

From: Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development
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To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 2 March 2021

Subject: Performance Dashboard

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

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

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA) service has adopted a temporary set of indicators to reflect current delivery of services and have not set targets. Similarly, the Environment, Planning and Enforcement Division have not set targets.

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

Recommendation(s):

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

1. Introduction

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

2. Performance Dashboard

2.1. The current Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance dashboard provides results up to the end of December 2020 and is attached in Appendix 1.

2.2. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2020/21. The Dashboard also includes a range of activity indicators which help give context to the KPIs.

2.3. For those with targets, KPIs are presented with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) alerts to show progress. Details of how the alerts are generated are outlined in the Guidance Notes, included with the Dashboard in Appendix 1.

3. Economic Development

- 3.1. The number of properties brought back to use through No Use Empty (NUE) over the last 12 months was 472, which is ahead of target; 6,798 in total have been brought back to use since the start of the project in 2005. The target for the number of businesses assisted via the Kent and Medway Growth Hub was exceeded. Whilst high-intensive support is below target, the accumulative aspects of a unique business interaction moving from medium touch to high intensive will continue to be accumulative leading to the annual target set by BEIS being met.
- 3.2. The Kent & Medway Covid-19 Helpline phase 3 (Oct-Dec) completed 43 Business Support Network Sessions, 337 1-2-1s with businesses, with 148 businesses engaging in a deep dive survey. 26.7% of businesses confirmed an improvement in confidence moving forward.

4. Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)

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

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

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

5. Environment, Planning and Enforcement

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

6. Recommendation(s):

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

7. Contact details

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