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To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 25 September 2020

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 so far this year. Economic Development have set targets against indicators, which have been RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rated accordingly.

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 first 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 June 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 519, which is ahead of target; 6,566 in total have been

brought back to use since the start of the project in 2005. In this quarter, £1.97m was secured from developers of new housing sites for capital investment, which was 100% of the amount sought. The target for the number of businesses assisted via the Kent and Medway Growth Hub was exceeded,

- 3.2 The Kent & Medway Growth Hub, provided an enhanced service provision, during the period of Qtr1 20-21. The service consisted of non-financial business support to Kent businesses adversely impacted by the COVID19 emergency. The key focus of the enhanced service covered three areas:
- Assist businesses to access the Governments support measures as soon as they are available;
 - Gather local intelligence on where further support is needed; and
 - Provide information, advice and reassurance to businesses struggling to cope.

The target number of calls were set at 8,000 and achievement against target can be reported for Quarter 1 as 8,260.

4. Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA)

- 4.1. All of Kent's libraries, register offices and the archive at Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone were closed for the duration of Quarter 1 following the government's implementation of lockdown.
- 4.2. All Registration services were suspended except death registrations, which moved to a telephone service from 1st April. Libraries and Archive staff continued to work behind the scenes, carrying out Home Library customer befriending calls, promoting and developing digital offers, answering customer enquiries and working to improve access to archive collections.
- 4.3. The library online joining facility was amended so that customers could join via the website and immediately access e-Material; eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines and eNewspapers. This facility along with e-offers was actively promoted on the website and social media, and from 20th April through a countywide radio advertising campaign.
- 4.4. The 'Ask a Kent Librarian' Service continued to respond to enquiries via telephone and email, helping many customers to access e-Material. A programme of virtual events and activities was developed, including a reading group and Summer Reading Challenge.
- 4.5. Library staff were in regular contact with over 250 vulnerable customers, offering companionship and support with signposting to organisations such as Kent Together. This service was extended to Postal Loan and Mobile Library customers.
- 4.6. As key workers, the Registration teams across the county continued to work from 14 LRA buildings. The demand for death registration appointments was much higher than usual due to the pandemic with 5,350 deaths registered, an increase of 40% on the same period in 2019-20. By moving to a telephone registration approach, working as a county team and focussing those staff only on Death registrations the demand was dealt with effectively and compassionately.

- 4.7. Following the government's easing of lockdown restrictions in May, plans for recovery were set in motion with the re-establishment of face to face birth appointments in 12 libraries from 17th June, as well as the recommencement of notice of marriage appointments. By the end of June 2020, the backlog of 4,000 birth registrations had already been reduced by 1,608 and was cleared by the end of August.
- 4.8. Archive staff were able to work from the Kent History and Library Centre to complete the required checks on collections and answer outstanding enquiries. Library staff also began to enter buildings on a phased basis, keeping to social distancing guidelines, to prepare for the 'Select and Collect' physical book service and public PC offer which launched at 12 libraries on 13th July. We have since opened another 12 in September with a browse and borrow book offer and public PCs.
- 4.9. There were no physical book issues during Quarter 1, but due to rigorous promotion and an upsurge in usage as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown, e-Issues increased by 108% to 389,712. The Libraries Customer Satisfaction Survey, which included a section on customer satisfaction with services during the lockdown, indicated that 94% of library customers were satisfied with the service. Surveys of other parts of the service will take place later in 2020/21.

5. Environment, Planning and Enforcement

- 5.1. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of people reporting Public Rights of Way (PROW) faults online; this coincides with an increase in the number of faults reported which is up by over a third compared to Quarter 1 last year, indicative of the greater use of the PROW network during lockdown. There was also more than a three-fold increase in the number of businesses supported by Trading Standards and the Sustainable Business Team in Quarter 1 compared to last year.
- 5.2. Some indicators experienced significant decreases compared to the same period last year including, income generated (down 45%), investment secured (down 62%), and as very little volunteering was possible, volunteer hours contributing to EPE services were down 92%.

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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