

Report to	Kent HOSC Meeting
Meeting date	7 TH October 2026
Report title	Overview of the Kent and Medway ICB Maternity Services Transformation Programme
Key question	To Brief provide HOSC
Executive Lead	Jennie Hall: Chief Nursing, Quality and Experience Officer
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Which of the organisation's strategic objectives does the report support:	
☒ Commission the right services each year	☐ To ensure financial sustainability over three years
☒ Lead strategy and ensure commissioning levers deliver impact	☐ Develop into a high-performing Commissioning Organisation
☐ Renew our culture for long-term sustainability	
Recommendation (outcome / action requested):	
Meeting action required: ☐ Seek assurance ☐ Decision/approval required ☒ For noting/information Recommendation(s) to the meeting: To note the programme of work being led by Kent and Medway ICB To ask the Committee what updates and assurance they would like to request	
Executive summary:	
The Kent and Medway Maternity Services Review is a system-wide programme established by NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) to develop a robust understanding of current maternity services and identify opportunities to improve outcomes, quality, safety and experience for women, babies and families across Kent and Medway. The Review forms part of the ICB's wider response to national and local maternity challenges, including the findings of the National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation, variation in service performance and outcomes, and the need to ensure services remain sustainable and equitable for the future. The programme is being delivered through a collaborative and coproduction approach involving provider organisations, clinical leaders, service users, Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnerships (MNVPs), local authority partners and other stakeholders. A dedicated Programme Board has been established to provide independent oversight, assurance and challenge throughout the Review process.	

Since mobilisation, the programme has established its governance arrangements, agreed review objectives and scope, undertaken significant analytical activity and commenced stakeholder engagement activities. This work has created the foundations for the development of a comprehensive Case for Change that will articulate the challenges, opportunities and priorities for maternity services across Kent and Medway. Phase 1 has focused on evidence gathering, analysis and system engagement and has not sought to predetermine future recommendations or service configuration decisions.

The next phase of the programme will focus on completing the Case for Change, undertaking further engagement with women, families, staff and stakeholders, developing future model of care requirements and considering opportunities for service improvement. Any future proposals that may constitute substantial service change would be subject to appropriate governance, engagement and decision-making processes, including further engagement with Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee(s) where required.

Proposed next steps:

The next phase of the programme will focus on completing the Case for Change, undertaking further engagement with women, families, staff and stakeholders, developing future model of care requirements and considering opportunities for service improvement. Any future proposals that may constitute substantial service change would be subject to appropriate governance, engagement and decision-making processes, including further engagement with Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee(s) where required.

Governance pathway to date:

Meeting name:	Date:	Outcome:
Kent and Medway Trust Board	22 nd September 2026	Agreement of Scope and Terms Reference
Kent and Medway Trust Board,	21 st July 2026	Agreement of Draft Terms of Reference
Medway HASC	19 TH August 2026	None, Presentation of Programme

Contact for further information

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COMPLIANCE NOTES:

Equality, health inequalities and quality impact assessment

If this report is presented for decision/approval, please complete:

Has an assessment been undertaken?

- ☐ Yes (please attach the action plan as an appendix to this paper)
- ☐ No/Not applicable (please indicate why an assessment was not required)

Conflicts of interest

Are there any conflicts associated with authors or reporting officers?

- ☐ Yes ☒ No

FOI status

Is this report disclosable under FOI?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Our understanding is that there is no legal exemption for why this paper should not be disclosable under FOI, unless deemed otherwise by the Committees Team.

Financial implications

Are there financial implications associated with this report?

☒ Yes ☒ No

Financial modelling is deliberately sequenced to follow Phase 1 rather than precede it, so that evidence and engagement inform costed options rather than the reverse. No financial commitment is sought through this paper; full modelling will be brought to Board alongside any future configuration recommendation.

Legal implications

Are there legal implications associated with this report?

☒ Yes

This paper does not itself engage the statutory service reconfiguration process. Should the Review's findings lead to a recommendation for configuration change, the full statutory route—including HOSC and HASC oversight, a case for change and public consultation where thresholds are met would apply and would be brought to the Kent and Medway ICB Board for decision.

Quality and safety implications

Are there quality or safety implications associated with this report?

☒ Yes ☐ No

The purpose of the Maternity Service Review Programme is to support an increased quality of service provision.

Patient and public engagement

Are there patient and public engagement implications associated with this report?

☒ Yes ☐ No

MNVP have been key stakeholders throughout the co-design elements of this process and will be members of the Programme Board from the outset. Future patient and public engagement will be required and will be coordinated accordingly with Comms and MNVP and reported to the Board when appropriate.

KENT AND MEDWAY ICB MATERNITY SERVICES REVIEW PROGRAMME

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper provides the HASC with an overview of the Kent and Medway Maternity Services Review and an update on progress to date. It outlines the purpose of the review, the work undertaken during Phase 1, and the proposed next steps as the programme moves into the next stage of development.

2. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) commenced the Kent and Medway Maternity Services Review in 2026 as part of its ongoing commitment to improving outcomes for women, babies and families across the system.

The Kent and Medway (K&M) Maternity Services Review was approved in principle by the ICB's Executive Committee in June 2026, with its scope and Terms of Reference subsequently approved by the ICB Board in July 2026.

The Review was established as the ICB's primary commissioning response to a combination of national and local drivers, including the findings of the National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation (the Amos Review), wider quality and safety concerns within maternity services nationally, variation in outcomes and experience across Kent and Medway, and the need to ensure services remain safe, sustainable and equitable for future generations.

The Review is intended to provide an evidence-based assessment of current maternity services and to identify opportunities to improve quality, safety, outcomes and experience across the maternity pathway.

Importantly, the Review is not predicated on any pre-determined outcome: no service configuration decisions have been made. It is designed to develop a shared understanding of current services and future challenges before any options or recommendations are considered.

3. PROGRAMME APPROACH

The Review is a system-wide programme covering maternity, neonatal and women's health services across all four provider trusts (Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust, East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust and Medway NHS Foundation Trust), and all Four Layers of Care (Primary, neighbourhood, multi-neighbourhood and Acute). This will involve the ICB, provider trusts, service users, local authority partners, maternity and neonatal voices representatives, clinical leaders and wider stakeholders.

The programme is underpinned by three principles:

1. Co-production and collaboration across the system.
2. Use of robust evidence and analysis to inform conclusions.
3. Meaningful engagement with women, families, staff and communities.

A dedicated multi-organisation Programme Board has been established to provide independent oversight and assurance throughout the Review process, supported by governance, data and engagement arrangements.

The Review is being delivered in two phases.

Phase 1 built the evidence base and established governance, agreeing scope, objectives and the framing for a case for change through co-design, and testing key lines of enquiry through an evidence-led tabletop exercise across seven domains: population, equity, access, safety, activity, workforce, and experience and cost. A stakeholder workshop was held on 5 August to support this phase of the review.

The programme has now moved into Phase 2, which will take the validated evidence forward to co-produce the Case for Change, develop and recommend future care models and conduct an options appraisal.

4. PROGRESS TO DATE

Since mobilisation of the programme, significant work has been undertaken to establish the foundations for the Review.

Key achievements include:

- Agreement of the Review scope, objectives and governance arrangements through a multi-agency co-design process.
- Establishment of the Maternity Services Review Programme Board and supporting governance structures.
- Development of a Memorandum of Understanding across participating organisations.
- Production of a comprehensive baseline evidence base covering activity, quality, workforce, finance, inequalities, outcomes and service delivery.
- Development of a maternity dashboard and analytical framework.
- Initial stakeholder engagement with providers, clinical leaders and partner organisations.
- Commencement of engagement planning with women, families and wider stakeholders to inform the Case for Change.

The Maternity Services Review Programme Board held its inaugural meeting on 17th September 2026, approving its Terms of Reference and confirming arrangements for the supporting Data Subgroup. An Engagement Subgroup is also planned.

5. NEXT STEPS

Over the coming months, work will focus on:

- Completion of the Case for Change, with a first draft expected at the Programme Board in October for iteration and co-production
- Further analysis of quality, activity, workforce, finance and population need.
- Ongoing engagement with women, families, frontline staff, community representatives and stakeholders.
- Current-state pathway mapping across maternity services.
- Identification of Future Care Model requirements.
- Clinical workshops to define Future Model principles
- Development and testing of potential service improvement opportunities.

- Continued assurance through the Programme Board and wider governance structures.
- The April Board meeting will serve as a key gateway to consider the need to progress with an Options Appraisal.

The purpose of this phase is to establish a shared understanding of the challenges facing maternity services and the outcomes that any future service model should seek to achieve.

6. ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Review recognises that the experiences of women, families and staff are critical sources of evidence.

An engagement programme and subgroup are being developed to ensure that lived experience, clinical insight and stakeholder perspectives directly inform the emerging Case for Change and future recommendations. The engagement subgroup will provide a layer of assurance to the Programme Board. This will include engagement with service users, Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnerships (MNVPs), provider organisations, local authorities, community groups, HOSC and HASC, and wider partners.

The Maternity Services Review Programme will consider the fundings from the Thirlwall Inquiry published in September 2026

7. REQUIRED OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

The meeting is asked to note:

The current position of the programme

Further updates and progress can be provided at key stages of the Kent and Medway Maternity Services Review programme.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

There are no supporting Documents