

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

Tuesday, 21st September, 2021

10.00 am

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**



AGENDA

GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 21 September 2021 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Ask for: **Emily Kennedy**
Telephone: **03000 419625**

Membership

Conservative	Sir Paul Carter, CBE (Chairman), Mr Baker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Binks, Mr C Broadley, Mr T Cannon, Mr S Holden, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr S C Manion, Mr J Meade, Mr D Robey, Mr S Webb and Mr J Wright
Labour	Ms J Meade and Ms M Dawkins
Liberal Democrat	Mr M J Sole
Green Party	Mr M Hood

Webcasting Notice

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UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

- 1 Introduction/Webcast announcements
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes
- 3 Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
- 4 Minutes of the meetings held on 27 May 2021 and 1 July 2021 (Pages 1 - 26)
- 5 Verbal updates by the Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

- 6 Performance Dashboard (Pages 27 - 42)
- 7 Regional Growth Fund Monitoring Report Q1 2021/22 (Pages 43 - 48)
- 8 Design in Kent's Built Environment (Pages 49 - 52)
- 9 No Use Empty Scheme (Pages 53 - 68)
- 10 21/00079 - Contracts for Post Mortem Facilities for the Mid Kent & Medway, North East Kent and Central & South East Kent coroner areas (Pages 69 - 78)
- 11 Youth Unemployment and Apprenticeships (Pages 79 - 86)
- 12 Work Programme 2021/22 (Pages 87 - 90)

EXEMPT ITEMS

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

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Monday, 13 September 2021

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Mote Hall Leisure Centre, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 7RN on Thursday, 27 May 2021.

PRESENT: Mr Baker, Mrs R Binks, Mr C Broadley, Mr T Cannon, Sir Paul Carter, CBE, Ms M Dawkins, Mr S Holden, Mr M A J Hood, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr S C Manion, Ms J Meade, Mr J Meade, Mr D Robey, Mr M J Sole, Mr S Webb and Mr J Wright

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Election of Chair

(Item 3)

It was proposed and seconded that Sir Paul Carter be elected Chairman of the Committee.

RESOLVED that Sir Paul Carter be elected Chairman of the Committee.

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

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Online on Thursday, 1 July 2021.

PRESENT: Sir Paul Carter, CBE (Chairman), Mr Baker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Binks, Mr C Broadley, Mr T Cannon, Ms M Dawkins, Mr M Dendor (Substitute for Mr S Holden), Mr M A J Hood, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Ms J Meade, Mr J Meade, Mr D Robey, Mr M J Sole, Mr S Webb and Mr J Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE and Mr D Murphy

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Jones (Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste), Ms J Taylor-Smith (Strategic Manager, Business Development - Libraries and Registration Service), Mrs A Hunter (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and Hayley Savage (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

2. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies were received from Mr Holden and Mr Manion.

Mr Dendor was present as a substitute for Mr Holden.

3. Declarations of Interest

(Item 3)

Mr Broadly declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 13 (Work Programme 2021/22) on the agenda, with reference to the Theme Park Project on Swanscombe Peninsula, due to his role as Chairman of Broadness Cruising Club and Secretary of Northfleet Harbour Restoration Trust.

4. Election of Vice Chairman

(Item 4)

It was proposed by Mr Kite, and seconded by Mrs Binks, that Mr N Baker be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

It was RESOLVED that Mr Baker be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021

(Item 5)

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021 are correctly recorded and a paper copy be signed by the Chairman.

6. Verbal updates by the Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

(Item 6)

1. Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) introduced himself to members, explaining that he oversees a complex portfolio encompassing 15 services, and is always happy to speak to members outside of the Committee. Mr Hill said he is also the Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

Mr Hill gave a verbal update on the following:

- (a) The 4,000 mile Public Rights of Way (PROW) network has been very busy during the pandemic. A decision paper on PROW Operational Management Policies will come to the Committee at a future meeting.
- (b) The County Council's 9 country parks have been very busy during the pandemic seeing an increase in visitors of 60%. The development of a Country Parks Strategy is underway and will be supported by a member working party.
- (c) The County Council has an active partnership with Sports England with the Kent School Games taking place every second year and this proves to be very popular. The Open Golf in Sandwich will take place between 11 and 18 July 2021 with an expected attendance of 32,000 visitors each day, a total of 130,000 visitors over four days.
- (d) The Community Warden Service has provided an important visible presence across rural areas throughout the pandemic providing protection for around 4,000 vulnerable people. Two Canterbury Community Wardens, Mandy Quay-Verlander and Roger Lithgow, have received the Lord Mayor's 'Community Hero' Award.
- (e) The Coroners' Service has seen an increased workload as a result of the pandemic which necessitated the building of a temporary mortuary.
- (f) Trading Standards have increased their remit and played a major role during Brexit with increased border responsibilities. A paper on the implication and planning for new import duties will come to the Committee at a future meeting.
- (g) The Arts Investment Fund has provided a lifeline to small arts organisations with hotspots for creative activities being established in several areas within Kent. The Turner Contemporary is providing a real focus for arts in Margate, with smaller organisations being set up in its shadow.
- (h) The Libraries Registration and Archives Service (LRA) has been badly affected by the pandemic with the closing of 99 libraries and 5 mobile libraries. A phased reopening is taking place, in line with government guidelines, with 43 libraries currently open, and it is anticipated libraries across the county will be open by mid-August. Many libraries in town centres have been refurbished but some small libraries require work. A review will be taking place and a paper will come to the Committee at a future meeting.

- (i) Birth and death registrations were halted during lockdown but are now fully operational with death registrations taking place by telephone. The service has taken the decision to cease further wedding and civil partnership ceremony bookings for July, August and September this year. The first National Registrars Day to recognise efforts during the pandemic was held on 1 July 2021.
 - (j) Kent Libraries have announced that the Summer Reading Challenge is back with Wild World Heroes. This year, Wild World Heroes is a celebration of nature and action for the environment and is in partnership with WWF UK. It will run from Saturday 10 July until Saturday 11 September and children aged 4 – 11 years old can take part.
2. Mr Hill responded to comments and questions from the Committee, including the following:
- (a) Mr Hill confirmed there were no plans to reduce visits and mobile libraries will form part of the review. The importance of these visits for the community in rural areas was noted.
 - (b) Mr Hill confirmed the leaking roof of Folkestone Library is in the process of repair and recognised the importance of completing this.
 - (c) Asked whether there was an intention to cut the opening hours of smaller libraries, Mr Hill responded that there was currently no intention to do so.
 - (d) Asked about the increase in demand for wedding and civil partnership ceremonies and when things would get back to normal, Mr Hill confirmed there had been a 60% increase in demand and bookings are now being taken for October onwards in line with government guidelines.
 - (e) Reference was made to the top 10 suggestions for cycling in Canterbury in the Active Travel document and the creation of cycle paths, but as it was the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport it was suggested that the document be sent to him.
 - (f) Asked whether youth hubs opening would coincide with libraries in mid-August, Mr Hill said that responsibility for youth services was not part of his portfolio but the library service was considering how it might work in collaboration with other services.
3. Mr Murphy (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) introduced himself and his Deputy, Mr Robey, to members and said that he was available for questions outside of the Committee.

Mr Murphy gave a verbal update on the following:

- (a) Mr Murphy said he had been in communication with the Chief Executive of Visit Kent regarding rebuilding the county's tourism sector which had fallen to less than a quarter of what it was before the pandemic.

- (b) The Kent Show would not be going ahead as normal this year and was being replaced by the Kent County Summer Fair at the Kent Showground, Detling on 10 and 11 July.
 - (c) Entries for The Kent Excellence Business Awards 2021 had now closed and winners would be announced in the KM and KM online.
 - (d) Staff at the Kent Film Office were managing unprecedented demand for filming in Kent which had resulted in a direct spend of £34 million into the Kent economy. This included 905 enquiries and 519 filming days.
 - (e) Mr Murphy said he had been involved in discussions around the roll out of broadband in the county, inland border facilities at Dover and Sevington, Dungeness B and its decommissioning, and how better to manage Section 106 contributions.
4. Mr Murphy and Mr Jones responded to comments and questions from the Committee, including the following:
- (a) Mr Murphy said there will be continued lobbying for infrastructure funding from all avenues including central government, external agencies and Section 106 contributions. Work is also taking place with Network South East and rail providers to look at new cross county rail links and links in and out of London. Mr Murphy suggested that the Committee consider a paper on infrastructure funding at a future meeting.
 - (b) In response to a question about rural broadband, Mr Murphy said there had been delays in responses from government and information would be shared as soon as possible.
 - (c) The shortage of HGV drivers nationwide had resulted in recycling waste collections being suspended in some areas. Mr Murphy said nationally 45,000 tests were waiting to be carried out and there had been a migration of qualified HGV drivers back to Europe due to Brexit.
5. Mr Jones gave his update, explaining he was the interim director until a permanent director has been recruited. Since the last meeting bids had been made for the Levelling Up Fund, Community Renewal Fund, and the Active Travel funding pot had been announced.

Services throughout the pandemic have been exceptionally flexible and agile with some services, such as country parks, seeing an exceptional level of high demand. There is an eagerness within the Directorate to get all community services operational, and Mr Jones expressed gratitude and credit to those involved.

6. It was RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

7. Risk Register Review (Item 7)

Jody Catterall (Risk Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Catterall (Risk Manager) introduced the risk management report explaining that the report presents two strategic risks on the Corporate Risk Register which relate to the Cabinet Committee, and a summary of key risks from within the Growth, Environment and Transport directorate.

Ms Catterall explained that the Corporate Risk Register is taken to the Governance and Audit Committee regularly and, in addition to this, strategic risks are reported to cabinet committees annually.

2. Ms Catterall and Mr Jones responded to comments and questions from the Committee, including the following:
 - (a) In response to a question about whether Risk GT0003 should be assessed higher than the current score of Medium as a result of blockages further afield due to utilities and debris, Mr Jones said teams were working with water authorities to ensure drains were clear and pumping equipment was fully operational.
 - (b) Ms Catterall explained the methodology behind scoring risks, namely the use of the 5x5 matrix, impact and likelihood, and discussions with officers.
 - (c) Referring to risk CRR0003 and risk CRR0042 it was noted that many traders are experiencing difficulties in sourcing materials and parts efficiently and questioned how these businesses can be supported. Mr Jones explained that the backlog of building activities was creating a shortfall in materials. Work was being done with the border force to increase efficiency in importing goods, and on transporting materials to site as quickly as possible. He explained that whilst new materials are difficult to get, there has been an improvement in the recycling and reuse of equipment in the construction industry.

3. It was RESOLVED that the risks presented in the report be noted.

8. Performance Dashboard

(Item 8)

Rachel Kennard (Chief Analyst) was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Kennard introduced the fourth and final Performance Dashboard for the 2020/2021 financial Year.
 - (a) In response to comments and questions Ms Kennard confirmed that the increase from £5.9 million (for year to March 2020) to £28 million in relation to the activity indicator EPE03 – *Value of items prevented from entering or removed from the market by Trading Standards* - was correct and that there had been considerable effort in this area resulting in the significant increase in performance.
 - (b) Mr Jones undertook to provide additional information to a member about the targets associated with the proposed KPIs SPA01 and SPA02

(c) Mr Murphy said he would speak with Ms Kennard about how more detailed information on employment in the 16-24 age category, including NEETs (not in education, employment or training) and those undergoing apprenticeship programmes within the private and public sector, might be included in the next performance dashboard.

(d) In response to a question about the target of 400 homes being brought back into use through the No Use Empty Scheme when 462 units had been brought back into use in 2020/21, Mr Jones said he would be happy to provide statistical updates.

2. It was RESOLVED that the performance report for Quarter 4 of 2020/2021 be noted, and that Mr Murphy discuss with Officers the inclusion of data relating to young people in unemployment and apprenticeships (16-24 age category).

9. District Visits Programme 2021

(Item 9)

Rob Hancock (Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hancock introduced the report outlining the proposed programme for future member visits to Kent districts in 2021. Visits had been interrupted by the pandemic but it was proposed to start them again in September with visits scheduled to the Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Thanet, Canterbury and Maidstone Districts.
2. Members commented on the success of previous visits and expressed their support for the continuation of such visits. Mr Hancock said that any requests for visits to specific sites should be referred to Mr Murphy.
3. It was RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee endorse the report, and that the briefing note for the visit on 22 September 2021 include background information explaining how the Council and the districts have worked together in the past.

10. Kent County Council Village and Community Hall Grant Scheme Performance Report - 2020/21

(Item 10)

Mark Reeves (Project Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hill introduced the agenda item and said the County Council's Village Halls and Community Centres Grant Scheme, which supported small village halls by offering capital grants of up to £30,000 from an annual allocation of £75,000, was very important to communities.
2. Mr Reeves introduced the report which provided an update on grants made under the scheme since April 2020.
3. In response to a question, Mr Reeves said that grant agreements were sent once funding was agreed, funds were paid as quickly as possible and halls had the option to submit invoices in stages to alleviate the financial pressure.

4. It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11. Report on decision taken by the Leader between meetings - 21/00042: UK Community Renewal Fund: Bid Submission

(Item 11)

Sarah Nurden (Strategic Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Nurden introduced the report and presented a series of slides outlining the background to the decision. The presentation is attached as an appendix to the minutes.
2. Ms Nurden said the framework on the Shared Prosperity Fund had not yet been released, and she would welcome the opportunity to speak with members to identify potential projects prior to the framework being announced. She undertook to share the Local Government Association papers on the Shared Prosperity Fund with members.
3. It was RESOLVED that the decision taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution: 21/00042: UK Community Renewal Fund: Bid Submission be endorsed, and that information about successful bids be included as an agenda item at the next meeting.

12. 21/00056 - Inward Investment Services

(Item 12)

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

1. Mr Smith introduced the report explaining that the Council was seeking to procure inward investment services for the period August 2021 to April 2023.
2. It was RESOLVED that the proposed decision to enter into a contract with the successful bidder for the provision of inward investment services and provide authority to the Director of Growth and Communities the delegated authority to enter into necessary contractual arrangements to let the contracts as shown at Appendix A be endorsed.

13. Work Programme 2021/22

(Item 13)

It was RESOLVED that the committee's planned work programme for 2021 be noted subject to the inclusion of the following items:

- Country Park Strategy (all member working party)
- Trading Standards – implication and planning for new import duties
- Libraries Network Review
- Section 106 Developer Contributions
- Infrastructure Funding
- Monitoring of unemployment and private and public apprenticeship take-up figures for 16-24 year olds

- Interest free loans – money loaned to businesses on recyclable basis to help economy recover and grow
- Update on the No Use Empty Scheme
- UK Community Renewal Fund: Successful Bids
- Statistics on the key industry sectors in the county to target resources



UK Government

UK Community Renewal Fund

GEDC Cabinet Committee – 1 July

Context:

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme for **2021/22**.

Context:

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Context:

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme for **2021/22**.



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UK Government



UK Shared Prosperity Fund

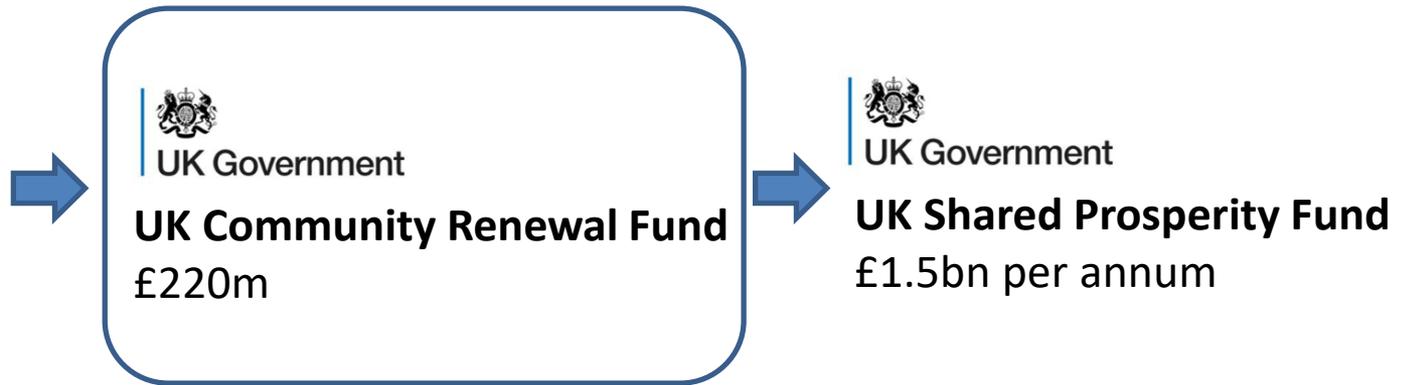
£1.5bn per annum

Context:

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme for **2021/22**.



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This aims to support people and communities **most in need** across the UK to **pilot programmes and new approaches** to prepare for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

It is a 90% revenue fund

Priority Places

To ensure the UK Community Renewal Fund funding reaches the most in need, the UK Government has identified 100 priority places for investment based on an index of economic resilience across Great Britain.

In Kent, the UK Government has designated these four districts as priority places:

- Canterbury
- Gravesham
- Swale
- Thanet

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The Government will prioritise bids that target the top 100 places, however bids targeting other places can be submitted.

Investment Priorities

Projects must deliver activity that is line with the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus and align with **one or more** of these investment priorities:

- Investment in skills
- Investment for local business
- Investment in communities and place
- Supporting people into employment

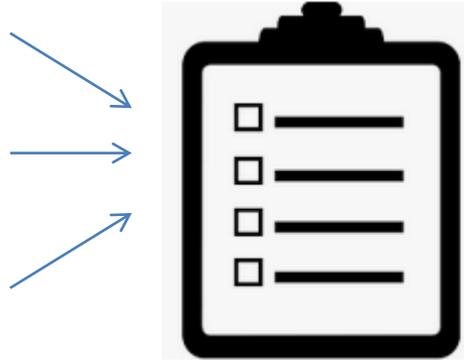
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There are no financial allocations to these priorities.

Projects should also be able to demonstrate the extent of contribution to net-zero carbon objectives or wider environmental considerations. *(This is not applicable to interventions focused on supporting people into employment).*



Part 8



Bid Value - £0 to £3m
Bids £0.5m+ encouraged

£3m per place shortlist

Funding award

Assessment Criteria

Strategic Fit Sub-Criteria:

- Aligns with local need & evidence of local support
- Aligns to the investment priorities
- Contributes to the net-zero agenda
- Produces transferable learning
- Is innovative

Deliverability, Effectiveness & Efficiency Sub-Criteria:

- Can meet 31 March 22 deadline
- Appropriate risk mitigation
- Offers good value for money
- Has a need for intervention
- Has effective evaluation strategy

Band A – Projects scoring 80% in strategic fit and in the deliverability criteria, and 51% of activity in the priority place(s).

Band B – Projects scoring 80% in strategic fit and in the deliverability criteria, and 51% of activity in other place(s).

Band C – Projects scoring 50% in strategic fit and in the deliverability criteria, and 51% of activity in the priority place(s).

+ Ministerial Discretion

Timeline

Chancellor announces a new UK CRF fund

Information published on KCC website & Press release issued

KCC deadline for bid submission

- Due Diligence Checks
- AECOM assessment
- Local Stakeholder Evaluation Panel assessment

March

April

May

Pre-election period

MHCLG publish details on how fund will operate

3 workshops held & 19 meetings with interested parties

Gateway Checks

Timeline

Cabinet Members met to discuss feedback

Call-in period

MHCLG to make decision in "late July 2021 onwards".

KCC enter into back-to-back funding agreement with project promoters.

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June



July

August

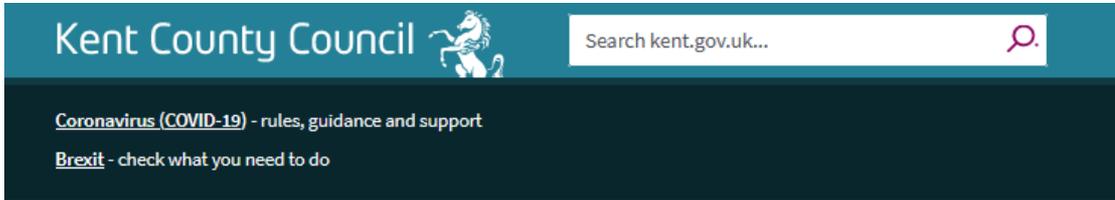
KCC leader takes formal decision

Submission to MHCLG

KCC enter into funding agreement with Government

Project Inception

Website & Workshops:



[Home](#) > [Leisure and community](#) > [Community grants and funding](#) >

UK Community Renewal Fund

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme. It aims to support people and communities most in need across the UK to pilot programmes and new approaches to prepare for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This is a government funding programme that will begin in 2022.

This £220 million fund will invest in skills, community and place, local business, and supporting people into employment.

We are seeking bids from organisations wishing to deliver activity in Kent as part of the UK Community Renewal Fund.

- Grants of up to £3 million are available for project activity in 2021/22.
- 90% of funding available through the UK Community Renewal Fund is revenue funding.

The deadline for applications is **9am on Tuesday 4 May**. Early submission is encouraged.

Information for applicants

Apply



Workshops



Privacy notices



If you are interested in applying, please read:

- [invitation to bid document \(PDF, 293.3 KB\)](#)
- [the assessment criteria document.](#)

[Visit the GOV.UK website for more details about the UK Community Renewal Fund.](#)



[UK Community Renewal Fund: prospectus 2021-22](#)

HTML



[UK Community Renewal Fund: assessment criteria](#)

PDF, 236KB, 17 pages



[UK Community Renewal Fund: technical note for project applicants and deliverers](#)

PDF, 326KB, 17 pages

BIDS

Gateway Checks
(in-house)

Due Diligence Checks by S151

All private-sector bidders were asked to submit a copy of the last three years of their accounts, so a credit check could be undertaken on the applicant.

Two officers in KCC's finance team used this financial information to ascertain if each bid passed this gateway criteria:

- Project proposal will be delivered by a **legally constituted organisation that can receive public funds.**

Local Stakeholder Evaluation Panels

The Government said *“lead authorities may choose to involve other organisation to provide advice during the assessment and prioritisation process, e.g. on alignment with local priorities or links to existing activity. CMM in March agreed to this approach.*

Thus 12 district panels were arranged in May to which MPs, District, Skills, Business, and Community representatives were invited. Panel Members were asked to score each bid against these two criteria:

- Project contributes to **local needs** and has **evidence of local support**
- Project contributes to an **investment priority**

Consultancy Checks

The Government said *“Lead Authorities must ensure that all applicants are assessed in the same way and conflicts of interest are avoided”*. To aid independent assessment and help with resource management, CMM in March agreed that some of the UK CRF capacity funding should be used to procure consultants to score each bid against the **5 deliverability, effectiveness, and efficiency sub-criteria**, and the remaining **3 strategic fit sub-criteria**.

GET had an existing framework agreement, which allowed KCC to contract with AECOM to complete this work in the short timescale.

KCC Leader decided shortlist
Informed by earlier assessment activity

Local Stakeholder Evaluation Panels

- Constituency MP(s)
- District Leader
- District Chief Executive
- Skills Representative
- 2 x Business Representative
- Community Representative
- Kent Environment Board Representative

Appendix A: Kent-based projects shortlisted for submission to the Government

Proposal Name	Activity within which district or unitary areas	UK CRF requested
<i>In alphabetical order:</i>		
Breaking Barriers – Inclusive Employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Folkestone & Hythe 	£437,938
Bridge the Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£561,618
Canterbury & Folkestone Skills Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Folkestone & Hythe 	£998,668
Canterbury's Creative Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) 	£815,895
Cohesive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Dartford 	£1,629,172
Creative Tunbridge Wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunbridge Wells 	£425,000
Diversity House: Centre for Innovation and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) 	£423,631
Employment and Support Hub - Canterbury & Thanet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£640,556
Employment and Support Hub - Gravesham & Swale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Swale (PP) 	£1,363,023
GreenCore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Medway* <p>*Medway is its own lead authority and this project is recommended for shortlisting by their officers.</p>	£726,650
Growing Green: A net-zero innovation pathway for micro and SME businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Tonbridge & Malling 	£513,122
Growing Regional Innovation by Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Dover 	£662,763
Growth Gurus – Community Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks (specifically Swanley) 	£552,500
Ignition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£545,120
Kent and Medway Partnership for Enterprise, Food and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Swale (PP) • Medway* <p>*Medway is its own lead authority and this project is recommended for shortlisting by their officers.</p>	£528,714
Net Zero Pathway for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Gravesham (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£625,603
Pop Up Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford • Dover • Folkestone and Hythe 	£1,586,896
Recover. Rebuild. Restart.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dartford • Folkestone and Hythe • Maidstone 	£49,680
Runway Futures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford • Maidstone • Tonbridge & Malling 	£521,119
Community Renewal and Decarbonisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidstone 	£500,000

Sheerness Dockyard Church Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) 	£83,260
South East Creatives – Thanet Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanet (PP) 	£500,000
Sustainability Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£983,577
Swale & Ashford Skills Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Ashford 	£998,668
Thanet & Dover Skills Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanet (PP) • Dover 	£998,668
The Kent Level Up Support Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Dartford 	£79,440
Trinity's 8-week Training & Work placement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Swale (PP) • Medway* <p>*Medway is its own lead authority and this project is recommended for shortlisting by their officers.</p>	£500,000
West Kent Work-Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks • Tunbridge Wells 	£412,778
What Matters – NEETS Navigator Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford 	£51,557
Youth National Seaside Heritage Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanet (PP) 	£192,168

Q&A

From: Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member for Economic Development
 Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
 Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 24 September 2021

Subject: Performance Dashboard

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard shows the progress of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and activity indicators for Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

15 of the 25 KPIs achieved target and were RAG rated Green. 4 KPIs were below target but did achieve floor standard and were RAG rated Amber. 2 did not meet floor standard and were RAG rated Red. The remaining 4 KPIs do not have a return for this Quarter, with reasons given in the report.

Recommendation(s):

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report for Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Part of the role of Cabinet Committees is to review the performance of those functions of the Council that fall within its remit. To support this role, Performance Dashboards are regularly reported to each Cabinet Committee throughout the year, and this is the first report for the 2021/22 financial year.

2. Performance Dashboard

- 2.1. The current Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance dashboard provides results up to the end of June 2021 and is attached in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2021/22. The Dashboard also includes a range of activity indicators which help give context to the KPIs.
- 2.3. For those with targets, KPIs are presented with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) alerts to show progress. Details of how the alerts are generated are outlined in the Guidance Notes, included with the Dashboard in Appendix 1.

3. Growth & Communities - Economic Development

- 3.1. The number of properties brought back to use through No Use Empty (NUE) over

the last 12 months was 511, which is ahead of target; 7,077 in total have been brought back to use since the start of the project in 2005. Over £11m was secured as developer contributions, which was 96% of the amount sought. The Quarter 1 target for the number of businesses assisted via the Kent and Medway Growth Hub was exceeded, for both those requiring light/medium support, and those requiring intensive support.

4. Growth & Communities - Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)

- 4.1. Further to the prime minister's announcement on 5th April that Step 2 of the government's roadmap to recovery could proceed, 32 libraries re-opened for browsing and study from 12th April, and the Archive Search Room opened with a social distancing appointment delivery model. Ceremonies were opened up to 15 attendees, increasing to 30 in May. A further 10 libraries opened over the course of Quarter 1, including the new library in the Southborough Hub and the freshly refurbished Greenhithe and Lenham Libraries.
- 4.2. In line with national trends, recovery of activity takes time. Physical issues and visitors to libraries have been increasing each month as customers become more confident to visit the Covid-secure library buildings. The temporary KPIs that were established for 2020/21 continue to be used in order to monitor usage of the service. Where it has been possible to reasonably establish targets, performance indicators have been set for e-Issues and online contacts for both Libraries and Archives, and these will be revised on a quarterly basis. The e-offer continues to thrive, with an increase of 19% on e-issues against the same reporting period in 2020-21, exceeding expectations for Quarter 1.
- 4.3. The online contacts for both Library and Archive services have fallen significantly and have not met expected levels for Quarter 1. An analysis of Library online activity reveals that although web hits and online enquiries have increased, the decline in use of social media has caused the overall numbers to fall (although expected levels set pre-pandemic have been far exceeded). This is due to physical services opening up again, and customers no longer needing to rely on social media as they did during Quarter 1 2020/21, when the initial lockdown was declared. A 30% decrease in reach on Facebook was factored into the forecasting to reflect this, but the decrease in usage was higher than anticipated, and this will be taken into consideration when forecasting for Quarter 2. How people use services again as LRA opens up more physical services is something that LRA will be monitoring carefully.
- 4.4. Results for the mobile library survey were collated, with customer satisfaction for the service at 100%. There was positive feedback on the new mobile vehicles, with customers commenting that they were looking forward to exploring inside the mobiles when restrictions were relaxed. The mobile library is part of the Libraries Direct performance indicator, which also includes Postal Loans, the Home Library Service and Open Access, and overall satisfaction with Libraries Direct was 100%, reflecting the appreciation of more vulnerable customers for these services during the pandemic and the recognition of the lifeline that these services provide for people.
- 4.5. Customer satisfaction for Registration is currently at 94%. Staff have been working to clear the backlog of 3,000 birth registrations from the second and third lockdowns and have delivered over 5,600 birth registration appointments during

Quarter 1. Death registrations are still carried out over the telephone and have reduced by 35% against the same reporting period last year, with fewer deaths related to Covid-19. The implementation of the marriage schedule system has resulted in poor functionality of the registration database, RON, which has presented a significant challenge to all the teams within the Registration service during May and June. The system now appears to be more stable.

- 4.6. The delayed Archive distance enquiry survey was carried out during Quarter 1, along with an in-house survey of customers using the Search Room. Results will be published in the Quarter 2 report.

5. Growth & Communities – Other Services

- 5.1. This year sees a number of new indicators introduced to the report following restructuring of the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate. Whilst a few of these are being refined, and there is no return this Quarter, the majority of the others have exceeded target. Two KPIs failed to meet floor standard, firstly Median number of days to resolve priority faults on Public Rights of Way network; this was due to a combination of factors including an increase in the number of faults reported, time spent responding to planning applications, and staffing issues. Secondly, Percentage of disabled people participating in Kent Active Partnership led programmes, with low participation due at least in part to continued shielding and/or restriction of activities for this group during the pandemic.

6. Recommendation(s):

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report for Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

8. Contact details

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Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard

Financial Year 2021/22

Results up to end of June 2021

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Produced by Kent Analytics

Publication Date: September 2021

Guidance Notes

RAG RATINGS

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

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

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

Activity Indicators

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

Key Performance Indicators Summary

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

Growth & Communities - Libraries, Registrations and Archives (LRA)	RAG
LRA06 : Customer satisfaction with Registration Services	AMBER
LRA12 : Customer satisfaction with libraries	AMBER
LRA13 : Customer satisfaction with archives	GREEN
LRA19 : Customer satisfaction with Libraries Direct Services	GREEN
LRA20 : Customer satisfaction with PCs and Wi-Fi	AMBER
LRA21 : Percentage of registration appointments available within statutory time targets	GREEN

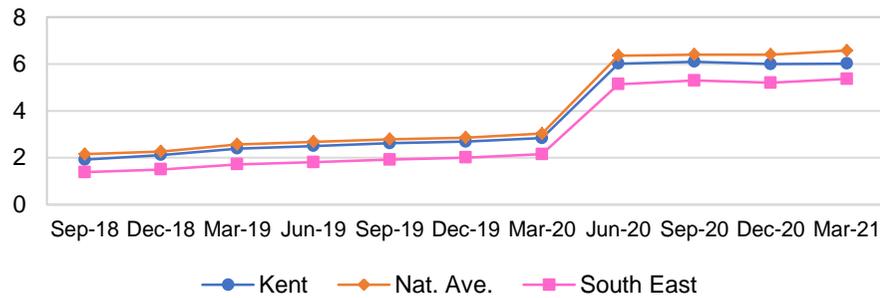
Growth & Communities – Other Services	RAG
DT14: Percentage of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) faults reported online	AMBER
EPE16: Median number of days to resolve priority faults on public rights of way network (rolling 12-month figure)	RED
CST01: Percentage of local actions from completed Domestic Homicide Reviews implemented by target date.	N/a
CST02: % of Lessons Learnt Domestic Homicide Review attendees rating the event as very good or excellent	N/a
COR01: Percentage of cases progressed for initial coronial decision within 2 working days of notification of a death	GREEN
KCP01 : Kent Country Parks aggregate average star ratings from Google, Trip Advisor and Facebook	GREEN
KSS01: Number of work experience hours of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) delivered	N/a
PAG01: Percentage of planning applications determined to meet MHCLG performance standards	GREEN
PP01: % of the most vulnerable victims of scams recorded on the National Scams Hub supported by Public Protection	GREEN
PP02: % of trader applications to Public Protection's 'Trading Stds Checked' scheme processed within 10 days	GREEN
SPA01: Percentage of participants in Kent Active Partnership led programmes who have a disability	RED
SPA02 : Percentage of participants in Kent Active Partnership led programmes from diverse ethnic groups	GREEN
TS01: Food Standards: Percentage of businesses now trading legally following an intervention from Trading Stds	GREEN
TS02: Product Safety: Percentage of businesses now trading legally following an intervention from Trading Standards.	GREEN
TS04: Percentage of businesses rating Trading Standards advice as Very Good or Excellent	N/a

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Derek Murphy

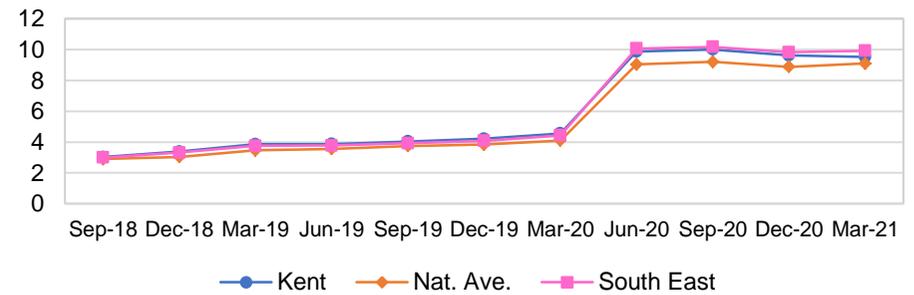
Ref	Performance Indicators – Economic Development	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	RAG	Target	Floor
ED05	Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (rolling 12 months)	519	482	472	462	511	GREEN	400	350
ED08	Developer contributions secured against total contributions sought	100%	100%	97%	78%	96%	GREEN	93%	85%
ED10	Businesses assisted via Kent and Medway Growth Hub contract (Cumulative)	552	1,843	2,189	2,875	612	GREEN	343	308
ED11	Businesses assisted through intensive support provided via the Growth Hub contract (Cumulative)	26	48	71	104	57	GREEN	35	30

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Year to date	Previous YTD
ED08a	Developer contributions received (£000s)	1,966	8,702	17,248	11,092	11,249	11,249	1,966

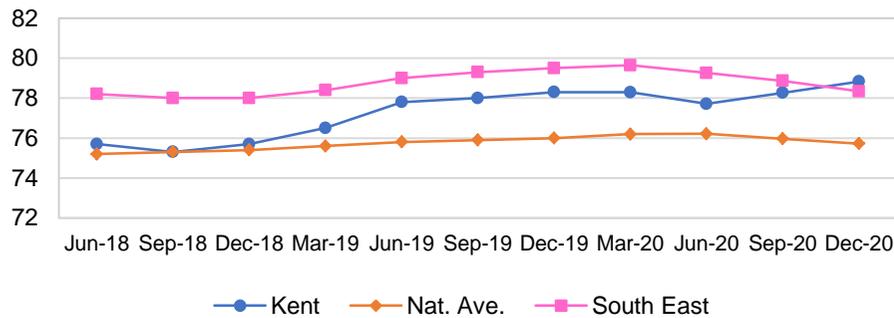
Percentage of 16 to 64 year olds claiming JSA/UC



Percentage of 18 to 24 year olds claiming UC

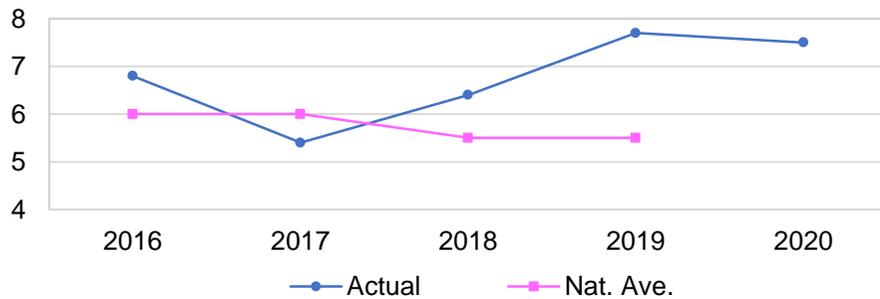


Percentage of 16 to 64 year olds in employment *

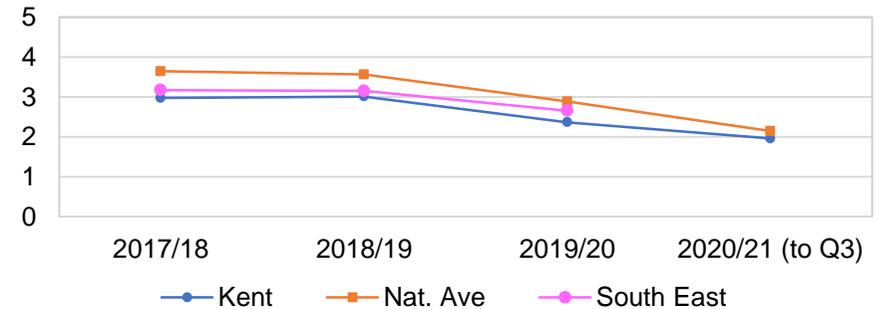


For Percentage of 16 to 64 year olds in employment, figures are derived from annual survey, with confidence interval for Kent figures at plus / minus 2 percentage points.

Percentage of 16 to 17 year olds who are NEET



Percentage of 16-24 year olds starting an apprenticeship



Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Mike Hill

Ref	Performance Indicators – Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Mar-21	Jun-21	RAG	Target	Floor
LRA06	Customer satisfaction with Registration Services	New Measure		96%	95%	94%	AMBER	95%	90%
LRA12	Customer satisfaction with libraries	97%	92%	94%	83%	*	AMBER	88%	80%
LRA13	Customer satisfaction with archives	91%	95%	96%	*	*	GREEN	96%	90%
LRA19	Customer satisfaction with Libraries Direct Services	New Measure		97%	*	99.8%	GREEN	95%	93%
LRA20	Customer satisfaction with PCs and Wi-Fi	New Measure		37%	83%	*	AMBER	85%	75%
LRA21	Percentage of registration appointments available within statutory time targets	N/a	97%	93%	100%	100%	GREEN	95%	93%

* No survey

LRA06 - Staff have been working to clear the backlog of 3,000 birth registrations from the second and third lockdowns and have delivered over 5,600 birth registration appointments during Quarter 1. Death registrations are still carried out over the telephone and have reduced by 35% against the same reporting period last year, with fewer deaths related to Covid-19. The implementation of the marriage schedule system did result in poor functionality of the registration database, RON, which has presented a significant challenge to all the teams within the Registration service during May and June. The system now appears to be more stable

LRA12 -The results of the Library Survey indicate that satisfaction is at 83% which is 2% below target. An examination of the comments from those who expressed dissatisfaction suggests that this is largely due to the closure of smaller branch libraries due to the pandemic. All libraries will have reopened by the end of August 2021.

LRA20 – Satisfaction with PCs and Wi-Fi was at its highest since this indicator was introduced, with 83% of our customers satisfied. Those who expressed dissatisfaction cited slow performance as the reason, and this has now been addressed by the PC refresh and installation of Windows 10.

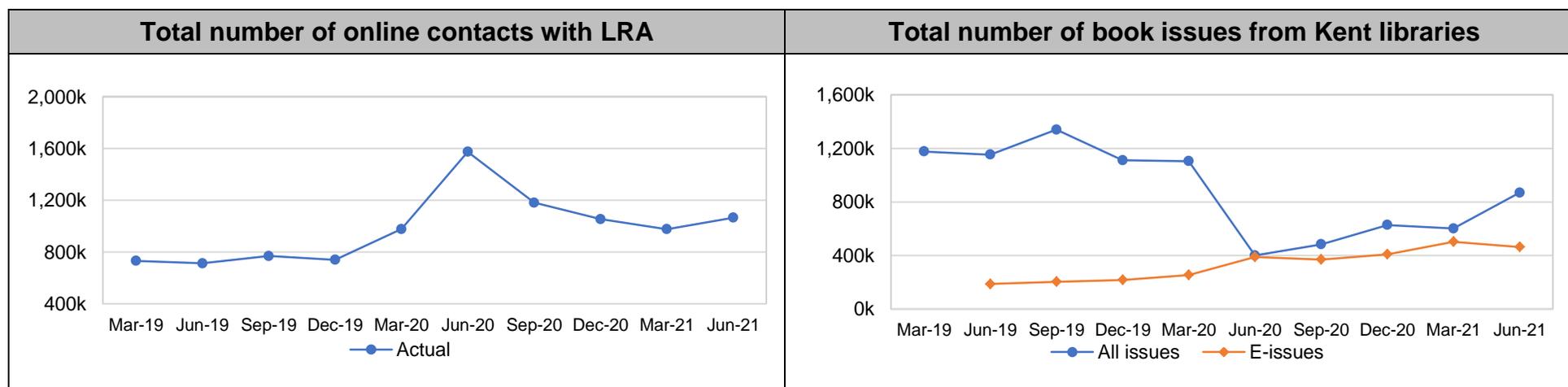
Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Mike Hill

Ref	Activity Indicators (Quarterly totals) - LRA	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	In Expected Range	Expected Activity	
								Upper	Lower
LRA03	Total number of audio and e-books issued (000s)	390	370	410	503	464	Above	409	370
LRA04	Number of online contacts to Libraries and Registration services (000s)	1,471	1,047	920	881	981	Below	1,150	1,040
LRA24	Number of online contacts for Kent archives (000s)	104	134	134	96	84	Below	114	103

LRA03 - The e-offer continues to thrive, with an increase of 19% on e-issues against the same reporting period in 2020-21, exceeding expectations for Quarter 1.

LRA04 & LRA24 - The online contacts for both Library and Archive services have fallen significantly and have not met expected levels for Quarter 1. An analysis of Library online activity reveals that although web hits and online enquiries have increased, the decline in use of social media has caused the overall numbers to fall (although expected levels set pre-pandemic have been far exceeded). This is believed to be due to physical services opening up again, and customers no longer needing to rely on social media.

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Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Mike Hill

Key Performance Indicators (temporary indicators during Coronavirus for LRA)

Indicator	Definition	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21
Number of Online Joiners	The number of customers who join online to access online and e-resource services	4,991	1,822	1,685	2,283	1,880
Number of visitors to static libraries	Number of customers visiting libraries where browsing has been enabled	*	49,437	83,615	*	187,803
% of available PC time used	Usage of available PCs as a percentage of the total availability (in hours)	*	25%	20%	3%	19%
% Increase of e-Issues	% increase of e-Issues as a comparison with same reporting period in previous year	108%	82%	88%	97%	19%
Number of physical issues	Number of issues of all material other than e-Resources	*	113,599	217,957	99,096	404,812
Total reach on Libraries and Archives Social Media	Total reach on Facebook (central and district pages) + New Twitter followers	1,310,570	867,086	766,707	683,242	750,512
Number of Ask a Kent Librarian enquiries answered	Total number of enquiries answered via Email, Govmetric, Out of Kent chat, Quidget chat, Social Media and Kent chat	2,138	4,028	3,236	3,521	3,474
Number of Archives enquiries answered	Total number of enquiries answered via Email, Social Media and online	655	1,248	1,068	1,126	1,714
% of Archive Search Room “sessions” booked	This KPI reflects the percentage of available sessions booked.	*	73%	93%	*	94%

* No returns due to lockdowns

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Mike Hill

Ref	Performance Indicators - other services	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
DT14	Percentage of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) faults reported online	88%	84%	86%	87%	87%	AMBER	90%	75%
EPE16	Median number of days to resolve priority faults on public rights of way network (rolling 12 month figure)	13	19	20	25	32	RED	20	25
CST01	Percentage of local actions from completed Domestic Homicide Reviews implemented by target date.	New indicators				See notes	N/a	70%	63%
CST02	Percentage of Lessons Learnt Domestic Homicide Review Seminar attendees rating the event as Very Good or Excellent.						N/a	85%	76.5%

DT14 – Following success at meeting the previous target of 85%, the target has been increased to 90% for this year, and it is likely that it will take a little time to achieve this. In addition, customer surveys show that the core customer base would rather telephone, and this is also true for those who feel an issue is urgent. In the longer term it may be possible to remove the requirement for people to register before using the online system, which should increase online reporting.

EPE16 – Increased use of the PROW network during the pandemic has seen a larger number of faults reported, with 18% more faults reported than the same period pre-Covid. This has led to increased workload and some delays in fault resolution, even when dealing with priority matters. Increase in other work, such as responding to planning applications, has also meant less time to deal with faults. Staff vacancies and periods of self-isolation due to Covid for other staff has also had an impact.

CST01 – A new process to report on actions more readily is being developed, as currently actions are only followed up once the Home Office has approved the Domestic Homicide Review and its recommendations which can be several months after the target date has passed.

CST02 – No events were held this quarter.

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Mike Hill

Ref	Performance Indicators - other services	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
COR01	Percentage of cases progressed for initial coronial decision within 2 working days of notification of a death.					92%	GREEN	80%	72%
KCP01	Kent Country Parks aggregate average star ratings from Google, Trip Advisor and Facebook	New indicator				4.6	GREEN	4.5	4
KSS01	Number of work experience hours of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) delivered by Kent Scientific Services (KSS) for Kent students in the 16-24 age range.	KSS are not supporting work experience currently, due to COVID.						400	360
PAG01	Percentage of planning applications determined to meet MHCLG performance standards					100%	GREEN	90%	81%
PP01	Percentage of the most vulnerable victims of scams recorded on the National Scams Hub supported by Public Protection					100%	GREEN	85%	76.5%
PP02	Percentage of trader applications to Public Protection's 'Trading Standards Checked' scheme processed within 10 working days.					100%	GREEN	90%	81%

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Mike Hill

Ref	Performance Indicators - other services	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
SPA01	Percentage of participants in Kent Active Partnership led programmes who have a disability	New indicators				10%	RED	30%	15%
SPA02	Percentage of participants in Kent Active Partnership led programmes from diverse ethnic groups					40%	GREEN	30%	15%
TS01	Food Standards: Percentage of businesses now trading legally following an intervention from Trading Standards.					100%	GREEN	70%	63%
TS02	Product Safety: Percentage of businesses now trading legally following an intervention from Trading Standards.					82%	GREEN	70%	63%
TS04	Percentage of businesses rating Trading Standards advice (Primary Authority and Pay as You Go) as Very Good or Excellent.					See note	N/a	80%	72%

SPA01 – Inclusion is being encouraged and promoted, but local consultation and national research shows that some disabled people are still shielding and/or restricting their activities during the pandemic which may have contributed to the lower than expected participation.

TS04 – Although 62 businesses were contacted in Quarter 1, no responses were received. This is a new survey and had not been incorporated into the main dealings with businesses. Once it is integral, regular feedback is expected.

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From: **Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member, Economic Development**
Simon Jones - Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 21 September 2021

Subject: **Regional Growth Fund Monitoring Report – Q1 2021/22**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This report summarises the results of KCC’s monitoring returns from businesses that have received loans and equity from KCC managed Government funded Business Investment Schemes – this consists of the current Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) scheme and the former Regional Growth Fund (RGF) schemes.

Since 2012, the number of new and protected jobs recorded up to the end of June 2021 is 4,927, consisting of 3,126 new jobs and 1,402 protected jobs. The average cost per job is £1,422.

Loan repayments to date of the value of £30,078,015 have been received. These repayments are being recycled through the Kent and Medway Business Fund to enable KCC to continue to offer financial support for new investment.

Out of the 150 loans being reported, 70.6% are rated as Green or Amber (covered in paragraph 3.1).

Recommendation: The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note the report.

1. Background Information

1.1 The Regional Growth Fund (RGF) was established in June 2010 with three objectives:

- To facilitate new investment by private sector enterprise: the aim was to support projects with significant potential for economic growth and to create sustainable private sector employment.
- To help those areas and communities that were particularly dependent on the public sector to make the transition to sustainable private sector-led growth and prosperity; and
- To address a market failure in the provision of bank lending to viable small and medium sized businesses who had a limited credit history or track record and required finance on flexible terms given their limited collateral.

- 1.2 The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) allocated £55 million from the Government's Regional Growth Fund to KCC between 2011 and 2014. This funded three RGF schemes covering the whole of Kent and Medway and additional local authority areas:
- Expansion East Kent (East Kent - £35 million);
 - Tiger (North Kent and Thurrock - £14.5 million);
 - Escalate (West Kent and parts of East Sussex - £5.5 million).
- 1.3 These RGF schemes provided grants, loans, and equity investments for businesses with investment plans leading to job creation and growth from November 2011 to January 2016. For most businesses, loan finance was provided at 0% interest, with a repayment period of between five and seven years. The schemes also allocated grants and equity investments.
- 1.4 From January 2017, KCC used the recycled RGF loan repayments to enable the Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) to provide loans and equity investments ranging between £50,000-£500,000 to eligible businesses across Kent and Medway. The majority of funding recipients receive 0% interest loans, with a repayment period of up to five years. The recycled RGF loan repayments are also used to finance the Kent Life Sciences (KLS) Fund, a sub-programme of the KMBF scheme. This provides equity investments predominantly in the life science sector. A summary of the equity investments can be found in Section 4 of this report.
- 1.5 All applications to RGF schemes and the KMBF undergo due diligence inquiries before being examined by the Investment Advisory Board (IAB). The majority of the members of this Board come from the private sector, including Finance and Banking, Manufacturing, and the Scientific and Creative Industries. Once an application has been reviewed by the Board, it makes a recommendation to KCC to Approve or Reject the project and what conditions should be set if funding is approved.
- 1.6 Invicta Law Ltd provides advice on contracts, insolvency issues and works with the KCC Business Investment Team to recover the maximum amount of loan value. KCC Internal Audit oversees the investment procedures and processes and advice on other matters related to the use of the funds.
- 1.7 In order to reduce the risk of default, KCC requires applicants to provide some form of security, whether through assets, property, or personal guarantees for all loans over £100,000. For loans between £50,000 and £100,000, the IAB may recommend a Personal Guarantee be taken before funding is given, though it is not a requirement.
- 1.8 Where businesses find it difficult to repay the loans, KCC can offer to restructure their debt to support further business growth and resume repayments. In cases of non-engagement, KCC pursues loan recovery through Security or Personal Guarantees, where applicable (see Section 2.1).
- 1.9 Working with external partners, KCC has recently established a Recovery Working Group, a sub-group of the IAB, to advise on technical issues related to the recovery of existing investments (see Section 2.1).

1.10 Many loan recipients have incurred significant economic disruption caused by the Covid-19 outbreak. This report will outline the various actions undertaken to support businesses in receipt of loan and equity investment from the former RGF schemes and the Kent and Medway Business Fund.

2. Update on all Government Funded KCC Business Investment Schemes

2.1 Since the last report presented to this Committee in November 2020, to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on its loan recipients and the wider business community KCC agreed to offer all loan recipients an additional six-month repayment holiday until September 2021 (18 months in total, since March 2020). KCC have continued to monitor the existing loan recipients.

2.2 The table below shows the total funding committed in loan and equity investments, broken down by local authority area, the number of jobs created\protected and private sector investment (leverage) as of the 30 June 2021.

Districts	Funding per Local Authority £	Private Investment £	No of Businesses	No of Jobs Created	No of Jobs Protected	Total Number of Jobs
Ashford	£1,039,600	£982,928	17	34	21	55
Canterbury	£9,270,080	£9,737,619	60	311	89	400
Dartford	£2,470,115	£2,238,578	16	119	53	172
Dover	£13,530,183	£12,636,972	57	370	162	532
Folkestone & Hythe	£6,513,468	£10,175,900	30	244	122	366
Gravesham	£881,062	£843,375	5	55	60	115
Maidstone	£3,272,587	£3,487,936	19	100	91	190
Medway	£4,798,621	£4,246,218	26	232	155	387
Rother (1)	£136,250	£136,250	3	24	3	27
Sevenoaks	£644,000	£760,472	7	48	18	66
Swale	£7,685,202	£19,140,158	27	284	287	571
Thanet	£8,416,256	£11,264,724	62	446	277	723
Thurrock (2)	£1,121,700	£1,421,355	5	72	13	85
Tonbridge & Malling	£1,173,510	£1,187,798	12	46	21	67
Tunbridge Wells	£1,993,000	£2,257,250	16	136	26	162
Wealden (1)	£200,000	£200,000	1	5	4	9
Total	£63,145,634	£80,717,533	363	3,126	1,402	4,927

(1) Not part of the eligible area for the Kent and Medway Business Fund since 2017

(2) KCC is now working with Thurrock to develop a fund managed by KCC to support Thurrock businesses as agreed in Key Decision 20/00103.

2.3 All businesses are still required to complete a monitoring return as part of their loan agreements with the County Council and these must include employment contracts and copies of payroll as evidence for jobs created and protected. The cumulative total of jobs that have been created or protected is 4,927 as of 30 June 2021. This is an increase of 276 since the last report submitted to this Committee in November 2020 (4,651). This increase is in part due to additional KMBF Capital Growth and KMBF Recovery loan recipients being added to the monitoring cycle. It should also be noted we have also seen jobs lost in some companies and we anticipate possible further job losses in Q2 2021/22 when the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) scheme, is expected to cease. There is an overall target of

5,990 jobs (4,402 new jobs and 1,588 protected jobs) for the period up to March 2023.

- 2.4 KCC supported the establishment of an on-line COVID-19 Questionnaire to encourage feedback and build intelligence on local companies and the Kent economy during the pandemic and has been liaising with the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Locate in Kent, and other business bodies to assess the current gaps in financial support. The feedback and intelligence obtained is being used to inform the relaunch of KMBF.

3. Loan Monitoring

- 3.1 As part of the loan agreement, each business is contracted to provide a quarterly monitoring return. These returns are in arrears of the previous quarter, and upon receipt and internal validation, one of the following RAG ratings is applied:
- Green Risk Status: full return received and no outstanding issues;
 - Amber Risk Status: partial return received and/or some issues re contracted milestones;
 - Red Risk Status: Category A (Bad debt); Category B (No monitoring return); Category C (Non-achievement of key milestones/targets, including loan repayment, job outcomes and/or delay to planned objectives).
- 3.2 Out of the 150 being reported on during the monitoring period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021, 106 (71%) of returns were flagged as Green or Amber. The value of those loans was £17,310,570. Of the total number of businesses monitored during the period 11 identified were in the Red Category B (No monitoring return) and 33 businesses were identified as Red Category C (Non-achievement of key milestones/targets).
- 3.3 67 businesses have had loans or equity which are in Category A (Bad Debt) with a value of £9,302,882 of which £2,293,657 has so far been recovered. The total of funds not yet recovered is therefore £7,009,225 which equates to 11.10% of the total loan and equity investments made. This includes businesses which KCC is still actively pursuing to repay the debt and where further debt recovery is still possible (£2,990,665). The total of loans written off (where debt recovery is no longer possible) is £5,270,465.

4. Equity Investments

- 4.1 Between 2013 and 2016 KCC made equity investments in 19 businesses at a cumulative initial value of £8,990,634 at the time the respective equity investments were made.
- 4.2 In January 2017 the Kent Life Sciences (KLS) Fund was established with the aim of making equity investments in companies with game-changing medical technologies and advanced therapeutics. This sector was targeted because of its high growth potential and the opportunities it offered to build upon the facilities offered by Discovery Park, Kent Science Park and the Kent based universities. KCC has committed equity investments to nine businesses at a cumulative initial value of £4,350,000. KLS is funded from recycled RGF loan repayments.

- 4.3 In making these equity investments, KCC sees its role as a “patient investor” and it is anticipated the Council will not accrue a positive return from most of the businesses for a further three to five years. NCL Technology Ventures (NCL) have been appointed by KCC to manage, monitor, and oversee these investments. NCL work with businesses to design an appropriate exit strategy for each investment. Quarterly reports on the performance of all the equity investments are provided to the KMBF Investment Advisory Board (chaired by a KCC Member) and an annual report is provided to the KCC Governance and Audit Committee as part of the reporting on companies in which KCC has an interest.
- 4.4 NCL have designated 17 of KCC’s equity investments as having Green Risk Status, five as Amber Risk Status and three as Red Risk Status. Three of KCC equity investments (total initial value £2,274,072) are designated as Bad Debt as of 30 June 2021.
- 4.5 To mitigate the economic impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on the companies in receipt of equity funding, KCC has been working with NCL to ensure that the innovative companies in which KCC invested have received specialist support and assistance.

5. Cost per Job

- 5.1 The cumulative total amount of repayments expected in the nine years to June 2021 was £30,861,068. The actual amount receipted by the end of June 2021 was £28,164,073 which represents an achievement of 91.26%. In terms of the unrecovered funds, the cost per job is £1,422.
- 5.2 In terms of the total loan and equity awarded by the former RGF and KMBF schemes the average “cost” per job is £12,816 in comparison with the national average for Regional Growth Fund Schemes of £37,400 per job (over the first four RGF rounds according to the 2014 National Audit Office report on the Regional Growth Fund).

6. Legal

- 6.1 KCC has two contracts with BEIS and it also has legal agreements with the company undertaking independent financial appraisals and the company managing the equity portfolio.

7. Policy Framework

- 7.1 KCC’s Interim Strategic Plan sets out the short terms goals and this scheme assists in meeting the Economic Challenge.
- 7.2 The impact of Covid19 has impacted on this scheme and KCC have instituted measures to mitigate these impacts and these have been outlined in this Report.

8. Equalities and data protection implications

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was undertaken in March 2021 and is attached to this report.

8.2 The EqlA will be kept under review as the project progresses.

9. Data protection

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

10. Recommendation

Recommendation:

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

11. Contact details

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From: Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee 24 September 2021

Subject: **Design in Kent's Built Environment**

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral divisions: All

Past Pathway of Paper: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 12 November 2020, Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee 17 November 2020

Future Pathway of Paper:

Summary: This paper updates Cabinet Committee on development progress of the refreshed Kent Design Guide and the next elements of activity to launch the guide.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to endorse the current approach and timetable to deliver the Kent Design Guide.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A refreshed Kent Design Guide in digital format is in development to replace the 2005 printed version. The refreshed guide aims to ensure there is a county level framework for design quality in building development. This framework directly follows the ten characteristics of well-designed places outlined in the National Design Guide published by MHCLG.¹
- 1.2 A Cabinet Committee paper was presented to GEDCCC on 17th November 2020 to advise on the wider aspects of Design in Kent's Built Environment² and the steps that were being taken to promote and progress the subject.
- 1.3 Government announced its intention to incorporate good design practice into National Planning Guidance in its August 2020 White Paper³, with a stated intention to promote a framework of design codes that Local Planning Authorities will be tasked to deliver. However, the programme has been significantly delayed and a copy of the Bill that has been promised to Parliament is still awaited.

¹ [National Design Guide – October 2019 – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#)

² [Design in Kent's Built Environment - Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee 17 November 2020](#)

³ [Planning for the Future" White Paper; MHCLG August 2020](#)

- 1.4 Much is still unknown about the scope and resource impact that these mandated design codes will have on Local Planning Authorities. The Kent Design Guide, which was in development before the Government's White Paper, means that the Kent Design Guide web site could sit as a useful repository to enable benchmarking of design codes in Kent, both from cross county design codes and those that relate more at a district level. It is certainly possible that the Kent Design Guide becomes the Kent Design Code in the fullness of time.
- 1.5 In practice, this would require the significant input of Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), in particular to assemble detailed design codes for their neighbourhoods and / or for specific development sites in their districts. This is expected to be very resource intensive for LPAs, and potentially very costly unless Government is willing to provide funding support. It is also apparent that some Kent LPAs may be in a much better position than others in resource terms to develop design codes. Equally for KCC, there could be substantial resource implications and specialist advice required to adapt existing design guidance across service areas to become design codes. The emerging design guide does, however, represent a strong platform upon which design codes for the county and districts could be presented.

2. Kent Design Guide

- 2.1 KCC organised two workshops in 2018 with a range of partners involved in planning and building. The workshops considered the question of how the county's public and private sector could deliver higher design quality more consistently, particularly in housing development.
- 2.2 Collectively, local authorities, developers, housebuilders, agents, consultants, and statutory consultees concluded that there are several ways to achieve meaningful design guidance for Kent's built environment. The suggestions made in these discussions have been incorporated into the draft guide.
- 2.3 The new guide is entirely digital. Much of the new website has now been populated with content from a range of KCC services and external stakeholders including Kent Police and Kent Planning Officers Group representing the Districts' and Boroughs' Planning Authorities. This engagement will continue throughout the life of the Guide. Some of the imagery used is taken from shortlisted entrants and category winners of the annual Kent Design and Development Awards. The flexibility of the website's design also allows new content to be uploaded and presented when required. This provides the opportunity to update the site once the new National Model Design Code is published, and reference other new national requirements as they come forward.

3. Soft testing

- 3.1 A two-week period of soft testing of the web site by KCC colleagues and some external stakeholders took place in early September 2021. This process invited general comments and observations about the web site, but also suggested feedback around the following:
- Comments on how well, or otherwise, the web site can be navigated;

- The readability of the content – whether the subject matter is clear and easy to understand;
- Assistance to identify any suitable quality images that could be included against areas of content on the web site
- Any specific dislikes about the web site

3.2 The soft testing process was also an opportunity to test the site's rigour, with specific colleagues at KCC looking to 'break' the web site.

3.3 Officers are currently in the process of reviewing the comments received and making amendments to the web site where these are required.

4. Wider engagement

4.1 A process of wider and more formal engagement is proposed to take place for an 8-week period from 1 October to 30 November 2021. Direct engagement will be made predominantly with professionals working in the built environment such as planners and local government officers, developers, architects, construction engineers and local and parish councils. The engagement process will also be publicly available via KCC's web site.

4.2 Much like the soft testing process, the focus of the formal engagement is to receive feedback on an individual's experience of navigating and understanding the Kent Design Guide's content so that this can be considered and amended if required. This will ensure the Guide's use is maximised going forward. It is not about the specifics of the technical guidance that has been developed in the guide, for example on issues such as KCC's expectations on the design standards of street lighting or parking, or the technical standards expected for sustainable drainage. If this type of feedback is received, this will be relayed to the individual teams at KCC or the design guide's wider stakeholders to consider and to address separately.

5. Timetable

5.1 The aim is to have the web site publicly available and ready for use by Spring 2022. Once the engagement process concludes, responses will be collated, and work will get underway to further amend the web site early in the New Year.

5.2 Further engagement with Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee and Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is currently planned for the 17 March 2022 and 22 March 2022 meetings respectively. There is the opportunity also to reengage with the Kent Chief Executives' Group at an appropriate meeting, at which Kent's other local Planning Authorities will be able to form their own view as to whether to adopt the Guide either wholly or in part.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

6.1 A screening assessment has been undertaken and will be kept updated as the project progresses.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The cost of developing the design guide web site, including design, development, and copywriting support, have been met by the Economic Development Division's core budget. The cost of this to date has been approximately £60,000. A further £7,000 per annum is likely to be required for future web site support, development, and content production.

8. Data Protection Implications

- 8.1 There is no processing of personal data associated with this project.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to endorse the current approach and timetable to raising the quality of design in Kent's built environment.

10. Contact details

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From: Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member, Economic Development
Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director for Growth & Communities
Steve Grimshaw, Strategic Programme Manager Economic Development

To: Growth, Economic Development & Communities Cabinet Committee –
21 September 2021

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

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All

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

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

In addition to this, NUE is helping to deliver increased Council Tax receipts, Business Rates and supporting districts with their Local Plan targets.

NUE operates a loan scheme providing short term secured loans registered as a first or second charge. The loans are primarily interest free with an upfront administration fee. However, interest bearing loans (for larger sums/projects) have been introduced over the last three years. On repayment of the loan, funds are recycled to the next project.

NUE previously reported to Cabinet Committee in September 2020.

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet Committee with:

- a further update on NUE's performance to date
- a progress update regarding the £12m Derelict Conversion/New Builds NUE Scheme (investing the Council's cash balances in accordance with KCC's Treasury Management Strategy) which is helping contribute to accelerating the delivery of good quality housing in the County
- an update regarding funding beyond the current financial year

Recommendations:

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

1. Introduction

1. 1. Kent County Council (KCC) launched its 'No Use Empty' (NUE) campaign in 2005 as part of its Public Sector Agreement (PSA2) targets, to examine better ways of delivering services, and in particular how we might work more effectively with district councils. The primary aim of the initiative is to improve the physical urban environment in Kent by bringing empty properties back into use as quality housing.
1. 2. The initiative originally focused on the following districts: Thanet, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe (Shepway) and Swale, as the research found most empty properties (over 3,000) were in these areas. As the project was very successful KCC expanded NUE to include all 12 Kent district councils in January 2008.
1. 3. NUE is now firmly established as the longest running and most effective empty property initiative in the country winning several national awards for partnership and regeneration.

2. Achievements

- 2.1 There were 9,000 long-term empty properties in Kent when NUE was launched in 2005. As of 30 June 2021, NUE has returned 7,077 long-term empty properties back into use across the County to the decent home standard. Long term empty means those dwellings that have been unoccupied or substantially unfurnished for over six months.
- 2.2 Latest Council Tax records show there are a total of 6,032 long term vacant dwellings in the Kent area. NUE on average is returning 500 long-term empty properties back into use per annum (based on performance over the last 10 years). Without NUE intervention the number of long-term empty properties would probably be more than 15,000. For clarity this excludes investment activity which is focused on new builds.
- 2.3 NUE as a service has seen an unprecedented increase in loan applications over the last 18 months. A total of 63 loan applications were approved in 20/21 of which 42 were empty property loans and 21 were for new build loans. Only three loan applications received during the year did not progress, primarily due to the required supporting evidence not being provided. The pre-application work NUE undertakes with our district empty property officers and the required upfront application fee minimises the number of applications which are not supported.
- 2.4 The table below records the loans approved (across both NUE and Treasury investment, total value of loans and number of units being supported).

NUE (Empty Property)			
Financial Year	Loans Approved	Value Approved	Units Supported
18/19	34	£6.8m	111
19/20	33	£4.9m	89
20/21	42	£4.4m	81
21/22 (to date)	20	£4.8m	78
NUE (DC/New Build)			
Financial Year	Loans Approved	Value Approved	Units Supported
20/21 (First Year)	21	£11.2m	96
21/22 (to date)	8	£4.8m	19

- 2.5 Demand for the traditional empty property loans in 21/22 has not diminished following the lifting of the pandemic restrictions. A total of 20 loans have been approved since 1st April 2021. NUE have a steady pipeline of projects which will exceed the number

of units supported in 21/22 compared to the previous year, which as shown above, was comparable to previous years despite the pandemic.

- 2.6 **NUE Commercial.** Following the success of the first NUE commercial phase (2018-2020) which returned long term empty commercial properties (empty shops or small redundant workspace areas) to use for alternative commercial or mixed-use purposes, KCC secured a further funding of £2m from Growing Places Fund (GPF) in 2021 for NUE to operate a second phase. The new funding has a target to return a minimum of 16 commercial units and provide 36 residential units by March 2024.
- 2.7 In January 2020 NUE featured in the guidance for 'Dealing with Empty Shops' produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) for councils faced with challenges around vacancy on their high streets and in their town centres.
<https://www.local.gov.uk/dealing-empty-shops-guide>
- 2.8 A summary of NUE Commercial is at **Appendix 1** including example projects.
- 2.9 Kent's approach to tackling empty properties has been widely praised with NUE winning three national awards for Regeneration and Partnership Working. KCC were the only non-housing authority finalist in the category for 'Council of the Year' at the UK Housing Awards 2020.

3. NUE Finance (Empty Property)

- 3.1 KCC are an enabler. The recycling loan fund operated by NUE provides working capital to help owners/small developers refurbish/convert empty homes or redundant commercial buildings to provide good quality residential accommodation.
- 3.2 NUE was originally funded using a mixture of borrowing (£7m), performance reward grant (£2m) related to the PSA2 and surplus KCC funds (£1m). The loan fund was allowed to be recycled several times attracting private sector leverage (applicants' own funds to support project costs), government grant (£760k Homes and Communities Agency) and a total of £1m "top-up" funds from districts.
- 3.3 In the early years of the scheme empty properties attracted Council Tax concessions. NUE loans were provided interest free with an administration fee charged to help bring these properties back into use and generated additional Council Tax receipts.
- 3.4 As NUE has evolved we have also introduced interest bearing loans for larger empty property projects which require a greater financial support or to those small developers who return to the scheme with new projects. The interest rate reflects the increased risk of these loans and is used to provide for a small element of bad debt risk as well as assisting with the administration costs of the scheme which is self-funding e.g., at no cost to the Council. The loans continue to be offered interest free to first time applicants and an application fee is charged.
- 3.5 To date, NUE has awarded £42.8m in short term secured loans and has levered in £36.8m from the public/private sectors, giving a total investment of £79.6m across Kent. All loans are subject to a risk assessment and secured as a 1st or 2nd charge and offered typically over a two-to-three-year period.
- 3.6 The investment has funded 1,220 homes of which 867 of these are classified as new homes (change in numbers). The new homes are generating new Council Tax receipts worth approximately £1,379,667 per year (based on completions to date),

rising to £1,532,856 by 2022/23 (based on projects due to complete). Should an average of 57 new homes per year be maintained over the next five years, this will further increase the value of Council Tax receipts generated as a direct result of NUE to £1,934,546.

- 3.7 A summary of NUE investment by district and Council Tax is at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.8 In July 2019, when the first tranche of borrowing was to be repaid (e.g., part of the capital taken out of the NUE scheme), a temporary extension was granted to at least 2021-22 with a further update to be provided at that time. (The record of decision is appended as a background document to this report).
- 3.9 The following is an extract for the NUE initiative as described in Section 5, Page 55 of the Budget Book 2021-22 (approved 11 February 2021). The repayment of £7m capital was deferred until 2023/24 which is why there is no Cash Limit shown in the table below for 2023/24.

Capital Investment Plans				Cash Limits			
Ref	Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Later Years
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
26	Kent Empty Property Initiative (NUE)	46,657	33,818	5,443	4,556	0	2,840

4. How NUE has evolved

- 4.1 NUE remains innovative and has taken advantage of funding opportunities as they have arisen to offer different loan products, deliver more homes and bring vacant commercial properties back into use as previously reported to GEDCC.
- 4.2 Whilst the construction industry has experienced challenging times, NUE is becoming increasingly important as we continue our work to regenerate local communities and further support the Kent economy by giving loans at 0% on first applications (cheaper than the market) and charging an interest rate which is competitive and has different lending criteria to traditional high street lenders.
- 4.3 **Derelict Conversion/New Builds NUE Scheme (£12m)**. NUE launched a new loan product in 20/21 using the Council's cash balances in accordance with its Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) as approved by County Council. £12m was made available to provide secured, by way of first charge, short-term interest-bearing loans (recycled) to developers of derelict/vacant sites, to create new build residential units in Kent.
- 4.4 Investing the Council's cash balances was deemed a more appropriate funding route for these short-term loans (two-to-three years) than borrowing from external lenders over longer periods of time (20-25 years). In this way the Council is diversifying its investments, receiving a return on its funds, and saving on borrowing costs.
- 4.5 The introduction of an interest-bearing loan (still competitive) was firstly to help cover the costs of administering the scheme but more importantly to ensure the Council still earned a return on its funds. NUE is still able to deliver its impressive benefits of

Council Tax and Business rate receipts, supporting the economy and small developers, assisting District Councils deliver their Local Plan targets as well as covering the costs of the service.

- 4.6 Since April 2020 demand has been such that NUE have accelerated the number of loans approved (29 to date) thanks to an internal Treasury agreement with NUE to make available a further £4m (January 2021).
- 4.7 Current individual projects are varied ranging from single houses, bungalows, 2-3 houses and apartment blocks, all of which are in seven of the 12 Kent districts and primarily in our coastal regions.
- 4.8 A total of £6m was advanced in 20/21 and £9m is expected to be drawn down by the end of this financial year.
- 4.9 The following table represents all projects supported with Treasury Investment.

District	No. Of Loans	NUE Loan £	New Builds Supported
Canterbury	1	£474,000	TBC – planning resubmitted
Dartford	1	£600,000	1 x 12 HMO (target - key workers)
Dover	10	£4,815,000	20
Folkestone & Hythe	6	£3,843,000	51
Swale	2	£1,120,000	7
Thanet	8	£5,015,000	35
Tunbridge Wells	1	£200,000	1
Total	29	£16,067,000	115

- 4.10 NUE is pleased to confirm that £2.3m of loans advanced have been repaid to date and is being recycled to new projects. A total of 22 new builds of the 115 supported have been delivered, sold, and occupied.
- 4.11 One of the first projects to be awarded with investment funds completed in January 2021. A new build apartment block to provide eight affordable homes built by a local developer was purchased by Dover District Council.
- 4.12 A selection of other projects supported is at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.13 NUE continue to receive enquiries from local developers who either have or are about to acquire derelict sites to take forward for new developments or from those who are interested in knowing more about the loans scheme.

5. Return on Investment

- 5.1 There is an interest-bearing element to cover the cost of the service and to compensate Treasury for the opportunity cost of lending NUE the funding as opposed to investment.
- 5.2 The difference between the actual interest charged on each individual loan and the amount required by Treasury is used to cover the operational costs of NUE management and administration over the lifetime of the initiative.

6. NUE beyond 2022-23

- 6.1 Bringing long term empty properties back into use is a key method of driving regeneration which not only provides new homes but also new sources of employment and a sense of community.
- 6.2 NUE is helping to increase Council Tax receipts which represent a high percentage of the KCC budget. NUE continues to seek to convert existing building which means fewer brownfield/green sites are needed to meet housing targets.
- 6.3 The new Council Tax receipts generated from our new builds, is calculated to be £195,000 per year (based on Average Band C £1,700 per home x 115 units to date). This is in addition to the traditional empty property scheme covered under 3.3.
- 6.4 **NUE main loan scheme (£10m)** is currently included in the Capital Programme. The Budget Book 2021-22 shows NUE funded to 2022-23. There is an expectation that NUE will collect and repay £7m of the £10m allocated at the end of March 2023. Therefore, should the traditional empty property initiative be continued under this programme then Cabinet will be required to support a further extension (and non-repayment). Alternatively, NUE continues to seek to enhance the level of funding beyond the current £16m which has been made available via the TMS, subject to certain conditions being met and governance being updated. Growth, Economic Development & Communities Cabinet Committee will be updated on ongoing negotiations in due course.
- 6.5 **NUE new builds.** There is a steady pipeline of projects and enquiries as previously mentioned. The availability of this KCC loan fund is assisting our smaller local developers who still find it difficult to access mainstream funding. Bespoke lenders often require: a higher rate of interest; greater security; early exit penalty fees; more restrictive lending criteria and delays in being able to administer and process in timescales which are critical to taking projects forward. The NUE loan scheme bridges the gap for many developers between mainstream lenders and bespoke lenders
- 6.6 Having a degree of flexibility in accessing and potentially increasing the funding Treasury have made available to NUE for new builds will ensure NUE is able to offer a fluid “open year-round” approach and is not solely reliant on projects to complete and be repaid before a new project can be funded and works commence.

7. Equality and Diversity

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the service. No issues have been identified.

8. Information Governance

- 8.1 To comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), a privacy notice for NUE is published on the KCC website (<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/access-to-information/gdpr-privacy-notice/economic-development/no-use-empty-scheme>).

9. The performance of the NUE initiative is monitored and reviewed by the Growth and Communities Directorate.

10. Policy

10.1 NUE is identified in KCC's Interim Strategic Plan – Setting the Course (December 2020) under the section 'Bring forward infrastructure projects to stimulate economic growth' on page 15.

https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/116033/Interim-Strategic-Plan.pdf

11. Conclusion

10.1 Continued support for NUE will allow the initiative to:

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

12. Recommendation(s):

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

13. Appendices and background document:

Appendix 1 – NUE Commercial and example projects (both phases)

Appendix 2 - Summary NUE Residential (Countywide Investment)

Appendix 3 - Summary NUE Derelict Sites - example project

Background document: Record of key decision: July 2019:

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

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Growth & Communities

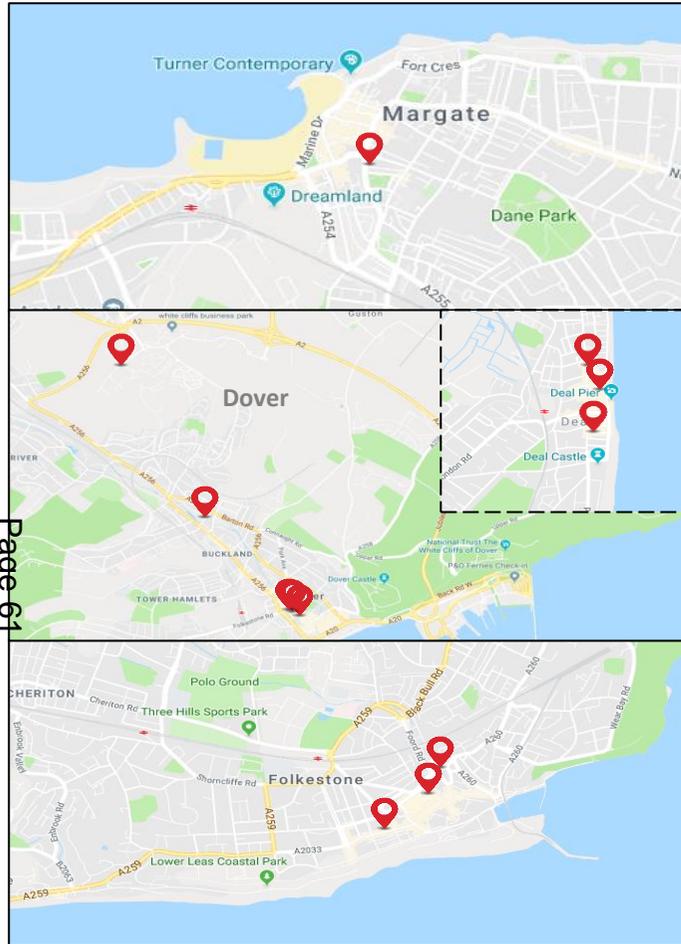
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Appendix 1 – Summary of NUE Commercial 2018-2020 (GPF2) - Phase I

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



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

Completions:

15 Commercial Units
28 Residential Homes

Commercial properties back into use included:

Beauty Salon, Delicatessen, Restaurant, Recruitment Agency, Marketing Suite for Property Sales, Office Space, Pizza Room for Micro Brewery, retail units for local independent traders

Appendix 1 – NUE Commercial Phase I - examples of projects supported

132 High Street, Deal	Sandgate Road, Folkestone
<p>NUE used Growing Places Funds (£65k) to help fund the refurbishment of an empty shop on Deal High Street. The funding has helped the owners to carry out a complete renovation and restoration of a beautiful heritage building in the conservation area of Deal ensuring it stands for many years to come retaining its character as a shop with living accommodation.</p> <p>The new shop, Barkened, is a lifestyle shop that designs and handcrafts their own goods and supports other independent makers, selling unique and thoughtful products that are focussed around people, pets and homes.</p> <p>In addition to GPF funds the owners also received a £10k grant from Dover District Council's Town Centre Business Grant Scheme. KCC have a 1st charge secured and repayments have commenced to clear the loan by January 2022.</p>	<p>NUE used Growing Places Funds (£200k) and provided an additional funds (£200k) from the main NUE loan fund to contribute to the total project costs of £990k to bring this former Pharmacy building back into use.</p> <p>This was a three-storey retail unit with a large single storey rear addition. It closed in 2017 and remained empty until the new owner acquired it. The ground floor comprises a large lock up shop with the upper parts offering basic ancillary storage space.</p> <p>Planning permission was granted for change of use and creation of 6 flats. The commercial space is now a beauty salon and an independent coffee shop employing 9 staff across both businesses.</p> <p>The flats are completed to decent homes standard and rented to local people. KCC have a 1st charge secured and the loan is to be repaid by March 2022.</p>



Appendix 1 – NUE Commercial Phase II - examples of projects supported

Folkestone Town Centre	The Promenade, Leysdown-on-Sea
<p>NUE have provided Growing Places Funds (£242.5k) and Folkestone & Hythe DC Top Up Funds (£120k) to fund the total refurbishment costs of £362.5k to bring this empty shop in the heart of Folkestone Town Centre back into use following the acquisition of the freehold by the new owner.</p> <p>The property also has planning permission granted for 8 self-contained apartments.</p> <p>NUE have worked with the applicant on a previous project. They have assisted in publicising the NUE scheme by providing and placing advertising boards in the shop front.</p> <p>Works have just commenced being the most recent project we have supported with our new allocation of GFP funding.</p>	<p>NUE have provided Growing Places Funds (£125k) to contribute to the total project costs of £267k to bring this former Pub back into use.</p> <p>Swale Borough Council granted permission in April 2020 for change of use of a former Public House into a Fish and Chip Take Away/Restaurant with a bar and conversion of existing first floor into 3 self-contained flats.</p> <p>Works have started on the property which has been empty for 3 years and did not conform to current regulations and was below the required energy efficiency ratings.</p> <p>Steady progress is being made and it is hoped that the project will complete before the end of the calendar year.</p>
	
<p style="text-align: center;">NUE COMMERCIAL PHASE II (2021-24)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">£2M FROM GROWING PLACES FUND TARGET</p> <p style="text-align: center;">18 COMMERCIAL BACK INTO USE 36 RESIDENTIAL BACK INTO USE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DELIVERY DATE 31 MARCH 2024</p>	

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Appendix 2 – Summary NUE Residential (Countywide Investment) – August 2021

NUE INTERVENTION	INVESTMENT			PROPERTY VALUES			HOMES BACK INTO USE		
	Total KCC NUE Loan	Public & Private Sector Investment	Total Investment	Original Value of Properties	Future Value of Properties	Increase in Value of Properties	Current Empty Residential Units	Future Residential Units	NUE New Homes Created
Local Authority Name									
Ashford	£505,000	£224,700	£729,700	£1,288,000	£2,105,000	£817,000	5	12	7
Canterbury	£825,000	£4,065,124	£4,890,124	£2,882,000	£10,070,000	£7,188,000	9	45	36
Dartford	£676,000	£731,216	£1,407,216	£4,979,000	£6,493,500	£1,514,500	11	34	23
Dover	£10,664,310	£7,779,385	£18,443,695	£17,870,000	£42,418,500	£24,548,500	65	295	230
Folkestone & Hythe	£10,560,727	£3,291,464	£13,852,191	£14,103,500	£31,920,200	£17,816,700	48	217	169
Gravesham	£870,000	£537,806	£1,407,806	£1,963,500	£3,000,000	£1,036,500	2	16	14
Maidstone	£1,270,000	£922,555	£2,192,555	£2,686,800	£5,529,800	£2,843,000	3	38	35
Sevenoaks	£604,000	£1,163,530	£1,767,530	£3,949,000	£5,619,000	£1,670,000	15	25	10
Swale	£2,083,500	£2,194,909	£4,278,409	£6,155,750	£10,643,000	£4,987,250	16	78	62
Thanet	£13,235,500	£14,768,991	£28,004,491	£27,942,750	£63,385,500	£35,442,750	151	411	260
Tonbridge and Malling	£370,000	£483,249	£853,249	£1,615,000	£2,975,000	£1,360,000	7	15	8
Tunbridge Wells	£1,177,156	£647,371	£1,824,527	£6,208,000	£9,195,000	£2,987,000	21	34	13
Total Kent	£42,841,193	£36,810,300	£79,651,493	£91,643,300	£193,354,500	£102,211,200	353	1,220	867

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

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

The net number of empty homes brought back into use were included in the New Homes Bonus allocations (80% districts/20% KCC)

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

Note this table excludes KCC Treasury funded projects.

Appendix 2 – Summary Additional Council Tax as a direct result of NUE investment

NUE HAVE SUPPORTED 1,220 HOMES WITH CAPITAL INVESTMENT OF WHICH 867 ARE CLASSED AS NEW HOMES (CHANGE IN NUMBERS)

TO CALCULATE THE IMPACT NUE HAVE ASSUMED THAT PROJECTS FUNDED ARE DELIVERED AT LEAST ONE YEAR LATER

E.G. 34 EXTRA HOMES IN 2007-08 WILL GENERATE £ 41,889 THE FOLLOWING YEAR AND THEN RISING ON A CUMULATIVE BASIS

AVERAGE BAND C RATES (2008-2021) HAVE BEEN USED (AS THESE ARE THE TYPICAL PROPERTIES DEALT WITH)

MAINTAINING THE SAME LEVEL OF ACTIVITY GOING FORWARD ADDS AN EXTRA £100K TO THE COUNCIL TAX RECEIPTS

Colour Code					
	Delivered				
	Projected				
					Based on Band C
	Total Homes	Extra Homes	Extra Homes		New Council
	Inc Extra Homes	By Tear	Cumulative		Tax Generated
2007-08	48	34	34	£	-
2008-09	21	15	49	£	41,899
2009-10	75	53	102	£	62,037
2010-11	89	63	166	£	131,798
2011-12	77	55	220	£	213,257
2012-13	59	42	262	£	284,583
2013-14	154	109	372	£	341,456
2014-15	95	68	439	£	488,316
2015-16	111	79	518	£	583,363
2016-17	46	33	551	£	709,475
2017-18	84	60	610	£	784,412
2018-19	111	79	689	£	913,774
2019-20	89	63	753	£	1,080,349
2020-21	83	59	812	£	1,225,473
2021-22	78	55	867	£	1,379,667
2022-23	80	57	924	£	1,532,856
2023-24	80	57	981	£	1,633,278
2024-25	80	57	1037	£	1,733,701
2025-26	80	57	1094	£	1,834,123
2026-27	80	57	1151	£	1,934,546
2027-28	80	57	1208		
TOTALS	1700	1208			

Appendix 3 – NUE Treasury Loans – Ottaway House, Dover

As part of their commitment to provide more affordable housing across the district, Dover District Council (DDC) employed Martello Building Consultancy as Employers Agent and Karlee Construction Limited whom provided a turnkey, off the shelf development to construct eight self-contained flats on Folkestone Road in Dover. Whilst Martello have worked with lots of public sector organisations across London and the south-east over the years but this was the first housing scheme that they had undertaken for Dover District Council. The building, which has been called Ottaway House, is named after Dover-born sportsman, Cuthbert Ottaway who captained the England Football team against Scotland in 1872 in what is now recognised as the first international match to be played.

The design of the scheme provides spacious, functional, self-contained units with a shared outside space. The properties will be let on a short-term basis at affordable rents and will provide interim housing for local people facing homelessness, while a more permanent solution to their housing needs can be found. The scheme is part of an ambitious programme by DDC to build up to 500 new affordable homes across the district.

NUE provided a loan of £480k towards the project costs in region of £830k and has since been repaid.



Appendix 3 - Adelaide Road, Elvington

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

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

All homes have been sold and the KCC loan repaid.



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

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee
– 21 September 2021

Decision No: TBA

Subject: Contract extensions for coroners' post mortem examinations

Classification: Part 1 Report – Unrestricted
Part 2 Appendix - Exempt as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Electoral Divisions: Countywide

Summary: This report concerns proposed extensions to two of the four contracts for body storage and post mortem (PM) facilities with the Kent NHS Trusts that expire on the 30 September 2021.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Community & Regulatory Services on the proposed decision to award 12-month extensions to the PM contracts with East Kent NHS Trust and Medway NHS Trust for the period 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022 as shown at Appendix A.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 places a duty on Coroners to investigate deaths that are referred to them if they have reason to think that:
- The death was violent or unnatural;
 - The cause of death is unknown; or
 - The deceased died while in prison, police custody or another form of state detention e.g., where a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard Order (DoLS) is in place
- 1.2. In some cases, the Coroner will order a PM to establish the cause of death, and in such cases, the deceased is taken to one of five NHS mortuaries across Kent and Medway located at Margate, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells, Dartford, and Gillingham. On behalf of the Kent Senior Coroners, KCC ensures access to body storage and PM facilities across the four Kent coroner areas.
- 1.3. Two of the four contracts for body storage and PM facilities are due to expire on the 30 September 2021 and in the normal course of events KCC would seek to renew the

contracts for another four years. However, in light of the decision by KCC to build a Digital Autopsy and Body Storage facility at Aylesford, the contracts simply need to be extended until such time as the new facility opens, estimated for July 2022. These extensions will ensure this critical service continues uninterrupted and will allow for a phased transition from invasive PMs to non-invasive Digital Autopsy (DA) for the majority of deceased. Where the DA is inconclusive in terms of identifying a cause of death to the coroner's satisfaction, a partial or full invasive PM may still be necessary and a single NHS Trust is being commissioned to fulfil this role. It is estimated that through DA the number of invasive PMs within Kent and Medway will fall from 3,000 a year to 1,100.

- 1.4. This report sets out the needs of the two Kent and Medway senior coroners and the options and context for re-providing these services, before recommending an option for KCC to extend the contracts with the current providers for this critical service.

2. The needs of the Senior Coroners

- 2.1. Her Majesty's Senior Coroners are responsible for providing the coronial service for the KCC and Medway administrative areas. By virtue of The Coroners and Justice Act 2009, KCC is responsible for meeting all the costs of the coroner service although Medway Council meets its share of the costs through a cost apportionment and pro rata allocation.
- 2.2. In particular, KCC supports the Senior Coroners by putting in place contracts for the major areas of activity which includes the provision of body storage and PM facilities. In 2020, 6,573 deaths were referred to the Senior Coroners, of which 3,028 necessitated a PM (46% of deaths referred).
- 2.3. Until now the NHS in Kent and Medway has always provided body storage and PM facilities to the Kent and Medway coroners as an adjunct to their own requirements for body storage for hospital deaths where the coroner is not involved. There are no private sector PM providers anywhere in England and Wales that could take on this PM work. Furthermore, each of the five mortuaries in Kent and Medway are already operating at full capacity for body storage and so would not be able to take on any additional PM work from each other in the absence of significant capital investment to increase their body store capacity and given the number of PM's will reduce significantly when the DA facility opens, such investment cannot be justified and, in any event, would be impossible within the timeframe for this proposed extension.
- 2.4. Commissioning the coronial work outside of Kent at other NHS sites is not an option for two reasons. First, the cost to KCC of transferring the deceased would be prohibitive. Second, the service has recent previous experience of using Greenwich Public Mortuary for a year when Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust did not renew its contract with KCC in 2013. At that time, there was a public outcry by families and funeral directors about the costs of transporting the deceased from Greenwich once the PM had been done, and the travelling time to view the deceased. The local MP eventually intervened and brokered a solution with the Trust to take the work back. However, the lesson learned is that from a customer perspective, procuring services at such a distance from the coroner area places an unsustainable strain on bereaved families and service costs and therefore is not a viable option.

3. Procurement route

- 3.1. The current level of expenditure on PMs with the two Trusts is in the region of £997,000 a year depending on activity levels. Normally this level of expenditure would require a full tender process compliant with the European Procurement Regulations and KCC's Procurement Standing Orders.
- 3.2. However, in the absence of any private sector providers and with finite capacity at the current providers KCC is left with no alternative but to seek to extend the contracts with the current providers on a temporary basis until the DA facility comes on-line in July 2022. This will ensure continuity of service given the long standing and successful partnerships between the Trusts, KCC and the Senior Coroners.

4. Options

- 4.1. **Do nothing** – this is not an option. Unless a contract is put in place the system of coronial death investigation and certification in the Mid Kent and Medway area will collapse with the inevitable consequences for bereaved families.
- 4.2. **Go out to tender** – this is not an option. The Kent NHS Trusts do not have capacity to take on any extra work without significant capital investment and given that KCC is moving over to Digital Autopsy which will significantly reduce PM activity, such capital investment makes no sense at all. Whilst it is possible that NHS providers outside of Kent, for example in the greater London area, may have some capacity, past experience of using a mortuary outside Kent has shown that such an approach simply does not work on any level.
- 4.3. **Use a framework or other viable contract mechanism** – there are no known frameworks or other viable mechanisms in existence elsewhere in England and Wales.
- 4.4. **Renew contract through single source procurement** – this is the only viable option given the very specialist nature of the work and the absence of any alternative providers with sufficient capacity in Kent or nearby adjoining areas.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The financial implications of these three proposed contract extensions are set out in Part 2 (exempt) of this report. It is estimated that the cost to extend the contracts is within the current funding envelope.
- 5.2. It should be noted that the current contract with East Kent NHS Trust is a fixed fee regardless of activity levels and is paid in 12 equal instalments. At the point where the DA facility opens, all deceased that would normally have undergone an invasive PM will be scanned, so dependent on if and when notice is served to end the contract extension, KCC could potentially be liable for both DA scanning charges and the monthly charge for PMs even though no PMs will be taking place in the East Kent area. To mitigate this scenario, the move over to DA will be phased with deaths in the East Kent area not being scanned at the DA facility until the contract extension with the Trust comes to an end.

6. Policy Framework

- 6.1. This tendering opportunity has not been subject to competition. The existing contract can be extended, as supported by Regulation 72 (c) (ii) and (iii) of the Public Contract Regulations which states that a contract may be modified without a new procurement procedure in accordance (c) (ii) the modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract; (iii) any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contracts or framework agreement

7. Equality implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) was prepared and approved in 2019 when the PM contract with Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust was last renewed. Nothing has changed since then in terms of the impact of the contract on the protected characteristics and no issues have been identified by the service.

8. Data Protection Implications

- 8.1 For the purposes of the coroner service, the two senior coroners are the data controllers. The GDPR does not apply to deceased persons but information is collected during the course of their enquires that relates to the living. This includes details about next of kin, for example name, address, and telephone number. Sometimes this information is shared with other organisations for the specific purposes of the coroner's investigation, as in this case with the NHS. However, it is not necessary to seek the explicit consent of the data subject to share this data. In any event, the contract contains a data sharing agreement that places a specific obligation on the provider to comply at all times with the requirement of the GDPR for the data they hold relating to next of kin. In addition, the service has published a privacy notice which explains what personal information it holds about service users, how it collects it, how it uses it and how it might share information.

9. Policy – Strategic Statement

- 9.1 The proposed Digital Autopsy facility, to which these contracts are directly linked, supports the KCC Strategic Statement outcome 38(a) Modernising the Council through technology solutions for business change.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 KCC supports the Kent and Medway Senior Coroners by ensuring contracts are in place for body storage and for PMs to ensure they are able to discharge their statutory duties in accordance with the Coroners and Justice Act 2009. There are no private sector PM providers anywhere in England and Wales to take on the Kent and Medway PM workload. The five current mortuary sites are all operating at full body storage capacity and could not take on additional work from each other without significant capital investment and given that PM activity will reduce significantly when the Digital Autopsy facility opens, such capital investment could not be justified. KCC is therefore left with no alternative but to extend the current PM contracts with the current providers until the Digital Autopsy facility opens.

11. Recommendation(s)

11.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Community & Regulatory Services on the proposed decision to extend the PM and body storage contracts with East Kent NHS Trust and Medway NHS Trust for the period 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022 as shown at Appendix A.

12. Appendices:

Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision

Contact details

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY

Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

DECISION NO:

21/00079

For publication

Key decision*

Yes –

Subject:

Contract extensions for coroners' post mortem examinations

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Community & Regulatory Services I agree to award 12-month extensions to the PM contracts with East Kent NHS Trust and Medway NHS Trust for the period 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022

Reason(s) for decision:

The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 places a duty on Coroners to investigate deaths that are referred to them if they have reason to think that:

- The death was violent or unnatural;
- The cause of death is unknown; or
- The deceased died while in prison, police custody or another form of state detention e.g., where a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard Order (DoLS) is in place

In some cases, the Coroner will order a PM to establish the cause of death, and in such cases, the deceased is taken to one of five NHS mortuaries across Kent and Medway located at Margate, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells, Dartford, and Gillingham. On behalf of the Kent Senior Coroners, KCC ensures access to body storage and PM facilities across the four Kent coroner areas. Two of the four contracts for body storage and PM facilities are due to expire on the 30 September 2021 and in the normal course of events KCC would seek to renew the contracts for another four years. However, in light of the decision by KCC to build a Digital Autopsy and Body Storage facility at Aylesford, the contracts simply need to be extended until such time as the new facility opens, estimated for July 2022. These extensions will ensure this critical service continues uninterrupted and will allow for a phased transition from invasive PMs to non-invasive Digital Autopsy (DA) for the majority of deceased

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposal is being considered at the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 21 September 2021.

Any alternatives considered:

Do nothing – this is not an option. Unless a contract is put in place the system of coronial death investigation and certification in the Mid Kent and Medway area will collapse with the inevitable consequences for bereaved families.

Go out to tender – this is not an option. The Kent NHS Trusts do not have capacity to take on any extra work without significant capital investment and given that KCC is moving over to Digital Autopsy which will significantly reduce PM activity, such capital investment makes no sense at all.

Use a framework or other viable contract mechanism – there are no known frameworks or other viable mechanisms in existence elsewhere in England and Wales.

Renew contract through single source procurement – preferred option – this is the most viable option given the very specialist nature of the work and the absence of any alternative providers with sufficient capacity in Kent or nearby adjoining areas.

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

.....
signed

.....
date

Name:

From: Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member for Economic Development
 Shellina Prendergast, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
 Simon Jones, Interim Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet
 Committee – 20 September 2021

Subject: **Youth Unemployment and Apprenticeships**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: None

Electoral Division: All

Summary: The number of young people aged 18 – 24 claiming unemployment related benefits has more than doubled since the start of the pandemic last year. Over one in ten were unable to find jobs. The youth unemployment rate has slightly improved since June 2021, but it is still the highest since records began in 1992.

As the economy comes out of lock-down, there are increasing numbers of reported staff and skills shortages causing supply chain problems and increasing prices, nationally and in Kent and Medway.

The Government has introduced an unprecedented series of measures to tackle this employment crisis, many of which are aimed at helping young people into employment.

A Kent and Medway Employment Task Force was set up last October to find local solutions and to work to improve the impact locally of the Government's measures.

Recommendation:

The Committee is invited to comment on the situation and make recommendations to the Cabinet Members responsible for Economic Development, and for Education and Skills.

1. Introduction

1.1 The number of young people aged 18 to 24 claiming unemployment related benefits more than doubled between March 2020 and May 2020 owing to the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic lock-down. More than one in ten were unemployed. This remained the situation until June 2021 when the youth unemployment rate slightly improved. The latest available figures show youth unemployment at just under 8 per cent.

1.2 Youth unemployment in Kent and Medway has broadly followed the national pattern. In March 2020, 6,895 young people in Kent and Medway aged 18 to 24

were unemployed (an unemployment rate of 4.8 per cent); this increased to 14,550 in November 2020 (10.1 per cent) and this number only fell to 11,155 (an unemployment rate of 7.8 per cent) in June 2021, the latest month for which figures are available. The next updating of the numbers is expected on 17 September.

- 1.3 Adult unemployment also doubled during the pandemic. In March 2020, the unemployment rate in Kent and Medway for those aged 25 to 49 was 3.1 per cent: this increased to 6.5 per cent over the following year, slightly falling to 5.7 per cent in June 2021. The corresponding figures for those aged between 50 and 64 also showed an immediate doubling of the unemployment rate from 2.2 per cent in March 2020 to 4.5 per cent a year later only falling to 3.9 per cent in June 2021.
- 1.4 None of these unemployment numbers include those on furlough. The impact of the unwinding of furlough will be seen over the next month.
- 1.5 It should be noted that whilst the claimant count method of calculating unemployment is a very accurate measure of changes in unemployment it does not include the economically inactive who are not claiming (or cannot claim) benefits. Similarly, it does not include figures for those not in education, employment, or training (“NEETs”). The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that 631,000 people in the UK were NEETs in the quarter April to June 2021, which is approximately 9.3 per cent of all young people; the ONS estimate that this is an improvement of 1.8 percentage points from before the pandemic, probably because of an increase in the numbers in full time education. However, the ONS estimate that half of all NEETs are looking for, and available for work so these numbers should be added to the claimant count figures for unemployment. (The ONS data for NEETs were published on 26 August 2021 and will be refreshed on 25 November 2021.)
- 1.6 In short, young people have been affected the most in terms of unemployment during the pandemic both nationally and in Kent and Medway.

2. The measures taken by the Government to tackle youth unemployment

- 2.1 Since the start of the pandemic in early 2020 the Government has put in place various initiatives aimed at getting people into employment:
 - In July 2020 the Government published its “**Plan for Jobs**”. This set out measures to get people back into employment, keeping people in their jobs and creating new jobs. It announced the Kickstart Scheme for the young unemployed.
 - In September 2020, the “**Lifetime Skills Guarantee**” was announced which offered a fully funded college course to any adult without an A-Level or equivalent qualification.
 - In the **Plan for Jobs** and the **March 2021 Budget**, incentive payments were announced that would be paid to employers when they took on new apprentices or trainees. This was in addition to other measures announced

in the January 2021 **White Paper on “Skills for Jobs”**.

- 2.2 The number of people starting **apprenticeships** fell following the outset of the coronavirus pandemic. From April to September 2020 across the UK, there were 82,400 fewer people starting an apprenticeship than for the same period in 2019 which was a fall of 41 per cent. In the March 2021 Budget, the Government announced it would pay employers in England £3,000 for every new apprentice they hired between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021. (This was an increase from the incentive that had been previously announced in the July 2020 “Plan for Jobs”. This promised to pay £2,000 for new apprentices under 25 and £1,500 for those aged 25 and over if they were employed from August 2020 to the end of March 2021.) Prior to the pandemic, the Government gave £1,000 to employers for every apprentice they took on who was either aged between 16 and 18 or aged between 19 and 24 and had been in care or had a local authority Education, Health and Care Plan. The new payment was to be additional to this.
- 2.3 As of 9 July 2021, incentive claims had been submitted across Great Britain for 79,850 apprentices. In the South East region, from August 2020 to April 2021 (ie in the first eight months of the educational year) there were 38,690 apprenticeships started and 15,080 completed. (We do not have the figures for Kent and Medway.)
- 2.4 Other initiatives were also announced in the **White Paper on “Skills for Jobs”**:
- The White Paper pledged to make it easier for apprenticeship levy-paying employers to transfer their levy funds to other employers. A “matching service” to help the transfer of funds was promised in the Autumn of 2021.
 - The White Paper said that front-loaded training would be introduced for some apprenticeships in the construction sector from April 2021 to enable apprentices to get more training when they first start to help them enter the workforce more quickly.
- 2.5 The **Kickstart Scheme** was announced as part of the “Plan for Jobs” announced in July 2020. Employers would be able to take on unemployed young people offered by the Department of Employment’s Job Centres on six-month placements with funding provided to the employers to pay the wages and National Insurance costs, plus the cost of training for one day a week and £1,500 to cover “set-up costs”. The Government provided a budget of £2 billion to fund over 250,000 Kickstart jobs. (The Government estimated that for a 24-year-old, the grant to the employer would be worth £6,500 based on the National Minimum Wage for those aged 21 to 24.)
- 2.6 The scheme got off to a slow start. As of 20 May 2021, only 262 Kickstart opportunities had been approved nationally by the Department of Work and Pensions, but by 22 July 2021 over 155,000 job placements had been approved, nearly 2,000 of which are in Kent and Medway.

3. Other measures taken by the Government to provide employment support

- 3.1 As part of its **November 2020 Spending Review** the Government said it would provide labour market support worth £2.6 billion in 2021-22.
- 3.2 The **Restart Programme** was announced to support unemployed people to find work. The scheme was intended to provide “intensive and tailored support to over 1 million unemployed people”. The scheme would offer “enhanced support” to Universal Credit claimants who have been out of work for at least 12 months. The guidance notes state that the commercial providers of this Restart support should “design and tailor interventions in accordance with the local labour market”. “This means seeking out and taking advantage opportunities such as local growth sectors and local training initiatives and flexing the offer throughout the lifetime of the Restart Scheme based on emerging labour market challenges and opportunities.” The guidance says the scheme should keep strong relationships with local stakeholders to make sure it complements “local efforts”. 70 per cent of the contract value to each provider will only be paid to the provider when a participant has met the qualifying conditions which include participants having a contract of employment with an employer or the participant becomes self-employed.
- 3.3 The Government said the three-year Restart Programme would provide £2.9 billion of funding, with around £400 million in 2021-22. Individual unemployed people only started to be referred to the Restart Scheme in July 2021, so it is too early to measure its impact.
- 3.4 Extra funding for some of the existing employment support programmes was announced in July 2020 as part of the “Plan for Jobs”:
- The **Work and Health Programme** provides support for people in England and Wales to find and keep a job. It is available for people with health conditions or disabilities and those who have been unemployed for over two years. As part of the Plan for Jobs, a Job Entry Targeted Support programme was launched in October 2020.aiming to support over 250,000 people. Additional support is being offered to people receiving benefits and who have been unemployed for more than three months.
 - **Sector-based Work Academies** offer employment placements for people receiving benefits. These placements can last up to six weeks. Although available to jobseekers of all ages they are primarily aimed at young people. In 2021-22 the Government has increased the funding available to double the number of participants to 80,000.
- 3.5 Announced in September 2020, additional support is being aimed at young jobseekers:
- The **Youth Employment Programme** is a 13-week programme to help people prepare for work and includes an employment and skills review and a work search review.

- **Youth Employability Coaches** have been appointed to support young people who have complex needs
- **Youth Hubs** are being set up to offer support for up to six months from a youth hub work coach. As of June 2021, 110 Youth Hubs had opened virtually across England, Wales and Scotland. The Department for Work and Pensions aims to have at least one Youth Hub in every Jobcentre Plus District. One has already been established physically in Medway and discussions are under way to have one in every Kent District.
- The **Flexible Support Fund** gives Jobcentre Plus managers greater freedom to tailor back-to-work support to individual and local needs. An increase of £150 million was included in the Plan for Jobs.
- A new **Job Finding Support Service** was announced in the Plan for Jobs. It was launched in January 2021. It provides personalised online support to those who have been unemployed for less than three months.
- The number of **Work Coaches** in Jobcentre Plus offices was doubled: 13,500 new coaches had been appointed by March 2021.
- The Government said it will pay employers £1,000 for every new trainee they take on from the start of September 2020 to the end of July 2022. An additional £126 million was provided to fund this, which will provide for 40,000 more traineeships. **Traineeships** were previously only available to people aged 16 – 24 who were qualified below level 3, but the Plan for Jobs expanded eligibility to include those with three qualifications. This is against the background that the number of traineeships has been gradually decreasing since 2015-16.

4. **Initiatives to improve access to training for sector specific skills have also been announced.**

- 4.1 On 29 September 2020 the Prime Minister announced the **Lifetime Skills Guarantee**. From April 2021 adults without an A-level or equivalent qualification have been able to access a fully funded college course. The courses available to study are only those considered to be “valued by employers”. The Education and Skills Funding Agency publishes the list; the latest version is dated August 2021: the largest sector not currently listed is retail. Building and construction is included but not architecture nor urban, rural and regional planning. Accounting, finance, and business management is included as is hospitality and catering but not arts, media and publishing nor leisure, sports, travel and tourism.
- 4.2 Alongside the Lifetime skills Guarantee, the Government announced **Digital Skills Bootcamps** for adults aged 19 and over. These were piloted in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands and four more have been announced, but none so far in the South East. They offer participants help to build up sector specific skills over 12 to 16 weeks. The sectors covered are construction, digital, engineering and manufacturing, green skills, and rail.

- 4.3 A **Skills Toolkit** was launched in April 2020. It offers 70 courses in eight subjects: as of 27 June 2021, there have been an estimated 222,000 course registrations and 44,200 course completions nationally.
- 4.4 The **National Careers Service** has been given extra funding of £32 million to support 269,000 more people over the next two years.
- 4.5 For the 2020-21 academic year, £101 million has been allocated to provide **level 2 and level 3 courses** to 18- and 19-year-olds “where there are not employment opportunities available to them”.

5. The Kent and Medway Employment Task Force

- 5.1 The Kent and Medway Employment Task Force was set up last October following a recommendation in the Kent and Medway Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan which had been adopted by the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership in August 2020.
- 5.2 The Kent and Medway Renewal & Resilience Plan proposed that the Task Force should “build on previous experience of successful task forces – temporary, task-oriented and focused on the central challenge of rising unemployment and what we collectively need to do to limit and reverse it. It will exist in the context of the Government’s proposed interventions, and will identify how these can be best supported, and where they can be supplemented by additional local action”.
- 5.3 The Kent and Medway Employment Task Force’s terms of reference are to:
- Identify and progress initiatives that will mitigate the extent and impact of unemployment, under-employment, and economic inactivity, including:
 - Temporary employment and employment subsidy schemes, including those recently announced by Government.
 - Intermediate labour market initiatives.
 - Jobs brokerage and information, advice and guidance schemes.
 - Sector-specific initiatives, including driven by the private sector.
 - Additional training and re-training capacity.
 - Measures to maintain demand for training and skills (especially apprenticeships and work-based learning) during recession
 - Secure resources to meet identified needs.
 - Identify opportunities for innovation in addressing the employment crisis.
 - Maintain an awareness of the current state of the labour market.
 - Ensure that actions progressed in support of future employment contribute to the three principles for Renewal and Resilience set out in the Plan (Greener Futures; Productive and Open; and Better Opportunities, Fairer Chances).

5.4 Its membership is:

- Roger Gough (Chairman), Leader, Kent County Council
- Rodney Chambers (Vice Chairman), Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, Medway Council
- Alan Brookes, Chair, Kent Association of Headteachers, and Headteacher, Fulston Manor School
- Simon Cook, Principal, MidKent College
- Karen Cox, Vice Chancellor of the University of Kent
- Carol Ford, fresh food and horticulture consultant.
- Sir Roger Gale, MP for North Thanet
- Damian Green, MP for Ashford
- Nicolas Heslop, Tonbridge & Malling Council
- Jo James, Chief Executive, Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
- Hamera Ahmad, DWP Service Leader for Kent
- Anthony Lilley, Chairman, The Creative District Co.
- Geoff Miles, Chairman, Maidstone Studios, and Chairman, Kent & Medway Economic Partnership
- Pauline Smith, Chief Executive, CXK
- Paul Winter, Chairman of Kent & Medway Skills Commission, and Chairman, Wire Belt Company

5.5 Task Force papers are shared with Baroness Stedman-Scott, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Work and Pensions and Peter Schofield, Permanent Secretary at the Department of Work and Pensions. Both have a standing invitation to join meetings of the Task Force.

5.6 The Task Force is serviced by a Reference Group chaired jointly by the Cabinet Members for Economic Development and Education and Skills and supported by KCC and Medway Council Officers and The Education People.

5.7 The Task Force commissioned a Kent and Medway Skills Evidence Base which supported the successful bid by Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce to be designated by the Department for Education to implement, on a pilot basis, a Local Skills Improvement Plan.

5.8 The Task Force established a Horticulture and Fresh Food sub-group to find and implement solutions to staffing and skills shortages. This is the first of similar sectoral groups: the next will be for the road haulage and logistics sector.

6 Financial implications

6.1 Kent County Council's Budget for 2021-22 made financial provision of £150,000 to support the implementation of the renewal and Resilience Plan.

7 Equalities and Diversity

7.1 An EQIA will be drawn up for any new policies that are intended to be adopted by KCC under the aegis of the Renewal and Resilience Plan.

8 Information management

8.1 No information is held which falls within the ambit of the GDPR. The statistics published by the ONS are GDPR compliant.

9 Recommendation

The Committee is invited to comment on the situation and make recommendations to the Cabinet Members responsible for Economic Development, and for Education and Skills.

Contact details

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**GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22**

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

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

17 NOVEMBER 2021

1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)		
4	Minutes (Standing Item)		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)		
7	106 Contributions	Agenda setting 29/7/21	
8	PROW Operational Management Policies	Agenda setting 29/7/21	
9	Green Economy – Prospects and Opportunities	Agenda setting - 29/7/21 - Investment opportunities in Kent business and education, sustainable housing and development	
10	Research and Development Government Funding	Agenda setting – 29/7/21 - Aspiration and approach discussion. Invite Discovery Park and East Malling Research Station to present at this or future meeting.	
11	District Visits Programme (Standing Item)		
12	Work Programme (Standing Item)		

13 JANUARY 2022

1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)		

4	Minutes (Standing Item)		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)		
7	Kent Developers' Guide		
8	District Visits Programme (Standing Item)		
9	Youth Unemployment and Apprenticeships	Agenda setting 29/7/21 – Proposed solutions following on from scoping in September. Include economic context from strands of work led by Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	
10	Work Programme (Standing Item)		

22 MARCH 2022

1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)		
4	Minutes (Standing Item)		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)		
7	District Visits Programme (Standing Item)		
8	Work Programme (Standing Item)		

28 JUNE 2022

1	Intro/ Web announcement (Standing Item)		
2	Apologies and Subs (Standing Item)		
3	Declaration of Interest (Standing Item)		
4	Minutes (Standing Item)		
5	Verbal Update (Standing Item)		
6	Performance Dashboard (Standing Item)		
7	District Visits Programme (Standing Item)		
8	Work Programme (Standing Item)		

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

Healthy New Town (Kenneth Keogh & Allison Duggal) – report and presentation	Date TBC
Otterpool Garden Town	Date TBC
Mayflower Event	Date TBC
Theme Park project on Swanscombe Peninsula – regular updates (The London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH) regeneration project)	Date TBC

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation	Date TBC
Faversham Creek Bridge – update report	Date TBC
European Funding (further update requested at GED&C CC 28/11/2019)	Date TBC
Update Report on consultation of the shared prosperity fund (requested at GED&C Committee on 17 January 2020)	Date TBC
Apprenticeships and update on the Carillion Apprenticeship adoption grant	Date TBC
Artificial Intelligence (Kent and Medway Enterprise and Productivity Strategy)	Date TBC
The effectiveness and efficiency of Solar, wind and wave energy, including heat pumps, and an update on the current position and potential for Kent	Date TBC
New Developer Contributions Guide s106	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller Service Charge and Rent Setting Policy (Decision)	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller: Pitch Allocation and Site Management Policy (Decision)	Date TBC
Gypsy and Traveller: Unauthorised Encampment Strategy	Date TBC
Locate in Kent – to attend and present	Date TBC
Trading Standards – paper on implication and planning for new import duties (mentioned by Mr Hill in his update at 1/7/21 meeting)	Date TBC
Libraries Network Review (member working group required to include committee members – agenda setting 29/7/21)	Date TBC
Kent Country Parks Strategy pre-consultation brief (added by TW on 18/8/21)	Date TBC
Country Park Strategy – Need all member working party (mentioned by Mr Hill in his update at 1/7/21 meeting)	Date TBC
Monitoring of unemployment and private and public apprenticeship take-up figures for 16-24 year olds (requested at 1/7/21 meeting)	Date TBC
Statistics on key industry sectors in the county (requested at 1/7/21 meeting)	Date TBC
Infrastructure Funding (suggested at 1/7/21 meeting)	Date TBC

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