

The Limes Stakeholder Meeting
Thursday 3rd April 2025, 11am
MS Teams Meeting

Agencies and Services in Attendees
KCC, UAS Children's Service
KCC, Prevent
Kent Police
DBC, Councillor
DBC, Councillor
DBC, Representative

Kent County Council (KCC) – Dartford Borough Council (DBC) - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UAS Children)

Introductions
Introductions were made and agenda shared.
Update
<p>A representative from KCC provided a comprehensive overview regarding the current state of the Reception Centre, the Looked After Children housed there, and the planned activities. It was reported that there have been no more than a dozen young people in placement at any given time. There have been no incidents, and no young people have gone missing. All the young people have been actively engaging in their education and with the independent living programme (ILP). Consequently, there are no significant concerns at this time.</p> <p>The KCC representative also addressed the most recent complaints. One complaint was from a member of the public who reported being followed while walking up from the bottom of Brent Lane. It was noted that such incidents have only been reported since the Reception Centre opened. Upon reviewing the CCTV footage, the KCC representative confirmed that no staff or boys were outside during the reported hours. Therefore, it can be concluded that the individual involved was not associated with the Reception Centre.</p> <p>Another complaint concerned food truck deliveries. The KCC representative explained that this issue is dependent on parking availability, as some non-Reception Centre vehicles have been observed parking near the gate or on the adjacent 'no parking' white restriction lines.</p> <p>A further complaint was related to the York Road-side boundary of the Reception Centre, where it was reported that someone was speaking in a foreign language. The KCC representative investigated and found that this was a security staff member on a phone call while performing a routine security check around the perimeter. The staff member has been spoken to about being mindful of the noise. This information was communicated to the residents on York Road.</p> <p>Additionally, the KCC representative provided updates on the maintenance and further development of the Reception Centre. Firstly, a shed will be constructed in the garden. The respective neighbour has been informed about the potential minor dust, dirt, and noise, and has expressed understanding. Secondly, NHS subcontractors have been granted access to the Reception Centre due to a neighbouring construction development with overlapping water drains and pipes. The KCC representative confirmed that the subcontractors have been briefed on appropriate conduct while at the Reception Centre.</p>
Stakeholder Questions
A DBC councillor representative inquired about the location of the shed being built in the garden and its proximity to the neighbours. A KCC representative responded, specifying the exact location within the garden.

Regarding the complaint about a member of the public being followed on Brent Lane, a Kent Police representative commented that their investigation concluded this was an isolated incident. They further noted that there is no intelligence suggesting similar activities in the area. A DBC councillor representative confirmed that the information, indicating the incident did not originate from The Limes, has been disseminated.

A Kent Police representative asked when the number of young people arrivals would increase. A KCC representative explained that various factors, such as variable weather conditions and developments in Integrated Children's Services, influence this. Additionally, more Reception Centres for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children have opened, including one in Gravesend overlapping with the Dartford area and another in Canterbury that is yet to open.

In anticipation of an increase in arrivals, the Reception Centre has been proactively making improvements. Recently, the current young people in placement were taken on a trip to another Reception Centre in Faversham to interact with other young people from similar backgrounds, journeys, and experiences. Furthermore, there will be a redesign of the Reception Centre's welcome room, and discussions are underway to collaborate with the local football club on a bid for a dementia-friendly garden, which would benefit the community and keep the young people active. Additional activities are being researched, and further developments will be confirmed in the future.

A DBC councillor representative asked if any of the reception centres take care of orphan children. A KCC representative clarified that the young people are unaccompanied asylum seekers.

A Kent Police representative suggested that the young people from this Reception Centre could attend a Sikh event being held in Gravesend. A KCC representative agreed, noting that this could be a beneficial way to break down barriers between different communities and positively influence public perception.

A KCC representative then asked the stakeholders if there were any updates or queries. The DBC councillor representatives and Kent Police representatives indicated that they had no further updates or queries.

AOB

None Raised