



AGENDA

CABINET

**Monday, 15th March, 2021, at 10.00 am
online**

Ask for: **Emily Kennedy**
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UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

1. Apologies and Substitutes
2. Declaration of Interests by Member in Items on the Agenda for this meeting
3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 14 December 2020 and 11 January 2021 (Pages 1 - 18)
4. Cabinet Member Updates
5. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - January 2020-21 (Pages 19 - 28)
6. Decision 21/00035 - Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme (Pages 29 - 42)
7. Port of Dover Closure incident follow-up and EU Transition update (Pages 43 - 52)
8. Quarterly Performance Report 20/21 Q3 (Pages 53 - 102)
9. Kent Rail Strategy 2021 - update (Pages 103 - 104)

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

Friday, 5 March 2021

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Online on Monday, 14 December 2020.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr P J Oakford, Mr M D Payne, Mrs S Prendergast and Mr M Whiting

ALSO PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) and Mr A Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

190. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

191. Declarations of Interest

(Item)

There were no declarations of interest.

192. Minutes of the Meetings held on 9 and 30 November 2020

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2020 and 30 November 2020 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

193. Cabinet Member Updates

(Item 5)

- (1) Mrs Bell said targeted symptom-free testing was to be offered to secondary schools in Kent before Christmas. The numbers of school age children testing positive for Covid-19 had been a matter of concern and testing would assist in preventing children without symptoms passing on the virus. Existing testing infrastructure was to facilitate symptom free testing and schools were urged to support the testing programme. Additional mobile testing units were to be deployed to a small number of schools and further education colleges.

Community testing was due to begin in all districts in Kent after Christmas as part of the Covid-19 Winter Plan. There were logistical challenges in regard to the preparation of test sites, recruitment of staff and management of the equipment and IT infrastructure. Work was being done to set up sites in Thanet and Swale with assistance from military planners. Key workers and their families would be targeted first and lateral flow testing would be used.

Under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020, a Christmas market which had been due to take place in Broadstairs was cancelled. An assessment of the arrangements for the event concluded concerns about the positive case rate in the local area, the scale of the event and the lack of detail in the event's risk assessment constituted a serious threat to public health.

Covid-19 local restriction tiers were being reviewed but it was anticipated that Kent would remain in Tier 3 restrictions.

- (2) Ms Chandler said throughout the pandemic, the CYPE divisional management team had undertaken planning to look after staff health and wellbeing as well as continuing with the statutory duty to safeguard children.

Ms Chandler said that there had been an increase in referrals since half term and work was being done to review the latent demand model. It was thought that there were higher levels of staff sickness and the impact had been felt more in the second wave of the pandemic. Face to face work needed to continue with children and families.

Work had been undertaken to look at how frontline staff could be supported and if staff had capacity to assist in this regard.

In the second wave of the pandemic, there had been reports of more staff sickness and staff had reported increased anxiety around completing home and school visits, particularly in Thanet and Swale where the infection rate was higher. Staff resourcing had also been an issue for staff working in Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Staff undertaking home and school visits had PPE, risk assessments had been completed for both staff and for families.

The annual Try Angle Awards were launched on 12 August and nominations were open to children and young people between the ages of 11 and 18 years old, who deserved recognition for their efforts, determination and perseverance. Award categories included achievement in the arts, sports, music and personal development. Open Access Team and Kent Youth Voice were judging the awards in each district. Planning was underway for the 'Spirit of Try Angle Awards' which would be held online.

- (3) Mr Long thanked headteachers, staff in Kent schools and KCC officers. It was acknowledged that schools were facing additional challenges and were commended for remaining focused on delivering the best education they could to students. Schools had responded to the changing guidelines and advice whilst doing what was acknowledged to be a stressful job in normal times.

The contribution of KCC staff who support the education sector and the work they had done during the Covid-19 crisis was also noted.

It was noted that schools were under significant pressure due to the rise in case of Covid-19 and increased numbers of staff falling ill or needing to self-isolate.

School and bubble closures had impacts on child safety and more widely on families and the community.

Schools had been contacted by KCC to encourage them to stay open where possible and to work collaboratively within their localities. Swale had been particularly impacted by bubble and school closures. Schools had responded by reviewing the size of bubbles and ways of working to minimise, where possible, the impact of individual cases.

School returns to the DFE suggested that most Primary schools were providing remote learning to all pupils self-isolating or absent linked to Covid-19. A small number of schools indicated they were not providing remote learning, however those contacted had confirmed this was an administrative error. All secondary schools that had been contacted had remote learning policies in place.

KCC, with the help of TEP had put together a package of support for Headteacher Wellbeing. This had been finalised in partnership with the KAH Headteacher Wellbeing Group HT to ensure that the offer was appropriate, user friendly and responded to the challenges faced by Kent Headteachers.

On 26 November 2020, KCC announced proposals to provide food vouchers to the families of children who are eligible to receive benefits-related Free School Meals ahead of the December school holidays.

The food voucher scheme was funded by part of KCC's £4.5m share of the Government's £170m Covid Winter Grant Scheme. Families of children in receipt of benefits related free school meals would receive one £15 voucher per eligible child per week of the two-week December holiday, which could be spent online or instore at Asda or instore at Tesco.

KCC planned to launch a similar scheme to provide food vouchers for eligible families during the February half-term break and details were to be made available in the New Year.

Schools and colleges had been asked to provide up to date data on all families who were receiving benefits related free school meals. This was to enable Agilisys, the commissioned provider, to issue vouchers via email or text in the week commencing 30 November 2020, with the scheme completed by the 9 December. A small team had been established to ensure that queries could be resolved swiftly to ensure that the scheme was implemented, and families received their vouchers on time.

15,634 children had taken the Kent Test which had been delayed by a month to accommodate the impact of Covid-19 and the school closures that affected all children from late March this year. The vast majority of testing for pupils in Kent schools took place on 15 October and testing for out of county pupils was predominantly completed on 17, 18 and 24 October. Alternative testing arrangements were made for all pupils unable to attend because of COVID-19.

Headteacher Assessment panels took place virtually this year. This required a digital solution, which worked very well.

Results of the Kent Test were released to parents on 26 November, as planned as part of the revised timetable.

- (4) Mr Payne said that work had continued to construct an inland border facility at Sevington. The work had been impeded by poor weather conditions but they were assured that the facility would be available for DVSA and HMRC by the 1 January 2021. Highways England had tested a quick moveable barrier which was at Junction 8 and Junction 9 on the M20 and was to be put out on 29 December 2020 in time for 1 January 2021.

KCC had been given temporary enforcement powers to permit the clamping of antisocially parked HGVs in the east of Kent from 1 January 2021.

The consultation into 5 schemes of tranche 2 of the Active Travel Fund had begun and was extended to run until 19 January 2021 due to the Christmas period. It was hoped that feedback would inform the development of cleaner and safer neighbourhoods for road users and residents alike.

Mr Payne and Ms Chandler attended the official re-opening of the toll bridge at Sandwich. The swing bridge now operates to facilitate the passing of maritime traffic and with the platform extension at Sandwich railway station, the highway infrastructure is in place for the rescheduled 149th Open at Royal St George's Golf Club.

- (5) Mr Whiting said a 4 year exchange project funded by the EU and led by KCC had brought together innovative technology and creative small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Kent with regions in France, the Netherlands and Belgium. Over 300 SMEs took part in seminars, events and visits and the project had concluded with 90% of businesses involved saying that it had helped with leads. This work would be taken forward through the Straits Committee.

Mr Whiting addressed an EU transition seminar organised by the Invicta Chamber of Commerce and thanks were given to the Leader and KCC staff for their assistance with the event.

Work on a new Kent Design Guide had continued to ensure a countywide framework for quality design. Positive feedback had been received from Kent's leading developers.

East Kent Opportunities – a limited liability joint venture between KCC and Thanet District Council, completed a land sale at Manston Business Park to All Access Scaffolding Ltd, a local SME business which employed around 100 people. Further land sales were to be completed assisting SMEs.

- (6) Miss Carey said the Christmas tree recycling scheme which had been successful for 8 years in the Ashford area in aid of the Pilgrim's Hospice, would be extended to Canterbury and Thanet. In exchange for a donation to the Pilgrim's Hospice, trees were collected or dropped to a collection point. Trees could also be taken to KCC Recycling Centres.

The Kent Environment Strategy Conference was held online at the end of November. The theme was: Kent 2050 - The Road to Net Zero and it launched the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy. There were some technical problems on the day of the event but the full whole event was available to watch back.

The Plan Bee Conference held its first online summit in November on Kent's pollinator action plan and updated on progress.

The attendance at the online events had demonstrated there was an appetite for information and more online events were planned, as well as to launch the environment hub on the KCC website.

LoCASE 3 had been approved by central government, expanding on LoCASE 2. There was a partnership of over 20 district, boroughs, organisations and further education colleges across the south of England with a budget of over £16 million.

- (7) Mr Hill said the John Downton Award for Young Artists event had been held virtually. The young people had displayed and talked about their work online and the standard of work was very high. The winning piece would be displayed at the Turner Contemporary.

Funding had been awarded to 3 arts projects via the Capital Kickstart grants programme: the refurbishment of the Turner Contemporary in Margate, the Tunbridge Wells Cultural and Learning Hub and to Jasmin Vardimon Company in Ashford.

- (8) Mrs Prendergast said work on the Kent Local Tracing Partnership was underway, supporting the national Test and Trace service. KCC commissioned call handlers were contacting those not reached by the government within the first 24 hours of receiving a positive Covid-19 test.

The 24 Ways in 24 Days to Protect Kent campaign promoted public health messages on social media and service messages in the run up to Christmas.

A feedback campaign had been launched asking why people are and are not complying with restrictions. 700 responses had been received and this demonstrated that people wanted to share how they felt about living in tier 3 restrictions.

The KCC Communications team had planned extensively for potential disruption in Kent due to the end of EU transition period. Work had been done with Kent Resilience Forum to ensure alignment of messages. The Contact Centre was resourced to deal with an uplift in enquiries from the public, the KCC website had been re-structured so service messages were visible, and messages would be put out on social media platforms.

- (9) Mr Oakford said the results of the public budget consultation had been received and work was being progressed on finalising the Budget for the coming year. The recent Spending Review had been better than expected and had provided KCC with time to plan and consult on future savings.

It also allowed for an in-depth review of property and the use of new technology to be conducted. There were difficult budget decisions to be made.

The Property Team had been working with colleagues in Social Care and Public Health to identify and prepare locations for the Kent Community Testing to begin.

- (10) Mr Gough said that statutory duties had been resumed in relation to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, after these had been suspended in mid-August. At that time, the advice from the Director of Children's Services was that KCC was unable to provide a safe level of service. Caseloads had reduced and pressures were reduced but concerns remained that a sustainable national system was needed.

Concerns were raised about the alarmingly high infection rates for Covid-19 in many parts of Kent. Steps were being taken with contact tracing, testing, communications, enforcement and close working with NHS colleagues and it was the central concern of Cabinet that the numbers were reduced.

194. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - September 2020-21 (Item 6)

- 1) Mr Oakford said the report was the first forecast since the Budget amendment and reflected the situation at the end of September 2020.
- 2) There was a forecasted underspend, excluding schools and Covid-19, of £4.5 million, which was a change from the last report of £12.4 million with a previously reported overspend of £7.9million. All directorates had seen an improvement in their forecasts, with all apart from ASC reporting a forecast underspend. The forecast for CYPE had moved from an overspend of £6.7 million to an underspend of £1.1 million, which reflected a reduction in demand.
- 3) The reported Covid-19 position was an available grant of £15.4 million compared to a £17.2 million budget held corporately. The available grant was a result of underspends, most notably due to lower numbers of social care clients moving into care and a reduction in demand for home to school transport.
- 4) The Budget and Medium Term Plan relied on underspends going forward and it was emphasised that it was important not to lose sight of this going into the new financial year.
- 5) Resolved that the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report be noted.

195. Quarterly Performance Report - Quarter 2 2020/21 (Item 7)

Rachel Kennard, Senior Intelligence Analyst was in attendance for this item

- 1) Rachel Kennard outlined the report with results of 35 key performance indicators (KPIs) up to the end of September 2020. KPIs were rated red, amber or green based on the most recent performance against targets. Despite the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic, 21 of the KPIs were 'RAG' rated as green and represented continued delivery of the Council's priorities.
- 2) There had been increased digital engagement from the public and online services were being used to access services. 7% fewer telephone calls were made to the Contact Point.
- 3) There had been improvements in timescales for referrals and services within social care and a higher proportion of adults with additional needs were living in their own homes or with family.
- 4) There were 3 areas that had been 'RAG' rated as red and performing below target. The CYPE target for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) to be issued within 20 weeks.
- 5) Under Public Health, the KPIs 'RAG' rated red related to NHS health checks and sexual health services which had been affected by the pandemic.
- 6) Mrs Chandler said that progress had been made with the number of EHCPs issued but the indicator used for the Performance Report did not show this progress. There were high levels of demand for EHCPs.
- 7) Mr Payne asked for Members to note that the submission of the Development Consent Order for the Lower Thames Crossing would happen in 2021.
- 8) Ms Bell said that Covid-19 had affected Public Health services but many services had been delivered online and it was anticipated that there would be a mixed model of virtual and face to face services moving forward.
- 9) In response to a question from the Leader, it was noted that the new regression based approach flagged those KPIs with a statistically significant trend.
- 10) Resolved that the Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 2 be noted.

196. Corporate Risk Register

(Item 8)

Mark Scrivener, Corporate Risk Manager was in attendance for this item

- 1) Mr Scrivener advised the main 'refresh' of the Corporate Risk Register was undertaken in the summer due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2) The emerging winter risks had been reported on earlier in the year and it was noted that the nature of the risks had been fluid due to the evolving situation and challenges presented by the pandemic. The risks that remained at a high level were in relation to Covid-19 and the end of the transition period for exiting the EU.

- 3) It was reported that the risk in relation to the workforce had been moved from medium to high level. Whilst the Staff Wellbeing Survey had shown staff resilience, there were concerns moving into the winter in relation to higher Covid-19 infection rates.
- 4) The Leader said that steps had been taken to manage risks in relation to 'Effectiveness of Governance within a Member-led Authority' and this area was being re-examined.
- 5) Resolved that the Corporate Risk Register be noted.

197. Sustaining the Economy Post-Lockdown

(Item 9)

David Smith, Director of Economic Development was in attendance for this item.

- 1) Mr Whiting introduced the agenda item and wished to emphasise the effects of Covid-19 on the Kent economy, businesses and residents. Measures had been put in place to aid businesses.
- 2) Mr Smith said that Kent's largest business sector, retail and wholesale were severely impacted by the first lockdown. The near closure of the construction sector also had a severe impact on Kent's economy, due to the concentration of this industry in the county.
- 3) Public Health rules on social distancing and government restrictions had impacted on the arts, entertainment and leisure sector and this impact had worsened since the summer.
- 4) It was forecast that there would be some recovery to the Kent economy and the level of recovery would be affected by whether a Trade and Cooperation Agreement had been reached between the UK and the EU. Unemployment would be likely to lag behind the return to output growth. It was expected following a decrease in September that unemployment figures would increase due to the second lockdown.
- 5) An update was provided on the Kent and Medway Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan. Full details of support for businesses was accessible on the KCC website.
- 6) Resolved that the presentation on Sustaining the Economy Post-Lockdown be noted.

198. Spending Review

(Item 10)

Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance and Dave Shipton, Head of Finance Policy, Planning & Strategy, were in attendance for this item.

- 1) Mr Oakford said the results of the Spending Review were better than anticipated. Additional funds were 'one offs' with the exception of the opportunity to increase the adult social care precept by an additional 1%, subject to Full Council's approval. It was hoped that the government would announce the final financial settlements in December.
- 2) The Covid-19 funding, the social care grant and council tax compensation would not mean that there were not financial challenges and £90 million spending pressures for the coming year. Savings would still need to be achieved.
- 3) Mr Shipton said that there were adjustments that would be needed over the medium term as there was still a significant imbalance in the Spending Review.
- 4) Resolved that the Spending Review be noted.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the online on Monday, 11 January 2021.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr P J Oakford, Mr M D Payne, Mrs S Prendergast and Mr M Whiting

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

199. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

200. Cabinet Member Updates

(Item 3)

- 1) Mrs Bell reported that symptom-free Covid-19 testing had started at 12 sites across districts in Kent. KCC's Chairman, Mr Gibbens, had been one of the first to book at the testing site at Sidney Cooper Gallery in Canterbury and was interviewed by BBC Radio Kent during the test. The Armed Forces assisted KCC in setting up the testing site. Further testing sites were to open so that there would be 2 in each district by the end of January 2021.

The total number of tests conducted to 8 January 2021 was 41083 of which 450 were positive, meaning that those people could isolate and reduce their risk of transmission to others. Bookings were available on the KCC website and bookings would also be available via a dedicated telephone line.

Adult Social Care had continued to work closely with the hospital trusts and social care providers on discharges from hospital. There were a number of designated beds in care homes available for adults of any age who were Covid-19 positive and leaving hospital.

The Kent and Medway CCG website had up to date information on the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination programme. More hospital hubs, primary care services and large vaccination centres were to open and services were to take vaccinations out to care homes and to the housebound.

- 2) Mrs Chandler said despite unprecedented pressures on the Social Work Team, all families with an assigned Social Worker had been contacted to ensure that families continued to receive the correct level of support and assistance. KCC had continued to ensure that all families were provided for through the help and support of the Social Work Team.

KCC had only received 6 new Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs) over the festive period which was considerably lower than previous years. However, this was a result of the closed border to France.

Covid-19 testing was being conducted at reception centres which had helped to reduce the number of UASC kept in quarantine and had allowed for a speedier transition.

There had been a reduction in the number of UASC as a large cohort transitioned to Care Leavers on 1 January 2021.

- 3) Mr Long said the rapidly changing guidance to schools from the Department for Education to the evolving Covid emergency had required Education officers to work through Christmas to provide much needed advice and support to Kent schools. All mainstream primary and secondary schools were to remain closed to all except the children of critical workers and vulnerable children. Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units were to remain open to all pupils as these fall within the vulnerable category. A school survey revealed that there were 5162 vulnerable children and 16,340 critical worker children and it was expected that the numbers would rise. The definition of vulnerable includes those without adequate access to online learning, and this was also starting to have an impact.

Early Years Settings, in line with government guidance, remained open to all pupils and had 13,899 in attendance which had dropped from the attendance level in December which was just over 27,000. Childminder numbers however remained stable. Funding issues needed to be resolved by Government, and this was being pursued by KCC.

Schools had a statutory duty to deliver remote learning with the minimum criteria set by government. There was a mix of both live and recorded teaching sessions as well as set time to complete tasks and assignments independently. KCC were providing advice and support to schools to ensure that they delivered the best education possible in the circumstances. Ofsted were to inspect schools where there were significant concerns about safeguarding or the quality of remote learning.

Secondary schools were to prioritise home learning to exam year groups and other year groups would be included as resources allowed.

KCC distributed laptops and tablets to all our children in care. The DfE had provided 3563 devices and 502 4G routers to Kent and these were deployed to all children with a social worker and vulnerable Year 10 children within maintained schools. Academies had their own allocation. The DfE aimed to deliver 1million devices by the end of the academic year.

Secondary and Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units had started to receive their test kits, and some had started to use these to test staff and pupils who are attending site.

Government had announced that exams will be cancelled this year and Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) would be consulting to determine the best way forward.

- 4) Mr Payne said the messages around transition and exports via Dover and Eurotunnel were well recognised but were worth repeating. HGVs needed to have a Kent Access Permit before coming into Kent and proceeding to the ports. Similarly, the French government had insisted on Covid-19 testing ahead of journeys taking place.

Due to further lockdown restrictions Highways site meetings were not taking place with third parties and all communications were to take place via telephone, email or post. Customer enquiries would still be dealt with but the timescales for response could be longer. Kent Highways continued to operate.

Direct debits for collection of KCC Travel Saver and Travel Saver Plus cards had been suspended for January and February and would be reviewed in March 2021.

Enforcement of HGV fly parking around the county's channel ports came into force. Information had been given to the haulage community and it was hoped that there would be an improvement for residents.

- 5) Miss Carey said that all 18 waste and recycling centres were open 7 days a week, with slots being booked online or by telephone up to a month in advance. Around 60% of slots were being taken but there was variation in use between sites. It was not considered that restrictions of the number of visits were necessary as it was reported that there was plenty of space between vehicles and careful cleaning was taking place between slots.

Waste transfer stations which processed kerbside collections from districts were operating under extended hours, in order to deal with the extra volume of waste from households over the Christmas period as well as staffing issues for district councils and traffic issues due to the end of EU transition period.

KCC was to host an interactive online conference on the theme of reducing carbon emissions in existing homes. The conference was due to take place on 3 consecutive mornings from 26 January 2021 and would cover best practice in retrofitting energy efficiency measures.

- 6) Mr Whiting said that work was being done with Locate in Kent to try to ensure Kent was not left out of the Government's levelling up agenda. Kent had a number of areas of high deprivation, and it was considered important for the Government to recognise this when relocating departments out of London to other parts of the country.

The London Resort had submitted its application for a Direct Consent Order, or DCO, to Government. KCC was supportive of this huge project, which had the potential for massive economic benefit to Kent. However, there were specific areas of concern including transport and environmental matters. Work would continue with the development company and KCC was to make a formal submission to the DCO.

The Kent and Medway Growth Hub helpline had seen an increase in calls. Intelligence was used to help inform government of the issues businesses were having in Kent. Hospitality remained the most affected sector.

The Growth Hub also reported that its conversations with businesses suggested many firms had stockpiled or deferred their orders to avoid any potential issues with transporting goods across the channel post-transition. There was an expectation that cross-channel traffic would start to increase as those stockpiles reduced and businesses started to better understand the new customs clearance arrangements,

The Rural Sector had been hit by the Covid pandemic and the extreme weather conditions in the past year. DEFRA reported a sharp drop in agricultural contribution to the UK economy, which was down by some 10% overall, with crop outputs down by one-fifth. The outcomes of the KCC Scrutiny Committee's Short Focused Inquiry into the Farming Economy were awaited.

KCC's inaugural Infrastructure Funding Statement was live on kent.gov.uk. It was a summary of all financial and non-financial developer contributions that KCC had been involved with over the course of the financial year. The statement included information on Section 106, legal agreements under the Community Infrastructure Levy, examples of infrastructure projects delivered and planned. Provision of good infrastructure was considered key to unlocking Kent's potential, and the annual statement showed how the monies received were being spent to deliver that infrastructure.

- 7) Mr Hill said that the latest lockdown had not changed the position for Community Services from Tier 4 restrictions. Parks, as well as car parks, play areas and toilets were open. There had been heavy usage of Public Rights of Way which had resulted in wear and tear in the wet weather conditions.

Libraries were to continue to provide full digital services and would be offering a click and collect book service from 33 open libraries for 2.5 days a week. The public computer provision remained suspended for staff safety reasons. Mobile Library Service 'select and collect' was to continue as would the Home Library Service, Prison Library Service and the postal loan service for the blind and partially sighted.

Registration of deaths via the telephone was to continue and there had been an increased workload with more deaths registered. Birth registrations were paused while staff focus on death registration, except for in emergencies. This was to be kept under review.

Wedding ceremonies were suspended during lockdown except for in exceptional circumstances.

KCC had to 'stand up' the Aylesford Temporary Place of Rest because of the pressure on mortuary facilities across the county. The urgent requirement only emerged on 30th December and despite it being the Christmas period with many contractors away, KCC was able to stand up Aylesford in 48 hours to make it operational by 2pm on New Year's Day. This was a herculean effort by partners in KCC and the KRF to bring forward in hours a facility which normally would take weeks to commission.

Trading Standards were taking on increased enforcement action as a result of lockdown, working with Kent Police. This was expected to continue and it was anticipated that when there was full resumption of freight traffic across the channel, there could be a shortage of trained Trading Standards officers. These were difficult to recruit and needed time to train.

- 8) Mrs Prendergast said that an e-newsletter had been sent to residents and organisations. The e-newsletter gave information on lockdown and support available, the latest on Test and Trace, regulations for people and freight travelling to the EU and details of the draft Budget. Kent Communications were emphasising crucial actions relating to the pandemic such as symptom free testing.

There was continuous review of health & safety, HR policies and guidance so that staff could continue to work safely, providing vital support to residents and service users.

- 9) Mr Oakford said that the draft Budget was published on 6 January 2021 and it was felt that it was a sound and balanced budget. KCC had received a generous financial settlement from central government and had been able to improve the financial resilience of Council. However, savings would still need to be achieved in the coming year and the Council would need to deal with the incremental pressures and impact on both Adults and Children's Services from the pandemic.

The Property Team had received notice before Christmas regarding the set up of 24 mass testing sites in Kent. Outstanding work was done over the Christmas period to identify and prepare sites, and persuading contractors to work. 12 of 24 sites were operational, with the remainder due to open imminently.

Thanks were given to Democratic Services, who had managed to keep the Council running through an extremely busy time. Thanks were given to all KCC staff who had worked over the Christmas period.

- 10) Mr Gough said that there had been extraordinary challenges for KCC in the Christmas period. There had been a sudden and major impact on Kent's highways with French authorities stopping travel across the Channel due to concerns around the new strain of Covid. Urgent support was required for those affected, both those who were not able to travel and communities in Kent. Organisations within the Council, Kent Resilience Forum, as well as private companies, voluntary organisations and community groups had responded and this work was acknowledged. Work was being undertaken to minimise any future disruption.

201. Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2021-25

(Item 4)

David Adams (Interim Director for Education) was in attendance for this item.

- 1) Mr Long introduced the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education 2021-25 and advised that this was a 'living' document which sought to raise education standards whilst supporting what parents wanted for children's education.

- 2) Mr Adams highlighted the key issues from the Plan. Work was being undertaken to deliver school places for September 2021, with the impact of the pandemic.
- 3) There were significant challenges presented by a lack of information from central government about funding. It was reported that there was normally a 3 year rolling programme of funding but this had been delayed.
- 4) There was continuing engagement and dialogue with the Department for Education around funding issues, demographic growth and school expansions.
- 5) In response to questions and comments, it was noted that:
 - A greater proportion of school age children were being given Education, Health and Care plans than in many other authorities and a high proportion were attending special schools but work was underway to ensure in future a greater number could be supported within mainstream education.
 - There had been challenges for the early years sector due to the pandemic and the way that providers had been funded based on headcount. KCC was lobbying the Department for Education to change the funding position.
 - In most districts, there was a deficiency of selective school places and as set out in the Commissioning Plan, further schemes were being worked on to produce temporary capacity.
- 6) Resolved that the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education 2021-25 be approved.

202. Kent & Medway Employment Task Force update - Kickstart & Apprenticeships in Kent (presentation)

(Item 5)

Michelle Flegg, Workforce Development Strategy Manager was in attendance for this item.

- 1) The Leader introduced the update as the Chairman of Kent and Medway Employment Taskforce. The Taskforce included representatives from schools, universities, further education colleges, representatives from the Department of Work and Pensions, as well as representatives from the business community. The Taskforce coordinated work to respond to the employment crisis and pressures arising from the pandemic.
- 2) Ms Flegg updated Members on work being done in relation to Kickstart and Apprenticeships in Kent. The economic impact of the pandemic was greatest for young people and partnership work with other employers would help to mitigate the effects and provide opportunities for young people.
- 3) The apprenticeship levy had been introduced in 2017 and KCC contributions equated to approximately £2.1million per year. All public sector employers were subject to a target requiring the creation of apprenticeship training opportunities for new and existing staff to the value of 2.3% of headcount.

- 4) There were different levels of apprenticeship training across many disciplines at KCC, including a social work degree programme for existing members of staff.
- 5) Since 2019, all levy paying employers have been able to share a proportion of their levy with other employers to support apprenticeship training. There was a virtual event planned for February 2021 to raise awareness of the benefits, mechanisms for sharing the levy and to consider the design of a collaborative approach.
- 6) Kickstart Gateways were being established to support employers able to offer less than 30 apprenticeship placements. Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Dover Chamber of Commerce, CXK Ltd, Sevenoaks District Council and Gravesham Borough Council were approved Kickstart Gateways. KCC was applying for Kickstart Gateway status via the Education People.
- 7) The government's new Kickstart scheme was to create 6-month work placements aimed at those aged 16 to 24 who were on Universal Credit and were deemed at risk of long term unemployment. The scheme placements aimed to develop the skills and experience of the participants. The scheme was to create new roles and was not to replace existing or planned vacancies. KCC had agreements from the DWP for 50 placement opportunities, with an option for this to be increased.
- 8) In response to questions, it was noted:
 - Work was being done to raise awareness around skills that would be needed by the workforce going into the future, such as digital skills. Green energy and retrofitting related jobs would be considered by the Task Force. Education partners were involved with the Task Force and were making sure young people were being skilled for future employment.
 - KCC was committed as an employer, as a Gateway and also playing a wider role in supporting others with Kickstart and apprenticeships.
- 9) Resolved that the Kent & Medway Taskforce update on Kickstart & Apprenticeships in Kent be noted.

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From: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, Peter Oakford
Corporate Director of Finance, Zena Cooke

To: Cabinet, 15 March 2021

Subject: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – January 2020-21

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The attached report sets out a high-level summary of the revenue and capital budget monitoring position as at January 2020-21 excluding and including the impact of Covid 19. The report sets out the position regarding the Council's main revenue budget and separately the position regarding Covid-19 related expenditure and funding.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to NOTE the forecast Revenue and Capital monitoring positions.

1. Introduction

1.1 The attached report sets out the revenue and capital monitoring position as at January 2020-21 including the financial information related to the impact of responding to the Covid 19 pandemic.

2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – January 2020-21

2.1 The attached report sets out the projected out-turn as at 31 January 2020-21. The report also sets out the Covid-19 related financial position which takes account of estimated risks and future demand pressures, The County Council is experiencing financial pressures arising from the impact of Covid-19 across a range of services, and these are being offset through the use of one-off emergency grant funding in this year. The Council has received a large number of specific grants to support the Covid-19 pandemic. The report considers the impact the grants have on the outturn position and our reserves.

3. Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to NOTE the forecast Revenue and Capital monitoring positions.

4. Contact details

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Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring & Forecast Outturn 2020-21

January 2020-21

By Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services,
Peter Oakford
Corporate Director of Finance, Zena Cooke
Corporate Directors

To Cabinet – 15 March 2021

Unrestricted

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1 Introduction

This report provides the budget monitoring position up to 31 January 2020-21 for both Revenue and Capital budgets, and how we are responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.1 We have improved the clarity of the report. Key information is on the left, detail is on the right, in grey

All figures are in millions, to one decimal place, unless otherwise stated

This report uses the following key abbreviations and colours:

	ASCH	Adult Social Care & Health
	CYPE	Children, Young People & Education
	GET	Growth, Environment & Transport
	S&CS	Strategic & Corporate Services
	FI&U	Financing Items & Unallocated
	SDB	Schools' Delegated Budgets
	U	Unallocated

1.2 The budget amendment included £72.2m of Covid-19 related budgets allocated by directorate but held corporately.

Following the budget amendment, the Covid-19 related budgets of £72.2m have been allocated by Directorate but are held corporately. These corporately held budgets will be allocated at the end of the year when the final costs of Covid are known.

The £72.2m Covid-19 related budgets are funded from the Covid Emergency grant.

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on the way we are monitoring the budget this year

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to have a huge impact on the way the Council works. It is important for us to understand and report on the financial effect of Covid-19 and for us to monitor against the emergency funding the government has provided. Alongside a dedicated section on Covid-19 in this report, we are showing two variance figures in all Directorate and Key Service summaries, excluding and including the impact of Covid-19.

1.3 We continue to provide regular returns to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) setting out the impact of Covid-19 and the application of additional government grants

The MHCLG return differs from this budget monitoring as it includes the gross impact of additional spending related to responding to the pandemic and the economic fallout, delays to planned savings and loss of income. The gross impact includes estimates for potential additional costs arising later in year (which are not included in this monitoring report) and does not net off any in-year underspends, which are reflected in this report.

1.4 The Revenue forecast as at the end of January is an underspend of -£14.0m excluding Covid-19.

All directorates are reporting an underspend. The largest is (-£5.0m) in FI&U, followed by ASCH (-£4.7m), S&CS (-£3.1m), CYPE (-£0.9m) and GET (-£0.3m). The forecast underspend has increased by £2.1m since the last report in November. This is an exceptional year and is not an indication of future spending or saving levels, and although this level of underspend is encouraging, it is important to note the position does not consider the continued impact of the third lockdown.

The Revenue forecast for the Covid-19 related underspend as at the end of January is -£11.8m against the £72.2m of Covid

The revenue forecast for Covid-19 related budgets is an underspend of £11.8m. We are beginning to see the impact of the third lockdown, but we do not yet know the full financial impact of this. We also have £7.5m of additional risks identified as part of our MHCLG government return. It

1 Introduction

related budgets.

The overall underspend is £25.8m.

should be noted that £18.6m has been assumed in 2021-22 to help balance the budget. £17.7m of this is tranche 4 of the Covid-19 Emergency Grant and is not within the figures above because it relates to 2021-22. £20.8m of recurring COVID budget amendment items have also been built into the 2021-22 MTFP.

1.5 The Capital forecast as at the end of January is an underspend of £201.5m excluding Covid-19. The forecast underspend has increased by £52.1m

The underspend is made up of -£4.3m real and -£197.2m rephasing variance. This represents 38.1% of the capital budget.

The largest real variance is an underspend of -£3.3m in CYPE.

The major rephasing variances are -£96.4m in GET, -£58.1m in S&CS and -£38.9m in CYPE.

1.6 Schools' Delegated Budgets are reporting a £34.5m overspend

The overspend position of +£34.5m reflects the impact of high demand and high cost per child of High Needs Placements.

2 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2.1 Note the forecast Revenue and Capital monitoring position as at January 2021 | The projected Revenue budget out-turn is the position as at the end of January. It is important to note that this position does not take account of the full impact of the third national lockdown. |
|--|---|
-

3 Revenue & Capital Positions

Revenue Variance -14.0m underspend
Capital Variance -201.5m underspend

The revenue monitoring position as at the end of January is showing a variance of **-£14m excluding Covid-19**. The Covid-19 forecast as at the end of January is showing a Covid-19 related underspend of **£11.8m** but there will still be further financial challenges as the pandemic continues and we do not know the full impact of the further national lockdowns. The overall underspend is **£25.8m**.

The capital monitoring position is **-£201.5m** of which **-£197.2m** relates to rephasing of projects and **-£4.3m** are real variances.

Directorate Revenue variances excluding the impact of Covid-19

Directorate	Revenue Budget £m	Variance excl. Covid-19 £m	Last Reported Position (Nov) £m	Movement (+/-) £m
Adult Social Care & Health	402.5	-4.7	-4.4	-0.2
Children, Young People & Education	281.7	-0.9	-0.7	-0.2
Growth, Environment & Transport	173.8	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1
Strategic & Corporate Services	90.2	-3.1	-2.4	-0.7
Financing Items & Unallocated	79.6	-5.0	-4.1	-0.9
	1,027.7	-14.0	-11.8	-2.1
Schools' Delegated Budgets	0.0	+34.8	+34.5	+0.3
	1,027.7	+20.8	+22.7	-1.7

Covid-19 budgets held corporately allocated by Directorate as per the Budget Amendment

The table below shows the forecast position against the Covid-19 budgets as at January 2021. It shows an underspend of **£11.8m** against the corporately held **£72.2m** Covid-19 related budget. More detail can be found in Section 4.

Directorate	Covid-19 Allocation £m	Covid-19 Forecast £m	Covid-19 Variance £m
Adult Social Care & Health	33.7	21.8	-12.0
Children, Young People & Education	7.7	-1.1	-8.9
Growth, Environment & Transport	9.9	9.0	-0.9
Strategic & Corporate Services	7.2	11.6	+4.3*
Financing Items	6.7	19.3	+12.6**
Unallocated	7.0	0.0	-7.0
	72.2	60.5	-11.8

3 Revenue & Capital Positions

Revenue Variance -14.0m underspend
Capital Variance -201.5m underspend

*The Strategic & Corporate Services variance includes a drawdown from the Public Health Reserve of £0.1m to cover their additional costs. **Financing Items includes the £16m Helping Hands scheme

Capital position

Directorate	Capital Budget £m	Variance excl. Covid-19 £m	Real Variance £m	Rephasing Variance £m	Covid-19 Forecast £m	Variance incl. Covid-19 £m
Adult Social Care & Health	4.2	-3.8	0.0	-3.8	0.0	-3.8
Children, Young People & Education	154.3	-42.2	-3.3	-38.9	1.7	-37.2
Growth, Environment & Transport	298.0	-98.2	-1.8	-96.4	0.1	-96.3
Strategic & Corporate Services	71.5	-57.3	0.8	-58.1	0.6	-57.5
	528.0	-201.5	-4.3	-197.2	2.4	-194.8

4 Covid-19

As part of the Budget Amendment, we have held £72.2m budget corporately for Covid-19 response and recovery. Taking account of Covid-19 related revenue costs, additional Covid-19 related risks and compensating forecasted underspends and capital costs, the Covid-19 related projected underspend is currently £11.8m. This does not take account of the impact of the latest restrictions.

Covid-19 Forecasts (20-21)

	ASCH £m	CYPE £m	GET £m	S&CS £m	FI £m	U £m	Total £m
Covid-19 allocation held corporately	33.7	7.7	9.9	7.2	6.7	7.0	72.2
Drawdown from Public Health Reserve*				0.1			
Revenue Forecasts							
Actual spend	6.9	4.7	7.8	13.5	16.0	0.0	48.9
Underspends	-16.5	-14.0	-12.7	-3.3			-46.5
Loss of income	4.0	2.6	9.6	1.1	1.9		19.3
Unrealised savings	3.3	1.3	0.1		1.4		6.0
One off payments to the market	23.7	0.6	0.2				24.5
Payments for undelivered variable fee services	0.3	3.7	3.9	0.3			8.3
Total Revenue forecast	21.7	-1.1	9.0	11.6	19.3	0.0	60.5
Covid-19 Related Underspend compared with Covid-19 related Budgets held corporately	-12.0	-8.9	-0.9	+4.3	+12.6	-7.0	-11.8
Reconciliation to MHCLG Return							
Removal of underspends and additional income not included	16.5	14.0	12.7	3.3			46.5
Removal of capital forecasts not included		-1.7	-0.1	-0.6			-2.4
Additional risks identified							7.5
Total per MHCLG Return	38.2	11.1	21.6	14.4	19.3	0.0	112.1
Variance against MHCLG Return compared with Covid-19 Budgets held corporately							+39.9
Capital Forecasts							
Actual spend to be covered by Revenue Contribution	0.0	1.7	0.1	0.6	0.0		2.4

*Public Health are forecasting a net spend of £0.1m in response to Covid-19 which will currently be funded by a drawdown from the Public Health reserve

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From: Roger Gough, Leader of the Council
Richard Long, Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member - Integrated Children's Services
Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education

To: Cabinet – 15 March 2021

Decision No. 21/00035

Subject: **Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme**

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: Leader Decision

Electoral Division: All

Summary: The Covid pandemic has had an impact on all children and young people in Kent. The effects will vary between individuals depending upon their circumstances, recognising these will be both positive and negative. However, it is recognised nationally and internationally that children and young people have sacrificed more than most over the course of the pandemic.

It is proposed that the County Council leads a wide ranging programme across the whole of Kent to reconnect children and young people to some of the things they have missed and provide a wide range of new opportunities over the remainder of this academic year, and the entirety of the next. This will be an ambitious programme which will require the support and endeavour of the whole Council and reaches across all Cabinet portfolios. The programme is in addition to rather than instead of existing services and commitments. The programme will focus on positive opportunities and hopefully draw together a wide range of partners and resources, including community resources, to invest in the children and young people of Kent.

The programme will be shaped with children and young people and seek to reconnect them to:

- Health and happiness
- Learning missed
- Friends, family and community
- Sports, activities and the outdoors
- Economic wellbeing

This report introduces the need for the programme, sets out the immediate activities required and the recommended approach to develop detailed plans for implementation of the next phase of the programme after the election. It is vital that

this programme is responsive to any changes in impact or need and is a universal offer for all children and young people in Kent.

It is recognised that the current period is unprecedented in the Council's history. This paper seeks to capture some of those challenges and opportunities in setting out the immediate steps being taken and those contemplated to support the County's children. These unique circumstances mean that the county will be exiting from the pandemic during the pre-election period and work must be progressed in order that any administration in power after May stands ready to deliver in this vital area.

To recognise the unique circumstances and the importance of providing a broader view of the membership of the Council, the Leaders of the Opposition parties have been invited to attend and speak at Cabinet on 15 March 2021.

Similarly, recommendation 7 provides a specific intention for the views, comments and input of non-executive Members to be noted as part of the development of this programme.

Finally, an informal Member group will be established and meet fortnightly during the pre-election period to ensure political oversight and involvement on a cross party basis.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to;

1. Agree the creation of the 'Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme';
2. Confirm that this decision establishes the Programme via formal governance to ensure transparency, evidence a clear intention to deliver in the future and allow appropriate preparatory work to be undertaken, prior to a further key decision where scope, objectives, outcomes and funding for the full project may be confirmed;
3. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Leader and the Cabinet Members for Integrated Children's Services and Education and Skills, to take necessary actions, including but not limited to, entering into relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as required to establish the Programme and undertake relevant preparatory work within normal delegated spend thresholds;
4. Approve acceptance of the £5.3m specific grant funding from the Department for Education to deliver the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme and confirm that this will be an integral part of the Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme;
5. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education to develop a funding framework, and manage and deploy the accepted HAF funding, in accordance with the grant conditions and arrangements detailed in the relevant appendix of this report.

6. Agree that full implementation of the Programme will be subject to a future Key Decision which will confirm;
 - i. The detailed scope, objectives and measurable outcomes of the Programme.
 - ii. The full funding allocation.
 - iii. Monitoring arrangements for delivery of outcomes and spend.
 - iv. Delegated spend arrangements via an appropriate framework.
 - v. General delegations as required to allow for effective implementation of the decision.
7. Note any comments or other input from non-Executive Members consulted as part of this decision.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Members have been united in expressing their concern about the impact of the pandemic on the young people of Kent. Throughout the past year it has been a clear priority for the administration and all Members in their role scrutinising the executive. Further, it formed a key part of the budget debate and was raised in the amendments proposed by the opposition groups. Similarly, Members have recognised the key role and responsibilities of the County Council in recovering from the pandemic for our young people.
- 1.2. It is recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the lives of all Kent residents substantially since March 2020 when the county entered the first national lockdown. However, this has been particularly felt by the young people of the county who have seen every aspect of their life and development impacted. A high proportion of the past year has been spent in lockdown and the remainder under restrictions that have materially impacted on the wellbeing, education and social development of our young people.
- 1.3. During those lockdown periods, state funded schools in Kent saw only 2000-2500 pupils attending daily, which represents about 1% of the school population. Similar numbers attended early year settings, representing about 7% of the cohort. Figures demonstrate that approximately 200,000 school children were unable to attend school between March and September 2020, and 40% of pre-school children did not return to settings.
- 1.4. Whilst all schools and settings were open to all pupils between September 2020 and December 2020, provision for many was disrupted with class or year group bubbles being required to self-isolate because of Covid-positive cases, or staff shortages. The impact of this period on their learning, wellbeing and friendships has been recognised as significant.
- 1.5. The pandemic has also impacted on other aspects of children and young people's lives. Evidence is already emerging regarding the effects on their mental and physical health. The Chief Inspector for Ofsted, Amanda Spielman, states in her most recent (Dec 2020) annual report that some

children have regressed, particularly in early years, and lost skills such as being able to hold a pencil. The report also indicates that ‘some children are thought to be at least 6 months behind where they should be’, presenting with issues around stamina and mental health in addition to gaps in learning.

- 1.6. While schools have worked to understand and measure gaps, these cannot be fully understood until teachers have had time to undertake a rounded assessment with students back in their classrooms. We therefore do not know the full extent of the issue for children and young people. Schools and settings also report regression in the social skills of young children and the school readiness of those who have essentially missed most of their nursery experience.
- 1.7. Disadvantaged pupils are likely to be disproportionately impacted by all these issues and we may well see the attainment gap widen for this group in the short and medium term. This group’s attainment was already below that of their non-disadvantaged peers prior to the pandemic.
- 1.8. Older students have experienced uncertainty regarding their public examinations and the results. Youth unemployment has risen disproportionately compared to that of other age groups, and the short-term economic prospects of young people remains uncertain. The UK’s jobless rate rose to 5.1% in the three months to December, with the number of people on company payrolls down 726,000 on pre-pandemic levels. Almost three-fifths of these were younger than 25 years of age. In Kent youth unemployment has risen from 4.4% in January 2020 to 9.5% in January 2021 (national is 8.7%).
- 1.9. In the last 12 months, all children and young people have seen a reduction in their ability to socialise, travel, see friends and family, take part in organised sports, clubs, outdoor and indoor activities, art, theatre, culture, music and entertainment.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1 The programme brand “Reconnect” was the suggestion of our young people.
- 2.2 Discussions with them have demonstrated a clear preference on their part for a programme focused on positive opportunities rather than emphasising the “damage” that may have been done to them or their futures by the pandemic. Young people have made it clear that they want to feel optimistic and look forward. Initial discussions show that they want a programme of **additional** opportunities reflecting that.
- 2.3 Whilst acknowledging that the Council will continue to need to target our core resources at those most in need, this is a universal programme to bring the very best out of our talented and capable young people. Initial discussions with young people made it clear that they do not want the messaging to suggest we are trying to “fix a broken generation” or anything similar.
- 2.4 The programme brand “Reconnect” signifies that we are entering the phase of children and young people being able to reconnect with their education, their friends, their families, their passions and interests, and to try new things.

- 2.5 This must be a programme for all, recognising that all children and young people have missed opportunities, but it will recognise that some will need more support reconnecting than others, for some the gaps will have become wider than for others. It will be a programme of choice. It will harness the variety of funding streams that exist now, and in the future providing a vehicle for coalescing, corralling and delivering opportunities.
- 2.6 The County Council has a range of ideas, plans and powers that can give life to this programme but we recognise that we are not alone in that. Our colleagues elsewhere in the districts, boroughs and city councils will have their own ideas and plans and it is vital that we draw in partners who already occupy the space of supporting children and young people to work together cohesively for the benefit of our young people. We will capitalise on the spirit of the Kent community to support each other.
- 2.7 The intention is to make this a priority of the County Council, and that of other public bodies, charitable organisations and the Kent community. We intend this to be a programme that operates between now and the end of August 2022. We want Kent to “give a year to the children”.
- 2.8 Given the aspiration, this work needs to advance at pace in order that all necessary preparation, advice and information can be brought together with a clear scope, with defined outcomes, activities and funding sources. This will allow a substantive key decision to be taken after the election to set out the programme for the year ahead.
- 2.9 This is also a programme that will be for all Members. Accordingly, all views are welcome to sustain, inform and support the detailed planning for the next phase of the programme and ensure a rounded view of the opportunities, challenges and way forward.
- 2.10 This will be a programme which will need the entire County Council’s support and involvement. Whilst it will be led by the Children, Young People and Education Directorate, it is expected all parts of KCC, including our trading companies, will contribute.
- 2.11 A clear brand will be created for the programme, together with a communications strategy to engage children and young people, their families, and their communities. Following consultation with our Participation Unit, the name of the programme is proposed as “Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People” or “Reconnect” for short.

3. Aims of the Programme and Outcomes to be Achieved

- 3.1 The programme aims to Reconnect Kent children and young people to:
- Health and Happiness
 - Learning Missed
 - Family, Friends and Community
 - Sport, Activities and the Outdoors

- Economic Wellbeing
- 3.2 These themes resonated with the young people in the Participation Unit, with the emphasis being forward looking, positive, enjoyable and fun, rather than focused on a deficit model.
- 3.3 Work will need to be undertaken to develop a full suite of outcome and performance measures, but it is anticipated these will include:
- participation levels
 - feedback
 - improvements in resilience and wellbeing scores
 - demonstrable evidence of reduced learning loss
 - increased levels of volunteering
 - the number of young people supported into employment
- 3.4 It is important that outcomes and the scope of the project are developed in the coming months with young people. This is vital to ensure that the programme in all its various forms reflects the aspirations and needs of young people as seen by them.
- 3.5 The views of children and young people will be at the heart of the programme. It is not for us to second guess what they would find interesting, exciting and engaging. We will work with children and young people, their families as well as our delivery partners, schools and settings to construct and constantly evaluate the programme.
- 3.6 Similarly, given the approach to this programme will be very different, Members are asked to also contemplate the aims and outcomes and provide their views. The importance of this is reflected in recommendation 7 which explicitly references the input of non-executive Members. The fact that this is about “getting it right” is reflected in the fact that the Leaders of the Opposition Groups have been invited to attend and speak at the Cabinet Meeting where this paper will be discussed.
- 3.7 To provide an opportunity for cross-party input during the pre-election period, an Informal Member Group will be established and chaired by the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children’s Services. Standing membership of the group will include the opposition spokespeople on matters for children and young people.

4. Activities, Funding and Timescales

- 4.1 At this stage it is not possible to detail what provision will be made beyond broad headlines and that provides the opportunities for Members to give their views. Work will need to be undertaken with families and delivery partners to construct the programme, plus the level of resources that can be pulled together will be an influencing factor.

- 4.2 The full and final detail of the complete programme to run is a matter for Member decision and which will be brought forward after the election. The current intention is for the programme to begin immediately and then run until the end of the Summer Holidays in 2022. The ultimate direction will be one for Members after the election.
- 4.3 Importantly, the programme is about additionality and not simply reshaping or flexing base budget activity to reflect the post-Covid environment. In order to achieve the aims of the programme, dedicated funding and a vigour in chasing down funding opportunities and funding streams is required. It is anticipated that these will largely be one off and these will be fully clarified in the weeks and months ahead leading into the next key decision.
- 4.4 The proposal is for the programme to be provided with dedicated funding and be the umbrella for specific grant funding which supports the aims of the Programme. The activities and projects funded by the Programme will be additional to the core activity of the County Council's directorates, and the funding commitments will be time limited and will not be a recurring cost to the Council beyond 31 August 2022.
- 4.5 The dedicated programme team will be seconded until 31 August 2022. These posts will be funded from dedicated, or, where appropriate, external funding/grants that are sheltered within the Programme.
- 4.6 The use and impact of the Programme funding will be monitored closely, not only in order to provide update reports to Cabinet and the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee, but also to flex the response according to experience, and how need and demand changes across the County.
- 4.7 The funding from the Council for the full and final programme will be determined as part of the year end closing of accounts process. The amount of funding will be dependent on the level of revenue underspend at the end of the financial year. The financial implications of the programme will be set out in the future key decision report but will largely be from one-off funding sources such as revenue underspend.
- 4.8 Whilst the full long-term detail and vision of this programme cannot currently be set out, there are already known resources which it is proposed should be sheltered under the umbrella of the Reconnect Programme. Details of these are below and give an illustration of how the Programme could operate in some areas. In addition, work commenced or committed using other areas of COVID grant funding will be assessed and where appropriate brought under this programme.
- 4.9 Known funding streams

Scheme	Funding	
	Nationally £m	Locally £m
Holiday Activities and Food Programme	220	5.3

Digital Access (children)		0.1
Kickstart		1.3
Catch-up Premium	650	15.4*
National Tuition Programme	550	
Secondary Summer Schools	200	4.7*
Recovery Premium	302	7.1*

* Estimated allocation direct to schools

- 4.10 The Holiday Activities and Food grant for Kent from the Department for Education has been finalised at £5.3m. The recommendations for this paper include the necessary decision making to accept and disburse this grant. The grant is given to Kent County Council to provide holiday activity support to disadvantaged children during the Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021 breaks. These will cover at least 4 hours a day, for 4 days a week, with one week of activity in Easter, 4 in the summer and 1 at Christmas.
- 4.11 In view of the timescales for delivery of an Easter Programme, a specific recommendation of this paper is that the Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education be delegated responsibility for delivery of the HAF programme and for the associated £5.3m grant. Further details of the HAF programme are contained as an Appendix to this report.
- 4.12 The Education People are being commissioned to develop the programme in partnership with stakeholders. Ongoing lockdown restrictions will affect the provision available at Easter 2021. Rules allow:
- outdoor provision for all children without restriction,
 - indoor provision to:
 - vulnerable children and young people
 - children on free school meals, where they are attending as part of the holiday activities and food programme
 - other children, where the provision is:
 - reasonably necessary to enable their parents and carers to work, search for work, undertake education or training, or attend a medical appointment or address a medical need, or attend a support group
 - being used by electively home educating parents as part of their existing arrangements for their child to receive a suitable full-time education
 - being used as part of their efforts to obtain a regulated qualification, meet the entry requirements for an education institution, or to undertake exams and assessments
- 4.13 The Council has secured £100k of financial support to help improve the digital access for children and young people. Working with Cantium Business Solutions we have identified 94 laptops which are being rebuilt for distribution to children and young people. Remaining funding will be targeted towards the provision of internet access. One intention is to work with charitable organisations who are similarly looking to collect and refurbish second-hand devices to better co-ordinate this activity and the distribution of devices, as well

as to maximise the value of the financial contributions we secure. Through this co-ordination the aim is to use the Reconnect brand to drive donations from businesses and individuals and create the network to recondition these and distribute them via our schools and settings. Another proposal is to work with Kent's Public Service Network to explore opportunities for providing internet access to children and young people with limited access at home.

- 4.14 Government has also announced funding to support academic catch up. £650m was announced for Catch Up Premium, which would be distributed to schools (£80 per pupil in years R to 11 in mainstream schools, and £240 per place for special schools and pupil referral units). £350m was provided for a national tutoring programme, which has been extended by £200m. £200m was recently announced for secondary summer schools, while £302m is to be provided as a one off "recovery premium" for primary and secondary schools to boost summer schooling, clubs and activities. While we will not control this funding, it is suggested that the Reconnect Programme work with schools to ensure our activities dovetail with and enhance the opportunities provided to their pupils using this funding.
- 4.15 There are also charitable organisations that are seeking to support children reconnect with and extend their learning, such as the Kent based Invicta National Academy. Working with these and schools to blend schemes, such as the holiday activities fund, will enable us to provide an enjoyable and balanced experience for children and young people.
- 4.16 It is intended that the programme should work with existing clubs and organisations to help them reconnect with children and young people. We know that lockdown will have broken some of the links, both child to club, and adult volunteers to club because their circumstances may have changed, and they can no longer commit the time. We will promote clubs and organisations to families and look to secure bursary funding to support fees and equipment for disadvantaged children to overcome barriers to participation.
- 4.17 It is understood funding to promote the community use of schools' sports facilities may be being made available via Sports England, which we will look to draw into the programme. Details of this have not yet been released.
- 4.18 The aspiration of the programme is limitless. We envisage libraries running book clubs, country parks being venues for outdoor learning and activities, leisure centres being available to children and young people free or at reduced rates, family learning in schools and centres, taster sessions in different sports and hobbies, through to premier sports clubs running academies. Again, the thoughts and views of Members would be particularly welcome on the opportunities and needs in order that subsequent activity reflects all of our communities.
- 4.19 We are working with our schools to create job opportunities for trainee Teaching Assistants using the Kickstart scheme. The aim is not only to reconnect these young people with training and employment opportunities, but to support our work on improving the outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The intention is to employ these young people on a supernumerary basis, provide high quality training and job experience in both

mainstream and special schools with a focus on supporting pupils with SEND. The ultimate aim is that these young people secure permanent jobs in mainstream schools because they have strong skills in supporting children and young people with SEND. We anticipate the first cohort will start after Easter and will therefore be part of the workforce available to support summer activities, thereby ensuring all children can be included. Securing two cohorts of 100 young people would attract £1.3m in funding from the DWP in wages, training and administration costs.

- 4.20 The initiatives above provide a flavour of the scope and aspiration of the programme using existing, known aspects that we are working on where funding has been clearly identified. The Reconnect Programme and brand will be the umbrella under which all additional activity meeting the aims of the programme will be sheltered. The intention is to create a brand that the Kent community can get behind but we need to work across the County on this. We see this as similar to “City of culture” and “Kent Together” style initiatives where individuals, clubs and businesses want to play their part, get behind the cause and be associated with the brand.
- 4.21 The initiatives above, which have external funding attached, fit within the aims of the programme, but also have grant conditions attached which will mean these are not universally available. While we will be creative in how we position funding streams alongside each other, dedicated funding is needed to make the programme universal, and to act as the seed funding to attract further resources.
- 4.22 Further formal and public decisions will need to be made after the elections in May, to agree the additional one-off funding needed for the scheme, and what will be funded by the Council and how.
- 4.23 Through this paper, Members are asked to commit to the principle of the Reconnect Programme being a priority subject to detailed funding and programme activity on the phases from June 2021 to August 2022 being agreed after the election.
- 4.24 In addition, we will establish simple mechanisms for businesses, charities, communities and public sector partners in Kent to offer funding or services in kind to the programme, or to offer to volunteer or be delivery partners in the programme

5. Additional Information

- 5.1 This paper sets out the interim arrangements that allow for the coalescing and commencement of work under this programme with the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education as the officer with accountability for the delivery of the programme and to be accountable for the resources provided and outcomes of the programme. The long term governance, funding and outcomes of the project will be brought before Members after the election for decision.

- 5.2 David Adams has been asked to act as the Reconnect Programme Director to drive this programme forward and to meet the expectations and aspirations of this paper and the associated ideas and input of Members. It is apparent that even in these initial stages, the Programme Director will need to pull upon staff resources across the County Council to deliver the programme.
- 5.3 Given the need to implement quickly, the Council will operate within existing data-sharing protocols whilst in parallel developing data sharing arrangements that will significantly enhance the Council's ability to target specific groups and individuals most in need of support going forward.

6. Equality Implications

- 6.1 To reduce potential adverse impacts:
- 1) The programme aims to be universal, supporting all children and young people aged 2 to 19/24 years.
 - 2) A good proportion of the external funding has grant criteria targeting this to vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, with clear eligibility criteria such as entitlement to Free School Meals. This is intended to help ensure household income is not a barrier to participation.
 - 3) Efforts will be made to target specific groups who are vulnerable, either by raising their awareness of the opportunities provided by the funding to ensure they do not miss out, or by direct provision of support.
 - 4) Evidence on the impact of Covid-19 on protected characteristics will be sought and used to influence decision making.
 - 5) Any document made available to the public to support accessing funds will also be made available in accessible formats as appropriate.
 - 5) An EQIA screening will be completed by the appropriate organisation for all initiatives using this funding.
- 6.2 A programme level EQIA will be developed alongside the formation of the programme.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The nation is galvanising behind children and young people to ensure they are able to access opportunities to help them reconnect with all aspects of a healthy, safe, and enriched childhood.
- 7.2 We constantly aim for Kent to be the most forward looking area in England for care, education and learning, supported by specialist and early help services so that we are the best place for children and young people to grow up safely, learn, develop and achieve.
- 7.3 The Reconnect Programme is essential to the Council delivering this aim in a post-Covid environment.

Recommendations

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to;

1. Agree the creation of the 'Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme';
2. Confirm that this decision establishes the Programme via formal governance to ensure transparency, evidence a clear intention to deliver in the future and allow appropriate preparatory work to be undertaken, prior to a further key decision where scope, objectives, outcomes and funding for the full project may be confirmed;
3. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Leader and the Cabinet Members for Integrated Children's Services and Education and Skills, to take necessary actions, including but not limited to, entering into relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as required to establish the Programme and undertake relevant preparatory work within normal delegated spend thresholds;
4. Approve acceptance of the £5.3m specific grant funding from the Department for Education to deliver the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme and confirm that this will be an integral part of the Reconnect: Kent Children and Young People Programme;
5. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education to develop a funding framework, and manage and deploy the accepted HAF funding, in accordance with the grant conditions and arrangements detailed in the relevant appendix of this report.
6. Agree that full implementation of the Programme will be subject to a future Key Decision which will confirm;
 - a) The detailed scope, objectives and measurable outcomes of the Programme.
 - b) The full funding allocation.
 - c) Monitoring arrangements for delivery of outcomes and spend.
 - d) Delegated spend arrangements via an appropriate framework.
 - e) General delegations as required to allow for effective implementation of the decision.
7. Note any comments or other input from non-Executive Members consulted as part of this decision.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme

1. Introduction

1.1 During the course of the current pandemic government policy towards the provision of free meals to eligible pupils has evolved and predominantly been based on the provision of vouchers to parents. For the coming holiday periods starting with Easter 2021 and up to and including the Christmas holidays the government have announced a new initiative called the Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) which takes a different approach to making provision for children who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). This scheme has previously been piloted across a small number of Local Authority areas prior to national rollout. There are some case studies of delivery methodology and activities, but these have been on a very small scale and pre pandemic, dating from 2018 and 2019.

2. Holiday Activities and Food Programme

2.1 The objectives of this government scheme for all eligible 5 – 16 year olds are to provide healthy food, enriching activities, physical activity and nutritional education to children and their parents during the holiday periods.

2.2 The DfE has been clear that this provision must be inclusive and accessible to children with SEND and those who live in isolated or rural areas as part of an offer to all eligible children.

2.3 As a minimum the provision is intended to extend to four hours per day for four days a week, over a four-week period in the summer and one week during the other holiday periods.

2.4 Whilst the focus of HAF is clearly on provision for eligible children who currently receive benefits related free school meals within its guidance the DfE encourages local authorities to make holiday clubs available to any children not eligible for free school meals, who can pay to attend.

2.5 In addition the guidance also states that if local authorities can demonstrate that they are offering the programme comprehensively across the full geographical area and are fully meeting demand from free school meal eligible children in the area they can seek approval from the DfE to use up to 15% of their allocation to provide free or subsidised holiday club places for children who are not in receipt of benefits related free school meals but who are considered by the local authority as vulnerable or in need of this provision. This may include children assessed as being in need, looked-after children, children with an EHC plan (education, health and care), children assessed as otherwise vulnerable, or children living in areas of high deprivation.

2.6 Nationally a maximum allocation of £220 million is being made available to all Local Authorities. KCC has been allocated a maximum of £530,560 for 2020/21 and £4,745,300 for 2021/22. A requirement of the allocation is for Local Authorities to submit regular reporting and monitoring updates both before and

after each of the holiday periods setting out planned delivery and actual take up, respectively. In respect of this financial year's allocation KCC was required to submit the first of these reports by 26th February. This plan set out how KCC will meet the government requirements. It has been accepted and funding for 2020/21 is being released by DfE.

- 2.7 The Interim Director of Education has commissioned the Early Years and Childcare team within TEP to deliver the HAF programme in Kent on behalf of KCC because of their strong links with the existing Out of School holiday scheme providers.
- 2.8 TEP's Early Years and Childcare team plans to work with existing providers and partners in the community to deliver the programme, in order to support continuity and longer-term sustainability of local projects.
- 2.9 TEP is currently recruiting a project team that will comprise a Programme Co-ordinator, two Programme Advisors and a Business Support Officer to ensure an effective and focused delivery of the programme in Kent

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 As previously indicated grant funding is being made available by the DfE. This will amount to £5.3m for Kent in total. Planned delivery will need to take place within this funding envelope. The DfE has confirmed that up to 10% i.e., £530k of the available grant can be used to meet the additional costs that Local Authorities may incur in administering the scheme. In light of this there are no revenue budget implications for KCC.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal requirements in this grant are standard although there is a recognition that the impact of Covid19 may require some flexibility on the use of the grant. The key legal requirements on the Authority are as follows.
- a) The DfE will require the Section 151 Officer to confirm at the end of each financial year that the funding has been properly expended.
 - b) The Authority will not overspend on the Programme, over and above their maximum funding allocation, without the prior written approval of the DfE. Unauthorised overspends will not be reimbursed by the DfE.
 - c) The Authority must maintain reliable, accessible and up to date accounting records with an adequate audit trail for all expenditure funded by grant monies under this Determination.

5. Equalities implications

- 5.1 As previously indicated the conditions of the grant require KCC to ensure that delivered activity is inclusive and accessible to all eligible children. As KCC's commissioned provider TEP are currently undertaking the EqIA screening in line with KCC policy.

From: **Michael Payne, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: **Cabinet – 15 March 2021**

Decision No: **N/A**

Subject: **Port of Dover Closure incident follow-up and EU Transition update**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This report updates Cabinet on how lessons learned by KCC from the 48-hour total border closure and introduction of new Covid-19 testing regime for all travellers in the week leading up to Christmas 2020 are being taken forward.

There is also an update on traffic management following the end of transition on 1st January 2021 and a look ahead to July 2021 when national import controls will be introduced on the UK side of the border.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to:

- a) **Note** the lessons identified and actions underway in response to the port closure incidents before and over Christmas 2020.
- b) **Note** the latest update regarding the border situation now and for the immediate future in Kent post EU Transition.

1. Border Closure December 2020 - Background

- 1.1 On December 19th, 2020, the Prime Minister announced tougher restrictions for large parts of South East England with a new Tier 4: 'Stay at Home' alert level, following a rapid rise in infections attributed to the spread of a new variant of COVID-19. Following this, on Sunday 20th December, the French Government announced it would not accept any passengers arriving from the UK for a minimum 48-hour period.
- 1.2 France subsequently reopened its borders to vehicles travelling from the UK on Wednesday 23rd December but with a new requirement for all travellers, including HGV drivers, to have a negative COVID-19 test prior to travel.

- 1.3 This unprecedented and rapidly evolving situation threatened to cause gridlock on Kent's roads and put hauliers and other travellers at real risk of being stranded in the UK for the Christmas period. Furthermore, the disruption occurred while the Council was still working with partners to deal with the broader Covid-19 response and recovery effort, including moving into 'Tier 4' restrictions and finalising preparations in the county for the end of the UK/EU Transition period, as well as preparing for disruption from Storm Bella (which hit Kent on 26th December). Resources were also stretched as many staff from across all local partners were taking leave over the holiday period before "standing up" ahead of the EU Transition end date on 1st January 2021.
- 1.4 From a KCC perspective, officers involved with the response went above and beyond normal working practices, working excessive hours through the Christmas period to manage the impact of a combination of events that were outside the usual remit of a Local Authority. There was severe disruption for days before the situation began to ease.
- 1.5 The readiness to deal with an event of this magnitude was aided by the *Operation Fennel* traffic management plans and testing and exercising that had taken place over the previous two years. These trusted working relationships between partners were key in forming an effective response to this event, which drew praise from the Secretary of State for Transport, who expressed his gratitude for the work carried out by KCC and all partners of the Kent Resilience Forum to help ease the significant disruption during this period.

2. Positives, Lessons Learned and Actions Arising from Border Closure Incident

- 2.1 As is usual after such events, KCC and partners in the Kent Resilience Forum have been reviewing the local response to enable the learning of lessons which in turn helps in planning future responses to any similar incidents that occur. As well as a number of positives to take from the incident response, it is accepted that there were several aspects of this incident where lessons need to be learned. Positive aspects and areas for improvement in future are summarised below from a KCC perspective:

2.2 Lessons

- (i) Traffic congestion and community impacts in Dover Town and the surrounding areas as many vehicles rushed to the area to try to beat the 48-hour closure and/or to be early in the queue for when the borders reopened.
- 2.2.1 KCC and partners were able to respond quickly to the growing queues of HGV's (accepting that response to LGVs/passengers was less effective) while the new requirement to overlay COVID-19 testing was resolved. Great agility, flexibility and support was shown to develop and implement a testing policy and approach, acceptable to the French, within 24 hours. The availability and readiness of the Manston site ahead of EU Transition was also important.

2.2.2 However, following the announcement of the French port closure on 20th December, traffic quickly built up in Kent and particularly in Dover Town and the surrounding roads, which had detrimental impacts on the community in the days that followed. Traffic management plans in existence at the time did not give consideration to a complete closure of the border nor provision for the volume of non-HGV traffic that could accumulate in Dover if that occurred. Initially, lateral flow Covid testing took place at Manston and on the M20 motorway, but once it was apparent that congestion at the Port could not be resolved without clearing the gridlock in Dover, testing was set up in Dover too.

(ii) Driver welfare provision for all travellers caught up in the incident.

2.3.1 KCC, with crucial support from local partners, provided hot meals to those caught up in the disruption on an unprecedented scale, with 12,000 hot meals given to stranded travellers in one day. Ongoing arrangements and involvement of local charities and caterers resulted in a minimum of two meals per day being provided. Any spare food was redistributed to relevant charities. The logistics to deliver welfare provision on such a large scale required specific expertise that is not currently available internally and so support provided by the Armed Forces was of great assistance in the response effort.

2.3.2 However, the existing Driver Welfare Plan is based on port disruption with people in queues and so did not initially consider non-HGV traffic already in Dover. There were challenges with availability of caterers listed in the 'KCC Crisis Manual' which were exacerbated by being in Tier 4 lockdown; this impacted on the food that could be provided quickly. In addition, existing plans have food provision as a last resort, the focus being to get traffic moving, hence the provision of food in first 24 hours was limited to a high energy cereal bar for HGV drivers, alongside provision of water.

(iii) Dealing with a far greater number of Light Goods Vehicles and other passenger traffic who are not necessarily in a known queue.

2.4.1 The multi agency Vulnerable People and Communities Cell (VPCC) engaged with the District Council and local volunteers to provide support and made use of community volunteers to locate the smaller vehicles. Welfare was provided in Dover's main car parks and communications advised where welfare was available.

2.4.2 However, linked to the congestion points in section 2.2 above, Dover Town Centre quickly became gridlocked with non-HGV traffic, consisting mainly of travellers wanting to return to Europe for Christmas along with smaller goods vehicles and local traffic. The Driver Welfare cell had little capacity to support the non-HGV traffic due to the volumes of HGVs they were dealing with. Travellers were reluctant to move their vehicles for fear of losing their place in the queue for the Port and therefore did not want to take up offers of welfare at Lydden Hill and other areas. The gridlock impacted on welfare being provided as volunteers could not get through into Dover Town Centre freely.

(iv) Communication flow with those directly caught up in the incident, and with local and national stakeholders.

2.5.1 On a positive note, there was consistent messaging to advise the border was closed. An *Operation Fennel* Communication Plan was ready for implementation which meant this was already in place to notify traffic about potential hold ups on the M20 and at Dover. In addition, messages were sent to hauliers and the travelling public informing them to get a negative COVID-19 test before coming to Kent. Various technologies were used to overcome language barriers. KCC's Contact Point was also used to coordinate offers of help from the public and there was good engagement with communications team at the Department for Transport.

2.5.2 It is acknowledged, however, that earlier communication with local members could have been better. There were also challenges in communicating with drivers that were not in a queue. Engagement from foreign embassies was not managed centrally, with no central contact point. There was an additional complication of communicating technical information about the border closure and the requirement for COVID-19 testing to drivers whose first language was not English. In addition, there was significant impact on "business as usual" activity for the KCC Contact Point with out of hours Highways lines particularly impacted.

b) Actions

2.6 Consequently, a number of actions have been recommended and are being taken forward by the Council and its partners:

i) Keeping Dover Clear and LGV / other passenger traffic considerations

- KCC input into the multi-agency *Keep Dover Clear* plan, which will include consideration of how and where non-HGV traffic will be supported. Productive meetings involving KCC, Highways England, Kent Police and Dover District Council have been held and a plan is being developed identifying short term, medium term and longer term actions.
- Consider increasing the size of the pool of specialists from KCC available, (where capacity will allow) involved in response, to allow time for recovery and reflection for those leading the response for consecutive days.
- Review the Kent wide traffic management plans to include the management of non-HGV traffic in the event of port closure or delays.
- Consider the approach for driver welfare for non-queuing traffic.
- Review the approach for supporting people who are not residents of Kent but require welfare

ii) Driver welfare

- Extend the existing Driver Welfare Plan to cover all types of traffic potentially impacted by incidents such as this.

- Engage with Department for Transport on the level of provision of driver welfare for events of this nature which have severe and far-reaching impacts.
- Review what is an acceptable level of welfare provision to meet not only KCC's responsibilities in this regard, but also stakeholder expectations.
- Ensure emergency plans consider the management of spontaneous volunteers in future emergencies.
- Review suppliers listed in the KCC Crisis Manual to ensure that all listed are able to provide support when required.

iii) Communications

- KCC are actively involved in the Communications and Driver Welfare cells of the KRF that have been reviewing and discussing messaging for future events.
- Review the potential to use emergency text messaging mechanisms to communicate in a particular geographical area.
- Formalise the appropriate use of the KCC Contact Point to coordinate offers of help from the public.
- Continue to explore various technologies available to overcome language barriers of those in the area looking to cross the border.
- Coordination and management of communication with any Foreign Embassies will be done centrally.
- Look at how best to engage local Members earlier in similar events in future.

3. End of UK/EU Transition Period Update

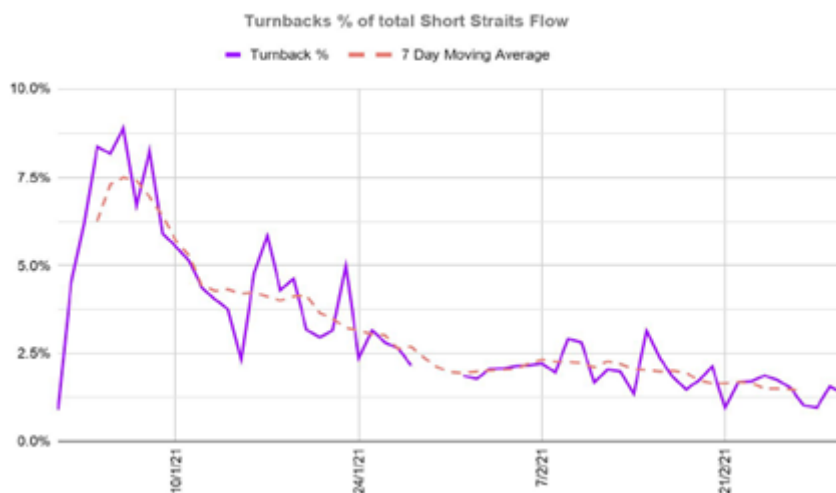
- 3.1 Following the events pre-Christmas, the situation on Kent's roads since the end of transition on 1st January can be described as very calm. Due to the continuing testing requirements and to ensure appropriate flow rates to both portals it has been necessary to split Europe bound traffic between two routes. All Port of Dover traffic has been directed to use Manston (splitting at M20 Junction 7, A249, A299) whilst Eurotunnel traffic has used the M20 and the Sevington site. Domestic traffic has been free to use all routes with the only restriction being the continued use of M20 Brock contraflow for both coastbound and London bound traffic.
- 3.2 Deploying this plan has meant little or no disruption on the main routes in Kent. This was largely due to:
- a) lower flows of HGVs than seen in previous years (reflecting the level of stockpiling witnessed at the end of 2020) but flow rates are now increasing closer to the seasonal average
 - b) efficiency of the military led testing regimes at both Manston and Sevington. To illustrate this, over 100,000 tests have been carried out over the two months between 4th January and 3rd March - 45,840 tests have been carried out at Sevington of which 79 have been positive and at Manston, for

the same time period, 62,658 tests have been carried of which 70 have been positive.

- c) the low level of non compliance with Kent Access Permit and M20 Brock restrictions. Between 1st January and 3rd March the total offences are as shown below and the daily total is currently running at about 2% of HGVs:

Volume KAP offences = 1817
Brock (TTRO) offence = 1398
Total Kent Offences = 3215

- d) the low level of HGV ‘turnbacks’ at both the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel – the percentage of turnbacks peaked at 8% of total outbound flow at the beginning of January; however, the 7-day rolling average has dropped to below 2%, as shown below



3.3 At the same time significant progress has been made on the construction of the Sevington site, with buildings for HMRC and DEFRA use now clearly visible on site, as well as parking ‘swim lanes’, entrance booths and access and exit arrangements.

3.4 There were some teething issues with signage and sat nav directions and some HGVs were going to wrong locations for the Waterbrook site and diverting from the main route to Manston. There are now very few issues with routing to Manston. However, for the Waterbrook site, despite many direction signs a few HGV drivers do persist in following their sat navs and causing congestion in local areas. The numbers are much lower than they were but when it happens it does cause disruption to local communities and businesses.

- 3.5 KCC also introduced the HGV clamping system prohibiting any heavy goods or large goods vehicle which has a gross vehicle weight in excess of 5 tonnes from parking anywhere within 7 districts and boroughs, likely to be most impacted by the traffic management plans, namely Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe, Maidstone, Swale and Thanet. The restriction covers all the areas within these districts and boroughs with the exception of lay-bys located along the A249, A299 and A256. Also exempted from enforcement are drivers who take their short statutory break (45 minutes), anywhere within the zone, in safe roadside locations.
- 3.6 Hundreds of signs have been deployed around the 7 named districts and boroughs to define the zonal parking restriction, using entry and exit signage to inform drivers when they are entering and leaving the areas to which the restriction applies.
- 3.7 Whilst the restriction came into force early January, KCC's enforcement agent carried out a period of "soft enforcement" by speaking to drivers and handing out over 500 multi-language warning leaflets. Enforcement by the application of a PCN and Clamp commenced 11th January 2021.
- 3.8 For the first 6 weeks of the scheme (11th January – 21st February 2021), KCC have issued a total of 1098 PCNs and clamps, with weekly distribution as follows:

Week Ending	No of clamps issued in week	Running total
17 th January	162	162
24 th January	186	348
31 st January	172	520
7 th February	172	692
14 th February	218	910
21 st February	188	1098

- 3.9 In addition, Ashford Borough Council continued with their existing clamping enforcement operation between 11th and 20th January 2021 and issued a total of 66 PCN and clamps.
- 3.10 Of the total PCN and clamps issued to date, the majority have been along the M20 corridor from Maidstone towards Eurotunnel and the Port of Dover. Dover (31%), Ashford (30%), Maidstone (17%) and Folkestone & Hythe (13%) account for over 90% of the total volume of clamps issued. Furthermore, 17% have been applied to UK registered vehicles with 83% made up of EU and International registered vehicles. Nearly 70% of clamps have been issued between the hours of 2200 and 0600.

4. Proposal for Immediate Changes to Traffic Management

- 4.1 Currently, approximately 2,000 Covid tests per day are being completed on freight across the two existing sites at Manston and Sevington. The testing rate ebbs and flows across the 24-hour period and across the days of the

week. The traffic management plan in place is predominantly to service the testing requirements, not the border flow issues as originally planned, with freight demonstrating a high rate of border readiness.

- 4.2 Since 21st February 2021 there has been an amendment to the UK France protocol and there are now concessions relative to the previous testing requirements which enable the following:
- Freight from France which spends less than 48 hours in the UK is exempt from provision of a test
 - Freight from Republic of Ireland to France via the land bridge can rely upon a test taken in Ireland if taken within 72 hours of departure from a UK port.
- 4.3 This change is serving to reduce the level of testing required at Kent sites. This now means that the traffic plans can be revised. It is proposed to route all freight via M20 reverting to the original Op Brock plan – traffic to be filtered by infrastructure and signage only prior to J8, split by portal, with ability to instigate controls of both or either lane at the front of the queue.
- 4.5 At the current level of demand for tests the likelihood of queues within Brock and therefore restricted access to both portals is low. This system does provide the ability to hold queues by portal in the case of disruption or flow restriction however if Sevington capacity becomes overwhelmed then there will be a need to hold both lanes of traffic and manage the flow through accordingly.
- 4.6 Key dependencies of this change will be the transfer of HMRC from the Waterbrook site onto Sevington (planned for 12th/13th March) and a good national and local communications plans informing HGV drivers and hauliers of the changes.
- 4.7 Changing the traffic management is not without a risk of congestion as the new system ‘beds in’ but traffic/queue lengths/flow rates will be closely monitored. Furthermore, although Manston will not be used it will be kept open for the first few weeks just in case it has to be stood up again in short order.

5. Planning for Day 200 and Managing Future Congestion

- 5.1 Working with Government departments including DFT, HMRC, DEFRA, MHCLG, local partners are preparing for two future scenarios:
- Plans for ‘Day 200’ - the proposed introduction of import controls from 1st July 2021
 - Future plans for managing large scale issues at the ports, particularly as the Manston site is only available until the end of June 2021.

a) Day 200 Planning

- 5.2 Import controls are due to be introduced from 1st July 2021. Full implementation will rely on the supply of Border Control Posts across the UK. In Kent, the

Sevington site will be available on a phased basis from July with full completion scheduled for August/September 2021. The BCP at White Cliffs site in Dover is further back in its delivery. The SDO has yet to be submitted to MHCLG for approval and works can only start on site once approvals are in place. The current timetable shows a completion date of spring 2022.

- 5.3 We are awaiting further detail about the introduction of controls. Once we know more detail alongside the national planning assumptions we will plan traffic management as well as the deployment of Trading Standards staff across the 2 sites, as appropriate, to work alongside the key Government agencies as well as the district Port Health Authority staff.

b) Future Traffic Management Plans

- 5.4 Local partners are working with DFT on reviewing and revising traffic management plans for coping with any large scale issue at the portals or in the Straits. Historically 'Op Stack' was deployed which had impacts on the M20 corridor and the communities of Ashford, Maidstone, Folkestone and Hythe and Dover. With DFT leasing the Manston site and deploying M20 Brock the plans then evolved into Op Fennel which whilst not perfect do serve to keep the M20 open for local residents and businesses but it does create new impacts, particularly for Thanet.

- 5.5 DFT currently have no plans to extend the lease of the Manston site which will leave Kent without the necessary infrastructure to respond to large scale congestion. The deployment of all stages of Op Stack is compromised by the inclusion of the Sevington site. So a new plan is required. Officers are working with DFT and Highways England to identify options and these will be reported to Members as they are developed.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The events before and over Christmas could be rightly termed 'unprecedented'. But it is important that we learn key lessons that can help shape our response to future incidents. Alongside this we now need to turn our attention to planning for the introduction of import controls as well as the future traffic management plans.

7. Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to:

- a) **Note** the lessons identified and actions underway in response to the port closure incidents before and over Christmas 2020.
- b) **Note** the latest update regarding the border situation now and for the immediate future in Kent post EU Transition

8. Contact Details

Report author and Relevant Director

From: Roger Gough – Leader of the Council
David Cockburn – Corporate Director, Strategic and Corporate Services

To: Cabinet – 15 March 2021

Decision No: n/a

Subject: **Quarterly Performance Report, Quarter 3, 2020/21**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The purpose of the Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is to inform Cabinet about key areas of performance for the authority. This report presents performance to the end of December 2020 (Quarter 3, 2020/21)

Of the 35 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) contained within the QPR, 20 achieved target (Green), 11 achieved and exceeded the floor standard but did not meet target (Amber). 4 KPIs did not meet the floor standard (Red).

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to NOTE the Quarter 3 Performance Report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is a key mechanism within the Performance Management Framework for the Council. The report for Quarter 3, 2020/21 is attached at Appendix 1, and includes data up to the end of December 2020.
- 1.2. The QPR includes 35 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) where results are assessed against Targets set at the start of the financial year.

2. Quarter 3 Performance Report

- 2.1. Results for KPIs compared to Target are assessed using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status.
- 2.2. Of the 35 KPIs included in the report, the latest RAG status are as follows:
 - 20 are rated Green – the target was achieved or exceeded. A decrease of 1 on the previous quarter.
 - 11 are rated Amber – performance achieved or exceeded the expected floor standard but did not meet target.

- 4 are rated Red – Performance did not meet the expected floor standard. An increase of 1 on the previous quarter.
- 2.3. With regards to Direction of Travel¹, 7 indicators show a positive trend, 20 are stable or with no clear trend, and 8 are showing a negative trend.
- 2.4. The 4 indicators where the RAG rating is Red, are in:
- Customer Services
 - Complaints responded to within timescale.
 - Children, Young People and Education
 - Percentage of Education, Health Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks.
 - Public Health
 - Number. of eligible people receiving an NHS Health Check.
 - Percentage of new first-time attendances at sexual health clinics who take up the offer and are screened for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis, and HIV.

3. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to NOTE the Quarter 3 Performance Report.

4. Contact details

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¹ Calculated based on the new regression-based approach agreed by Cabinet in July 2020.

Kent County Council

Quarterly Performance Report

Quarter 3

2020/21

Produced by: KCC Analytics
E-mail: performance@kent.gov.uk
Phone: 03000 416091



Key to KPI Ratings used

This report includes 35 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), where progress is assessed against Targets which are set at the start of the financial year. Progress against Target is assessed by RAG (Red/Amber/Green) ratings. Progress is also assessed in terms of Direction of Travel (DoT) through the use of arrows. Direction of Travel is now based on regression analysis across the whole timeframe shown in the graphs, and not, as previously the case, on the movement from the last quarter.

GREEN	Target has been achieved
AMBER	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
RED	Floor Standard* has not been achieved
↑	Performance is improving (positive trend)
↓	Performance is worsening (negative trend)
→	Performance has remained stable or shows no clear trend

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

Key to Activity Indicator Graphs

Alongside the Key Performance Indicators this report includes a number of Activity Indicators which present demand levels for services or other contextual information.

Graphs for activity indicators are shown either with national benchmarks or in many cases with Upper and Lower Thresholds which represent the range activity is expected to fall within. Thresholds are based on past trends and other benchmark information.

If activity falls outside of the Thresholds, this is an indication that demand has risen above or below expectations and this may have consequences for the council in terms of additional or reduced costs.

Activity is closely monitored as part of the overall management information to ensure the council reacts appropriately to changing levels of demand.

Executive Summary

20 of the 35 indicators are rated as Green, on or ahead of target, 1 less than the previous quarter. 11 indicators reached or exceeded the floor standard (Amber) with 4 indicators not achieving the floor standard (Red), 1 more than the previous quarter. 7 indicators were showing an improving trend, with 8 showing a worsening trend.

	G	A	R	↑	⇒	↓
Customer Services		2	1		3	
Economic Development & Communities	2				2	
Environment and Transport	4	2		2	4	
Children, Young People and Education	8	5	1	3	6	5
Adult Social Care	3	2		1	3	1
Public Health	3		2	1	2	2
TOTAL	20	11	4	7	20	8

Customer Services - Satisfaction with Contact Point advisors and the percentage of phone calls answered both missed target by 1 percentage point. The percentage of complaints responded to within timescale decreased in the last quarter and was below floor standard. Visits to the KCC website continue to increase.

Customer Services KPIs	RAG rating	DoT
% of callers to Contact Point who rated the advisor who dealt with their call as good	AMBER	⇒
% of phone calls to Contact Point which were answered	AMBER	⇒
% of complaints responded to within timescale	RED	⇒

Economic Development & Communities – The No Use Empty programme, which returns long term empty domestic properties into active use, continues to exceed its rolling 12 months target. The amount of Developer Contributions secured also achieved target. The number of books issued from libraries has increased for the second quarter in a row.

Economic Development & Communities KPIs	RAG rating	DoT
No. of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE)	GREEN	⇒
Developer contributions received as a percentage of amount sought	GREEN	⇒

Environment and Transport – Three of the four indicators for Highways and Transport remained at or above target. Emergency incidents attended within 2 hours of notification remained at 97%, narrowly missing the 98% target for the second quarter in a row. The target for Waste diverted from landfill remained one percent below target, due to maintenance work at the Allington Energy from Waste plant which continued into October. Greenhouse Gas emissions continue to trend downwards, achieving target.

<u>Environment & Transport KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
% of routine pothole repairs completed within 28 days	GREEN	⇒
% of routine highway repairs reported by residents completed within 28 days	GREEN	⇒
Emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification	AMBER	⇒
% of satisfied callers for Kent Highways & Transportation, 100 call back survey	GREEN	↑
% of municipal waste recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill – rolling 12 months	AMBER	⇒
Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑

Education and Wider Early Help – Due to Ofsted suspending school inspections until 2021 there is no update for State funded schools or Early Years settings which are rated Good or Outstanding, both were meeting target at the end of March 2020. Completion of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in timescale remained below the floor standard. Permanent pupil exclusions remains ahead of target.

<u>Education & Wider Early Help KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
% of all schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements (data to March 20)	GREEN	⇒
% of Early Years settings with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements (childcare on non-domestic premises) (data to March 20)	GREEN	⇒
% of Education, Health Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks – rolling 12 months	RED	⇒
% of pupils permanently excluded from school – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑
No. of first-time entrants to youth justice system – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↓

Children's Integrated Services – Three of the nine indicators met target, with the other six achieving the floor standard. Four of those missing target are also showing a negative direction of travel. The number of children in care decreased, but the number of care leavers continues to increase.

<u>Children's Integrated Services KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
Percentage of front door contacts where the final decision is made within 3 working days	GREEN	↑
Percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help / Social Work teams within 3 months	GREEN	⇒
% of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	GREEN	⇒
% of children social care referrals that were repeat referrals within 12 months	AMBER	↓
Percentage of child protection plans that were repeat plans	AMBER	↓
Average no. of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑
% of children in care with 3 or more placements in the last 12 months	AMBER	↓

<u>Children's Integrated Services KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
% of foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)	AMBER	⇒
% of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	AMBER	⇩

Adult Social Care – Short-term services which lead to lower or no ongoing support increased but did not meet target, and the proportion of clients receiving direct payments continued on a downward trend. The other three indicators all exceeded target.

<u>Adult Social Care KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
Proportion of people who have received short term services for which the outcome was either support at a lower level or no ongoing support	AMBER	⇒
Proportion of clients receiving Direct Payments	AMBER	⇩
The proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family	GREEN	⇩
Proportion of KCC clients in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding	GREEN	⇒
Proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services	GREEN	⇒

Public Health – NHS Health Check delivery continues to be affected by Coronavirus although a limited number of checks were possible in Quarter 3. Health visiting for mandated checks exceeded target and has an upward trend, with the service delivered both online and face to face. The sexual health service is still unable to report accurately on its KPI due to Coronavirus, and there is no update for Quarter 3. The other two indicators exceeded target despite having to move away from face-to-face appointments.

<u>Public Health KPIs</u>	RAG rating	DoT
Number of eligible people receiving an NHS Health Check – rolling 12 months	RED	⇩
Number of mandated universal checks delivered by the health visiting service – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇩
% of new first-time attendances at sexual health clinics who take up the offer and are screened for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis, and HIV	RED	⇒
Successful completion of drug and alcohol treatment	GREEN	⇒
% of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends or someone in a similar situation	GREEN	⇩

Customer Services	
Cabinet Member	Shellina Prendergast
Corporate Director	Amanda Beer

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
		2	1		3	

Customer contact through Contact Point (KCC's call centre) is provided via a strategic partnership, whilst Digital services are provided by KCC.

Percentage of callers who rated the advisor as good, was below target by 1 percentage point. 65 callers gave a negative response, 321 neutral, and 10,630 positive responses over the Quarter. No service or call type received particularly high numbers of dissatisfied callers, so it is unclear why performance fell in the Quarter. The target was achieved in the month of December, and there are no reasons why the target cannot be met going forward.

Calls answered also dropped to 1 percentage point below target, with December being a particularly challenging month. Very high call volumes were experienced by the out of hours service on several occasions, including during adverse weather on 4th December and Storm Bella on 27th-28th December. Answer rates were also affected by the implementation of the Kent Local Tracing Partnership for Covid-19 test and trace calls. This service was implemented at the very end of November and to enable this to be set up as quickly as possible and ensure a high-quality service, it was agreed that existing staff would conduct the calls, which took them away from their normal duties and adversely affected the answer rate. New advisors have since been recruited to replace and expand this service.

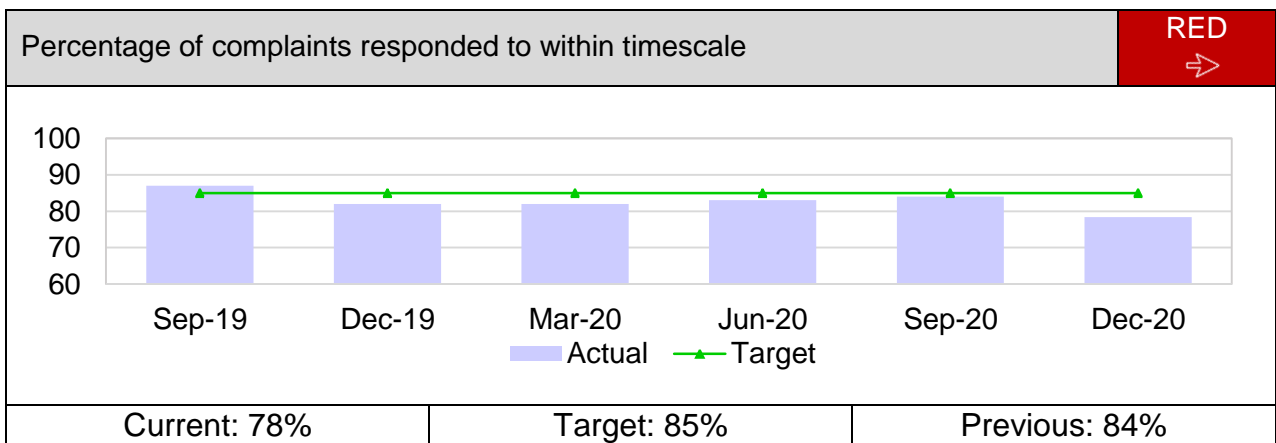
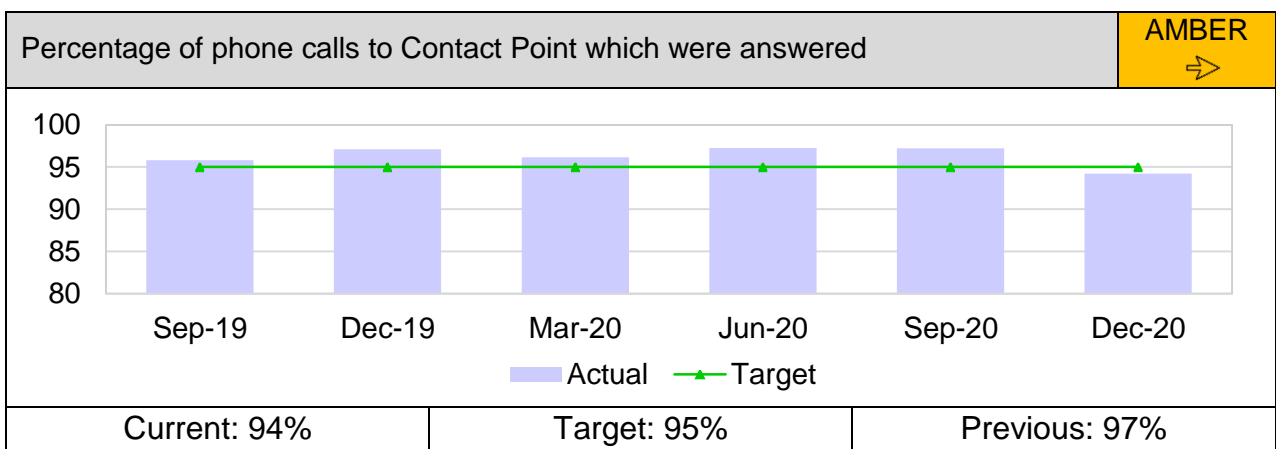
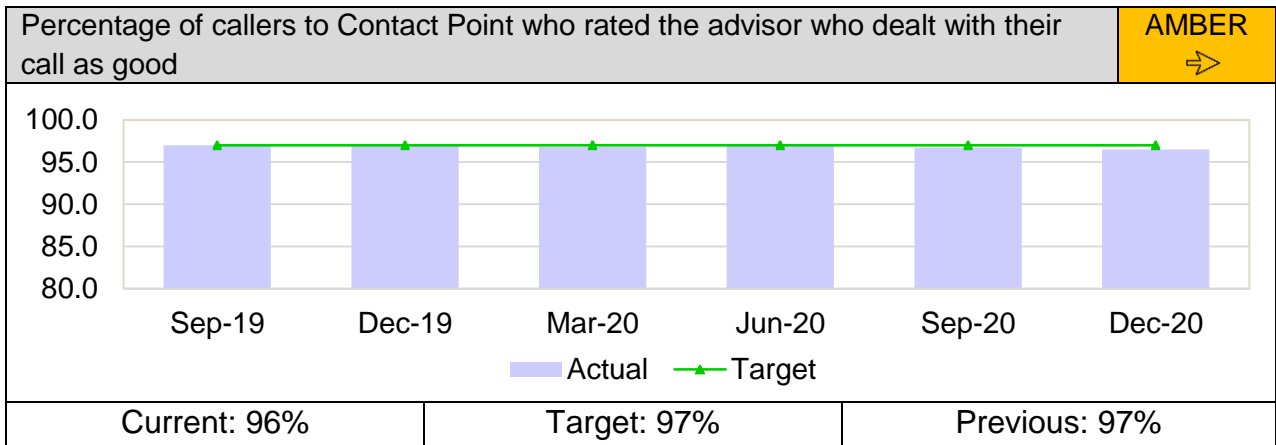
Contact Point received 17% fewer calls than the previous quarter and 12% fewer calls than the same period last year. The 12 months to December 2020 saw 10% fewer calls than in the 12 months to December 2019.

Average call time increased to 5 minutes 36 seconds, remaining within the target of 5 minutes 45 seconds.

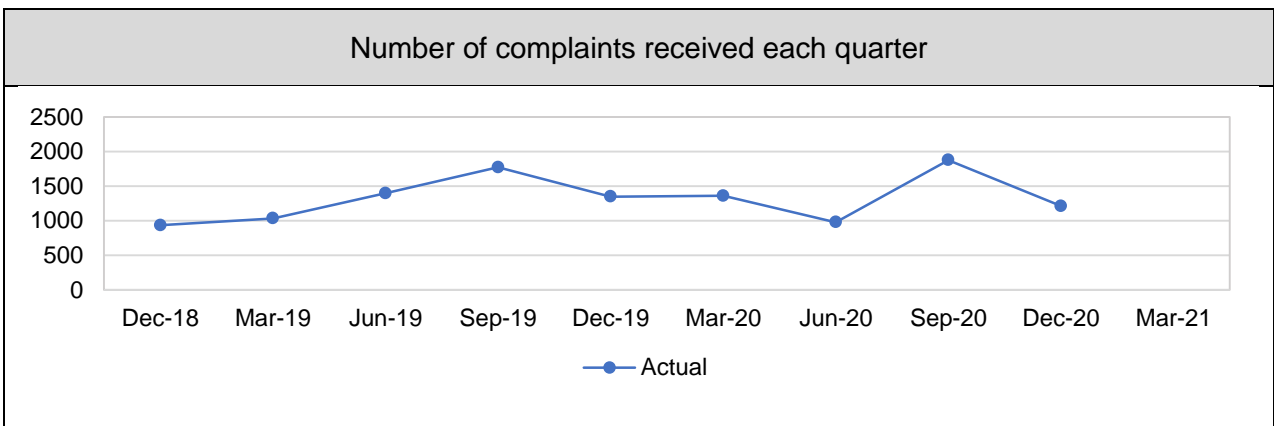
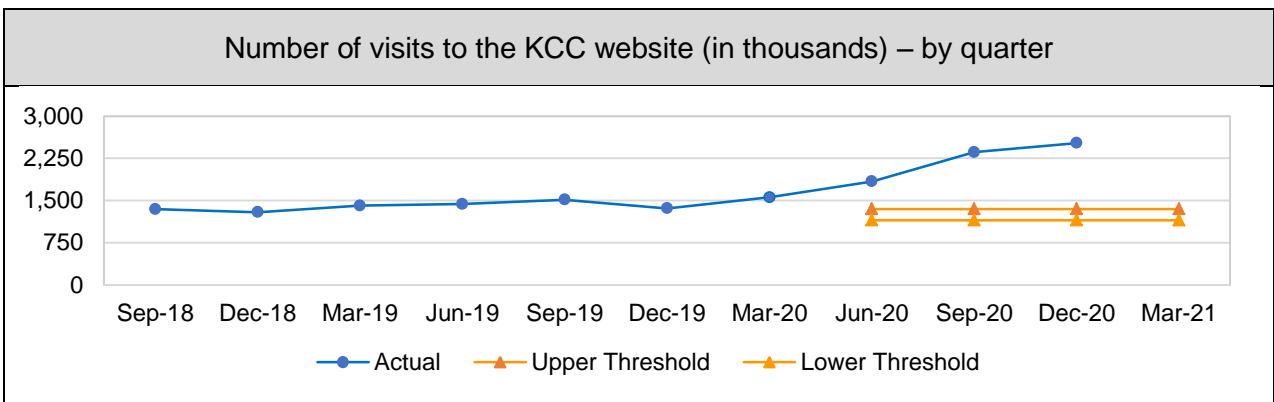
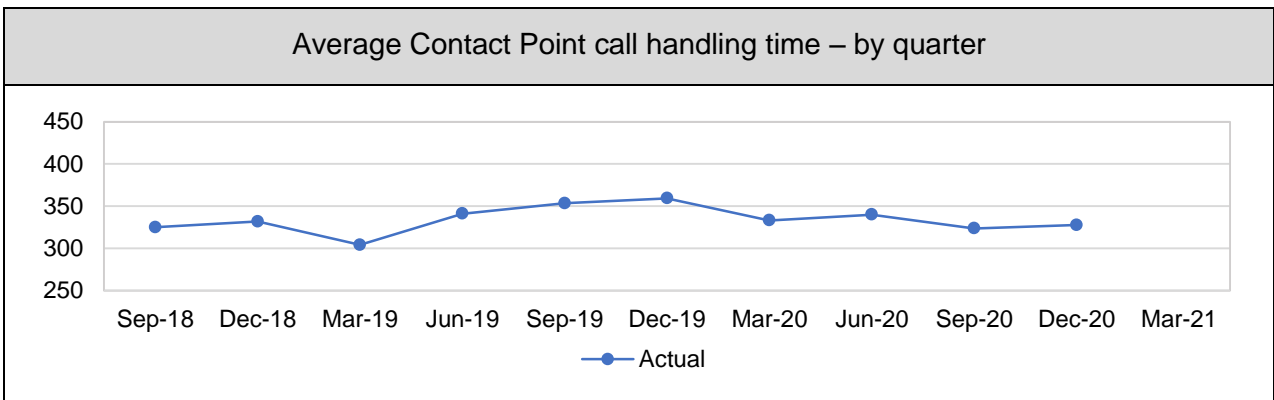
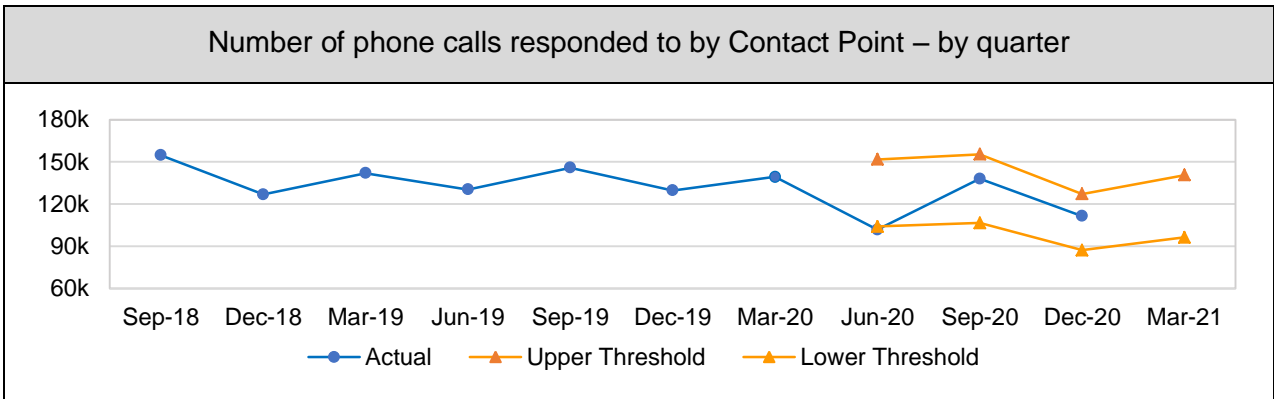
Visits to the KCC website continue to increase well above expected levels. Pages relating to Coronavirus had a high volume of visits, especially pages relating to cases in Kent which gets a significant amount of repeat traffic. House Waste Recycling Centre pages also continue to be frequently visited, with content accessed including what can be recycled, where it can be done, and how to book a visit.

The Quarter to September saw a significant increase in the volume of complaints received following the lifting of lockdown restrictions. Responding to these complaints had a knock-on effect in the Quarter to December with workloads remaining high for teams. 78% of complaints were responded to within 20 working days, which is below the 85% target. The volume of cases, coupled with complexity of some complaints and staff availability, has resulted in difficulties meeting the target this Quarter.

Key Performance Indicators



Activity indicators



Customer Services – Call Activity

Number of phone calls to Contact Point (thousands)

Contact Point received 17% fewer calls than the previous quarter and 12% fewer calls than the same period last year. The 12 months to December 2020 saw 10% fewer calls than in the 12 months to December 2019.

Service area	Jan – Mar 20	Apr – Jun 20	Jul – Sep 20	Oct – Dec 20	Yr to Dec 20	Yr to Dec 19
Adult Social Care	32	28	31	27	117	125
Highways	20	8	20	22	70	76
Specialist Children’s Services	20	17	16	11	64	81
Waste and Recycling	4	16	15	10	44	16
Schools and Early Years	8	4	6	9	26	29
Libraries and Archives	9	1	11	8	29	36
Blue Badges	14	8	9	8	39	55
Transport Services	10	3	15	6	34	50
Registrations	8	5	6	5	24	30
KSAS*	3	2	2	4	12	9
Other Services	2	1	3	3	9	6
Speed Awareness	7	2	4	2	16	22
General	4	3	2	2	11	13
Adult Education	5	1	2	1	9	21
Kent Together	-	5	1	1	7	0
Total Calls (thousands)	146	105	142	119	512	570

* Kent Support and Assistance Service

Numbers are shown in the 1,000’s and may not add exactly due to rounding. Calculations in commentary are based on unrounded numbers.

Customer Services – Complaints Monitoring

The number of complaints received in this quarter has returned to a more normal level, following a steep increase last quarter. Over the last 12 months there has been an 2% decrease compared to the previous year. Despite receiving fewer complaints at the beginning of the financial year, volumes are returning to normal annual levels. The significant increase in the previous quarter has continued to impact teams' ability to respond within timescale.

In this Quarter, KCC received complaints relating to public transport for school children, along with other complaints relating to temporary measures implemented due to Covid-19, including Cycle lanes and Household Waste Recycling Centres.

Service	12 mths to Dec 19	12 mths to Dec 20	Quarter to Sep 20	Quarter to Dec 20
Highways, Transportation and Waste Management	3,027	3,000	1,216	661
Adult Social Services	921	951	218	193
Specialist Children's Services	544	589	173	169
Education & Young People's Services	390	236	79	42
Libraries, Registrations and Archives	340	260	93	71
Strategic and Corporate Services	136	121	32	38
Environment, Planning and Enforcement & Economic Development	114	207	66	34
Adult Education	63	44	9	2
Total Complaints	5,535	5,408	1,886	1,210

Customer Services – Digital Take-up

The table below shows the digital/online or automated transaction completions for Key Service Areas.

Transaction type	Online Jan 20 – Mar 20	Online Apr 20 – Jun 20	Online Jul 20 – Sep 20	Online Oct 20 – Dec 20	Total Transactions Last 12 Months
Renew a library book*	77%	**	74%	79%	301,077
Report a Highways Fault	56%	55%	52%	58%	95,358
Book a Speed Awareness Course	76%	85%	85%	81%	28,144
Apply for a KCC Travel Saver (Rolling 12 months)	73%	70%	95%	98%	20,966
Book a Birth Registration appointment	80%	89%	87%	88%	18,758
Apply for or renew a Blue Badge	70%	81%	81%	76%	9,230
Report a Public Right of Way Fault	65%	88%	84%	86%	7,394
Apply for a Concessionary Bus Pass	43%	71%	74%	65%	7,235
Highways Licence applications	83%	84%	97%	97%	6,706
Apply for a HWRC recycling voucher	97%	100%	99%	99%	4,883

* Library issue renewals transaction data is based on individual loan items and not count of borrowers.

** No data available due to lockdown

Economic Development & Communities	
Cabinet Members	Mike Whiting, Mike Hill
Corporate Director	Barbara Cooper

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	2				2	

Support for business

Kent's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) investments have continued to create and sustain employment opportunities. The extent of the impact caused by the economic disruption of the Coronavirus pandemic (in terms of business failures and loss of jobs) on the Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) loan recipients has still not fully emerged, due to the impact of the government support schemes in reducing business failures and protecting jobs. To mitigate the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, KCC agreed to offer all loan recipients a one-year repayment holiday until March 2021.

The KMBF had committed £10.4m to 76 businesses in Kent and Medway. In the period until the end of Quarter 3, the scheme has created 212 new jobs and safeguarded 63 further jobs (the increase in jobs is mainly the result of more companies being added to the monitoring cycle). These investments are intended to support 732 new and safeguarded jobs over the next 3 years.

A new KMBF funding round was launched in Quarter 2 consisting of three strands: Recovery Loans (£50k-£100k), Capital Investment Loans (£50k-£100k) and Large Loans (£101k-£500k). Funding approvals made in Quarter 3 totalled £2.8m.

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funded Innovation Investment Loan scheme, managed by KCC over the period 2015-2018, has so far committed £6.2 million to 19 businesses in Kent and Medway, creating 61 new jobs and safeguarding a further 70 jobs, to the end of December 2020.

KCC Economic Development has continued to play a leading role in financing and establishing, with the support of the Kent districts, the Coronavirus Business Support Helpline operated by Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce. During phase 3 (Oct-Dec) the Helpline 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.

KCC is working with its equity partner, NCL Technology Ventures, to ensure that the innovative companies in which KCC has an equity stake, receive specialist support and assistance.

An online Coronavirus questionnaire is building understanding of the needs of local companies and the Kent economy. A total of 3,581 respondents have been asked for their opinions on the types of future support that would be helpful. Those respondents have primarily come from the Tourism & Hospitality, Retail, Professional & Business Service and Construction sectors. The most popular support sought is Access to finance, Specific Business Advice, Advice on financial business planning and Adoption of new Technology / Digitisation. Common themes emerging from the survey are business reporting a negative impact on sales and revenue, varying levels of confidence of business owners and impact on employee working conditions.

Converting derelict buildings for new housing

In Quarter 3, 131 long term empty properties were made fit for occupation through the No Use Empty (NUE) Programme, bringing the total to 6,798 since the programme began in 2005. NUE had processed 36 loan applications by December increasing the total NUE investment to £68.1 million (£35.5 million from KCC recycled loans and £32.6 million from public/private sector leverage).

NUE submitted individual business cases to the Growing Places Fund (GPF) round 3: NUE Commercial Phase II (request £2m) and further investment into the main NUE scheme (£2.5m). The commercial business case will be considered by SELEP in February 2021.

Following the approval of £12m from Treasury, NUE has processed a further 9 loans (18 to date) with a cumulative total value of £9.1m to bring forward empty/derelict sites which have planning permission to create new housing. A total of 71 new units are currently supported, an increase of 25 since last quarter. NUE has 10 more potential projects to research (new builds) with an indicative value of £6.4m.

One of the first projects in Dover supported with a loan from Treasury funding is due to be completed in January 2021. The property which will provide 8 residential units accommodation is to be acquired by Dover District Council to provide affordable housing.

NUE provided the Treasury Investment Management Team with an update report in January 2021 with a view to unlocking additional investment support given the initial uptake and increasing project pipeline.

Infrastructure projects

In Quarter 3, the following new capital funding awards were made by the SELEP Accountability Board:

- The award of £2,500,000 of Getting Building Funding (GBF) to support the delivery of the Discovery Park Incubator. This project refurbishes the first and second floor of Building 500 to create world-class research and development space including 50,000 sq.ft. of individual biology and chemistry laboratories together with associated write-up space. New plant-room equipment will be delivered to attract the companies to this world-class and world-leading science park.
- The award of £578,724 of Getting Building Funding (GBF) to support the delivery of the Javelin Way Development. The project develops the Javelin Way site for employment use, with a particular focus on the development of Ashford's creative economy. The scheme consists of two elements: Firstly, the construction of a 'Creative Laboratory' production space, to be leased from KCC by the Jasmin Vardimon Company (JVC), a major dance and creative organisation. This will be used as education space for accredited courses. Secondly, the project develops 29 light industrial units for sale and/or lease, suitable for additional creative businesses as well as the general market.

- The award of £12,301,786 of Getting Building Funding (GBF) to support the delivery of the New Performing & Production Digital Arts Facility at North Kent College. The project enables the construction of a new two-storey 2,826 square metre, state-of-the-art, performing and production digital arts facility within North Kent College's Dartford campus, to replace old accommodation that is unfit for modern education purposes and very expensive to maintain.
- The award of £3,536,466 of Getting Building Funding (GBF) to support the delivery of the Romney Marsh Employment Hub. The project enables the construction of a business centre and will create up to 700 jobs over ten years by bringing forward some six hectares of land for employment uses in the Romney Marsh area.
- The award of £11,999,000 of Getting Building Funding (GBF) to support the delivery of the Thanet Parkway Railway Station. This is in addition to the £14m of Local Growth Fund that has been awarded to the project.
- The award of £1,490,000 of Getting Building Funding (GBF) to support the delivery of The Meeting Point, Swanley. This project provides a new high-quality, sustainable, mixed use development at a key gateway to Swanley town centre. The project will fund the creation of a business hub co-working space of 250 square metres and the delivery of 17 new quality homes.

Getting Building Funding (GBF) is capital grant funding. In total, £35m of GBF has been awarded to organisations in Kent. GBF awards are subject to sufficient GBF being received by SELEP from Central Government in 2021/22.

Growing Places Funding (GPF) is capital loan funding. In total, £13m of GPF has been awarded to projects in Kent. Three GPF projects (Workspace Kent, Live Margate, No Use Empty Commercial Phase I) sought revised repayment schedules due to the impact of COVID-19, and these were agreed by the SELEP Accountability Board.

Local Growth Funding (LGF) is capital loan funding. In total, £127m of LGF has been awarded to projects (predominantly transport projects) in Kent. During Quarter 3, the SELEP Strategic Board ringfenced an additional £1m of LGF for the Kent and Medway Medical School, an additional £315k of LGF for the East Malling Advanced Horticultural Hub, an additional £100k of LGF for Dover TAP (as part of Kent Strategic Congestion Management Programme). These LGF awards are subject to endorsement by the SELEP Accountability Board, with the decision due in Quarter 4 of 20/21.

Capital Skills Funding is capital grant funding. In total, £13m of Capital Skills Funding has been allocated to Kent between 2015-21 to support the further education sector. This has been invested into capital projects on college campuses (including the building and refurbishment of college facilities and the purchasing of new equipment).

Broadband

KCC has been working with the Government's broadband agency, Building Digital Delivery UK (BDUK), to improve broadband connectivity since 2012. As a result of this work, 96% of homes and businesses in Kent now have access to a superfast broadband service of at least 24mbps. The project has been extended with Openreach contracted to deliver full fibre (fibre-to-the-premise) connections to over 5,000 rural

homes and businesses in Kent that currently have a sub-superfast broadband service (less than 24mbps). The infrastructure build for these new connections continues despite Coronavirus and over 139,850 homes and businesses have benefited from the Kent BDUK project to date. A further 2,000 homes and businesses are also receiving a faster broadband connection as a result of the Government's Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme and the Kent Top Up Voucher pilot.

Kent has also been selected as a 'Planning for Gigabit' pilot by BDUK. This process is about getting the County ready for the Government's new £5 billion 'Outside-In' programme, which is looking to provide gigabit-capable connections to the 20% homes and businesses across the UK that are unlikely to receive an upgrade from market-led upgrade programmes. Whilst the details of these new national programmes are currently being finalised by Government, the understanding is that they will comprise a mix of area-based procurements and new voucher schemes.

In the meantime, broadband network operators are continuing to invest in the next generation, gigabit-capable networks across Kent. The availability of gigabit capable connections doubled over 2020 and is currently at 20%. It is anticipated, given current build rates, that this market-led investment will reach over 40% of homes and businesses by the end of 2021.

Funding Infrastructure

KCC has a statutory right to seek financial contributions for capital investment from developers of new housing sites. In Quarter 3, 28 Section 106 agreements were completed and a total of £17.2m was secured.

s.106 contributions secured £000s	Jan to Mar 2020	Apr to Jun 2020	Jul to Sep 2020	Oct to Dec 2020
Primary Education	7,892	1,006	5,249	8,073
Secondary Education	2,641	895	3,243	8,491
Adult Social Care	146	27	67	155
Libraries	330	21	69	398
Community Learning	130	8	38	55
Youth & Community	70	10	36	76
Total	11,209	1,966	8,702	17,248
Secured as % of Amount Sought	99%	100%	100%	97%

Kent Film Office

In Quarter 3, the film office handled 93 filming requests and 89 related enquiries. 180 filming days were logged, bringing an estimated £870K direct spend into Kent. The Kent Film Office was unable to continue the work placements scheme in the office due to staff shortages but managed to secure 10 placements on visiting productions, some of them longer term, paid trainee posts.

Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)

In Quarter 3, LRA continued 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, adhering to the Government's 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

The escalation of Covid-19 cases in Kent towards the end of the year 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.

The impact of the 2nd lockdown and subsequent tiering has meant a continued focus on virtual offers. E-Usage has continued to see a significant increase, with December seeing the most e-Issues within a month for this year. During December, the e-Book and e-Audio issues reached the 2 million mark, with 500,000 of these loans achieved since March this year. Overall, e-Issues have increased by 88% for Quarter 3, with e-Newspapers increasing by 101%, e-Books by 92%, e-Audiobooks by 67% and e-Magazines by 41%. Numbers of customers joining online remains steady month on month, averaging at 575 new joiners each month over Quarters 2 and 3.

Virtual events and activities continue to develop. Libraries Week, which ran from 5th to 10th October, was entirely digital and involved a substantial programme of events on Social Media such as author interviews and talks, films, and posts promoting services and how to get the most from the library. The LRA Facebook posts saw 3,772 engagements during Libraries Week, a 94% increase on the average weekly post figure of 1,940.

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.

The Coroner Service

The Coroner Service has maintained service delivery despite an unprecedented workload arising from the pandemic. Working closely with stakeholder partners through the mechanism of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) Death Process Management Group, preparations were made for the increased pressure that winter and rising COVID-19 infections created, and innovative solutions continue to be developed with stakeholder partners to deliver an effective response to reports of deaths as well as maintaining inquest hearings. For example, a new electronic case management system has been introduced, along with a document management system for electronic court bundles, and MS Teams used as a virtual court platform, to meet the expectations of the Lord Chief Justice to maintain inquest hearings. The Coroner Service also delivered a high-profile jury inquest presided by a Deputy Chief Coroner, for which the service was commended.

Kent Country Parks

Kent Country Parks have continued to offer visitors the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and undertake exercise throughout the COVID-19 restrictions. Sites have been extraordinarily busy, and the significantly higher number of cars and people has continued into the winter months. Site staff have worked hard to provide safe and COVID secure sites despite personal, work and visitor pressures. Sites are showing signs of excessive wear and tear given high footfall and wet weather. Individual sites in December were between 50% and 220% busier in December 2020 compared to December 2019.

Community Safety

The Kent Community Warden Service (KCWS) has continued to support and reassure those vulnerable people most in need. Efforts have also focused on supporting communities to adapt to the changing restrictions. This has included providing advice around social distancing, vaccinations, and COVID-19 related guidelines.

The Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) managed 18 domestic homicide reviews (DHRs) in Quarter 3 on behalf of the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP).

Public Rights of Way

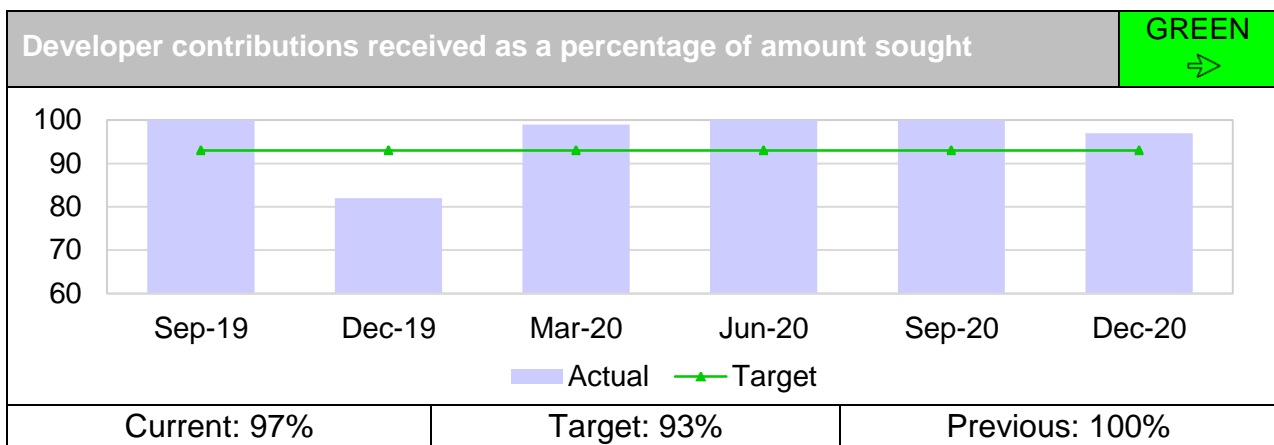
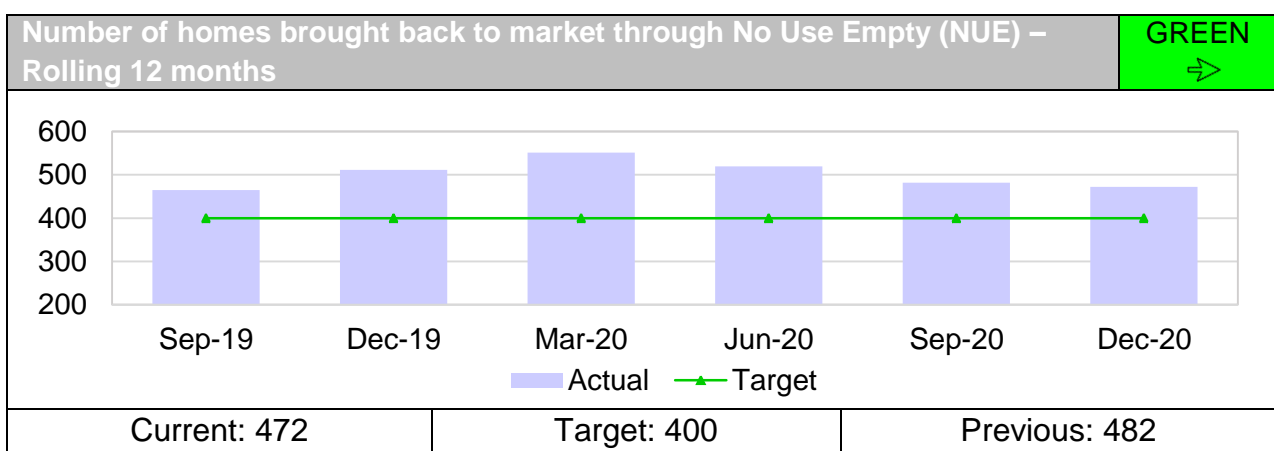
The substantially higher levels of use of the Public Rights of Way network have been sustained since Quarter 1. Where counters are present on the network, they are consistently demonstrating levels of use 2 to 3 times greater than at the start of the first lockdown. The increased use does also bring pressures, including the deterioration in the condition of the network. However, maintenance programmes have all progressed well during the year and by Quarter 3 were all back on target. During this Quarter there was also the successful prosecution of a company for the obstruction of a Public Right of Way at Ashford.

Resilience and Emergency Planning Service (REPS)

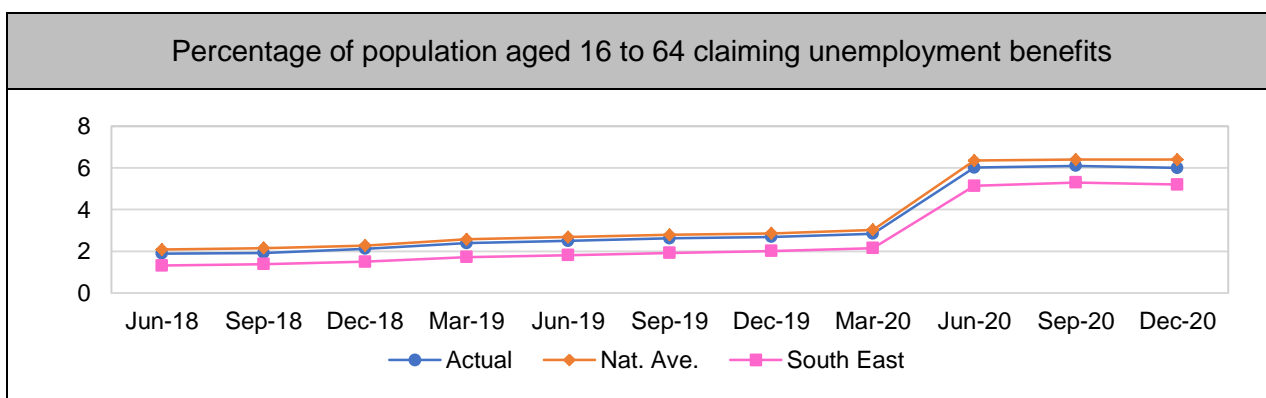
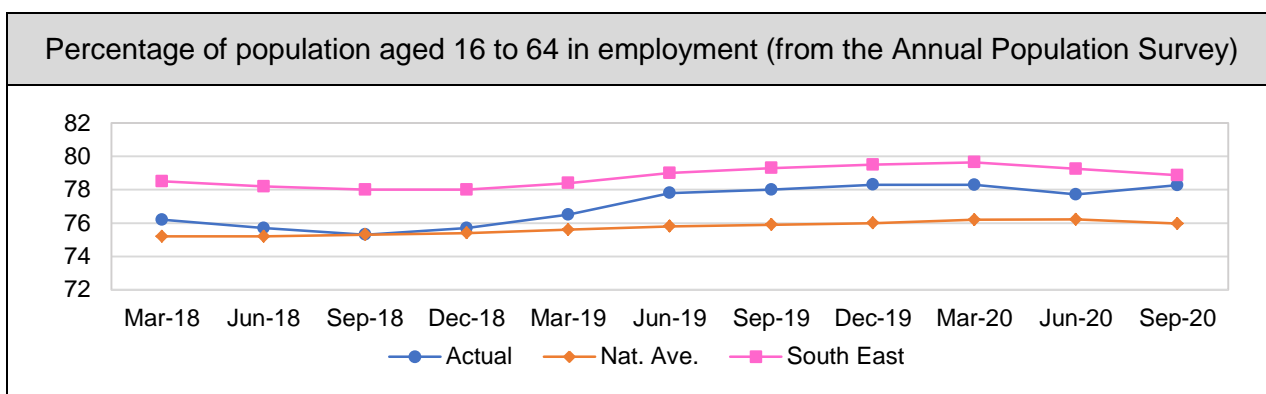
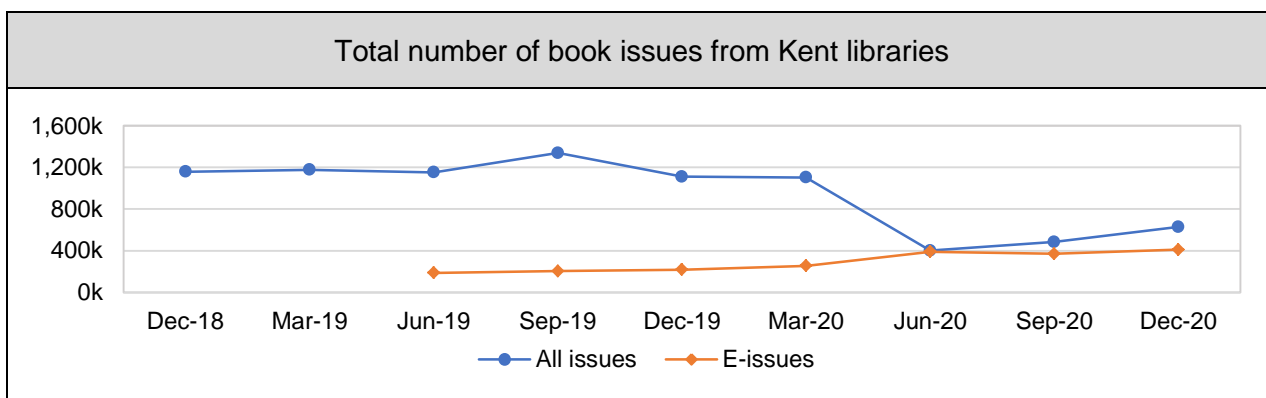
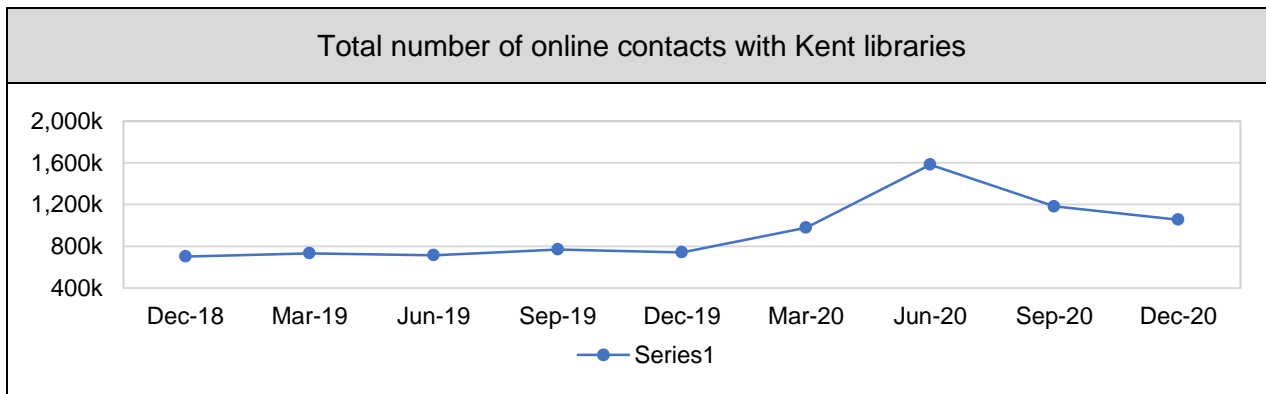
In Quarter 3 the 24/7 Duty Emergency Planning Officer received 373 alerts (the figure for the same period in 2019 was 194).

Notable incidents in this quarter occurred primarily over the festive period when there was a temporary suspension of travel to France via the Channel Ports and a subsequent testing requirement. This placed immense pressure upon all partners, and REPS was heavily involved in planning and response from the 21st December onwards. Coinciding with impacts arising from COVID-19 restrictions at the Channel Ports, Storm Bella hit Kent overnight on 26th and 27th December resulting in storm damage and localised flooding.

Key Performance Indicators



Activity indicators



Environment and Transport	
Cabinet Members	Michael Payne, Susan Carey
Corporate Director	Barbara Cooper

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	4	2		2	4	

Highways

Highways staff along with contractors continued to ensure roads and footways are as safe as possible whilst adapting to the coronavirus event and new rules following the Brexit transition period. In December, the service reacted to a cyber-attack on Amey, the Term maintenance contractor, although crews were back using mobile tablets/technology by the first week of January.

Performance has been maintained above target for all but one highway KPI. The attendance at Emergency Incidents within 2 hours of notification is at 97% compared to a target of 98%. For those incidents when the target was not met, attendance took place shortly after the 2-hour requirement. Demands over this quarter have put pressure on both KCC Incident Response Officers and Amey crews across the County, with almost 300 incidents in December, the highest since March 2020.

New enquiries and faults raised for action by customers in this quarter, at 19,016, was slightly under the normal seasonal demand. However, there has been very high demand for some specific teams like Soft Landscaping where 'tree' enquiries have been the highest in 5 years, peaking at over 500 per month, and Drainage enquiries at over 1,000 per month. The team are working through these in priority order in accordance with the published approach to asset management. Overall, the number of open highway customer enquiries (work in progress) increased a little to 5,869 although again, this is also below usual seasonal expectations.

The demand from utility companies to access and open Kent roads this year has resulted in 98,559 permit requests, up on 90,378 for last year. This pressure for road space and managing the network, where roadworks delays take place, is placing significant pressure on the team working remotely due to Covid.

Approval was given for the 2021/22 Winter Service policy which includes the use of technology to improve services and the value and impact of 'Navtrak' in-cab technology in reducing grit wastage and the length of journeys to grit roads.

Members were updated on plans for a Multimodal Strategic Transport Model being constructed for KCC, with work underway to set up a support and scenario testing service to provide a single model for different agencies to access and enable future use by KCC, district and borough partners and developers.

A £24.2m road resurfacing programme came to an end, resurfacing around 550,000 m² with new tarmac and replacing 50 miles of Kent's roads. The majority of this work was delivered by Eurovia Infrastructure Ltd, whose resurfacing contract with KCC came to end in December. A new contract is in place with GW Highways for the next two years.

Asset Management

The Highways Asset Management Plan is being developed to replace and update the six existing documents published on the KCC website over the last five years. The new single document is forward-looking and amounts to an action plan and investment strategy for the next five years. It recognises the increasingly challenging environment with deteriorating assets, increasing traffic volumes, uncertainty around future funding and, more recently, coronavirus impacts. The new document will be considered by the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 18 March, prior to a Cabinet Member key decision.

Casualty Reduction.

From September to December 2020 there were a reported 149 KSI (Killed or Seriously Injured) collisions which resulted in 163 KSI casualties (11 Fatal, 152 serious) and when confirmed, these figures are expected to be similar if not a little higher level than 2019 for the same period.

'Vision Zero – The Road Safety Strategy for Kent' is being developed, has been presented to Members, with the draft vision endorsed by The Casualty Reduction Partnership in December.

During 2020, 25,870 offences were detected at fixed camera sites across Kent and Medway. The site where most offences were detected is Pin Hill, Canterbury, the reasons for this are being investigated. A Social Media campaign "What type of criminal are you?" was run in December to engage young drivers, which received over 36,000 views. Online driver education continues to be delivered, with a total of 10,009 clients in 2020.

Public Transport

Towards the end of 2020, the Public Transport team and transport providers supported the full return of students to education in line with the operating guidance issued in respect of transport. Numbers taking up KCC Travel Saver passes indicated that around 80% of normal bus users continued to travel via this mode and despite the reduced numbers travelling, over 120 extra buses were commissioned using Government funding to ensure that services could operate safely and provide for all students.

Crash Remedial Measures & Local Transport Plan (LTP)

Delivery of the 2020/21 Crash Remedial Measures (CRM) and Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme is nearly complete with a small number of schemes being pushed back due to resourcing issues. The programme has been impacted by the lockdown impositions and the impact of the pandemic. 125 schemes have been successfully handed over for delivery in addition to the hundreds of 'smaller jobs' to improve safety. The team is delivering Combined Member Grant funded schemes in addition to managing the second tranche of Active Travel Funding from the Government with a view to constructing five large schemes to improve active travel choices for communities in Kent.

There is now a focus on the detailed investigations of the latest 122 crash cluster sites across the County. Each will each require detailed accident investigation to see if engineering interventions could help reduce crashes.

Journey Time Reliability/Congestion Strategy

The Service continues to develop and deliver a programme of schemes within the Local Growth Fund (LGF) to improve the reliability of localised journey times. Two key signalised junction refurbishments in Dover have been completed, with Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA) deployed to improve junction efficiency. Installation of a new electronic Variable Message Sign on the A256, approaching Dover, is now operational. Camera enforcement of yellow box markings at A282 J1B in Dartford is now operational and monitoring will take place to understand impact on congestion.

Local Growth Fund Transport Capital Projects

Through SELEP, KCC is managing £128 million of Government funding from rounds 1 to 3 of the LGF. There are currently 2 'Red' schemes causing concern, Sturry Link Road and Maidstone Integrated Transport Project.

For the Sturry Link Road project, SELEP Accountability Board agreed in September 2020 that the £4.791m remains ringfenced to allow planning consent to be secured. The Maidstone Integrated Transport Project has suffered numerous delays due to Covid-19, and as such a request will be made to the next Accountability Board to release the remaining LGF for the delivery of the Project beyond 31st March 2021.

SELEP received confirmation from Government in August that the remaining LGF (totalling £25.9m) would be released. The Growth Deal expires on 31st March 2021 but SELEP will advise accordingly on how they intend to manage the financial position at the end of this final year. It is likely this will take the form of capital swaps into local authorities' own capital programmes as has happened in previous years.

Waste Management

The target of 99% of municipal waste to be recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill was missed due to delayed maintenance work at Allington Energy from Waste plant. As this occurred from September into October, it impacted on both Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 figures. The delayed maintenance was due to the pandemic, whereby planned works scheduled for March and April had to be postponed. This resulted in increased repairs and maintenance due to the infrastructure operating for longer than the optimal time. For the 12 months to December, 2.4% was sent to landfill, similar to last year's figure, and is below the government target of 10% by 2035.

Although total waste volumes are down, kerbside collections have increased during further lockdowns. Waste converted to energy was 54% in 2020 compared with 51% in 2019, with recycling at 44% (2020) compared to 47% (2019). The reduction in recycled materials is primarily due to less waste being deposited at the HWRCs as fewer trips are being made since the start of the pandemic.

December has been a very difficult month as the EU exit plans were developed in detail to ensure all waste transfer and final disposal outlets offered much greater levels of resilience to cater for the potential disruption caused by the pandemic and the transition. The expected higher volumes of waste received over the Christmas period were compounded further by increased demands caused by the lockdown.

In preparation for the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee in January, reports and other associated documents were prepared for seven key decisions to be considered. These relate to the waste commissioning programme, infrastructure

expansion and progressive partnership agreements with the East Kent Districts. In addition, the team have successfully de-commissioned and implemented a new transfer station and HWRC contract for twelve of the eighteen waste sites in Kent.

Heritage Conservation

Heritage Conservation has secured a grant of £24,894 from the government's COVID-19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Fund which will enable repairs to the reefing stage at Meopham Mill and allow public access once it is possible for visitors to return.

Old Chalk New Downs

In lieu of the direct public engagement work of the project, and to encourage and enable people to still get out and connect with the chalk grassland and wider project area, the Heritage Lottery Fund funded Old Chalk New Downs project team have published a set of 23 self-guided walks and are in the process of creating StoryMaps for these trails to inspire people to visit (two published to date). Another success of the project has been the Conservation Traineeship programme. These are designed to help graduates develop a wide range of skills in respect of conservation work and assist them in finding full time employment.

Sustainable Business and Communities

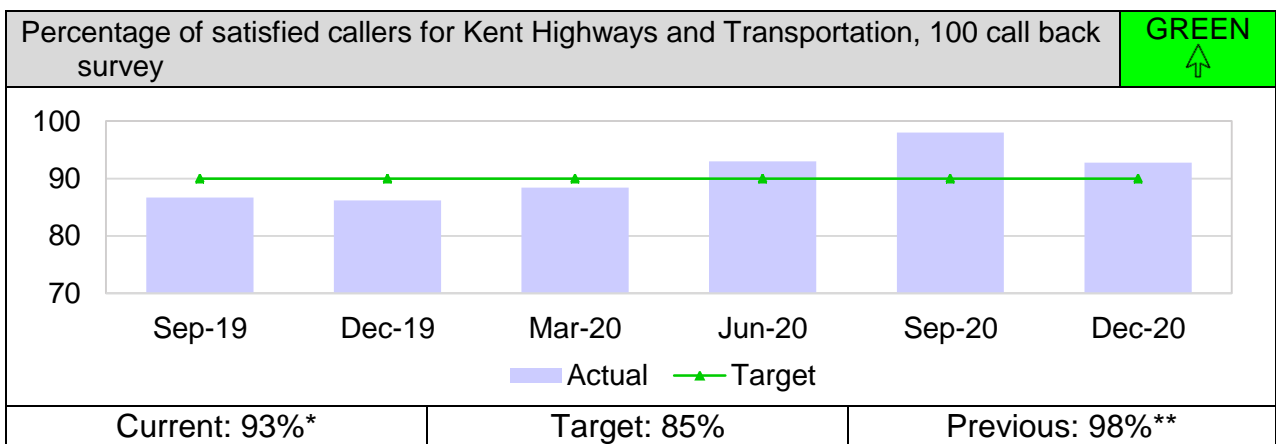
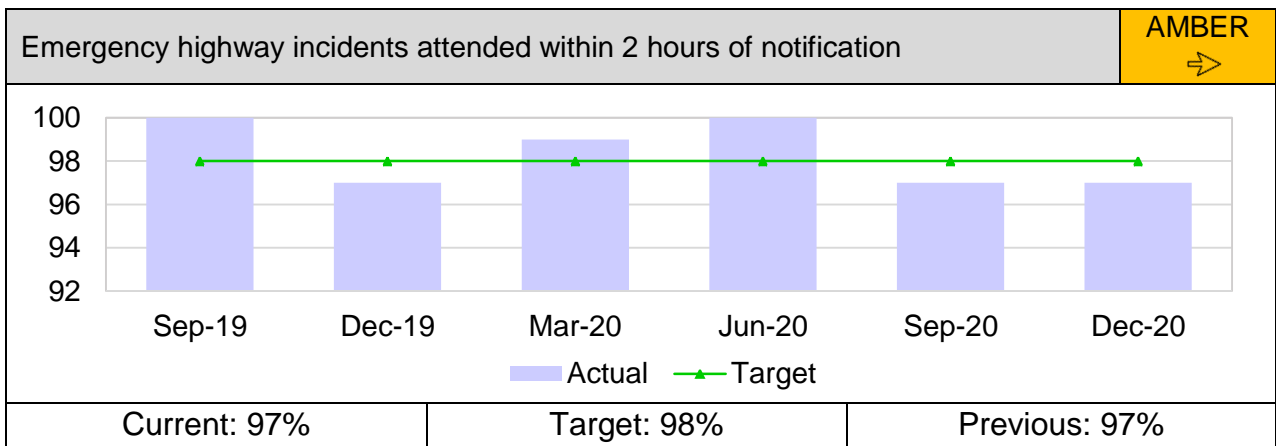
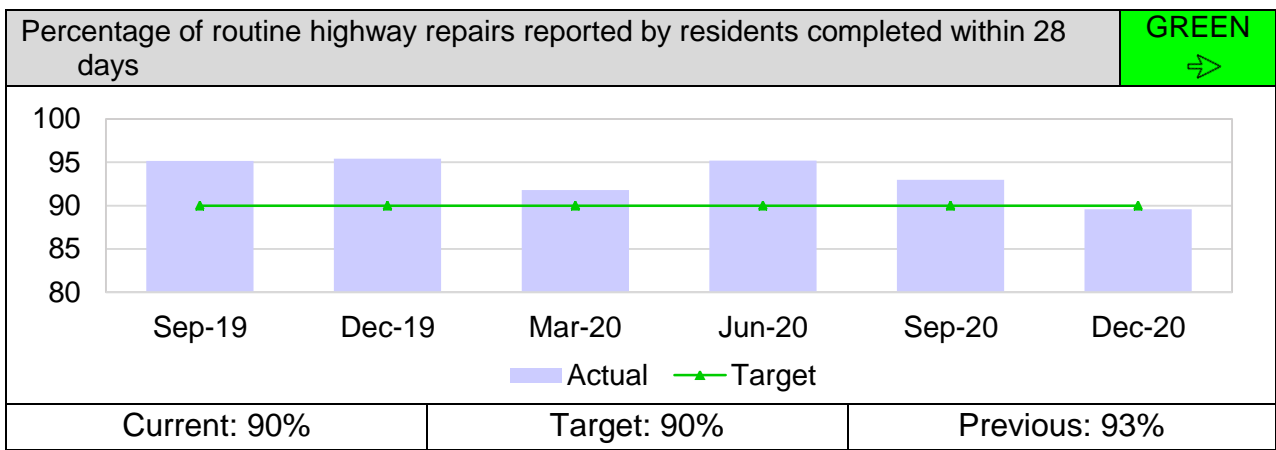
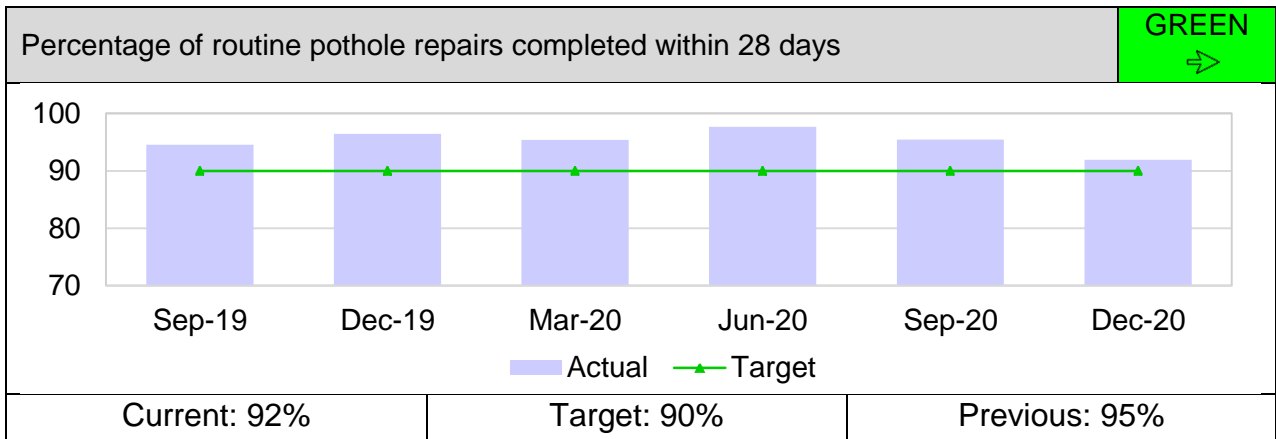
The second quarter of 2020-21 has seen a more significant reduction in emissions due to the impact of Coronavirus, achieving a 40% reduction in emissions compared to the 2015 baseline. This exceeds the stretch target of 38% reduction to be achieved by March 2021 and is largely attributed to the reduction in business travel equating to 500 tonnes of GHG emissions compared to Quarter 1. As calculated last quarter, there is confidence that the modelled BAU (Business As Usual) data showed that the target would have been met even without the impact of Coronavirus.

697 households have accepted quotes from Solar Together Kent, a scheme which tackles carbon emissions from housing, contributing to Kent's Net Zero ambition. The Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) programme has been confirmed by Government to run until 2023, covering a much wider area including Kent and the wider South and East, from Essex to Hampshire, working with more partners and bringing much greater benefits. The first of the charging points for taxis, as part of the wider Kent EV (Electric Vehicles) Programme, have now been installed in Thanet with the rest to follow later this year; and 'Connected Kerb' has been appointed to install the charging points for the Parish EV project. The Maidstone Heat Network project has been awarded a £2.5m grant. This project will produce low carbon heat from the River Medway using a water source heat pump. The funding is from Triple Point on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and will enable the development of the project as well as meet part of the construction costs.

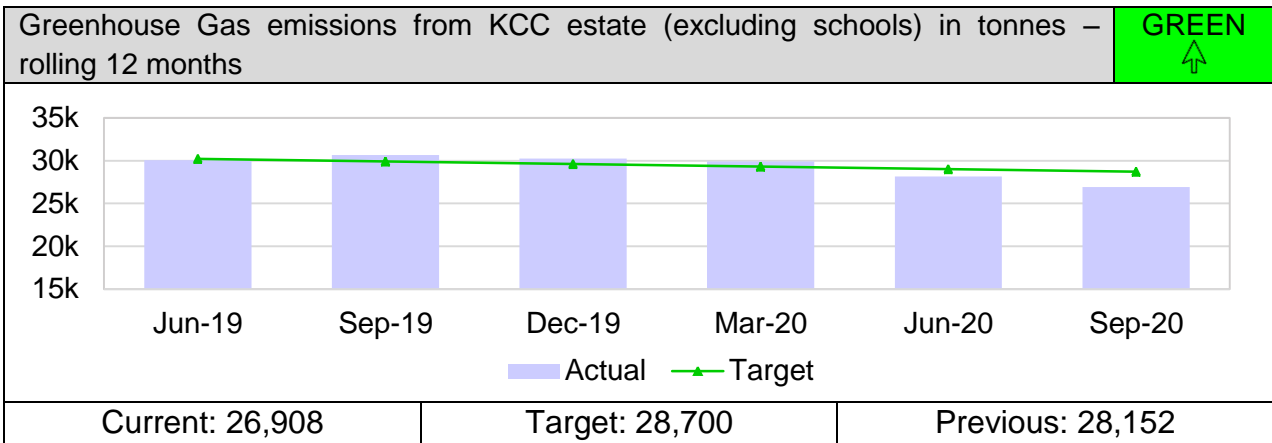
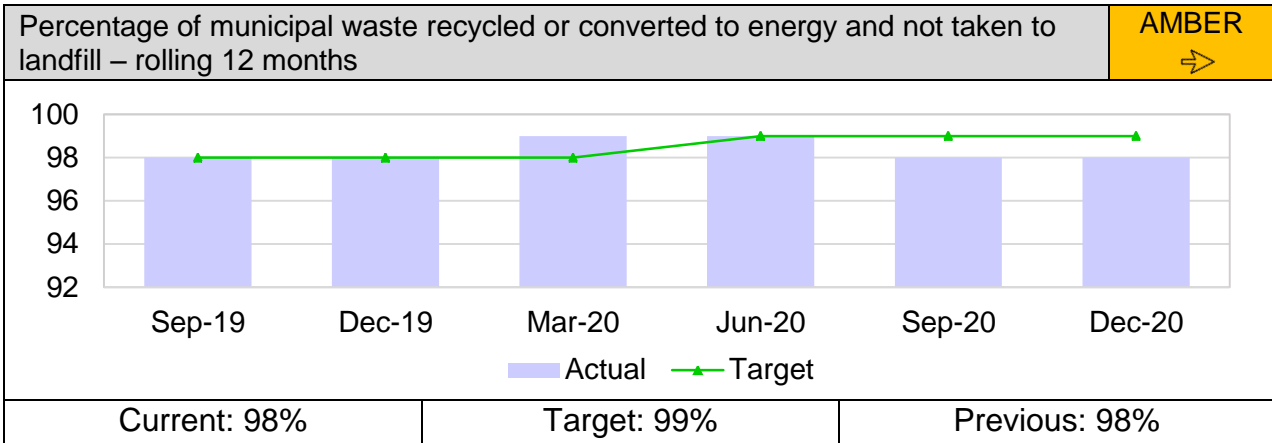
Transport Strategy

The Lower Thames Crossing Development Consent Order (DCO) was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in October by Highways England but was subsequently withdrawn in November. The withdrawal allows more time for Highways England to work with a range of stakeholders including KCC to improve aspects on the project, such as mitigating the impacts of construction, reducing and mitigating the environmental impact of the utilities diversion through Shorne Woods Country Park, and agreeing appropriate mitigation measures for the wider local road network.

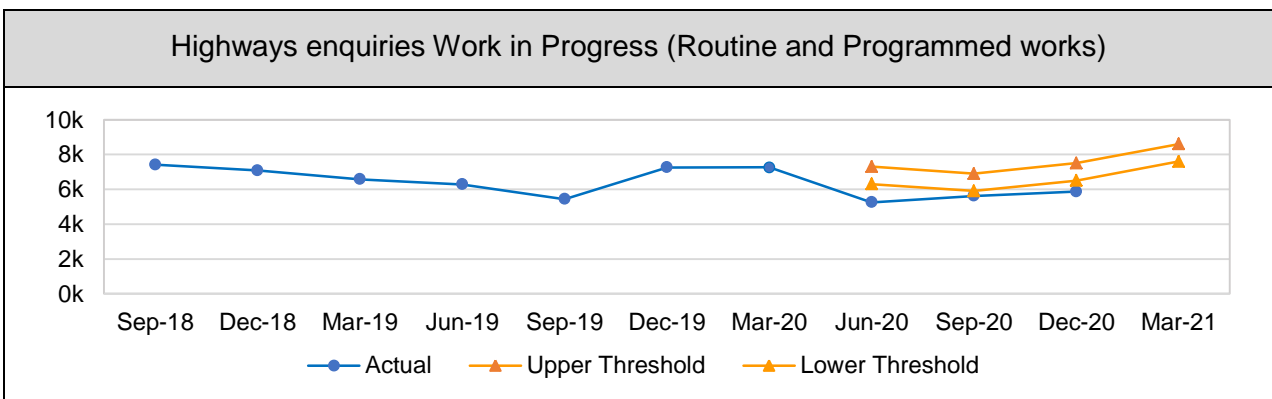
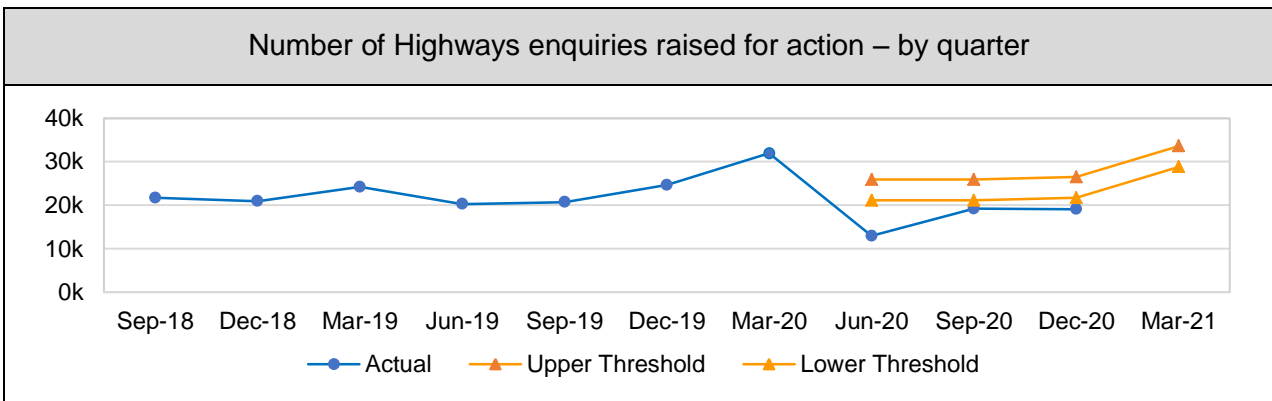
Key Performance Indicators

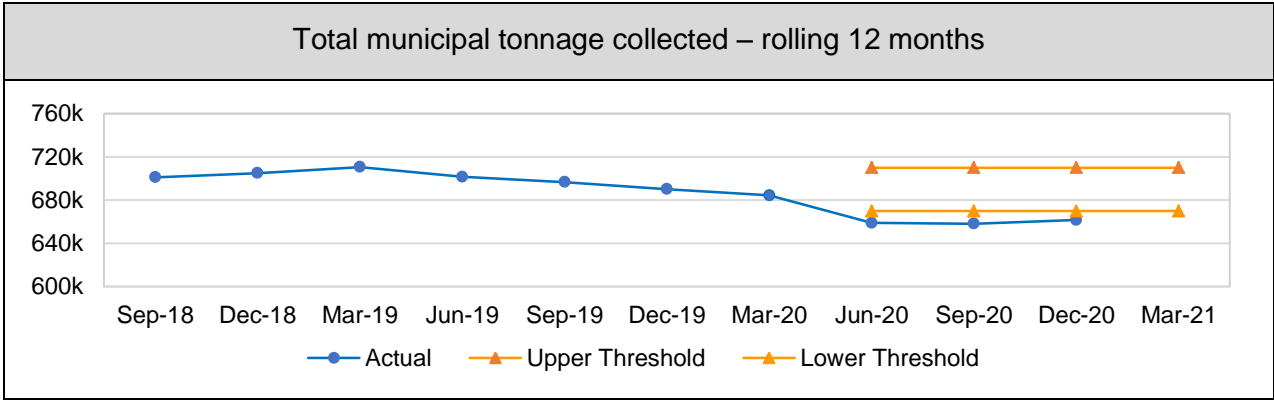


*October and December figures only; **July and August figures only



Activity indicators





Children, Young People and Education	
Cabinet Member	Richard Long, Sue Chandler
Corporate Director	Matt Dunkley

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	7	6	1	3	6	5

Schools

On Tuesday 5th January 2021, all primary and secondary schools were closed to pupils except those of critical workers and vulnerable children, due to the coronavirus outbreak. Special schools currently remain open unless advised by Public Health England, but many parents are choosing not to send their children to these schools.

Attendance by School Type and Criteria on Friday 15th January 2021

School Type	Total number of schools reporting	% of all pupils attending	% attending with EHCP	% attending with a Social Worker	% attending with FSM	% Vulnerable Children Attending	% pupils of Critical Workers Attending
Primary	368	15.7	36.1	41.2	13.3	17.1	65.0
Secondary	87	2.6	16.2	18.4	3.4	5.7	57.1
Special	20	24.9	25.0	33.3	20.8	25.3	67.1
PRU	4	27.2	50.0	39.3	23.0	29.9	75.0
Kent Total	479	9.7	26.3	31.8	9.9	14.3	64.2

Vulnerable Children are an aggregation of the FSM, EHCP and Social Worker categories.

'Total School Roll' is based on the schools that have reported.

The Department for Education (DfE) cancelled all exams and assessments that would have taken place in the 2021 Summer term. There are currently no plans for Ofsted to resume school inspections until at least the Summer term. Therefore, the latest Ofsted data available for schools based on their last inspection is from March 2020 when 91% of schools in Kent (530 of the 580) were Good or Outstanding, compared to the national figure of 86%. The percentage of Primary schools judged as Good or Outstanding at 92% compares favourably to the national figure of 88%. 87% of Secondary schools were judged to be Good or Outstanding compared to 76% nationally. The percentage for Special schools at 96% was six percentage points higher than the national position.

During the Autumn term the focus for The Education People (TEP) school improvement was to support schools to re-establish normality as far as possible. School improvement visits continued face to face where possible. However, a spike in infections in some areas from November meant that many visits moved back to being virtual, as schools developed infection management strategies.

School Places and Admissions

For admissions in September 2020, 88% of parents secured their first preference primary school, and 78% of families secured their first preference for secondary school places, both are one percentage point lower than last year.

The net change to the total number of places being offered for September 2020 entry was an increase of 139 Year 7 places and an increase of 83 Year R places.

Early Years

Current guidance from the Government is that all Early Years settings should remain open during the latest coronavirus lockdown.

Ofsted has not carried out any new inspections since March 2020. The latest inspection data for the percentage of Early Years settings rated Good or Outstanding at 99% is one percentage point above the target. This has increased by 1 percentage point from last Quarter due to closures of some settings. Any new settings will not have been inspected yet.

3,692 two-year olds have been funded through the Free for Two scheme equating to a 69.8% take up. This is a decrease of 5.8 percentage points compared to the same period last year.

The Early Years and Childcare Service has continued to support the Early Years and Childcare Sector through the Coronavirus pandemic and the November lockdown, acting on Department for Education (DfE), Public Health England (PHE) and Ofsted advice and guidance. Supply and demand are still being regularly monitored (with supply still sufficient to meet demand). In October, the interim scenario based Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for 2020/21 was produced. During the period October to December, the Childcare Market in Kent had seemed to be recovering and coping reasonably well, however financial viability and sustainability are increasingly presenting as issues. There have been regular communications with the Early Years and Childcare Sector as a whole, including a weekly 'Early Years and Childcare COVID-19 Blog', a monthly generic Early Years and Childcare Bulletin and ongoing supportive contact with individual providers. The Early Years and Childcare Service's Threads of Success training offer continues to be delivered on virtual platforms. These ways of working will continue moving forward.

Skills and Employability

The NEET Support Service was successfully integrated into the Skills and Employability team on 1st October 2020. The county NEET strategy and Participation Action plan has been re-written to incorporate NEET support services into all aspects of the team's work. The work of the Participation and Careers Enterprise Company officers has continued on-line, supporting schools and colleges in their post-16 recruitment which started 1st November. Apprenticeship and recruitment events were delivered with employers and training providers and further events are scheduled in early 2021. Kent Choices Website has the function to support young people in making post 16 applications, and training has been provided to all schools to use its improved functionality. The service developed a virtual work experience provision to support young people with a virtual work placement due to current opportunities being suspended because of the pandemic. There is currently a lack of provision for the 903 young people who were NEET in December. Where available, it is mainly online learning which is often unsuitable as does not provide the practical/vocational experience they are looking for. In addition, it does not meet other eligibility criteria to allow families to claim child benefit. The problem is likely to worsen with the ending of NEET programmes funded by the European Social Fund (EFA) in December 2020.

SEND (Special Educational Need and Disability)

Based on the rolling 12-month average, 31% of EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks (623 out of 2,001), the same as the last quarter. This percentage continues to be impacted as the backlog (those over 20 weeks) is worked through. The decision to issue an EHCP cannot be taken until information and advice has been received from an Educational Psychologist (EP). In line with the national picture, there have been significant delays in the SEN Service receiving EP advice and information which has meant it has been difficult to improve performance in relation to the 20-week timeframe. A recovery plan has been developed to ensure that all delayed EP assessments are completed, and delayed EHC plans are issued by the end of April 2021.

Work continues to improve the quality of EHCPs issued. In addition to a rolling programme of training sessions covering all aspects of the statutory assessment process (delivered by the Interim Head of Service) the SEN team have received specialist training delivered by the Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (IPSEA). A quality assurance framework has been developed and is now being implemented to ensure that the Service rigorously monitors the quality of EHCPs issued and drives continuous improvement through analysis of data and moderation. The Service continues to work with partners in health, social care and education to improve the quality of information and advice received during the statutory assessment process.

There was a significant increase in requests for Statutory Assessment (EHC needs assessment) during October, November and December; an average of 362 requests per month compared to an average of 220 per month for the previous three months. It seems likely that this increase is linked to the difficulties that some children and young people experienced following a return to education following the first national lockdown.

Wider Early Help

16 pupils were permanently excluded for the rolling 12-month period to December 2020*. Six were primary phase pupils and 10 were secondary phase pupils. The percentage of pupils excluded from school equates to 0.01%. This Autumn term four pupils (one primary phase and three secondary phase) were permanently excluded compared with 12 for the same period last year.

The official data for the number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Young Justice System comes from the Police National Computer (PNC) and is published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). This national data has not been updated due to PNC unavailability during Covid-19. The most recent national data available is for the previous year, ending March 2019, which still illustrates Kent's strong performance against the national average, the provisional Kent numbers of FTEs, shows a small but consistently increasing rate in the year to 261. This remains below the target of 270. In response, the Service is currently scrutinising its preventative offer, to ensure the response to Community Resolutions is robust.

Front Door

The performance measure for the "Percentage of front door contacts where the final decision is made within 3 working days" has been set to ensure robust timeliness in this initial stage of decision making. Performance as of 31st December 2020 was 94.0%,

which is above the Target of 90.0% and an improved position from 30th September 2020 when it was 92.8%.

Early Help

At the end of December 2020 2,761 families were open to Early Help units, providing support for 5,785 children and young people under the age of 18 (including unborn). This is a 12% increase when compared to the end of the previous quarter (2,456 families) and a 2.5% increase compared to the same period for 2019 (2,694 families).

The performance measure for “Percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help / Social Work teams within 3 months” was 14.9% for the rolling 12 months to December 2020, achieving the Target of below 15.0%.

Children’s Social Care - Staffing and Caseloads

The number of open cases (including those for care leavers above the age of 18) was 11,151 as at 31st December 2020, an increase of 173 children and young people when compared to the number of cases open on 30th September 2020.

There were 4,901 referrals to children’s social care services in the quarter, a decrease of 6.5% when compared to the previous quarter (5,242). The rate of re-referrals within 12 months for the 12 months to December 2020 was 29.0% compared to 29.7% at the end of Quarter 2. The reductions in re-referrals are more evident when looking at the re-referral rates for a 3-month period, which for December 2020 was 26.1% compared to 29.5% for September 2020.

The percentage of case-holding social worker posts held by permanent qualified social workers increased slightly in the quarter, from 93.0% in September 2020 to 93.5% in December 2020 and has continued to remain above the target of 85.0%. The number of case-holding social work posts filled by agency staff increased slightly in the quarter, from 13.9% at the end of Quarter 2 to 14.1% at the end of Quarter 3.

At 20.7 cases the average caseload for Social Workers in children’s social work teams remains above the target level of 18 and is an increase from 19.7 cases at the end of the previous quarter.

Child Protection

On 31st December 2020 there were 1,143 children subject to a child protection plan, a decrease of 56 from the end of the previous quarter (1,199). The rate per 10,000 children (aged 0-17) was 33.6, which remains below the last published rate for England of 43.8, as at 31st March 2020. The percentage of children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time was 23.3% at the end of Quarter 3, which is a slight reduction from the previous Quarter (24.1%) and remains outside of the target range of between 17.5% and 22.5%. This compares to an average for England of 21.9%, and an average for Kent’s Statistical Neighbours of 22.7% (for those becoming subject to a repeat plan during April 2019 – March 2020).

Children in Care

The number of citizen children in care decreased by 8 in the last quarter, to 1,370. The number of unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC) in care decreased 63 to 411. The number of children in care placed in Kent by other local authorities (OLA) decreased during the quarter, by 58 from 1,324 to 1,266.

Status	Mar 20	Jun 20	Sep 20	Dec 20
Citizen	1,388	1,389	1,378	1,370
UASC	423	497	474	411
Total	1,811	1,886	1,852	1,781
Gender				
Male	1,168	1,250	1,215	1,157
Female	643	636	637	624
Age Group				
0 to 4	188	193	187	203
5 to 9	193	199	205	188
10 to 15	716	714	706	676
16 to 17	714	780	754	714
Ethnicity				
White	1,241	1,245	1,228	1,201
Mixed	94	94	99	102
Asian	85	101	98	88
Black	112	120	124	109
Other	279	326	303	281

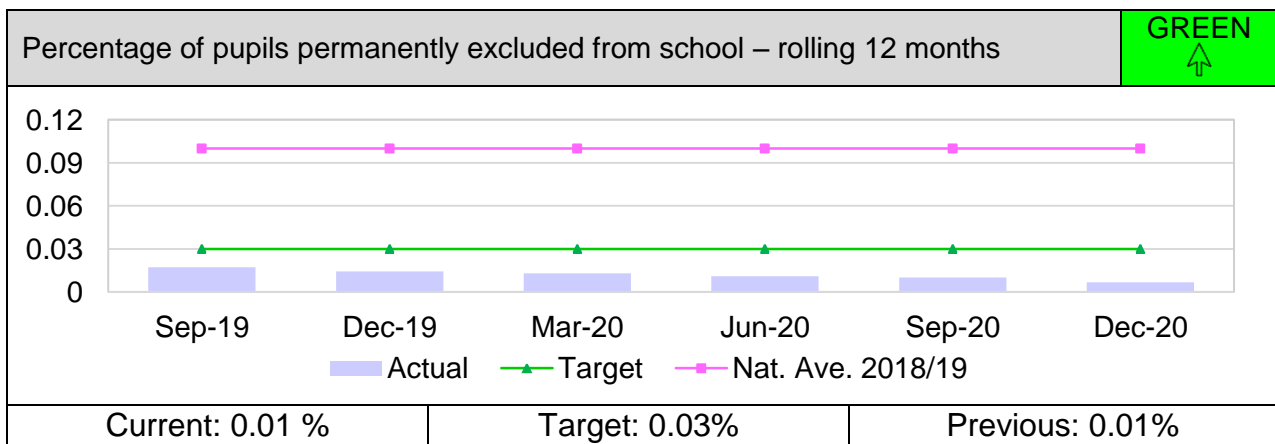
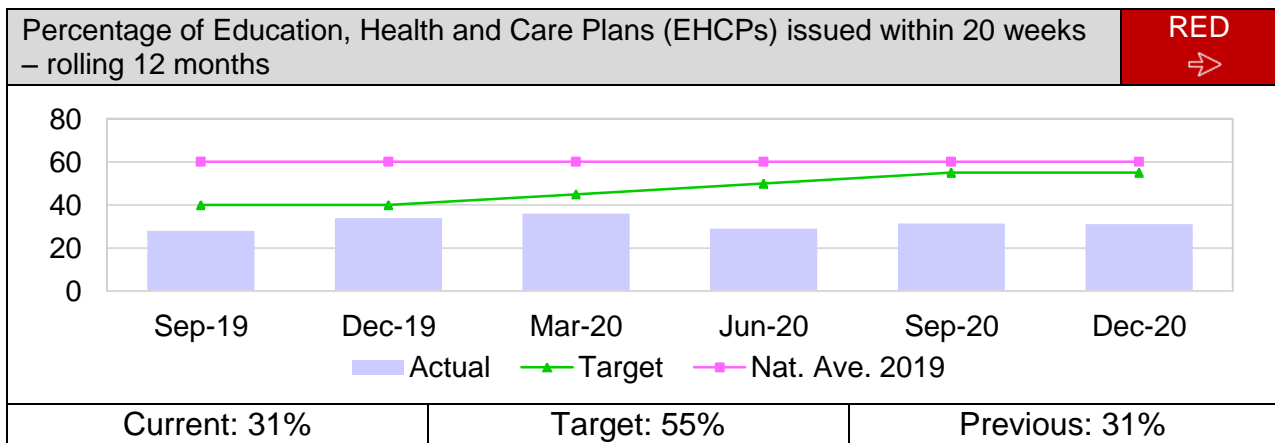
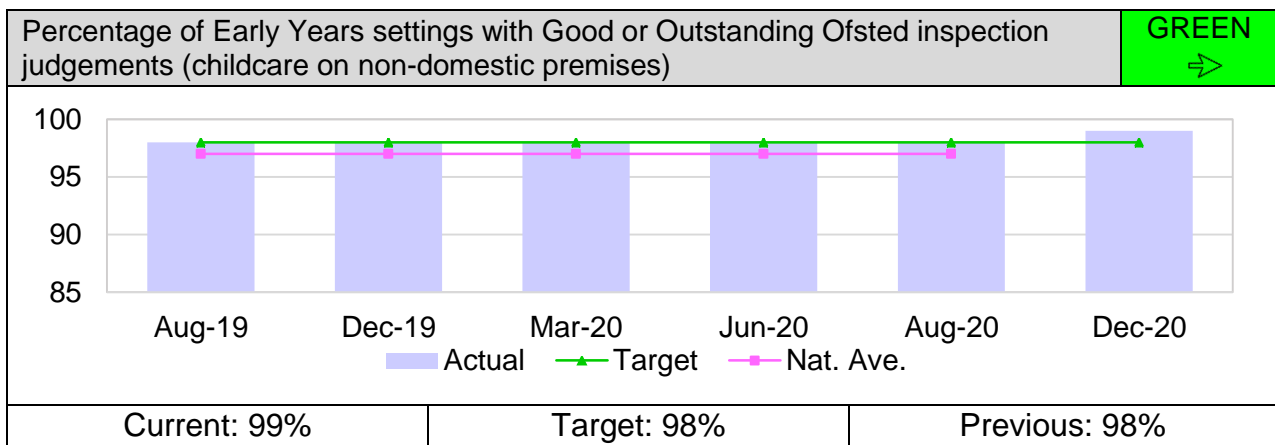
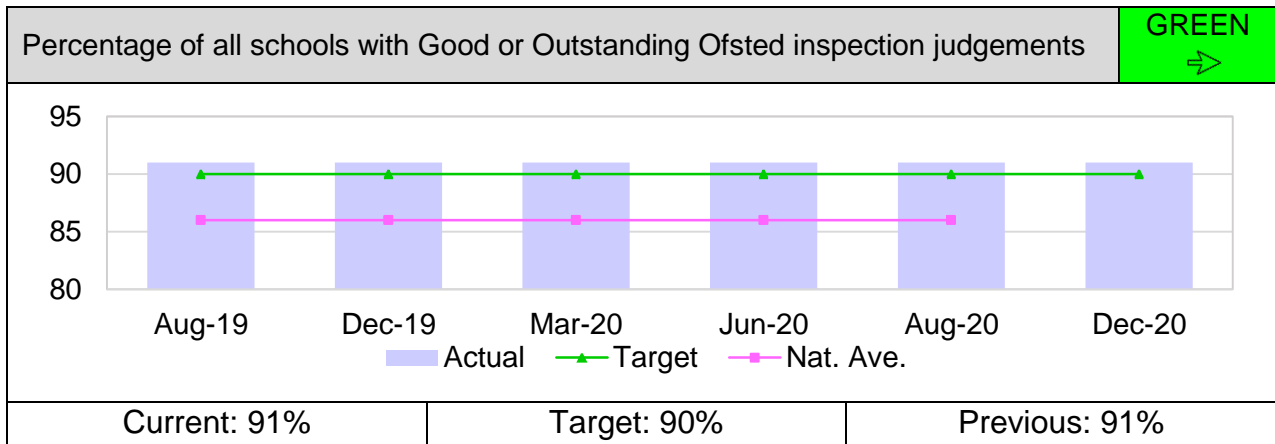
The percentage of Kent children placed in KCC in-house foster care or with family/friends is now 80.2%, compared to 80.1% the previous Quarter. This remains below the 85.0% target. Performance against placement stability of 3 or more placements in a 12-month period has increased very slightly in the quarter, from 12.0% to 12.2%, including UASC and decreased for Citizen CIC only from 10.5% to 10.3%. This compares to the latest published England average of 11.0% (2019/20).

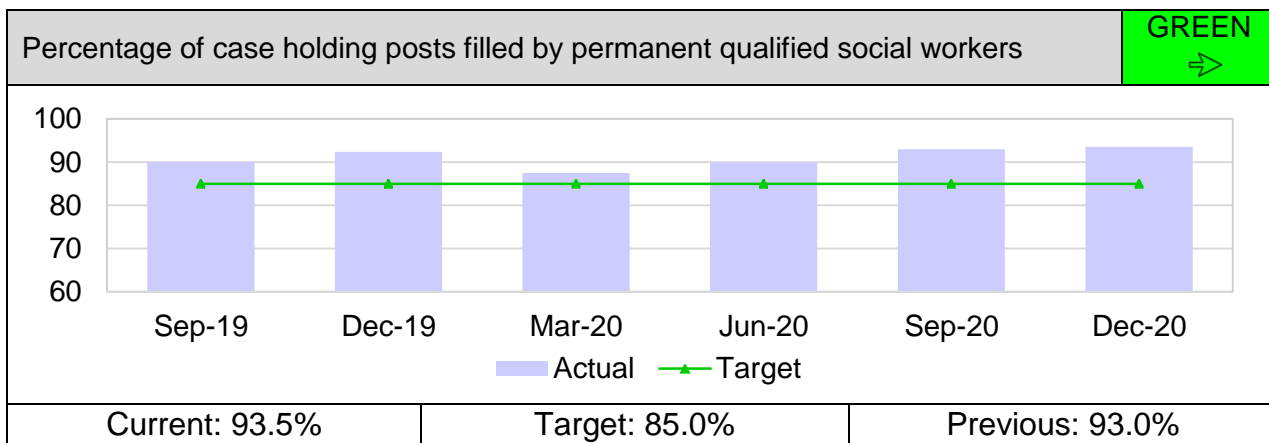
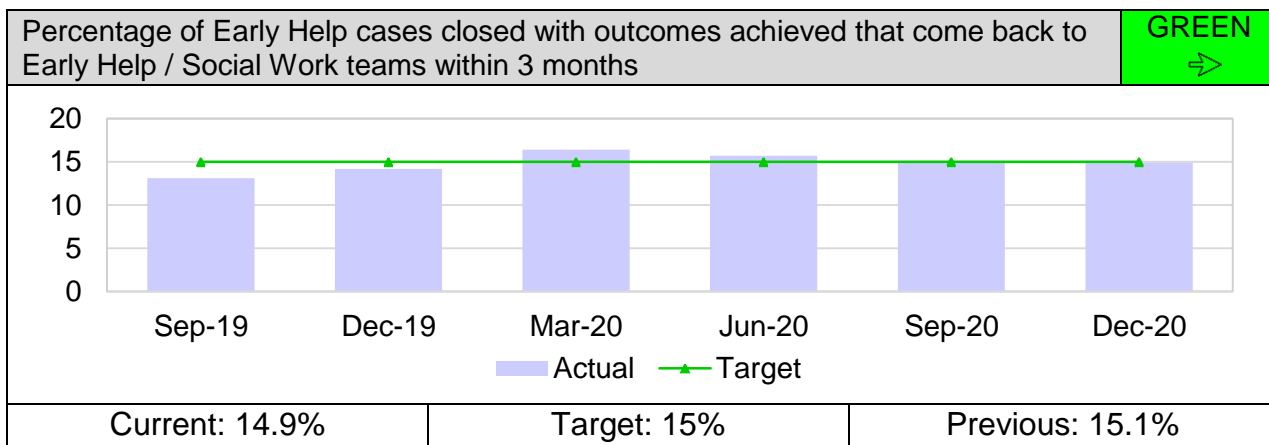
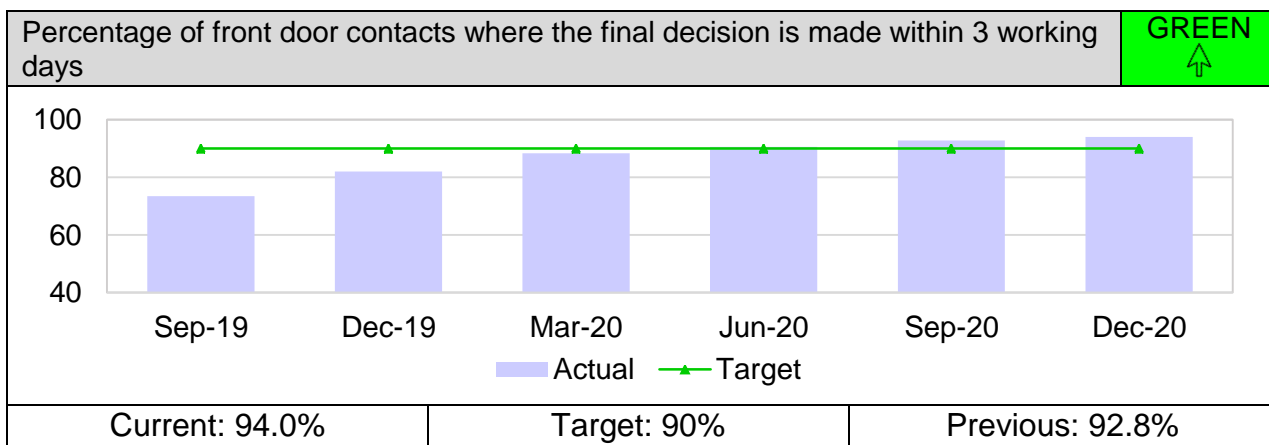
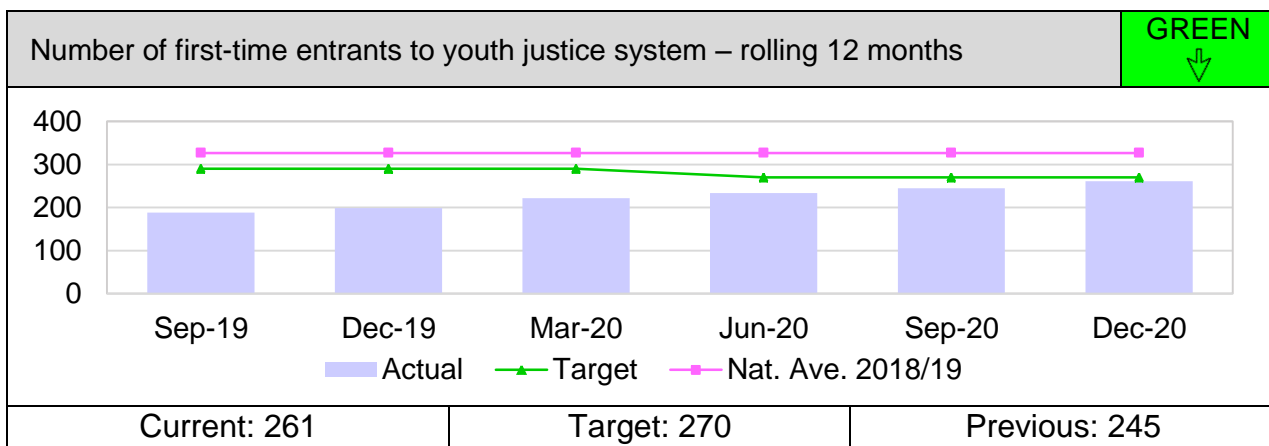
For children who were adopted in the last 12 months the average number of days between coming into care and moving in with their adoptive family continues to outperform the nationally set target of 426 days. The average number of days for Kent children at the end of December 2020 was 305 days, compared to 313 at the end September 2020.

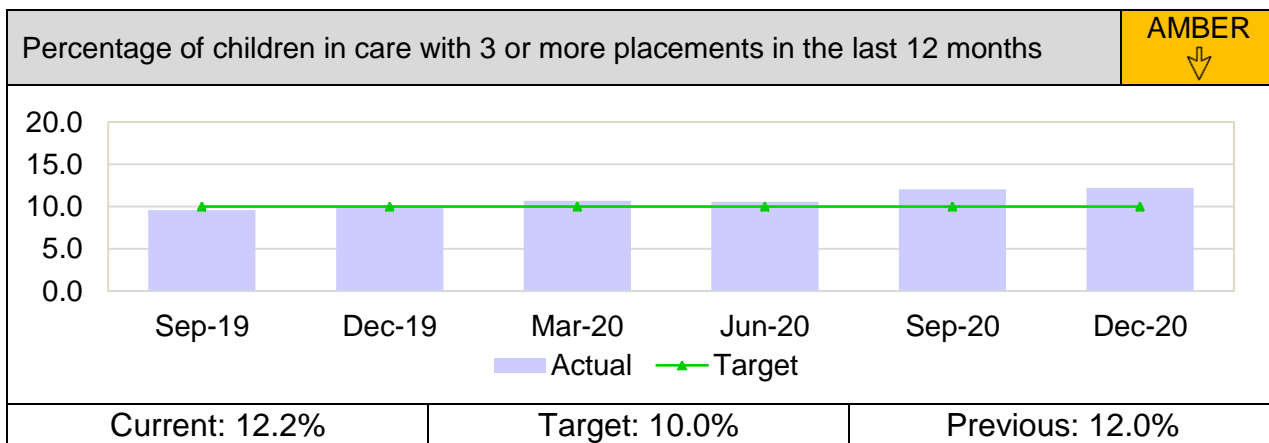
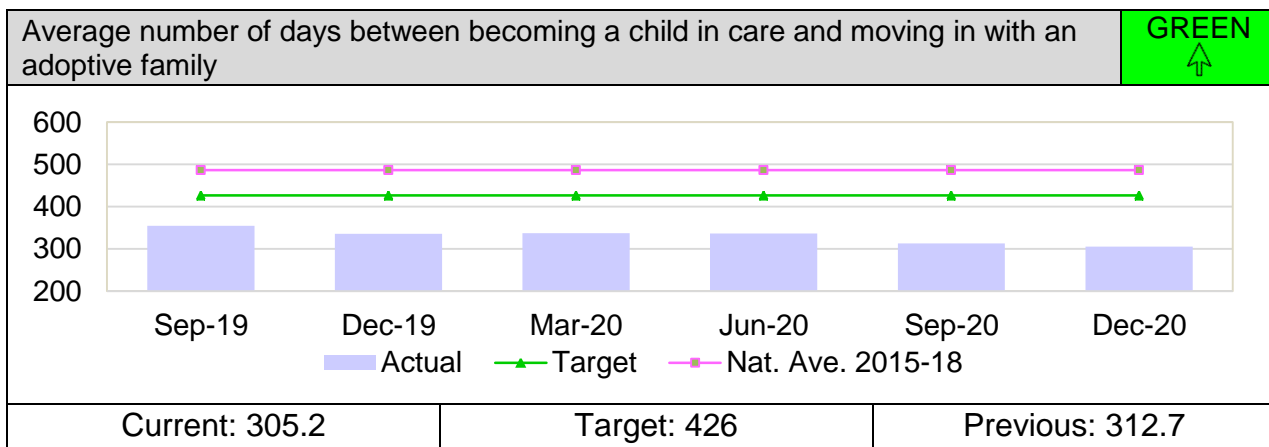
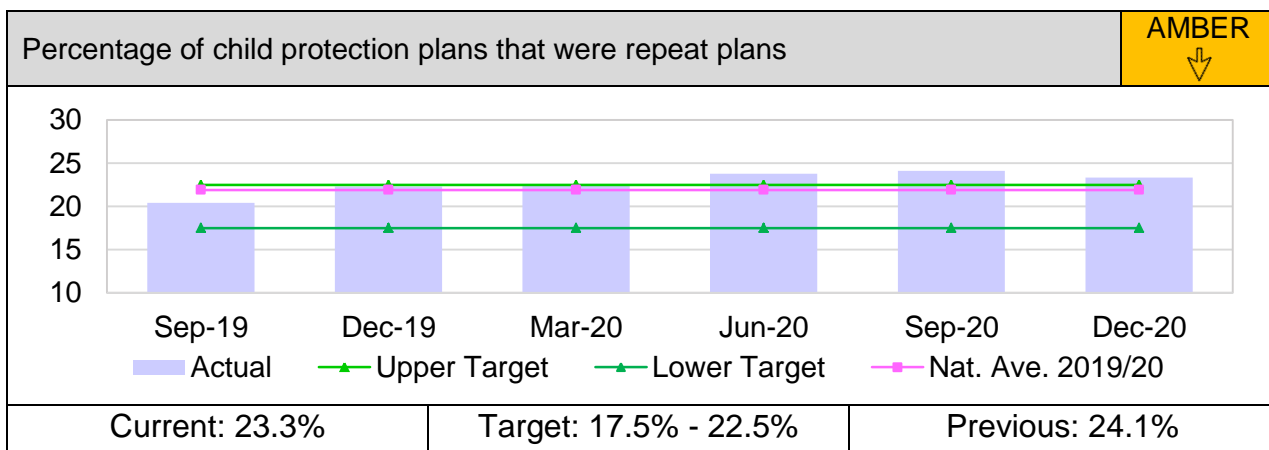
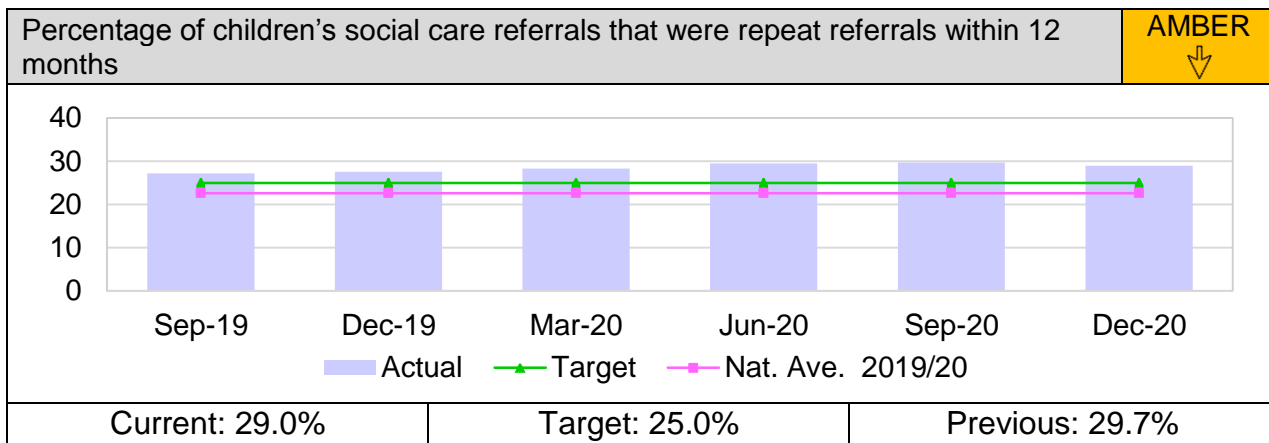
Care Leavers

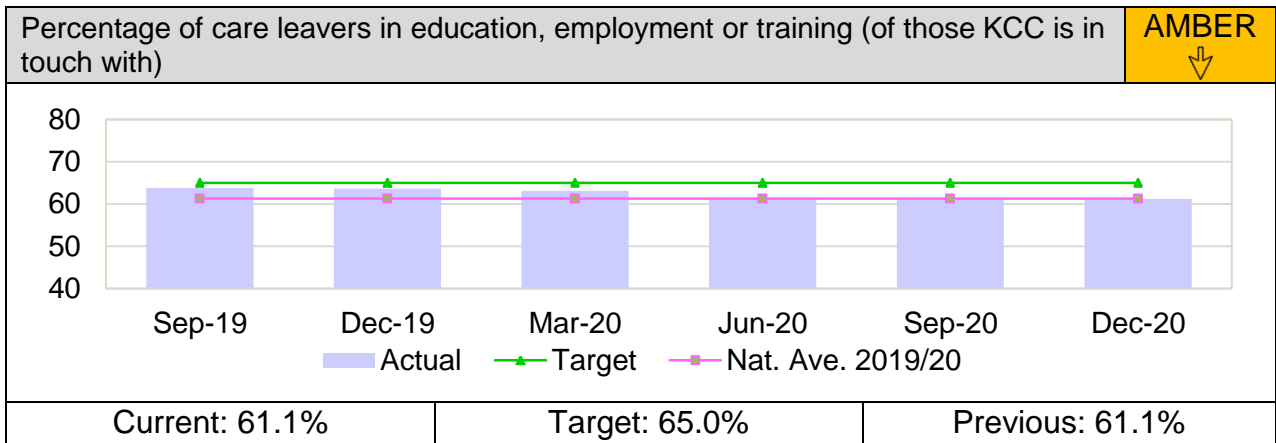
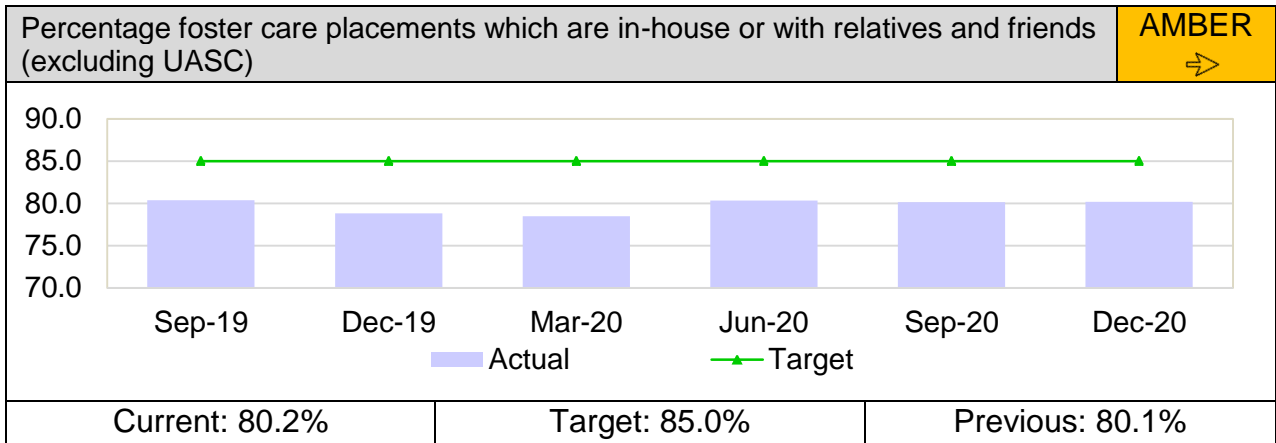
The number of care leavers at the end of December 2020 was 1,968 which is an increase of 96 from the previous quarter. Of these, 926 were citizen care leavers and 1,042 were unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training has remained the same as for Quarter 2 at 61.1%, which is below the 65.0% target.

Key Performance Indicators

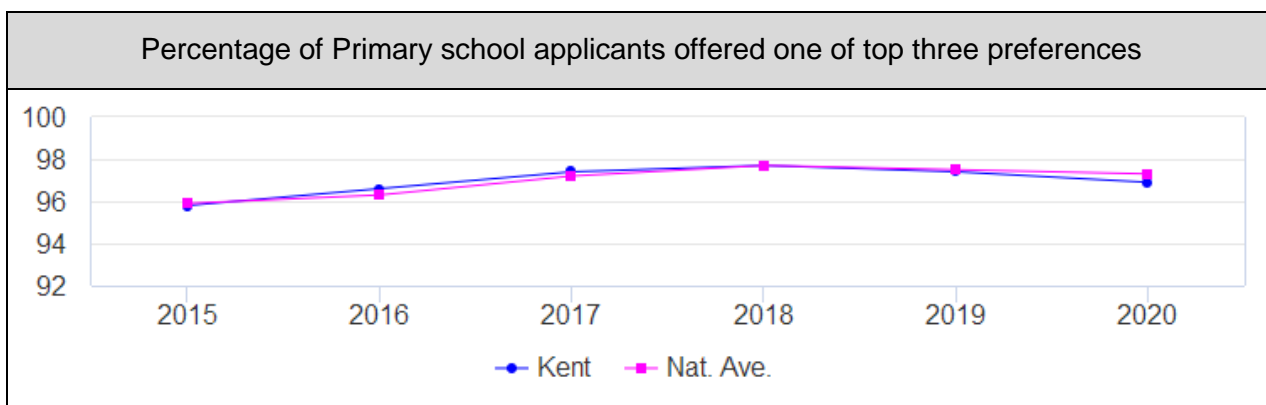
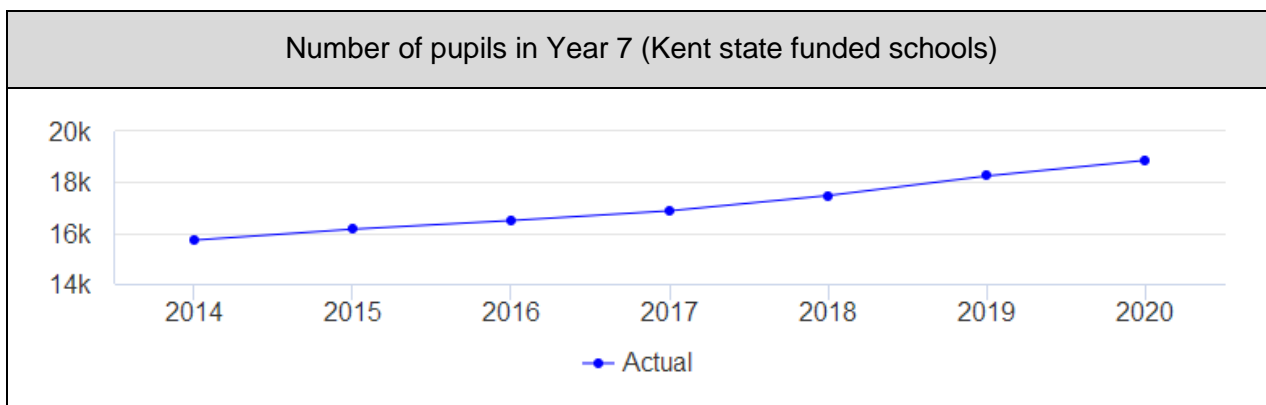
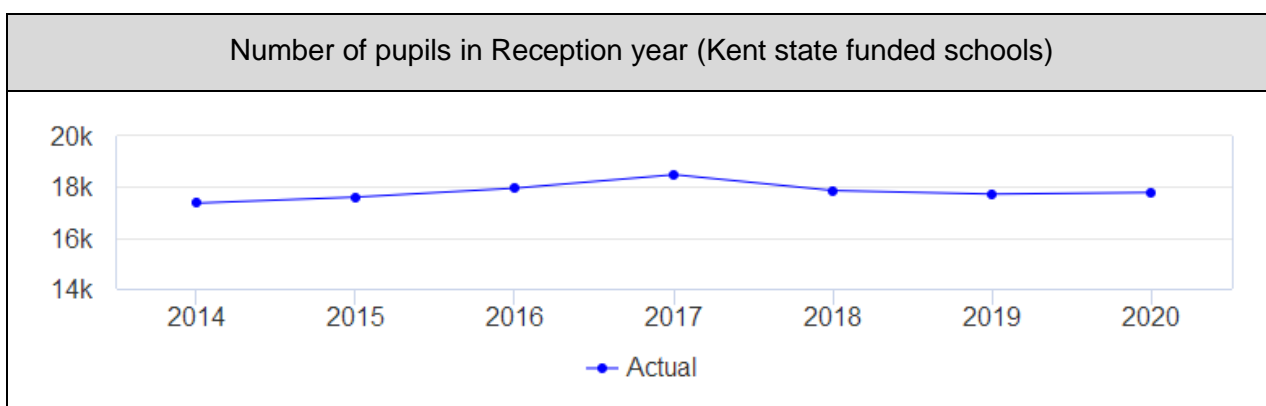
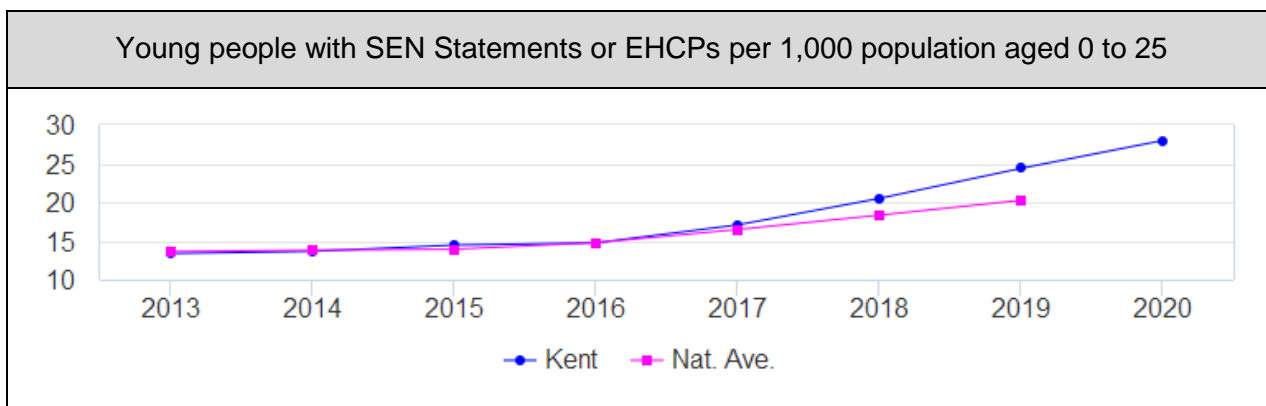




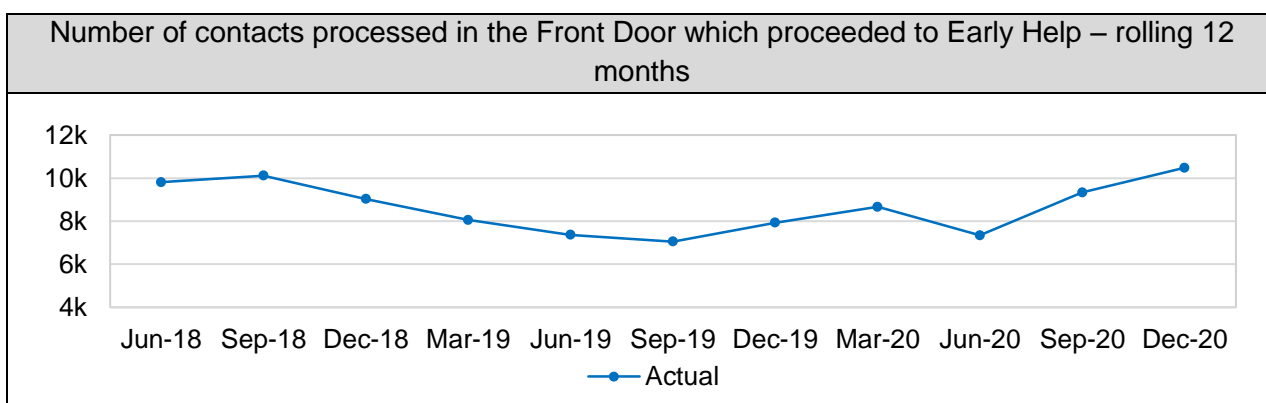
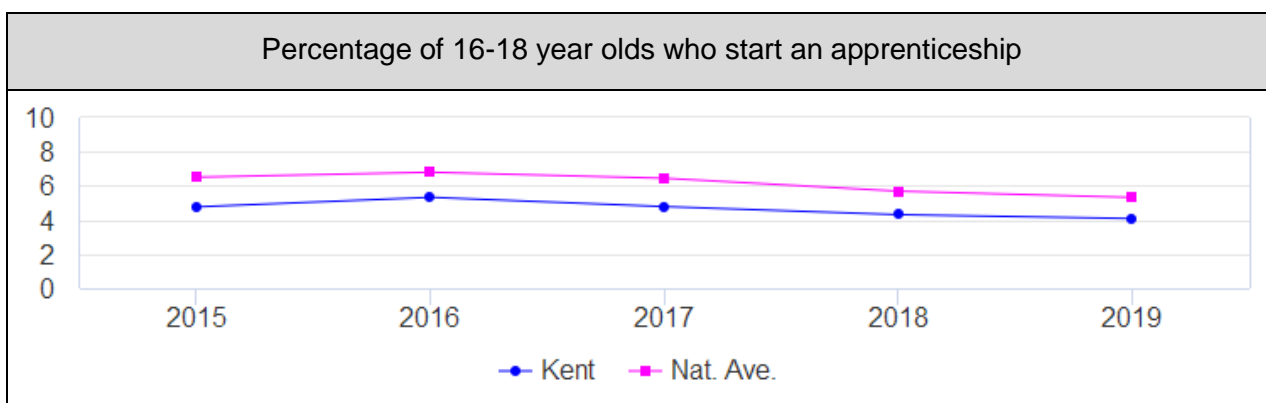
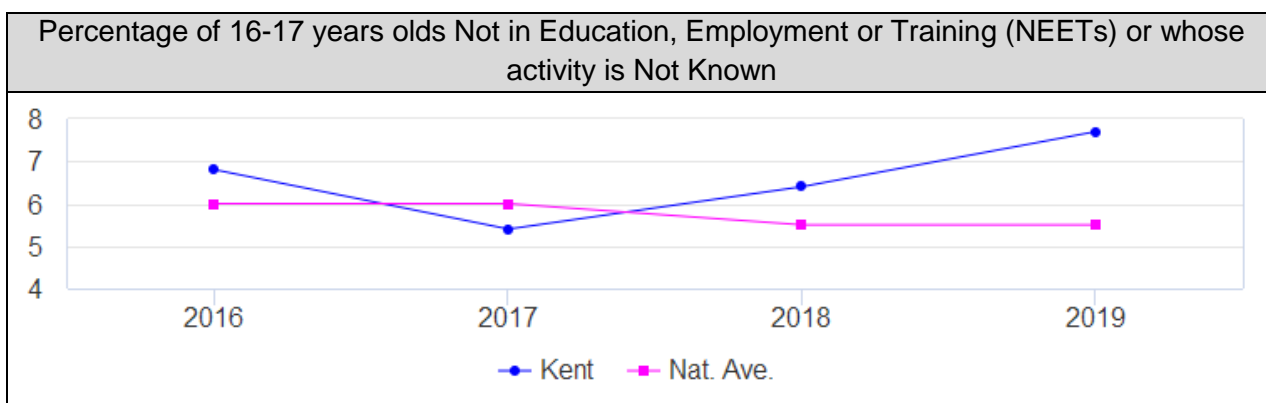
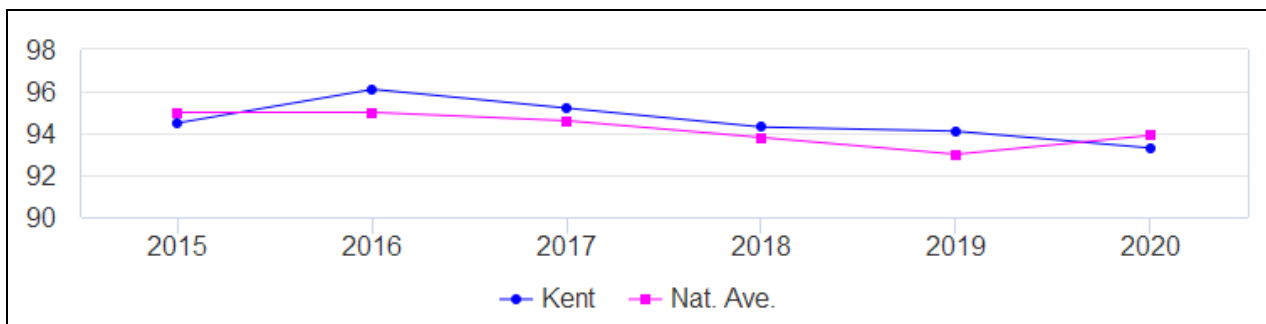




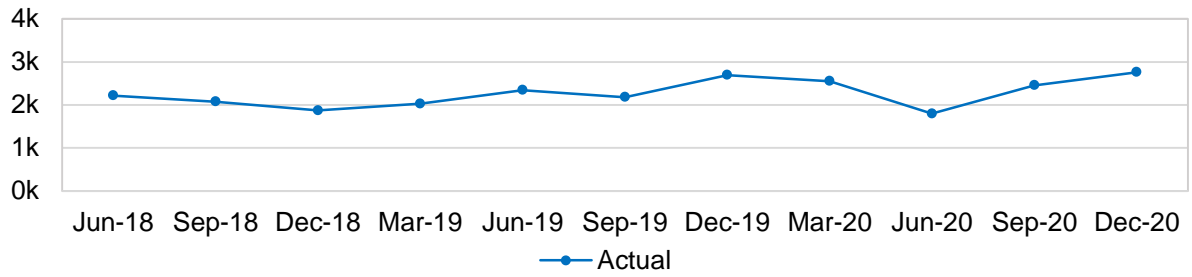
Activity indicators



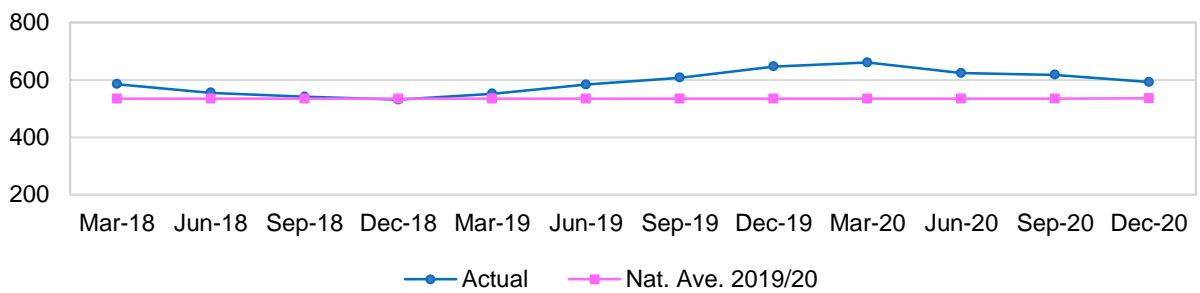
Percentage of Secondary school applicants offered one of top three preferences



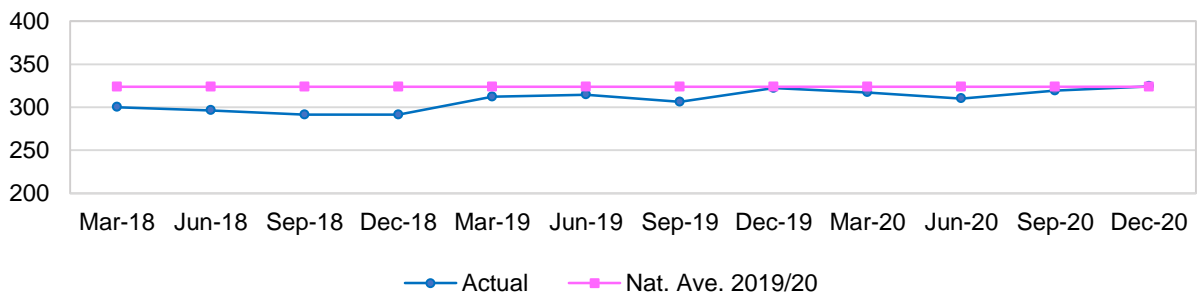
Number of open Early Help cases managed by Units



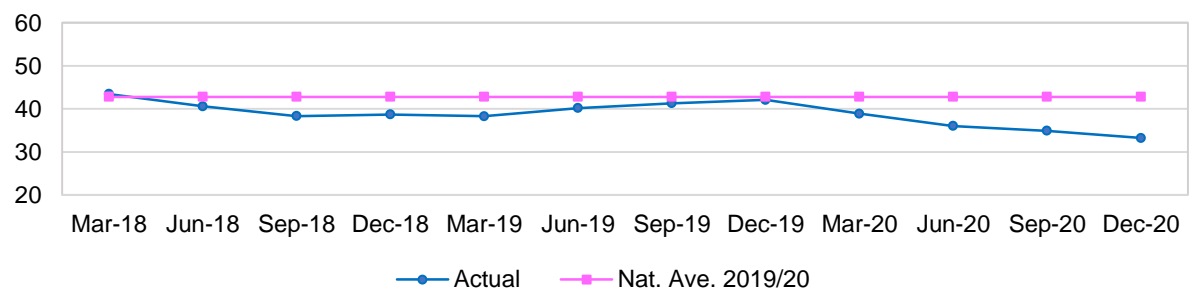
Rate of CSW referrals per 10,000 population aged under 18 – rolling 12 months



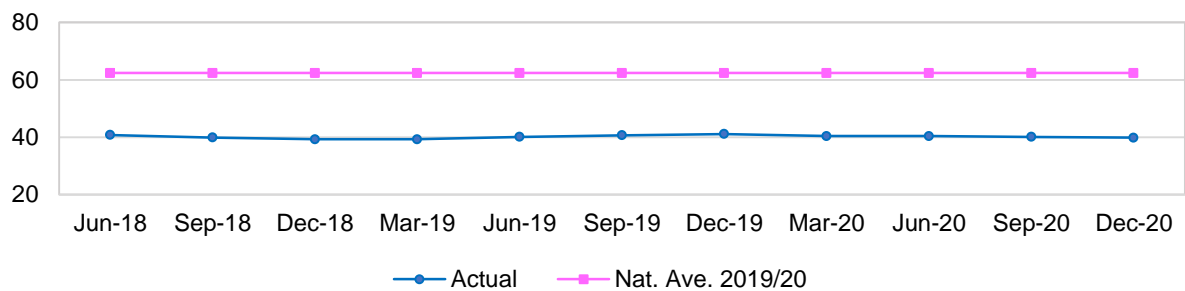
CSW caseload per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



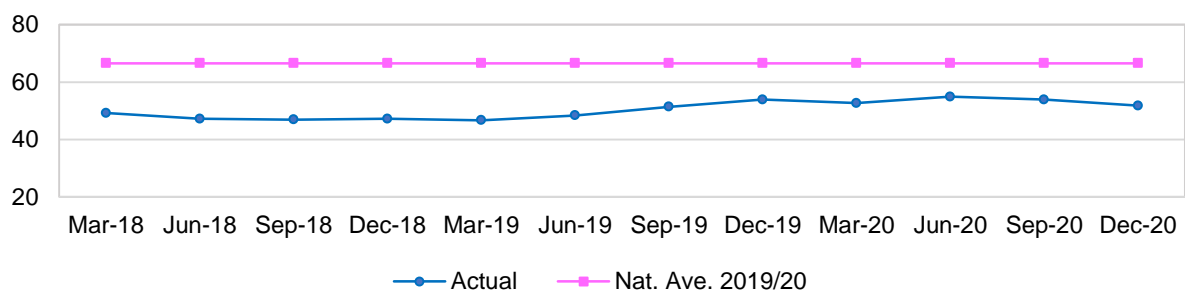
Rate of children with Child Protection Plans per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



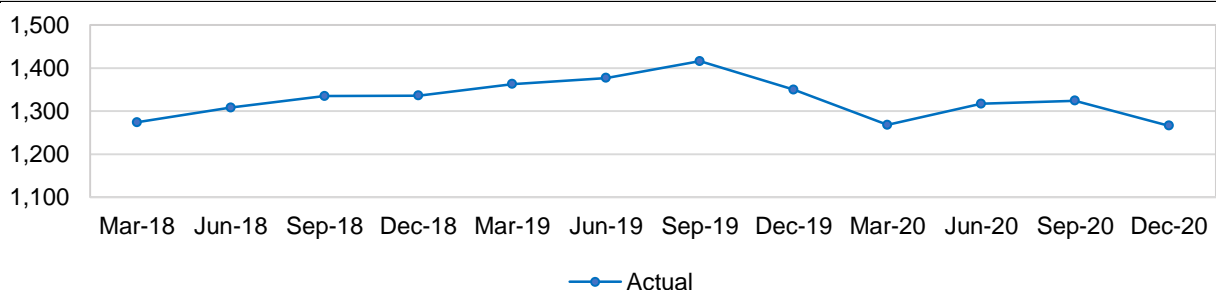
Rate of Children in Care (excluding UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



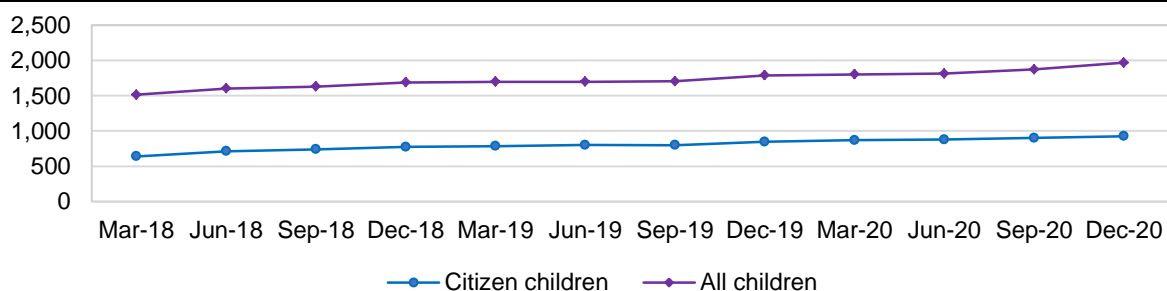
Rate of Children in Care (including UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



Number of other local authority children in care placed into Kent – snapshot at quarter end



Number of care leavers as at quarter end



Adult Social Care	
Cabinet Member	Clair Bell
Corporate Director	Richard Smith

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	3	2		1	4	1

Key Performance Indicators

Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH) continues to work within an environment affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and is assessing the immediate and long-term impact on services and clients. As reported previously, in Quarter 1 there was a decrease in clients accessing long term services. As lockdown restrictions were eased in the summer and death rates decreased, the number of clients began to increase. However, rising infection rates and the implementation of Tier 4 followed by the national lockdown has resulted in the numbers remaining lower than in pre-Covid-19 times. One area that is increasing is the number of Carers making contact and ASCH and Commissioning are working to ensure Carers are being fully supported.

The proportion of people who have received short term services for which the outcome was either support at a lower level or no ongoing support has been affected by both the winter pressures experienced early in 2020 and the Coronavirus pandemic throughout the rest of the year. There has been an increase in the numbers of clients with a wider range of needs receiving services through short term pathways, leading to a decreased proportion where the outcome was either support at a lower level or no ongoing support as more people need further or longer-term support.

In Quarter 3, 1,454 people received short term support with 900 people requiring less or no ongoing support (62%). This compares with Quarter 2 where 1,329 people received short term support with 769 people requiring less or no support (58%). There were not only increases in the numbers accessing short term services but more of these people no longer needed ongoing support or required support at a lower level afterwards.

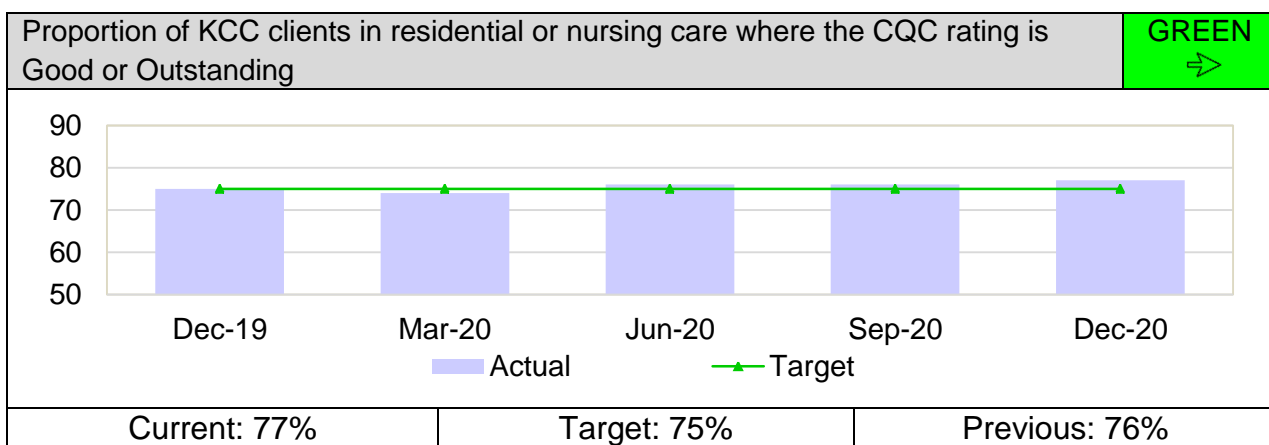
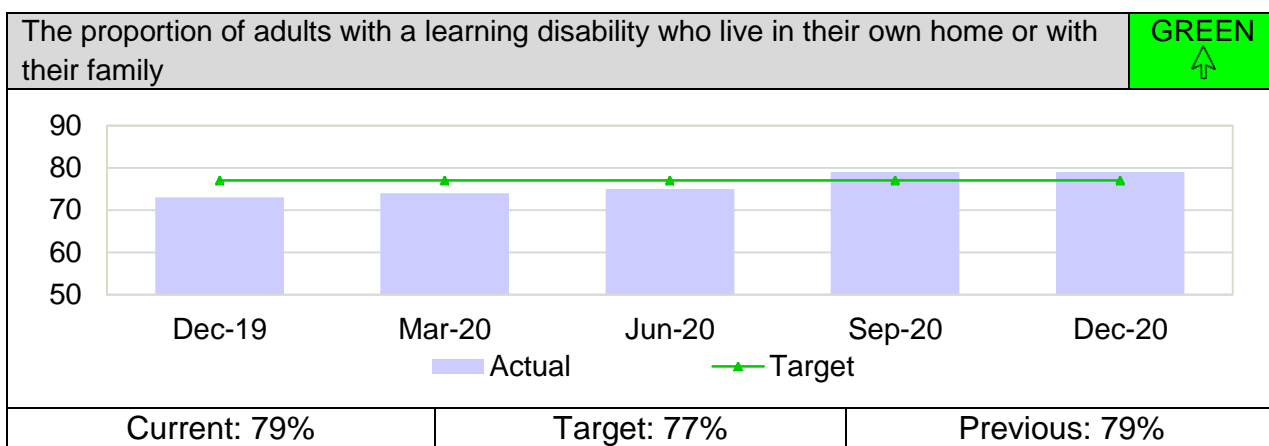
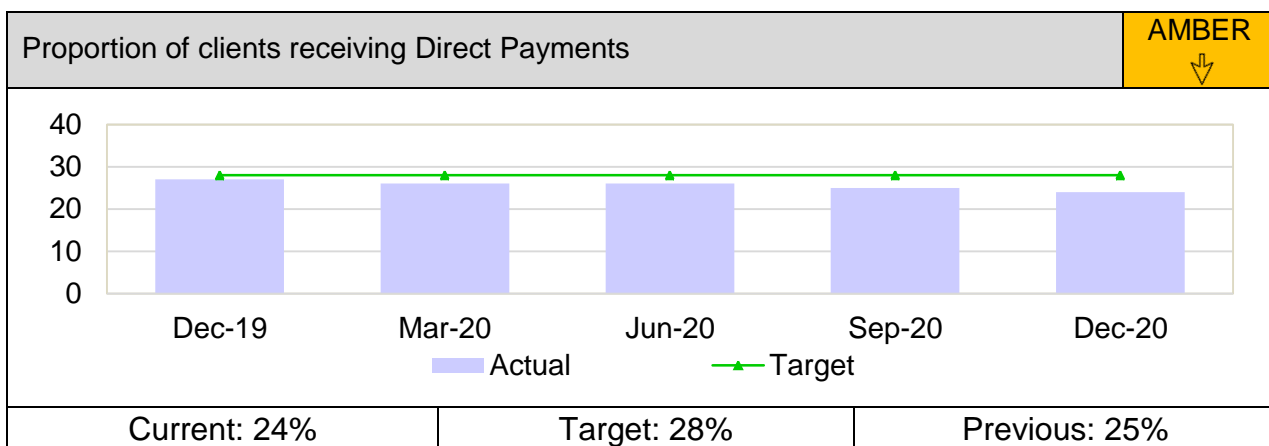
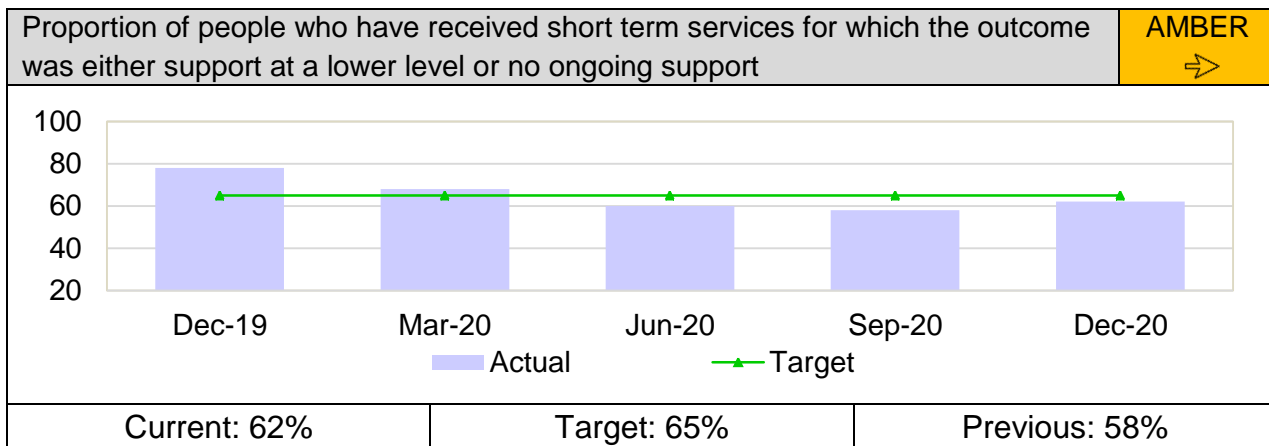
The number and proportion of people in ASCH receiving Direct Payments continues to decrease. Since March 2020, less people have wanted to have Personal Assistants and other workers inside their homes, whilst some people have needed to isolate, and alternative services have been limited due to the lockdown tiers experienced in Kent.

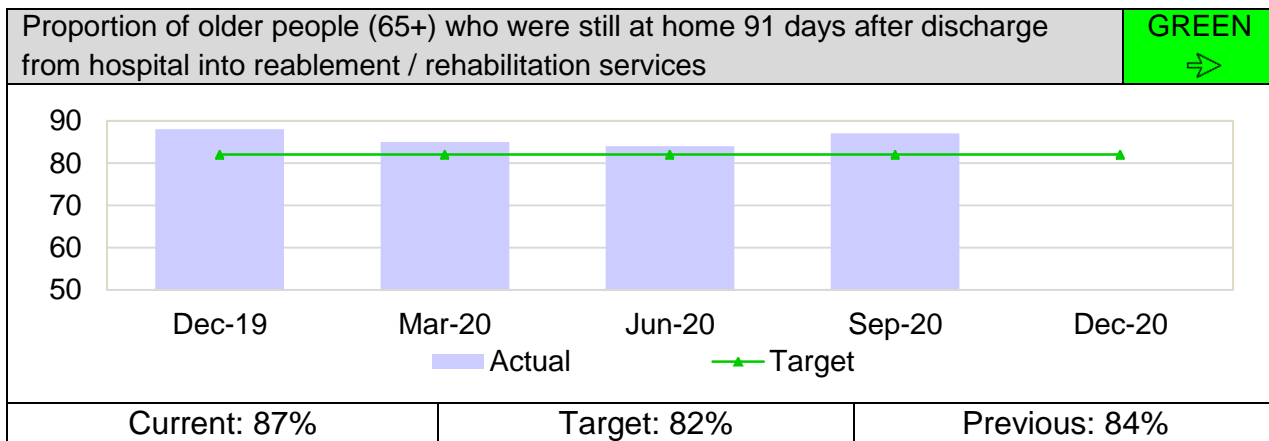
The proportion of adults with a Learning Disability who are living in their own home or with their family remains at 79% for Quarter 3, just above the target of 77%.

The proportion of KCC clients in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding was 77% in Quarter 3, which is in line with the previous Quarter and above the target of 75%. With the implementation of Tier 4 in Quarter 3 followed closely by the full lockdown in late December, KCC Commissioners have been developing systems to monitor and risk assess homes virtually whilst they have been unable to make face to face visits.

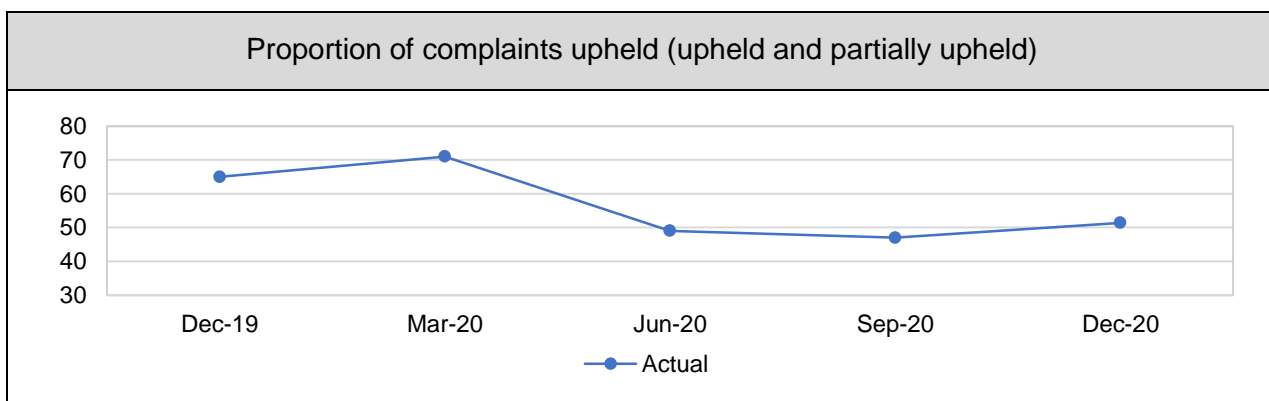
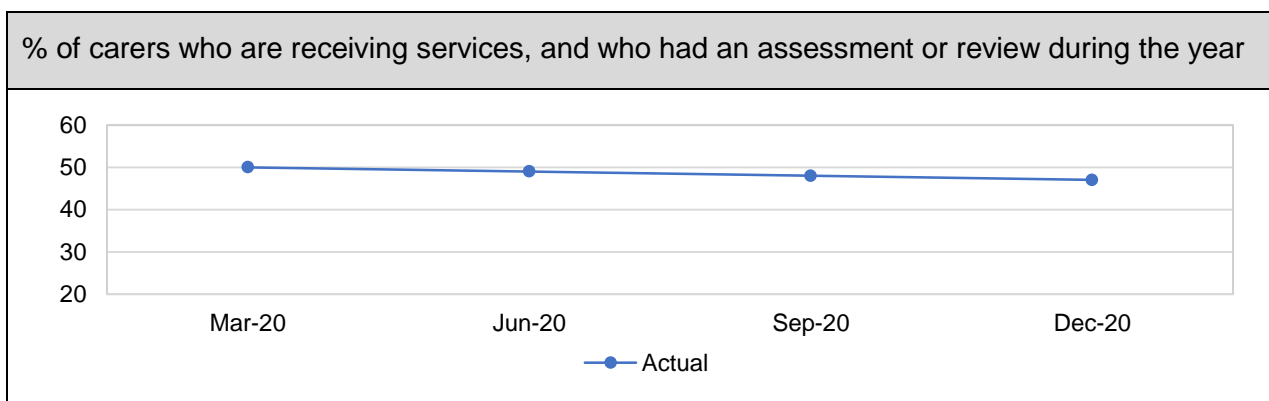
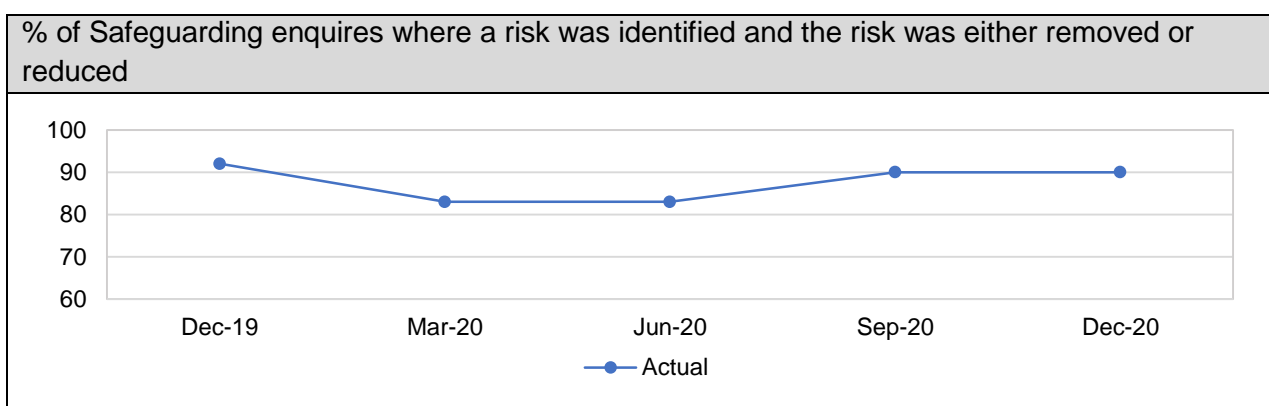
The most recently available figures for the proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital having received enablement services was 87%, an increase on the previous quarter and above the target of 82%.

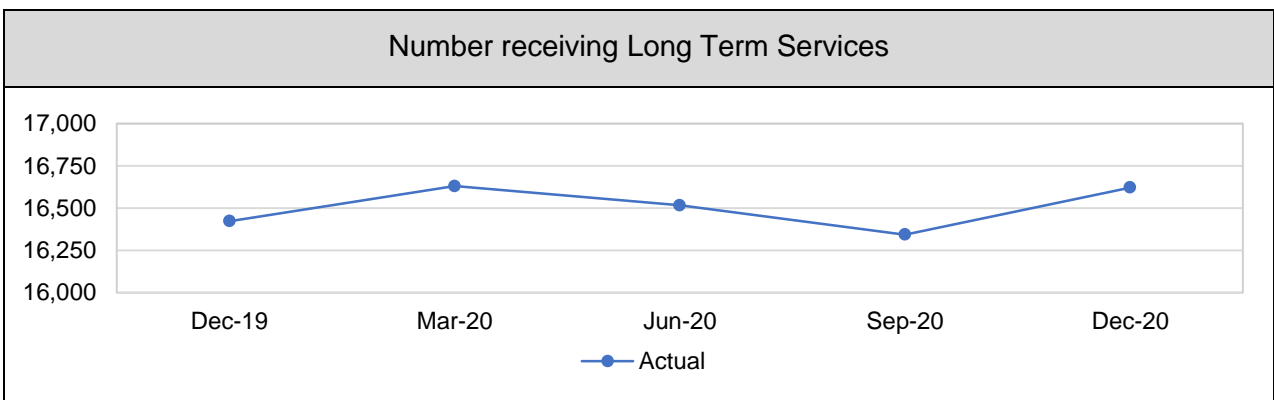
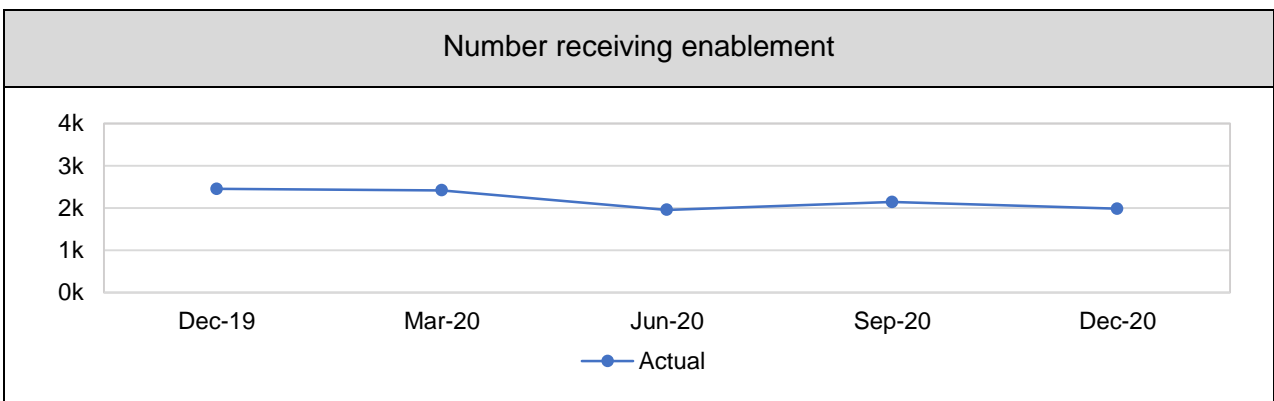
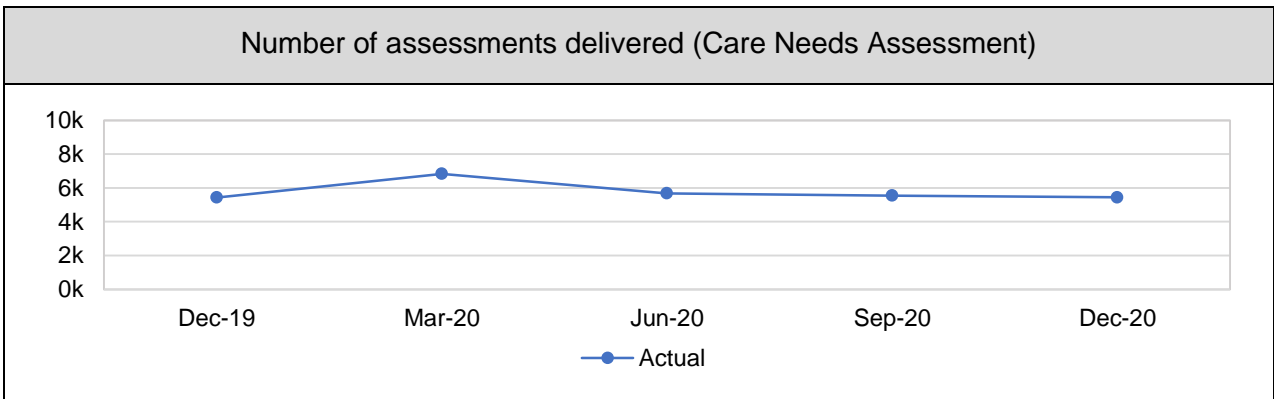
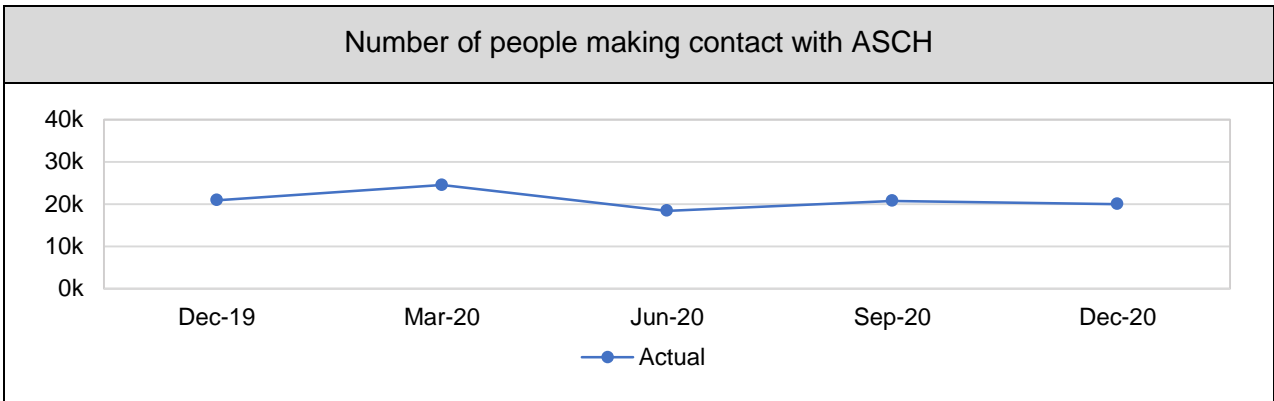
Key Performance Indicators

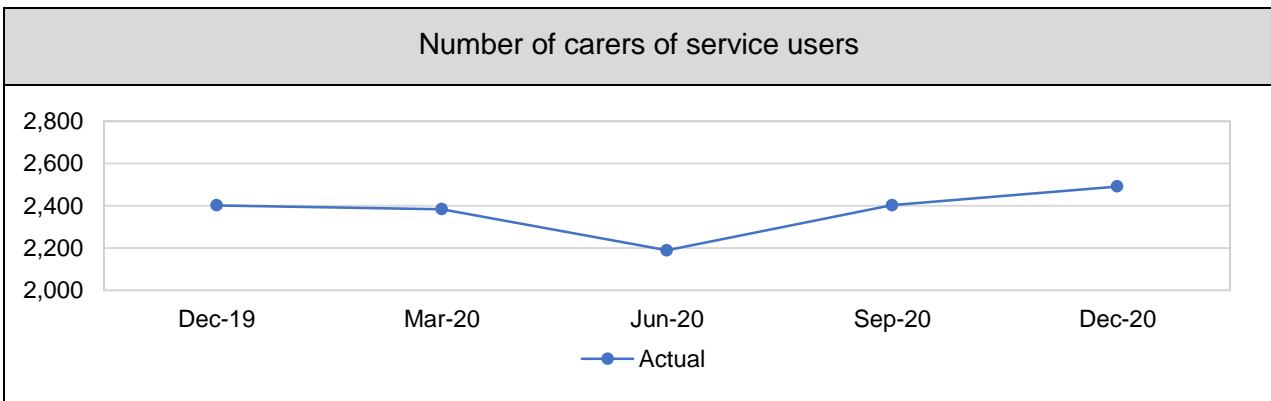
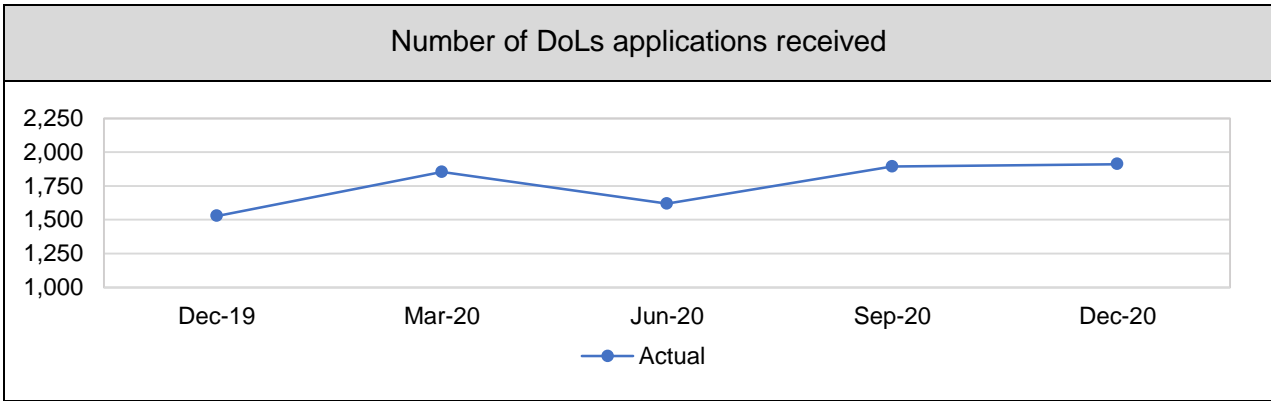




Activity indicators







Public Health	
Cabinet Member	Clair Bell
Director	Andrew Scott-Clark

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	3	0	2	1	2	2

The NHS Health Check Programme was halted in March due to the Coronavirus pandemic, in line with National guidance. The service was able to resume from Quarter 2 on a careful and managed roll-out ensuring Health Checks were being delivered in a safe way. The KPI still shows a decline as fewer checks were made in Quarter 3 than in Quarter 3 last year. Around a third of contracted GP practices had initially come forward to confirm they were able to restart but following the lockdown at the end of Quarter 3 this situation has changed. National priorities communicated via the CCG requested GP practices focused all efforts on the vaccine roll out and they stop non-essential services. As a result, there are less GP practices who are able to deliver Health Checks.

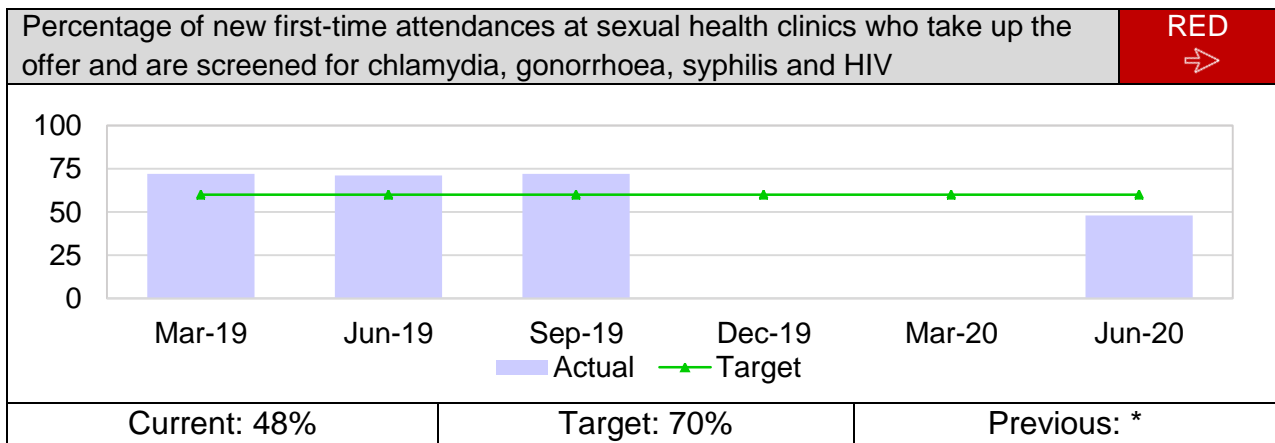
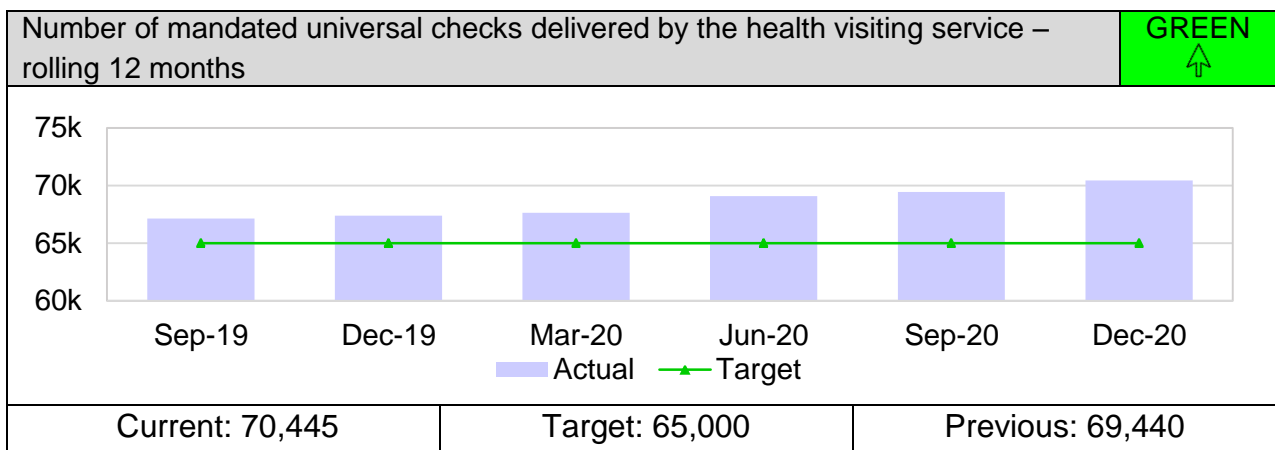
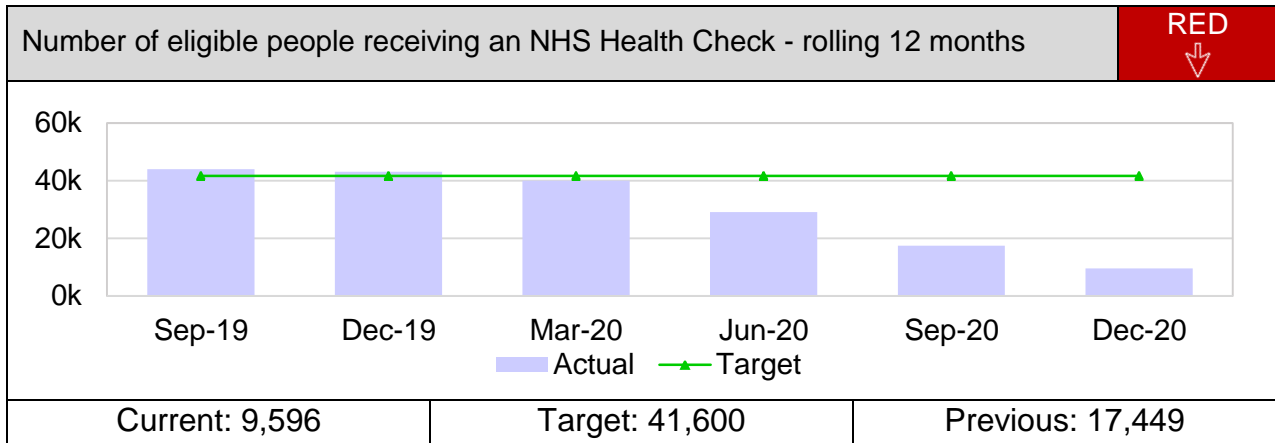
The Health Visiting Service has continued to increase the number of mandated universal contacts delivered. Delivery of all five mandated contacts has remained above target during Quarter 3, with 6-8 week contacts and 9-12 month development reviews exceeding target. The service has continued to increase face to face delivery for mandated contacts since Quarter 1 in line with national guidelines.

The sexual health service was unable to report accurately on the previous KPI due to changes in the pathway for testing in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. An agreement has been reached with the providers to deliver an alternative performance indicator which demonstrates the providers' contribution towards improving sexual health outcomes through ensuring all patients are directed to testing either face to face or through the online service. With the move to new indicators and current COVID-19 pressures, the providers are unable to provide a full and up to date data set in terms of the number of attendances at clinic, but this will be available for next quarter. Services have adapted to COVID-19 and through the new triage process are able to direct clients to the most appropriate form of care. Online requests continue to be used as an alternative delivery to face-to-face where appropriate.

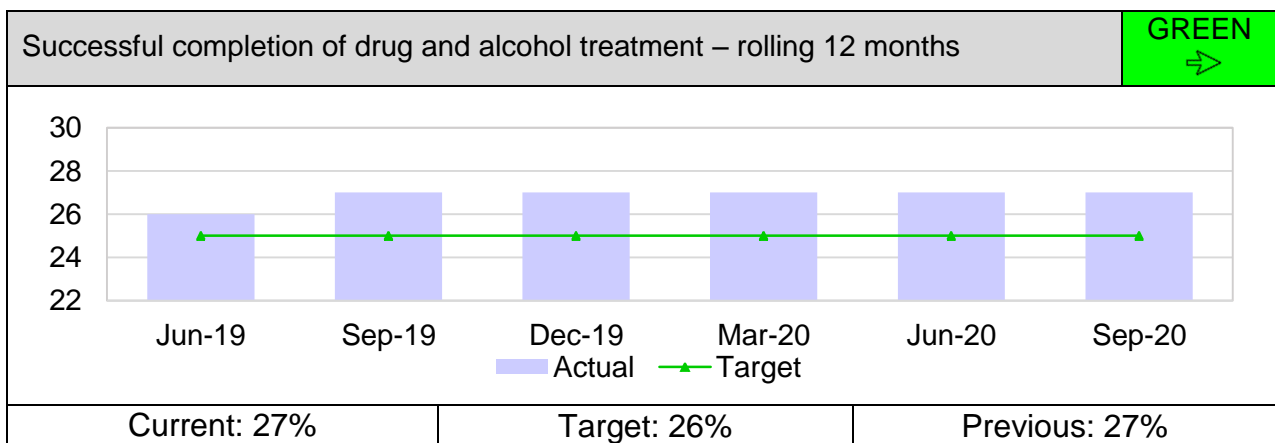
The Community Drug and Alcohol providers have continued to run effective services. There is a blended approach to service delivery with some interventions being delivered virtually and some face-to-face dependant on service user risk, vulnerability and clinical need.

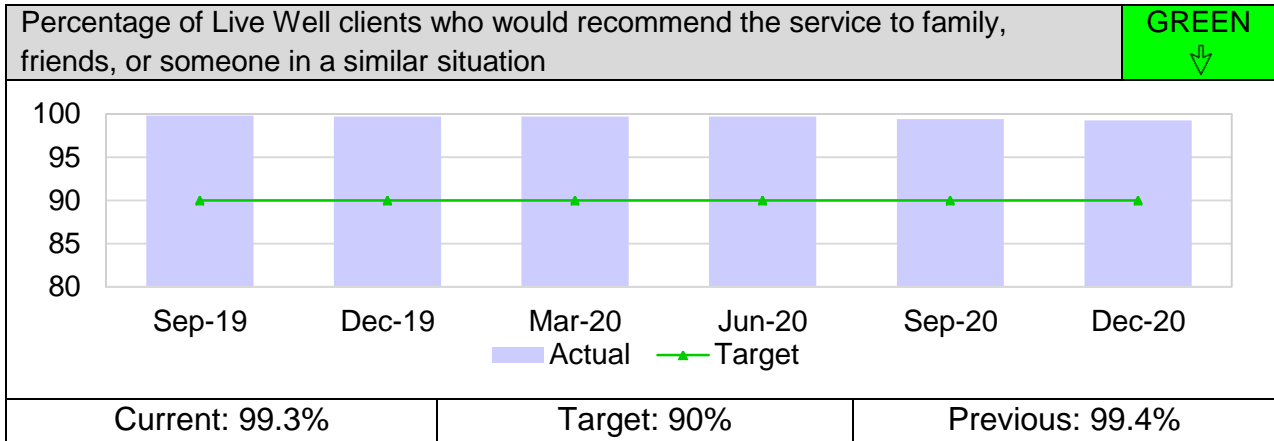
Although Live Well Kent Services ceased face-to-face appointments due to COVID-19, service user satisfaction rates have maintained above target performance, with 99.3% of people indicating that they would recommend the service to family, friends, or someone in a similar situation. 79% of sign-ups to the service were new individuals who have not been supported by the services previously.

Performance Indicators

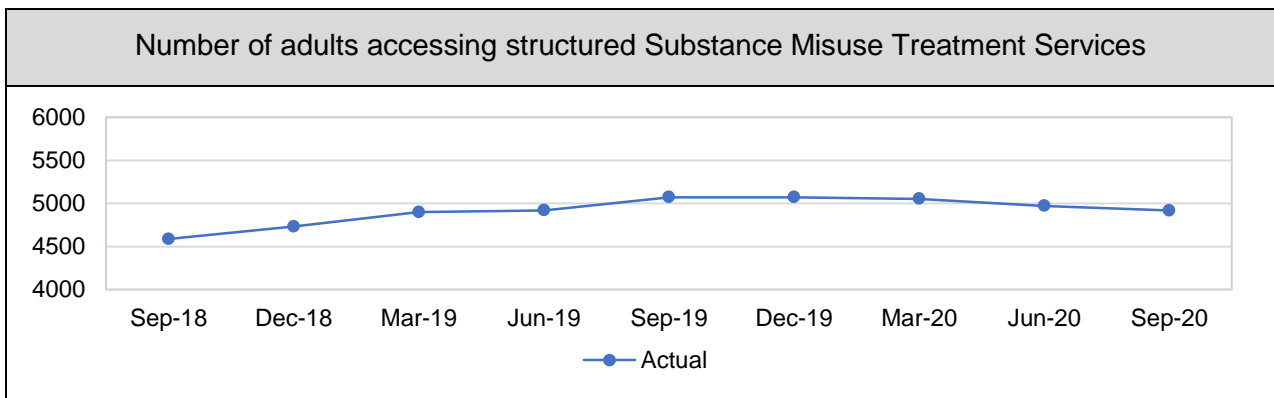
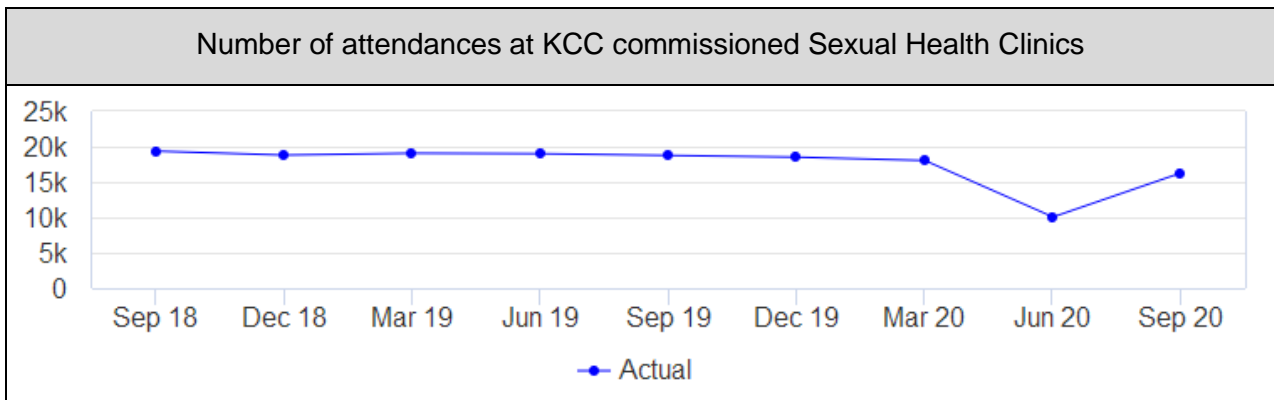
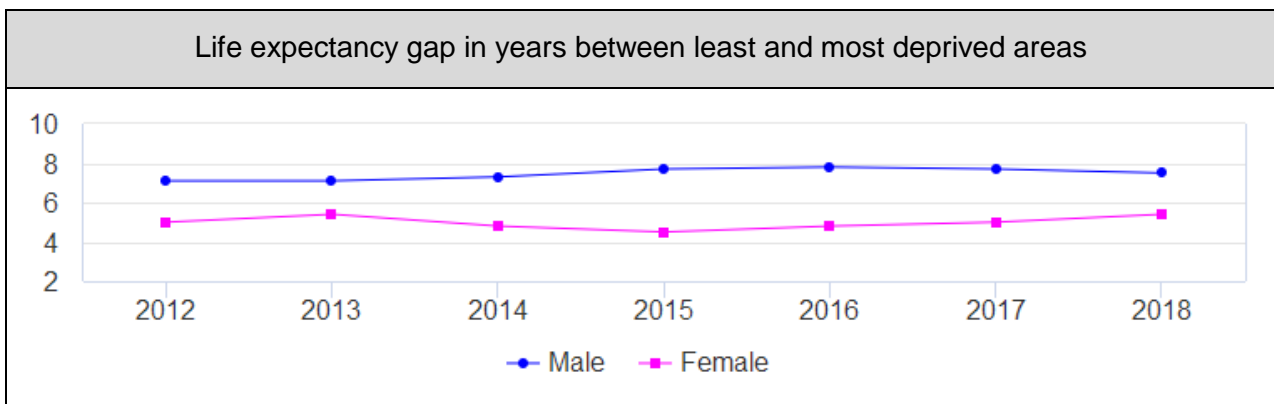


* Data for December 19 and March 20 is embargoed





Activity indicators



Corporate Risk Register – Overview

The Coronavirus public health emergency continues to have a profound impact on the risk environment that the council is operating in, particularly with the third national 'lockdown' being imposed on 4th January 2021 to cope with the second wave of the virus. The Council is an integral part of the county's response to the pandemic and is leading local recovery efforts via the multi-agency Local Resilience Forum. The pandemic, as well as introducing new risks, has compounded existing challenges.

The table below shows the number of corporate risks in each risk level (based on the risk score) in March 2021, compared with December 2020.

	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
Current risk level December 2020 *1 risk had a score TBC	0	1	19
Current risk level March 2021	0	2	19

CHANGES DURING LAST QUARTER

Due to the continuing Coronavirus impacts, the corporate risk profile has not changed greatly in the past few months. One risk has been further developed:

CRR0045: Maintaining effective governance and decision-making in a challenging financial and operating environment for local government. The risk has been revised to reflect the uncertain and challenging environment that the Council is operating in; the council is taking note of any learning opportunities presenting themselves from governance issues across the local government sector and areas for development highlighted in the previous years' Annual Governance Statement, which emphasises the importance of continually reviewing governance arrangements. This includes mitigations such as reviewing the future role of the Governance and Audit Committee.

MITIGATING ACTION

As is to be expected, the response to, and recovery from, the Coronavirus pandemic is being managed, both at KCC level and with partners, alongside UK/EU Transition related activity and severe weather implications. From a workforce perspective, the Corporate Management Team is utilising feedback from the third *Work and Wellbeing* staff survey conducted in January 2021 to engage with managers across the organisation and explore solutions and devise next steps.

A number of corporate risks are being part-mitigated by major change activity within KCC's Strategic Reset Programme, including the *Making a Difference Everyday* programme in Adult Social Care, the *Kent & Medway Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan*, the *Change for Kent Children* programme, as well as several 'digital' projects in the pipeline, looking to build upon opportunities arising from the coronavirus pandemic and enhancements in technology to improve services to service users and residents.

**From: Michael Payne, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment
and Transport**

To: Cabinet 15/03/21

Subject: Kent Rail Strategy 2021 – as amended by Scrutiny Committee

Key decision: Affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions

Classification: Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee 15/09/20
Cabinet 25/01/21
Scrutiny Committee 10/02/21**

Future Pathway of Paper: None

Electoral Division: All divisions

Summary:

Cabinet resolved to approve and adopt the Kent Rail Strategy 2021 at their meeting on 25 January 2021 (Decision Number: 21/00011). This decision was called-in and considered by the Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 10 February 2021.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet:

(1) To amend paragraph 4.15 of the Kent Rail Strategy 2021 as follows:

‘This strategy therefore calls again on the Rail Minister to approve the operation of this last leg of the whole Thameslink service programme. At the very least this would be an initial all-day service between the county town and Blackfriars, whilst retaining the ambition and working towards a through service in due course to St Pancras and on to Cambridge allowing full interconnectivity with Crossrail and the Underground network.’

(2) That the section on page 62 of the strategy is further amended as follows:

‘Rail Minister to approve the operation of Maidstone East section of the Thameslink service programme, with an initial all-day service between the county town and Blackfriars, while retaining the ambition of a through service to St Pancras and beyond.’

Recommendation:

Cabinet is asked to note and approve the Scrutiny Committee’s amendments to the Kent Rail Strategy 2021.

Contact details

Report Author: Stephen Gasche Rail Project Manager Transport Strategy Team 03000 413490 stephen.gasche@kent.gov.uk	Relevant Director: Stephanie Holt-Castle Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement 03000 412064 stephanie.holt-castle@kent.gov.uk
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Appendix – Kent Rail Strategy 2021 (as amended)