart Kent help?

Communication

Kent Resilience Hub

217,990

Resilience Hub webpage views

105,071

MoodSpark webpage views



1,699

Twitter Followers

1,467

Facebook Followers





What difficulties have young people been experiencing?

Children and young people's mental health needs have increased.

National data shows that in 2021

1 in 6

children aged 6 to 16 years old had a probable mental disorder, an increase from one in nine children in 2017³.

The main difficulties young people involved with HeadStart told us they were experiencing were:

- Managing their emotions – anger, anxiety, stress, confidence
- Relationships with friends and family

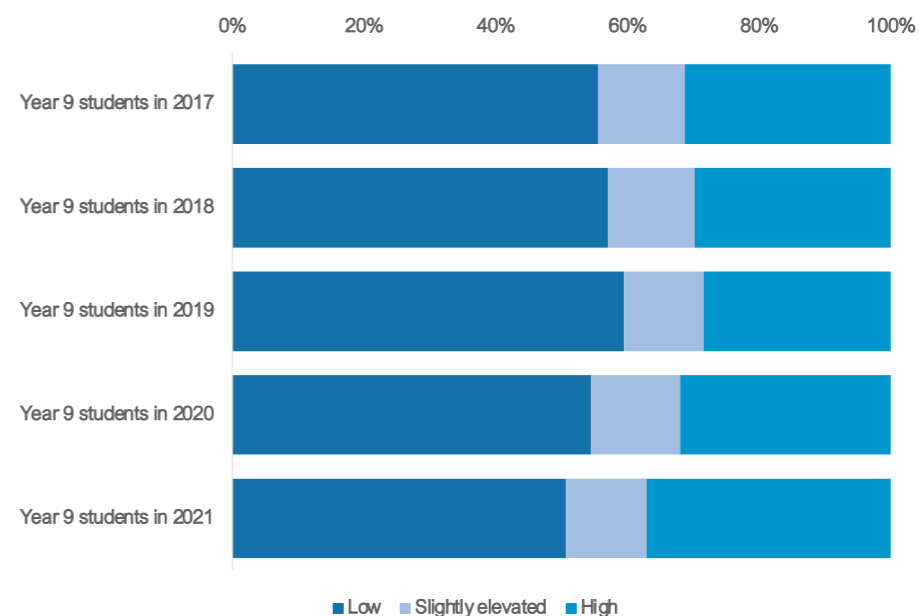


³ Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2021: Wave 2 follow up to the 2017 survey, Mental Health of Children and Young People Surveys, NHS Digital



What difficulties have young people been experiencing?

Through the annual Wellbeing Measurement Framework⁴ survey carried out in HeadStart schools between 2017 and 2021, over a **third of young people** consistently reported high or slightly elevated level of attention difficulties.



1/3

"I am restless, I cannot stay still for long"

"I am easily distracted, I find it hard to concentrate"

"I am constantly fidgeting or squirming"

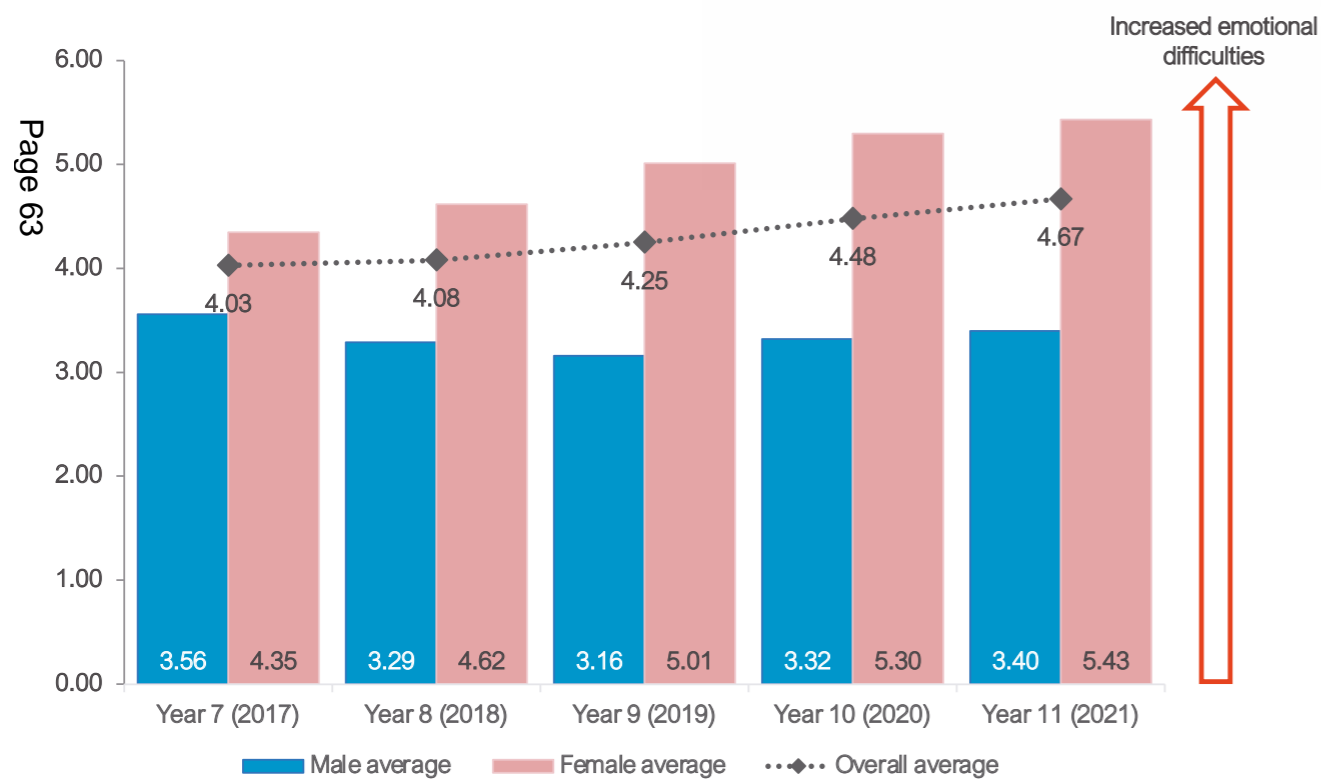


⁴www.headstartlearning.info

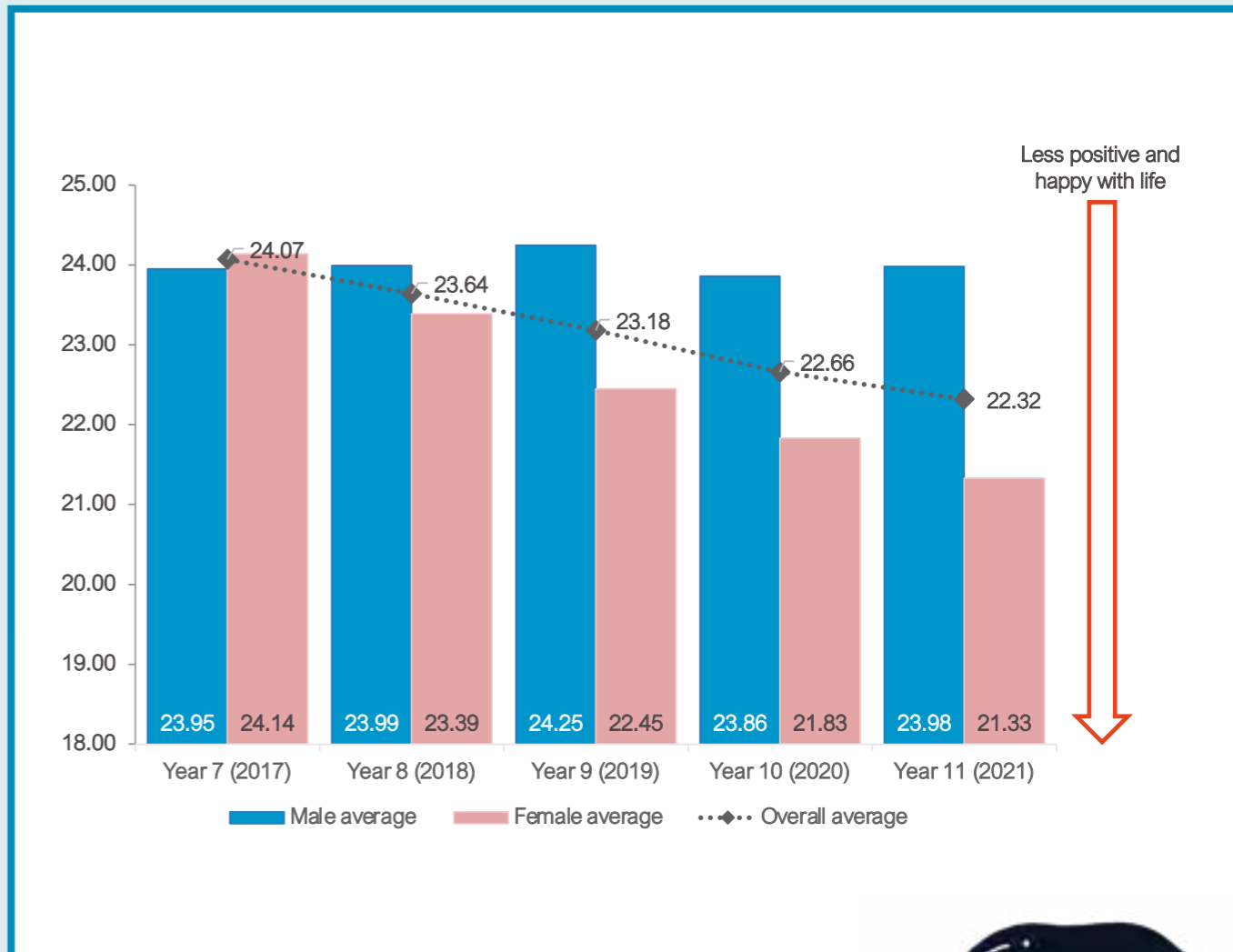


What difficulties have young people been experiencing?

Increasing levels of emotional difficulties were reported by females as they got older. Females in all year groups surveyed between 2019 and 2021 reported significantly more emotional difficulties than males⁵.



What difficulties have young people been experiencing?

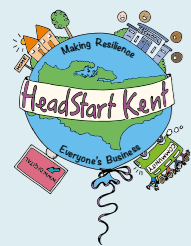


Females also reported they felt less positive and happy with life as they got older. Females in all year groups surveyed in 2020 and 2021 were significantly less positive than males⁶.



⁵Year 7 and Year 9 in 2019, Year 9 and Year 10 in 2020, Year 9 and Year 11 in 2021

⁶Year 9 and Year 10 in 2020, Year 9 and Year 11 in 2021



What difficulties have young people been experiencing?

When the young people surveyed were asked about their experiences during the pandemic, they said their **feelings of frustration and ability to concentrate had got worse**. They were also much more worried about their future.

A significantly higher level of need was reported by young people when they were aged 12 to 13 who went on to be supported by HeadStart when they got older, compared to those who did not go onto receive support⁷.

This shows that **HeadStart was supporting the right young people with the most need**.

Before they were supported by HeadStart, they reported:

- **More emotional, behavioural and attention difficulties**
- **More difficulties with peers**
- **Less positive appraisal of their wellbeing**
- **Felt less able to manage their emotions, solve problems, cope with stress and set goals**
- **Felt less supported by an adult in their home**
- **Felt less likely to make positive contributions at home and in school**

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Young people still just want someone to talk to. A non-judgmental person they trust and can talk to in confidence.

“I think being that person that can listen, I think that’s the biggest thing that they can get out of it, that somebody’s actually taking what they have to say seriously or to heart...”



What difficulties have young people been experiencing?

Young people taking up HeadStart support

30%

had Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

vs 15% in the overall Kent population

31%

were eligible for Free School Meals

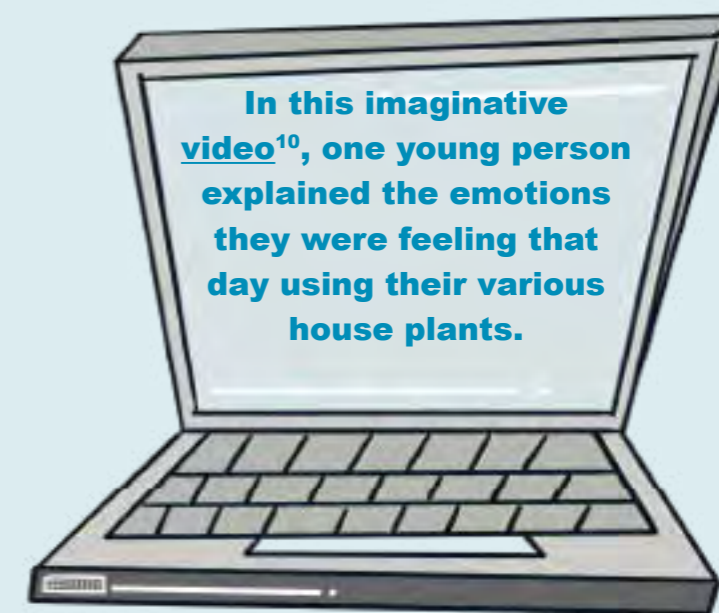
vs 20% in the overall Kent population

8%

experienced domestic abuse⁸

33%

lived in the top 20% most deprived areas in Kent⁹



⁸ A domestic abuse incident notification was received from the police by HeadStart and sent to the young person's school

⁹ Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Kent & Medway Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019

¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdAejlSDvoo>

⁷ From Wellbeing Measurement Survey data for Year 8 students in 2018. 518 received support from HeadStart after 2018.



What went well?

Coproduction and participation

The involvement of young people in the programme was one of its major successes. Young people from many different backgrounds were supported and encouraged to take part in the full variety of activities and training offered. This ranged from interviewing staff to sitting on a panel deciding grant awards, or even just having fun learning how to cook.

Joining the Kent Youth County Council and HeadStart central SpeakOut groups was a particular achievement. Young people, who may not normally have the opportunity to meet, worked together on topics important to them. By having young people from different backgrounds and areas working together, this meant that the views of young people, who are potentially less represented, were heard.

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The need to coproduce the programme with young people was embedded into the plan from the start. Staff were given the time and resources needed to make sure young people were able to lead and make decisions. They were trusted as professionals and given independence to do things differently. Many colleagues saw the value in coproduction and have adopted the principles in their work.



What went well?

"...the coproduction and the participation work has been outstanding."

"To do coproduction properly, you need time."



Adaptations and challenges

At the start, there may have been too much freedom and flexibility in the participation work and the priorities of what was supposed to be delivered needed to be made clearer for staff.

Young people did not like the You're Welcome standard as it was more focused on assessing health services and they felt the language used in the documents wasn't suitable for what they needed. As an alternative, they developed the Kent Youth Charter, which sets out six principles of how young people want staff to engage and work with them.



What went well?

Working with schools

HeadStart supported schools to embed a whole school approach to resilience and emotional wellbeing. Using the Resilience Toolkit as a basis to plan and review their work against eight principles to promote mental health and wellbeing¹¹, schools delivered on actions that benefitted students, staff and the wider community.

"The more you make it part of your day to day, the more impact it will have..."

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"I think it has really focused our minds. I think it's really made us sit back and think, right, what do we do as a school and what can we do?"

HeadStart staff made sure they were approachable and readily available to work together with the school staff. They were flexible in their approach and the work was 'done with the schools, not to them'. They built strong relationships with the schools and continue to be highly regarded.

School staff felt that being involved with HeadStart had made a positive impact on the ethos and environment within their schools. They valued the support and guidance from the HeadStart staff and, as well as the funding provided, felt this enabled the success of the programme in their schools.



What went well?

"[HeadStart] have a really good relationship with the schools, they're well-respected. The whole-school approach has been really well-embraced by those schools."

"The funding and training offered by HeadStart has been invaluable."



Adaptations and challenges

The Resilience Toolkit was updated many times and improved based on feedback from schools. At the start there was too much paperwork, so a simpler online version was created.

Early on, HeadStart staff realised that one standard approach to supporting schools wouldn't work as all schools are different. So, the support provided was tailored for each individual school based on their needs.

More than just one or two people are needed to deliver change within a school. Ideally, a team of staff at varying levels need to support one another to embed a programme such as HeadStart. The right person needs to drive it forward within the school and backing from senior leadership is essential.

Schools are busy and time is limited so clearly communicating what needs to be achieved and breaking down what needs to be delivered into manageable chunks is helpful for staff.

¹¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing



What went well?

Training and workforce development

The reach of training provided directly by HeadStart staff or through delivery partners was wide. Participants thought the training was delivered well and that what they learned was useful. They were confident applying what they learnt and, as a result of training, they felt more confident supporting young people's emotional health and wellbeing.

School staff and other professionals in the community felt that having access to free training around the topics of mental health and wellbeing was needed, as that type of training was not always available in their existing continuing professional development plans.

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"When talking to a young person and their family that was struggling with the difficulties that mental health brings up, I felt able to effectively support and offer strategies to help further."

"I think the key thing for us was the amount of training that it has enabled us as a staff to have, it has been massive, and we would never have been able to access that without HeadStart."



What went well?

"When students disclose suffering of ill mental health incidents, I feel more comfortable with identifying their symptoms."

"I think it's helped us to have more of a universal vocabulary when we're supporting people."

Adaptations and challenges

Because of the pandemic, many of the courses delivered by HeadStart were adapted and delivered online rather than face to face. Lots of people attended the online sessions and the feedback was positive.

The date, time and location of training courses need to be flexible to maximise attendance and fit around the timetables of potential participants, particularly teachers who have training days set many months in advance.





What went well?

Direct support for young people

The grants that young people could access through the programme were seen as a real benefit.

It was felt that one of the main advantages was that the young people themselves, rather than adults, decided on the activity or interest to take up through a Talents and Interests grant and they developed and worked on the Pay It Forward grant projects.

PAY IT FORWARD



School staff thought that the development of safe spaces was a very successful part of the programme within their schools.



Young people asked for online support and counselling to be made available by HeadStart and this support has been accessed by thousands of young people.



The mentoring provided by delivery partners through the programme was considered a valuable resource.

School staff explained that it could be difficult to find support from external organisations. They said that support from people outside of the school was needed at times as some young people preferred to be supported by an adult not linked to the school.





What went well?

"I think the fact that we have been able to tap into the funding bids [...] What's been brilliant is it has got to be student led and that makes a massive difference as well. Some of our students with the highest need have been the ones that have been involved doing the [Pay It Forward] bids."

"The ability to create a 'safe space' has allowed for some of the most vulnerable students a place they can access to support them."



"The Talents and Interests grant was a really good idea too because there are so many kids that, for whatever reason, come from a home where they don't have the finances to support a child with an interest. For me that was brilliant, and it's worked really well."

"It's very hard to find support for students, particularly external support in the form of things like mentors because one to one work, it takes a lot of time [...] To have that time for a mentor to spend one to one quality time with a student is so beneficial to them, so I think that works really well, I think it's valued, definitely."



What went well?

Adaptations and challenges

At the start, the Talents and Interests grant application form had lots of questions and was too long. The form was made shorter and only the really important information was collected.

It took a while for one of the mentoring delivery partners to get up and running as it was a completely new service they were offering. It takes time to recruit volunteers, set up administrative processes and promote a service, so this needs to be factored in at the start.

There weren't always mentors available or suitable when delivery partners were getting started, so it was difficult for schools to manage some young people's expectations.

The transition support intervention was based on learning from the previous phase of HeadStart. When this was scaled up it didn't work as well because the strong existing links between the primary feeder schools and secondary schools weren't there.





What went well?

Websites

The Kent Resilience Hub and Moodspark websites are considered valuable resources. They are simple to use, clear, accessible, and visually pleasing. The range of tools, resources, activities, and information is suitable for all the audiences they serve.

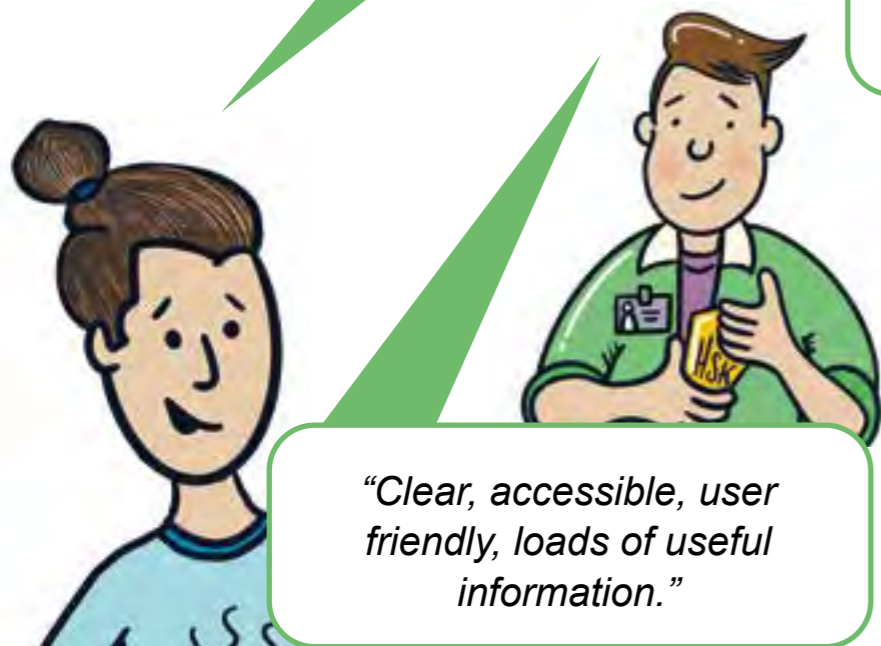
At the start, awareness of the websites was mainly achieved through promotion by HeadStart staff and paid advertising directed a lot of people to view some of the pages. More recently the websites have been promoted through partner organisations in education and health settings.

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"I think being able to go somewhere that [schools] could trust to access the different types of resources is important."

"The fact it caters for a range of audiences in one place is a good thing."

"Clear, accessible, user friendly, loads of useful information."



What went well?

Adaptations and challenges

Lots of work went into developing the websites and there have been a few versions. It took a while to get them right.

Resources and content need to be refreshed and kept current, so they must be reviewed and updated regularly.





What went well?

Building relationships and working in partnership

HeadStart has raised the profile of the emotional health and wellbeing agenda and encouraged discussion about the topic amongst partners. Many of the HeadStart staff worked on the programme for a long time. They were knowledgeable and experienced in their area of work and dedicated to making the programme a success. They were skilled at building productive and long-lasting working relationships with the right people. HeadStart shared their learning in many places and built a good reputation with partners.

They made connections and created openings for key people from different parts of the 'system' to work together towards a shared goal, where they previously may not have had that opportunity. This was especially highlighted during the pandemic when HeadStart connected various organisations to create 'back to school' guidance, a resource that was used widely.

"People working together, talking, taking away barriers to working together and thinking how they can fund, finance, support young people's mental health together."

"It's making sure the right people are around the table and that they stick at it. I think that's been crucial."

"I think HeadStart has sort of had this funny place in the middle, but actually joins a lot of things up."



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What went well?

Adapting and improving delivery

HeadStart was designed to be rolled out in phases to different areas over the years, so intensive work could be done in those areas for a limited time. This approach was useful as feedback and learning gathered from rollout in the first areas was used to adapt and improve how the programme was delivered in future areas.

There was a top-level plan of what had to be delivered but HeadStart had the flexibility to adjust the programme when needed to adapt to different circumstances and arising situations.

As time went on, starting the programme in the new areas got easier. This was because of the improvements that were made but also because of increased confidence and understanding between HeadStart staff around what needed to be delivered and improved general awareness of the programme overtime.

"...in the beginning people weren't sure what HeadStart was and what the benefit was, whereas now, people are finding out from other schools that actually there is a benefit."

"...I think it was just us being honest as a team and knowing and reaching out and saying this isn't working and this needs to change."



"...there's always been a progression, not a standing still."



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Overall

The areas of strength for young people in HeadStart schools, who completed the Wellbeing Measurement Framework survey from 2017 to 2021, were:

Empathy “I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt”

Family support “At home, there is an adult who believes I will be a success”

Peer support “There are students at my school who would invite me to their home”

Relationships with peers “I have one good friend or more”



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Using the Wellbeing Measurement Framework survey as evidence to show the difference HeadStart may have made to the wellbeing of young people they supported was challenging for several reasons and no clear conclusions could be made.

There were the following limitations to the data:

- The number of young people completing the survey and who also received direct support from HeadStart was quite low.
- The average age that young people accessed support from HeadStart was around 13 or 14 years old and only certain year groups in schools completed the survey each year, so it was hard to get survey data for before and after support from the survey for some young people.
- HeadStart started in different areas at different times, so some young people didn't receive support until much later in the programme.
- The pandemic meant that young people weren't in school, and the survey was difficult to carry out, so the number of young people completing it in 2020 and 2021 was a lot lower than in previous years so there was less data.

Although the survey was carried out in HeadStart schools, young people in those schools may not have linked completing the survey to support they might have received through the programme. When they completed the survey each year, it was just a reflection of how they were feeling on that specific day and any number of issues could have been affecting them, so changes in their wellbeing may not be directly related to HeadStart.

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It was felt that HeadStart had made a big difference to the lives of young people who were directly supported by the programme due to the strong evidence in the form of stories.

However, many people thought it would be hard to prove that HeadStart had helped young people wider than those directly supported, because data or stories would be harder to collect.



“...I think young people might not even realise that they've been impacted on by HeadStart.”

“...those kind of little more personal success stories I think are so important.”

In this [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVOanqH90GA)¹², CJ shares their experience of being involved with HeadStart and the positive difference it has made to their family.

¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVOanqH90GA>



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Coproduction and participation

The young people that participated in HeadStart were encouraged and supported to take part. Some young people were looking for emotional support, while others were looking for personal development opportunities or to make a difference in their community.

They enjoyed taking part in the activities, making friends, socialising, and learning new skills. By having the opportunity to lead, they felt empowered, and this improved their confidence. They were able to build their resilience, better deal with their emotions and develop friendships. Experiencing different situations and connecting with a wider range of young people and adults than normal helped improve their communication skills and has better equipped them to deal with later life events.

Coproduction or participation itself actually helped many young people to improve their resilience because they were helping others and helping the programme.



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

"To be honest, at the beginning it was just something to do. I thought I may as well go and try it. But what made me want to stay was actually being part of something that mattered [...] At HeadStart the things you do actually matters and makes a difference."

"The HeadStart programme (SpeakOut) has been really important to me. It made me feel part of something [...] I have been able to use my own experiences and struggles with mental health, to help others. I have also learned more about myself and how to manage situations, and I know that I'm in control, developing my own resilience for difficult times."



"We've got individuals who we've seen really grow. I think we can be quite proud of ourselves."



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Case Study

Jack (16 years old) started to get involved with HeadStart around four years ago after having a resilience conversation at school. He took part in residential, attended the local SpeakOut group and Kent Youth Voice, helped develop the Youth Charter and among other things, was also a peer mentor.

When asked how being involved with HeadStart helped his resilience and emotional wellbeing, Jack said...

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“My favourite experience was probably going to Blackpool in 2019 for the national residential. It was really cool to meet other HeadStart areas and lots of new people and to go to a place I’d never been to before. I’ve kept in contact with some of the people I met there so that’s cool.”

“I have made so many friends from HeadStart. I have become so much more confident as a person and learned so many skills, like public speaking and overcoming that anxiety. I have learned things like mindfulness, which is very beneficial to my emotional wellbeing. When I joined, I was getting picked on at school but joining HeadStart made me more resilient and not afraid to be myself.”

“All HeadStart events I’ve been to have always had great snacks.”



THOUGHTS

FEELINGS



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Schools

Schools played an important part in providing opportunities for young people to build their resilience and emotional wellbeing. In the schools that adopted a whole school approach, both the school staff and young people said it was really important to think about how language is used, and situations are approached. They also felt it was essential to have a variety of staff available at different levels to support young people and to be champions at promoting resilience and wellbeing throughout the school.

School staff said the benefits of a whole school approach were:

Empowering young people – by introducing a peer mentoring programme, young people were empowered and keen to support their peers. This was done with understanding and empathy.

Calmer school environment – the development of safe spaces, where young people have time to themselves or access to support from staff, improved the atmosphere at school.

Improved attendance and behaviour – staff noticed an improvement in young people’s engagement and willingness to learn.

Happier and healthier students – having access to support through additional interventions or grant funding improved the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people.



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?



“All of the HeadStart plan is now an integral part of nurture and wellbeing within the school.”

“You can always talk to someone in this school. You can talk to them about anything. I trust them.”

The young people were **happiest at school** when they:

- Built relationships with their peers
- Had creative and engaging forms of learning
- Had the option to choose subjects that interest them
- Took part in extra-curricular activities



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

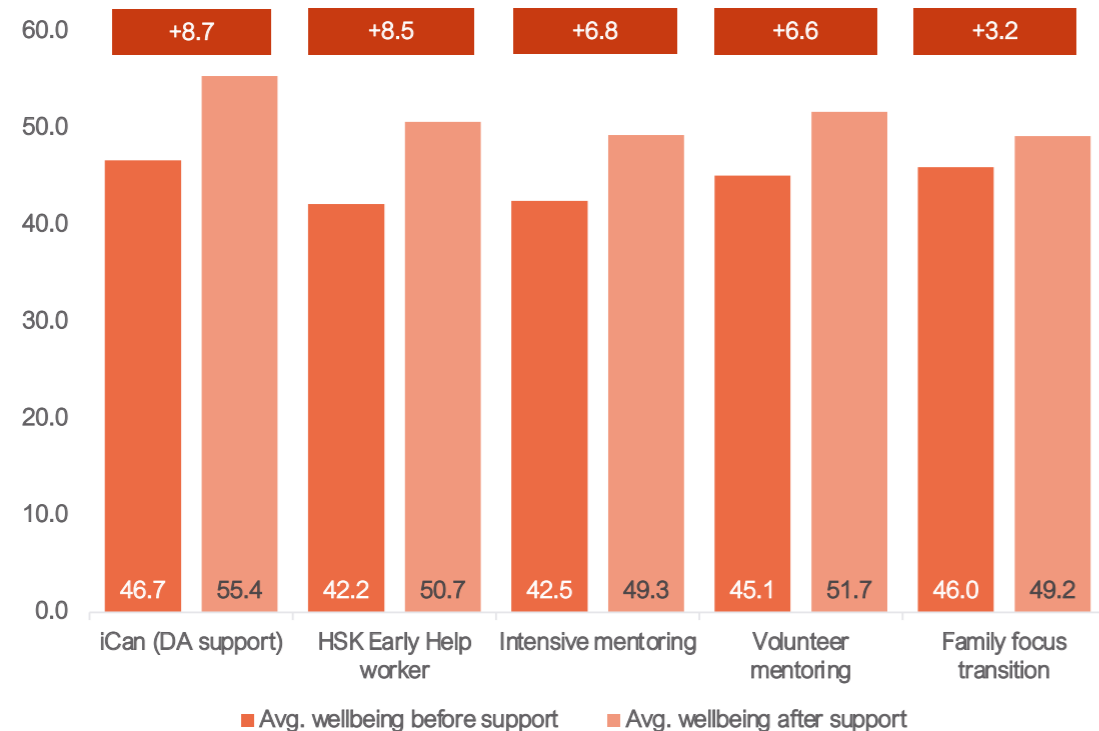
Additional support

Young people really benefitted from one to one or group support provided by delivery partners or the HeadStart Senior Early Help workers. The young people were given tailored support to help with their individual needs and many built strong relationships of trust with their workers.

On average young people were supported from between 3 to 6 months depending on the type of support they had.

There was a **significant improvement in the wellbeing** of those that successfully completed the interventions.¹³

“Having a mentor is comforting, not to feel judged and having someone that I can talk to, and trust has been so helpful. I feel listened to.”



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

“My mentor has helped with my emotions and feelings around friends and family.”

“Having a mentor has helped a lot with my goals...I can now deal with a lot more situations and not get angry or emotional.”

“I feel like I have come so far with my anxiety. I feel happier, I was just so unhappy. I was so negative about myself and that's changed now. I've come so far.”

“I worry a lot less. The different strategies we covered have really helped in my day-to-day life.”



¹³ Warwick Medical School (2015). Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/research/platform/wemwbs/



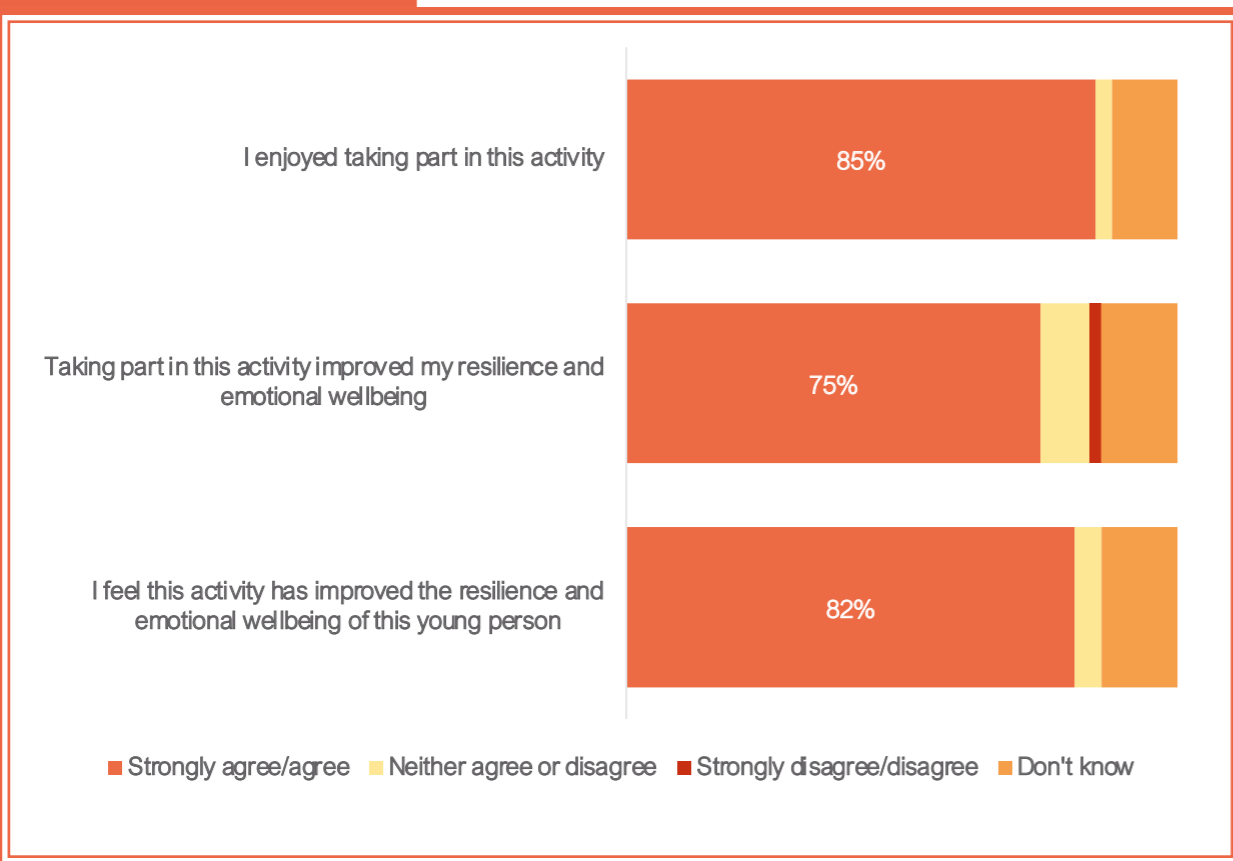
How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Grants

A real advantage of HeadStart was the availability of money so young people could develop a talent or interest. Most young people used their grant funding to access sports, such as a gym or swim membership, or to take part in creative arts, like dancing or singing lessons.

The young people enjoyed the activities and most agreed it improved their resilience and emotional wellbeing. Most adults also agreed that taking part had helped the young people.

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How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?





How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Pay It Forward grants gave the young people the opportunity to plan and deliver projects that would help others in their community. Young people also assessed and approved the applications submitted by their peers. They enjoyed the responsibility of making decisions and felt more confident speaking in a group.



The most popular type of project chosen was safe spaces. HeadStart funded 26 indoor and 22 outdoor spaces in schools and the community. It was a great way for young people to get creative with their designs.



Clubs and groups were also another popular project type, allowing young people to make friends and pursue hobbies. They funded cookery clubs, a wide variety of sports, arts and crafts and Lego clubs.

Young people were able to make a difference in their community by leading environmental projects. These included creating garden spaces, growing food for the community and litter picking.



How has the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people changed?

Case Study

Youth Ngage is a community Youth Group for ethnic minority young people in Gravesham. In 2021 they applied for a Pay If Forward grant for the members to learn about healthy food and cooking. Seventeen young people attended weekly sessions for ten weeks and learnt how to prepare simple, healthy lunches and quick meals.

The healthy meals they cooked included pasta bake with butternut squash, fresh and healthy pizza, chicken fajitas, healthy soup for the winter and festive cookies.

"The young people bonded and learnt how to work together as a team and achieved good results. The project was very entertaining, educating, and creative.

They developed valuable skills, made new friends, developed their confidence, look happier and feel good."

Social



What were the challenges?

Awareness and understanding

Raising awareness of HeadStart and making sure people understood what it was trying to achieve was a frequent challenge for the programme, especially at the start. HeadStart shared key messages through various methods, such as workshops, newsletters, and social media. In the first few years, most people said they found out about the programme by attending meetings, through colleagues or their supervisor/manager. It was accepted that communicating with such a wide and varied audience could be difficult.

It was suggested that communication and promotion of the programme could have been better, especially to celebrate the successes. There was recognition that awareness had improved in recent years, but it was felt that this could have been done sooner.



"...the biggest let down of HeadStart was our ability to communicate what we were doing and to celebrate [it]."

"It was no point having a programme if only a few people knew about it. And yet our stakeholders, being the whole of people in Kent, it's almost impossible to do in an easy way."



What were the challenges?

Resilience conversations

The resilience conversations, previously known as domains based conversations, was an area of the programme that had many developments. At the start, the people who were using them felt that there was too much paperwork involved and based on this feedback they were made shorter and simpler to complete.

Following this, the self-reflection tool was developed and added to the collection of tools available to enable conversations with young people. The language was changed to make them more accessible, and a widget symbol version was developed for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The details of young people having these conversations were needed for local and national evaluation and to access some types of support. To start with, the number of conversations reported was quite low as people found it time consuming recording them. We knew that the number of young people actually having a resilience conversation was probably much higher than the number reported. However, after the changes were made, the number reported did increase.

HeadStart felt that resilience conversations weren't as successful as they could have been, due to the understanding of the tool, the perceived lack of use and the challenges with their development and the administration of them. However, schools felt this was one of the parts of the programme they most wanted to continue to use.

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What were the challenges?



"Resilience conversations didn't really work as well as they could have done, because by the time it got much better, a lot of people had given up on it."

"...having the domains-based conversations has enabled me to be more targeted and succinct in my supportive conversations to young people."



What were the challenges?

Commissioning and contract management

The process to commission the HeadStart delivery partners was one of the difficulties at the start of the programme. In the absence of a dedicated commissioner, either working within the HeadStart team or directly supporting them through the process, there were challenges navigating unfamiliar systems and procedures. This led to a delay in the additional support interventions and training providers starting in the first areas.

It was suggested that having a dedicated commissioning resource would have helped the programme, especially around the management of provider and school deliverables.

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"I just think with the commissioning, that we've kept finding new departments and new hoops, new things that it needs to go through. New process, new systems, again, just you're not aware of unless you've done it before. I think we all thought it would just be this, this and this and then it's turned into maybe five more stages."



What were the challenges?

Integration within Kent County Council

"I think we should've been integrated more into the wider workforce rather than us always being this team that kind of sat to the side... it always felt like we were separate."

"I think probably one of the biggest barriers was that, because it was with a different service, a lot of staff and teams probably thought, well that's HeadStart that's over there. That's for them to worry about and not necessarily something for us to worry about in our teams."



Another perceived challenge was how HeadStart may have been seen as separate from Integrated Children's Services, or wider Kent County Council. It was felt that at times colleagues outside of HeadStart were not using the available tools/resources or adopting the general ethos of the programme.

However, being seen as separate from Kent County Council, especially because of the branding, potentially enabled engagement with those who may have in the past been reluctant to engage with support or services.



What is carrying on?

Many of the elements of HeadStart, such as whole school approaches or behaviour change through training, will continue long after the programme has ended as they have been embedded in schools and communities.

In addition to this, the following parts will be continued once HeadStart comes to an end:

Kent Resilience Hub and Moodspark websites	Kent Community Health Foundation Trust – Public Health School Nursing Service have taken ownership.
School Resilience Toolkit Award for Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience	Kent Community Health Foundation Trust – Public Health School Nursing Service have taken ownership.
Resilience conversations and trauma training	Kent Community Health Foundation Trust – Public Health School Nursing Service will offer free training to schools every term. Kent County Council staff can access training on Delta.
Youth Mental Health First Aid training	The Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership will offer free training until March 2024.
Mental Health Support Teams (project management)	Two team members from HeadStart have been funded by the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group to continue to lead the recruitment and engagement of schools, and manage the implementation of the service, until March 2024.



What is carrying on?



Participation workers	Kent County Council Integrated Children's Services has committed to continuing the work of the HeadStart participation workers as these staff support Kent Youth County Council. The workers will lead on: Kent Youth Voice, local SpeakOut groups, UK Youth Parliament, commissioning engagement, leading the Kent participation community of practice, Try Angle Awards, Youth Charter implementation, Coproduction training, Big Conversation, peer mentoring train the trainers, supporting the Voluntary Community Sector in delivering emotional wellbeing programmes
Emotional wellbeing participation workers	Two team members from HeadStart have been funded by the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group to continue to focus on the voice of young people, parents, and carers with lived experience of the mental health system.
Kooth (online support and counselling)	This support is now funded by the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group until April 2023.
Intensive mentoring	This support will be funded by the Reconnect programme until August 2022.
Volunteer mentoring	This support will be funded by the Reconnect programme until August 2022.
Talents and Interests grants	This support will be funded by the Reconnect programme until August 2022.



Thank you to everyone that took the time to provide their views around different topics for the evaluation over the course of the programme.

Sarah Collins

HeadStart Monitoring & Evaluation Officer

Kent Analytics

Strategic & Corporate Services

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From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Dan Watkins, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

To: County Council – 14th July 2022

Subject: Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5)

Status: Unrestricted

Summary: KCC's Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) is in early stages of development, to replace the existing LTP4 '*Delivering Growth Without Gridlock*' as the statutory document for Kent County Council's transport vision. LTP4 (despite written with a horizon of 2016 up to 2031) was reviewed as a first task by the LTP5 Member Task and Finish Group and deemed to need replacement.

A draft ambition statement has been developed and agreed over a series of Member Task and Finish Group meetings, following review of the plan's evidence base. The draft ambition seeks to achieve balance across a range of focuses whilst making clear the Council's priorities, including those already adopted (e.g., Vision Zero, Energy & Low Emission Strategy, Bus Service Improvement Plan). Nine outcomes have also been drafted and cover key themes across society, economy, and the environment. The ambition and outcomes will provide the basis for the Plan's development of policies and proposals.

Government will consult on new guidance for Local Transport Plans in 2022 and, ahead of that, has been sharing the purpose and its key aspects. KCC's work to date fits well with the emerging guidance, including a new requirement to quantify carbon reductions forecast to accrue from LTP5's proposals.

Recommendation:

That the County Council notes progress on development of Local Transport Plan 5, the draft ambition and outcomes developed and the remaining steps to developing a full draft plan for consultation.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a statutory document set out in the 2000 Transport Act which was then amended in the 2008 Local Transport Act removing the need for 5-year plans. LTP's are the only KCC transport policy document which require the approval of the full Council. As statutory plans they carry weight in the planning system and are therefore given regard by Government in its decision making. The plan is a critical instrument to attract Government transport funding and reduce transport carbon emissions in the future.
- 1.2 The Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth Without Gridlock (LTP4) was adopted in 2017 with the intention to remain as Kent Council's statutory Local

Transport Plan (LTP) for the period of 2016-2031. LTP4 pulls together transport policies, looking at local schemes and issues as well as those at a countywide and national significance.

- 1.3 In the previous report on LTP to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee in September 2021 it was agreed that LTP4 was to be reviewed and, if appropriate, the process of drawing up a new LTP was to begin. A Member Task and Finish Group was established after endorsement at ETCC (Appendix 1 contains an organogram of the group), chaired by Councillor Dan Watkins, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.
- 1.4 The Group endorsed officers progressing a new LTP (LTP5). The primary reason was LTP4 was considered insufficient concerning the extent it addressed transport's contribution to climate change. In addition, new adopted local plans with revised growth challenges, pandemic-driven challenges to the travel market, and the centralisation of competitively bid-for funds for specific purposes (Bus, Cycling & Walking), following the end of the Local Growth Deal through SELEP, also drive the need for a new plan.
- 1.5 Government has communicated that it is drafting new LTP guidance because it plans to make LTPs a priority and increase their ties to future grant funding awards. With a funding landscape made up of multiple small pots targeting specific policies and modes, Government wants to put Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) in the best position to balance these competing priorities and asks with a single unifying plan. Government is encouraging LTAs to establish and use LTPs to promote a pipeline of local transport interventions, to increase LTAs readiness for bidding for future funds and implementing schemes where funding is awarded. Government's focus will be on seeing evidence in new LTPs of a pipeline that supports economic growth and levelling up, improves transport for users, and reduces environmental impacts, all with a place-based focus.
- 1.6 LTP5 must therefore reflect the ambitions held by KCC through existing programmes such as the Bus Service Improvement Plan and active travel and significant new changes in the mechanisms to support these such as the application for powers concerning Moving Traffic Violations, as per Section 6 of the Traffic Management Act (TMA). The BSIP allocation draw-down and a decision on KCCs application for Section 6 TMA powers are expected to complete over summer, providing important milestones from which LTP5 development can proceed.
- 1.7 The remaining development of LTP5 will be tied to development of these programmes. This will ensure that the plan can convincingly convey to bodies such as Active Travel England, National Highways and so on, that its components are integrated and what their total impact is estimated to be in delivering government policies in Kent.
- 1.8 Decarbonisation and net zero will have a more prominent role within the upcoming LTP5 as the new guidance will include a requirement for LTPs to demonstrate forecasting of the quantified carbon reductions the plan will deliver. In anticipation of this and reflecting KCC's own policy position, the ambition, and

outcomes for LTP5 reflect the prominence of climate change as a challenge to both combat and adapt to.

2. Ambitions and Outcomes

- 2.1 The Member Task and Finish Group was assembled to guide the direction of the ambition statement and outcomes for LTP5. Over the first 4 meetings, a review of LTP4 took place followed by consideration of the evidence base developed in support of LTP5. This enabled the ambition statement and outcomes to be finalised over the most recent meetings. The ambition statement that has been developed and proposed for LTP5 is as follows:

“We want to improve the health, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of lives in Kent by delivering a safe, reliable, efficient, and affordable transport network across the county and as an international gateway. We will plan for growth in Kent in a way that enables us to combat climate change and preserve Kent’s environment. We will achieve the delivery of emission-free travel by getting effective dedicated infrastructure to electrify vehicles, increase public transport use and make walking and cycling attractive. This will be enabled by maintaining our highways network and delivering our Vision Zero road safety strategy. These priorities will ensure our networks are future-proof, resilient and meet user needs.”

- 2.2 The draft outcomes that have been developed for LTP5 were also agreed by the Member Task and Finish Group. The outcomes, listed below, reflect existing adopted plans / strategies and challenges. The development of the LTP5 ambition and outcomes has been undertaken cognisant of the need to comply with Government policy. Once the draft ambition and outcomes have been considered by the Council, a new name for LTP5 will be developed.
- 2.3 SMART objectives will be put against the outcomes listed below, through liaison with subject experts in KCC, so that policies and proposals developed for the LTP can be measured in their impact on delivery of the objectives. In some instances, SMART objectives (targets) are already established through adopted KCC plans / strategies.
- 2.3.1 Outcome 1: Our highways network is kept to satisfactory levels, helping to maintain safe and accessible travel.
- 2.3.2 Outcome 2: Vision Zero delivery in road safety is supported.
- 2.3.3 Outcome 3: International travel becomes a more a positive feature facilitated by the county’s network, as negative externalities of road-based international travel are decreased.
- 2.3.4 Outcome 4: Established international rail travel from locations in Kent continue to be available, rail and public transport connections to points for international travel hubs are improved and the environmental impacts of aviation in Kent reduce compared to current levels.
- 2.3.5 Outcome 5: Deliver climate change resilient transport, future-proofed for growth and innovation, aiming for an infrastructure-first approach, to

reduce the risk of highways and public transport congestion due to development.

- 2.3.6 Outcome 6: Access to Kent's historic and natural environment is enhanced.
- 2.3.7 Outcome 7: Road-side air quality improves as decarbonisation of travel accelerates, contributing towards the target of net zero and carbon budget targets.
- 2.3.8 Outcome 8: A comprehensive public transport network supported by dedicated infrastructure to attract increased patronage, with the consequent impact on improving service provision viability.
- 2.3.9 Outcome 9: Transport makes a positive contribution to public health due to increasing numbers of people using a growing cycling network with dedicated infrastructure, and an improving pedestrian network.

3. Evidence Base – the transport challenges in Kent that the new Plan needs to try and address

- 3.1 The Member Task and Finish Group considered the evidence base in the development of the new LTP. The evidence base provided insight on Kent's transport challenges, thematically and spatially and informed the crafting of the ambition and its outcomes. The headlines of the evidence base follow below.
- 3.2 KCC research illustrates that the public expect a high quality and frequent service from the public transport system if they are going to consider it as a substitute for their private motor vehicles. This is coupled with the (high / rising) cost of public transport options, frequently cited as an issue.
- 3.3 Safety is a priority for the public of Kent and is why KCC already has its ambitious Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy. Research shows that the public want to feel safe if they use the road for walking or cycling, and clearly favour means of achieving that such as 20 mph zones, and segregated cycle lanes.
- 3.4 Impacting a wide range of outcomes from transport in Kent is the quality of the highway. Research shows the main concern is that repairs do not keep up with the rate of deterioration, impacting safety and usability.
- 3.5 Our transport systems are still in a recovery phase as the pandemic continues. Rail and bus patronage remains far short of 2019 levels. The evidence base illustrates that given the volume of short-distance trips made in private vehicles, small mode shifts (in single percent figures) from private car could make a large contribution towards recovering patronage, with fares revenue able to support comprehensive network that becomes increasingly attractive.
- 3.6 KCC and national research shows the pandemic has embedded preferences for working from home. This is set against a risk of potential increased car use during weekdays for grocery, leisure, and home-delivery traffic locally rather than around their former place of work (e.g., London). This is adding pressure to the highway. National data indicates that since summer 2021 daily recorded volumes of motor vehicles are consistently exceeding 2019 levels.

- 3.7 Travel challenges on the Kent network arise from how the existing 1.6 million residents and 70,000 businesses operating in Kent either have to or chose to travel. Enabling Kent to accommodate new development growth will therefore rely on getting more sustainable outcomes from all travel – new and existing. Population is forecast to grow by 330,000 over the next 15 years, with District and Borough Local Plans setting out development strategies and sites to deliver c. 9,750 homes per annum over the same period, equivalent to delivering growth across the county equal to the size of the planned Otterpool Park garden settlement each year.
- 3.8 It will not be possible to grow the road network to accommodate all the increased trips from population growth. Some highways schemes will remain necessary though, given the nature of the county and the need for new development areas to be accessible and attractive to locate to. The challenge will be ensuring the infrastructure-first principle is applied, with highways schemes providing effective and dedicated infrastructure to reduce the negative effects of increased travel Kent’s highway and public transport network performance.
- 3.9 The Kent Transport Model forecasts growth from development up to 2037 and suggests that with travel habits from 2019 continuing, a typical inter peak hour on the roads could match today’s AM peak hour traffic levels, before we forecast the effect of mitigations that the LTP could promote. Journey speeds could decline, and variability or reliability of journey times could increase, with the time taken to complete journeys forecast to increase by c. 17% on average. The number of junctions that are classed as pinch points, is forecast to increase by c.35% adding to the locations already identified on the road network today. Congestion and stop-start conditions also risks worsening air quality locations.
- 3.10 Using the Kent Transport Model, we can forecast surface transport emissions on the KCC and / or National Highways networks. Our forecasts currently indicate that by 2027, emissions could fall by 8% and up to 33% by 2037 compared to 2019 levels. To meet the Government’s carbon budgets¹ on the pathway to net-zero, which were established by the Climate Change Committee chaired by Lord Deben, KCC needs to aim to achieve a far greater reduction of 30% in the next 5 years and 80% in the next 10 years.

4. Developing the Local Transport Plan’s policies and proposals

- 4.1 The consideration of policies and proposals to include in the draft LTP will focus on their contribution to achieving the outcomes and ambition. By extension, this will also include their impact on the challenges the evidence base has identified. Forecasting the quantified carbon reductions of LTP5 policies and proposals will also be a key feature of the next stage. Engagement will take place with a wide range of stakeholders to support the development of the plan’s content.

¹ **Note:** the carbon budgets are the most important aspect in ensuring carbon emissions decline to the volume and speed necessary to provide the best chance of limiting the global warming to well below 2 °C, with a target of 1.5 °C (associated with net zero in 2050) as intended by the Paris Climate Agreement. Technically net-zero in 2050 could be achieved whilst global warming exceeds the targets, for example if carbon emissions remain very high until a sudden sharp drop just before 2050.

4.2 The scheduled milestones that have been set for development of the plan, are listed below. They ensure KCC have a comfortable cushion between the current planned adoption date and the timeframe Government has set for completed plans by spring 2024.

4.2.1 Complete LTP4 Plan review – November 2021 – COMPLETED

4.2.2 Establish a new draft Ambition and outcomes for the plan: March 2022 - COMPLETED

4.2.3 Develop policies and proposals content for the LTP – summer / autumn 2022 through to winter 2023

4.2.4 Statutory consultation: Spring 2023.

4.2.5 Draft new LTP for Full Council vote on adoption: autumn 2023

5. District/Borough Council Engagement

5.1 Early engagement sessions were held with each of the 12 District/Borough Council officers, and Medway Council officers, to introduce plans for LTP5. Further sessions will inform development of policies and proposals for LTP5.

5.2 Key concerns repeatedly brought up in the engagement sessions included climate change and decarbonisation, bus services, schools generated car traffic, rate of active travel delivery, Local Plan (and associated local transport strategies) review and delivery challenges and timescales.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Spend to date has totalled c. £72,000, spent primarily on scoping for the SEA, Kent Transport Model use, and carbon emissions forecasting.

6.2 As of the 21st of March 2022, the Secretary of State for Transport has granted £178,671.43 under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 to Kent County Council for the primary purpose of preparing for the launch of the new Local Transport Plan guidance and updating of LTPs to abide by this new guidance. The funds must be spent or committed by January 2023.

7. Legal implications

7.1 As a statutory plan, the LTP must fulfil legislative requirements concerning Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The LTP will be prepared with support from a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), to measure the potential impact of the policies and proposals on the environment and will aim to reduce their impact where one may arise. The scoping stage of the SEA is nearing completion following consultation with statutory bodies, before receiving final approval from relevant specialists within KCC.

8. Equalities implications

8.1 The new LTP will be prepared with input from an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) to ensure the consideration of the policies and proposals that the Council choses to promote in the new LTP and further KCC’s efforts in fulfilling its statutory public sector equalities duty. The EqIA will be published with the draft plan for the public consultation exercise.

9. Governance

9.1 The LTP will continue to be developed in collaboration with the Member Task and Finish Group. Later in 2022, an update will be provided to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on the progress of the plan along with KCC’s proposed response to the Governments consultation on the new LTP guidance.

10. Conclusions

10.1 KCC will continue to develop LTP5 and its draft policies and proposals, through work of the Member Task and Finish Group, and through consultation with stakeholders including District and Borough officers, local and County Members through Joint Transportation Boards (JTBs).

10.2 As a statutory plan, LTP5 is a critical opportunity to establish a new pipeline of proposals for transport in the county, that carry weight in the planning process and in Government’s decision making. Government is placing more onus on LTPs for determining grant funding awards to Local Transport Authorities, as they seek to ensure schemes deliver national policy on levelling up, decarbonisation and the environment, active travel, the bus network, and innovation for the future of transport. To fund our future pipeline, LTP5 must focus on further delivery of progressive policies and schemes that speak to this focus of government funding.

11. Recommendation

11.1 That the County Council notes progress on development of Local Transport Plan 5, the draft ambition and outcomes developed and the remaining steps to developing a full draft plan for consultation.

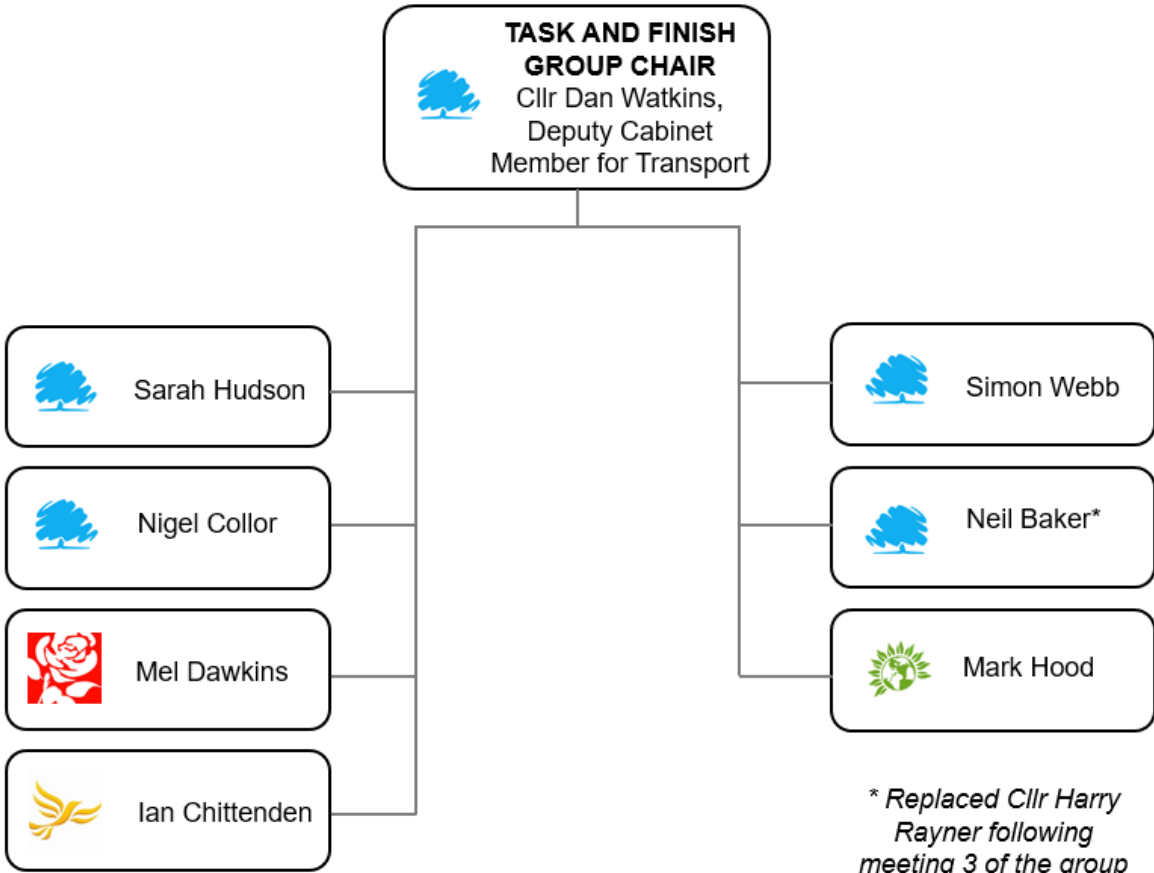
12. Background Documents

- 12.1 Local Transport Plan 4 published on KCC website at https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/72668/Local-transport-plan-4.pdf .
- 12.2 ETCC September 2021 paper on proposed early review of LTP4 published on KCC website at <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s105548/LTP5%20Report.pdf>

13. Officer Contact details

Relevant manager: Joseph Ratcliffe, Transport Strategy Manager 03000 413445 joseph.ratcliffe@kent.gov.uk	Relevant Director: Simon Jones, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport 03000 411683 simon.jones@kent.gov.uk
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Appendix 1 – Member Task and Finish Group Organogram



Note: Proposed representation from parties reflects broad balance of power on the Council as a whole

** Replaced Cllr Harry Rayner following meeting 3 of the group*

From: Roger Gough – Leader of the Council
David Cockburn – Chief Executive Officer

To: County Council – 14 July 2022

Subject: **End of Year Performance Report, 2021/22**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This is the Performance Report for Kent County Council covering the financial year ending 31 March 2022. The report presents information for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and activity measures across the Council Directorates, and a summary of the Corporate Risk Register.

Of the 33 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) presented in the Quarterly Performance Report, in the final quarter of 2021/22, 24 achieved target (Green) and 6 achieved and exceeded the floor standard but did not reach target (Amber). 3 KPIs did not meet the floor standard (Red).

Recommendation(s): The County Council is asked to NOTE the Performance Report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This is the end of year 2021/22 KCC Performance Report based on the Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) which is reported to Cabinet and is published on the KCC website under “Council performance”. The QPR is a key mechanism within the Performance Management Framework for the Council and has been delivered on a consistent basis for the last nine years.
- 1.2. This report presents the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and their associated targets which were agreed at the start of the year. The report includes trend data for activity levels relating to service demand, updates on programme delivery, and a summary of the Corporate Risk Register.
- 1.3. The selection of KPIs has remained largely consistent over time, ensuring that long-term as well as short-term trends are being tracked in relation to priority areas for the council. The report is supported by more detailed reporting and monitoring of Performance and Activity indicators provided to and discussed at Cabinet Committees.

2. Performance Report

- 2.1. The QPR reported to Cabinet on 23 June 2022 is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2. Results for KPIs compared to Target are assessed using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status.
- 2.3. Of the 33 KPIs included in the report, the latest RAG status are as follows:
 - 24 are rated Green - Target was achieved or exceeded (an increase of 2 on the previous year).
 - 6 are rated Amber - Performance achieved or exceeded the expected floor standard but did not meet the target for Green (a decrease of 4 on the previous year).
 - 3 are rated Red - Performance did not meet the expected floor standard (the same number as the previous year)ⁱ.
- 2.4. All KPIs are assessed for Direction of Travelⁱⁱ, with 10 indicators showing a positive trend, 18 are stable or have no clear trend, and 5 are showing a negative trend.

3. Recommendation(s)

- 3.1. The County Council is asked to NOTE the Performance Report.

4. Contact details

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ⁱ KPIs and associated targets are reviewed on an annual basis. In 2020/21 there were a total of 35 KPIs in the QPR compared to 33 KPIs in 2021/22.

ⁱⁱ Calculated using a regression-based approach agreed by Cabinet in July 2020.

Kent County Council

Quarterly Performance Report

Quarter 4

2021/22

Produced by: Kent Analytics
E-mail: performance@kent.gov.uk
Phone: 03000 416205



Key to KPI Ratings used

This report includes 33 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), where progress is assessed against Targets which are set at the start of the financial year. Progress against Target is assessed by RAG (Red/Amber/Green) ratings. Progress is also assessed in terms of Direction of Travel (DoT) using arrows. Direction of Travel is now based on regression analysis across the whole timeframe shown in the graphs, and not, as previously the case, on the movement from the last quarter.

GREEN	Target has been achieved
AMBER	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
RED	Floor Standard* has not been achieved
↑	Performance is improving (positive trend)
↓	Performance is worsening (negative trend)
⇒	Performance has remained stable or shows no clear trend

*Floor Standards are the minimum performance expected and if not achieved must result in management action.

Key to Activity Indicator Graphs

Alongside the Key Performance Indicators this report includes a number of Activity Indicators which present demand levels for services or other contextual information.

Graphs for activity indicators are shown either with national benchmarks or in many cases with Upper and Lower Thresholds which represent the range activity is expected to fall within. Thresholds are based on past trends and other benchmark information.

If activity falls outside of the Thresholds, this is an indication that demand has risen above or below expectations and this may have consequences for the council in terms of additional or reduced costs.

Activity is closely monitored as part of the overall management information to ensure the council reacts appropriately to changing levels of demand.

Executive Summary

24 of the 33 indicators are rated as Green, on or ahead of target, a decrease of 3 on the previous Quarter. 6 indicators reached or exceeded the floor standard (Amber) with 3 indicators not achieving the floor standard (Red), the same number as the previous Quarter. 10 indicators were showing an improving trend, with 5 showing a worsening trend.

	G	A	R	↑	⇒	↓
Customer Services	1	1	1		3	
Growth, Economic Development & Communities	1		1		2	
Environment and Transport	6			2	4	
Children, Young People and Education	7	4	1	5	2	5
Adult Social Care	4	1			5	
Public Health	5			3	2	
TOTAL	24	6	3	10	18	5

Customer Services - Satisfaction with Contact Point advisors continued to meet target. The percentage of calls answered improved to move above floor standard. The percentage of complaints responded to within timescale improved but remains below floor standard. The number of phone calls responded to by Contact Point remains within expectations.

Customer Services KPIs	RAG rating	DoT
% of callers to Contact Point who rated the advisor who dealt with their call as good	GREEN	⇒
% of phone calls to Contact Point which were answered	AMBER	⇒
% of complaints responded to within timescale	RED	⇒

Growth, Economic Development & Communities – The No Use Empty programme, which returns long term empty domestic properties into active use, continues to exceed its rolling 12 months target. The amount of Developer Contributions secured achieved 65% of the total sought, which is below floor standard. The total number of books issued by the Library service (physical and e-issues) is higher than the same Quarter in 2019 (pre-pandemic).

Growth, Economic Development & Communities KPIs	RAG rating	DoT
Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE)	GREEN	⇒
Developer contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought	RED	⇒

Environment & Transport – All four indicators for Highways and Transport achieved or exceeded target. Highways enquiries and work in progress continue to be below expected levels, with fewer severe weather episodes than expected. The percentage of waste diverted from landfill over the last 12 months continues to exceed its 99% target. The Greenhouse Gas KPI which measures progress towards Net Zero in 2030 is ahead of target.

<u>Environment & Transport KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
% of routine pothole repairs completed within 28 days	GREEN	⇒
% of routine highway repairs reported by residents completed within 28 days	GREEN	⇒
Emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification	GREEN	⇒
% of satisfied callers for Kent Highways & Transportation, 100 call back survey	GREEN	↑
% of municipal waste recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑
Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇒

Education & Wider Early Help – Schools continue to exceed the inspection target, but Early Years settings dropped below, although 97% are still rated good or outstanding. Completion of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in timescale continues on an upward trend but remains below the floor standard. Permanent pupil exclusions remains ahead of target. The number of first-time entrants to the youth justice system continues to decrease ahead of target and is on an improving trend. There was a marked improvement in the percentage of secondary school applicants being offered one of their top three preferences following a fall last year. There was also improvement in the percentage of 16-17 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) or whose activity is Not Known.

<u>Education & Wider Early Help KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
% of all schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements (data to March 20)	GREEN	↑
% of Early Years settings with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements (childcare on non-domestic premises) (data to March 20)	AMBER	↓
% of Education, Health Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks – rolling 12 months	RED	↑
% of pupils permanently excluded from school – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇒
No. of first-time entrants to youth justice system – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑

Children’s Social Care & Early Help – Four of the seven indicators met target, one less than last quarter, with the other three achieving the floor standard but all three are on a negative trend. Percentage of foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC), and Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with), have not met target for over a year. The number of children in care increased.

Children’s Social Care & Early Help KPIs	RAG rating	DoT
Percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help / Social Work teams within 3 months	GREEN	⇒
% of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	AMBER	⇩
% of children social care referrals that were repeat referrals within 12 months	GREEN	⇩
% of child protection plans that were repeat plans	GREEN	⇩
Average no. of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇩
% of foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)	AMBER	⇩
% of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	AMBER	⇩

Adult Social Care – Four out of the five KPIs met or exceeded target, and were RAG rated Green. The proportion of clients receiving Direct Payments remains below target. There was a decrease in the number of people receiving enablement.

Adult Social Care KPIs	RAG rating	DoT
Proportion of people who have received short term services for which the outcome was either support at a lower level or no ongoing support	GREEN	⇒
Proportion of clients receiving Direct Payments	AMBER	⇒
Proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family	GREEN	⇒
Proportion of KCC clients in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding	GREEN	⇒
Proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services	GREEN	⇒

Public Health – There is a positive trend on three of the five indicators, and all indicators are exceeding their targets.

Public Health KPIs	RAG rating	DoT
Number of eligible people receiving an NHS Health Check – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇩
Number of mandated universal checks delivered by the health visiting service – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇒
% of first-time patients (at any sexual health clinics or telephone triage) who are offered a full sexual health screen	GREEN	⇩
Successful completion of drug and alcohol treatment	GREEN	⇩
% of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends or someone in a similar situation	GREEN	⇒

Customer Services	
Cabinet Member	Bryan Sweetland
Corporate Director	Amanda Beer

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	1	1	1		3	

Customer contact through Contact Point (KCC's call centre) is provided via a strategic partnership, whilst Digital services are provided by KCC.

The percentage of callers who rated their advisor as good, remained at 97% and met target. The percentage of calls answered by Contact Point improved to 91% for the Quarter, moving above the floor standard. Sickness levels continue to be higher than expected, and particular pressure on the call centre occurred in February due to calls relating to Storm Eunice and Special Educational Needs transport. Average call time decreased to 5 minutes 40 seconds, which is within the target of 5 minutes 45 seconds.

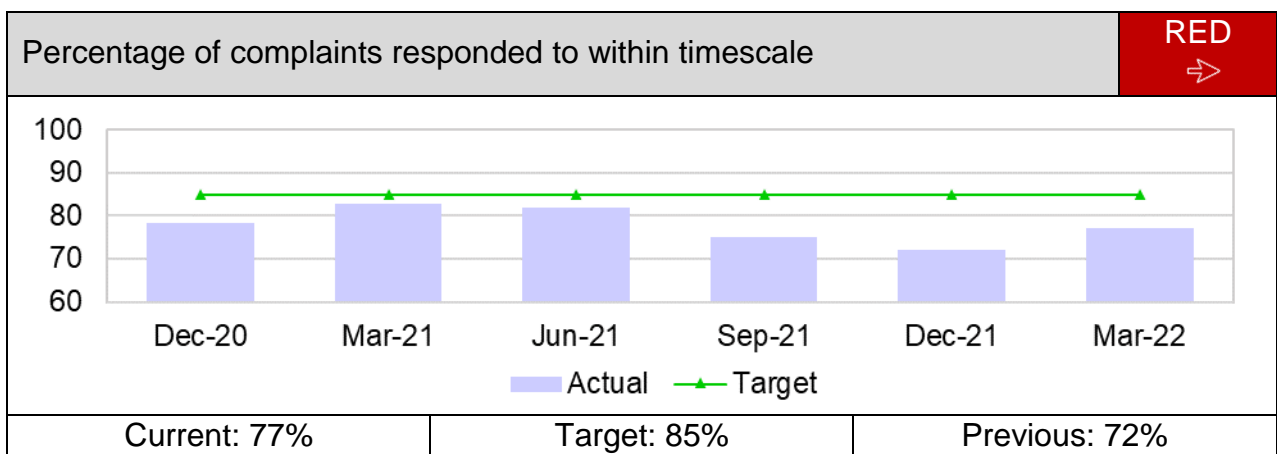
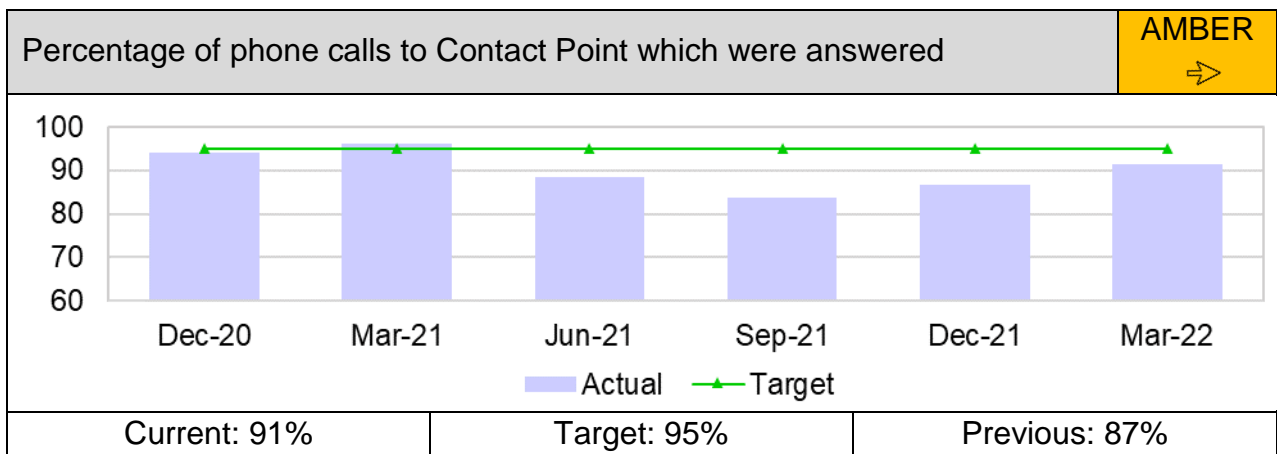
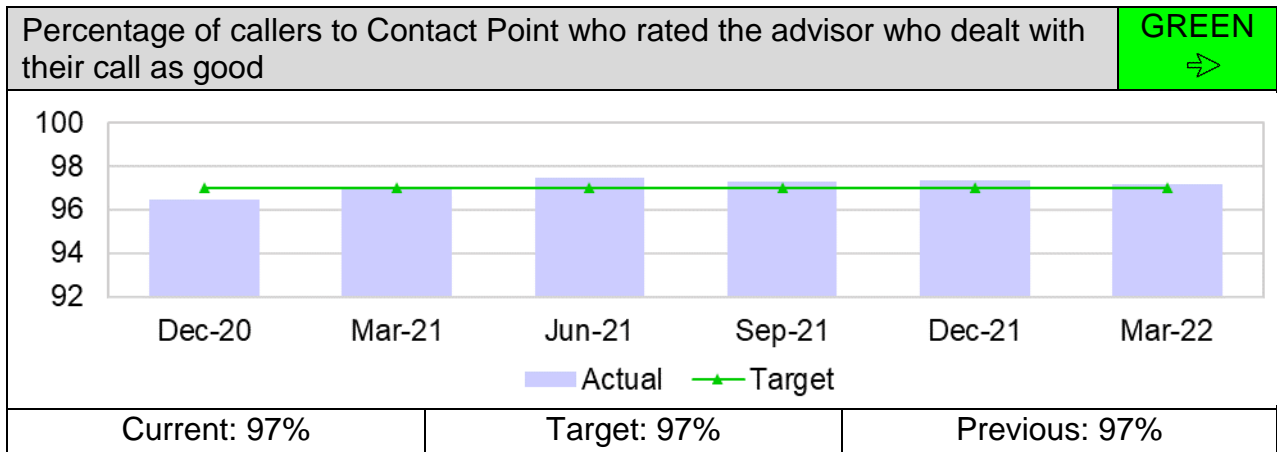
Contact Point received 15% more calls than the previous quarter and 12% more calls than the same period last year. The 12 months to March 2022 saw a broadly similar number of calls to the 12 months to March 2021 (1% fewer).

We are unable to report on web visitor numbers for Quarter 4 due to the review of KCC's use of cookies on kent.gov.uk. This review is now complete, and information is being collected and will be reported on from Quarter 1 2022/23.

Quarter 4 saw the number of complaints received increase on the previous Quarter, to be at a similar number to Quarter 4 last year. Between January and March, 77% of complaints were responded to in time, and so this indicator remains below the floor standard of 80% but shows an improvement on the previous Quarter. In terms of Directorate performance, Children, Young People and Education achieved 52% within timescale, Adult Social Care and Health 76%, Growth, Environment and Transport 84%, and Strategic and Corporate Services 82%.

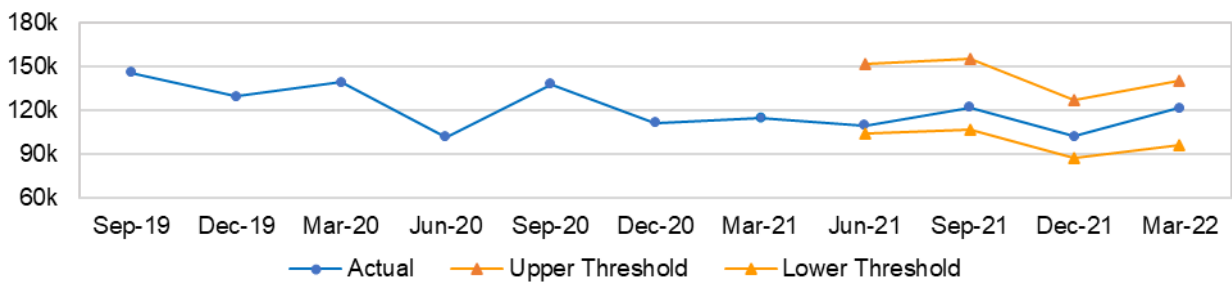
The volumes and complexity of complaints being received in some services, alongside day-to-day management of cases, has proved challenging. Work is ongoing to address performance, however it may take some time as the backlog of cases is dealt with.

Key Performance Indicators

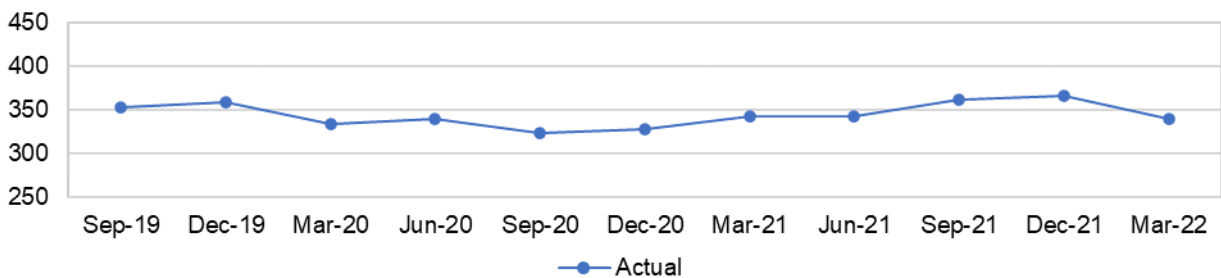


Activity indicators

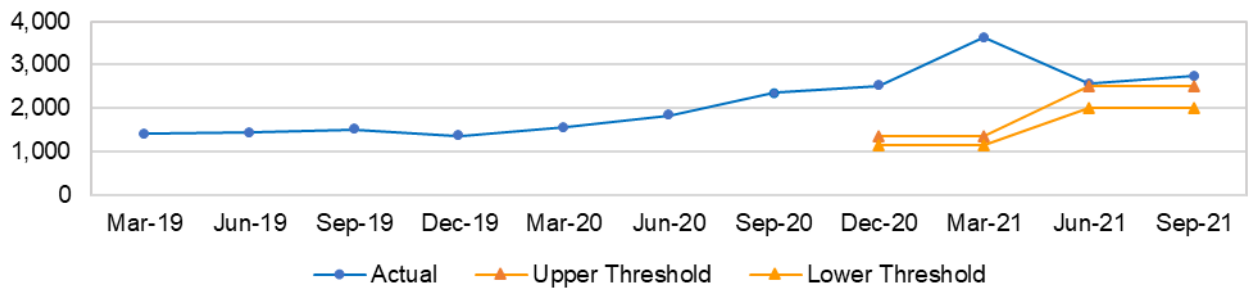
Number of phone calls responded to by Contact Point – by quarter



Average Contact Point call handling time in seconds – by quarter

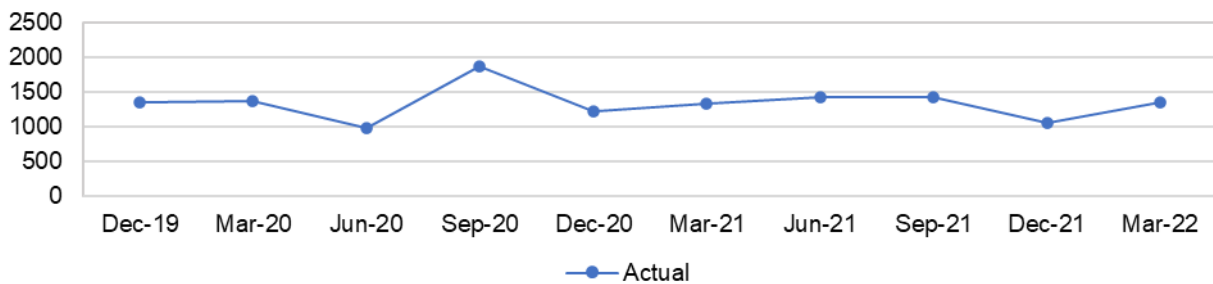


Number of visits to the KCC website (in thousands) – by quarter*



* Due to a review of KCC's use of cookies on kent.gov.uk no visitor data was not available from October until February. This information is now being collected again and will be reported on from Quarter 1 2022/23 onwards.

Number of complaints received each quarter



Customer Services – Call Activity

Number of phone calls to Contact Point (thousands)

Contact Point received 15% more calls than the previous quarter and 12% more calls than the same period last year. The 12 months to March 2022 saw a similar number of calls to the 12 months to March 2021 (1% fewer).

Service area	Apr – Jun 21	Jul – Sep 21	Oct – Dec 21	Jan – Mar 22	Yr to Mar 22	Yr to Mar 21
Adult Social Care	29	27	25	27	112	118
Integrated Children's Services	18	19	18	19	73	71
Blue Badges	8	10	10	14	36	39
Highways	17	17	12	14	62	62
Transport Services	8	16	8	10	38	36
Waste and Recycling	12	16	9	9	48	44
KSAS*	4	4	7	8	19	12
Libraries and Archives	8	10	7	7	31	29
Registrations	5	6	4	6	21	24
Schools and Early Years	5	5	4	5	19	24
Adult Education	1	5	4	5	12	9
Driver improvement	3	4	4	4	14	17
Main line	3	4	3	3	13	12
Other Services	2	2	1	2	7	8
Kent together	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	2	7
Total Calls (thousands)	124	147	116	134	507	512

* Kent Support and Assistance Service

Numbers are shown in the 1,000's and may not add exactly due to rounding. Calculations in commentary are based on unrounded numbers.

Customer Services – Complaints Monitoring

Quarter 4 saw the number of complaints received increase from Quarter 3, to be at a similar number to Quarter 4 last year.

Over the last 12 months there has been a 3% decrease in complaints received compared to the previous year.

In Quarter 4, frequently raised issues included SEN provision, Household Waste and Recycling Centres and complaints relating to school transport following the change of transport providers.

Service	12 months to Mar 21	12 months to Mar 22	Quarter to Dec 21	Quarter to Mar 22
Highways, Transportation and Waste Management	3,114	2,793	512	764
Adult Social Services	759	746	198	194
Integrated Children’s Services	711	828	173	220
Libraries, Registrations and Archives	141	176	44	30
Education & Young People’s Services	230	269	46	50
Strategic and Corporate Services	166	179	37	37
Environment, Planning and Enforcement & Economic Development	242	176	43	34
Adult Education	21	46	7	14
Total Complaints	5,384	5,213	1,060	1,343

Customer Services – Digital Take-up

The table below shows the digital/online or automated transaction completions for key service areas.

Transaction type	Online Apr 21 - Jun 21	Online Jul 21 - Sep 21	Online Oct 21 - Dec 21	Online Jan 22 - Mar 22	Total Transactions Last 12 Months
Renew a library book*	82%	82%	80%	80%	836,751
Report a Highways Fault	59%	61%	58%	58%	94,123
Book a Driver Improvement Course	88%	86%	85%	88%	32,112
Book a Birth Registration appointment	86%	87%	89%	86%	23,644
Apply for a KCC Travel Saver (Rolling 12 months)	99%	100%	100%	100%	23,374
Report a Public Right of Way Fault	87%	85%	89%	91%	21,271
Apply for or renew a Blue Badge	70%	66%	68%	73%	16,555
Apply for a Concessionary Bus Pass	74%	65%	67%	70%	13,483
Highways Licence applications	99%	99%	100%	100%	8,279
Apply for a HWRC recycling voucher	99%	99%	99%	99%	5,171

* Library issue renewals transaction data is based on individual loan items and not count of borrowers.

Growth, Economic Development & Communities	
Cabinet Members	Derek Murphy, Mike Hill
Corporate Director	Simon Jones

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	1		1		2	

Support for business

Kent's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) investments have continued to create and sustain employment opportunities during Quarter 4. The impact in terms of business failures and loss of jobs caused by the economic disruption from the Coronavirus pandemic on the Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) loan recipients has so far been much lower than anticipated. A number of recipients have requested to vary their repayments to support them with the rising cost of supplies, but generally, it has been positive, with some loan recipients requesting to repay the remaining balance of their loan in full early following the resumption of repayments in October 2021 (10 companies, total repayments during Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 were over £1.5m), others moving towards pre-pandemic trading levels; and the majority commencing their repayments as scheduled.

Since 2017 to the end of Quarter 3 of 2021/22, the KMBF has provided funding of £15.2 million to 107 Kent and Medway businesses, creating 392 new jobs and safeguarding 150 further jobs.

In Quarter 3, (on 29 October 2021) the KMBF relaunched with a new secured loan scheme for Kent & Medway Businesses seeking loans over £101,000. To date 50 pre-applications to the value of £11,471,597 have been received, of these 16 businesses have submitted full applications to the value of £4 million, and the KMBF remains open to applications for funding from businesses in the Kent and Medway area.

The KMBF management team continues to work with its equity partner, NCL Technology Ventures, to ensure that the innovative companies in which the KMBF has an equity stake receive specialist support and assistance.

The South-East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has provided funding for the Innovation Investment Loan scheme which the KMBF team manages for Kent and Medway. Through this scheme, £6 million of loans have been made to 18 businesses. By the end of Quarter 3 of 2021/22, 137 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) jobs had been created and 64.5 FTE jobs safeguarded.

Converting derelict buildings for new housing and commercial space

In Quarter 4, 96 long term empty properties were made fit for occupation through the No Use Empty (NUE) Programme bringing the total to 7,352 since the programme began in 2005. NUE processed a further five loan applications in Quarter 4 (41 in total which equalled the loans processed last financial year) increasing the total NUE investment in converting derelict properties to £85.1m (£47.2m from KCC recycled loans and £37.9m from private sector leverage). £7m of loans were repaid during 21/22.

NUE received confirmation from SELEP in December 2021 that a £2.5m bid to the Growing Places Fund had been approved. The contract is now in place with the

accountable body (Essex County Council). The full £2.5m was received by KCC in March 2022 and will be made available to convert additional derelict properties from 2022/23.

NUE received the first drawdown of £750k from a separate £2 million awarded under SELEP Growing Places Fund (GPF) for NUE Commercial Phase II in July. The target is to return 18 empty commercial units back into use and create 36 new homes by March 2023. Two new projects were approved in Quarter 4 increasing the number of projects supported to eight (covering Dover (2), Folkestone, Herne Bay, Hythe, Ramsgate, Sittingbourne, and Sheerness) and these will return eight empty commercial units back into use and create 36 homes.

Following the approval of £16m from KCC Treasury to bring forward empty/derelict sites with planning permission for new builds, NUE has processed a total of 35 applications at the end of Quarter 4. The value of loans awarded was £19m. This was achieved by recycling £3.2m of loan repayments received following the completion and sale/re-finance of seven projects which have provided 33 residential units: Dover (13 homes), Broadstairs (2 homes), Folkestone (11 homes) and Ramsgate (7 homes). The total number of new homes funded is 137 across 7 Kent districts.

NUE has identified potential projects with an indicative value of £20m. Based on current loans repaid and value of loans due to be repaid between now and during 2022/23, NUE would be able to service 20% of the potential projects subject to final assessment next year.

Infrastructure projects

In Quarter 4 of 2021/22, the following capital funding decision was made by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's (SELEP) Accountability Board:

- The award of £1,009,000 Getting Building Funding to Dover Citadel Ltd for the Techfort project, subject to the project spending all Getting Building Funding by 30th September 2022. The Techfort project sees the refurbishment of 10,890 sq ft (1,012 sq.m.) of the historic Citadel in Dover's Western Heights. Casemates buildings (# 51 and 52) in the Citadel will be upgraded to accommodate a mix of cultural uses including a gallery, market, recording studio and bar, and the project will act as the first step of delivering the ambitious TechFort vision to see the entire Citadel brought back into use.

Broadband

The broadband team are continuing to support BDUK on the pre-procurement work for the Kent delivery phase of the Government's Project Gigabit Programme. Up to £203m has been allocated for Kent and Medway as part of the new national Project Gigabit Programme. The aim of this programme is to deliver gigabit-capable connections to areas that are not expected to benefit from connectivity upgrades by telecoms operators.

The Government's intention is that a single contract will be established to deliver these new connections across Kent and Medway. The procurement will be led by Building Digital UK (BDUK). Kent County Council's broadband team has been asked by BDUK to help lead and support the local delivery across Kent

BDUK are currently forecasting that the Kent and Medway project will cover circa 109,000 properties and have advised that the invitation to tender will be launched this

summer, with the contracted work commencing in April 2023. The pre-procurement work (which is required to meet current subsidy control and procurement legislation) is underway.

In the meantime, the infrastructure build for the final phase of the Kent BDUK Project continues. As of March 2022, over 144,600 faster broadband connections had been delivered by the project.

Funding Kent's Infrastructure

KCC has a statutory right to seek financial contributions for capital investment from developers of new housing sites. In Quarter 4, eighteen Section 106 agreements were completed and a total of £9.4 million was secured. This represents 65% of the amount sought, which is below the floor standard and is mainly due to one site off Shottendane Road in Thanet. Concerns at this site relate to viability which was shaped by the challenging topography and the policy requirement for the site to deliver essential on-site highway infrastructure. It was originally refused permission but the Inspector overturned Thanet District Council's decision. KCC is currently in the process of bidding for infrastructure funding through the Department for Transport's Major Road Network (MRN) Programme, which, if successful, will significantly improve the prospects of this and other development sites in Thanet being able to meet future KCC financial contribution requests. In the meantime, Highways and Education are being prioritised for payments received.

s.106 contributions secured £000s	Apr to Jun 2021	Jul to Sep 2021	Oct to Dec 2021	Jan to Mar 2022
Primary Education	5,296	4,292	6,675	4,047
Secondary Education	5,464	4,554	5,333	4,716
Adult Social Care	108	128	153	92
Libraries	223	173	80	170
Community Learning	58	23	25	41
Youth & Community	52	63	79	60
Waste	47	89	15	26
Highways	464	420	3,537	242
Total	11,713	9,742	15,897	9,395
Secured as % of Amount Sought	96%	99%	98%	65%

Kent Film Office

In the 4th quarter of 2021/22, the film office handled 134 filming requests and 169 related enquiries. We logged 126 filming days bringing an estimated £1.2 direct spend into Kent & Medway, giving a total of £8.2m for the year. Highlights for the Quarter included, Netflix Luther, Marvel's Spiral, BBC comedy Pru and Gangs of London 2.

Libraries, Registration and Archives

During Quarter 4 the Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) Hub opened in Kent History and Library Centre, with the team providing support to new businesses both virtually and in person. Cheriton and Paddock Wood Libraries have been fully refurbished, and The Amelia Scott in Tunbridge Wells, comprising Library services, Adult Education, Museum, Art Gallery, Gateway and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

services, opened on 28 April 2022. In March, Wi-Fi printing was rolled out across all libraries following requests for this service from the public.

While recovery from pandemic restrictions continues, footfall across libraries has improved, and is now at 61% of pre-pandemic levels, exceeding the latest national average of 50%. Physical issues are now at 85% of pre-pandemic levels, compared to the latest national figure of 70%. Digital issues have dipped by 8% from the same period last year (which was an exceptional lockdown period when at times it was our only library offer), but have reached the milestone of 3 million loans in total, just over a year since the 2 million mark was hit. Total issues are now 8% higher than they were pre-pandemic. Both visitors and issues have come within the forecast parameters for Quarter 4, and the recent library customer satisfaction survey has yielded a satisfaction rate of 94%.

The Registration Service remained busy with 4,437 birth registrations carried out across Quarter 4, an increase of 11% on the pre-pandemic figure as teams continue to deal with the backlog of registrations. Death registrations remained high, at 4,172. There were 872 ceremonies, an increase of 22% on the same period pre-pandemic, and this figure includes 57 citizenship ceremonies in which over 1,000 new citizens were welcomed. Customer satisfaction with registration is 94%, which is 1 percentage point below target.

After a dip during the winter period, Archive Search Room bookings are beginning to pick up again, with 161 bookings in March 2022, the most bookings in one month since the Search Room reopened. Parallel to this, remote enquiries have also seen an increase, having risen by 48% on the same Quarter last year to 2,123, exceeding upper expectations for the number of Archive enquiries answered.

Phase 2 of the “Let’s Talk about Kent Libraries” engagement has been completed in Quarter 4 and analysed by Lake Market Research. This exercise sought feedback from the public and staff on the future priorities for the service, with over 1,800 people responding to the survey, as well as 600 non-users. Their feedback will be used to help inform and shape the LRA Strategy.

Community Safety

Now that all restrictions have been lifted, a particular focus is rebuilding confidence and reducing social isolation through social engagement. Clubs, events, projects and meeting points (surgeries) are being restarted or initiated. Other focus areas include the rising cost of living and Ukraine conflict related support. The KCWS undertook just under 4,500 tasks in support of these activities during this quarter.

Explore Kent

The popularity of public rights of way (PRoW) and green spaces continues with over 19,000 route downloads during this quarter. Through collaboration with Kent Downs AONB and funding from the Experience project the new [Explore Kent website](#) continues to engage Kent’s residents. In this Quarter there were 88,000 visitors to the website and our social media engagement continued to grow as below via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Explore Kent worked with partners this Quarter to provide campaigns for: Transport Innovation, Contain the Outbreak Management Fund, the physical and mental health benefits of access to the PRoW network, and Kent Sport and Physical Activity.

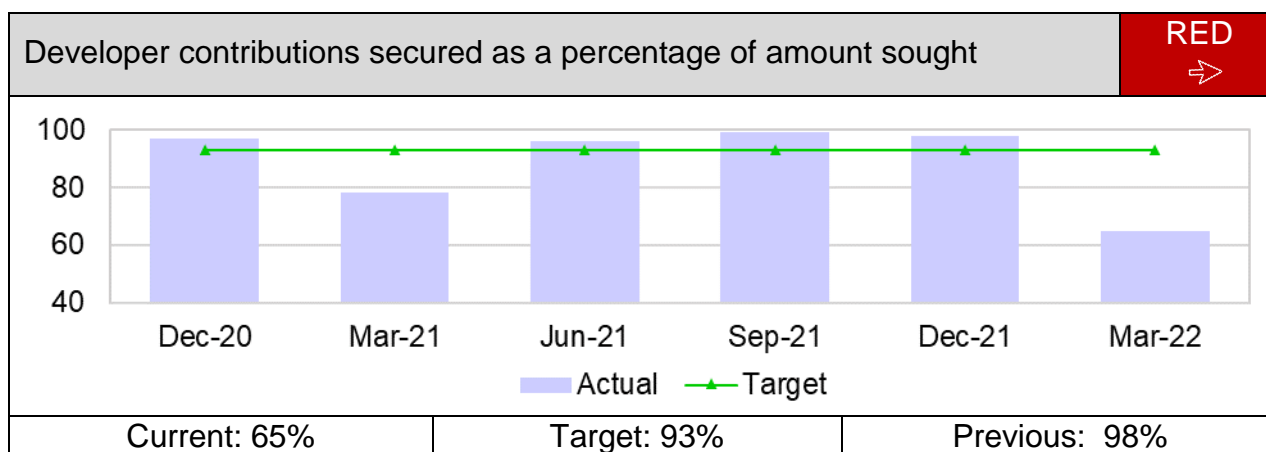
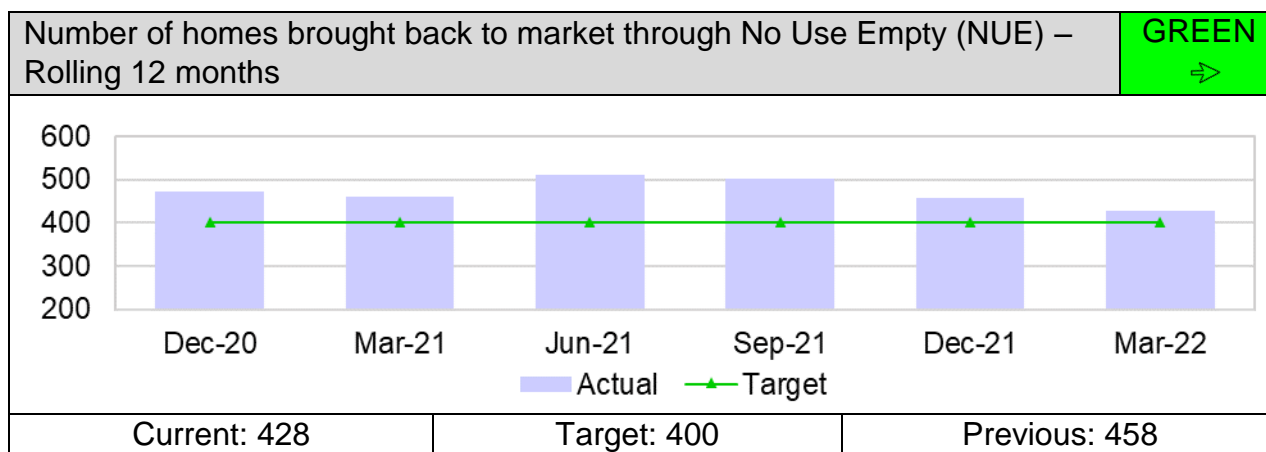
Kent Country Parks

Kent County Council is investing in new and improved play areas across most of its country parks. Kent Country Parks have received £1.1million of Public Health Covid-19 recovery funding to invest in its play provision. The money will be used to improve existing play areas as well as install new play equipment. [More details and schedule of works are available in the press release](#) of 6th March.

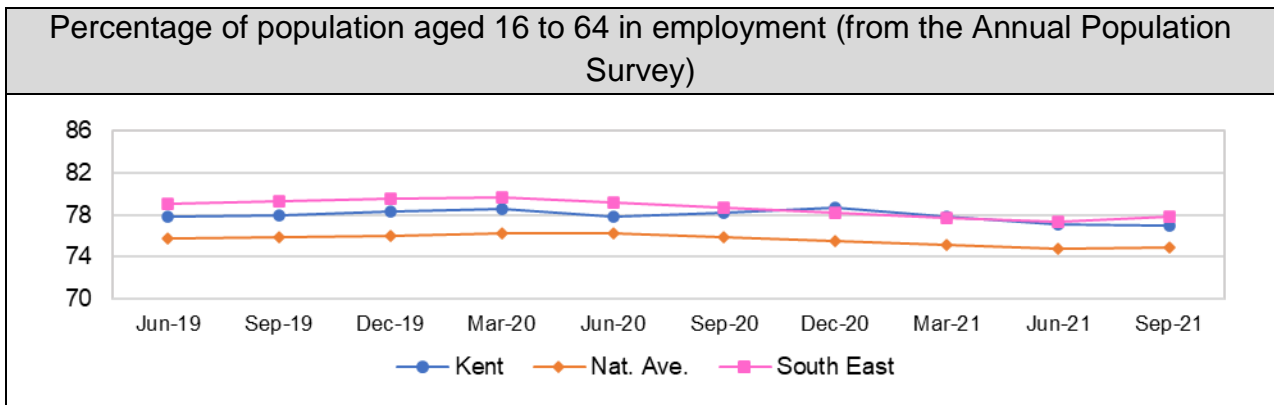
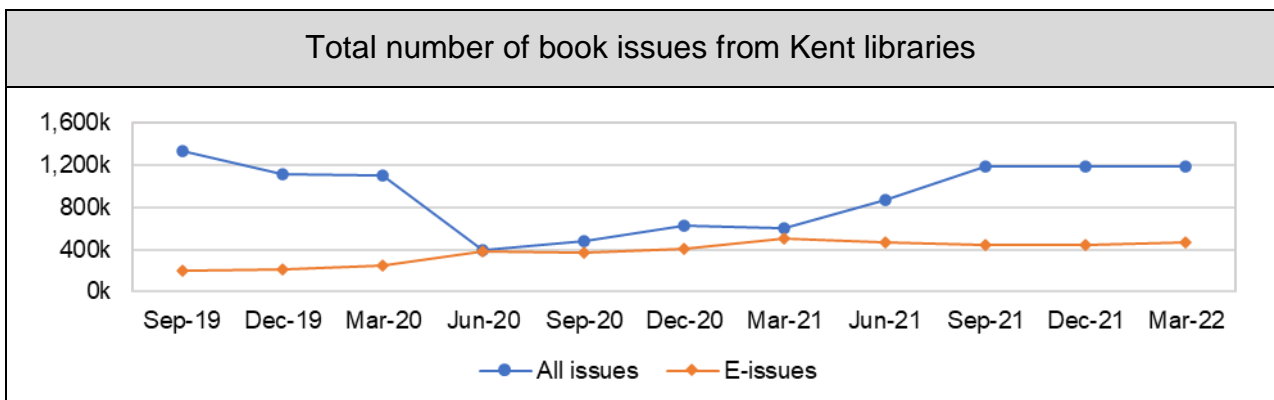
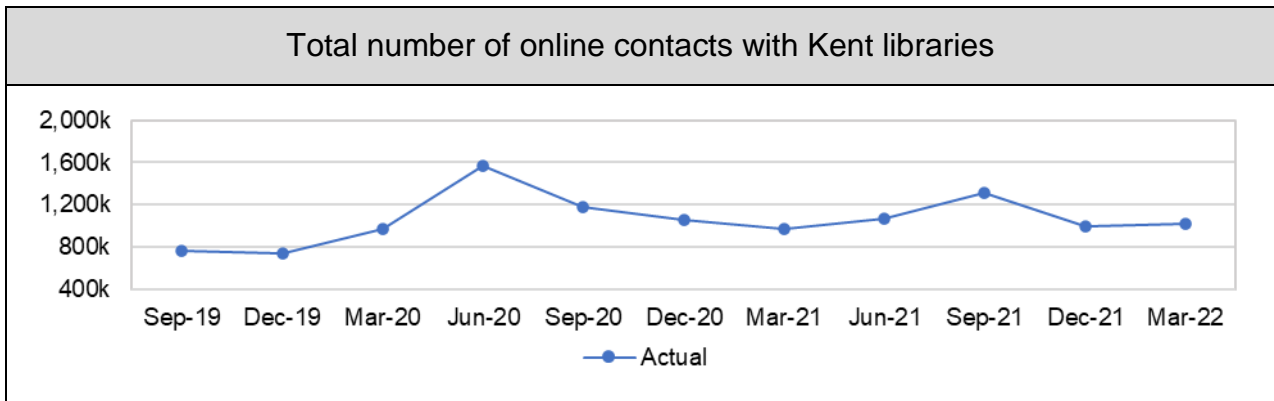
Sport and Physical Activity

Quarter 4 began with our Everyday Active campaign delivering its most successful challenge to date. With the 375 people that signed up managing to log over 57 million steps and covering close to 20,000 miles between them whilst saving 1,020kg of CO2 through active travel. This Quarter has also seen Sport England agree £3.4 million investment into the Active Partnership for the 2022–2027 period to support getting more people, more active, more often across Kent and a further £200k through the [Together Fund](#) has been awarded to support projects targeting the most disadvantaged.

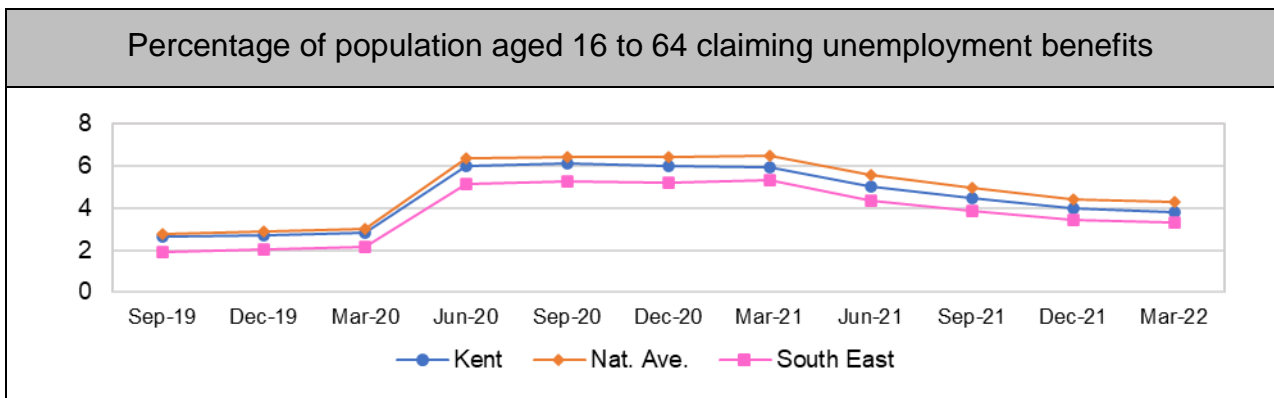
Key Performance Indicators



Activity indicators



NB: 95% confidence interval of figures are, Kent (+/- 2.1), Nat Ave (+/- 0.3), South East (+/- 0.7).



Environment and Transport	
Cabinet Members	David Brazier, Susan Carey
Corporate Director	Simon Jones

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	→	↓
	6			2	4	

Highways

For the Quarter to the end of March, all 4 of the Highways KPIs are RAG rated green. The attendance at Emergency Incidents within 2 hours of notification has remained steady at 99% (above the target of 98%). The Service received 671 reports of emergency incidents in this Quarter, with the contractor Amey unable to attend just 7 of these within the 2-hour response time window and several of these missed the target by just a few minutes. This represents continued good work from Amey to ensure response times remain on target.

Routine faults responded to in 28 days remains on target at 90% in this quarter, with 11,843 requests from customers. Less severe weather than usual for most of this Quarter led to a quieter period for the service overall, although storms in February increased the volume of emergencies reported over one particular week. The service continues to work with contractors and their supply chain to ensure performance targets are achieved.

The total number of customer contacts regarding highway issues in the last Quarter increased to 43,103 with 20,646 of these identified as faults requiring action by front line teams. The remaining contacts are handled at first point by Agilisys using information provided by the Highways Service and on the KCC website. At the end of March there were 5,330 open enquiries (work in progress), and this compares to 6,681 at the same time last year, reflecting the quieter period in some parts of the business.

The monthly call back survey where we call 100 highways customers whose enquiries have been closed in the last month, remained at 98% satisfaction for the latest Quarter with an improving trend over the last 6 Quarters. This is well above our 85% target and really pleasing to see following the Covid recovery. Comments reflect the improvements to both the contact centre helpline as well as increased confidence in the online fault reporting tool (our reporting tool now receives approximately 60% of all enquiries reported by the public). Customers also said they were happy with the speed and quality of repairs we are carrying out. Further improvements to the reporting tool are being investigated at present.

The high demand from utility companies to access their infrastructure under Kent roads, as well as requests from developers and for KCC's own works, continues, with 153,500 Streetwork permits issued in the 2021/22 period. This is well above expected levels of around 120,000. This is placing pressure on the team and additional resources are being sourced.

Asset Management

In July 2021, KCC published its new Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) covering 2021/22-2025/26. It explains how effective and efficient highways asset management, as a key enabling service, facilitates the delivery of Kent's strategic objectives. It also includes asset condition forecasts based on current investment levels, what maintenance services Highways provides and what it does not, an assessment of associated risk and a five-year forward works programme. Importantly, it was used as a key tool to inform Kent's capital budget for 2022/23 during these difficult financial times. It also enabled Kent to maximise available funding from the Department for Transport.

The HAMP also describes a range of future actions to further improve our approach to highways maintenance and transportation matters, focussing on increasing asset lifespans, reducing lifecycle costs and improving future maintainability against the increasingly challenging backdrop of deteriorating assets, increasing traffic volumes, uncertainty around future funding and, more recently, Covid. Officers have developed a project plan to implement the various actions in the HAMP and have started implementing key ones including improving our knowledge of assets and their condition and introducing new maintenance hierarchies.

Casualty Reduction

The team are undergoing a reorganisation in order to be better placed to deliver on Vision Zero objectives, which includes the creation of a Safe Vehicles Team.

Working in partnership with National Highways, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Service, we have launched the Driving for Better Business Kent pilot scheme, targeting fleet managers in Kent to encourage safer operations, driving and vehicles in their fleets.

The casualty figures for the Quarter below are an increase on the same Quarter in 2020/21, but that was during Covid restrictions and thus a period of lower traffic volumes. They are similar to figures for the same Quarter in 2018/19 (pre-pandemic).

January to March 2022 Casualty Data – Kent roads and National Highways in Kent

Month	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
January	4	53	339	396
February	4	39	259	302
March	2	53	251	306

Provisional data subject to change.

We have had a productive year delivering Bikeability, having trained more than 4,100 children in Levels 1 and 2, and 125 children in Level 3. With the exception of the 2020/21 Covid affected year, we have increased our numbers of children (and schools) every year since 2016.

To assist with increasing take-up of Walking Buses and in line with the Vision Zero (VZ) Strategy of increasing safer walking to school, the team have launched a [new campaign video](#) to encourage parents to sign up as walking bus. The campaign has been a success with schools contacting the team to find out more about walking buses and we are now in the process of risk assessing routes and speaking to schools about the next steps.

Crash Remedial Measures & Local Transport Plan (LTP)

Development of the 2022/23 Crash Remedial Measures (CRM) and Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme has now taken place.

There are over 33 CRM schemes programmed around the County identified for delivery by the end of March 2023. The team also have an additional 31 schemes to implement, having worked with the parishes and elected community bodies to help them identify improvements they feel are needed in their local areas.

The team have recently undergone a redesign to incorporate all the County's Road Safety and Active Travel services into one new Group. The main intention from this redesign is to ensure all responses to road safety are addressed. When concerns around safety and accessibility are raised, the group will be able to consider the appropriate response, whether that be behaviour change interventions or engineering measures and to ensure that we begin to embed the safe systems principles of our new VZ Strategy into our working practises.

Journey time reliability/Congestion Strategy

A programme of schemes within the Local Growth Fund (LGF) to improve the reliability of localised journey times are complete and post-scheme monitoring is taking place. The Department for Transport opened a process for applying for new moving traffic enforcement powers and work is well underway developing Kent's application and future use of powers. The County Council aims to submit an application in May, once we have met the statutory requirements for making an application. It is anticipated that the earliest Kent could be designated powers is Autumn 2022.

The service remains engaged with National Highways to identify opportunities for new or improved collaborative traffic management, for example, where National Highways can utilise KCC's electronic Variable Message Signs out of hours. We are also participating in a National Highways project to review Diversion Routes for Emergency Use, where Kent's local road network is utilised as a diversion route in emergency scenarios, for example, when the motorway network is closed for a period due to a serious road traffic accident/fatality.

Local Growth Fund (LGF) Transport Capital Projects

Through SELEP, KCC is managing £128 million of Government funding from rounds 1 to 3 of the LGF. There are currently 2 'Red' schemes causing concern, Sturry Link Road and Maidstone Integrated Transport Project.

For the Sturry Link Road project, following the granting of permission for the scheme by KCC Planning Committee in September, the SELEP Accountability Board agreed that the total £5.9m LGF allocation should be retained against the project. The remaining £4.656m LGF allocated to the project was transferred to KCC in March 2022. This is still subject to the condition that the land acquisition is completed by 31st August 2023. The procurement of the design and build contract closed in June 2022. A further update on progress with the project will be provided at the July 2022 Accountability Board meeting.

In regard to the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package Scheme, it was agreed that the £8.9m LGF funding should remain allocated to the project. The SELEP Accountability Board were updated at the May meeting regarding the positive news that the consent to relocate the ragstone wall on the boundary of Mote Park was granted by MBC's Planning Committee. The Accountability Board will be further updated on progress at the July 2022 meeting.

Transport Strategy

Work with National Highways on the Lower Thames Crossing continued with the scope of works agreed for the desktop study for developing local road mitigations through a modification to the existing Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). Procurement of the study will take place next quarter funded by the grant from National Highways. Work with National Highways also continued on the options development for Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) pipeline schemes for Brenley Corner and A2 Lydden to Dover (public consultation is expected in summer 2022).

Partnership working with Transport for the South East (TfSE) continued with their work on a Strategic Investment Plan (public consultation launched on 20 June) and a Key Decision was taken by the Leader for KCC to continue to participate in the Sub-national Transport Body as a voluntary partnership following rejection by government of TfSE's application for statutory status. This is alongside the work of the Transport Strategy team in developing a new Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) for Kent, as reported to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee (ETCC) in September 2021, with the Member Task and Finish Group having had regular meetings to develop a draft ambition statement and draft objectives for the new plan. Further work on the new LTP5 will now be paused until the government publishes its new guidance for local transport plans (expected this summer) to ensure that KCC's draft plan is compliant. KCC has also received grant funding from the Department for Transport to develop its new LTP, therefore alignment with the new guidance is critical for unlocking this additional funding.

Delivery of the Thanet Parkway railway station has continued to progress with substantial completion of the station and car park expected by end of August. The station is on track to be open by May 2023 following the planned upgrading of level crossing and signalling infrastructure required for the operation of the new station.

Public Transport

The Department for Transport (DfT) announced the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) allocations for the National Bus Strategy in April 2022. Half of the authorities who submitted a BSIP received funding and in the case of Kent, we received a provisional allocation of £35.1m over three years, split into capital and revenue. This allocation was less than the amount requested, and we were required to submit a revised submission in June, followed by detailed negotiations with the DfT later before final agreement in July.

Use of local buses has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Overall operators are reporting use at 80% of pre-pandemic levels, however off-peak travel, in particular those with an older persons/disabled bus pass (ENCTS), is only back to 55% of pre-pandemic levels and use of some evening/weekend services is particularly poor. This presents significant challenge to the bus market and although additional government funding is being provided until the end of October 2022, there is the potential for more bus route withdrawals by operators if traffic levels do not return.

Local transport operators including taxi/private hire continue to find the recruitment of staff difficult and combined with Covid, service reliability has not been as good as many operators would have hoped and is stopping operators taking up new opportunities.

Waste Management

The KPI target on diversion from landfill continues to be met, with 99.2% of waste over the last 12 months being recycled, composted, or used for energy generation. The 0.8% going to landfill includes asbestos, with landfill being the only approved way to dispose of this material.

Kerbside volumes of collected waste continue to be higher than normal but this is partly offset by reduced HWRC volumes. Total waste volume in the 12 months to March, is slightly lower than the 12 months to December and within the expected range. Onsite service demand at HWRCs continues to be well managed through the booking system.

Natural Environment and Communities

In January 2022, the Kent Nature Partnership appointed its new Chair, following the retirement of Caroline Jessel after 10 years. Matthew Balfour will now Chair the Partnership, leading it through a critical period as the Environment Act is implemented.

Also in January 2022, Plan Bee launched its Kent Children's University Kent's programme, 12 months of pollinator themed activities that can be completed by anyone but that can also be used to earn learning credits for the Children's University initiative. In February, the Plan Bee Fastrack bus made its debut on the route between Dartford and Gravesend. It features England's rarest bumblebee, the Shrill carder bee, chosen as Thameside is part of only two small areas left in England where it is still found. KCC's Fastrack transit service and the Plan Bee team are working together to create a number of features throughout the Dartford, Ebbsfleet and Gravesend network that will help to boost the local populations of this rare wild bee and other pollinators.

The public consultation for Plan Tree was held between March and May, and the first four trees of a jubilee wood were planted at Sandwich Junior School. This wood, to become part of the Queen's Green Canopy, will see further trees planted later in 2022 and has been designed to represent the 1,768 children who are in KCC's care.

Our bid to the Tree Call to Action Fund to enable capacity building against this agenda within the authority was unsuccessful. The fund was hugely oversubscribed (£26.25 million of bids to a fund that had only £6 million). In feedback we have been told that the bid was robust with good deliverability but our existing tree canopy cover went against us. Given the extent of (unsuccessful) bids, a fund is expected to be launched in early summer for funding that will support the establishment of trees. We will be submitting a reworked bid to this fund. In the meantime, we are working on a Local Authority Treescapes Fund bid to progress tree planting at a number of school sites across the county.

Sustainable Business and Communities

Up to December 2021, reductions of greenhouse gas emissions were well ahead of where we expected to be and confirms very good progress towards the KCC Net Zero by 2030 target. In the coming year, the results of the £20.6 million investment of Government grant funding in energy projects, including two solar parks, will be seen with more significant reductions in emissions.

KCC relaunched its Environmental Champion Network (staff-to-staff support network for the environment) in January 2021. There are now 186 registered KCC Environment Champions with plans to introduce an ambassador scheme and training sessions. The network is also holding green lunches, with the first held in March 2021 on Plan Bee.

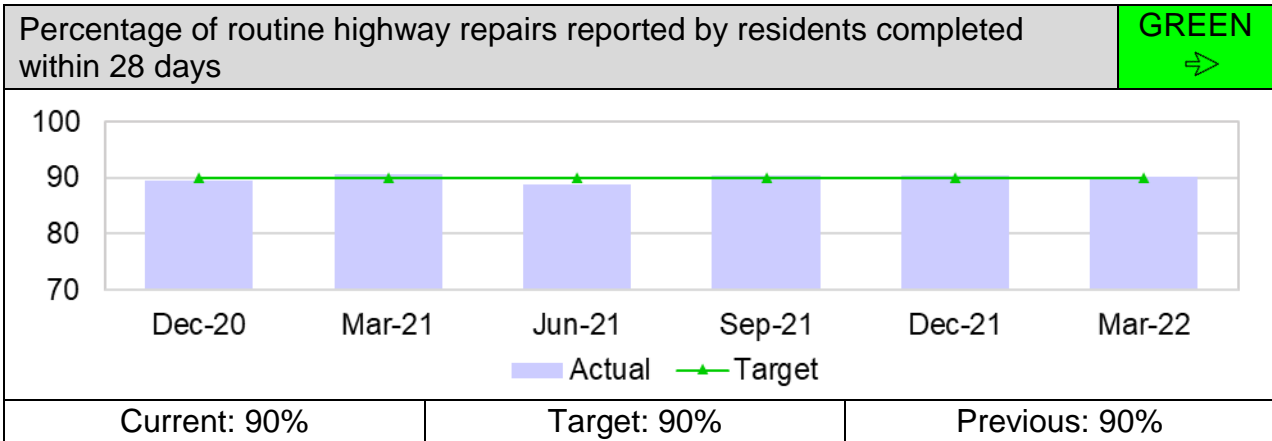
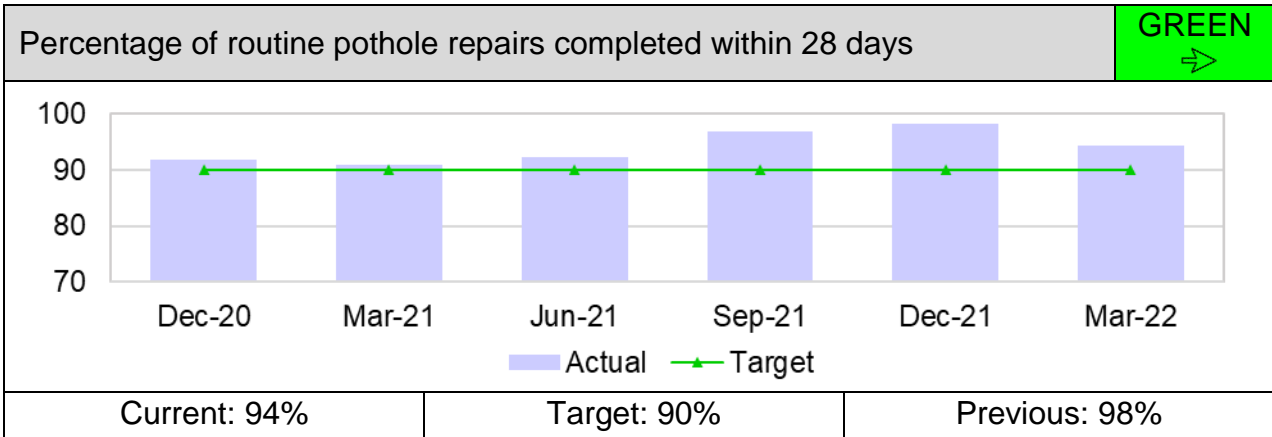
Lord Deben (Chair of the UK Committee on Climate Change) came to Kent on 8 March and visited the Cool Towns Project in Margate, a solar PV installation at Herne Bay High School, green energy projects at Worrall House, and Preston Farm in the Darent Valley to see the flood and drought management solutions in place.

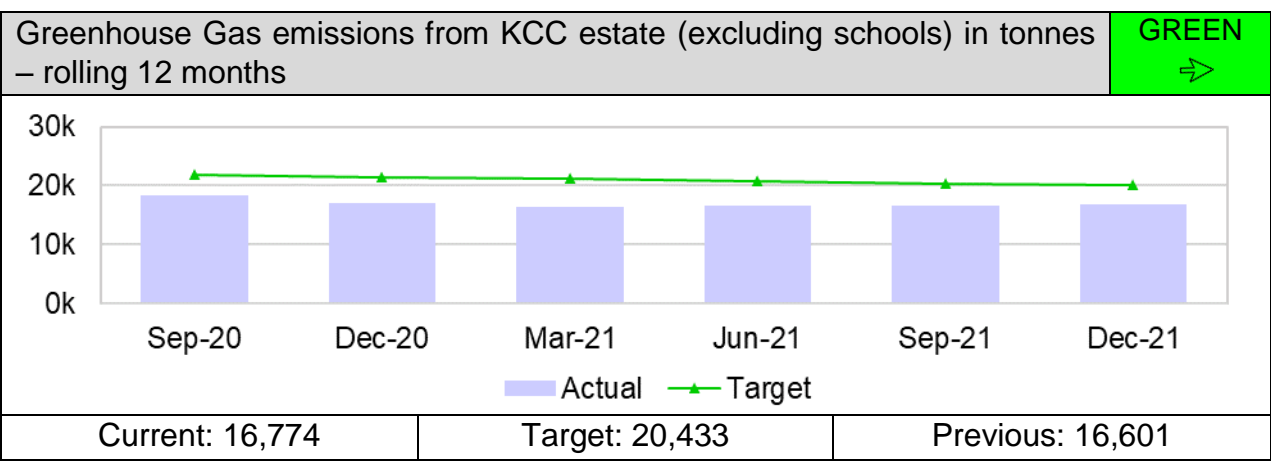
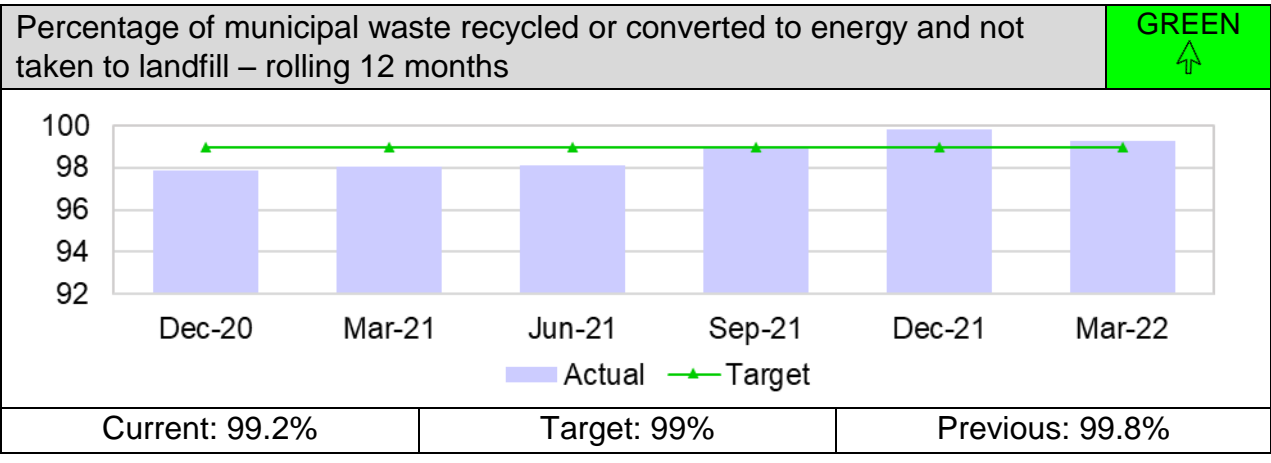
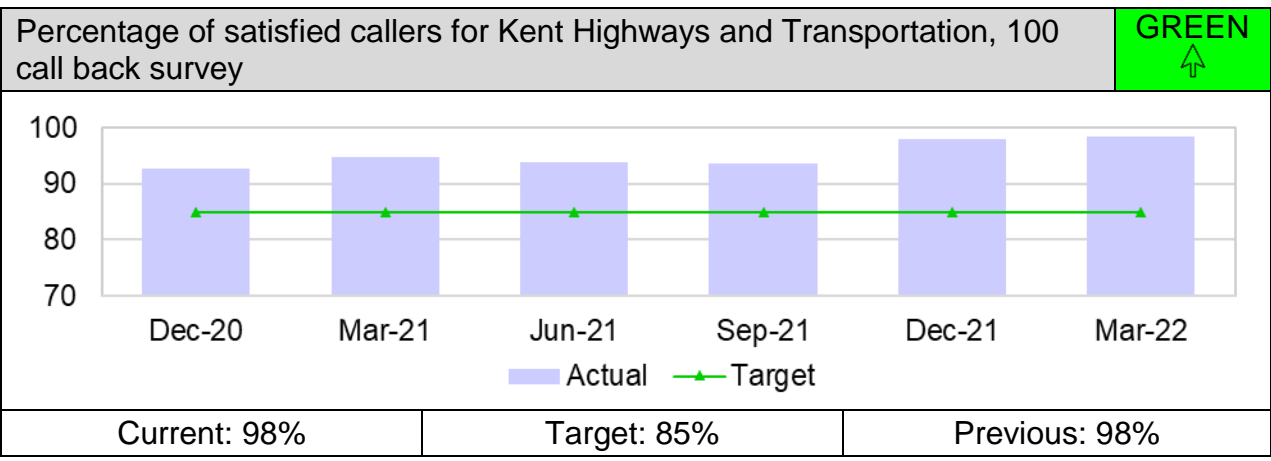
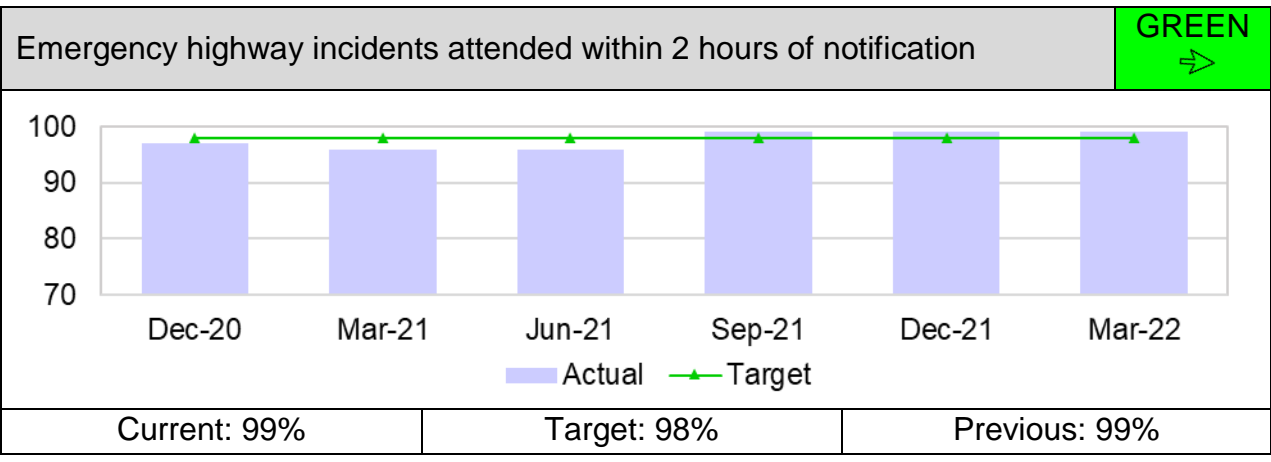
Phase Two of the group-buying scheme Solar Together has started, with over 11,000 registrations in the first stage during Quarter 4. Registrants were contacted in April 2022 with personalised recommendations for their property. The number of registrations was higher than anticipated and is likely a reflection of concerns about the rising costs of energy. Officers are working with the scheme delivery partner (iChoosr) to ensure that the chosen installers can meet demand.

Several new initiatives have been launched by the Low Carbon Kent business team:

- The Growing Green pilot project working with 40 SMEs in the food and drink sector to reduce carbon from their businesses.
- C-Care, a cross Channel Interreg Project which aims to provide support to Kent businesses which have been impacted by the pandemic. As part of this project, a Green Recovery Voucher pilot scheme was launched (March 2022) to implement a sustainable solution or project to help with business resilience and green economic recovery for 100 Kent based SMEs. The voucher scheme is worth £150,000 (£1,500 for each of 100 SMEs).
- A grant stream from Southeast New Energy, providing businesses with high energy use with up to £10,000 grant to fund projects to reduce carbon emissions with a focus on community energy.

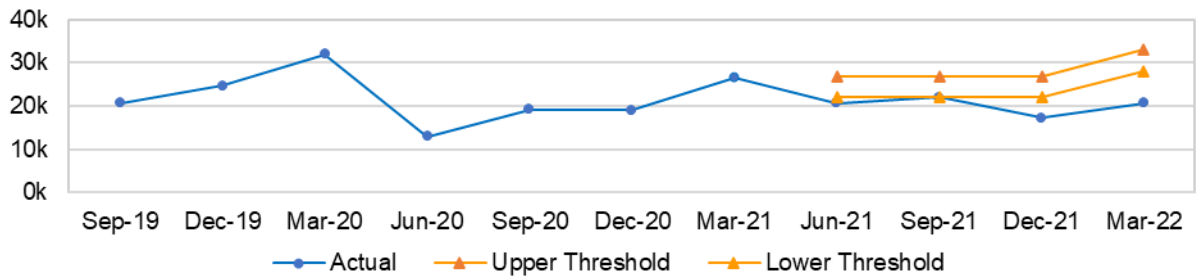
Key Performance Indicators



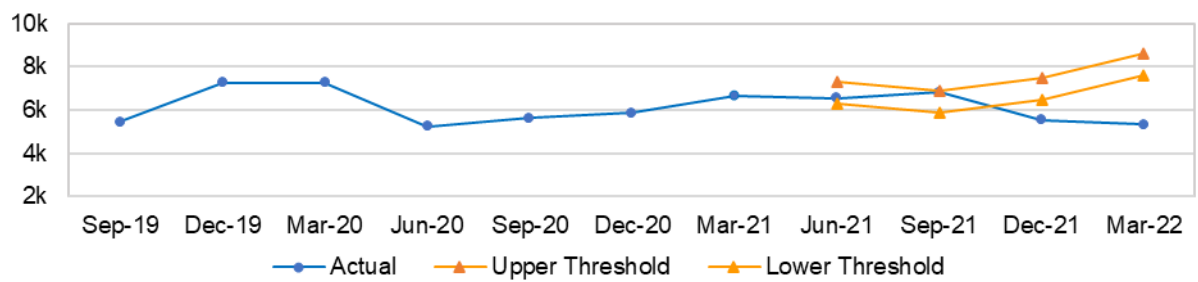


Activity indicators

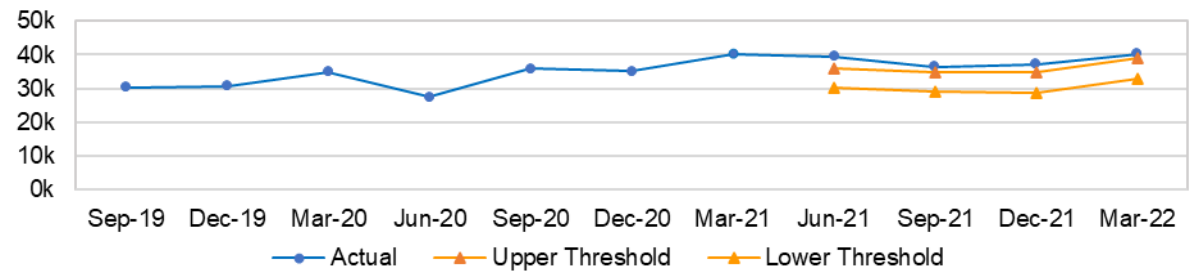
Number of Highways enquiries raised for action – by quarter



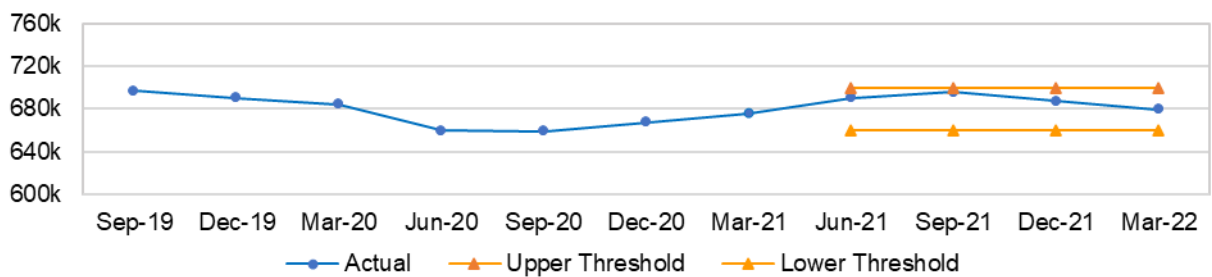
Highways Work in Progress (active enquires/jobs)



Number of streetwork permits issued



Total municipal waste tonnage collected – rolling 12 months



Children, Young People and Education	
Cabinet Member	Shellina Prendergast, Sue Chandler
Corporate Director	Matt Dunkley

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	7	4	1	5	2	5

Schools

Absence from primary and secondary schools, on Thursday 31st March 2022, due to Covid was 2.1% (based on 183 schools submitting their data to the Department for Education) compared to 5.2% in the fourth week of the Spring term. Absenteeism for reasons other than Covid was much higher at 20.4%. 8.7% of teachers were absent for any reason. Children aged 5 to 11 are now eligible for a Covid-19 vaccination. This should help to reduce the need for children to have time off school and should reduce the risk of spread of Covid within schools

This summer will see the return of statutory end of year tests and assessments for pupils in Reception (Early Years Foundation Stage), Year 2 (Key Stage One), Year 6 (Key Stage 2), Year 11 (GCSE) and Year 13 (A Levels and equivalents). Kent County Council are asking secondary schools to share their headline results on results days in August.

Ofsted restarted their routine inspections in September 2021 for all school types and grades, having ceased their full programme of graded inspections in March 2020. Based on the latest inspection data as at the end of March 2022, 92% of schools in Kent (535 of the 581) were Good or Outstanding, compared to the national figure of 87%. The percentage of Primary schools judged as Good or Outstanding at 93% compares favourably to the national figure of 89%. 88% of Secondary schools were judged to be Good or Outstanding compared to 79% nationally. The percentage for Special schools at 96% was six percentage points higher than the national position.

Over the last Quarter, ongoing Covid-19 infection rates leading to staff and pupils' absence, continued to impact on the consistency of provision and progress. This risk is outside of The Education People's (TEP) control although the service offers advice and support to schools around provision. Additional specialist adviser visits for early reading, maths and EYFS have been rolled out across targeted primary schools. These visits have helped identify common misconceptions in Kent schools such as a lack of cohesion in maths, a lack of pace in schools moving to a validated phonics scheme, a lack of understanding around maths prioritisation materials and headteachers' knowledge gaps around Early Years and assessment. On the back of additional visits, TEP have been able to prioritise and signpost appropriate training both as a traded offer or through the maths and phonics hubs.

Secondary schools network meetings for curriculum leaders of maths and English continued with the delegates shaping the agenda. TEP supported the end of the current phase of the 16-19 review, the recommendations of which were published in April 2022. Kent will look afresh at post-16 provision and collaborate on improving the offer in accordance with the Kent Pledge ("Making Kent a county that works for all children").

SENCO forums have continued to run on a termly basis. These forums are well attended and provide both the national and local picture in terms of SEND. As a result of feedback, these have now been split into primary and secondary forums.

School Places and Admissions

The parents and carers of 17,592 children who applied for a place at a Kent primary school received their offers via email or online on Tuesday 18th April. Of the 17,175 Kent applicants, 16,787 (97.7%) will receive one of their three named schools and 15,486 (90.1%) will be offered their first preference. Last year 97.7% of applicants were offered a place at one of their three named schools with 89.2% securing their first preference.

More than 95% of pupils received an offer from one of their four preferred secondary schools. The percentage of pupils offered a place at their first-choice school has gone up to 79.6% (14,574 pupils). Last year parents/carers selected their secondary schools before knowing their child's Kent Test results, leading to a result that was significantly lower than usual at 69.7% (12,736 pupils).

Early Years

The latest inspection data for the percentage of Early Years settings rated Good or Outstanding is 97%, one percentage point below the target but in line with the National figure.

3,207 two-year olds have been funded through the Free for Two (FF2) scheme equating to a 65.7% take up. This is an increase of 7.6 percentage points compared to the same period last year.

Supply and demand have continued to be regularly monitored, with supply in general terms still meeting demand. During January, February and March the childcare market in Kent continued to present as recovering and coping reasonably well, however longer-term financial viability and sustainability may yet present as issues and are still being closely observed. We are particularly concerned about and monitoring reductions in the number of childminders and will be meeting with representatives from the sector to see if there is something we can do to stem the number of Ofsted registered childminders resigning, and to attract new people to the profession. The percentage of settings with good and outstanding judgments has declined slightly since the end of December 2021 (previously 98.9%, now at 98.6% across all types of provision). We are targeting good and outstanding settings due an Ofsted inspection to support them to retain a good or better Ofsted judgement, making clear recommendations where appropriate. There have been the usual established regular communications with the Early Years and Childcare Sector as a whole, including the weekly topical blog, termly (six times annually) generic Early Years and Childcare Bulletin and ongoing contact with individual providers as appropriate and necessary. The Early Years and Childcare Service's Threads of Success training offer continues to be delivered on virtual platforms but with the resumption of increasing levels face to face, including continuing support for providers in relation to their implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Skills and Employability

Provisional data for the percentage of children who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) or whose activity is not known, over the three-month period of December, January and February (2021/22), is 5.1%. This comprises of 2.8% NEETS and 2.3% Not Knowns. Compared to the same period last year this is an overall

improvement of 2.4 percentage points from 7.5%. The improvement is largely due to reducing the number of not knowns through enhanced tracking. There were 758 fewer young people whose activity was not known than in the previous year.

Engagement Officers are now able to go into schools to support Year 11 students with officers seeing an increase in schools approaching them to support reducing the number of NEETs. There has been an 80% increase of the number of schools where engagement activities have taken place in comparison to last year. This equates to 53 schools, against 29 schools for the same period last year.

The service saw an increase in the number of apprenticeships starts possibly indicating that businesses are feeling more confident about the economic landscape and the team continue to support LA maintained schools to offer such opportunities. There were 96 apprentice starts in Kent Schools, a 20% increase on the previous year. In total there have been 7,930 apprenticeship starts across all age ranges (representing a 5% increase on 2020/21)

SEND (Special Educational Need and Disability)

Based on the rolling 12-month average to March 2022, 44.9% of EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks excluding exceptions (1,221 out of 2,721) an increase of four percentage points on the previous quarter. In the single month of March, performance was 59.8% with 159 plans out of 266 being issued within timescale.

Regarding cases within 20 weeks, there has been a significant improvement in the receipt of advice and information; so much so that there has also been significant improvement in the number of decisions made within 16 weeks. This previously averaged at 48% per month but has been as high as 72% in recent months. This increases the capacity of the service to be able to issue new EHC plans within 20 weeks

Timely advice and information are still one of the major problems in the issuing of EHC plans and timely decisions made. The SEND/ICS Co-ordinators and Communication Officers have had a great impact not only on the timely advice on Social Care (SC), with over 95% of Advice & Information (A&I) being received within 6 weeks, but also on the quality of the A&I. Currently there is work being completed between SEND and SC to train staff and to produce an on-line form for SC to complete which will help ensure that quality and timely advice is assured.

Over the last Quarter, timeliness of Education Psychology advice has been more variable, and this has directly impacted on the number of EHC plans over 20 weeks. Steps are being taken to streamline administration and to address the volume of referrals in as efficient a way as possible.

Work continues to improve the quality of EHC plans issued. We have now completed five cycles of audit with cycle six in progress. The process has had a big impact on the quality of Kent's EHCPs which compare favourably with national data of other authorities using the same audit tool.

Stability of staffing within SEND remains an issue. We were hoping to embark on a campaign with Human Resources to drive recruitment as well as retention of committed, experienced staff, but this has been delayed due to the business redesign.

School-age phase transfer (when a pupil moves from one stage of education to another) was a success. SEN completed 97% of all amendments within the statutory deadline of 15th Feb.

Wider Early Help

Thirty-eight pupils were permanently excluded for the rolling 12-month period to March 2022; fourteen were 'primary' phase and twenty-four 'secondary' phase pupils. The percentage of pupils excluded from a school equates to 0.02%. The latest 12-month period is not directly impacted on by the Covid-19 'National 3.0' school closures, and therefore, is more reflective of the level of permanent exclusions pre-pandemic, with the rolling 12-month period to March 2020 seeing thirty-six pupils permanently excluded, seventeen 'primary' phase pupils and nineteen 'secondary' phase.

The number of first-time entrants to the Youth Justice System in Kent has declined for the fourth consecutive quarter, with the rolling 12 month figure at 229. The service has been focussing on risk assessment and planning training for all practitioners and managers and we are seeing a positive impact of this in our records.

The Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), now that it has merged with the National Probation Service, will stop delivering unpaid work to children. This service will now be delivered in-house, and will link with our Reparation Service, which accredits (through AQAs) community reparation activity. As this activity is not only restorative, but also addresses the education, training and employment needs of children, it is a welcome opportunity to deliver unpaid work in a more meaningful and positive way.

Collaboration continues with the Police and Medway Local Authority to plan the implementation of 'Outcome 22.' We have agreed referral processes and are awaiting Police guidance so we can then devise our own inputting, reporting and practitioner guidance and agree a launch date.

Early Help

At the end of March 2022, 2,987 families were open to Early Help units, providing support for 6,252 children and young people under the age of 18. This is a 10.4% increase in the number of families supported compared to the end of the previous quarter (2,706 families in December 2021).

The performance measure for 'Percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help / Social Work teams within 3 months' was 13.4% for the rolling 12 months to March 2022, continuing to achieve the target of below 15.0%.

Children's Social Care - Staffing and Caseloads

The number of open cases (including those for care leavers above the age of 18) was 11,927 at 31st March 2022, an increase of 50 (0.4%) children and young people when compared to end of the previous quarter (11,877).

There were 5,119 referrals to children's social care services in the quarter, an increase of 4.6% when compared to the previous quarter (4,786) and an increase of 9.0% compared to January to March 2021 (4,696). The rate of re-referrals within 12 months for the 12 months to March 2022 was 22.0%, an improvement on performance in the previous quarter of 22.9% and continuing to achieve the target of below 25.0%. This compares to the England average of 22.7% for 2020/21.

The percentage of case-holding social worker posts held by permanent qualified social workers employed by Kent County Council has continued to reduce and for March 2022 was 83.3% which is below the target of 85.0%. The proportion of case-holding social work posts filled by agency staff was 12.2%, which is a reduction from the end of Quarter 3 when it was 13.8%. The average caseload for Social Workers in Children's Social Work Teams increased by an average of 3 cases in the quarter, from 22.9 cases in December 2021 to 25.9 cases in March 2022, remaining outside of the target of no more than 18 cases.

Child Protection

On 31st March 2022 there were 1,276 children subject to a child protection plan, an increase of 14 from the end of the previous quarter (1,262). The rate per 10,000 children (aged 0-17) was 36.8 which remains below the last published rate for England of 41.4, at 31st March 2021. The percentage of children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time increased slightly, from 19.7% in December 2021 to 19.8% in March 2022, continuing to remain within the target range of between 17.5% and 22.5%. This compares to an average for England of 22.1% (March 2021).

Children in Care

The number of citizen children in care increased by 23 in the quarter, to 1,403. The number of unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC) in care increased by 1 in the quarter to 362. The number of children in care placed in Kent by other local authorities (OLA) decreased by 4 to 1,248.

Status	Jun 21	Sep 21	Dec 21	Mar 22
Citizen	1,384	1,379	1,380	1,403
UASC	378	350	361	362
Total	1,762	1,729	1,741	1,765
Gender				
Male	1,131	1,098	1,105	1,114
Female	631	629	633	648
Non-binary		2	3	3
Age Group				
0 to 4	223	221	226	232
5 to 9	193	189	185	194
10 to 15	691	691	669	714
16 to 17	655	628	661	625
Ethnicity				
White	1,233	1,213	1,215	1,228
Mixed	87	96	94	103
Asian	84	72	60	54
Black	78	58	44	43
Other	280	290	328	337

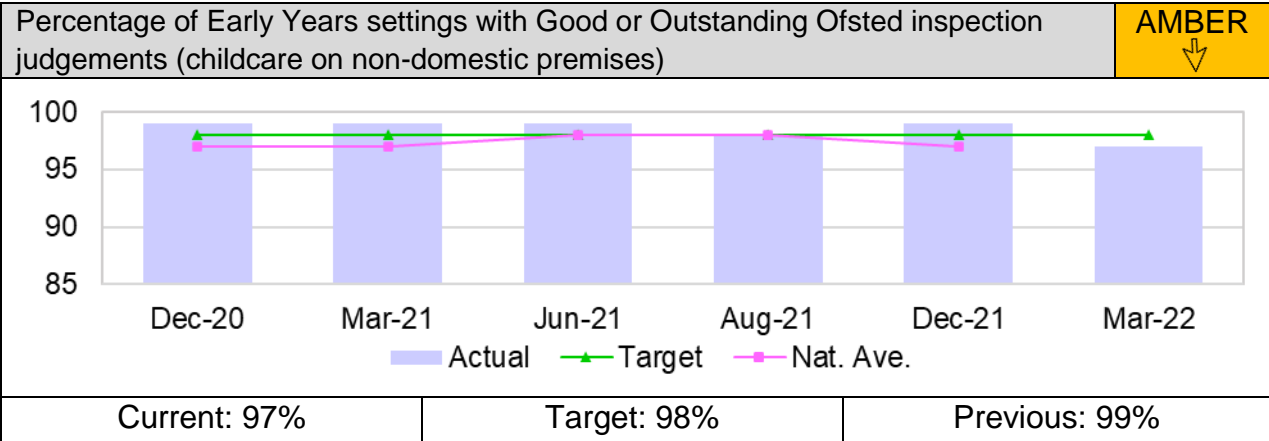
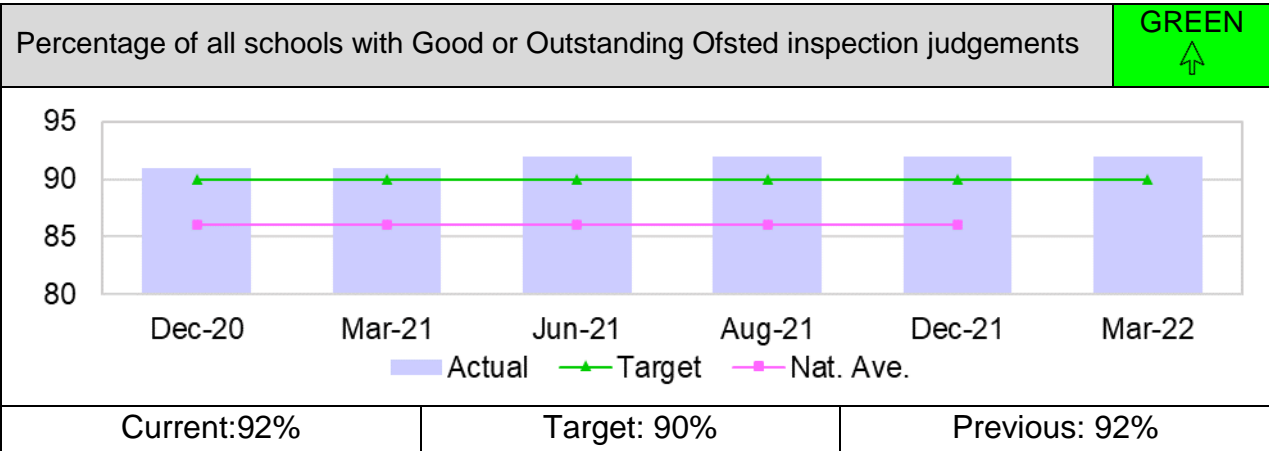
The percentage of Kent's children placed in KCC in-house foster care or with family/friends reduced by 0.9% in the quarter, from 79.2% at the end of December 2021 to 78.3% at the end of March 2022. This remains below the target of 85.0%.

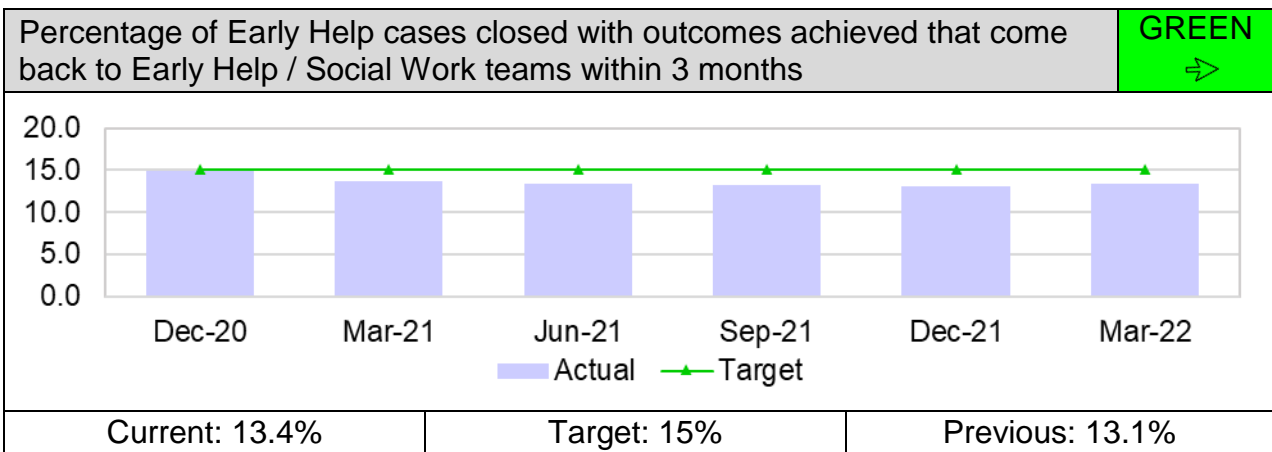
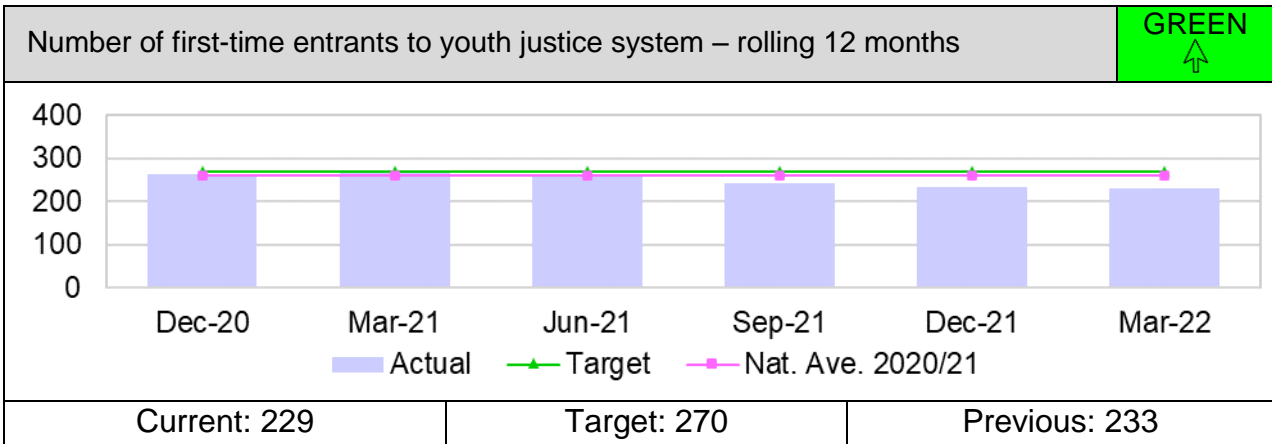
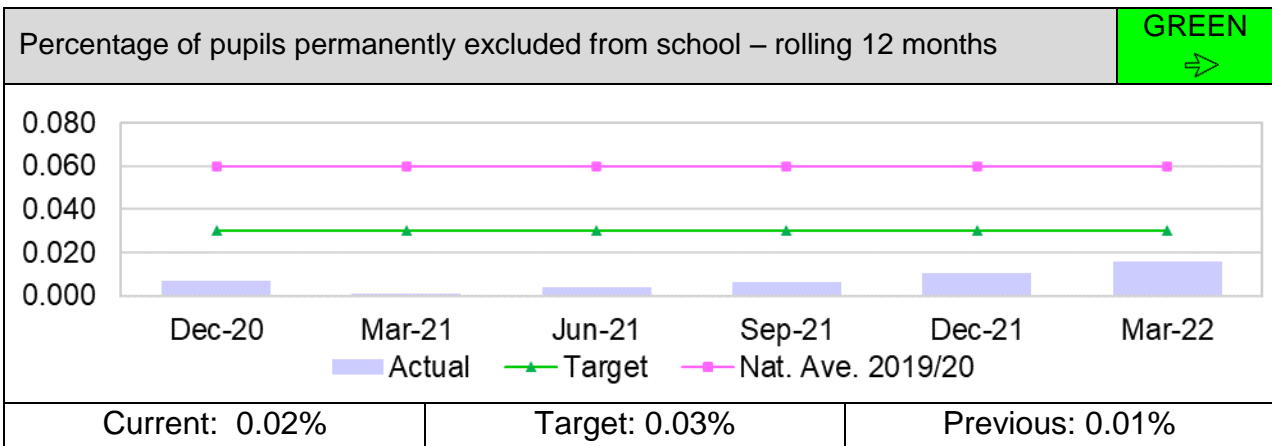
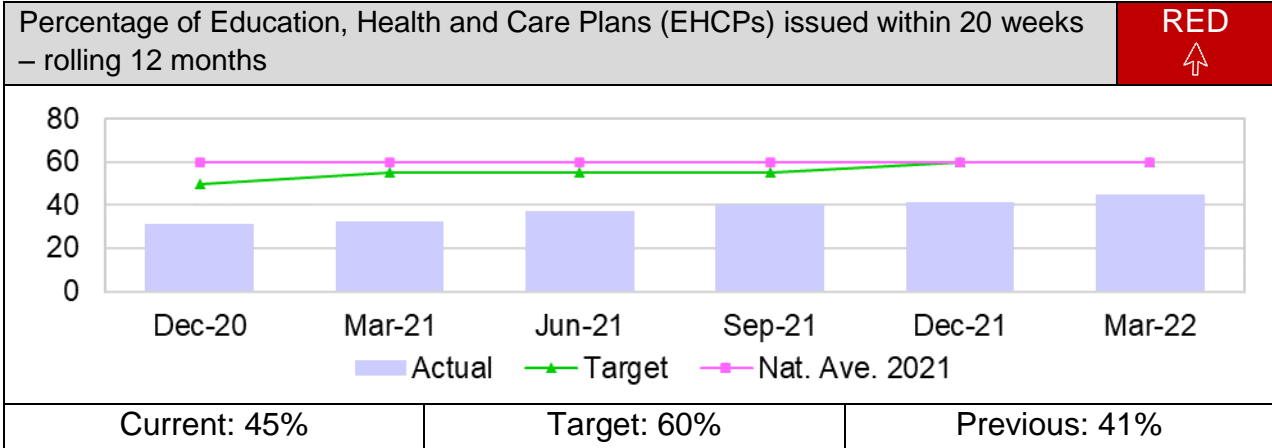
For children who were adopted in the last 12 months the average number of days between coming into care and moving in with their adoptive family continues to outperform the nationally set target of 426 days. The average number of days for Kent’s children at the end of March 2022 was 377 days slightly higher compared to December 2021 (372 days). The decrease in performance for this timeliness measure is the result of delays to court hearings.

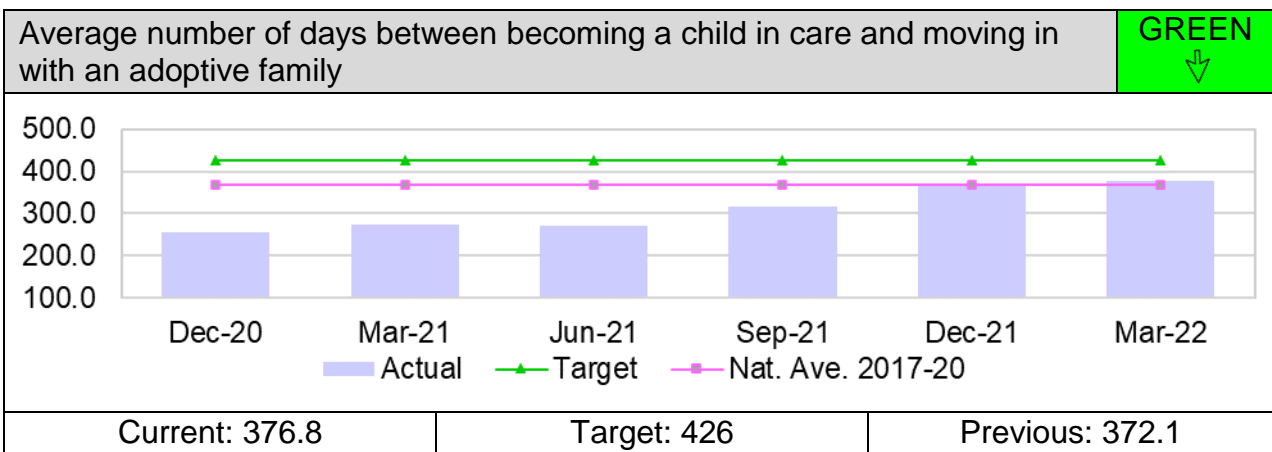
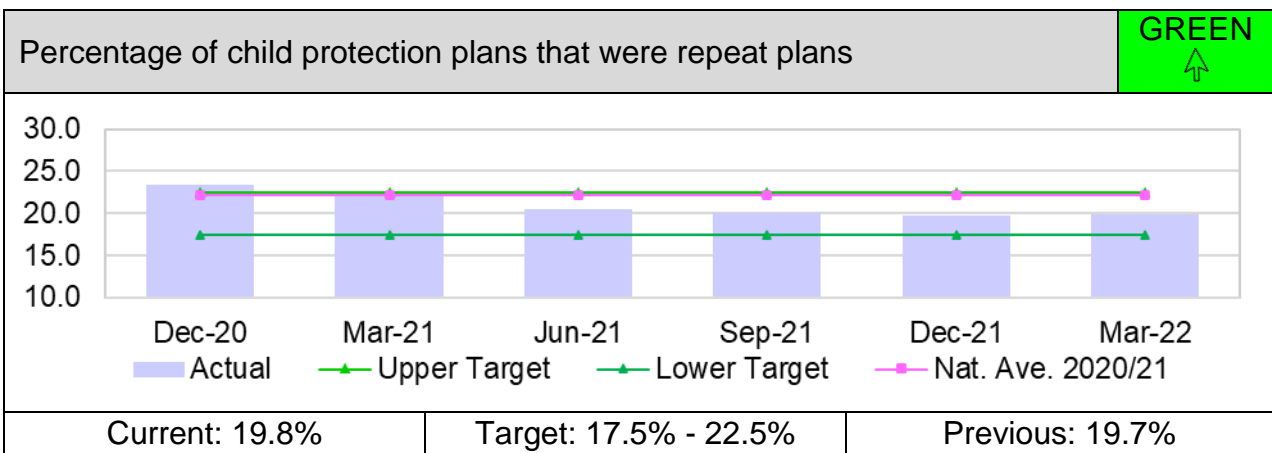
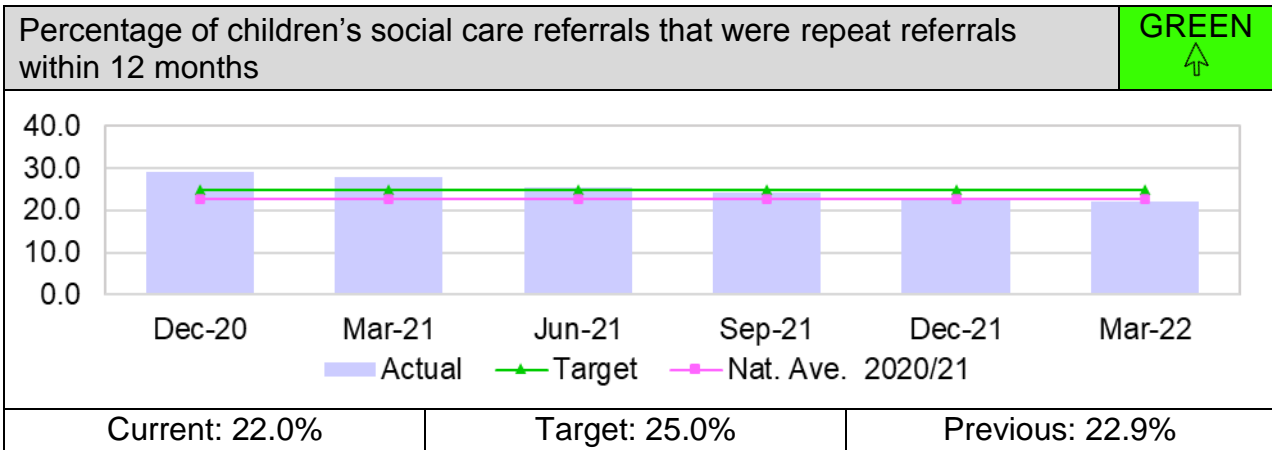
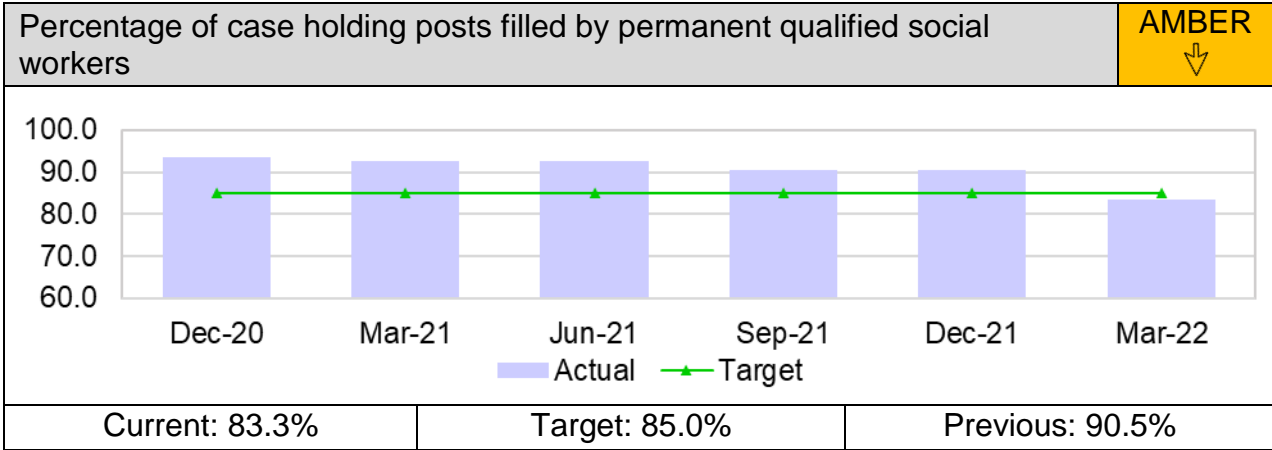
Care Leavers

The number of care leavers at the end of March 2022 was 2,076 which is a decrease of 8 from the previous quarter (2,084). Of the 2,076 Care leavers 977 (47%) were citizen care leavers and 1,099 (53%) were unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training remained stable in the Quarter at 57.9%, staying below the 65.0% target.

Key Performance Indicators

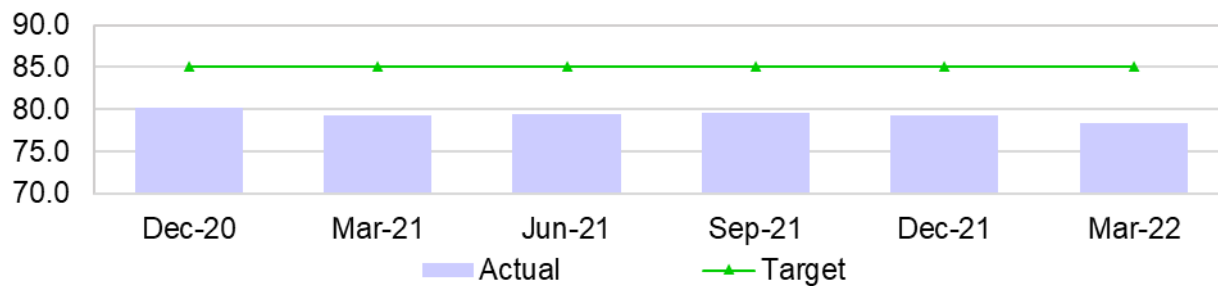






Percentage foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)

AMBER
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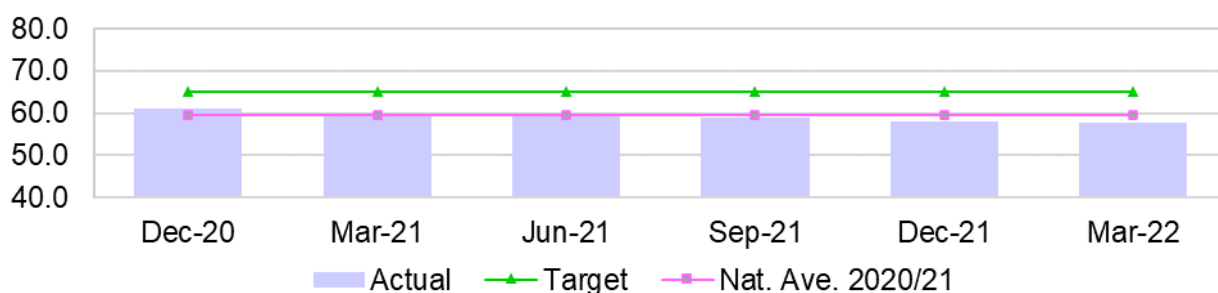
Current: 78.3%

Target: 85.0%

Previous: 79.2%

Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)

AMBER
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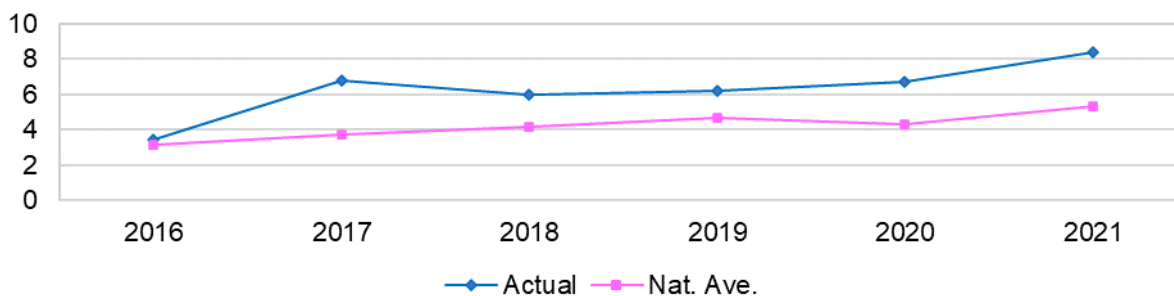
Current: 57.9%

Target: 65.0%

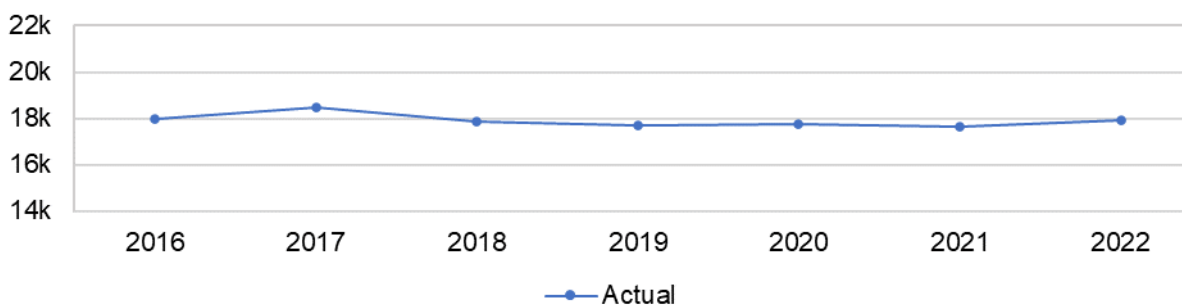
Previous: 58.0%

Activity indicators

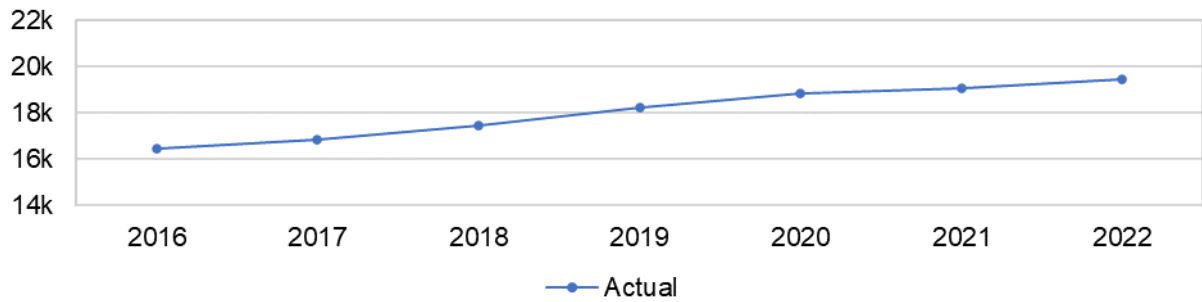
Number of initial requests for statutory assessment (for an EHC plan) per 1,000 population



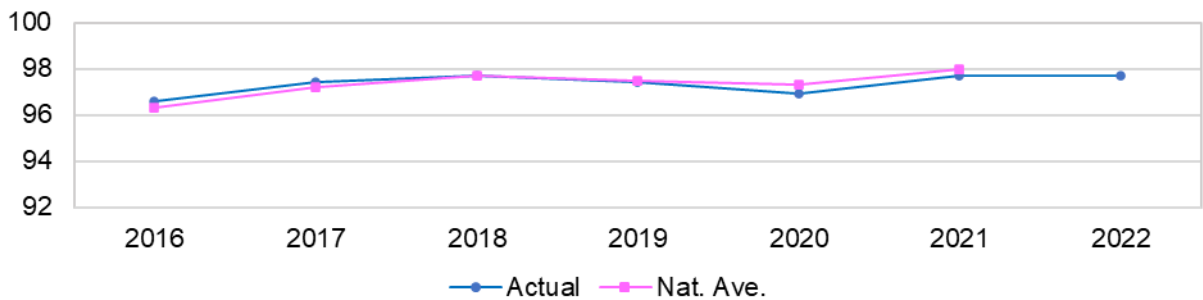
Number of pupils in Reception year (Kent state funded schools)



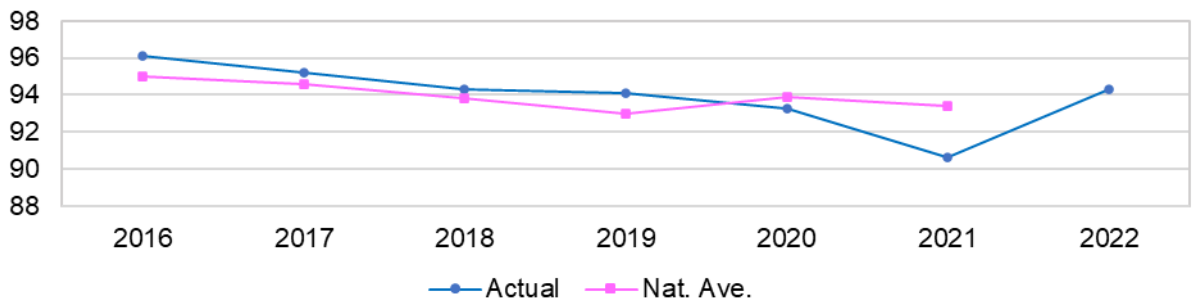
Number of pupils in Year 7 (Kent state funded schools)



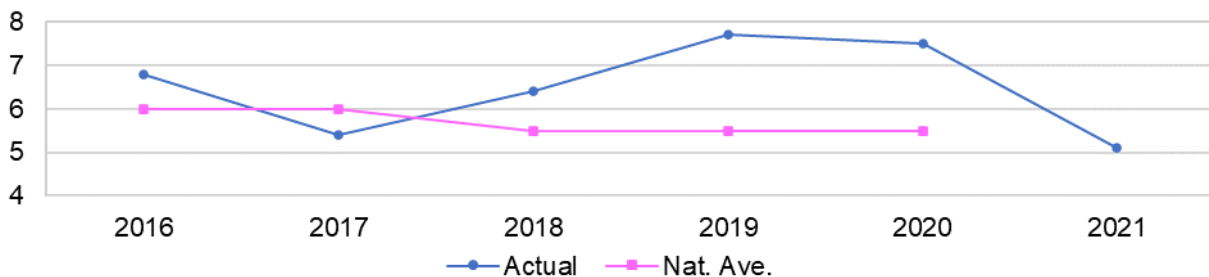
Percentage of Primary school applicants offered one of top three preferences



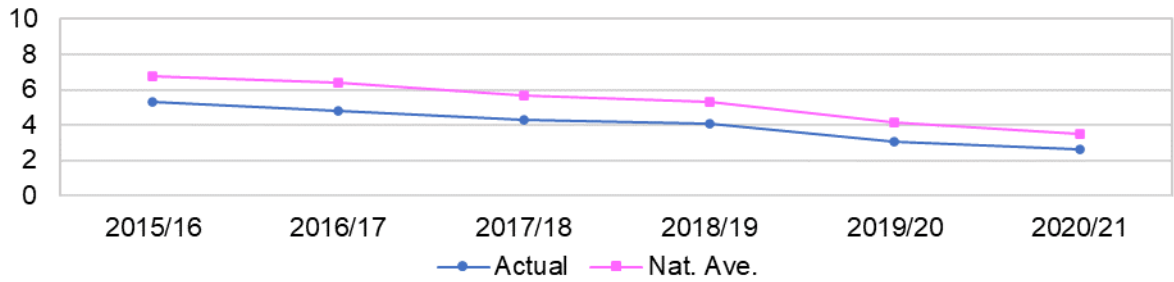
Percentage of Secondary school applicants offered one of top three preferences



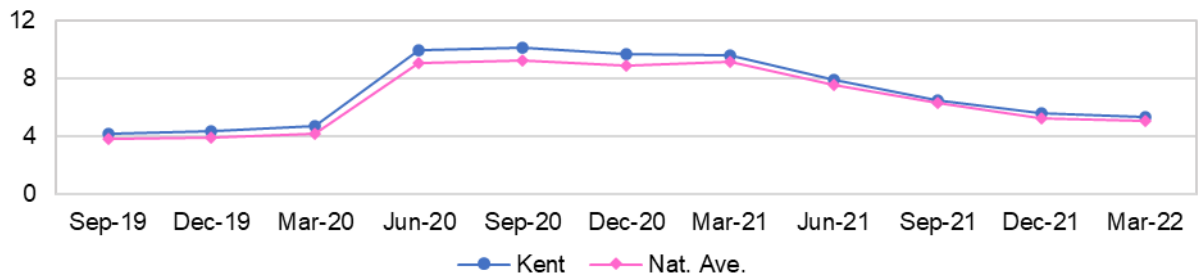
Percentage of 16-17 years olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) or whose activity is Not Known



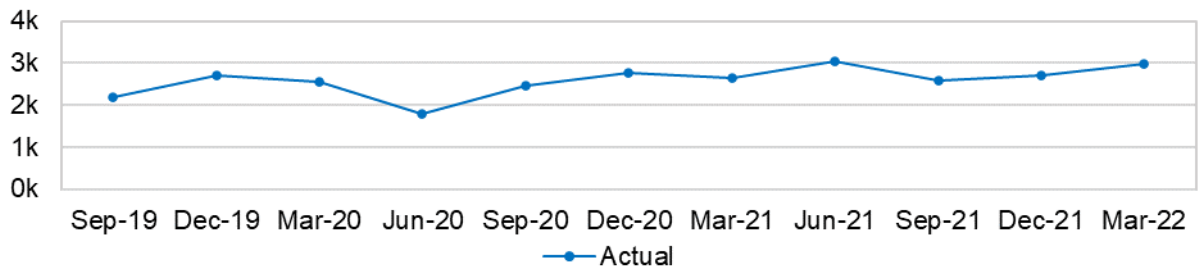
Percentage of 16-18 year olds who start an apprenticeship



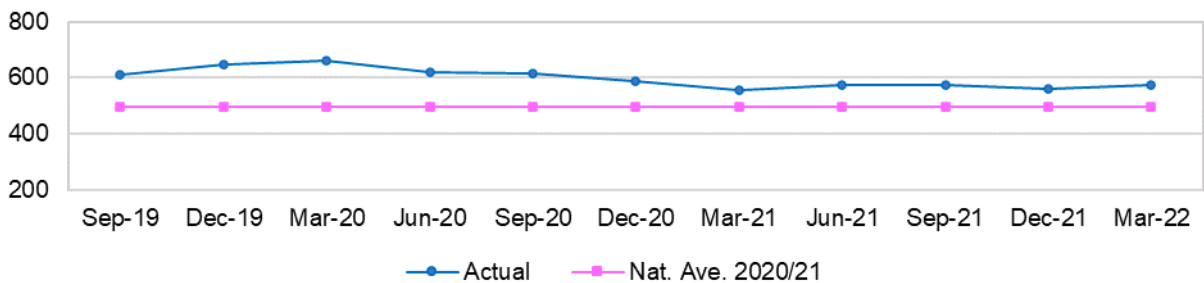
Percentage of 18-24 year olds claiming Universal Credit



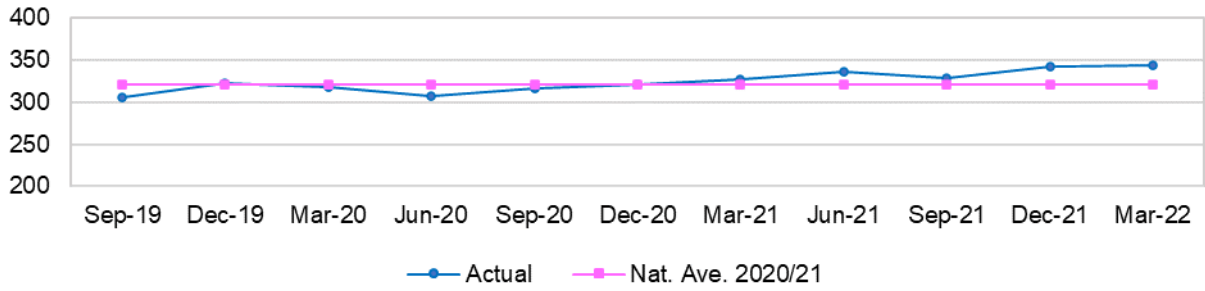
Number of open Early Help cases managed by Units



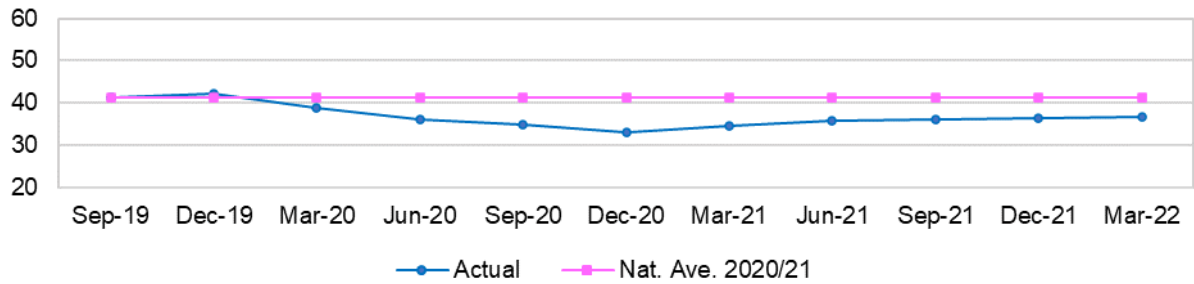
Rate of CSW referrals per 10,000 population aged under 18 – rolling 12 months



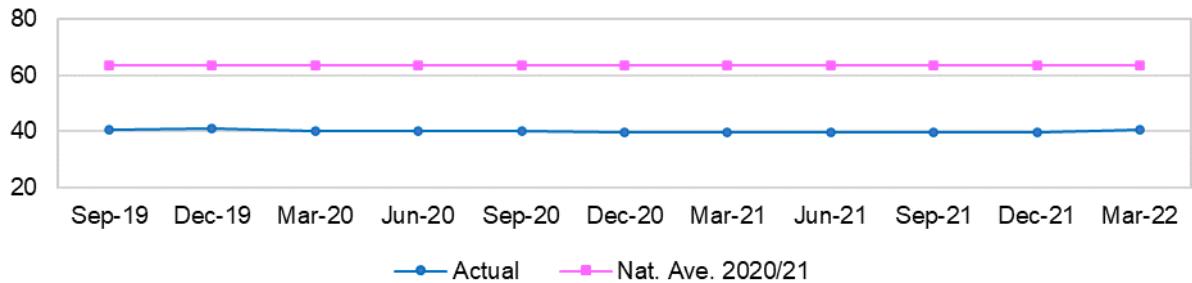
CSW caseload per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



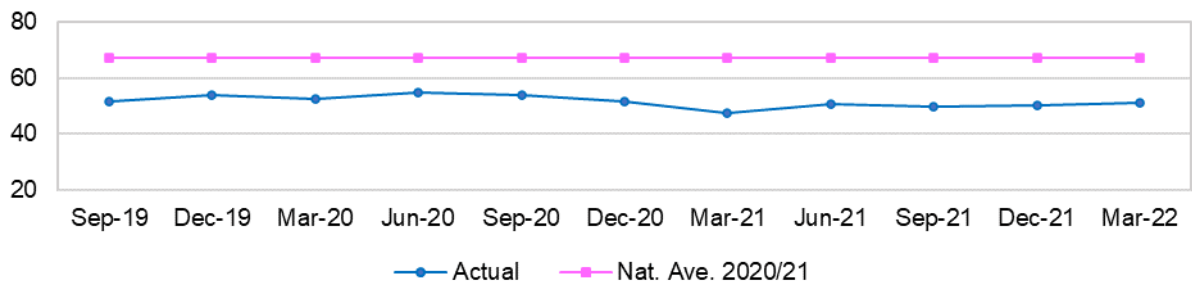
Rate of children with Child Protection Plans per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



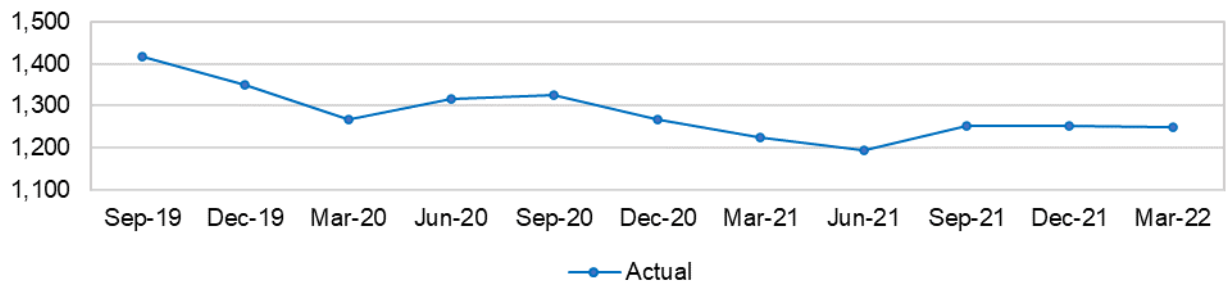
Rate of Children in Care (excluding UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



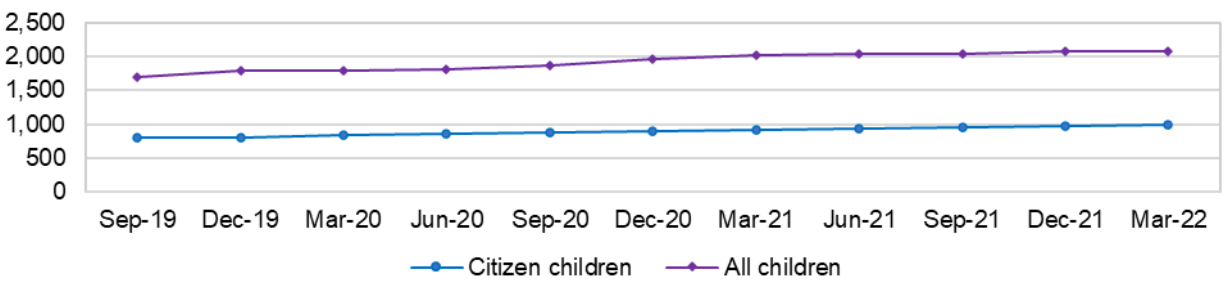
Rate of Children in Care (including UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



Number of other local authority children in care placed into Kent – snapshot at quarter end



Number of care leavers as at quarter end



Adult Social Care & Health						
Cabinet Member	Clair Bell					
Corporate Director	Richard Smith					
KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	→	↓
	4	1			5	

Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) experienced increased activity levels during Quarter 4, which included increases in the number of people making contact. This is a seasonal trend so the increased contacts are expected, however this was the highest in almost 2 years. There was also an above average number of referrals and Care Needs Assessments delivered in the Quarter to March 2022

More people identified themselves as Carers to ASCH following recent work by ASCH on producing and consulting on a new Carers Strategy and reflecting the pressures on home care provision as family members help loved ones while care is sourced and arranged.

There was also an increase in the number of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) in Quarter 4, with a particular increase in urgent DoLS. During 2021/22, over 8,400 DoLS referrals were received, over 7,500 completed, and there were over 11,000 active applications running through the year.

Over the course of 2021/22, demand for mental health support has increased and in Quarter 3 the number of people with a mental health need accessing ASCH services peaked at just over 1,200; Quarter 4 saw the first period for over 2 years where the numbers of people we support did not increase. The majority of people with a mental health need are being supported through Supporting Independence Services and Supported Living.

Four of the five ASCH KPIs have remained above target throughout 2021/22, the measure on Direct Payments (DPs) however has stayed below target and is RAG rated Amber. The proportion of people in receipt of a DP increased to 25% in Quarter 4 having remained stable at 24% for the first 9 months of 2021/22, although this is above National levels reported for 2020/21 and Kent has a strong position nationally, ranking 59th of 150, it remains below expectations.

ASCH continue to promote the use of DPs, for those currently receiving support, those awaiting a service, and those new to ASCH. DPs are an important delivery mechanism to support people to have choice over their support and maintain their independence, and are key to Making a Difference Every Day.

ASCH have been scoping and implementing new digital solutions to improve the uptake, pathways and use of DPs throughout 2021/22. A new Information and Guidance platform has been developed and will improve the availability of advice and information on DPs and self-directed support for Kent residents. The platform will also link to the community catalyst website for micro-enterprises which is where people can find out what is available in their community; a digital self-service pathway is also being developed which will include the assessments, and care and support planning, which will allow people to start to set up a DP as early as possible.

The KCC Kent Enablement at Home Team (KEaH) have developed training with the DP Team to enhance conversations they have with people whilst they are being supported by our enablement service, and it has provided a greater understanding of DPs and the benefits to the people we support.

ASCH, during 2021/22, has experienced differing trends in the numbers of people accessing enablement services, with increases in the those receiving support via short-term beds, but lower and reducing numbers accessing the KeaH service. Reductions in those accessing the enablement element of the service is due to a combination of service availability, lower numbers of referrals and providing support to people where other services are unable to, for example the NHS or Homecare providers.

The KeaH Service has implemented a series of actions to help address the reduced service availability; one successful action has been a new recruitment campaign. Commencing in February 2022, the service worked with the KCC Communications Team and Stakeholder Engagement Team, using Social Media for the first time to proactively advertise for new workers. A video was produced and released depicting one of our support workers discussing the benefits of working in the Service. This generated much interest and they were able to recruit to around 95% of their vacancies in most areas of Kent.

The KPI measuring the outcomes of those receiving a short-term service in Quarter 4 continued at 65% with just over 700 people not needing ongoing support or needing support at a lower level. Although this is a lower proportion than experienced in the first 2 Quarters of the year, it is comparable to Quarter 4 in 2020/21. Where people did need more or ongoing support, 88% received community-based support such as Care and Support in the Home, with the remaining 12% requiring long term support in residential or nursing homes; this split has been consistent throughout 2021/22.

Where people are at home 91 days after discharge from hospital having received an enablement service, there was an increase in people on this care pathway in Quarter 3 and although more people were at home 91 days later, the proportion has decreased to 85%. ASCH continues to work with colleagues in the NHS and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to ensure all the discharge pathways from hospitals and into Adult Social Care are being used by all partners; this will maximise opportunities to increase people's independence and ensure people are on the pathway that is the right course of action for them.

The indicator related to the proportion of KCC people in residential or nursing care in homes that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have rated as Good or Outstanding decreased in Quarter 4 to 81%. Although this remains above the target of 75% it is lower than the 83% recorded in the previous two quarters. Quarter 4 saw a corresponding increase in people we support in homes that were rated as Requiring Improvement by 2%. This includes new care homes being assessed and those whose rating decreased.

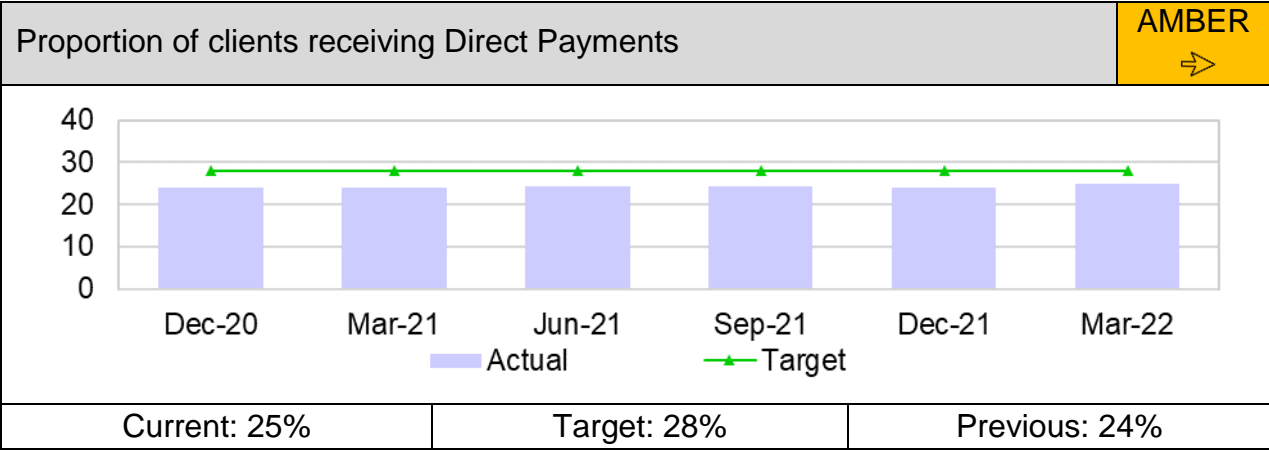
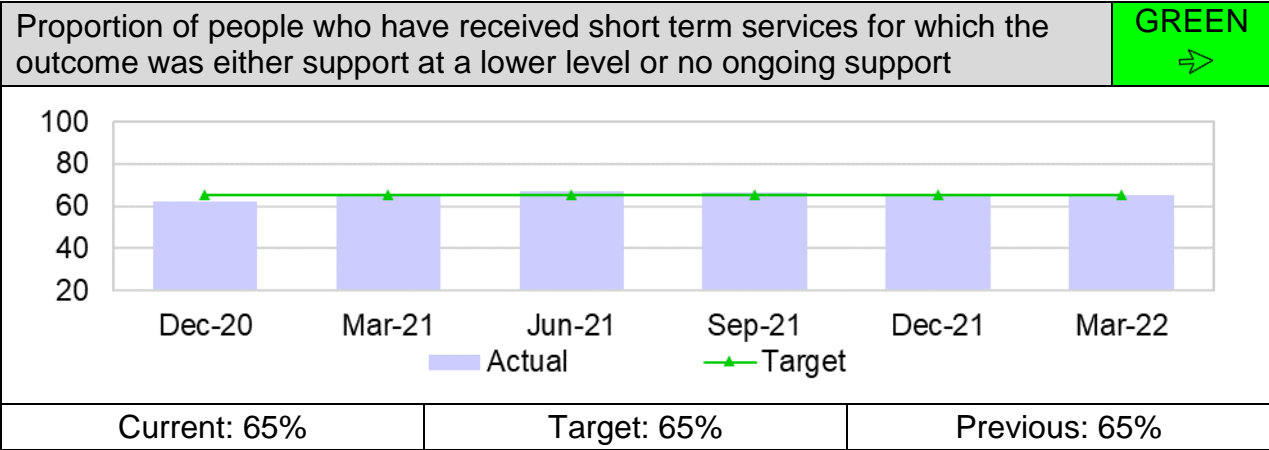
KCC Commissioners and the Care Home Support Team continue to work to improve the quality of these services by working with providers, giving advice and support, and ensuring action plans are in place that respond to CQC findings. Commissioners use a KCC Care Home Risk Matrix, triangulating data and intelligence to ensure resource is

focussed on supporting those rated, or at risk of being rated, as Requiring Improvement or considered at high risk in terms of poor quality.

KCC commissioners continue to work collaboratively with CQC to ensure that homes that have made improvements are reinspected at pace, recognising the impact a poor CQC rating has on the health and social care system by closing the home to admissions.

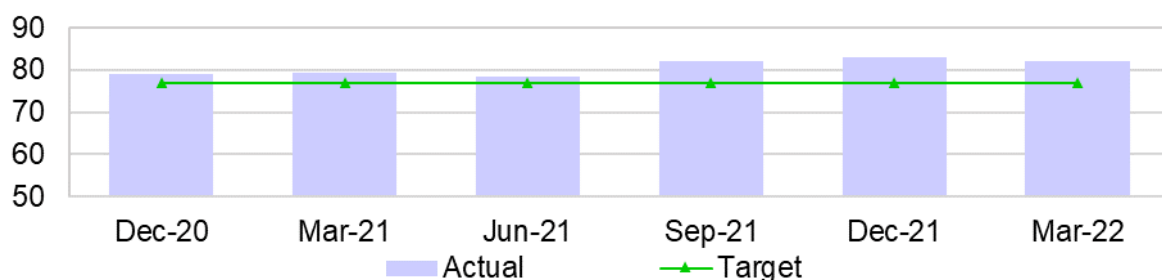
The proportion of people we support with learning disabilities who live in their own home or with family continues to remain above target at 82% for Quarter 4. This measure forms part of the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework for which measures are collated from all Local Authorities on an annual basis. For 2020/21, Kent compares well to both the national average (78%) and the South East average (76%). All Care Needs Assessments and annual Reviews are focussed upon the provision of person-centred outcomes and ASCH actively support and enable adults with a learning disability to remain in their own home or with their family, as opposed to hospital or residential care.

Key Performance Indicators



The proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family

GREEN
⇒



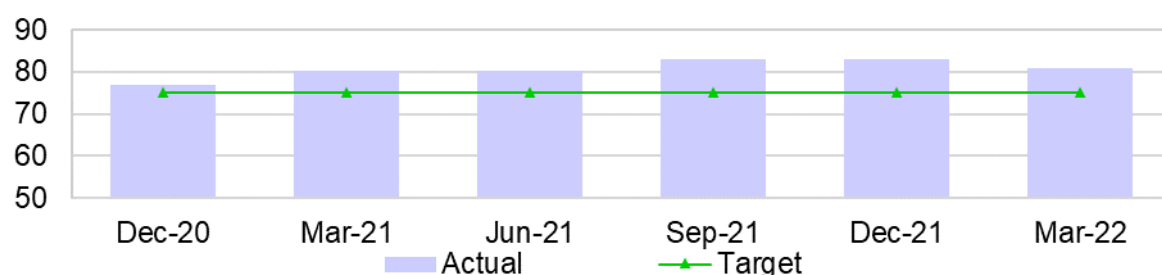
Current: 82%

Target: 77%

Previous: 83%

Proportion of KCC clients in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding

GREEN
⇒



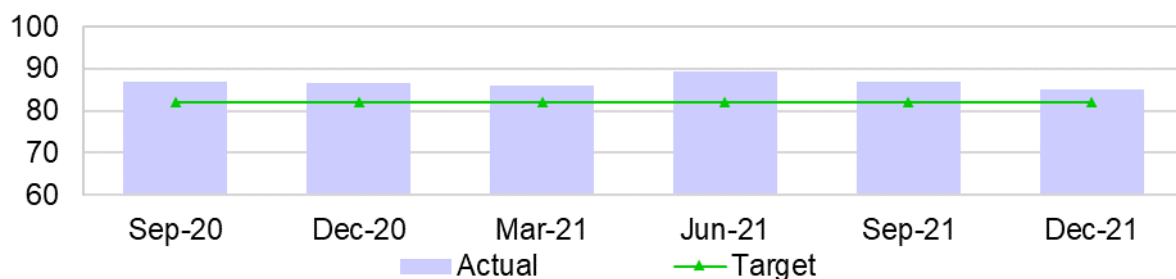
Current: 81%

Target: 75%

Previous: 83%

Proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services

GREEN
⇒



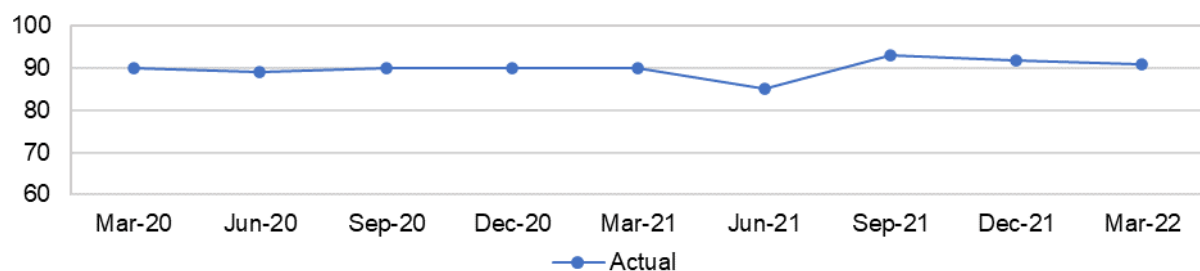
Current: 85%

Target: 82%

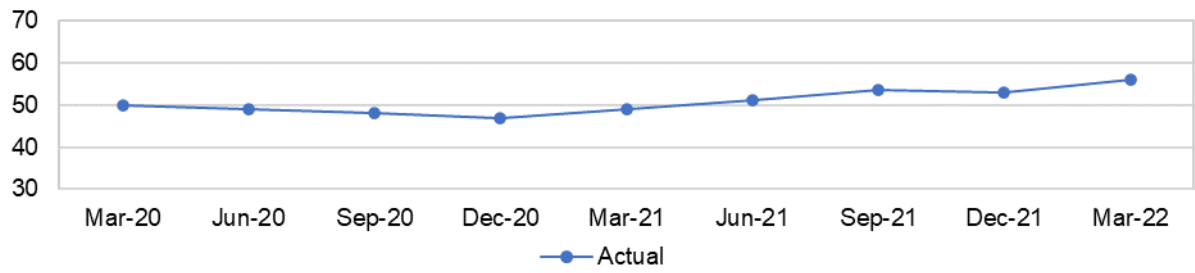
Previous: 87%

Activity indicators

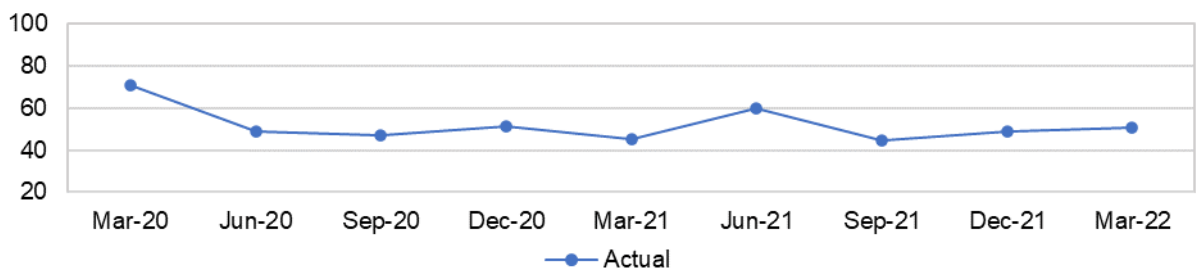
Percentage of Safeguarding enquires where a risk was identified, and the risk was either removed or reduced



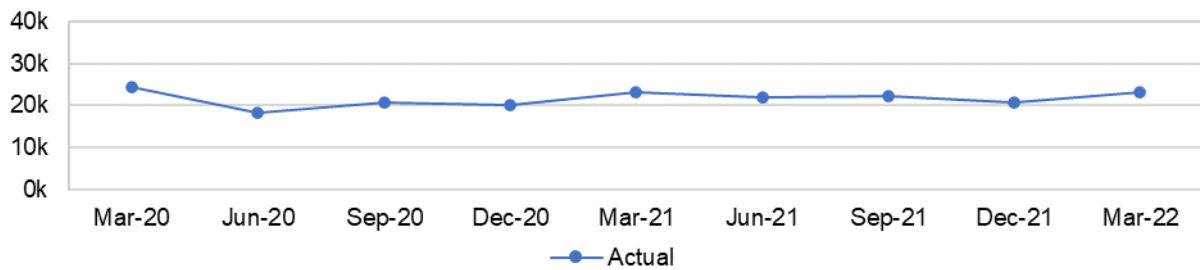
Percentage of carers who are receiving services, and who had an assessment or review during the year



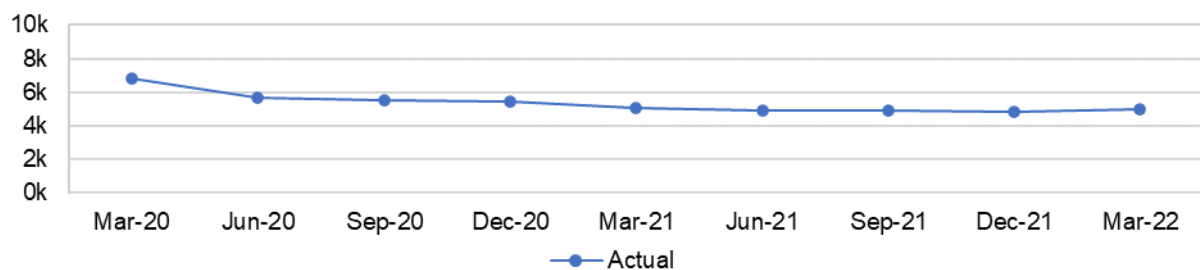
Percentage of complaints upheld (upheld and partially upheld)



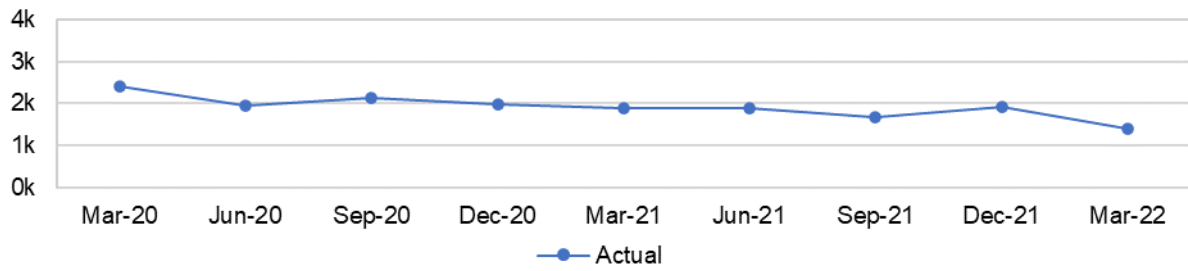
Number of people making contact with ASCH



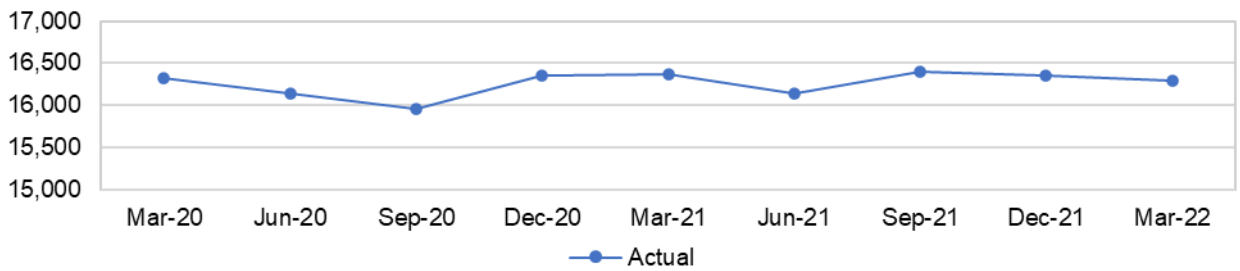
Number of assessments delivered (Care Needs Assessment)



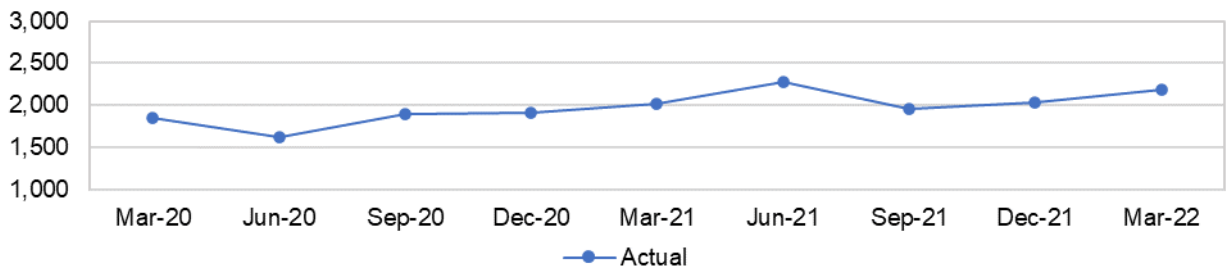
Number receiving enablement



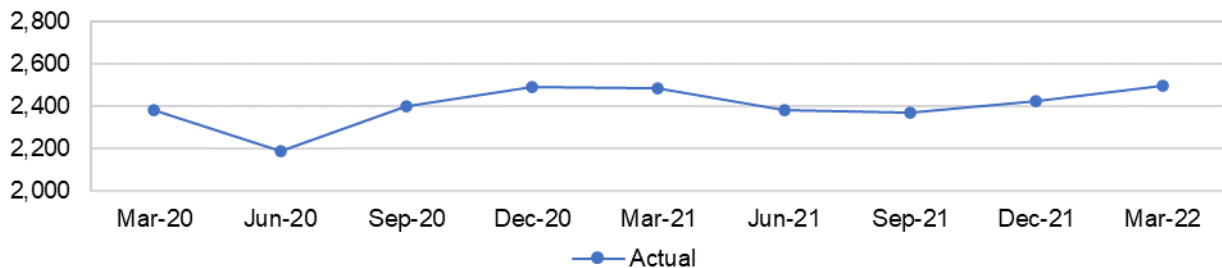
Number receiving Long Term Services



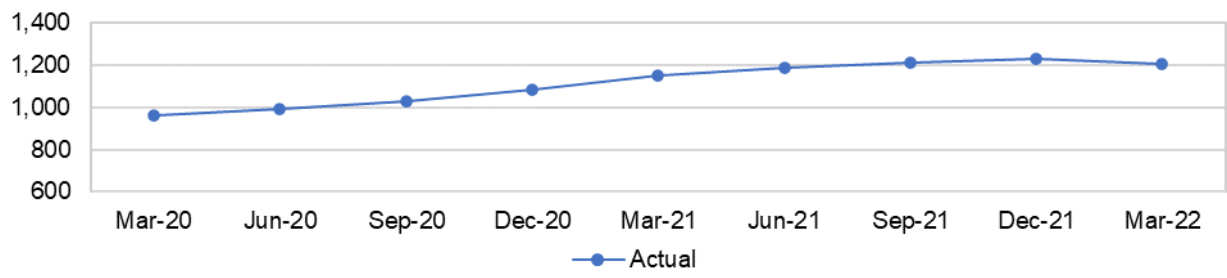
Number of Deprivation of Liberty safeguards (DoLs) applications received



Number of carers known to Adult Social Care



Number of People accessing ASCH Services who have a Mental Health Need



Public Health	
Cabinet Member	Clair Bell
Director	Anjan Ghosh

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	5			3	2	

The NHS Health Check Programme continues to recover after the service resumed delivery in Quarter 2, 2020/21, following a nationally mandated pause in March 2020 due to COVID-19. There were 4,844 Health Checks carried out in Quarter 4, which exceeds the target. A risk stratified approach to NHS Health Checks is being developed which targets those at highest risk of cardiovascular disease and the pilot phase is due to be rolled out in Quarter 1 2022/23.

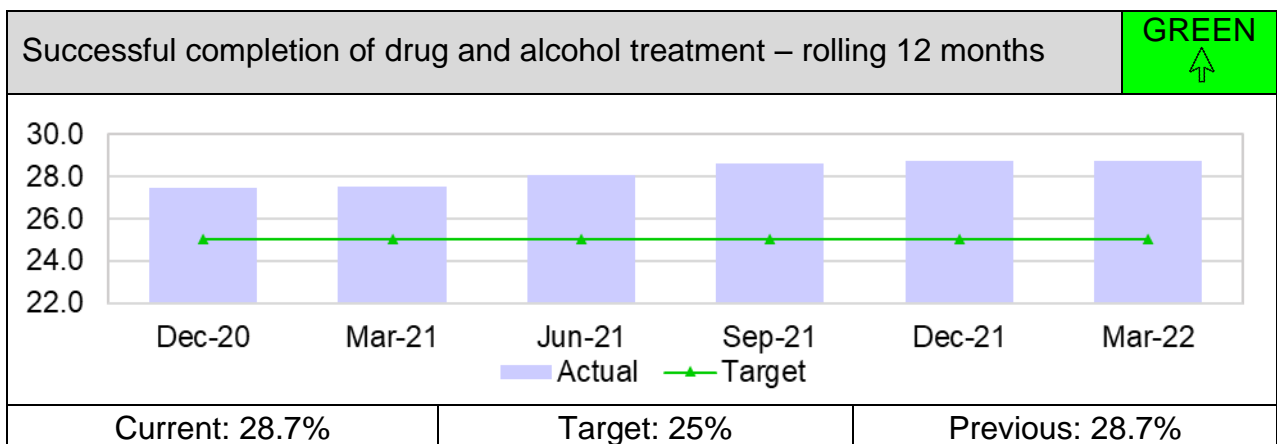
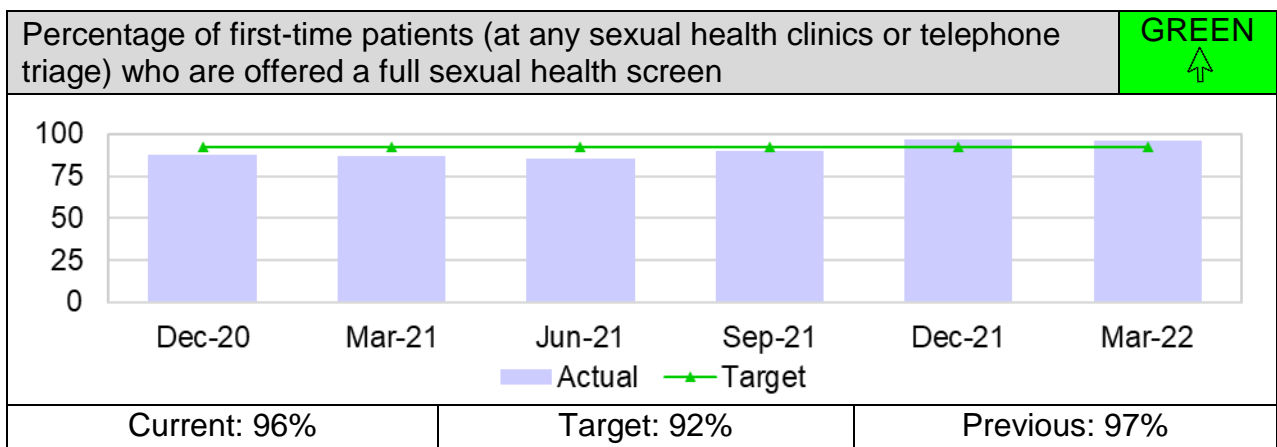
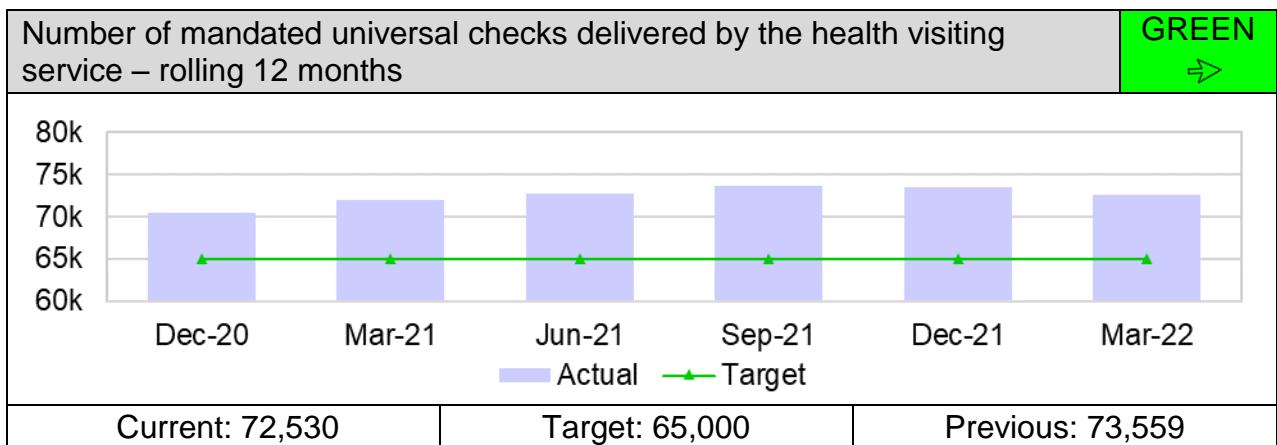
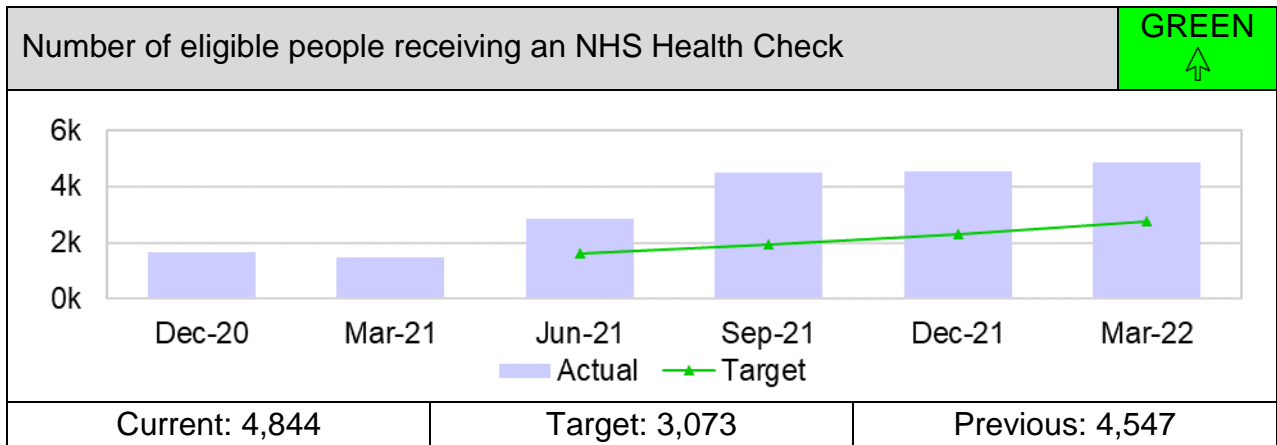
The Health Visiting Service delivered 16,980 mandated contacts in Quarter 4, reaching a total of 72,530 for 2021/22. All five mandated contacts met or exceeded target. Face-to-face delivery has increased for all contacts from 31.3% in Quarter 4 2020/21 to 58.7% in Quarter 4 2021/22. Calls to the duty line remain high, with 13,428 calls received in Quarter 4 and 50,897 calls received in total throughout 2021/22. Referrals to the Specialist Infant Feeding service have remained elevated throughout the year (4,040 in total for 2021/22).

In Quarter 4, the Sexual Health Service has continued to perform well. This is reflected in the continued increase in the use of online services, with in-person testing only taking place once a telephone triage is completed. A full sexual health screen can be completed through the home testing service or at a clinic. In Quarter 4, the indicator recorded 96% of first-time patients being offered a full sexual health screen; exceeding the target of 92%.

The community drug and alcohol data for Quarter 4 shows continued above target performance. The Services have resumed all face-to-face interventions and continue with a blended approach with digital interventions available to those who have a preference for this method of service delivery.

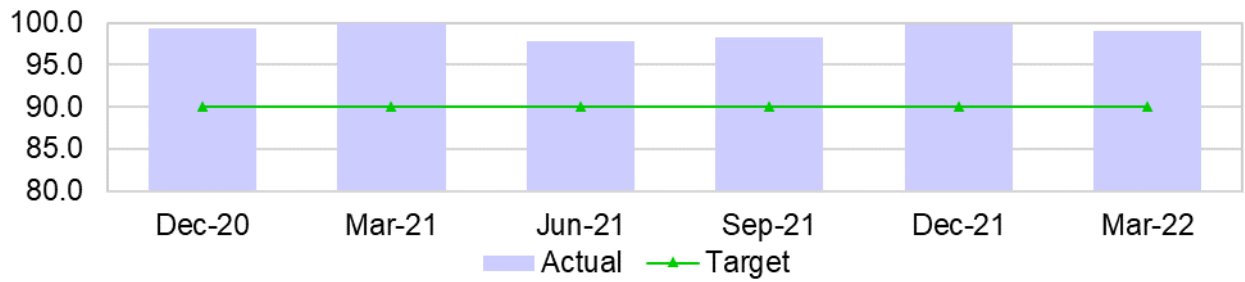
Live Well Kent (LWK) referrals increased in Quarter 4, with self-referrals continuing to be the most common referral route. Client satisfaction rates remain above target at 99%. Mental health awareness week was promoted across the Live Well network, and a further timetable of events is in development which will link to KCC social media promotion.

Performance Indicators



Percentage of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends, or someone in a similar situation

GREEN
➔



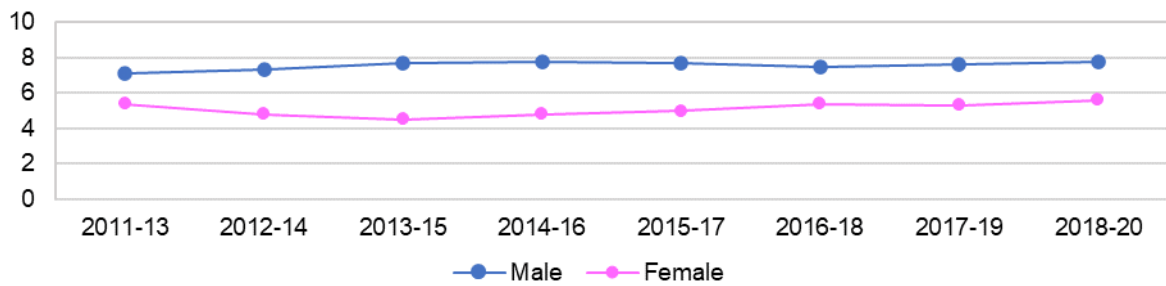
Current: 99.0%

Target: 90%

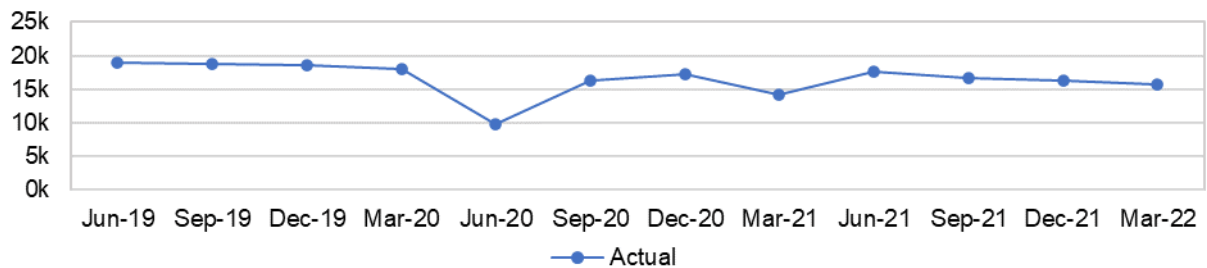
Previous: 99.7%

Activity indicators

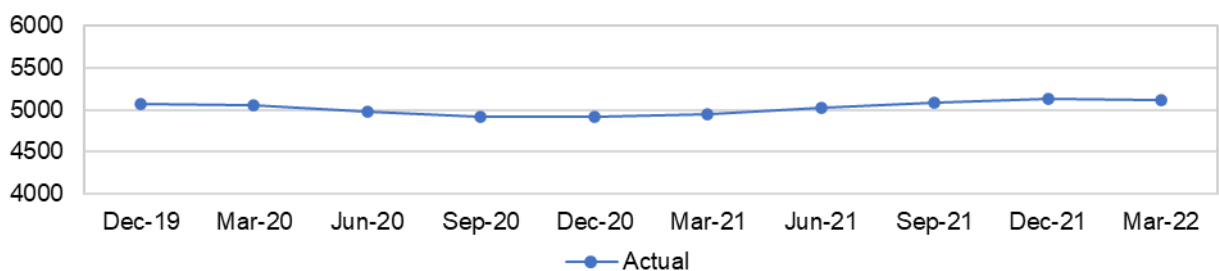
Life expectancy gap in years between least and most deprived areas



Number of attendances at KCC commissioned Sexual Health Clinics



Number of adults accessing structured Substance Misuse Treatment Services



Corporate Risk Register – Overview

The Authority continues to balance ongoing recovery from the Covid-19 emergency with delivery of more “business as usual” type activities, while also leading on the development of new ways of working and delivery of services in a challenging environment of inflationary pressures, increasing fuel prices and labour shortages in some areas.

The table below shows the number of corporate risks in each risk level (based on the risk score) in May 2022, compared with February 2022.

	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
Current risk level February 2022*	0	3	13
Current risk level April 2022*	0	3	14

*Two risks have ratings to be decided

CHANGES DURING LAST QUARTER

A ‘current’ risk rating has been proposed for the new corporate risk ‘CRR0054 Supply Chain and market challenges’. The risk has been rated as ‘High’ with work underway to identify mitigating controls and appropriate actions to reduce this risk where possible, initially focusing on our organisational standards.

A new short-term risk is proposed to be added relating to the council’s response to the Ukraine resettlement schemes, which presents resourcing challenges as well as potential safeguarding / welfare concerns, which KCC is working with partners to address. Consideration is also being given as to how implications of adult social care reform are to be reflected in the corporate risk profile.

MITIGATING ACTIONS

The Corporate Risk Register mitigations are regularly reviewed for their continued relevance and urgency, and new mitigations introduced as required. Updates have been provided for nine actions to mitigate elements of Corporate Risks that were due for completion or review up to the end of April 2022. These are summarised below.

Due Date for Completion	Actions Completed	Actions Partially complete	Regular Review
Up to and including April 2022	4	5	-

CRR0002: Safeguarding – Protecting adults at risk**Partially Complete**

Recommendations from the recent Kent and Medway PREVENT Peer review to improve and promote best practice are being implemented. This has been reported to Kent and Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board and to KCC's Corporate Management Team. All relevant remaining actions are incorporated within the 2022/23 PREVENT Partners action plan

CRR0014: Technological Resilience and Information Security**Partially Complete**

Progress continues to be made on implementation of actions within the Consolidated Security Action plan

Partially Complete

Continuation of roll out of Microsoft Security and Compliance package

CRR0039: Information Governance**Partially Complete**

Data mapping exercise to understand the movement of KCC data both internally and externally is partially complete. Mapping for Infrastructure directorate is in progress.

Partially Complete

Continuation of roll out of Microsoft Security and Compliance package (cross-reference to CRR0014 above)

CRR0045: Maintaining effective governance and decision making in a challenging financial and operating environment for local government**Outstanding**

Review of KCC Operating Standards – action being reviewed as part of broader context of CEO Operating Model approved by County Council at end of May.

CRR0051 – Supporting the workforce transition to hybrid working**Complete**

The People Strategy for 2022-2027 has been approved by Personnel Committee. It is designed to create the conditions for excellence across the workforce, underpinning how KCC acts as an employer, and the approach and delivery of organisation objectives.

CRR0053 – Impacts on fulfilling statutory duties due to capital programme affordability

Complete

The ten-year capital programme has been published as part of the 2022-2032 capital programme. This has identified projected costs for some of the rolling programmes and a separate section of potential stand-alone projects which are markers and will have full business cases and identified funding planned, evaluated and agreed.

Complete

The Infrastructure service, with support from Area Education Officers, has written to schools regarding their obligations for maintenance and their responsibilities for repairs under financial thresholds

Complete

External funding bid for 'priority school' build programme has been submitted to the Department for Education. The outcome is awaited as to whether the bid was successful or not.

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By: Roger Gough – Leader of the Council
Benjamin Watts – General Counsel

To: County Council – 14 July 2022

Subject: **Annual Report on Urgent Decisions taken by the Executive – 2021-22**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The Constitution requires that the Leader of the Council reports urgent Executive Decisions to County Council on an annual basis.

Recommendation: The Council is asked to note the report.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Constitution makes provision, under sections 12.32 and 12.33, for the use of urgency procedures as part of Executive decision-making, complying with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.
2. In accordance with section 12.37 of the Constitution, this paper serves as the required annual report to Council providing details of when urgency procedures have been used. The purpose of this report is provide a collated list of urgent decisions and draw Members' attention to those instances when urgency has been necessary. The period covered by the report is 15 July 2021 to 1 July 2022.
3. Detailed consideration of these decisions and the related areas of Council business is the responsibility of the Cabinet Committees and the Scrutiny Committee. The relevant Cabinet Committee will have considered these urgent decisions following their implementation, including receiving reports on the urgency and reasons why pre-decision consideration was not possible when applicable. Should further consideration of any of these issues be desired, Members are asked to liaise with Democratic Services and the relevant Committee Chairs to explore adding them to their work programmes.
4. Since 15 July 2021, **14** decisions were taken via the urgency procedures detailed in the Constitution and the Executive Arrangements Legislation during the timeframe covered by this Annual Report to Council. **8** of these decisions were semi-urgent, with the remainder progressed via the full statutory urgency process allowing for immediate implementation.

5. This report sets out the key information of each of these decisions; the decision-maker; the date of decision; a brief summary of the decision; the type of urgency process used and the reason for urgency.
6. The Executive, when required, uses two types of urgent decision permitted under the relevant legislation and detailed in the Constitution. These are;
 - the General Exception route, which is referred to in KCC documentation as 'semi-urgent' because they involve compliance with all normal decision-making processes but the notice of the proposed decision will have been published on the list of Forthcoming Executive Decisions (FED) for more than 5 but fewer than 28 days; and
 - Cases of Special Urgency, referred to as Statutory Urgency Process or 'full urgency' in KCC. These decisions are subject to a process of requiring agreement by the decision-maker, the relevant senior officer and the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee that urgency is necessary, followed by consultation with relevant non-Executive Members where possible. Such decisions may be implemented immediately, without advance notice on the FED and they are not subject to call-in.
7. To clarify the terminology further, urgency relates to the adherence to the lengthy timeframes set out in the relevant Executive Arrangements regulations. From a practical perspective, implementation of a decision with fewer than six weeks notice requires some form of urgency process and a decision requiring implementation with fewer than two weeks notice requires a fully urgent decision. While efforts are always made to provide long term notice of all substantive Executive activity through effective planning and governance arrangements, it is vital that the Council has the capacity and agility to respond to changing circumstances and fast-paced situations when necessary.
8. It should be noted that a number of the urgent decisions were taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. Temporary Place of Rest decision) and to the war in Ukraine (e.g. Homes for Ukraine Scheme decision). The urgency process was required, in some cases, to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure would be in place to support the delivery of vital assistance. In addition, there continue to be some challenges in managing the acceptance and deployment of significant grant funding from Government within the normal local authority decision-making timescales. While the Council welcomes the additional funding when it has been made available, this has repeatedly involved having to make binding commitments within timescales that do not accord with the normal local authority governance timetable; as outlined above, anything less than six weeks' notice from government is likely to require an urgent decision in some form.
9. The list provided below for Members' information has been separated out into urgent decisions (Full Statutory Urgency) followed by semi-urgent decisions.

Urgent Executive Decisions – 15 July 2021 to 1 July 2022

21/00078 - Princess Christian's Farm

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health on 1 September 2021.

1. Urgency process:
Statutory urgency – immediate implementation.

2. Summary:
The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health agreed to the procurement of a replacement provider, using the Urgent Procurement processes, to deliver services at the Princess Christian's Farm. The service at Princess Christian's Farm was attended by those living with a learning disability and or autism; any decisions related to the service provision would affect those individuals and or their families/carers.

3. Reason for Urgency:
The provider's license to run the service was due to expire on 31st October 2021. Urgent procedures were required to ensure enough time was allowed to award a contract and allow TUPE transfer negotiations before the new provider could take over the running of the service. There was uncertainty on the state of the farm buildings and whether this could have an impact on interested providers. Therefore, the results of the survey were required before KCC would be in a position to take an informed decision, with procurement viability having been successfully confirmed. It was unclear of market interest in taking over the provision/farm. Going to market without gauging interest from the market would have been high risk, especially on the potential impact of those attending the farm, should a new provider not be found.

21/00107 - Household Support Grant

Decision by the Leader of the Council on 22 November 2021.

4. Urgency process:
Statutory urgency – immediate implementation.

5. Summary:
The Government announced in October 2021 the Household Support Grant, which was in line with previous grants issued (Covid Winter Grant and Covid Local Support Grant). While previous acceptance and management of related grants was possible via delegated authority arising from previous decisions, it was appropriate and necessary for these previous arrangements to be noted, and the ongoing acceptance and deployment of the Grant to be subject to Executive Member decision-making.

This decision was necessary to confirm KCC's acceptance of the additional grant monies and clearly set out the approved use through to the grant spend end-date of 31 March 2022. The Household Support Grant provides the Council about £11m

to support the most vulnerable residents in the County over the winter period, without a direct impact on the Council's budget.

6. Reason for Urgency:

Final formal confirmation of the full funding scale, total spend deadline and activity timelines were not received from Government with sufficient notice to allow for appropriate KCC Governance processes to commence at an earlier stage. It was therefore not possible to comply with normal Executive Decision governance timescales while meeting government deadlines and the need to deliver the relevant funding support to residents.

There was an urgent need to allocate and distribute the grant funding as quickly as possible to reach those residents and households most in need of financial support over the winter months. It was also important that schools were advised as early as possible that free school meal provision in school holidays would continue and include the Easter holidays. The grant was strictly time limited and needed to be spent in full by the end of March 2022 to avoid any unspent grant being clawed back by Government.

22/0006 - Temporary Place of Rest Arrangements

Decision by the Leader of the Council on 6 January 2022.

7. Urgency process:

Statutory urgency – immediate implementation.

8. Summary:

KCC has a statutory responsibility under the Civil Contingency Act 2004 to take the lead on behalf of the Kent Resilience Forum in responding to humanitarian impacts that result from an emergency. As part of the continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic - and in light of the new Omicron Variant, latest modelling, the rising absenteeism of frontline hospital staff and other routine winter pressures - the multi-agency partners of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) of which KCC has a lead role, have decided to initiate preparations to set up the Aylesford Temporary Place of Rest, in case it was needed in 2022 to support the county's existing mortuary space.

The initial estimate was that funding up to £1m would be required to set up and operate a Temporary Place of Rest. The Emergency Covid reserve would be used to fund the costs incurred.

9. Reason for Urgency:

Because setting up the site would take time, a proactive move was taken to plan ahead, to allow for putting the necessary statutory and logistical plans in place at minimum cost to ensure that the county would be prepared for any potential winter pressures on death management and services across in the new year.

22/00029 - Solar Farm

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Environment on 28 March 2022.

10. Urgency process:

Statutory urgency – immediate implementation.

11. Summary:

The acquisition of the Solar Farm would reduce KCC's electricity costs either directly via a discount or via the dividend and, crucially, reduce carbon creation.

12. Reason for Urgency:

To benefit from the £14.415m Salix PSDS grant, the project had to be delivered by 30th June 2022. The solar park SPV had to be purchased before 3 April 2022, otherwise the letter of intent signed between the parties would expire.

22/00037 - Implementation of Homes for Ukraine Scheme in Kent

Decision by the Leader of the Council on 5 April 2022.

13. Urgency process:

Statutory urgency – immediate implementation.

14. Summary:

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has seen the largest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, with approximately 4 million Ukrainian refugees leaving Ukraine to neighbouring countries to flee the conflict. The UK Government responded, amongst other things, with the development of two key schemes to enable Ukrainian refugees to enter the UK; the 'Extended Family Scheme' - where refugees can join family members already living in the UK - and the 'Homes for Ukraine Scheme' - where Ukrainian refugees are sponsored to come to the UK by a host family or individual.

As part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, the government required local government to undertake a number of checks and provide support to both the Ukrainian guests and their sponsors. Under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, the government confirmed that it would provide funding at a rate of £10,500 per guest to Councils to enable them to provide support to refugee families, rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities.

15. Reason for Urgency:

The Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched by the government following the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent humanitarian crisis, as those in Ukraine sought to flee the conflict. An urgent decision was needed to enable the Council to implement the scheme and ensure that the appropriate infrastructure would be in place to support the delivery of the scheme in the County. Compliance with the standard Executive Decision timeframes would have delayed significantly the delivery of vital support to Ukrainian refugees coming to Kent.

22/00054 - Adjustments to 2022-23 Secondary Mainstream Transport Assessment

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on 16 June 2022.

16. Urgency process:
Statutory urgency – immediate implementation.
17. Summary:
The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agreed to alter the secondary school transport assessment process by removing the need for pupils transferring to secondary mainstream to apply for free school transport and, instead, proactively contact parents to inform them of their child’s eligibility status.
18. Reason for Urgency:
The proposed decision highlighted that the adjustments to 2022-23 secondary Mainstream Transport Assessment needed to take place as quickly as possible. Following the publication of the FED, application numbers had increased more rapidly than anticipated, which meant that the proposed change needed to be implemented as quickly as possible to ensure that the benefits from the change could be realised.

Semi-Urgent Executive Decisions - 15 July 2021 to 1 July 2022

21/00109 - Kings Hill Solar Park

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Environment on 10 December 2021.

19. Urgency:
Semi-urgent decision.
20. Summary:
Kent County Council was awarded via a Section 31 agreement some time-limited grant funding from Salix towards the delivery of a number of low-carbon energy projects, including two solar parks. This decision entailed the delivery of a c2.98MW solar park in Kings Hill within close proximity to the Kent Scientific Services building. The funding was initially allocated to the North Farm waste site, which KCC own. However, over a year’s worth of environmental improvements were required on the site before the solar park project could start. Instead of losing the funds, officers sought to develop the Kings Hill site instead, which is owned by the Liberty-KCC joint venture.
21. Reason for the urgency:
Effective use of the Decarbonisation Funding to deliver carbon reduction initiatives. The scheme seeks to offset over 633 tonnes of carbon a year from

KCC's energy requirement, and will contribute significantly to the de-carbonisation of KCC energy supplies and in meeting its carbon neutrality 2030 target.

A decision was necessary outside of the Cabinet Committee process because of the complexity of the project and associated risks in several areas, including rapidly changing market conditions. When the project's risks were satisfactorily mitigated, the decision needed to be implemented rapidly so that the time-limited grant funding from BEIS would be secured.

21/00125 - Country Parks Play Areas Improvement Programme

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services on 7 January 2022.

22. Urgency:

Semi-urgent decision.

23. Summary:

Kent County Council secured funding to enlarge or install new playpark equipment and outdoor seating/picnic areas. The equipment would be funded via the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) to provide further outdoor provision to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The budget was about £1.2m. The playgrounds would be DDA compliant in terms of their accessibility and inclusive design. The surfacing had to adhere to standards EN1176 and EN1177.

The procurement could be awarded to multiple contractors on a site-by-site basis. Each site would be awarded based on design, appropriateness of site requirements, quality, and value for money. The improvements over winter would ensure continued outdoor activities that are accessible and safe.

24. Reason for urgency:

COMF funding was awarded on 15th November 2021. Clarity of the funding restrictions were detailed in early December 2021. There was a risk that, should the work not be completed by 31st March 2022, the funding would not be rolled over in financial year 22/23.

Due to the lead times to order, manufacture and deliver the playpark equipment required in early January at the latest, this would not have the required time to be presented at the appropriate Cabinet Committee.

22/00018 - Highway Rural Swathe Contract -Maintenance Frequencies

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on 25 February 2022.

25. Urgency:

Semi-urgent decision.

26. Summary:

The Council has a legal duty to keep roads and pavements clear of vegetation for safe passage of highway users. The main service areas comprise: rural grass

cutting (swathe); visibility cutting at road junctions; maintenance of rural hedges owned by KCC; and the managed maintenance of Conservation verges. Three swathe contracts were going to expire in March 2022 and, as a statutory requirement, they had to be re-tendered to continue service provision. The Council implemented Plan Bee as part of its environmental strategy to improve the biodiversity across its assets. There was an opportunity to change the service policy of the Rural Swathe, Visibility and Hedge Maintenance Contracts to address this strategy and improve the biodiversity of its road verges.

27. Reason for urgency:

A decision needed to be taken before the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee meeting on the 17th of March 2022 in order to allow contractors to mobilise in time to provide the service (set out in Option 3). The main works of Option 3 were planned to commence on the 1st of May 2022. A failure to provide a decision within 8 weeks (early March) of the main works associated with Option 3 would have meant no implementation until 2023.

22/00021 - Rights, Representation and Advocacy Service

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on 21 March 2022.

28. Urgency:

Semi-urgent decision.

29. Summary:

The Cabinet Member agreed to award a new contract, under the same terms and conditions to the Young Lives Foundation, for a period of six-months from 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022.

30. Reason for urgency:

The Representation, Rights and Advocacy (RRA) Service Contract expired on the 31 March 2022, and there was no option to extend within the contract. Initial contracting and decision timetables had to be amended to respond to new information and requests for specific service updates made by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and KCC Adult Social Care. These requests were in part prompted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services findings. Due to the timescales involved in reviewing and amending initial commissioning arrangements, it was necessary to progress via urgency arrangements to deliver the contract prior to the 31 March 2022 deadline.

22/00041 - Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grants 2022/23 to 2024/25

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health on 28 April 2022.

31. Urgency:

Semi-urgent decision.

32. Summary:
The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health agreed to accept the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grants 2022/23 to 2024/25, and the Inpatient Detoxification Grant (£7,421,560) under the Office for Health Inequalities and Disparities' (OHID) terms and conditions.

33. Reason for urgency:
Dame Carol Black was commissioned by the Home Office and the Department of Health and Social care to undertake an independent review of drugs to inform additional interventions to tackle the harm that drugs cause. Following the review, a three-year funding package was announced in the National Drug Strategy to implement the recommendations outlined in the review through additional funding outside of the Public Health Grant to local authorities. Due to the short timescale for the OHID paperwork return, it was necessary to progress this as a semi-urgent decision.

22/00050 - Inflationary Pressures on Capital Construction Programmes

Decision by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on 6 May 2022.

34. Urgency:
Semi-urgent decision.

35. Summary:
The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services agreed, amongst other things, t

1. Note the £28.8 million estimated impact on capital budget spend in the Medium-Term Financial Plan of £339.3 million across the capital programme for 2022-23, were already approved via key decision or covered by appropriate delegated authority to be funded from the options identified.
2. Consider the use of Fluctuation clauses when deemed necessary to control costs to KCC and alleviate adverse effects to the main contractor supplier of the rise in material costs;

36. Reason for urgency:
The national fiscal and economic context was an important consideration for the Council in setting and managing its revenue and capital budgets. The budget report to County Council on 10 February 2022 referred to the extraordinary and unexpected challenge to the UK economy and economies across the world arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. KCC had a significant Capital Construction Programme, which was adversely impacted by the inflationary pressures facing the UK construction industry. This decision was necessary to ensure that KCC had sufficient capital allocated and effective contractual management arrangements in place to deliver the projects, with anticipated additional costs as set out in the

Medium-Term Financial Plan. A decision was required to implement these in the time available to avoid disruption to frontline services, and to secure the contractual arrangements for the provision of key infrastructure projects - including the provision of school places to meet KCC's statutory duties.

22/00040 - Domestic Abuse Duty: 2022 to 2023 funding

Decision by the Leader of the Council on 13 May 2022.

37. Urgency:
Semi-urgent decision.
38. Summary:
The Leader of the Council was asked to consider taking the decision to accept £3,112,501 domestic abuse funding (2022/23) for the delivery of domestic abuse support in safe accommodation duties, as defined by the Domestic Abuse Act.
39. Reason for urgency:
In April 2021 the Domestic Abuse Act was passed. Part 4 of the Act gave upper-tier authorities duties to support victims of domestic abuse within safe accommodation services. The definition of safe accommodation included refuge, sanctuary (where security measures were applied within existing homes) and move on accommodation (as people moved out of refuge or other safe accommodation into longer-term homes). The Council was also required, via statutory guidance, to monitor any impact of the new duties on community-based services (those who accessed support in their own home and communities). To support the Act and the delivery of the new duties, £3.1 million was allocated to the Council in 2021/22, with the same amount allocated for 2022/2023. A decision was needed to accept the funding, including confirmation of agreement to deploy the funding in accordance with the relevant terms from Government, within a brief time window. Accepting the available funds from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities allowed KCC to continue to develop and expand this important work.

22/00045 - Procurement of an E-Voucher Distribution Provider

Decision by the Cabinet on 17 May 2022.

40. Urgency:
Semi-urgent decision.
41. Summary:
KCC provides a range of support to the residents of Kent who are on low incomes or in financial crisis. Through the pandemic period the need for such support has been significantly higher than pre-pandemic. Previously, separate KCC services made their own arrangements for procuring and distributing vouchers to individuals and families, despite the basic requirements being very similar.

The Cabinet agreed that the Council procured a single service provider of e-vouchers, using the Crown Commercial Framework RM6255, to meet the needs of

the County Council, with an expected 3-year contract term and the potential for two 1-year extensions.

42. Reason for urgency:

The timetable for procurement was driven to ensure that, if a decision had to be made to issue free school meals during summer 2022, the Council had a provider in place to implement this.

RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to note the report.

Background Documents (listed in date order)

Urgent Executive Decisions – FED entries Records of Decision and published Reports:

21/00078 - Princess Christian's Farm

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2514>

21/00107 - Household Support Grant

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2532>

22/0006 - Temporary Place of Rest Arrangements

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2547>

22/00029 - Solar Farm

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2582>

22/00037 - Implementation of Homes for Ukraine Scheme in Kent

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2584>

22/00054 - Adjustments to 2022-23 Secondary Mainstream Transport Assessment

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2612>

Semi-Urgent Executive Decisions – FED entries Records of Decision and published Reports:

21/00109 - Kings Hill Solar Park

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2537>

21/00125 - Country Parks Play Areas Improvement Programme
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2549>

22/00018 - Highway Rural Swathe Contract -Maintenance Frequencies
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2567>

22/00021 - Rights, Representation and Advocacy Service
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2579>

22/00040 - Domestic Abuse Duty: 2022 to 2023 funding
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2601>

22/00041 - Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grants 2022/23 to 2024/25
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2597>

22/00045 - Procurement of an E-Voucher Distribution Provider
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2602>

22/00050 - Inflationary Pressures on Capital Construction Programmes
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2598>

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From: John Betts, Interim Corporate Director of Finance
To: County Council, 14 July 2022
Subject: Kent Local Pension Board terms of reference
Status: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Selection and Member Services Committee – 29 June
2022

1. Introduction

- a) Following on from the Pension Fund Investment Governance Lessons Learnt Review undertaken by Internal Audit, Barnett Waddingham were commissioned to undertake a review of the Governance of the Pension Fund. They completed their review in 2021 and since then officers have been implementing the report's recommendations.
- b) The report recommended changes to the Pension Board's terms of reference and board membership, and these were considered by an informal meeting of the Board on 7 June. Members were supportive of the proposed changes.

2. Kent Local Pension Board revised terms of reference

- a) County Council agreed the current version of the Pension Board's terms of reference on 26 March 2015 prior to the establishment of the Board on 1 April 2015 in accordance with Section 5 of the Public Service Act 2013 and under Regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations 2013 (as amended).
- b) The terms of reference have been amended and enhanced based on the recommendations of the governance review in order to fully describe the role of the Board as laid out in the regulations. They have also been updated to reflect best practice and to take account of guidance from the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) as well as the Pensions Regulator (TPR).
- c) A copy of the revised terms of reference is at appendix 1.
- d) The terms of reference will be reviewed every three years and when significant changes to the LGPS regulations occur.

3. Recommendation

County Council is asked to agree the revised Kent Local Pension Board terms of reference.

4. Background Documents

None.

5. Report Author and Relevant Director

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Kent Local Pension Board Terms of Reference

Membership: Total Ten

Four employee representatives
Four employer representatives
The Board may also contain two other members

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the terms of reference of the Local Pension Board (the Board) of Kent County Council (the 'Administering Authority') as Scheme Manager, as defined under Section 4 of the Public Service Act 2013.
- 1.2 The Board is established in accordance with Section 5 of that Act and under Regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations 2013 (as amended).

2. Role of the Board

- 2.1 The role of the Board, as defined by Regulation 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 is to assist the County Council as Administering Authority:
 - (a) to secure compliance with:
 - (i) the scheme regulations;
 - (ii) any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the LGPS Scheme and any connected scheme;
 - (iii) any requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the LGPS Scheme.
 - (b) to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the LGPS Scheme.
- 2.2 The Board will ensure it effectively and efficiently complies with the Code of Practice on the governance and administration of public service pension schemes issued by the Pension Regulator.
- 2.3 The Board will also help ensure that the Kent Pension Fund is managed and administered effectively and efficiently and complies with the Code of Practice on the governance and administration of public service pension schemes issued by the Pension Regulator.
- 2.4 The Board has power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.

2.5 The Board should always act within its terms of reference.

3. Establishment of the Board

3.1 The Board was established on 1 April 2015, subsequent to approval by Kent County Council on 26 March 2015.

4. Appointment of members of the Board and voting rights of Board members

4.1 The composition of the members of the Board is as follows:

The Board shall consist of at least eight members and may contain up to 10 members. It shall be constituted as follows:

- i) Four employer representatives;
- ii) Four scheme member representatives;
- iii) The Board may also contain two independent members.

4.2 The Board shall be constituted as follows:

- Employer representatives
 - 2 x Kent County Councillors
 - 2 x other employer representatives to come from nominations from other employers in the fund (e.g. District, Borough and Parish Councils, Academies, Police, Fire and other scheduled or admitted body employers in the Kent Pension Fund).
- Member representatives
 - 1 x Unison nominated representative
 - 3 x other member representatives, at least one staff and one pensioner representative is desirable.
- The Board may also contain other members
 - 2 x members from an external source (to be recommended by the appointments panel).

4.3 Scheme member and employer representatives shall be appointed in equal number and shall together form the majority of the Board membership.

4.4 Nominations will not be accepted from district / borough councillors who are also County Councillors.

4.5 No officer or elected member of the Administering Authority who is responsible for the discharge of any function of the Administering Authority under the Regulations may serve as a member of the Board.

4.6 Each Board member so appointed shall serve for 4-year renewable periods, from date of appointment, with a maximum of 8 years.

- 4.7 Each Board member should endeavour to attend all Board meetings during the year. Substitutes are allowed for two member representatives and for two employer representatives providing they undertake the training and development.
- 4.8 Each employer representative on the Board should be able to demonstrate their capacity to represent scheme employers in the Kent Pension Fund.
- 4.9 Each member representative on the Board should be able to demonstrate their capacity to represent scheme members of the Kent Pension Fund.
- 4.10 Each Board member should participate in training when required.
- 4.11 Member representatives on the Board shall be appointed by the Scheme Manager in accordance with the Appointment and Termination Process.
- 4.12 The Appointments Panel shall be made up of the following:
- Chair of the Pension Fund Committee,
 - the Corporate Director of Finance (or their nominee),
 - the Head of Pensions and Treasury,
 - the General Counsel (or their nominee)
- 4.13 Each employer representative and member representative of the Board will have an individual vote on any matter needing a decision. Independent Members of the Board do not have voting rights. It is expected that the Board will, as far as possible, reach a consensus.

4.14 Dual membership with the Committee of any type is not allowed.

5. Appointment and duties of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board

- 5.1 A Chair could be elected by the Board from among the Board membership based on their skills and is not restricted to being a Councillor.
- 5.2 One of the independent members may be appointed as Chair if authorised by the Scheme Manager.
- 5.3 The Vice Chair of the Board to be elected by the Board.
- 5.4 The Chair is responsible for ensuring that meetings are properly conducted, decision making is clear and professional advice is followed. The Chair is also responsible for agreeing the agenda and approving the minutes for each meeting.
- 5.5 The Vice Chair shall undertake the duties of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence.

6. Notifications of appointments to the Board

6.1 When appointments to the Board have been made, the Scheme Manager shall publish the name of the Board members, the process followed in the appointment together with the way in which the appointment supports the effective delivery of the purpose of the Board.

7. Termination of membership of the Board

7.1 Any termination of membership of the Board will be in accordance with the **Appointment and Termination Process**.

7.2 Membership of the Board may be terminated due to:

- They have a conflict of interest which cannot be managed in accordance with the Board's conflicts policy
- A member dies or becomes incapable of acting
- A member of the Board is appointed to the Superannuation Fund Committee.
- A member is appointed to the role of an officer of the Administering Authority with responsibility for the discharge of functions under the Regulations
- A member resigns
- A representative member ceases to represent his constituency, for example if an employer representative leaves the employment of his employer and therefore ceases to have the capacity to represent the Fund's employers; and
- A member fails to attend 2 consecutive meetings or otherwise comply with the requirements of being a Board member, for example fails to attend the necessary knowledge and understanding training.

8. Conflict of Interests

8.1 The Scheme Manager will approve a **Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy** (annex 1) which will be adopted by the Board and by which members of the Board will need to abide. Members of the Board will provide any information the Scheme Manager reasonably requires from time to time to ensure that members do not have a conflict of interest.

9. Attendance and legislative requirements

9.1 Board members shall endeavour to attend at least two Local Pension Board meetings per year.

9.2 Board members should also commit sufficient time in order to prepare for meetings, obtain and keep under review their knowledge and understanding.

9.3 Members of the Board should be aware that their individual legal responsibility begins from the date they take up their role on the Board.

10. Knowledge and Skills

- 10.1 In accordance with section 248A of the Pensions Act 2004 (“the 2004 Act”), every individual who is a member of a Board must be conversant with:
- i) the regulations governing the LGPS; and
 - ii) any document or policy about the administration of the Fund.
- 10.2 Board members should also have a knowledge and understanding of:
- i) the law relating to pensions; and
 - ii) such other matters as may be prescribed
- 10.3 The Board shall adhere to the Scheme Manager’s Training Policy to address the knowledge and skills requirements that apply to Local Pension Board members under the 2004 Act.
- 10.4 It is for individual Board members to ensure they have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly exercise their functions as a member of the Local Pension Board.
- 10.5 In line with this requirement, Board members are required to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and to refresh and keep their knowledge up to date. Local Pension Board members are therefore required to maintain a written record of relevant training and development.
- 10.6 Arrangements for training, facility time and expenses of and Pensions Board members are described in the Kent County Council constitution. This policy applies equally to all Board members.
- 10.7 The Fund's training policy was updated in March 2022. Board members have been provided with a copy of the Pension Fund training plan.
- 10.8 Members’ training is regularly reviewed with support from officers and all additional costs of attending training courses are reimbursed from the Fund.

11. Board Meetings: Notice and Public Access to Board Meetings and Information

- 11.1 The Board is considered a committee of local government and therefore the usual provisions about transparency in respect of access to information and reports will apply.
- 11.2 There will be four meetings a year to enable the Board to discharge its functions effectively. Meetings may be held in person in Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, online via Microsoft Teams or as hybrid meetings, as decided by the Chairman of the Board with the consent of the Board members.

- 11.3 The Scheme Manager shall give notice to all Board members of every meeting of the Board, which will be held in public (apart from confidential matters). All members will normally be sent an agenda and papers at least five working days before the meeting unless an urgent meeting is required.
- 11.4 Any meeting of the Board will include provision for confidential matters or matters that would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 to be dealt with privately in Part 2 and any documents in connection with such matters will be dealt with confidentially.
- 11.5 The Scheme Manager shall ensure that a formal record of Board proceedings is maintained. Following the approval of the minutes by the Chairman of the Board, they shall be circulated to all members.
- 11.6 All agendas, reports and minutes will be available on the website except for any confidential or exempt matters.
- 11.7 In accordance with the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, the Administering Authority shall publish information about the Board to include:
- i) the names of the Board members and their contact details;
 - ii) the representatives of employers and members of the Board;
 - iii) the role of the Board;
 - iv) the Terms of Reference.

12. Quorum

- 12.1 The Board shall have a quorum of a third of the membership, or no fewer than three members which should always include the Chair or the Vice Chair, at least one employer representative and at least one member representative.

13. Board Costs and Budget

- 13.1 The Board is to be provided with adequate resources to fulfil its role. In doing so, the budget for the Board will be met from the Kent Pension Fund.
- 13.2 The Board will seek approval from the Director of Finance for any expenditure it wishes to make.

14. Core Functions of the Board

- 14.1 The first core function of the Board is to assist the Scheme Manager in securing compliance with the Regulations, any other legislation relating to the Scheme and requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the Scheme.

- 14.2 The second core function of the Board is to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme.
- 14.3 In support of its core functions the Board may request information from the Kent Pension Fund Committee with regard to any aspect of the Scheme Manager function. Any such request should be reasonably complied with.
- 14.4 The Board may make recommendations to the Kent Pension Fund Committee. These recommendations should be given due consideration and a response made to the Board within a reasonable period of time.

15. Reporting Arrangements

- 15.1 The Board should report to the Kent Pension Fund Committee in the first instance.
- 15.2 On receipt of a report from the Board, the Kent Pension Fund Committee should consider and respond to the Board within a reasonable period of time.
- 15.3 Where the Board is satisfied that there has been a breach of regulation which is reported to the Kent Pension Fund Committee and is not rectified within a reasonable period of time the Board has a duty to escalate this perceived breach
- 15.4 The appropriate internal route for escalation is the Head of Pensions and Treasury.
- 15.5 The Board may report concerns to the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board subsequent to the internal route for escalation.
- 15.6 Board members are subject to the requirement to report breaches of law to the Pension Regulator under the Act and the Code,

16. Board Review Process

- 16.1 The Board will undertake each year a formal review process to assess how well it and the members are performing with a view to seeking continuous improvement in the Board's performance.

17. Advisors to the Board

- 17.1 The KCC Corporate Director of Finance will be responsible for providing professional advice to the board and secretarial support will be provided by KCC Democratic Services.
- 17.2 The Board may be supported in its role and responsibilities through the appointment of advisors and shall, subject to any applicable regulation and legislation from time to time in force, consult with such advisors to the Board and on such terms as it shall see fit to help better perform its duties.

18. Code of Conduct

18.1 The Scheme Manager will approve a **Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interests Policy** (annex 1) which will be adopted by the Board and which members of the Board will need to abide by.

19. Data Protection and Freedom of Information

19.1 The Board and its members will need to comply with the Scheme Manager's Data Protection and Freedom of Information Policy.

20. Accountability

20.1 The Board will be collectively and individually accountable to the Scheme Manager and to the Pensions Regulator.

21. Acceptance and Review of Terms of Reference

21.1 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years and when significant changes to the Regulations occur.

21.2 The revised Terms of Reference were agreed by County Council on.....

DRAFT

THE KENT LOCAL PENSION BOARD

CODE OF CONDUCT & CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

1. Code of conduct

1.1 As members of a publicly funded body with a responsibility to discharge public business members the Local Pension Board should have the highest standards of conduct.

1.2 Local Pension Board members should have regard to the Seven Principles of Public life:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

1.3 Accordingly Local Pension Board members should:

- Act solely in the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a friend or close associate.
- You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
- When carrying out your public duties you must make all choices on merit and must be impartial and seen to be impartial.
- You must co-operate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your role.
- You will on occasions be privy to confidential and sensitive information, such as personal information about someone, or commercially sensitive information which, if disclosed, might harm the commercial interests of the Council or another person or organisation. This information must not be revealed without proper authority.
- You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes) and you must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.
- You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your public post, in particular as characterised by the above requirements, by leadership and example.

- In addition to compliance with the Kent Local Pension Board Code of Conduct & Conflict of Interests Policy, you will sign adherence to the Conflict of Interest Declaration and declare any further potential conflicts of interest that may arise once appointed as a member ;
- You should comply with the Kent Local Pension Board Code of Conduct & Conflict of Interests Policy in addition to existing compliance with any Councillor or Officer Codes of Conduct that may apply to you.

2. Conflict of interest

- 2.1 The Public Service Pensions Act 2013, Section 5(4) requires that any member of a Pension Board must not have a “conflict of interest”, which is defined in Section 5(5) as a “financial or other interest which is likely to prejudice the person’s exercise of functions as a member of the board, but does not include a financial or other interest arising merely by virtue of membership of the scheme or any connected scheme.”
- 2.2 A conflict of interest exists where there is a divergence between the individual interests of a person and their responsibility towards the Local Pension Board, such that it might be reasonably questioned whether the actions or decisions of that person are influenced by their own interests. A conflict of interest would prejudice an individual’s ability to perform their duties and responsibilities towards the Local Pension Board in an objective way.
- 2.3 An example of a potential conflict of interest could be:
- A Local Pension Board member may be required to review a decision which may be, or appear to be, in opposition to another interest or responsibility; e.g(s):
 - a review of a decision which involves the use of departmental resource in the function of the Local Pension Board, whilst at the same time being tasked with reducing this departmental resource by virtue of their employment;
 - a Local Pension Board member could also be employed or have an interest in either privately or as part of the Council in a service area of the Council for which the Local Pension Board has cause to review;
 - an independent member of the Local Pension Board may have a conflict of interest if they are also advising the Scheme Manager.
- 2.4 All prospective Local Pension Board members are required to complete the **Kent Local Pension Board Conflict of interest declaration** before they are appointed to the Local Pension Board.
- 2.5 All appointments to the Local Pension Board should be kept under review by the Local Pension Board.
- 2.5 It is the duty of any appointed Local Pension Board member to declare any potential conflict of interest. This declaration should be made to the Chair of the Local Pension Board in the first instance or to the Scheme Manager and recorded in a register of interests.

- 2.7 The Local Pension Board shall identify and monitor any potential conflict of interests in a register of interests. The register of interests should be circulated to the Local Pension Board and Scheme Manager for review and publication.
- 2.8 If the Local Pension Board suspects any conflict of interest it should report its concerns to the Scheme Manager.
- 2.9 When seeking to prevent a potential conflict of interest becoming detrimental to the conduct of decisions of the Local Pension Board, the Local Pension Board should consider obtaining legal advice when assessing its course of action and response. The Local Pension Board may wish to consult the Director of Legal and Democratic Services in the first instance.
- 2.10 Education on identifying and dealing with conflict of interest will be included as part of the training requirement in the **Attendance and knowledge and understanding policy**.
- 3. Alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct and conflict of interest policy**
- 3.1 A process for dealing with the consideration of any alleged breaches, to include any sanctions to be applied, will be agreed by the Scheme Manager and the Local Pension Board.

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