

From: Linden Kemkaran – Leader of the Council
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To: County Council – 16 July 2026

Decision No: n/a

Subject: **Year-end Quarterly Performance Report, 2025/26**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This is the Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) for Kent County Council covering the last quarter of the financial year ending 31 March 2026. The report presents information for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and activity measures across the Council Directorates, and a summary of the Corporate Risk Register

Of the 39 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) contained within the QPR, 18 achieved target (Green), 12 achieved or exceeded the floor standard but did not meet target (Amber). Nine KPIs did not meet the floor standard (Red).

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is a key mechanism within the Performance Management Framework for the Council and is reviewed each quarter at Cabinet. The report summary for Quarter 4, 2025/26 is attached at Appendix 1, and includes data up to the end of March 2026.
- 1.2. The 2025/26 QPR includes 39 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) where results are assessed against Targets set at the start of the financial year.
- 1.3. In comparing performance to the previous year (2024/25) when there were 38 KPIs, it should be noted that there are four new KPIs in 2025/26 with three KPIs having been removed.

2. Quarter 4 Performance Report

- 2.1. Results for KPIs compared to Target are assessed using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status.
- 2.2. Of the 39 KPIs included in the report, the latest RAG status are as follows:
 - 18 are rated Green (one fewer than Quarter 4 last year) - the target was achieved or exceeded.
 - 12 are rated Amber (three more than Quarter 4 last year) – performance achieved or exceeded the expected floor standard but did not meet target.
 - 9 are rated Red (one fewer than Quarter 4 last year) – performance did not meet the expected floor standard.

2.3. The nine indicators where the RAG rating is Red, are in:

- Customer Services
 - Percentage of complaints responded to within timescale
- Governance and Law
 - Percentage of Freedom of Information Act (Fol) requests completed within 20 working days
 - Percentage of Data Protection Act (DPA) Subject Access requests completed within statutory timescales
- Environment and Transport
 - Percentage of routine highway repairs reported by residents completed within 28 days
 - Percentage of emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification
- Children, Young People and Education (Education & Skills)
 - Percentage of annual EHCP reviews waiting less than 12 months
 - Percentage of pupils (with EHCP's) being placed in independent or out of county special schools
- Children, Young People and Education (Integrated Children's Services)
 - Percentage of foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)
 - Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)

With regards to Direction of Travel, seven indicators show a positive trend, 28 are stable or with no clear trend, and four are showing a negative trend. Of those KPIs with a negative trend:

- Two are within Integrated Children's Services (both relating to foster care, including the Red RAG rated indicator above)
- One is within Adult Social Care (long-term support needs of older people met by admission to residential and nursing care homes)
- One is in Public Health (Number of eligible people receiving an NHS Health Check)

3. Commentary

3.1. This report shows a similar overall position to that reported last year. 14 of the 18 Green RAG rated KPIs, were also rated Green last year. Of the nine Red RAG Rated KPIs, five of these were also rated Red last year.

- 3.2. The performance indicators giving greatest concern remain closely aligned with the services where the financial strains and demand are most acute (particularly Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, children in care placements and Adult Social Care). Initial requests for Education Health & Care Plans remain high. In Adult Social Care, the numbers of people requiring ongoing support continues to increase, especially those with a mental health need, and safeguarding enquiries also continue on an upward trajectory. We are also seeing numbers of Freedom of Information and Subject Access requests remaining above expected levels.
- 3.3. It is important to note that this demand-led pressure on services in Kent continues to be reported by many upper tier county councils and unitary authorities across the country. As NHS providers struggle to meet demand and catch up with significant waiting lists, there is a knock-on effect on adult social care services, whilst the social care provider market continues to be fragile given workforce and inflationary pressures. The need for the Government to implement a sustainable funding model for adult social care is imperative if all local authority services are not to face ongoing financial and capacity pressures. Weather related demand and market pressures are impacting on the quality of the road network at national level.
- 3.4. Moving back to the situation in Kent, it is important to consider in more detail the nine KPIs rated as Red. The Red KPIs come under three broad categories – Cross-cutting; Highways & Transportation, and Children, Young People and Education.
- 3.5. Cross-cutting Red KPIs:
- Percentage of complaints responded to within timescale (stable / no clear trend)
 - Percentage of Freedom Information Requests completed within 20 working days (stable / no clear trend)
 - Percentage of Subject Access Requests completed within timescale (stable / no clear trend)

These KPIs involve Directorates working with the central Customer Experience and Information Governance teams. The level of demand and complexity of some of these requests has increased, possibly in part due to use of AI in generating requests. This alongside the other concurrent pressures on services has in-part led to continuing challenges with meeting response times, although performance for responding to Freedom of Information requests has improved. There is also an issue of dealing with a backlog of older cases, meaning it is not always possible to prioritise new requests over those which have been waiting longer which also impacts on KPI performance.

3.6. Highways & Transportation

- Emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification (stable / no clear trend)

This KPI only moved to a Red rating in the final quarter of the year having been close to target previously. There was an exceptionally high volume of concurrent emergency incidents in the final quarter due to various impacts from adverse weather. The new Highways contractor, Ringway, understand improving performance in this area is a priority.

- Percentage of enquiries requiring a response completed within 28 days (stable / no clear trend)

Similarly, the lowest performance for this KPI came in Quarter 4. This quarter saw the highest volume of incoming enquiries in over 10 years, creating unprecedented demand which peaked in March. This again is now the responsibility of Ringway who will draw on learning from other contracts to support improvements to how issues are managed across the districts.

3.7. Children, Young People and Education Red KPIs:

- Percentage of annual EHCP reviews waiting less than 12 months (stable / no clear trend)

Following above target performance in 2024/25, the target was made significantly more challenging for 2025/26, with the floor standard set at what was achieved in Quarter 4 last year. However, performance has in fact dropped a small amount since last year resulting in the Red RAG rating. Internal reorganisation of teams, and a planned programme of improvement should both positively impact on the performance of this KPI moving forward.

- Percentage of pupils (with EHCP's) being placed in independent or out of county special schools (stable / no clear trend)

This KPI continues to be impacted by a delay in the provision of two new special schools in Kent as a result of DfE decision making, leading to a continued over-reliance on independent specialist provision to compensate. While recent DfE advice has made clear that these schools remain in their plans, this does not offset the negative impact of ongoing delays. This area is therefore likely to remain below target for the foreseeable future.

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

Performance against this measure is impacted by the availability of in-house foster placements which is a national issue. Additional fostering beds continue to be made available following the opening of new KCC Children's homes and supported accommodation; in which should give a small boost to the performance.

- Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with) (stable / no clear trend)

Some unaccompanied young people (who account for around half of all care leavers) remain without status, either due to recent entry before turning 18 or because they arrived after 23 July 2023 and are affected by the Immigration Act (2023). As a result, these care leavers cannot continue education or enter employment at 18, reducing participation in education, training, and work. The Home Office has confirmed their applications will be prioritised.

- 3.8. Finally, and for balance, it is worth noting the many positive aspects in the report. Callers to Contact Point who rate the advisor who dealt with their call as Good, has met the high target of 97% for every quarter since December 2022. • The number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE) exceeded its target for the year. Less than 1% of our municipal waste is taken to landfill. The rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system continues to improve below its target. Repeat referrals to children's social care continue to be within target. Fewer 18-64 year olds are needing to have their needs met by admission to residential or nursing care homes; and, the number of adults successfully completing substance misuse treatment continues to exceed target.

4. Recommendation(s)

The County Council is asked to NOTE the Performance Report.

5. Contact details

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