

**GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE**

**Friday, 25th September, 2020**

**10.00 am**

**Online**





## AGENDA

### GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

Friday, 25 September 2020 at 10.00 am  
Online

Ask for: **Ann Hunter**  
Telephone: **03000 416287**

#### Membership (18)

Conservative (15): Mr M C Dance (Chairman), Mr N J Collor (Vice-Chairman),  
Mr A M Ridgers, Mr S Holden, Mrs R Binks, Mr A Booth,  
Mr A H T Bowles, Mr D L Brazier, Mr A Cook, Mr J A Kite, MBE,  
Mr G Lymer, Mr S C Manion, Mr D D Monk, Mr J Wright and  
Mr J P McInroy

Liberal Democrat (2): Mr I S Chittenden and Mr A J Hook

Labour (1) Mr D Farrell

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes  
To receive apologies for absence and notification of any substitutes present
- 3 Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda  
To receive any declarations of interest made by Members in relation to any matter on the agenda. Members are reminded to specify the agenda item number to which it refers and the nature of the interest being declared
- 4 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2020 (Pages 1 - 14)
- 5 Verbal updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director
- 6 Performance Dashboard (Pages 15 - 26)
- 7 20/00083 - Local Growth Fund Round 3b Third Party Scheme - East Malling  
Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone (Pages 27 - 42)

- 8 20/00086 - Investment of Getting Building Funding in KCC-delivered projects (Pages 43 - 56)
- 9 20/00096 - Kent County Council's participation in the Straits Committee (Pages 57 - 76)
- 10 Kent & Medway Economic Recovery Dashboard (Pages 77 - 78)
- 11 Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan (Pages 79 - 82)
- 12 Front-line Community Services in context of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Recovery (Pages 83 - 94)
- 13 No Use Empty (NUE) - Update (Pages 95 - 110)
- 14 2019/20 Equality and Diversity Review of Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate (Pages 111 - 120)
- 15 Decisions taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings (Pages 121 - 122)
- 16 Work Programme 2020/21 (Pages 123 - 128)

### **EXEMPT ITEMS**

*(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)*

Benjamin Watts  
General Counsel  
03000 416814

**Thursday, 17 September 2020**

*Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.*

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES  
CABINET COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held virtually on Microsoft Teams on Friday, 3 July 2020.

PRESENT: Mr M C Dance (Chairman), Mr N J Collor (Vice-Chairman), Mr S Holden, Mrs R Binks, Mr A Booth, Mr A H T Bowles, Mr D L Brazier, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr A Cook, Mr D Farrell, Mr A J Hook, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr G Lymer, Mr S C Manion, Mr J Wright and Mr J P McInroy

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE and Mr M Whiting

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Ross Gill (Associate Director of SQW), Mrs S Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement), Matt Hyland (Executive Project Co-ordinator – East Kent Opportunities LLP), Rachel Kennard (Chief Analyst, Strategic Commissioning – Performance & Analytics), Mr J Pearson (Service Improvement Programme Manager), Dafydd Pugh (Project Manager), Martyn Riley (Programme Manager, Business Investment), Mr D Smith (Director of Economic Development), Mrs A Hunter (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and Miss G Little (Democratic Services Officer)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

**221. Membership**

*(Item 2)*

The Committee noted that Mr Hook has replaced Mr Daley as a Member of the Committee.

**222. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item 3)*

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr A Ridgers.

**223. Protocols for Virtual Meetings**

*(Item 4)*

It was RESOLVED that in order to facilitate the smooth working of its virtual meetings, the Committee agreed to adopt the Protocols for Virtual Meetings.

**224. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda**

*(Item 5)*

There had been no declarations of interest received.

## **225. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020**

*(Item 6)*

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020 are a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

## **226. Verbal updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director**

*(Item 7)*

1. Mr M Hill, OBE (Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) provided an update to Members on the response of Community Services to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the following:

### **(a) Libraries, Registration and Archives**

This service continued to work to the specific government unlocking timetable and had fully engaged corporate support from Health and Safety, Infrastructure and Communications. To date they had successfully:

- Restarted the home library service,
- Restarted record management service,
- Restarted face to face birth registrations on 17<sup>th</sup> June (which had a significant backlog; and
- Restarted notice of marriage appointments

The next step of the re-opening phase required a careful and programmed approach to ensure the health and safety of staff and public. This was due to start July with a basic offer comprising of a select and collect system for books and one hour of pre-booked IT access. The planned sequence of reopening to customers was as follows:

- From Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July KCC would open 12 libraries, one in each district with opening hours to the public from 10:00am to 4:00pm Monday to Saturday. The detailed list of libraries to be opened was included in the briefing note that Mr Hill sent to Members earlier in the week.
- In August, subject to confirmation and based on initial opening experience, KCC intended to open a further 12 libraries, again one in each district.
- Finally, in September, KCC hoped to open another handful of libraries to complete all its tier one and tier two libraries. Depending on the ability to staff buildings and the Council's reopening policy, KCC would then look at opening additional libraries.

Risk assessments had been completed for all the services that were operating or proposed to operate in the near future and had been

completed with the support of Health and Safety and Infrastructure. The appropriate PPE was in place.

Plans had also been put in place to support the potential return of the Archive Search Room at the Kent History and Library Centre in August. Mr Hill confirmed that the planned approach to Libraries was in-line with many local authorities who were taking a phased approach to reopening.

(b) **Wedding Ceremonies**

Wedding ceremonies were due to commence from 4<sup>th</sup> July in accordance with government guidelines. The maximum number of people able to attend a ceremony was 30 and this figure included staff, photographers etc. Due to social distancing measures, space limitations had been applied to all KCC venues.

(c) **Public Protection Group**

The Public Protection Group's alerts and messages to protect Kent residents and business from Covid scams successfully achieved a reach of over 3 million between 17<sup>th</sup> March and 8<sup>th</sup> June. On 16<sup>th</sup> June, Public Protection hosted a live on-line session to answer questions from businesses on reopening trading safely and had scheduled a further live session at 1.00 pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> July which was aimed specifically at the tourism and hospitality sector.

(d) **Community Wardens**

Community Wardens continued to work across the county and had supported 3,631 vulnerable people with food, prescriptions, advice and welfare support since the start of lockdown. They had also been working alongside local colleagues helping to ensure that the town centres and shops could safely reopen. They continued to respond to emergencies and had recently been involved in the Eastchurch landslide cliff collapse.

(e) **The Emergency Planning Team**

The Emergency Planning Team had arranged the donation, storage, quality assurance and distribution of over 100,000 items of PPE to support infection control. This generous gifting of much-needed equipment by local businesses, academic institutions and KCC staff was fundamental to ensuring that appropriate PPE was available to support KCC staff and care providers (including care homes) - especially when conventional supply chains were at their most challenged in late March and April.

(f) **Trading Standards**

Since the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, Trading Standards had focused on dealing with Covid related issues and received 2,200 referrals of which 630 required action. These ranged from businesses overcharging for their goods, scammers selling fake goods, sanitiser safety concerns, social distancing complaints, fake PPE and prohibited shops trading.

As part of the World Customs Union activity to stop unsafe and counterfeit PPE putting users and patients at risk, Trading Standards had worked with the UK Border Force and the National Crime Agency to stop the importation of large quantities of illegal surgical masks , respirators and protective suits and the successful detention of over 130,000 illegal facemasks concealing £1 million pounds worth of cocaine. They had also established a referral system to offer support to care homes.

(g) **Kent Sport**

Kent Sport had successfully supported sports organisations to attract £750,000 of funding from the Sport England Community Emergency Fund and had provided 42 everyday active small grants. Sport England has also recently awarded Kent Sport £110,000 to support organisations that worked with vulnerable people. One example is the Young Lives Foundation which supported the most vulnerable young people in the County.

(h) **Kent School Games**

KCC were unable to hold its flagship Kent School Games this year. However, two schemes; My Active Rainbow and My Active Life had been developed as an alternative option to the Games. This provided young people with the opportunity to work through a series of challenges and gain rewards including Kent School Games Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals.

(i) **Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Explore Kent**

During the lockdown there had been a significant increase in people wishing to get out into the countryside to visit KCC's Country Parks and use the extensive PROW network. The Explore Kent website had experienced a significant spike for people looking for information and record engagements on their social media platform. Mr Hill actively encouraged everyone to make use of the excellent service.

Explore Kent was also working with the PRoW service to access government funding to promote safe travel and route improvements. All KCC's Country Parks were busy, often with full car parks and were running a popular take away offer from the cafes.

(j) **Kent's Creative Economy**

The creative sector had been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and Kent experienced the sudden and complete shutdown of all spaces for public performance with rehearsal spaces, studios and workshops closed. Kent's creative economy continued to rely heavily on tourism, particularly the night-time economy and festivals sector, all of which were temporarily redundant. In response to the crisis, the KCC Culture and Economy team lead a series of roundtable discussions with over 100 sector professionals. Information gathered from the sessions helped to inform KCC's plan for renewal and resilience and was also used to inform the Arts Council

England and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) in order to access emergency funding. KCC also refocused the arts investment fund to provide immediate support to struggling businesses and continued to work with the Arts Council as part of their national initiative to distribute 4,000 'Let's Create' packs containing art and craft materials to primary and secondary age children across the county. The service is currently working with the Kent Cultural Transformation Board to look at opportunities and innovations to support economic and social renewal of the creative sector in Kent.

2. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) provided an update on the following:

(a) Mr Whiting thanked the staff and officers at KCC for their continued hard work and their ability to provide an excellent service during the pandemic.

(b) **The National Institute of Agricultural Botany**

The National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB) had received £18million from the government's Strength in Places Fund which formed part of the £33million investment programme for innovative projects and emerging technologies that would help to drive economic growth in the UK.

(c) **Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme**

KCC continued to make the case to government for an increased number of workers to be included within the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) and continued to support the Pick for Britain campaign launched by the National Farmers Union (NFU).

(d) **Kent Film Unit**

Mr Whiting informed Members that 20 projects had been cancelled as a result of Covid with a consequential loss of £2.5million, however, officers had undertaken a significant amount of work to ensure that KCC was in the best possible position to progress with projects as restrictions around Covid were lifted.

3. The Cabinet Members responded to comments and questions as follows:

(a) Mr Hill responded to a request to reopen libraries in the eastern part of Swale and within the Faversham, Canterbury area and confirmed that in line with Government guidelines, KCC would only be reopening one library within each district in the first tranche. A review of the geographical spread of libraries would take place as further libraries were reopened.

- (b) Mr Hill confirmed that the public toilets within KCC's country parks had reopened when the public car parks had reopened.
- (c) In response to the backlog of birth registrations, Mr Hill confirmed that 12 locations had reopened and anticipated that the backlog would reduce within a 4 to 6-week period.

4. It was RESOLVED that the update be noted, with thanks.

## **227. Decision Summary Report**

*(Item 8)*

- 1. The Chairman introduced the report which provided a summary of the decisions taken or in progress by the Cabinet Member for Community & Regulatory Services and Cabinet Member for Economic Development during the temporary suspension of Cabinet Committee meetings during the COVID crisis.
- 2. It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **228. Performance Dashboard - Q4 2019/20**

*(Item 9)*

*Rachel Kennard (Chief Analyst, Strategic Commissioning – Performance & Analytics) was in attendance for this item.*

- 1. Ms Kennard introduced the report which showed the progress made against targets set for Key Performance indicators (KPIs) up to the end of March 2020. Several services were impacted by Coronavirus at the end of the quarter, which affected both performance and data availability of some indicators. Ms Kennard drew members attention to the typographical error on page 21 of the agenda pack and clarified that two of the KPIs were below target but did achieve floor standard (amber) and four did not achieve the floor standard (red). In conclusion, Mrs Kennard confirmed that fifteen of the nineteen had performed above the floor target and thirteen had performed at the level required.
- 2. It was RESOLVED that the performance report be noted.

## **229. 20/00063 - Reinvestment of Growing Places Fund**

*(Item 10)*

*David Smith (Director of Economic Development) was in attendance for this item.*

- 1. Mr Smith introduced the report that summarised the process adopted by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), to award capital

from the Growing Places Fund to new projects which would help unlock economic growth in local areas; and provided details of the Kent and Medway bids that SELEP had prioritised for investment.

2. The officer responded to comments and questions as follows:

(a) Mr Smith confirmed that Kent County Council (KCC) would be responsible for the repayment of the loan to the SELEP, plus any interest charge incurred as a penalty for late repayment. However, Mr Smith verified that KCC had no previous experience in dealing with such a matter to date and this was primarily due to the extensive management of each project.

(b) Mr Smith verified that the proposal for the Swanley Town Centre project did not need to be resubmitted. The method adopted by the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership was to prioritise those projects which were affordable and already at the delivery stage of the process. As the Growing Places Fund received repayments from loans upon completion of projects, this could potentially be reinvested into new or awaited projects in the pipeline.

(c) In response to concerns regarding the potential need to reassess the list of prioritised projects in light of Covid, Mr Smith assured the Committee that whilst the list was subject to change there was no justification to date to support this. However, the government had invited Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to put forward the projects which were urgently required in light of the pandemic and an extensive list of projects was submitted by the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership to SELEP. As a result, the government had announced that additional funding would be made available to each LEP across the country (including SELEP) which would fund those projects considered to be urgent as a result of the Covid pandemic.

(d) In response to queries relating to the No Use Empty (NUE) Scheme around the percentage of houses which had been prioritised for Social Housing as opposed to Affordable Housing, Mr Smith, in agreement with Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) agreed to bring a report back to the Committee to cover Members questions.

3. It was RESOLVED that the proposed decision (20/00063) to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, to:

(a) Note the projects in Kent that the South East Local Enterprise Partnership has prioritised to receive Growing Places Funding (GPF),

- (b) Act as the accountable body for projects within Kent County Council's geographical boundaries that receive GPF funding approval from the SELEP Accountability Board; and
- (c) Delegate to the Section 151 Officer the authority to sign on KCC's behalf a loan agreement or equivalent, where this is required to draw down funds following business case approval,

be endorsed.

### **230. Manston Business Park Thanet - East Kent Opportunities LLP**

*(Item 11)*

*David Smith (Director of Economic Development) and Matt Hyland (Executive Project Coordinator – East Kent Opportunities LLP Project Coordinator) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Smith and Mr Hyland introduced the report that set out the key successes and objectives of the East Kent Opportunities Limited Liability Partnership (EKO LLP), in particular the work that continued to be undertaken by EKO LLP to facilitate and deliver the maximum employment creation opportunities through the landholdings at Manston Business Park.
2. Mr Hyland responded to comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mr Hyland confirmed that since the start of the joint venture in 2008, there had been fourteen Property Solicitors. There was a predominant issue around the continuity and retention of Solicitors, however, Mr Hyland noted that the positive aspect of this was the EKO LLPs ability to succession plan and continually refresh enthusiasm into the project.
  - (b) Mr Hyland addressed concerns relating to the potential difficulties that could arise from a family owned business and recognised that with most family run businesses a generational change could have a number of implications. However, having undergone a recent restructure the Mayweathers' had announced their intention to purchase the two remaining option parcels in an attempt to finish the Maple Business Park.
  - (c) Members questioned whether the acquisition of office space was still viable as many businesses had started to operate from home a result of Covid. Mr Hyland confirmed that a majority of Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that had expressed an interest to operate from Manston were those who worked within the construction industry and required large storage or workshop facilities. A majority of SME Directors who owned companies often purchased commercial property

through the investment of personal funds. The tax advantage of this, was that they could then rent that property out to another company.

3. It was RESOLVED that the report which featured the current economic and regeneration objectives achieved by EKO LLP, be noted.

### **231. Economic Recovery Plan**

*(Item 12)*

*David Smith (Director of Economic Development) and Ross Gill (Associate Director of SQW) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Smith introduced the report which set out the draft Economic Recovery Plan and the work which was underway to develop specific actions, both for local delivery and for the engagement with Government as the Kent and Medway economy continued to emerge from the Covid-19 crisis. These included the development of potential initiatives (capital and revenue) that could support the delivery of the Economic Recovery Plan and which would help to place Kent in a strong position to respond to funding opportunities and requests from Government. A presentation by Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Economic Development), Mr Gill (Associate Director of SQW) and Mr Smith accompanied the report and set out the actions to support business and jobs, the economic impact of Covid-19 and analysis of data; and the next steps in taking forward the medium-term plan for renewal and resilience. Mr Smith informed Members that a Strategy was in the process of being developed, however, the focus of work was around identifying a list of priorities and key actions to help support the businesses and people of Kent who had been impacted by Covid-19.
2. The officer and Cabinet Member for Economic Development responded to comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) In response to comments raised around the ability to adapt to change and the flexibility of the Economic Recovery Plan to respond to the frequent changes that were being brought forward by Government, Mr Smith informed the Committee that the Plan had a lifespan of twelve to eighteen months. Therefore, whilst the current set of actions responded to the current needs of the county, there was scope to refresh the document over its lifespan to identify new measures. Mr Smith informed Members that three new loan schemes were due to be launched, and again, throughout the duration of those schemes, Kent County Council would be able to draw upon the lessons learned around what companies required loans, what support would be required from KCC to support those companies; and then use that information to adapt the Economic Recovery Plan.

- (b) Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) and Mr Smith responded to comments concerning Brexit and confirmed that KCC had moved into the planning phase of the UK's transition away from the EU. Mr Smith noted that whilst the Economic Recovery Plan was not part of the Brexit planning, through extensive joined up working with businesses and public authorities across England, both plans were complimentary in how they addressed the need for KCC to invest its resources into the people and businesses of Kent to ensure economic growth.
- (c) Mr Whiting assured Members that engagement with district councils and partner agencies had been crucial in the development of the Economic Recovery Plan and this was apparent at the Leaders webinar which welcomed over 400 participants, all of whom had supported and continued to play a significant part in the development and implementation of the Kent and Medway Economic Recovery Plan. Mrs Cooper supplemented this by reassuring Members that work was also being done in conjunction with colleagues in Children's, Young People and Education, those within the freight industry and those within customs which included the potential development of a customs training programme due to increased staff demand.
- (d) Mrs Cooper informed Members that the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) did not have a separate Economic Recovery Plan. The KRF was a multi-agency gathering established to bring together planning and response to emergencies. The Economic Recovery Plan for Kent and Medway as set out within the report was led by KCC.
- (e) Mr Smith confirmed that the details of the Infrastructure plan were yet to be finalised, upon which, they would be submitted to Government. Mr Whiting was persistent in his message to Ministers in explaining the needs of the Kent and Medway economy and pursued Government support.
- (f) In response to concerns relating to young people in Kent and prospective job opportunities, Mr Smith endorsed the need for apprenticeship programmes and assured Members that KCC was incorporating the economic and social needs of young people within the Economic Recovery Plan. Mr Smith reminded Members that there were various strands of work going into the Plan, all of which would help to ensure a robust, and futureproof, economic framework for both Kent and Medway.
- (g) Mr Smith assured the Committee that communication, confidence and trust with officers, Members and partner agencies was key, and this formed one of the five channels of activity within the Economic

Recovery Plan. Mr Smith acknowledged that there would be periods of trial and error in terms of the media platforms used and how information was disseminated throughout the county but affirmed to Members that KCC listened and engaged with all groups.

3. Mr Whiting thanked the Committee for their comments and provided assurance that all Members would continue to be listened to and receive regular updates as plans progressed.
4. It was RESOLVED that, the actions to be prioritised in supporting economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, be endorsed.

### **232. Tourism sector reopening**

*(Item 13)*

*David Smith (Director of Economic Development) and Dafydd Pugh (Project Manager) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Smith and Mr Pugh introduced the report which provided an overview of the progress towards the reopening of the tourism sector and the work underway to support those preparations in Kent. They highlighted the extensive efforts of Visit Kent and drew attention to discussions that have taken place under the Straits Committee with neighbouring regions on the content to explore future joint initiatives as borders reopen to visitors.
2. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) expressed his thanks to Deirdre Wells, OBE (Chief Executive Officer, Visit Kent) and to Mr Pugh for their extensive work and for supporting the meetings of the Straits Committee which has underpinned the success and support that KCC and its counterparts had received from Government and the British Embassy.
3. The officers responded to comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) In response to whether Kent had benefited from higher staycation enquiries compared to other parts of the country, the officers confirmed that it was too early to answer as the data would not be available, however, this information would be available to report at a future Committee.
  - (b) Mr Smith confirmed that the communication and marketing programme that had been launched by Visit Kent was modelled on the Countryside Code (*statutory guidance issued by Government from natural England and the Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs*).
4. It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**233. The Kent and Medway Growth Hub Covid-19 Business Support Helpline**  
(Item 14)

*David Smith (Director of Economic Development) and Martyn Riley (Programme Manager, Business Investment) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Smith introduced the report which provided an overview of the enhanced growth hub service which had been designed, implemented and delivered specifically as a response to the Covid-19 crisis. Mr Smith commended the Chamber of Commerce for the exemplary speed in which it had managed to establish such a successful helpline and said that it was an excellent example of a contributory brokerage model between Kent County Council and the local authorities within Kent and Medway which had been recognised through the positive response from businesses. Mr Riley highlighted the key points within the report, particularly in relation to the achievements of the helpline with approval ratings at 96%; and also, the next steps which included the use of intelligence to identify what businesses required for them to return to growth.
2. The officers responded to comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) In response to comments concerning the number of enquiries received from businesses in Swale, Mr Smith clarified that Swale Borough Council had established its own helpline service to support local business which had proven to be incredibly successful and therefore fewer calls were being filtered through the hub that was managed by the Chamber of Commerce.
3. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) expressed his thanks to Mr Smith and Mr Riley for the accelerated speed in which they managed to establish the helpline and commended the overall success of the scheme, including the work that had been carried out with partners across Kent.
4. It was RESOLVED that the contents of the report and the observed support provided to Kent Business in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, be noted.

**234. Work Programme 2020-21**  
(Item 15)

1. Mr Smith informed Members that district visits would be rescheduled in the future in accordance with government guidelines.

2. It was RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of the following items:
  - (a) A report on the No Use Empty Scheme containing information around affordable and social housing
  - (b) An update report on the tourism sector

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From: Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services  
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

Subject: Performance Dashboard

Classification: Unrestricted

**Summary:** The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard shows the progress of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and activity indicators.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA) service has adopted a temporary set of indicators to reflect current delivery of services and have not set targets. Similarly, the Environment, Planning and Enforcement Division have not set targets so far this year. Economic Development have set targets against indicators, which have been RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rated accordingly.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Part of the role of Cabinet Committees is to review the performance of those functions of the Council that fall within its remit. To support this role, Performance Dashboards are regularly reported to each Cabinet Committee throughout the year, and this is the first report for the 2020/21 financial year.

## 2. Performance Dashboard

- 2.1. The current Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance dashboard provides results up to the end of June 2020 and is attached in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2020/21. The Dashboard also includes a range of activity indicators which help give context to the KPIs.
- 2.3. For those with targets, KPIs are presented with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) alerts to show progress. Details of how the alerts are generated are outlined in the Guidance Notes, included with the Dashboard in Appendix 1.

## 3. Economic Development

- 3.1. The number of properties brought back to use through No Use Empty (NUE) over the last 12 months was 519, which is ahead of target; 6,566 in total have been

brought back to use since the start of the project in 2005. In this quarter, £1.97m was secured from developers of new housing sites for capital investment, which was 100% of the amount sought. The target for the number of businesses assisted via the Kent and Medway Growth Hub was exceeded,

- 3.2 The Kent & Medway Growth Hub, provided an enhanced service provision, during the period of Qtr1 20-21. The service consisted of non-financial business support to Kent businesses adversely impacted by the COVID19 emergency. The key focus of the enhanced service covered three areas:
- Assist businesses to access the Governments support measures as soon as they are available;
  - Gather local intelligence on where further support is needed; and
  - Provide information, advice and reassurance to businesses struggling to cope.

The target number of calls were set at 8,000 and achievement against target can be reported for Quarter 1 as 8,260.

#### **4. Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)**

- 4.1. All of Kent's libraries, register offices and the archive at Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone were closed for the duration of Quarter 1 following the government's implementation of lockdown.
- 4.2. All Registration services were suspended except death registrations, which moved to a telephone service from 1<sup>st</sup> April. Libraries and Archive staff continued to work behind the scenes, carrying out Home Library customer befriending calls, promoting and developing digital offers, answering customer enquiries and working to improve access to archive collections.
- 4.3. The library online joining facility was amended so that customers could join via the website and immediately access e-Material; eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines and eNewspapers. This facility along with e-offers was actively promoted on the website and social media, and from 20<sup>th</sup> April through a countywide radio advertising campaign.
- 4.4. The 'Ask a Kent Librarian' Service continued to respond to enquiries via telephone and email, helping many customers to access e-Material. A programme of virtual events and activities was developed, including a reading group and Summer Reading Challenge.
- 4.5. Library staff were in regular contact with over 250 vulnerable customers, offering companionship and support with signposting to organisations such as Kent Together. This service was extended to Postal Loan and Mobile Library customers.
- 4.6. As key workers, the Registration teams across the county continued to work from 14 LRA buildings. The demand for death registration appointments was much higher than usual due to the pandemic with 5,350 deaths registered, an increase of 40% on the same period in 2019-20. By moving to a telephone registration approach, working as a county team and focussing those staff only on Death registrations the demand was dealt with effectively and compassionately.

- 4.7. Following the government's easing of lockdown restrictions in May, plans for recovery were set in motion with the re-establishment of face to face birth appointments in 12 libraries from 17<sup>th</sup> June, as well as the recommencement of notice of marriage appointments. By the end of June 2020, the backlog of 4,000 birth registrations had already been reduced by 1,608 and was cleared by the end of August.
- 4.8. Archive staff were able to work from the Kent History and Library Centre to complete the required checks on collections and answer outstanding enquiries. Library staff also began to enter buildings on a phased basis, keeping to social distancing guidelines, to prepare for the 'Select and Collect' physical book service and public PC offer which launched at 12 libraries on 13th July. We have since opened another 12 in September with a browse and borrow book offer and public PCs.
- 4.9. There were no physical book issues during Quarter 1, but due to rigorous promotion and an upsurge in usage as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown, e-Issues increased by 108% to 389,712. The Libraries Customer Satisfaction Survey, which included a section on customer satisfaction with services during the lockdown, indicated that 94% of library customers were satisfied with the service. Surveys of other parts of the service will take place later in 2020/21.

## **5. Environment, Planning and Enforcement**

- 5.1. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of people reporting Public Rights of Way (PROW) faults online; this coincides with an increase in the number of faults reported which is up by over a third compared to Quarter 1 last year, indicative of the greater use of the PROW network during lockdown. There was also more than a three-fold increase in the number of businesses supported by Trading Standards and the Sustainable Business Team in Quarter 1 compared to last year.
- 5.2. Some indicators experienced significant decreases compared to the same period last year including, income generated (down 45%), investment secured (down 62%), and as very little volunteering was possible, volunteer hours contributing to EPE services were down 92%.

### **6. Recommendation(s):**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report.

## **7. Contact details**

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Relevant Director: Barbara Cooper

Corporate Director  
Growth, Environment and Transport  
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# **Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard**

## **Financial Year 2020/21**

### **Results up to end of June 2020**

Page 19

**Produced by Strategic Commissioning - Performance & Analytics**

**Publication Date: September 2020**

## Guidance Notes

### RAG RATINGS

Results in this report show either quarterly data or Year to Date (YTD) values.

<b>GREEN</b>	Target has been achieved
<b>AMBER</b>	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
<b>RED</b>	Floor Standard* has not been achieved

\*Floor Standards are the minimum performance expected and if not achieved must result in management action

### Activity Indicators

Activity Indicators representing demand levels are also included in the report. They are not given a RAG rating; instead they are compared with previous year or tracked within an expected range represented by Upper and Lower Thresholds. The Alert provided for Activity Indicators is whether they are in expected range or not. Results can either be in expected range (**Yes**) or they could be **Above** or **Below**.

## Key Performance Indicators Summary

Economic Development (ED)	RAG
ED05 : Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty	GREEN
ED08 : Developer contributions secured against total contributions sought	GREEN
ED10 : Businesses assisted via Kent and Medway Growth Hub contract	GREEN
ED11 : Businesses assisted through intensive support provided via the Growth Hub contract	GREEN

Environment, Planning and Enforcement (EPE)	RAG
DT14 : Percentage of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) faults reported online	No targets set due to Coronavirus
EPE04 : Number of businesses supported by EPE services	
EPE15 : Income generated by EPE charged for services	
EPE16 : Median number of days to resolve priority faults on Public Rights of Way	
EPE18 : Investment secured by EPE services (Grants / EU funding)	
EPE19 : Number of volunteer hours contributing to delivery of EPE services	

Libraries, Registrations and Archives (LRA)	RAG
LRA06 : Customer satisfaction with Registration Services	No targets set due to Coronavirus
LRA12 : Customer satisfaction with libraries	
LRA13 : Customer satisfaction with archives	
LRA19 : Customer satisfaction with Libraries Direct Services	
LRA20 : Customer satisfaction with PCs and Wi-Fi	
LRA15 : Number of customers attending events in libraries and archives	
LRA17 : Number of volunteer hours adding extra value to the LRA service	
LRA21 : Percentage of registration appointments available within statutory time targets	
LRA22: Percentage of total issues as e-issues	

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Economic Development	David Smith	Mike Whiting

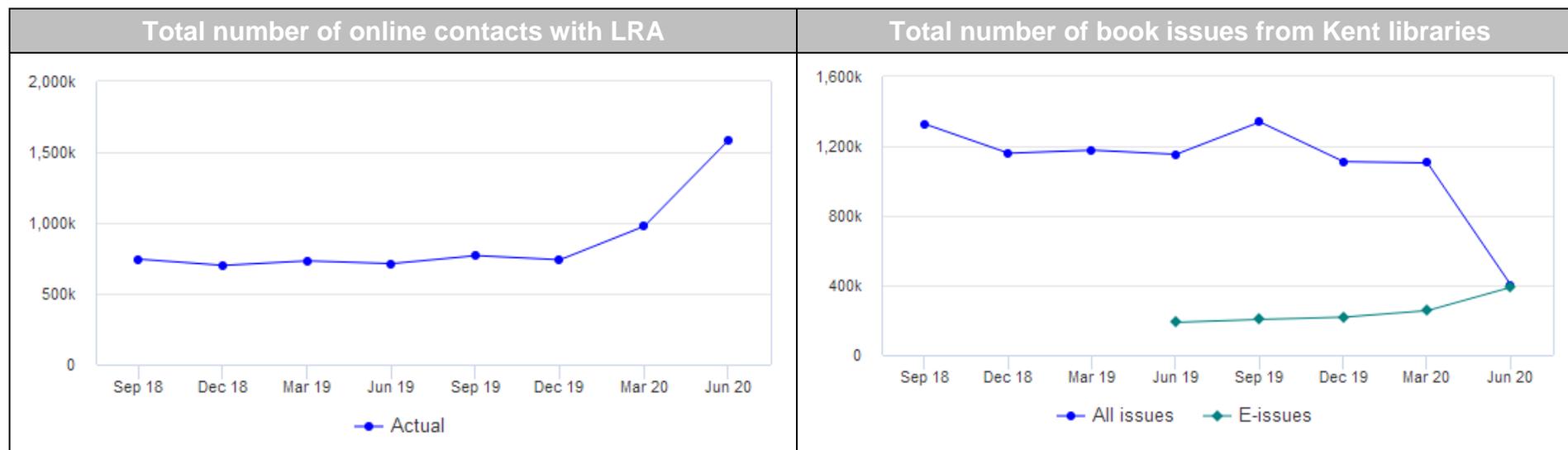
Ref	Performance Indicators	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
ED05	Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (rolling 12 months)	464	465	511	551	519	GREEN	400	350
ED08	Developer contributions secured against total contributions sought	100%	100%	82%	99%	100%	GREEN	93%	85%
ED10	Businesses assisted via Kent and Medway Growth Hub contract	648	373	743	1,634	552	GREEN	262	225
ED11	Businesses assisted through intensive support provided via the Growth Hub contract	36	60	58	10	26	GREEN	25	20

ED11 – To be counted in this indicator, businesses need to have received more than 12 hours of support.

Service Area	Head of Service	Cabinet Member
Libraries, Registrations and Archives (LRA)	James Pearson	Mike Hill

Ref	Activity Indicators	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21
LRA02	Total number of books issued (includes audio- and e-books) (000s)	1,153	1,339	1,111	1,104	<b>400</b>
LRA03	Total number of audio and e-books issued (000s)	188	204	218	255	<b>390</b>
LRA04	Number of online contacts to Libraries and Registration services (000s)	639	695	662	913	<b>1,471</b>
LRA24	Number of online contacts for Kent archives (000s)	74	74	78	64	<b>104</b>

Page 23



Service Area	Head of Service	Cabinet Member
Libraries, Registrations and Archives	James Pearson	Mike Hill

**Key Performance Indicators** during the COVID-19 Lockdown Period

Indicator	Definition	Q1 20/21
Number of Online Joiners	The number of customers who join online to access online and e-resource services	4,991
Percentage Increase in e-Issues	% increase of e-Issues as a comparison with same reporting period in previous year	108%
Number of items issued from Prison Libraries	Total number of books issued to wings + individuals where the library can be opened and staffed	4,517
Total reach on Libraries Social Media	Total reach on Facebook (central and district pages) + New Twitter followers	1,222,800
Number of virtual activity sessions	Number of events on Facebook e.g. Storytime	27
Number of engagements with virtual activity sessions	Number of post clicks + number of reactions for 4 weeks from date of post	10,783
Number of calls to Libraries Direct Customers	Number of engagements with customers from Home Library Service, Postal Loan and Mobile Library Services	3,418
Number of Ask a Kent Librarian enquiries answered	Total number of enquiries answered via Email, Govmetric, Out of Kent chat, Qidget chat, Social Media and Kent chat	2,138
Number of death registrations	Number of death registrations for Kent and Bexley completed during reporting period	5,350
Percentage increase in death registrations	% increase of death registrations as a comparison with same reporting period in previous year	40%
Total reach on Archives Social Media	Total reach on Facebook + New Twitter followers	87,770
Number of Archives enquiries answered	Total number of enquiries answered via Email, Social Media and online	655

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Environment, Planning and Enforcement	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Mike Hill

Ref	Performance Indicators	Q1 19/20	Q2 19/20	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q1 Target 19/20	Q1 Floor 19/20
DT14	Percentage of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) faults reported online	68%	70%	76%	65%	<b>88%</b>	85%	75%
EPE04	Number of businesses supported by Trading Standards and the Sustainable Business Team	116	143	163	121	<b>388</b>	105	94
EPE15	Income generated by EPE charged for services (£000s)	845	1435	1026	1,394	<b>450</b>	740	680
EPE16	Median number of days to resolve priority faults on public rights of way network (rolling 12-month figure)	21	16	15	14	<b>13</b>	24	28
EPE18	Investment secured by EPE services (Grants / EU funding) (£000s)	791	661	1,388	2,165	<b>303</b>	700	633
EPE19	Number of volunteer hours contributing to delivery of EPE services	9,966	10,488	10,973	19,899	<b>847</b>	13,665	12,300

**Appendix 1**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Head of Service</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Environment, Planning and Enforcement</b>	<b>Stephanie Holt-Castle</b>	<b>Mike Hill</b>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Activity Indicators</b>	<b>Q1 20/21</b>
EPE02	Value of criminal activity investigated by Trading Standards	£84,880
EPE03	Value of items prevented from entering or removed from the market by Trading Standards	£6,274,016

From: **Mike Whiting - Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Barbara Cooper - Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport**

To: **Growth, Economic Development & Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020**

Decision No: **20/00083**

Subject: **Local Growth Fund Round 3b Third Party Scheme – East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper:** None

**Future Pathway of Paper:** For Cabinet Member Decision

**Electoral Division:** Malling Central

**Summary:** As the end of the Growth Deal (March 2021) approaches, a number of projects throughout the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) region have experienced difficulty with delivery and £33.396m of funding has been returned to SELEP for reallocation to projects which can demonstrate deliverability by March 2021. Through this process NIAB East malling Research successfully bid for £1.6m for the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone. As this scheme is being delivered by an external partner (NIAB East Malling Research), the County Council will transfer the LGF along with the associated spend and project management responsibilities on to the third party for the delivery of the scheme.

A legal agreement has been drafted between KCC and NIAB EMR which needs to be signed before the LGF can be drawn down and transferred to the delivery partners. This transfers the responsibilities for the project management of the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone to NIAB EMR, as set out in the Service Level Agreement between KCC and Essex County Council as the Accountable Body for SELEP.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked consider, endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, as shown at Appendix A, to agree to approve the progression, via KCC's Local Growth Fund arrangements, for the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone, allowing it to progress to the stages of development and delivery.

To facilitate this, to

- to confirm that KCC will act as the accountable body for the project;

- to enter into a Local Growth Fund (LGF) funding agreement; and
- to enter into legal agreements with the relevant third parties delivering the schemes to transfer the conditions of the LGF spend and project management to them; and
- to delegate authority to Corporate Director of Growth Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance, Strategic and Corporate Services to enter into relevant legal agreements and take other actions necessary to implement this decision

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In the Growth Deal announcements in July 2014 (Round One), January 2015 (Round Two) and February 2017 (Round Three), the Government allocated £570 million from the Local Growth Fund to capital projects across the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) area.
- 1.2 In total, through the three rounds, £128m Local Growth Fund was allocated towards the delivery of 25 Highways and Transportation projects and 6 non-transport projects in Kent.
- 1.3 As the end of the Growth Deal (March 2021) approaches, a number of projects throughout the SELEP region have experienced difficulty with delivery. This has resulted in £33.396m of funding being returned to SELEP for reallocation to projects that can deliver by the end of March 2021. Through this process, an allocation of £1.6m has been allocated to NIAB EMR for the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone.
- 1.4 Through the Service Level Agreement with Essex County Council as the Accountable Body for SELEP, Kent County Council is responsible for the programme management of all Local Growth Fund projects in Kent. There are, however, specific projects for which third party organisations are responsible for delivery.
- 1.5 The East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone is a third party LGF scheme which will be delivered by an external partner; NIAB East Malling Research (NIAB EMR).
- 1.6 This report provides an overview of the project and outlines the required decisions to allow the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone to progress.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 The scheme is fully externally funded with no implications to either the revenue or capital budgets for KCC.
- 2.2 The County Council supported NIAB EMR in developing a funding bid for Local Growth Fund (LGF) Round 3b and this has successfully secured an £1,683,600 contribution towards delivery of the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone project.

2.3 The match funding for the scheme is being provided by NIAB EMR as set out in the approved business case.

2.4 KCC costs in developing the legal agreement with NIAB EMR and administering the LGF will be recouped in full as set out in the Legal Agreement.

### **3. Policy Framework**

3.1 The scheme has a strong fit with all three objectives of 'Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020)'

3.2 The new infrastructure, services and high-tech plant growing facilities will generate additional research and development spend in the region, creating enhanced training and high-skilled employment opportunities. In addition, a total of 40 jobs will be safeguarded which will assist in Kent communities feeling the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life.

### **4. The Report**

4.1 The Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone at East Malling, would be the first step towards delivering the vision of a cutting-edge Innovation Campus for horticulture in Kent. This campus will secure the long-term delivery of world-class research, innovation and knowledge exchange for the UK horticultural industry. Accelerating investment at East Malling will ensure that NIAB EMR and its partners remain at the cutting edge of research and innovation and are able to secure future public and private sector funding. Access to the most advanced facilities is essential to attract and retain high-calibre staff, provide the 'know-how' that is needed by industry to deliver sustainable growth and productivity gains. It will also look to ensure that Kent and Medway remains a world-class leader in horticultural innovation and drives the sector to enhance the provision of fresh produce.

4.2 The County Council supported NIAB EMR in developing the funding bid for Local Growth Fund (LGF) Round 3b and this has successfully secured an £1,683,600 contribution towards the delivery of the Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone project. As part of the bidding process; NIAB EMR prepared a business case which demonstrated that the Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone will provide a high value for money solution to secure the long-term delivery of world-class research, innovation and knowledge exchange within the County.

4.3 Through the Service Level Agreement with Essex County Council as the Accountable Body for SELEP, Kent County Council is responsible for the programme management of all Local Growth Fund projects in Kent. Where projects are delivered by third parties; a legal agreement is prepared to transfer KCC's responsibilities as set out in the Service Level Agreement; on to the delivery partners.

4.4 A legal agreement has been drafted between KCC and NIAB EMR which will be signed before the LGF can be drawn down and transferred to the delivery partner for the delivery of the project. This agreement transfers the

responsibilities for the programme management of the Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone project to NIAB EMR.

4.5 NIAB EMR; as the delivery partner; is responsible for the production and ongoing review of an Equalities Impact Assessment for the project.

4.6 Through the decisions outlined above, any further decisions required to allow the scheme to proceed through to delivery will be taken by the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment & Transport under the Officer Scheme of Delegations, following prior consultation with the Cabinet Member.

## **5. Conclusions**

5.1 The Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone is an important scheme which has been prioritised for Growth Deal funding by both the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership and SELEP. The scheme, which is to be delivered by NIAB EMR and is fully externally funded, will look to secure the long-term delivery of world-class research, innovation and knowledge exchange for the UK horticultural industry. A legal agreement will be signed prior to the funding being transferred on to NIAB EMR.

## **6. Recommendation(s)**

### **Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked consider, endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, as shown at Appendix A, to agree to approve the progression, via KCC's Local Growth Fund arrangements, for the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone, allowing it to progress to the stages of development and delivery.

To facilitate this, to

- to confirm that KCC will act as the accountable body for the project;
- to enter into a Local Growth Fund (LGF) funding agreement; and
- to enter into legal agreements with the relevant third parties delivering the schemes to transfer the conditions of the LGF spend and project management to them; and
- to delegate authority to Corporate Director of Growth Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance, Strategic and Corporate Services to enter into relevant legal agreements and take other actions necessary to implement this decision

## **7. Background Documents**

Appendix A – The Proposed Record of Decision

Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix C - The approved business case for the Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone is available to view here:

<https://www.southeastlepp.com/app/uploads/2019/09/Full-Business-Case-Advanced-Technology-Horticulture-Zone-EMT-NIAB-EMR-03-June-2020.pdf>

## **8. Contact details**

Report Author

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Relevant Director:

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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development

**DECISION NO:**

20/00083

**For publication**

**Key decision: YES /~~NO~~**

**Subject Matter / Title of Decision**

Local Growth Fund Round 3b Third Party Scheme – East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone

**Decision:**

As Cabinet Member for Economic Development I approve the progression, via KCC's Local Growth Fund arrangements, for the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone, allowing it to progress to the stages of development and delivery.

To facilitate this, I agree:

- to confirm that KCC will act as the accountable body for the project;
- to enter into a Local Growth Fund (LGF) funding agreement; and
- to enter into legal agreements with the relevant third parties delivering the schemes to transfer the conditions of the LGF spend and project management to them

I also agree to delegate authority to Corporate Director of Growth Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance, Strategic and Corporate Services, to enter into relevant legal agreements and take other actions necessary to implement this decision.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

As the end of the Growth Deal (March 2021) approaches, a number of projects throughout the SELEP region have experienced difficulty with delivery; and to date £33.396m of funding has been returned to SELEP for reallocation to projects which have demonstrated deliverability by March 2021.

Through this process, an allocation has been made available for the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone. This scheme is being delivered by external partners (NIAB East Malling Research) and KCC will transfer the LGF on to the third party for the delivery of the scheme. The Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone is an important scheme which has been prioritised for Growth Deal funding by both the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership and SELEP. The scheme, which is to be delivered by NIAB EMR and is fully externally funded, will look to secure the long-term delivery of world-class research, innovation and knowledge exchange for the UK horticultural industry.

This decision will enable a legal agreement to be signed between the County Council and NIAB EMR. The legal agreement needs to be signed before the LGF can be drawn down and transferred to the delivery partners for the delivery of the project and it transfers the responsibilities for the programme management of the East Malling Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone to NIAB EMR.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

The proposal will be considered by the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee at its meeting on 25 September.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:** Page 33

**Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:**

.....  
signed

.....  
date

# KCC – Highways Transportation and Waste (HTW).

## Equality Analysis / Impact Assessment (EqIA)

### Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:

LGF Advanced Technologies Horticulture Zone NIAB EMR

### Brief description of policy, procedure, project or service

NIAB EMR in partnership with the East Malling Trust proposes to develop an Advanced Technology Horticultural Zone at East Malling, which would be the first step towards delivering the vision of a cutting-edge Innovation Campus for horticulture in Kent. This project will specifically provide the new infrastructure and see the construction of a state-of-the-art glasshouses supported by a green energy facility. The project will use advanced greenhouse designs which will host high-tech imaging, robotics, precision irrigation rigs, LED lighting and CO2 systems with the purpose of advancing horticultural agronomy in the region. This facility will allow an increased level of innovative research projects and best practice demonstrations to be delivered in a commercially relevant setting.

### Aims and Objectives

**Objective 1:** Unlock the East Malling Estate for future investment and development so that the Innovation Campus (including the planned Horticulture Zone) can be realised as the UKs focus of excellence for the horticultural sector.

**Objective 2:** Install the primary infrastructure to service the new Horticultural Zone in the immediate to long-term.

**Objective 3:** Construct the infrastructure to house the **energy facility** which in future will enable the deployment of low-carbon technologies. This will improve sustainability and reduce environmental impact in horticultural research and. innovation.

**Objective 4:** Construct new state-of-the-art plant growing facilities that will enable new technologies

### JUDGEMENT

Date Document Updated 17/09/2020

Set out below the implications you have found from your assessment for the relevant Protected Groups. If any negative impacts can be justified, please clearly explain why.

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken

I have found the Adverse Equality Impact Rating to be **Low**

# GET Document Control

## Revision History

Version	Date	Authors	Comment
V0.1	16/09/2020	Professor Mario Caccamo & Ross Newman	Completed by LGF grant applicant
V1 (this should be assigned to the version the Director signs off)	17/09/2020	Christopher Seamark	Checked by Local Growth Fund Programme Manager

## Document Sign-Off (this must be both the relevant Head of Service and the relevant Director)

### Attestation

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment. I agree with the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue
Simon Jones		Director	17/09/20
Tim Read		Service Head	17/09/20

Date Document Updated 17/09/2020

3

This document is available in other formats. Please contact [diversityinfo@Kent.gov.uk](mailto:diversityinfo@Kent.gov.uk) or telephone on 03000 415 762

## **Part 1 - Screening**

Regarding the decision, policy, procedure, project or service under consideration,

Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?

Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?

**Please note that** there is no justification for direct discrimination; and indirect discrimination will need to be justified according to the legal requirements

Protected Group	You <b>MUST</b> provide a brief commentary as to your findings, or this EqIA will be returned to you unsigned			High/Medium/Low Favourable Impact
	High Negative Impact	Medium Negative Impact	Low Negative Impact	
<b>Age</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.
<b>Disability</b>				Facility will be accessible. All health & safety guidelines followed and risk assessments in place.
<b>Sex</b>				Gender balance regularly monitored (66% female across the site)

<b>Gender identity/ Transgender</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.
<b>Race</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.
<b>Religion and Belief</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.
<b>Carer's Responsibilities</b>				Equal opportunity employment policies across NIAB group.

## **Part 2 - Full Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment**

**From the screening grid, identify the Protected Groups impacted**

**Information and Data used to carry out your assessment**

**Who have you involved consulted and engaged with?**

**Analysis**

**Adverse Impact,**

**Positive Impact:**

**JUDGEMENT**

### Part 3 - Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Resource implications


**Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan?**

**Next Steps**

From: Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

Subject: **Investment of Getting Building Funding in KCC-delivered projects**

Decision No: 20/00086

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: For decision by Leader of Council

Electoral Division: All

**Summary:**

On 10th June 2020, under the programme banner of Getting Building Funding the Government made a call to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) for shovel-ready schemes that were able to stimulate economic recovery and help mitigate the impact that COVID-19 has had on employment levels but also spend any allocation by March 2021. .

The SELEP Strategic Board confirmed seven Kent projects to be included within the £85m ask of Government. Three of these projects are to be delivered directly by Kent County Council and are covered by Decision 20/00085. Four projects are to be delivered by third-party promoters and are the subject of this report.

This key decision is therefore required to enable grant agreements to be entered into, so that additional Government funding may be secured for these third-party projects from the Getting Building Fund.

**Recommendation(s):** The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider, endorse or make recommendations to the Leader of the Council as shown at Appendix A, that the Leader of the Council agrees to:

Agree that the Getting Building Funding (GBF) will be used to support the third-party projects that the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Board prioritised to receive GBF at its board meeting on 16 July 2020.

Act as the accountable body for third-party projects within Kent's geographical boundaries that are selected by the SELEP to receive GBF grant funding.

Delegate to the Section 151 Officer the authority to sign on KCC's behalf a grant agreement or equivalent, where this is required to draw down funds following business case approval.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Getting Building Funding was announced by Government on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The funding is part of the Government’s plan to deliver upgrades to local infrastructure and boost skills and help fuel a green economic recovery by investing in shovel-ready housing and infrastructure projects, creating jobs and supporting economic recovery.
- 1.2 The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) confirmed seven projects within Kent which have been approved by Government for funding.

## 2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 Kent County Council must enter into a grant agreement with SELEP (via Essex County Council which is SELEP’s accountable body) for all schemes awarded GBF by SELEP within KCC’s administrative boundary. The grant agreements give Kent County Council the legal and financial responsibility for ensuring the proper use and administration of the funding in accordance with the grant agreement.
- 2.2 For third-party promoted schemes, KCC will need to make a back-to-back grant agreement with the project promoters, so they can draw down the SELEP capital grant for the amounts specified:

Project Title	GBF award	Project Promoter
First + Second Floors, Building 500, Discovery Park	£2,500,000	Discovery Park Ltd
The Meeting Point, Swanley	£1,490,000	Sevenoaks District Council
New Performing & Production Digital Arts Facility at North Kent College	£12,625,000	North Kent College
Romney Marsh Employment Hub	£3,536,466	Folkestone & Hythe District Council

- 2.2 The GBF capital grant funding is provided by the Government via SELEP. It is not KCC funding and can only be spent on these capital projects
- 2.3 The Government has specified that the GBF must be spent by 31 March 2022 or there is a potential that the funding will be clawed back. Appropriate project management oversight is being directed to these projects to minimise this risk.

## 3. Policy Framework

- 3.1 The GBF investment will help Kent County Council to deliver against its objectives within Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council’s Strategic Statement (2015-2020). Specifically, the capital grant investment will help deliver these outcomes:
  - Kent communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life.
  - Kent business growth is supported by having access to a well skilled local workforce with improved transport, broadband and necessary infrastructure.

- Kent County Council supports well planned housing growth so Kent residents can live in the home of their choice.

#### 4. The Report

- 4.1 On 10th June 2020, the Government made a call to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) for shovel-ready schemes that were able to spend in the next 18 months, to stimulate economic recovery and help mitigate the impact that COVID-19 has had on employment levels.
- 4.2 Consequently, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), via the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP), wrote to local stakeholders (including KCC) asking for their shovel-ready scheme suggestions. All forthcoming proposals were then submitted to Government, via SELEP, on 18th June 2020. The accumulated total of these SELEP suggestions equalled £573m.
- 4.3 On 3rd July 2020, the Government informed the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) that it would receive £85million of 'Getting Building Fund' (GBF) to deliver 'shovel-ready' schemes. GBF is capital grant funding.
- 4.4 The Government asked SELEP to prioritise its original scheme suggestions for inclusion within the £85m funding envelope. The SELEP Strategic Board met on 16th July 2020 (join these 2 paras) and confirmed seven Kent projects to be included within the £85m ask of Government. Three of these projects are to be delivered by directly by Kent County Council and are covered by Decision 20/00085. Four projects are to be delivered by third-party promoters. These third-party schemes are:

Project Title	GBF award	Project description
First + Second Floors, Building 500, Discovery Park	£2,500,000	The refurbishment of the ground floor of Building 500 to create world-class research and development space. 50,000 sq.ft. of individual biology and chemistry laboratories together with associated write-up(correct wording?) space, and new plant-room equipment will be delivered to attract the companies to this world-class and world-leading science park.
The Meeting Point, Swanley	£1,490,000	Provision of a new high-quality, sustainable, mixed use development at a key gateway to Swanley town centre, which will set high standards and help kick-start urban renewal essential. The project will fund the creation of a business hub co-working space of 250 square metres and the delivery of 17 new quality homes.
New Performing & Production Digital Arts	£12,625,000	Construction of a new two-storey 2,826 square metre, state of the art,

Facility at North Kent College		performing and production digital arts facility within North Kent College's Dartford campus, to replace old, dilapidated and historic accommodation that is unfit for modern education purposes and very expensive to maintain.
Romney Marsh Employment Hub	£3,536,466	Construction of a business centre and will create up to 700 jobs over ten years by bringing forward some six hectares of land for employment uses in the Romney Marsh area.

- 4.6 Business cases will be presented to the SELEP Accountability Board for their approval of the funding award. Each project must also produce an Equalities Impact Assessment A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required, as personal data is not included in the grant agreements or project business cases.
- 4.7 Subject to the necessary approvals being granted, SELEP will require Kent County Council to enter into a grant agreement with Essex County Council (which is SELEP's accountable body) for all schemes awarded GBF by SELEP within KCC's administrative boundary. The grant agreements give Kent County Council the legal and financial responsibility for ensuring the proper use and administration of the funding in accordance with the terms and conditions. A back-to-back grant agreement between Kent County Council and the third-party project promoter would then be signed.
- 4.8 If Kent County Council were to choose to not enter into a grant agreement for the GBF projects selected by the SELEP Strategic Board, the GBF funding could be either (i) retained by central government or (ii) reallocated to other projects by the SELEP Strategic Board not necessarily within Kent.

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This key decision is required to enable grant agreements to be entered into so that additional Government funding may be secured for these projects. Due to the terms and conditions of the Government's Getting Building Fund, this funding can only be spent on these specific projects.

## 6. Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider, endorse or make recommendations to the Leader of the Council as shown at Appendix A, that the Leader of the Council agrees to:

Agree that the Getting Building Funding (GBF) will be used to support the third-party projects that the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Board prioritised to receive GBF at its board meeting on 16 July 2020.

Act as the accountable body for third-party projects within Kent's geographical boundaries that are selected by the SELEP to receive GBF grant funding.

Delegate to the Section 151 Officer the authority to sign on KCC's behalf a grant agreement or equivalent, where this is required to draw down funds following business case approval.

**Appendices and background documents:**

- Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision
- EqlA

**Report Author**

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Kent and Medway Economic Partnership  
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## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TAKEN BY**

**Roger Gough**

**Leader of the Council**

**DECISION NO:**

**20/00086**

**For publication Yes**

**Key decision\***

Yes

**Subject:** Investment of Getting Building Funding in third-party projects

**Decision:**

As Leader of the Council I agree to:

Agree that the Getting Building Funding (GBF) will be used to support the third-party projects that the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Board prioritised to receive GBF at its board meeting on 16 July 2020.

Act as the accountable body for third-party projects within Kent's geographical boundaries that are selected by the SELEP to receive GBF grant funding.

Delegate to the Section 151 Officer the authority to sign on KCC's behalf a grant agreement or equivalent, where this is required to draw down funds following business case approval.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

Getting Building Funding was announced by Government on 10th June 2020. The funding is part of the Government's plan to deliver upgrades to local infrastructure and boost skills and help fuel a green economic recovery by investing in shovel-ready housing and infrastructure projects, creating jobs and supporting economic recovery.

This key decision is required to enable grant agreements to be entered into so that additional Government funding may be secured for these projects. Due to the terms and conditions of the Government's Getting Building Fund, this funding can only be spent on these specific projects.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:****Any alternatives considered:**

If Kent County Council were to choose to not enter into a grant agreement for the GBF projects selected by the SELEP Strategic Board, the GBF funding could be either (i) retained by central government or (ii) reallocated to other projects by the SELEP Strategic Board.

**Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:**

.....  
signed .....

.....  
date .....

Name:

**Kent County Council  
Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA)- Draft**

**Directorate/ Service:** Growth, Economy and Transport/ Economic Development

**Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:** Kent County Council's decision to endorse and act as the accountable body for projects within Kent County Council's geographical boundaries that receive Growing Places Fund (GPF) approval from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Accountability Board.

**Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer:** Sarah Nurden

**Version:** 1 – Initial Screening

**Author:** Theresa Warford

**Pathway of Equality Analysis:** Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 17 July 2020.

**Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.**

**Context**

The Growing Places Fund (GPF) was established by the Government in 2011 to promote economic growth, create jobs and build houses in England. The funding was distributed to local enterprise partnerships (LEPs)<sup>1</sup> to allocate to local projects accordingly to investment criteria set by the LEP. GPF is a revolving capital loan scheme – with repayments reinvested in new local projects.

SELEP has now received £12m in repayments from existing GPF schemes, which is now available to reallocate to new projects. On 12 June, the SELEP Accountability Board considered full business case applications for new schemes which met its reinvestment criteria. Five Kent schemes were awarded funding.

**Aims and Objectives**

Local Enterprise Partnerships bring together local partners (namely local businesses, local authorities, universities, and further education colleges) in the pursuit of economic growth. Kent County Council has been a partner in the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) since its inception in 2011.

**Summary of equality impact**

This EqIA is for KCC's proposed decision to endorse and act as the accountable body for projects within Kent County Council's geographical boundaries that receive Growing Places Fund (GPF) approval from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Accountability Board.

Kent County Council has been a member of SELEP since its inception in 2011. As a member KCC has been able to access competitive funding schemes to prioritise its strategic aims within regional and national agendas, and influence strategy formation.

Individual schemes go through an assessment process including a full business case which in turn includes an EqIA as part of the assessment.

As this decision is to endorse and adopt the individual schemes that have been awarded funding, this EqIA screening has considered the outcomes of the individual scheme EqIA assessments undertaken as part of the formal application and assessment process.

**Adverse Equality Impact Rating** **Low**

**Attestation**

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning Kent County Council's proposed decision to endorse and act as the accountable body for projects within Kent County Council's geographical boundaries that receive Growing Places Fund (GPF) approval from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Accountability Board.

**Head of Service**

Signed: [redacted] Name: [redacted]

Job Title: [redacted] Date: [redacted]

**DMT Member**

Signed: [redacted]

Name: David Smith

Job Title: Director, Economic Development Date: [redacted]

Page 53

## Part 1 Screening

Protected Group	Please provide a <b>brief</b> commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact	Medium negative impact	Low negative Impact	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
<b>Age</b>	None	None	None	The individual schemes will help deliver the outcomes of KCC's strategic objectives to promote affordable and accessible housing and transport connections to enable access for all ages to housing and employment opportunities.
<b>Disability</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Sex</b>	None	None	None	None.
<b>Gender identity/ Transgender</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Race</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Carer's Responsibilities</b>	None	None	None	None

## **Part 2**

### **Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment**

#### **Protected groups**

From the initial screening, it is not anticipated that any protected characteristics will be negatively impacted by KCC's decision to endorse and act as accountable body to SELEP GPF approved schemes.

#### **Information and Data used to carry out your assessment**

This is an overarching decision that will allow KCC to enter into a third-party agreement to help unlock £12m of GPF to invest in capital schemes across Kent to support housing and employment growth. Data analysis will be included as part of the scheme business case.

#### **Who have you involved consulted and engaged?**

As part of the funding award each scheme will need to provide a full business case supported by data analysis and demonstrate robust consultation with directly affected communities and key stakeholders.

#### **Analysis**

The delivery of schemes will have a positive impact for all Kent residents, by increasing choice and opportunities to access a range of housing and access to improved transport infrastructure will increase accessibility to employment and other key services such as health whilst growing a sustainable economy.

#### **Adverse Impact**

After completing the initial screening grid, it indicated that the decision will not have a significant negative impact on any of the protected characteristics. Individual schemes that are delivered will be subject to an individual Equalities Impact Assessment which will be reviewed as the schemes are taken forward for delivery to ensure that no protected characteristics are adversely impacted.

#### **Positive Impact**

The aims and objectives of SELEP will enable planned housing growth and transport infrastructure that will benefit all Kent residents.

### **JUDGEMENT**

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken

**Internal Action Required**

**YES/NO**



**From: Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development**  
**Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport**

**To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020**

**Subject: Kent County Council's participation in the Straits Committee**

Non-Key decision: 20/00096

Classification: **Unrestricted**

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

**Future Pathway of Paper: For Cabinet Member decision**

**Electoral Division:** Countywide

**Summary:** This report provides an overview of the participation of Kent County Council in the Straits Committee. This is a new, voluntary partnership between Kent County Council and neighbouring Belgian, Dutch and French local authorities to pursue lasting good neighbourly relations and create opportunities for mutual benefit for businesses, residents, local stakeholders and communities.

The report sets out the decision requirement to confirm Kent County Council's membership of the Straits Committee. It provides background to the development of the Straits Committee, the priorities going forward and the arrangements being developed to support joint initiatives between the participating areas. Initial priorities include the development of a strategy for the Straits Committee; the hosting of a Straits conference in Kent; the setting up of joint working groups in specific policy areas; and the setting up of a small project support scheme.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the proposed decision, as attached at appendix A, to:

Confirm the participation of Kent County Council in the Straits Committee

Approve funding of £100,000 from reserves for activities connected to the Straits Committee. These will include support to joint initiatives on economic development, tackling climate change, supporting young people and any initiatives in other policy areas as agreed within the Straits Committee; the development of a strategy for the Straits Committee; the hosting of a Straits conference in Kent; and the setting up of a small project support scheme.

Agree delegated authority for management of that funding to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

## **1. The Straits Committee: Introduction and decision requirement**

- 1.1 The Straits Committee is a new, voluntary partnership between Kent County Council and neighbouring Belgian, Dutch and French local authorities bordering the Dover Straits and the Channel-North Sea area. The aim is to initiate a new, flexible and efficient way of working together to create opportunities for mutual benefit and pursue lasting good neighbourly relations.
- 1.2 Following the advice of the General Counsel and with the approval of the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Economic Development signed a Memorandum of Understanding in February 2020 for the creation of the Straits Committee. While this does not place any legal requirements on Kent County Council, the principle of KCC's involvement in the Straits Committee should be confirmed by an Executive Decision by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development. This will show that Kent County Council's participation is in line with its own governance. It will also show that it intends to abide by any arrangements concluded for the effective functioning of the Straits Committee between signatory authorities.
- 1.3 Kent County Council's participation in the Straits Committee will lead to spend activity. The Executive Decision confirms funding approval and the relevant delegation of authority. This report sets out where budget will be deployed.

## **2. Background to the creation of the Straits Committee**

- 2.1 Kent County Council has had longstanding relations, underpinned by memoranda of understanding, with the neighbouring continental local authorities of the Hauts-de-France region (France); the Département of Pas-de-Calais (France); and the Belgian Province of West Flanders. These relationships have led to many joint initiatives over time in areas such as trade, tourism, education, social care, transport and the environment, and these initiatives have often been supported by cross-border funding mechanisms.
- 2.2 Following the UK's decision to leave the European Union, a series of discussions between Kent County Council, its continental neighbours and other near neighbouring authorities, took place from 2018 to 2020. These meetings underlined the strong, shared commitment to continuing cross-Channel local-to-local cooperation where it may be of mutual benefit. They also recognised that, as the framework under which cooperation had developed would change after the United Kingdom left the European Union, cross-Channel relationships needed to evolve to reflect the changing circumstances.
- 2.3 Kent was encouraged by the UK diplomatic service to formalise a new relationship with its neighbours and, as a result, Kent County Council and the Département of Pas-de-Calais received a small Foreign and Commonwealth Office grant in 2019 to develop a proposal for member-led, cross-border

Committee. Neighbouring authorities from France, Belgium and the Netherlands subsequently agreed to join the initiative at a meeting chaired by the Leader at County Hall in October 2019.

- 2.4 On 5th February 2020, the Straits Committee was launched with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the headquarters of the Département of Pas-de-Calais in Arras, France. The signatory authorities entered into an arrangement to develop a shared, forward-looking vision for the cross-border Straits area. This included giving priority to joint work on economic development and fluidity of trade; climate change and clean growth; and supporting young people.

### **3. Straits Committee working arrangements**

- 3.1 The Straits Committee intends to provide a flexible, member-led framework under which relations may be developed between neighbouring cross-border areas. Summarised below are the working arrangements reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding and elaborated on by the terms of reference agreed for its “Executive Committee”. These two documents are appended to this report.
- 3.2 The signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding are the Départements of Nord and of Pas de Calais (France); the Provinces of East and West Flanders (Belgium); the Province of Zeeland (The Netherlands); and Kent County Council. The Hauts-de-France region, while not a formal signatory, takes part as an observer.
- 3.3 The Straits Committee’s central component is a cross-authority working group of local elected members known as the “Executive Committee”. Each authority has designated a cabinet member to sit on this Committee: Kent County Council’s representative is the Cabinet Member for Economic Development.
- 3.4 Each authority may bring before this “Executive Committee” challenges and opportunities where they feel there may be a tangible benefit from working together. The Executive Committee, scheduled to meet up to four times a year, will then consider what the authorities can do within their respective responsibilities to advance the issues under consideration. The Committee members aim to make conclusions and recommendations by consensus.
- 3.5 The elected members on the Executive Committee are supported by designated officers in each signatory authority. These officers will prepare for meetings for the Executive Committee and follow up agreed action points between the elected members. Two officers within Economic Development provide the Kent secretariat, coordinating closely as and where required with external bodies in Kent and internally with KCC divisions.
- 3.6 The Memorandum of Understanding creating the Straits Committee also commits the signatories to holding an annual public conference that will be open widely to stakeholders from across the Straits area. This will look at opportunities for the area and act as a forum for creating new relations and partnerships. The members intend to hold the first conference in 2021.

- 3.7 The Straits Committee does not have delegated authority. The working arrangements are entered into voluntarily and, as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding, each participating authority must comply with its own governance in taking part in the Straits Committee.
- 3.8 The signatory authorities intend to offer a clear, open process for possible enlargement once work to agree a shared vision and strategy has been completed. The Province of South Holland (The Netherlands) and Essex County Council have both expressed an interest in the Committee.

#### **4. Priorities for the Straits Committee**

- 4.1 The Executive Committee was inaugurated in March and met again in July, in a format combining virtual and physical participation, to set the direction for joint working. We set out below the main activities of work and the implications for resourcing.
- 4.2 **The development of a shared vision and strategy:** This is a short piece of work to develop a shared vision that sets out clearly and concisely the purpose and intentions of the Committee to internal and external audiences, including prospective new members. The document should act as an advocacy tool for the Straits Committee to gain support from higher levels of government for continued investment in joint working.
- 4.3 The production of the strategy is being overseen by the Province of West Flanders with the support of all Straits partners. Work should be completed in early 2021.
- 4.4 **The creation of a small project support initiative:** The Straits Committee authorities have agreed to work together to set up a small project support initiative. The aim is to help local organisations work with partners in neighbouring Straits areas on projects that promote and strengthen good-neighbourly relations and deliver tangible benefits. The scheme proposal, which is set out in more detail in the annex, is intended to have a joint bidding and evaluation process. However, each participating Straits authority will be responsible for contracting and monitoring successful bidders in their area. We intend to model the Kent component on the well-established processes used in the monitoring and administration of the Combined Members' Grant Scheme.
- 4.5 The Straits authorities are working together to have this scheme in place for the beginning of 2021. Further details are provided in the annex.
- 4.6 **The setting up of cross-border working groups:** The members agreed to set up a series of cross-border working groups in specified areas where key stakeholders can come together and initiate ideas for joint working. As and when project initiatives emerge with strong business cases, the intention is to work together to see how these could be brought forward to delivery.
- 4.7 A first working group on tourism recovery was held in early June. This brought together destination management organisations from across the Straits area, including Visit Kent, to share best practice on preparing business for reopening and to discuss the potential for working together to promote each other's

markets. Further discussions between the destination management agencies are planned for September with a view to agreeing a joint programme in the Autumn.

- 4.8 A second working group on innovation is planned. This will look at ways to link up research strengths within the Straits area to encourage new cross-sectoral networks and partnerships to emerge. The Cabinet Member for Economic Development oversaw an informal consultation of key organisations involved in supporting innovation in Kent during the Summer. The priorities identified will now be analysed and fed into a proposal to be coordinated by the Province of West Flanders during the Autumn.
- 4.9 Further working groups are planned to focus on young people and climate change in the coming months. Several “bottom-up” project ideas involving young people and secondary schools working across borders are, however, already under development. These include a fully-funded, French international work placement scheme where Kent is helping Pas-de-Calais find new placement hosts in Kent; the establishment of the Hardelot Centre as Education Tourism Hub; and an annual festival celebrating the culture and history of France and England from ‘cave men’ to the present time. This will promote local artisans, museums historic sites, local producers, especially those who specialise in traditional gastronomy.
- 4.10 The organisation of a first annual Straits conference:** The Cabinet Member for Economic Development has put Kent forward to host the first annual Straits conference in 2021. This would bring stakeholders together from across the Straits area to debate challenges and opportunities for the Straits area and create new partnerships.
- 4.11 With the continuing uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, a flexible proposal will be brought forward in the Autumn to allow for the delivery of this conference under different scenarios and in different formats. These scenarios will include different hybrid options of virtual and face-to-face interactions. We will also continue to explore the possibility of a full face-to-face conference should the health situation and removal of travel restrictions allow this to be considered.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Kent County Council will make £100,000 available from reserves to support activities connected to the Straits Committee.

## **6. Legal implications**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising for Kent County Council from the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding to create the Straits Committee.

## **7. Equalities implications**

- 7.1 An initial screening of Kent’s participation in the Straits Committee has evaluated the planned activities as having low or no impact.

## **8. Other corporate implications**

- 8.1 Participation in the Straits Committee complements existing service and directorate-led initiatives where partnerships and projects with organisations in neighbouring European territories have been established to identify innovations that can be brought back into policy and service delivery.
- 8.2 During the development of the Straits concept, the views of Directorate Management Teams as to future priorities for cooperation were sought. The Straits Committee will continue to link positively with directorates and their services to provide a vehicle for enabling further cooperation where it may add value to existing initiatives.

### **Governance**

- 8.3 It is proposed that authority is delegated to the Director of Economic Development, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Economic Development to take appropriate actions to implement Kent's participation in the Straits Committee, including arrangements for the awarding of grant payments in line with the Growth Environment and Transport Directorate's Scheme of Delegation.

## **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1 This report has set out the background to Kent's membership of the Straits Committee, the initial priorities identified by the participating areas, and the arrangements made to support joint initiatives. As the framework governing relationships at a national level evolves, the Straits Committee provides a flexible and efficient way for Kent to work with its neighbouring continental local authorities. This will contribute to maintaining good neighbourly cross-Channel relations and creating opportunities for mutually beneficial outcomes.

## **10. Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the proposed decision, as attached at appendix A, to:

Confirm the participation of Kent County Council in the Straits Committee

Approve funding of £100,000 from reserves for activities connected to the Straits Committee. These will include support to joint initiatives on economic development, tackling climate change, supporting young people and any initiatives in other policy areas as agreed within the Straits Committee; the development of a strategy for the Straits Committee; the hosting of a Straits conference in Kent; and the setting up of a small project support scheme.

Agree delegated authority for management of that funding to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

**11. Background Documents**

11.1 The following background documents are can be accessed [here](#)

- 11.1.1 Memorandum of Understanding: Creation of the Straits Committee
- 11.1.2 Straits Committee: Executive Committee Terms of Reference
- 11.1.3 Straits Committee: Launch conference report 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
- 11.1.4 Straits Committee: Small project initiative explanatory note

**12. Contact details**

Report Authors: Dafydd Pugh & Myriam Caron Name and job title: Project manager (Brussels); European Partnerships Manager Telephone number: 03000 417157 Email address: <a href="mailto:dafydd.pugh@kent.gov.uk">dafydd.pugh@kent.gov.uk</a> ; <a href="mailto:myriam.caron@kent.gov.uk">myriam.caron@kent.gov.uk</a>	Relevant Director: David Smith Name and job title: Director of Economic Development Telephone number 03000 417176 Email address: David.smith2@kent.gov.uk
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## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

### DECISION TO TAKEN BY

**Mike Whiting**  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**

### DECISION NO:

**20/00096**

### For publication

### Key decision\*

No

**Subject:** Kent County Council's participation in the Straits Committee

### Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Economic Development I agree to::

Confirm the participation of Kent County Council in the Straits Committee;

Approve funding of £100,000 from reserves for activities connected to the Straits Committee. These will include support to joint initiatives on economic development, tackling climate change, supporting young people and any initiatives in other policy areas as agreed within the Straits Committee; the development of a strategy for the Straits Committee; the hosting of a Straits conference in Kent; and the setting up of a small project support scheme; and

Agree delegated authority for management of that funding to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

### Reason(s) for decision:

Kent County Council has longstanding memoranda of understanding with the French Hauts-de-France region, the Pas-de-Calais Département, and the Belgian Province of West Flanders. These relationships have led to many joint initiatives over time – often supported by cross-border funding mechanisms - in areas such as trade, tourism, education, social care, transport and the environment.

Over the last three years, meetings between Kent County Council, its continental partners and other continental authorities have shown a desire to continue local-to-local cooperation where it may be of mutual benefit. Kent was encouraged by the UK diplomatic service to formalise this into a new relationship and, on 5th February 2020, Kent County Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with neighbouring French, Belgian and Dutch local authorities to create the Straits Committee.

The Straits Committee is a new, voluntary partnership between Kent County Council and neighbouring Belgian, Dutch and French local authorities bordering the Dover Straits and the Channel-North Sea area. The aim is to initiate a new, flexible and efficient way of working together to create opportunities for mutual benefit and pursue lasting good neighbourly relations.

### Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposal is being considered by the Members of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

### Any alternatives considered:

- Do nothing: While the MOU does not place any legal requirements on Kent County Council

(KCC), the failure to adopt this decision would call into question KCC's ongoing involvement in the Straits Committee and ability to support joint initiatives, including related spend activity. This would lead to a weakening of relations with KCC's European partners at a time when the UK is seeking close ties and friendly cooperation with neighbouring countries.

- Adopt a decision approving Kent's involvement in the Straits Committee and associated budget (Preferred option): This would align KCC's participation in the Straits Committee with KCC's governance and provide a mechanism for supporting joint initiatives with spend activity.

**Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:**

.....  
.....  
signed

.....  
.....  
date

Name:

**Kent County Council  
Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

**Directorate/ Service: Growth, Environment & Transport / Economic Development**

**Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:** Participation of KCC in the Straits Committee

**Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer:** Dafydd Pugh & Myriam Caron / David Smith, Director of Economic Development

**Version:** 1.0

**Author:** Dafydd Pugh

**Pathway of Equality Analysis:**

**Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.**

- **Context**

Kent County Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to take part in the Straits Committee, a new, voluntary partnership between Kent County Council and neighbouring Belgian, Dutch and French local authorities to pursue lasting good neighbourly relations and create opportunities for mutual benefit for businesses, residents, local stakeholders and communities.

- **Aims and Objectives**

The MOU commits the partners to develop a shared, forward-looking vision for the Straits area where cooperation may achieve tangible results. This may be in any area but the partners will pay particular attention to joint work on economic development and fluidity of trade, addressing climate change and clean growth, and supporting young people.

Planned activities include support to joint initiatives on economic development, tackling climate change, supporting young people and any initiatives in other policy areas as agreed within the Straits Committee; the hosting of a Straits conference in Kent; and the setting up of a small project support scheme.

- **Summary of equality impact**

**Adverse Equality Impact Rating Low**

**Attestation**

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning **Confirmation of the Participation of Kent County Council in The Straits Committee**. I agree with risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

**Head of Service**

Updated 17/09/2020

Signed:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

**DMT Member**

Signed:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

**Part 1 Screening**

**Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?**

**Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?**

Protected Group	Please provide a <u>brief</u> commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact EqlA	Medium negative impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
<b>Age</b>	None	None	Low:  <i>Small Project Initiative</i> Applicants to the small project initiative who may have difficulty with an online application may request a paper copy of documents	Low
<b>Disability</b>			Low:  <i>Small Project Initiative:</i> Applicants who may have difficulty with online forms will be offered the possibility to request a paper copy of documents or engage with the process by telephone.  <i>Events:</i> We will ensure that venues used for	Low

			public events in connection with the Straits Committee are fully accessible.	
<b>Sex</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Gender identity/ Transgender</b>	None	None	Low - We will ensure that any gender identity issues are managed sensitively (For example when handling personal data as part of an event)	Low
<b>Race</b>			Straits Committee events may involve the use of different modern European languages. Support will be provided for translation where required	
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	None	None	None	None
<b>Marriage and</b>	None	None	None	None

<b>Civil Partnerships</b>				
<b>Carer's Responsibilities</b>	None	None	None	None

**Part 2**

**Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment**

**Protected groups**

**Information and Data used to carry out your assessment**

**Who have you involved consulted and engaged?**

**Analysis**

**Adverse Impact,**

**Positive Impact:**

**JUDGEMENT**

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken
- **Adjust and continue** - adjust to remove barriers or better promote equality
- **Continue the policy** - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity. Set out the justifications: there is no justification for direct discrimination; and indirect discrimination will need to be justified according to the legal requirements.

Updated 17/09/2020

- **Stop and remove the policy** – policy shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination it must be stopped and removed or changed

**Internal Action Required YES/NO**

There is potential for adverse impact on particular groups and we have found scope to improve the proposal...

**Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan**

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications

Page 74

**Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan?**

Yes/No

Appendix

Please include relevant data sets

Please forward a final signed electronic copy and Word version to the Equality Team by emailing [diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk](mailto:diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk)

If the activity will be subject to a Cabinet decision, the EqlA must be submitted to committee services along with the relevant Cabinet report. Your EqlA should also be published .

The original signed hard copy and electronic copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.



From: Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

Subject: Kent & Medway Economic Recovery Dashboard

Classification: Unrestricted

**Summary:** The Kent & Medway Economic Recovery Dashboard was launched in August to support the Kent & Medway & Medway Renewal and Resistance Plan.

A presentation and demonstration of the Dashboard will be given to the Committee by Jeanette Forster, KCC's Senior Analyst Officer, County Statistics (Economy & Housing), Strategic Commissioning – Analytics.

**Recommendation:**

Members are asked to note the Dashboard.

## 1. Introduction and purpose

- 1.1 The Kent & Medway Economic Recovery Dashboard was launched in August to support the Kent & Medway Renewal and Resistance Plan.
- 1.2 Aimed at business, public and voluntary agencies, and developed by Kent County Council's Data Analytics team, the Economic Recovery Dashboard provides insight and understanding of how our local economy and business sectors are faring as we emerge from lockdown.
- 1.3 Data from the dashboard will also help us target and measure interventions as we work with partners across the county to deliver the Renewal and Resistance Plan and drive local economic recovery.

## 2. How to access the Dashboard

- 2.1 The Dashboard can be accessed freely at [www.kent.gov.uk/economicdashboard](http://www.kent.gov.uk/economicdashboard) and is updated fortnightly.
- 2.2 Updates are sent directly to anyone registering via [research@kent.gov.uk](mailto:research@kent.gov.uk).

## 3. Dashboard content and data

- 3.1 The Dashboard includes a range of economic indicators with dashboard data which can be interrogated by geographical area using simple drop-down boxes. Statistics are drawn from a range of authoritative sources at both national and county level. These include modelled estimates from the Office

of National Statistics (ONS)'s Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey with national figures disaggregated and applied to Kent and Medway.

- 3.2 The Dashboard also includes a unique and interactive “vulnerability index” which creates an economic vulnerability score for a sector or local geographical area comparing data against local economic indicators across England and allowing users to select the industrial sectors they wish to consider as the most vulnerable.
- 3.3 Finally, the Dashboard looks at the Government’s COVID-19 support schemes and the take up in Kent and Medway’s local authorities.

#### **4. Launch**

- 4.1 The Kent & Medway Economic Recovery Dashboard was officially launched on 14<sup>th</sup> August as part of KCC’s programme of announcements of measures supporting the delivery of the Renewal and Resistance Plan.
- 4.2 Since its launch to the media and business, the Economic Recovery Dashboard has become the most viewed document on the Facts & Figures pages of the kent.gov website.

<b>Recommendation:</b>
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Members are asked to note the Dashboard.
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#### **5. Contact details**

##### **Report Author and Relevant Director:**

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**From:** Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25th September 2020

**Subject:** Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:** This paper introduces the Kent and Medway Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan which was launched in August, and its accompanying Economic Impacts Evidence Base.

The Plan builds on earlier drafts of a proposed plan to tackle the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Cabinet Committee discussed the draft plan in July and the version now published incorporates the views of Members.

The Plan is focused on a positive view of the future, with the aim of establishing a more sustainable and resilient economy in the longer term.

The Plan is a Kent and Medway partnership document and it will be regularly reviewed to maintain its relevance and to ensure delivery of the appropriate actions

**Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is recommended to note the Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan and its Evidence Base, and Members are invited to provide comments to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the actions underway to take the Plan forward.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has already had a significant impact on the Kent economy. Nationally, output fell by around 19% between March and May, with sectors such as tourism and hospitality, retail and cultural industries especially badly hit. While the summer has seen a return to growth, this remains very fragile, especially given the possibility of a 'second wave'.
- 1.2 Within Kent and Medway, the claimant count increased by 115% between March and July – a much faster increase than in the last recession following the 2008 financial crash. It is widely expected that unemployment will rise substantially as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (the 'furlough scheme') unwinds and comes to an end.

1.3 In this context, there will be an important role for KCC and its partners in supporting the county's economy through the crisis. We will clearly need to work alongside and complement the extensive central Government response.

## **2. The Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan**

2.1 The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee considered the draft of the economic recovery plan on 3 July. There was a consensus that we should explain more clearly the vision for the type of economy that we wanted to see in Kent and Medway post Covid-19, ensuring that we "build back better". We were asked to set out plans for a "green recovery", contributing to the net zero carbon target. And we were asked to adopt a more positive outlook, with an emphasis on renewal rather than simply recovery. It was suggested that skills development should be a central part of the employment and labour market theme. And we were encouraged to focus on digital infrastructure in the context of home working and automation.

2.2 The "Kent and Medway Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan" was endorsed by Kent local authority Leaders and members of the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership and launched on 10 August, accompanied by an Economic Impacts Evidence Base report,

2.3 The focus of the Plan is on supporting businesses and jobs in the medium term based on three cross-cutting themes that should underpin all our activities in the 'recovery' phase: supporting long-term sustainability and resilience, higher productivity and better opportunities and fairer chances.

2.4 The Plan sets out five 'channels' of activity. These are:

### **Communications, confidence and trust:**

We will strengthen the relationships between economic development agencies, support providers and businesses to provide more integrated services, developing a stronger evidence base to guide our approach to renewal and resilience.

### **Open for business:**

Our hospitality, retail and cultural sectors have been amongst the worst hit during the pandemic. We will build confidence among visitors and residents, demonstrating that our county and our towns are 'open', within Government guidelines. Immediate actions include a new campaign to attract visitors from the South East to enjoy the county's hospitality, with a potential further campaign later in the year to drive bookings for 2021

### **Business - Supporting innovative and resilient businesses to drive**

**future growth:**

We will provide better co-ordinated business advice as the starting point for a more integrated and comprehensive business support offer. Immediate actions include the extension and further development of the Kent and Medway Growth Hub's support service and a further £6 million for the Kent and Medway Business Fund, offering loan support for firms with the appetite and capacity for growth.

We will also support those clusters of activity in which Kent and Medway has distinctive assets and capabilities, building our innovation infrastructure for the long term.

**People - Enabling people to access work and skills to reach their potential:**

We will work with central Government and with partners across Kent and Medway to address the pressing challenge of rising unemployment. We will establish an Employment Task Force as a time-limited, action-focused body to coordinate a Kent and Medway-wide response and take an active role in the labour market.

**Investment - Planning and investing now for a sustainable future:**

We will accelerate capital investment, where it will support a sustainable, lower-carbon recovery and will support local employment and supply chain growth, and we will seek to invest in energy efficiency and green infrastructure to support immediate employment and longer-term benefits.

- 2.5 Recognising the fast-moving nature of the crisis, the Plan is not intended to be a detailed action plan; instead, it sets out a framework for action which can evolve over time.

**3. Next steps**

- 3.1 The Plan has initiated some immediate actions, including:

- The creation of the Employment Task Force to galvanise local labour market action, especially in the context of the Kickstart scheme and the other employment measures announced by Government during the summer. The Task Force will be chaired by the Leader of Kent County Council and Cllr Rodney Chambers has agreed to be Deputy Chairman. The Task Force's first meeting will be on 1<sup>st</sup> October.
- Proposals for capital investment through the Government's 'Getting Building Fund', to bring forward projects that will deliver long-term economic benefit, but which are currently stalled. Funding to the value of £37 million has been identified for schemes in Kent and Medway, and we expect this to be confirmed later in the Autumn.
- Further support for business, through the relaunch of the Kent and Medway Business Fund which offers loans at a zero percent rate of

interest, and the extension of the Business Recovery Helpline operated by Kent and Medway Growth Hub.

**4. Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is recommended to note the Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan and its Evidence Base, and Members are invited to provide comments to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the actions underway to take the Plan forward.

**5. Background Documents**

Economic Renewal and Resilience Plans for Kent:

- Backing jobs & businesses: building a sustainable future plan
- Economic Impacts Evidence Base

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus/support-for-businesses/economic-renewal-and-resilience-plans-for-kent>.

**6. Contact details**

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From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

Barbara Cooper, Director of Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

Subject: Front-line Community Services in context of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Recovery

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All

**Summary:** This report presents an overview of the activity of front-line services relevant to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee and their ongoing service delivery in the context of COVID-19 ‘Recovery’ perhaps better described as COVID-19 ‘steady state’. This report reflects on the summer period and looks forward to the autumn period.

**Recommendation(s):**

**The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee** is asked to note this report.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 This Cabinet Committee received a detailed verbal presentation on the impact of COVID-19 and lock down across several front-line community services on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020. That verbal presentation also touched on early experiences of service delivery in the context of Recovery from a first spike. The Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services then provided a further detailed update as part of his verbal update to this Cabinet Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020.

1.2 COVID-19 continues to require services to work within both a Respond context and a Recovery context, with the possibility of a resumption of national or local lockdowns in some form for the autumn or winter 2020/2021.

**2. Community Wardens/Community Safety**

2.1 The Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) resumed meeting in July via MS Teams to ensure continued work on statutory partnership activity such as Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) project funding work. Several DHRs had been successfully progressed by Kent Community Safety Team in

the spring and dates to re-instate those that were initially postponed were agreed with partners. The Business as Usual engagement at district level Community Safety Partnership meetings has been maintained throughout.

- 2.2 The PCC recently agreed that the KCSP can use its 2020/21 CRG funding allocation to support a range of community safety projects as set out in a business case submitted earlier this year. However, whether all the projects can still be delivered as planned during 2020/21 may be impacted due to partner agencies having to deal with the pandemic. In addition, several projects which received funding in 2019/20 were also put on hold due to the pandemic. In-year changes to the business cases for both 2019/20 and 2020/21 are likely to be required, increasing the KCST workload in managing the project funding and ensuring it is used effectively.
- 2.3 Our wardens have been working closely with Districts/Boroughs as lockdown restrictions have eased and town centres have opened. The priority for reopening was to ensure clear public messaging around social distancing and navigating through town centres. There has also been demand in relation to increased gatherings, where anti-social behaviour and coastal area popularity has required wardens to provide extra visible presence in partnership with other agencies. As lockdown eased and the shielding programme ended, wardens have been able to move away from providing support for essential food and medical needs for vulnerable individuals. A return to BAU is underway, including responding to requests for welfare checks of potentially vulnerable adults referred in by the ASCH for example.
- 2.4 Looking towards the autumn, key KCST deliverables such as training and seminars provided for community safety partners are being adapted for digital/virtual delivery. This year the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) Conference is being developed with the Kent Resilience Forum around the topic of Community Resilience, and virtual delivery is planned.
- 2.5 This autumn, wardens will continue to adapt their approaches for supporting residents and communities whilst social distancing and restrictions on gatherings continue. Social isolation and loneliness have grown during the lockdown and will persist where residents remain cautious. Tackling this issue was already an objective for the service (and an associated Interreg funded project; Connected Communities) and will remain a priority. Unlike many others in the public, voluntary and community sector, with the notable exception of the NHS and Age Concern, KCWS has been able to expand its pool of volunteers during lockdown. Their activities have been restricted to sharing Public Protection social media messages, but this will broaden as KCWS capacity and social distancing restrictions allow.

### **3. Country Parks**

- 3.1 As has been previously reported to this committee, Country Parks have been open throughout the pandemic, and have been extremely busy since reopening the car parks in May after a six-week closure during the strictest period of lockdown. The summer period saw the major sites full on many days, and both

Kent Police and local district/borough councils supported the service to encourage and enforce responsible parking outside the parks.

- 3.2 The parks, as with all green spaces, experienced a large increase in litter. This led to additional costs for litter collections and warden hours. Play areas reopened at the very end of July, with hand sanitiser available at each one and new, greatly enhanced cleaning regimes. Cafes were reopened for takeaway coffees/food at major sites.
- 3.3 In addition to littering, the team experienced many operational challenges caused by unexpected customer behaviour across all sites, including visitors swimming and tombstoning where it was not safe to do so. Both the Environment Agency and Kent Police again supported the service to promote safe customer behaviour.
- 3.4 Looking to the autumn, the service will be re-opening the cafés as sit in cafés (rather than takeaway) at Shorne and Lullingstone and is exploring options for the re-opening of the visitor centres. These plans are still in development but will be implemented in late September/October to move the country parks onto their next stage of the recovery in a COVID-secure manner. The service is also promoting an adjusted education offer to schools.
- 3.5 The team will also be attending to damaged pathways across the entirety of the estate, caused by visitors observing social distancing and therefore walking intensively along the edges of our trails and paths. The team is currently liaising with parkrun UK to determine whether the ever-popular parkrun will be able to recommence across several of our sites at the end of October

#### **4. Culture and Creative Economy**

- 4.1 The Culture and Creative Economy Team led a series of roundtable Zoom discussions throughout the summer with over 100 sector professionals. Chaired by industry leaders, the roundtables were started quickly at the start of lockdown and were welcomed by the sector in enabling creative businesses to share experiences and give each other critical support.
- 4.2 The South East Creatives programme, a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funded SELEP wide business support programme remained active over the summer providing business advice, mentoring and grant aid to the creative sector through local hubs. Specialist business advice was made available through the Kent & Medway COVID-19 Business Support Helpline, delivered via Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce.
- 4.3 Looking ahead to this autumn, the roundtable Zoom discussions are continuing with a focus on what the cultural sector needs to support businesses back into the marketplace. Part of this discussion will be about learning from our experiences and looking at different ways of delivering cultural services. Areas to be progressed include developing strong cultural hubs to make new use of buildings to reenergise town centres and developing a practical model for social

prescribing in response to the positive health effects which people in lockdown experienced through engagement with cultural activity.

- 4.4 With ongoing restrictions on social distancing, the sector continues to struggle albeit a small number of outdoor events are beginning to happen but with significantly reduced numbers. A combination of home-delivered resources supported by online tutorials is proving popular and distanced workshops in COVID-19 safe studios have taken place. Theatres are particularly hard hit with distancing meaning audience numbers are too low to make shows viable. Government has agreed to review this in November.

## **5. Explore Kent**

- 5.1 Over the summer, the Explore Kent (EK) service was able to continue with team members working effectively from home. Some commissions, which EK relies upon for its sustainability, were paused, including Old Chalk New Downs, Country Parks marketing and the Kent Downs AONB's Experience project.
- 5.2 Some commissions however operated as Business as Usual, or they were only minimally impeded, such as Walking and Cycling Town Cycle Maps production (in summer 2020 they were created for Dartford, Gravesham, and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils). Additional cycling and walking route guides were produced for a range of other clients.
- 5.3 EK also provided extensive summer digital content including staycation ideas for residents and visitors to make the most of Kent.
- 5.4 For the next few months, Explore Kent will continue to be engaged in promotion of active travel route improvements as part of the Emergency Active Travel Fund grant KCC received. Working with KCC PROW and Transport Innovation services, Explore Kent is also promoting safe active travel to workplaces and schools using a package of marketing.

## **6. Libraries, Registration and Archives**

- 6.1 During lockdown, LRA focused on its digital service delivery and contacting by phone those users of the home library service and postal loan service to ensure they had regular contact. The service has produced a fuller report on this period including positive feedback from customers who received services at this time. This is Included as Appendix !- LRA lockdown performance report.
- 6.2 Since the Cabinet Committee briefing, the following LRA service recovery steps have been progressed:
- Home library service and postal loan services have restarted deliveries
  - 12 libraries reopened from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July. These had an initial offer of:
    - Bookable Public PCs which in July saw 5,275 bookings with 2,141 hours of usage
    - Select and Collect book offer which provides users with access to the service without having to fully come inside a library as it is accepted

that this remains an uncertain time when many people are still nervous of indoor public spaces. Here, customers can request titles that are in that specific library to come and collect or can ask for the staff to select books for them based on their genre or author preferences. July saw 4,432 Select and Collect requests with 19,679 issues.

- A further 12 libraries reopened over the course of week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> August offering library browsing with social distancing measures in place.
- September also saw the return of the Mobile Library Service with some additional seven libraries reopening across the month,
- The Archive search room reopened for booked appointments on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- Registration services have made excellent progress on clearing backlogs caused by the lockdown and as of 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020:
  - Face to Face birth registrations resumed from 17<sup>th</sup> June and Kent had a backlog of over 4000 births. . By the end of June 2020, the backlog of 4,000 birth registrations had already been reduced by 1,608 and was cleared by the end of August.
  - Welcomed 202 new citizens by completing their Citizenship ceremony
  - Weddings and civil partnerships resumed from Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July and as of 17<sup>th</sup> August 347 ceremonies had been held

6.3 Staff have produced some very creative and professional films for customers to enjoy, from illustrated versions of picture books to special Archive local history talks.

6.4 In Registration the teams of Customer Service Officers, Ceremony Officers and Technical officers have worked to keep customers up to date with the latest information and government guidance. This has been most relevant for Registration ceremony teams who have worked to keep couples informed to enable them to make difficult choices about whether to progress or postpone their special day. Throughout the pandemic, Registration staff managed the difficult emotional task of speaking to those bereaved to register a death at the most difficult of times.

6.5 The service has worked in partnership with the KCC health and safety and infrastructure teams on making library, registration and archive buildings COVID-19 secure with screens, hand sanitizer, re-designed layouts, one-way flows and use of face coverings in place. Staff have also been deployed to roles introduced since lockdown began to lift, to facilitate social distancing, for example completing careful return of library stock ensuring that 72-hour quarantine for book returns is achieved.

## **7. Public Protection Communications and Trading Standards**

7.1 During the pandemic, GET's Public Protection Group developed and implemented a sophisticated social and digital media plan to help protect Kent residents and businesses. 'Between 17<sup>th</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> September our alerts and messages had a direct reach of 2,277,000, with a further 1,474,000 achieved through viral reach'.

- 7.2 Throughout the spring, summer and continuing into autumn the team successfully used social media together with direct mailing and a dedicated online page to warn and advise about fraudsters and the vast number of Covid-19 related scams targeting Kent residents; including NHS Test and Trace scams, fake masks and sanitisers, and Coronavirus cure and/or insurance scams. These channels also delivered significant promotion for the Kent Together helpline.
- 7.3 Public Protection has also ensured that Kent businesses have been proactively warned and advised about the growing number of business scams, including HMRC scams, PPE scams, and supply chain scams. Trading Standards supported Kent businesses with unlimited free business advice during the period and ran two well attended virtual workshops for Kent businesses. Membership fees for the KCC Trading Standards Checked fair trader scheme were also temporarily suspended until this autumn to specifically help the building and home maintenance sector.

## **8. Public Rights of Way**

- 8.1 There was a very significant increase in use of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network by the public at the start of lockdown. Automated counters measured at least a three- fold increase in use, one route measuring a 10-fold increase. This increase in use was evident throughout the network. This use gradually fell back during summer as alternative recreational opportunities opened, but levels of use across the summer remained high at three times pre-COVID levels.
- 8.2 Associated with this, the service also experienced an increased level of reported nuisance across the summer, particularly reports from landowners, and consequently undertook a project working with Explore Kent and Kent Downs AONB to deliver a video guide for new and inexperienced users of Public Rights of Way.
- 8.3 Early summer (May) saw the resumption of all the PRoW maintenance programmes. Vegetation clearance was the first area recommenced as it aids with social distancing. Remaining maintenance programmes restarted in early June. Programmes have been amended to ensure that schemes can be delivered in year.
- 8.4 Working with KCC Highways Team (KHT), the PRoW Service directly secured over £156, 000 from the Government's Emergency Active Travel Fund. The actual spend on PRoW will be greater as there are several PRoW improved as part of KHT led projects under the same scheme.
- 8.5 The Medway Towpath, an extremely valuable local route, unfortunately had to be closed temporarily this summer at Ringlestone Park, Widespread and advanced Ash Dieback in an adjacent woodland was identified, requiring the felling of 100+ ash trees by the landowner. This section has now re-opened There was additionally a partial collapse of the footpath and a section of the river wall. Investigations are progressing but a geological fault is thought to be

the cause of the issue. Repair is being phased over financial years to be met within current budgets. The Aylesford section of the river path remains closed pending the completion of the repairs .

- 8.6 Turning to this autumn, use of the Public Rights of Way network has remained high as COVID restrictions have eased. While it is anticipated that this use will decline further as winter approaches, it is still 300% up on pre-COVID, as identified above.
- 8.7 The long-term implication of greater use will be of greater wear and tear on PRow, effectively shortening the lifespan of some assets and creating a potential budget pressure.
- 8.8 One unexpected impact of the COVID-19 restrictions has been an increase in the receipt of Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 applications to record public rights of way. These applications are being worked through in accordance with national requirements, but it must be noted that there was an existing backlog pre-COVID.

## **9. Sport and Physical Activity**

- 9.1 Across the summer the Sport and Physical Activity (SPA) service delivered 'My Active Rainbow' and 'My Active Life' as an alternative option to the Kent School Games. My Active Rainbow was targeted at primary aged young people and was accessed through a variety of networks. Young people were encouraged to participate in a series of challenges and gained rewards including Kent School Games Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals. These challenges ran throughout the summer school holidays to encourage young people to remain active during the summer. As at the end of August, 8,259 individual challenges had been completed and 834 medals awarded.
- 9.2 The team reviewed and developed safeguarding materials to provide guidance regarding online delivery by a range of Kent sports clubs, which are almost wholly voluntary and community in nature. This was referenced as an example of good practice by Sport England to all Governing Bodies of Sport and funded partners. More recently additional safeguarding advice has been added to support clubs and organisations in relation to 'return to play'.
- 9.3 Boxing, fitness, hockey, basketball and handball all secured funding via Sport and Physical Activity to deliver virtual Satellite Clubs (these are where sports clubs deliver engagement usually on school grounds to engage young people within an environment, they feel confident)
- 9.4 The Service ran a virtual but proactive celebration of Volunteers' Week albeit stretched throughout June, linked to the fact that community sport is delivered in large part by voluntary and community sports clubs. The service's volunteer Facebook page saw a monthly increase of 5000% in people reached, a 14,000% increase in engagement and a 1,600% increase of page 'likes'.

- 9.5 500 My Active Rainbow packs were placed into culture packs that were distributed to vulnerable families, and similarly, working with Sports Directory UK, 50 boxes of sports equipment/items were distributed to vulnerable young people aged 16-21.
- 9.6 The financial impact on the leisure sector has been profound. To support the sector, by the end of August the Sport and Physical Activity service awarded Everyday Active Small Grants (Kent Trust for Youth Sport/Kent and Medway Active Partnership funding) to 69 successful applications. Additionally, there were 194 successful Kent sports clubs/organisations' applications to the Sport England Community Emergency Fund – receiving £757,503
- 9.7 Looking ahead to this autumn, Kent Sport was successful in securing Tackling Inequalities Funding – £110,000 to support organisations with significant financial need that work with deprived communities, Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups and disabled people/those with long-term health conditions. This is to try to halt the inequalities gap re physical activity and sport from widening further due to COVID-19. Additionally, a further £110,000 has been secured through a second tranche of funding, from Sport England, to further extend delivery across the County and engagement with underrepresented groups.
- 9.9 In addition, four virtual Kent School Games competitions have been created for roll out from September – in Dance, Rowing, Cheerleading, Sportshall Athletics.
- 9.10 The leisure sector faces an enormous challenge to recover from COVID, however, and this is explicitly recognised within the Kent and Medway Recovery Strategy Finance Cell's Action Plan. Many local leisure facilities remain closed amid real concerns for the financial viability for these local community facilities, especially in Kent where many facilities are run by local Leisure Trusts. There is still wariness from the public to return to leisure facilities. Additionally, many governing bodies for sport have furloughed staff and, in some cases, made regional/local development officer posts redundant.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 The costs and lost income directly attributable to COVID are captured by Corporate Finance. The costs captured for the services above (forecast to financial year end) are £3.5m, of which LRA accounts for £3.2m

## **11. Policy Framework**

- 11.1 The services above deliver 'Business as Usual' against a wide range of Policies. As can be seen from the narrative, all services have looked to negate any negative impact from COVID on existing established priorities but have simultaneously adapted to challenges and opportunities as the year has unfolded.

## **12. Equalities Impact Assessment**

12.1 Existing Business as Usual for these services is governed by a suite of Equality Impact Assessments. These largely cover the additional or revised activities described above. The need to complete Equality Impact Assessments was paused by KCC during the height of the pandemic but has now resumed. The requirement to observe the Equality Duty 2010 has been maintained by KCC throughout the year.

### **13. General Data Protection Regulation Considerations**

13.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not needed for this overarching narrative report

### **14. Conclusion**

14.1 The importance and value of these community services is demonstrated by the additional demands placed upon these services by members of the public at a time of considerable national disruption. These services are used by most of our residents, and feedback year after year identifies their value to our residents.

14.2 The services have sought to mitigate COVID's negative impacts and meet the surge in customer demand throughout lockdown and across the period covered by this report. Autumn and Winter will bring their own challenges, and all the services are currently preparing for a triple coincidence of COVID, Transition and Winter Preparedness (flu and seasonal weather risks)

14.3 The services have learned and adapted to every stage of the pandemic. It has been a significant step for staff and customers to return to face to face delivery of services and it has been key to build this up step by step building confidence of both staff and customers. This has guided a careful, measured and phased approach to Recovery, which will continue to evolve and reflect national and local conditions.

### **15. Recommendation(s)**

#### **Recommendation(s):**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note this report.

### **16. Contact details**

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Steve Rock – Head of Trading Services 03000 414137

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**Relevant Directors:**

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David Smith, Director Economic Development, 03000 417176



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From: Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member, Economic Development  
 Steve Grimshaw, Strategic Programme Manager Economic Development  
 David Smith, Director for Economic Development

To: Growth, Economic Development & Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

Subject: **No Use Empty (NUE) – Update**

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All

**Summary:** Kent County Council (KCC) launched the No Use Empty (NUE) initiative in 2005 in East Kent. Following the success of NUE, the initiative was rolled out across Kent in 2008/09 and is now delivered by KCC in partnership with all 12 districts and borough councils.

The primary aim of the initiative is to improve the physical urban environment in Kent by bringing empty properties back into use as quality housing through a range of interventions.

In addition to this, NUE is helping to deliver increased Council Tax receipts and Business Rates.

NUE operates a loan scheme providing short term secured loans registered as a first or second charge. On repayment of the loan, funds are recycled to the next project.

NUE previously reported to Cabinet Committee in March 2020.

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet Committee with a further update on the initiative, its performance to date, progress regarding Treasury Investment (£12m) and specifically NUE's involvement regarding social and affordable housing, all of which help contribute to accelerating the delivery of good quality housing in the County.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and comment on the NUE initiative and performance to date.

**1. Introduction**

1. 1. Kent County Council (KCC) launched its 'No Use Empty' (NUE) campaign in 2005 as part of its Public Sector Agreement (PSA2) targets, to examine better ways of delivering services, and particularly at working more effectively with district councils. The primary aim of the initiative is to improve the physical

urban environment in Kent by bringing empty properties (defined as empty for over 6 months) back into use as quality housing.

1. 2. The initiative originally focused on the following districts: Thanet, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe (Shepway) and Swale, as the research found most empty properties (over 3,000) were in these areas. As the project was very successful KCC expanded NUE to include all 12 Kent district councils in January 2008.
1. 3. NUE is now firmly established as the longest running and most effective empty property initiative in the country winning several national awards for partnership and regeneration.

## **2. Achievements**

- 2.1 There were 9,000 long-term empty properties in Kent when NUE was launched in 2005. As at 30 June 2020, NUE has returned 6,572 long-term empty properties back into use across the County to the decent home standard. Long term empty means those dwellings that have been unoccupied or substantially unfurnished for over six months.
- 2.2 Latest Council Tax records show there are a total of 5,340 long term vacant dwellings in Kent (Kent area). NUE on average is returning 500 long-term empty properties back into use (based over the last 10 years). For clarity this excludes Treasury investment activity which is focused on new builds.

## **3. Finance**

- 3.1 NUE operates a recycling loan fund providing working capital to help owners/small developers refurbish/convert empty homes or redundant commercial buildings to provide good quality residential accommodation.
- 3.2 To date, NUE has awarded £34.9m in short term secured loans and has levered in £32.3m from the public/private sectors, giving a total investment of £67.2m across Kent. All loans are subject to a risk assessment and secured as a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> charge and offered typically over a 2-3-year period. The loans are offered interest free to first time applicants.
- 3.3 The investment has funded 325 individual projects creating 1,101 homes with 776 of these classified as new homes (change in numbers). These new homes will generate new Council Tax receipts worth approximately £781,898 per year.
- 3.4 A summary of NUE investment by district is at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 In July 2019 it was agreed that the NUE initiative would be extended to at least 2021-22 with a further update to be provided at that time. (The record of decision is appended as a background document to this report).
- 3.6 The following is an extract for the NUE initiative as described in Section 2 of the Budget Book 2020-21 to 2022-23 (approved 13 February 2020).

Capital Investment Plans				Cash Limits			
Ref	Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Later Years
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
19	Kent Empty Property Initiative (NUE)	37,287	27,729	3,160	5,105	61	1,232
20	NUE – Affordable Homes	4,824	2,105	1,111	0	0	1,608
	Total	42,111	29,834	4,271	5,105	61	2,840

#### 4. How NUE has evolved

4.1 NUE remains innovative and has taken advantage of funding opportunities as they have arisen to offer different loan products, deliver more homes and bring vacant commercial properties back into use.

4.2 These include:

Loan Product	Funding Source	Summary	Outcomes
NUE Affordable Homes Project (2012-2015)	HCA - £750k	5 Year Loans ( final repayments due 2020/21) to be recycled	42 affordable homes in Dover, Folkestone, Hythe and Sittingbourne
NUE Top Up Loans (on going)	Dover DC - £600k Folkestone & Hythe DC - £ 1.5m Tunbridge Wells BC - £100k	In addition to the £25k per unit from NUE, an extra £15k is provided as a 'Top Up'	146 units funded with a Top Up Loan
Live Margate (on-going)	GPF - £2.6m	NUE allocated funds to assist with the delivery of this KCC project	64 long term empty properties are currently funded and on track to achieve target
NUE Commercial (2018-2022)	Growing Places Fund (GPF) - £1m	The project aims to return long term	The project is required to return 8

		empty commercial properties back into use for residential, alternative commercial or mixed-use purposes with a specific focus on town centres (particularly coastal areas of Kent).	commercial units back into use and provide a total of 28 residential units by March 2022.
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4.3 **NUE Commercial.** A total of 12 individual projects have been funded to deliver 15 commercial units (8 more than required) and 28 residential units by March 2022.

4.4 Recent projects completed include a new Mediterranean-style restaurant/deli in Deal. In Dover, works are nearing completion to provide a convenience store and a fitness centre in the town as well as new office accommodation in Whitfield.

4.5 The final projects are on track to be completed by March 2021.

4.6 A summary of NUE Commercial is at Appendix 2 including example projects.

## 5. **NUE 2020-21**

5.1 Bringing long term empty properties back into use is a key method of driving regeneration which not only provides new homes but also new sources of employment and a sense of community.

5.2 **NUE main loan scheme.** NUE will continue to offer interest free loans to first time applicants.

5.3 Demand for the traditional empty property loans has not diminished during the pandemic. NUE has continued to process applications. A total of 20 loans have been approved (April to August 2020) with a value of £1.2m.

5.4 **NUE Derelict Sites (£12m).** NUE launched a new loan product this financial year following support from Treasury Management and agreement from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services. £12m has been made available to provide secured, by way of first charge, short-term interest-bearing loans (recycled) to developers of derelict/vacant sites, in order to create new build residential units in Kent.

- 5.5 Radio Kent interviewed the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and there was countywide press coverage which has prompted on average 3-4 calls per week.
- 5.6 NUE has processed 9 loans (value £5.8m) since April 2020 to bring forward empty/derelict sites which have planning permission to create new housing. A total of 47 new units (Dover, Folkestone and Ramsgate) are currently supported.
- 5.7 The maximum limit on the amount to be lent to each developer is £1m and maximum duration is 3 years. All loans awarded will be subject to agreed drawdown and routine monitoring/site visits which is consistent with existing NUE procedures.
- 5.8 A modest return is made to KCC Treasury for the opportunity cost of using investment funding. In addition to this NUE is helping to increase Council Tax receipts which represent a high percentage of the KCC budget and seeking to convert existing buildings which means less brownfield/green sites are needed to meet housing targets.
- 5.9 Demand is such that the £12m could be allocated in a shorter timescale than originally envisaged. Several more projects have been identified which the NUE team is following up.
- 5.10 An example of a project supported by Treasury funds is shown at Appendix 3.

## **6. Social and affordable housing**

- 6.1. The primary aim of the NUE initiative is to improve the physical urban environment in Kent by bringing empty properties back into use as quality housing through a range of interventions.
- 6.2. Whilst Kent is not the housing authority, NUE has previously delivered an Affordable Homes Project 2012-2015 with HCA funding – 42 units.
- 6.3. In addition to this NUE has funded the following projects which are in keeping with the aspiration to provide social and affordable housing. A total of 59 additional units have been supported using re-cycled HCA funds and NUE funds.

6.4. These include:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Loan Value</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
2013-14	2-3 Bedford Place, Maidstone	7	£175,000 (repaid)	Developer sold to Housing Association to meet their Affordable Homes quota
2014-15	12 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone	9	£175,000 (repaid)	Homes for adults with mild-learning difficulties –below market rent
2015-16	1 Dover Road, Folkestone (using recycled HCA funds – 5 Year Loan)	11	£400,000	Managed by Optivo on Affordable Terms
2016-17	56-58 New Street, Ashford,	6	£350,000 (repaid)	Developer sold to Housing Association to meet their Affordable Homes quota
2017-18	239 Boxley Road, Maidstone (using recycled HCA funds – 5 Year Loan)	8	£400,000	Homes for adults with mild-learning difficulties – below market rent
2018-19	12-14 Princess Street, Folkestone,	8	£410,000 NUE £120,000 F&HDC (repaid)	Developer sold to F&HDC for their housing stock
2019-20	Tower Street, Dover	10	£500,000 (repaid)	3 bed houses on market for £210,000 each (below average Dover price) and

				there is the help to buy option.
Total Units / Funding	59	£2,530,000		

6.5. In addition to the above table, NUE is currently supporting (using Treasury investment) a new build project in Dover which the developer has agreed to sell on completion to the local district council. This will provide 8 units of affordable accommodation.

## 7. Conclusion

7.1. Continued support for NUE will allow the initiative to:

- Support economic growth including through new commercial activity: attracting new business rates, creating and safeguarding jobs
- Increase the number of new homes available as a result of mixed-use developments: generating new council tax receipts
- Support wider regeneration, assisting in the vitality and viability of existing commercial areas, improving the quality of the local environment, complementing wider regeneration activities and supporting community safety and cohesion.

## 8. Recommendation(s):

8.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and comment on the NUE initiative and performance to date.

## 9. Appendices and background document:

Appendix 1 - Summary NUE Residential (Countywide Investment)

Appendix 2 - Summary NUE Commercial and example projects (updated)

Appendix 3 - Summary NUE Derelict Sites - example project

Background document: Record of key decision: July 2019:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2270>

## 10. Contact details

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## Appendix 1 – Summary NUE Residential (Countywide Investment) – August 2020

NUE INTERVENTION	INVESTMENT			PROPERTY VALUES			HOMES BACK INTO USE		
	Local Authority Name	Total KCC NUE Loan	Public & Private Sector Investment	Total Investment	Original Value of Properties	Future Value of Properties	Increase in Value of Properties	Current Empty Residential Units	Future Residential Units
Ashford	£470,000	£204,700	£674,700	£1,058,000	£1,825,000	£767,000	4	11	7
Canterbury	£625,000	£3,917,849	£4,542,849	£2,252,000	£8,855,000	£6,603,000	7	37	30
Dartford	£626,000	£680,869	£1,306,869	£4,275,000	£5,608,500	£1,333,500	9	32	23
Dover	£8,731,510	£7,313,585	£16,045,095	£16,028,000	£37,728,500	£21,700,500	61	279	218
Folkestone & Hythe	£9,722,227	£2,960,432	£12,682,659	£12,375,500	£28,291,200	£15,915,700	46	202	156
Gravesend	£100,000	£57,806	£157,806	£543,500	£900,000	£356,500	1	4	3
Maidstone	£1,270,000	£922,555	£2,192,555	£2,686,800	£5,529,800	£2,843,000	3	38	35
Sevenoaks	£604,000	£1,163,530	£1,767,530	£3,949,000	£5,619,000	£1,670,000	15	25	10
Swale	£1,650,500	£1,939,374	£3,589,874	£4,135,000	£7,405,000	£3,770,000	13	67	54
Thanet	£10,150,500	£11,992,491	£22,142,991	£19,779,250	£46,221,000	£26,441,750	148	367	219
Tonbridge and Malling	£370,000	£483,249	£853,249	£1,615,000	£2,975,000	£1,360,000	7	15	8
Tunbridge Wells	£667,000	£593,298	£1,260,298	£3,773,000	£5,035,000	£1,262,000	11	24	13
<b>Total Kent</b>	<b>£34,986,737</b>	<b>£32,229,738</b>	<b>£67,216,475</b>	<b>£72,470,050</b>	<b>£155,993,000</b>	<b>£84,022,950</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>776</b>

The total includes loans operated under NUE including the Affordable Homes (2012-15) project co-funded with HCA.

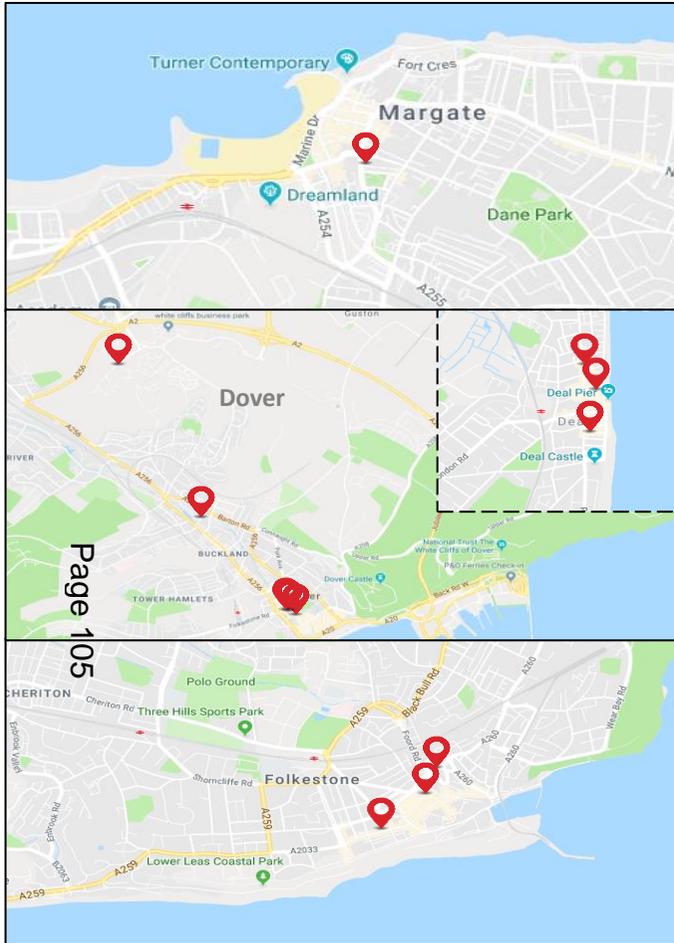
New Homes Created as a result of converting larger empty properties with planning permission for residential use.

Future property values recorded from RICS valuation at time of application and in most cases would have risen over the lifetime of project.

Note this table excludes KCC Treasury funded projects.

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## Appendix 2 – Summary of NUE Commercial (GPF2)



**TARGET:** To return back into use a total of **8 COMMERCIAL UNITS** and create **28 RESIDENTIAL HOMES** – GPF Awarded £1M

Commercial Units	Residential Homes	Total	GPF £	LEVERAGE £	TOTAL £
2	1	Deal	85,000	410,000	495,000
9	16	Dover	595,000	1,667,000	2,262,000
2	6	Folkestone	280,000	1,140,000	1,420,000
2	5	Margate	40,000	311,867	351,867
15	28	Investment	1,000,000	£3,528,867	4,528,867

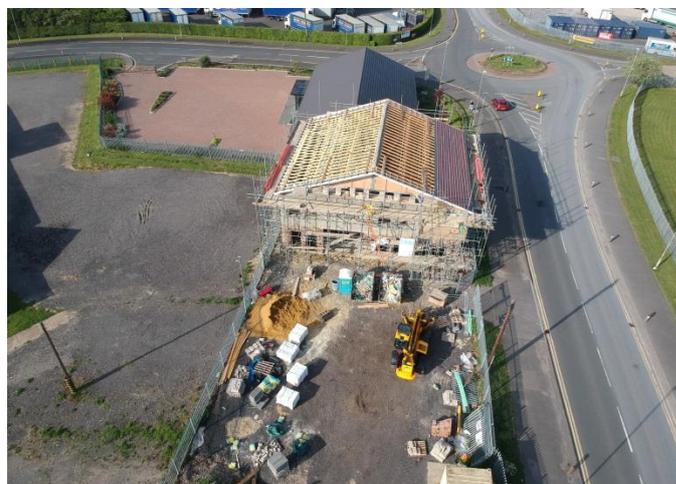
**Completions to date:**  
**12 Commercial Units**  
**22 Residential Homes**

**Works in Progress:**  
**3 Commercial Units**  
**6 Residential Homes**

Commercial Properties back into use include: Beauty Salon, Delicatessen, Restaurant, Recruitment Agency, Marketing Suite for Property Sales, Office Space, Pizza Room for Micro Brewery, retail units for local independent traders,

## Appendix 2 – examples of projects supported NUE Commercial (GPF 2)

St. Matins Yard, Lorne Road, Dover	Land at Menzies Road, Whitfield
<p>NUE used Growing Places Funds (£30k) to help complete the transformation of the site known as St Martins Yard (derelict for 10 years) and a target for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The commercial unit is occupied by the Breakwater Brewery &amp; Taproom company (Est 2016) who wished to expand their business.</p> <p>A Pizza room and an area to produce canned beer have been created within the remaining section of the derelict unit. NUE sign posted the owners to LOCASE energy efficiency scheme to seek grant assistance for the canning equipment required.</p> <p>KCC have a 1st charge secured on the freehold.</p>	<p>This is the final project to be awarded NUE Growing Places Funds. Dover District Council granted planning approval (Oct 2018) for a two-storey office building to be created with parking on site (including charging points for electric vehicles).</p> <p>The building is fully air conditioned and each of the offices (suites 1-4) will provide 100m2 of floor space.</p> <p>Two local businesses (an energy firm and an architect's firm) will re-locate from their current location in September 2020.</p> <p>A loan of £100k was provided. KCC have a 1st charge secured on the freehold.</p>



Information:	Dover	Whitfield, Dover
How long empty	10 Years	Vacant land
Private Funds	£30k	£104k
GPF Funds	£30k	£100k
NUE Loan	£0k	£0k
Total Project Cost	£60k	£204k



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## Appendix 3 – NUE Treasury Loans – Adelaide Road, Elvington

The development involves building 5 houses on vacant land in accordance with the planning consent granted by Dover District Council on 28 June 2019. The land is situated on the outskirts of the village of Elvington extending a long-established residential area with open farmland to the north and west close to the village primary school.

The houses will have all main services connected. Each house will have a garden to the rear and two parking spaces each to the front. The houses will have brick faced cavity walls and pitched slated roofs. Plot 1 will be detached and plots 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be semi-detached. Houses will vary in size, but each will have a hall, lounge, dining area, WC on the ground floor and a landing, 3 bedrooms bathroom with WC and shower room.

All five properties are currently reserved (Aug 2020). The project is on track to be completed within the next 3 months.



<b>Information:</b>		Square Foot	1,107 per unit
Land Value (start)	£170k	Project Timescales	15 months
Cost of Works	£750k	Loan Due Repaid	30 June 2021
NUE Treasury Loan	£500k	Interest agreed 7%	£35,000 (£7,500 for Treasury 1.5%)
Private Funds	£250k	Marketed	£270-290k
Loan is in staged payments	Not to exceed 80% LTV		

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**From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services**

**Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport**

**To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee - 25 September 2020**

**Subject: 2019/20 Equality and Diversity Review of Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate**

**Classification: Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 15 September 2020

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

**Electoral Division: All**

**Summary:** This report sets out a position statement for the Growth, Environment and Transport (GET) Directorate for 2019/2020 regarding equality and diversity within work programmes.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note current performance, provide any comment and agree to receive this report annually in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Publication of equality and diversity information is compulsory in England for all public authorities, as stipulated in the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010. Proactive publication of equality and diversity information ensures not only compliance with the legal requirements, but also transparency for the public in how this Directorate ensures equality and diversity considerations are part of every stage of our programmes and projects.
- 1.2 GET firmly places our approach to equality and diversity within our customer focus. The Duty for GET is about understanding and responding to our customers and non-customers' needs, data-led across all ten protected characteristics. Everybody has protected characteristics.
- 1.3 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has identified six domains which reflect the capabilities or areas of life that are important to people and that enable them to flourish. The six domains are work, living standards, education, justice and personal security, participation and health.

1.4 KCC corporately has moved to measure all services' progress against the Equality Duty 2010 by utilising these EHRC domains. This report therefore looks to do the same, as we have done in the previous two years' reports, .

## **2. Financial Implications**

2.1 There are no financial implications in producing an annual review of progress against the Equality Duty 2010

## **3. Policy Framework**

3.1 This report relates to the KCC Equality and Human Rights Policy 2016 – 2020.

## **4. GET progress against KCC Equality and Diversity Objectives**

4.1 GET Directorate has lead responsibility for five of the KCC Human Rights and Equality Policy Objectives: and further detail is given for each from paragraph 4.2 onwards

4.1.1 Protected characteristics will be considered within all highways and transport schemes identified within Local Transport Plan 4, as well as the schemes' potential to advance equality of opportunity

4.1.2 The Equality Duty will inform all services' efforts to maximise businesses' potential.

4.1.3 The protected characteristics of all members of a community will be considered when investing in roads, facilities and utilities that are identified through the Growth and Infrastructure Framework, and delivered to meet the needs of Kent's population changes

4.1.4 Irrespective of Age, Disability, Race or Religion and Belief, Kent residents should be able to access our county's high-quality landscapes and environment

4.1.5 The Libraries, Registration and Archives Service in Kent will continue to understand its local communities' needs, and tailor its services accordingly

4.2 Further details of GET's performance against these objectives are given in appendix 1.

## **5. Conclusions**

5.1 GET continues to improve its compliance with the Equality Duty by improving year on year the volume, depth and underpinning data of completed equality impact assessments. However, neither Directorate Management Team nor the GET Equality and Diversity Group can become complacent that the Equality Duty is always fully considered.

- 5.2 From preparing this 19/20 review, it is apparent that the GET Equalities and Diversity Group is more systematically utilising the online portal of completed EqlAs as a 'temperature check' and 'tool' for driving forward the agenda
- 5.3 Throughout 19/20 and as is evident from the above sample of Equality Impact Assessments, a great deal of consideration was given to digital accessibility from an equality perspective by GET officers in 19/20, which was a focused piece of work ahead of imminent Government digital accessibility legislation coming into force September 2020. The Government Digital Service (GDS) will monitor public sector websites and apps on their accessibility from September 2020 onwards. GET has been working proactively with KCC Infrastructure on this for over two years.
- 5.4 GET has a Joint Organisational Development/Equality and Diversity Group that works to ensure as a directorate we have a clear focus on how we support diversity and inclusion across our staffing. That group's work falls outside of the remit of this report, but as per previous years, continues to use national peer reviews, KCC and GET organisational data and the KCC and GET staff survey reflective data to inform its focus, and its work.

## 6. Recommendation

**Recommendation:** The Cabinet Committee is asked to note current performance, provide any comment, and agree to receive this report annually in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010

## 7. Background Documents

- 7.1 KCC Human Rights and Equality Strategy 2016 – 2020:

[https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/67075/Executive-summary-of-our-annual-equality-and-diversity-report-2016-2020.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/67075/Executive-summary-of-our-annual-equality-and-diversity-report-2016-2020.pdf)

Appendix 1: GET's performance against KCC Equality and Diversity Objectives and EHRC domains – examples from Equality Impact Assessments

## 8. Contact details

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## Appendix 1: GET's performance against KCC Equality and Diversity Objectives and EHRC domains – examples from Equality Impact Assessments

### Objective:

Protected characteristics will be considered within all highways and transport schemes identified within Local Transport Plan 4, as well as the schemes' potential to advance equality of opportunity.

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Following a review of the HTW Active Travel Strategy EqIA, two further two mitigating actions were identified for those with a disability. Firstly, the adoption of the new Department for Transport cycle design standards which will include information provided by the Wheels to Wellbeing group. This has been deferred as the updated guidance has not yet been produced. Secondly to more strongly promote active travel infrastructure for adapted cycle users and visually impaired users.</li> </ul>	Disability and Carers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation A specific EqIA was undertaken with respect to transport as part of the planning for the open Golf event and although the event has been deferred due to Covid-19, several mitigating actions were planned such as: communication targeted at those with additional needs prior to the event; clear signposting; alternative mini bus provision from the station to mitigate the walking route for those unable to use steps and encouragement of event visitors to use the park &amp; ride facility</li> </ul>	Age, Disability, Pregnancy & Maternity; and Carers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work HTW's Live labs - Issues found in the screening for users using assistive technology led to mitigating actions to ensure the operational and strategic platforms developed will conform to government standards for digital accessibility leading to all users of the systems being able to have full access and gain from the benefits offered by the systems.</li> </ul>	Disability and Carers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living Standards HTW's OLEV Taxi Charging Infrastructure - Mitigating project actions were identified to ensure instructions are easy to read and accessible for those who may struggle with the introduction of new technological systems. Other identified mitigations included ensuring installations are well-lit and well-positioned near other public infrastructure to enable safe access by anyone and at all hours for new users who may feel vulnerable at public charge points. Additionally, installations have been designed to allow at least 1.2m behind the charging points to enable wheelchair manoeuvrability and pedestrian flows</li> </ul>	Age, Disability, Sex, Pregnancy & Maternity, and Carers
HTW's Tunbridge Wells Public Realm Phase II - The updated EqIA identified a concern with no central island	Age, Disability, Carers and

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<p>protection and speed of traffic for those within several protected characteristics. It was proposed that a road safety audit stage 3 was undertaken in March 2020 to make sure that all crossing points are safe for all users and to make sure the scheme is fit for purpose which includes enough indication to drivers that they are in a heavily used pedestrian area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Justice &amp; Personal Security HTW's Lorry Control Scheme - Minor negative impacts were identified whereby certain users may struggle to understand which roads have a TRO or struggle to use appropriate routing software to avoid such roads. Mitigating actions were identified in the form of clear information on the KCC website regarding which roads are suitable/ not suitable for lorry drivers to use; signposting to useful tools drivers can use to avoid penalty charge notices (PCNs) and to establish a mandate that allows for genuine mistakes if KCC do not wish to issue PCNs.</li> </ul>	<p>Maternity</p> <p>Age, Disability, Race</p>

**Objective:** The Equality Duty will inform all services' efforts to maximise businesses' potential

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work KCC's Kent Ambassadors new website – This has undergone a digital accessibility audit to ensure compliance with internet publishing legislation. A phone number is included on the website so that anyone who may have difficulty in effectively accessing online information is able to speak to an officer if help is required. Translation of information / webpages into other languages and a glossary of terms is available on request.</li> <li>Education EPE's Dover Urban Archaeological Database Project - Through EqIA screening, potential negative impacts were identified for those who might have been unable to access the project's online outputs. This would prevent them from learning about Dover's heritage and contributing their knowledge. This impact is mitigated through making information available in alternative formats on request and clearly communicating this fact in the project materials. All online materials have been tested to ensure they comply with assistive software systems as identified by the Government Digital Service Standards. In addition, and subject to COVID-19 limitations, a talk on the project will be arranged at its conclusion so that people can receive its information in summary form via a face-to-face event.</li> <li>Living Standards EPE's Archaeological Notification Areas Project - An EqIA revealed that certain people may be unable to access the project's online outputs. As with the above EqIA, this might prevent them from learning about possible heritage constraints on development and deny them access to the accompanying advice, however the EqIA Action Plan determined that documents would be made available in alternative formats on request and</li> </ul>	<p>Age, Disability, Race and Carers</p> <p>Age; Disability, and Carers</p> <p>Age, Disability, Race, and Carers</p>

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<p>clearly advertised in the project materials. All online materials were tested to ensure they comply with assistive software systems as identified by the Government Digital Service Standards. A talk on the Palaeolithic part of the project will again (subject to COVID-19) be arranged at its conclusion so that people can learn about it via a face-to-face event. This will be advertised through both digital and non-digital media. For race, Non-English speakers would be unable to read the attributes in the Geographical Information System (GIS) layer or read the accompanying advice however it was to be clearly advertised that documents could be made available in alternative languages on request and this offer will be clearly advertised.</p>	

**Objective:**

The protected characteristics of all members of a community will be considered when investing in roads, facilities and utilities that are identified through the Growth and Infrastructure Framework, and delivered to meet the needs of Kent's population changes

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living Standards</li> </ul> <p>EPE's Essella Road Bridge Repair/Replacement - A low negative impact was identified and the potential to provide a more accessible structure was considered as an option when bidding for capital funding for the bridge repairs. This was ruled out principally based on cost, but it is likely that site constraints would prevent the construction of a more accessible structure even were the funding available.</p> <p>KCC's response to TfSE Proposal to Government led by EPE to Transport for the South East (TfSE) Proposal to Government - KCC responded to this consultation and an EqlA screening was completed alongside the response. For the draft TfSE Transport Strategy, TfSE completed an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, including an Equalities Impact Assessment on the draft Strategy. Whilst no negative impacts were identified within the comprehensive screening, a positive equality outcome was outlined: the older generation and families with younger children tend to rely on public transport, and therefore will benefit from more affordable and accessible transport solutions (bus and rail that will enable them to enjoy their journeys throughout Kent, also supporting access to jobs and education services. With respect to disability, those who fall under this characteristic, who may rely on public transport, will also benefit.</p> <p>ED's Otterpool Park - the focus of an EqlA was to screen Kent County Council's service requirements arising from the application. No negative impacts were identified at this stage as more detailed EqlAs will be undertaken for each project deriving from the outcome of the application. However, annotated within the action plan, potential projects were identified, for issues to be determined as the new community develops. Amongst many for example, for age, a potential action identified that ten per cent of homes in each substantial phase shall be built to meet the needs of the elderly, from active retired people to those requiring intensive nursing care, including specialist provision. All such homes shall be built to meet Wheelchair User Dwellings standards</p>	<p>Age, Disability, Maternity and Carers</p> <p>Age, Disability, Carers, and Maternity</p> <p>Age, Disability, Carers, and Sex</p>

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<p>as set out in Building Regulations and, for sex, a street lighting project may help to ensure vulnerable groups, for example lone women, feel safe in the new community during darker hours.</p> <p>ED's Kent Design Guide - Evidence from the National Audit Office confirmed assumptions that a percentage of those who are older or who have a disability have never used the internet, so accessibility was key in its development. Mitigating actions determined in the EqIA action plan from a digital interface perspective have ensured that translation of information / webpages into other languages is also available on request along with a glossary of terms. The content itself is being considered from an equality perspective by each contributor.</p>	<p>Race, Age, Disability and Carers</p>

**Objective:** KCC Human Rights and Equality Policy Objective: "Irrespective of Age, Disability, Race or Religion and Belief, Kent residents should be able to access our county's high-quality landscapes and environment.

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living Standards</li> </ul> <p>EPE's Flood alleviation scheme at George Park, Margate - through EqIA screening, negative impacts were identified for whilst the works were taking place. Works were expected to last three months (12 weeks) whereby the park was fenced off and the path through the park would be inaccessible. Therefore, people had to use alternative paths on the surrounding roads to get to the same point the path provided and then post works where there are several depressions to be made within the ground to serve as drainage functions that may prevent people from moving around the park as before therefore mitigating actions were identified through the scheme design including providing better connectivity to the surrounding area through additional paths.</p>	<p>Age; Disability, Maternity and Carers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation</li> </ul> <p>EPE's Fifth Continent - Low negative impacts were identified, with amongst others, mitigating actions identified such as strict protocols put in place to ensure no women who are pregnant or who have recently given birth are put at risk of chlamydia, toxoplasmosis, listeriosis or Q fever from livestock when activities are carried out on farms with livestock. Additionally, those who felt they were unable to be involved due to the physical nature of archaeological excavation could be involved in less physical activities such as finds processing.</p> <p>EPE's Chilmington Green Community Archaeological Project – potential positive impacts for older residents were written into the project to complement the project's physical activities with a mitigating action for older people who were invited to contribute their memories via the WW2 project. Forming a group of volunteers for this project generated cross-generational inclusion benefits. The educational projects brought/bring opportunities for activities for young people together with older. With respect to those who may be less able to take advantage of the project's information, reports etc which are likely to be delivered primarily digitally, documents were made available in alternative formats on request and clearly advertised in the project materials. All online materials were tested to ensure they comply with assistive software systems as identified</p>	<p>Age, Disability, Carers and Pregnancy</p> <p>Age, Disability, Race and Carers</p>

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
by the Government Digital Service Standards. Project events ensured that people also have an opportunity to engage in face-to-face events that will be advertised in both digital and non-digital media.	

**Objective:** KCC Human Rights and Equality Policy Objective: “The Libraries, Registration and Archives Service in Kent will continue to understand its local communities’ needs, and tailor its services accordingly.

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living Standards</li> </ul> <p>LRA’s Libraries Extra (technology assisted opening) - The existing EqIA was revised as part of the pilot review, using customer and staff feedback and observations. Potential equality improvements were identified such as extending opening hours at one of the sites on a Sunday for carers allowing more opportunity to take advantage of the library at less conventional times. An unexpected equality outcome for this pilot, was the use of the library during the non-staffed hours for an autistic child and his parent. The environment was much quieter than usual, and the family have rediscovered their love of the library.</p> <p>LRA’s Newsguard for public access PCs (helping library users become more confident in the news information they find on the web as the News Guard browser filters information from credible sources only) - an Equality Impact Assessment identified a mitigating action that LRA would make IT buddies and LRA staff aware of this addition to the Public PC build so that they could offer IT buddy support to show how to search the web for news and to learn how to interpret the NewsGuard system for those who may be reluctant to search the web for news.</p>	<p>Disability and Carers</p> <p>Age, Disability and Carers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Justice and Personal Security</li> </ul> <p>LRA’s Safeguarding policy - an impact screening identified that staff with visual impairments may find the flowchart difficult to read due to the layout and colours used and so, a monochrome version was also made available.</p>	<p>Disability</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation</li> </ul> <p>LRA’s Core &amp; Exempt Offers for customers - A full Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken with issues and mitigations identified such as: a three week loan period can be too short for some exempt card holders, and can be a barrier to access the service, therefore the loan period for exempt card holders has been extended to six weeks; and ensuring that all staff are aware of the information sheets (designed to provide information on services we provide for particular groups, e.g. dementia patients and families; visually impaired customers) and that they are reviewed regularly.</p> <p>Sandwich Library - Relocation of Local Studies and Large Print Stock - The EqIA screening proved a very useful tool in the planning of the project to ensure optimal layouts from an equality perspective – for example, the local studies area is now an accessible area for study use (Delivery of Book Start in Kent - BookTrust is a</p>	<p>Disability and Carers</p> <p>Disability, Maternity, and Carers</p>

EHRC Domain	Protected Characteristics
<p data-bbox="107 140 1671 284">national organisation which works with local authorities across England and Wales to ensure every child receives a free book and information to support the importance of reading and sharing stories with very young children. There are two universal packs but BookTrust also offers other more targeted additional needs packs, mainly via early years settings:</p> <ul data-bbox="152 325 1671 513" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="152 325 1592 360">• Bookshine – books and resources supporting children with a hearing impairment and their families</li> <li data-bbox="152 363 1570 399">• Booktouch – books and resources supporting children with a visual impairment and their families</li> <li data-bbox="152 402 958 437">• Dual Language books – offered in over 30 languages</li> <li data-bbox="152 440 1671 513">• Bookstart Star – books and resources supporting children with motor function delays or disabilities and their families. Kent Libraries work with our partner Portage, to deliver these packs to the target audience</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="107 555 1641 628">The screening for this scheme highlighted the need to work with specialist groups to identify where specialist bookstart packs are needed.</p>	

From: Roger Gough, Leader of the County Council  
 Barbara Cooper- Corporate Director - Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

Decision No: N/A – For information only

Subject: **Decisions taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Cabinet Member Decision

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

**Electoral Division:** County-wide

**Summary:** The attached decision was taken between meetings of the Growth, Economic Development and Cabinet Committee as it could not be reasonably deferred to the next programmed meeting of the Cabinet Committee for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.2 below.

**Recommendation:**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note that the following decision was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council’s constitution:

20/00085 – Investment of Getting Building Funding in KCC-delivered projects

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The following decision was taken between meetings of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee, as it could not reasonably be deferred.

**2. 20/00085 – Investment of Getting Building Funding in KCC-delivered projects**

2.1 The Leader of the Council has taken a decision to accept the Getting Building Funding (GBF) under SELEP terms and conditions to support already approved KCC projects that the SELEP Partnership’s Strategic Board prioritised to receive GBF at its Board meeting on 16 July 2020. SELEP confirmed seven projects within Kent, including three that are being directly delivered by KCC; Digitally Connecting Rural Kent & Medway, Thanet Parkway Railway Station and Javelin Way Development.

- 2.2 Since the publication of the Forthcoming Executive Decision plan, KCC has been informed by Building Digital UK (BDUK) that the extended broadband top-up voucher scheme needed to be announced on 7 September as this was the last date that changes could be made to the scheme to allow sufficient time to build the required broadband connections.
- 2.3 The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of broadband to Kent's residents and businesses to access services and home-working. To not jeopardise the project, the Leader has taken the decision to enable KCC to meet the BDUK announcement date.

### **3. Recommendation(s)**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note that the following decision was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution:

20/00085 – Investment of Getting Building Funding in KCC-delivered projects

### **4. Background Documents**

20/00085 – Record of Decision -

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2393>

### **5. Contact details**

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**From:** Benjamin Watts, General Counsel

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

**Subject:** Work Programme 2020 -2021

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past and Future Pathway of Paper:** Standard agenda item

**Summary:** This report gives details of the proposed work programme for the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee.

**Recommendation:** The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and agree its Work Programme for 2020/21.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The proposed work programme, appended to the report, has been compiled from items in the Future Executive Decision List and from actions identified during the meetings and at agenda setting meetings, in accordance with the Constitution.
- 1.2 Whilst the chairman, in consultation with the cabinet members, is responsible for the programme's fine tuning, this item gives all members of this cabinet committee the opportunity to suggest amendments and additional agenda items where appropriate.

## **2. Work Programme 2020 - 2021**

- 2.1 The proposed work programme has been compiled from items in the Future Executive Decision List and from actions arising and from topics, within the remit of the functions of this cabinet committee, identified at the agenda setting meetings [Agenda setting meetings are held six weeks before a cabinet committee meeting, in accordance with the Constitution.
- 2.2 The cabinet committee is requested to consider and note the items within the proposed Work Programme, set out in appendix A to this report, and to suggest any additional topics to be considered at future meetings, where appropriate.
- 2.3 The schedule of commissioning activity which falls within the remit of this cabinet committee will be included in the work programme and considered at future agenda setting meetings to support more effective forward agenda planning and allow members to have oversight of significant services delivery decisions in advance.
- 2.4 When selecting future items, the cabinet committee should give consideration to the contents of performance monitoring reports. Any 'for information' items

will be sent to members of the cabinet committee separately to the agenda and will not be discussed at the cabinet committee meetings.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 It is vital for the cabinet committee process that the committee takes ownership of its work programme to deliver informed and considered decisions. A regular report will be submitted to each meeting of the cabinet committee to give updates of requested topics and to seek suggestions for future items to be considered. This does not preclude members making requests to the chairman or the Democratic Services Officer between meetings, for consideration.

**5. Recommendation:** The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and agree its work programme for 2020/21.

**6. Background Documents:** None

### **7. Contact details**

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**GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21**

(Members agreed that the number of jobs being created through the work being undertaken in the reports presented to the Cabinet Committee should appear at the top of each report where appropriate)

Item	Cabinet Committee to receive item
Portfolio Dashboard	At each meeting
Final Draft Budget	Annually (January)
Annual Equality and Diversity Report	Annually (June/July)
Risk Register – Strategic Risk Register	Annually (March)
Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring	Bi-annual (6 monthly) – November and May
Regional Growth Fund Monitoring	Bi-annual reporting (6 monthly) – November and May
Work Programme	At each meeting
Programme of Visits to Districts	At each meeting

**TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020**

1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)	NO		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)	NO		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)	NO		
4	Minutes (Standing Item)	NO		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)	NO		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)	NO		
7	Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring	NO		
8	Kent Design guide – PROVISIONAL key decision, FED awaited	YES		
9	Digital Autopsy (key decision)	YES	06/04/2020	Johnathon White
10	Regional Growth Fund Monitoring	NO		
11	District Visits Programme 2020 (Standing Item)	NO		
12	Work Programme (Standing Item)	NO		

**TUESDAY 19 JANUARY 2021**

1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)	NO		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)	NO		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)	NO		
4	Minutes (Standing Item)	NO		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)	NO		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)	NO		

7	District Visits Programme 2020 (Standing Item)	NO		
8	Work Programme (Standing Item)	NO		
<b>TUESDAY 23 MARCH 2021</b>				
1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)	NO		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)	NO		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)	NO		
4	Minutes (Standing Item)	NO		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)	NO		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)	NO		
7	District Visits Programme 2020 (Standing Item)	NO		
8	Work Programme (Standing Item)	NO		
<b>TUESDAY 15 JUNE 2021</b>				
1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)	NO		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)	NO		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)	NO		
4	Minutes (Standing Item)	NO		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)	NO		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)	NO		
7	District Visits Programme 2020 (Standing Item)	NO		
8	Work Programme (Standing Item)	NO		

<b>Items for Consideration that have not yet been allocated to a meeting</b>	
Healthy New Town (Kenneth Keogh & Allison Duggal) – report and presentation	Date TBC
Otterpool Garden Town	Date TBC
Mayflower Event	Date TBC
Theme Park project on Swanscombe Peninsula – regular updates (The London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH) regeneration project)	Date TBC
Ebbsfleet Development Corporation	Date TBC
Faversham Creek Bridge – update report	Date TBC
European Funding (further update requested at GED&C CC 28/11/2019)	Date TBC
Update Report on consultation of the shared prosperity fund (requested at GED&C Committee on 17 January 2020)	Date TBC
Apprenticeships and update on the Carillion Apprenticeship adoption grant	Date TBC
Artificial Intelligence (Kent and Medway Enterprise and Productivity Strategy)	Date TBC
The effectiveness and efficiency of Solar and wind energy	Date TBC
New Developer Contributions Guide s106	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller Service Charge and Rent Setting Policy	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller: Pitch Allocation and Site Management Policy	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller: Unauthorised Encampment Strategy	Date TBC
Locate in Kent – to attend and present	Date TBC

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