

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

**Tuesday, 26th September, 2023**

**2.00 pm**

**Council Chamber, Sessions House**







## AGENDA

# GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 26 September 2023 at 2.00 pm  
Council Chamber, Sessions House

Ask for: Hayley Savage  
Telephone: 03000 414286

### Membership (17)

Conservative (12): Mr H Rayner (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Binks, Mr D L Brazier, Mr C Broadley, Mr T Cannon, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr S Holden, Mr S C Manion, Mr J Meade, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr A M Ridgers and Mr R J Thomas

Labour (2): Ms K Grehan and Mr B H Lewis

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr M J Sole

Green and Independent (2): Mr M A J Hood and Mr M Baldock

### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

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

- 1 Introduction/Webcast announcements
- 2 Membership
- 3 Apologies and Substitutes
- 4 Election of Chair
- 5 Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
- 6 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2023 (Pages 1 - 8)
- 7 Verbal updates by the Cabinet Members and Corporate Director
- 8 Petition Scheme Debate - Folkestone Library (Pages 9 - 14)
- 9 Kent & Medway Business Fund Bi-Annual Monitoring - Q4 2022/23 (Pages 15 - 20)
- 10 23/00088 - Kent & Medway Business Fund 2023 (Pages 21 - 34)

- 11 23/00089 - Transition of Local Enterprise Partnership Responsibilities to Kent County Council (Pages 35 - 50)
- 12 Performance Dashboard (Pages 51 - 66)
- 13 Work Programme 2023/24 (Pages 67 - 72)

**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

**Monday, 18 September 2023**

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

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

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 28 June 2023.

PRESENT: Mr N Baker (Chairman), Mr M Baldock, Mrs R Binks, Mr C Broadley, Ms K Grehan, Mr S Holden, Mr M A J Hood, Mr B H Lewis, Mr S C Manion, Mr J Meade, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr D Robey, Mr M J Sole, Mr R J Thomas, Mr D Watkins, Ms S Hamilton and Mr D Jeffrey

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Holt-Castle (Director of Growth and Communities), Hayley Savage (Democratic Services Officer) and Mr S Jones (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

**142. Membership**

*(Item 2)*

Mr Baldock had joined the Cabinet Committee along with Ms Grehan and Mr Lewis who had replaced Ms Dawkins and Ms Meade.

RESOLVED that the change in membership be noted.

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

*(Item 4)*

There were no declarations of interest.

**144. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2023**

*(Item 5)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2023 were a correct record.

**145. Verbal updates by the Cabinet Members and Corporate Director**

*(Item 6)*

1. Mr Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services, provided an update on the following:
  - (a) The Council had been successful in securing £3.8million from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Traveller Site Fund to implement a range of improvements to the seven gypsy traveller sites owned and managed by Kent County Council.

- (b) Kent Libraries was shortlisted for two categories in the National Library awards, including Playground in the children's promise category, and the Prison Library team in the reading category. Mr Hill was pleased to announce that Ms Elizabeth Gunn and Ms Tracy McKechnie from the Prison Library Team won the reading award.
  - (c) The annual Summer Reading Challenge in Kent libraries would run from Saturday, 8 July until 9 September 2023 where children aged 4-11 would be able to visit Kent Libraries and get involved in "Ready, Set, Read!". Last year, over 16,000 Kent youngsters took part in the challenge and across the country, the Summer Reading Challenge reached over 700,000 children and families, with approximately 600,000 children taking part through their local library service.
  - (d) Turner Contemporary was currently exhibiting Beatriz Milhazes: Maresias, a survey of the work of Beatriz Milhazes, widely recognised as one of the leading abstract artists working today. This was her first UK solo institutional exhibition in over two decades and brought together 20 key paintings and 5 works on paper.
2. Mr Murphy, Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development, provided an update on the following:
- (a) The Employment Task Force was encouraging employers to look at skills and the improvement of recruitment and retention methods. The taskforce was being reviewed to ensure it was relevant to the objectives of the Council.
  - (b) The Straits Committee was meeting in Dover on 4 and 5 July 2023 and would focus on water conservation, effects of water erosion, preservation, and the quality of water.
  - (c) Local public opinion regarding potential small modular reactors at Dungeness was being explored and the Council was working closely with local authorities. A possible advantage of the reactors, if they were secured, was hydrogen production and desalination plants.
  - (d) A meeting took place on 26 June 2023 with further education college principles, chaired by the Leader of the Council. The committee looked at how courses could best provide the skillsets needed by industries in Kent, and a review of the committee was being undertaken.
  - (e) A South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Board meeting was taking place on 7 July 2023 to discuss the government announcement that funding for SELEP would cease in 2024.
3. Mr Murphy responded to the following questions and comments from Members:

- (a) A Member asked about progress at the Port of Ramsgate and Mr Murphy said tenders had been issued by Thanet District Council for the reopening of the port.
  - (b) Asked whether the Employment Taskforce extended to apprenticeships and skills, Mr Murphy said the Employment Taskforce would look at apprenticeships and their funding at greater depth.
  - (c) Asked whether, in addition to nuclear energy at Dungeness, other sources of renewable energy were being considered, Mr Murphy said as part of the Economic Development restructure there would be a post recruited to, to specifically look at energy infrastructure needs of the county and Ms Holt-Castle confirmed the new post would work closely with the Environment and Circular Economy Team.
  - (d) Members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of different energy sources and the importance of a water strategy in terms of accessing and utilising different types of water and consideration of the strategies used by building companies and developers. Mr Jones said the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee was looking at a water strategy and Southern Water attended the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee on a regular basis. Mr Jones said the Growth and Infrastructure Framework was a useful tool in identifying gaps in infrastructure and requirements for improvement. A Member highlighted the importance of prioritising the reduction of demand for energy such as electricity.
4. Mr Jones, Corporate Director Growth, Environment and Transport, provided an update on the following:
- (a) At the National Empty Homes Conference in Birmingham in May, No Use Empty (NUE) Officer, Mr Jake Body, received the Rising Star Award for his work.
  - (b) The Business Investment Team had received confirmation from government that funding to provide Kent and Medway Business Fund loans would be retained for ten years.
  - (c) The Growth and Communities team had recently completed the EU funded C-Care – Covid Channel Area Response Exchange project where businesses had been supported in relation to technological resilience and green recovery. The project also provided support and accreditation to Trading Standards Checked member companies.
  - (d) The Taste of Kent Awards which took place on 15 June 2023 celebrated, across 28 categories, some of Kent's best food and drink producers and hospitality venues.
  - (e) Active Kent and Medway launched the Summer Moves campaign which promoted low cost and easy access to new sport or activity across the county over the summer. Free bus travel was promoted over a weekend in June allowing residents to travel to leisure facilities and activities in Kent.

- (f) The Primary PE Conference was held on 16 May 2023 where over 100 schools across the county were represented. Feedback had been positive, and the team continued to work with schools to inspire future generations to be more active.
- (g) Trading Standards had recently completed a successful doorstep crime campaign in the villages around Gravesend and the team was posting reels on their Instagram and Facebook accounts to give tips to residents on the latest scams.
- (h) A Regional Tobacco Co-ordinator had been recruited to the Trading Standards team for the Southeast region. Four Trading Standards trainees had completed Part 1 of their professional exams and four members of staff were undertaking apprenticeships, all of which provided additional resilience and capacity to the team.
- (i) Animal Health Officers would be at the Kent County Show in July to ensure legal welfare standards were met and disease was not brought into the county.
- (j) Community Wardens had been busy engaging with scam victims and supporting Adult Social Care colleagues with visits to hard-to-reach residents. The impact of the Positive Wellbeing activities undertaken by Community Wardens showed that participants felt 46% less isolated and 38% less lonely, and 59% said their situation had improved. As a result, the positive wellbeing model was being rolled out across the service.
- (k) The Prime Minister visited the Kent Scientific Services offices in Kings Hill regarding the targeting of young children by vape manufacturers. Mr Jones congratulated two apprentices within the team, Ms Kirsty Thompson, and Ms Bethany Collins, who had gained their degrees.

RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

#### **146. Review of the Kent Community Warden Service** (Item 7)

*Mr Shaffick Peerbux, Head of Community Safety, Community Protection and Ms Kathleen Dardry, Community Safety Practice Development Officer, were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Hill introduced the item and expressed his disappointment that, along with many other difficult decisions the Council had had to take to meet budgetary requirements, it had been found necessary to reduce the budget for Community Wardens. Mr Hill stressed that the proposed reshaping of the service was not a reflection on performance and highlighted the service would remain robust if the proposals were implemented. He said the proposed model was flexible to allow for additions in the future should resources become available.



2. Mr Peerbux introduced the report and provided a summary of the work involved, in the pre-consultation period, in identifying the proposals to redesign the service.
3. Mr Peerbux and Ms Holt-Castle responded to the following comments and questions from Members:
  - (a) Members commented on the possibility of obtaining, and actively promoting for, other means of funding to continue the current service provision, for example through commercial sponsorship, developer contributions and parish councils. Ms Holt-Castle said alternative sources of funding had been, and would continue to be, considered and conversations had taken place with colleagues in Adult Social Care regarding health and care partnerships. Ms Holt-Castle clarified that the proposed future model was scalable and would be able to absorb any future opportunities. Ms Holt-Castle explained that Section 106 developer contributions were restricted to capital and equipment and could not be used for staffing costs, however Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding was more flexible.
  - (b) Members expressed their concern for the long-term effects on communities as a result of the reduction in the service, for example in relation to health, increased anti-social behaviour and vulnerable residents.
  - (c) Asked about the reduction in posts, Mr Peerbux said this amounted to approximately 32 posts and the streamlining of management. The redundancy costs were difficult to predict at this stage and unions had been consulted from the outset.
  - (d) Regarding equality implications, a Member commented that the four groups impacted by the service reduction would also be affected by reductions in other services and asked whether the accumulative effects had been considered. Mr Peerbux said the Geographical Allocation Policy would involve work to ensure adverse effects were not multiplied on specific groups.
  - (e) Members echoed the comments made by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services regarding the invaluable and important work carried out by Community Wardens.
  - (f) Asked whether proactive engagement with parish councils would take place, Mr Peerbux said engagement with the Kent Association of Local Councils took place as part of the pre-consultation period and work would continue closely with them.
  - (g) A Member referred to the reduction in funding for Police Community Support Officers in Kent Police and the further effects of this on communities. Mr Hill said he was liaising with the Chief Constable and the Commissioner regarding the gap this would leave.

- (h) Mr Peerbux clarified that the Positive Wellbeing pilot to address social isolation was being embedded and would be part of the community warden function moving forwards along with other KCC commissioned services.
- (i) Members discussed the need for local Community Wardens with knowledge of the local area and commented on the opportunity of shared and partnership working with district, borough, and parish councils.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee considered and commented on the public consultation proposals alongside an updated geographical allocation policy, to help identify where wardens will be placed.

#### **147. Performance Dashboard**

*(Item 8)*

*Mr Matthew Wagner, Interim Chief Analyst, was in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Wagner introduced the performance report for Quarter 4 of 2022/23 and clarified that figures provided for the year to date referred to the complete financial year. He said of the 25 Key Performance Indicators, 22 were rag rated green, 2 were amber and 1 was red.
2. Mr Murphy, Ms Holt-Castle, and Ms Taylor Smith responded to the following questions and comments from Members:
  - (a) Asked about Section 106 developer contributions received from district planning authorities, Mr Murphy said formulas, set by central government, were applied to Section 106 funding requests, based on the relevant development and the Developer Contributions Guide. With regards to CIL, a bid could be made for funding and negotiated with the districts. The red KPI related to two districts where CIL money was being negotiated and was delayed.
  - (b) Asked about information relating to libraries, Ms Taylor-Smith said feedback was collected and online surveys were carried out. Ms Taylor-Smith said she would investigate feedback received from Members in relation to individual libraries.
  - (c) Asked how the percentage of children with Free School Meals who engaged with the Kent School Games was determined, Ms Holt-Castle clarified that this KPI included those who had participated in local finals, district finals and county finals.
  - (d) A Member asked whether comparative data from the previous five years in relation to the percentage of death and birth registrations could be presented at a future date.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee note the performance report for Quarter 4 of 2022/23.

#### **148. Underage Vaping**

*(Item 9)*

*Mr James Whiddett, Operations Manager for Trading Standards, was in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Hill introduced the item and highlighted the good work of Kent Trading Standards and Kent Scientific Services within this area and referred to the Prime Minister's visit in May. He stressed the importance of the issue, and the adverse effects vaping had on young people.
2. Mr Whiddett introduced the report and provided some background information. He said in 2021 the service had received 32 vaping enquiries, compared to 99 in 2022 and 90, to date, in 2023.
3. Mr Whiddett responded to the following questions and comments from Members:
  - (a) Asked about information for schools, Mr Whiddett said the work being undertaken with Public Health would include good practice guides for schools and there was guidance available from the Association of Directors of Public Health. Currently work was directed at secondary schools, but recent developments had indicated that this should be extended to primary schools.
  - (b) A member asked how vaping affected smoking rates and Mr Whiddett said NHS data, recently provided on smoking and vaping prevalence, was being reviewed.
  - (c) Members asked about the disposal of vapes and associated costs, particularly those containing lithium. Mr Whiddett said work was underway with the Environment Agency and the Council's steps in disposing of batteries and nicotine in products was in accordance with the guidance and best practice. Mr Jones said work was ongoing with the Kent Resource Partnership in looking at the risks involved for collection and disposal of contaminated vapes and it was suggested this be discussed further at the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee.
  - (d) Asked about the financial impacts of tackling the issue on the Council, Mr Whiddett said work with agencies to identify the criminals and claim back costs was a complex situation and ongoing.
  - (e) Asked about the Council's involvement in online sales, Mr Whiddett said the focus was currently on the High Street where data indicated more significant activity, but online sales would also be considered when information became available.
  - (f) Asked about addressing demand, Mr Whiddett said meetings took place with public health regarding the use of illegal products amongst young people and underage vaping had recently been included.
  - (g) Members noted that a government consultation had finished on 6 June 2023 which looked at issues such as design, disposal, and the selling of

vapes to children. It was suggested that, following the government report, these issues be addressed across the portfolios.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee note the report.

**149. Work Programme 2023/24**  
*(Item 10)*

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee note the Work Programme 2023/24.

From: Benjamin Watts, General Counsel

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities  
Cabinet Committee – 26 September 2023

Subject: **Petition Scheme Debate – Folkestone Library  
Petition**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Details of a petition received which will be the subject of a debate, in accordance with the County Council's petition scheme.

## **For Decision**

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### **1. Introduction**

1.1. In accordance with the Petition Scheme set out at sections 14.34-14.39 of the Constitution, any petition on a County Council matter which has between 2,500 and 9,999 signatures will trigger a debate at the appropriate Cabinet Committee.

1.2. The process for the debate on each petition is that the lead petitioner will be invited to speak to the petition for a total of 5 minutes. There will then be a debate of up to 45 minutes before the Cabinet Member is invited to respond for a maximum of 5 minutes. As the subject matter of this petition relates to a matter which is the responsibility of the Council's Executive, the Cabinet Committee can decide whether to make a recommendation to the relevant Cabinet Member to inform the decision-making process.

### **2. Petition – Folkestone Library Petition**

2.1. A petition was received which requested that Folkestone Library, Grace Hill be repaired and re-opened to the public. This petition had a total of 3,645 signatures, thus triggering a debate at this Cabinet Committee.

2.2. A statement from the lead petitioner, Bryan Rylands, is attached at Appendix 1. Mr Rylands has confirmed that he will be attending the meeting to address the committee about the petition.

2.3. A position statement prepared by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services and the Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport is attached at Appendix 2.

#### **Recommendation:**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is invited to debate the issues raised in the petition, comment to the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services and decide how it intends to respond to the petition.

**Background Documents**  
[Constitution of Kent County Council](#)

**Contact Details**

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# Statement in support of the petition to repair and reopen Grace Hill Library

## 1. **History/location** for community needs

Grace Hill has a significant place in the history of the Kent Library Service as one of the first purpose-built community libraries.

The location serves the areas of greatest deprivation in the Folkestone and Hythe. Users include families on low income and many vulnerable individuals, as evidenced in our own recent user survey. Reductions in other public services mean that the library is in a location and building of enormous character and great potential. The Grace Hill closure has impacted on some of the most vulnerable people who continue to suffer the consequences, as reported in our survey.

## 2. **Communication** KCC<> community

Local people reacted to the closure with considerable anger. Many have no access to the internet and would not have seen statements online but would have seen news reports last year that the library "was saved".

Members have promised to involve local Town and District Councillors and community groups going forward, to help avoid fostering a cynical view of politicians and their motivation. **Campaign focus** on seeking a solution

The Save Our Library campaign has commanded remarkable support, including this petition. The Grace Hill issue has touched a national nerve of widespread concern over the future of the Library Service. Grace Hill represents the opportunity to buck the trend of decline and despair with a good outcome and a positive future.

We have consistently called for three positive things to happen:

### **Repair, Retain and Reopen**

The demands are not unrealistic, not impossible, not unaffordable. We have examined the facts in detail and with care: costings, architecture, surveys and strategic planning. The constructive meeting held between senior officers and a representative of the SOL campaign agreed that a way forward might well be found by working with local partners.

## 3. **Funding issues** recognised; funding opportunities

We understand the challenge of repairs as a significant element in the wider asset management portfolio, due to the constrained budget allocation and reflecting the KCC change of policy in 2011 from proactive maintenance to essential repairs only. As well as working to create opportunities for KCC officers and District Council officers to work together, potential funding solutions for a phased approach to a repair programme have been identified. Phased repairs would involve a far smaller cost than originally publicised.

## 4. **Community Expectations** - based on realism

Grace Hill can play a key role in the regeneration of this significant Kentish town. The expectations of the campaign are not unrealistic and our experience includes complex local authority project management. We feel no stone should be left unturned, no lack of effort should lead to the avoidable loss of a significant community asset.

Political leaders and Officers at the District Council are ready and willing to work with KCC.  
**We are asking KCC Councillors and officers to work with us to refresh the original mission of Grace Hill as a centre of opportunity.**



From: Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services  
Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Environment and Communities Cabinet Committee – 26 September 2023

Subject: **Petition scheme debate- Folkestone temporary library closure**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: Position statement responding to the petition on Folkestone Library, the petition wording is “We the undersigned petition the council to Fix Folkestone Library and re-open it to the public. This is a Grade II listed building, which is probably the earliest surviving purpose-built library in the County. A library is more than a building: it is a symbol of community and learning. That is why the threat to Grace Hill is a matter of extreme concern for all of us.”

## **1. Position statement**

- 1.1 KCC recognises and appreciates the continued impact of the temporary closure of Folkestone Library for the people of Folkestone and the surrounding area and acknowledge fully the depth of feeling expressed locally.
- 1.2 No longer term decisions have yet been taken and all options remain open, this includes what is required to repair the existing library to enable it to reopen and exploring the potential for an alternative building in the town centre.
- 1.3 We have explored a number of potential routes for funding including approaching National Government and exploring other potential funds to bid through for example Arts Council or Heritage organisations but we have not yet been able to identify a suitable fund to bid for or funding that is available. We will continue to explore external funding opportunities including the potential to secure Community Infrastructure Levy funding from Folkestone and Hythe District Council.
- 1.4 KCC is exploring longer term options for the reopening of a town centre library and intends to update further when there is some certainty on viable options and how it will engage with the Folkestone community on these.
- 1.5 In parallel to this work has progressed to expand our current temporary library service provision;
- 1.6 We are making arrangements to provide some further temporary library services in Folkestone town centre in the Shepway Youth Centre, which is close to the original library building. We will move as much of the Folkestone local history collection as possible here, as well as provide public PCs, microfilm readers, photocopier and a free reservation pickup point. We expect to open this in November.

- 1.7 Additional public computers and additional birth and death registration location in Folkestone at Wood Avenue Library are now all available. We will continue to keep our FAQs on the library page updated with key developments as well as updating our social media and information available at the Folkestone libraries.

### **Background documents**

None

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

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet  
Committee – 26 September 2023

Subject: **Kent & Medway Business Fund Bi-Annual Monitoring –  
Q4 2022/23**

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 Q4 2022/23 is 5,137, consisting of 3,682 new jobs and 1,456 protected jobs. The average cost per job is £996.78 (covered in section 5).

Loan repayments to the end of Q4 2022/23 of the value of £37,306,415 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 130 loans being reported, 70.8% are rated as Green or Amber, 29.2% of loans are rated Red (covered in paragraph 3.1).

**Recommendation:** The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note the report and make any recommendations to the Cabinet Member.

## **1. Background Information**

1.1 The Regional Growth Fund (RGF) was established in June 2010 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills now the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) 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 Government's Regional Growth Fund allocated £55 million from the 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 the KMBF/RGF schemes undergo due diligence inquiries from an independent financial appraiser (currently Kreston Reeves) and KCC Finance colleagues before being examined by the Investment Advisory Board (IAB). There are two KCC Councillors who currently sit on the Board who also chair both the main IAB and Sub-Groups. 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. KCC officers review the Recommendation and approval is made by either the Director of Growth and Communities or the Interim Head of Economy in line with the Officer Scheme of Delegation.
  - 1.6 The scheme uses Bevan Brittan LLP and Freeths Ltd to provide advice on contracts, insolvency issues and work with the KCC Business Investment Team to recover the maximum amount of loan value. KCC Internal Audit oversees the investment procedures and processes and advise on other matters related to the use of the funds. A recent KCC Internal Audit report identified One High Risk, Three Medium Risks and Two Low Risks related to the Kent and Medway Business Fund. This report was extensively discussed at the Governance and Audit Committee in October 2022. Following on from this meeting a plan of action was agreed with the support of the Corporate Director Finance and KCC Finance colleagues. Progress on this plan action will be regularly reported and monitored by the Governance and Audit Committee.

- 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 £26,000 and £99,999, security is not taken.
- 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 an independent financial appraiser (Kreston Reeves) and KCC Finance colleagues, KCC has established a Debt Recovery Working Group, a sub-group of the IAB, chaired by a KCC Member to advise on technical issues related to the recovery of existing investments (see Section 2.1).
- 1.10 The previous contracts with the Government ended on the 31 March 2023. KCC closed KMBF to new applications on 9 February 2023 pending a decision by the Government on the future use of the fund.
- 1.11 As reported at the May and June 2023 meetings of this committee, KCC has now received a positive decision on the future use of the recycled KMBF\RGF investments.
- 1.12 Details of the proposed new arrangements for the recycled KMBF\RGF investments are outlined in a separate Committee Paper on the agenda for today's Meeting on the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee.

## **2. Update on Government Funded KCC Business Investment Schemes**

- 2.1 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) cumulatively as of the 31 March 2023.

<b>Districts</b>	<b>Funding per Local Authority £</b>	<b>Private Investment £</b>	<b>No of Businesses</b>	<b>No of Jobs Created</b>	<b>No of Jobs Protected</b>	<b>Total Number of Jobs</b>
Ashford	£1,857,600	£1,739,637	23	46	37	83
Canterbury	£9,884,680	£10,995,473	65	1,345	82	1,426
Dartford	£2,470,115	£2,238,578	16	134	52	186
Dover	£15,606,053	£19,219,589	57	445	216	661
Folkestone & Hythe	£6,787,468	£10,399,900	32	208	120	328
Gravesham	£881,062	£843,375	5	55	60	115
Maidstone	£4,218,837	£4,527,436	24	116	92	208
Medway	£4,867,621	£4,266,218	27	230	150	380
Rother (1)	£136,250	£136,250	3	34	3	37
Sevenoaks	£734,000	£790,472	8	49	18	67
Swale	£7,685,202	£19,140,158	27	286	286	572
Thanet	£8,921,256	£11,659,724	65	452	277	729
Thurrock (2)	£881,700.00	£1,421,356	4	72	13	85
Tonbridge & Malling	£1,533,510	£1,617,798	14	53	21	74
Tunbridge Wells	£2,083,000	£2,279,250	17	152	25	177

Wealden (1)	£200,000	£200,000	1	5	4	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>£68,748,354</b>	<b>£91,475,214</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>3,682</b>	<b>1,456</b>	<b>5,137</b>

(1) Not part of the eligible area for the Kent and Medway Business Fund since 2017. All recycled loan payments from Rother and Wealden companies have now been transferred to East Sussex County Council for use in their own business support schemes.

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

2.2 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 5,137 as of 31 March 2023. In its positive decision on the future use of the recycled KMBF/RGF investments (see 1.11) the Government have confirmed that KCC has exceeded agreed jobs targets laid down in its contracts.

2.3 The cumulative amount of repayments expected to date was £40,219,841. The actual amount receipted by the end of Q4 2022/23 was £36,831,796 which represents an achievement of 91.6%.

### 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 130 being reported on during the monitoring period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023, 92 (70.8%) of returns were flagged as Green or Amber. The value of those loans was £12,732,517. Of the total number monitored during the period 17 businesses (loan value £1,430,498) identified were in the Red Category B (Nil or incomplete monitoring return) and 21 businesses (loan value £3,203,035) were identified as Red Category C (Non-achievement of key milestones/targets).

3.3 82 businesses have had loans which are in Category A (Bad Debt) with a value of £10,745,550 of which £3,324,023 has so far been recovered. The total of funds not yet recovered is therefore £7,421,527 which equates to 10.8% of the total loan and equity investments made to date. This includes businesses which KCC is still actively pursuing to repay the debt and where further debt recovery is still possible (£2,301,062) The total value of KMBF/RGF loans where debt recovery is no longer possible is £5,120,465, such a determination is reached in line with KCC Financial Regulations. Any bad debts incurred during the normal course of business investment (loans and equity) are attributed as a loss to the Fund rather than to the County Council. The County Council's liability is limited to instances of KCC's misadministration of the Fund.

#### **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. KCC has fully exited from one business and partially exited from another business.
- 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 £4,624,950. KLS is funded from recycled KMBF/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. Newable Ltd and 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 Newable and NCL have designated nine of KCC’s equity investments as having Green Risk Status, eight as Amber Risk Status and four as Red Risk Status (total initial value £1,765,000). Five of KCC’s equity investments (total initial value £3,394,072) are designated as Bad Debt as of 31 March 2023. Again, such determination is reached in line with KCC Financial Regulations, and represents a loss to the Fund rather than the County Council
- 4.5 To mitigate the potential impact of the current economic conditions on companies in receipt of equity funding, KCC has been working with Newable and NCL to ensure that the innovative companies in which KCC invested have received specialist support and assistance.

#### **5. Cost per Job**

- 5.1 In terms of the unrecovered funds, the cost per job is £996.78
- 5.2 In terms of the total loan and equity awarded by the KMBF/RGF schemes the average “cost” per job is £13,382.98 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. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The capital costs of loan and equity investments are sourced from current and future recycled loan and equity investments from the KMBF/RGF schemes.

6.2 The annual cost to KCC of administering the KMBF scheme (inc. staff, legal, appraisal and monitoring costs) is £670,000 per annum. The revenue costs of this activity have been funded from two sources: a) a management charge of 5% levied from the fund on the value of all investments made to companies; and b) an administrative charge of 5% levied from the companies on the value of all loans. This makes the scheme self-funding.

## **7. Legal**

7.1 KCC had two contracts with DBT, both ended on the 31 March 2023. A recent decision by DBT mandated that all the recycled KMBF/RGF funds are to be managed by KCC as a loan scheme for a 10-year period.

7.2 KCC also has legal agreements with the company undertaking independent financial appraisals, two legal companies (see 1.6) and the companies managing the equity portfolio (see 4.3).

## **8. Policy Framework**

8.1 The KMBF is in-line with Priority 1: Levelling Up Action 3 - Kent County Council's Strategic Statement Framing the Future: Framing Kent's Future – Our Council Strategy - as KMBF seeks to attract national and international investment to businesses in the county.

## **9. Equalities implications**

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken

9.2 The EqIA will be kept under review as the project progresses.

## **10. Data protection**

10.1 The existing privacy notice covers the operation of the KMBF, and no new data protection issues arise due to the contents of this paper.

## **11. Recommendation**

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

## **12. Contact details**

### **Report Author:**

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### **Relevant Director:**

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**From:** Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director of Growth & Communities

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet  
Committee, 26 September 2023

**Subject:** Kent & Medway Business Fund 2023

**Key decision:** 23/00088

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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

**Future Pathway of report:** Key Decision

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** The report propose that the Kent County Council (KCC) reopen the Kent & Medway Business Fund (KMBF) on 9 October 2023 offering loans to businesses within Kent & Medway, following formal written approval from the Head of Regional Growth Fund (RGF), Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities received on 12 June 2023, allowing Kent County Council to continue managing the recycled KMBF/RGF investments to provide loans to local businesses until March 2032.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the proposed decision to:

- (i) Reopen the Kent & Medway Business Fund (KMBF) in October 2023 and continue to provide loan finance to businesses until March 2032;
- (ii) Approve the KMBF Scheme Governance and decision-making arrangements; and
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Director of Growth and Communities to take relevant actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement this decision.

The Proposed Record of Decision is attached as Appendix A

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The Government allocated £55 million from the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) to KCC between 2011 and 2014. This funded three RGF programmes covering the whole of Kent and Medway and additional local authority areas:

- East Kent (Expansion East Kent - £35 million).
- North Kent, Medway, and Thurrock (Tiger - £14.5 million).

- West Kent (Escalate -£5.5 million).
- 1.2 These programmes operated 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. KCC's costs of administering these programmes were fully covered by an administration charge deducted from each loan and a charge to the RGF allocation.
- 1.3 Since January 2017, KCC has used the recycled KMBF\RGF investments (loan repayments and sale of shares in equity stakes) to enable the KMBF to provide new loans ranging between £26,000-£500,000 to eligible businesses across Kent and Medway in addition to a small number of equity investments managed separately by an external supplier. Most funding recipients receive interest-free loans, with a repayment period of up to five years. The recycled KMBF/RGF investments were also used to finance the Kent Life Sciences (KLS) Fund, a sub-programme of the KMBF programme, which provides equity investments in companies predominantly in the life science sector to support their growth. Since 2017, KMBF has made the following investments:
- No of Loan Investments: 104; Total Loan investment £13,889,299
  - No of Equity Investments: 9 companies; Total Equity Investment £4,350,000
  - KMBF Jobs created Full Time equivalent (FTE) 449.92
  - KMBF Jobs Protected Full Time equivalent (FTE) 138.91

## **2. Kent & Medway Business Fund**

- 2.1 Since August 2022, the KCC Business Investment Team has been working with senior colleagues from the Office of General Counsel and Finance to review the entire loan process, to ensure that the governance, due diligence, application process and template documentation pertaining to the scheme was updated and fit for purpose to support the relaunch of the scheme following confirmation that KCC can do so from the Head of Regional Growth Fund, DLUHC received on 12 June 2023.
- 2.2 On 25 January 2023 the Business Investment Team submitted their formal Business Case to the Head of Regional Growth Fund to support the retention of the recycled KMBF/RGF loan repayments.
- 2.3 On 31 March 2023 KCC's current contracts with government pertaining to the RGF funds originally allocated expired, and the scheme closed.
- 2.4 On 12 June 2023 the Head of Regional Growth Fund, DLUHC, provided written confirmation allowing KCC to continue managing the recycled KMBF/RGF investments to provide loans to local businesses until March 2032.
- 2.5 On 14 June 2023 the members of the Investment Advisory Board (IAB) and IAB Sub-Group came together to review the historic performance of the KMBF/RGF schemes and to scope the proposed offer, terms, and eligibility criteria of KMBF's future loan products.

- 2.6 On the 14 July 2023, the Chairmen of both the IAB and IAB Sub-Group presented their proposals for KMBF to senior officers of the Council from the GET Directorate, Office of General Counsel and Finance, and agreement was reached on the proposed offer, terms, and eligibility criteria of KMBF's future loan products. The scheme criteria is set out below:

<b>Kent &amp; Medway Business Fund (Standard)</b>	
<b>Offer/Terms</b>	<b>Eligibility</b>
Loan Offer £100k-£600k (0% Interest)	Business Type Kent & Medway SME - established
Repayment Period Term of loan – 5 years (following a 6-month repayment free period)	Sectors Exclude - Sensitive Sectors* Applications invited from all other sectors*
Match Funding/Admin Fee Match – 50% of total project costs Admin Fee – 10%	Criteria Growth, Innovation, Increased Productivity, Supply Chain, Contribution to Net Zero
Security Security applied on all loans, but commensurate with risk	Employment Job Creation Job Protection

<b>KMBF Small Business Boost</b>	
<b>Offer/Terms</b>	<b>Eligibility</b>
Loan Offer £26k-£99k (0% Interest)	Business Type Kent & Medway SME – established Kent & Medway start-ups
Repayment Period Term of loan – 5 years (following a 6-month repayment free period)	Sectors Exclude - Sensitive Sectors* Applications invited from all other sectors*
Match Funding/Admin Fee Match – 20-30% of total project costs Admin Fee – 10%	Criteria Growth, Innovation, Increased Productivity, Supply Chain, Contribution to Net Zero
Security Security may be applied, commensurate with risk, as detailed within the independent appraisal report. <i>(No specific loan value at which security is applied)</i>	Employment Job Creation Job Protection

\*Since the eligibility was agreed, it has been determined that there are no sensitive sectors within the Subsidy Control Act 2022, Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) route.

- 2.7 This has led into the preparation and drafting thereof of Guidance Notes for KMBF to support its relaunch on 9 October 2023, with input from senior officers from the Office of General Counsel and Finance.
- 2.8 Following the production of draft Guidance Notes, the Business Investment Team sought legal advice and guidance on the UK Subsidy Control Act 2022, that the proposed schemes decided upon were compliant with UK Subsidy Control. That legal advice was received on 18 August 2023 and confirmed that KCC can progress its scheme under the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) route within the 2022 Act. KCC is continuing to work with its external legal representatives on the governance documentation to support the MFA route, such as de minimis declaration and gross cash equivalent notification on all approved loans, and embedding into its process, those awards that require to be added to the Subsidy Control Database.

2.9 On 24 August 2023, the draft Guidance Notes were sent to external lawyers for final review, and at the point of writing this report the final review, and any suggested amends thereof is awaited.

### **3. Financial Implications**

3.1 The approximate overall KCC revenue costs of administering the loan schemes are around £670,000 per annum. The overall administration costs are made up of staff costs, legal, due diligence/appraisal, and the ongoing monitoring costs associated with and to the lifespan of each individual investment held with the loan portfolio.

3.2 Whilst preparing the Business Case submitted to DLUHC KCC undertook a financial modelling exercise which assisted in determining the level at which the administration fee and management fee should be set ensuring that the total revenue costs of the scheme could be covered. This exercise determined that a figure of 10% would be appropriate. The Business Case submitted and approved allows KCC to apply a management fee of up to 10% (formerly 5%) on each approved loan.

3.3 In addition, a further modelling exercise was undertaken whereby the Business Investment Team ran a variety of loan values, through a loan template calculator, using various interest rates to ensure that the application of a 10% administration fee, paid by each approved loan recipient, was not prohibitive as the loan offer is set at 0% interest. This exercise concluded that the increase from a 5% administration fee to 10% would not be cost prohibitive due to the current rate of interest set by the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

3.4 The application of both the management fee and administration fee will ensure that the administration of the KMBF/RGF Investments and future KMBF loan schemes will be self-funding.

### **4. Legal implications**

4.1 The approval from DLUHC allows KCC to continue to manage the recycled KMBF/RGF Investments and to provide loans to local businesses until March 2032.

4.2 Investments will be internally and externally assessed via an impartial third-party appraiser, under contract with KCC, who provide an appraisal report to assist the Investment Advisory Board and Sub-Group in making recommendations to Senior Officers in line with the Officer Scheme of Delegation. Such recommendations will include specific loan conditions to mitigate any default and/or loss to the KMBF/RGF recycled funds, by way of the attachment of security.

4.3 Such investments will be recommended by the Investment Advisory Board and Sub-Group and approved by either the Director of Growth and Communities or the Interim Head of Economy in line with the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

## **5. Equalities implications**

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is appended to this report.

## **6. Data Protection implications**

6.1 A DPIA assessment determined that a full DPIA required to be completed and this has been actioned and is currently in the approval stage. An existing privacy notice covers the operation of the KMBF and has been reviewed as part of the decision process preparation; and it has been determined that no new data protection issues will arise from the proposed processing of new loan applications.

## **7. Governance**

7.1 The Director of Growth and Communities will inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

## **8. Conclusions**

8.1 To continue to offer finance to businesses located in Kent & Medway, via loan investments with the objectives of supporting growth, increase productivity, innovate and create/protect jobs.

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

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the proposed decision to:

(i) Reopen the Kent & Medway Business Fund (KMBF) in October 2023 and continue to provide loan finance to businesses until March 2032;

(ii) Approve the KMBF Scheme Governance and decision-making arrangements; and

(iii) Delegate authority to the Director of Growth and Communities to take relevant actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement this decision.

The Proposed Record of Decision is attached as Appendix A

## **10. Background Documents**

10.1 Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision

10.2 Appendix B - EqIA

## **11. Contact details**

### **Report Author:**

Name: Susan Berdo

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### **Relevant Director:**

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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

**Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**DECISION NO:**

23/00088

**For publication**

**Key decision: YES**

**Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Kent & Medway Business Fund 2023**

**Decision:**

As Cabinet Member for Economic Development, I agree to:

- (i) Reopen the Kent & Medway Business Fund (KMBF) in October 2023 and continue to provide loan finance to businesses until March 2032;
- (ii) Approve the KMBF Scheme Governance and decision-making arrangements; and
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Director of Growth and Communities to take relevant actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement this decision.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

The Government allocated £55 million from the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) to KCC between 2011 and 2014 to provide business loan finance. On 31 March 2023 KCC's current contracts with government pertaining to the RGF funds originally allocated expired, and the scheme closed.

The Business Investment Team had submitted a formal Business Case to the Head of Regional Growth Fund to support the retention of the recycled KMBF/RGF loan repayments on 25 January 2023. On 12 June 2023 the Head of Regional Growth Fund, DLUHC, provided written confirmation allowing KCC to continue managing the recycled KMBF/RGF investments to provide loans to local businesses until March 2032.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

The proposal is being considered by Members of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 26 September 2023.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

- **Close down the scheme:**
  - KCC's on-going management cost of the existing investment portfolio would not be covered as there would be no new loan expenditure, therefore recovering KCC management costs would have required special approval from DLUHC.
  - This would not support KCC's economic drivers to increase growth, productivity, innovation, and job creation/protection.
- **Commissioning the scheme out to a third party provider.**

- It is unclear if doing so would offer up any significant savings (scheme administration), improve investment performance over time, or reduce bad debt; nor ensure complete alignment during any procured contract term to KCC's priorities.
- Within the RGF Evaluation and throughout the approval with DLUHC the internal administration of the scheme was highly commended.

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

.....  
signed

.....  
date



## EQIA Submission – ID Number

### Section A

**EQIA Title**

The Kent and Medway Business Fund -2023

**Responsible Officer**

Susan Berdo - GT GC

### Type of Activity

**Service Change**

No

**Service Redesign**

Service Redesign

**Project/Programme**

No

**Commissioning/Procurement**

No

**Strategy/Policy**

No

**Details of other Service Activity**

No

### Accountability and Responsibility

**Directorate**

Growth Environment and Transport

**Responsible Service**

Economy

**Responsible Head of Service**

Steve Samson - GT GC

**Responsible Director**

Stephanie Holt-Castle - GT GC

### Aims and Objectives

The Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) was established in 2017 as a vehicle to deliver investment in new and existing small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Kent and Medway, delivering sustainable employment over the long term, creating and adopting innovative products, processes and services and improve their productivity.

The objective of the scheme is not to replace commercial sources of finance or offer operating subsidies. Rather it will support projects with strong business cases for which commercial finance is unavailable on viable terms (for example, because the product or technology involved is untested). The scheme will offer two types of investments, KMBF Standard Loans which will provide finance for up to 50% of project costs for investments between £100,000 and £500,000, and the KMBF Small Business Boost Loans (KMBF SBB) which will provide no more than 70-80% of finance for KMBF investments of between £26,000 and £99,999, with the remaining balance funded through private sources, including bank lending.

Loans will be generally offered interest-free although arrangement charges will be levied to pay for administration costs.

### Section B – Evidence

**Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?**

Yes

**It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?**

No
<b>Is there national evidence/data that you can use?</b>
Yes
<b>Have you consulted with stakeholders?</b>
Yes
<b>Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?</b>
<p>To deliver the scheme, Kent County Council works closely with all the Kent City, District and Borough Councils and with the Unitary Authority of Medway Council.</p> <p>The scheme will be run in line with KCC's Equality &amp; Diversity Policy Statement. As such we are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and combating unfair treatment. Equality and freedom from discrimination are fundamental rights and we seek to demonstrate leadership and commitment in promoting these rights.</p> <p>KCC is in regular contact with local trade bodies for the business community and the local chambers of commerce, independent business advisors, Locate in Kent, and the Federation of Small Businesses. KCC manages the Kent and Medway Growth Hub from whom it receives some referrals to the scheme . All referrals are recorded and include some Equality data, in line with the Department for Business &amp; Trade (DBT) Framework. The Growth Hub maintain extensive data sets to include business information for Kent and Medway, to which KCC have access. The Growth Hub report on a regular monthly basis as part of their contractual obligations</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that current and potential business applicants, their employees and job applicants will not be discriminated against on the grounds of social circumstances, gender, race, disability, sexuality, age, religion/belief or any other protected characteristic.</p> <p>Only limited data on protected characteristics is currently gathered by the application process, specifically age and gender and this is cross referenced to data held at Companies House. This data has been compared with the data reported in the House of Commons Research Briefing on Business Statistics dated 6 December 2022, which confirmed national statistics regarding leadership of businesses by gender and ethnicity.</p> <p>The Office of National Statistics does not currently gather data regarding the age of business leaders or directors, so it is difficult to find comparative data on this factor. However the Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring United Kingdom Monitoring Report 2021 states that those aged 25-34 are more likely to be involved in early-stage entrepreneurial activity than all other age groups, though the difference between other ages groups between 18 and 44 is not significant. In this regard, the new KMBF scheme will offer loans to both established, early stage and start-up businesses.</p> <p>KCC now uses a voluntary equality and diversity survey at pre-application stage to gather anonymous data regarding applicant's protected characteristics. The response rate to this survey is currently 22.2%, the results indicate that the make-up of the applicants' businesses in terms of gender leadership and ethnicity are broadly in line with the national statistics recorded in the House of Commons Research Briefing, and that the applicants by age are also broadly comparable to national statistics.</p>
<b>Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?</b>
Yes
<b>Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?</b>
Yes
<b>Section C – Impact</b>
<b>Who may be impacted by the activity?</b>

<b>Service Users/clients</b> Service users/clients
<b>Staff</b> No
<b>Residents/Communities/Citizens</b> Residents/communities/citizens
<b>Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?</b>
Yes
<b>Details of Positive Impacts</b>
<p>The revised scheme will target all sectors of the business community and information and application forms will be easy to access. There are multiple possible referral routes (the Business &amp; IP Centre, business associations (FSB, IoD), chambers of commerce and the Growth Hub, business community groups) to reach the Kent &amp; Medway business community. The project has strict perimeters in which it can operate. Businesses that are eligible for support have to be located within the eligible area - Kent and Medway.</p> <p>The revision of the Standard Loan Scheme and the Small Business Boost Scheme have been supported by a range of web accessible marketing collateral which includes appropriate imagery reflecting the county business demographic. Hard copies of all documentation are available and alternative versions of the application documents can be made available when requested. The delivery team have consulted with industry professionals to ensure the widest possible reach and ensure that representation is multi-faceted. Any physical engagement events will take into account meeting times to suit a range of needs and will ensure that there is full disability access to enable maximum engagement and opportunity. This new marketing collateral will be used as part of a wider marketing communications strategy to improve awareness and reach of the Kent &amp; Medway Business Fund.</p> <p>The scheme will make available services and make any possible steps to accommodate any circumstances or adjustment that is required to accommodate business directors with any of the protected characteristics. All online communications material is subject to a digital accessibility check to ensure that it meets the WCAG 2 recommendations (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)</p> <p>With regard to the equality &amp; diversity data that the Kent &amp; Medway Business Fund currently gathers the make-up of these businesses in terms of whether they are female led, male led or equally led are broadly in line with national statistics (source: House of Commons), though KCC will use targeted promotional activities to make direct engagements with members of the Kent Population with protected characteristics. KCC will continue to use existing tools to gather equality &amp; diversity data in their latest forms, while ensuring ongoing compliance with data protection policies in order to ensure that individual's data is kept private and anonymised.</p> <p>All funding decisions are based on the business case and financial viability only. Support is provided to the Investment Advisory Board (including training if required) who make funding recommendations (the final decision lies with KCC) to ensure compliance with our equality duties.</p> <p>It is a legal requirement of the scheme's funding agreement with the UK government to promote equality &amp; diversity though opportunities for addressing equality issues outside of the eligible areas and activities defined within this contract are restricted. The programme management team are in a good position to promote equal opportunities and can provide examples of good practice.</p>
<b>Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions</b>
19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
<b>Are there negative impacts for age?</b>

No
<b>Details of negative impacts for Age</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating Actions for Age</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age</b>
Not Applicable
<b>20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Disability?</b>
No
<b>Details of Negative Impacts for Disability</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Disability</b>
Not Applicable
<b>21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sex</b>
No
<b>Details of negative impacts for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Race</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable

<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable

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

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet  
Committee - 26 September 2023

**Subject:** Transition of Local Enterprise Partnership Responsibilities to Kent  
County Council

**Key Decision:** 23/00089

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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

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

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were set up by Government in 2011 as business-led partnerships bringing together the public, private and education sectors to have a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive growth and job creation. The South-East LEP (SELEP) is the largest of the 38 English LEPs and has brought together three counties (Kent, Essex & East Sussex) and three Unitary Authority areas (Southend, Thurrock & Medway).

On 4 August 2023, Government confirmed that it will withdraw support for Local Enterprise Partnership (LEPs) from April 2024 and transfer responsibilities for functions delivered by the LEPs to upper tier and combined local authorities.

Following a recent SELEP Strategic Board Decision, SELEP is now working towards its closure in March 2024 with the responsibility for its core functions being transferred to upper tier local authorities.

Responsibilities will be transferred to whole county geographies or areas with a population of at least 500,000. Kent County Council will therefore need to agree to take on LEP functions on behalf of Kent and Medway.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the proposed decision to agree to:

a) the transfer of relevant South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) responsibilities to Kent County Council from April 2024 including:

- Business representation
- Strategic economic planning
- The delivery of government programmes (where directed); and

b) to delegate authority to the Director for Growth and Communities to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of and entering into required contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

as shown at Appendix A

## 1. Context

- 1.1 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were set up by Government in 2011 as business-led partnerships bringing together the public, private and education sectors to have a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive growth and job creation. The South-East LEP (SELEP) is the largest of the 38 English LEPs and has brought together three counties (Kent, Essex & East Sussex) and three Unitary Authority areas (Southend, Thurrock & Medway).
- 1.2 As part of the Spring Statement on 15th March 2023 and in line with a commitment to empower democratically elected local leaders, the government announced its intention for the functions of LEPs to be delivered by upper tier and combined local authorities in the future. Following an information gathering exercise to which both Kent County Council and the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) responded, it confirmed its decision in an announcement (with an accompanying guidance note) on 4th August 2023. Following a recent SELEP Strategic Board Decision, SELEP is now working towards its closure in March 2024 with the responsibility for its core functions being transferred to local authorities including KCC.
- 1.3 In line with the geography principles set out in the government's 2022 Levelling Up White Paper and for areas where there is not yet a devolution deal agreed or under negotiation, the LEP transition guidance confirmed that it expects LEP functions to be transferred to either a whole county level or functional economic area with a minimum population of 500,000. KCC will therefore need to agree to take on LEP functions on behalf of Kent and Medway. This has been agreed with Medway Council with further discussions due to take place about the detail. Government has indicated that it will be receptive to local areas putting forward the most suitable arrangements and scenarios for their circumstances.
- 1.4 The transfer of responsibilities to Kent County Council will directly support the Framing Kent's Future ambition to "*Work with partners to develop a better co-ordinated approach to economic development across the county, joining up the strengths of the County Council, the Kent Districts and Medway. As part of this, we will explore opportunities with Government to gain control of more of the resources and decision-making that shape economic growth in the county.*"

## 2. The role of the South-East Local Enterprise Partnership, the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership and Kent County Council:

- 2.1 SELEP has brought together partners and stakeholders to plan and deliver activities supporting its four strategic priorities:
  - Business resilience and growth



- UK's global gateway
- Communities for the future
- Coastal catalyst

2.2 SELEP's work has also included a focus on skills (including digital), clean growth and net zero and sector-focused activity. In practice, SELEP has been involved in overseeing:

- Investment Programmes: channelling and allocating government funding including Local Growth Fund (LGF), Getting Building Fund (GBF) and Growing Places Fund (GPF).
- Business Support: allocating central government funding for the operational costs of the Growth Hubs service including the Kent & Medway Growth Hub, a business signposting and advice service currently contracted by KCC and delivered by Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce.
- Major Projects Group: working to ensure that benefits of major schemes are realised including analysing skills requirements, employment and local supply chain opportunities linked to 16 major projects in the SELEP area including Ebbsfleet Garden City and Otterpool Park.
- Sector Working Groups: coordinating various thematic groups, some of which remain active including the Universities, Coastal Communities and South-East Creative Economy Network (SECEN) groups.

2.3 Essex County Council (ECC) acts as accountable body for SELEP and looks after many of the back office, legal and HR functions for the organisation.

2.4 Due to SELEP's size, the governance model has relied on four federated boards including KMEP.

2.5 KMEP is made up of the 14 Local Authority Leaders from Kent & Medway, two Education Representatives (Further and Higher Education) and 17 Private Sector Representatives including three business membership organisations: Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Institute of Directors. KMEP aims to represent the diversity of the Kent business community through its private sector membership in terms of geographical spread, industry sectors, size of businesses and protected characteristics. KCC provides the secretariat function for KMEP and leads its workstreams.

2.6 KMEP has supported SELEP in the delivery of its strategic priorities at a more local level where a significant number of projects, programmes and activities have been implemented on the ground. KMEP's role has been to:

- Approve, drive forward and monitor a strategic economic plan for Kent & Medway (please note that formal endorsement for the new Kent & Medway Economic Framework will be sought at the October KMEP board meeting);
- Consider strategic economic investment priorities for funds administered through SELEP and determine and monitor the use of this funding;
- Act as the commissioning body for projects and programmes in Kent and Medway;
- Consider and develop responses to new economic opportunities and challenges in Kent & Medway;

- Ensure a strong voice for Kent and Medway business and government at national and regional level, especially through the ‘Kent & Medway Business Advisory Board’ subgroup.
- 2.7 Officers from across KCC support the work of KMEP by providing information, intelligence and support for priority activities such as recent activity on Operation Brock, Lower Thames Crossing and Nutrient Neutrality. KMEP has also provided opportunities for Kent’s District & Borough Councils to ensure that more local issues feature in wider plans and activities for Kent such as highlighting the lack of available business space in certain districts or flagging up risks to local areas of certain infrastructure improvements not going forward.
- 2.8 Information in the LEP transition government guidance remains fairly general but KCC will need to work towards the adoption (or continuation) of the following broad functions:
- Business representation – Government is encouraging upper tier local authorities to create or continue to engage with an Economic Growth Board made up of local business leaders and relevant representative bodies. Through extensive discussion, it is anticipated that KMEP will therefore continue to play an important role in local decision making and economic strategy.
  - Strategic economic planning - Government is encouraging areas to produce or update economic strategies to support local decision making. The new, KCC-led Kent & Medway Economic Framework (to be considered for adoption at the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee on 26th September 2023) will play a key role in making the case for future access to government programmes.
  - The delivery of government programmes (where directed) – for KCC this will involve taking on the role of accountable body to oversee the future management and monitoring of the Growing Places Fund (GPF) capital loan programme as well as oversight of ongoing Local Growth Fund (LGF) projects until 2026-27. See below for detail on funded capacity to meet this requirement in the short to medium term.
- 2.9 These LEP functions are underpinned by a range of activities and workstreams including various SELEP-led sector groups, partnerships and networks such as the South East Creative Economy Network, Coastal Communities, Major Projects and Housing groups and the collation of economic data and intelligence to inform strategies and programmes of activity.
- 2.10 As part of the transition process it is anticipated that Kent County Council will also take on or continue responsibility for the following activities:
- Continuing to manage the contract for the Kent & Medway Growth Hub service and ensuring that this adapts to meet the evolving needs of local businesses.
  - Playing a leading role in the continuation of relevant wider working group activities such as the South East Creative Economy Network and working closely with other organisations such as the Thames Estuary Growth Board and neighbouring Local Authorities where appropriate.

- Coordinating and supporting multi-agency working groups such as the Employment Task Force, Local Skills Improvement Plan / Fund and industry sector-focused groups.
- Collating economic data and intelligence and preparing responses to broad economic opportunities and challenges in Kent and Medway for agreement by KMEP including transport issues, development, energy, skills, employment, decarbonisation and the transition to net zero.
- Ensuring that Kent businesses are able to engage with local decision making to support the economic growth agenda. This will be assured through the work of the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership and Business Advisory Board, partnerships with local business member organisations (Chambers of Commerce, Institute of Directors, Federation of Small Businesses), District Council business networks and direct interactions with local firms.

2.11 KCC is currently participating in five thematic working groups coordinated by SELEP to consider the practical implications of the transition arrangements and to ensure that all aspects of the process run as smoothly as possible:

- Growth Hubs & Business Support
- Partnerships & Networks
- Governance and Capital Programmes
- Resourcing
- Data and Intelligence

2.12 The working groups will feed into SELEP's LEP-wide transition plan for endorsement by its Strategic Board on 13th October (both the Leader of the KCC and Medway Council's Cabinet Member for Economic and Social Regeneration & Inward Investment are board members). In parallel, KCC will draft its own LEP integration plan along with a Kent & Medway Integration plan for endorsement by the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership.

2.13 KCC, Medway Council and KMEP will agree the best way forward for key activities formerly delivered by SELEP with a view to implementing the best county-wide solution or continuing certain activities with Essex and East Sussex where there is merit in doing so.

2.14 There are a number of opportunities provided by these new responsibilities including possibilities to make a stronger case for future government investment in Kent & Medway to support priorities identified in the Kent & Medway Economic Framework.

### **3. Financial Implications**

3.1 The message to government from local authorities including through the County Councils Network has been clear about the need for resources to support new burdens in the context of LEP transition.

3.2 For KCC, adopting LEP functions will incur revenue costs as much of the activity to be transferred has a staffing requirement. However, there are two sources of external funding that will help support KCC LEP transition activity in the short term:

3.2.1 The Government has confirmed that it will provide some revenue funding to local authorities in 2024-25 to support them in delivering the functions currently delivered by LEPs (amounts are yet to be announced). Funding beyond 2024/25 is subject to future Spending Review decisions. Based on SELEP currently receiving an annual government grant of £250,000 for the whole area, KCC could expect somewhere in the region of £100,000 of funding for the 2024-25 financial year to specifically support activity related to LEP transition.

3.2.2 Along with the other Upper Tier Local Authorities in the SELEP area, KCC is planning to offer roles to some of the current SELEP secretariat team to support LEP integration activity and future economic growth work for the county. Funding for these posts for a fixed period would be provided to KCC (along with funding to cover redundancy liabilities should future government funding for former LEP activity not be forthcoming) by SELEP from its residual funding. A formal KCC HR-led process is currently being developed to produce job descriptions and requirements from a KCC perspective with a view to matching these to expressions of interest from appropriate individuals within the SELEP team. The contractual arrangements and terms and conditions of the posts are currently under discussion between KCC and ECC's HR teams but will ensure that KCC is adequately protected from financial risks.

3.3 From April 2024, KCC will also take on responsibility for the future management and monitoring of SELEP's capital funding programmes. While this will primarily relate to ensuring the smooth running of existing Local Growth Fund (LGF) projects until their conclusion in 2026-27 (**see Annex 1**), KCC anticipates securing a pot of recycled Growing Places Fund (GPF) capital loan funding that could be run as a new Kent & Medway scheme to provide an evergreen loan fund to support capital investments in the county that contribute to economic growth. It is currently understood that this funding would need to adhere to the original aims set out by government which were to support stalled capital investments by providing interest-free loans. SELEP is currently holding approximately £15m of repaid GFP loan funding that will need to be shared between Kent & Medway, Essex and East Sussex for allocation to future projects.

#### **4. Legal implications**

4.1 In order to support the practical arrangements of the transition process, a number of legal agreements will be prepared over the coming months involving KCC and ECC's legal teams including the novation of accountable body funding agreements for capital programmes.

4.2 Given that the recent government guidance did not go into specific detail, robust legal agreements relating to different elements of the transition process will ensure that KCC's interests are protected.

#### **5. Equalities implications**

5.1 An EqIA for LEP transition has been developed.

5.2 It is not anticipated that there will be any negative equalities and diversity impacts resulting from the transition of SELEP responsibilities to KCC. As was the case with SELEP, programmes, activities and policies adopted at a local level will adhere to Public Sector Equality Duty requirements.

**6. Other corporate implications**

- 6.1 The Economy Team within Growth & Communities will continue to lead the integration process. Current staff resource within the team will focus on ensuring a smooth transition.
- 6.2 KCC’s legal, finance and human resources teams will support the transition process to ensure that KCC’s interests are protected.
- 6.3 Reporting mechanisms for current KCC-led capital projects funded by SELEP and managed by the KCC Major Capital Programme team within Highways & Transportation will change. KCC will need to report directly to the relevant government departments rather than via SELEP on the progress of LGF projects.

**7. Governance**

7.1 Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director of Growth and Communities, will inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation

**8. Conclusions**

- 8.1 The government’s decision to allocate LEP responsibilities to Local Authorities will provide a range of opportunities for KCC and its partners and stakeholders across Kent & Medway to have more freedom in setting strategic priorities and accelerating programmes of activity to support economic growth in the county.
- 8.2 KCC is well placed to take on former LEP responsibilities thanks to its track record in planning and delivering successful economic growth initiatives in the county, its ability to convene partners and stakeholders to work together for the benefit of local businesses and residents.
- 8.3 KCC will make use of financial resources provided by SELEP and central government to ensure the effective transition and management of new responsibilities from April 2024.

**9. Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the proposed decision to agree to:

- a) the transfer of relevant South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) responsibilities to Kent County Council from April 2024 including:
  - Business representation

- Strategic economic planning
- The delivery of government programmes (where directed); and

b) to delegate authority to the Director for Growth and Communities to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of and entering into required contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

as shown at Appendix A

## **10. Appendices and Background Documents:**

Annex 1: Ongoing SELEP-Funded Projects in Kent

Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision

Appendix B - EqIA

[Guidance for Local Enterprise Partnerships \(LEPs\) and local and combined authorities: integration of LEP functions into local democratic institutions](#)

[Local Enterprise Partnerships: information gathering exercise](#)

## **11. Contact details**

Report Author:

Steve Samson

Interim Head of Economy

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Relevant Director:

Stephanie Holt-Castle

Director of Growth & Communities

03000 412064

[stephanie.holt-castle@kent.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.holt-castle@kent.gov.uk)

## Annex 1: Ongoing SELEP-Funded Projects in Kent

The projects listed below were originally allocated funding by SELEP. From April 2024, KCC will need to monitor these projects until their completion. There will also potentially be a small number of new, year-long 'Getting Building Fund' projects to monitor subject to them being approved by the SELEP boards at the start of 2024.

### Local Growth Fund Projects:

Delivery Body	Project Title	LGF Awarded	Planned Completion
Kent County Council	Sturry Link Road	£5.9m	December 2026
Kent County Council	Maidstone Integrated Transport	£8.9m	Spring 2024
Dartford Borough Council	Dartford Town Centre Transformation	4.3m	2026
National Highways	M2 Junction 5 Improvements	£1.6m	Winter 2024

### Growing Places Fund Projects:

Delivery Body	Project Title	Loan Repayment Details
Kent County Council	Workspace Kent	£234K to be repaid by 2026-27 financial year
Kent County Council	Live Margate	£1m to be repaid by 2023-24 financial year
Kent County Council	Javelin Way	£1.1m to be repaid by 2025-26 financial year
Kent County Council	No Use Empty Commercial	£2m to be repaid by 2026-27 financial year
RYZE Hydrogen	Green Hydrogen	£3.5m to be repaid by 2025-26 financial year
NIAB EMR	Wine Innovation Centre	£500K to be repaid by 2025-26 financial year
Kent County Council	No Use Empty Residential	£2.5m to be repaid by 2026-27 financial year
Kent County Council	Herne Relief Road	£3.5m to be repaid by 2025-26 financial year

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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

**Derek Murphy, Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**DECISION NO:**

23/00089

**For publication**

**Key decision: YES**

**Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Transition of Local Enterprise Partnership Responsibilities to Kent County Council**

**Decision:**

As Cabinet Member for Economic Development, I agree to:

- a) the transfer of relevant South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) responsibilities to Kent County Council from April 2024 including:
  - Business representation
  - Strategic economic planning
  - The delivery of government programmes (where directed); and
- b) to delegate authority to the Director for Growth and Communities to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of and entering into required contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were set up by Government in 2011 as business-led partnerships bringing together the public, private and education sectors to have a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive growth and job creation. As part of the Spring Statement on 15th March 2023 and in line with a commitment to empower democratically elected local leaders, the government announced its intention for the functions of LEPs to be delivered by upper tier and combined local authorities in the future. This was confirmed on 4th August 2023. Following a recent SELEP Strategic Board Decision, SELEP is now working towards its closure in March 2024 with the responsibility for its core functions being transferred to local authorities including KCC.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

The proposal is being considered by Members of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 26 September.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

None – The transition of LEP responsibilities to local authorities is mandated by government

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

.....  
signed

.....  
date



## EQIA Submission – ID Number

### Section A

#### EQIA Title

Transfer of South East Local Enterprise Partnership activities to Kent County Council

#### Responsible Officer

Steve Samson - GT GC

### Type of Activity

#### Service Change

No

#### Service Redesign

No

#### Project/Programme

Project/Programme

#### Commissioning/Procurement

No

#### Strategy/Policy

No

#### Details of other Service Activity

No

### Accountability and Responsibility

#### Directorate

Growth Environment and Transport

#### Responsible Service

Economy, Growth & Communities

#### Responsible Head of Service

Stephanie Holt-Castle - GT GC

#### Responsible Director

Stephanie Holt-Castle - GT GC

### Aims and Objectives

Following a government announcement in August 2023, Kent County Council will be taking on responsibilities for overseeing a range of activities supporting the economic growth agenda in Kent & Medway that were formerly delivered by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) from April 2024.

The aims of the former SELEP activity are to:

- Lead on strategic economic planning for Kent & Medway
- Ensure a representative business representation in 'regional' decision making and economic strategy
- Deliver a range of government programmes to tackle barriers to an boost economic growth in the county

KCC-led Individual programmes, projects and activities supporting this agenda are subject to their own EqIAs.

### Section B – Evidence

#### Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

#### It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

<b>Is there national evidence/data that you can use?</b>
Yes
<b>Have you consulted with stakeholders?</b>
Yes
<b>Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?</b>
KCC has consulted with all district and borough councils, Medway councils, higher and further education institutions and the private sector through the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP). When private sector board members are recruited to KMEP, the panel takes onto account equalities and diversity characteristics to ensure as far as possible, that the board is representative of Kent's population.
<b>Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?</b>
No
<b>Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?</b>
Yes
<b>Section C – Impact</b>
<b>Who may be impacted by the activity?</b>
<b>Service Users/clients</b> Service users/clients
<b>Staff</b> No
<b>Residents/Communities/Citizens</b> Residents/communities/citizens
<b>Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?</b>
Yes
<b>Details of Positive Impacts</b>
There may be opportunities in future to design or deliver activities targeted at under-represented groups in Kent and Medway e.g. businesses led by individuals with different protected characteristics.
<b>Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions</b>
<b>19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for age?</b>
No
<b>Details of negative impacts for Age</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating Actions for Age</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age</b>
Not Applicable
<b>20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Disability?</b>
No
<b>Details of Negative Impacts for Disability</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Disability</b>
Not Applicable
<b>21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sex</b>
No
<b>Details of negative impacts for Sex</b>

Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Race</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
No
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Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
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<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
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<b>Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
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<b>Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable

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

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 26 September 2023

**Subject:** Performance Dashboard

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard shows the performance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and activity indicators for Quarter 1 of 2023/24.

16 of the 22 KPIs achieved target and are RAG rated Green. Four KPIs were below target but did achieve floor standard and are RAG rated Amber, and two KPIs were below floor standard and RAG rated Red.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report for Quarter 1 of 2023/24.

**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 2023/24 financial year.

**2. Performance Dashboard**

- 2.1. The current Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance dashboard provides results up to the end of June 2023 and is attached in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2023/24. The Dashboard also includes a range of activity indicators which help give context to the KPIs.
- 2.3. KPIs are presented with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) alerts to show performance in the Quarter. Details of how the alerts are generated are outlined in the Guidance Notes, included with the Dashboard in Appendix 1.

### **3. Growth & Communities - Economy**

- 3.1. The number of properties brought back to use through No Use Empty (NUE) over the 12 months to March was 388, which is below the target of 400. Not all districts have dedicated Empty Property Officers and districts currently have vacancies in their Private Sector Housing teams. Whilst this is impacting on performance, NUE projects funded in the previous budget year will, on completion, contribute to achieving the annual target.
- 3.2. The target for the number of businesses assisted via the Kent and Medway Growth Hub was exceeded for those provided with both light/medium and intensive support.

### **4. Growth & Communities – Strategic Development and Place**

- 4.1. The total amount secured for developer contributions in Quarter 4 was £13.3m (99.7% of the amount sought), meaning this KPI was above target. As for the contributions outstanding from last Quarter (where performance was at 81%), it is still too early to say whether these contributions will be forthcoming.

### **5. Growth & Communities - Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)**

- 5.1. The highlight of Quarter 1 was the engagement across LRA with the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023. All 99 libraries took part in the celebrations with book displays, artwork created by local communities, coronation themed activities such as rhyme times, craft sessions and adult social groups to name but a few examples, as well as live streaming of the Coronation itself at Kent History and Library Centre that over one hundred people attended on the day. Kent Archives displayed items from the collection from past coronations and hosted a talk by Dr James Lloyd on royal heraldry, while the Registration teams at Oakwood House in Maidstone and Danson House in Bexley held a special Citizenship Ceremony with flags and Coronation-themed cakes.
- 5.2. Further cause for celebration was the success of the team from HMP Swaleside's prison library at the National Libraries Connected Conference in June. The team won the Reading Award within the Universal Reading Offer category for their dedicated work to bring library services to prisoners who were unable to leave their cells to visit the library during and after lockdown. At the same conference, Kent Libraries' innovative Playground initiative was also recognised by being nominated for the national Children's Promise Award. These awards are open to every library service across the UK and each nomination has a panel of sector experts to judge, so Kent's performance is recognition of the team's drive to innovate and improve services for customers.
- 5.3. The engagement of Kent's Libraries with the Coronation, plus continued efforts to reinstate events and activities and launch new initiatives, resulted in just under 42,000 people attending events throughout Quarter 1, surpassing the target of 34,000. Total visitor numbers were over 735,000 which was up by over 20% on Quarter 1, 2022/23.



- 5.4. Library issues increased by 12% on the same period last year, and at over 1.3 million were at the upper end of expectations. We would expect to see library visits and issues increasing during Quarter 2, and positive initial take-up of the Summer Reading Challenge has already indicated that this is likely to be the case. The library survey, carried out in April 2023, yielded a customer satisfaction rating of 94% for Kent's library services.
- 5.5. The number of death registrations has fallen from the high levels experienced during the winter months, but are still higher by 4% compared to the same period last year, with just over 4,200 registration appointments delivered. Birth registration appointments remain fairly level, with just four fewer appointments than in Quarter 1 2022/23. There were 2,073 ceremonies during Quarter 1, which included the welcoming of 969 new citizens to the United Kingdom, 16 of whom attended the individual ceremonies newly implemented at Oakwood House, Maidstone. The promotional plan for Oakwood House, the new site for the County Register Office, included three open days which were held in May 2023 and were attended by 156 couples, resulting in 54 new bookings for ceremonies at the venue. Overall, Oakwood House has been very well received by couples and citizens attending ceremonies there.
- 5.6. The number of Archive enquiries has dropped slightly by 2% in comparison with Quarter 1, 2022/23, with numbers at the lower end of expectations. However, an analysis of the figures shows that while remote enquiries have fallen, physical visits to the Search Room have increased by 14%. The Archive Service launched their outreach programme for the year with a well-attended two-day conference held in May both at Kent History and Library Centre and the University of Kent. Entitled "Constables, Charters and Kent", the conference served to highlight new material acquired by Kent Archives, and this coupled with the fresh programme of lunchtime talks has served to attract more researchers to the Search Room. This is borne out by the increasing number of "Archive Enabled" cards that are being issued to customers visiting the facility which enable them to order documents and use the equipment for research.

## **5. Growth & Communities – Other Services**

- 5.1 Most indicators for other services in Growth & Communities have met or exceeded target and are RAG rated Green. Four KPIs failed to meet target but did achieve floor standard, so are RAG rated Amber and two did not meet floor standard so are RAG rated red.
- 5.2 The percentage of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) faults reported online has declined and is below its new higher target. It is thought this was due to more people reporting for the first-time which tends to be by phone. The second PRoW KPI, which is the median number of days to resolve priority PRoW faults is below floor standard and so RAG rated red. This is due to a number of priority faults having been made safe, but then requiring a longer-term repair which has impacted on the median number of days figure.

- 5.3 The new KPI on the percentage of service users who report feeling safer due to warden support was Amber for Quarter 1, with 67% saying they felt safer against a target of 70%. For those who didn't say they felt safer, responders advised it was not applicable to their circumstances, or they reported no change, or that they didn't know. No respondents reported that they felt less safe.
- 5.4 The percentage of cases progressed for initial coronial decision within two working days of notification of a death remains Amber, with delays continuing to be due to the time taken to receive information from the NHS.
- 5.5 The second Red KPI is the percentage of schools with the highest numbers of children eligible for free school meals engaging with the Kent School Games. This was due to three Kent School Games events being cancelled due to bad weather and this negatively impacted the KPI.

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

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report for Quarter 1 of 2023/24.

Contact details:

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# **Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard**

## **Financial Year 2023/24**

### **Results up to end of June 2023**

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Produced by Kent Analytics

## 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 (**In Line**) or they could be **Above** or **Below**.

## Key Performance Indicators Summary

<b>Growth &amp; Communities – Economy</b>	RAG
ED05 : Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty	AMBER
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

<b>Growth &amp; Communities – Libraries, Registrations and Archives (LRA)</b>	RAG
LRA06 : Customer satisfaction with Registration Services	GREEN
LRA15: Total number of customers attending events in Libraries and Archives	GREEN
LRA12 : Customer satisfaction with libraries	GREEN
LRA13 : Customer satisfaction with archives	GREEN

<b>Growth &amp; Communities – Other Services</b>	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.	GREEN
CST02: % of Lessons Learnt Domestic Homicide Review attendees rating the event as very good or excellent	GREEN
CST03: Percentage of service users who report feeling safer due to warden support	AMBER
COR01: Percentage of cases progressed for initial coronial decision within 2 working days of notification of a death	AMBER
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)	GREEN
PAG01: Percentage of planning applications determined to meet MHCLG performance standards	GREEN
PP01: Percentage of the most vulnerable victims of scams recorded on the National Scams Hub supported	GREEN
PP02: Percentage of trader applications to Public Protection's 'Trading Standards Checked' scheme processed within 10 working days	GREEN
AKM01: % of schools with highest numbers of children eligible for free school meals engaging with the Kent School Games	RED
AKM02: Number of people attending and engaging with training and learning opportunities facilitated by Active Kent & Medway	GREEN
TS04: Percentage of businesses rating Trading Standards advice (Primary Authority and Pay as You Go) as Very Good or Excellent	GREEN

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

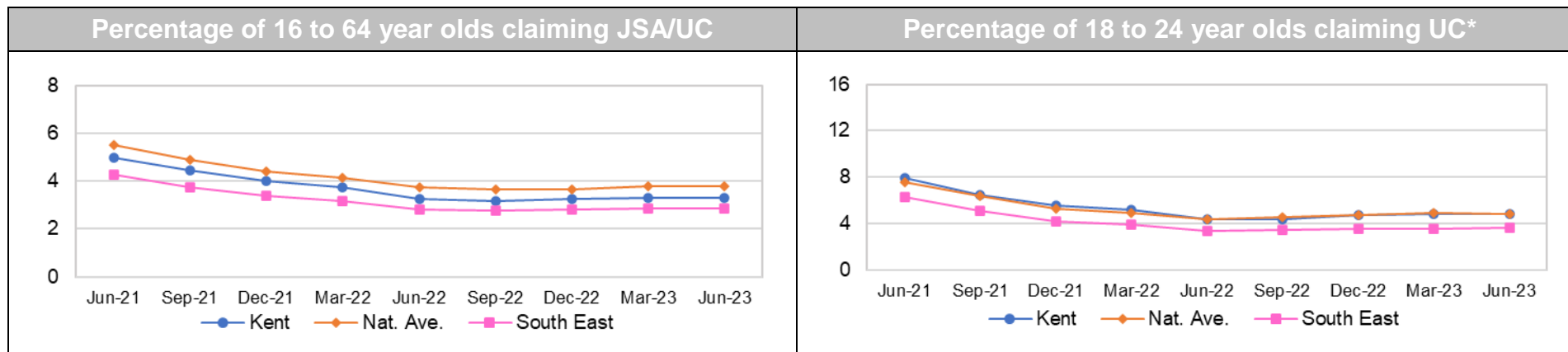
Ref	Performance Indicators - Economy	Jun-22 (Q1)	Sep-22 (Q2)	Dec-22 (Q3)	Mar-23 (Q4)	Jun-23 (Q1)	RAG	Target	Floor
ED05	Number of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE) (rolling 12 months)	350	445	420	418	388	AMBER	400	350
ED08	Developer contributions secured against total contributions sought	99%	100%	99.9%	81%	99.7%	GREEN	98%	85%
ED10	Businesses assisted via Kent and Medway Growth Hub contract (Year to Date)	381	884	1,326	1,722	261	GREEN	171	154
ED11	Businesses assisted through intensive support provided via the Growth Hub contract (Year to Date)	14	36	86	140	30	GREEN	17	15

ED05 - Not all districts have dedicated Empty Property Officers and districts currently have vacancies in their Private Sector Housing teams. Whilst this is impacting on performance, KCC does have NUE contacts in all districts, and NUE projects funded in the previous budget year will, on completion, contribute to achieving the annual target.

Ref	Activity Indicator	Jun-22 (Q1)	Sep-22 (Q2)	Dec-22 (Q3)	Mar-23 (Q4)	Jun-23 (Q1)	YTD 23/24	YTD 22/23
ED08a	Developer contributions secured (£000s)	6,342	9,339	1,349	4,246	13,300	<b>13,300</b>	6,342

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

Activity indicators



\* Please note this activity indicator was incorrectly labelled in the performance dashboard item (appendix 2) at the May 2023 Committee meeting.

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Clair Bell

### Quarterly KPIs

Ref	Performance Indicators – Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	RAG	Target	Floor
LRA06	Customer satisfaction with Registration Services	94%	95%	94%	95%	95%	GREEN	95%	90%
LRA15	Total number of customers attending events in Libraries and Archives	30,703	41,829	31,622	44,272	41,969	GREEN	34,000	30,800

Quarter 4: LRA06 – 685 customers were surveyed, 651 were satisfied.

### Annual KPIs

Ref	Performance Indicators – Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	RAG	Target 2023/24	Floor 2023/24
LRA12	Customer satisfaction with libraries	92%	94%	83%	94%	94%	GREEN	90%	85%
LRA13	Customer satisfaction with archives	95%	96%	No Survey	97%	98%	GREEN	95%	90%

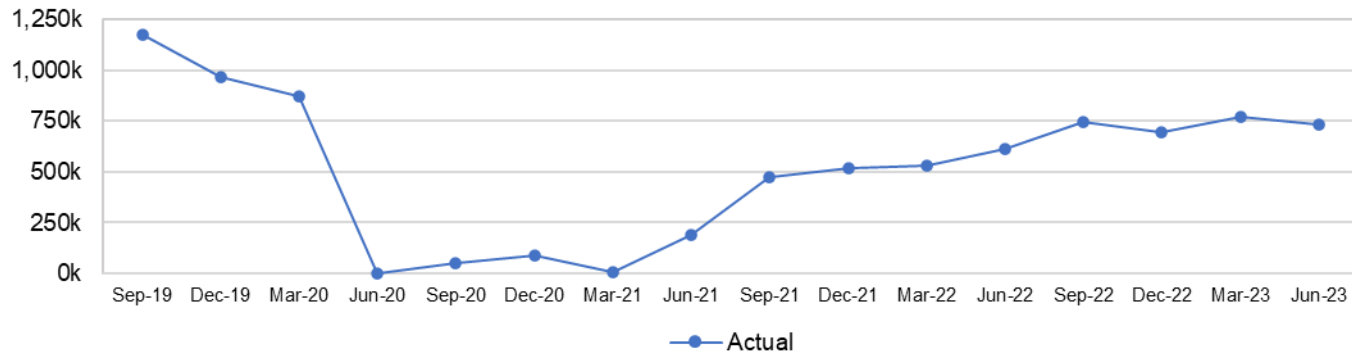
2022/23: LRA12 – 5,974 customers surveyed, 5,642 satisfied; LRA13 – 108 surveyed, 106 satisfied.



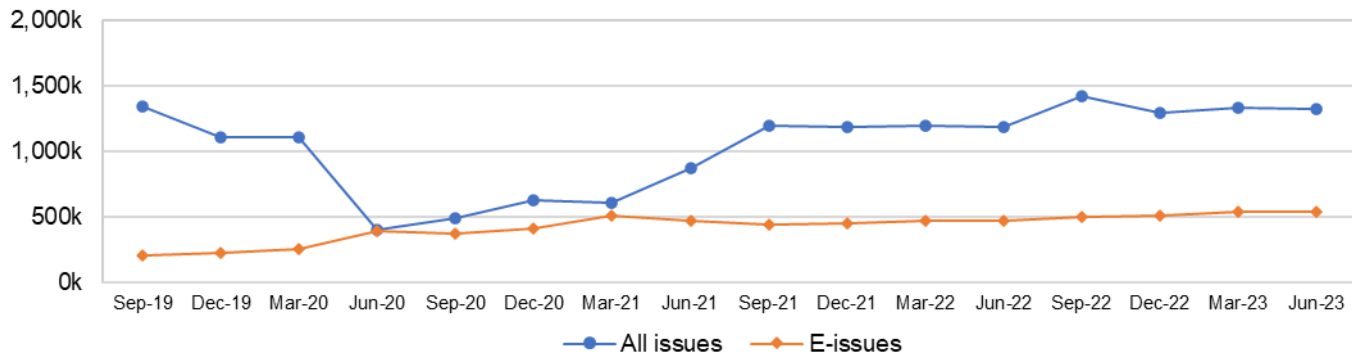
Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Clair Bell

Ref	Activity Indicators (Quarterly totals)	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Value vs Expected	Expected Activity	
								Upper	Lower
LRA01	Number of visits to libraries (including mobiles) (000s)	613	748	696	771	<b>736</b>	In line	766	693
LRA02	Total number of books issued (includes audio- and e-books) (000s)	1,182	1,425	1,293	1,331	<b>1,324</b>	In line	1,326	1,199
LRA25	Number of archive enquiries answered	1,948	2,221	1,859	2,479	<b>1,915</b>	In line	2,110	1,910

**Total number of physical visits to Kent libraries**



**Total number of book issues from Kent libraries**



Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Clair Bell

Ref	Performance Indicators - other services	Jun-22 (Q1)	Sep-22 (Q2)	Dec-22 (Q3)	Mar-23 (Q4)	Jun-23 (Q1)	YTD 23/24	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
DT14	Percentage of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) faults reported online	93%	93%	94%	89%	87%	87%	AMBER	90%	80%
EPE16	Median number of days to resolve priority faults on public rights of way network (rolling 12-month figure)	24	23	25	*	30	**	RED	20	25
CST01	Percentage of local actions from completed Domestic Homicide Reviews implemented by target date.	82%	75%	83%	95%	85%	85%	GREEN	70%	63%
CST02	Percentage of Lessons Learnt Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Seminar attendees rating the event as Very Good or Excellent.	77%	94%	86%	***	***	***	GREEN	85%	76.5%
CST03	Percentage of service users who report feeling safer due to warden support	New indicator				67%	67%	AMBER	70%	65%

\* No data available due to a software issue

\*\* No Year-to-Date figure as this is a Rolling 12-month indicator.

\*\*\* No seminars have been held since December 2022, but one is planned for September 2023 (Q2)

Jun-23 (Q1): DT14 – 1,790 faults reported, 1,555 were online; EPE16 – 30 priority faults resolved; CST01 – 26 reviews, 22 completed by target date; CST03 – 254 service users reported feeling safer, 377 service users were surveyed.

DT14 - We have seen a move to on-line reporting particularly by the traditional PRoW users. It is quicker, easier and people can opt to be updated. However, the levels of reporting through the Contact Centre tend to increase when there are weather events. Those reporting for the first time or as a one-off also tend to use the Contact Centre rather than register to report online – vegetation overgrowth is a common driver of such reports and these have been higher than usual this year.

EPE16 – The issue with the software in the previous Quarter has now been addressed with the system updated to allow more accurate capturing of faults information. However, a number of faults which were made safe but then required a longer-term permanent repair, have negatively impacted the KPI.

CST02 – No seminars have been held since December 2022, but one is planned for September 2023.

CST03 – Although the target was not met, for those who didn't say they felt safer, responders advised it was not applicable to their circumstances, or they reported no change, or that they didn't know. No respondents reported that they felt less safe.

Division	Director	Cabinet Member
Growth & Communities	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Clair Bell

Ref	Performance Indicators - other services	Jun-22 (Q1)	Sep-22 (Q2)	Dec-22 (Q3)	Mar-23 (Q4)	Jun-23 (Q1)	YTD 23/24	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
COR01	Percentage of cases progressed for initial coronial decision within 2 working days of notification of a death.	75%	75%	72%	66%	78%	78%	AMBER	83%	72%
KCP01	Kent Country Parks aggregate average star ratings from Google, Trip Advisor and Facebook	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.6	GREEN	4.6	4.0
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.	*	185	148	0	214	214	GREEN	75	68
PAG01	Percentage of planning applications determined to meet MHCLG performance standards	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN	100%	81%

\* KSS did not support work experience in 2021/22 academic year (Sept 2021 – Jul 2022) due to Covid

Jun-23 (Q1): COR01 – 1,601 cases, 1,242 progressed within 2 working days; PAG01 – 35 planning applications, all of which met MHCLG performance standard.

COR01 – The coroner service is reliant on information from the NHS particularly in order to progress cases and while the NHS continues to be under pressure, the information is not always provided as quickly as we require in order to progress cases in an optimal time frame. This has been exacerbated by the recent and current NHS and doctors strikes and the piloting of the Medical Examiner system by the NHS.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Growth &amp; Communities</b>	<b>Stephanie Holt-Castle</b>	<b>Clair Bell</b>

Ref	Performance Indicators - other services	Jun-22 (Q1)	Sep-22 (Q2)	Dec-22 (Q3)	Mar-23 (Q4)	Jun-23 (Q1)	YTD 23/24	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
PP01	Percentage of the most vulnerable victims of scams recorded on the National Scams Hub supported by Public Protection	100%	100%	100%	100%	*	N/a	GREEN	90%	80%
PP02	Percentage of trader applications to Public Protection’s ‘Trading Standards Checked’ scheme processed within 10 working days.	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN	100%	81%
AKM01	Percentage of schools with the highest numbers of children eligible for free school meals engaging with the Kent School Games	55%	55%	54%	55%	42%	42%	RED	55%	45%
AKM02	Number of people attending and engaging with training and learning opportunities facilitated by Active Kent & Medway	316	580	163	153	306	306	GREEN	250	225
TS04	Percentage of businesses rating Trading Standards advice (Primary Authority and Pay as You Go) as Very Good or Excellent	100%	100%	100%	92%	100%	100%	GREEN	90%	82%

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\* No return for this Quarter due to a reduction in referrals of people who have been scammed.  
 Jun-23 (Q1): PP02 – 33 trader applications processed; AKM01 – 11 schools with high proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals engaged with Kent school games; TS04 – 5 out of 5 businesses rated trading standards advice as very good or excellent.

AKM01 – Three Kent School Games events were cancelled in Quarter 1 due to bad weather and this negatively impacted the KPI.

**From:** Benjamin Watts, General Counsel

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 26 September 2023

**Subject:** Work Programme 2023/2024

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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

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

**Recommendation:** The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and agree its Work Programme for 2023/2024.

## 1. Introduction

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

## 2. Work Programme

- 2.1 The proposed work programme has been compiled from items in the Future Executive Decision List and from actions arising and from topics, within the remit of the functions of this cabinet committee, identified at the agenda setting meetings. Agenda setting meetings are held 6 weeks before a cabinet committee meeting, in accordance with the constitution.
- 2.2 The cabinet committee is requested to consider and note the items within the proposed Work Programme, set out in appendix A to this report, and to suggest any additional topics to be considered at future meetings, where appropriate.
- 2.3 The schedule of commissioning activity which falls within the remit of this cabinet committee will be included in the work programme and considered at future agenda setting meetings to support more effective forward agenda planning and allow members to have oversight of significant service delivery decisions in advance.
- 2.4 When selecting future items, the cabinet committee should consider the contents of performance monitoring reports. Any 'for information' items will be

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

### **3. Conclusion**

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

**4. Recommendation:** The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and agree its Work Programme for 2023/2024.

**5. Background Documents:** None

### **6. Contact details**

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**GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Committee to receive item</b>
Work Programme	Standing item
Verbal Updates – Cabinet Members and Corporate Director	Standing item
District Visits Programme	Standing item
Final Draft Budget	Annually (November)
Risk Register – Strategic Risk Register	Annually (March)
Performance Dashboard	Quarterly
Kent and Medway Business Fund Monitoring	Bi-annual reporting (6 monthly)
Key Decision Items	

**9 NOVEMBER 2023 at 2pm**

1	Intro/ Web announcement	Standing item
2	Apologies and Subs	Standing item
3	Declaration of Interest	Standing item
4	Minutes	Standing item
5	Verbal Updates – Cabinet Members and Corp. Dir.	Standing item
6	District Visits Programme	Standing item
7	Final Draft Budget	Annually
8	Project Gigabyte Broadband Programme	
9	Kent Communities Programme	Key Decision
10	Kent and Medway Economic Framework	Key Decision
11	Trading Standards Checked	
12	Integrated Care Strategy	Key Decision
13	Work Programme	Standing item

**18 JANUARY 2024 at 10am**

1	Intro/ Web announcement	Standing item
2	Apologies and Subs	Standing item
3	Declaration of Interest	Standing item
4	Minutes	Standing item
5	Verbal Updates – Cabinet Members and Corp. Dir.	Standing item
6	District Visits Programme	Standing item
7	Community Wardens Consultation Report	
8	Work Programme	Standing item

**5 MARCH 2024 at 2pm**

1	Intro/ Web announcement	Standing item
2	Apologies and Subs	Standing item
3	Declaration of Interest	Standing item
4	Minutes	Standing item
5	Verbal Updates – Cabinet Members and Corp. Dir.	Standing item
6	District Visits Programme	Standing item
7	Risk Register	Annually
8	Kent and Medway Business Fund Monitoring	Bi-annual reporting
9	Work Programme	Standing item

**14 MAY 2024 at 2pm**

1	Intro/ Web announcement	Standing item
2	Apologies and Subs	Standing item
3	Declaration of Interest	Standing item
4	Minutes	Standing item
5	Verbal Updates – Cabinet Members and Corp. Dir.	Standing item
6	District Visits Programme	Standing item
7	Work Programme	Standing item

**3 JULY 2024 at 10am**

1	Intro/ Web announcement	Standing item
2	Apologies and Subs	Standing item
3	Declaration of Interest	Standing item
4	Minutes	Standing item
5	Verbal Updates – Cabinet Members and Corp. Dir.	Standing item
6	District Visits Programme	Standing item
7	Work Programme	Standing item

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

Thames Estuary/EDC/Thames Crossing	TBA - (possibly three separate items)
Otterpool	Late 2023
Trading Standards Checked and Ports Team	Possibly two reports

Creative Economy	James Pearson
Sources of Energy	<i>(Mark Hood – Agenda Setting 17/5/22)</i> Update paper.
Kent Design Guide	Deferred from September meeting – date TBC
Tourism in the county and economic impact	<i>(Mark Hood – Agenda Setting 3/8/22)</i> Possible presentation from Chief Exec of Visit Kent.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (KCC's strategic role)	<i>(Jordan Meade – GED&amp;C CC 11/01/23)</i> After government announcement
Dungeness Nuclear Power Station	<i>(Mr Robey – agenda setting 31/01/23)</i>
Agriculture and farming economy – how can the Council assist the farming industry	<i>(Mr Sole – GED&amp;C CC 14 March 2023)</i>
Gypsy and Traveller Sites	<i>(Mr Rayner – GED&amp;C CC 14 March 2023)</i>
Banking hubs (LINK invitation)	<i>(Mr Hood – agenda setting 31/1/23)</i>
Faversham Creek Bridge	<i>(re-added – agenda setting 23/5/23)</i>

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