

# Governing Body's Review of Meeting Local Need

## MidKent College

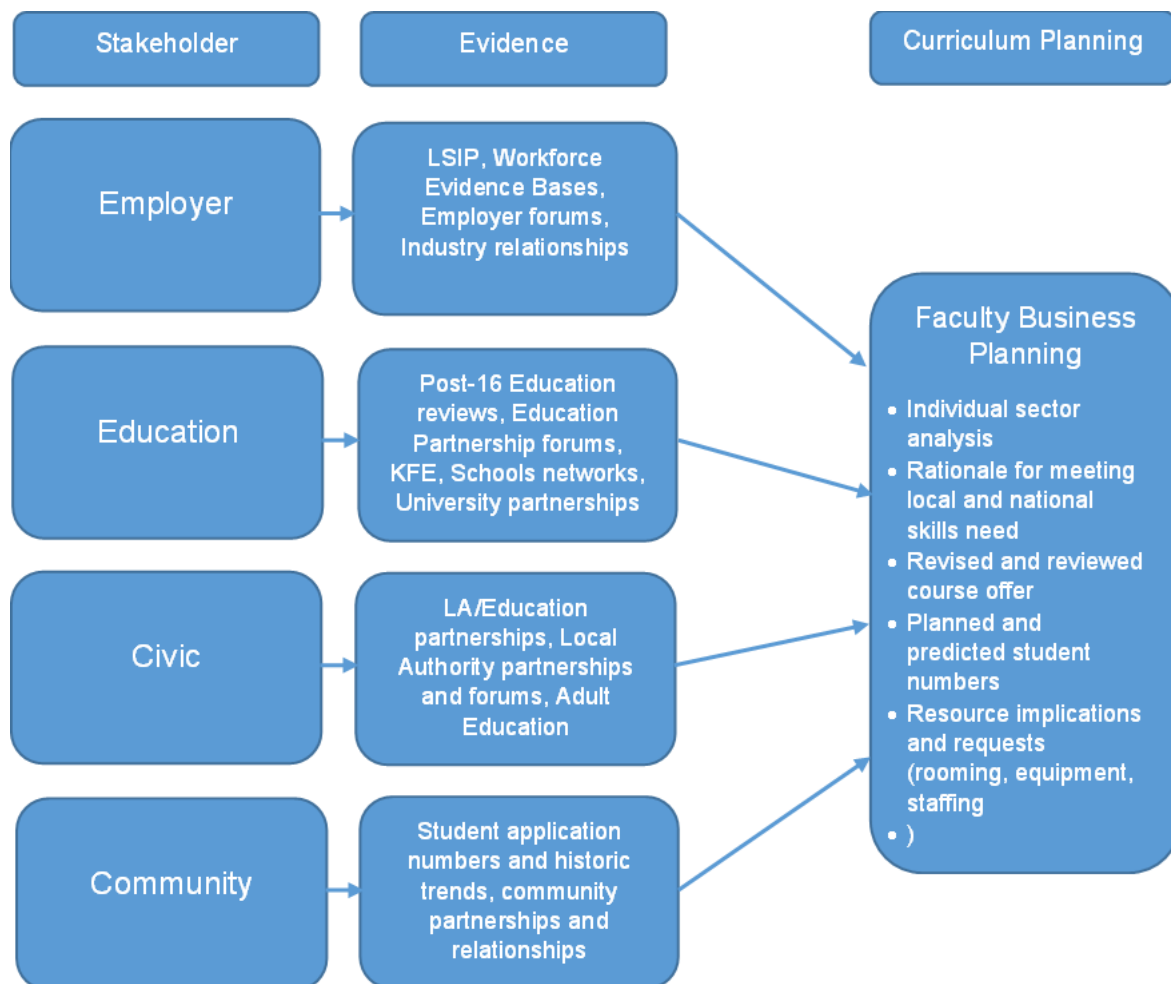
April-June 2023

### **Governors' foreword**

In accordance with the statutory guidance set out in the DFE's [Review how well the education or training provided meets local needs](#) document, the below provides a summary of the findings of the Governors' working group, supported by the College executive, in relation to the Board's duty to review. This document is approved for publication on behalf of the Governing Board of MidKent College by the Chair of Governors, Martin Cook.

### **Review of Local Need and the College's provision**

The College aims to support and engage with local needs across a wide range of external stakeholders, from the skills needs (both current and emergent) and growth demands of local employers and industry sectors, to educational needs and gaps within the local education landscape, to supporting civic initiatives and priorities within the local authority agendas, to working closely with local community groups and charities.



As well as engaging regularly with stakeholders in each of these categories, the College relies upon a number of key research documents to gain an understanding of the wider pictures, particularly where the stakeholder groups are so large (e.g. Employers and Education), and to rationalise its planned offer every year. The College also produces an annual [Accountability Statement](#), detailing its work to meet not only local, but also regional and national skills priorities and agendas across all of the industry sectors it works with.

The Local Skills Improvement Plan for Kent and Medway outlines three key sectors of higher need in the local area: Construction, Land-Based & Food Production, and Manufacturing & Engineering; alongside these, the plan also acknowledges the significant needs in Professional Services, Visitor Economy, and the wider Health

and Care sector. It also identifies that in terms of employment within the local region, four sectors make up 40% of the jobs in Kent and Medway: Health & Social Care, Education, Retail, and Business Admin & Support. It further acknowledges that the sectors of Accommodation & Food, Manufacturing, Construction, and Professional Scientific & Technical as also significant in terms of employment numbers, making up a further 27% of all jobs.

With the exception of Land-based & Food Production, the College engages well in all of these sectors, with the bulk of them falling with the faculties of Construction & Engineering (supported by the College's subsidiary company, MKC Training, who offer high quality professional training to the Royal Engineers in Medway), Fitness & Professional, and Digital & Care; but with all faculties having some involvement in developing employability skills and transferable skills applicable to all sectors. The Land-based & Food production sector is well-served across the county by Hadlow College (part of North Kent College), although the College does provide a popular Animal Management provision in Medway, with positive destinations for students and a particular focus on development of students with lower academic starting points and/or additional learning needs.

In addition to the outlined sectors, there has also been a significant growth and demand (particularly in Medway) in the local Creative industries sector, along with a range of emergent technical and creative skills needed to support. As well as the work being done within the existing Faculty of Creative Industries detailed below, the College is also embarking on an ambitious project to grow significant Higher Education provision in this space, (particularly in response to the removal of the University of the Creative Arts campus in Rochester), and is collaborating with an array of local stakeholders (University of Kent at Medway, Medway Council and Adult Education, the Institute of Creative and Cultural Industries, community groups such as Creative Medway) to open the Medway School of Arts in 2023-24.

The College works closely with industry partners to ensure that the curriculum design meets the skills needs of students going into work in that sector – for example, in Construction key employers are invited in regularly to speak to students, visits to external building sites and contracts are made available to students, and examples of real-work projects are set for student cohorts. Similarly, in Health and Social Care, the College has a memorandum of understanding with the Kent and Medway NHS, and works closely with its local health trusts to support the pipeline and to expose students and prospective employees to a wide range of careers within the Health and Care sector, supported by and supporting the local Health Academy and Hospital schools.

In terms of Education need, the KCC post-16 review identifies in particular the need for a wider sixth form choice for students in Kent, and the need to develop digital skills and adopt blended or remote learning models to widen participation for harder to reach students, as well as develop clear pathways from level 2 and below and support aspiration for young people from all backgrounds.

The College also works collaboratively with a range of other educational settings and institutions, and has developed a number of pathways for students coming to College from schools, including independent and specialist schools, many of whom

have regular access on site to support transition work. In addition, the College collaborates very closely with the other FE Colleges as part of Kent Further Education (KFE), and maintains supportive relationships with Colleges across the wider South East region. Governors have a good understanding of the FE offer across the county, and we are encouraging greater collaboration between governing bodies in defining the landscape. The post-16 review in Kent, and the draft version for Medway have been instrumental in the College developing an integrated strategy for meeting local educational needs and covering identified gaps.

From a Civic perspective, both KCC and Medway Council have acknowledged a significant growth in demand to cater for students with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), and Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP), along with a rising need to support English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) qualifications for overseas students, including refugees and asylum seekers, particularly those of Afghan and Ukrainian origin. The College meets regularly with the Local Authorities in a wide variety of contexts, collaborating on provision for SEND learners, Adult Education and the local offer, and young people currently Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs).

The College has a rigorous and robust business planning cycle designed to ensure that it meets local needs. This process is intended to not only provide financial predictions and meet the demands of students, but also ensure that the curriculum is both reactive to changes in national initiatives, incentives, and educational reform, as well as responsive to changes in the local needs and employment demographic. This ensures students attain the best possible destinations and support the local economy effectively when they graduate from College.

Faculty specialisms	Key Local Needs identified.
Faculty of Construction and Engineering Industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bricklaying, Carpentry and Multi-trade</li> <li>• Engineering, Motor Vehicle and the Institute of Technology</li> <li>• Higher Education</li> </ul>	High priority for skills in Engineering (including Manufacturing and Science) and Construction Trades in local employment sector (see LSIP, WFEB). High priority to raise attainment level of level 4 and above qualifications across Kent and Medway.
Faculty of Care and Digital Industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Social Care</li> <li>• Childcare and Education</li> <li>• Information Technology</li> </ul>	High priority to meet workforce shortages and skills development in the Health and Care sector (see also <a href="#">K&amp;M Integrated Care Strategy</a> ) Rise in Education employment needs. High priority for development of Digitalisation skills across many sectors (see LSIP), and workforce shortages in technical roles across local industry.
Faculty of Creative Industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art and Design</li> </ul>	Significant growth in the Creative sector across Kent and (particularly) Medway,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media and Graphics</li> <li>• Performing Arts and Music</li> </ul>	<p>with rise in employment and workforce need coupled with skills shortages in terms of emergent technologies. Civic drive for creative and cultural development in local areas.</p>
<p>Faculty of Academic Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A-levels</li> <li>• Elective Home Educated</li> <li>• Access to Higher Education</li> <li>• Adult Finance and Professional</li> <li>• Progression Curriculum</li> </ul>	<p>Strong educational need for wider choice for sixth form students across county (see post-16 review). Increase in Home Educated students following pandemic and opportunities for developing remote learning pathways. Growth in SEN and EHCP learners, high Local Authority priority to improve outcomes and progression for SEN learners.</p>
<p>Faculty of Fitness and Professional Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport and Public Services</li> <li>• Hospitality and Catering</li> <li>• Plumbing and Electrical</li> </ul>	<p>Significant recruitment and workforce challenges for the armed forces and the police. Increase in lifestyle and wellbeing support industries. Significant population growth predicted for Medway. Recovering hospitality and catering sector post-pandemic. High Priority for Construction Trades skills development and meeting workforce demands.</p>
<p>Faculty of Sciences and Development Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal Management</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• ESOL</li> <li>• Maths and English</li> </ul>	<p>High priority to develop progression routes for lower attaining students. Science key to industry sector development. National agenda with respect to English and Maths attainment. Growth in numbers of refugees and asylum seekers needing language development, work skills, and progression opportunities as a result of Kent's geographical placement.</p>
<p>Faculty of Business and Service Industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hair</li> <li>• Beauty</li> <li>• Travel and Tourism</li> <li>• Business</li> </ul>	<p>Increased priority in maintaining and developing service industries to support economic growth and cultural developments in local regions. High level of SMEs and Enterprise across Kent and Medway.</p>
<p>Apprenticeships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Administration and Accountancy</li> <li>• Civil Engineering and Quantity Surveying</li> <li>• Bricklaying, Carpentry</li> </ul>	<p>In identified sectors, the College offers an alternative route for both students and employers to undertake apprenticeships to support businesses with their workforce development plans, and also to offer cross-cutting business</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engineering and Motor Vehicle</li></ul>	occupations to support the wider local employer base.
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As a result of the work undertaken, Students at the College gain useful skills in order to prepare them for progression into industry; for example, students working in sectors that are traditionally dominated by small or one-person businesses are supported to develop enterprise skills, and are given information about how to set up and promote themselves, along with advice from visiting speakers who have first hand experience of doing so within those sectors.

The College liaises very closely with Civic and Community stakeholders in each of the sectors that it serves to establish and plan to meet the needs of both specific groups of students and individuals. For example, students with significant disability and/or additional learning needs in Supported Learning engage with a broad range of external experiences and settings, in order to develop independence skills and broaden their experience and aspirations.

The College also provides students with opportunities to engage with key workplace priorities such as sustainability within each sector context, and digital skills and developments. Students are regularly involved with competitions and events run by employers across all sectors; for example IT, eSports, and Media students are involved with setting up and supporting the Medway Rapture Gaming Festival each year.

This engagement leads to strong destinations for students on leaving the College, with a high proportion of students moving on to relevant employment and/or further study including apprenticeships and Higher Education. Students in many areas move into key jobs within the sector as a result of the structure and planning of curriculum. For example, in our Cabin Crew Travel & Tourism course, approximately 74% of last year's students are currently flying with airlines, with all of the remainder leaving College for jobs in Customer Service roles. In addition, there is flexibility within the curriculum design to allow students to change their minds about intended destinations, and students are well supported to make informed decisions about their future pathways.

Signed by Martin Cook, Chair of the Governing Body, following Governing Body approval on 13 July 2023

