

**From:** Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services  
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee 1 February 2018

**Subject:** Libraries Registration and Archives half-year performance update against the service specification 2017-2018

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Future Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Electoral Division:** All Divisions

**Summary:** This report outlines Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA) half-year performance against its outcome based specification for 2017-2018.

**Recommendation:** The Cabinet Committee is asked to comment and note the progress LRA has made to date in 2017-18

## **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 LRA is one of the pioneer KCC services to be internally commissioned against the KCC 'outcomes' framework. In June 2017, LRA updated the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee (GEDC) on its first year of delivery under this model and confirmed the specification for 2017-18. The LRA service specification is a three year rolling document that is currently in the second year of delivery.

## **2. Commissioning LRA against outcomes 20017-18: Progress to date**

- 2.1 The service specification requires LRA to use two different approaches in measuring performance:
- **Key Performance Indicators:** These are mainly volume outputs; numbers that indicate level of use, for example, the number of people who visit our buildings. This is the traditional way that LRA has been measured and is still an important benchmark of performance.
  - **Outcomes:** Outcomes allow a focus on the quality of the experience/services for the customer which is at the heart of what we do. This enables LRA to better demonstrate the positive difference LRA can make to the people of Kent.

- 2.2 The service specification articulated **what** was required to be delivered and in response the LRA service plan explains clearly **how** it will deliver.
- 2.3 This report is based on the outputs and outcomes LRA has achieved at the half year point in 2017- 2018. LRA continues to develop and refine its approach to outcome evaluation and has recently adopted a new outcome evaluation toolkit. This approach is enabling staff to easily collect outcome information, ensure this is considered upfront when activities are devised and allows LRA to better record this feedback.

### **3. LRA performance 2017-2018: key highlights to date**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 provides the detail about performance to date. However, summary highlights are shown below under the headings of activities; performance indicators and strategic outcomes:

#### **a) Activities**

- Work has started on developing 'Ambitions' for the whole of Libraries, Registration and Archives. This work has included full staff engagement as well as arranging and delivering 6 meetings of the member working group. Members have visited service points across a range of LRA services and taken part in a workshop session to inform the development of the 'Ambition' statements. Work has also progressed on engaging focus groups for both customers and non-users and an external company has been appointed to take this work forward. The draft 'Ambition' statements will be shared with the Cabinet Committee in March.
- A contract has been agreed with 'Find My Past' for the digitisation of parts of Kent's historic and unique Archive service. The Archive service has also launched a new, more customer-focussed website and applied to The National Archives to renew its accreditation against the new benchmark framework.
- Launched and developed Kent's digital den initiative – launching 3 out of the 5 locations at Gravesend, Sheerness and Ashford;
  - Gravesend, which is the most established, has seen 12 children attending (8 boys and 4 girls), with a further 19 children on the waiting list (17 boys, 2 girls) for which two additional sessions will start in January.
  - At Sheerness, although the group started with 9 children attending; attendance has reduced in December and therefore the initiative will be refreshed in the New Year.
  - Ashford launched on 11 January; and the club already has 10 children signed up to the first session; 8 boys and 2 girls. 52 children are signed up to the waiting list; 28 girls and 24 boys
- LRA achieved the Customer Service Excellence award following an external review and visit this year.

- During the peak summer period for weddings (July to September) LRA officiated at 2,906 weddings which represents an additional 4.4% compared to the same period in 2016.
- Progressed proposals for a mini refurbishment of Tonbridge Library which will take place early 2018 and see the external front of the building improved with the front entrance brought back into use, ground floor redecorated and the provision of new library shelving and furniture.

## b) Key Performance Indicators –

	Type of KPI	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 2 Target	Year-end target	Year to date	Direction of travel
KPI 1a	Visits to libraries and Archives venues	1,241k	1,391k	1,380k	Upper 5,070k	2,632k	↓
				1,270k	Lower 6,630k		
KPI 1b	Visits to the Archive search room	1,164	1,287	n/a	n/a	2,451	↓
KPI 2	Library Issues	1,677k	1,343k	1,310	Upper 4,775k	2,510k	↓
				1,210	Lower 4,285k		
KPI 3a	Events across LRA venues	5,820	5,182	n/a	n/a	11,002	↓
KPI 3b	Attendees at LRA Events	51.9k	64.8k	n/a	210k		↑
KPI 4	Active Library and Archive Borrowers (rolling year)	160.2k	161.3	n/a	n/a	161.3	↓
KPI 5a	Customer Satisfaction – Libraries *	97%	97%	n/a	95%	97%	↑
KPI 5b	Customer Satisfaction – Archives *	89%	87%	n/a	90%	87%	↓
KPI 5c	Customer Satisfaction – Births and Deaths *	94%	93%	n/a	95%	93%	↓
KPI 5d	Customer Satisfaction – Wedding Ceremonies *	98%	97%	n/a	95%	97%	↑
KPI 5e	Customer Satisfaction – Citizenship Ceremonies – NEW*	100%	97%	n/a	95%	97%	↓
KPI 6a	% of Registration appointments booked online	36%	40%	n/a	n/a		↑
KPI 6b	% of birth appointments booked online	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	↔
KPI 6c	% of death appointments booked online	44%	39%	n/a	n/a	n/a	↓
KPI 7	PC Use in Libraries	117.7k	124.7k	n/a	n/a	242.4k	↓
KPI 8	Library Community Outreach (rolling year)	1,407	1,371	n/a	1,455	1,371	↓

## Key

Green- performing within specification or above

Amber/Yellow- Performing just below target.

Red- Under target

The table above shows the LRA performance against its Key performance indicators over the year so far. Quarter 2 has seen some areas of improvement over Q1. The colours represent performance against the agreed KPIs. In terms of performance in Q2;

- Visits and issues - compared to the same quarter last year figures are up +0.23% and +0.7% up although the year to date is slightly down.
- Online contacts - as is being found nationally these contacts have increased by +22.2% on the same quarter last year.
- Wi-Fi usage - is continuously growing with a +20% increase on Quarter 2 last year. Despite this increase our PC use has also increased by +1.35% this quarter.
- Over 64,000 people attended events in libraries during the summer—an increase of +18% on the previous year.

- Customer satisfaction (Archives) – Following feedback from service users, we are reviewing the on-line booking form.
- Community outreach – We have seen less customers receiving our home library service with a decrease of –7% which is why this target is amber. We are reviewing our offer to make it more accessible to a wider audience

To put this in some context nationally, evidence shows that the usage of libraries has been in decline for many years. The 2015/16 CIPFA figures show that nationally issues and visits dropped by 6% and 2% respectively on the previous year. This year to date in Kent issues have gone down by just under 1% and visits are down by 2.8%. CIPFA 2016/17 figures have just been published and will be analysed in the near future. More recent results released for the Taking Part Survey 2016/17 shows that nationally fewer people are visiting libraries and that they are visiting less frequently with more engaging digitally. Kent is in line with this trend also with more customers taking up our digital offer.

c) **Progress against KCC's Strategic Outcomes:**

**Outcome 1: Children and young people get the best start in life.**

The Summer Reading Challenge 2017: There was an overall 2% increase in those taking part in Kent. It is also evident from the comments received that this does make a difference to children in maintaining reading skills ahead of the new school year in September;

*'Orla had gone off of reading, but after taking the SRC she has really found the love of reading again and discovered new authors. The mother also said that coming into the Library with Orla over the summer had got the whole family back into the 'library habit' - Broadstairs Parent*

*'Benji really enjoyed the challenge. He always reads a lot but this definitely encouraged him to continue in the holidays.'* – Paddock Wood Parent of 10 year old

*'Thank you, the reading challenge really helped my daughter to continue practising her reading and helped with my son's story understanding' – Canterbury parent of 2 and 6 year old*

*'My son has done the reading challenge and has really enjoyed it. I think it is good to encourage his reading over the summer. It's fun and free :-)' - Deal Parent*

LRA also runs a range of events and activities that make a difference as illustrated by these comments:

*"We really appreciate the opportunity for Charlotte to socialise with other children who have dyslexia. She loves coming to the sessions and they have*

*helped her confidence. Chatterbooks is fun and informative - we like the scope of the sessions; the subjects are perfect for their age group!" – Ashford parent*

*'Thanks so much for your fun sing-a-long every week. Me & Lachlann really enjoyed coming during my maternity leave. It was also lovely to have a cup of tea every week from a friendly face & to chat & play with the other Mums and Dads, & babies. It has really encouraged us to use the library' - Faversham parent*

**Outcome 2: Kent Communities feel the benefit of economic growth by being in work, health and enjoying a good quality of life.**

LRA has collected a range of outcome feedback that illustrates the positive difference we make to this outcome;

*'The library is essential for my wellbeing. Being able to borrow such a huge variety of books lights up my life and I appreciate it very much..... Customer at Canterbury library*

This article by a Dover customer was printed in the Guardian online: **My library has been there at many times in my life**

*When I first came to this country, I used my local library to learn English and to read books in my own language too.*

*When I had children, I used my library to nurture a love of reading which has seen them achieve highly at school. I also took them to story time to give me a break.*

*When I went to university I used my library for materials and to study in peace, which helped me achieve two MAs.*

*When I got depression I used my local library for information and as a place where I could be without anybody judging me.*

*Whenever I moved house I found my local library to make friends and discover information about my local area.*

*When I worked as a school librarian I sent all my students to the library to access online and print information that my school could not provide for them. Now I am a grandmother and take my granddaughter to my library all the time because I want her to become a reader.*

*Myself, my children and my students could not have achieved everything they have without our library.*

### **Outcome 3: Older and vulnerable residents are safe and supported with choices to live independently.**

LRA is a service for all and, as well as helping everyone who comes into our service points, there are also a number of outreach services to help combat social isolation and these continue to make a positive difference to customers.

One of our Home Library Service customers passed away; at the funeral service the customer's son mentioned how valuable the service was to his mother, and what great joy it gave to her when she was unable to get out the house.

A thank you from a customer who has used our Touch a New World service

*'I want to thank you for providing a tutor for me for my iPad. ....My memory is often faulty but Della (volunteer) understands. She is excellent. Also thank you for arranging for Sheila (volunteer) to deliver and collect library books .... I am more than pleased with all the help I receive from your library service.'*

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The focus on outcomes is a real positive development for LRA and one that we will continue to explore. The customer outcome stories above clearly demonstrate the positive difference that LRA services are having on the people of Kent of all ages every day.
- 6.2 Performance across the KPIs is on or close to target with the service continuing to focus on visits and satisfaction levels over the next part of the year. The key piece of work to define the future Ambitions for LRA is on track and will be key to ensure that the service adapts to meeting the needs of our communities both today not just and going forward

## **7. Recommendation**

**Recommendation:** The Cabinet Committee is asked to comment and note the progress LRA has made to date in 2017-18

## **8. Attachments**

Appendix 1- LRA performance report to date

## **9. Contact details**

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