

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

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 1 July 2021

**Subject:** Performance Dashboard

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Performance Dashboard shows the progress of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and activity indicators for Quarter 4 of 20/21.

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

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

**Recommendation(s):**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report for Quarter 4 of 20/21, and COMMENT on proposed KPIs for 2021/22.

**1. Introduction**

1.1. Part of the role of Cabinet Committees is to review the performance of those functions of the Council that fall within its remit. To support this role, Performance Dashboards are regularly reported to each Cabinet Committee throughout the year, and this is the fourth and final 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 March 2021 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 462, which is ahead of target; 6,924 in total have been brought back to use since the start of the project in 2005.
- 3.2. Quarter 4 was the first time this year that developer contributions secured did not exceed target. This was due to one project, namely the proposed housing development at Sturry/Broad Oak. The 78% of sought contributions secured is based on a worst-case scenario which includes potential loss of LEP funding due to project delays, and unexpected costs for Nitrate mitigation.
- 3.3. The target for the number of businesses assisted via the Kent and Medway Growth Hub was exceeded, for both those requiring light/medium support, and those requiring intensive support. The Kent & Medway Covid-19 Helpline Phase 4 (Jan-Mar) completed 103 Business Support Network Sessions, 512 1-2-1s with businesses, with 30% of businesses confirming an improvement in confidence moving forward.

### **4. Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)**

- 4.1. In accordance with the government's lockdown guidelines announced in January 2021, 29 libraries continued to offer the Select and Collect service within reduced opening hours. Taking account of the very high level of Covid19 cases in Kent at the time, PC and Wi-Fi provision were suspended for the lockdown period. A further three libraries were opened for Select and Collect during January and February, two of which were to ensure library provision in areas where libraries were assigned as Covid testing centres. The Archive Search Room remained closed, with staff both working at home and coming in to carry out collection work and research for enquiries. Birth registrations were suspended so that the team could focus on the high number of death registrations. Ceremonies were also suspended, unless there were exceptional circumstances, as required by government, but Citizenship Ceremonies were able to continue on an individual basis.
- 4.2. The temporary KPIs the service has deployed this year were retained for Quarter 4 in order that LRA's output could be measured, particularly with regards to digital content and services tailored to be delivered during the Covid pandemic. Development of the online offer continued, and e-issues increased by 97.1% against the same reporting period last year, with March seeing the highest weekly issues to date. The online service offer was developed to include a YouTube channel, launched in February 2021, and a Podcast channel featuring On the Books author interviews. The number of customers joining online increased by 35.5% from Quarter 3, reflecting the increased online engagement during the lockdown period.
- 4.3. Mobile libraries continued to deliver the Select and Collect book offer throughout Quarter 4, and between 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 6<sup>th</sup> April, brand new mobile vehicles were

deployed, carrying the new LRA branding. The vehicles are greener and although smaller, can hold more stock than the old mobile vehicles.

- 4.4. Other projects that were completed during this period included the refurbishment of Greenhithe Library, and the completion of the new multi-partner Southborough Hub building, in which the library will be housed. Both libraries opened at the end of April. In addition, Kent LRA joined the British Library's network of Business and Intellectual Property Centres (BIPC), which will enable the Service to support small businesses in the county through a host of different services. Plans have been drawn up for a BIPC hub at Kent History and Library Centre.
- 4.5. In line with the government's roadmap to recovery, a phased recovery programme has been developed for LRA and, during March, essential PC use and birth registrations were resumed in libraries. Staff have been working to clear the backlog of almost 3,000 birth registrations from the lockdown period alongside all the new births, registering a total of 2,486 births during March and reducing the backlog in that time by just under 1,000. Although up by 29.3% from Quarter 4 last year, death registrations have been reducing month on month during this Quarter. Customer satisfaction with registration overall is at 94.5% which is just 1.5% percentage points below the target that was set pre-Covid.
- 4.6. The results of the Library Survey indicate that satisfaction is at 83% which is 2 percentage points below the floor level. An examination of the comments revealed that the closure of smaller branch libraries due to the pandemic was the main reason for dissatisfaction. However, satisfaction with specific services was higher, with 88% satisfaction with the e-offer and 90% with the Select and Collect service.
- 4.7. LRA are now working towards the reopening of libraries in line with the government roadmap, with a view to reopening all 99 libraries by the summer.

## **5. Environment, Planning and Enforcement (EPE)**

- 5.1. Although no targets were set for 2020/21 due to uncertainties caused by Coronavirus, 4 out of the 6 KPIs did exceed the year-end target set the previous year. For the other two, the greater use of the Public Rights of Way network during lockdowns has seen a greater number of faults reported, coupled with some delays to maintenance programmes during lockdowns, and as such the time taken to fix faults has increased. For volunteer hours, this has been impacted on by Covid restrictions, but there were still over 20,000 hours contributing to delivery of EPE services over the year.
6. KPIs proposed for use in the 2021/22 dashboard are detailed in Appendix 2.

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

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance report, and COMMENT on proposed KPIs for 2020/21.

## 8. Contact details

Report Author: Rachel Kennard  
Chief Analyst  
Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance  
03000 414527  
[Rachel.Kennard@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.Kennard@kent.gov.uk)

Relevant Director: Simon Jones  
Interim Corporate Director  
Growth, Environment and Transport  
03000 411683  
[Simon.Jones@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Simon.Jones@kent.gov.uk)