

Medway Council
Meeting of Health and Wellbeing Board
Thursday, 16 April 2026
2.00pm to 4.55pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

- Present:** Councillor Teresa Murray, Deputy Leader of the Council (Chairperson)
Councillor Simon Curry, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration
Councillor Mark Jones
Councillor Andrew Lawrence
Councillor Eddie Peake
Councillor Adam Price, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (including statutory responsibility)
Kelly Cogger, Assistant Director, Children's Social Care
Jackie Brown, Assistant Director Adult Social Care
Lee-Anne Farach, Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive
Dr David Whiting, Director of Public Health
- Substitutes:** None
- In Attendance:** Siobhan Callanan, Interim Deputy Chief Executive
Matthew Charles, Project Officer, Partnership Commissioning for Children and Families
Dominic Cox, Deputy Chief Commissioning Officer Kent and Medway ICB
Stephanie Davis, Democratic Services Officer
Ian Gilmore, Head of Regulatory and Environmental Services
Dr Jack Jacobs, Kent Local Medical Committee
Abigail Kitt, Deputy Director, Health Improvement & Transformation, Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group
Victoria Nystrom-Marshall, Programme Manager, Transformation and Improvement Team, KMPT
Councillor Alex Paterson, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement
Dr Ash Peshen, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, NHS Kent and Medway
Inspector Allen Searle, Kent Police
Nicoleta Stangu, Head of Children in Care, Care Leavers and Youth Offending

855 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Coombs, Adam Doyle, Chief Executive NHS Kent and Medway and Integrated Care Board (ICB) Representative, Martin Riley, Joint Senior Responsible Officer Medway and Swale Integrated Care Partnership, Jack Packman, Medway Voluntary Action, and Andrew Stradling, Interim Medical Director Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership.

856 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 12 February 2026 was agreed and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

857 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

858 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

859 Review of Themes from Performance Indicators

Discussion:

The Director of Public Health introduced the report which reviewed the work undertaken by the Board in 2025/26 and the following were discussed:

Therapeutic Alliance- went live on 1 April 2026, and it was envisaged that the Alliance would be able to address some of the issues experienced, in particular with the issues of long wait lists for neurodiversity assessments and support. Demand for support was increasing and the impact on schools and learning must be recognised. Additionally, there were people on various waiting lists for different providers, and this often caused confusion for families. The Deputy Chief Commissioning Officer Integrated Care Board (ICB) agreed to provide information to a later meeting on this matter.

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The rough sleepers team has been strengthened and partners across the Board agreed to collaborate and link together their work on homelessness.

GP's - in relation to recruitment of GPs, the Board was informed that the number of GPs had increased, with a 30% increase in Medway since 2020 and whilst it was acknowledged that some GPs were part-time it was important to remember that this was due to some working in very acute services which were very demanding. Going forward, whilst it was important to have GPs, the focus was on development of multi-disciplinary teams with specialisms in practices.

In relation to Kinship, it was commented that the current figures known may not be a true reflection of the situation and many more people may start to come forward.

Decision

The Board agreed:

- a) To note the report.
- b) That a briefing paper on progress on the Kinship Pilot Programme be provided.
- c) That a paper be presented to a future meeting on progress on Neurodiversity, including an update on waiting lists.

860 Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board Recovery and Transformation Programme and Outcome of Formal Staff Consultation

Discussion:

The Deputy Chief Commissioning Officer Integrated Care Board (ICB) introduced the report which detailed the outcome of the ICB's formal staff consultation, the response to Medway's submission to the consultation and the transformation programme.

The following were highlighted:

- There were over 400 comments received from staff and partners in response to the consultation, which were taken into consideration.
- The key theme going forward was for the ICB and the Council to work better together, with a proactive and clear approach.
- There would be a strong organisational focus on commissioning of multidisciplinary teams, with areas of expertise and clinical leaders working in those teams.
- There would be a focus on strong improved, robust internal and external collaboration with more work to be undertaken on strengthening joint commissioning opportunities and focus on outcomes.
- Statutory responsibilities remained a priority and capacity to deliver those responsibilities would be maintained.

Members then raised a number of questions and comments, which included:

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The Chairperson expressed thanks for the response received to the Councils consultation submission and advised that this would be discussed by the leadership. It was recognised and accepted that the ICB had been asked to reduce costs, but this must not be done at a detriment to residents and by reduction of services.

Concerns were raised regarding the ability to deliver in the timescales projected.

In response to a question on impact on delivery of service, in particular in relation to statutory responsibilities, the Board was informed that capacity would continue to be maintained. The key challenge was in understanding of priorities and aligning with commissioning intentions.

There was concern regarding transparency, recruitment and retention of executive leadership and it was asked what steps would be taken to strengthen governance to ensure that the executive would be appropriately held to account. The Board was informed that NHS England would still retain responsibilities for ensuring accountability. The Board was not reassured by this due to the disbanding of NHS England next year.

The Board was informed that the first piece of work to be undertaken in the coming months was on driving forward joint commissioning objectives and this would be the first test of partnership working. It was important to note that the ICB could not carry out this transformation work alone and needed the support of partners.

It was commented that the recurring word throughout this transformation programme was collaboration and that there needed to be a level of trust developed to assure that the ICB would be open and transparent with the Council and provide feedback as needed.

Decision:

The Board noted the report.

861 Update on Neighbourhood Health

Discussion:

The Director of Public Health presented the report which detailed the steps that would be taken, and key timelines in production of the plan. The report also summarised key points from the National Framework guidance. He advised that there was a requirement for a strong link between the plan and the Better Care Fund and officers were confident in the steps being taken in development of the plan.

The Deputy Director, Neighbourhood Health Transformation, Kent and Medway ICB added that due to the importance of the agenda, officers had been working

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together at pace whilst awaiting the guidance. Leaders of all organisations involved had been working collaboratively on the plan and a strategic model of agreed principles had been established.

It was commented that there was a need to ensure that the adult social care voice was central, as the involvement and capacity of workforce delivery of services would be a responsibility of the Council and it was vital to ensure that resource constraints and challenges would be taken into consideration. Additionally, the plan must ensure a strong focus on the prevention agenda and the involvement of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sectors in plans was crucial.

Decision:

The Board agreed:

- a) To note the report
- b) That a workshop session be arranged prior to submission of the full plan in September 2026

862 Better Care Fund

Discussion:

The Head of Adult Partnership Commissioning and the BCF presented the report which detailed the statutory plan between NHS Kent and Medway ICS and Medway Council with Medway NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) for 2026 – 2027.

Members then raised a number of questions and comments, which included:

Forward planning - in response to a question regarding forward planning for hospital discharges, the Board was informed that forward planning did not fall under this plan and was more aligned to the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and that this plan was centred around solutions to discharge planning.

Domiciliary care - in response to a question on the viability of domiciliary care, the Board was informed that there were no issues with capacity in the domiciliary market. There was in fact a need for a dedicated piece of work to be undertaken on assessment of the need for short term, step down from the acute beds and the impact if more were introduced, particularly the impact on people's abilities to be cared for at home. It was important to ensure the right mix of care was in place to address people's needs and choice for care.

Decision:

- a) The Board noted the report and the BCF plan for 2026-27
- b) The Board noted that Cabinet in May would be requested to approve delegated authority for the Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive, Lee-Anne Farach, to oversee any further changes to the BCF

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plan and S75 agreement, as required to meet national approval. Delegated authority would also be requested for the approval of all monitoring reports as required by NHS England and for any required extension to plans required in 2027-28, in recognition of the risk of delayed National guidance and continuation of essential services.

863 Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment and Community Safety Plan

Discussion:

The Board received the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment and Community Safety Plan and was informed that there had been considerable engagement with the community this year, with feedback received and lessons to be learnt. It was highlighted that the action plan included the changes as of April 2026 around the new laws and policy changes targeting misogyny and violence against women and girls with the criminalisation of public sexual harassment and sex as a hate crime characteristic.

Members then raised a number of questions and comments, which included:

Going forward, the reports should link in and reference other documents such as the Medway One Council Plan.

Child protection - it was noted that the report was well written and demonstrated a strong focus on community safety; however, concern was raised that, while there were approximately 300 children in Medway subject to child protection plans and at risk of significant harm, the report did not recognise or suggest how those children could be supported. Officers acknowledged the comment and agreed to engage with the relevant team to consider how this issue could be addressed through the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

CCTV - in response to a question on what benefit the role of CCTV brought to the system, the Board was informed that the work that had been undertaken by Kyndi in relation to CCTV had directly led to the ability to deal with offences and led to investigations.

In response to a further comment regarding reports of non-functioning CCTV on buses and trains, the Board was informed that the Police maintained active partnerships with both transport providers. It was confirmed that the quality of CCTV footage received had been good and had been used successfully for identification purposes and, in some cases, to support prosecutions.

The Chairperson added that there was work being undertaken to ensure the renewal of cameras in Medway and to ensure that they were in working order.

Drugs and alcohol – it was commented that there was a notable increase of cannabis use in the community and it was asked how that was being dealt with, particularly due to the links with other crime, the impact on health and on

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wellbeing, and the coercion of children and young people into crime related activities. The Inspector Kent and Medway Police said that considerable work continued to be undertaken on drug use and the impact on children and families. There was ongoing preventative work on changing behaviours and attitude as the priority was not to criminalise young people which was why there was a strong focus by the Youth Justice Board on education which was crucial to tackling issues. There was a strong child centred policing team in place who worked in the community and with schools.

The community was instrumental in their support in tackling issues with drugs and alcohol and were encouraged to continue to report concerns. Reporting could be done in various forms and channels and partners around the room were encouraged to assist with promotion of reporting in their organisations, wards and communities.

Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) - it was highlighted that the report referenced a rise in ASB, and it was asked whether this was due to improvements in reporting. The Board was informed that Kent Police had made changes to reporting in the last year to ensure the process was more robust, and information captured accurate and whilst as a result there had been an increase, this could only be compared to the quality of recording in previous years. The focus was not on data but on interacting with communities to better understand their needs, views and address concerns.

Fraud - it was expressed that there was a rise in the criminal act of fraud and scamming of people, and it was asked if this was a matter the CSP were aware of and focused on. The Board was informed that Medway was part of a national initiative on tackling this issue and details of the Scambusters organisation was promoted by the CSP.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement and Chairperson of the CSP added that this issue must be taken seriously due to the impact on victims' lives, the majority of these crimes took place online, through the use of the internet. It was noted that a high percentage of victims did not come forward due to feelings of shame associated with being a victim. Another area of concern was online sexual crime where young people were being coerced to engage in acts of explicit sexual nature, taking and sharing pictures of themselves, which were then been used to blackmail and bully them. These incidences had resulted in the loss of lives through suicide of young people. Communities must be vigilant of crimes of this nature and be encouraged to reach out for support if affected.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement and Chairperson of the CSP informed the Board that a key strength of the Partnership was its ability to make positive changes through practical actions that, while often small in scale, had a meaningful impact on residents' lives.

Decision:

The Board noted the Strategic Assessment 2025 and draft CSP Action Plan 2026-27.

864 Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

Discussion:

The Head of Corporate Parenting and Youth Justice and the Project Officer Partnership Commissioning for Children and Families presented the report and gave a presentation which highlighted the following:

- This report for 2024/2025 was based on 8 priorities, the new strategy being produced would focus on 5 priorities which would cover key areas such as permanence, meeting education health and accommodation needs, and the development of independent living skills.
- There had been an increase in children in care assessing employment, education or training (EET) with 74% of care leavers in EET which exceeded the target of 60%.
- There were currently 90% of care leavers living in suitable accommodation and this was due to the extensive collaborative work with colleagues in fostering, with many young people remaining living with foster carers, as well as colleagues in the housing department.
- Children and young people's achievements continued to be celebrated at every opportunity.
- The reverse buddy scheme had been launched to listen to young people, support and coach them.
- There were still areas of improvement and ongoing work such as with initial health assessments as well as early permanency support and planning to ensure children and young people remained with families where possible.
- Conversations continued to take place with partners on improvements to care pathways for young people.
- Work was undertaken with Mid-Kent College on production of vital information for young people such as registering with dentists and how to improve their mental wellbeing. There were also more upcoming opportunities to collaborate with young people on production of other videos aimed at them and their needs.

Members of the Board were encouraged by the videos being produced by young people for young people as it was felt that young people's voices were not heard enough in health. It was also commented that it was important the videos be made available to children that were not in care, the officer clarified that the videos were available for all children and young people in Medway.

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Decision:

The Board agreed:

- a) To note the report
- b) That officers share the videos produced by young people for young people to the Board

865 Work Programme

Discussion:

The Board received the work programme report.

Decision:

- a) The Board agreed the work programme attached at Appendix 1.
- b) The Board agreed as per discussions that Neurodiversity be added to the work programme.

Chairperson

Date:

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