



Summons to and
Agenda for a
Meeting on
**Thursday, 21st
September, 2023**
at **10.30 am** or on the
rising of the **Special
Freedom of the
County meeting,**
whichever is the later



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
SESSIONS HOUSE
MAIDSTONE

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

To: All Members of the County Council

A meeting of the County Council will be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ on Thursday, 21st September, 2023 at **10.30 am** to deal with the following business. **The meeting is scheduled to end by 4.30pm.**

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record **(Pages 1 - 14)**
4. Corporate Parenting Panel - Minutes for noting **(Pages 15 - 22)**
5. Chairman's Announcements
6. Questions
7. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)
8. Section 5 Report – UASC (to follow)
9. Kent Partnership County Youth Justice Plan 2023/24 **(Pages 23 - 100)**
10. Treasury Management Annual Report - 2022 - 23 **(Pages 101 - 122)**
11. Motions for Time Limited Debate **(Pages 123 - 126)**

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

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 13 July 2023.

PRESENT: Mr G Cooke (Chairman), Mr B J Sweetland (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr D Beaney, Mrs C Bell, Mrs R Binks, Mr T Bond, Mr A Booth, Mr A Brady, Mr D L Brazier, Mrs B Bruneau, Mr S R Campkin, Miss S J Carey, Sir Paul Carter, CBE, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mrs P T Cole, Mr P Cole, Mr N J Collor, Mr P C Cooper, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr M C Dance, Ms M Dawkins, Mr M Dendor, Mr R W Gough, Ms K Grehan, Ms S Hamilton, Peter Harman, Jenni Hawkins, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Rich Lehmann, Mr B H Lewis, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Mrs M McArthur, Mr J P McInroy, Ms J Meade, Mr J Meade, Mr D Murphy, Mr P J Oakford, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr H Rayner, Mr O Richardson, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr D Robey, Mr D Ross, Mr A Sandhu, MBE, Mr T L Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr L Sullivan, Mr R J Thomas, Mr D Watkins, Mr S Webb, Mr M Whiting, Ms L Wright and Mr C Passmore

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

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

The Chairman welcomed new Member for Maidstone Central Division, Mr Passmore, to County Council and congratulated him on his success at the recent by-election.

150. Apologies for Absence
(Item 1)

The Democratic Services Manager reported apologies for absence from Mr Broadley, Mr Cannon, Mrs Dean, Mrs Game, Mrs Hudson, Mr Ozog, Mrs Parfitt-Reid, and Mr Wright.

Members were advised that Mr Chittenden and Ms Constantine had given their formal apologies and were joining the meeting virtually.

151. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda
(Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

152. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2023 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2023 be approved as a correct record.

153. Corporate Parenting Panel - Minutes for noting - 12 April 2023
(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 12 April 2023 be noted.

154. Chairman's Announcements
(Item 5)

Mr John Kirby

- (1) With the greatest of sadness, the Chairman informed Members of the death of Mr John Kirby, former Member for Ramsgate from 2009-2013. During his time at Kent County Council, Mr Kirby served on the Planning Applications Committee, Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee, Environment, Highways and Waste POC, Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Board, the Select Committee on Dementia and was Chairman of the Select Committee on Domestic Abuse. In addition to his time at Kent County Council, Mr Kirby was also appointed to a number of outside bodies including Ramsgate Town Partnership (Town Centre Management), East Kent Community NHS Trust and Sandwich & Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve Steering Group. He was a Thanet District Councillor and was Mayor of Ramsgate in 1993.
- (2) Tributes were made by Mr Gough, Dr Sullivan, Mr Hook, Mr Lehmann, and Mr Shonk.

Mr Leyland Ridings

- (3) With the greatest of regret the Chairman reported that Mr Leyland Ridings had very recently, on 11 July 2023, passed away. The Chairman invited Members to pay tribute to Mr Ridings at its next full meeting on 21 September 2023.

Motion of condolence

- (4) Mr Cooke proposed, and Mr Sweetland seconded, that the Council formally record the sense of loss it feels on the sad passing of Mr Kirby and Mr Ridings and extends to their families and friends its heartfelt sympathy to them in their sad bereavements.

Agreed unanimously.

- (5) The Chairman held a one-minute silence in memory of Mr Kirby and Mr Ridings.

KYCC – Youth Mental Health Journalist of the Year

- (6) At The Day's Global Young Journalist Awards Ceremony on Thursday 15 June, Shreya Nivarty was named as the winner of the Mental Health Journalist of the Year Award. The Chairman said Shreya was a member of Kent Youth County Council (KYCC) and Chair of the Mental Health Campaign group. Shreya submitted an article about her experience with KYCC and why she got involved. The award was presented by Dr Stuart Lawrence, author of Silence is Not an Option and brother of Stephen Lawrence. The Chairman was pleased that Shreya's work had been recognised in this way and invited Members in congratulating her on this remarkable achievement.

Birthday Honours List

- (7) The Chairman referred Members to His Majesty the King's first Birthday Honours List announced in June and was pleased to refer Members to the list of Kent recipients. The Chairman formally congratulated all those who received an Honour.

Newly Appointed Deputy Lieutenants of Kent

- (8) The Chairman referred Members to the list of newly appointed Deputy Lieutenants of Kent, appointed in June by the Lord-Lieutenant, The Lady Colgrain. Each of the seven new Deputy Lieutenants had been appointed for their positive contributions to the County and the Nation. The Chairman formally congratulated all those appointed.

Chairman's Charities

- (9) The Chairman thanked Members for their generous donations made at the Annual meeting in May and was delighted to start his fundraising endeavours and raise awareness for young carers in Kent.
- (10) The Chairman explained that following the presentation at the annual meeting, Ms Wright secured tickets for Young Carers to attend a music event in June at Dreamland. In total 50 family tickets and several pairs of tickets were provided, and young carers and their families enjoyed a very well-deserved activity together. The Chairman personally thanked Ms

Wright for helping to make this happen and extended his thanks to Ms Liz Addison at Dreamland, for the very kind and thoughtful gesture.

HMS Kent - Freedom of the County

(11) The Chairman said it was his wish, and the wish of his predecessor Mrs Lesley Game, that HMS Kent be awarded the Freedom of the County of Kent. The Chairman was delighted to announce that, in consultation with all Group Leaders, the Freedom of the County would be bestowed on HMS Kent at a specially convened meeting ahead of Full Council on 21 September.

155. Questions

(Item 6)

In accordance with Sections 14.15 to 14.22 of the Constitution, 12 questions were submitted by the deadline, 9 questions were asked, and replies given. A record of all questions put and answers given at the meeting is available [online](#) with the papers for this meeting.

Questions 10 - 12 were not put in the time allocated but written answers were provided.

156. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)

(Item 7)

- (1) The Leader opened his report by referring to the severe and growing financial stress across local government and explained that one of the key issues for rural authorities was the balance and distribution of funding, the case for which had been put to the Secretary of State. Mr Gough said although the Secretary of State's speech to the Local Government Association (LGA) spoke of a fairer and more rational allocation of resources across authorities, much of it was focused on simplicity and flexibility in funding which, whilst also welcome, was a different issue.
- (2) Mr Gough explained that the Council was involved in three separate judicial review claims in relation to the care of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and proceedings had recently been issued to the Home Office regarding the operation of the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). He said the three claims would be heard together and an urgent preliminary issues hearing would take place on 20 and 21 July 2023. He highlighted that the National Transfer Scheme had to operate in an effective way for the Council to meet the full range of its statutory duties and explained that whilst many placements had been made by the NTS it had not always kept pace with the number of arrivals. Mr Gough stressed that it had always been the Council's priority, under extremely challenging circumstances, to deliver a safe service.

- (3) Mr Gough explained that a change in Department for Education guidelines regarding Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) had meant that four schools in Kent had to close temporarily for roof strengthening works. Alternative provisions were established very quickly, and Mr Gough paid tribute to Members and officers across education, infrastructure, and communications for their work in minimising the disruption and anxiety for schools, children, and families.
- (4) Mr Gough referred to central government's proposals to end support for the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) by March 2024 and said the Council had a responsibility to ensure that the achievements of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) were maintained under the new arrangements and structure of the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership.
- (5) Cabinet on 29 June 2023 considered the devolution agenda and agreed to submit an expression of interest to government. Mr Gough said he believed the right answer for Kent and Medway, under current national policy, was a mayoral county combined authority, and said his aim was to be as wide ranging and inclusive as possible in taking the proposals forward. He highlighted that progress depended on open conversations with government and close working with partners and district colleagues.
- (6) Mr Gough referred to the reinstatement of Operation Brock and the pressure on the traffic management system over the summer months. He said this was part of a much wider issue which included the future introduction of the Entry Exit System (EES) and European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). He said joint working, in the form of task and finish groups, had taken place with the Department for Transport and other key partners to determine long term solutions.
- (7) The Leader turned again to the financial pressures on the Council and referred to the twelve-week Community Wardens consultation that began on 12 July 2023. He acknowledged that, unfortunately, it was unlikely this would be the last difficult proposal the Council had to confront.
- (8) Mr Gough spoke positively about the Family Hubs consultation which ran until 13 September 2023 and explained that the Council, one of fourteen national trailblazers, was able to access up to £10million in transformation funding over three years. He said this was an opportunity for the Council to work closely with the NHS and other partners to ensure that children and families received the best start in life. He explained that two pilots were being launched at Seashells Childrens Centre on Sheppey and Milmead Childrens Centre in Margate.
- (9) Mr Gough said the government confirmed, just ahead of the Big Free Bus weekend on 24 and 25 June 2023, the second tranche of the Bus Service Improvement Plan and said a series of measures would be taken forward to support bus travel in the county. He also explained that £6million in additional funding from government was now being deployed to tackle potholes and other road surface problems.

- (10) Mr Gough said the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Accelerated Progress Plan was in the final stages of sign off from the Department for Education and he had been pleased to join the Strategic Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) recently at one of their meetings.
- (11) Finally, Mr Gough commented on migration and resettlement schemes, the use of bridging hotels, and the significant challenges in terms of housing arrangements and school moves faced by children and families. Mr Gough said the Council was actively working with district colleagues to ensure the right support for families was provided.
- (12) The Leader of the Labour Group, Dr Sullivan, responded to the Leader's remarks. She referred to central government's empty promises of fairer, simpler, and more flexible funding and compared the issues that currently faced the Council to "Groundhog Day".
- (13) Dr Sullivan spoke about the lack of support from central government in relation to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and how this had led to the Council's threat of legal action against the government.
- (14) Dr Sullivan thanked the members of the public who had given up their time to protest against the proposed closures of some Household Waste Recycling Centres in Kent. She said the right to protest was an important part of civic duty and public responsibility.
- (15) Dr Sullivan commented on the impact of Operation Brock on Kent residents across the county, especially surrounding the ports, and hoped for a long-term solution from central government.
- (16) In relation to RAAC, Dr Sullivan joined the Leader in thanking officers for their efficiency in ensuring the effected schools were safe and showed appreciation for the offer of briefings and information surrounding the required urgent key decision. She also thanked the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills for information in relation to a separate urgent key decision, acknowledging that both situations warranted the use of the urgent key decision process.
- (17) Dr Sullivan turned to Family Hubs and the Youth Investment Fund and questioned why a smaller amount of funding, than that referred to in Framing Kent's Future, was being requested. She condemned the closure of some Children's Centres and the proposal of a more digital offer, noting that this had been tried during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown and had resulted in children not socialising, and an increased need for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and speech and language therapy.
- (18) Dr Sullivan confirmed that the Labour Group supported devolution, however, they wanted to see power and resources go further and deeper into communities, and she questioned what the additional, and potentially costly, mayoral county combined authority layer above the Council would bring.

She emphasised that fully funded local government with devolution down to communities was needed.

- (19) Finally, Dr Sullivan referred to SEND across the public sector where parents and groups within communities were fighting for chances and opportunities that they legally deserved. She asked for open and transparent accountability at the SEND Scrutiny Sub-Committee and the opportunity for Members to question what was being done. Dr Sullivan referred to the Accelerated Progress Plan and its submission to the DfE without sufficient public scrutiny. She referred to the funding gap in the Council's budget and hoped the Administration would be open to new ideas and solutions.
- (20) Mr Lehmann, Leader of the Green and Independent Group, congratulated Mr Passmore on his election victory and welcomed him to the Council.
- (21) Mr Lehmann spoke about events since the last Full Council in late May and said it had been the hottest June on record, both globally and in the UK, and the record daily global temperature was broken three times in the space of four days between 3rd and 6th July. He said the climate crisis was no longer a distant threat and any pretence that it was not happening was a failure of central government and of governments around the world. He noted that within the Leader's remarks there had not been a single mention of the climate. Mr Lehmann compared that with the leader's speeches from Full Council meetings in June and July 2020 where much of it related to the Covid-19 pandemic and said if the climate emergency was being treated with the seriousness it deserved the same would apply. He commented that sadly, any work on climate and biodiversity was curtailed by the need to balance the short-term financial stability of the Council against the long term sustainability of a habitable planet.
- (22) Mr Lehmann said the Green and Independent Group fully supported devolution; however, it was against the form of devolution which was, it appeared, currently on offer from central government. His group's definition of devolution was based around the passing down, or decentralisation of power, and not the passing up to a directly elected mayor. Mr Lehmann questioned whether any Kent leaders wanted an elected mayor and said he strongly believed that no deal was better than a bad deal at this stage.
- (23) Mr Lehmann referred to Brexit and expressed his disappointed at the reinstatement of Operation Brock. He said it was reaching a stage where a school holiday without Operation Brock in place would feel odd and regretfully acknowledged that, with the delayed implementation of the Entry Exit System, it was likely that the situation would worsen. He clarified that he felt Operation Brock made the best of a bad situation, although it was one that could have been avoided.
- (24) Regarding RAAC, Mr Lehmann also thanked officers and Members involved in the swift action taken to minimise disruption to pupils. He said he hoped that the necessary repairs and safety measures would be in place rapidly to

ensure that the effected schools could resume normal activities as soon as possible.

- (25) Mr Lehmann said Community Wardens played a vital role in communities and his group's attempts last year to try and expand the service and, this year, to try and prevent the cutting of the service, were an indication of the value it placed on them. He said the warden's role had become more vital since the widespread removal of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) across the county, and residents were losing trusted points of contact.
- (26) Mr Hook, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, welcomed new Member for Maidstone Central, Mr Passmore. He summarised Mr Passmore's background which included time in the Royal Navy, a varied career in business, and his current role as a management consultant helping firms meet their environmental, sustainable, and ethical standards. Mr Hook explained that Mr Passmore's great grandfather had been a Member of KCC for Sidcup and his great aunt had been a member of KCC during World War 2.
- (27) Mr Hook said his group fully supported the legal challenge against central government regarding Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and highlighted that the protection of refugee children was a morally important issue and a national responsibility. Mr Hook condemned the painting over of children's murals at the intake centre in Kent and said he thought the spirit of people in Kent, and the country, had been misjudged.
- (28) Mr Hook said his group strongly supported the devolution of power to local levels and reminded Members of a motion submitted by his group earlier in the year. He said Kent was big enough to exercise more control and his group opposed a directly elected mayor, acknowledging the difficulties in holding an elected mayor to account. He referred to the changing of governments over time and noted that the proposal for devolution in places like Scotland and Wales was developed over many years.
- (29) Mr Hook was pleased that RAAC in schools was being addressed and referred to the future and cost of the Council's headquarters, Sessions House, and questioned when a decision regarding this would be progressed.
- (30) Mr Hook expressed his disappointment regarding the reimplementation of Operation Brock and noted that every school holiday brought Operation Brock and chaos to roads across Kent. He suggested that border controls should be changed when the Brexit agreement was reviewed in the second half of 2024.
- (31) The Leader responded to a number of points that were raised. He said he felt all groups were in broad agreement on the asylum issues and reiterated that the National Transfer Scheme had placed a significant number of children in local authorities across the country, without which a crisis would

have occurred long ago. He said issues arose where the rate of dispersal did not match the numbers of people arriving and explained that the Council secured in 2020/21 a financial regime from government which meant Kent council taxpayers were not responsible in the way they had been in the past. He said the Council had always been concerned that, without an effective scheme in place, it would not be able to deliver the full range of its statutory services.

- (32) Mr Gough said he supported the idea of devolution down to communities and said devolution was vital to address powers relating to buses and other public transport. He acknowledged Mr Hook's point that it was likely to be a process of many steps and said it was vital that, at this stage, Kent and Medway commenced a dialogue with government, so that powers and funding could be brought to the county sooner rather than later.
- (33) The Leader responded to Dr Sullivan's comments on SEND and said she had always been welcome to join the SIAB Committee, as well as the SEND Scrutiny Sub-Committee. He confirmed there was an open public approach and he had attended the multi-agency partnership board to see how different agencies were working together.
- (34) Mr Gough said he thought all the group leaders agreed that Operation Brock was simply mitigation needed to manage pressures and not the perfect solution. He expressed his concern regarding the upcoming EES and ETIAS which would also need mitigation to avoid further disruption. He stressed that the Council's Administration was deeply involved in seeking long term solutions from government.
- (35) The Leader emphasised the importance of Family Hubs in bringing together health and other key partners, to ensure the best start in life for children. Mr Gough explained that through wider outreach, as well as a digital offer, the Council could ensure that services were brought out to communities that most needed them.
- (36) Finally, the Leader joined the other group Leaders in welcoming Mr Passmore as a new Member of the Council.
- (37) RESOLVED that the Leader's update be noted.

157. End of Year Performance Report - 2022/23

(Item 8)

- (1) Mr Gough proposed, and Mr Oakford seconded the motion that
"County Council notes the Performance Report."
- (2) The Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 1.
- (3) RESOLVED that the County Council notes the Performance Report.

Mr Baldock asked that his vote to abstain from the recommendation be noted in the minutes.

158. Annual Report on Urgent Decisions
(Item 9)

- (1) The Chairman highlighted to Members that detailed consideration of decisions within the report should not form part of the debate.
- (2) Mr Gough proposed, and Mr Oakford seconded the motion that
“The County Council notes the report.”
- (3) The Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 2.
- (4) RESOLVED that the County Council notes the report.

159. External Audit - Annual Report 2021-22
(Item 10)

Mr Paul Dossett from Grant Thornton was in attendance for this item.

- (1) The Chairman welcomed Independent Auditor, Mr Paul Dossett from Grant Thornton, and explained that, in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) recommendations, audit findings would be highlighted and drawn to the attention of all Members.
- (2) Mr Paul Dossett from Grant Thornton introduced the report and answered questions from Members.
- (3) Mrs Binks proposed, and Mr Chard seconded the motion that
“The County Council notes the External Audit Annual Report 2021-22.”
- (4) Following the debate, the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 3.
- (5) RESOLVED that the County Council notes the External Audit Annual Report 2021-22.

160. Proportionality
(Item 11)

- (1) Mr Gough proposed, and Mr Oakford seconded the motion that
“County Council:

- (a) Notes the outcome of the recent by-election and that no changes are required under the proportionality rules.
 - (b) Confirms the continued delegated authority to the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Group leaders to adjust the allocation of committee places in order to conform to overall proportionality requirements and manage membership arrangements in line with the details set out in this report and that considered by Council on 25 May 2023.”
- (2) Following the debate, the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 1.
- (3) RESOLVED that County Council:
- (a) Notes the outcome of the recent by-election and that no changes are required under the proportionality rules.
 - (b) Confirms the continued delegated authority to the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Group leaders to adjust the allocation of committee places in order to conform to overall proportionality requirements and manage membership arrangements in line with the details set out in this report and that considered by Council on 25 May 2023.

161. Motions for Time Limited Debate
(Item 12)

Motion for Time Limited Debate 1 – Disposable E-cigarettes

- (1) Jenni Hawkins proposed, and Mr Hood seconded the following motion for time-limited debate:
- “County Council requests that the Executive write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to request that disposable vapes are banned.”
- (2) Following the debate, Mr Hood proposed a recorded vote.
- (3) The Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph 2 to the vote.
Motion lost.
- (4) The Chairman put the substantive motion set out in paragraph 1 to the vote.
Substantive Motion carried.
- (5) RESOLVED that County Council requests that the Executive write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to request that disposable vapes are banned.

Motion for Time Limited Debate 2 – ULEZ Expansion

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

“That County Council:

- Notes the existing KCC commitment to air quality in Kent via the Kent and Medway Low Emissions Strategy;
- Notes the disproportionate impact the ULEZ expansion will have on essential key workers and those on low incomes;
- Requests that the Leader of the Council write to the Mayor of London, expressing this Council’s considerable concern about the impact of the expansion and calling on the Mayor, explicitly, to reverse the decision.
- Requests that the Executive confirm that it will not permit any new ULEZ signs being erected on Kent County Council property nor any existing LEZ signs being changed.”

- (2) Mr Hook proposed and Mr Streatfeild seconded the following amendment:

“That County Council:

- Notes the existing KCC commitment to air quality in Kent via the Kent and Medway Low Emissions Strategy;
- Notes the disproportionate impact the ULEZ expansion will have on essential key workers ~~and~~, those on low incomes ~~and people without access to good public transport options; and~~
- Requests that the Leader of the Council
 - write to the Mayor of London, expressing this Council’s considerable concern about the impact of the expansion and calling on the Mayor, explicitly, to reverse the decision; ~~and~~
 - ~~lobby Government to ensure that, should the expansion progress, a scrappage scheme similar to the scheme available to Greater London residents is made available to Kent residents who work in, or have close family in, the proposed extended ULEZ area.~~
- Requests that the Executive confirm that it will not permit any new ULEZ signs being erected on Kent County Council property nor any existing LEZ signs being changed.”

- (3) Following the debate, the Chairman put the amendment set out in paragraph 2 to the vote.

Amendment lost.

- (4) Dr Sullivan proposed and Ms Grehan seconded the following amendment:

“That County Council:

- Notes the existing KCC commitment to air quality in Kent via the Kent and Medway Low Emissions Strategy;
- Notes the disproportionate impact the ULEZ expansion will have on essential key workers and those on low incomes;
- Requests that the Leader of the Council write to the Mayor of London, expressing this Council's considerable concern about the impact of the expansion and calling on the Mayor, explicitly, to reverse the decision.
- Requests that the Executive confirm that it will not permit any new ULEZ signs being erected on Kent County Council property nor any existing LEZ signs being changed."
- Requests that the Leader of the Council write to the Government to call for investment into a national scrappage scheme, investment into electronic charging points and investment into more environmentally friendly public transport that will give an affordable, reliable choice for Kent residents and businesses."

- (5) Following the debate, the Chairman put the amendment set out in paragraph 4 to the vote.

Amendment lost.

- (6) The Chairman put the substantive motion set out in paragraph 1 to the vote.

Substantive motion carried.

- (7) RESOLVED that the County Council;

- Notes the existing KCC commitment to air quality in Kent via the Kent and Medway Low Emissions Strategy;
- Notes the disproportionate impact the ULEZ expansion will have on essential key workers and those on low incomes;
- Requests that the Leader of the Council write to the Mayor of London, expressing this Council's considerable concern about the impact of the expansion and calling on the Mayor, explicitly, to reverse the decision.
- Requests that the Executive confirm that it will not permit any new ULEZ signs being erected on Kent County Council property nor any existing LEZ signs being changed.

Mr Hood asked that his vote against the substantive motion be noted in the minutes.

162. Monitoring Officer's Section 5 Report - UASC
(Item 13)

This item was taken after Item 4.

- (1) The Chairman explained he had approved the addition of this urgent item to the agenda.

- (2) The General Counsel provided an explanation of the Section 5 report.
- (3) RESOLVED that the County Council notes the report.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL – 31 May 2023

MINUTES of the meeting held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Dirk Ross (Chair), Dan Bride, Becki Bruneau, Gary Cooke, Tony Doran, Alison Farmer, Kelly Grehan, Sarah Hamilton, Sarah Hammond, Dylan Jeffrey, Kayleigh Leonard, Rory Love, Nancy Sayer, Tracy Scott and Caroline Smith.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Joanne Carpenter (Participation and Engagement Manager), James Clapson (Democratic Services Officer), Alice Gleave (Interim Assistant Director SEND Operations), Kevin Kasaven (Assistant Director), Leemya McKeown (Assistant Director, Safeguarding Professional Standards and Quality Assurance), Chis Nunn (Senior Management Information Officer) and Hayley Savage (Democratic Services Officer).

1. Membership

Members noted the following changes to the membership of the Panel:

- Rory Love OBE replaced Shellina Prendergast.
- Dylan Jeffrey replaced Margot McArthur.
- Kayleigh Leonard replaced Sophia Dunstan.
- Becki Bruneau joined the panel filling a vacant seat.

2. Apologies and substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Stephen Gray, Peter Harman, Lesley Game, David Beaney and Sharon Williams.

Dan Bride and Sarah Hamilton were present virtually.

3. Chairman's Announcements

The Chair advised that Trudy Dean had stepped down as Vice Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP).

It was proposed by Gary Cooke, seconded by Dylan Jeffrey, and AGREED that Becki Bruneau be elected Vice-Chair of the CPP.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2023 were correctly recorded.

5. Participation Team update

1. Jo Carpenter introduced the update and advised of the following:
 - The team had been busy supporting the newly qualified social worker recruitment programme.
 - There would be two new apprentices joining the team over the next couple of weeks.
 - A number of activities were scheduled to take place during the May half term holiday.
 - The Super Council, made up of the Children in Care Councils, came together on 31 May to consider the Government's response to the Social Care Review.
 - The Children in Care Council groups also met during the Easter school holiday. Their feedback on how children could be made to feel happy, safe and stable at home would be incorporated into staff training events.
 - The Young Adult Council had become well established, and an exclusive group for unaccompanied asylum seeking young people called YAC Extra had been set up to consider the specific issues these young people faced.

2. Kayleigh Leonard updated the panel on recent events that had taken place, they included:
 - Two activity sessions in Maidstone for children aged 5 and under.
 - A visit to Go-Ape for members of the Young Adult Council.
 - Two science days.
 - Two pizza making sessions at Pizza Express.
 - Rock climbing at Bowls Rock.
 - An event of Easter family fun and circus skills.
 - Cup cake decorating at a cake school in Maidstone.
 - A trip to Kent Cricket Club's ground in Canterbury.

3. Jo Carpenter advised of a new Our Children and Young People's Council (OCYPC) group called MAGIC (Making A Great and Important Change), that had met on 31 May. It provided an opportunity for children in care and adopted young people with special educational needs, to express how they felt about school, education, health, and wellbeing services.

4. Kevin Kasaven advised that following the recruitment process, KCC had offered 67 people Social Worker positions. There were also a number of Social Worker agency staff who were looking to return to permanent employment, however they sometimes required professional development and training to fill gaps in their experience.

5. Sarah Hammond said that KCC offered incentives for social workers to join and stay in the organisation. The Government was expected to restrict the number of agency staff that a local authority (LA) could employ. This would reduce the amount of work available to agency staff in future. Overall, there was a financial benefit for KCC to employ social workers directly.

6. It was agreed that the CPP chair would invite all KCC Members to attend the Corporate Parenting Team Day in July.
7. Gary Cooke, as Chairman of the Council, agreed that a corporate parenting stand could be set up outside the Council Chamber at the next Council meeting to help engage with Members, and raise the profile of the work being done.
8. The Chair of CPP welcomed any ideas that could raise the profile of the CPP. He would coordinate with Jo Carpenter about the quarterly newsletter and wished to send out a monthly CPP email to all Members, to highlight good news stories and upcoming events.
9. RESOLVED that the update was noted.

6. Challenge Card Update

1. Caroline Smith provided an updated on two challenge cards; the My Things Matter Pledge, and Accommodation for Care Leavers. She advised that KCC had signed up to the 'My Things Matter Pledge' which would help to ensure children had a better experience when moving home.
2. Caroline advised that the Accommodation for Care Leavers challenge card had a number of hurdles that were yet to be overcome. Local councils were hesitant to waive the requirement for care leavers to have lived in their area for three of the last five years in order to join the housing register. Care leavers often could not meet this criterion for reasons beyond their control and could find themselves unable to live close to where they worked, studied or had friends and relatives. Members of the CPP were asked to continue to champion the issue with their local council colleagues.
3. Members discussed the housing issues facing care leavers and acknowledged the social housing pressures local councils experienced. It was agreed that a report would come back to the next CPP meeting on 26 July. The report would look at the number of care experienced young adults, in which district they were living, the common reasons for them wanting to live in a different area and how this related to the current requirement for a local connection. The report would also consider how the project could be progressed and the ways in which Members of the CPP could offer support.
4. RESOLVED that the challenge card progress to date be noted.

7. Verbal Update by the Cabinet Member

1. Sue Chandler provided an update on the following:
 - From 1 May to 26 May, 99 unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) arrived in the county. This brought the total number to 503 so

far for 2023. The largest cohort was from Afghanistan, although there had been an increase in arrivals from Sudan.

- On 1 June there would be a UASC connections day that would give children the opportunity to meet their peers. Previous events of this type had been very successful.
- The Christmas Appeal had raised nearly £27,000. This money was used to provide £10 vouchers to young people and starter packs for care leavers when moving into their first home. Thanks were offered to the Corporate Parent Team and the Yong Lives Foundation for their work on the project. Items within the starter packs were bought in bulk through the Young Lives Foundation, to offer best value for money.

2. RESOLVED that the verbal update be noted.

8. Performance Scorecard for Children in Care

1. Chris Nunn presented the score card for March 2023 and the proposed targets for 2023/24. He explained that:
 - There were 27 key performance indicators (KPIs) that were measured monthly. National data was used to assess how Kent compared to others and this data was used to set appropriate targets.
 - The proposed targets had not changed from previous years, however there were changes to the methodology/definitions of three targets as detailed at paragraph 3 of the report.
 - There were 6 green, 13 amber and 8 red rated KPIs. The number of red KPIs had increased by one since the panel last met; that KPI was previously amber.
2. The Panel acknowledged that there was a shortage of foster carers due to a number of reasons including:
 - Competition with independent fostering agencies.
 - Affordability of housing; people bought smaller homes without spare rooms and dependents lived in the family home for longer, this led to less availability of spare rooms for foster children.
 - Some people have a fear of giving up paid employment to become a foster carer.
3. Caroline Smith detailed some of the work done to highlight the need for foster carers in Kent, such as the use of social media, the creation of a Members' pack, the inclusion of fostering information on the back of council tax bills, and the Foster Care Fortnight Project that had just taken place.
4. Caroline Smith advised that both online and in person foster care information sessions were held for people who were interested in fostering. CPP would consider the Annual Fostering Report at the October meeting; Caroline would include information on how many of the online attendees became foster carers compared to the number of in person attendees, and how many of these people remained foster carers a year after being approved to foster.

5. Sarah Hammond noted that Kent had not had any children's homes for around 25 years, lots of LA's stopped providing secured home provision when a national system was implemented that took the decision of who got placed in the homes away from LA's.
6. Gary Cooke highlighted that paragraph 4.3.4 of the report showed a lower percentage of children in care were issued a care plan within 20 weeks than children not in care. There would also be a review into the cases to identify the causes that led to the 20 week deadline being missed, and new SEN teams were in place and responsible for the provision of this service.
7. Rory Love asked about the barriers to getting 90% of children in care an up-to-date dental check. It was noted that there was a shortage of NHS dental practitioners in Kent, however KCC worked with NHS England around capacity and these children had priority access. The percentage of children in care with an up-to-date dental check had steadily improved since Covid 19 restrictions were lifted. The KPI also included UASC who sometimes had significant dental care requirements.
8. RESOLVED that the performance data in the Corporate Parenting Scorecard be noted.
9. **Kent Children in Care (CIC) in the statutory school years with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) - Access to Education**
1. Tony Doran introduced the report which offered a six monthly update on the access to education of Kent children in care in statutory school years who had an EHCP. During Tony's introduction it was noted that:
 - There were 28 children on the Virtual School Kent (VSK) EHCP tracker, this also included children at risk of exiting mainstream education.
 - 18 children were not registered on a school role and received SEN tuition, however six of these children were placed outside of Kent which made negotiating bespoke tuition more challenging.
 - Five children operated on a reduced school timetable. A reduced timetable could be used to manage a trauma, the child would return to full time education after a specified spell.
 - Two children were receiving education from non-Department for Education registered providers.
 - So far in the 2022/23 academic year, 25 children's cases had been escalated to the VSK and SEND Leadership Team's Complex Case meetings. Resolutions had been found for 12 children and 13 children's cases were ongoing due to their complexity.
2. Alice Gleave added the following points:
 - KCC was currently undertaking a sufficiency assessment that looked to increase capacity and ensure adequate educational resources were in place within schools to support children with EHCPs.
 - There was a post-16 year old EHCP case team, that worked to create transition plans for children in years 10 and 11.

- There would be a deep dive investigation to establish the causes of the low percentage of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks for children in care. The investigation would present clear actions for implementation by the assessment teams, and the performance would be closely monitored.
 - The service was undergoing a number of changes that were designed to ensure the right children received the right support at the right time. The child should always be kept at the centre of the process.
 - Appendix C of the report detailed KCC's pledge to young children that consisted of three elements; A good education; Getting ready for being an adult; Championing your needs and interests. The format of EHCPs had been redesigned to ensure they captured the voice of the child and was geared towards their aspirations.
3. The Chair asked about the educational support provided to the 18 children not registered at a school and for those on a limited timetable. He was advised that each child had a bespoke provision that was tailored to their individual needs. It could be based in the home, a therapeutic setting, or an educational setting; some children also received therapeutic support to help them cope with full time education. The outcomes section of the EHCP determined the type of support provided to the child. The overarching aim was to provide appropriate support to enable the child to return to full time education when the time was right.
 4. In response to a question from Sarah Hamilton about pathways to independence and further education, Alice Gleave advised the board that there had been meetings with college representatives. They had discussed what skills and courses could be provided to support young people who had experienced a disrupted education. East Kent College had taken part in a small scale trial and offered a transition year with enhanced support for some of these young people.
 5. Tracy Scott highlighted that speech and language support was often identified in EHCPs, however it was not always accessible as the service was under great strain. Nancy Sayer advised that there had been a meeting about the issue on 30 May and she offered to email Tracy details of the outcomes.
 6. Rory Love asked why the key findings statistics at 2.1 of the report seemed to show a lower percentage of children in care with an EHCP than in the data provided by the Local Government Authority (LGA)? It was noted that the data shown at 2.1 of the report only considered the number KCC's children in care, whereas the LGA's data also included children placed in Kent by other LAs, this increased the percentage. 60-70% of the children placed in Kent from other LA's had an EHCP. It was agreed that a further breakdown of the figures would be provided when the report came to a future CPP meeting.
 7. Kevin Kasaven advised that KCC did not place children in placements rated inadequate or requires improvement however, the majority of other LA's did not have this restriction. KCC had strong commissioning arrangements that enabled access placements rated outstanding within Kent and these placements also cost the Council less than other LA's were charged for lower rated or unregulated placements.

8. Becki Bruneau noted that the drive for Ofsted ratings and league table results could offer an incentive for schools not to be inclusive. Tony Doran said that there was pressure on schools to solely focus on good exam results and Ofsted ratings. It was a challenge to make schools recognise the importance of inclusion. Alice Gleave added that KCC had teams that worked with schools to help mitigate their concerns and garner confidence that they could offer a good inclusive education. Last year KCC held a meeting with secondary school headteachers to look at the acceptance of seven SEND children, this allowed the headteachers to see what other schools were offering, and to offer peer to peer challenge.
9. Gary Cooke said that encouraging inclusion within secondary schools was made more difficult as they were not maintained by the LA. How closely a child lived to the school was the key determining factor for acceptance. This could lead to some SEN children going to their nearest school rather than the right school that would meet their needs.
10. Rory Love highlighted that the Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education Strategy was going through KCC's governance process. Once agreed it could be used in different forums to encourage key stakeholders to be more inclusive. Rory added that Ofsted also wished to encourage inclusive practices and would not award an outstanding rating to a school that did not have inclusive policies in place.
11. RESOLVED to note the work of the virtual school and Kent SEN in supporting its young people.

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

To: County Council – 21 September 2023

Subject: Kent partnership County Youth Justice Plan 2023/24

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report:

Children's and Young People's Cabinet Committee - 12th September 2023

The 2023/24 Kent Youth Justice plan was submitted to the national Youth Justice Board as required by 30th June 2023.

Future Pathway of report:

The plan will be shared at the next multi-agency statutory County Youth Justice partnership Board (CYJB) meeting 4th September 2023.

The actions within the plan are monitored and supported by the Youth Justice Service and by the CYJB partnership. The plan will be published on KCC's public facing website and will be shared with KCC's divisional management team.

Electoral Division: ALL

Summary:

The Kent Youth Justice multi-agency statutory partnership are required to create and submit an annual Youth Justice Plan to the national Youth Justice Board (YJB). The 2023/24 plan was co-produced with the Youth Justice partnership and KCC's Youth Justice workforce. It describes how the partnership will meet our ambitions to deliver a high-quality service for children, families, and victims of youth crime.

The plan includes ambitions for the next 12months, which are shared with the Youth Justice partnership and workforce. Progress is scrutinised and monitored at quarterly CYJB meetings.

Recommendation(s): County Council is asked to APPROVE the Youth Justice Plan.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Kent Youth Justice multi-agency statutory partnership are required to create and submit a Youth Justice Plan annually to the national Youth Justice Board (YJB).
- 1.2 The substance of the 2023/24 plan has been directed by the YJB which is reflected in the length and depth of the document, including reflections on the previous 12 months and ambitions for the next.

2. Background

- 2.1 See Kent's co-produced County Youth Justice Plan inserted at the end of this report. The plan:
- 2.2 Articulates the Youth Justice Partnership vision and principles. It explains our approaches to Child First, Restorative Justice and our commitment to hear the voice of the child and victims.
- 2.3 Contains analysis of characteristics of children in the youth justice system, their offending and re-offending, including service demand and disproportionality.
- 2.4 Reflects on the progress of our previous plan; key performance indicators (KPIs); outlines the new national KPIs for 2023 and our priorities.
- 2.5 Explains our governance, leadership and partnership arrangements, including our shared strategies for prevention; tackling serious youth violence and managing contextual risks.
- 2.6 Outlines our resources and services, including those for Education, Training and Employment; Transition into, within and out of the secure estate.
- 2.7 Illustrates our commitment to workforce development and the well-being and support of our workforce.
- 2.8 Commits the partnership to evidence-based practice and adhering to standards for children in the youth justice system.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 At the time of creating the plan, the partnership did not know the government financial settlement to Kent County Council for Youth Justice services for the financial year 2023/24, for either the core grant or the secure estate funding.
- 3.2 The national YJB confirmed on 20th July that they had agreed with central government to uplift core Youth Justice grants to Local Authorities by 4.5% in 2023/24. This realised for Kent a settlement of £1,362,082 which is an increase of £58,654 from 2022/23.
- 3.3 Kent County Council were also informed on 24th July that Kent's allocation of the secure remand grant has decreased by £35,251 this year, from £367,526 in 2022/23 to £332,275 for 2023/24. This reflects Kent Youth Justice's success in reducing secure remands in 2022/23 since the previous year.
- 3.4 These grants contribute to an overall Kent Youth Justice budget of £4,449.3k for 2023/24. Financial contributions from Police; the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner; Public Health and Probation remain the same as the previous year.
- 3.5 The delivery of the plan and the budget is overseen by the quarterly County Youth Justice Board, and performance is forecast within the financial envelope.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 It is a statutory requirement for the county to produce and submit a multi-agency Youth Justice plan to the national YJB. As required as a condition of the grant allocation, an

agreement with the national YJB has been signed by the Local Authority Chief Financial Officer (S151 certified) and the Youth Justice Head of Service.

5. Governance

- 7.1 The strategic and operational ambitions within the plan are shared with the partnership and workforce, and progress against them scrutinised and monitored at quarterly CYJB meetings. These are also provided to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) as part of the 'evidence in advance' in the week preceding a full inspection.
- 7.2 The Youth Justice Plan is one of the documents which make up the 'Policy Framework' as set out in section 8.7 and 8.8 of the Constitution. All Policy Framework documents require debate and approval by Full Council.

6. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s):

County Council is asked to APPROVE the Youth Justice Plan.

10. Appendices

- **County Youth Justice Plan 2023-24 – Appendix 1**

11. Contact details

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Kent



Youth Justice Plan 2023-2024

Service	Kent Youth Justice
Leads/ Authors	Dan Bride - Assistant Director & Head of Service (KCC) Jason Read- Youth Justice Service Manager (KCC) Katy Batt- Strategic Youth Justice Manager (KCC) Mark Powell- Director, Violence Reduction Unit
Chair of YJS Board	Until August 2023: Stuart Collins, Director Operational Integrated Children's Services From August 2023: Carolann James, Interim Director Operational Integrated Children's Services

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1. Introduction

Kent's 2023/24 Youth Justice plan has been co-produced with the Youth Justice partnership and KCC's Youth Justice workforce. It describes how the partnership will meet our ambitions to deliver a high-quality service for children, families, and victims of youth crime. Our success will be evidenced in our performance against the new national key performance indicators.

Our plan is both strategic and operational. It describes services that contribute to the prevention of offending, the diversion of children away from the criminal justice system and our efforts to reduce the re-offending of children in Kent.

At the heart of our plan is our commitment to listen to victims and work restoratively to repair harm.

Our plan describes how partners share the responsibility to safeguard children and to manage the risk that some children pose to others.

It describes the operational partnership approaches across Kent, and the strategic links that underpin them. Within this document is our commitment to and arrangements for leadership and governance, including how we will monitor and be accountable for the quality and effectiveness of Kent's Youth Justice Services.

In June 2021, Kent's Youth Justice partnership was inspected by HMIP and received an overall grading of Requires Improvement. This plan reflects our learning from HMIP, and our priorities, progress, and continued improvement journey to provide an excellent service to children, families, partners, communities, and victims.

In May 2023 the Kent Youth Justice partnership participated in the HMIP & Ofsted remand management thematic inspection. Although not a formally graded inspection, the feedback was positive and highlighted areas of effective practice, strengths, and areas for development. The focus of this consolidated and further developed the partnership's thinking about best practice and how we can achieve good outcomes with and for the small but complex cohort of children who end up in the secure estate. Our ambitions and aspirations are influenced by our experience and learning from that thematic inspection.

2. Kent Context

Kent is the fifth most populous county in England and the most populous non-metropolitan county. It has 12 district councils and around 300 town and parish councils.

Kent has a mixed economy of large rural agricultural areas and urban towns. Despite areas of affluence, Kent has 901 Lower Super Output Areas: 51 of these are in the 10% most deprived in England. 75% of districts have been increasing in deprivation, relative to other areas in England, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD2019). 15% of children under 16 are in absolute low-income families.

Large parts of Kent are within the London commuter belt, and it has strong transport connections to London and the continent.



Kent has 336,385 children living here, with an above average percentage of 5–19-year-olds. Between 1200 and 1300 other Local Authority Children are typically placed in Kent at any one time, and around half are aged 13-17 years.

While the exploitation and serious violence landscape is fluid, in Kent there are two active Task Forces: Thanet and Maidstone. Police report that they are aware of 13 Young Street Groups, 2 gangs and 29 County Lines active in Kent.

3. Our Vision & Principles

The Kent Youth Justice partnership considers all under 18's in the Youth Justice system to be children. We very purposefully use the word 'child' rather than 'young person' – to highlight that children should be understood and responded to differently than adults.

The partnership is committed to child-focussed and trauma-informed language. We refer to our statutory delivery mechanism as a 'Youth Justice Service' and avoid using negative labels such as 'youth offending/offender' and 'nominals.' We consider push and pull factors that influence children's behaviour, rather than blaming children.

We believe that custody should be a last resort for children because detention has detrimental consequences on a child's attachments, well-being, and future life chances.

The partnership are committed to best practice; working collaboratively; hearing the voice of children; protecting victims and potential victims; and doing our best to offer individualised supervision and support which meets children's diverse needs.

The partnership invests in services and front-line staff to ensure the availability of timely, robust, quality interventions which seek to understand, address, and manage trauma, and the resultant risk of harm that some children pose to others.

We are open, transparent, and honest, and we take seriously our responsibilities to protect the public from serious harm. The Kent Youth Justice Service does not propose community remands or sentences where they feel unable, at that time, to understand and/or safely manage risk of harm to others. They keep dynamic assessments of risk and our offers to manage those risks, under the scrutiny of the YJ service's senior managers, and under review.

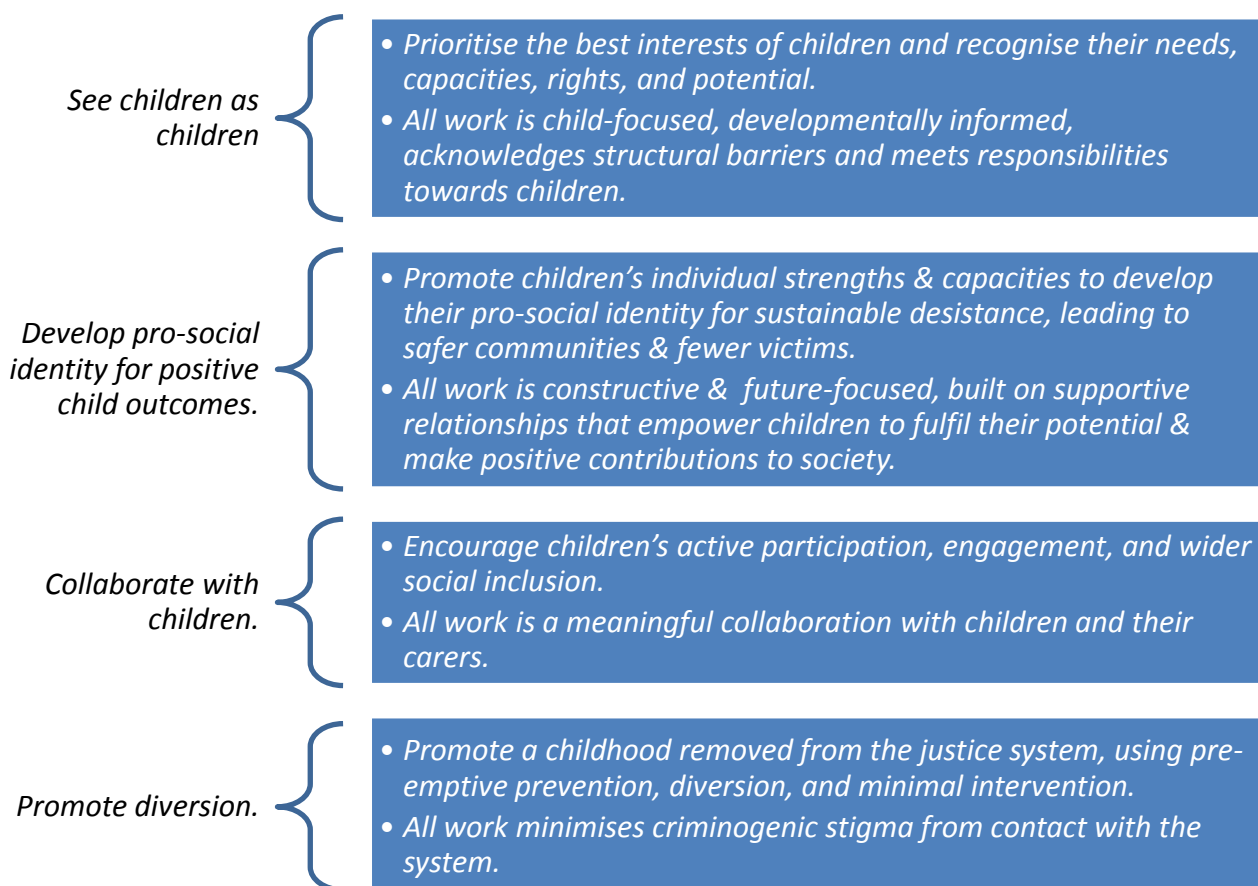
The partnership strives to have a learning culture where we are reflective and open to challenge, where we learn from our experiences, and we constantly seek to improve and develop.

4. Child First

Kent's Youth Justice partnership continues to share the national Youth Justice Board's vision of a Child First youth justice system as described in the YJB 2021-24 strategic plan.

In March 2021, 'Child First Justice: The research evidence-base' was published, comprising "the foundation of a progressive approach to how children should be understood, treated and supported after experiencing problems that have led them to commit a crime."

The report advises Youth Justice services to adopt the following four components, all of which resonate with Kent's vision and delivery model:



In Kent, the prevention, diversion, and early intervention offer is deliberately located within Early Help and in the voluntary sector. This avoids labelling children as "offenders" and in line with research of 'what works,' (YEF) responds to their holistic and wider family needs.

Kent's County Youth Justice Board (CYJB) is committed to a child first approach, which is modelled in our language, in our commitment to maximising opportunities for children and in addressing structural inequalities.

In 2023/24, Kent Local Authority (KCC) is learning from "language that cares" and introducing the practice of writing "to the child" in case recording. KCC monitor this through dip sampling.

5. Voice of the Child

Our 2022/23 Youth Justice partnership plan set out our intention to increase service user feedback. We achieved this with Youth Participation apprentices who undertook surveys with service users; co – created easy read documents and information packs; played a valuable ‘meet and greet’ role at court and supported Youth Justice to hear the voice of children in the recruitment of staff.

Kent’s 4 apprentices completed their tenures, progressed into other roles, or left the team in 2022/23. KCC have reflected that the qualification (Youth Work) attracts our trainees to move on from Youth Justice and are now exploring Apprenticeships with a potential progression pathway to attract, retain and develop apprentices for a career in Youth Justice.

In 2023/24 a review of Kent Youth Justice role and structures will propose how the service, and the County Youth Justice Board, systematically hears the voice of children and their families; will outline responsibilities about how we respond, and sets expectations and ambitions for how we co-create, and develop our services with children and their families.

In 2022/23 in partnership with Kent’s Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), Kent’s Youth Participation team supported a Bystander campaign in Kent’s Pupil Referral Units. This dovetailed with the partnership contextual safeguarding and prevention approaches to hear where children do and do not feel safe. We will continue to collaborate through District Contextual Safeguarding Meetings (DCSMs) in which the multi-agency team devise and implement plans to respond to contextual risks and enhance guardianship and safety. The framework continues to identify key themes about how and why children feel safe and unsafe, and collaboration continues to share children’s views, comments, and ideas.

KCC’s current mechanism for hearing the voice of children includes case audits which require the auditor to contact the child and their parents/carer, to hear their experience of the service. This approach was used in the YJ partnership 2022 BAME deep dive which elicited the feedback below from children about their experiences of services and of partner agencies:

“My family life is chaotic. I think people didn’t always understand that. I’m not sure what else they could have done.”

“There were some people from similar backgrounds to me who understood my culture and family life. Not everyone really understood or took the time to understand.”

This feedback prompts the partnership to ensure in 2023/24 that our collective workforces have the skills and knowledge to have sensitive and meaningful conversations with children and their families about identity and lived experience.

In 2023, Kent’s children open to Youth Justice were invited by HMIP as part of the remand thematic to share their experiences of the secure estate. This will inform HMIP’s national report due for publication in the autumn of 2023, and could influence wider system change.

At an operational level, KCC's Youth Justice engagement strategy reminds practitioners and managers that *"it is critical that children's voices are heard, and their individual circumstances and needs taken into account."* This guides the service to ensure the voice of the child and their lived experience is the foundation of assessment, planning, delivery, and review.

Some of the feedback that the services of the Youth Justice partnership has received in the last year includes:

*brilliant worker....
built a great
understanding of
not only my son
but us as a family.*

"I've been arrested about 3 times this year but, last year, it was 15 times.

When you have a professional [Salus mentor] who understands everything that's going on in your life and tries to make it right, a lot of stuff changes. Without them, I probably would be banged up right now."

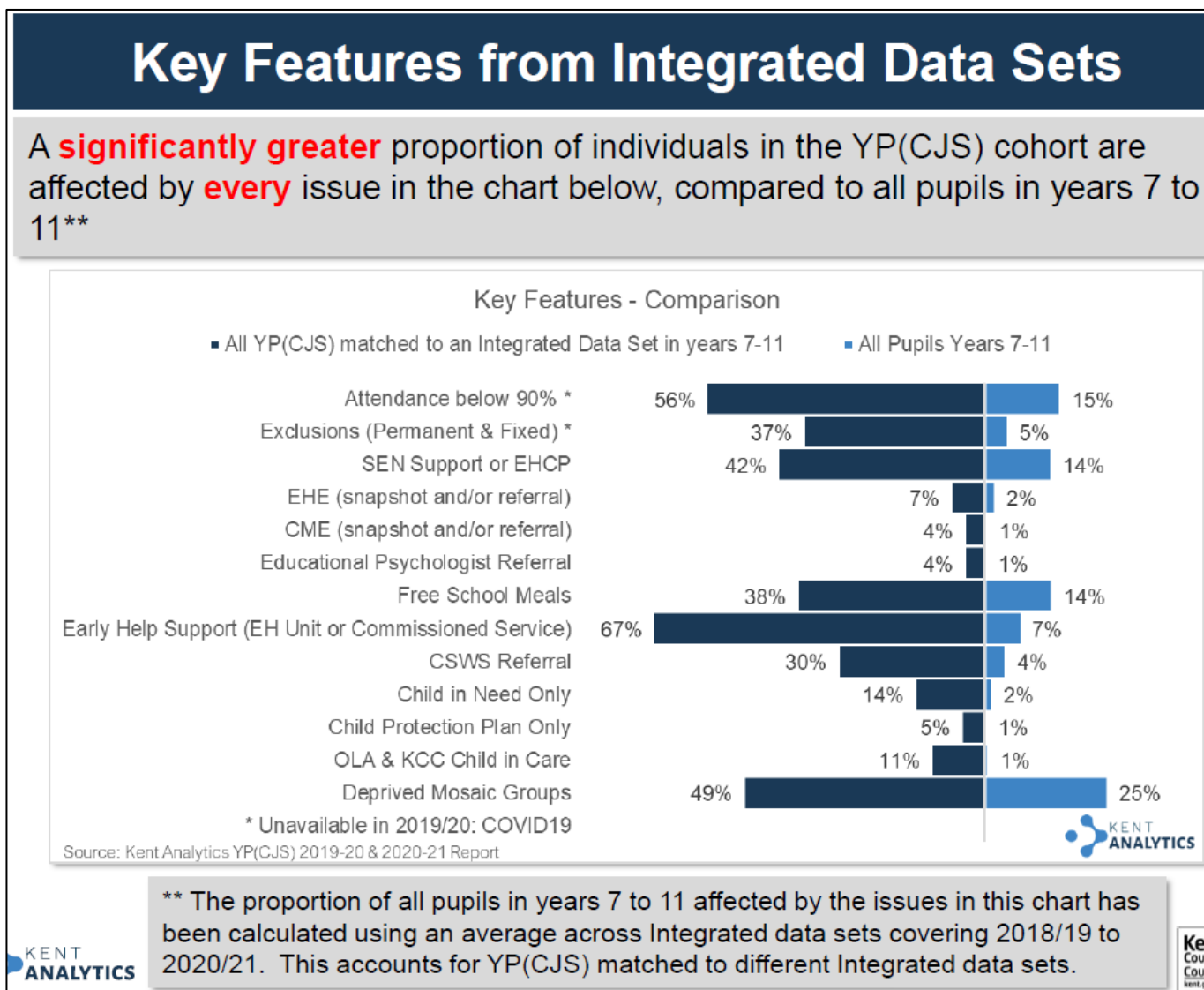
Further enhancing how the partnership hears and responds to the voice of children and their families is a priority for the year ahead. To achieve this, in 2023/24, the Youth Justice partnership will:

- Explore how we can ensure that our children and their families are fully aware of their rights to comment, compliment and complain, how to go about this and that they are supported when needed to do so. We will consider hosting focus groups and maximising digital technology. We have an ambition to elicit the voice of the child consistently throughout their orders.
- Ensure that Kent's County Youth Justice Board hears and responds to the voice of those children who are in receipt of statutory youth Justice intervention. A standing agenda item at the quarterly board will include service user feedback, enabling the board to have a direct line of sight to the views of children, and to scrutinise the Youth Justice service for its responsiveness.
- The partnership will consider how the voice of children and families in respect to commissioned services and other Youth Justice partners are heard.
- KCC Youth Justice will introduce a responsibility for a practitioner within each Youth Justice locality team to lead and champion participation.

6.0 Characteristics of Kent Children in the Youth Justice System and their offending

KCC’s Analytics Team was commissioned by the County Youth Justice Board to report on the profile of Kent children who had out of court or court disposals (‘the Youth Justice cohort’) in the period 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2021. Most of the slides in this plan are from that report.

Of the Kent Youth Justice cohort, a significantly greater proportion of them are affected by **all** features in the Children’s Integrated Data Set, as illustrated below:



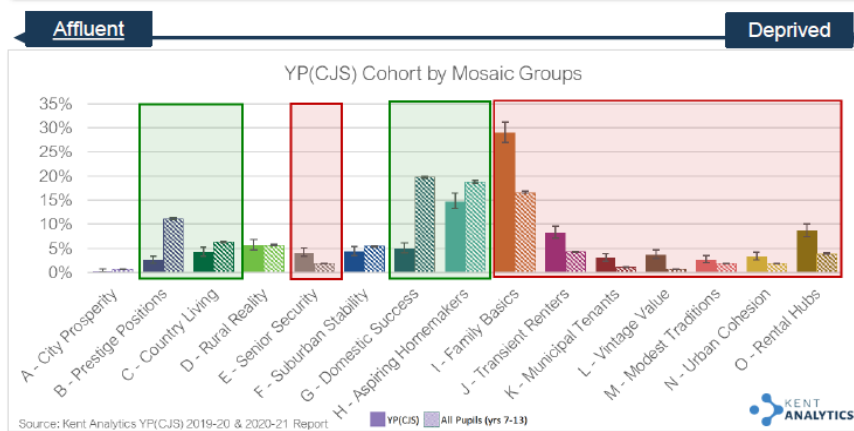
There is a significant over-representation of children resident in Canterbury, Dover, Gravesham, and Thanet, and of pupils at schools in Dover and Thanet districts.

There is a significant over-representation of children from deprived Mosaic Groups, and an under-representation of more affluent groups.

Characteristics of Individuals – Mosaic Groups

When looking at socio-economic groups using Experian's Mosaic, the YP(CJS) cohort is not particularly representative of all pupils in years 7 to 13 in 2020-21; affluent groups are under-represented (significant difference in green boxes) and deprived groups are over-represented (significant difference in red boxes)

Three groups in the middle order are defined as those containing families: 'G – Domestic Success'; 'H- Aspiring Homemakers'; 'I – Family Basics'. The more affluent groups G and H are under-represented in the YP(CJS) cohort, and more deprived group I is over-represented



Note: Experian changed the definition and order of their Mosaic groups in 2021. Further information can be found in the appendix.

Out of Court disposals make up 77% of outcomes for children (rounded figures):

- 81% Community Resolutions
- 14% Youth Cautions
- 6% Youth Conditional Cautions.

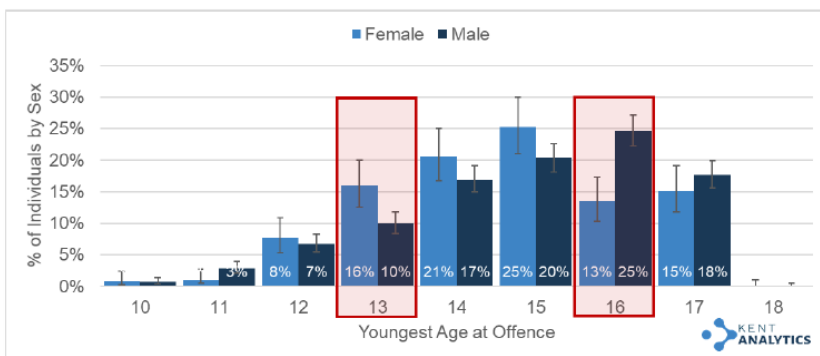
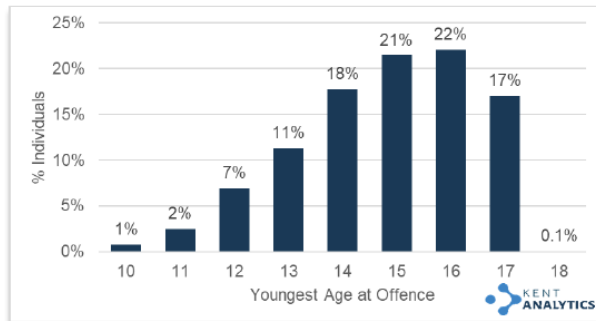
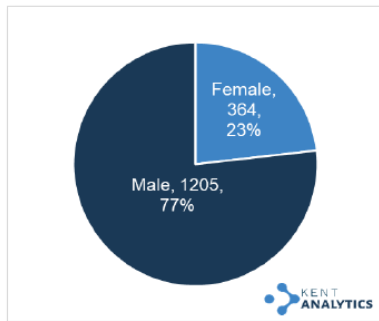
For those children who only have a Court outcome, these are made up of (rounded figures):

- 29% Referral Orders
- 27% Compensation Order
- 14% Youth Rehabilitation Order
- 10% Fine
- 6% Conditional Discharge
- 5% Detention and Training Order/Custody

There are a further 6% of the cohort who receive both an out of court and a court disposal, and their outcomes are proportionately like the two cohorts above.

Of those who are school age, significantly more of them have poor school attendance; exclusions; free school meals; Special Educational Need (SEN) Support or Education & Health Care Plans (EHCPs) and referrals to Early Help or Social Work. 9% have been in Care at some time in the last 4 academic years.

Characteristics of Individuals – Sex & Age



A greater proportion of females offended at a younger age, compared to males. This is significant at the youngest offence age of 13, and reversed at age 16 when a significantly greater proportion of males offend.

A significantly larger proportion of females were known to have committed offences at the youngest age of 13, compared with males. The most frequently committed offence by females is 'theft from a shop' and a greater proportion of females (than males) had outcomes for assaulting Police.

There is a significantly smaller proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity (BAME) females compared to white females. The cohort are 77% male, and a significantly larger proportion of males are BAME compared with White.

The most frequently committed offence categories are, in order:

- Violence against the person
- Criminal damage
- Theft & handling stolen goods
- Public Order
- Drugs
- Motoring offences

Most recorded offences by children (90%) have a gravity score of 2 or 3 (on a scale of 1-8 where 1 is low and 8 high). A significantly greater proportion of males were known to have committed offences of possessing a knife/blade/offensive weapon in a public place.

7.0 Governance, Leadership & Partnership Arrangements

7.1 County Youth Justice Board

The YJ Partnership is governed by the County YJ Board with membership from the key strategic partners (the Local Authority, Kent Police, Health, Education, and the National Probation Service). The full membership is at appendix 1.

There is active participation from HMCTS, the Violence Reduction Unit, NHS England Health and Justice, and Kent's Children's Services, both from Corporate Parenting and the Professional Standards and Safeguarding Unit. The Kent Equality Cohesion Council and the Governor of Cookham Wood YOI attend periodically, when appropriate.

The Board meets quarterly and is chaired by the Director of Operational Integrated Children's Services within the Children, Young People and Education Directorate. This strategic leadership helps to ensure that Youth Justice has a voice within wider children's services and strategic partnerships.

The Board receives detailed reports which allow learning from individual and thematic case audits/learning reviews and service user feedback.

The Board has oversight of financial proposals and decisions, KCC Youth Justice forecast and outturn budgets, contributions from partners and opportunities to lever in additional funding and resources.

The Board are aware of the new national performance indicators for 2023/24. Currently they receive reports on service performance against the key indicators, with success and challenges shared and scrutinised, with benchmarking, trends and comparisons where available:

- First Time Entrants into the Criminal Justice system,
- rate of re-offending,
- number of children entering custody,
- suitability of accommodation on release from custody,
- engagement in ETE at both statutory and post-statutory school-age,
- disproportionality.

The Board also receive reports on performance against our ambitions for improvement and development, including those arising from our last HMIP inspection, our operational and strategic self-assessments, and our county plan. We report periodically on key messages from HMIP, including both thematic and individual Inspection outcomes and learning.

The Board holds partners to account for their contribution to the Youth Justice service with each statutory partner reporting annually to the Board. These partner reports help Board members to understand the contributions and expectations of each partner, and to share and scrutinise challenges and successes. This helps the Board to set priorities for the partnership.

The Board commissions thematic reports which assist in understanding cross-cutting themes and which provide a greater depth of analysis. In 2022/23 the thematic reports included:

- Analysis of BAME children in the Youth Justice system
- Remand management and the use of the secure estate
- Serious Youth Violence
- Risk management

7.2 Key Strategic Partnerships and forums

The Kent Youth Justice Service has strategic partnerships within Kent:

District Councils

- Community Safety, Contextual Safeguarding, Local Children's Partnership Groups, Youth Councils

Violence Reduction Unit

-and commissioned services

NELFT & Forensic CAMHS

-Children and Young People's Mental Health Service

Local Authority

- Children's & Adolescent's Social Work and Corporate Parenting, Early Help & Adolescent Early Help, Open Access Youth Hubs & Children's Centres

Health

- Integrated Care Board (ICB), SYMBOL (Speech & Language), We Are With You (Substance Misuse)

Kent Equality Cohesion Council (KECC)

Kent County Youth Justice Board

- KCC, Police, Health, Probation, Education, Magistrates, KECC, NHS England Health & Justice, Office of the PCC

Education

-The Education People, Schools, SEND, 'PRU, Attendance & Inclusion', Virtual Schools Kent

Voluntary Organisations

- Young Lives Foundation: Appropriate Adult Service

and spanning Medway Authority:

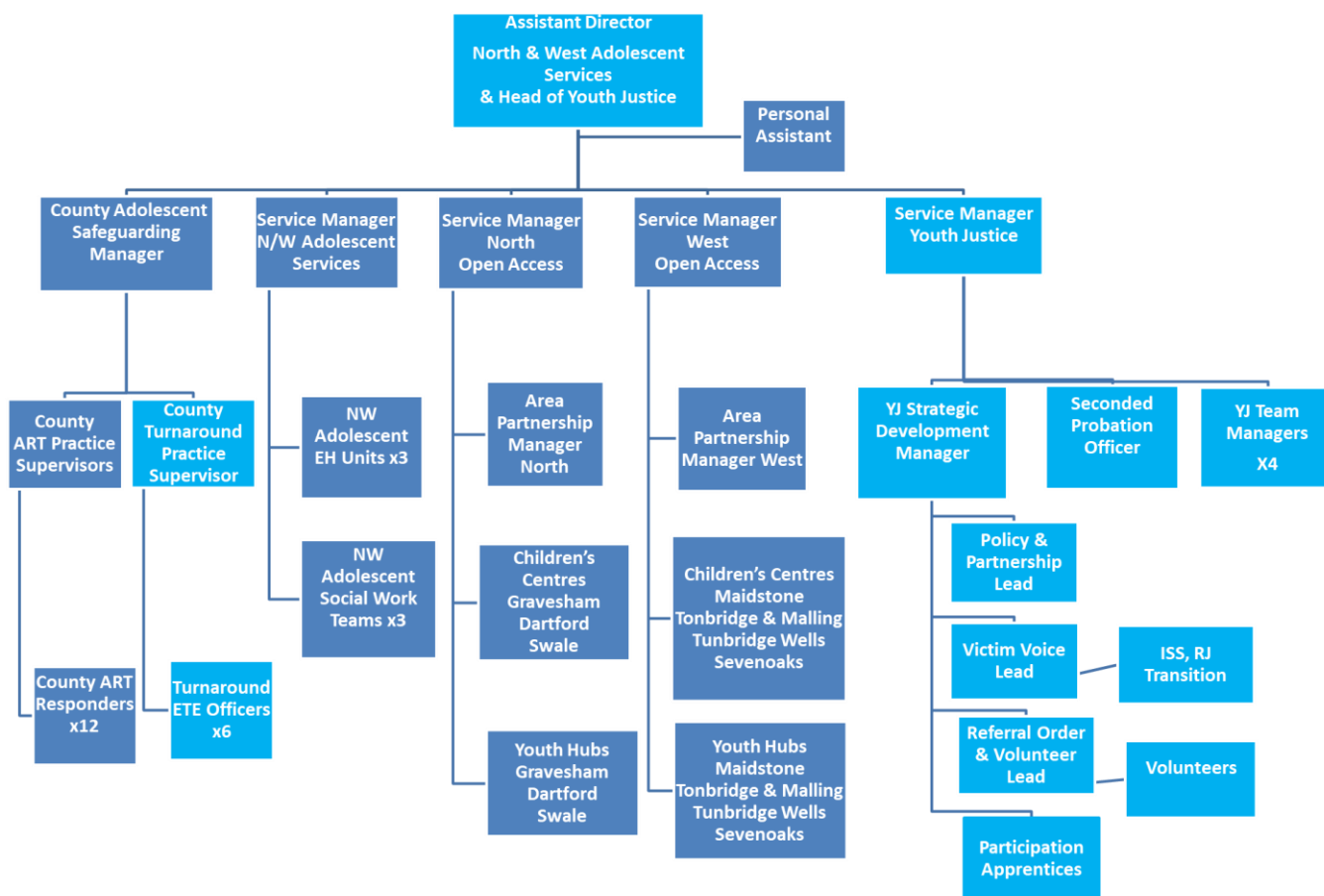
Violence Reduction Unit -and commissioned services
National Probation Service MAPPA, Integrated Offender Management
Kent Police - Police Youth Justice team, Child Centred Policing, Gangs & County Lines team, MCET.
HM Courts & Tribunal Service & Magistrates - Youth Courts, Magistrates Court, Crown Courts
Multi-Agency Partnerships - Kent & Medway Safeguarding Children Partnerships, Joint Exploitation Group, Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership
Police & Crime Commissioner Commissioned services including Restorative Solutions & Catch 22
Secure Estate - Cookham Wood YOI, Medway Secure School, Secure Stairs & Transitions
Health - Integrated Care Board, Criminal Justice Liaison & Diversion Service, NELFT & Forensic CAMHS
Voluntary Organisations

Kent Youth Justice are represented on various strategic forums with partners. The most relevant are:

Strategic MAPPA Board	Kent Criminal Justice Board	Kent & Medway Reducing Reoffending Board	Kent & Medway Joint Exploitation Group	Violence Reduction Unit Oversight Board
Protecting Vulnerable People Board	Kent & Medway Youth Justice Scrutiny Panel	KCC's Corporate Parenting Panel	NEET Interdependencies Group	Health Complex & Crisis Care Pathways
South of Thames Youth Justice Heads of Service Group	South-East Region Contextual Safeguarding Forum	Kent & Medway Court Users Group	Southern Region Youth Justice Performance Forum	

7.3 Service Structure

The Youth Justice service sits within the Integrated Childrens Services as part of Kent County Council’s Children, Young People and Education Directorate. The statutory head of Youth Justice is the Assistant Director for Adolescent Services and Open Access with strategic responsibility for Contextual Safeguarding and Missing Children.



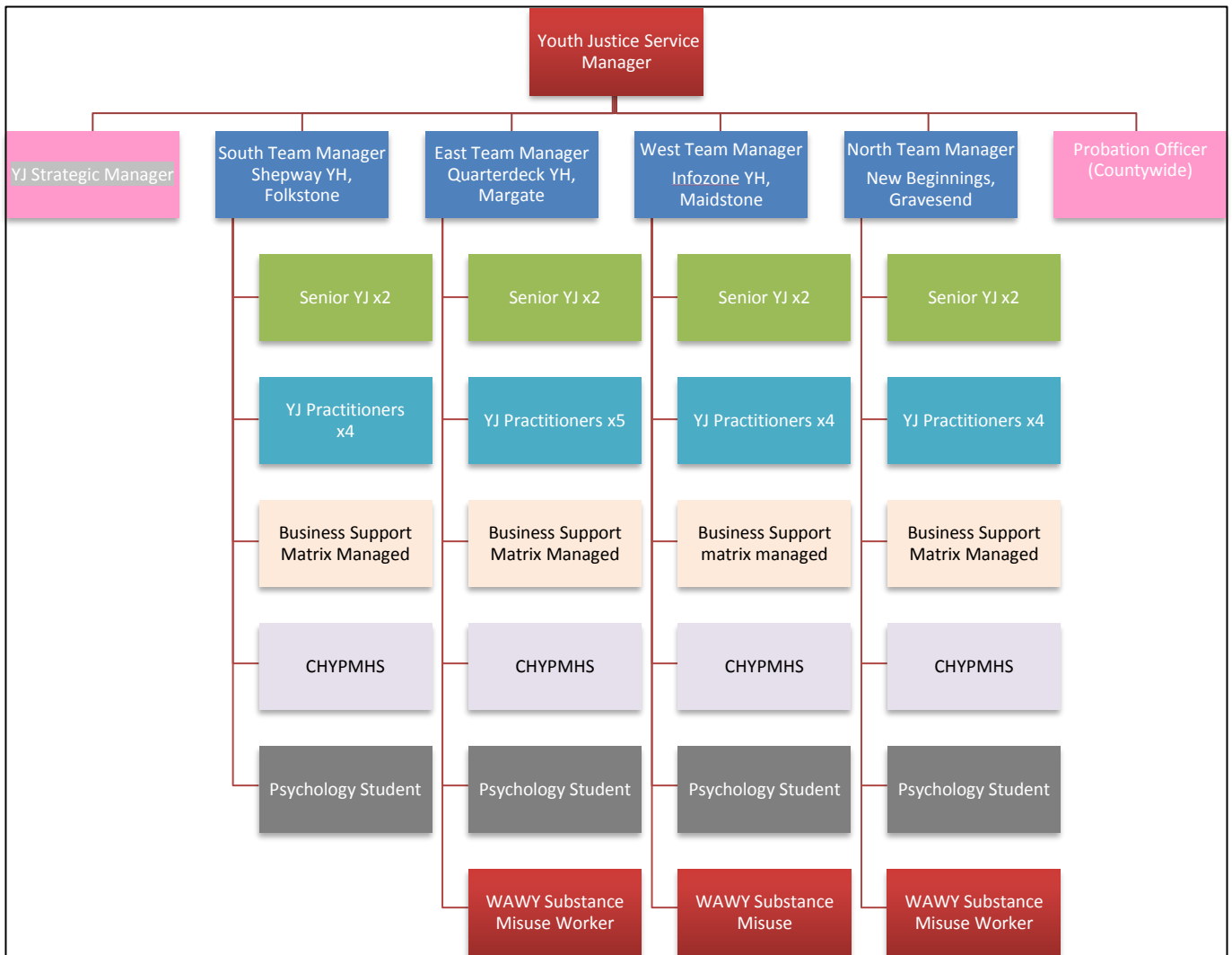
The Strategic Youth Justice Manager oversees a county-wide team including:

- Victim Voice Lead
- Volunteer and Referral Order Lead
- Policy and Partnership Officer
- Non-case holding operational services: Intensive Supervision and Surveillance, Transition and Restorative Justice.

In addition to the roles illustrated in the structure chart above the YJ service is also supported by a YJ central Business Support Team, which has one Senior Business Support Officer, and 2 Business Support Officers.

The service has dedicated time of Management Information Officers and other Management Information and Intelligence functions which support systems, data and reporting.

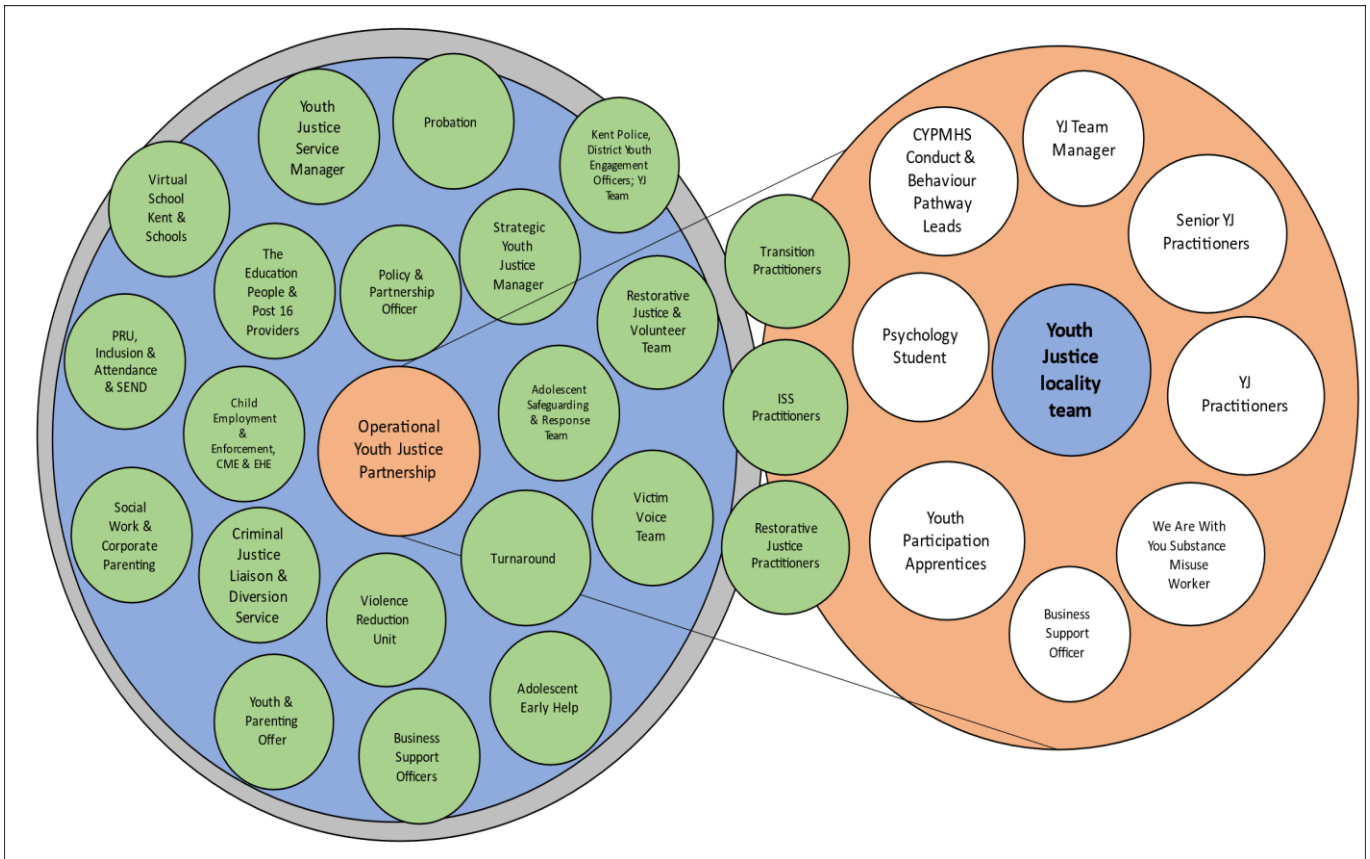
The Youth Justice Service Manager has responsibility for the 4 Youth Justice locality teams which provide statutory services for those children who have entered the Youth Justice System.



The four locality teams provide all statutory functions including case management and court work, including weekend and bank holiday remand Court duties.

The Youth Justice teams work closely with the six Adolescent Early Help units. These focus on prevention, diversion, Out of Court Disposals and holistic, whole-family support. Our Turnaround team works alongside Early Help, promoting engagement in Education, Training or Employment.

The interface of the four youth justice teams with wider services is illustrated below:



YJ Service establishment/seconded/commissioned @ April 2023

	Full time equivalent establishment
County wide and central functions	1x Head of Service, 1x Service Manager 1x Strategic YJ Manager 1x Victim Voice Lead 1x Volunteer Lead, ~20x Referral Order Panel Volunteers 1x Policy and Partnership Officer 2x ISS Practitioners, 2x Restorative Justice Practitioners, 2x Transition Practitioners 1x Probation Officer 1 Senior Business Support Officer, 2 Central Business Support Officers

	Full time equivalent establishment (not actual)
Locality Teams	4x Team Managers 8x Senior YJ Practitioners 17x YJ Practitioners 4x Youth Participation Apprentices 4x Psychology Students on Placement 4x 0.14 (total 0.6FTE) Children & YP Mental Health Practitioners 3 x Substance Misuse Workers 2 x Speech and Language workers 4x Business Support Officers

Outside of Youth Justice but an integral part of service delivery	
Prevention, Diversion	1x Turnaround Practice Supervisor 6x Turnaround ETE Officers 1x Turnaround Data and Business Support Officer Re-Frame- Substance misuse (OOCs) Contribution from 6x Adolescent Early Help Units
Police	New Child Centred Policing structure from 7 th June 2023. Police Youth Justice team (manage out of court disposals). 1 x supervisor 6 x YJ officers
Other-	Health -CJLaDS Appropriate Adults commissioned service- Young lives Foundation

In 2023/24 a revised Kent Youth Justice structure will be proposed, within the budget envelope. The aim is to provide a pathway for entry into and progression within the service, and to recruit, develop and retain staff to ensure the required skills and experience meet service demand.

8.0 Progress of Previous Plan

Kent's quarterly county Youth Justice Board receives detailed reports (see 7.1). As a result, strategic and operational improvement actions are routinely identified and are formulated into iterative plans.

In June 2021, Kent Youth Justice partnership was inspected by HMIP. Following this, the partnership agreed an improvement plan (appendix 4) which complements the county plan. This continues to be monitored and triangulated with qualitative and quantitative information reported to each County YJ Board.

In 2022/23 the partnership focused on:

8.1 Transitions

into, within, and out of Custody, and from YJ to Probation services.

- Piloted 2FTE Transition Practitioners, with NHS funding, across Kent and Medway:
 - to support children within Cookham Wood Young Offenders Institution (YOI), and to provide continuity in respect to healthcare, education and provide intensive out of hours support to them upon their release.
 - To enhance oversight of the experiences of children in the secure estate, ensuring services prioritise their best interests, recognise their needs, capacities, rights, and potential, and address the causes of offending and any unmet social, emotional, health or educational needs.
- Maximised the impact of the seconded Probation resource to monitor and embed good practice in managing transition from YJ to Probation, supported by new operational guidance.

- Co-created resources for children and families about Assisted Prison Visits Schemes; support networks; sentence implications and custodial establishment information.
- Ensured Youth Justice practitioners use the YJ Application Framework (YJAF) as required.
- Ensured that Youth Justice practitioners took a copy of the custodial warrant from Court when a child was remanded to Youth Detention and Accommodation or sentenced to custody and stored this on the child's case records as per YJB guidance.
- Created and launched a bespoke Detention Placement Plan and guidance for social workers and IROs to formulate and record sufficient care plans for children entering the secure estate.

8.2 Youth Detention and Accommodation (YDA).

The last 3 years performance for this measure is reported in section 9.4. In 2022/23 we minimised our rate of YDA by:

- Enhancing the consistent quality of Kent Youth Justice Pre-sentence reports (PSRs) and Asset+ (YJB assessment framework) by improving the guidance and support to both practitioners and Youth Justice Team Managers, including coaching on quality assurance
- Maximising sentencer confidence in Kent Youth Justice credibility to offer robust and effective recommendations about the supervision of children in the community. Kent Youth Justice delivered remand management and 'work in court' training to improve the knowledge and skills of practitioners and managers specifically in proactive remand management. This was complemented with updated and clear remand management guidance. Kent Youth Justice monitored this through feedback from practitioners about their confidence in court, and Magistrate's feedback on practitioner's competence in Court. Magistrates have remarked on staff being proactive, well prepared, and confident in court.
- The partnership monitored and ensured sufficient Intensive Supervision and Surveillance resource to meet demand for robust alternatives to the use of custody. The partnership agreed to maintain 2 FTE ISS Practitioners.

8.3 Disproportionality

- 93.7% of all Kent residents are of white ethnic origin, predominantly White British. 20.5% of 102,447 children (20, 981) in school years 7-14 are Black or of a Minority Ethnicity (BAME), which is much higher than the general Kent population at 6.6% (January census 2019).

- Analysis of Kent children with a Court or Out of Court disposal between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2021 indicated the following:

Ethnicity: BAME Points of Interest

Overall, 228 individuals in the YPC(JS) cohort have a recorded ethnicity which is grouped into BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), making up 13% of the cohort.

BAME Summary:

- When compared to the white cohort, there is a significant over-representation of males in the BAME cohort, and an under-representation of females
- When looking at offences, a significantly greater proportion of BAME individuals committed offences categorised as 'Drugs' and 'Robbery' compared to the white cohort
- A significantly greater proportion of BAME individuals committed offences with a seriousness rating of 6, compared to the white cohort. This is probably linked to offences of 'Robbery', which all attract a seriousness score of 6
- In the Violence Against the Person offence category, a significantly greater proportion of the BAME cohort committed offences 'Possess a knife/sharp blade – in a public place' and 'Grievous bodily harm – without intent' compared to the white cohort
- There is a significant over-representation of BAME individuals in the Serious Youth Violence cohort; 13% of the overall cohort are made up of BAME individual, in the Serious Youth Violence cohort it is 39%

- Children from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, Children in Care (CiC), and children with special education needs are over-represented within the YJ system both nationally and in Kent. The partnership aimed to understand this and to take action to improve the outcomes for these children.

In 2022/23 the partnership:

- Focussed YJ Participation apprentices on engaging over-represented cohorts (BAME, Children known to Social Work, specifically Children in Care) to learn from them how they could have been supported to prevent offending. This is ongoing and will inform our future developments.
- Reported on and scrutinised the over-representation of identified groups (CiC, BAME) within disposal decisions (Out of Court and post court). The partnership, via the County Youth Justice Board, are continuing to explore disparity in Education, Training and Employment including exclusions from school, to better understand and tackle these issues which impact on entry into and escalation through the youth justice system.

- Heard a thematic report from KCC's Quality Assurance unit of some CiC and BAME children to identify if there was anything the partnership could have done differently to avoid their involvement in the YJ system.
- The Kent YJ service continued to upskill our adolescent workforce through engagement in mandatory training which challenges unconscious bias and awareness of disproportionality.
- Actively recruited a diverse workforce and volunteer group to try to attract people who are representative of the child cohort.
- The service promoted YJ practitioners using specialist services including the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) practitioners to support children from minority groups.

The partnership have monitored progress against this priority at each quarterly CYJB.

The following additional Covid-recovery priorities were identified at the CYJB and with the workforce, through performance data; deep dives; feedback, and in anticipation of the post-pandemic needs of the YJ cohort and the workforce.

8.4 Education, Training & Employment (ETE)

The partnership understands the impact that the response to Covid had on the participation of children in ETE and undertook to support children open to YJ to access full time education, training, or employment.

In 2022/23 the partnership:

- Collaborated with TEP to 'deep dive' the needs of the NEET cohort, and to explore the market for supporting them. We explored potential funding avenues and piloted Kent YJ delivering AQA accreditations within Restorative Justice activity.
- Used trauma-informed approaches to develop meaningful relationships with children to better understand and address the barriers to their engagement in ETE
- Embedded our collaborative arrangements with the Inclusion and Attendance Service; and Virtual School Kent so that these services are aware of children in the criminal justice system and can support them whenever necessary. We have agreed a framework to collaborate with the Special Education Needs service.
- We created a Turn Around project team which complement Early Help activity with a focus on improving the education, training and employment offer and engagement of children at risk of entering the youth justice system.

The success of these actions will be indicated in the longer term by children's increased engagement in ETE, which we monitor at each quarterly CYJB.

8.5 Serious Youth Violence & Contextual Safeguarding

Serious Youth Violence - summary

- Serious Youth Violence has been defined by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) as any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity (seriousness) score of 5 or more
- The most frequently committed offence classed as serious youth violence in the data set is Robbery, which attracts a seriousness score of 6
- There is a significant over representation of males in the serious youth violence cohort when compared to those who did not commit serious youth violence offences
- Individuals with a recorded ethnicity of BAME are over-represented in the serious youth violence cohort compared to those who did not commit serious youth violence offences
- There is an over-representation of the serious youth violence cohort with addresses in Gravesham district, compared to the non-serious cohort

We pioneered and identified good practice to tackle county lines and youth violence in Kent, as well as following the Youth Endowment Fund published guidance of 'what works.'

In 2022/23, working in partnership with Kent and Medway Police, VRU and local authority, we continued delivery of the North Kent and Medway Serious Youth Violence & Prevention Project, which we extended until the end of May 2023. This service was independently evaluated, and the learning will inform our future Serious Youth Violence developments.

In 2022/23 the service:

- Piloted ways of working with children to test, identify and evaluate emerging good practice related to county lines, use of weapons and serious youth violence.
- Offered a knife 1st aid course which teaches children the skills to respond to the impact of harm caused by weapons.
- Involved service users and Youth Participation Apprentices in the development of Contextual Safeguarding practice. We have systems in place to understand how un/safe children feel in community locations and buildings (including schools) and we work in partnership to formulate plans to improve safety and feelings of safety in our communities and on-line.

- Collaborated with the Police Missing Child Exploitation Team (MCET), to analyse and understand the data and trends of gangs, modern day slavery, missing and serious youth violence in Kent. We will continue to do this in 2023/24.
- With the Police and VRU, we embedded multi-agency identification and responses to county lines within operational and strategic frameworks, including District Contextual Safeguarding meetings.
- We collaborate with the VRU to scrutinise the effectiveness of the partnership Gangs Strategy, through the monitoring of incidents of serious youth violence and county lines activity, which is reported to the CYJB and other strategic partnerships. This continues in 2023 and is an agreed approach by multi-agency partners.
- We started to develop a strategy and enhance our staff guidance on the use of National Referral Mechanism, to impact on diversion from prosecution where appropriate. However, changes in national contextual safeguarding guidance have influenced this work being deferred until national best practice is better understood.

We will continue in 2023 to develop knowledge and skills in 'what works' by engaging in conferences and keeping up to date with research and shared learning.

We also:

- Improved our assessment and management of extra-familial risk and safeguarding by embedding our contextual safeguarding approaches.
- Delivered training to Panel members on trauma informed practice and case formulation.

9. Resources & Services

The YJ Service is funded by a range of grants and partner contributions. This income, together with Kent County Council's contribution, fund the core service and staff. A finance report at every quarterly CYJB provides actual and forecast expenditure and income. Proposals for service delivery changes are overseen by the Board.

In 2022/23, the Board agreed to invest the remaining £38k from the former Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for Speech and Language, together with a further £100k from the new Integrated Care Board, to extend the YJ contract with the Speech and Language provider, Symbol into 2023/24.

The board also agreed to commit £46k from the CCGs for Trauma informed workforce development from 2022/23 to embedding case formulation in the 4 Youth Justice locality teams in 2023/24.

The NHS Secure Stairs grant, used to fund the 2FTE Transition Practitioners, has now ended. Due to the additionality that these roles provide in achieving positive outcomes for children going into and coming out of the secure estate, the YJ service will propose a model to the Board, and to KCC's senior management team, to retain sufficiency in this service and keep this under review.

The Police and Crime Commissioner have reduced their contribution to Kent YJ in 2023/24 by £10k, to contribute to the post-11pm access to their Appropriate Adult Service. The PCC grant to Kent YJ provides £265k for restorative justice, tackling high-risk and first-time entrants.

Public Health continue to invest £305k in Youth Justice. In 2023/24 the service level agreement will be refreshed to clarify expectations, outcome, and reporting mechanisms.

We Are With You' seconds specialist substance misuse staff into the 4 Youth Justice locality teams. They also deliver 'Reframe:' the diversion scheme for out of court disposals where the child has committed a low-level drugs possession offence.

Probation contribute £6.5k and remain committed to 1.0FTE seconded staff to the Youth Justice service.

Kent Police are currently restructuring, and the partnership await clarification of resource for Youth Justice. It is expected that Child Centred Police will contribute to ISS delivery, while the Police Youth Justice Team will support intelligence sharing functions and joint decision making for Out of Court Disposals. Police are not currently seconded into the Youth Justice service but collaborative working and co-location with Youth Justice continues to be explored.

The Violence Reduction Unit are a key partner in the contextual safeguarding and risk management approaches, providing both personnel and resources to District Contextual Safeguarding Meetings, Complex Adolescent Harm Meetings and a range of commissioned provision across the continuum of need.

NELFT second 4 CHYPMHS staff to provide consultancy 5 hours per week to each of the 4 locality teams.

At the time of writing the plan, the partnership do not have confirmation of the YJB grant for 2023/24.

10. Performance & National Key Performance Indicators

- The YJ service report on performance against KPIs to the quarterly County Youth Justice Board. Qualitative reports compare performance against national and regional averages and YOT family data. The Board scrutinises the direction of travel, and tackles challenges proactively. The service identifies areas where they are an outlier, providing deep dives and briefings, to elicit CYJB steer on priorities and actions.
- The Youth Justice service reports qualitatively on audits of YJ, OOCs and commissioned partner audits. Key partners bring their own reports annually about their contribution to Youth Justice, including any key changes and challenges.
- Annually, KCC's analytics team produces a profile of children in the system, which helps inform developments. The board considers HMI Probation inspections & thematic reports: learning what we can from these. A self-assessment is undertaken with representatives from across the partnership and the Youth Justice workforce, and through this identify actions, which are reported against to the Board.

10.1 Demand

- Currently, KCC's data doesn't distinguish between children given Community Resolutions who accept intervention, and those who don't, nor does it distinguish Community Resolutions issued on the spot by Police, from those agreed jointly with Adolescent Early Help or YJ. Community Resolutions managed by Early Help, and the Re-Frame diversion scheme for drugs possession delivered by 'We Are With You', are therefore not counted in the table below. The Youth Justice service are working with partners to amend processes to facilitate reporting on these in in 2023/24.

	Case load at May 2023	Caseload at May 2022	Caseload at May 2021	Caseload at May 2020
Youth Caution*	0	8	21	35
Youth Conditional Caution	17	22	13	14
Intensive Supervision & Surveillance	3	7	7	5
Community Sentences	104	106	138	101
In Custody	3 YDA 3 DTO 4 S250/254	4 YDA 5 DTO 1 S.90-92	4	4
RLAA	5	3		
Bail Supervision and Support	7	3		
Report stage (outcome outstanding)	12	13		
ASB Injunction Supervision	0	2		
Total YJ caseload excl. OOCDS* held in AEH	158	158	164	138

- Around one-third of the cohort are intensively supervised by Youth Justice (3 times per week); one-third enhanced (4x month); 10% standard, and 20% in the assessment stage at any one time.
- Kent YJ practitioners provide the weekday, weekend and holiday occasional Court duty service, and evening referral order panel duties.
- Kent YJ are reviewing structures and resources in 2023/24 and are confident in achieving a sufficient establishment of practitioners and managers to meet the service demands. The aspiration is to provide pathways from entry level apprentices to progress through to Senior Management opportunities, to attract and retain the right people for the service.

10.2 First Time Entrants

- Following an increase in first time entrants in 20/21 (attributable in part to Covid pandemic Court delays) Kent saw an 11% reduction in first time entrants the following year. However, local data records a 30% increase in first time entrants in 22/23 from 21/22. There is more to be done on the accuracy of and congruence between KCC and Police data.

Year & Quarter	Number	Annual Total
2022/23 Q4	85	313
2022/23 Q3	78	
2022/23 Q2	76	
2022/23 Q1	74	
2021/22 Q4	71	241
2021/22 Q3	72	
2021/22 Q2	47	
2021/22 Q1	51	
2020/21 Q4	67	270
2020/21 Q3	79	
2020/21 Q2	68	
2020/21 Q1	56	

- The launch of Outcome 22 by Kent Police is expected to reduce first-time entrants. This has been an action for the partnership since 2021 and its implementation impacted by the restructure of Kent Police. The launch of Outcome 22 is anticipated in August 2023.
- KCC's implementation of the Turnaround programme from January 2023 will reduce first time entrants by enhancing the Early Help offer to those children who come to the attention of the Police but are not in receipt of Youth Justice services.
- Police 'no further action' (NFA) decisions are disproportionately related to incidents of Adolescent to Parent Violence (APV). Kent has an APV intervention which can be offered as part of Outcome 22 as an alternative to NFA. This is expected to break the cycle of APV and reduce future offending and entry into the Youth Justice System.

10.3 Reoffending

- Using the CorePlus toolkit, Kent's YJ Service reported, in May 2023, the re-offending rates illustrated in the table below. Police data differs significantly from our local authority data, and we hypothesise that Kent Police figures include children who offend in Kent but are not resident in Kent (particularly in high volume areas such as Bluewater Shopping Centre), include those who are resident in Medway, and include those who are placed in Kent by other authorities. Further work is needed to achieve a data set that the partnership can have confidence in.

	Cohort	Re-offenders	Rate of re-offending	CIC re-offenders
Youth Caution or Conditional Caution	72	15	21%	50%
Referral Order	126	29	23%	36%
YRO/Supervision	44	9	20%	57%
Female	60	7	12%	50%
Male	352	63	18%	33%
BAME	69	14	20%	50%
White	337	56	17%	35%
Total	406	70	17.2%	

10.4 Use of the Secure Estate

- The number of children remanded to youth detention or sentenced to custody had significantly reduced year on year, until 2021/22 when several incidents of serious youth violence saw several children charged with murder, attempted murder and GBH s.18. This escalated the number of secure remands as illustrated in the table below and echoed the national increase of children subject to YDA in that year.

- In 2022/23 the number of secure remands reduced by 19% from the year before, and custodial sentences by 11%.

Year and Quarter	Custodial Sentences	Total	YDA	Total
2022/23 Q4	1	8	4	13
2022/23 Q3	2		2	
2022/23 Q2	3		3	
2022/23 Q1	2		4	
2021/22 Q4	2	9	2	16
2021/22 Q3	3		1	
2021/22 Q2	1		7	
2021/22 Q1	3		6	
2020/21 Q4	2	6	2	9
2020/21 Q3	1		4	
2020/21 Q2	1		1	
2020/21 Q1	2		2	

- Coaching of KCC's Youth Justice Team Managers in quality assurance was prioritised for cusp-of custody Pre-Sentence reports. This drove county consistency in quality, ensured robust risk management and maximised community resources to avoid custodial sentences where appropriate.
- The partnership participated in the HMIP & Ofsted remand thematic inspection. 15 children's remand records were inspected by HMIP and 2 were inspected additionally by Ofsted. Partners met with Inspectors in focus groups and provided evidence of policy and practice. The inspection acknowledged strengths in the partnership, and will inform KCC's structural review of Youth Justice, including the commitment to the secure estate Transition resource.

10.5 Additional Key Performance Indicators (from April 2023)

- It is a requirement for the partnership to report on new Key Performance Indicators from April 2023, with the first submission in August 2023.
- The Kent YJ case management and information system is being upgraded to facilitate this reporting both locally and nationally.

Key Performance Indicator	Definition	Currently Reportable?	Risks/challenges
Suitable accommodation	The type and suitability of accommodation at the start and end of the order by type of order. Additionally, for those leaving custody, it notes how far in advance accommodation was secured.	Partially	Accommodation is currently reported, but not in advance of release from the secure estate. A new mechanism will be put in place by KCC to record and report this. Kent consistently achieves 100% performance and has processes in place to seek suitable accommodation for this cohort. There is a low risk of not sustaining this performance, although placements, if required for this cohort, are increasingly difficult to identify and are costly. The Board has representation from Social work services which influences the timeliness of searching for accommodation, and the use of trauma informed profiles and placement plans.
Education, Training & Employment (ETE)	The number and proportion of children in ETE by suitability, provision type and type of order for children of school age and children above school age and how many hours were offered and attended.	Yes	Counting rules have changed to reduce “suitable” hours & include education pathway plans. This KPI (in addition to SEND) will present the biggest challenge for the partnership to achieve. However, counting rules have changed to “suitable” hours and acknowledge an educational pathway plan. This offers a more flexible measure and should see an increase in performance. The Board has representation from SEND and the PRU Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS) to support policy and practice against this measure.

Key Performance Indicator	Definition	Currently Reportable?	Risks/challenges
SEND/Additional Learning needs	The number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) for England by type of order, whether the child has a formal plan in place and whether they are in suitable ETE.	Partially	<p>The number of children open to YJ with Education Health & Care Plans (EHCP)s is reported on but not whether they have suitable provision and whether they have a plan in place. A new mechanism will be put in place by KCC to record & report this.</p> <p>Kent SEND is currently on a journey to necessary improvement, and this KPI presents a significant challenge for the partnership to achieve. SEND are represented on the County YJB and YJ are a key partner in supporting the SEND improvements for children in the youth justice system.</p>
Mental Healthcare and Emotional Wellbeing	Children screened or assessed to understand their mental health and emotional wellbeing needs. For children with an arrangement to support their mental health and emotional wellbeing, the measure seeks clarification on whether support is in place.	No	<p>A new mechanism will be put in place with NELFT (children's mental health provider) and KCC to record and report this performance.</p> <p>There are numerous services which contribute to meeting the emotional and mental health needs of children open to Youth Justice, with representation at the County Youth Justice Board and within the partnership.</p>
Substance Misuse	The number of children with a screened or identified need for an intervention or treatment to address substance misuse and of those, the number of planned/offered treatment and the number of children attending intervention/treatment.	No	A new mechanism will be put in place with We Are With You (WAWY) and KCC to record and report this performance.

Key Performance Indicator	Definition	Currently Reportable?	Risks/challenges
Out of Court Disposals	The number of children with interventions ending in the period, broken down into the number of children who completed the intervention programmes in the quarter and the number who did not complete intervention programmes in the quarter.	No	Further work will be done by Kent Police and Kent Youth Justice to ensure all Out of Court Disposals are reported on, and the impact of them understood by the partnership.
Links to wider services	The number of children who are care experienced ('Looked After Child'), a 'Child in Need' or who are on a 'Child Protection Plan', an 'Early Intervention Plan' or who are referred to Early Help services.	Partially	Numbers of children in care are reported but not children in need, child protection or early help. This information is available, and a new mechanism will be put in place by KCC to report this performance.
Management Board (CYJB) attendance	The attendance of senior partners at the quarterly CYJB meetings, and if those partners contribute data from their individual services that identify areas of racial and ethnic disproportionality.	No	A new mechanism will be put in place with key partners and KCC to record and report this performance, and to keep members to account for their active representation.
Serious Youth violence	The numbers of children cautioned or convicted of Serious Violence on the Youth justice caseload (defined as any drug, robbery, or violence against the person offence, with a gravity score of 5 or more	No	<p>A new mechanism will be put in place by KCC to record and report this performance.</p> <p>Kent has experienced several serious youth violence incidents in the last two years. In 2023/24 the partnership will be implementing a multi-agency serious incident thematic review to identify learning and future actions.</p>

Key Performance Indicator	Definition	Currently Reportable?	Risks/challenges
	resulting in a caution or court sentence).		
Victims	The number of victims resulting from offences committed by children on the Youth Justice caseload. The number contacted, the number engaged in restorative justice, and numbers who requested and were given further information and support.	No	There is more to be done by the Police to ensure that Kent Youth Justice receives victim details in a timely manner for all offences committed by children. The partnership have the mechanisms to report on this and will amend reporting mechanisms to include this KPI.

11. Priorities

11.1 Over-represented Children

Black, Mixed, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, and children in care, are significantly overrepresented in the criminal justice system nationally, and most evidently in custody. Research illustrates that Black children receive harsher sentences for comparable offences than White children. When remanded into custody, Black children are more likely than White children to then receive a custodial sentence.

The Kent Youth Justice partnership have a role in tackling this disproportionality:

- Strategic leaders and practitioners from the partnership to challenge themselves to offer the best possible service to BAME children and those in care; to understand their early life experiences, how their identity and experiences impact them, and to be flexible, resourceful, creative, and responsive to meet their needs.
- Partnership practitioners taking responsibility and being persistent in efforts to engage BAME children, and their families, and developing effective and meaningful professional relationships. The partnership will collaborate with other organisations who can help this, including faith and cultural groups where appropriate.
- Leaders and practitioners committing to ongoing training and development of the workforce, including volunteers, to help us all use appropriate language, to understand diversity, and to challenge unconscious bias.

- Partnership leaders and the County Board to use data to highlight and scrutinise areas of disproportionality, such as assessments of risk, proposals for Out of Court Disposals, community remand and sentencing proposals.
- Leaders and manager developing recruitment processes to attract a diverse and representative cohort of staff and volunteers across the partnership.
- Leaders investing in developing practitioners' skills and confidence to ask children and families about their identity and lived experiences.
- The Board improving how we hear the voice of children to inform our strategic and operational actions to tackle disproportionality. In 2023 Kent YJ will review the role of Participation Apprentices; how services understand lived experience of the justice system and utilise the expertise of our BAME community partners (including the Equality Cohesion Council) to help us in this work.
- The Board hearing disproportionality in the system, keeping partners to account for what is being done about it, and monitoring how effective those actions are.
- All Board members, staff and volunteers proactively tackling discrimination and unconscious bias at every level.
- The Board understanding and learning from Audit and keeping partners to account for what is being done about it and monitoring how effective those actions are.

In 2022/23 Kent Youth Justice and its partners audited the records of our BAME children. The methodology considered the quality and timeliness of intervention for ethnic minority children, informed by Her Majesties Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) October 2021 published findings of *"The experiences of Black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system"* and the subsequent (December 2021) HMIP effective practice guidance. The records were selected of 10 children in Kent of ethnic minority who had been convicted of the most serious offences and were subject to either custodial or highly intensive court orders.

An audit was undertaken of both the social work and youth justice records. The parents/carers and the children were also surveyed about their experiences and reflections, and specifically on whether there were any missed opportunities to access support earlier.

The children and their families told us:

"the Youth Justice Worker was the only person he felt able to talk to".

"There were some people from similar backgrounds to me who understood my culture and family life. Not everyone really understood or took the time to understand."

The findings of the audit mirrored the HMIP thematic inspection, although most of the BAME children audited had been relocated or displaced from London boroughs to Kent, due to contextual risks. This meant that by the time the children arrived in Kent, they were beyond early intervention and diversion.

The findings of the audit were presented to the County Youth Justice in February 2023. The CYJB agreed that *it is important to hear the voice of the child. The CYJB agreed to hear case histories, specifically the early life experiences and access to services, of BAME children who commit grave crimes resulting in YRO's with ISS and DTO's.* In 2023/24 the partnership will continue to hear analysis of our BAME children to challenge our service provision and to drive improvement.

Additionally, support for Youth Justice Team Managers in the gatekeeping of “so-serious” Pre-Sentence Reports (PSRs) was identified as a development need and is being met through coaching. In addition to scrutinising risk and safeguarding responsibilities, this process focuses on PSRs for children facing custody, including those who are BAME and CiC. In 2023/24 Kent Youth Justice will introduce additional gatekeeping for BAME and CiC children, to strive to achieve better outcomes for them.

11.2 Prevention

11.2.1 Adolescent Early Help

The key delivery arm of the partnership prevention strategy continues to be KCC's Adolescent Early Help service. This provides an holistic, needs-led, whole family approach to all adolescent early-help referrals, including out of court disposals (except for Youth Conditional Cautions). Referrals to Adolescent Early Help services can be made to Kent's Front Door by any individual (including self-referrals) or partner agency that identifies a child requiring support.

Children and families accessing Early Help have a proportionate assessment of their needs undertaken, and success is measured individually against those. Adolescent Early Help Unit Leads are responsible for quality assurance of assessments and plans. KCC's county-wide integrated children's services audit and moderation programme provides a further layer of scrutiny and opportunities to identify learning and improvement needs.

11.2.2 Family Hubs

Kent offers universal and targeted provision for children and families through open access Youth Hubs and Children's Centres. In 2023, Kent are developing a Family Hubs model with partners, with full implementation in 2025. These will deliver a range of programmes including parenting support to meet local need.

Kent's current open access offer includes universal and targeted detached youth work. Targeted work is directed by partnership information shared within District Contextual safeguarding meetings (DCSM's); responding to places and spaces where children may be at risk of harm, exploitation of behaviour that could lead to entry into the criminal justice system.

11.2.3 Partnerships

Kent's partners contribute significantly to the prevention of children offending. Kent Police lead the multi-agency Concordat and child centred policing plan. In June 2023 Police launched their child centred policing teams which will deliver OSARA problem solving within schools and youth ASB hotspots and provide early intervention- targeting those at risk of entry into the criminal justice system.

11.3 Diversion and Out of Court Disposals

Kent and Medway's Out of Court Disposal panel is led by the Police and enables decision making about children to be shared and informed by the Local Authority. The panel prioritises diversion of Children in Care. The CYJB have asked the Police to consider BAME children a priority group for diversion in 2023/24.

In 2023 KCC will launch a bespoke assessment, planning and reporting tool for Out of Court Disposals. This will focus on the 3 pillars of youth justice, sharing the assessment of risk of harm to others, safety and well-being of the child and factors for and against desistance with the OOC panel. This is intended to improve shared decision making and achieve better outcomes for children, including tackling disproportionality.

11.3.1 Outcome 22

In 2022/23 KCC and the Police prepared for the implementation of Outcome 22 as a deferred prosecution, and for those who may otherwise have received a 'no further action' but are willing to engage with intervention to reduce the likelihood of future offending. This is intended to 'go-live' in August 2023. Outcome 22 should see a decrease in unilateral on-the-spot community resolutions, in favour of needs-led preventative and diversionary intervention and will reduce Kent's first-time entrants.

In 22/23 Kent saw a rise in first time entrants, against the national downward trend.

In the County Youth Justice Board consultation to inform this plan it was agreed that in 2023/24 the Youth Justice Partnership will:

- Launch Outcome 22
- Implement the revised OOC assessment, planning and reporting tool.
- Develop a framework to monitor and measure the effectiveness of Out of Court disposals.
- Improve confidence in and congruence between Police and local authority data.

11.3.2 Turnaround

The introduction of the Turnaround program in 2023 is a key strand of Kent's diversion strategy. The principles of Kent's delivery of Turnaround is to enhance the current local authority early help offer, by providing early support to engage children in education, training or employment and ensuring they have a suitable offer of ETE. Engaging in ETE is one of the key protective factors for desistance, and being NEET, excluded or not attending/engaging, being one of the strongest factors against desistance.

Turnaround maintains a non-criminogenic approach, delivering evidence-based interventions, and using a multi-agency assessment and plan, in line with Supporting Families.

Referrals are predominantly but not exclusively from Police. KCC are currently collaborating with Police to create a referral pathway and process, including triage, and recording for effective monitoring and evaluation purposes. The eligible cohort are those children who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- With a first-time Youth Caution,
- Subject to Police No Further Action decisions following arrest (including outcome 22),
- Subject to a Community Resolution,
- Released under investigation or subject to pre-charge bail,
- Fined, discharged (absolutely or conditionally) and/or acquitted at court,
- With Community Protection Orders, Civil Injunctions/Orders as a result of anti-social behaviour (including Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Community Protection Notices) and who have not previously received statutory YJ intervention.

Turnaround offer diversionary support to children, who, because of no comment interviews, would previously have escalated to Court. In the first period of delivery, Jan-March 2023, 23 children were supported by Turnaround. The target for 2023/24 is 113 children.

Turnaround will bring expertise which will to facilitate a cultural shift away from demands in Kent for EHCPs, while challenging and supporting schools and training providers to meet children's needs.

Practice Example:

- Police referred a 15-year-old male after imposing a Community Resolution for criminal damage.
- No current or previous access to services.
- Turnaround Officer contacted parents, agreed plan of support.
- Child had been persistently absent from school over a 5-month period.
- Team around the child meeting identified interventions to support academic change for the child. Agreed managed move to an alternative provision for 6 weeks.
- Child was off-rolled at named school. Re-integration meeting held with school, Turnaround Officer, family, Adolescent EH worker to discuss the breakdown of school placement.
- Child accepted an alternative educational provision at another local school.
- Turnaround funding provided uniform & temporary transport, and continued mentoring to support the school placement.
- Outcome: significant improved attendance was sustained.

11.3.3 Reframe

Kent's commissioned substance misuse provider, 'We Are With You,' deliver the Youth Diversion and Intervention Scheme, Reframe. This offers an alternative to Police to give a 'no further action' rather than an out of court disposal for children who have committed a low-level drugs offence, such as possession of cannabis.

We Are With You are committed to referring onwards to Kent's Front Door, should a child or family need, and consent to, more holistic support.

11.4 Education

The Kent County Youth Justice Board considers both the offer to and the engagement of children in Education, Employment or Training, at the time they start and when they end their order. There are continued concerns about the impact of covid on children's engagement, and the reduction in suitable post-16 provision for the YJ cohort.

In response, the Youth Justice service is accrediting reparation and ISS activity through the AQA framework. The activity enhances the skills and employability of the YJ cohort, while giving them real qualifications that have currency. In 2022/23, 71 children achieved at least 1 AQA.

KCC's commissioning ensures providers offer social value, and Kent YJ will promote the opportunity for providers to offer apprenticeships, work experience and employment to the youth justice cohort.

KCC's commissioned provider for NEET monitoring and advisory services, The Education People (TEP), contributes to the CYJB periodically and collaborates with the service outside of the board. TEP don't provide post-16 education, but they work with providers to understand the gaps in post-16 provision, and they help broker sufficient placements to meet identified need.

The partnership will promote an inclusive culture in KCC and partnership buildings, such as libraries and adult education, which reflects our shared roles as corporate parents, to provide a welcoming and safe space for children open to youth justice, and their families.

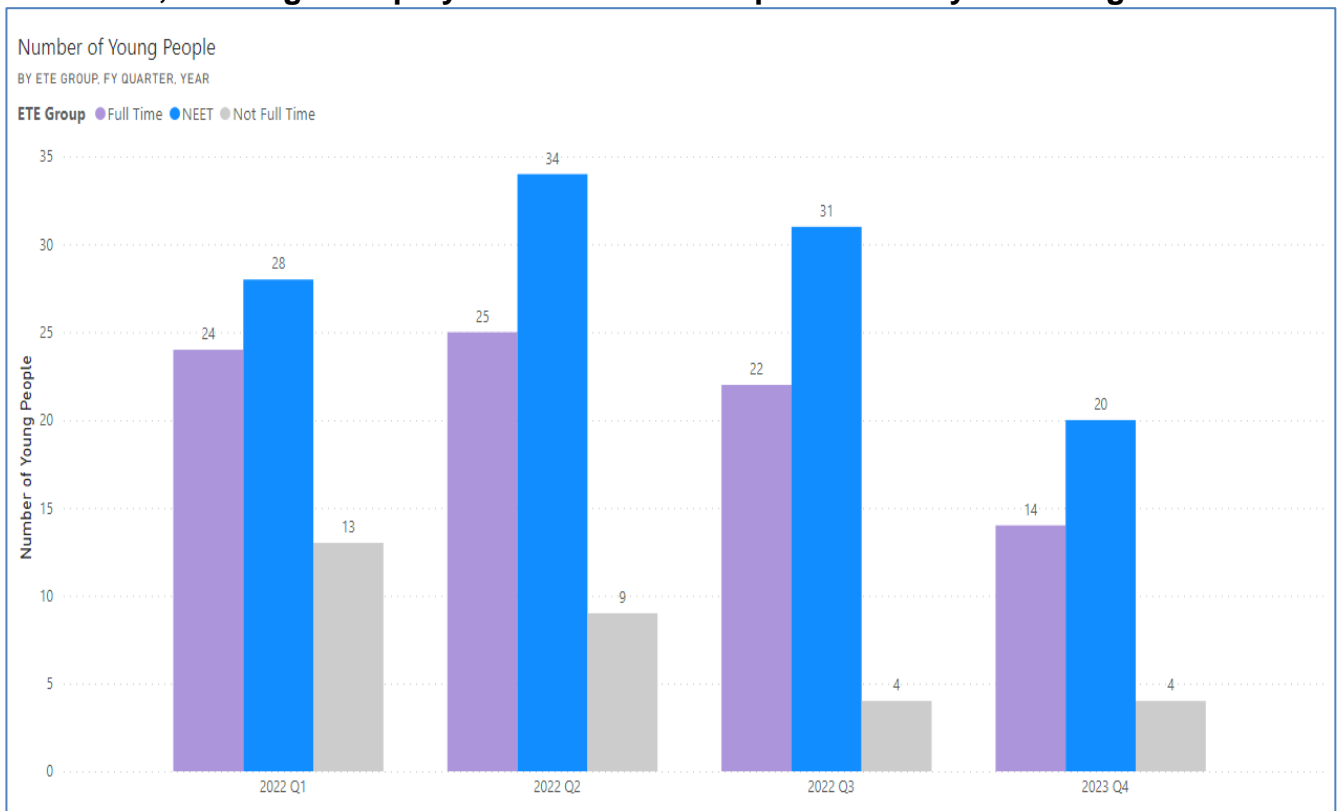
Kent Youth Justice will fully introduce the education and Youth Justice education risk assessment tool. This facilitates a shared risk assessment and management plan which can improve children's access to education provision when a concern about risk of harm to others has been raised.

It is evident, based on current performance data, that engagement in education, training and employment is one of the key challenges for Kent Youth Justice Services and its partners. The counting rules for the new national ETE and SEND key performance indicators gives more flexibility to meet individual needs for children, which reflect realistic and sustainable educational and vocational pathway planning.

Education, Training & Employment Attendance– statutory school age 2022/23



Education, Training & Employment Attendance – post statutory school age 2022/23



11.5 Restorative Approaches & Victims

Kent Youth Justice service has a dedicated Victim Voice Lead, 2 Restorative Justice (Reparation) practitioners and are currently training 3 further staff in restorative justice and victim contact work to ensure the service can meet demand.

A focus on this work has seen a continuing increase in the quality and quantity of hearing the voice of victims in our assessment, planning and interventions.

Kent YJ has a diverse range of in-direct reparation projects which offer accreditations to children. The Police and Crime Commissioner fund Restorative Solutions to offer direct “victim-offender” restorative conferences. They also provide specialist support to ensure that apology letters created with children are as meaningful and restorative as possible for the victim.

A restorative meeting was held between a child in custody and a victim. This allowed the child to hear the views of the victim directly, which elicited an apology from the child.

Prior to the meeting both parties were prepared by Restorative Solutions. The child was incredibly nervous beforehand but felt proud afterwards to have taken part. The Victim expressed that they felt safe and completely supported throughout the whole process.

The meeting helped both the child and victim to put the incident behind them.

Kent YJ have developed a suite of proxy victim statements to enhance victim empathy intervention when the victim is not identifiable or does not wish to participate in restorative justice. The service has co-created a proxy victim video with Kent Police, aimed at children who have committed an offence against an emergency worker. The partnership are currently developing projects with National Rail for children who offend on the railway.

By implementing Outcome 22, the partnership hopes to reduce the numbers of unilaterally imposed informal Community Resolutions. These disposals, if administered without a genuine restorative element, can disregard the voice of victims, undermining victim confidence in decision making, and in the system.

In 2023 – 24 the Youth Justice partnership will:

- Continue to prioritise Police obtaining and sharing victim contact details with the local authority at the earliest opportunity, by launching an improved E-YOT or alternative Police referral form.
- Ensure Kent YJ case audits and case management quality assurance processes provide oversight of the extent to which the voice of victims is heard in assessment, planning and delivery of work with children.
- Report to CYJB on the new Victim KPI, to share responsibility, drive performance and encourage challenge. This will include monitoring and evaluating Kent YJ’s Victim voice resource for both sufficiency and quality.

11.6 Serious Violence & Exploitation

The Youth Justice Board’s definition of serious violence is any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of 5 or more. 45 Kent children received a court outcome for serious violence offences by this definition in the year 2022 – 23.

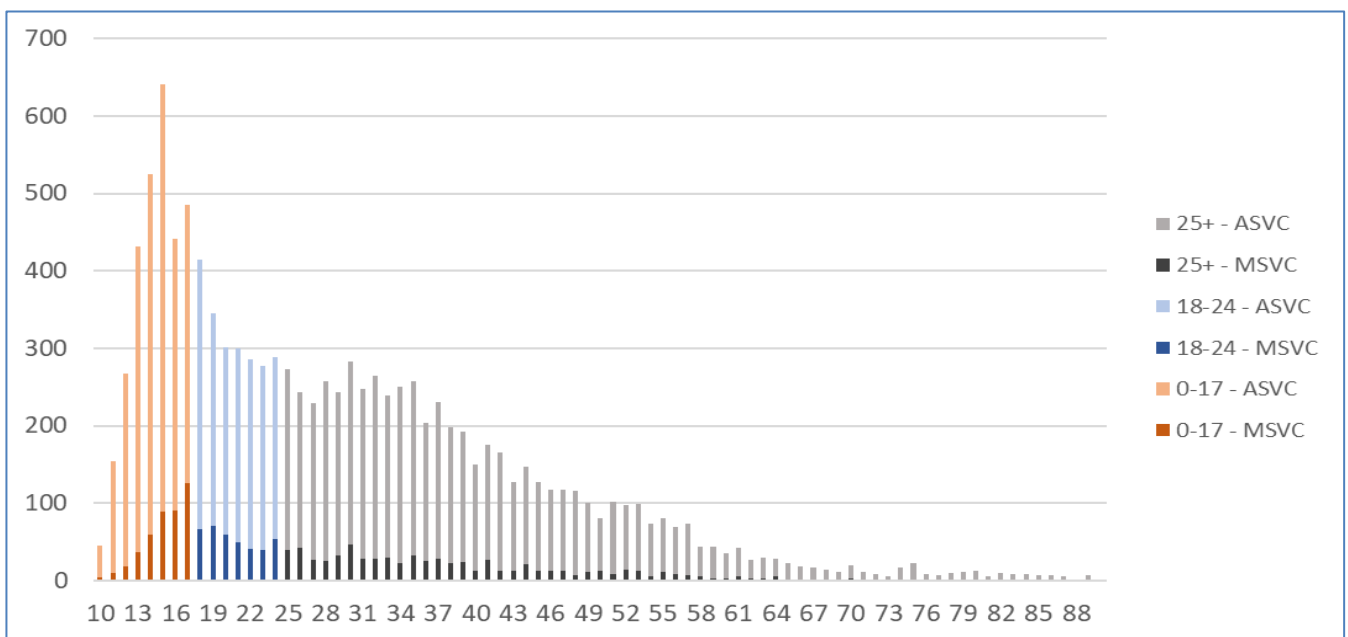
Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit provides analysis of serious violence within the 2022/23 Strategic Needs Assessment, using data from October 2021 – September 2022. The VRU data identifies the main types of serious violence as:

- Violence with injury
- Robbery
- Violence linked to weapons
- Violence linked to drug supply

Children are over-represented in the serious violence data both as suspects and victims. 63% of children open to Kent Youth Justice have been convicted of a violent offence.

		10 – 17 years	18 - 24 years	25+ years
Kent	Proportion of the total suspects	24.9%	19.1%	55.5%
Medway	Proportion of the total suspects	31.9%	20.5%	47%
Kent	Proportion of total victims	28.3%	15.6%	56.1%
Medway	Proportion of total victims	31.7%	16.9%	51.4%

The VRU needs assessment identified that while serious violence remains lower than pre-pandemic levels, there has been a disproportionate increase in the numbers of children involved in offences where injury has been caused and where weapons were involved.



ASVC = All Serious Violent Crime.

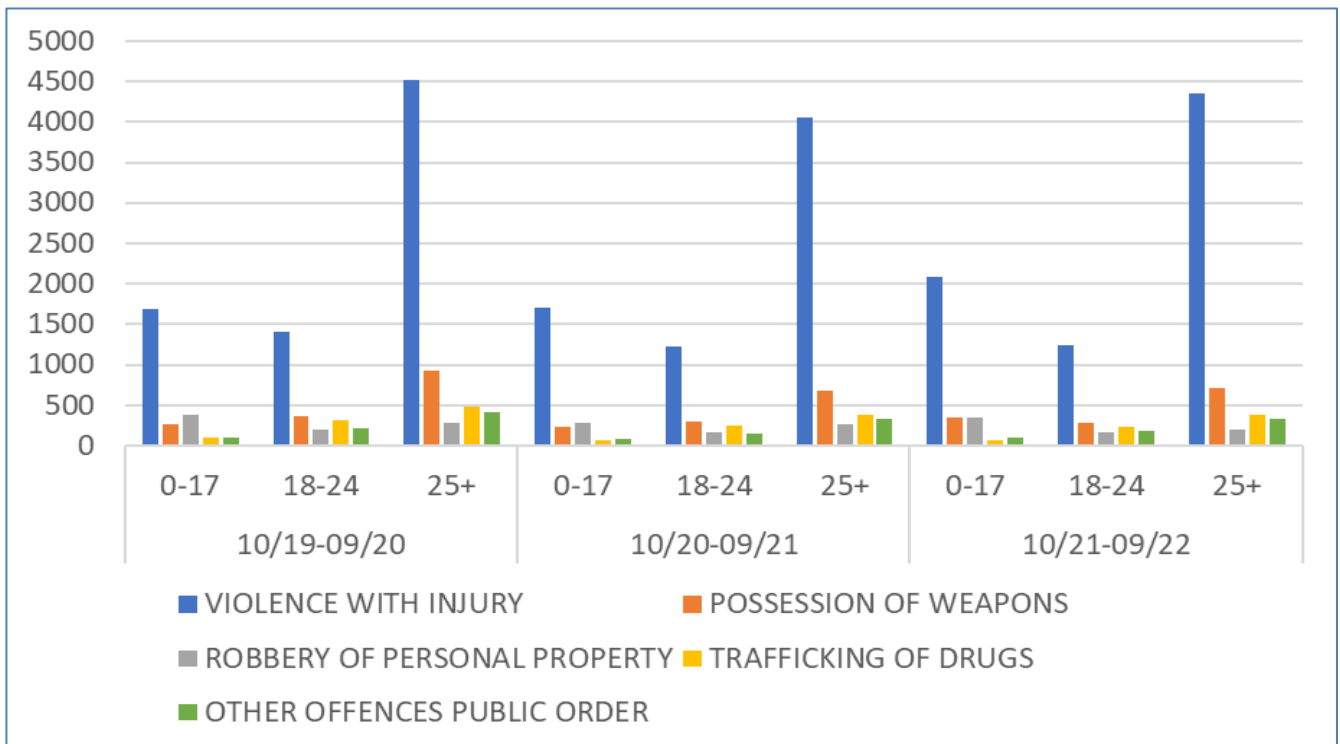
MSVC = Most Serious Violent Crime, includes Homicide, Attempt Murder, Assault with intent to cause serious harm, knife, firearm, corrosive related serious violence, aggravated burglary excluding Domestic Abuse

The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and Kent Youth Justice service work closely together leading multi-agency approaches to reduce or prevent violence from occurring. One of the VRU Directors is seconded from Kent Youth Justice which supports excellent mutual understanding and collaboration.

Kent Police are actively involved in the strategy to tackle serious violence and a new model for neighbourhood policing has created a Child Centred Policing role. This role will increase information sharing and lever in resources for joint working with children and families where there are risks of violence or exploitation.

The Kent Youth Justice partnership through the County Youth Justice board have agreed to follow best practice and guidance from the Youth Endowment Fund, supporting what does work and agreeing not to commission or support intervention with no evidence base or proven to be harmful. In line with this, the partnership commissions, delivers and/or supports those approaches which make high and moderate impact on reducing serious violence including:

- Focussed Deterrence
- Reachable Moments (A&E Navigators)
- Street Games
- Social Skills development
- Dialectical Behavioural Therapy approaches
- Restorative Justice
- Mentoring
- Hot-Spots Policing
- By-stander interventions
- Pre-Court diversion
- Parenting intervention



The Partnership Activity Includes:

- Information and data sharing. The YJ service and the VRU routinely share intelligence, information, and data. The VRU provides analysis of multi-agency data sets (Police, KCC, Probation) which enhances understanding of serious violence risk related to locations, times, and individuals.
- Kent Police's Youth Justice team provide daily intelligence checks on children in the criminal justice system.
- Multi-agency collaboration in District Contextual Safeguarding Meetings and Complex Adolescent Harm Meetings which are the multi-agency mechanisms to identify, plan and respond to contextual risks.
- Kent's YJ and Adolescent Response Team co-designed the Focussed Deterrence approach with Police and VRU to tackle young street groups and gangs.
- Police, VRU and Youth Justice play a key role in MAPPA processes and work closely with the Integrated Offender Management teams who will focus on serious violence in 2023 – 24.

In 2023 – 24 the Youth Justice Partnership will:

- be actively represented on the new Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Board. The chair of the County Youth Justice Board will represent the partnership on the Board which will set the strategic priorities for the specified authorities to meet the legal requirements of the serious violence duty.
- support the development of a multi-agency data sharing platform that combines data from Police, Local Authorities, Probation and Health. This will enable user generated analysis to inform the strategic and operational response to violence.
- identify children where risks of harm from knives or weapons is high. A Focussed Deterrence and approach will persistently offer of support, coupled with enhanced surveillance and enforcement.
- seek representation from all specified and relevant authorities (Police, Health, Education, Community Safety) to deliver a plan for children where there is a risk of harm linked to violence. informed by and including all relevant agencies.
- collaborate with the VRU to deliver Street Aid training to children where there are risks of harm linked to weapons. The training will equip children with skills to provide first aid should this be required, and the program provides an opportunity for professionals to talk with children about harm from weapons.
- explore with Health the opportunity to develop a fast track CAMHS response for victims and witnesses of serious youth violence.
- develop a strategy and enhance guidance to partners on the use of National Referral Mechanism, to divert children from prosecution where appropriate.

11.7 Detention in Police Custody

Kent YJ and Kent Police are a signatory to the national Children in Custody Concordat:

- *To coordinate activity to meet the aims and objectives of the Home Office Children in Custody Concordat ensuring principles and processes are discussed and reviewed to ensure children are only detained where it is absolutely necessary.*
- *To work together to develop best practice to ensure children spend the minimum amount of time necessary in Custody and that when they do, they are cared for with dignity and respect taking in to account their needs in order to reduce trauma.*

In 22/23 The Safeguarding Partnership Independent Scrutineer reviewed Kent Police procedures and outcomes for children detained overnight in Police custody. They noted that some children were unnecessarily detained, and that further partnership work was needed to tackle this. There have been 622 children arrested, brought into custody, and detained by Kent Police from Jan-June 2023. This includes Medway and out of area children. This is comparable with 1,650 child detentions in 2020, 1,202 child detentions in 2021 and 1,440 child detentions in 2022.

The scrutineers report and recommendations are available via the link [Annual Reports - Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership \(kscmp.org.uk\)](https://www.kscmp.org.uk)

Kent and Medway YJ services, Kent Front Door and Police meet quarterly to develop a strategy and local concordat. This articulates the expectations of each other in respect to children coming to the attention of Police and going through Police custody. An operational, tactical meeting will be introduced in 2023/24 to facilitate scrutiny of child level custody decisions, including the provision of accommodation by the Local Authority, to drive practice improvement and overcome barriers and challenges in meeting the aims of the national concordat.

11.8 Transition Into & Out of the Secure Estate

In 2022/23 the number of children remanded to secure reduced by 19%. Children receiving custodial sentences fell by 11% from the previous year.

In 2021, with NHS England Secure Stairs funding, Kent Youth Justice enhanced transition and resettlement resource and employed two dedicated Transition Practitioners. These work within Cookham Wood YOI to embed trauma-informed approaches and to adopt the framework for integrated care of children with complex needs.

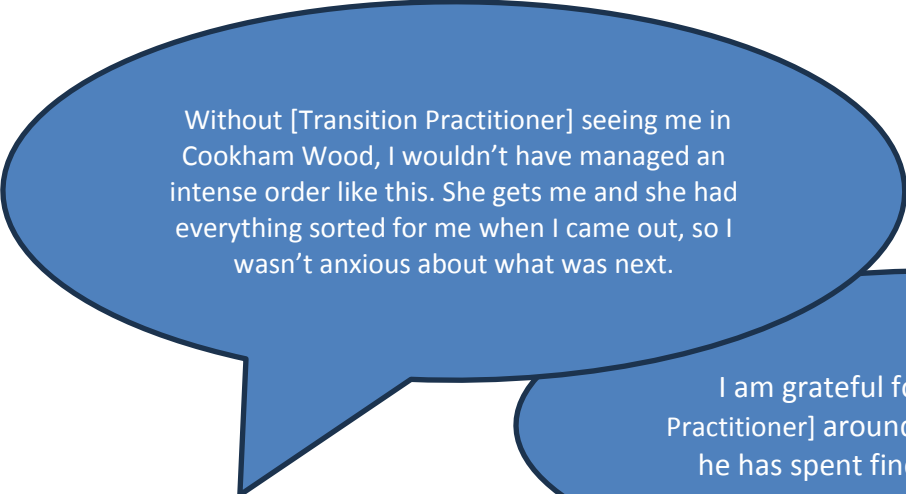
As part of a 2-year pilot, the Transition practitioners have worked with providers to ensure continuity of healthcare and education for children going into and coming out of the secure estate. They directly offer intensive and out of hours support to children upon their release into the community. They have additionally monitored and reported on children's experiences of the secure estate, ensuring services prioritise their best interests, recognise their needs, capacities, rights, potential, and address the causes of offending and any unmet social, emotional, health or educational needs.

Kent Youth Justice have extended the contract of our Transition practitioners while the staffing structure and establishment is reviewed in 2023. Transition are currently part of a county-wide YJ team which includes the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance resource. These practitioners necessarily work closely together with the most high-risk children open to Youth Justice.

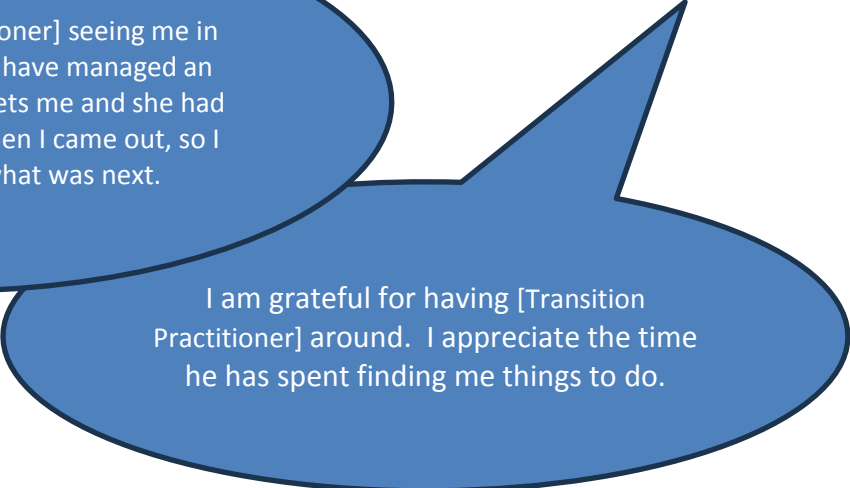
Transition in Practice

Whilst serving a DTO in Cookham Wood YOI a supported child expressed an interest in pursuing employment in the construction Industry. His Transitions Practitioner arranged for him to attend a Construction Youth Trust course for three days on release on temporary licence (ROTL). The child was supported and encouraged by his Transitions Practitioner for the 3 days of the course. The child learnt new skills relevant to the construction industry, was able to tailor his CV for desired job roles and met professionals in the industry to talk about future employment opportunities.

A 17-year-old child was remanded to youth detention for 12 months and subsequently sentenced to a YRO ISS band 1, at 25 hours/week. The child was seen twice each week in the secure estate by the Transitions Practitioner to prepare them for release into the community. For the first few weeks following release, the child was seen daily by their Transitions Practitioner, including on weekends. The child participated in several training courses and achieved a variety of AQA qualifications. This enabled them to secure employment within 6 months of release.



Without [Transition Practitioner] seeing me in Cookham Wood, I wouldn't have managed an intense order like this. She gets me and she had everything sorted for me when I came out, so I wasn't anxious about what was next.



I am grateful for having [Transition Practitioner] around. I appreciate the time he has spent finding me things to do.

Kent Youth Justice continue to work closely with Social work services to ensure planned access to suitable accommodation upon release from custody. The quality of this collaboration was recognised in the 2023 HMIP and Ofsted remand thematic inspection.

12. Standards for Children in the Justice System

Kent's YJ service, Quality Assurance Team, CYPE staff, volunteers, and representatives from the partnership completed a full national standards self-assessment in April 2020. This was scrutinised by KCC's internal audit team, and the following outcomes verified:

Standard	Operational Self-Assessment	Strategic Self-Assessment
NS1 Out of Court Disposals	Outstanding	Good
NS2 At Court	Good	Good
NS3 In the Community	Good	Good
NS4 In Secure Settings	Good	Requires Improvement
NS5 On Transition	Good	Requires Improvement

The self-assessment is different to the HMIP inspection framework. This first self-assessment set a baseline for Youth Offending Teams nationally, from which to devise their own continuous performance improvement plans. Kent's plan was presented to, agreed by, and is routinely monitored by the County Youth Justice Board.

Kent's Youth Justice partnership will complete the required national standards self-assessment of 'work in court' in the autumn of 2023, and implement any actions in response to the findings.

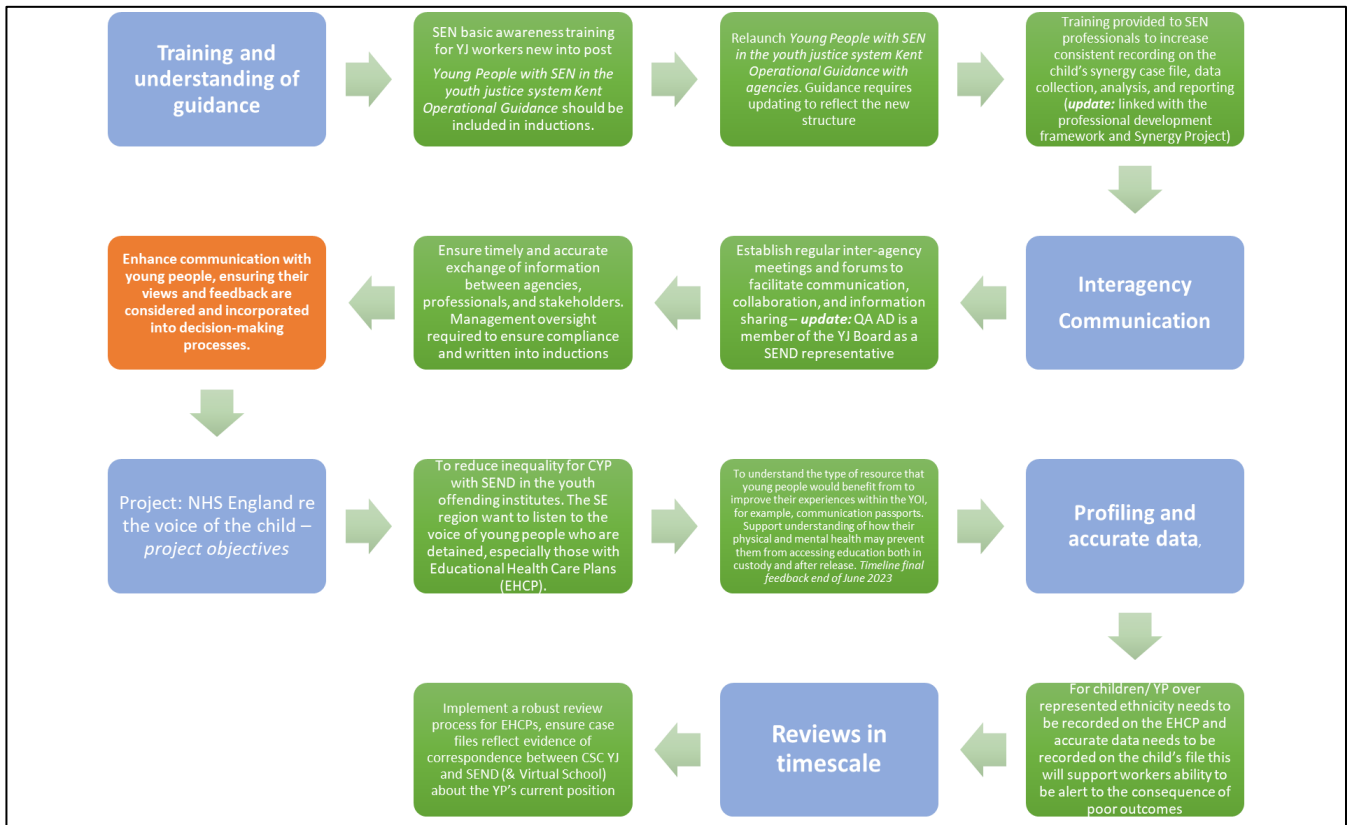
13. Workforce Development

A Kent Youth Justice work force skills audit was undertaken in November 22 to inform the 2023/24 workforce development plan. The plan identifies the range of skills and knowledge required by the Youth Justice workforce, which is fulfilled by KCC's Learning and Development framework.

In 2023, the partnership will ensure the YJ workforce are offered opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge to:

- Understand Contextual Safeguarding and how Kent's multi-agency approaches fit with YJ risk assessment, planning and delivery.
- Talk with children and families about identity, including ethnicity and culture.
- Intervene with the male cohort to develop violence-free relationships, supporting the Violence Against Women and Girls agenda.
- Understand and tackle technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour.
- Embed case formulation approaches.
- Promote the service and the board hearing the voice of the victim in assessment, planning and delivery.

To provide a more robust ETE offer to children in the youth justice system, including appropriate speech and language and SEN support, Kent YJ and KCC's SEND team have developed an action plan:



Kent YJ will continue to deliver bitesize briefings and short webinars for front line staff in response to identified need; to launch or promote initiatives; to announce legislative or practice guidance changes or to drive improvements in areas of weakness. This will sometimes include the wider partnership.

A priority for the YJ service is the recruitment, retention, and development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce to deliver a high-quality service. This will enable operational improvement aspirations to be achieved and improve performance against key performance indicators.

In 2023/24 Kent YJ expect to develop the service structure and introduce Youth Justice Practitioner apprenticeships to 'grow our own' and develop a progression pathway. Staff will continue to access the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate (the qualification that is endorsed by the Youth Justice Board and brings together the most up-to-date thinking, knowledge, research, and evidence about what works in Youth Justice).

13.1 Staff Wellbeing & Support:

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, KCC continues to adopt a hybrid working approach. KCC facilitate staff to work from home with equipment, training and advice on maximising technologies including MS Teams and have bookable team spaces to promote team connection. The 4 area-based Youth Justice teams have weekly face to face meetings and once or twice weekly access to office space.

Kent Youth Justice introduced a trauma-informed supervision model in 2020. The legacy of this service was to train first line managers to offer trauma-informed supervision to practitioners, and to understand when and where to signpost staff for further individual support when needed.

KCC undertake regular staff surveys to connect and listen to the work force. Flexible working hours are encouraged to enable staff to be productive around child-care and other responsibilities.

KCC Senior Managers produce a staff bulletin to share key messages, service information, and provide light-hearted reports to keep staff connected, and the workforce is encouraged to switch off, to take breaks and to find a good work/life balance. Ideas are shared across the council to encourage this.

KCC have an accessible staff care offer including:

- Corporate mechanisms to recognise contributions.
- Guidance on achieving physical and emotional well-being.
- A health and well-being page, with a new well-being tool, on KCC's intranet (KNET).
- A specialist counselling service.
- Mindfulness and wellbeing webinars.
- Access to coaching.
- Occupational Health advice.
- Integration of wellbeing support throughout professional development for managers.
- Bespoke support for teams for bereavement, stress management.
- Management guidance on inducting and supporting staff with remote working.

Kent also offer several Staff Support Groups:

- Aspire for the Under 30's
- Rainbow for LGBTQ+ Employee
- Staff Ethnic Diversity Forum
- Single Parents Staff Group
- Mental Health Support Group

14. Evidence-Based Practice & Innovation

14.1 Trauma Informed Approaches:

‘The Work of Youth Offending Teams to Protect the Public’, an Inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation (October 2017) identified that, of cases audited, 81% of children who pose a public protection risk had experienced trauma, and 41% had witnessed or committed domestic abuse. Common experiences of trauma were separation and estrangement from parents, death of a parent or carer, sexual abuse, severe physical chastisement, repeat domestic abuse and parental substance misuse. For some children, their experiences of trauma were multiple and severe. The Inspectorate recommended that all YOTs move to a trauma-informed delivery model.

In 2018/19, Kent YJ secured NHS Children’s Workforce Transformation Funding to develop and embed trauma-informed practice. Until 2022 this was used to deliver Forensic Case Formulation and trauma informed practice training to the adolescent workforce. Development opportunities continue to target new staff and those needing refreshers, to ensure these remain the service’s core practice approaches.

The ‘Punishing Abuse’ report (2021) found “Poverty, disadvantage, and social exclusion, linked with systemic failure to address their needs, creates a conveyor belt which propels vulnerable children towards exploitation and crime. Trauma informed approaches are part of the Kent Practice Framework with a rolling programme of training available: mandated for the adolescent workforce. Together with the Integrated Care Board, KCC YJ are commissioning case formulation coaching to embed this and to progress towards being a fully trauma-informed service.

Kent’s trauma informed approaches include relationship and strength-based approaches, and efforts to reduce transitions for adolescents within and across Kent services. This approach is reflected in the non-blaming language that the partnership uses, including practitioners taking responsibility to engage children (not children responsible for engaging with services), and referring to push and pull factors for children, rather than ‘choices’ they make. In 2023 KCC will start to use ‘language that cares’ and write case records to children rather than about them.

14.2 Communication Passports:

Kent YJ and the Speech and Language provider, Symbol, are developing Communication passports: a mechanism to inform professionals of the best way to communicate with the child, identify any triggers and Speech, language, or communication needs. These Passports are co-created by the YJ practitioner with the child, following training from Symbol, Speech, and language therapy service. These documents are shared with the courts and will be extended in 2023 for passports to be recorded on the local Police system. This may reduce assaults on emergency workers and enable Police to better support children who are detained in their custody.

“...defendants list any special needs & explain what they might find difficult (e.g. attention for any length of time) ... very helpful. We used these for 3 cases yesterday – at least one of the youths was potentially tricky to question but in the event it was fine & he gave us a lot of very relevant information.

This is a good innovation I think.”

Magistrate Feb 2023

14.3 Street Aid:

The VRU and Kent YJ will continue to collaborate in 2023 to deliver Street Aid training where there are risks of harm from weapons. This will equip children with skills to provide first aid in the event of a weapon wound. The program gives professionals an opportunity to talk with children about harm from weapons. 38 KCC staff from Youth Justice, Adolescent Early Help and the Open Access Youth service have completed the training so they can deliver the programme with children in groups or 1:1.

14.4 Focussed Deterrence:

Focussed Deterrence is an evidence-based approach which the Youth Endowment Fund identify as having a high impact on Serious Violence. Focused deterrence attempts to identify the people most likely to be involved in violence, such as through gangs and young street groups.

In Kent these individuals and groups are identified within the multi-agency adolescent risk management DCSM & CAHM structures. Response plans and support offered are based on the focused deterrence approach.

Focussed Deterrence combines several core strategies:

- **Support**
Help for people involved in violence to access positive support and social services. The support is delivered by multiagency partnership including YJ practitioners. This enables intensive support including outside of office hours.
- **Community engagement**
Engaging the wider community to communicate that they want violence to stop and those involved to be safe, provide support, and encourage reintegration in the community. In Kent the VRU fund the KCC community conferencing services to work with local communities affected by violence.
- **Deterrence**
Clear communication of the consequences of violence and swift and certain enforcement if violence occurs. Kent Police and YJS work together to ensure children are aware of the consequences of violence and Police provide timely enforcement where required.

15. Service Development Plan

15.1 Previous development plan

In June 2021 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) undertook a full inspection of Kent Youth Justice Services and the partnership. The summary of HMIP's Ratings of Kent YJ Against the 12 Standards is in the improvement plan at appendix 1.

The Youth Justice partnership co-produced an Improvement Plan with key delivery partners, the KCC Directors Management Team, County Youth Justice Board, the senior KCC Youth Justice leadership team, Quality Assurance Professional Standards and Safeguarding, and Information & Intelligence. This was submitted (appendix 1) to HMIP on 19.10.2021. This addressed HMIP's 6 recommendations and each of the areas for improvement identified in the body of the report.

Since 2021, most actions have been completed in a timely way and achieved the required standards and expectations. This includes overwhelmingly positive workforce engagement, quality staff appraisals and bespoke Youth Justice development to meet service needs.

There are three targets which remain ongoing into 2023:

1. The implementation of Outcome 22

Work continues with Police and both Kent and Medway local authorities to implement Outcome 22. Kent systems and processes are in place. Thresholds have been agreed and written guidance on these is awaited from Kent Police for anticipated go-live in August 2023.

2. A bespoke Communities of Practice in Contextual Safeguarding was to be prioritised to be delivered to Youth Justice, by KCC's Quality Assurance Team, to include how the framework fits with Youth Justice risk assessment, planning and delivery.

In 2023 the Youth Justice Senior Management Team will take responsibility for the design and delivery of the Communities of Practice Session, and this will be embedded in work force development planning and delivering.

3. A bespoke audit by Kent's Quality Assurance Team of Kent YJ's assessment and planning of risk.

In 2023 YJ will return to undertaking HMIP-style case audits, with the results of these reported to the CYJB. This includes a judgement of the quality of assessment and planning of risk and all aspects of the 3 domains of HMIP inspection. This provides a transparent and realistic assessment of HMIP inspection outcome, and helps the partnership understand the areas of strength and the focuses for improvement.

In 2023, Kent Youth Justice will also participate in the CYPE audit framework, which will be reported to the County YJB by the Quality Assurance Team representative.

To obtain an independent view of the quality of case work and management oversight in 2022, Kent Youth Justice commissioned an external independent 'deep dive' of those records which had not been through the Kent Youth Justice risk panel. This highlighted that Team Managers have the appropriate knowledge to quality assure assessments and plans to the required standards, but that there is some continued inconsistency by them to do so.

The Service Manager and Head of Service have been consulting with staff and scrutinising the YJ structure, staffing capacity and pathways for staff progression. In August 2023 a proposal will be presented to KCC's Directors Management Team for an improved structure to attract, develop and retain the necessary capacity, skills, and knowledge that the services needs in order to improve. Job descriptions and a commensurate work force development plan will align with these proposals, within the financial envelope.

A summary of all outstanding 2022/23 and new actions have been collated to form the Kent Youth Justice partnership plan for 2023/24.

15.2 Kent Youth Justice partnership service 2023/24 development plan

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Child first	Introduce the practice of "writing to the child" in local authority case notes	Case record is free of any blaming / labelling language. Records are child focused	Audits and dip sampling	Start Oct 2023. Ongoing monitoring	KCC YJ Strategic Development Manager
	The partnership to co-create a shared child first vision and statement of principles	Partners language and approaches are genuinely child first and blame free; professionals are curious about the lived experience of children; and the partnership are increasing informed by the voice of children	Self-reflection	Start Sept 2023	KCC YJ Strategic Development Manager

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Voice of the Child	All partners to bring voice of the child information as a standing agenda item to CYJB meetings	User voice is heard by the service and partnership and reflected in decisions about service design.	Actions arising from the meeting discussion. Audits.	Launch Sep 2023	YJ Strategic Development Manager and all board members
	Ensure each YJ team has a lead with responsibility for participation	Maintained focus on participation and voice of child actions	Increase participation and feedback	Launch Oct 2024	YJ Service Manager
Voice of the Child / Child first	Develop focus groups with children open to YJ to hear feedback and ideas on specific issues or co produce new resources.	Regular input from children. Empower children to make positive contributions, encourage wider social inclusion	Number of focus groups, attendance, engagement. Outputs and outcomes.	Launch Dec 2023	YJ Policy & Partnership Officer & KCC Participation Team, Police, PCC, VRU, Magistrates, Health, Education, Social Work
	Kent YJ to develop a process for obtaining voice of the child and their carers at beginning and end of Court orders.	Voice of the child and family consistently obtained, reported, and considered in operational decision making	Increase service user voice – and records of 'you said we did' showing the difference it has made	Launch Dec 2024	Kent YJ Policy & Partnership Officer & KCC Participation Team

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
New KPI's	Upgrade the Kent YJ case management and information system	Accurate reporting on new KPI's enabling understanding and constructive challenge and support by CYJB	Successful system upgrade, KPIs can be accurately reported on to CYJB	Sep 2023	MIU with testing support from YJ Teams

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
	Amend County Youth Justice Board performance report to include new KPIs	CYJ board have oversight of performance on all indicators, and can understand and offer constructive challenge and support	Amended agenda	Sep 2023	YJ Service Manager

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Children from groups which are over-represented.	YJ to introduce additional gatekeeping of PSR's for BAME and CIC Children	Achieving better outcomes for BAME and CIC children	Sentencing outcomes for over-represented children	Launch Jul 2023	YJ Service Manager
	CYJB to consider criteria for O OCD panel to include BAME children	Outcomes for BAME children will have multi agency decision making	Reduce BAME children entering YJ system	Sep 2023	YJ Police Team
	Thematic audit exploring case histories of BAME children who commit grave crimes resulting in YRO's with ISS and DTO's.	Board will understand children's early life experiences & their access to services. Missed opportunities identified & learning applied.	Completion of audit, learning identified, and actions created and followed up.	Start August 2023	Youth Justice Strategic Manager and VRU

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Diversion/ Child First	Implement outcome 22	Reduction in FTEs. More children will receive diversionary intervention to prevent entry into the YJS	Outcome 22 successfully delivered. Reduced FTEs.	Launch August 2023	Police & YJS

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
	Thematic audit of FTE's	Understand the journey of children who became FTE. Identify and follow actions to make future change.	Completion of audit	Cohort Oct-Dec 2023 for Feb 2024 CYJB	Youth Justice and Kent Police
Diversion	Test and launch new O OCD referral, assessment, planning and reporting tool	Police referrals will have victim information to improve victim voice. Assessments & plans will record desistence, safety & wellbeing & risk of serious harm to improve joint decision making.	Audit	August 2023	Kent Youth Justice, Kent Management Information and Kent Police

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Restorative Justice/ Victim Voice	Launch new Police referral form with mandatory victim details section	YJ will have victim details to contact and hear victim views. Increase Victim voice.	Power BI reports & audits will evidence increased victim voice, restorative justice & victim satisfaction	Sep 2023	Police & Victim Voice Lead
	Report on new victim KPI	CYJB will understand the proportion of victims identified, supported, & any gaps in processes that need to be remedied. CYJB oversight of victim satisfaction.	Quarterly Performance reports- including that data and victim qualitative satisfaction feedback.	July 2023 onwards	Kent Police, KCC MIU & YJ Victim Voice Lead
	Create and implement mechanism to measure victim satisfaction.	CYJB to have oversight of victim satisfaction & if improvements to processes or services are required.	Victim feedback	Jan 2024	Kent Police, Kent YJ Victim Voice Lead, Restorative Solutions (PCC)

_Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Serious violence and exploitation	The chair of the CYJB to represent the partnership on the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Board	Partnership will have a voice in setting strategic priorities for the specified authorities to meet the legal requirements of the serious violence duty.	Attendance at Board	Immediate	CYJB Chair, VRU
	Support the development of a multi-agency data sharing platform that combines data from Police, Local Authorities, Probation & Health	successful, will allow user generated analysis to inform the strategic and operational response to violence.	Development and launch of the platform	To be confirmed by project team	Kent YJ, Kent MIU, & VRU
	Delivery of Street aid courses	Equip children to provide first aid & enable professionals to talk with children about weapon harm	Attendance at training and delivery of intervention to Children (monitored by VRU), and reduction in serious youth violence	Throughout 2023/24	VRU
	VRU to seek Health to develop a fast track CAMHS response for victims and witnesses of Serious Youth Violence	Children who experience Serious youth violence will have timely access to emotional well-being support	Children who experience Serious youth violence will have timely access to emotional well-being support		VRU

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
	Develop a partnership strategy and enhance knowledge of the use of National Referral Mechanism, with the intended impact on diversion from prosecution where appropriate.	Appropriate NRM referrals made by first responders, with prosecution not pursued where unnecessary.	Dip-sampling case records of relevant offences to measure if exploitation is identified; NRM referrals made and prosecutions avoided. Reporting numbers of NRM referrals and impact.	Dec 2023	YJ Strategic Development Manager KCC Adolescent Safeguarding Manager Kent Police

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Service standards for children in YJS are upheld.	Audits of youth justice case work	CYJB will have oversight of the quality of casework with children open to YJ.	Audits against service standards	From Sept 2023	Kent YJ KCC Quality Assurance Team
	Audit moderation	CYJB can have confidence in the accuracy of audit outcomes	Audit and moderation against service standards	From Sept 2023	Kent YJ KCC Quality Assurance Team
	Kent YJ to present evidence-based proposal for structure to KCC Directors Management Team, within budget, & with a work force development plan.	The YJ service will have a practitioner and management structure that can meet service demand and quality standards.		August 2023	Kent YJ Head of Service YJ Service Manager

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
	Complete the National standards self-assessment, implement any actions based on the findings	Assessment will identify actions	Completion of self-assessment and follow up of actions	Autumn of 2023	CYJB Partners YJ Service Manager YJ Strategic Development Manager
	Implement thematic serious incident audit process & present findings to CYJB	All serious incidents will be reviewed & learning shared at CYJB	Completion of reviews, reports to CYJB, learning shared & embedded	Launch August 2023	YJ Head of Service & YJ Service Manager

Priority	Action	Outcome	Measured by	Time frame	Lead Responsibility
Workforce Development	Identify and provide learning opportunities that meet identified work force need. This will include partnership developments.	Work force is confident & suitably skilled	Participation in learning opportunities. Evidence in case audits & partnership reflections & feedback of learning embedded.	Starting Sept 2023	Strategic Development Manager KCC Learning & development. CYJB partners
	KCC to deliver SEND action Plan	Improvement in service for SEND Children open to YJ	Dip samples & audit	Implement from Jul 2023, audit Oct-Dec 2023	YJ Strategic Development Manager KCC Assistant Director SEN
	YJ staff progression pathways including apprenticeships	Progression pathway for YJ to recruit & retain a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.	Staff feel skilled, reflected in good case audits, inspection, feedback & outcomes. Vacancies filled in a timely way & staff retained & progressing.	Dependent on provision of Apprentice-ships; on agreement to proposal and on recruitment	YJ Service Manager Strategic Development Manager

16. Challenges, Risks & Issues

Risk	Mitigating Factors
<p>Missed Opportunities</p> <p>There is a risk that a lack of early assessment (through the use of on-the-spot community resolutions) misses opportunities to identify needs and intervene early to prevent offending and re-offending by children.</p>	<p>The implementation of Outcome 22 is expected to reduce informal CRs and No Further Actions and replace these with holistic early intervention.</p>
<p>First Time Entrants</p> <p>The population census in 2021 has identified that the Kent population aged 5 -9 and 10 – 14 is higher than that of those aged 15 – 19. The increase in the numbers of those reaching adolescence creates a risk that there will be an increase in children who will require support from the Youth Justice partnership.</p>	<p>The Youth Justice service will drive the delivery of Outcome 22 so that it is available to all children where an alternative to prosecution is appropriate. The service will closely monitor and evaluate the delivery and impact of Outcome 22 and re-referrals into the criminal justice system.</p> <p>Review continues, with Kent YJ, Kent Police and VRU, of the effectiveness of prevention and diversion programmes and arrangements. Reframe will refer to EH when appropriate for holistic prevention services.</p>
<p>County Lines:</p> <p>are resourceful and evolve quickly. It is a challenge for professionals to remain up to date with their methodologies and activities.</p>	<p>Partnerships are strong and proactive about understanding and sharing information and intelligence about county lines, particularly with the Police and the VRU.</p> <p>The partnership will actively seek opportunities to learn from research and best practice about how to respond most effectively to county lines; will continue to embed the multi-agency adolescent risk management and contextual safeguarding framework; and publish the learning from the Serious youth Violence Prevention Project.</p> <p>In 2023/24 the partnership will create practice guidance and expectations for the meaningful use of National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and create a strategy for understanding and working with girls in a way which responds to the different role they play in county lines.</p>
<p>Children involved in knife crime.</p> <p>The VRU's Strategic Needs</p>	<p>The County Youth Justice Board will be represented on the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Board. Kent YJ and the VRU will</p>


Risk	Mitigating Factors
<p>Assessment published in March 2023 noted a disproportionate increase in the numbers of children involved in violence linked to knives and weapons (as victims or suspects) when compared to other groups in the County in the previous 12-month period.</p> <p>This suggests a risk to the Youth Justice service of an increase in the number of children requiring intensive community supervision or to be placed in the secure estate. It also identifies an increased safeguarding concern for children as the potential victims of weapon harm.</p>	<p>work closely together to identify children where risks of involvement in knife crime are emerging. They will ensure that support is available to the identified cohort of children and will promote opportunities to involve them in alternative positive activities.</p>
<p>Contextual safeguarding</p> <p>The response to harm occurring outside the home, including harm linked to offending, requires a shared understanding of what the harm is and where it happens using all available data and the views of children, adults and communities.</p> <p>The current arrangements for sharing data risk missing information from organisations who do not attend any contextual safeguarding meetings, and there is not a consistent approach to gathering the qualitative data from children, adults, and communities.</p>	<p>The Youth Justice Head of Service chairs the Contextual Safeguarding steering group under which any work to improve the data sharing and understanding of places and spaces sits. Youth Justice will ensure that the Contextual Safeguarding plan for 2023 – 24 includes a focus on capturing the voices of children.</p>
<p>Reducing Re-offending:</p> <p>Performance according to the CorePlus toolkit is good, but national data from PNC reports differently. Accurate data is needed to understand this.</p>	<p>Kent YJ & Police will work to improve data accuracy between systems, to better understand reoffending rates.</p> <p>Kent YJ monitor & report reoffending data to the CYJB. Kent MIU produce an annual analytical report on patterns and trends of the YJ cohort.</p> <p>Kent YJ will offer robust evidence-based interventions based on case formulation which considers the sequencing of trauma, desistance, relationships, skills & strengths-based approaches. Kent YJ will continue to embed these workforce skills & knowledge.</p>

Risk	Mitigating Factors
<p>Diversity: National research identifies groups who are over-represented in the criminal justice system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Eastern European communities (ii) BAME young men (iii) Young women (iv) Gypsy / Roma / Travellers (v) Children in Care (vi) with Speech, Language, Communication Needs (vii) with Special Education Needs 	<p>Audits will identify practice & resource implications for over-represented groups. Engagement activity to hear the voice of service users from over-represented groups will assist CYJB to understand what the partnership can do better to improve outcomes for this cohort. Workforce development will support front line staff from across the partnership to develop cultural competence. Improved recruitment methodologies will support an increasing diversity of the YJ workforce. Kent YJ collaboration with PIAS will maximise the impact of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller outreach practitioners.</p>
<p>Education, Training & Employment: Ongoing challenge to achieve full time engagement of children in ETE. This is related to the high proportion of children with specific needs in the criminal justice system and an absence of suitable provision and opportunities.</p>	<p>The partnership aims to implement the HMIP ETE thematic recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure all children have a comprehensive ETE assessment and speech and language screening. 2. Monitor key aspects of ETE work for children open to YJ at every county board meeting, and with operational managers and partners, including TEP. 3. Develop ambitious aims for ETE work in YJ, including the achievement of Level 2 English and Maths by every child. 4. Refresh ETE training for YJ and AEH practitioners, to understand how they can support children, and what services they can access to achieve this. 5. Establish a greater range of occupational training opportunities for those children beyond compulsory school age working with TEP and by accrediting reparation and unpaid work activities where possible to increase the skills and employability of our cohort. <p>Kent YJB will monitor and evaluate the educational engagement and attainment in disproportionately represented groups within the YJ caseload.</p>
<p>Recruiting & Retaining Staff: With the right skills, knowledge and experience is becoming increasingly challenging since Covid and Brexit.</p>	<p>Kent YJ hope to secure agreement to create a progression pathway to 'grow our own' staff, which should aid recruitment and retention. Kent YJ will present a proposal to KCC's DMT for a</p>

Risk	Mitigating Factors
Kent YJ staff vacancy impacts on capacity.	new YJ structure to meet demand for capacity, knowledge, skills, and experience. A robust work force development plan aims to support staff from across the YJ partnership to develop the necessary skills and knowledge.

17. Sign off, Submission & Approval

The plan has been co-produced with the Kent YJ workforce, key partners and members of the County Youth Justice Board.

Chair of YJS Board - Name	Stuart Collins Director - Social Work Lead
Signature	
Date	June 2023

The plan is being presented to KCC's cabinet and full Council meetings in September 2023.

18.0 Appendices

18.1 County Youth Justice Board Membership at April 2023

Stuart Collins	Director of Integrated Children's Services, West Kent, KCC
Dan Bride	Assistant Director, Adolescents, Open Access & Head of Youth Justice, KCC
Jason Read	Youth Justice Service Manager, KCC
Katy Batt	Strategic Development Manager - Youth Justice, KCC
Sam Matthews	Kent Police, Child Centred Policing Manager
Peter Gates	Children & Young Peoples Lead, Health & Justice NHS England
Mark Powell	Police Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Director
Sue Mullin	Interim Associate Director, Children's Commissioning Team, Integrated Care Board
Caroline Smith	Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting, KCC
Craig Heskett	Deputy Head of Service, National Probation Service
Elise McQueen	Assistant Director, SEND, KCC
Dylan Jeffrey	Deputy Cabinet Member, Integrated Children's Services KCC
Gurvindar Sandher	CEO Kent Equality Cohesion Council
Jackie Hamilton	Chair, West Kent Youth Panel (Magistrate)
Christina Rowberry	Legal Advisor, North & Central Kent Court Administration, HMCTS
Simon Smith	Lead Officer for PRU, Inclusion & Attendance, KCC
Dunston Patterson	Oversight Manager for national Youth Justice Board
Sam Jones	Partnerships and Commissioning Officer, Office of the Police, Crime & Commissioner
Leemya McKeown	Interim Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Quality Assurance & Professional Standards, KCC

Kent Youth Justice Services Inspection – June 2021 Judgement, response, and action plan

Foreword

Our commitment to ensuring Kent’s Youth Justice services achieve the best outcomes for young people across the county is unwavering.

The judgement of our services as “requires improvement” has been a tough message to hear, however we welcome the constructive findings of the inspection report and have put together this action plan in response. We know that the legacy of the pandemic is being felt across our communities and, in particular the challenges our children and young people face. Making sure that our practitioners, services and partners have the right expertise and capacity to respond to this complex environment is at the heart of the actions we have set out to meet the challenges highlighted by the inspectorate.

The inspection report has given us a clear path. We have demonstrated in some aspects of our work that we can deliver outstanding outcomes. Our challenge now is to make sure that outstanding work is consistently delivered in every aspect of our work for all children and young people who are involved with our Youth Justice services. This improvement plan is a contract. We commit to delivering it to the highest standard to give our practitioners the support they need, and in return we ask all our staff to engage with the improvements and hold ourselves and each other to the highest standards.

Together we know that we can rise to the challenges placed upon us, and together we will make sure all children and young people in Kent can feel safe, valued and able to thrive no matter the challenges they face.

Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

Dan Bride, Assistant Director - Adolescent and Open Access – West

Introduction

In June 2021 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) undertook a full, virtual, 2-week inspection of Kent Youth Justice Services. Week 1 scrutinised 'evidence in advance' and week 2 (21-25 June), was fieldwork, comprising case work interviews, file reads and stakeholder engagement.

The result of this inspection is that HMIP have judged our services as “**requires improvement**”. We understand and accept this judgement, including the reflections and recommendations set out in [the inspection report](#)¹. This document sets out how we intend to respond to these findings and ensure that Kent's youth justice services are outstanding both in terms of delivery and impact for young people across the county.

What the Inspectorate said

This has been a **difficult period for practitioners at Kent Youth Justice Service**. The pressures of their workload, caused by Covid-19, have been considerable – particularly the impact of the Kent variant of the virus.

Inspectors praised Kent YJS for its work during the Covid-19 pandemic and noted that it had continued to provide children with consistent access to essential services, such as in-person group sessions and educational and health support. However, **where the service may have excelled in supporting desistance, in too many cases its planning to keep children and other people safe did not meeting the standards expected**.

We found **inconsistencies in the level of management oversight and in the support offered to new staff**. Improvements were also required in the quality of assessments, to identify the risk of harm posed by children under their supervision. However, **they have strong leadership** and where we have made recommendations to strengthen the service, **we have every confidence these will be implemented quickly and effectively**.

The inspection noted the **success of (youth) justice participation apprentices**, who speak to children supervised by the YJS – the aim is to channel the voice of children into strategic and operation decisions. This was seen to boost the already solid work of the service in including children, and their families, in a positive and supportive way.

¹ The full report can be accessed online here <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/kent-yjs/>

The accomplishment of the service in their work with children and understanding their needs, is countered with discrepancies in the quality of assessment and planning, and the priority given to protecting victims. A successful balance is required to move the service into an overall rating of 'Good'. Service leaders demonstrated their determination to progress, so this should result in the improvements required.

There is a lot for Kent YJS to be proud of – it demonstrates outstanding commitment to integrated services, partnerships and to ensuring children under its supervision have access to appropriate facilities. **The inconsistencies should be relatively straightforward to solve.**

Our reflections

Kent Youth Justice is a strong partnership which achieves its principle aim of reducing the offending and re-offending of children. HMIP noted our work to support the desistance of offending amongst children as “excellent”, and this is reflected in Kent’s rate of re-offending (34%) being lower than the national average (38%). **We are proud that, despite the challenges of the pandemic, our child-focussed approaches kept the public safe from harm during this exceptional time.**

However, as reflected in the overall grading of ‘requires improvement’, **Kent Youth Justice acknowledges that our articulation of assessments and plans were inadequate during the period inspected.**

The global pandemic is not the sole reason for the weaknesses identified by HMIP, and the key findings resonate with our own findings (although not consistently with the ratings) of our case audits. That said, **the impact of the pandemic does provide some context to the operational challenges**, both at that time and the legacy of this, which will help inform what we need to do differently to achieve our ambitions.

- **During the pandemic many partner agencies stopped face to face delivery**, and many had no alternatives (for example Unpaid Work). This made Youth Justice practitioners busier with the full burden of implementation falling to them, but this pressure should be relieved now that most agencies are working ‘normally.’
- **The virtual court exceptional delivery model increased the Youth Justice daily duty demands** from 2 Courts to 5 Police stations and, as the Courts opened, this increased to 7 potential daily duty sites. This made practitioners busier, and while courts are now sitting in-person, the processing of the back-log is seeing an increase in referrals to Youth Justice.
- **New staff have been unable to shadow Court work due to limited numbers of staff allowed to sit in court** under Covid measures. This remains a problem and creative ways of training staff outside of the Court room (such as role plays and videos) will be developed
- Operational Youth Justice **staff teams were depleted with staff isolating, shielding, off sick (some with covid) and/or experiencing bereavement**, and one team member died in December 2020. While Covid remains prevalent in our communities, there remains some risk of staff being off sick or isolating. With most staff vaccinated, the impact should not be as severe as it was during the height of the pandemic.

Recommendations for improvement

In order for Kent Youth Justice Services to respond to the findings of the inspection, HMIP recommend that we implement an action plan that delivers on achieving the following objectives:

1. Practitioners have the time, knowledge, and skills to meet the needs of their cases
2. Assessment and planning to keep the child and others safe are thorough and give sufficient focus to protecting victims
3. Oversight of case management is applied consistently
4. Staff appraisals are timely and add personal and professional value
5. Staff at all levels understand the activities of the Board (invite observation)
6. Assures itself that out-of-court disposal decisions are proportionate, and that voluntary outcomes maximise opportunities for support without children being criminalised.

In response, our improvement plan will focus on the following four key strategic objectives:

- Creating the capacity and functionality to lead, drive, monitor and assure Senior Managers and the CYJB of operational service improvements, with a particular focus on case management oversight and compliance with KCC and YJB policy, guidance, and standards
- Ensuring that the capacity and development needs of the workforce are understood, and that quality opportunities achieve the development and embedding of appropriate and improved (practitioner and manager) confidence, skills, and knowledge
- Enhancing communication and engagement between the workforce, Managers, Senior Leaders and the CYJB
- Developing a proportionate early intervention offer, with joint decision making between the Police and the Local Authority, as an alternative to the imposition of informal and unilateral Out of Court Disposals (informal Community Resolutions)

All actions and progress will be overseen by the Corporate Director, the Director with responsibility for Youth Justice, and the Youth Justice partnership, via the County Youth Justice Board.

Improvement Plan

Creating the capacity and functionality to lead, drive, monitor and assure Senior Managers and the CYJB of operational service improvements, with a particular focus on case management oversight and compliance with KCC and YJB policy, guidance, and standards

HMIP Recommendations:

2. Assessment and planning to keep the child and others safe are thorough and give sufficient focus to protecting victims
3. Oversight of case management is applied consistently

Outcomes:

- Consistent high quality of case management across all teams
- More effective and consistent management oversight of casework
- Consistent and robust assessment and planning that prioritises keeping victims safe
- Youth justice workers have the capacity and expertise to prioritise planning, assessment and analysis of all factors to better support child safety and the wellbeing and protection of victims

Ref:	Action	Timeframe	Responsible officer
1.1	Create a new YJ Service Manager role to lead and line-manage the YJ Team Managers	Oct 21	Dan Bride
1.2	Set the new Service Manager ambitious but realistic improvement targets in line with the HMIP action plan, line managed directly by the YJ HoS, and reporting to the CYJB, specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Team Manager oversight of YJ staff in line with KCC standards, policy and approaches, including the appraisal, development and supervision of practitioners (recommendations 1, 2 and 4) b) Team Manager oversight of practice and performance, in line with YJB standards, policy and approaches 	Dec 21	Dan Bride
1.3	Re-launch the YJ allocations policy - check compliance through audit.	Oct 21 May 22	Dan Bride Kevin Kasaven
1.4	Set expectations re maximising use of partnerships and support services (e.g., TEP, RJ, ISS,	Oct 21	Dan Bride

	Transition)		
1.5	Develop Core+ reports and templates (including caseload and a service specific supervision template and report)	Dec 21	Katherine Atkinson
1.6	Deliver training and support to staff to utilise above reports	Dec 21	Katherine Atkinson
1.7	YJ engagement in the CSWS Director's review of Team Manager responsibilities and capacity, to understand any barriers to YJ TM effective oversight, and consider workforce succession planning and progression opportunities	Dec 21	Dan Bride
1.8	Service Manager will set expectations of Team Managers re case management oversight responsibilities and accountabilities to KCC and YJB standards.	Dec 21	Dan Bride
	An ICS-aligned but YJ specific supervision template will be created on Core+ to drive consistent quality of supervision, and facilitate reporting/oversight by the YJ Service Manager to the HoS	Dec 21	Katherine Atkinson
1.9	Create and launch with partners (Probation, Police), an Expert Risk Panel to quality assure ROSH and SWb assessments and plans, and to coach improvements by Practitioners and Team Managers – with a feedback loop to monitor progress.	Sept 21	Dan Bride
1.10	Enhance the impact of audit of YJ cases by: a) re-launching the YJ audit tool b) additionally using the CYPE audit tool on YJ cases b) QA moderation using the YJ tool c) appreciative enquiry implementation d) QA audit of YJ in May 2022 to provide reassurance and a clear line of sight of practice to the CYJB	Nov 21 – May 22	Kevin Kasaven
1.11	Review and dovetail the KCC alert and KMSCP serious incident review process a) to adopt the national YJB reporting process and criteria b) to include incidents of serious harm to others perpetrated by children b) ensure learning from case reviews is shared with CYJB, DivMT and ICS workforce	Nov 21	Kevin Kasaven
1.12	Current cases brought up to the expected standard of RoH and SWb assessment and plans	Nov 21	Dan Bride
1.13	Produce, enhance and rollout a bespoke Adolescent and YJ scorecard, a suite of reports and	Dec 21	Katherine Atkinson

	a service KPI page, including the levels of RoH identified in assessments; supervision RAGS; quality and activity metrics.		
1.14	a) Host a victim voice roadshow (or communities of practice) to re-launch the victim voice processes and the reflection of the impact, wishes and needs of victims in assessments (of RoH) and plans, and the identification of how to keep victims and potential victims safe b) Measure improvements through audit.	Dec 21 – May 22	Dan Bride Kevin Kasaven
1.15	Target YJ staff to attend a Communities of Practice on contextual safeguarding approaches to manage harm, exploring coordination with others, including parents.	Dec 21	Kevin Kasaven

Ensuring that the capacity and development needs of the workforce are understood, and that quality opportunities achieve the development and embedding of appropriate and improved (practitioner and manager) confidence, skills, and knowledge

HMIP Recommendations:

1. Practitioners have the time, knowledge and skills to meet the needs of their cases
4. Staff appraisals are timely and add personal and professional value

Outcomes:

- All staff have sufficient knowledge and skills to manage cases allocated to them
- Practitioners have appropriate and manageable workloads
- Case allocation consistently takes into account diversity of children

Ref:	Action	Timeframe	Responsible officer
2.1	Deliver a 'bitesize bootcamp' to YJ Team Managers re the appraisal framework and People Strategy	Dec 21	Dan Bride
2.2	YJ Service Manager will role model the TCP/PDP good conversation process with Team Managers and hold Team Managers to account for implementation of the standards	Dec 21	Dan Bride
2.3	Alignment of YJ workforce development with CYPE's workforce development workstream/CFKC and the Kent Academy	Oct 21	Dan Bride
2.4	Conduct a knowledge, skills, and development needs analysis of YJ and AEH practitioners	Nov 21	Dan Bride

	and managers (reflecting audit findings, experience and training)		
2.5	Launch a refreshed YJ and AEH workforce development plan, based on the analysis, reporting to the Kent Academy, which addresses the full range of skills and knowledge, commissioning/procuring bespoke opportunities from the YJ budget, if necessary, in addition to CYPE core development opportunities (assessment skills, professional curiosity, trauma-informed language, and management training including appraisals, HR processes, and Kent Manager)	Dec 21	Dan Bride
2.6	YJ Service Manager oversight of the quality of appraisals, PDPs and supervision, in line with ICS policy, and engagement with learning and development	Dec 21	Dan Bride
2.7	Review of YJ service structure, responsibilities, and progression/ succession planning (Apprenticeships) with WFD strategy officer, reporting to Kent Academy	Jan 22	Dan Bride
2.8	Service manager will evidence that Team Managers have appropriate appraisal/PDPs in line with KCC guidance, which reflect their individual needs for knowledge and skills development, and utilises CYPE management and supervision training including Kent Manager, HR appraisal training and supervision.	Dec 21	Dan Bride

Enhancing communication and engagement between the workforce, Managers, Senior Leaders and the CYJB

HMIP Recommendations:

5. Staff at all levels understand the activities of the Board (invite observation)

Outcomes:

- Information consistently and clearly cascades effectively from senior leaders to practitioners

Ref:	Action	Timeframe	Responsible officer
3.1	A YJ communication strategy will be launched within the workforce engagement and development roadshow to maximise opportunities for ongoing and meaningful	Dec '21	Dan Bride

	communication between practitioners, managers, senior managers and CYJB members		
3.2	Team managers, represented at each CYJB, will feedback key messages and decisions to teams	Nov '21	Dan Bride
3.3	Practitioners and Managers (and CYJB Members) will complete the CYJB induction module	Dec '21	Dan Bride
3.4	CYJB to consider inviting observation of CYJB meetings by practitioners and/or sharing recorded meetings	Dec '21	Matt Dunkley (chair)
3.5	Launch a YJ engagement and development campaign, using a suite of in-house (communities of practice, 'Space to Think') and innovative approaches ('Bitesize Bootcamp Bulletins') to drive key ICS and YJ policy & practice messages including supervision, appraisal, and Asset Plus risk assessment, planning and review. This campaign will also enhance communication between senior managers, the CYJB and practitioners	Dec 21	Dan Bride

Developing a proportionate early intervention offer, with joint decision making between the Police and the Local Authority, as an alternative to the imposition of informal and unilateral Out of Court Disposals (informal Community Resolutions)

HMIP Recommendations:

6. Assures itself that out-of-court disposal decisions are proportionate, and that voluntary outcomes maximise opportunities for support without children being criminalised.

Outcomes:

- Better and more consistent opportunities identified and acted upon that divert children away from the criminal justice system and into service better able to meet their needs
- More wide-ranging assessments that better incorporate the level and nature of need relating to safety and wellbeing, as well as the risk of harm that children pose to others
- Better and more consistent planning for contingency measures to protect the child and others where circumstances change

Ref:	Action	Timeframe	Responsible
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			officer
4.1	Outcome 22 will be implemented and launched	Dec 2021	Sam Matthews
4.2	KCC will offer a triage (via Front Door) and preventative offer (via AEH) to Outcome 22 where appropriate.	Dec 2021	Susannah Beasley-Murray
4.3	Systems guidance will be updated for Front Door and Business Support re triage and inputting Outcome 22.	Dec 2021	Katherine Atkinson
4.4	Operational guidance re Outcome 22 will be available to the YJ workforce.	Dec 2021	Dan Bride
4.5	Front Door data quality will be improved to enable data linkage between EHM and Core+	Dec 2021	Susannah Beasley-Murray

From:	Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance
To:	County Council – 21 September 2023
Subject:	Treasury Management full year report
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides an overview of Treasury Management activity in 2022-23 and developments in 2023-24.

Recommendation: Members are asked to note this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report covers Treasury Management activity in 2022-23.
- 1.2 The Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2022-23 was approved by the County Council on 10 February 2022.
- 1.3 The Council has both borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are therefore central to the Council's treasury management strategy. This report covers treasury activity and the associated monitoring and control of risk.
- 1.4 Treasury risk management at the Council is conducted within the framework of CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year and, as a minimum, a semi-annual and annual treasury outturn report. This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
- 1.5 The Council has nominated the Governance & Audit Committee to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies. The Governance & Audit Committee endorsed this report at its meeting on 11 July 2023.

2. External context

- 2.1 **Economic background:** The following economic commentary has been provided by the Council's treasury advisor during the reporting period, Arlingclose.

- a) *The war in Ukraine continued to keep global inflation above central bank targets and the UK economic outlook remained relatively weak with the chance of a mild recession. The economic backdrop during the January to March 2023 period continued to be characterised by high energy and commodity prices, high inflation, and the associated impact on household budgets and spending.*
- b) *Central Bank rhetoric and actions remained consistent with combatting inflation. The Bank of England, US Federal Reserve, and European Central Bank all increased interest rates over the period, even in the face of potential economic slowdowns in those regions.*
- c) *Starting the financial year at 5.5%, the annual CPI measure of UK inflation rose strongly to hit 10.1% in July and then 11.1% in October. Inflation remained high in subsequent months but appeared to be past the peak, before unexpectedly rising again in February 2023. Annual headline CPI registered 10.4% in February, up from 10.1% in January, with the largest upward contributions coming from food and housing. RPI followed a similar pattern during the year, hitting 14.2% in October. In February RPI measured 13.8%, up from 13.4% in the previous month.*
- d) *Following the decision by the UK government to reverse some of the support to household energy bills announced under the Liz Truss-led administration, further support in the form of a cap on what energy suppliers could charge households was announced in the March Budget to run from April until June 2023. Before the announcement, typical household bills had been due to rise to £3,000 a year from April.*
- e) *The labour market remained tight albeit with some ongoing evidence of potential loosening at the end of the period. The unemployment rate eased from 3.8% April-June to 3.6% in the following quarter, before picking up again to 3.7% between October-December. The most recent information for the period December-February showed an unemployment rate of 3.7%.*
- f) *The inactivity rate was 21.3% in the December-February quarter, slightly down from the 21.4% in the first quarter of the financial year. Nominal earnings were robust throughout the year, with earnings growth in December-February at 5.7% for both total pay (including bonuses) and 6.5% for regular pay. Once adjusted for inflation, however, both measures were negative for that period and have been so throughout most of the year.*
- g) *Despite household budgets remaining under pressure, consumer confidence rose to -36 in March, following readings of -38 and -45 in the previous two months, and much improved compared to the record-low of -49 in September. Quarterly GDP was soft through the year, registering a 0.1% gain in the April-June period, before contracting by (an upwardly revised) -0.1% in the subsequent quarter. For the October-December period was revised upwards to 0.1% (from 0.0%). The annual growth rate in Q4 was 0.6%.*
- h) *The Bank of England increased the official Bank Rate to 4.25% during the financial year. From 0.75% in March 2022, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) pushed*

through rises at every subsequent meeting over the period, with recent hikes of 50bps in December and February and then 25bps in March, taking Bank Rate to 4.25%. March's rise was voted by a majority of 7-2, with two MPC members preferring to maintain Bank Rate at 4.0%. The Committee noted that inflationary pressures remain elevated with growth stronger than was expected in the February Monetary Policy Report. The February vote was also 7-2 in favour of a hike, and again with two members preferring to keep Bank Rate on hold.

- i) After reaching 9.1% in June, annual US inflation slowed for eight consecutive months to 6% in February. The Federal Reserve continued raising interest rates over the period with consecutive increases at each Federal Open Market Committee meetings, taking policy rates to a range of 4.75%- 5.00% at the March meeting.*
- j) From the record-high of 10.6% in October, Eurozone CPI inflation fell steadily to 6.9% in March 2023. Energy prices fell, but upward pressure came from food, alcohol, and tobacco. The European Central Bank continued increasing interest rates over the period, pushing rates up by 0.50% in March, taking the deposit facility rate to 3.0% and the main refinancing rate to 3.5%.*
- k) Uncertainty continued to be a key driver of financial market sentiment and bond yields remained relatively volatile due to concerns over elevated inflation and higher interest rates, as well as the likelihood of the UK entering a recession and for how long the Bank of England would continue to tighten monetary policy. Towards the end of the period, fears around the health of the banking system following the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank in the US and purchase of Credit Suisse by UBS caused further volatility.*
- l) Over the period the 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield rose from 1.41% to peak at 4.70% in September before ending the financial year at 3.36%. Over the same timeframe the 10-year gilt yield rose from 1.61% to peak at 4.51% before falling back to 3.49%, while the 20-year yield rose from 1.82% to 4.96% and then declined to 3.82%. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 2.24% over the period.*

3. Local context

- 3.1 At 31 March 2023 the Council had borrowings of £802.5m and investments of £492.4m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. These are shown in the following table.

	31 Mar 2023 Actual £m
Loans CFR	1,070.0
External borrowing	-802.5
Internal borrowing	267.5
Less: balance sheet resources	-759.9
Treasury investments	492.4

- 3.2 The Council followed its strategy to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, known as internal borrowing, in order to reduce risk and keep interest costs low. This strategy is regularly reviewed with the Council's treasury advisors taking account of capital spending plans and available cash resources.
- 3.3 The treasury management position on 31 March 2023 and the change during the year is shown in the following table.

	31-Mar-22	2022-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23
	Balance £m	Movement £m	Balance £m	Average Rate %
Long-term borrowing	826.0	-23.5	802.5	4.48
Total borrowing	826.0	-23.5	802.5	4.48
Long-term investments	296.4	15.6	312.0	3.88
Short-term investments	36.5	9.2	45.7	3.92
Cash and cash equivalents	130.9	3.8	134.7	3.91
Total investments	463.8	28.6	492.4	3.97
Net borrowing	362.2	-52.1	310.1	

4 Borrowing Update

- 4.1 CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement, and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield unless these loans are for refinancing purposes.

5 Borrowing Strategy During the Period

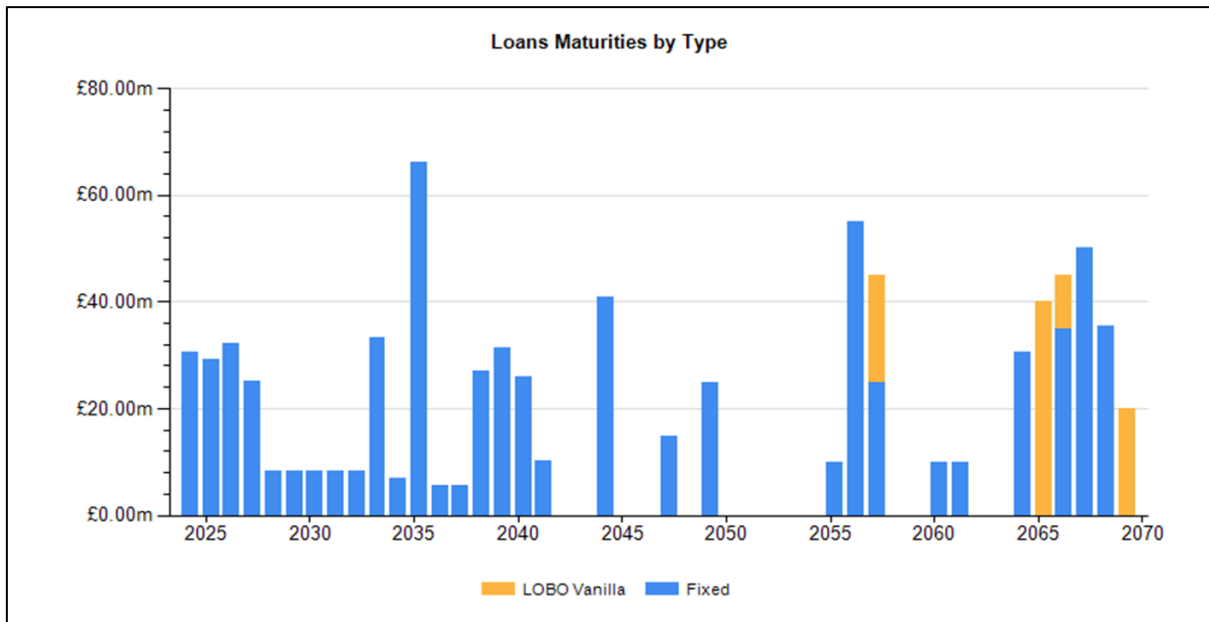
- 5.1 The Council's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over

the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Council's long-term plans change being a secondary objective.

- 5.2 At 31 March 2023 the Council held £802.5m of loans as part of its strategy for funding previous capital programmes. No net new borrowing was undertaken in the year (although a portion of the borrowing portfolio was restructured, see para. 5.4 below) and £23.5m of existing loans were allowed to mature without replacement.
- 5.3 Interest rates rose markedly over the year in both the long and short term, with rates at the end of March around 2% - 4% higher than those at the beginning of April. The PWLB 10-year maturity certainty rate stood at 4.33% at 31st March 2023, 20 years at 4.70% and 30 years at 4.66%.
- 5.4 Officers rescheduled a portion of the Council's long dated market debt in December 2022 with a view to reducing overall financing costs. £75.7m worth of market loans (held by Barclays) was repaid/replaced with new PWLB borrowing undertaken in accordance with the Council's approved borrowing strategy for the year.
- 5.5 The Council continues to hold LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Council has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. Rising interest rates increases the likelihood of a lender exercising their option although no banks exercised their option during the period.
- 5.6 The Council's borrowing activity in 2022-23 is as follows:

	31/03/2022	2022-23	31/03/2023	31/03/2023	31/03/2023
	Balance	Movement	Balance	Average Rate	Value Weighted Average Life
	£m	£m	£m	%	yrs.
Public Works Loan Board	426.9	57.0	484.0	4.52%	12.91
Banks (LOBO)	90.0	0.0	90.0	4.15%	40.88
Banks (Fixed Term)	291.8	-75.7	216.1	4.54%	39.23
Streetlighting project	17.2	-4.8	12.4	2.08%	12.88
Total borrowing	826.0	-23.5	802.5		23.14

- 5.7 The maturity profile of the Council's outstanding debt at 31 March 2023 was as follows:



6 Treasury Investment Activity

- 6.1 CIPFA published a revised Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes on 20th December 2021. These define treasury management investments as investments that arise from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.
- 6.2 The Council holds significant invested funds representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the year the Council's investment balance ranged between £376.8m and £579.7m due to timing differences between income and expenditure.
- 6.3 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.
- 6.4 Bank Rate increased from 0.75% at the beginning of the year to 4.25% at the end of March 2023. Short-dated cash rates, which had ranged between 0.7% - 1.5% at the beginning of April, rose by around 3.5% for overnight/7-day maturities and 3.3% for 6-12 month maturities.
- 6.5 The Council continues to hold significant cash balances in money market funds as well as in bank call accounts which have same day availability. This liquid cash was diversified over several counterparties and money market funds to manage both credit and liquidity risks.

6.6 During the year the Council loaned £7.4m to the no use empty loans programme. At 31 March 2023 the Council had made loans totalling £22.0m to the programme now achieving a return of 4.0% which is available to fund general services. A £25.7m net increase in covered bonds in the year brings the total bond portfolio up to £116.7m. These instruments are negotiable, have the benefit of collateral cover and pay an above base rate return.

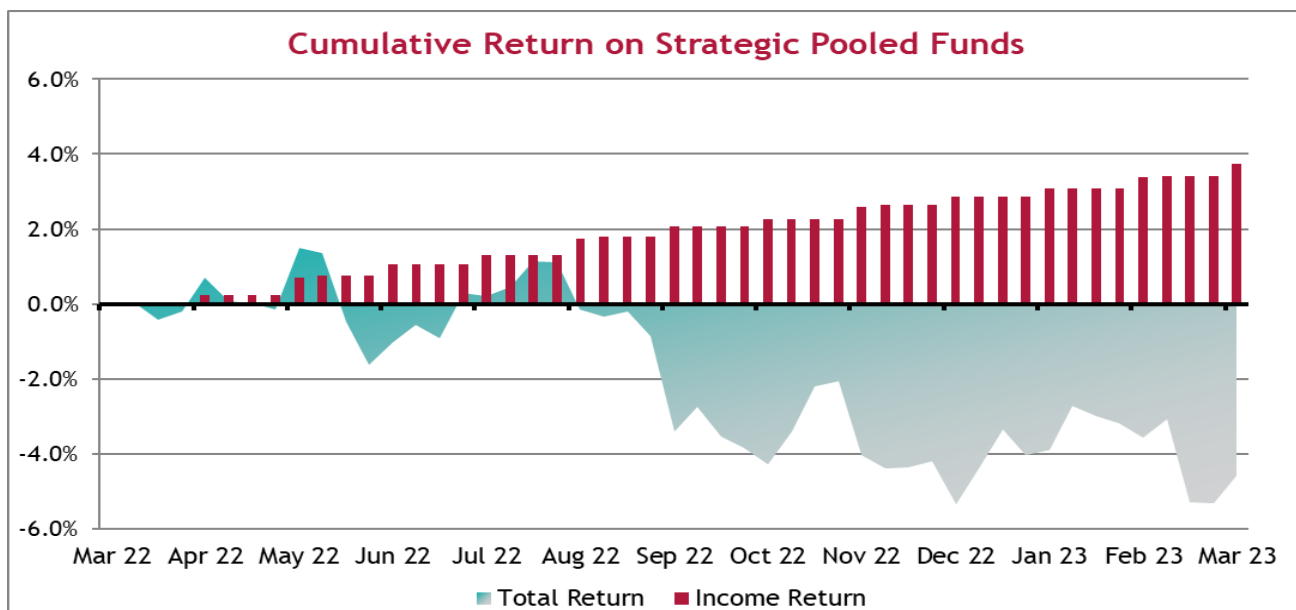
6.7 The Council's investments during the year are summarised in the table below and a detailed schedule of investments as at 31 March 2023 is in Appendix 1.

	31-Mar-22	2022-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23
	Balance	Movement	Balance	Rate of Return	Average Credit Rating
	£m	£m	£m	%	
Bank Call Accounts	5.0	-3.8	1.3	0.80	A+
Money Market Funds	130.9	3.8	134.7	3.91	A+
Covered Bonds	91.0	25.7	116.7	3.92	AAA
DMO Deposits (DMADF)	19.5	15.1	34.6		
Government Bonds	12.0	-2.2	9.8	3.84	AA-
No Use Empty Loans	14.6	7.4	22.0	2.50	
Equity	1.3	0.0	1.3		
Internally managed cash	274.3	46.1	320.4	3.91	AA
Strategic Pooled Funds	189.0	-17.1	172.0	4.06	
Total	463.4	29.0	492.4	3.97	

7 Externally managed investments

7.1 The Council is invested in equity, multi-asset and property funds. Because the pooled funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives are regularly reviewed.

7.2 **Performance YTD.** The value of our holdings decreased to £172.0m at the end of March 2023, showing an unrealised loss of £17.1m (-9.03%) since the end of March 2022. This was partially offset by income earned over the period, and the total return (comprised of both income and capital returns) on the pooled fund investments over the year since 31 March 2022 was -4.97%, as shown in the table below.



7.3 Strong inflationary pressures and the associated increase in interest rates provided strong headwinds for most major investment asset classes in 2022, which was a challenging year for investors generally.

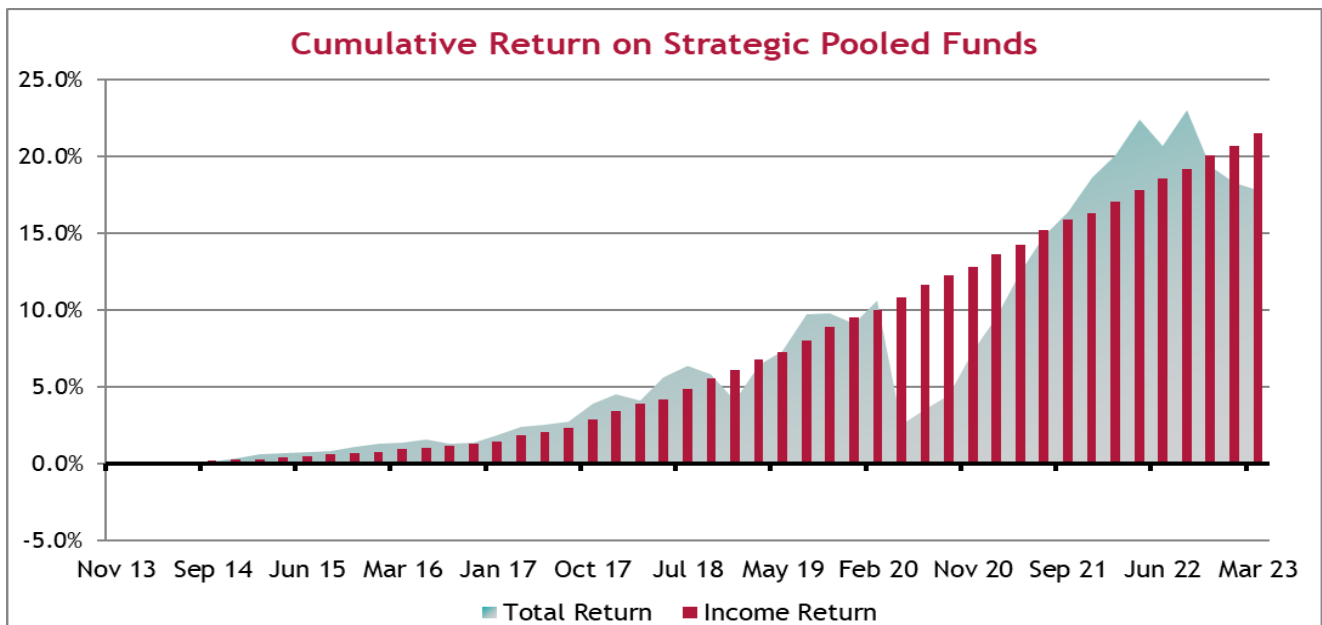
7.4 Strategic pooled fund investments are made in the knowledge that capital values will fluctuate, however the Council is invested in these funds for the long term and with the confidence that over a three-to-five-year period total returns are reasonably expected to exceed cash interest rates.

7.5 The market value of the pooled fund investments as at 31 March 2023 compared to the position as at 31 March 2022 is shown in the table below.

Investment Fund	Book cost	31-Mar-22	2022-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23	
		Market Value	Movement	Market Value	12 months return	
		£m	£m	£m	Income	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	%
Aegon (Kames) Diversified Monthly Income Fund	20.0	20.1	-2.4	17.7	5.01%	-6.87%
CCLA - Diversified Income Fund	5.0	5.2	-0.5	4.7	2.75%	-6.13%
CCLA – LAMIT Property Fund	60.0	67.6	-11.1	56.4	3.62%	-12.87%
Fidelity Global Multi Asset Income Fund	25.0	23.9	-1.2	22.7	4.43%	-0.55%
M&G Global Dividend Fund	10.0	14	-0.2	13.8	3.21%	1.52%

Ninety-One (Investec) Diversified Income Fund	10.0	9.6	-0.5	9.1	4.01%	-1.30%
Pyrford Global Total Return Sterling Fund	5.0	5.1	-0.0	5.1	1.20%	0.88%
Schroder Income Maximiser Fund	25.0	21.5	-1.1	20.4	6.96%	1.68%
Threadneedle Global Equity Income Fund	10.0	11.9	-0.1	11.8	2.21%	1.27%
Threadneedle UK Equity Income Fund	10.0	10.2	0.1	10.3	3.60%	4.65%
Total Externally Managed Investments	180.0	189.0	-17.1	172.0	4.06%	-4.97%

7.6 Performance since inception: KCC initially invested in pooled funds in 2013. By the end of March 2023 they had achieved a total income return of £44.1m, 21.51%, with a fall in the capital value of the portfolio of £7.7m, -3.75%. Total returns since inception have been far in excess of the returns available from cash and these instruments are an effective way of managing the Council's longer term cash balances. The following chart tracks the returns earned on the pooled funds over the period from inception.



7.7 The DLUHC published a consultation on the IFRS 9 pooled investment fund statutory override for English authorities for fair value gains and losses on pooled investment funds which was due to expire with effect from 2023/24. The options under evaluation were to allow the override to lapse, to extend it, or to make it permanent. The override will be extended for two years and therefore remain in place for the

2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years. Under the Regulations, gains and losses resulting from unrealised fair value movements relating to treasury pooled investment funds, that otherwise must be recognised in profit or loss under IFRS 9, are not charges to the revenue account, and must be taken into an unusable reserve account.

8 Investment benchmarking at 31 March 2023

8.1 The Council's treasury advisor during the reporting period, Arlingclose, monitors the risk and return of some 160 local authority investment portfolios. The metrics over the 12 months to 31 March 2023 extracted from their quarterly investment benchmarking, per the table below, show that the risk within the Kent internally managed funds has been consistent throughout the 12-month period and in line with that of other local authorities. The income return has risen reflecting increased rates payable on our cash investments.

Internally managed investments	Credit Score	Credit Rating	Bail-in Exposure %	Weighted Average Maturity (days)	Rate of Return %
Kent - 31.03.2022	3.17	AA	53	290	0.62
Kent - 31.03.2023	3.26	AA	46	315	3.91
Similar LAs	4.37	AA-	42	1,894	3.38
All LAs	4.71	A+	59	12	3.67

8.2 The following table shows that overall KCC's investments in strategic pooled funds are achieving a marginally superior income return compared with that of other local authorities, whilst the income returns for all investments (i.e., including internally managed investments) is meaningfully higher by comparison.

	Rate of Return – Income only %	Total Rate of Return %
Strategic Funds at 31.03.2023		
Kent	4.06	-4.97
Similar LAs	4.02	n/a
All LAs	3.93	n/a
Total Investments at 31.03.2023		
Kent	3.98	0.67
Similar LAs	3.48	1.24
All LAs	3.66	1.59

9 Actual and forecast outturn

- 9.1 Over the 12 months to 31 March 2023 the Council's strategic investments generated an average total return of -4.97%, comprising a 4.06% income return which is used to support services in year, and -9.03% of unrealised capital loss.
- 9.2 Interest rates have moved higher and the returns on our cash deposits are expected to continue to improve for the foreseeable future.
- 9.3 Forecast net debt costs are lower than budget as yields from short-term and variable long-term cash investments have increased.

10 Compliance

- 10.1 The Corporate Director Finance reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the year complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

11 Treasury Management Advisor

- 11.1 The Council retains an appointed external treasury management advisor to support the delivery of its treasury management activity, and to provide ongoing access to appropriate specialist advice to enable the Council to effectively develop and implement its treasury management strategy.
- 11.2 Officers carried out a re-procurement exercise for the Council's treasury management advisory contract over the course of Q4 2022/23 and Q1 2023/24, as the contractual arrangements with the incumbent provider, Arlingclose, were due to end by 31 May 2023. Following a competitive tendering exercise, Link Asset Services have been appointed as the Council's treasury management advisor for a period of three years, with an optional extension of a further two years, commencing from 1 June 2023.

12 Treasury Management Indicators

- 12.1 The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators:
- 12.2 **Security:** The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its internally managed investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Actual 31/03/2023	Target
Portfolio average credit rating	AA	AA

12.3 **Liquidity:** The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

Liquidity risk indicator	Actual 31/03/2023	Target
Total cash available within 3 months	£199.6m	£100m

12.4 **Interest rate exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates was:

Interest rate risk indicator	Actual 31/03/2023	Limit
One-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£1.4m	£10m
One-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	-£1.4m	-£10m

12.5 **Maturity structure of borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing were:

	Actual 31/03/2023	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	2.53%	100%	0%
12 months and within 5 years	8.00%	50%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	3.12%	50%	0%
10 years and within 20 years	32.54%	50%	0%
20 years and within 40 years	26.27%	50%	0%
40 years and longer	27.55%	50%	0%

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

12.6 **Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end were:

	Actual	Limit	Limit	Limit
Price risk indicator	31/03/2023	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Principal invested beyond year end	£260.9m	£300m	£300m	£300m

13 Recommendation

Members are asked to note this report.

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August 2023

Appendices:

- 1. Investments as at 31 March 2023**
- 2. Glossary of local authority treasury management terms**

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Investments as at 31 March 2023

1. Internally Managed Investments

1.1 Term deposits, Call accounts and Money Market Funds

Instrument Type	Counterparty	Principal Amount £	Interest Rate	End Date
Treasury Bills	DMO	4,907,022	3.800%	05/06/23
Treasury Bills	DMO	4,905,102	3.880%	12/06/23
Total Treasury Bills		9,812,124		
Fixed Deposits	DMADF (Debt Management Account Deposit Facility)	34,595,000	4.050%	
Total DMADF		34,595,000		
Call Account	National Westminster Bank plc	1,250,000	0.08%	
Total Bank Call Accounts		1,250,000		
No Use Empty Loans		22,032,251	2.50%	
Registered Provider	£10m loan facility – non utilisation fee		0.40%	31/03/23
Registered Provider	£5m loan facility – non utilisation fee		0.40%	16/06/24
Registered Provider	£10m loan facility – non utilisation fee		0.25%	26/05/25
Money Market Funds	LGIM GBP Liquidity Class 4	19,987,693	4.0928%	
Money Market Funds	Aviva Investors GBP Liquidity Class 3	19,910,343	4.0998%	
Money Market Funds	Aberdeen GBP Liquidity Class L3	19,950,290	4.0523%	
Money Market Funds	Federated Hermes Short-Term Prime Class 3	14,973,687	4.0410%	
Money Market Funds	HSBC GBP Liquidity Class F	19,972,199	2.8764%	
Money Market Funds	Northern Trust GBP Cash Class F	19,928,099	4.0799%	
Money Market Funds	Deutsche Managed GBP LVNAV Platinum	19,985,521	4.1790%	
Total Money Market Funds		134,707,832		
Equity	Kent PFI (Holdings) Ltd	1,298,620		n/a

Bond Portfolio

Bond Type	Issuer	Adjusted Principal	Coupon Rate	Maturity Date
		£		
Fixed Rate Covered Bond	Bank of Scotland - Bonds	4,246,471	1.7146%	20/12/24
Fixed Rate Covered Bond	Bank of Scotland - Bonds	6,530,502	0.4259%	20/12/24
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Nationwide Building Society - Bonds	4,500,297	4.2294%	12/04/23
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Nationwide Building Society - Bonds	5,578,594	4.1435%	12/04/23
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Bank of Montreal - Bonds	5,000,334	4.2591%	17/04/23
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Leeds Building Society Bonds	4,200,414	4.4671%	17/04/23
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Nationwide Building Society - Bonds	4,001,542	4.7640%	10/01/24
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Santander UK - Bonds	2,000,672	4.8481%	12/02/24
Floating Rate Covered Bond	TSB Bank - Bonds	2,500,840	5.0033%	15/02/24
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Royal Bank of Canada - Bonds	1,797,281	4.3589%	03/10/24
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Royal Bank of Canada - Bonds	8,999,539	4.1249%	03/10/24
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Royal Bank of Canada - Bonds	5,029,231	3.6547%	30/01/25
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Bank Of Nova Scotia Bonds	5,080,056	4.0372%	14/03/25
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Bank Of Nova Scotia Bonds	4,039,681	4.3173%	14/03/25
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce - Bonds	5,106,496	4.0598%	15/12/25
Floating Rate Covered Bond	National Australia Bank - Bonds	10,159,141	3.7409%	15/12/25
Floating Rate Covered Bond	National Australia Bank - Bonds	5,113,553	3.9834%	15/12/25
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Bank Of Nova Scotia Bonds	715,708	4.1436%	26/01/26
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Nationwide Building Society - Bonds	501,408	4.4235%	20/04/26
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Nationwide Building Society - Bonds	5,406,780	4.4783%	20/04/26
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Bank Of Nova Scotia Bonds	10,143,316	4.4426%	22/06/26
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Royal Bank of Canada - Bonds	4,062,039	3.8921%	13/07/26
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Yorkshire Building Society - Bonds	3,006,915	4.1051%	18/01/27
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Yorkshire Building Society - Bonds	2,003,165	4.1260%	18/01/27
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Leeds Building Society Bonds	3,998,271	4.6527%	15/05/27
Floating Rate Covered Bond	Leeds Building Society Bonds	3,004,313	4.5895%	17/05/27
Total Bonds		116,726,557		

Total Internally managed investments	320,422,383
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2. Externally Managed Investments

Investment Fund	Book Cost	Market Value at	12 months return to	
	£	31-March-23	31-March-23	
		£	Income	Total
Aegon (Kames) Diversified Monthly Income Fund	20,000,000	17,675,276	5.01%	-6.87%
CCLA - Diversified Income Fund	5,000,000	4,722,602	2.75%	-6.13%
CCLA - LAMIT Property Fund	60,000,000	56,419,131	3.62%	-12.87%
Fidelity Global Multi Asset Income Fund	25,038,637	22,701,201	4.43%	-0.55%
M&G Global Dividend Fund	10,000,000	13,776,852	3.21%	1.52%
Ninety One (Investec) Diversified Income Fund	10,000,000	9,111,664	4.01%	-1.30%
Pyrford Global Total Return Sterling Fund	5,000,000	5,085,292	1.20%	0.88%
Schroder Income Maximiser Fund	25,000,000	20,366,760	6.96%	1.68%
Threadneedle Global Equity Income Fund	10,000,000	11,792,917	2.21%	1.27%
Threadneedle UK Equity Income Fund	10,000,000	10,299,857	3.60%	4.65%
Total External Investments	180,038,637	171,951,550	4.06%	-4.97%

3. Total Investments

Total Investments	£492,373,933
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GLOSSARY

Local Authority Treasury Management Terms

Authorised limit	The maximum amount of debt that a local authority may legally hold, set annually in advance by the authority itself. One of the Prudential Indicators.
Bail-in	A method of rescuing a failing financial institution by cancelling some of its deposits and bonds. Investors may suffer a haircut but may be given shares in the bank as part compensation. See also bail-out.
Bail-out	A method of rescuing a failing financial institution by the injection of public money. This protects investors at the expense of taxpayers. See also bail-in.
Bond	A certificate of long-term debt issued by a company, government, or other institution, which is tradable on financial markets
Borrowing	Usually refers to the stock of outstanding loans owed and bonds issued.
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	A council's underlying need to hold debt for capital purposes, representing the cumulative capital expenditure that has been incurred but not yet financed. The CFR increases with capital expenditure and decreases with capital finance and MRP.
Capital gain or loss	An increase or decrease in the capital value of an investment, for example through movements in its market price.
Certainty rate	Discount on PWLB rates for new loans borrowed, available to all local authorities that provide a forecast for their borrowing requirements.
Collateral	Assets that provide security for a loan or bond, for example the house upon which a mortgage is secured.
Collective investment scheme	Scheme in which multiple investors collectively hold units or shares. The investment assets in the fund are not held directly by each investor, but as part of a pool (hence these funds are also referred to as 'pooled funds').
Cost of carry	When a loan is borrowed in advance of need, the difference between the interest payable on the loan and the income earned from investing the cash in the interim.
Counterparty	The other party to a loan, investment or other contract.
Counterparty limit	The maximum amount an investor is willing to lend to a counterparty, in order to manage credit risk.
Covered bond	Bond issued by a financial institution that is secured on that institution's assets, usually residential mortgages, and is therefore lower risk than unsecured bonds. Covered bonds are exempt from bail-in.
CPI	Consumer Price Index - the measure of inflation targeted by the Monetary Policy Committee.
Credit risk	The risk that a counterparty will default on its financial obligations.
Debt	(1) A contract where one party owes money to another party, such as a loan, deposit or bond. Contrast with equity.

	(2) In the Prudential Code, the total outstanding borrowing plus other long-term liabilities.
Deposit	A regulated placing of cash with a financial institution. Deposits are not tradable on financial markets.
Discount	(1) The amount that the early repayment cost of a loan is below its principal, or the price of a bond is below its nominal value. See also premium. (2) To calculate the present value of an investment taking account of the time value of money.
Discount rate	The interest rate used in a present value calculation
Diversified income fund	A collective investment scheme that invests in a range of bonds, equity and property in order to minimise price risk, and also focuses on investments that pay income.
Dividend	Income paid to investors in shares and collective investment schemes. Dividends are not contractual, and the amount is therefore not known in advance.
DMADF	Debt Management Account Deposit Facility – a facility offered by the DMO enabling councils to deposit cash at very low credit risk. Not available in Northern Ireland.
DMO	Debt Management Office – an executive agency of HM Treasury that deals with central government's debt and investments.
EIP	Equal instalments of principal. A method of repaying a loan where the principal is repaid over the life of the loan, in equal instalments. Interest payments reduce over time as the principal is repaid.
Equity	An investment which usually confers ownership and voting rights
Equity fund	A collective investment scheme that mainly invests in company shares
Floating rate note (FRN)	Bond where the interest rate changes at set intervals linked to a market variable, most commonly 3-month LIBOR or SONIA
FTSE	Financial Times stock exchange – a series of indices on the London Stock Exchange. The FTSE 100 is the index of the largest 100 companies on the exchange, the FTSE 250 is the next largest 250 and the FTSE 350 combines the two
GDP	Gross domestic product – the value of the national aggregate production of goods and services in the economy. Increasing GDP is known as economic growth.
GILT	Bond issued by the UK Government, taking its name from the gilt-edged paper they were originally printed on.
Gilt yield	Yield on gilts. Commonly used as a measure of risk-free long-term interest rates in the UK
Income return	Return on investment from dividends, interest and rent but excluding capital gains and losses.
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards, the set of accounting rules in use by UK local authorities since 2010
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Interest	Compensation for the use of cash paid by borrowers to lenders on debt instruments.
Internal	A local government term for when actual “external” debt is below the capital financing

borrowing	requirement, indicating that difference has been borrowed from internal resources instead; in reality this is not a form of borrowing
Liquidity risk	The risk that cash will not be available to meet financial obligations, for example when investments cannot be recalled and new loans cannot be borrowed
Loan	Contract where the lender provides a sum of money (the principal) to a borrower, who agrees to repay it in the future together with interest. Loans are not normally tradable on financial markets
LOBO	Lender's Option Borrower's option – a long-term loan where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate on pre-determined dates. The borrower then has the option to either accept the new rate or repay the loan without penalty. LOBOs increase the borrower's interest rate risk and the loan should therefore attract a lower rate of interest initially
Long-term	Usually means longer than one year
Market risk	The risk that movements in market variables will have an unexpected impact. Usually split into interest rate risk, price risk and foreign exchange risk
Maturity	(1) The date when an investment or borrowing is scheduled to be repaid. (2) A type of loan where the principal is only repaid on the maturity date
MiFID II	The second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive - a legislative framework instituted by the European Union to regulate financial markets in the bloc and improve protections for investors.
Money Market Fund (MMF)	A collective investment scheme which invests in a range of short-term assets providing high credit quality and high liquidity. Usually refers to Constant Net Asset Value (CNAV) and Low Volatility Net Asset Value (LVNAV) funds with a Weighted Average Maturity (WAM) under 60 days which offer instant access, but the European Union definition extends to include cash plus funds
Monetary Policy	Measures taken by central banks to boost or slow the economy, usually via changes in interest rates. Monetary easing refers to cuts in interest rates, making it cheaper for households and businesses to borrow and hence spend more, boosting the economy, while monetary tightening refers to the opposite. See also fiscal policy and quantitative easing.
MPC	Monetary Policy Committee. Committee of the Bank of England responsible for implementing monetary policy in the UK by changing Bank Rate and quantitative easing with the aim of keeping CPI inflation at around 2%.
MRP	Minimum Revenue Provision – an annual amount that local authorities are required to set aside and charge to revenue for the repayment of debt associated with capital expenditure. Local authorities are required by law to have regard to government guidance on MRP. Not applicable in Scotland, but see Loans Fund
Operational risk	The risk that fraud, error or system failure leads to an unexpected loss
Pooled Fund	Scheme in which multiple investors hold units or shares. The investment assets in the fund are not held directly by each investor, but as part of a pool (hence these funds are also referred to as 'pooled funds').
Price risk	The risk that unexpected changes in market prices lead to an unplanned loss. Managed by diversifying across a range of investments
Prudential Code	Developed by CIPFA and introduced in April 2004 as a professional code of practice to support local authority capital investment planning within a clear, affordable, prudent and sustainable framework and in accordance with good professional practice. Local authorities are required by

	law to have regard to the Prudential Code. The Code was updated in December 2021
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board – a statutory body operating within the Debt Management Office (DMO) that lends money from the National Loans Fund to councils and other prescribed bodies and collects the repayments. Not available in Northern Ireland.
Quantitative easing (QE)	Process by which central banks directly increase the quantity of money in the economy in order to promote GDP growth and prevent deflation. Normally achieved by the central bank buying government bonds in exchange for newly created money.
Registered Provider of Social Housing (RP)	An organisation that is registered to provide social housing, such as a housing association.
Refinancing risk	The risk that maturing loans cannot, be refinanced, or only at higher than expected interest rates leading to an unplanned loss. Managed by maintaining a smooth maturity profile
REIT	Real estate investment trust – a company whose main activity is owning investment property and is therefore similar to a property fund in many ways
Revolving credit facility (RCF)	A loan facility that can be drawn, repaid and (usually) re-drawn at the borrower's discretion. Interest is payable on drawn amounts, and a commitment fee is often payable in undrawn amounts.
Secured investment	An investment that is backed by collateral and is therefore normally lower credit risk and lower yielding than an equivalent unsecured investment
Share	An equity investment, which usually also confers ownership and voting rights
Short-term	Usually means less than one year
SONIA	Based on actual transactions and reflects the average of the interest rates that banks pay to borrow sterling overnight from other financial institutions and other institutional investors. Replaced LIBOR from the end of January 2022
Strategic funds	Collective investment schemes that are designed to be held for the long-term, comprising strategic bond funds, diversified income funds, equity funds and property funds
T-bill	Treasury bill - a bill issued by a government
Total return	The overall return on an investment, including interest, dividends, rent, fees and capital gains and losses.
Weighted average life (WAL)	The average time to maturity of an investment portfolio, weighted by the size of the investment and normally expressed in days
Weighted average maturity (WAM)	the average time to the next interest rate reset on an investment portfolio, weighted by the size of the investment and normally expressed in days. A portfolio of fixed rate investments will have a WAM identical to its WAL.
Yield	A measure of the return on an investment, especially a bond. The yield on a fixed rate bond moves inversely with its price

Motion for Time Limited Debate – ‘Boys Need Bins’

Proposer: Mr Mike Sole

Seconder: Mr Chris Passmore

Background – Provided by the Liberal Democrat Group

Prostate Cancer UK are campaigning to improve facilities in male toilets for those suffering from incontinence. The ‘Boys Need Bins’ campaign encourages every public toilet and business across the UK to provide incontinence bins in their male toilets – enabling men who need to dispose of pads and other incontinence products to do so easily, safely, and with dignity.

Figures from Prostate Cancer UK show that between 3 and 6 million people in the UK suffer from incontinence. As many as 1 in 3 men over 65 are estimated to have urinary incontinence in the UK – yet there are little facilities for men, as there are for women, in public places.

Motion:

- a. This Council believes that it is important to make life more comfortable and dignified for those who suffer from incontinence.
- b. This Council supports the provision of sanitary bins in all toilets the authority manages so that waste products can be disposed of in a discreet and hygienic manner.
- c. To recommend to the Executive:
 - a. All toilets managed by this authority, whether for public or internal use, have at least one sanitary waste bin.
 - b. To encourage other authorities in Kent to provide sanitary waste bins in all their managed toilets.

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COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING - Thursday, 21st September 2023

Motion for Time Limited Debate – Youth Services

Proposer: Dr Lauren Sullivan

Seconder: Alister Brady

Background information provided by the Labour Group:

The National Youth Agency (NYA) (the national governing body for youth work in England) defines the key purpose of youth work as: 'Enabling young people to develop **holistically**, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational **development**, while also enabling them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to **reach their potential**'.¹

With the increasing number of youth mental health referrals in Kent, the rise in the number of young people refusing to attend school, the increasing rates of young people involved in criminal activity and in anti-social behaviour, the wider impacts of reducing the level of Youth Service provision, both in-house and commissioned, over the past ten years has taken its toll on Young People in Kent.

Last year, UK Youth (a national youth work charity), in collaboration with Frontier Economics, published a report entitled *Untapped: The Economic Value of Youth Work*.² The report highlights the important role the youth work sector plays in delivering wider societal benefits, including improved health outcomes, increased employment and education, and a reduction in crime. The report demonstrates that by investing in youth work it will save the taxpayer billions over the long-term, with every pound invested in the youth sector yielding a saving of between £3.20 - £6.40 (which according to the government's benchmarks, represents a 'high' or 'very high' return on investment).

Kent County Council have a statutory duty to provide leisure provision and youth service for young people in Kent and in Kent there has been over many years a reduction in universal, preventative and open access Youth Work activity. While some posts in house have been retained, the work, duties and roles staff undertake have changed to more akin to early help and social work roles that are targeted in nature rather than universal, therefore removing the truly preventive nature of youth work. These changes do not reflect core youth work principles and values. This trend looks set to continue with the proposed closures of Youth Centres and the proposal to stop funding the Commissioned Youth Contracts when they expire next year.

This is not the time to start making further cuts to youth services – young people in Kent are having to overcome a series of difficult challenges, including the lingering impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, mental health struggles, the cost-of-living crisis and increasing barriers to sustained employability. The young people of Kent need our support and they need high-quality youth services – and as the UK Youth report highlights, so do we as society.

Motion:

¹ 'What is Youth Work?', National Youth Agency – accessible here: <https://www.nya.org.uk/what-is-youth-work/>.

² *Untapped, The Economic Value of Youth Work* – accessible here: <https://www.ukyouth.org/2022/11/ground-breaking-uk-youth-report-aims-to-realise-untapped-potential-of-youth-work/>.

The County Council resolves to:

- Recognise and support the pivotal role the youth sector plays in delivering wider societal benefits, both nationally and in Kent;
- Recognise that the young people of Kent are experiencing a number of challenges and that access to high-quality youth provision will help them to overcome these types of challenges;
- Recommend the removal of the needless back office commissioning and monitoring costs to youth work provision as being surplus to requirements and add this as a saving;
- Recommend that the Executive continue funding youth services in the districts and Boroughs of Kent after the commissioned service contracts expire next year by identifying alternative savings up to the value of the proposed cut of £913,000. For example, the necessary savings could be achieved by (not exhaustive list):
 - Removing Deputy Cabinet Members (-£167,200)
 - Reducing the number of Cabinet Members in the GET Directorate to two Cabinet Members (-£65,862)
 - Abolishing market premia payments for senior staff graded KR13 and above (-£219,300)
 - Restructuring Senior Management to adopt a Chief Executive Model without Corporate Directors (-£259,400) and a reduction in the associated support staff (-£212,500).
- Recommend that all frontline revenue monies preserved via the above arrangement are reinvested in each and every District and Borough as in-house youth provision, thereby retaining the existing youth work offer by expanding their youth work teams.
- Recommend that the Executive do not propose any further cuts to youth services as part of setting a balanced budget for 2024/25, recognising that these should be a spending priority for the Council; and
- Recommend that the Executive move away from short-termism around youth service spending and consider, where possible, investing more heavily in preventative youth services over the medium-term, recognising the economic value and return on investment that this will generate, as well as the future savings offered through reduced demand for high needs / crisis intervention services in KCC and the wider public sector.