

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 25th January, 2023**

**2.00 pm**

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County  
Hall, Maidstone**







## AGENDA

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, 25th January, 2023, at 2.00 pm**  
**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,**  
**Maidstone**

Ask for: **Anna Taylor**  
Telephone: **03000 416478**

#### **Membership**

- Conservative (10): Mr A Booth (Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mrs R Binks, Mr T Bond, Mr N J Collor, Mr G Cooke, Mrs S Hudson, Mr H Rayner and Mr O Richardson
- Labour (1): Dr L Sullivan
- Liberal Democrat (1): Mr A J Hook
- Green and Independent (1): Rich Lehmann
- Church Representatives (3): Mr J Constanti, Mr M Reidy and Mr Q Roper
- Parent Governor (2): Ms R Ainslie-Malik and Mrs K Moses

*County Councillors who are not Members of the Committee but who wish to ask questions at the meeting are asked to notify the Chairman of their questions in advance.*

## **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

### **A - Committee Business**

- A1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- A2 Apologies and Substitutes
- A3 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this Meeting
- A4 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2022 (Pages 1 - 8)
- A5 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - September 2022-23 (Pages 9 - 72)
- A6 Draft Ten Year Capital Programme, Revenue Budget 2023-24 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023-26 (Pages 73 - 74)  
Please refer to the draft budget report published and shared on 3 January 2023.
- A7 SEND Sub-Committee Terms of Reference (Pages 75 - 82)

### **B - Any items called-in**

### **C - Any items placed on the agenda by any Member of the Council for discussion**

- C1 Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People - Evaluation of Programme (Pages 83 - 112)

### **D - For Information**

- D1 Work Programme (Pages 113 - 114)

## **EXEMPT ITEMS**

*(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)*

Benjamin Watts  
General Counsel  
03000 416814

**Tuesday, 17 January 2023**

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL****SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 7 December 2022.

PRESENT: Mr A Booth (Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mrs R Binks, Mr T Bond, Mr N J Collor, Mr G Cooke, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr D Jeffrey, Rich Lehmann, Mr H Rayner and Dr L Sullivan

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P J Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services), Mrs C Bell (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health), Mrs S Chandler (Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services) and Mrs T Dean, MBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mrs S Hammond (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education), Mr R Smith (Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health), Mr S Collins (Director of Integrated Children's Services (West Kent and Early Help and Preventative Services Lead)), Mrs C Head (Head of Finance Operations), Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager), Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Mr M Dentten (Democratic Services Officer)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

**64. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this Meeting**  
*(Item A4)*

No declarations were made.

**65. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2022**  
*(Item A5)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2022 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**66. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - September 2022-23**  
*(Item C1)*

*Mr P Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) was in attendance for this item and Mrs C Head (Head of Finance Operations) was in attendance virtually for this item.*

1. Mr Oakford introduced the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report to September 2022, which had been presented to Cabinet on 1 December and was the second for the 2022/23 financial year. The Committee were informed that the report projected a £60.9m in-year overspend, which represented a £10.3m increase from the previously reported projection. He warned that it was a serious cause for concern and required significant management action

to minimise spend as far as possible, to ensure that the authority was as close to a balanced budget as possible by the end of the financial year. The main reasons for the projected overspend were detailed with inflationary, demand pressures and non-delivery of some agreed savings cited. Adult Social Care and Children, Young People and Education were highlighted as the directorates with the majority of the projected overspend, at £27.7m and £33.9m respectively. He explained that whilst the £25m risk reserve was designed to address overspend, that additional overspend would need to be met from the authority's general reserves. Members were informed that £35m of the £51m savings target were anticipated to be realised by the end of the financial year. Regarding the capital budget, he confirmed that a £74.6m underspend, with £103.7m rephased and an in-year overspend of £29.1m, had been forecast. Concerning the projected deficit on the High Needs budget, he advised that it was expected to increase by £46m in 2022/23 to £147m, up from £101m at the end of 2021/22. He concluded by alerting Members that the report reflected the most challenging projection that the Council had seen in recent years and that difficult decisions would need to be taken to reduce the projected overspend and impact on the medium-term financial plan.

2. A Member asked whether the mainstream home to school transport budget included both pupils with KCC funded bus passes, as well as those provided with hired vehicle transport, if a breakdown of the total mainstream home to school transport spend across both categories could be confirmed. Mrs Head agreed to provide Members with the requested information following the meeting.
3. Following a request from a Member for more information on the reasons for the projected capital budget underspend, Mrs Head explained that rephasing projects to future years as well as slippage were the main reasons for the underspend. Mr Oakford confirmed that the reasons for rephasing and overspends were tracked.
4. In response to a question from a Member on what overspend was expected by the end of the financial year, Mr Oakford stated that the target was to reduce the overspend to below £25m, in order that it could be covered by the risk reserve.
5. A Member asked whether section 12 of the report was the only governance document for in-year spend and changes. Mr Watts agreed to follow up the question with the Corporate Director for Finance and provide Members with an answer following the meeting.
6. Mr Oakford informed Members, following a question from a Member on whether the projected savings for SEN assessments were realistic, that the resourcing of assessments were the subject of ongoing discussions with the Cabinet Member and Corporate Director as part of the budget setting process.
7. Concerning the provision of home to school transport, the Chairman stated that he hoped officers were proactive in reducing costs, where possible, without reducing service quality. He emphasised the need to analyse the reasons for costs increases, to understand whether inflation or unreasonable increases had been the drivers for increased service costs. Mr Oakford

explained that the home to school transport market had experienced higher demand and a lower supply of drivers and providers, which had caused cost increases, he reassured the Committee that officers were investigating the matter closely. He added that the retender of home to school transport had reduced service costs, but increased demand had created the projected overspend.

8. Mrs Bell confirmed, following a question from a Member, that the difference in costs between framework and non-framework beds differed from contract to contract. She confirmed that alternative models of care were being investigated to further increase service capacity and reduce costs. Mr Oakford reassured Members that Cabinet drilled down into the reasons for cost increases, with care home beds a prime example. He added that keeping providers afloat, in order to maintain local supply, was an important factor and that homes needed at least 80 beds to be financially viable, with over 80% in Kent below that level.
9. In response to a question from a Member, Mr Oakford explained that, aside from highway and school capital projects, most other projects had been pushed back to reduce the impact of inflation.
10. A Member asked whether council tax collection rates could be improved to increase the authority's revenue. Mr Oakford confirmed that KCC financially incentivised district councils to improve their collection rates.
11. A Member commented that a strict commercial approach to contracts was required and that the use of local providers should be maximised.
12. Mr Oakford confirmed, in response to a question from a Member on reducing service levels to improve the Council's financial position, that service costs and outcomes were being examined as part of the budget setting process. He added that financial and statutory service resilience were priorities.
13. A Member asked for confirmation of the High Needs deficit, how the deficit would be repaid and what it would stand at the end of the 5-year period. Mr Oakford explained that KCC were in ongoing negotiations with the Department for Education as part of their Safety Valve Programme and that further detail could not be provided in open session at that moment. Mrs Head confirmed that £147m was the projected cumulative deficit for the end of the 2022/23 financial year.
14. Mr Rayner moved and Dr Sullivan seconded a motion "that the meeting be taken into closed session."
15. Members discussed the motion and how best to consider confidential information relating to the High Needs deficit, including the merits of delaying consideration of the issue to January, in order that further information and the appropriate officers can attend the Committee.
16. Dr Sullivan withdrew her second. The motion was lost.

17. The Chairman moved a motion “to defer consideration of the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.”

18. Members voted on the motion. The motion passed by majority vote.

RESOLVED to defer consideration of the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

## **67. Making a Difference Everyday Strategy - 6 month update**

*(Item C2)*

*Mrs C Bell (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health) and Mr R Smith (Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mrs Bell introduced the item which served as an update on the progress made over the previous six months to deliver against ‘Making a Difference Everyday: Our Strategy for Adult Social Care in Kent 2022-2027,’ following a call-in of the decision to adopt the Strategy in May 2022. She explained that delivery had progressed largely as planned, with delays in some areas. A longer than expected reorganisation of teams as part of the transition to the Locality Operating Model as well as delays to the implementation of the government's adult social care reforms were cited as the main impediments for the programme.
2. Mr Smith gave a presentation. The contents of the presentation included a summary of the strategy development process as well as the progress made implementing the Locality Operating Model; a new place-based way of working; Digital Front Door; Digital Self Serve; Self-directed Support; and Technology Enabled Care. He reminded Members that the strategy was in its second of its five-year transformation programme and that user feedback had been included as part of the ongoing programme evaluation along with cost benefit analysis.
3. Mr Smith emphasised, following a question from a Member, that Making a Difference Everyday was designed as an efficiency and practice improvement model which focused on a transition from a traditional care to community and digital model, rather than an explicit savings vehicle.
4. Additional information on the diagnostic process undertaken, including the cost to the Council, was requested by a Member.
5. In relation to the developments cited in the presentation as to be completed by December 2022, a Member asked whether they were expected to be completed on time. Mr Smith confirmed that there had been a minor delay to the starting of the Quality Assurance Board, which he would be chairing the first meeting of in January 2023, with the delay due to the finalisation of membership. He added that the Self Assessment Tool had also experienced minor delays due to a longer than expected platform development process.



6. A Member asked how implementation of Making a Difference Everyday had strengthened workforce resilience. Mrs Bell acknowledged that the provider market both in Kent and nationally faced significant staff shortages which impacted morale. Mr Smith added that over 90% of Kent's adult social care provision was commissioned and that a recruitment campaign and investigations into attracting new recruits to the health and social industry were underway. It was noted that new digital roles would attract other professionals to social care and further diversify the workforce. He emphasised the importance of health and social care integration for strengthening workforce resilience across both sectors.
7. Mr Smith reassured the Committee that the Locality Operating Model was designed to improve integration with the wider health system and partnerships.
8. Members commented that further improvements to information sharing between the NHS and social care were required to maximise the service efficiency.
9. Mrs Bell agreed to provide a further update to the Committee at the appropriate time. Dr Sullivan asked that the questions with outstanding answers be addressed in the future update.

RESOLVED to note the update on the Making a Difference Everyday (MADE) Strategy.

#### **68. Family Hubs Transformation Decision** (Item C3)

*Mrs S Chandler (Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services), Mrs S Hammond (Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education) and Mr S Collins (Director of Integrated Children's Services (Early Help and Preventative Services Lead)) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mrs Chandler provided an overview of decision 22/94 (Family Hubs Transformation) which she had taken as an urgent decision on 14 October. She outlined the circumstances which had required an urgent decision, with KCC needing to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Department for Education (DfE) within a timeframe which didn't allow sufficient time for an ordinary key decision. She noted that the Scrutiny Chairman and Group Spokespeople had been engaged at the time of decision to explain the reasons for urgency.
2. Following a question from a Member in relation to part (c) of the key decision (to confirm that any implementation or full delivery of a Family Hub Model in Kent will be subject to the development of detailed proposals, appropriate consultation, engagement and governance through normal Executive Decision-making arrangements), Mrs Chandler confirmed a further update on Family Hubs would be provided at the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee's 17 January meeting.
3. In response to questions from Members, Mr Collins confirmed that the Family Hubs operating model would include partnership with health visitors and

midwives, with a particular focus on outreach and a diverse offer incorporating face-to-face, virtual and digital methods. He clarified that the programme was targeted at young people, 0-19 and up to 25 with specific needs. Regarding the timeline leading up to the urgent decision, he explained that confirmation, from the DfE, that KCC had been accepted for funding was received on 6 October, along with a request to sign a memorandum of understanding; followed by consideration of the offer by senior officers at Strategic Reset Board on 13 October; Mrs Chandler as the Cabinet Member was then informed to ensure political oversight and that the appropriate governance arrangements could be put in place; and an extension to 14 October was agreed with DfE which permitted sufficient time for the urgent decision to be taken. He confirmed in relation to Priority 4 (New Models of Care and Support) of Framing Kent's Future that Family Hubs represented a new model of care and that health visitors and midwives had been consulted on future changes and delivery. He gave reassurance that children and family's views would be used to develop the delivery plan.

4. Mr Watts informed the Committee that future key decisions would be required to agree the implementation arrangements for the Family Hub model and advised that it would be subject to call-in.

RESOLVED to note the information provided in response to Members' questions on the Family Hubs Transformation decision.

#### **69. Scrutiny Committee's role in relation to KCC's SEND provision** (Item C4)

*Mrs T Dean, MBE (Member for Malling Central) and Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager) were in attendance for this item.*

1. The Chairman introduced the item. He reminded Members of the ongoing issues related to the County Council's provision of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services, which had been highlighted by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) conclusions, published in November 2022, that Kent hadn't made sufficient progress in addressing any of the significant weaknesses raised in their March 2019 inspection report. He stated that it was now appropriate for Scrutiny Committee to establish a dedicated sub-committee to provide targeted overview and scrutiny of SEND provision in the county.
2. Mrs Dean shared her reasons for suggesting a sub-committee to the Chairman, which included: a need to closely track progress made against the nine significant weaknesses identified; consolidate scrutiny of SEND provision; improve information sharing with Members; and improve the challenge given by Members.
3. Mr Cooke proposed and Mr Jeffrey seconded a motion "that the Scrutiny Committee establish a Sub-Committee to consider KCC's SEND provision."
4. Mr Cook advised Members on the process for establishing a Sub-Committee of the Scrutiny Committee, which included that it was within Scrutiny Committee's power to establish a Sub-Committee; the proposed Sub-

Committee would be politically proportionate; it would be a formal committee of the Council, requiring properly constituted physical meetings; would handle issues within the subject area of SEND provision on behalf of Scrutiny Committee; and that, in consultation with the Scrutiny Chairman and Group Spokespeople, the terms of reference would be drafted by Democratic Services for approval by the Committee at a future meeting.

5. Mr Watts reassured Members that future executive key decisions related to SEND would continue to follow the agreed procedures, as set out in the Council's constitution, including consideration of proposed decisions by the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee as well as analysis of management plans by Governance and Audit Committee.
6. Mr Cook confirmed, following a question from a Member, that external co-opted representation on the Sub-Committee, including Parent Governor Representatives, would be explored as part of the establishment process.
7. Members voted on the motion. The motion passed by majority vote.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee establish a Sub-Committee to consider KCC's SEND provision.

**70. Work Programme**  
*(Item D1)*

RESOLVED to note the report.

This page is intentionally left blank

By: Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Scrutiny Committee, 25 January 2023

Subject: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – September 2022-23

---

Summary: At the Scrutiny Committee meeting in December Members deferred consideration of the Budget Monitoring Report to the January meeting.

---

### **1. Introduction**

- a) The Scrutiny Committee received the attached report at their meeting in December but resolved to defer further consideration to the January meeting. The report sets out the revenue and capital budget monitoring position as at September 2022 – 23.
- b) At the December meeting Members had questions about the High Needs deficit and considered it would be useful to delay further consideration of this issue until January when further information would be available.
- c) The next Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report will be submitted to Cabinet in March and the Scrutiny Committee will receive a verbal update at this meeting.

### **2. Attached documents**

- a) [Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – September 2022-23](#)

### **3. Recommendation**

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss and note the report.

### **Contact Details**

Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer  
[anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk](mailto:anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk) 03000 416478

This page is intentionally left blank



# Finance Monitoring Report

As at September 22-23

---

By Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services,  
Peter Oakford  
Corporate Director Finance, Zena Cooke  
Cabinet Members  
Corporate Directors

To Cabinet – 1 December 2022

Unrestricted

---

## Contents

### Section

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Recommendations
- 3 Revenue
- 4 Adult Social Care & Health
- 5 Children, Young People & Education
- 6 Growth, Environment & Transport
- 7 Chief Executive's Department
- 8 Deputy Chief Executive's Department
- 9 Non-Attributable Costs
- 10 Schools' Delegated Budgets
- 11 Savings
- 12 2022-23 additional management actions and impact on 2023-24
- 13 Capital
- 14 Treasury Management Monitoring
- 15 Council Tax and NNDR

### Appendices

- A1 Revenue Variances Table
- A2 Prudential Indicators
- A3 Reserves Monitoring

---

## Contact Details

Corporate Director Finance – Zena Cooke  
Head of Finance Operations – Cath Head  
Chief Accountant – Emma Feakins  
Capital Finance Manager – Jo Lee  
Capital Finance Manager – Julie Samson

03000 419 205 | [zena.cooke@kent.gov.uk](mailto:zena.cooke@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 416 934 | [cath.head@kent.gov.uk](mailto:cath.head@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 416 082 | [emma.feakins@kent.gov.uk](mailto:emma.feakins@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 416 939 | [joanna.lee@kent.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.lee@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 416 950 | [julie.samson@kent.gov.uk](mailto:julie.samson@kent.gov.uk)



# 1 Introduction

---

**This report sets out the Council’s financial position for the year as at the end of September 2022-23. The Revenue General Fund is projecting a +£60.9m overspend for the full financial year. Adult Social Care and Children, Young People and Education are projecting significant overspends of +£27.7m and +£33.9m respectively.**

**The size of the overspend is of serious concern and will require significant management action, minimising spend as far as possible to ensure we are as close to a balanced budget as possible by the year end. This is particularly important given the 2023-24 and medium-term budget challenge. Inflationary and demand pressures, combined with non-delivery of some agreed savings, are impacting on both income and expenditure.**

**Any overspend at the end of the financial year will need to be met from general or earmarked reserves, but this approach is not sustainable in the medium term. A new section 12 has been added to this report which details the actions that are being and will be taken that are not yet reflected in this report but which will reduce the overspend position. This section 12 also highlights the impact of these actions on the 2023-34 budget position.**

---

1.1 The overall Revenue General Fund projection is a +£60.9m overspend. The Revenue General Fund projected year end position is a net overspend of +£60.9m.

Overspends are projected in all Directorates except CED & NAC. The largest variances are +£33.9m in CYPE and +£27.7m in ASCH, with overspends in GET of +£5.1m, and DCED +£1.4m. NAC is projecting an underspend of -£6.5m. Details can be found in the individual directorate sections.

---

1.2 There is £11m of spend that will be funded from the Covid-19 emergency grant reserve. The projected net spend of £1,260.0m includes £11m of Covid-19, and committed Helping Hands and COMF spend which will be funded from the Covid-19 emergency grant reserve. £11m of this is reflected in this report as a drawdown from the reserve as it relates to the committed spend identified in the 2021-22 outturn report.

---

1.3 The Schools’ Delegated Budgets are reporting a +£50.4m overspend. The overspend position of +£50.4m reflects the impact of high demand for additional SEN support and high cost per child resulting from greater demand for more specialist provision. The projected deficit on the High Needs budget has increased by £46m in this year from £101m at the end of the 2021-22 and estimated to increase to around £147m by the end of this financial year. The High Needs deficit is the Council’s single most significant financial risk and is now part of the DfE’s Safety Valve Programme which requires a robust deficit reduction plan to bring the deficit back into balance within 5 years.

---

1.4 The Capital projection is a net underspend of -£74.6m.

The Capital Programme continues to experience significant slippage. The net underspend is made up of +£29.1m real overspend and -£103.7m slippage, which represents almost 20% of the budget.

The largest real variance is an overspend of +£19.3m in GET. Details can be found in the capital sections.

The major slippage is -£66.1m in GET and -£23.2 in CYPE. Details can be found in the capital section.

---

## 2 Recommendations

---

### Cabinet is asked to:

---

- |     |  |                                 |
|-----|--|---------------------------------|
| 2.1 | Note the projected Revenue monitoring position of £60.9m overspend                                       | Please refer to sections 3 to 9 |
| 2.2 | Note the projected Schools' monitoring position of £50.4m overspend                                      | Please refer to section 10      |
| 2.3 | Approve the use of reserves in this year to fund the £1.1m timing difference in Kent Travel Saver income | Please refer to section 6       |
| 2.4 | Note the progress on the delivery of £41.2m in-year savings  | Please refer to section 11      |
| 2.5 | Note the actions being taken to reduce the projected overspend as far as possible                        | Please refer to Section 12      |
| 2.6 | Note the projected Capital monitoring position of £74.6m underspend                                      | Please refer to Section 13      |
| 2.7 | Note the Prudential Indicators report  | Please refer to Appendix 2      |
| 2.8 | Note the Reserves monitoring position  | Please refer to Appendix 3      |
-

## General Fund

### Projected position as overspend/(underspend)

Directorate	Revenue Budget	Revenue Projected Outturn	Net Revenue Projected Variance	Last reported position	Movement (+/-)
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care & Health	460.6	488.3	27.7	25.6	2.1
Children, Young People & Education	321.0	354.9	33.9	24.5	9.4
Growth, Environment & Transport	178.7	183.8	5.1	5.7	(0.6)
Deputy Chief Executive Department	71.7	73.2	1.4	0.5	0.9
Chief Executive Department	33.5	32.7	(0.7)	0.1	(0.8)
Non-Attributable Costs	129.4	123.0	(6.5)	(5.7)	(0.8)
Corporately Held Budgets	4.1	4.1	0	0.	0
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>1,199.1</b>	<b>1,260.0</b>	<b>60.9</b>	<b>50.6</b>	<b>10.3</b>
<b>Ringfenced Items</b>					
Schools' Delegated Budgets	0.0	50.4	50.4	0.0	50.4
<b>Overall Position</b>	<b>1,199.1</b>	<b>1,310.4</b>	<b>111.3</b>	<b>50.6</b>	<b>59.4</b>

## General Fund

The General Fund projected position is a net overspend of +£60.9m, with the most significant overspends in Children, Young People and Education of £33.9m and Adult Social Care & Health of £27.7m. The projected overspend represents 5% of the Revenue Budget and presents a serious and significant risk to the Council's financial resilience if it is not addressed. More detail is provided in the Covid-19 section below. There is £25m set aside in a risk reserve that can be used to mitigate in part the projected overspend, but action will be required to address the remaining overspend.

## Covid-19

The 2021-22 Outturn position set aside £15m for the continuation of Contain Outbreak Management (COMF), £8.3m for Helping Hands, £6.8m for Reconnect, £5m for Market Sustainability and £3.7m Covid-19 related roll forward requests. There is £14.9m set aside that is available to support unavoidable future Covid-19 related spend, loss of income and unrealised savings that have been impacted by Covid-19. The £5m for Market Sustainability is available to offset the overspend as it is unlikely that there will be a call on this in this financial year.

The projected Revenue net spend of £1260.0m includes £11.0m spend relating to Covid-19 and committed COMF and Helping Hands off set by £11m (a £10.4m drawdown from the Covid-19 emergency grant reserve and a £0.6m budget allocation).

## Collection Fund

Council Tax remains a significant source of income and the 2023-24 budget will be dependent on the improved levels budgeted for in 2022-23 for Council Tax Reduction Scheme discounts and the collection rate materialising.

At this early stage, we can gain some confidence that the projected collection fund deficit is relatively minor (0.8% of the budget). There have also been some changes to the payment arrangements for Council Tax which affect the profile of collections; this has not been factored into this projection and is likely to improve the position further. For more information, please refer to section 15.

### **Schools' Delegated Budgets**

The projected overspend is +£50.4m. The DSG deficit will increase from £97.6m to £146.6m in 2022-23. This is almost entirely due to an increase in the High Needs budget deficit, which is the Council's single biggest financial risk and the finalisation and successful delivery of the Council's deficit recovery plan is critical to bring the budget into balance. The Council is working with the Department for Education (DfE) in the second round of the Safety Valve Programme for those Councils with the highest deficits to support the development of a sustainable plan for recovery. For more information, please refer to section 10.

	Budget	Revenue Projected Outturn	Projected Variance Net Revenue Projected Variance	Last reported position (June)	Movement (+/-)
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care & Health Operations	411.6	448.9	37.3	31.3	6.0
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (ASCH)	40.1	30.9	(9.2)	(5.2)	(4.0)
Public Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Business Delivery	9.0	8.5	(0.5)	(0.5)	0.1
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	<b>460.6</b>	<b>488.3</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>
Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately	4.2	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Net Total incl provisional share of CHB</b>	<b>464.9</b>	<b>492.5</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>

The Adult Social Care & Health directorate is projecting a net overspend of +£27.7m, which includes a net contribution to reserves of +£2m.

The Adult Social Care & Health Operations division has a projected net overspend of +£37.3m, which is predominantly due to Older People – Residential Care Services which are projecting a net overspend of +£22.5m.

Projected contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts is contributing +£2.1m to the overall overspend, with this pressure arising due to both an increase in levels of debt owed to the council as well as the requirement to set aside an amount for debts not yet due. This is based on the bad debt provision policy, so as debt rises, so will the provision required.

£5.6m has been released from unrealised creditors that are not anticipated to be required. The creditor position at the end of each year is based on the activity position known as at 31 March.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown below and details of where savings have not been achieved can be found in the Savings Section 11.

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Older People - Residential Care Services	+£22.5m	High levels of complexity requiring additional support	<p>+£22.5m of this overspend is driven by increased demand in higher needs placements which are costing more, possibly due to a requirement to pay more due to a shortage in the social care workforce and costs for older people accessing residential and nursing care services, including +£10.4m from the increasing use of short-term beds which are significantly more expensive than long term beds.</p> <p>These are in part due to individuals leaving hospital with increased complex needs requiring additional support and an increase in situations where having been placed in a short term bed, it is considered detrimental to move an individual to a lower cost placement.</p> <p>+£0.9m of this overspend relates to the £2.1m projected contribution to the provision for bad and doubtful debts.</p>

A further overspend of +£0.9m relates to contract and commissioning savings which are no longer expected to be realised against this service line.

The above overspends are partly offset by -£1.8m released from centrally held funds, such as prices and winter pressures and provisions.

Adult Mental Health -  
Community Based  
Services

+£5.2m

Increases in Supported Living care packages & non-achievement of savings

+£3.3m of this overspend relates to clients receiving supported living care packages, including an increase in average hours provided per client to meet more complex needs.

A further +£2.7m relates to savings which are no longer expected to be realised against this service line. £1.4m is due to arranging care and support where achievement of savings has been impacted by demand and pressures in the social care market. And +£1.3m is due to delays in the procurement of new models of care relating to microenterprises and Technology Enabled Care (TEC).

The above overspends are partly offset by -£0.9m which relates to unrealised creditors.

Adult Learning Disability -  
Community Based  
Services & Support for  
Carers

+£4.4m

Increased complexity and higher costs than anticipated.

+£6.6m of the overspend relates to clients receiving supported living and day care packages with higher costs mainly driven by increasing complexity of needs.

+£0.2m of this overspend is due to unrealised savings, mainly due to contract and commissioning savings which are no longer expected to be achieved this financial year.

+£0.1m due to an increase to projected contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts.

The above overspends are partly offset by -£2.5m which related to unrealised creditors (-£2.2m) and centrally held funds (£0.3m).

Older People -  
Community Based  
Services

+£2.7m

Non-achievement of savings

The overspend is largely due to +£8.7m of savings which are no longer expected to be realised in-year against this service line. +£4.3m is due to arranging care and support where achievement of savings has been impacted by demand and pressures in the social care market and +£4.4m is due to delays in the procurement of new models of care relating to microenterprises and Technology Enabled Care (TEC).

+£0.9m of the overspend relates to an increase in projected contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts.

The overspends are partly offset by -£2.4m released from centrally held funds and provisions, and -£1.9m from the unrealised creditors.

The underlying service activity is projecting an underspend of -£2.6m where continuing workforce shortages in the social care

market have reduced the availability of suitable homecare packages and resulted in more clients receiving alternative support.

Adult Mental Health - Residential Care Services	+£2.1m	Increasing complexity of need and costs and non-achievement of savings	<p>+£1.8m of the overspend is due to service activity exceeding budgeted levels.</p> <p>+£0.3m of this overspend is due to contract and commissioning savings which are no longer expected to be achieved this financial year.</p> <p>The above overspends are partly offset by -£0.1m unrealised creditor position and centrally held funds.</p>
Adult Physical Disability – Community Based Services	+£1.8m	Increasing complexity of need and costs and non-achievement of savings	<p>+£1.1m of the overspend is due to service activity exceeding budgeted levels, and +£1.0m relates to savings which are no longer expected to be realised against this service line.</p> <p>The above overspend from service activity and unrealised savings are partly offset by -£0.2m unrealised creditor position and centrally held funds.</p>
Adult Physical Disability - Residential Care Services	+£1.2m	Increasing complexity of need and costs and non-achievement of savings	<p>+£1.2m of this overspend is due to service activity exceeding budgeted levels, and +£0.2m relates to savings which are no longer expected to be realised against this service line.</p> <p>A further +£0.2m pressure relates to contract and commissioning savings which are no longer expected to be realised against this service line.</p> <p>The above overspends are partly offset by -£0.2m released from centrally held funds and provisions.</p>
Strategic Management & Directorate Support (ASCH)	-£2.2m	Release of centrally held funds.	There is a -£2.2m projected underspend on this service due to the release of centrally held funds to partly offset pressures across ASCH operations.
Adaptive & Assistive Technology	-£3.9m	Re-alignment of savings	-£3.1m of this projected underspend relates to savings, with -£2.9m relating to planned expenditure to achieve efficiencies through greater use of technology enabled care being deferred to the following financial year, and -£0.2m from realigned savings which are now expected to be achieved against this service line.
Provision for Demographic Growth - Community Based Services	-£6.7m	Release of centrally held funds.	This is the release of centrally held funds to partly offset pressures across ASCH operations.





	Budget £m	Revenue Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance		Movement (+/-) £m
			Net Revenue Projected Variance £m	Last reported position (June) £m	
Integrated Children's Services (East & West)	165.8	175.7	9.9	5.6	4.3
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	91.8	100.2	8.4	7.5	0.9
Education	61.2	76.7	15.5	11.0	4.5
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (CYPE)	2.3	2.3	0.0	0.3	(0.3)
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>	<b>321.0</b>	<b>354.9</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>9.4</b>
Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Net Total incl provisional share of CHB</b>	<b>321.0</b>	<b>354.9</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>9.4</b>

The Children, Young People & Education directorate is projected to be overspent by +£33.9m

This is due to significant inflationary pressures in school transport services along with higher costs of supporting both looked after children and disabled children and young people.

The £354.9m forecast includes £6.8m in relation to the Reconnect project and £0.1m of Contain Outbreak Management Fund spend. Both have been covered by a drawdown from the Covid-19 emergency grant reserve as agreed in the 2021-22 outturn report.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown here:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Home to School Transport (Education)	+£13.6m	Significant inflationary increases on transport contracts and increase in demand	The projection includes +£1.3m overspend on mainstream home to school transport and +£12.7m on Special Education Needs (SEN) transport services. Significant inflationary increases on new transport contracts due to higher operating costs and a reducing supplier base, along with increasing bus ticket prices have led to price rises of between 10-20% and pressures of approximately +£1.1m and +£9.3m on mainstream and SEN transport services respectively. The projection assumes the number of children requiring SEN transport will continue to increase in line with historic trends with nearly 10% year on year increase in the number travelling. This is a consequence of the higher Education Health and Care Plan numbers and greater number of children with SEN not being educated in their local school. The forecast assumes work to slow this trend will not start to impact significantly until 2023 (leading to a total pressure of +£3.1m).

The mainstream home to school transport projection also assumes a rise in the number of pupils travelling from the Autumn term due to a combination of rises in secondary population, greater automation of the eligibility process that may result in more children being identified to receive free transport, and wider changes in bus services (leading to a pressure of +£0.3m).

Other School Services (Education) +£1.6m Various school related costs

Delays in basic need capital projects have resulted in use of more temporary accommodation to ensure sufficient school places are available (+£1.0m). Projected estimates of +£0.4m pressure on essential maintenance of school properties that do not meet the threshold for capital projects. There is a further risk of costs associated with feasibility costs or capital surveys that may result in additional works updates; however these will be forecast once there is clarity regarding the safety valve programme. Further updates will be given in future reports.

Children's Social Work Services - Assessment & Safeguarding Service (Integrated Children Services) +£1.9m High use of agency required to meet demand and inflationary cost increases of agency workers

Recruitment and retention of social workers continues to be a challenge, along with the need to provide sufficient cover for high levels of maternity leave. This has led to a higher number of agency staff to meet demand, coupled with higher costs following high inflationary increases.

Looked After Children - Care & Support (Integrated Children Services) +£8.1m Increase in number and cost of looked after children. High costs of legal services.

The number of looked after children has increased slightly over the past 6 months (6%) resulting in a higher use of independent fostering agency placements (increases in demand +£1.6m overspend). The cost of placements continues to rise with a greater number being placed in more expensive external settings as no suitable alternative is available. In addition, the use of unregulated placements has also become more common where it has become more difficult to find suitable residential placements and at significant cost (increases in cost of placements +£3.1m). Campaigns are continuing to recruit more in-house foster carers but based on current success rates it is likely some savings may not be achieved whilst some will be delayed to 2023-24 (+£1.0m). The cost of legal services has increased significantly since COVID-19 and initial projections suggest similar levels of activity will occur in 2022/23 due to the continual backlog in court proceedings (+£2.3m).

<p>Adult Learning &amp; Physical Disability Pathway – Community Based Services (Special Educational Needs &amp; Disabilities)</p>	<p>+£4.5m</p>	<p>Increasing cost of Supported Living and Homecare packages</p>	<p>The number of supported living and homecare packages have remained relatively static, however the average cost of packages continue to increase in response to the level of support required. The service has seen a reduction in the use of residential care but this has resulted in higher packages of community support contributing to the higher cost.</p>
<p>Children in Need (Disability) - Care &amp; Support (Special Educational Needs &amp; Disabilities)</p>	<p>+£0.5m</p>	<p>Increasing number of Direct Payments and cost of homecare packages</p>	<p>The number and cost of packages for disabled children have increased, this is partly due to inflationary increases and additional support required during to COVID.</p>
<p>Looked After Children (with Disability) - Care &amp; Support (Special Educational Needs &amp; Disabilities)</p>	<p>+£1.8m</p>	<p>Increased number and cost of residential and unregulated placements</p>	<p>The projection assumes the number of residential &amp; unregulated placements continue to increase in line with historic trends. The projection recognises the increasing cost of new placements.</p>
<p>Special Educational Needs &amp; Psychology Services (Special Educational Needs &amp; Disabilities)</p>	<p>+£1.4m</p>	<p>Increased use of agency</p>	<p>Difficulties in the recruitment of suitably qualified Education Psychologists and SEN officers has led to an increasing use of agency staff.</p>

	Budget	Revenue Projected Outturn	Net Revenue Projected Variance	Projected Variance	
				Last reported position (June)	Movement (+/-)
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Highways & Transportation	66.3	69.9	3.6	1.7	1.9
Growth & Communities	29.1	30.3	1.2	1.9	(0.8)
Environment & Waste	81.9	82.2	0.3	2.0	(1.7)
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (GET)	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.1	0.0
<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport</b>	<b>178.7</b>	<b>183.8</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>(0.6)</b>
Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Net Total incl provisional share of CHB</b>	<b>178.9</b>	<b>184.0</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>(0.6)</b>

The Growth, Environment & Transport Directorate is projected to be overspent by £5.1m with significant inflationary pressures (over £5m) contributing to this position. There is a recommendation to fund £1.1m of the overspend from reserves due to the timing of income received in relation to Kent Travel Saver. The income received in 2023-24 will repay the reserve.

The projected variance now reflects that all Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and Helping Hands projects (£1.0m) are funded from the Covid-19 emergency grant reserve. This is offset by a £1.5m non-delivered income target for recouping business rates to support expenditure on economic development and COVID recovery projects/strategies.

The projection continues to show that bus operators are being supported through this period of recovery and transition and continue to be paid at budgeted levels of activity, which are significantly above actual levels of activity. These payments are being paid on a phased reducing basis down towards the actual level of activity in line with the Government request. For Kent Travel Saver (KTS) and the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) this is a combined cost of £2.8m. This is included in the projections and is within the existing cash limits. The GET Directorate Management Team (DMT) have also enacted other mitigations, for example, extended vacancy management, delaying non-essential projects/pilots and spend to bring the overspend position into balance by the year-end. More detail on future actions can be found in Section 12.

Details of the significant variance on the General Fund are shown below:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Supported Bus Services (Highways & Transportation)	+£2.7m	Undelivered saving	A budget reduction of £2.2m was agreed at County Council but a delay in progressing the decision has meant that the profiled savings have not been delivered as planned. The decision was confirmed at October's County Council and 90 days' notice has been given to operators with savings assumed to be made from February. The quantum of routes that require withdrawal (to achieve the net £2.2m budget reduction) is in excess of £3m.

Kent Travel Saver (Highways & Transportation)	+£2.1m	Delays in income and increased operator costs	System issues have resulted in direct debits for the first two monthly instalments not being taken from parents who pay the full cost of the pass. It was decided that the instalments would therefore slip by two months with the final payments being taken in April and May. This means the income falls into the next financial year leaving a significant shortfall this financial year (+£1.1m). Due to the timing nature of this overspend, it will be met from reserves in 2022-23 and the reserve repaid with late income received in 2023-24.  The remaining overspend relates to increased payments to operators, including additional capacity payments, following an increased take up of passes, offset in part by additional income (+£1.0m). The position would be improved should the service not be required to pay bus operators at budgeted levels for the summer term in line with a request from Government (+£0.4m).
Highway Assets Management (Highways & Transportation)	+£1.2m	Energy inflationary pressure, partially offset by income.	The cost of energy for streetlighting, tunnels and traffic signals has increased significantly since the budget was set (+£1.7m). The projection is based on a known summer price and an estimated winter price as advised by LASER, although the latter is expected to be confirmed shortly. Increases in street works and permit income partially offset the additional energy costs plus small overspends in Highways Managers and Soft Landscaping.
Growth and Support to Businesses (Growth & Communities)	+£1.2m	Non-achieved income target	The business rate pool between KCC and districts and boroughs funds a range of regeneration and economic development projects. To date it has not been possible to identify and agree projects and spend that could be funded by the Business Rate pool. Further work will be undertaken to achieve this income target, this shortfall in income relates to (+£1.5m). This is partially offset by other small variances including vacancies in staffing.
Residual Waste, (Environment & Waste)	+£0.5m	Inflationary pressure partially offset by reduced volumes	This overspend relates to the significant price pressure for Allington Waste to Energy plant as the contractual uplift based on April RPI was much higher than the budgeted estimate (£2.6m). This is offset by reduced tonnes (-£2.0m).
Public Protection (Enforcement) (Growth & Communities)	+£0.2m	Trading Standards new burdens grant not received	The budget for this service was built on the assumption that funding would accompany the additional burdens being placed on Trading Standards following EU Exit (including Border Ports, Animal Health, and Feed Officers/Teams) but no Government funding has been forthcoming. (+£0.5m). This is partially offset by other small underspends including vacancies in staffing.

Waste Facilities & Recycling Centres (Environment & Waste)	-£0.2m	Favourable recycling prices offsetting other pressures	This underspend is due to favourable prices relating to the material recycling facility as well as additional income for recyclables (-£1.7m) and a reduction in tonnes primarily composting and food waste (-£0.5m). However, these savings are almost entirely offset by pressures within haulage (£0.4m), increased price of composted waste (£0.4m), inflationary increases in the costs of managing Transfer Stations and Household Waste Recycling Centres (£0.4m), and shortfalls in some areas of income (£0.5m).
Libraries, Registration & Archives (Growth & Communities)	-£0.3m	Registration income offset by reduced Library income	Levels of Registration income remain high post pandemic (-£0.6m) but Library usage has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, with income lower in areas such as fines and printing (+£0.5m). There are several other smaller variances including staffing underspends due to vacancies. No government funding for the new burden costs resulting from increased demands on the Registration service, following the introduction of the Marriage Schedule Act 2021 (+£0.1m) has been forthcoming.
Transportation (Highways & Transportation)	-£0.4m	Underspend on Driver Diversion Schemes	This is largely due to an underspend within Driver Diversion Schemes resulting from vacancy management, an increase in client numbers and a reduction in venue costs (-£0.2m), together with small underspends across a range of budgets. The increased cost of energy for traffic signals has resulted in a small overspend (+£0.1m).
English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) (Highways & Transportation)	-£1.9m	Activity is below budgeted level	The service is projecting an underspend (-£1.9m) as activity is projected to be below the levels built into the budget.  The Government's expectation is that bus operators are paid at pre pandemic rates, reducing towards actual activity by the end of the financial year. Without this request, the service would have been projecting an additional underspend of around (-£2.4m), (-£4.3m in total).

	Budget £m	Revenue Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance		Movement (+/-) £m
			Net Revenue Projected Variance £m	Last reported position (June) £m	
Finance	12.7	12.8	0.1	0.2	(0.1)
Strategic Commissioning	8.0	8.0	(0.1)	0.1	(0.2)
Governance, Law & Democracy	8.3	8.1	(0.2)	(0.2)	0.0
Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	4.4	4.3	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (S&CS)	0.0	(0.4)	(0.4)	0.0	(0.4)
<b>Chief Executive's Department</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>(0.7)</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>(0.8)</b>

The Chief Executive's Department is projected to underspend by -0.7m

This consists of the following variances within several key services as below:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (S&CS)	-£0.4m	Reduced Early Retirement Costs	This projected underspend is due primarily to reduced early retirement costs.
Governance, Law & Democracy	-£0.2m	Additional income	Increased income from Schools' appeals together with reduced cost of provision.
Strategic Commissioning	-£0.1m	Difficulties recruiting commissioning staff	Staffing underspend due to difficulties recruiting commissioning staff.
Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	-£0.1m	Release of contingencies	Release of contingency budget (held against unpredictable risk exposure), which is no longer required.
Finance	+£0.1m	Overspend against staffing.	This projected overspend relates to staffing and is due primarily to currently unfunded trainee costs.



	Budget	Revenue Projected Outturn	Projected Net Revenue Variance	Projected Variance Last reported position (June)	Movement (+/-)
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Infrastructure	6.2	6.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Strategic Management & Departmental Budgets (DCED)	3.3	3.3	0.0		
Technology	24.0	23.8	(0.2)	(0.6)	0.4
Corporate Landlord	27.1	28.9	1.9	1.3	0.5
Marketing & Resident Experience	6.0	6.0	0.0		
Human Resources & Organisational Development	5.1	4.9	(0.2)	(0.3)	0.1
<b>Deputy Chief Executive's Department</b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>

The Deputy Chief Executive's Department is projected to overspend by +£1.4m.

This is mainly due to a projected overspend within Corporate Landlord, with minor projected underspends within the Technology, and Human Resources & Organisational Development Key Service lines.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown here:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Corporate Landlord	+£1.9m	Inflationary Pressure on Utilities	<p>There is a +£1.9m projected overspend which is due to an anticipated increase in utility costs across all properties. These increases are related to the current national trend and are significantly higher than the budgeted price increase funded as part of the 2022-23 budget. The projected overspend has been modelled by Laser.</p> <p>This position does not show the effect of the government's energy support scheme (the position will be updated in future reports).</p>

	Projected Variance				
	Budget £m	Revenue Projected Outturn £m	Net Revenue Projected Variance £m	Last reported position (June) £m	Movement (+/-) £m
Non-Attributable Costs	129.4	123.0	(6.5)	(5.7)	(0.8)
Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately	(0.3)	(0.3)	0	0.0	0.0
<b>Net Total incl provisional share of CHB</b>	<b>129.2</b>	<b>123.0</b>	<b>(6.5)</b>	<b>(5.7)</b>	<b>(0.8)</b>

Non-Attributable Costs are projected to be underspent by (£6.5m). -£3m of the underspend relates to a drawdown from reserves of the S31 grant for Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) which was accrued for in 2021-22.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown below:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Non-Attributable Costs	-£6.5m	S31 grant for Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF), net debt costs and increase in Extended Rights to Travel grant	<p>-£3.0m of the underspend is due to the drawdown from reserves of the S31 grant for Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) which was accrued for in 2021-22 based on a government data collection exercise and the final figure has not been confirmed. This funding had not been built into the 2022-23 budget and will be an in-year underspend.</p> <p>-£2.4m net debt costs due to the estimated impact of the increase in the Bank of England base rate on our interest on cash balances.</p> <p>-£1.0m increase in the Extended Rights to Travel grant compared to the budget assumption.</p>

**The latest forecast for the Schools' Delegated Budget reserves is a surplus of £59.9m on individual maintained school balances, and a deficit on the central schools' reserve of £146.6m.**

The balances of individual schools cannot be used to offset the overspend on the central schools reserves and therefore should be viewed separately. The table below provides the detailed movements on each reserve.

The Central Schools Reserve holds the balance of any over or underspend relating to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This is a specific ring-fenced grant payable to local authorities to support the schools' budget. It is split into four main funding blocks, schools, early years, high needs and central, each with a different purpose and specific rules attached. The Council is required to hold any under or overspend relating to this grant in a specific reserve and is expected to deal with any surplus or deficits through future years' spending plans.

	Individual School Reserves	Central Schools Reserve	<i>Note: a negative figure indicates a drawdown from reserves/deficit</i>
Balance brought forward	61.3	-97.6	
Forecast movement in reserves:			
Academy conversions and closing school deficits	-1.4		
School Block Related Spend		-3.1	
High Needs Placements, Support & Inclusion Fund		-44.9	
Underspend on Early Years		0.2	
Overspend on Central DSG Budgets		-1.1	
Forecast reserve balance	59.9	-146.6	

In accordance with the statutory override implemented by the then Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) during 2020-21, and in line with the Department for Education (DfE) advice that local authorities are not expected to repay deficits on the DSG from the General Fund and can only do so with Secretary of State approval, the central DSG deficit of £146.6m will be held in a separate unusable reserve from the main council reserves. This statutory override is currently in place until April 2023 and may be further extended whilst Councils implement recovery plans. The Council continues to work with the Schools Funding Forum to address the deficit. The DfE have invited the Council to take part in the second round of the Safety Valve Programme for those Councils with the highest deficits to support the development of a sustainable plan for recovery; this may include further funding from the DfE to pay off part of the deficit but only if the Council can demonstrate a credible plan. The DSG deficit is the Council's single biggest financial risk; therefore, the finalisation and successful implementation of the Council's deficit recovery plan is critical. The SEND Green Paper published earlier this year sets out the Governments proposed reforms to the SEND and alternative provision (AP) system which in part is expected to support a more sustainable high needs funding system although it is recognised this will not impact immediately and local actions are required.

Key Issues	Details
School Block: One-off Settlement	<p>The DSG Reserve as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 of £98m is formed from a net surplus on the Schools Block of £3m and a net deficit on the High Needs block of £101m. The two blocks of funding have different purposes and rules and Secretary of State Approval is needed to transfer funding from the schools' block to other funding blocks. The Schools Block funds primary and secondary schools' budgets, and the accumulated balance from previous years underspend, has been fully committed to be paid to schools, as a one-off additional payment to support the cost of changes to the calculation of pay for term time only staff. Payments began in 2021-22 and the remaining payments are expected to be paid in 2022-23.</p>
Early Years: general underspend	<p>The Early Years Block is used to fund early years' providers the free entitlement for eligible two, three and four-year olds. Each year, when setting the funding rate an estimate must be made as to likely hours that will be provided to ensure it is affordable within the grant provided. This can lead to minor under or overspend if activity is slightly lower or higher than expected. This has led to a small underspend of £0.2m, which will be used to partly fund spend on the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund which is currently funded from the High Needs Block.</p>
Reduction in government funding for Central Services	<p>Since 2020-21, the Government has reduced the funding used to support some of the central services currently funded from the DSG (£3.3m). Although some of this has been addressed through the Medium-Term Financial Plan (£1.5m) and other short term alternative funding sources (£1.3m) without any direct impact to schools; we are currently undertaking an initial scoping of the areas we may need to review in terms of our future relationship with schools in line with Government policy, funding and wider DSG deficit recovery plan and implement changes that will eliminate the funding shortfall.</p>
Higher demand and higher cost for high needs placements	<p>The High Needs Block (HNB) is intended to support the educational attainment of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and pupils attending alternative education provision. The HNB funds payments to maintained schools and academies (both mainstream and special), independent schools, further education colleges, specialist independent providers and pupil referral units. Some of the HNB is also retained by KCC to support some SEND services (staffing/centrally commissioned services) and overheads.</p> <p>The net deficit on the high needs block was £101m as at 31st March 2022 and is estimated to increase to around £147m by 31st March 2023. The overspend on the high needs block has been growing significantly over recent years and is the most significant financial risk to the council.</p> <p>The forecast in-year funding shortfall for High Needs placements and support in 2022-23 is +£46m due to a combination of both higher demand for additional SEN support and higher cost per child resulting from greater demand for more specialist provision. The forecast levels of growth are expected to be similar to previous years, since the introduction of the legislative changes in 2014, which also saw the expansion of duties to the age of 25 without sufficient extra funding. Many other local authorities are also reporting deficits on their high needs block resulting from significant increases in their number of EHCPs and demand for SEN services. However, the increases locally are increasing at a significantly faster rate than the other comparative councils and the council is now placing a greater proportion of children in both special and independent schools compared to other local authorities, and a smaller proportion of children with</p>

SEND included in mainstream schools. The tables below detail the trend in both spend and number of HNB funded places or additional support across the main placement types.

---

Table: Total Spend on High Needs Block by main spend type

	19-20 £'ms	20-21 £'ms	21-22 £'ms	22-23 £'ms
Maintained Special School	97	106	123	136
Independent Schools	40	49	60	70
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP* **	38	46	54	62
Post 16 institutions***	16	17	19	21
Other SEN Support Services	44	49	43	49
Total Spend	234	264	299	338

\*Specialist Resource Provision

\*\* Please note this data excludes any costs incurred by primary & secondary schools from their own school budget.

\*\*\*Individual support for students at FE College and Specialist Provision Institutions (SPIs)

Table: Average number of HNB funded pupils receiving individualised SEN Support/placements. This is not the total number of children with SEN or number of EHCPs.

	19-20 No	20-21 No	21-22 No	22-23 No
Maintained Special School	4,751	5,118	5,591	5,760
Independent Schools	907	1,126	1,348	1,554
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP*	3,922	4,510	5,258	5,938
Post 16 institutions***	1,196	1,281	1,453	1,516
Total Number of Pupils	10,776	12,035	13,650	15,069

Table: Average cost of HNB funded pupils receiving individualised SEN Support or placement cost.

	19-20 £s per pupil	20-21 £s per pupil	21-22 £s per pupil	22-23 £s per pupil
Maintained Special School	£20,330	£20,629	£21,648	£22,066
Independent Schools	£43,851	£43,734	£44,799	£45,349
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP*	£9,691	£10,294	£15,464	£16,326
Post 16 institutions***	£13,393	£13,309	£13,090	£13,865

Since 2020-21 the Government has provided further funding; however, as can be seen from the projection, this has been insufficient to meet the demand and we will need to take further actions to ensure we are able to support children with SEN sustainably, in partnership with the Schools Funding Forum. The Council, with support from Schools, Schools Funding Forum and the Secretary of State have continued to transfer £10m from the schools' budget to the high needs budget each year to fund activities to support inclusive practices in mainstream schools. These activities are being implemented and their impact monitored.

Our response to the Written Statement of Action (WSOA), put in place to address a number of areas of concern raised in the 2019 Ofsted/CQC Local Area SEND Inspection,

overlaps in a number of places with our strategy for reducing the pressure on the High Needs budget. The recent re-inspection has identified further accelerated progress is required to address these concerns and a renewed focus on actions to support improvements across the SEN system. Overlapping actions include:

- Reviewing our commissioning strategy for SEN provision across the county including supporting the development of new special schools and Specialist Resource Provisions to reduce our increasing reliance on independent schools including the opening of two new special schools last year which when fully opened will avoid over 350 higher cost placements.
- Reviewing commissioning arrangements including independent providers, home tuition and therapy services.
- Improving parental confidence through supporting inclusive practice and capacity building in mainstream schools and FE Colleges to reduce reliance on special and independent schools. This will support the council's ambition set out in the report presented to Cabinet in January setting out the council's intention to support a model of provision where the proportion of children and young people supported in each provision type (mainstream and specialist provision) will more closely reflect both statistical neighbours and national averages.
- Further collaborative working with Health and Social Care partners

The longer-term impact of children being out of school during the COVID pandemic on this budget is starting to be evidenced through increasing demand for Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) services.





The budget agreed at County Council included the requirement to deliver savings totalling £41m during 2022-23. A further £10.6m of undelivered savings from the previous year are included in the overall 2022-23 savings requirement of £51.6m. £24.7m of the total £41m agreed savings are on track to be delivered, with the breakdown of the position as follows:

- A net position of £14.3m is forecast for ASCH, CYPE and GET as not achieved in 2022-23 and will slip into future years;
- £4.5m has been identified by ASCH, CYPE, and GET as undeliverable in 2022-23;
- The Public Health, CED and DCED savings for 2022-23 are £2.6m and are on track to be delivered;
- The NAC overachieved saving is due to £2m relating to additional MRP saving due to fewer assets becoming operational in 2021-22 as a result of slippage in the capital programme and £0.5m over-achievement of forecast dividends from our wholly-owned companies.
- £10.6m of undelivered savings from the previous year have been delivered

Directorate	Previous year saving delivered in 2022-23 £m	2022-23 Target £m	Not achieved in 2022-23 £m	Saving no longer required £m	Not Deliverable £m	Over Recovery £m	Forecast Savings 2022-23 £m
Adult Social Care & Health	5.4	22.2	(11.0)		(1.4)		15.1
Public Health		2.2		(0.1)			2.1
Children, Young People & Education	5.2	2.7	(0.8)		(0.9)		6.1
Growth, Environment & Transport		7.1	(2.5)		(2.2)	0.2	2.6
Deputy Chief Executive's Department		0.1					0.1
Chief Executive's Department		0.4					0.4
Non Attributable Costs		6.1				2.5	8.6
Corporately Held Budget		0.3					0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>(14.3)</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>	<b>(4.5)</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>35.3</b>

Directorate	2022-23 Target £m	Previous year saving delivered in 2022- 23 £m	Not achieved in 2022- 23 £m	Saving no longer required £m	Not Deliverab le £m	Over Recovery £m	Forecast Savings 2022-23 £m	Split of Forecast savings 2022-23		
								As planned £m	from alternative s (ongoing) £m	from alternati ves (one-off) £m
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>(11.0)</b>		<b>(1.4)</b>		<b>15.1</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>
Transformation: Service Redesign	8.4	5.4	(6.6)		(1.0)		6.2	3.7	1.9	0.6
Efficiency: review of existing contracts for commissioned services	5.0		(4.4)		(0.3)		0.3	0.2	0.1	
Income: uplift in social care client contributions	2.5						2.5	2.5		
Policy: Housing Related Support - Homelessness	2.3						2.3	2.3		
Policy: Strategic Review of in-house services	3.4						3.4	3.4		
Policy: review existing contracts & grants with voluntary sector	0.6				(0.1)		0.4	0.4		
Policy: Adult social care non residential charging										
<b>Public Health</b>	<b>2.2</b>				<b>(0.1)</b>		<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.1</b>		
Grant Income: Increase in Public Health Grant	2.0						2.0	2.0		
Income: increase in income for externally funded posts	0.1						0.1	0.1		
Small efficiency savings	0.2				(0.1)		0.1	0.1		

<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>(0.8)</b>	<b>(0.9)</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.7</b>	
Transformation: Change for Kent Children (In-house fostering, newly qualified social workers & social work establishment)		3.1	(0.2)	(0.9)	2.0	0.2	1.4	0.4	
Transformation: Community Learning & Skills Efficiency: SEN Transport re-procurement		2.0			2.0	2.0			
Efficiency: savings to offset reduction in Central Services for Schools Block DSG	0.8		(0.5)		0.3			0.3	
Efficiency: efficiency measures within Community Learning & Skills	0.2				0.2	0.2			
Grant income: new Supporting Families grant	0.8				0.8	0.8			
Income: uplift in social care client contributions	0.1				0.1	0.1			
Policy: Care Leavers placement cost reductions	0.4				0.4	0.4			
Policy: above inflation increase in price of Kent 16+ Travel Saver	0.4				0.4	0.4			
Policy: Adult social care non residential charging									
Policy: introduce HTST hubs for SEN children		0.1	(0.1)						
<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport</b>	<b>7.1</b>		<b>(2.5)</b>	<b>(2.2)</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.1</b>
Transformation: re-focus Sports & Physical activity service to deliver Public Health outcomes with grant funding allocated accordingly	0.2				0.2	0.2			

Transformation: introduction of use of Digital Autopsy within Coroners service	0.1	(0.1)			
Transformation of Country Parks					
Efficiency: Waste renegotiation of gate fee	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	
Efficiency: Waste dampening of impact of new recycling performance payments	0.2		0.2	0.3	
Efficiency: Review of school road crossing patrol service	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	
Efficiency: Release of LRA ambition delivery budget	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	
Efficiency: review of early retirement budget					
Efficiency: Kent Scientific Services savings from expanding toxicology service					
Efficiency: Review of LRA non staffing spend					
Efficiencies within Heritage Conservation Service					
Grant Income: Assumed new burdens grant for ongoing EU Exit costs incl Border Ports and new responsibilities under the Marriage Schedule Act 2021	0.7	(0.6)	0.1		0.1
Income: Reprioritise external income to support the wider economic recovery within Kent	1.5	(1.5)			
Income: Increase in net income for street works and permit scheme	0.4		0.4	0.4	
Income: Kent Travel Saver price increase to offset bus operator inflationary fare increases	0.1		0.1	0.1	
Income: surplus generated from Solar Park					

Income: Review of charges for service users (Coroners SLA with Medway & Highways charges)	0.1		0.1	0.1
Policy: Review and reduction in subsidised bus contracts	2.2	(2.2)		
Policy: above inflation increase in the price of the Kent Travel Saver pass	0.9		0.9	0.7
Policy: HWRC booking system	0.2	-0.2		
Policy: Charge all non-Kent residents for using HWRCs	0.1		0.1	0.1
Policy: Reduction in Trading Standards budget	0.1	(0.1)		
Policy: Review of book start service to nursery settings				
Policy: Change neighbourhood notification as part of determination of planning applications				
<b>Deputy Chief Executive's Department</b>	<b>0.1</b>		<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>
Efficiency: Emergency Planning deletion of temporary post				
Policy: Review of on-call payments for tactical managers & emergency response team	0.1		0.1	0.1
<b>Chief Executive's Department</b>	<b>0.4</b>		<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Transformation: Automation of Adult Social Care payment system	0.1		0.1	0.1
Efficiency: Review of early retirement budget	0.3		0.3	0.3
<b>Non Attributable Costs</b>	<b>6.1</b>		<b>2.5</b>	<b>8.6</b>
Income: Return from our companies	4.0		0.5	4.5
Financing: Reduction in overall level of	2.1		2.0	4.1

# 11 Savings

Target for year £51.6m  
£35.3m savings to be delivered

prudential borrowing including review of amounts set aside for debt repayment (MRP)											
<b>Corporately Held Budget</b>		<b>0.3</b>						<b>0.3</b>			<b>0.3</b>
Efficiency: Workforce Management		0.3						0.3			0.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>41.0</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>(14.3)</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>	<b>(4.5)</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>1.6</b>

Explanation of the Directorate Savings variances are shown below:

Page 42	11.1	The ASCH budget savings for 2022-23 are £22.1m plus £5.4m previous year saving. Of the overall £27.5m £15.1m is identified as being on track to be delivered with £11.0m forecast to slip into future years, and £1.4m assumed at this stage not to be achievable.	£11.0m of slippage is due to delays in the procurement of new models of care; Digital Front Door, Microenterprises and Technology Enabled Care (TEC) £4.8m, Commissioning activity £4.4m and a further £1.9m on 'Arranging support', both which are anticipated to be achieved fully once the new adult social care and health operating model is implemented fully next year, which has been delayed due to the scale and size of the restructure.
		Overall it is felt that £1.4m will not be achieved over the medium term £1m relates to 'Arranging Support' and £0.4m relates to Commissioning activity this will not be achieved over the medium term primarily due to the demand and pressures in the social care market, increased unit costs and potential overlap with other commissioning and review work that is underway.	
	11.2	The CYPE budget savings for 2022-23 £2.7m plus a £5.2m previous year saving. £6.1m has been identified as on track to be achieved, £0.9m will not be achieved and the remaining £0.8m has been slipped into future years.	<p>CYPE budget savings for 2022-23 were set at £2.7m and £5.2m of a prior year savings target has been added to the 2022-23 target, a total of £7.9m. £6.1m is forecast to be achieved this year, of which £2.1m relates to CFKC CSW agency and staffing savings that were not achieved and has been covered through alternative actions including use of MTFP funding and one-off grants.</p> <p>The remaining £0.8m savings has slipped into future years and is due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delays in the piloting of standard pick up points for some SEN transport services until 2023-24 to allow more time to explore and plan for any changes.</li> <li>efficiency savings to offset the anticipated 20% annual reduction in Dedicated Schools Grant: Central Services for Schools Block has not been achieved and is to be considered as part of a wider review of the</li> </ul>

DSG and services currently paid for on behalf of the schools. This has been delayed further to reflect any requirements of the DSG safety valve plan.

- £0.2m of CFKC savings relating to foster carer recruitment has been slipped to future years where COVID has delayed delivery.

11.3	The GET budget savings for 2022-23 are £7.1m. £2.7m is identified as being on track to be delivered with £2.2m forecast to slip into future years, £2.2m assumed at this stage not to be achievable.	<p>The £2.2m saving that has not been delivered relates to a budget reduction to Subsidised/Supported Bus services that was agreed at County Council. A delay in progressing the decision has meant that the profiled savings have not been delivered as planned. The decision has now been taken and 90 days notice shortly to be given to operators so the saving will commence from mid February 2023.</p> <p>The £2.2m saving that has not been delivered comprises of two elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £0.7m was primarily an income target from a grant expected from Government for new burdens in relation to a new border control team that was a required following Brexit/Transition. No new burdens monies have been provided.</li> <li>• £1.5m was a proposal to try and utilise Business Rates income to fund regenerative and environmental activities. This has not been delivered in-year. The proposal will look to be rolled out to fund future growth pressures and projects going forward but this will be worked up working collaboratively with districts on certain projects/initiatives rather than having a target set.</li> </ul>
11.4	The NAC budget savings for 2022-23 are £6.1m with £8.6m forecast to be achieved.	£2.0m over achievement relates to additional Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) saving due to fewer assets becoming operational in 2021-22 due to slippage in the capital programme, but this is simply re-phasing of MRP into future years. £0.5m over-achievement of forecast dividends from our wholly-owned companies.

## 12 Reducing the gap

This section sets out the management action being taken to reduce the Council's projected overspend of £60.9m, which are not yet reflected in this report. The actions identified to date are expected to deliver a reduction of £7.9m in spend by the end of the financial year, £6.2m one-off reductions and £1.7m that will have an on-going impact. Work is continuing to identify more actions to reduce the overspend further, to be as close as a possible to a balanced budget position. This is particularly important given the 2023-24 and medium term budget challenge. This section 12 also highlights the impact of these actions on the 2023-34 budget position.

Any overspend at the end of the financial year will need to be met from general or earmarked reserves, but this approach is not sustainable in the medium term.

										2023-26 MTFP impact		
Corporate Board Agreed Action	ASCH	CYPE	GET	CED	DCED	TOTAL	22-23 one-off	22-23 recurring	23-24	24-25	25-26	
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	
Corporate Directors to continue to work with their DMTs and services to substantially reduce the current gap e.g. reduced activity in non-essential areas,		+12.5	-600.0	-36.9	0.0	<b>-624.4</b>	-210.9	-413.5	-1,382.0	-300.0	250.0	
"Deep dives" in key areas of demand led spend to identify options for savings / spending reductions through reducing future activity forecasts	-1,615.0	-415.0				<b>-2,030.0</b>	-1,615.0	-415.0	-2,243.8	-845.6		
Maximising use of grant funding and other income for existing eligible spend	-1,345.0	-2,000.0			-115.0	<b>--3,460.0</b>	-3,405.0	-55.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Reviewing contract forward plan to identify contracts where quality / quantity can be amended to deliver savings or decommissioned entirely	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-20.0	<b>-20.0</b>	-20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Ensuring potential discretionary spend over a particular threshold is avoided, largely non staffing	0.0	-250.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>-250.0</b>	-250.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Reviewing and monitoring agreed savings and cost reduction proposals to ensure they are delivered	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-98.0	<b>-98.0</b>	-98.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Formal process to approve workforce spend e.g. vacancy management, use of interims/agency etc.	0.0	-220.8	0.0	-700.0	0.0	<b>-920.8</b>	-620.9	-300.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	



## 12 Reducing the gap

Resource Review Panels to review spending for key demand led budgets e.g. care placements and packages	0.0	-480.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	-480.2	0.0	-480.2	-3,284.1	-2,400.2	0.0
	-2,960.0	-3,353.5	-600.0	-736.9	-233.0	-7,883.4	-6,219.8	-1,663.7	-7,209.9	-3,545.8	250.0

Directorate & Division	Details of Actions to be taken	22-23 one-off	22-23 Recurring	23-24	24-25	25-26
		£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
ASCH - Operations	Review of day care forecast	-900.0				
ASCH - Operations	Review of forecast for clients in receipt of more than one type of service	-715.0				
ASCH - Strat Mgmt.	Alternative eligible use of non-ringfenced grant	-845.0				
ASCH - Operations	Public Health Contribution to discretionary preventative services	-500.0				
		-2,960.0				

## 12 Reducing the gap

Directorate & Division	Details of Actions to be taken	22-23 one-off	22-23 Recurring	23-24	24-25	25-26
		£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
CYPE - ICS	Explore strategies, including statutory guidance, to reduce dependency on social work agency staff		12.5	-1,005.0	-300.0	
CYPE - ICS	Review of Integrated Children's Placements: Reduce dependence on high levels of additional support and seek enhanced contributions from health.		-225.0	-1,000.0		
CYPE - ICS	Reduction in Legal Services Spend through cost efficiencies by Invicta Law and review of the use of legal services by social workers		-169.1	-1,014.6	-845.6	
CYPE - ICS	Section 17 payments will only be made in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear statutory responsibility or where this avoids children coming into care		-20.8	-229.2		
CYPE - ICS	Maximise use of grants to meet statutory responsibilities	-2,000.0				
CYPE - ICS	Review all non-essential non-staffing spend across open access services	-250.0				
CYPE - ICS	Review of vacancies across the directorate	-220.9				
CYPE - SEND	Review of 18-25 community-based services (including daycare, transport, direct payments and supported living): ensuring strict adherence to policy, increased use of framework providers and enhanced contributions from health.		-165.9	-1,754.8	-1,334.1	
CYPE - SEND	Review of Children with disability packages: ensuring strict adherence to policy, review of packages with high levels of support and enhanced contributions from health		-314.4	-1,529.3	-1,066.1	
		-2,470.9	-882.7	-6,532.9	-3,545.8	

## 12 Reducing the gap

Directorate & Division	Details of Actions to be taken	22-23 one-off	22-23 Recurring	23-24	24-25	25-26
		£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
GET - H&T	Increased income from Technology bagging-up to offset rise in activity		-100.0	-100.0		
GET - H&T	Developer Agreements contribution to part-offset cost increases		-300.0	-250.0		250.0
GET - H&T	Stop in-year road safety campaigns	-100.0				
GET - H&T	Public Protection staff/vacancy management and income opportunities	-100.0				
		<b>-200.0</b>	<b>-400.0</b>	<b>-350.0</b>		<b>250.0</b>

Page 4

Directorate & Division	Details of Actions to be taken	22-23 one-off	22-23 Recurring	23-24	24-25	25-26
		£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
CED - Strat Comm	Management action to reduce non-essential spend	-10.9	-26.0	-27.0		
CED - Strat Comm	Hold vacancies in year pending the review of the Strategic Commissioning structure.	-400.0	-300.0	-300.0		
		<b>-410.9</b>	<b>-326.0</b>	<b>-327.0</b>		

## 12 Reducing the gap

Directorate & Division	Details of Actions to be taken	22-23 one-off	22-23 Recurring	23-24	24-25	25-26
		£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
DCED - Property	Increased cost retrieval from industry for regulatory compliance interventions	-60.0				
DCED - Property	Recharge a proportion of team members' time spent working on EU Exit / KRF Pilot		-55.0			
DCED - CLL	Temporary Closure of part floors of buildings or on certain days of the week where occupancy levels are low. Targeted Utilities saving	-20.0				
DCED - CLL	Temporary closure of Henwood and Aylesford Offices in 2022/3 with consolidation into other offices	-98.0				
		<b>-178.0</b>	<b>-55.0</b>			

Directorate	Capital Budget	Variance	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance
Adult Social Care & Health	1.8	-0.5	0.2	-0.7
Children, Young People & Education	96.7	-18.4	4.8	-23.2
Growth, Environment & Transport	255.1	-46.8	19.3	-66.1
Chief Executive's Department	0.6	-0.1	0.0	-0.1
Deputy Chief Executive's Department	37.0	-8.8	4.8	-13.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>391.2</b>	<b>-74.6</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>-103.7</b>

The total approved General Fund capital programme including roll forwards for 2022-23 is £391.2m

The current estimated capital programme spend for the year as at the end of September is projected at £316.6m, which represents 81% of the approved budget. The spend to date as at the end of September is £120.8m, representing 31% of the total approved budget.

The directorates are projecting a £74.6m underspend against the budget, this is split between a +£29.1m real variance and -£103.7m slippage.

### Inflation

Across the capital programme there are inflationary pressures that are forecast to hit predominantly from 2023-24. The main areas impacted are below:

Education capital projects - £18m forecast inflation pressure based on the latest information from quantity surveyors, of which, £8.1m is included within the current forecast. The majority of the inflation pressure is likely to hit in 2023-24 and 2024-25.

### Highways Asset Management (HAM)

The resurfacing element of HAM will not be impacted by inflation until after January 2023 when the contract is renewed for next year's programme of works. The impact could be as much as 20% increase. If there is no additional funding available then less works will be able to be done within the resource available, accelerating the maintenance backlog.

For structures and other areas within this budget the inflation increase will result in less work being done within the budget available and things will have to get pushed back to future years.

### Major Highways Schemes - schemes in delivery

The Major Capital Programme team are currently delivering seven schemes which have achieved funding, awarded a construction contract and are currently being delivered on site through a contractor. Where the existing scheme allowance for inflation and cost increases cannot be met by risk and contingency budgets, projects have been descoped to meet the available funding. In all cases, the Council will be a last resort for covering increased costs and additional funding options will be explored and requested from Central Government or the District Council that KCC are delivering on behalf of.

Major Highways Schemes - schemes not yet in delivery

The Major Capital Programme Team are currently progressing 13 schemes which have unlocked external funding, been designed and have either achieved or are very close to achieving planning. The KCC Commissioning Team have been engaged and a contract award is required in the next 12 to 18 months. An increase in cost due to inflation is dependent on how the market prices each scheme through the procurement phase and whether KCC is willing to potentially accept further risk and award a construction contract, noting that this increase may not be fully felt until delivery begins on site.

**2022-23 Variances**

The major variances (>£1m rephasing and >£0.1m real variances) are described below:

**Adult, Social Care & Health:**

Project	Real Variance £m	Detail £m
<u>New variances to report:</u>		
There are no variances to report.		

**Children, Young People & Education:**

Project	Real Variance £m	Slippage£m	Detail
<u>New Variances to Report:</u>			
Annual Planned Enhancement Programme	2.0	-0.5	Real variance represents decarbonisation projects for which Salix funding may be available but has not yet been bid for. If unsuccessful there will be a funding gap. There is also a projected overspend of £6.2m across 2023-24 and 2024-25 due to facilities management referrals which have been identified as priority 1's.
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2017	3.2	-6.3	The real variance is due to: -£2.7m Deal School and -£1m Oakley Satellite now being reported under High Needs Provision 22-24. +£0.3m Ebbsfleet Green Primary – correction of prior years costs. +£0.2m Sunny Bank Primary due to additional works agreed to finalise the project. +£6.2m correction to overall budget due to funding re Royal School for the Deaf inadvertently added back twice into basic need, which was highlighted during the closure of accounts.

			Slippage due to: -£3.3m Meopham School – the contract has only recently been awarded. -£3.0m Thamesview School due to a delay going out to tender. (Previously reported -£1.8m real and -£0.5m slippage).
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2018	-0.8	-2.2	The real variance is due to -£ 1.2m Garlinge Primary now being reported under the High Needs Provision line and +£0.4m Tunbridge Wells Boys Annex where the previous forecast was incorrect but it was completed within the Record of Decision (ROD). The slippage is due to Dartford Bridge Primary – offices within the school site are being used by other services and need to be vacated before the expansion can proceed. (Previously reported -£1.2m real and -£0.9m slippage).
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2019	1.0	-12.0	Real overspend due to: +£0.9m Towers School – previous forecast too low but is within ROD. +£0.6m Whitstable & Seasalter Junior which includes improvement and modernisation works from Annual Planned Enhancement. -£0.5m Nexus Special School now being reported under High Needs Provision 2022-24. Rephasing is due to: -£4.0m Borden Grammar due to a review of design required. -£2.9m Chilmington Green Secondary – initial service installation works have not yet been started. -£1.6m Queen Elizabeth’s Grammar – a school managed project where expenditure is dependant on parties agreeing and signing a funding agreement. -£1.5m Maidstone Girls Grammar- the costs came in high and the quantity surveyor is now reviewing the project which has delayed works. (Previously reported +£3.5m real variance).
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2020 (2021-25)	-0.5	-2.8	The real variance is due to Dover Christ Church as places are not needed until 2028-29 so it has been removed. The slippage is due to St Mary of Charity Primary where places are not needed until 2024 at the earliest. (Previously reported -£1m slippage).
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2021 (2022-26)	-0.3	-2.3	The real variance is due to: +£1.0m Archbishop’s School – an urgent bulge year is required. -£0.6m Parkside Primary where expansion is no longer needed. -£0.4m Towers School where expansion is no longer required. -£0.3m Meadowfield School satellite now reported under High Needs Provision 22-24.

£1.8m of the slippage is due to Marden Primary where the timing of expenditure is dependent on parties agreeing and signing a funding agreement, and delivery timescales by the school.

---

Overall Basic Need Programmes

Across the basic need programmes over the next three years, there is a projection in excess of current budget of approximately £11m. Of this, £6m is due to forecast inflation pressures, which are not expected to materialise until 2023/24 and 2024/25. There are sufficient basic need grant allocations to cover the expected overspend in the current programme, however cash limit changes are on hold pending discussions around total pressures on the capital programme.

---

High Needs Provision

0.6

The variance is due to:  
 +£0.4m Tenders for the Canterbury Academy are higher than expected due to the requirement of a steel frame.  
 +£0.1m Parkside Primary where design changes have increased costs.  
 (Previously reported +£0.3m real variance).

---

High Needs Provision 2022-24

-0.6

+6.3

The real variance of -£0.6m is to be used to fund the overspend on the High Needs Provision 21-22 line.

The slippage is due to a number of projects that have been added and brought forward: Deal Special School, Garlinge Primary, Oakley Satellite, Nexus Satellite and Sunny Bank Primary. Expenditure is to be funded from the high needs grant which is due to be received in 2022/23.  
 (Previously reported +£5.8m slippage).

---

School Roofs

-2.6

Birchington CEPS is not commencing until the completion of Lunsford Primary as the mobiles purchased are to be used at Birchington. There is also a forecast overspend of £1m across later years and a revised ROD is being sought.

---

*Previously reported variances:*

---

*Modernisation Programme*

+0.1

*The real variance is due to a project which has been transferred from the Annual Planned Enhancement Programme. Funding will be transferred and listed in the cash limit changes section of the report.*

---

*Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2016*

+0.2

*The real variance is due to the addition of a school managed project to enable additional places.*

---

Overall Basic Need Programmes

Across the basic need programmes over the next three years, there is a forecast in excess of current budget of approximately £15m. Of this, £7m is due to forecast inflation pressures, the majority of which are not expected

---



*to materialise until 2023/24 and 2024/25. There are sufficient basic need grant allocations to cover the expected overspend, however cash limit changes are on hold pending discussions around other pressures on the capital programme.*

---

	Nest 2	-1.6	Slippage due to land being sought and the project is still at discussion/planning stage.
--	--------	------	--

---

**Growth, Environment & Transport:**

Project	Real Variance £m	Slippage £m	Detail
---------	------------------------	----------------	--------

New Variances to Report:

---

Highways Asset Management and Programme of Urgent Safety Critical Works (Highways & Transportation)	-16.8	The slippage includes £4.9m of Challenge Fund grant relating to tunnels/structures lighting and re-construction of the Thanet Way. The remaining slippage of £11.88m is due to a lack of Senior Resource in the Structures Operation Team due to the inability to recruit specialist staff and rolling forward funds due to the scale of some projects and lead in time for design, tendering and commissioning. There are also delays with Amey delivery times.
---	-------	--

---

A229 Bluebell Hill M2 and M20 Interchange Upgrades (Highways & Transportation)	-4.4	This project is awaiting commitment of funding from the Department for Transport therefore it has been profiled across future years
--	------	---

---

Bath Street Fastrack (Highways & Transportation)	-2.0	The invitation to tender (ITT) has been delayed due to last minute design changes due to statutory undertake requirements. The ITT is now being issued October 22 meaning the likely start for the contractor will be mid February 23.
--	------	--

---

Bearsted Road (National Productivity Investment Fund) – Kent Medical Campus (Highways & Transportation)	1.4	-7.9	<p>Significant challenges have been encountered during the design phase which has delayed the programme and contract award. The current profiling reflects expected construction to commence in January 2023 (delayed from April and then August 2022), however since the original pricing of the contract, there have been significant increases in construction costs, notably due to increase in energy and fuel prices and on top of this inflation costs have increased significantly along with changes to red diesel tax and National Insurance increases. Until the price and programme is agreed there could be further changes to the profiling and the overall cost</p> <p>The predicted overspend is due to delays and loss of income due to COVID.</p> <p>(Previously reported -£1.9m slippage).</p>
Dartford Town Centre (Highways & Transportation)		-2.9	<p>The project has been delayed due to partner project management changes, that are now resolved, therefore budget has been reprofiled to 2023/24.</p>
Dover Inter Border facility (Highways & Transportation)	0.7		<p>The real variance is due to additional grant that needs to be added to the cash limit.</p>
Fastrack Full Network (Highways and Transportation)		-8.1	<p>Over the last year or so Balfour Beatty have been slow completing the Preconstruction stage and reviewing internal governance regarding their ability to deliver the works etc. We have therefore been unable to start the tunnel works and have been moving costs back. We have now reached the situation where the project costs have increased significantly, particularly due to inflation pressures. The works are now beyond the available budget and a review is in hand to determine if our funders will/can provide additional budget.</p> <p>At this stage little construction spend is now forecast for FY22/23.</p> <p>(Previously reported -£6.0m)</p>
Faversham Swing Bridge (Highways & Transportation)		-1.2	<p>There are ongoing discussions with Peel Ports relating to this project.</p>
Government Transition Works (Highways & Transportation)	2.0		<p>The variance is due to additional grant funding for the works at Sevington, which will be added to the cash limit.</p>
Herne Relief Road (Highways & Transportation)		1.0	<p>The spend on this project has been reprofiled to more accurately report the anticipated monthly spend for the works based on the current programme for the scheme. Funding is available to cover this spend being brought forward.</p>

Housing Infrastructure Fund – Swale (Highways & Transportation)		-1.3	There are programme delays on Grovehurst Road and Key Street. The contract award was delayed by two months on Grovehurst Rd and by 6 months on Key Street due to ongoing works at M2 junction 5 and awaiting the planning consent of the adjacent development roundabout with an impact on the final proposals.
Sturry Link Road (Highways & Transportation)		-1.7	Delays in appointing the principal contractor has resulted in reprofiling to future years.
Leigh (Medway) Flood Storage Areas (Environment & Waste)	-0.1	-0.8	The funding originally allocated to this project (£2.5m) has now been split between this and a new line – Surface Water Flood Risk Management. The real variance therefore shows the amount to be transferred in this financial year.
Surface Water Flood Risk Management (Environment & Waste)	0.1		Funding to be vired from Leigh (Medway) Flood Storage Areas.
Local Authority Treescape Fund (Environment & Waste)	0.1		Additional grant has been received that needs adding to the cash limit.
Country Parks Access & Development (Growth & Communities)	0.2		Additional external funding has been received that needs adding to the cash limit.
Broadband Contract 2 (Growth & Communities)		-1.3	Invoice from BDUK is expected in 2023-24.
Digital Autopsy (Growth & Communities)		-2.5	The slippage is due to the project tender (ITT) for the DA and body store delivery failing. The project is now looking at alternative options to bring in the necessary providers. Given the amount of time this will take to bring forward, the capital spend has been deferred as the capital element can only be entered into at the same time as the revenue contracts to ensure the project is de-risked. (Previously reported -£1.9m slippage).
Innovation Investment Initiative (i3) (Growth & Communities)		-2.6	Due to the launch of the new Kent and Medway Business Fund scheme and the time constraints this has placed on the team it is not possible to also promote the i3 scheme this year so any forecasted expenditure has been pushed back to future years.
Kent & Medway Business Fund (Growth & Communities)		-3.0	Slippage is due to profiling now in line with anticipated loan applications and approvals.
Kent Empty Property Initiative (Growth & Communities)	1.6	0.6	The real variance is due to additional external funding expected to be received.

*Previously reported variances:*

<i>Highways Asset Management and Programme of Urgent Safety Critical Works (Highways &amp; Transportation)</i>	7.0	<i>The majority of the real variance is due to the re-establishment of the £7m Pothole Blitz programme. A solution for funding this is being worked up. +£0.5m relates to additional grant which has been awarded from the Department of Transport for traffic signal maintenance. +£0.2m relates to additional external funding which has been received towards the Urban Tree Challenge to reinstate tree loss. (Previously reported +£7.6m)</i>
<i>Integrated Transport Schemes (Highways &amp; Transportation)</i>	0.7	<i>The real variance is due to the addition of a number of minor schemes which will be externally funded and the cash limit will be increased when the funding is banked. (Previously reported +0.6m)</i>
<i>A226 St Clements Way (Highways &amp; Transportation)</i>	-0.2	<i>The defects period of the main works has been completed and retention has been released. An allowance has been held back this year to complete some minor works and for landscape works. The underspend is to be released back to the Strategic Transport Infrastructure Programme (formerly known as Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme) as these are the conditions of the funding.</i>
<i>Dover Bus Rapid Transit (Highways &amp; Transportation)</i>	-3.9	<i>The profiling of the scheme has been updated to reflect the latest works programme from Colas, and has resulted in slippage following slow mobilisation.</i>
<i>Green Corridors (Highways and Transportation)</i>	-2.4	<i>The slippage is due to the construction of the three largest sites (sites 6, 8 and 11) will span 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years. The construction periods have been delayed so that the sites can be procured together and constructed by a single contractor. Other works nearby mean that the construction of these sites cannot begin before January 2023 due to road space availability and procurement timescales.</i>
<i>Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 3 (Highways &amp; Transportation)</i>	-1.2	<i>The areas covered by this grant are Herne Bay Seafront and Sevenoaks Urban area. Timeframes suggest £1.2m of the funding received will be in contract by the end of this financial year but spend will incur in 2023-24, hence the slippage. (Previously reported -£1.1m).</i>
<i>Thanet Parkway (Highways &amp; Transportation)</i>	5.4	<i>The costs in excess of budget are expected to start crystallising in this financial year with an anticipated overspend of £5.4m, and another £1.2m in 2022-23. Funding options are being sought and the position will continue to be closely monitored.</i>
<i>Kings Hill Solar Farm (Growth &amp; Communities)</i>	0.6	<i>Higher than anticipated costs have resulted in a forecast overspend, funding options are being explored. (Previously reported +£0.2m)</i>

*Javelin Way Development (Growth & Communities)*

-0.01

*Slippage is due to delays in finalising the legal agreements, and limited capacity of UKPN following the storms. (Previously reported -£1.0m).*

*Marsh Million (Growth & Communities)*

-0.3

*The project has now come to an end and distributions will be made to the contributors of the scheme.*

**Chief Executive’s Department:**

Project	Real Variance £m	Slippage £m	Detail
---------	------------------------	----------------	--------

New variances to report:

There are no variances to report

**Deputy Chief Executive’s Department:**

Project	Real Variance £m	Slippage£m	Detail
---------	------------------------	------------	--------

New variances to report:

No new variances to report.

Previously reported variances:

<i>Modernisation of Assets</i>	<b>+4.8</b>	<i>The real variance is due to inflation (approximately £0.7m) and addressing category 1 and urgent works. Funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund will offset approximately 0.6m of the variance. There is a £0.3m revenue contribution towards works at Turner Contemporary. Funding options for the remainder of the overspend are being considered as part of the Capital Budget process to address the remainder of the overspend alongside other pressures identified on the Capital Programme. (Previously reported +£5.4m).</i>
--------------------------------	-------------	---

<i>Dover Discovery Centre</i>	<b>-4.1</b>	<i>The project is reporting slippage as there have been delays in planning approval. The forecast for this year is for design costs only. (Previously reported -£2.4m).</i>
-------------------------------	-------------	---

<i>Strategic Estate Programme</i>	<b>-9.0</b>	<i>The slippage reflects the descoping of initial Stage 2 proposals for Sessions and Invicta refurbishment to keep costs in line with the approved budget, which alongside a delay in the release of the Sessions House Masterplan means a postponement of the original planned commencement date for any refurbishment.</i>
-----------------------------------	-------------	--

**The purpose of this section is to monitor actual Council Tax discounts and collection rates against the budget throughout the year and to use this to inform collection fund and the Council Tax Base estimates to be included in next financial year's budget.**

---

14.1 Council Tax income is vital source of funding for the Council's revenue budget

Council Tax income is a key source of funding for council services and makes up almost 70% of our net budget (and just under 50% of our gross budget). The amount generated through Council Tax is principally determined by the Council Taxbase. The Council Taxbase is the number of properties (expressed as the number of weighted band D equivalent properties) adjusted for exemptions, discounts and premiums, other minor adjustments (e.g. estimated new builds), the band D charge per property and the collection rate. The most significant discounts are the 25% single persons discount and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for low income households.

---

14.2 The budget is based on estimated Council Tax collection. Actual collections are managed through local district collection funds

The twelve Kent districts provide the budgeted Council Taxbase. This forms the basis for the County Council precept after applying the county's share of the Council Tax charge (including a separate precept for adult social care), which is included in the Council's annual budget. Districts must provide the budgeted precept to the County Council in-year and any difference between the budgeted precept and the actual Council Tax collected is accounted for by districts through their local collection funds.

---

14.3 Following an unprecedented collection fund deficit in 2021-22 due to the pandemic, the budgeted taxbase for 2022-23 has increased by 2.63%

From 2015-16 to 2020-21 the budgeted taxbase increased each year by an average of 1.95%. During this period we also saw collection fund surpluses ranging from £3.9m to £12.5m, reflecting over-collection on the budgeted precept. The Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected both the discounts provided through the CTRS and the collection rate, and this resulted in an unprecedented collection fund deficit of £13.9m in 2021-22. This deficit is being accounted for over three years from 2021-22 to 2023-24.

---

The budgeted increase in taxbase for 2022-23 is 2.63%. This increase reflects a return to pre-pandemic levels for the budget assumptions for CTRS discounts, and an improvement on collection rates from last financial year, from 97.8% to 98.2%.

The purpose of this section of the monitoring report is to provide an early indication of whether CTRS discounts and collection rates during the year are consistent with the amounts in the 2022-23 budget estimates, and to have early oversight of the likely impact of any variances on the collection fund and the Council Taxbase to be included in the forthcoming year's budget.

---

## Budgeted Tax Base 2022-23

- 14.4 563,284.89 band D Equivalents = £823.1m for the County Council precept
- The 2022-23 net budgeted Council Taxbase for Kent is 563,284.89 band D equivalents which produces the County Council precept of £823.1m. The precept includes the following reductions: £74.2m due to single persons discount, £77.8m relating to Council Tax Reduction Scheme, and £15.4m for the expected collection rate loss. The table below shows the composition of the budgeted Council Taxbase for the Kent County Council precept:

	Band D equivalent	Total Precept @ £1,461.24
Number of Dwellings (692,361)	685,572.00	£1,001.8m
Less Exemptions & Disabled	-14,338.11	£-21.0m
Less Single Persons Discount	-50,801.21	£-74.2m
Less Council Tax Reduction Discounts	-53,216.26	£-77.8m
Less Other Discounts	-1,880.42	£-2.7m
Add Premiums, New Builds, etc	8,508.38	£12.4m
Less Collection Losses	-10,559.49	£-15.4m
Net Taxbase/Precept	563,284.89	£823.1m

The net precept of £823.1m includes £97.6m for the Adult Social Care precept.

## Council Tax Charge Increase

- 14.5 KCC's element of individual household Council Tax charge for 2022-23 increased by 2.994% compared to 2021-22
- The 2022-23 budget, which was approved by full council on 10th February 2022, included a 2.994% increase to the Council Tax charge. This increased the band D charge by £42.48, from £1,418.76 to £1,461.24. This increase consists of a £28.35 (1.998%) general increase up to the referendum limit and a £14.13 (0.996%) maximum permitted increase for the Adult Social Care Precept.
- Kent County Council and Kent Fire and Rescue Service have a total band D charge of £1,543.59. It is essential to include the Fire Authority's share of Council Tax for comparison purposes with other Shire Counties because some are still responsible for Fire & Rescue Services and do not levy a separate precept. The charge in Kent is ranked 10th out of 24 when compared with other Shire Counties, the highest charge is £1,728.66 and the lowest is £1,432.17.



## Monitoring

14.6 Quarter 2 monitoring is showing a forecast collection fund deficit of £6.2m, largely as a result of lower than estimated collection rates to date.

The twelve Kent Districts have provided an update as at quarter 2 on the Council Tax collection and level of CTRS claimants, and this information has been used to produce a forecast against the budget. The forecast is based on actual collection rates to date and the original projected collection rate for the remainder of the year, which is generally consistent with forecasting methodology for the rest of the Council's budgets.

The table below shows a forecast collection fund deficit of £6.2m (0.8%). This is predominantly due to lower than estimated collection rates (average collection rate 56.2% to date, compared to budgeted 57.0%).

	Budget	Forecast	Variance
CTRS	-£77.8m	-£77.7m	£0.1m
Collection Rate	98.2%	97.4%	-£6.3m
Forecast Collection Fund Deficit			-£6.2m

This projected variance is concerning and could indicate that we are starting to see the impact of the increase in cost of living and economic downturn in the form of lower than budgeted Council Tax collection rates. If this forecast was to materialise and not recover, then the Council would have to account for a deficit on the 2022-23 council tax collection in the 2023-24 budget, and potentially face a lower tax base for 2023-24 in what is already going to be an extremely challenging budget to balance.

It is worth noting that the forecast collection rate does not take into consideration any payments against 2021-22 arrears or the impact of the option for Council Tax payers to change to making payments over twelve monthly instalments (which changes the profile of collection compared to the standard 10 monthly payments). These factors are likely to reduce the forecast collection fund deficit by the end of the year, although data is not available to establish how much of an impact this will have.

In the context of the national cost of living crisis, CTRS and collection fund rates will continue to be closely monitored throughout the rest of the financial year. In addition, significant movements in forecast between quarter 1 and quarter 2 for individual districts are being investigated further. An update will be provided at quarter 3.

## 14.7 Conclusion

Council Tax remains a significant source of income and the 2023-24 budget currently assumes that the improved levels budgeted for in 2022-23 for CTRS discounts and collection rates will materialise. The forecast deficit of £6.2m is a concern, because both the 2022-23 deficit and reduced council tax collection rate will impact on the 2023-24 budget.

This position will continue to be monitored closely and an updated position, along with the outcome of the discussions with individual districts where significant movements have been seen from one quarter to the next, will be provided at quarter 3.

---

## 15 Treasury Management Monitoring

Treasury management relates to the management of the Council's debt portfolio (accumulated borrowing to fund previous and current capital infrastructure investments) and investment of cash balances. The Council has a comparatively high level of very long-term debt, a significant proportion of which was undertaken through the previous supported borrowing regime.

15.1 Total external debt outstanding in September was £822.09m down by £3.88m since 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

KCC debt includes £425.61m of borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). The vast majority is maturity debt (debt is only repaid upon maturity) at a fixed rate of interest. The average length to maturity of PWLB debt is 15.20 years at an average interest rate of 4.70%.

Outstanding loans from banks amount to £291.8m. This is also at fixed term rates with average length to maturity of 36.01 years at an average interest rate of 4.40%.

The council has £90m of Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans. These loans can only be renegotiated should the lender propose an increase in interest rates. The average length to maturity of LOBO loans is 38.97 years at an average interest rate of 4.15%.

The balance of debt relates to loans for the LED streetlighting programme. The outstanding balance is £14.68m with average of 11.74 years to maturity at an average rate of 1.80%.

KCC's principal objective for borrowing is to achieve an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest rates and certainty of financing costs. This is achieved by seeking to fund capital spending from internal resources and short-term borrowing, only considering external long-term borrowing at advantageous interest rates.

15.2 Majority is long term debt with 12.47% due to mature within 5 years

Maturity 0 to 5 years £102.49m (12.47%)<sup>1</sup>  
Maturity 5 to 10 years is minimal  
Maturity 10 to 20 years £212.00m (25.79%)  
Maturity over 20 years £507.60m (61.75%)

15.3 Total cash balance at end of September was £476.1m, up by £12.3m from the end of March

Cash balances accrue from the council's reserves and timing differences between the receipt of grants and other income and expenditure. Balances are forecast to decline over the remainder of the year in line with the typical trend observed in previous years.

<sup>1</sup> Split across the next five years is as follows: Year 1 £16.70m, Year 2 £20.60m, Year 3 £24.18m, Year 4 £24.00m, and Year 5 £17.00m

15.4 Cash balances are invested in a range of short-term, medium term and long-term deposits

Investments are made in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy agreed by full Council alongside the revenue and capital budgets. The treasury strategy represents a prudent approach to achieve an appropriate balance between risk, liquidity and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses on the sum invested. Longer term investments aim to achieve a rate of return equal or exceeding prevailing inflation rates.

Short term deposits (same day availability) are held in bank accounts and money market funds. Current balances in short-term deposits in September were £113.7m (23.89% of cash balances). Short-term deposits enable the Council to manage liquidity. Bank accounts and money market funds are currently earning an average rate of return of 2.04%.

Deposits are made through the Debt Management Office (an executive agency responsible for debt and cash management for the UK Government, lending to local authorities and managing certain public sector funds). As at the end of September, the Council had £31.8m in government bonds. These deposits represent 6.68% of cash investments with an average rate of return of 1.59%.

Medium term deposits include covered bonds, a form of secured bond issued by a financial institution that is backed by mortgages or public sector loans. In the UK the covered bond programmes are supervised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). King and Shaxson acts as the Council's broker and custodian for its covered bond portfolio. As at the end of September, the Council has £132.3m invested in covered bonds earning an average rate of return of 2.60%.

The Council has lent £19.2m through the No Use Empty Loans programme which achieve a return of 2.50% that is available to fund general services. This total includes £4.6m of loans made since March.

The Council has now agreed 3 rolling credit facilities (RCF) with registered providers totalling £25m, for which we are receiving a fee ranging from 0.25% to 0.40%. None of the facilities have been drawn so far.

Long term investments are made through Strategic Pooled Funds. These include a variety of UK and Global Equity Funds, Multi Asset Funds and Property Funds. In total the Council has £177.8m invested in pooled funds (37.34% of cash balances). Excluding capital returns, these funds have earned a total income of £40.6m since inception, at an average annual rate of 4.11%. Returns on pooled funds can be volatile.

---

## 15 Treasury Management Monitoring

---

---

15.5	Treasury Management Advice	The Council secures external specialist treasury management advice from Arlingclose. They advise on the overall strategy as well as borrowing options and investment opportunities. Arlingclose provide regular performance monitoring reports.
15.6	Quarterly and Bi-annual reports	A fuller report is presented to Governance and Audit Committee on a regular quarterly basis. A report on treasury performance is reported twice a year to full Council.

---

## Appendix 1 - Key Service Summary

	Revenue Budget £m	Forecast £m	Variance £m
Community Based Preventative Services	13.3	13.1	-0.2
Housing Related Support	4.6	4.6	0.0
Statutory and Policy Support	1.2	1.6	0.3
Provision for Demographic Growth - Community Based Services	10.2	3.5	-6.7
Strategic Management & Directorate Support (ASCH)	6.8	4.6	-2.2
Social Support for Carers	3.2	3.0	-0.2
Partnership Support Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
Strategic Safeguarding	0.7	0.5	-0.2
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Directorate Budgets</b>	<b>40.1</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>-9.2</b>
Public Health - Advice and Other Staffing	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Children's Programme	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Healthy Lifestyles	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Mental Health, Substance Misuse & Community Safety	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Sexual Health	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Public Health</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Adult In House Carer Services	2.4	2.5	0.1
Adult In House Community Services	5.9	5.5	-0.4
Adult In House Enablement Services	7.4	7.0	-0.4
Adult Learning Disability - Case Management & Assessment Service	5.6	5.6	0.0
Adult Learning Disability - Community Based Services & Support for Carers	101.7	106.1	4.4
Adult Learning Disability - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	72.3	72.4	0.1
Adult Mental Health - Case Management & Assessment Services	10.0	10.0	0.0
Adult Mental Health - Community Based Services	11.4	16.6	5.2
Adult Mental Health - Residential Care Services	15.6	17.7	2.1
Adult Physical Disability - Community Based Services	21.0	22.8	1.8
Adult Physical Disability - Residential Care Services	17.9	19.0	1.2
ASCH Operations - Divisional Management & Support	6.8	6.7	-0.2
Older People - Community Based Services	37.4	40.1	2.7
Older People - In House Provision	14.5	15.2	0.7
Older People - Residential Care Services	45.9	68.4	22.5
Older People & Physical Disability - Assessment and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Services	21.7	22.2	0.5
Older People & Physical Disability - In House Community Homecare Service	0.0	0.0	0.0
Older People & Physical Disability Carer Support - Commissioned	1.2	1.6	0.4
Physical Disability 26+ Lifespan Pathway & Sensory and Autism 18+ - Community Based Services	5.9	6.5	0.6
Physical Disability 26+ Lifespan Pathway & Sensory and Autism 18+ - Residential Care Services	1.1	1.1	0.0
Sensory & Autism - Assessment Service	0.7	0.7	0.0
Service Provision - Divisional Management & Support	0.0	0.0	0.0
Adaptive & Assistive Technology	5.1	1.2	-3.9
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health Operations</b>	<b>411.6</b>	<b>448.9</b>	<b>37.3</b>
Business Delivery	8.3	7.8	-0.5
Independent Living Support	0.7	0.7	0.1
Business Delivery Unit	9.0	8.5	-0.5
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	<b>460.6</b>	<b>488.3</b>	<b>27.7</b>
<b>Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>

## Appendix 1 - Key Service Summary

	Revenue Budget	Forecast	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	2.3	2.3	0.0
Community Learning & Skills (CLS)	-0.4	-0.3	0.1
Early Years Education	0.0	0.0	0.0
Education Management & Division Support	1.4	1.2	-0.2
Education Services provided by The Education People	4.5	4.5	0.0
Fair Access & Planning Services	0.3	0.5	0.3
Home to School & College Transport	49.7	63.3	13.6
Other School Services	5.8	7.4	1.6
<b>Education</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>15.5</b>
Adoption & Special Guardianship Arrangements & Service	15.5	15.7	0.2
Asylum	-0.1	-0.1	0.0
Care Leavers Service	6.0	6.2	0.1
Children in Need - Care & Support	3.3	3.3	0.0
Children's Centres	4.6	4.5	-0.1
Children's Social Work Services - Assessment & Safeguarding Service	51.2	53.0	1.9
Early Help & Preventative Services	6.9	7.0	0.1
Integrated Services (Children's) Management & Directorate Support	5.7	5.3	-0.4
Looked After Children - Care & Support	66.8	74.9	8.1
Pupil Referral Units & Inclusion	0.1	0.1	0.0
Youth Services	5.7	5.7	0.0
<b>Integrated Children's Services (East &amp; West)</b>	<b>165.8</b>	<b>175.7</b>	<b>9.9</b>
Adult Learning & Physical Disability Pathway - Community Based Services	32.7	37.2	4.5
Adult Learning & Physical Disability Pathway - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	9.3	9.3	0.0
Children in Need (Disability) - Care & Support	5.5	6.0	0.5
Children's Disability 0-18 Commissioning	1.7	1.7	0.0
Disabled Children & Young People Service (0-25 LD & Complex PD) - Assessment Service	9.0	9.3	0.3
Looked After Children (with Disability) - Care & Support	16.4	18.2	1.8
Looked After Children (with Disability) - In House Provision	3.6	3.7	0.0
Special Educational Needs & Disability Management & Divisional Support	0.2	0.2	0.0
Special Educational Needs & Psychology Services	13.2	14.6	1.4
<b>Special Educational Needs &amp; Disabilities</b>	<b>91.8</b>	<b>100.2</b>	<b>8.4</b>
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>	<b>321.0</b>	<b>354.9</b>	<b>33.9</b>
<b>Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

## Appendix 1 - Key Service Summary

	Revenue Budget £m	Forecast £m	Variance £m
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	1.4	1.4	0.0
Growth and Support to Businesses	4.7	5.9	1.2
Community (Assets & Services)	2.8	2.9	0.1
Public Protection	11.4	11.5	0.2
Libraries, Registration & Archives	9.5	9.2	-0.3
Growth and Communities Divisional management costs	0.8	0.8	0.0
Growth & Communities	29.1	30.3	1.2
Highway Assets Management	33.0	34.3	1.2
Transportation	6.6	6.2	-0.4
Supported Bus Services	4.5	7.2	2.7
English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS)	13.8	11.9	-1.9
Kent Travel Saver (KTS)	4.8	6.9	2.1
Highways & Transportation divisional management costs	3.6	3.5	-0.2
Highways & Transportation	66.3	69.9	3.6
Environment	2.4	2.4	0.0
Residual Waste	45.8	46.2	0.5
Waste Facilities & Recycling Centres	31.9	31.7	-0.2
Environment and Waste Divisional management costs	1.8	1.9	0.1
Environment & Waste	81.9	82.2	0.3
Growth, Environment & Transport	178.7	183.8	5.1
Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately	0.2	0.2	0.0



## Appendix 1 - Key Service Summary

	Revenue Budget £m	Forecast £m	Variance £m
Strategic Refresh Programme	0.0	0.0	0.0
Strategic Management & Departmental Support	0.6	0.5	0.0
Health & Safety	0.4	0.4	0.0
Business & Client Relationships	2.4	2.4	0.0
Strategic Management & Departmental Budgets (DCED)	3.3	3.3	0.0
Human Resources & Organisational Development	5.1	4.9	-0.2
Marketing & Resident Experience	6.0	6.0	0.0
Property related services	5.9	6.0	0.1
Emergency Planning	0.2	0.2	0.0
Infrastructure	6.2	6.2	0.1
Technology	24.0	23.8	-0.2
Business Services Centre	0.0	0.0	0.0
Corporate Landlord	27.1	28.9	1.9
<b>Total - Deputy Chief Executive Department</b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>1.4</b>
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	0.0	-0.4	-0.4
Grants to Kent District Councils to maximise Council Tax collection	3.2	3.1	0.0
Finance	9.6	9.7	0.1
Finance	12.7	12.8	0.1
Governance & Law	6.9	6.7	-0.2
Local Member Grants	1.4	1.4	0.0
Governance, Law & Democracy	8.3	8.1	-0.2
Strategic Commissioning	8.0	8.0	-0.1
Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	4.4	4.3	-0.1
<b>Total - Chief Executive Department</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>-0.7</b>
Non Attributable Costs	129.4	123.0	-6.5
Corporately Held Budgets (to be allocated)	-0.3	-0.3	0.0
Total excluding Schools' Delegated Budgets	1,199.1	1,260.0	+60.9
Total Including Schools' Delegated Budgets	0.0	50.4	+50.4

## Appendix 2 - Monitoring of Prudential Indicators as at 30 Sept 2022

The prudential indicators consider the affordability and impact of capital expenditure plans, in line with the prudential code.

### Prudential Indicator 1 : Estimates of Capital Expenditure (£m)

	21-22 Actuals	22-23 Budget	22-23 Forecast
Total	335.3	339.3	316.60

### Prudential Indicator 2: Estimate of Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) (£m)

The CFR is the total outstanding capital expenditure not yet financed by revenue or capital resources. It is a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need.

	21-22 Actuals	22-23 Budget	22-23 Forecast
Total CFR	1,294.10	1,364.00	1,293.27

### Prudential Indicator 3: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement (£m)

Projected levels of the Authority's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, leases and transferred debt) are shown below, compared with the CFR.

	21-22 Actuals	22-23 Budget	22-23 Forecast
Other Long-term Liabilities	232.07	235.80	232.07
External Borrowing	825.97	802.50	802.29
<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>1,058.04</b>	<b>1,038.30</b>	<b>1,034.36</b>
Capital Financing Requirement	1,294.10	1,364.00	1,293.27
Internal Borrowing	236.06	325.70	258.91

### Prudential Indicator 4 : Authorised Limit and Operation Boundary for External Debt (£m)

The Authority is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (the authorised limit for external debt). A lower "operation boundary" is set should debt approach the limit.

	21-22 Actuals	22-23 Limit	22-23 Forecast
Authorised Limit - borrowing	826	876	822
Authorised Limit - PFI and leases	232	245	232
<b>Authorised Limit - total external debt</b>	<b>1,058</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>1,054</b>
Operational Boundary - borrowing	826	851	822
Operational Boundary - PFI and leases	232	245	232
<b>Operation Boundary - total external debt</b>	<b>1,058</b>	<b>1,096</b>	<b>1,054</b>

### Prudential Indicator 5: Proportion of Finance Costs to Net Revenue Stream (%)

Financing costs comprise interest on loans and minimum revenue provision (MRP) and are charged to revenue. This indicator compares the net financing costs of the Authority to the net revenue stream.

	21-22 Actual	22-23 Budget	22-23 Forecast
Proportion of net revenue stream	9.18%	9.06%	8.57%

### Appendix 3 - Reserves Monitoring as at 31 September 2022

	Balance as at 1 April 2022 £m	Forecast Contribution to/(from) Reserve £m	Projected Balance at 31 March 2023 £m
<b>General Fund (GF) Balance</b>	56.2		56.2
Budgeted contribution to/(from) in MTFP		3.0	3.0
	<b>56.2</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>59.2</b>

#### Earmarked reserves :

Vehicle, Plant & Equipment (VPE)	18.7	0.7	<b>19.4</b>
Smoothing	124.7	(13.5)	<b>111.2</b>
Major Projects	62.3	9.9	<b>72.1</b>
Partnerships	26.3	4.6	<b>30.9</b>
Grant/External Funds	79.1	(58.1)	<b>20.9</b>
Departmental Under/Overspends	8.4	(41.8)	<b>(33.4)</b>
Insurance	13.8	(0.8)	<b>13.0</b>
Public Health	16.8	(3.5)	<b>13.3</b>
Trading	1.2	0.0	<b>1.2</b>
Special Funds	0.6	0.1	<b>0.7</b>

<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>351.9</b>	<b>(102.4)</b>	<b>249.4</b>
---------------------------------	--------------	----------------	--------------

<b>Total GF and Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>408.1</b>	<b>(99.5)</b>	<b>308.6</b>
--	--------------	---------------	--------------

	Balance as at 1 April 2022 £m	Forecast Contribution to/(from) Reserve £m	Projected Balance at 31 March 2023 £m
<b>Schools Reserves</b>			
School delegated revenue budget reserve - committed	21.8	0.0	21.8
School delegated revenue budget reserve - uncommitted	39.3	0.0	39.3
Community Focussed Extended Schools Reserves	0.2	0.0	0.2
<b>Total School Reserves</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>(1.4)</b>	<b>59.9</b>

## DSG Adjustment Account - Unusable Reserve

	Balance as at 1 April 2022 £m	Forecast Contribution to/(from) Reserve £m	Projected Balance at 31 March 2023 £m
<b>Unallocated Schools Budget</b>	<b>(97.6)</b>	<b>(49.0)</b>	<b>(146.6)</b>

The General fund Reserve has been increased as agreed by County Council in the 2022-23 MTFP.

The earmarked reserves are decreasing mainly due to the following:

- Funding of £59.7m underlying overspend including using the £24.9m set aside in the risk reserve. The balance is currently being reflected in the Departmental under/overspends until year end when it will be decided which reserves the balance should be funded from.
- £12.2m drawdown from the Covid-19 emergency grant reserve as reflected in this report.

The DSG Adjustment Account deficit has increased due to pressures in Schools Funding. More details can be found in Section 10.

The net £102.4m drawdown reflected in the table above covers more than the reserve drawdowns set out in the Directorate sections of this report, as this includes funding elements, which are roll forwards and the S31 Compensation grants.

From: Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate & Traded Services

To: Scrutiny Committee – 25 January 2023

Subject: Draft Ten Year Capital Programme, Revenue Budget 2023-24 and medium term financial plan 2023-26

Classification: Unrestricted

**Summary:**

The administration's budget report published on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 sets out the background to and draft budget proposals for the capital programme, revenue budget for the forthcoming year and medium-term financial plan. The report is a standard report for the whole council focussing on the key strategic considerations underpinning the decisions necessary for County Council to agree the budget at the Budget Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023

The administration's overall budget strategy is intended to:

Achieve a balanced one-year budget and balanced medium-term plan with minimal unidentified savings targets

Maintain adequate reserves to mitigate financial risks/shocks and to invest in the future

Maintain a strong positive cashflow and high levels of liquidity

Maintain (but not exceeding) levels of borrowing compared to the asset base (maintaining a healthy balance sheet)

Plan to deliver a financially sustainable Council over the medium term.

In summary, the proposed draft 2023-24 revenue budget requires £39.1m savings, £15.7m additional income from fees and charges and net £14.8m from one-off use of reserves (additional contributions & draw downs, and removal of previous contributions and draw downs). The budget proposes a 5% increase in Council Tax which will generate £41.7m income to support service delivery,

The proposed draft capital programme 2023-33 includes spending of £1,644m of which £996m is funded from confirmed/indicative grants, £407m from borrowing and £261m other sources. The administration's strategy for the capital programme is to minimise the level of additional borrowing, for 2023-24 the changes to the programme represents a £9.6m reduction.

**Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to:

- a) **Comment** on the draft capital and revenue budgets including responses to consultation
- b) **Propose** any changes to the draft capital and revenue budgets for consideration by Cabinet on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 before the draft is presented for approval at County Council on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023

The full draft budget report and appendices may be accessed on Kent.gov.uk:  
[Our budget - Kent County Council](#)

### **Contact details**

#### Report Author(s)

- Dave Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy)
- 03000 419418
- [dave.shipton@kent.gov.uk](mailto:dave.shipton@kent.gov.uk)
  
- Cath Head (Head of Finance, Operations)
- 03000 416934
- [Cath.Head@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Cath.Head@kent.gov.uk)

#### Relevant Corporate Director:

- Zena Cooke
- 03000 416854
- [zena.cooke@kent.gov.uk](mailto:zena.cooke@kent.gov.uk)

By: Joel Cook – Democratic Services Manager  
To: Scrutiny Committee, 25 January 2023  
Subject: Scrutiny SEND Sub-Committee – Proposed Terms of Reference  
Status: Unrestricted

---

Summary: The Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 7 December, resolved to establish a Sub-Committee to consider KCC's SEND provision.

The proposed Terms of Reference for this Sub-Committee are appended to this report.

## Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- **Approve** the proposed Terms of Reference of the SEND Sub-Committee;
  - **Agree** to review the Sub-Committee after one year.
  - **NOTE** the suggested arrangements for progression, subject to engagement with the Sub-Committee Chair and Spokespeople designate.
- 

## 1. Introduction

- a) Following the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Transport Lessons Learned Review report and the Kent local area inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for children with SEND, the Scrutiny Committee considered that it would be appropriate to establish a dedicated sub-committee to provide targeted overview and scrutiny of SEND provision in the county. At its meeting on 7 December, the Committee confirmed its approval, in principle, to the establishment of the sub-committee subject to detailed arrangements being presented for final agreement. This report and the appended Terms of Reference set out the proposed approach for progression and implementation of the requested sub-committee.
- b) The sub-committee would be a formal committee of the Council and would exercise the functions of the Council's Scrutiny Committee in relation to KCC SEND provision. As a formal committee, it would be subject to all Access to Information regulations and requirements, as set out in legislation and the Constitution. It would meet in

public with published agendas and reports. As with any committee, it would have the ability to consider matters in private where relevant exemption or confidentiality criteria apply.

- c) Future key decisions relating to SEND would continue to follow the Council's decision-making process as set out in the Constitution, including consideration of proposed decisions by the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee and the analysis of existing management plans by Governance and Audit Committee.

## **2. SEND Sub-Committee Details**

- a) The purpose of the sub-committee would be to undertake normal Scrutiny Committee activity specifically in matters related to the Council's provision of and arrangements for SEND. As per s21 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Scrutiny Committee may set up sub-committees to exercise some of its functions. Members will be familiar with the Select Committee arrangements, which are one example of the Scrutiny sub-committee process. However, it is expected that the work of the sub-committee will be broader in scope and will not work toward the development of subject focused reports. Key outcomes of the sub-committee's work will be engagement with key parties involved in the provision and use of SEND services, the development of recommendations for improvement and the holding to account of the Executive for SEND policy, strategy and delivery.
- b) It is therefore anticipated that the sub-committee will consider a range of key issues linked with the provision of SEND services by the Council. Alongside a scoped initial work programme, agenda planning will be supported on an ongoing basis through the general arrangements allowing for Members to request items within the Scrutiny remit to be placed on the agenda – when specific issues are identified that fall within the SEND scope of the sub-committee, they will be scheduled for consideration at an appropriate meeting – the detailed arrangements of dates, times, required attendees and requested reports to be determined through discussion between the Chair and Spokespeople of the sub-committee, supported by Democratic Services.
- c) Taking account of views expressed and endorsed by the CYPE Cabinet Committee and Scrutiny Committee, it is suggested that the sub-committee could, among other matters, scrutinise progress made against OFSTED reports relating to SEND provision as well as exploring how the relevant circumstances arose. A range of SEND related matters have already been raised at various committee meetings and these will all be scoped as part of initial agenda setting and work planning, taking note of where monitoring or review responsibility has already been allocated (e.g. consideration and monitoring of SEND Transport Review Management Plans by Governance & Audit Committee).
- d) Support for the sub-committee will be provided by Democratic Services who will liaise with external partners, KCC staff and Executive Members as required. As per the debate at the 7 December 2022 Scrutiny Committee meeting, the resources required to support the establishment and operations of the sub-committee will require the suspension of Short Focused Inquiries until further notice.



- e) Where the sub-committee, having considered specific SEND related issues as part of a formal meeting, resolves to make recommendations to the Executive or request further information, this will be progressed via Democratic Services updating the relevant parties and confirming required next steps. It should be emphasised that recommendations put forward by the Scrutiny Committee are a vital part of the local government governance system, however, ultimate responsibility and decision-making for matters within the Executive portfolio (such as SEND services) remain with the Executive. On that basis, where recommendations are put by the Scrutiny Committee, the expectation and requirement are that the Executive explains its response in a transparent manner but it does not have to comply.
- f) It is also important to highlight that general responsibility for commenting and advising on proposed actions by the Executive are, under the Council's current governance structure, the responsibility of the Cabinet Committees. Noting the points highlighted at both CYPE Cabinet Committee and Scrutiny Committee, there was a broad acceptance among Members that it was unsustainable to maintain multiple concurrent reporting routes through different committees on identical issues. Therefore, the expectation is that the sub-committee will consider past activity, progress against previous commitments or statements made by the Executive (e.g. outcome and performance assessments on past Key Decisions in relation SEND) fulfilling the scrutiny functions of the Council, while the Cabinet Committee will fulfil the Executive advisory function and continue to consider and make recommendations on SEND related Executive decisions still to be taken or other future proposals.
- g) These arrangements are without prejudice to the call-in system detailed in legislation and the Constitution. Where call-ins of decisions taken in relation to SEND are deemed valid, they will be considered by the main Scrutiny Committee in accordance with existing constitutional rules. All Members of the Sub-Committee will be notified of any call-ins and will be able to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting as observers or guests.

### **3. Membership**

- a) Membership of the sub-committee is to be politically proportionate, based on the Council's previously agreed proportionality arrangements for Scrutiny sub-committees. It would therefore comprise 10 Members; 7 Conservative, one Labour, one Liberal Democrat and one Green & Independent. In addition, the sub-committee, when exercising powers in relation to education functions, will include Church Representatives (paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government Act 2000) and Parent Governor Representatives (paragraph 9 Schedule 1 to the 2000 Act) with voting rights. While SEND now sits within the Education and Skills Cabinet portfolio, the details of any item under consideration will determine the application of the above Education representative membership requirements – therefore they should not be expected or required to attend every meeting of the sub-committee.

- b) Recognising views expressed by the Scrutiny Committee, the Membership is to be drawn from all non-Executive Members. This mirrors the requirements for the main Scrutiny Committee whereby all Cabinet Members are prohibited from serving on the Scrutiny Committee and Deputy Cabinet Members are prohibited from serving Select Committees (by extension any relevant Scrutiny Sub-Committee) that will consider matters within their Executive Portfolio – in this case, SEND.
- c) Substitutions, noting the above eligibility requirements, would be permitted in accordance with normal committee arrangements. As with all formal committee meetings, all Members of the authority are entitled, under s16.21 of the Constitution, to attend and observe meetings of the sub-committee. In addition, where Members not serving as ordinary or substitute members of the Committee wish to participate, they should contact the Chair (and Democratic Services for meeting preparation purposes) in advance of the meeting, as per s16.21 of the Constitution.
- d) There would be a standing invitation to up to two Kent PACT representatives per meeting to attend as observers, with an expectation of participation being permitted depending on the issues under consideration.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- a) Taking account of the comments and input from Members at various committees, the above proposals have been developed to provide a measured approach to delivering focused Scrutiny activity for the SEND portfolio by making use of and highlighting the significant statutory power afforded to Scrutiny Committees. It will offer a clear identified forum for required formal Member consideration of key issues and risk areas relating to SEND, thus minimising duplication across Scrutiny and Cabinet Committee activity. The annual reporting of the sub-committee's work to the Scrutiny Committee will provide an opportunity for that Committee to consider and highlight, where it deems appropriate, any significant recommendations or risk issues identified by the sub-committee.
- b) Should the Scrutiny Committee agree to the progression and implementation of the sub-committee in line with the above arrangements, the date for the inaugural meeting of the SEND Sub-Committee would be proposed for late February. This would both allow for the confirmation of the normal committee arrangements such as election of Chair and provide an opportunity to formalise any provisional workplans developed through Member engagement prior to the meeting. The Sub-Committee would be expected to meet as and when relevant SEND items are identified but a schedule of planned sessions would be organised to accommodate forward planning of a manageable work programme – final details of this would be subject to determination by the Chair of the sub-committee, in consultation with the spokespeople.

#### **5. Appendix**

SEND Sub-Committee – terms of reference.

## 6. Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- **Approve** the proposed Terms of Reference of the SEND Sub-Committee;
- **Agree** to review the Sub-Committee after one year.
- **NOTE** the suggested arrangements for progression, subject to engagement with the Sub-Committee Chair and Spokespeople designate.

### Contact Details

#### Report Author

Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer  
[anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk](mailto:anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk) 03000 416478

#### Relevant Director

Benjamin Watts – General Counsel  
[Benjamin.watts@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Benjamin.watts@kent.gov.uk) 03000 416814

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Scrutiny Committee - SEND Sub-Committee**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Membership – 10 Members (plus 3 Church Education Representatives and 2 Parent Governor Representatives where applicable)

In line with Section 21 of the Local Government Act (2000) this Sub-Committee will exercise the following functions of the Council's Scrutiny Committee in relation to Kent County Council SEND provision.

1. Review or scrutinise decisions made, or other actions taken in connection with KCC SEND Provision.
2. Make reports or recommendations to the Executive, requiring them to consider and respond, indicating what (if any) action they propose to take, within 2 months (in matters relating to SEND Provision KCC).
3. Require the Leader, Cabinet Members and Senior Managers to attend before it and answer questions. It is the duty of any Member or Officer to comply with such a requirement.
4. Invite other persons to attend meetings of the Committee to answer questions and gather evidence with their consent.
5. Report annually to the Scrutiny Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

**From:** Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services  
Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

**To:** Scrutiny Committee – 25 January 2023

**Subject:** Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People - Evaluation of Programme

**Classification:** Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: **Cabinet – 1 December 2022; County Council – 15 December 2022**

Future Pathway of report: **None**

Electoral Division: **All**

**Summary:** This report sets out the achievements of the Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme.

**Recommendation(s):** Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 In March 2021, Cabinet approved (21/00035) that work begin to deliver the Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme, as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Politicians from all parties recognised that Kent’s children and young people (C&YP) had all been affected by the pandemic. They agreed it was essential that C&YP be supported to re-engage with activities and opportunities that they had enjoyed before the pandemic, and to try something new.

1.2 Formal approval for Reconnect was provided in Key Decision 21/00042 by Cabinet in June 2021. This set out the parameters within which the programme would operate, key of which were:

- This would be a KCC led, community-based programme, which sought to engage the whole Kent community in supporting C&YP
- It aimed to reconnect C&YP to:
  - Learning missed
  - Health and happiness
  - Friends, family and community
  - Sports, activities and the outdoors

- Economic wellbeing
  - It was to be universal, with something for all C&YP aged 0-19 years (up to 25 for those with SEND)
  - It would promote existing opportunities for C&YP to connect or reconnect to, fund and empower others to create additional opportunities
  - It should focus on the future, not dwell on the negatives of the pandemic
  - The voice of young people would be at the heart of the programme
  - Funding should be spent equally against each theme if possible
  - A quarter of the funding would be spent locally, via Local Children's Partnership Groups
- 1.3 This paper provides a summary of the evaluation of the programme. A full evaluation report is available at:  
[https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/141909/Reconnect-Evaluation-Report.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/141909/Reconnect-Evaluation-Report.pdf)
- 1.4 The programme was always intended to be fixed-term, ending on 31st August 2022, to provide immediate support post pandemic. Following agreement by Cabinet in July 2022, most activity and the public brand closed as planned, but some further support has been commissioned to run until 31 March 2022. This report covers the activity to 31 August 2022 only.

## **2. Evaluation - Outcomes and Impact**

- 2.1 It was recognised from the outset that the wide-ranging nature of activities and support which would be provided to C&YP would make it challenging to evidence impact, particularly trying to assign a direct causal link to the work of Reconnect; for example, demonstrating Reconnect has improved the achievement of pupils in maths, as opposed to this success being down to staff in schools, the support of parents and the hard work of the C&YP themselves.
- 2.2 The programme's evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations are drawn from semi-structured interviews, digital surveys, and data returns (i.e., case studies, quotations and other data providers have submitted). The data included in the findings is a minimum level of achievement. Participation numbers, for example, will be "at least" that reported, because in some cases providers could not count all the children participating (i.e. a family fun day), while in others the data provided by participants hides participation levels (to illustrate, one child minder registered to participate in the Big Summer Challenge, but all 12 of the children she looked after took part), and we have missing data returns.
- 2.3 It should also be noted that data was collected by providers in a variety of ways relevant to their events, for example, a festival compared to 1:1 counselling. Therefore, it has not been possible to collect detailed data, such as whether the participant has special educational needs, as the data collected must be proportionate and relevant for the provider to comply with GDPR. We do know,



however, that a wide variety of young people were engaged due to specific nature of the provision funded, such as a youth club for YP aged 18+ who have EHCPs, and the Kickstart activity which engaged NEETs.

## 2.4 Reach of the Reconnect Programme

The programme has reached at least 749,070 C&YP, meaning on average every Kent child aged 0-19 years has engaged in two Reconnect activities. It is evidently not that simple. Clearly some C&YP will have engaged in more activity than others. Some activities will have been more than one session. For example, the reach for bus passes is determined as the number of bus passes issued, but we know in summer 2022 the two big bus operators recorded over 1 million Reconnect journeys between them. In addition, we know more C&YP have been supported indirectly through the programme's activities. For example, Reconnect funded early years and forest school training for leaders to help Kent Scouts accelerate the opening of "Squirrel Dreys", a new group for younger children. While the children joining the new Squirrel Dreys are included in the reach figure, many leaders have commented how the training has altered their practice in other fields, such as with an older age group, or in their profession as a teacher. The children in the older groups, or school classrooms are the "indirect reach" we are not able to count.

2.5 The two tables below illustrate the reach of the programme, by age group and geography. It is evident that the objective of providing a universal programme with something for all ages in all localities has been achieved, thanks to the tremendous efforts of the organisations and individuals who joined the Reconnect cause.

Activity	Total	CYP	SEND	NEET	Under 5	6 to 11	12 to 16	Over 16
Reconnect 2021	11189	11189	SEND	NEET	2416	6063	2445	1182
County grants and Commissioned Activities	252358	22248	937	319	3780	15063	2955	19186
Locality Grants Round 2	17531	14076	1211	148	2297	6757	4529	2040
Locality Grants Round 3	34209	22154	1627	438	3044	10364	4920	4298
Leisure Centres	6271	5335	n/a	n/a	462	1162	861	839
Open Access	10315	1070	n/a	n/a	810	223	20	0
Big Adventures	4224	n/a	780	n/a	122	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bus Passes	399992	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Reconnect Programme 2021	12400	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Curious Maths	581	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

<b>Total</b>	749070	76072	4555	905	12931	39632	15730	27545
--------------	--------	-------	------	-----	-------	-------	-------	-------

\*The figure we have for the bus passes is the total number of bus passes (physical and digital) issued to CYP and families in Kent. The figure we have for Curious Maths is the number of subscriptions. It is highly likely that the programme has reached significantly more CYP, especially SEND and NEET CYP or CYP within these age ranges. These numbers are reflection of the data and feedback we have received from providers.

\*The Reconnect Programme 2021 includes our leisure centre discount scheme (2,500 altogether, 54% FSMs), our open access activities including the Christmas programme (approximately 4-5000 altogether) and the Invicta summer programme (approximately 4,900 registered; 33,000 sessions attended by children residing in Kent).

<b>District</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Just CYP</b>	<b>SEN D</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>Under 5</b>	<b>5 to 11</b>	<b>12 to 16</b>	<b>Over 16</b>
<b>Ashford</b>	7442	4877	286	47	1237	2446	879	151
<b>Canterbury</b>	24776	16773	359	58	1379	10949	1269	3147
<b>Dartford</b>	3412	2712	226	51	203	1714	614	468
<b>Dover</b>	2057	1971	135	5	906	804	192	980
<b>Folkestone and Hythe</b>	6727	6193	506	15	809	3871	1354	132
<b>Gravesham</b>	1557	1539	16	13	8	602	798	63
<b>Maidstone</b>	7933	6840	672	288	1520	3440	1428	590
<b>Sevenoaks</b>	3665	2441	503	23	142	1631	929	267
<b>Swale</b>	2955	1731	158	10	339	796	293	327
<b>Thanet</b>	4930	4333	482	130	469	1249	2382	251
<b>Tonbridge and Malling</b>	2034	1649	213	28	423	792	279	183
<b>Tunbridge Wells</b>	1757	1158	162	10	180	581	619	220
<b>Grand Total</b>	77498	58478	3775	905	9121	32184	12404	8543

## 2.6 Engagement Level

Providers reported high levels of engagement from C&YP and families on the programme.

The online survey feedback reveals that 86.3% of C&YP and families reported to have had a very positive experience with the activities they engaged in on the Reconnect Programme, and 15.8% had a positive experience. Our understanding of 'positive experience' covers several key themes identified in the evaluation analysis: a positive experience denotes fun, excitement, experiences they would have never done otherwise, spending quality time with family members, socialising with peers, a positive change i.e., being outside and not stuck inside, gained something from the activity like skills acquisition or a job, improvements in mental wellbeing or learning, etc. From this understanding of a positive experience, it would seem that many C&YP and families on the Reconnect Programme have engaged very well with the

Reconnect activities and this engagement has contributed to improvements in their mental health and wellbeing (as they are able to go out, be active, socialise with others – all of which are factors which research suggests can greatly influence mental health and wellbeing), learn and improve their academic engagement levels, etc.

95% of 100 interview respondents said that the activities they delivered went well (i.e., gave a rating of 7 and higher out of 10), and that they met their initial aims (aims which were in line with the Reconnect Programme's own aims). High levels of engagement across the board is suggested by repeated reference to words like 'engaged,' 'fun,' 'learning,' and the desire expressed by attending/participating C&YP to 'do it again.' Most survey respondents reported that C&YP would engage in the same or similar activities in the future – which suggests sustained engagement with the activities (e.g., physical activity, sports, and learning). 100% of interview respondents revealed that they would either continue delivering these activities, go on to deliver additional activities, or look for additional funding to continue delivery which suggests sustainability of the impact they have had.

## **2.7 Theme-specific Impact – in line with the logic model (programme aims, output(s), and medium-term outcomes) – based on survey responses and interviews**

Health and Happiness: 90% of C&YP and families reported that they were 'happy,' had 'had fun' and were 'engaged.' 65% of survey respondents reported that they saw improvements in the mental health and wellbeing of C&YP involved in their activities (thanks to the Reconnect funding they received). Reasons commonly given for this include being able to socialise with others and make new friends, learn new things, and have new experiences they would not have otherwise had. 95% of children and family services and support groups were able to reach sustainable engagement with the C&YP and families in their communities. 186 activities altogether delivered by 158 providers.

Economic wellbeing: Over 21 businesses and partner agencies were able to work together to support young people to engage with future employment opportunities. The programme was able to co-ordinate and promote a range of approximately 32 activities and opportunities for children and young people relating to economic wellbeing. As a result, through these activities YP aged over 16 on the programme were given a better chance of securing work in the future through their involvement in key reconnect economic wellbeing activities.

Learning Missed: We were able to support C&YP to re-engage in education following the pandemic by sourcing and promoting number of educational activities and opportunities for children and young people. For example, 4184 C&YP were able to re-engage with learning and gain cultural capital instrumental to the education experience through Big Adventures. 85% of providers reported that the CYP had learned or 'caught up' with their learning. 76% of C&YP and families were able to engage in activities that they were able to 'go out' and be 'active' following the pandemic. 146 activities delivered by

125 number of providers. As a result, C&YP on the programme, were able to catch up with learning missed and are engaged in education.

Sports, Activities, and the Outdoors: C&YP were able to live healthier lifestyles and engage in sport and physical activity. For example, 6271 CYP through the leisure centres alone. We were able to coordinate and promote a range of around 230 activities and opportunities for CYP relating to sports, activities, and the outdoors through around 204 providers. As a result, more C&YP are engaged in healthier activity.

Family, Friends, and Communities: Over 192 multiagency partners, business, community organisations and groups worked together, and this led to an increase in the number of local activities and opportunities available to C&YP in Kent. 218 activities. 56% of providers reported that they were able to enhance local networks for community assets. The programme was able to reduce the accessibility gap for some disadvantaged C&YP: 50% of respondents reported that the reconnect funding enabled them to provide activities or run events that were free (therefore, more accessible for lower income groups from deprived areas) and that had not previously been available in their area. The programme was also able to support connections between C&YP and responsible adults from older generations, as some interview respondents revealed.

As a result of investing in Kent communities we have created opportunities for communities to support C&YP and their families and fill gaps.

## 2.8 Learning Missed

The following are a few key projects and activities on the programme which sought to support the following Learning Missed objectives:

- To support children and young people to re-engage in education following the pandemic.
- To source and promote additional educational activities and opportunities for children and young people.

### **Invicta Home Study Support**

These were virtual home study support sessions for Years 5&6 and Years 10&11 which ran twice weekly. Attendance levels were good, with 673 individual KS2 attendees (16.62% FSMs and 4.99% SEND). The sessions appealed particularly to students of Black and Asian ethnic backgrounds (c50%) and a greater number of girls (55%). 70% of the 217 individual KS4 attendees were female, a little over 60% were white, 8.5% FSM and 18% SEND. Attendance was evenly spread at all IDACI levels.

Feedback was mostly positive from students and parents:

KS2: Maths – 73.65% of reported that the sessions were ‘enjoyable and informative,’

KS4: Has this session been helpful to you? Yes - English 88.76%, maths 86.29%, science 95.16%.

GCSE revision sessions were also held in Easter 2022. 1014 individual students attended the 44 sessions with each attending on average two

sessions. 8 subjects were covered with English and Maths having foundation and higher sessions to meet diverse needs, and study skills sessions were also delivered. 76% reported feeling they had progressed, with 21% feeling they had progressed somewhat.

### **Babble, Chatter, Talking Matters**

Home-Start Dover delivered a project aimed at 0–5-year-olds on development and school readiness with a special focus on communication/Speech and Language. Over the course of the project, from February 2022 to August 2022, over 80 children were provided with 480 hours of support between them. 98% of the children supported have seen improvements. The project has been so successful that Home-Start Dover have sourced additional funding to keep the project running to March 2023.

### **Lessons in a Box - Visit Kent**

125 boxes of high-quality teaching resources were quickly snapped up by Kent teachers in 107 schools in just 15 days from opening registrations. These were designed to bring to life six historic venues in Kent, which C&YP had been unable to visit during the pandemic. 8115 children took part in the Reconnect activities. "Our Year 5's loved taking part in the Reconnect Lesson in a Box challenge in Term 6. The children loved having a real-world focus for their writing and were especially motivated to create advertisements for local attractions. They were able to practice some amazing work completed for the project. As a teacher, the PowerPoints and resources were engaging, easy to use and pitched to the right level for my class. The children are amazed that they won and cannot wait for their class trip to Historic Dockyard Chatham at the beginning of next term." (KS2 Teacher)

### **Youth Summit**

More than 650 YP attended the University of Kent campus, enjoying a choice of 25 distinct types of activity across a wide range of subjects and over three days. When asked if they would come to the Youth Summit again, 93% of the young people said "yes". Words used to describe their experiences were: fun, gave me ideas, and valuable.

When asked 'how confident do you feel about sharing your opinions and ideas with others after taking in today's activities?' 70% of the attendees responded they were more confident after the event.

Attendees commented: "I think it was really good as we were all given a chance to participate in the interactive movie which was fun and an incredible experience overall." "I think the Exploring Scientific Spaces workshop was probably most inspiring, as we talked about women in STEM and how anyone can do anything, lifting our spirits higher." "Amazing and very nicely interactive."

### **Lyfta**

A real success of the Lyfta project was the engagement of students who accessed independently of their schools. Lyfta provided bespoke lesson

plans, created for students aged 4 to 6, 7 to 11 and 12 plus. In total, there were 165 sign ups from parents, carers or students which equated to 198 children given access to the platform.

"My child spent the weekend completing these excellent tasks. I must say, we were both really impressed with them. The information, videos, facts etc about each person and their location and lifestyle was amazing. She found each lesson extremely engaging and each one opened up a different conversation between us and discussions around the countries, cultures, feelings etc. Each lesson was completely different too, it was wonderful to be able to visit these places virtually. Her favourite was Anna in Norway. But Erkan in Turkey was a close second. She is going into year six when she returns in September. Many thanks once again. This summer holiday we have made full use of KCC's offering. Thank you again."

### **Sir Linkalot**

Positive feedback from beneficiaries suggests that Sir Linkalot helped to support student learning, specifically English and literacy, in an enjoyable and engaging manner.

- (Year 3) – It's really cool because it helps you know how to spell correctly. It helps me to learn.
- (Year 5) – I really liked it when he visited because he taught us and then he used different techniques that weren't on the app to help us. He is very enthusiastic and encouraging.
- Just to say we've been using this app for the past year and it is fantastic. Really, very good and an excellent resource. A much better way to learn spellings than lists or competitions.

### **Families Supporting Families (FSF)**

This targeted programme supported families in small groups to come together and learn with and from each other, to build social networks and resilience.

The following is a range of activities which potentially increase learning and wellbeing, which families identified as undertaking more often with their children because of taking part in FSF Pathway.	Families doing more or a lot more
○ Reading and looking at books together	100%
○ Singing songs and rhymes	60%
○ Creating made-up stories with their children	80%
○ Make-believe play	40%
○ Cooking	60%
○ Household chores	60%
○ Messy play	80%

o Play outdoors together	80%
o Access community events and facilities e.g. the library, swimming pool, the park, local woods.	80%

### **Playground**

Organised by KCC's Culture and Creative Economy Service, 311 playground sessions were delivered across 26 weeks in Children's Centres and Libraries by external creative artists. In total there were visits by 1537 babies aged 0-2 years and 1665 adults. The majority of babies were aged between 3 and 15 months. Feedback from Parents/Carers was hugely positive:

- o 95.4% would recommend Playground to other families.
- o Reasons for liking Playground sessions varied but the most popular answers included being free (84.6% of families), sessions were calming /relaxing (78.5%), sessions were baby-led (76.9%), and sessions encouraged baby development (66.2%).
- o Following participation in Playground parents/carers reported engaging in creative play more often with their baby at home. Before attending Playground almost, a quarter of the parents/carers (23.1%) reported that they either never engaged in creative play, or only engaged once a week. Post Playground however, this had reduced to 7.7%. In contrast, the numbers of parents and carers engaging in creative play at home at least once a day, or even several times a day, had increased from 33.8% to 58.4%
- o "It is absolutely brilliant; I really look forward to the sessions and make a special effort to make myself and baby available. I've never seen my little boy so happy."

### **Big Writing Challenge**

Almost 1700 C&YP submitted entries into the Kent Big Writing Challenge which was delivered by the Kent and Medway Charity Group. This broke down as KS1 (532), KS2 (740), KS3&4 (385) entries. The organisers received incredibly positive feedback from the district winners, participating schools, parents, and children with a celebration and prize giving event held at Canterbury Cathedral. The three individuals who were the age group winners won their schools funding for an off-site educational trip of their choice for their class. So far visits to Wingham Wildlife Park and Port Lympne have been planned and approved. The Kent and Medway Charity Group plan to continue running the competition annually.

### **Charlton Athletic Community Trust**

This project combined teaching and youth work. Phase 1 has focused on the Isle of Sheppey. Participating children weekly received an hour of tutoring from a qualified teacher, and then had a youth worker led session. They committed to undertake two hours of home learning each week using the School-Online platform. 59 children participated with 51 children completing the programme. Pre and post programme assessments were carried out:

<b>School</b>	<b>% of pupils making progress</b>	<b>Average progress (% improvement)</b>
Queenborough School	73%	37%
St Edmund's RCPS	84%	50%
Thistle Hill Academy	70%	21%

### **Reconnect Big Adventures**

Schools with 40%+ of their pupils living in IDACI bands A-F (disadvantaged communities) were able to access funding to support an offsite education trip. The objective was to support the reconnection with learning and recognised that post pandemic these school communities would find it hardest to reinstate this sort of opportunity.

62 Primary, Secondary and Special schools from all parts of the County took up the offer, with trips including the theatre linked to KS4 GCSE English, visits to Castles linked to KS2 history, and excursions to outdoor activity centres such as Bewl Water to provide enrichment.

When asked if they thought their activity or trip had provided disadvantaged C&YP with opportunities to engage in learning, schools and trip facilitators gave the following responses:

“Definitely. Many of the children had never been to London so even the journey there was amazing for them when they saw the landmarks of London. They were amazed by the golden rooms of the Houses of Parliament and that they were walking in the Queen’s footsteps.”

“Yes, it helps build schema and cultural capital, it allows them to be equal to peers who may have had the experience from a parent or carer.”

“Yes, definitely. We are a small primary school in a deprived area of Thanet with a large number of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils with over one third of these children in receipt of Free School Meals. We also have a large number of children with special educational needs who greatly benefited from this experience. Some of our pupils had never been outside of their home town or Thanet. Some of our children had never travelled on a coach before either or seen any exotic animals in real life. There were a lot of 'awe and wonder' and 'wow moments' seen throughout the day!”





Supporting families with deaf members who have been especially isolated in covid. 30 C&YP altogether were able to go on trips and outings with others C&YP their age. "I was very enjoying to go BSL community's events because I was meeting lots of new and old faces for the first time and long time since we met. These activities were very good and encouraging for Deaf/hard of Hearing youths to go because this helps and develops our social, mental and communication skills! These skills are very massive important of their entire life!"

### **Nova Children's Project**

Youth Club for YP with SEND. 93% of YP reported that the activity they took part in was very fun. 100% of YP reported that had enjoyed spending time with other young people. "Having time away from my parents and getting to know others is good. I do love my parents but it's nice to do things with other people." (YP)

### **LGBTQ+**

**Porchlight's BeYou project** provided opportunities for YP through 1) Three Trans-Inclusive Swimming Sessions – 10 C&YP and their families and 30 contacts. 2) Intergroup meet ups with 12 Kent-based groups - supported 52 C&YP. 3) Three family activity days with parents and their children who would benefit from additional peer support. (approx. 15 children and their families with 45 contacts). 4) Pride Event summer 2022 (approx. 75 young people). Feedback included - "it's the first time they have been swimming for years" and "I felt safe"

### **Children affected by bereavement**

**Demelza - Bereaved Siblings Project** - The project aimed to support C&YP whose sibling has died. A total of 25 individual children participated in the events and activities. Together there were 95 spaces used across these events, 45 for C&YP and 50 for other family members.

"My daughter spoke so animatedly about the day and how she had enjoyed mixing with others. She told me that she finds it hard at school, that she is shy and often doesn't join in. My daughter is keen to take part in more events and the impact of reconnecting over the summer is clear, extending in to how she feels about school, how we spend our time as a family and her feeling more relaxed and positive."(Parent/Carer, Sibling day at Bewl Water)

"Just wanted to say a massive thank you for yesterday. We absolutely loved it. Singing has always felt so cathartic. Music was a big part of [my Son's] short life."

### **ShivaNova**

ShivaNova have delivered 180 culturally diverse music and dance workshops in Folkestone, Dover and Ashford, involving 2600 C&YP, 100 adults. 240 participants have SEND.

"The children absolutely loved the sessions. It created a real buzz around the school and they were all very excited afterwards"

### **Mental health and wellbeing – interventions (counselling & mentorship)** **South Kent Mind**

Delivered wellbeing courses and activities aimed at improving the mental wellbeing of C&YP, supporting 250 C&YP overall. The three most common answers from participants to “the best aspects of sessions/activities” were: 1) Learning about anxiety, stress, coping with life, confidence, and self-esteem. 2) Improved confidence, improved self-expression, improved communication. 3) Learnt more about peers and friends, understand more about recognising mental health in others.

### **Salus Intensive Mentoring**

Supporting 58 children and young people. '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.'

### **Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust**

Reconnect funding sought to reduce the referral to treatment time for the C&YP's counselling service from 12 - 6 weeks. In the second quarter 2022 489 C&YP were reported to have received a Tier 2 (Targeted) Emotional Wellbeing Intervention (C&YP Counselling). 92.80% of children had closed referrals (and two or more contacts) with paired scores. 72.70% of children's paired scores show measurable improvement

### **Talents and Interests Grants (Jan- Sept 2022)**

55 out of the 62 evaluation forms for T&I grants this year stated that they either agree or strongly agree that the activity has improved their resilience.

“Archery is just me. It lets me control what I am doing, and I do not have to think about anything else. I did not mix well before I started shooting but I think I have got a lot better.”

“I find the [gym membership] helps me release stress. It makes me feel better about myself physically and mentally.”

## **2.10 Sports, Activities and the Outdoors**

Sports, Activities, and the Outdoors objectives were:

- To support children and young people in Kent to live healthier lifestyles and engage in sport and physical activity.
- To co-ordinate and promote a range of activities and opportunities for children and young people relating to sports, activities, and the outdoors.

### **Leisure Centres**

40 leisure centres in every district of Kent ran a summer 2022 Reconnect offer. Offers varied according to the facilities and staffing available. Emphasis was given to helping those in most financial need (FSMs), children in care/care leavers, and those with SEND, although the expectation was there would be a

strong universal offer. 6271 C&YP and families were supported through leisure centre activities.

- 'I think it was a really positive offering, which really made a difference to local people.'
- "The free bus travel and really low-cost swimming has given my kids so much to do this summer, I made them go (swimming) at least once a week to meet up with their mates as I had to work throughout."
- "The housing development on which the Community Centre is situated, comprises of a range of families (with varying ages of children) including some who are housed in affordable accommodation through Golding Homes. It is felt that our offer had something for everyone."
- "The boys came together to play football and are now meeting up regularly for casual kick abouts. The foster carers that stayed have connected with other foster carers and now attend coffee mornings together where they can share experiences and advice."
- "A number of parents have told us that they would never had considered the gym for their children without the incentive of the discount or free membership being offered (the targeted groups) especially as some of these young people suffer with anxiety, ADHD, autism. The parents have told us how much using the gym has benefitted their children and, in some cases, given them some much needed rest bite."

### **Play Place**

Play Place established a new outreach programme that focussed on working with children, young people (0-18 years old) and their families / communities. They achieved total contact numbers of 4,820 during the delivery of 120 sessions. The parks included areas that have high levels of rural, social, or financial deprivation. Parents, partners and C&YP have told us that they were pleased to be getting back outdoors and having something positive to do locally.

**Kent Scouts - International Jamboree** had 3,500 C&YP and 1,000 adults in attendance. This five-day residential event at Detling Showground would not have taken place in 2022 without grants from Reconnect and Headstart Kent, which enabled both additional activities to be provided and reduced the costs for some families to make attendance affordable, and thus in turn generate the attendee numbers needed to make the event viable.

### **Kent Scouts – Squirrels**

Squirrels is the new Scout group for children aged 4-5 years. To accelerate the creation of dreys across Kent and open this opportunity for children who had missed early socialisation opportunities, Reconnect funded training for leaders and potential leaders in early years development and forest schools. The intention was to give confidence to potential leaders that they could meet the needs of younger children and deliver high quality sessions for participants.

The numbers of Squirrels dreys has increased, with an additional 13 well established groups and a further seven starting out. Four of these dreys were in areas of deprivation. However, several of the Squirrels drey leaders reported

they had families come from lower deprivation areas as the families are travelling to attend.

There was a total of 189 attendees across all training sessions, the most popular being introduction to forest school, den building and stories training. It is estimated that during the life of the project it has reached 650-700 young people. Several leaders fed back they could adapt what they learned at the training they attended for the older sections (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers).

### **YO! Street Zone CIC**

YO! STREET ZONE CIC ran a weekly indoor street football club in Margate, as well as two street football competition events in a local park. This enabled C&YP from low-income families to attend weekly football club sessions free of charge. The YP really appreciated that the club was in a sports hall which was in walking distance from their homes. Many vulnerable BAME YP attended regularly. Feedback includes:

- "The club helped me to get better at football and I also made some new friends"
- "I was able to get more confident"
- "It was great that I could attend for free because my family couldn't afford it."

The two street football competitions ran in Dane Park in Margate. These were family events and open to anyone to attend. The first competition was for 11-15 year olds, the second for 16+ year olds. 5-aside teams competed against each other in heated 7 minute matches to find out which team has got what it takes to rule the court. Yo! also had their Panna Arena set up where anyone could get involved and play fun 1v1 panna matches. Over 80% of players attending this event were black or from other minority ethnic groups. Feedback includes:

- "It is moving to see so many young black people together. The work you are doing for the local community is truly amazing."
- "These events have been amazing for the community! It helps to put Margate on the map"
- "We didn't expect to see such a professional street football competition set up here in Margate."
- "I really enjoyed the food, the vibes and the people. Great day!"

### **Dance Buddies**

'Activate Us' ran a dance buddies project for children aged 12 and under in the Dover area. The aims were to:

- Encourage children to return to face to face activities after the covid pandemic.

- Encourage children to enjoy a new activity with a friend or relative.
- Try a fun and popular dance form that could become a hobby.
- Introduce children to a different part of culture - musical theatre.
- Get children physically active again after the pandemic.

Up to 15 different children attended the sessions. Some children were already attending dance classes but wanted to try a different style and try with a friend. Other children had never attended a dance class before.

“The parent of one of the children who attended for the whole block of lessons said that her daughter had wanted to attend dance classes for a long time, but financially it was not possible for the family to pay for regular classes. This child will also attend the second block of classes starting in September as we have been able to refer her to another scheme supporting families with low incomes whose children want to take part in activities that are beyond their means. This has been a real success story for this girl.”

Children enjoyed various aspects of the class and when asked what they enjoyed most their answers varied from learning how to dance, having fun, being able to bring my friend, learning a routine from a musical and then performing it to their parents at the end of the lesson block.

### **Road Safety**

The Riot Act arts company delivered road safety performances in schools, an opportunity schools and pupils have missed due to covid-19 related restrictions. 77 virtual sessions were delivered to 15,489 children in years 7 through to year 9, and 31 live performances to a further 5,662 children.

A survey was carried out with the pupil participants to understand the impact the performance had on their understanding and knowledge of road safety. Feedback was that most pupils had a greater understanding of road safety (76%).

1. *“I've learnt that you should come off your phone or pause your music when crossing the street. “*
2. *“that crossing the road without looking could be very lethal”*
3. *“Wait till it's safe to cross, use zebra crossing”*
4. *“I have learnt about peer pressure and peer influence and to always choose the right choices when crossing the road. I liked learning about road safety and lots of facts all about this!”*

90% of teachers reported that the presentation had been beneficial for students.

## **2.11 Friends, Family and Communities**

During the pandemic many families enjoy quality time together, bringing them closer to one another and making them reassess their lifestyles. Nationally reports of families moving to new locations, working remotely, and enjoying greater flexibility fill the headlines. However, the pandemic also saw C&YP not

able to see grandparents, missing their siblings or a parent in cases of separated households, exposed to higher levels of domestic violence, isolated from friends, and in too many cases, left anxious about social re-engagement. While activity to support some of these issues sits in other themes, particularly Health and Happiness, the Friends and Family theme has been tremendously important. It sought to quickly rekindle relationships, which we know are fundamental to wellbeing, confidence, learning and happiness. The objective was:

- To work with multi-agency partners, businesses, community organisations and groups to increase the number of local activities and opportunities available to C&YP in their communities.

### **Bus Passes**

Free bus travel has been the backbone of the Reconnect programme. It has made engaging in other activities possible for many C&YP and families. It has supported YP reconnect with friends and provided the opportunity for independence many would not ordinarily have during the summer holidays.

18 bus companies provided free travel to pupils in Years 6 to 13. 150,000 paper-based young person's bus passes were distributed in both summer 2021 and 2022. Free Family bus passes were distributed in summer 2021, focused on low-income families. All families with children on free school meals (benefits related) and those accessing "free for 2" early years places were issued electronic bus passes for Christmas 2021 (50,212 issued, 24,277 accessed). 34,000 families downloaded electronic bus passes in the summer 2022.

In summer 2022 Stagecoach and Arriva recorded over 1m Reconnect journeys between them. Unfortunately, we do not have travel data from the other companies that provided free travel.

### **Youth Reconnect**

KCC's commissioned youth providers were able to provide an additional 769 sessions, which had in totality 11,573 attendees (including 4960 YP). Activities included sailing and street sports (Canterbury Academy), a residential trip to Wales, mountain biking (Pie Factory), laser quest (Salus), choir and theatre trip to London (The Gr@nde).

### **Ice-skating Events**

416 C&YP enjoyed skating in the mobile ice rink which popped up in four locations. Positive feedback was received from attendees:

- "We all had fun on the ice rink, we laughed so much. Thanks for putting it on."
- "We all had a fantastic day, we all laughed and had fun skating. This is a day to remember, a special memory."
- "A day of the holiday that will be remembered for the right reasons."
- "It was great to get outside as a family and socialise with others."

- “It is not an activity my daughter can do, due to no local skating rink and the costs involved, so she was able to participate in a new experience.”
- “My little one has never been ice skating before, and she really loved it.”
- “Spend time together - quality time.”
- “Nice to have something to do together for all the family and different aged children so positive.”

### **Canterbury Festival - We:Connect**

18 Young people were part of the panel that created the event. 104 audience members made up of friends, family, students and college staff. 14 volunteers, 3 professional bands, 3 professional workshops, 6 student bands, 34 students performed, 8 students led workshops, and 42 participants in workshops.

“just wanted to say I’ve really enjoyed volunteering and being a part of this. It was really fun being able to have a part in event managing and being able to perform. Thank you for the cool opportunity and well done to everyone involved in organising” - Panel Member

### **Pillar Reconnect Festival, Folkestone**

1500 YP participated in workshops. These took place as part of the enterprise challenge on NCS (National Care Service) over the summer. 15 YP formed the Youth Board which helped to take the ideas from the workshops and book the venue, bands etc. 350 YP attend the festival.

- “It was great being asked what we wanted the festival to look like, it was great” - Sophie, Workshop Participant
- “I feel like the skills I learned over the last few months will help me in the future” - Samuel, Youth Board Member
- “The Highlight of my summer” - Max, festival attendee

### **Big Summer Challenge**

With 40 challenges, one for each day of the holiday, families could access resources to help keep their children occupied this summer. 1087 families registered to participate in the challenge, enabling them to upload photos and children’s work to the Big Summer Challenge portal, and be in with a chance to win one of 64 voucher prizes.

- “Wow Thank you so much! L loved taking part in this with her brothers! Was full of great ideas to fill the summer holidays! And not things that would cost a fortune being from a big family!”
- “Wow, I didn't expect us to win anything, that is great news! Thank you so much. My son is autistic, so he found it a bit hard to complete the tasks at



times, he will be really happy to know that he also gets this as a reward for his hard work.”

- “That is wonderful news. Thank you. My granddaughter will be absolutely delighted. We had such fun doing these activities during the summer.”
- “The girls had lots of fun doing the different activities and were so pleased to have completed them all.”
- “The news still hasn't really sunk in yet. We are going to use it to buy some new resources. The children are so excited.”

Nearly 500 organisations were supported through locality grants 1 and 2, resulting in 36230 CYP supported. Examples of activities and their impact are:

### **Sevenoaks Scouts**

Paddleboarding and activity day - “both of these events have been a huge success for us with a lot of positive feedback. We now have some great equipment and trained volunteers to continue to run these activities. Kemsing Scouts had their second event yesterday. We estimated about 200 people turned up which was beyond all expectations. It was great to see so many people from the village getting together and having fun.”

### **Allington Primary School**

Song writing workshops with 57 children involved - 100% of children enjoyed the workshops.

- “Music session was well structured. Kept the children engaged and interested. It allowed all children to achieve success by collaborative work with peers leadership from teacher. Allowed SEN children to access session.”
- “WOW! This is the best music workshop that I have been part of. It was inclusive to all abilities including a SEND pupil. Every child was focussed inspired. A few told me that they wanted to go home write their own music. would recommend this to everyone do. Thank you for making me enjoy a music session”

### **Free tennis/sports coaching**

“We have coached over 30 children, and currently we are coaching around 15 per week. I have reduced the classes to a maximum of 8 children per class from 12 as I found the indoor space inadequate for 12. I have noticed a significant change in the children's confidence and interaction within each other along with their physical improvement.”

"My 7 year old daughter loves attending the tennis sessions with Caroline. She has been able to grow in confidence not only with the sport, but also in responsibilities that Caroline gives her too. From the sounds of it she has learnt and developed many new skills and importantly has been given the time to do so as well, which in a school PE lesson is not quite as possible."  
(Parent)

## 2.12 Economic Wellbeing

The following are a few key projects and activities on the programme which sought to support the following Economic Wellbeing objectives:

- To work with businesses and partner agencies to support young people to engage with future employment opportunities.
- To co-ordinate and promote a range of activities and opportunities for children and young people relating to economic wellbeing.

### **CSCS Cards**

41 people attended four courses in separate locations, attaining 91 qualifications between them. 19 people have since found work. Everyone completing the course felt they were in a better place to find work. They all reported having improved their employability and their confidence.

### **Kickstart Programme**

KCC employed 80 YP aged 18-24 via its Reconnect Kickstart offer. These YP were placed in schools, particularly special schools, to learn to be teaching assistants, with some training as administrators and caretakers. Schools provided the day-to-day management and support. Employability training was delivered by Runway Training. 51 have moved onto employment, training, or education, 36 of which have employment in a school.

### **Propel - The Mason Foundation**

A county wide programme to support 60 young people with SEND into meaningful employment. Of the 9 young people that have secured employment, these roles range from paid to voluntary positions. They include General Assistant at American Golf, cleaning for various local and national companies, housekeeping at Premier Inn, several Teaching Assistant roles, within local educational settings, care work and volunteering at a local charity shop.

### **YMCA**

This Locality Grant funded project has seen 12 young people gain Sitech qualifications (construction based), while on its cycle project 12 young people get their Level 1 technician qualification meaning are qualified bike mechanics now. YMCA also ran a Job Club: "We had 23 young people that engaged regularly. 82% ended up with some form of work."

### **NEETs Bootcamp**

Delivered by West Faversham Community Association this project has supported 74 YP who were NEET or at risk of being NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) through a variety of activities such as employability skills (CV writing, interview skills), L2 Food Safety, Health and Safety, Teambuilding with a reward of gym membership and opportunity to undertake work experience at the end.

“We got a 96% satisfaction rate from the parents, and we're talking probably 200 parents. 81% of the YP felt more confident going into an interview, and 91% of attendees felt they were better positioned to gain employment after completing the boot camp.”

### **MyPocketSkill**

This is a digital platform that connects YP to skills-building, money-earning opportunities with households and businesses. It supports savings goals using behavioural science-based “nudges” to build financial capability within the YP. The platform was marketed through secondary schools, with 282 YP “onboarding”, the process of registering with the platform and advertising their skills to potential employers. Household and Businesses form the demand side, with 142 onboarding, meaning they are looking to employ a YP to help them. Tutoring services prove to be of high demand, a natural fit with older YP supporting younger children. Reconnect commissioned Ella through this platform to be the photographer at the Celebration event.

### **Education Business Partnership (EBP)**

The EBP was commissioned to support schools and businesses provide work placement opportunities for YP, something that had become more challenging during and post pandemic. The EBP supported 2230 students and engaged 442 new employers. An alternative blended model of placement was designed and delivered for some YP, recognising their needs and challenges in accessing genuine work placement opportunities.

- Mainstream placements - 1068 Students, 8 Schools
- Alternative/Blended - 1090 Students, 12 Schools
- SEND schools - 72 Students, 6 Schools
- Identified as vulnerable - 308 Students across 12 Schools

‘Thanks so much it was a huge success! I have been involved with Enterprise related activities for many years and I can't remember seeing such a high number of student engagement and positivity.’

"It was fantastic that despite not having a work experience placement, students were still able to develop their employability skills and get an insight into the world of work.”

Case study - EHCP student placed at East Kent Railway Trust

‘He's had a great placement; he's got to know most of the staff and he's really come out of his shell. They have said if he wants to carry on working there he can. He's like a different young person after the challenges of lock down. He goes train spotting at the weekends and he knows all the volunteers here. The driver has taken him up and down the track in the cab’.

### **Be Your Own Boss (BYOB)**

This project provided workshops for older YP who were considering starting their own business. 56 people started across 4 courses, with 49 completing. Through a ripple effect with learners passing on what they had learned to friends and family, BYOB estimate that an additional 50 people indirectly

accessed the course material and would have been able to access their support. At the end of the grant there have been 15 new businesses started, 24 people have said they intend to start their business idea this year, and 11 existing small businesses said they felt they have improved their ability to run and manage their own business.

### 2.13 **IDACI Reach**

One key aim of the programme was reach Kent's disadvantaged groups. IDACI analysis (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) was carried out on the postcode data provided by several key Reconnect activities, including participating Big Adventures, schools and leisure centres. Analysis shows:

- Overall in January 2021, 19% of pupils in Kent lived in the 20% most deprived LSOAs in England.
- Of the 581 schools involved in the Reconnect programme, 32% have a higher proportion of pupils from the most deprived areas when compared to Kent.
- Looking at the Big Writing Challenge, 57 of the 581 schools signed up (9.8%). Of these 57 schools, 13 (23%) were from the schools with a high proportion of pupils from the most deprived areas.
- As Big Adventures was targeted to schools serving disadvantaged communities, it is no surprise 85% of these schools were schools with a high proportion of pupils from the most deprived areas.

This analysis suggests that this aim has been achieved.

### 2.14 **Feedback from Providers**

The consensus among interviewees has been a gratitude for the programme. Many have explained that they would have been unable to deliver their activities or unable to have the impact they had if not for the Reconnect funding they received. Other interviewees were grateful that they were considered for funding, believing that they would have been marginalised or forgotten about by other funding 'pots.'

There are signs that many activities funded under the Reconnect programme will continue, being self-sustaining, such as the new Squirrel Dreys. Inevitably some providers are seeking further funding to continue delivering their activities, but they recognise Reconnect was a lifeline, with the pandemic reducing charitable funds by 30%.

Several providers have commented on the value of having a cause, such as Reconnect, to galvanise the community behind. Reconnect is believed to have become a brand that is recognised and understood, and has helped providers place and explain their offer in a context. It has also helped providers link activity with others, and to sign post C&YP to other opportunities. This is true also those in the children's workforce who have been able to encourage C&YP they are working with to engage in activities in their communities. This is illustrated particularly with the work of the Leisure Centres, who provided direct

routes in for foster carers and social workers to discuss the needs of the C&YP they were supporting and how they could access opportunities at the Centres.

## 2.15 **Social Media**

Almost 4,000 people have followed the Reconnect Facebook page since the page's inception in July 2021 and, in this time, Reconnect posted and shared over 400 stories, news, offers and relevant information for children, parents and families through their Reconnect Facebook page.

Figures show almost **780,000** people were reached from Reconnects' own offers, discounts, activities, and events including free bus passes, leisure centre discounts, benefits-related free school meal offers, free online educational tools and signposts to vital support and help for Kent families, particularly during holiday periods. Thousands more were reached through story and post sharing by Reconnect through tagging into partner event posts and mentioning Reconnect in their feedback.

The Reconnect Facebook and Instagram pages are still live as KCC recognise that at present, it is still a great channel through which to continue sharing news and information relevant to families with children.

## 2.16 **National Awards**

The Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme was a shortlisted finalist in two national awards; the Municipal Journal's Best Council Services Team, and the Local Government Chronicle's Best Children's Service. Unfortunately the programme did not win the awards, but it demonstrates the recognition the programme has achieved.

# 3. **Evaluation of Delivery Against Key Parameters**

## 3.1 **Community Engagement**

Reconnect was intended to be a Kent County Council led, community-based programme. The evidence above indicates this was successfully achieved.

Families said at the outset of the programme, "Keep it local". The Local Children's Partnership Groups (LCPGs) made that a reality for Reconnect, targeting the offer to their community's needs, using their local knowledge and networks to draw in organisations, clubs, individuals and businesses to deliver support. Through the locality grants, approaching 600 organisations provided opportunities and support to C&YP.

Delivery involved district and a small number of parish councils, schools, sports and leisure clubs, community groups, charities, businesses, Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service and individuals. Over 50 organisations provided area/county level services through grants or commissions.

Every major leisure centre in Kent (40) participated in Reconnect in summer 2022.

### 3.2 Spending by Theme

One key parameter was to spend KCC's £10m contribution equally between the five Reconnect themes. It proved easier to spend against some themes than others, albeit in reality spend on much activity could be assigned to a few themes. For example, a family swimming session could be "friends and family" or "sports, activities and the outdoors". The table below sets out the spend by theme as at August 2022.

	<b>Total Spend (£)</b>	<b>% Spend</b>
Programme Costs	420,857	5%
Economic Wellbeing	1,205,821	15%
Friends, Family and Community	1,385,728	17%
Health and Happiness	2,148,872	26%
Learning Missed	1,542,248	19%
Sport, Activities and the Outdoors	1,426,830	18%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,130,356</b>	<b>100%</b>

The high demand for mentoring and counselling support for children and young people meant commissions assigned to Health and Happiness took the funding spent against this theme to 26% of the £8.1m spent as of 16 August 2022. It was more difficult to commission activity linked to the Economic Wellbeing theme due to sector challenges. This was more noticeable with the spend at LCPG level which saw 13% given to initiatives linked to Economic Wellbeing, and 25% toward Sports, Activities and the Outdoors. At a programme level action was taken to try to balance the spend, for example a specific grant round focused on Economic Wellbeing was undertaken, but unfortunately the number and quality of bids received resulted in only £72k of the £150k budget being awarded.

As per the key parameters, one quarter (£2.5m) of Reconnect's budget was distributed via grant award rounds managed by LCPGs. Work was undertaken to streamline the grant awarding process, enabling three grant rounds to be run.

### 3.2 Governance Structure

The structure set out in the Cabinet paper of July 2021 was put in place:

- The **Reconnect Partnership Board** supplied strategic oversight, direction, and steering for the Reconnect programme. The Chair for this group was Nadeem Aziz, Dover District Council Chief Executive and was formed of a wide range of individuals from stakeholders such as the NHS, Kent Police, voluntary and community sector reps, schools and early years providers, Kent PACT, and other services within KCC.
- **Delivery Board** - The Programme Director, David Adams chaired this group. The delivery board met 2-weekly and considered recommendations for commissions from Theme Teams, new bids, connected the programme

locally and countywide, brought a wide range of perspectives to enhance proposals, reviewed performance of activities and programmes already underway and provided direction to services.

- **Assurance** was supplied for the programme through various teams, such as Corporate Assurance and Risk Team, Internal Audit, Health and Safety, Strategic Commissioning and Finance.
- **Political governance** was provided through the Cabinet Members for Integrated Children’s Services and Education and Skills, with reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny, and verbal reports by Cabinet Members to Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.
- **The Corporate Management Team** received an update on Reconnect and individual Corporate Directors have engaged to ensure services in their directorates contributed.
- **Involvement of Young People** - a young persons’ engagement strategy was developed setting out Reconnect’s approach to engaging young people on a variety of levels. This recognised that our touch points for young people were the thousands of individuals, paid and volunteers, who are working week in, week out with C&YP, talking to them about their lives, hopes, ambitions, and wants. They have shaped their offers around the voices of the C&YP they work with, co-produced their activities. These individuals have provided views to the Programme Team, bid for funds to deliver activities request by C&YP, and feedback on the successes and challenges. A Reconnect Young Persons Steering Group was set up to provide advice, guidance, and strategic direction to the programme Delivery Board – ensuring that young people were involved, consulted, and represented in decision making. However, the fast pace of the programme meant too often decisions needed to be made without the input of this group. Young People served on the LCPG grant panels, evaluating applications. Young people from the Participation Team formed the judging panel for the Reconnect Community Awards to ensure these were truly reflective of views and values of young people themselves.

The Cabinet paper also set out the intention for there to be a small programme team, with support being provided to the programme through staff embedded in services (Communications, Finance, Strategic Commissioning), and via staff in all parts of the Council. This was achieved and highly valued by colleagues. Embedded staff had the support and expertise of others in their services to draw on. Colleagues from across KCC worked together in Theme Teams or via the Delivery Board, gaining insights into the work of other, their perspectives on issues and forming new working partnerships.

#### 4. **Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme**

- 4.1 The HAF programme was launched for the Easter 2021 school holidays amidst the ongoing uncertainty of lockdowns and restrictions and expanded each holiday period as more providers were funded and places became more widely available:

Holiday Period	Places Offered	Take-up
----------------	----------------	---------

<b>Easter 2021</b>	2262	1861
<b>Summer 2021</b>	4748	4577
<b>Christmas 2021</b>	3236	2836
<b>Easter 2022</b>	5886	5175
<b>Summer 2022*</b>	7401	7107

\*awaiting final monitoring from a few programmes so take-up will increase

- Easter 2022, 3624 more places offered than in 2021 with 3314 more children taking up a place.
  - Summer 2022, 2653 more places offered than in 2021 with 2530 more children taking up a place.
- 4.2 The HAF Programme Team have seen first-hand during monitoring visits the exciting opportunities and activities available to children and young people, these have included water sports, horse riding, team sports, day trips to organised events, skateboarding, dance, arts and crafts and forming a rock band. Opportunities have also been taken to incorporate other activities through Reconnect, for example in summer 2022 CREST awards (science, technology, engineering and maths based) were available to Kent families to access. Through HAF programmes 1961 children participated in this opportunity.
- 4.3 Family activities have included recipe ideas to support cooking on a budget with ingredients included, family cooking sessions, outdoor pizza making, family BBQ's, family breakfasts and many more inspiring ideas.
- 4.4 Some programmes have also benefitted from funding or resources from supermarkets and other organisations and have used these to support families and enrich their programmes.
- 4.5 Feedback received from parents was that access to the HAF provision was further enabled by use of the free bus passes available during the summer holidays making access especially in rural areas easier.
- 5. Reconnect Community Awards and Celebration Event**
- 5.1 The Reconnect Community Awards celebrated the fantastic work of everyone who had helped make Reconnect a success. These provided the opportunity for members of the public and service users to nominate individuals and organisations who had gone above and beyond to help reconnect C&YP to the programmes five aims, to recognise young volunteers and outstanding individuals. The participation Team in KCC were the judging panel, sifting through the many entries to shortlist finalists and winners. A celebration event was held on Thursday 6th October 2022, hosted by Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director – Children, Young People and Education with shortlisted finalists invited and attendees from a wide variety of organisations who had been involved in the delivery of some of the many activities over the previous year. The Chairman of the County Council presented the awards. Special recognition was also paid on the night to the local bus companies who had so generously supported free travel and to the Theme Leads who had worked tirelessly to drive forward the programme. The evening also included a film highlighting the Reconnect programme



<https://vimeo.com/752459732/1e6b61f074> and another regards Culture Camps from the summer of 2022 <https://vimeo.com/755184831/4b3099e6d8>

## 6. Reconnect Legacy

6.1 It is hoped that several projects, delivered as part of Reconnect, will continue in future years and form part of the programme's legacy:

1. Big Kent Writing Challenge – The KM Charity Team was pleased with how the competition went and are confident that they will be able to secure sponsorship to deliver the competition annually, a short film demonstrates this year's Awards ceremony <https://vimeo.com/752418952/8d9ce8eabff>.
2. Simon Langton Girls School were the winners of the first Reconnect Hackathon, with their proposal to create a platform for all Kent schools to share their thoughts and activities related to addressing climate change. A short video showcasing the event can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/693883059/09f001c4a7>. Pupils have launched their website [www.biojoyversity.org](http://www.biojoyversity.org) which is supported by academics and professions from a wide range of backgrounds, as well as KCC's Environment Team. This will continue to grow and flourish, providing a voice for the County's C&YP to help achieve the change we need.
3. Maidstone School of Science and Technology (SST) was awarded £1,000 at the second Reconnect Hackathon event to deliver their idea of a wellbeing app. This will ask students how they are feeling and signpost to ideas and support for improving physical and mental health. Active Kent is supporting SST with this project and the app will continue beyond Reconnect. If successful, the app may be able to be replicated in other schools or settings.
4. Safety Pin – a project where QR codes are displayed in public places. Young people can scan the codes with their phones and be directed to a website containing links to information and support services. Reconnect funded the pilot of Safety Pin in West Kent but it is hoped that the project will be rolled out county-wide in the future.
5. Free holiday travel for young people – KCC Public Transport is exploring how such ticketing can be delivered in the future, both from a funding perspective and a technical perspective.
6. E-voucher system - Reconnect worked with Wonde Ltd to produce Reconnect e-vouchers and Holiday, Activities and Food Programme (HAF) vouchers. Services across KCC can create bespoke e-vouchers which can be used to provide specific support or access to an offer. Wonde has further developed its HAF platform, which is now used by several Local Authorities. Reconnect pulled services across KCC together to collectively commission an e-voucher provider. A new contract is in place with Wonde which is enabling service units to streamline and improve their processes for supporting children and families.
7. Playground has secured funding from the Arts Council and will continue delivering creative play sessions for under 2s in libraries and children's centres until March 2023. The Playground project has also secured Arts Council **National Portfolio Holder status**, which attracts 3 years of

funding for 2023-26. The countywide rollout of the project has been hugely successful, as evidenced in the documentary the team had produced.

8. If the pilot of the Brighter Worlds project in West Kent is successful, it may be rolled out countywide. The animation and training package, that Reconnect funded the development of, will be available for future years for schools and settings to use.
9. Kent Scout's Squirrels Drays will continue to run following support to train volunteers and funding to set up the groups.
10. Due to the success of the first Lessons in a Box project, Visit Kent is delivering another Lessons in a Box project in September 2022. This project was STEM based and will give pupils in key stage 2 the opportunity to find out how engineering, science and technology have influenced some Kent attractions. These resources stay in schools to use with future cohorts.
11. Training and support has been provided to community groups on child safeguarding and bid writing. This will continue to support these groups with their ongoing work with C&YP.
12. Counselling support for young people Mental Health Support Teams will continue to be funded until August 2023 to ensure much needed support is accessible.
13. ShivaNova has also secured Arts Council **National Portfolio Holder status**, and thus funding for 2023-26. They plan to continue delivering in South Kent.

## 8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The evidence shows that the Kent community has enabled the Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People programme to deliver something for everyone. It delivered a wide range of opportunities to C&YP, covering all five areas of the programme, with an offer for all ages. Those involved continue to deliver week in, week out to the County's C&YP and their efforts cannot be commended highly enough. Many C&YP are in a better place because of the programme; being fitter, happier, less isolated, more connected. There is still more that needs to be done over the years ahead to ensure the pandemic does not have a lasting detrimental impact on the County's C&YP, but the prompt action of the Council, through the creation of Reconnect, has gone some way to ameliorating the effects for many C&YP.

## 9. Recommendation

- 9.1 Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report.

## 10. Background documents

21/00044 - Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme  
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2489>

## 11. Contact Details

Report Author:

David Adams  
Reconnect Programme Director  
03000 414989  
david.adams@kent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

**Work Programme - Scrutiny Committee January 2023****Items identified for upcoming meetings**

SFI – Highways Improvement Plans – currently in progress.

SFI – S106 complete. Report sent to Leader/Cabinet Member for response (20/10/22)

<b>23 February 2023</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Item background</b>
Vision Zero – 18 months on from the adoption of Vision Zero – The Road Safety Strategy for Kent 2021 – 2026	<a href="#">Vision Zero</a>
Highways Improvement Plans - SFI	Report to Scrutiny
<b>20 April 2023 (possible pre-election period)</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Item background</b>
Homeless Connect – 6 month update on Transition Plans	Concerns raised in September 2022 over Homeless Connect Decisions 22/00075 and 22/00076
Carer's Strategy – 1 year on	<a href="#">Carers Strategy</a>

**June 2023 – Budget monitoring year end**

**June 2023 – Scrutiny Committee meeting as Crime and Disorder Committee**

**December 2023 - Budget monitoring report**

**January 2024 – Draft Budget 2024/2025 and MTFP**

**March 2024 – Review of SEND Sub-Committee – Annual Report**

This page is intentionally left blank