

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

Tuesday, 2nd March, 2021

2.00 pm

Online



AGENDA

GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 2 March 2021 at 2.00 pm
Online

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

Membership (18)

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

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/Webcast announcements
- 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 18 January 2021 (Pages 1 - 8)
To consider and approve the minutes as a correct record.
- 5 Verbal updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director
To receive verbal updates by the relevant Cabinet Members
- 6 Marsh Million - Closure of Scheme (Pages 9 - 16)

- 7 Kent & Medway Business Support (Pages 17 - 22)
- 8 21/00010 - Digital Autopsy (Pages 23 - 32)
- 9 Sport and Physical Activity Service Delivery Model (Pages 33 - 38)
- 10 Country Parks Strategy (Pages 39 - 58)
- 11 Performance Dashboard (Pages 59 - 72)
- 12 Work Programme (Pages 73 - 76)
- 13 Proposed Meeting Dates for 2021-2022
 - 15 June 2021
 - 24 September 2021
 - 16 November 2021
 - 13 January 2022
 - 22 March 2022
 - 28 June 2022

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

Monday, 22 February 2021

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES
CABINET COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held online on Monday, 18 January 2021.

PRESENT: Mr M C Dance (Chairman), Mr N J Collor (Vice-Chairman), 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 S Holden, Mr A J Hook, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr G Lymer, Mr S C Manion, Mr J P McInroy, Miss D Morton (Substitute for Mr A M Ridgers) and Mr J Wright

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mrs S Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement) and Mr D Smith (Director of Economic Development)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**263. Apologies and Substitutes**

(Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Ridgers, Miss Morton attended as his substitute.

264. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

265. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2020

(Item 4)

Resolved that the minutes were a correct record and that they be signed by the chairman.

266. Verbal updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

(Item 5)

1. Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Affairs) said the coroner for North West Kent had been investigating a death following a police shooting since 2016 and that there was a statutory obligation for such cases to be heard with a jury. Since the lockdown in March 2020 all inquest hearings had been held virtually, however, this method was not acceptable for this case. The coroner's service had, therefore, worked closely with KCC's infrastructure service to develop a Covid-safe way to accommodate a jury, the presiding coroner, the coroner's counsel, and witnesses in a court setting using County Hall and a bespoke IT package. In addition, jurors were provided with iPads to enable them

to access documents using a court document software package. Mr Hill said this was the first time this software had been used in a coroner's court, the first complex jury inquest in England and Wales delivered with significant video conferencing functionality, and during Covid-19 restrictions. He was pleased to say that a number of compliments from the Police and the judiciary had been received on the successful staging of this complex event despite the many complications presented by Covid-19.

2. Mr Whiting said he had been working closely with Locate in Kent to ensure Kent was not left out of the government's levelling up agenda which was focussed on the Midlands and the North. He said it was important that ministers recognised that Kent had areas of high deprivation, which should be reflected in any plans to relocate government departments from London to other parts of the country.
3. Mr Whiting said the London Resort had submitted its application for a Direct Consent Order to government. He said that, while KCC was generally supportive of the project, which had the potential for to bring significant economic benefit to Kent, there were areas of concern including transport and environmental matters. Officers were, however, working through these issues with the development company and the three planning authorities in the area.
4. Mr Whiting referred to the Scrutiny Committee's timely short, focussed inquiry into the local farming economy and said it would help inform new strategies to assist farmers, who played a vital role in Kent's economy and who had been negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and extreme weather in the last twelve months.
5. Mr Whiting said that KCC's first Infrastructure Funding Statement was now live on kent.gov.uk and that it provided a summary of all financial and non-financial developer contributions, as well as information on Section 106, legal agreements under the Community Infrastructure Levy and examples of infrastructure projects delivered and planned.
6. Mr Whiting said that the Innovative Sector Exchange Project, a four-year project to bring together innovative technology and creative SMEs across Kent and regions in France, the Netherlands and Belgium had come to an end last month. Over 300 SMEs had taken part in a range of seminars, advice sessions and company visits, with the project assisting those SMEs in the internationalisation of their businesses, in finding new customers and partners, and in boosting their innovation programmes. He also said that partners would take forward this work through the Straits Committee and that he had written to the Cabinet Office to make the government aware of the project and KCC's commitment to continuing cross-border partnerships. He congratulated the project manager, Steve Samson, who had managed the project on behalf of KCC.
7. Mr Whiting said that he would be speaking at the launch of the Experience Project which was part of an Interreg initiative funded by an EU grant of over €20 million. The project, led locally by Visit Kent, was scheduled to run until June 2023 with the objective of attracting new visitors to Kent from across the Channel, focussing on outdoor tourism activities such as walking and cycling.

8. Mr Whiting concluded his update by referring to land sales made by East Kent Opportunities, the limited liability Joint Venture formed between KCC and Thanet District Council, at Manston Business Park to All Access Scaffolding Limited, a local SME employing 100 people and to three future land sales that would allow the completion of Maples Business Park which provided affordable and flexible workshop, storage, and office accommodation for dozens of SME businesses. He thanked Matt Hyland, Chelsea Green and Thanet District Council for their work and cooperation in this highly successful partnership.
9. The verbal updates were noted.

267. Draft Capital Programme 2021-24 and Revenue Budget 2021-22
(Item 7)

Mr Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate & Traded Services) Zena Cooke (Corporate Director Finance), Dave Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy) and Kevin Tilson (Finance Business Partner) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Oakford introduced the report and referred, in particular, to the challenges in drafting the budget which had led to the proposal to increase council tax by 5%. He said this was necessary to enhance financial resilience and maintain a reasonable emergency reserve to cover unforeseen circumstances.
2. Mr Shipton referred to the budget report, published on 6 January, and described the principal changes in the presentation of the budget compared with other years as well as the reasons for presenting the full budget to all cabinet committees.
3. Mr Hill and Mr Whiting said the budgets relating to their portfolios were relatively small in relation to the overall budget. Mr Hill said that savings had been made in all areas of his portfolio and that the revenue for some services including the Public Rights of Way had increased. Mr Whiting said the Economic Development team had an enviable track record in securing funding from a variety of sources, and referred to the capital spending on projects such as the rollout of broadband, the no use empty scheme and the business loan scheme which attracted substantial match funding from the private sector.
4. In response to questions, Mr Hill said he was in discussion about dealing with vacancies in the community warden service. He also recognised the importance and value of internet facilities in Kent libraries to residents and said the service would be provided as soon as it was safe to do so. Mr Pearson said that the current offer of 'select and collect' was similar to library services being offered by other authorities and that others were also not offering PC access at this time. Staff and customer safety had to be the priority.
5. Resolved that the draft capital and revenue budgets, including the responses to the budget consultation, be noted.

268. 21/00001 Kent and Medway Growth Fund Extension
(Item 6)

Martyn Riley (Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item

1. Mr Smith introduced the report which outlined a proposal to extend the operation of the Kent and Medway Business Fund until 31 March 2023.
2. In response to members' questions, Mr Smith said the fund had originally consisted of separate pots for north, east, and west Kent and, at that time decisions, about the allocation of funding had involved members from the district councils in those area. Subsequently, the size of the fund was reduced, and a decision made to streamline the decision-making process. The streamlined process included participation in the advisory board's discussions by representatives of each of those areas. North Kent was represented by a councillor from Medway, West Kent by the Leader of Sevenoaks District Council and East Kent by Mr Lymer (the KCC member for Dover West). Mr Smith said he would discuss the question of member representation with the chairman of the advisory board but that it did not affect the proposed decision being considered by the cabinet committee today.
3. In response to further questions, Mr Smith said the Kent and Medway Business Fund provided loans or made equity investments in companies rather than giving grants. He said that in the early life of the fund, grants had been awarded to three companies who were seeking to re-locate to Kent, however, it became apparent that interest free loans repayable over six or seven years were just as effective in attracting firms to Kent. In addition, the repayment of loans created an income which could be recycled into more loans increasing the number of businesses that could be assisted. He said that the advisory board's terms of reference were modelled on the terms of reference of the Industrial Development Advisory Board which advised the Secretary of State for Business on government financial assistance to business under the Industry Act 1972 and the Industrial Development Act 1982. The membership of the board was drawn from the business sector and included those with specialist knowledge of investment and technology. The board members were not paid and did not receive expenses. One member received a fee for some specialist finance work he conducted for the board, but this was separate from his role as a board member. Mr Smith said that one of the members of the board was the head of a charitable organisation and he undertook to look again at the composition of the board.
4. Mr Smith said that the EQiA had been included with the report as a matter of record and, although it did not specifically refer to deafness, he assured the member that all protected characteristics were considered when administering the fund. He also confirmed that a company's policies relating to the environment, social value as well as traineeships and apprenticeships were considered as part of the application process, but the biggest determining

factor was the extent to which a company applying for a loan would create new jobs in Kent.

5. Mr Smith undertook to provide the cabinet committee with information relating to the number of companies, with women as directors or chief executives, that had received loans as well as the number of successful applications from Gravesham.
6. Mr Smith said that the Covid-19 pandemic had affected different sectors of business differently. The construction industry had been able to re-start during the summer, but it had not been possible for the hospitality and cultural sectors to re-open. A £6m fund had been launched in August and as some money remained unallocated, the launch of a second round of funding was being considered. The terms and conditions of the re-launched round would enable companies, which might not have been able to meet government conditions for government-backed loans, to apply for loans to support job creation.
7. Resolved to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development to delegate the authority to the Director of Economic Development:
 - a) To enter into relevant contracts, legal agreements and put appropriate arrangements in place required to implement this decision allowing Kent, Medway, and Thurrock Companies to access grants, loans or equity investments from the Kent and Medway Business Fund until the 31 March 2023.
 - b) That these grants, loans, and equity investments would be financed from recycled loan and equity repayments previously obtained from companies that received funds via the former Regional Growth Fund and Kent and Medway Business Fund programmes.
 - c) These investments shall be subject to the same rules, criteria and management/administrative charges as investments that have been allocated under the existing Kent and Medway Business Fund scheme.

269. Covid-19 Update (Presentation)

(Item 8)

1. Mr Pearson, Mrs Holt-Castle, and Mr Smith gave a presentation which is attached as an appendix to these minutes.
2. In response to members' questions officers provided the following information.
3. Mr Pearson said the government had relaxed some of the timescales for registration particularly relating to benefit claims as a result of the pandemic. He also said that he was confident that any backlog of registrations would be cleared quickly once it was safe to re-start services.

4. Mrs Holt-Castle said that where a business address, for the perpetrators of scams, could be identified the trading standards for that area lead the investigation with significant co-ordination nationally. She also said that the Police were responsible for responding to breaches of Covid-19 regulations.
5. Mr Smith said that an employment task force had been established to mitigate the impact of unemployment as a result of the pandemic and was focussed on support for young people where as many as one in every ten had not been able to find a job.
6. The presentation was noted.

270. Transition Update (Presentation)

(Item 9)

1. Mrs Cooper gave a presentation which is attached as an appendix to these minutes.
2. In response to members' questions, Mrs Cooper said that lessons had been learned from the most recent congestion on the M20 as a result of the requirement for lorry drivers to have a negative Covid-19 test before travelling to the continent. She also said that the environmental impact assessment on the Sevington Inland Border Facility had been conducted by the Department for Transport and that she would follow it up. She said HGVs could travel into Kent with an orange permit but needed to get a green permit at Ebbsfleet, Sevington or Waterbrook. Fines of £300 per offence were being imposed and, in addition, the lorries without green permits were being turned back at the ports and the Channel Tunnel. She said larger companies were, in many cases, coping better with the new requirements than smaller ones. Mrs Cooper said that the Manston site had been used solely because of the requirement to test lorry drivers for Covid-19.
3. The update was noted.

271. 21/00005 - Further Investment of Getting Building Funding in third-party projects

(Item 10)

Sarah Nurden (Kent and Medway Economic Partnership Strategic Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item)

1. Mrs Nurden introduced the report which asked the cabinet committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations on a proposed decision to be taken by the Leader of the Council.
2. Resolved to endorse the proposed decision of the Leader of the Council:

- (a) to agree that the Getting Building Funding (GBF) be used to support the third-party project that the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Board prioritised to receive GBF at its board meeting on 11 December 2020.
- (b) That Kent County Council acts as the accountable body for third-party projects within Kent's geographical boundaries that are selected by the SELEP to receive GBF grant funding.
- (c) to 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.

272. Kent Foundation (Presentation)

(Item 11)

1. Mr Whiting said he was very pleased to invite Stuart Tanton and two young entrepreneurs Eva Benka and Hayden Bloomfield to give presentations on the work and impact of the Kent Foundation. Mr Whiting also said that the Kent Foundation was a very important organisation in Kent and that the chairman of the County Council was co-opted as a trustee for the duration of his/her term of office. The presentations are attached as an appendix to these minutes.
2. Following the presentations Mr Whiting thanked Mr Tanton, Miss Benka and Mr Bloomfield for their presentations. He said he hoped that presentations gave members an understanding of the breadth of new businesses coming on stream and the value added by the Kent Foundation.
3. The chairman thanked Mr Tanton, Miss Benka and Mr Bloomfield on behalf of the committee for their presentations.

273. Work Programme 2020/21

(Item 12)

Resolved that the work programme be noted.

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From: Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development
David Smith, Director, Economic Development

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet
Committee, 2 March 2021

Subject: **Marsh Million - Closure of Scheme**

Key decision 20/00013

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Key Decision

Electoral Division: Ashford Rural East, Ashford Rural South, Hythe West,
Romney Marsh and Tenterden.

Summary: Kent County Council currently manages the Marsh Million scheme and is now seeking to close the scheme and allocate all the recovered loan repayments and uncommitted loan and grant funds to the original co-funders - Magnox/Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and recommend to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development the proposed decision to delegate the authority to the Director of Economic Development:

1. To enter into the relevant contracts and legal agreements required to implement this decision allowing the return of the recovered loan repayments and uncommitted loan and grant funds related to the Marsh Million scheme to the original co-funders (Magnox/NDA, KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council) on a pro-rata basis calculated on their original contributions.
2. To stand down the existing Marsh Board, the decision-making Board for the scheme.
3. That KCC will continue to act as the managing authority for the recovery of the outstanding loan repayments until such time as these loans are fully recovered or are no longer recoverable.

Proposed Record of Decision is attached as Appendix A

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kent County Council currently manages the Marsh Million scheme. New funding approvals have not been made under this scheme since 2018. KCC is now seeking to close the scheme and allocate all the uncommitted and recovered

loan funds to the original co-funders (Magnox/NDA, KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council) on a pro-rata basis.

- 1.2 The Marsh Million scheme was established in 2013 as a £1 million economic growth fund for the Romney Marsh. The eligible area was designated parts of Ashford (Parishes of Aldington, Appledore, Bilsington, Bonnington, Kenardington, Newenden, Orlestone, Ruckinge, Stone-Cum-Ebony, Warehorne, Wittersham) and Folkestone & Hythe (Parishes of: Brenzett; Brookland; Burmarsh; Dymchurch; Ivychurch; Lydd, Newchurch; New Romney; Old Romney; Snargate; and St Mary in the Marsh). The scheme was co-funded by the Magnox socio-economic programme, a joint initiative between Magnox and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (£500,000), Kent County Council (£400,000), Ashford Borough Council (£50,000) and Folkestone & Hythe District Council (£50,000).
- 1.3 Eligible applicants included businesses, social enterprises, charities, and public bodies. Funding was allocated equally (£500,000 grants and £500,000 loans) between two sub-programmes.
 - Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme (EPS) which offered grants ranging between £10,000-£100,000 for projects seeking to help start-ups, small businesses, and social enterprises in the Romney Marsh area to grow and diversify. Examples of such projects included training provision, environmental improvements (with an economic benefit) and tourism.
 - Marsh Business Boost which offered 0% interest loans of up to £50,000 to help start-ups, small businesses and social enterprises in the Romney Marsh area who were seeking to develop new or expand existing products or services, where these would lead to sustained employment.
- 1.4 All applicants attended an Approval Board. This Board consisted of representatives of the co-funders, private and voluntary sectors. This Board made funding recommendations and KCC as the financially responsible authority endorsed these recommendations. KCC was responsible for receiving co-funder contributions, processing, and appraising applications, entering funding agreements, making payments, and ultimately collecting loan repayments and monitoring outcomes.

2. Background, Options & Risks

- 2.1 Marsh Million scheme was administered by Kent County Council (KCC) via arrangements with the co-funders.
- 2.2 A final Report on the impact of scheme was commissioned and completed in 2019, this report has been fully discussed by the Marsh Board. At a January 2021 meeting the original co-funders (Magnox/NDA, KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council) agreed to close the existing scheme and return all uncommitted and recovered loan funds to the original co-funders on a pro-rata basis.
- 2.3 **Options** - KCC has reviewed the option to maintain the Marsh Business Boost loan scheme. However, with a significantly diminished budget and with the ready availability of alternative loan funding from the Kent and Medway

Business Fund and the No Use Empty scheme, the justification for maintaining a separate scheme is limited.

- 2.4 **Risks** - If KCC does not return the recovered and uncommitted loan and grant funds to the co-funders, then these funds will remain unused in the KCC accounts. Without the new arrangements with the co-funders KCC will not be able to share the on-going administrative costs of managing the scheme.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The capital costs from current and future loan investments from the Marsh Million scheme are estimated at £467,306 - this consists of: a) current loan repayments and uncommitted funds retained by KCC (£228,886); b) estimated value of future loan repayments up to March 2025 (£238,420).
- 3.2 Loan repayments and uncommitted loan and grant funds will be allocated to the original co-funders on a pro-rata basis, calculated on their original contributions - Magnox/NDA (50%), KCC (40%), Ashford Borough Council (5%) and Folkestone & Hythe District Council (5%). For example, based on KCC's pro-rata investment (40%), £89,554.40 will be returned to KCC immediately (£2,000 will be retained by KCC to cover on-going recovery costs). KCC's share of the loan repayments and uncommitted loan and grant funds will be allocated to: a) a contribution to the funding of the Romney Marsh Partnership post (£6,092); b) the balance to KCC's general funds. Future recovered loan repayments collected by KCC and will be returned to the co-funders every six months (see 4.4) minus the charges specified in (see 3.4).
- 3.3 The annual cost to KCC of administering the recovery of funds (inc. staff, legal, appraisal and monitoring costs) is £5,000 per annum.
- 3.4 The KCC revenue costs of this activity will be funded from an administrative charge of 10% levied against all future loan repayments. KCC will also retain a floating charge of £5,000 (from pro-rata contributions from the co-funders) to cover on-going recovery costs.
- 3.5 KCC is responsible for the recovery of outstanding loan repayments, if these funds cannot be recovered, KCC is not responsible for any subsequent bad debts.

Table 1: Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme (Grant) and Marsh Business Boost (Loan) - February 2021		
	Loan £	Grant £
Budget	500,000	500,000
Committed	480,174	484,770
Funds not Committed	19,826	15,230
Loan Repayments to date	193,830	0
Total Loan Repayments and Uncommitted Loans/Grants	<u>213,656</u>	<u>15,230</u>
Future Loan Repayments	238,420	0

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 During the time that loan repayments are recovered or unrecoverable, KCC will continue to act as the managing authority. No new loans or grants will be offered via this scheme.
- 4.2 KCC established an Approval Board to make funding decisions related to the scheme. This Board consisted of representatives of the co-funders, private and voluntary sectors. This Board will be stood down, and some its work (such as supporting economic and social projects on the Romney Marsh) may be taken forward by the existing Romney Marsh Partnership.
- 4.3 Invicta Law Ltd will continue to provide advice on contracts, insolvency issues and work with the KCC Business Investment Team to recover the maximum amount of loan value. KCC Internal Audit will oversee the investment procedures and processes and advise on other matters related to the use of the funds.
- 4.4 Contracts will be drawn up with the co-funders to ensure the repayment of recovered and uncommitted loan and grant funds based on their original contributions. After the initial transfer of the funds currently retained by KCC (see Table 1), funds will be transferred to the co-funders bi-annually (March and September) until such time as these loans are either fully recovered or no longer recoverable. KCC will have no on-going responsibility for managing any future expenditure of the repatriated loan repayments returned to the co-funders. KCC's responsibility will be to recover the contracted loan repayments on an on-going basis from existing loan recipients and then transfer these funds bi-annually to the co-funders. KCC will seek to recover the outstanding loan repayments in line with our existing procedures and practices. In the case of loan recipients who find themselves in difficulty and are unable to repay the loans on the agreed terms, KCC can offer to restructure their debt. Should these companies subsequently move into administration, KCC will not be liable to the co-funders for any of the outstanding unrecovered loan repayments. A detailed report from Invicta Law is not required at this time.

5. Equalities implications

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been appended to this report.

6. Other corporate implications

- 6.1 This decision does not have an impact in other areas of the Council's work.

7. Governance

- 7.1 The Director of Economic Development will inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 It is proposed that KCC return recovered and uncommitted loan and grant funds related to the Marsh Million scheme to the original co-funders (Magnox/NDA,

KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council) on a pro-rata basis calculated on their original contributions.

8.2 KCC will stand down the existing Marsh Board, the decision-making Board for the scheme.

8.3 KCC will act as the managing authority and administer the recovery of the outstanding loan repayments until such time as these loans are fully recovered or are no longer recoverable.

8.4 KCC's costs incurred in administering this scheme shall be funded from a charge levied on loan repayments and contribution from the other co-funders.

9. Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and recommend to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development the proposed decision to delegate the authority to the Director of Economic Development:

1. To enter into the relevant contracts and legal agreements required to implement this decision allowing the return of the recovered loan repayments and uncommitted loan and grant funds related to the Marsh Million scheme to the original co-funders (Magnox/NDA, KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council) on a pro-rata basis calculated on their original contributions.
2. To stand down the existing Marsh Board, the decision-making Board for the scheme.
3. That KCC will continue to act as the managing authority for the recovery of the outstanding loan repayments until such time as these loans are fully recovered or are no longer recoverable.

Proposed Record of Decision is attached as Appendix A

10. Background Documents

- Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision
- Appendix B – EqlA Marsh Million - <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=14890>

11. Contact details

Report Author: Martyn Riley Project Manager Tel: 03000 417161 martyn.riley@kent.gov.uk	Relevant Director: David Smith Director of Economic Development Tel: 03000 417176 david.smith2@kent.gov.uk
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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:

20/00013

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject: Marsh Million - Closure of Scheme

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Economic Development, I agree to:

Delegate the authority to the Director of Economic Development to enter into the relevant contracts and legal agreements required to implement this decision:

- Returning the recovered and uncommitted loan and grant funds related to the Marsh Million scheme to the original co-funders (Magnox/NDA, KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council) on a pro-rata basis calculated on their original contributions.
- Standing down the existing Marsh Board, the decision-making Board for the scheme.
- Authorising KCC to act as the managing authority for the recovery of the outstanding loan repayments until such time as these loans are fully recovered or are no longer recoverable.

Reason(s) for decision:

If KCC does not return the recovered loan repayments and uncommitted loan and grant funds to the co-funders, then these funds will remain unused in the KCC accounts.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

N/A

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

KCC has reviewed the option to maintain the Marsh Business Boost loan scheme. However, with a significantly diminished budget and with the ready availability of alternative loan funding from the Kent and Medway Business Fund and the No Use Empty scheme, the justification for maintaining a separate scheme is limited.

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

.....
signed

.....
Date

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

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee - 2 March 2021

Subject: Kent & Medway Business Support

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: N/A

Summary: This paper provides an overview of Kent County Council's support to business during the Covid-19 emergency, working closely with our local authority partners and the Kent & Medway Growth Hub.

Recommendation: The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and to offer to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development comments on the support provided to Kent's businesses in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In mid-March 2020, the Council put in place a series of measures to help mitigate the economic impact of Covid-19 on Kent's businesses. These included the immediate introduction of a 12-month re-payment holiday for businesses which were repaying Kent and Medway Business Fund loans and the introduction of a Business Help Line operated by the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce. The repayment holiday has since been extended by a further 6 months and it is planned that the Help Line should continue to be available until September 2021.
- 1.2 In August 2020, the Council invited businesses to apply for interest free loans to help cash-flow and put in place investment for recovery.
- 1.3 These measures complemented funds being made available from the Department of Business, Energy and Investment Strategy ("BEIS") through the South East local Enterprise Partnership ("SELEP").

2. Kent & Medway Business Fund

- 2.1 In March 2020, a twelve-month repayment holiday was offered to the 165 companies with outstanding loans from the Kent and Medway Business Loan fund. Of the £31 million loans that had been granted, the balance still to be repaid was £15.7 million. The repayment holiday provided £5.8 million of support for their cashflow over 12 months.

- 2.2 In April 2021, this twelve-month repayment holiday will be extended for a further six months until September 2021 which will give another £3 million relief to the cash-flow of those 165 companies.
- 2.3 An additional £3 million of interest free loans are now being paid to companies which have successfully met the criteria announced in August 2020 for Recovery Loans, Capital Growth Loans and Investment Loans.

3. Kent & Medway Growth Hub

- 3.1 The Growth Hub has continued to provide its “core” service with £224,790 of funding from BEIS for 2020-21, with an uplift to the sum of £122,546 to support Covid-19 and transition from the EU. The Hub provides specialist advice on e-commerce and EU transition through a team of specialists in e-commerce, taxation and trading standards. To date the uplift funding has supported the delivery of the following:
 - e-commerce: 29, 1-2-1s each of three hours
 - EU transition: 78, 1-2-1s each of three hours and 6 webinars attended by 150 businesses.

4. Kent & Medway Growth Hub Business Recovery Helpline

- 4.1 On 25 March 2020, the Chamber opened a Covid-19 Helpline. This provided a single point of contact for authoritative help and advice to companies across Kent and Medway. The Helpline was due to operate for a period of three months. Initially, most callers needed help in finding financial assistance, for example how to apply for the government funded Covid-19 business support schemes such as the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF), the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Grants Fund (RHLGF), the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Coronavirus Bounce Back Loans Scheme (CBBLS). The Helpline proved so successful (with a 95% satisfaction rating) funding was extended until September. The Helpline helped businesses applying for Local Authority Discretionary Grants, supporting the districts whilst they brought their schemes online, and helped businesses to develop their Recovery Action Plans (RAP). In its current delivery phase, the Helpline continues to support the sector-specific business support networks.
- 4.2 To date the Helpline has received over 15,000 phone calls, facilitated nearly 4,000 webchats and 7,000 individual phone-based advice, and has maintained its 95% customer satisfaction record.
- 4.3 Kent County Council has ear-marked funds in 2021-22 to extend the Helpline until September 2021: work is under way to draw up a specification for this extension with a review of the performance measures in the current contract.
- 4.4 BEIS have confirmed £22m for Growth Hubs across England for 2021-22, but SELEP has yet to receive an Offer Letter and/or Grant Agreement for its allocation. The Grant Offer Letter is expected to be received by the end of this financial year, with the Grant Agreement between Essex County Council and Kent County Council soon thereafter. It is believed that funding will mirror previous years and should be in the region of £224,790.

5. ERDF funded programme: South East Business Boost (SEBB)

- 5.1 SEBB II is an ERDF programme, and is an extension to the original SEBB programme which provided business advice (12 hours support) and capital grants to SMEs to support growth projects. The extension commenced in June 2020, and the grant element of the programme is being delivered by Kent County Council. The Accountable Body for SEBB is Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
- 5.2 The value of this ERDF funded contract is £710k and will support 262 Kent and Medway businesses until 31 March 2023. It is currently at tender stage, with three bids being evaluated. The programme will consist of two elements:
- 156 Grants ranging from £1,000 to £10,000 for growth projects.
 - 106 12-hour support, via 1 to 1s or Workshops on a range of business topics to support sustainability and growth.

6. SELEP Funded Business Support

(i) Recovery, Pivot and Scale-Up

- 6.1 SELEP is providing £232,797 for advice sessions on business leadership, pivoting and scale-up for 36 Kent and Medway companies over 2 years, commencing in early Q2 2021-22. The programme consists of 36 hours of support for each company.

(ii) Support for e-commerce

- 6.2 Kent County Council and Medway Council have put a proposal to the SELEP Business Support Fund for £245k to provide:
- 70 Grants of £500 to £2,000
 - 70 12-hour support sessions, to be delivered via webinars for advice to businesses on e-commerce.
- 6.3 The outcome of this proposal is due to be confirmed on 26 February.

(iii) Peer-to-Peer Networking

- 6.4 Peer-to-Peer Networking is funded by BEIS: Kent and Medway have previously been allocated funding to deliver 4 cohorts each of 11 businesses. This fully developed programme and its associated presentations and materials, which need to be adhered to, provides businesses with an opportunity to network with fellow businesses, collaborate to find solutions to common issues, and access expert business advice and support. All four cohorts commenced in January and will have concluded by 31 March 2021. The funding BEIS allocates to this is £15k per cohort. Throughout the programme metrics are being captured regarding business confidence and the key challenges they face.
- 6.5 Following an invitation from BEIS, Kent County Council and Medway Council have asked for a further £180k funding from SELEP to deliver a further 12 cohorts of peer-to-peer networking in 2021-22.

7. Creative and Cultural Economy

- 7.1 The Creative and Cultural Economy Team held a series of roundtable discussions with a mix of sub sectors of the cultural and creative industries including venues, festivals, screen, small scale theatre and touring, workspaces, cultural education and museums, galleries and heritage. The roundtables were attended by just over 100 businesses and gathered information on the immediate impact of the pandemic on the sector. The round tables provided support to the sector itself by sharing good practice and also informed the delivery of DCMS Cultural Recovery Funds administered by Arts Council England.
- 7.2 The £500m Cultural Recovery Fund was part of the 1.57bn DCMS rescue package administered by Arts Council England. 40 organisations in Kent received a total of £5.0m from the Cultural Recovery Fund.
- 7.3 The KCC Arts Investment Fund was opened in December to provide small grants of up to £2,500 to help the sector to reset and forward plan. Funding is available for creative and cultural industries and individual practitioners to help them to respond to the immediate challenges they are facing and to develop plans for the future. The fund of £100,000 has received 93 applications which are currently being assessed. 40 Businesses will receive grants.
- 7.4 South East Creatives business support programme adapted its work to deliver a range of resources online including one to one advice and mentoring, local information exchange and networking sessions. Grants continued to be available for those companies who want to and are able to continue developing their businesses during this period.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, KCC has moved swiftly to support Kent businesses. A range of actions has seen:
- 165 companies repaying loans to the Kent and Medway Business Fund benefiting from an 18-month repayment holiday, providing £8.8m support.
 - £3 million of interest free loans are being paid to companies which have successfully applied for Recovery Loans, Capital Growth Loans and Investment Loans.
 - The introduction of a business support line which has to date received over 15,000 calls and 4,000 webchats.
 - 4 Peer-to-Peer sessions for 44 companies to facilitate collaboration and access to expert business advice
 - Delivery commenced on the South East Business Boost Programme which will provide 156 Grants ranging from £1,000 to £10,000 for growth projects and 12-hour support, via 1 to 1s or Workshops on a range of business topics to support sustainability and growth to 106 businesses.
 - Bids submitted
 - to support 70 SMEs with business advice and small grants of £500 to £2000 to support digitisation through the SELEP's e-commerce programme
 - Advice sessions on business leadership, pivoting and scale-up for 36 Kent and Medway companies over 2 years, funded by SELEP

- Providing £100k Arts Investment Fund to assist 40 creative and cultural businesses with grants of up to £2,500.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and to offer to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development comments on the support provided to Kent's businesses in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

10. Contact details.

Report Author: Sue Berdo Programme Manager Economic Development Division susan.berdo@kent.gov.uk	Relevant Director: David Smith Director, Economic Development David.smith2@kent.gov.uk
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From: Mike Hill Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
Barbara Cooper Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee
- 2 March 2021

Subject: **Digital Autopsy Unit**

Decision number: 21/00010

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: N / A

Future Pathway of Paper: For Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Maidstone Rural North

Summary:

This project will enable KCC to deliver a Digital Autopsy and body storage facility. The digital solution will deliver a body image scanning facility that will seek to provide efficiencies for the service by significantly reducing the number of invasive post-mortems required and making the process quicker and more efficient. This in turn will deliver a higher level of service to Kent's communities, from having their loved ones returned sooner and avoiding the need for invasive procedures which is not supported by some faith groups and can be distressing for some families.

This digital approach is supported by the Kent Senior Coroners whilst also future proofing the resilience of the service and mitigating future unfunded costs. It could also strengthen KCC's ability to respond to Mass Fatalities and mitigates against significant financial outlay that would come with such an event.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services on the proposed decision as shown in Appendix A.

In relation to the delivery of the Digital Autopsy facility, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to:

- Enter into and or vary significant legal agreements including, but not limited to, a Service Level Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding and Collaboration Agreement with Medway Council and any other stakeholders as required.
- Enter into and or vary contracts for the delivery of the Digital Autopsy service including, but not limited to, body scanning and body transport.
- Consult with the Director of Infrastructure and enter into all necessary legal agreements for the delivery and the construction of the project, including purchase of the site if necessary.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This project seeks to develop a Digital Autopsy (DA) function as part of the Coroner Service in order to reduce the number of expensive invasive post-mortems, made possible by more precise and faster scanning technology. The outcome is anticipated to see a reduction in the number of invasive procedures¹ of over 68% and a much faster turn-around for the coroner service releasing bodies back to their loved ones. Maidstone NHS currently take on average 16 days to release bodies and the revised timeline using the DA is anticipated to see this reduced to 6-9 days.
- 1.2. The diminishing pool of pathologists and increasing costs associated with the NHS contracts for delivering post-mortems and body storage, have put significant stress on the coroner service. This proposal, supported by the Chief Coroner will ultimately seek to reduce revenue costs and strengthen KCC's ability to mitigate against ongoing significant financial outlays, including from a mass fatality incident.
- 1.3. KCC has a statutory responsibility for funding all costs of the Coroners Service for Kent and Medway which includes provision of a mortuary service which is currently delivered through NHS hospitals. Medway Council contributes 15.3% (based on Medway population) to the running costs of the service. It is planned that the DA facility will be located in Aylesford on a site currently owned by KCC.

2. Background

- 2.1 There are several key issues putting the continuation of the current service arrangements at risk:
 - a) NHS mortuaries currently do not have sufficient capacity to deal with the normal throughput of Coroner cases during the winter period, as well as their own hospital deaths and must hire in temporary storage for which KCC pays a proportionate contribution and which is a further unfunded and growing pressure.
 - b) Pathologist costs have and are continuing to rise sharply due to a national shortage of staff which has created significant unfunded pressures for the service with further costs of £277k built in for 20/21.
 - c) The uncontrollable nature of both of the above issues builds in risk to the Coroner Service budgets, which has seen the costs increase year on year.
 - d) Potential risk of Judicial Review if the current arrangements adversely affect service delivery to the statutory standards set by government. If Coroners do not have sufficient pathologists to deliver the service, this will put Coroners in breach of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009
- 2.2 Digital Autopsies are now modernising the approach to post-mortems with Sheffield, Preston, Bradford, and Sandwell councils having recently entered into contract for the service and with further authorities such as Birmingham and Essex similarly now investing in the technology.

¹ 3265 invasive procedures in 2018 would reduce to 945

- 2.3 The technology uses a CT (computerised tomography) scanner to scan the deceased in order to determine a cause of death and thus avoid the need for an invasive procedure. Cause of death success rates by this technology vary between parts of the UK dependent on the population types², with variations of between 50% and 90% success rates. Following examination of KCC's current causes of death, the likely outcome is that 75% of notifiable deaths will be able to be determined by this technology. The business case has reduced this success rate to 68% in order to be prudent and ensure a robust economic model.
- 2.4 The number of post-mortems required changes annually and this business case is predicated on there being an average 3,250 scans being required each year, based on historical figures. The DA scanner, which will be owned and maintained by the successful tenderer, will have the capacity for up to 4,000 post mortems per year. This additional capacity could be sold to neighbouring councils to provide an income generation and could also mitigate significant costs associated with any mass fatality in Kent or surrounding regions. These opportunities have not been included in the business case. Of the c3,250 scans, it is therefore anticipated that 68% of bodies requiring a post mortem will be able to be released back to their families within days, with the remaining 32% then going on to have a full or partial invasive post-mortem at an NHS facility.
- 2.5 KCC oversees the delivery of Coroner services on behalf of Medway Council. To date this has been done on an at cost basis. Subject to the project proceeding, KCC is engaging with Medway Council seeking a funding element that would support the capital and or revenue investment.
- 2.6 A site in Aylesford has been identified which is close to the Coroner Courts in Maidstone and has good connections to NHS hospitals which will be responsible for delivering the remaining post-mortems. The new location has been tested with current transport (body removal) contractors to determine the impact on costs of using a single location, as opposed to the current multiple NHS Trust locations and the business case takes account of these financial results.
- 2.7 It is planned that the project will be delivered by no later than March 2023.

² Population age, ethnicity etc. and correlations with types of death

3 Options analysis

3.1 Four options have been considered. The recommended option is **option 3 to Deliver the Digital Autopsy facility with NHS Mortuary Contract(s) plus the development of a Public Mortuary.**

3.2 Table 1 – Options appraisal

Factors	Options			
	1 – Do nothing	2 – Deliver DA only with NHS Mortuary Contract(s)	3 – Option 2 plus the development of a Public Mortuary to planning	4 – Deliver DA and PM
Capital costs (excluding partner contributions)	<p>Costs have risen by £260k (on a £1.1M budget) over the last two years as a consequence of price increases arising from the renewal of the post-mortem contracts in 2017, and the NHS Trusts moving to passing on a share of the cost of temporary body storage units to manage winter capacity pressures. This is an unfunded pressure and the gap between base budget and actual costs will continue to rise as there is an annual inflationary uplift built into our contracts with the NHS Trusts.</p> <p>Due to the lack of pathologists the service has had to employ agency pathologists with considerably higher fees. The impact of this increase, and the continued use of agency staff will continue to put pressure on costs.</p>	c£3M	c£3M but allowing for a future expansion to include a post-mortem facility (public mortuary) should providers ever pull out.	c+£6.5M
Mitigation of NHS cost increases	X	Some mitigation, though the NHS will still be required to do some post-mortems.	Partial mitigation. By having the proposals for the public mortuary ready should this scenario ever transpire, it ensures KCC can mitigate these costs fully. Providers must give KCC 12 months' notice before they pull out of delivering post-mortems.	Full mitigation.
Revenue savings	X	Invest to save confirmed by KCC finance; delivers savings against	Invest to save confirmed by KCC finance will deliver a payback of	Does not meet invest to save criteria, albeit KCC would retain a

	Options			
Factors	1 – Do nothing	2 – Deliver DA only with NHS Mortuary Contract(s)	3 – Option 2 plus the development of a Public Mortuary to planning	4 – Deliver DA and PM
		pathology costs, and availability of pathologists in Kent (and nationwide) are reducing.	less than 10 years, including borrowing costs.	more valuable asset and would be providing a statutory service.
DA suppliers	X	KCC would work with DA suppliers to determine options to lower KCC costs.	KCC will work with DA suppliers to determine options to lower KCC costs.	KCC will work with DA supplier to determine options to lower the costs to KCC.
KCC Coroner's Service capabilities	X	Enhanced capabilities, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less invasive, • better outcomes for families, • less distressing, • quicker, • more efficient process, and • ability to deal with mass fatalities. 	Enhanced capabilities, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less invasive, • better outcomes for families, • less distressing, • quicker, • more efficient process, and • ability to deal with mass fatalities. 	Most enhanced capabilities, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less invasive, • better outcomes for families, • less distressing, • quicker, • more efficient process, and • ability to deal with mass fatalities.
Capital / revenue contribution - Medway Council	X	Yes - contribution towards the facility including land value.	Yes - contribution towards the facility including land value.	Yes - contribution towards the facility including land value.
SE7 partners	X	X	There is potential to work with SE7 ³ partners to secure a capital contribution towards the facility to provide a South-East Region Mass Fatality option e.g. scanner which has the capacity to provide cause of death for this scenario and which will be a lower cost to either KCC (or SE7 partners) who will currently need to enact their own Mass Fatality contingencies and often have to displace business as usual activity. This can be delivered alongside the Kent service. This is not included in the business case but is a further benefit.	X

³ Surrey County Council, East Sussex County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, Kent County Council, Hampshire County Council, Medway Council and West Sussex County Council.

3.3 Table 2 – Options and Recommendations

Option	Recommendation
1 – Do nothing	This option is not recommended due to the risk of continuing increases in costs for covering shortfalls in pathologists, causing an ongoing unfunded inflationary, budgetary, and capacity pressure. It also does not allow for contingency planning should all NHS providers ever pull out of undertaking KCC post-mortems.
2 – Deliver DA only with NHS Mortuary Contract(s)	The recommendation is not to proceed with this option as it does not allow for contingency planning should all NHS providers ever pull out of undertaking KCC post-mortems.
3 – Option 2 plus the development of a Public Mortuary to planning	This is the recommended option.
4 – Deliver DA and PM	The recommendation is not to proceed with this option at this stage due to poor payback period, level of capital funding required, complexity of funding agreements and potential delay in constructing the DA facility. This can be progressed later subject to need determined by NHS continuing to agree to providing post-mortem facilities at a cost the council deems affordable. This is currently a growing financial pressure. This option might also be progressed when there is more certainty of cost.

4 Finance

4.1 Total capital costs of the proposed facility are anticipated to be up to c£3M with funding coming from KCC and Medway. The funds will ensure the delivery of the Digital Autopsy facility including body store.

4.2 The project is anticipated to deliver revenue savings that will see the project achieve a 10-year payback period. It will also seek to mitigate future unfunded cost increases while ensuring that KCC can avoid significant costs from any mass fatality incidents.

4.3 Costs provided to date are based on feasibility assessments undertaken by quantity surveyors and include market data from other authorities to determine costs and associated payback periods. While the outcome is likely to be broadly in line with the business case, the final position will remain subject to tender on the build contract and service contracts. A further Record of Officer Decision may be required to update the final figures subject to the outcomes remaining beneficial to KCC.

4.4 The following table sets out the anticipated savings to be delivered.

Table 3 – Anticipated savings

	£ Total	£ 19-20	£ 20-21	£ 21-22	£ 22-23	£ Later
Existing revenue budget (net)*			2,879,050	2,879,050	2,879,050	2,879,050
Revenue cost savings (net)					(473,700)**	(473,700)**
Proposed revenue budget					2,405,350	2,405,350
Net increase\ (reduction)					(473,700)**	(473,700)**

*existing budget but including Medway Council contributions in 20/21 and no allowance is given for future year increases in 21/22 and 22/23

**assumes 15.3% reduction in saving passed to Medway council

5 Legal

- 5.1 KCC will enter into several legal agreements including but not limited to a Service Level Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, and a Collaboration Agreement with Medway Council over the funding elements. If capital funding is not available from the partnership, then KCC will also consider revenue funding options.
- 5.2 In addition, KCC will also be seeking to enter into legal agreements with the preferred supplier of the Digital Autopsy service, body removal services, post-mortem services and the consultants and contractors to deliver the building.

6 Strategic case

- 6.1 The Coroner Service is a statutory service that is funded by KCC but not directly controlled by it.
- 6.2 KCC's Interim Strategic Plan sets out the short terms goals and this project will assist in meeting the Economic Challenge, Demand Challenge and Partnership Challenge.
- 6.3 Through its contribution to the wellbeing of residents, the project will offer an innovative non-invasive service which will be quicker, more effective and which will significantly lower the need for invasive procedures which will be supported in particular by many faith groups and will provide economic benefits as well as enhanced capabilities to deal with mass fatalities.
- 6.4 The impact of Covid19 is not anticipated to directly impact this project, however the enhanced capabilities of the facility could yet be called in to use to mitigate costs associated with future pandemics.

7 Equalities and data protection implications

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and is attached to this report.
- 7.2 No adverse impacts have been identified.
- 7.3 Some positive impacts have been identified in particular the reduction in invasive post-mortems which are not supported by some faith groups.
- 7.4 The EqIA will be kept under review as the project progresses.

8 Data protection

- 8.1 No adverse data protection issues are expected as part of this project.

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 The opportunity has arisen for KCC and Medway to benefit from new technology that will offer a digital solution to the Coroner Service. This will reduce the need for invasive procedures; be more efficient and effective; allow bodies to be returned to families sooner; deliver enhanced

capabilities to KCC and mitigate against ongoing revenue pressures including the potential for a mass fatality.

10 Recommendation

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services on the proposed decision as shown:

In relation to the delivery of the Digital Autopsy facility, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to:

- Enter into and or vary significant legal agreements including, but not limited to, a Service Level Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding and Collaboration Agreement with Medway Council and any other stakeholders as required.
- Enter into and or vary contracts for the delivery of the Digital Autopsy service including, but not limited to, body scanning and body transport.
- Consult with the Director of Infrastructure and enter into all necessary legal agreements for the delivery and the construction of the project, including purchase of the site if necessary.

11 Appendices

- Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision
- Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment - <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=14890>

12 Contact details

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Mike Hill Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

DECISION NO:

21/00010

For publication [

Key decision: YES

. The decision will:

- a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
 - the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
 - significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Digital Autopsy Unit

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services I agree to:

In relation to the delivery of the Digital Autopsy facility, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to:

- Enter into and or vary significant legal agreements including, but not limited to, a Service Level Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding and Collaboration Agreement with Medway Council and any other stakeholders as required.
- Enter into and or vary contracts for the delivery of the Digital Autopsy service including, but not limited to, body scanning and body transport.
- Consult with the Director of Infrastructure and enter into all necessary legal agreements for the delivery and the construction of the project, including purchase of the site if necessary.

Reason(s) for decision:

This project will enable KCC to deliver a Digital Autopsy and body storage facility. The digital solution will deliver a body image scanning facility that will seek to provide efficiencies for the service by significantly reducing the number of invasive post-mortems required and making the process quicker and more efficient. This in turn will deliver a higher level of service to Kent's communities, from having their loved ones returned sooner and avoiding the need for invasive procedures which is not supported by some faith groups and can be distressing for some families.

This digital approach is supported by the Kent Senior Coroners whilst also future proofing the resilience of the service and mitigating future unfunded costs. It could also strengthen KCC's ability to respond to Mass Fatalities and mitigates against significant financial outlay that would come with such an event

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposal is being considered by Members of the Growth, Economic Development and

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

1. Do nothing - This option is not recommended due to the risk of continuing increases in costs for covering shortfalls in pathologists, causing an ongoing unfunded inflationary, budgetary, and capacity pressure. It also does not allow for contingency planning should all NHS providers ever pull out of undertaking KCC post-mortems.
2. Deliver Digital Autopsy only with NHS Mortuary Contract(s) - This option does not allow for contingency planning should all NHS providers ever pull out of undertaking KCC post-mortems.
3. Deliver Digital Autopsy and Public Mortuary - This option is not recommended at this stage due to poor payback period, level of capital funding required, complexity of funding agreements and potential delay in constructing the Digital Autopsy facility.

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

.....
signed

.....
date

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

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 2 March 2021

Subject: Sport and Physical Activity Service – new service delivery model

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: n/a

Future Pathway of report: n/a

Electoral Division: all Divisions

Summary: This report provides an overview of the Sport and Physical Activity Service at Kent County Council (KCC), outlining its leading role in delivering a programme of activities across each of the districts in Kent, to realise the local vision 'More People, More Active, More Often'. The report outlines a recent review of the service and proposal to implement a new delivery model to position it as the strategic lead for sport and physical activity, responding to the recently published 10-year strategy for Sport England whilst making an even greater contribution to achieving wider outcomes for Kent and Medway.

Recommendation(s):

Members of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee are asked to note and comment on the contents of this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Kent Sport and Physical Activity Service is a 'blended' service comprising Kent County Council (KCC) funded staff and Sport England funded staff - the Active Partnership for Kent and Medway - working together as the lead single team for sport and physical activity for the county of Kent. The blended service has existed since the County Sport Partnerships (now Active Partnerships) were launched nationally in 2005 and prior to this, there was a Sports Development Unit at KCC.
- 1.2 The service works with a range of partners across Kent and Medway including local authorities, leisure providers, sport governing bodies and community safety teams, as well as the education, planning, transport, health, adult social care and, critically, voluntary and community sectors. It seeks to reduce levels of inactivity and provide opportunities for people and communities to engage in sport and physical activity for their enjoyment, contributing to the achievement of wider health and social outcomes. This is in alignment with the five 'Big

Issues' identified in the 10-year (post Covid-19 pandemic) strategy for Sport England:

- Recover and reinvent;
- Connecting communities;
- Positive experiences for children and young people;
- Connecting with health and wellbeing; and
- Active environments

- 1.3 In partnership with School Games Organisers, it is the Sport and Physical Activity Service that coordinates and manages the delivery of the highly successful countywide Kent School Games programme. Delivery has continued throughout the Covid-19 pandemic via online individual and team challenges to help young people keep physically active. This included the My Active Rainbow Challenge involving over 400 primary aged young people in a series of challenges and rewards, including Kent School Games medals.
- 1.4 For secondary school aged young people, the service delivers the Satellite Club programme, providing opportunities for young people to try new activities and helping to bridge the gap from school sport to community clubs. Delivery has continued virtually during the past year and included over 900 young people involved in online box fit, hockey, basketball and handball sessions.
- 1.5 The service is also working with health partners and leisure providers to ensure that there are activities available which suit those who are less active and will benefit their long-term health and wellbeing. This has included the launch of the new Everyday Active website to support health professionals to have productive conversations with patients about physical activity and equip them to provide appropriate local activity suggestions.
- 1.6 Kent's Sporting Memories project, managed and co-ordinated by the Sport and Physical Activity Service, was recently announced as the winner of two national Community Archive and Heritage Group awards. The project explores, preserves and promotes the rich history of sport in east Kent through oral history and reminiscence sessions. The activities contribute to improving the mental and physical well-being of older people (50+), in particular, those experiencing social isolation and loneliness and those living with dementia through tapping into their passion, knowledge and love of sport.

2. Supporting Covid-19 response and recovery

- 2.1 Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of exercise and physical activity in terms of both physical and mental health has been increasingly recognised and remains a highly prominent feature of Government guidance and policy. At the outset of the first lockdown, the Chief Medical Officer for England stated:

“There is no situation, there is no age and no condition where exercise is not a good thing.”

- 2.2 The pandemic has caused severe disruption to, and had a significant impact on, the sport and physical activity sector. The Sport and Physical Activity Service

has responded by playing a pivotal part in supporting the sector and encouraging Kent's residents to be active, as well as tackling inequalities in participation levels.

- 2.3 The service has secured over £250,000 of external funding to support the sport and physical activity sector. This has included the ongoing management and distribution of two grant aid funded streams; an 'Everyday Active' small grants programme and a 'Tackling Inequalities' funding programme. The small grants programme provides support to clubs and organisations whilst the Tackling Inequalities funding is aimed at reducing the impact of Covid-19 and the widening inequalities in sport and physical activity.
- 2.4 There is also a strong relationship between the Sport and Physical Activity Service and Explore Kent Service, led by KCC. Explore Kent provides a wealth of information about 'low barrier to entry' physical activities such as walking and cycling, and quality assures a significant number of promoted routes by working closely with the Public Rights of Way and Access Service. During the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been an unprecedented level of demand for this information. There have been circa 100,000 downloads of route guides in the first half of 2020/21 and this represents an almost doubling of the number compared to the same period in 2019/20. These physical activities serve to connect people to nature and natural spaces to benefit their mental health.

3. Kent Sport and Physical Activity Service Review

- 3.1 The blended model, comprising KCC and Sport England funded staff working together as a single team, is hosted by KCC. There is a Partnership Board (the Kent and Medway Active Partnership Board) that acts as an independent governing board for the Active Partnership and this oversees, scrutinises and guides delivery. KCC is represented on the Board that also includes cross-sectoral representation, including school sport, further education, elite sport and public health. The relationship between KCC (as host) and the Board is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding.
- 3.2 In the summer of 2020, an independent review of the blended model was commissioned by KCC. There were three key strategic drivers for the review; the emerging (as was) 10-year (2021-2031) strategy for Sport England, the response and recovery to the Covid-19 pandemic and the retirement of the postholder simultaneously occupying the Head of Service and Active Partnership Director role.
- 3.3 The independent review included:
 - A desk-based review of key strategic documents including business plan objectives and annual achievements;
 - A review of the two primary models (hosted and independent) for Active Partnerships, alongside the respective governance, staffing and financial structures in operation across England;
 - A series of stakeholder interviews including with, for example, the KCC Cabinet Member, Chairman of the Kent and Medway Active Partnership Board, Sport England and other local and regional stakeholders; and
 - Staff workshops engaging both KCC and Sport England funded staff.

- The review appraised four options:
 - A fully independent Active Partnership where it would be established as a separate legal entity and KCC would continue to invest through a funding or commissioning arrangement;
 - Blended model merged into a single Active Partnership team hosted by a third party and KCC would continue to invest through funding and/ or commissioning of the Partnership;
 - Maintaining the existing status quo; and
 - Blended model merged to a single Active Partnership team 'actively' hosted by KCC.
- 3.4 In the backdrop of the current economic climate, the review identified the need for the value of the sport and physical activity agenda to be strengthened to enable a greater contribution to the achievement of positive social, economic and environmental outcomes. It recognised that whilst fundamental changes to the current delivery model were not required, maintaining the status quo would not enable the Sport and Physical Activity Service to position itself in a strategic lead role, and properly influence systems change as required by Sport England and to achieve related strategic outcomes across Kent and Medway.
- 3.5 The review concluded that an evolved operating model (the fourth option outlined at paragraph 3.4) represents the preferred option. This would maintain the hosting relationship with KCC given the benefits this provides but would also seek to simplify the governance arrangements to provide the Active Partnership with greater independence to establish its position as the strategic lead for sport and physical activity in Kent and Medway, increasing its future level of impact. The preferred option would enable the delivery of the required 'step-change' but would also maintain a greater degree of stability given the current dynamic nature of the wider operating environment.
- 3.6 The other three options appraised were discounted for a variety of factors including, for example:
- Option one - there is no real evidence that a fully independent Active Partnership can achieve a greater impact or enjoy more security than a hosted model;
 - Option two - no preferential third-party host was identified but stakeholders did raise a number of concerns about alternative host providers although in the current economic climate, no willing or able alternative has come forward; and
 - Option three - maintaining the status quo would not address issues such as leadership and profile, leading to a potentially adverse impact on momentum in view of the transformational opportunities provided by the Covid-19 response to strengthen the value of sport and physical activity to positively contribute to a wider range of outcomes (option three).

4. Implementation

- 4.1 It is proposed that the implementation of the preferred option to merge the blended model to a single Active Partnership team is progressed without delay and commences with the appointment of an Active Partnership Director in

spring 2021. This is a key leadership role and will drive the strategic positioning of sport and physical activity across a wide range of key agendas at KCC and more widely, with regional and national partners.

- 4.2 The merger of the blended model would see the creation of a single body of Active Partnership staff. The service review did not consider organisational structures. However, given the proposed change to the operating model, it was recommended that the Active Partnership reviews the current staffing structure to ensure it is well placed to respond to the level of investment from core funders and the outcomes they articulate. The new Active Partnership Director will play a lead role in taking forward this recommendation and KCC has a well-established Service Re-design approach to underpin this process.
- 4.3 The preferred option would continue to see KCC host the Active Partnership and retain its representation on the Kent and Medway Active Partnership Board. However, the role of the County Council would be as an 'active host', where it sets out clear and defined outcomes to be achieved in return for its investment (outlined in Section 5). This allows the County Council to retain its commitment but simplifies the structure of the team. The Active Partnership would also be required to establish outcome-based measurements aligned to a new strategy for sport and physical activity in Kent and Medway.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the proposal for the blended model to merge into a single Active Partnership team.
- 5.2 The investment by KCC in the Sport and Physical Activity Service will be reduced by £100,000 in 2021/22, from £311,300 in 2020/21. This reduction has been offset by an investment of £100,000 in 2021/22 from the Public Health Grant.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 This report introduces Members to the Sport and Physical Activity Service at a critical moment when the importance and value of exercise and physical activity continues to be championed, particularly for its benefits on both physical and mental health. The key recommendation emerging from a recent service review provides a significant opportunity to for the service to deliver transformational change across Kent and Medway, building upon the momentum established during the Covid-19 pandemic and embedding sport and physical activity in the range of policy responses to follow.

7. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s):

Members of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee are asked to note and comment on the contents of this report.

8. Background Documents

- 8.1 Towards an Active County - A Strategic Framework for Sport and Physical Activity in Kent and Medway 2017-2021 - https://www.kentsport.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Strategic_Framework_2019_Refresh_Web.pdf
- 8.2 Sport England (2021) Uniting the Movement - a 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity - <https://www.sportengland.org/why-were-here/uniting-the-movement>

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

Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: **Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee**

Subject: **Country Parks – Renewal of the Kent Country Parks Strategy**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: n/a

Future Pathway of Paper: n/a

Electoral Division: County-wide

Summary: Kent County Council (KCC) owns and manages a portfolio of country parks and countryside sites across the county. These parks and greenspaces offer some of the highest quality habitats and landscapes that Kent has to offer. In 2020 they played host to approximately 1.3 million visits from dog-walkers, families, joggers and many others.

This paper sets the context for extending the existing strategy by one year to allow for customer insight to be gathered prior to the production of a new draft 2022-2027 Country Parks Strategy in the Autumn of 2021. The draft 2022-2027 Country Parks Strategy will be returned to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee in the Autumn of 2021 to ask Members of the Committee for their comments ahead of a planned public consultation in the Winter of 2021.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse the proposed one-year extension to the 2017-2021 Kent Country Parks Strategy (attached)
- 2) The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse the proposed activity and consultation process contained within section 2 of this report that will inform the production of the draft 2022-2027 Kent Country Parks Strategy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The KCC Country Parks service owns and manages a portfolio of country parks and countryside sites across the county.
- 1.2 During the period of the last strategy (2017-2021) the service has achieved a number of the planned strategic outcomes and some of these include:
 - i. *Ensuring high quality parks are provided, maintained and improved and that, where possible, the quality of standards of management are independently tested and verified.* This is evidenced by the Green Flag

awards that seven of the parks achieve annually and the annual South and South East in Bloom awards in which either Shorne Woods or Brockhill Country Parks have won the Country Park of the Year title for the last four years consecutively.

- ii. *Working with nurseries, schools, colleges and adult education providers to provide opportunities to increase awareness, enjoyment and engagement with the environment.* The total number of children undertaking an education visit to one of the country parks was 7,420 in 19/20 and this was combined with 121 adult learners undertaking a training course or qualification with the service helping to teach and support the next generation of forest school leaders whilst fostering a love of the environment with the young people of Kent.
- iii. *Increasing visitor numbers outside of peak times.* Since 2017 when visitor numbers began to be accurately and consistently measured the service has seen an increase in the number of visits across the portfolio. In 2019 there were an additional 250,000 visits to Country Parks sites compared to the start of the current strategy period in 2017. The impact of COVID-19 on communities has been especially apparent in the last 12 months where the service has seen a total increase in visitor visits of 23% compared to 2019 with some individual sites seeing their visitor numbers increase by 228% as local communities seek to use their local park for leisure and exercise. Compared to 2019 43% of these additional visits in 2020 have taken place in the off-peak winter months.
- iv. *Providing high quality volunteering opportunities.* The service has increased its volunteering opportunities by creating two new volunteer groups to add to the three that were already in existence. This contributed 7591 volunteer hours to the service during 19/20.
- v. *Increasing the percentage of the service's budget generated from on-site income generation activities.* In 2019/20 the service generated income in excess of £1.35 million through cafes, car parking, venue hire, events and school visits. This equates to 76% of the Country Parks direct costs, up from 40% self-funding in 2008-09, following a programme of continuous improvement and a focus on financial sustainability.
- vi. The service has also established and built its digital presence on social media through the use of Facebook accounts and through the development of an online booking system that enables customers to interact with the service on an increasingly digital platform. In 19/20 a total of 2919 tickets for events were purchased online, along with 90 bookings for children's birthday parties and 155 venue hire or corporate team building events. The Facebook pages average 2500 views per post and the interactions and page views are increasing all the time.
- vii. The service has successfully negotiated a Service Level Agreement with KCC Infrastructure that has seen three Countryside Sites previously transferred to the Estates team return to the portfolio with relevant funding for management. This has enabled the service to improve and maintain the sites to the high standards the service demands in line with their environmental potential whilst also delivering savings to KCC. The

management fees are now lower than when external contractors were delivering the site management, and the service has added value as visitors receive improved customer service and visitor experiences when using the sites due to daily visits from the Ranger team. New maps and signage are being provided together with bench and fence replacement and the development of a long-term management plan to support the environmental recovery of the sites.

- 1.3 Alongside this the service has, in part, met a series of challenging financial targets. The full achievement of these has been hampered by the restrictions on service delivery that have been observed over the past year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite these budget pressures, the Country Parks team has maintained exceptional customer satisfaction ratings - an average 9.25 out of 10 for overall satisfaction was achieved in the last visitor survey in 2016 - and have ensured that the parks are managed to a high industry standard.
- 1.4 Notably absent from the service activity since 2020 has been the necessary work to plan and research changes in visitor needs and wants. This has been impossible as the service responded to the ever-changing government guidelines to ensure the continued operation and availability of the portfolio for use by the public during the pandemic. This has been combined with an unprecedented increase in visitor numbers across the portfolio as the communities of Kent sought the health and wellbeing benefits of their local greenspace both for their exercise needs and for safe outdoor spaces to meet with friends and family, to walk their dogs or just to escape the confines of their homes for a short time. An agreement to extend the current strategy by one year will allow the service time to reflect on the changing demands and needs of their customer base, to explore the opportunities that we now have from this wider customer base and to analyse customer feedback and behaviour to ensure that the future focus of the parks service will continue to evolve and meet the new challenges which greenspace will face as we recover from the Covid-19 crisis. This will be framed alongside continued focus on the environmental recovery during the interim one-year strategic plan.
- 1.5 The draft 2022-2027 Strategy will be developed in conjunction with an Informal Member Working Group which will be chaired by Sarah Hohler, Deputy Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services. The first meeting of the working group is expected to take place in June 2021.

2.0 Proposed Activity and Consultation process

- 2.1 Following consideration by members of this Committee, the next stage of the development of the strategy is to conduct a visitor survey to ascertain the thoughts and views of both users and non-users of the Kent Country Parks and Countryside sites. The last visitor survey was conducted in 2016. Since then, the visitor numbers have increased across the portfolio and three Countryside sites have returned to the portfolio as mentioned above. The service is keen to ensure that the views of these new users are included in the development of the new strategy alongside existing repeat users to ensure we continue to meet the changing needs of our visitor base.

2.2 It is proposed that this survey will take place throughout June, July and August of 2021 and will include the following elements:

- i An online visitor survey to include targeted invitations to both existing park users through our customer management database and the local communities to the individual parks through our local community networks to seek views of both users and non-users.
- ii Face to face deep dive surveys at the Country Parks during peak visitor times to capture more specific views of users.
- iii Discussion at or by the individual parks' Liaison Groups; and
- iv Staff and volunteer surveys to seek input and engagement of both the professional and non-professional work force.
- v Informal interviews with local Members whose divisions our parks and countryside sites are into seek the representative views of local residents where appropriate.

2.3 Following the survey period a full evaluation and analysis will take place to inform the production of the draft 2022-2027 strategy which will be informed by the Informal Members Working Group, the individual Parks Liaison Groups^{1*} and any other groups or individuals identified during the survey period.

2.4 The draft 2022-2027 strategy will be returned to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee in the Autumn of 2021 for discussion and endorsement prior to public consultation.

2.5 Subject to endorsement by the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee, a public consultation on the draft 2022-2027 strategy is planned for a 10-week period across November 2021, December 2021 and January 2022, to ensure that visitors to the parks, both in and outside of the school holiday period, have an opportunity to respond.

2.6 It is anticipated the consultation will focus on a set of substantive questions that will be developed through the Member Working Group prior to being communicated and agreed with members in the Autumn of 2021.

2.7 We will also ask for basic demographic data about the respondents, as well as whether or not they are regular park users and if so, which is their regular park. This will enable us to analyse the responses by users and non-users, and by park where appropriate.

2.8 The responses to the public consultation will be analysed and a Consultation Report produced and shared with Members to outline the feedback received. This feedback will be used to inform and update where necessary the draft

1

The Individual Parks Liaison Groups seek to bring together strategic partners, neighbouring landowners, representatives from identified user groups and other interested parties to inform the management of the individual parks and to provide opportunities for communication and engagement with these important stakeholders.

2022-27 strategy, with the intention that a full and final version will be presented to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee in March of 2022 ready for adoption in April 2022.

- 2.9 An Equality Impact Assessment and Data Protection Impact Assessment Screening will be completed at the outset of the strategy development and will be referenced and updated as required during the lifetime of the strategy development work. The draft and final version(s) will be included in the presentations to Members as appropriate.

3. Policy Framework

- 3.1 As well as being intrinsically important sites for biodiversity and heritage, the parks make a significant contribution to wider outcomes important to Kent County Council. For example, the parks contribute to a wide range of KCC Strategic and Supporting Outcomes, including those in 'Setting the Course' the current interim strategic plan as follows;

Financial challenge

- Contribute to delivering a balanced budget by increasing the commercial opportunities at the parks to bring in more income and also by offsetting costs by delivery better value for money than external greenspace contract arrangements.
- Continuing to use technology to improve efficiency both by expanding the online booking system to include school and education bookings and by offering online interactions with the service where this is most appropriate.

Seizing the Opportunities

- Making the most of the increased and diverse customer base and ensuring that the strategic direction of the service is tailored to the commercial and environmental opportunities that our visitors need and want.
- Expanding on the partnership working arrangements that have been solidified during the pandemic arrangements to establish a more coherent approach to greenspace management with other local landowners and stakeholders.

Delivering Change

- Managing the competing demand for access to and use of the parks and countryside sites throughout the seasons alongside the need for environmental protection and good management.
 - Offering new opportunities for employment and training to Kent residents that better reflect the work that we will be undertaking.
- 3.2 In addition, the work contributes to the outcomes identified in the Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (extended to 2021) including;
- Every child has the best start in life.
 - Effective prevention of ill health by people taking greater responsibility for their health and wellbeing.

- The quality of life for people with long term conditions is enhanced and they have access to good quality care and support.
- People with mental health issues are supported to live well.
- People with dementia are assessed and treated earlier and supported to live well.

3.3 Finally, the Strategy also fundamentally contributes to the Kent Environment Strategy;

- Conserve and enhance the quality and supply of Kent's natural resources and assets.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The service is committed to being as financially self-sustaining as possible, and the service will continue to be managed in accordance with Directorate spending plans. The current revenue budget for the service for 20/21 is £1.8 million alongside a rolling capital budget of £63,000 per annum.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Kent Country Parks service has successfully met a number of the aims set out in the current 2017-2021 strategy. However, the impact of national restrictions over the past year has both hampered the full realisation of the strategic and commercial aims and increased the number of visitors across the year including at off-peak times. In order to ensure that the next strategic vision for the service takes stock of and responds to the needs of the changing visitor base and seeks to provide the service and facilities that our local communities want members are asked to approve the two key recommendations.

6. Recommendation(s)

- 1) The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse the proposed one-year extension to the 2017-2021 Kent Country Parks Strategy
- 2) The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse the proposed activity and consultation process contained within section 2 of this report that will inform the production of the draft 2022-2027 Kent Country Parks strategy

6. Background Documents

6.1 The following documents are attached to this paper: The 2017-2021 County Parks Strategy

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Kent Country Parks

strategy

2017-2021



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1 Foreword

Kent County Council (KCC) is privileged to own and manage a range of country parks and countryside sites which contain some of the highest quality natural habitats and landscapes that Kent has to offer. This four year strategy sets out how we intend to protect and manage these natural environments at the same time as providing high quality opportunities for individuals, families and communities to play, learn and relax in these environments.

Every day, our parks are home to:

- Walkers keeping fit in all weathers
- Children learning to engage with nature
- Families relishing spending quality time together
- Runners delighting in the landscape
- Horse riders and cyclists savouring the traffic free rides
- Local businesses blue sky thinking in our meeting rooms
- People enjoying the peace and tranquillity
- A wide variety of plants and wildlife

Over the period of the last strategy (2014-17), KCC's Country Parks team have maintained high customer satisfaction ratings and achieved Green Flag awards for seven of our parks, despite unprecedented budget pressures. We have been able to reduce our demand on Kent residents' council tax by increasing the amount of income we raise in the parks through high quality cafes, birthday parties for youngsters, car parking charges, the production and sale of coppiced timber, and other innovative schemes. All the money spent in the parks, is reinvested directly back into the parks.

We are proud of our country parks, and we are equally proud of the difference they have made to individuals and communities across Kent in recent years. The financial pressures are not likely to diminish in 2017 - 2021, but neither will our commitment to continue to provide inspirational parks for all to enjoy.



2 Highlights so far

The years covered by the last strategy (2014-2017) have seen a lot of amazing things happen in our parks; here are some of the highlights:

- In March 2017 Lullingstone was host to its 100th park run. Many of our sites hold park runs every weekend and runners cover over 100,000km every year!
- We have built and opened new outdoor classrooms at Brockhill and Lullingstone.
- Many of our sites now use animals to help manage the land, from goats at Lullingstone to cattle at Pegwell Bay.
- The team has gone the extra mile to make visits memorable, which has even include dressing up as the Easter Bunny and donning drinks cans costumes to encourage recycling
- Shorne Woods was the first park to get Trampers to help people with limited mobility to access our parks. They have proven so popular we have now introduced them in Lullingstone too.
- The Cabinet Member for Country Parks and the Country Parks team were invited to Westminster to discuss our thoughts about the future of British parks with a Parliamentary select committee.
- Seven of our parks gain and retain Green Flag awards annually
- Our parks welcomed approximately 4.5 million visitors over the three year period
- We installed a number of new play areas, each of them designed with local primary schools
- The parks benefited from approximately 29,000 hours of volunteers' time, volunteers who are as passionate about their local country parks as we are.



3 Vision and strategic aims

Our vision for the KCC Country Parks service is

“to provide an inspirational and sustainable countryside experience for Kent’s residents and visitors”

This vision is supported by three strategic aims:

- 1** Provide a network of high quality and biodiverse country parks
- 2** Increase visitor numbers to the country parks particularly at off peak times and among under-represented groups
- 3** Ensure the service is as financially self-sustaining as possible.



4 Strategic aim 1 - Providing a network of high quality and biodiverse country parks

The Country Parks service currently manages nine principal country parks:

- Shorne Woods
- Lullingstone Country Park
- Teston Bridge Country Park
- Trosley Country Park
- Manor Park Country Park
- Brockhill Country Park
- Pegwell Bay Country Park
- Grove Ferry Picnic Site
- White Horse Wood



Detailed descriptions, photographs, management plans of, and directions to, these parks can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/countryparks

In addition, the Country Parks service also work in partnership with five smaller countryside sites.

- The Larches
- Preston Hill
- Parkwood
- Bluebell Hill
- Dry Hill



To provide a network of high quality country parks, we will deliver the following objectives between 2017 and 2021:

Objective 1: Ensure high quality parks are provided, maintained and improved and that, where possible, the quality of our standards of management are independently tested and verified

We will work to ensure that the parks and the visitor facilities are maintained to the highest possible standards. Currently seven of our parks have achieved the Green Flag Award and we will look to retain and add to these awards.

Objective 2: Ensure that the biodiversity, heritage and landscape values of the sites are maintained or enhanced

KCC's country parks include examples of Kent's richest natural heritage, with sites of high biodiversity value, sites within the special landscape of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as well as sites containing Scheduled Monuments.

Of the nine principal parks, one is a National Nature Reserve (and adjacent to internationally important sites), three contain significant areas of land designated by Natural England as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and three are Local Wildlife Sites. The parks include a selection of some of the highest quality habitats in Kent. The Country Parks team aims to improve visitors' understanding of the landscape and biodiversity of our sites and carry out appropriate management to conserve and enhance this value further. All principal sites have management plans which consider landscape and biodiversity alongside visitor management, access and our parks' local communities.



Objective 3: Support Kent's Environment Strategy

Through the Kent Environment Strategy, Kent County Council is working with partners to protect and enhance our natural and historic environment at the same time as promoting economic growth. The parks will continue to play their part in the collection of Kent's natural resources and assets and we will use our parks to further the objectives of the Kent Environment Strategy.

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy>



5 Strategic aim 2 - Increasing visitor numbers to the country parks particularly at off peak times and among under-represented groups

We are confident about the benefits that our parks bring to individuals and communities. There were approximately 1.6 million visits to the country parks in 2015/16, and on average our visitors rated those visits as 9.25 out of 10 (Source - 2016 Visitor Survey). Over the next four years, we would like to increase the numbers of visitors to the country parks and to do that we will achieve the following objectives:

Objective 4: Work with nurseries, schools, colleges and adult education providers to provide opportunities to increase awareness, enjoyment and engagement with the environment.

Parks are a great place for children, indeed people of all ages, to learn about the world around them, to grow their confidence and develop skills to help them in the wider world. In doing so, we want to grow our already impressive education and volunteering offer with more school visits, a greater number of further education students training and developing vocational skills and playing host to more adult education classes.

Objective 5: Work with Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups, and NHS providers to ensure the parks maximise their potential to improve health, well-being and quality of life.

The physical and mental health benefits of simply being in a park are becoming increasingly well understood. According to NHS Choices physical activity can reduce your risk of heart diseases such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer by up to 50%. The mental health charity Mind say that it can also reduce anxiety and depression and increase self esteem. So we will work with health partners to promote and develop health initiatives in the parks.

Objective 6: Ensure that the parks are enjoyed by all sectors of the community, regardless of age, health, race, religion, disability or gender.

We will undertake research to understand who uses our parks and then take appropriate action to ensure that visitors to our parks reflect the diverse population of Kent.



Objective 7: Increase visitor numbers outside of peak times.

On a sunny bank holiday in August, our parks are already full with people enjoying all that they have to offer; on a damp and gloomy Tuesday in February it is a very different story! While we understand that there will always be a seasonal element to visitor numbers, we will do what we can to encourage visitors outside of peak times. This will include ensuring that we make best

possible use of social media and other communication methods to inspire individuals and families to visit us, as well as reviewing public transport options like bus routes to ensure that people can get to the parks. Our cafes will always be there with a warm mug of coffee to protect against the elements too!

Objective 8: Provide high quality volunteering opportunities

Our parks already benefit from the thousands of hours of hard work and dedication from our volunteers every year. We really value their input so we will continue to develop our volunteering programmes and ensure that we provide an enjoyable and rewarding experience to those people who generously give us their time in a wide variety of roles.



6 Strategic aim 3 - Ensuring the service is as financially self-sustaining as possible

Kent County Council continues to face a range of financial pressures. To ensure we can continue to provide high quality parks and the outcomes they deliver, we will pursue the following objectives over the next four years:

Objective 9: Increase the percentage of the service's budget generated from income generation activities.

The service now generates over £1.2million a year through areas such as room hire, cafes, team building, and school visits. In 2016/17 this equated to approximately 74% of the total Country Parks budget. This already makes it one of the most efficient country park teams in England, but we will work to become even more financially sustainable, including generating further income from the parks and seeking external grant funding where possible.

Objective 10: Ensure the portfolio of country parks and countryside sites is managed to maximise the delivery of our strategic aims

Some of our sites have more potential than others to deliver a quality country parks experience, deliver health outcomes, increase visitor numbers, and generate income. For example some of the smaller sites don't have a car park or basic visitor facilities such as toilets. This doesn't reduce their local importance but we feel that they may benefit from being managed by local community organisations or wildlife charities.

Therefore we will consider alternative management arrangements for some of our smaller countryside sites with any changes to management arrangements dependent on securing appropriate safeguards regarding land management standards and continued public access to these valued community assets. Any proposal would also be subject to public consultation



7 Delivery and performance management

This strategy will be delivered by the country parks team who will work in partnership with other parts of KCC, external stakeholders and local volunteers to achieve the vision, aims and objectives.



In order to ensure we know whether we are making progress, we will monitor the following indicators:

- Visitor numbers
- Visitor satisfaction ratings
- Volunteer numbers
- Number of Green Flag Awards
- Income generation levels
- Management of flora and fauna

Appendix - The Country Parks' contribution to wider outcomes

We believe that the country parks are important in their own right, but we also value the significant contribution they make to wider outcomes contained within KCC's "Increasing Opportunities and Improving Outcomes" strategic framework, the Kent Environment Strategy and the Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The parks also support a number of KCC's wider responsibilities such as the AONB Management Plan and the fulfilment of the Biodiversity Duty which the government has placed on public authorities.

The following table highlights the outcomes contained in these documents which the Country Parks help to deliver.

KCC STRATEGIC AND SUPPORTING OUTCOMES	KENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY OUTCOMES	KENT ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY OUTCOMES
<p>Children and young people in Kent get the best start in life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent's communities are resilient and provide strong and safe environments to successfully raise children and young people • Children and young people have better physical and mental health 	<p>Every child has the best start in life</p>	<p>Ensure sustainable access and connectivity for businesses and communities</p>
<p>Communities benefit from economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and mental health is improved by supporting people to take more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing • Kent residents enjoy a good quality of life, and more people benefit from greater social, cultural and sporting opportunities • Kent's physical and natural environment is protected, enhanced and enjoyed by residents and visitors 	<p>Effective prevention of ill health by people taking greater responsibility for their health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Conserve and enhance the quality and supply of Kent's natural resources and assets</p>
<p>Older and vulnerable residents are safe and supported with choices to live independently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with mental health issues and dementia are assessed and treated earlier and are supported to live well • Older and vulnerable residents feel socially included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of life for people with long term conditions is enhanced and they have access to good quality care and support • People with mental health issues are supported to live well • People with dementia are assessed and treated earlier and supported to live well 	

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 – 2 March 2021

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.

Economic Development have set targets against indicators, which have been RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rated. In Quarter 3, 3 of the 4 KPIs are RAG rated Green having achieved target, and 1 is rated Amber.

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 third 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 December 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 472, which is ahead of target; 6,798 in total have been brought back to use since the start of the project in 2005. The target for the number of businesses assisted via the Kent and Medway Growth Hub was exceeded. Whilst high-intensive support is below target, the accumulative aspects of a unique business interaction moving from medium touch to high intensive will continue to be accumulative leading to the annual target set by BEIS being met.
- 3.2. The Kent & Medway Covid-19 Helpline phase 3 (Oct-Dec) completed 43 Business Support Network Sessions, 337 1-2-1s with businesses, with 148 businesses engaging in a deep dive survey. 26.7% of businesses confirmed an improvement in confidence moving forward.

4. Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)

- 4.1. In Quarter 3, LRA began the recovery process following the first wave of the pandemic. By the end of October, 33 libraries were open, all offering browsing services and PC use, with 13 sites also continuing the Select and Collect offer. The reservation service was reactivated so that customers could collect existing reservations, and from 18th November the service went live so that customers could place reservations for items that were not available in their local library. The mobile fleet was back on the road and the Archive Search Room open for limited visitor access. Ceremonies were taking place following government social distancing guidelines and face-to-face birth registrations were being safely carried out, while death registrations continued over the phone. In tandem to this activity, the development of the LRA digital offer continued.
- 4.2. From 2nd November, library opening hours were extended for the majority of the 33 open sites in order to facilitate access, for example for parents and children after school hours. There was a gradual return of customers resulting in a positive recovery in both visitor numbers and issues.
- 4.3. The implementation of the second national lockdown on 5th November necessitated the removal of the browsing option from libraries. 13 sites offered Select and Collect initially, followed by a further 14 sites a week later. All sites continued to offer PC access and customer-facing birth registrations continued. However, only emergency ceremonies were allowed to continue for couples in exceptional circumstances, and the Archive Search Room was closed.
- 4.4. At the end of 2020, libraries and mobiles continued to offer Select and Collect, along with services to the vulnerable such as Postal Loan and Home Library services. PC use was suspended from 21st December. The Archive Search Room also remained closed, with staff continuing to work on the collections and deal with enquiries remotely.
- 4.5. Existing birth registration appointments were honoured but no new bookings taken, and ceremonies were again cancelled unless there were exceptional circumstances. Citizenship ceremonies continued but with just the citizen and KCC officer present. In Quarter 3 the team carried out 94 citizenship ceremonies, an increase of 213% on Quarter 3 2019-20. Interim results for Registration customer satisfaction show 93% satisfaction across the service, 3% below the

target of 96%, which was set before the Covid-19 pandemic when the service was very different.

- 4.6. The escalation of Covid-19 cases in Kent towards the end of the year as a result of the new variant was reflected in the increasing levels of death registrations, with 1,908 death registrations delivered in December, the largest figure since April 2020, when 2,441 deaths were registered, and a 46% increase on death registrations from December 2019.
- 4.7. With the new year and implementation of the 3rd national lockdown, LRA has supported efforts to control the virus with the identification of three sites, Folkestone, Dover and Larkfield Libraries, as suitable locations for asymptomatic Covid-19 testing centres.

5. Environment, Planning and Enforcement

- 5.1. A high percentage of people are reporting Public Rights of Way (PROW) faults online. Although there appears to be fewer businesses supported in Quarter 3 than in the previous two Quarters, there has been some reporting issues following a change of reporting systems, so the actual number may be higher. Income generated continues to perform well considering current circumstances, and investment secured is ahead of last year's target. Volunteer hours contributing to EPE services were up slightly on last Quarter's figure.

6. Recommendation(s):

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

7. Contact details

Report Author: Rachel Kennard
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Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard

Financial Year 2020/21

Results up to end of December 2020

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Produced by Strategic Commissioning - Performance & Analytics

Publication Date: February 2021

Guidance Notes

RAG RATINGS

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

GREEN	Target has been achieved
AMBER	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
RED	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	AMBER

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	

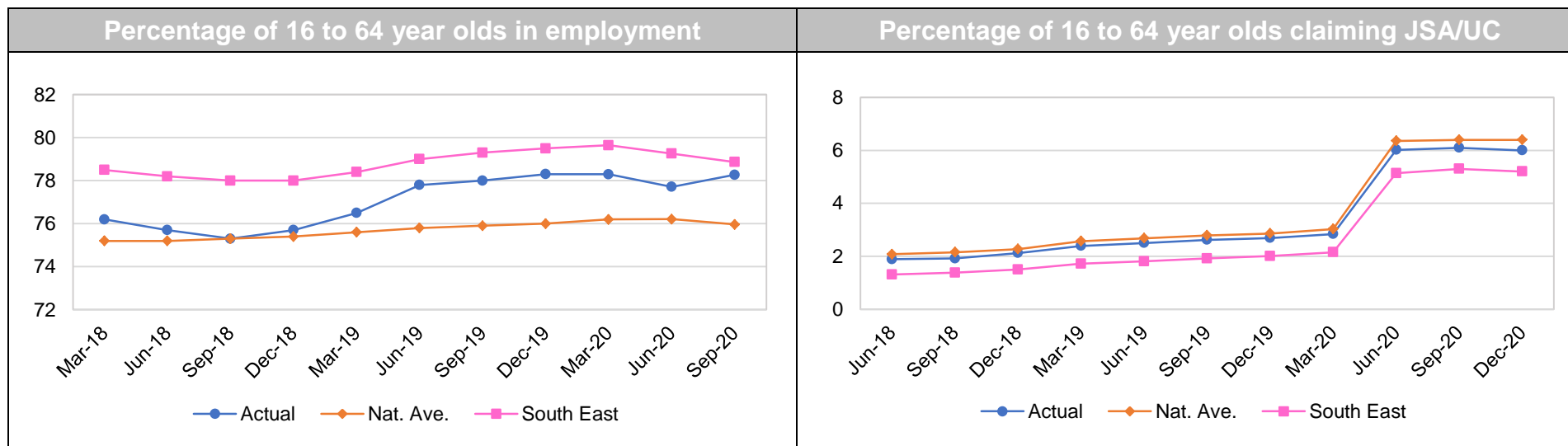
Libraries, Registrations and Archives (LRA)	RAG
LRA06 : Customer satisfaction with Registration Services	No targets set due to Coronavirus
LRA12 : Customer satisfaction with libraries	
LRA13 : Customer satisfaction with archives	
LRA19 : Customer satisfaction with Libraries Direct Services	
LRA20 : Customer 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	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	RAG	Target	Floor
ED05	Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (rolling 12 months)	511	551	519	482	472	GREEN	400	350
ED08	Developer contributions secured against total contributions sought	82%	99%	100%	100%	97%	GREEN	93%	85%
ED10	Businesses assisted via Kent and Medway Growth Hub contract (Cumulative)	3,264	4,898	552	1,843	2,189	GREEN	787	675
ED11	Businesses assisted through intensive support provided via the Growth Hub contract (Cumulative)	193	203	26	48	71	AMBER	75	60

ED11 – To be counted in this indicator, businesses need to have received more than 12 hours of support. It is likely the number of companies exceeding this threshold will increase towards year-end and the target for March 2021 will be met. Considerable additional support to businesses has been given via the Covid-19 Helpline as detailed in the cover report.

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Economic Development	David Smith	Mike Whiting



The indicators above provide contextual information on the general state of the Kent economy.

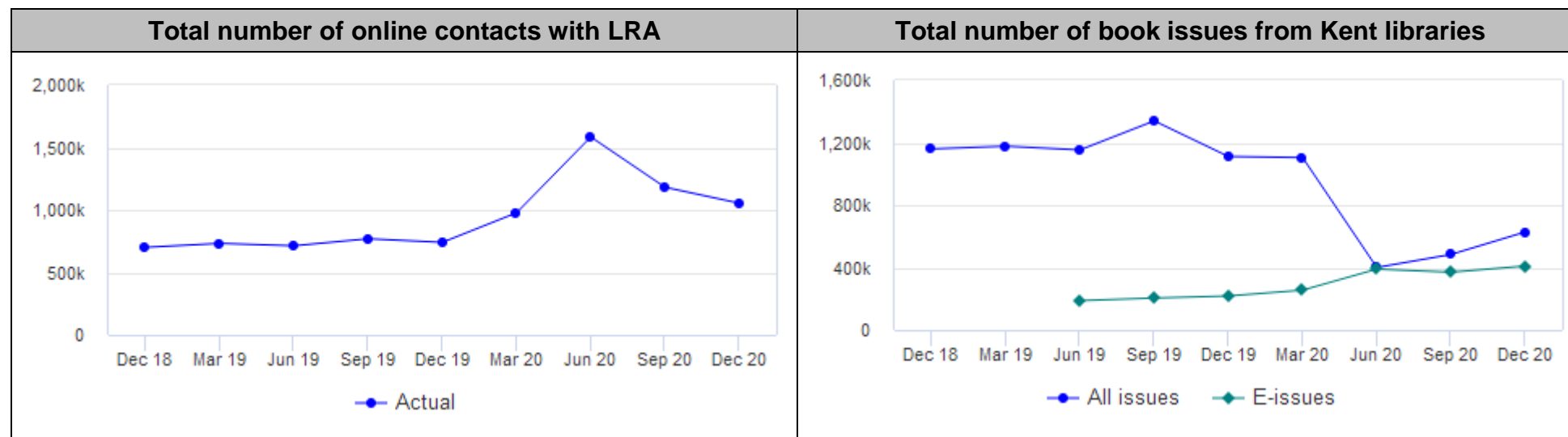
The percentage of 16 to 64 year-olds in employment is derived from the Annual Population Survey (APS) which is a sample survey. The results of the survey come with statistical confidence intervals, which for Kent are plus or minus 2%. Those not in employment include individuals who are students, looking after family/home, temporary or long-term sick, and retired.

The percentage of the population claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (UC) required to seek work (the claimant count), is a good proxy measure for unemployment and is a 100% count of claimants. The number of people unemployed, as defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and as estimated by the APS, includes individuals on other benefit types and also those not on benefits but seeking work, and this definition results in a higher percentage than the claimant count. A sharp increase can be seen in the above graph in the Quarter to June as a consequence of the Coronavirus lockdown.

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

Ref	Activity Indicators	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21
LRA02	Total number of books issued (includes audio- and e-books) (000s)	1,111	1,104	400	484	628
LRA03	Total number of audio and e-books issued (000s)	218	255	390	370	410
LRA04	Number of online contacts to Libraries and Registration services (000s)	662	913	1,471	1,047	920
LRA24	Number of online contacts for Kent archives (000s)	78	64	104	134	134

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

Key Performance Indicators (temporary indicators during Coronavirus)

Indicator	Definition	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21
Number of Online Joiners	The number of customers who join online to access online and e-resource services	4,991	1,822	1,685
Number of Select and Collect requests (static libraries)	Number of Select and Collect requests received online, via email and phone.		7,668	4,807
Number of visitors to browsing libraries (not including mobiles which are S&C)	Number of customers visiting libraries where browsing has been enabled.		49,437	83,615
% of available PC time used	Usage of available PCs as a percentage of the total availability (in hours)		25%	20%
Number of e-Issues	Total number of items issued, including e-Books, e-Audio, e-Magazines and e-Newspapers	389,712	369,954	409,598
% Increase of e-Issues	% increase of e-Issues as a comparison with same reporting period in previous year	108%	82%	88%
Number of physical issues	Number of issues of all material other than e-Resources (not including renewals)		113,599	217,957
Number of Select and Collect requests (mobiles)	Number of Select and Collect requests received online, via email and phone. Service available from 15.09.20		162	1,372
Number of online contacts to Libraries	Total number of hits to Leisure and Community/Libraries webpages + Library App launches + online enquiries + online reference + Social Media	1,467,022	1,047,316	920,171

Indicator	Definition	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21
Total reach on Libraries Social Media	Total reach on Facebook (central and district pages) + New Twitter followers	1,222,800	750,655	652,039
Number of virtual activities	Number of virtual events on Facebook	27	25	34
Number of engagements with virtual activity sessions	Number of post clicks + number of reactions for 4 weeks from date of post	10,783	3,869	4,762
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	4,028	3,236
% increase of death registrations	% increase of death registrations as a comparison with same reporting period in previous year	40%	6%	14%
Number of online contacts to Archives	Total number of hits to Leisure + Community/History and Heritage + Kent Archives and Local History webpages	20,292	17,973	15,095
Total reach on Archives Social Media	Total reach on Facebook + New Twitter followers	87,770	116,431	114,668
Number of Archives enquiries answered	Total number of enquiries answered via Email, Social Media and online	655	1,108	1,068
% of Archive Search Room "sessions" booked	This KPI reflects the percentage of available sessions booked.		73%	93%

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

Ref	Performance Indicators	Q3 19/20	Q4 19/20	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Q3 20/21	Q3 20/21 YTD	Q3 Target 19/20 YTD	Q3 Floor 19/20 YTD
DT14	Percentage of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) faults reported online	76%	65%	88%	84%	86%	86%	85%	75%
EPE04	Number of businesses supported by Trading Standards and the Sustainable Business Team	163	121	388	342	103	833	315	283
EPE15	Income generated by EPE charged for services (£000s)	1,026	1,394	576	926	890	2,402	2,580	2,362
EPE16	Median number of days to resolve priority faults on public rights of way network (rolling 12 month figure)	15	14	13	19	20	N/a	24	28
EPE18	Investment secured by EPE services (Grants / EU funding) (£000s)	1,388	2,165	519	1,536	1,745	3,801	2,500	2,259
EPE19	Number of volunteer hours contributing to delivery of EPE services	10,973	19,899	847	7,752	8,097	16,696	40,995	36,900

Ref	Activity Indicators	Q3 20/21 YTD	Q3 19/20 YTD
EPE02	Value of criminal activity investigated by Trading Standards (£m)	£1.01m	£4.74m
EPE03	Value of items prevented from entering or removed from the market by Trading Standards (£m)	£23.27m	£5.80m

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From: Benjamin Watts, General Counsel

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 2 March 2021

Subject: Work Programme 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 2021.

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 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.

<p>5. Recommendation: The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and agree its work programme for 2021.</p>

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 15 JUNE 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	PROW Operational Management Policies	YES	17/11/2020	
8	Kent Developers' Guide	YES	17/11/2020	
9	Post Mortem examination contract - Dartford and Gravesham	YES	17/11/2020	
10	Growth Hub Contract	YES		Deferred from March
11	Risk Management			
12	District Visits Programme 2020 (Standing Item)	NO		
13	Work Programme (Standing Item)	NO		

Items for Consideration that have not yet been allocated to a meeting

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 (Decision)	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller: Pitch Allocation and Site Management Policy (Decision)	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller: Unauthorised Encampment Strategy	Date TBC
Locate in Kent – to attend and present	Date TBC
Kent Design Guide update	Date TBC