

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee held at Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 17th March, 2026.

PRESENT: Mr B Fryer (Chairman), Mr J Baker, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr A Kibble, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Mr M Reidy, Dr Q Roper, Ms C Russell, Mr T L Shonk, Mr P Stepto and Mr P Chamberlain

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs B Fordham (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills), Mrs C Palmer (Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services) and Mr S Dixon

OFFICERS: Christine McInnes (Interim Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education), Katherine Atkinson (Assistant Director, Management Information and Intelligence, Integrated Children's Services), David Adams (Interim Deputy Director for Education: Sufficiency, Effectiveness and Skills), Craig Chapman (Interim Deputy Director for Education: Access and Inclusion), Ingrid Crisan (Director for Operational Integrated Children's Services), Kevin Kasaven (Director for Children's Countywide Services), Karen Stone (CYPE Finance Business Partner), Mark Scrivener (Head of Risk & Delivery Assurance), Christy Holden (Assistant Director for CYPE Commissioning), Helen Cook (Senior Commissioner), Samantha Sheppard (Senior Commissioner) and Georgia Humphreys (Democratic Services Officer)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

**53. Election of Vice-Chair**  
(Item 2)

1. Mr Shonk proposed, and Mr Mole seconded that Mr Mallon be elected as Vice-Chair of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.
2. As there were no further nominations, the Chairman declared Mr Mallon as Vice-Chair of the Committee.
3. RESOLVED that Mr Mallon be elected Vice-Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.

**54. Apologies and Substitutes**  
(Item 3)

Apologies had been received from Dr Sturley for whom Mr Chamberlain was present as substitute.

**55. Declarations of Interest**  
(Item 4)

There were no declarations of interest.

**56. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2026**  
(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the open and exempt minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2026 were correct records.

**57. Verbal Update by Cabinet Members**  
(Item 6)

1. Mrs Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, gave a verbal update on the following:
  - a. Mrs Fordham began by expressing condolences to the families and young people affected by the recent meningitis outbreak. She advised that the Council was working closely with Public Health and the UK Health Security Agency on managing the situation and communications.
  - b. Mrs Fordham outlined a wide-ranging programme of recent visits to education and skills settings across Kent.
  - c. Mrs Fordham reported that she and Mrs Palmer had attended the Local Government Association Children's Leadership Conference in Coventry, which had provided learning on the national White Paper, partnership working, governance, scrutiny and strategic thinking. She advised that they were considering how to apply this learning in Kent.
  - d. The Committee was updated on work with local partners in Cranbrook to explore options for re-establishing mainstream education provision, potentially through a satellite model. An update was also provided on involvement in the Isle of Sheppey Employment Forum, supporting the development of local opportunities for young people.
  - e. Turning to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Mrs Fordham highlighted that the publication of the Government's White Paper and SEND reform proposals, alongside a live consultation running to May and the requirement to submit Kent's proposals to the Department for Education by June, created a significant context for change. These submissions would influence future funding and the proposed write-off of 90% of the accumulated high needs deficit. This activity sat alongside the ongoing SEND transformation programme and Accelerated Progress Plan, which comprised 116 improvement projects.
  - f. Mrs Fordham reported on a recent visit to the Elective Home Education Team, which supported children not educated in school. She highlighted the team's ideas for transforming the service, including more data-driven approaches and advised that she would be following up to support further projects.
  - g. Mrs Fordham then summarised the rationale for bringing the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) back in-house. She explained that the aim was to establish a stronger, more consistent county-wide model of support for schools and early years settings. However, despite high engagement and positive feedback, data did not show consistent improvements in inclusive practice or a slowing of EHCP growth. A static budget that was unevenly distributed across districts led to variation in capacity and delivery and overall service capacity was insufficient to meet demand, requiring streamlining.

Following the transfer to KCC, a formal TUPE process was undertaken, with initial delays caused by essential checks such as DBS, IT access and mandatory training. In response, a consistent core offer aligned to the continuum of need was developed, and the training offer was fully overhauled and shared with schools.

2. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. Mr Chapman, Interim Deputy Director for Education: Access and Inclusion, explained that the industrial action within STLS related to disagreements over terms and conditions within the Council and expectations of ongoing working practices, not to budget cuts. He confirmed that a formal consultation and TUPE process had been followed and that staff were moving onto standard Kent teaching terms and conditions. He reported that, as at 12 March, there were 78 active STLS staff compared with 90 at transfer, with most reductions in administrative roles and some in teaching and higher-level teaching assistant posts. He advised that negotiations with unions were ongoing, and the Council had responded to their latest demands. Ms McInnes, Interim Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, added that there had been no cuts to the STLS budget and emphasised that this was not the reason for the industrial action.
  - b. A Member raised concerns about communication and timing of notifications to staff regarding changes and asked whether lessons learned reviews would be undertaken for future changes. Mrs Fordham confirmed that lessons learnt from this experience would be taken on board for future transformation and commissioning activity.
  - c. A Member asked about recent changes to post-16 transport policy for learners with EHCPs, including the timing and clarity of communications to parents, schools and members and requested further training on members' roles in the appeals process. Mr Chapman summarised the communication undertaken during the post-16 transport consultation. Initial information was issued in early 2025 to current users and families of EHCP learners who might require transport in the next two years. Following the July 2025 decision, a further update was sent in October to confirm that the changes applied only to future intakes. Additional engagement included targeted social media, meetings with schools, including special schools and a Member briefing in November 2025. It was explained that an increase in appeals was anticipated, and work was underway to develop further Member training and guidance. The Chairman confirmed that a recording of previous training on this was available on the Member SharePoint site.
3. Mrs Palmer, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, gave a verbal update on the following:
  - a. Mrs Palmer reported that recent weeks had been relatively quiet in terms of external visits but there had been extensive internal work with service directors on a range of planning and improvement activity within children's services.
  - b. Referring to recent media reports about the Council's budget, Mrs Palmer stated that reports of a £1.2m cut in fostering services and a £700k cut in disabled children's services were incorrect. She clarified that these figures related to efficiency savings, largely through the use

of technology to streamline processes, and not to reductions in service provision.

- c. Mrs Palmer updated the Committee on preparations for the launch of the Best Start in Life offer through family hubs on 31 March. She thanked Ms Crisan, Ms McInnes and their teams for their work and reported on her attendance at a family hub staff conference, noting the commitment and hard work of staff.
  - d. Mrs Palmer highlighted the introduction of online safety training for parents through family hubs, aimed at helping children to be confident, capable and safe online.
  - e. Mrs Palmer updated the Committee on youth justice work. She explained that following national changes to police guidance in December 2023, the Council had experienced issues with incomplete information on youth offending reports, particularly around victims, which affected the ability to undertake restorative work. She advised that, after sustained challenge, the police had updated their IT systems so that reports involving young people could not be submitted unless all required information was provided and that Kent's records were now up to date.
4. In response to comments and questions it was said:
- a. A Member asked about the future of specific family hub sites, including Priory Road in Ramsgate and sought assurance that services would be maintained in local communities. Mrs Palmer emphasised the importance of family hubs in delivering Best Start in Life and Families First initiatives, including support up to age 25 for young people with SEND. She advised that all existing family hub sites had been secured for the next three years. Ms Crisan, Director for Operational Integrated Children's Services, confirmed that there were no plans to close any family hubs.
  - b. Mrs Palmer highlighted that the current children's services leadership team worked collaboratively across portfolios to identify ways to save money without cutting services and that the team had jointly developed the current efficiency proposals.

RESOLVED that the verbal updates were noted.

## **58. Performance Monitoring** *(Item 7)*

1. Ms Atkinson, Assistant Director Management Information and Intelligence, introduced the report, providing the Committee with an overview of the performance data of the individual indicators.
2. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. When asked whether the proportion of pupils educated in out of county or independent schools was in line with forecast, Mr Chapman, advised that there had been an expectation of growth in these placements due to need, but he would confirm outside the meeting whether actual figures were in line with forecasts.
  - b. A Member sought assurance that retaining the new indicator on case holding staff present in post would not obscure the importance of social workers' professional qualifications. Ms Atkinson confirmed that

the qualification element remained important and was still monitored, the new measure simply focused on actual available capacity.

- c. A Member welcomed the improved results from case file audits, highlighting that 85% were rated good or outstanding, but emphasised the importance of maintaining standards, given previous Ofsted findings.
- d. A Member welcomed work to increase take-up of early years pupil premium and raised concerns that current free school meals processes could deter some families from applying. They asked about proposed changes to decouple free school meal eligibility from whether the child actually took the meal. It was explained that eligibility for pupil premium for school age children depended on registration for free school meals, pupils did not need to take the meal daily, but their Census Day status determines funding. It was reported that from September 2026 the Department for Education would end transitional Universal Credit arrangements and introduce annual eligibility checks before census, creating two tiers: pupils in households earning below £7,400 who will receive free school meals plus associated entitlements (including holiday activities and pupil premium) and other pupils on Universal Credit who would receive free school meals only.
- e. A Member commented positively on the performance data for the Dartford area, highlighting the predominance of green indicators, and thanked officers and staff for their work.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report.

**59. 26/00001 - Replacement of modular classrooms at Dover Grammar School for Girls**  
*(Item 8)*

1. Mrs Fordham introduced the decision, explaining that it related to a complete refurbishment and replacement of modular classroom accommodation at Dover Grammar School for Girls as part of the wider school modernisation programme. The preferred option was full replacement of the mobile classrooms at an estimated cost of approximately £1.4 million, to be funded from the Modernisation Programme budget.
2. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. When asked about consultation with the school and the impact of construction on school operations, Mr Adams, Interim Deputy Director for Education: Sufficiency, Effectiveness and Skills, confirmed that the school had been heavily involved in developing the proposal. He explained that there were two existing mobile blocks on a constrained site, including one near the main building at the top of an embankment where there were structural concerns. The intention was to construct new modular accommodation on currently unused space, then demolish the existing mobiles to free up land. The Council was working closely with the school on decant arrangements to minimise disruption during the project.
  - b. A Member queried the overall cost, asking whether the new accommodation was simply replacing portacabins. Mr Adams clarified that the project would replace portacabins with modern modular

buildings. He explained that site access constraints necessitated creating a new access route over the boundary to reach the construction area, which, along with the site's limited space, contributed to higher costs. He confirmed that Property colleagues had worked to ensure value for money and drive down costs where possible.

- c. Members welcomed investment in the school estate, noting that modern facilities supported pupils' learning and reflected the importance placed on education in Kent.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

**60. 26/00015 - Admission Arrangements and Scheme for 2027-28 Academic Year**  
*(Item 9)*

1. Mrs Fordham summarised that the report set out the outcomes of consultation on admission arrangements for primary and secondary schools for 2027–28 and the proposed determinations, including oversubscription criteria and published admission numbers (PANs) for community and voluntary controlled schools.
2. Mr Chapman explained that Kent County Council was responsible for co-ordinating admissions and acting as the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools under the School Admissions Code, which had remained largely unchanged since 2014. He advised that the Code required an admissions scheme setting out processes and timelines and determined admission arrangements for each school for which the Council was the admission authority, including oversubscription criteria and PANs. He confirmed that the Kent schemes for secondary, primary, infant and junior admissions remained broadly unchanged apart from updates to dates and that oversubscription criteria continued to prioritise looked after and previously looked after children, siblings, children with particular needs and then distance. He highlighted proposed PAN reductions at four primary schools and one junior school, driven by forecast lower demand to prevent excess capacity and financial instability. He explained that PANs could be increased at allocation if demand rose, but could not be reduced once places had been advertised.
3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. Mr Adams explained that the Commissioning Plan showed reduced demand in certain planning areas, including some South Kent and coastal locations. He cited Hythe Bay as an example where the PAN had already been reduced from 60 to 45 and was proposed to reduce further to 30, yet the school had received only 19 applications. Reducing PANs helped avoid situations where many schools in an area had to restructure due to low numbers.
  - b. A Member asked for information on the number of places reserved in grammar schools for pupils from poorer backgrounds. Mr Chapman confirmed that all grammar schools now offered places for such pupils and the detailed figures would be circulated outside the meeting.
  - c. A Member queried whether there were any significant changes in the admissions process beyond changes to numbers. Mr Chapman

confirmed that the overall process remained stable locally and nationally, with no major changes proposed.

- d. A question was asked about planning for substantial population growth and housing development in areas such as Dartford, and how places were allocated between long-standing residents and families moving into new developments. Mr Adams outlined the annual Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, which drew on pupil forecasting at district and planning-area level, considering migration trends and consented housing developments within a five-year period. He explained that the Plan identified gaps between forecast demand and existing capacity across primary, secondary, post-16 and SEND provision. The Council worked with district councils on local plans and Section 106 agreements to secure sites and developer contributions, and that the Plan provided transparency for Members, the public and prospective school providers. Mr Chapman clarified that the Admissions Code did not permit priority based on length of residence, and that oversubscription criteria had to be fair and consistent, though they could prioritise defined local areas or siblings. He added that Kent also scrutinised the admission arrangements of own admission authority schools to ensure compliance.
- e. A Member asked about the adequacy of local school places in Thanet and whether families were generally able to secure their preferred schools. Mr Chapman advised that there were no particular concerns about Thanet, preference data suggested that most families were obtaining suitable places.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

**61. 26/00014 - New Agreements for Specialist Resource Provisions, Specialist Post-16 Institutions and Pupil Referral Units**  
*(Item 10)*

1. Mrs Fordham introduced the decision, explaining that it proposed the implementation of legally binding agreements for Kent's specialist resource provisions (SRPs), specialist post-16 institutions (SPIs) and pupil referral units (PRUs). She explained that there were 76 SRPs, 22 SPIs and 6 PRUs and that the agreements would support oversight of quality and standards.
2. Ms Holden, Assistant Director for CYPE Commissioning, advised that the establishment of SRPs, SPIs and PRUs was governed by statutory Department for Education processes and that the number of commissioned places was set annually through separate key decisions. She explained that the proposed agreements would not create or close provisions but would provide a consistent framework for managing quality, standards and performance across providers. She added that bringing the three service types into a single decision would support a more consistent and effective approach to monitoring and improvement.
3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. A Member raised concern that the report did not adequately explain the proposed decision. Mr Adams explained that both SRPs in maintained schools and PRUs were established through school organisation legislation and registered with the Department for

Education and that any removal of such designations also followed statutory processes. Placements in SRPs and special schools were normally made through the EHCP process, which created legal duties to secure and fund provision through the schools funding framework. He added that as academy trusts are essentially companies, the Council had limited powers to intervene on quality beyond withdrawing placements. He stated that the proposed agreements were intended to set clear expectations for quality, curriculum, staffing and inclusion, and to enable the Council to monitor outcomes, attendance and provision for children with EHCPs. Additionally, this would allow officers to visit settings, review performance and require improvement where needed and ensure consistent standards across maintained and academy providers.

- b. A Member asked for more detail on how quality and effectiveness would be measured through the agreements. Mr Adams gave examples of likely contractual requirements, including the expectation that SRPs would have, or develop, a teacher with an appropriate postgraduate specialism in the relevant area of need. Additionally, there would be requirements for tracking pupils' progress, outcomes and attendance and sharing this data with the Council. It would include provision for specialist officers, such as SEN Inclusion Advisers, to access settings to observe practice.
- c. A Member asked that the detailed contractual framework be shared with the Committee once available. Ms Holden agreed to circulate further information and confirmed that only the front pages of the Equality Impact Assessments for SRPs and PRUs had been provided within the agenda pack but confirmed to Members that the full versions would be available alongside the Proposed Record of Decision when published.
- d. When asked about the planned creation of 889 new SRP places, how many SRPs this represented and whether they would be ready for September, Mr Adams explained that these places formed part of the SRP programme previously agreed by the Committee, funded by an additional £20m investment. Some secondary SRPs would open in September to support phase transfer, with other primary provisions opening during the academic year or in 2027 where new buildings were required.
- e. A Member questioned whether it would be more cost effective to expand in-house provision instead of funding SPIs, given the high cost of some independent specialist placements. Mr Adams advised that SPIs generally offered different post-16 pathways from those available in Kent's special schools, for example for young people with social, emotional and mental health needs. He stated that many SPIs were relatively cost-effective compared to non-maintained and independent special schools. He emphasised the importance of a range of pathways to promote independence and appropriate transitions for young people leaving special schools.
- f. A Member raised concerns about national proposals associated with the Safety Valve programme and SEND reform and asked whether Kent's plans to create around 600 further special school places by 2030 were compatible with Government expectations. Mr Adams explained that part of the planned growth related to two new special schools, which the Department for Education had already agreed to

fund. He added that national reforms emphasised greater inclusion in mainstream settings but recognised that special school numbers would continue to rise until reforms were fully embedded. He advised that without increased maintained capacity, more pupils would need placements in independent special schools, which would be unsustainable and not cost effective. Mr Adams confirmed that Kent was delivering nearly 900 new SRP places in mainstream schools, in line with the national direction of travel.

g. A Member asked whether the specific schools for SRPs listed only by area in the Commissioning Plan had been identified. Mr Adams explained that many of these were being firmed up with individual schools, in some cases, schools were awaiting clarity on future funding models following the recent White Paper.

4. In accordance with paragraph 16.31 of the Constitution, Mrs Russell wished for it to be recorded in the minutes that she voted against endorsing the proposed decision 26/00014 - New Agreements for Specialist Resource Provisions, Specialist Post 16 Institutions and Pupil Referral Units.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

**62. 26/00004 - Proposed Revision of Rates Payable and Charges Levied by Kent County Council for Children's Social Care Services in 2026-27**  
*(Item 11)*

1. Mrs Palmer introduced the decision, explaining that it set out proposed payment rates and charges for non-commissioned children's social care services, such as foster care allowances, special guardianship payments and Kent Supported Homes payments, for 2026–27.

2. Ms Stone, CYPE Finance Business Partner, explained that most rates were proposed to increase in line with the 4.1% CPIH index. She added that some rates linked to national frameworks would rise in accordance with national uplifts, which were slightly lower and that certain fixed charges would remain unchanged and be reviewed periodically rather than annually. She also advised that a wider review of the foster care offer was underway and that the proposed rates were based on the current payment system, with any future changes to be reported back to the Committee.

3. In response to comments and questions it was said:

a. A Member asked how adoption service charges worked and whether they were one-off payments. Ms Stone clarified that the adoption charges at the top of Appendix 1 related to payments made to other local authorities or voluntary adoption agencies when they matched adoptive parents for Kent children. She noted that local authority inter-agency rates had remained unchanged for several years, while voluntary agency charges increased annually in line with indexation.

b. A Member sought clarification on the foster care payment structure, particularly regarding the distinction between the maintenance and reward elements, as well as the reference to "non-related placements". Ms Stone explained that foster carers typically received a maintenance allowance to cover the child's day to day costs, such

as food and clothing and a reward element which recognised the carer's role and responsibilities.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

**63. 26/00005 - Young Carers - Commissioning of a new contract**  
*(Item 12)*

1. Mrs Palmer explained that the Council currently commissioned a service to provide activities and support for young carers, of whom there were estimated to be over 9,000 across Kent. The existing contract was due to expire in April 2027 and a new commissioning exercise was required.
2. Ms Holden advised that support for young carers was a statutory duty. She explained that the service had historically been well suited to delivery by the voluntary and community sector, allowing for flexibility and responsiveness. It was proposed to let a new contract with an initial four year term and two optional two year extensions. The contract would allow for responsibility to transfer to any new local authority created through local government reorganisation and would include early termination clauses to provide flexibility if needed. As a part of the commissioning activity, the service model would be co-designed with young carers to reflect current needs and maximise the impact of the available budget.
3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. When asked how much time support workers would typically spend in young carers' homes, Ms Holden explained that the level and nature of support would vary according to individual needs. Some young carers might only need information, advice or signposting to other services, while others would require more in-depth assessment and ongoing support, potentially including home-based work.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

**64. Contract Register**  
*(Item 13)*

1. Ms Holden explained that the register listed contracts and agreements within the Directorate that carried financial or legal obligations and were managed by her team. She outlined the Council's contract tiering tool, developed by the Commercial and Procurement Division, which assessed contracts against eight factors to classify them as gold, silver or bronze. Factors included value, length, strategic importance, complexity, supplier relationships and the impact of supplier failure.
2. Ms Holden advised that gold-tier contracts were subject to additional oversight by the Corporate Contract Management Review Group (CMRG). She reported that the low-needs and transitional supported accommodation contracts had recently been reviewed at their mid-point, and discussion had focused on the fact that there had been only one bidder for the low and transitional needs contract. In contrast, three bidders had competed for the medium and high needs contract, which enabled benchmarking of costs. The CMRG had agreed that commissioners and procurement colleagues could

actively seek to broaden the provider base ahead of future re-procurement. Ms Holden explained that other gold rated contracts included the rights, representation and advocacy service and the speech, language and communication needs service.

3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. A Member suggested that the register should indicate which contracts were gold tier and whether they had been reviewed by the CMRG. Ms Holden agreed to add this information in the narrative column in future versions.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the Contract Register.

**65. Risk Management: Children, Young People and Education**  
*(Item 14)*

1. Mr Scrivener, Head of Risk & Delivery Assurance, introduced the report, he explained that the Council's Corporate Risk Register was regularly reported to Cabinet and the Governance and Audit Committee. The report before the Committee set out those corporate risks most relevant to Children, Young People and Education, together with a summary of directorate level risks, to provide a high-level overview of key issues. He explained that most of the risks related to areas on which the Committee received substantive reports during the year. He highlighted that risks were dynamic, particularly those associated with delivery of the Safety Valve agreement and SEND reforms and that scores would be reviewed as the national policy position developed.
2. In response to comments and questions it was said:
  - a. When asked about the implications and the actions to be taken in reference to the maximum score for the high needs funding risk, Mr Chapman advised that the increased score reflected the seriousness of the position despite intensive work to reduce the overspend. He emphasised that SEND financial pressures were a national issue and that the Government's White Paper and SEND Reform Plan were intended to address them. He explained that recent Government announcements suggesting that 90% of historic deficits might be written off did not remove the in year pressures and that there was still no clarity on future funding. He added that the Council had been advised to focus its efforts on the areas of work with the greatest impact rather than spreading resources too thinly and that this work was continuing.
  - b. A Member asked whether the risk assessment had been updated following the announcement about a potential 90% write off of the accumulated deficit. Mr Chapman confirmed that the announcement related to historic deficits only. The Council still projected significant in year overspends and further national mechanisms were expected but not yet defined. The risk would be revisited as more information emerged.
  - c. A Member asked about the risk relating to insufficient Ofsted-registered providers to meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs and to provide personalised care and how this related to the Council's plans for its own children's homes. Mr Kasaven explained that improvements in neonatal and early years

healthcare meant that more children with complex needs were surviving into later childhood and adolescence. He reported that the market had not fully adjusted to the increasing complexity of needs or the regulatory requirements. He added that matching requirements and Ofsted regulations often limited the number of children who could be placed in each home, resulting in homes registered for four or five children sometimes having only one or two residents. Providers therefore sought higher fees to cover these voids, which contributed to cost pressures. The Council's development programme was focusing on smaller homes to reflect these realities and reduce void related costs over time.

- d. A Member highlighted that Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission had highlighted persistent issues with demand exceeding supply and a shortage of specialist provision for complex needs. They asked for further data and detail on how these risks were being managed. Mr Chapman stated that many of the responses were embedded in broader transformation projects to increase mainstream inclusion and specialist capacity, as discussed earlier in the meeting, and that further detail could be provided outside the meeting if required.
- e. A Member queried how comprehensive the risk register was and whether new or emerging risks were routinely captured. Mr Scrivener explained that there were over 600 risks recorded across the Authority, covering corporate, directorate and divisional levels. The system allowed for escalation and de-escalation as needed. He emphasised that risk management was also part of managers' day to day responsibilities and that the register focused on the most significant risks to ensure a proportionate approach.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered the risks presented.

**66. SACRE Annual Report 2024 - 2025 (For Information)**  
*(Item 15)*

1. Mr Dixon, Chair of the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE), introduced the report, explaining the purpose and role of the SACRE. Mr Dixon thanked SACRE members for their engagement and contributions throughout the year, offering particular thanks to Penny Smith Orr for her support and guidance.
2. Mr Dixon extended an invitation to Committee members to attend future SACRE meetings, sharing that the next meeting would take place at 10.00 am on 30 June at the Maidstone Salvation Army.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report.

**67. Work Programme**  
*(Item 16)*

RESOLVED that the work programme was noted.