

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held Virtually on Monday, 20 July 2020.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr P J Oakford, Mr M D Payne, Mrs S Prendergast and Mr M Whiting

ALSO PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Z Cooke (Corporate Director of Finance), Miss E Feakins (Chief Accountant), Mrs C Head (Head of Finance Operations), Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance - Planning, Policy & Strategy), Mrs S Thompson (Head of Planning Applications Group), Mr B Watts (General Counsel) and Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

154. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

155. Declaration of Interests by Member in Items on the Agenda for this meeting

(Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

156. Minutes of the Meetings held on 22 and 29 June 2020

(Item 4)

Resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on 22 and 29 June 2020 are a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

157. Cabinet Member Updates

(Item 5)

- (1) Mrs Bell said the authority, as part of its public health responsibilities, regularly reviewed its care settings to identify any issues that might contribute to the spread of the coronavirus. She also said that on Friday 17 July East Kent Hospitals Trust announced its intention to test its workforce over the following five days to get a snapshot of the number of staff across all sites who might be carrying the Covid-19 virus asymptotically and to help Public Health England understand more about the spread and prevention of the virus. The Trust intended to publish the results of the staff testing.
- (2) Mrs Bell said the government had announced new powers for local authorities to impose restrictions on movement to deal quickly with local outbreaks of

Covid-19. Upper tier councils now had the power to close premises, public outdoor spaces and prevent specific events taking place without having to make representations to a magistrate.

- (3) Mrs Bell said the latest figures from the Office of National Statistics indicated that the number of smokers in Kent continued to fall and was at a record low. The number of smokers in Kent had dropped from 15% in 2018 to 13.7% in 2019 which was below the national average. She was pleased that more people than ever were quitting, and young people were not taking up smoking in the first place. Although the number of smokers in Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone, Swale, Tonbridge and Malling, and Tunbridge Wells had fallen, work was underway to understand why some parts of the county, including Dartford, Dover, Gravesham, Maidstone, Sevenoaks and Thanet, had shown an increase. She said KCC commissioned the One You Smoke Free Service through the Kent Community Health NHS Foundation and was taking part in the national #QuitforCovid campaign.
- (4) Mrs Chandler said that since the 1 June, 70 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children had been transferred to other parts of the country under the National Transfer Scheme, however, in the same period there had been 116 new arrivals including 12 over the weekend. Mrs Chandler said she had attended the opening of a new facility, The Nest, which provided short breaks for 13-17-year-olds who were in Tier 4 accommodation. The original idea for the facility had come from parents, the building was operated using NHS funding and the aim was to prevent young people from going into secure accommodation.
- (5) Mr Long said all children would return to school in September and work was underway to create a socially distanced environment. He said there were practical difficulties to overcome and that announcements would be made when solutions were identified, and decisions made. He said he planned to make a decision on a proposal to postpone the Kent Test to mid-October. (Post meeting note: this decision was made on 22 July). Mr Long also said that, from the beginning of September and to an extent over the summer holiday, schools would be working to help children catch up on education lost as a result of lockdown and especially for those children who had suffered a disproportionate disadvantage. He said the government had promised £1 billion but details of how this might be split between schools and other organisations were awaited. KCC did not expect to receive assistance from the fund and its role, would be to advise and assist schools.
- (6) Mr Payne said that KCC had been successful in 100% of the bids it submitted to the government's Active Travel Fund, however in order to be eligible to apply for the second tranche of funding, these schemes had to be fully implemented within eight weeks. He said the authority intended to make ambitious bids for funding from Tranche 2 that would have significant benefits for cycling and walking while at the same time being mindful not to place public transport at a disadvantage and considering the needs of other road users.
- (7) Mr Payne said that, along with all 15 members of Transport for the South East, KCC had sent a letter consenting to the establishment of Transport for the South East as a sub national transport authority. He was also pleased to

announce that KCC in conjunction with Amey PLC had made a successful bid to the ADEPT Smart Places Live Labs project for £2 million which would be used for projects including researching the use of graphene for road surfaces which had the potential to increase durability and longevity.

- (8) Mr Whiting said that he continued to develop KCC's Renewal and Resilience Plan which involved meetings with numerous local organisations, and councils in Essex and London, as well as discussion with Kent businesses and the Institute of Directors. He said the plan would be formally launched at a special meeting of the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership in early August. He also said that the establishment of an Employment Task force would be finalised this week and that the Growth Hub Helpline was continuing to prove its worth. It had, to the end of the last week, taken 7,964 calls, conducted 1,809 webchats and its specialist advisers had provided 2,951 intensive advice sessions. Mr Whiting said that he had opened a Kent stakeholder meeting on innovation and co-operation attended by representatives from KCC, Kent universities and business as well as Locate in Kent and the Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of the meeting was to agree Kent's ambitions for cross-border co-operation on innovation, which would feed into the Straits Committee strategy, and Kent's response to the specific West Flanders proposal.
- (9) Mr Whiting said he had written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government expressing his disappointment at the government's decision not to involve the UK in future European Territorial Co-operation (Interreg) programmes. He had also responded to the government's consultation on a proposed Freeports policy and he promoted the establishment of such a facility in Kent. He said he had followed up his meeting with the Minister for London and had offered Kent's support for cross border joint working for key infrastructure schemes such as the Lower Thames Crossing, Crossrail to Ebbsfleet extension, Thanet Parkway station and additional rolling stock for HS1. Mr Whiting concluded his update by announcing Produced in Kent and Visit Kent had established a new HelpKentBuyLocal website to help residents find and book tables at local restaurants, cafes and pubs with a view to keeping the Kent pound within Kent.
- (10) Miss Carey said that all household waste and recycling sites in Kent were now open seven days a week and bookings could be made up to four weeks in advance with the limit of one visit per household per month increased to two. Feedback from residents was positive and capacity would be increased as fast as it was safe to do so. She also said that KCC's Planning Applications Committee had unanimously approved the plans for a new household waste and recycling centre at Allington which would relieve pressure on the Tovil site and bring the network of such sites to 19.
- (11) Miss Carey referred to the update, on how KCC would deliver an accelerated target for net zero carbon emissions for its own services and business by 2030, given at the meeting of the County Council on 16 July. Innovative work by Laser Energy had helped the authority model various strategies and she was pleased there was a plan to deliver the ambitious target. The day after the County Council meeting, the final draft of the Energy and Low Emissions

Strategy for Kent and Medway, which set out the plan for achieving net zero for Kent and Medway, was considered by the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee. She anticipated being able to adopt it on behalf of KCC shortly.

- (12) Miss Carey concluded her update by encouraging everyone in Kent to read the Management Plan for Kent's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and respond to the consultation before the deadline of 7 September.
- (13) Mr Hill said that 12 of the authority's larger libraries, one in each district, had re-opened last week and it was anticipated that 30 would be re-opened by the end of September. The initial services offered included public computer access and a select and collect book offer. It was planned to re-introduce book browsing, re-start the mobile library service and re-open the archive research room over the coming months. He also said: progress had been made dealing with the backlog of 4,000 birth registrations with 3,380 completed over the last four weeks; weddings and civil partnership ceremonies would start on 4 July in accordance with government guidance on social distancing and limits on the numbers attending; and citizenship ceremonies would re-commence as soon as possible.
- (14) Mrs Prendergast said that 52% of staff had responded to the recent staff survey and thanked all staff for their hard work during the pandemic. She said a new campaign, Moving Forward for Kent, had been launched to help get the Kent economy moving following the pandemic as well as to support businesses and residents. She said many businesses were using the hashtag *# for Kent* in their social media posts and using the campaign images in their promotional material. She also said that the annual budget consultation had been launched and, to date, 886 responses had been received, which was higher than in previous years at the same stage in the process.
- (15) Mr Oakford said that KCC's share of the government's Covid-19 Financial Support grant of £500 million was £10 million which would contribute to reducing the authority's budget gap. He also said KCC's buildings were being re-opened with Aylesford Depot and five area offices scheduled to re-open this week. Mr Oakford paid tribute to the staff in Democratic Services, who were supporting more meetings than normal, and he acknowledged the additional work involved in organising virtual meetings.

158. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - May 2020-21

(Item 6)

- (1) Mr Gough thanked officers for the new format of the report which improved its transparency and clarity. Mr Oakford introduced the report which set out the revenue and capital budget monitoring position as of 31 May 2020. He welcomed the new format and drew attention to the fact that it took account of the financial impact of the authority's response to Covid-19. He said that, excluding the impact of Covid-19, there was an overspend of £14.6 million on the revenue budget and a re-phasing of £48 million on the capital budget. Since the report had been published an additional £10 million Covid-19 Financial Support grant had been received which would reduce the overspend by £10 million and increase the grants received to date from £66.9 million to

£76.9 million. He drew attention to the overspend of £30.5 million in the Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG), as well as to the overspends in the revenue budget of £7.7 million in Children's Young People and Education Directorate (CYPE) and £3.8 million in Adult Social Care Directorate. In response to his invitation to comment on the report, Emma Feakins (Chief Accountant) described in greater detail the structure of the report.

- (2) Mrs Bell said that before the outbreak of Covid-19 there had been a trend towards older people receiving care in their own homes and a decline in demand for residential and nursing care. When the cost of care for these users and new users was projected forward for the full twelve months, there was an increase to the original budget forecast. In addition, there was some evidence that older people had received increased levels of support in their own homes, rather than moving into a social care setting, during the Covid-19 pandemic. The forecast position assumed that demographic pressures would result in an increase in client numbers during the rest of the year. Mrs Bell also said that demand for supported living services had increased and was likely to increase further as young adults with disabilities were more likely to maintain their independence at home with support rather than entering residential settings. She also referred to pressures on Adult Mental Health and Physical Disability Community Budgets and directed Members to appendix 1 of the report which set out detailed information.
- (3) Mrs Chandler said the most significant element of the overspend in CYPE was the £5.2 million that related to an increase in the number of externally purchased placements for looked after children (LAC). She said other authorities were in a similar position, and efforts were being made to recruit additional foster carers. She said the number of LACs in Kent was low relative to the population, which could be attributed, in part, to investment in early help services, and this should be a matter of celebration. Mrs Chandler also referred to the expenditure on Special Educational Needs and the work being done as a result of the Written Statement of Action following last year's Ofsted/CQC Local Area SEND Inspection. She anticipated that the number of referrals for EHCP Assessments would rise from September when pupils returned to school.
- (4) Mr Long said the overspend forecasted in the DSG was predominantly a result of the additional cost of supporting SEN services and because the Basic Need grant from government did not cover all the costs of building and expanding schools. Work was, however, underway to ensure capital projects were contained within the allocated budget. He also said an increase to the Basic Need grant was required and his discussions with the DfE led him to believe this might happen.
- (5) Ms Cooke said this was an important report as it informed the report setting out the amendment to the current year's budget which was to be considered by the County Council in September and for building the budget for 2021/22.
- (6) Resolved to:
 - (a) Note the new budget monitoring report format that increases the accessibility of the information contained in the report

- (b) Note the forecast Revenue and Capital monitoring position
- (c) Note the way the financial impact of Covid-19 is being monitored
- (d) Note and agree Revenue budget adjustments
- (e) Note and agree Capital budget adjustments
- (f) Note and agree the addition of two new fully funded schemes to the capital programme
- (g) Note the Prudential Indicators report.

159. Adoption of the Kent Mineral Sites Plan and modifications to the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013 - 2030 resulting from the Early Partial Review

(Item 7)

- (1) Mr Gough welcomed the report and said its length and comprehensiveness were a strong argument in favour of electronic papers. Mr Oakford introduced the report which set out the Inspector's Report on the examination of the Early Partial Review (EPR) of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan and the Kent Minerals Sites Plan (MSP). He said it was important to recognise the considerable efforts of Sharon Thompson and her team in progressing this work. Mr Oakford also said that, following publication of the pre-submission drafts, for the statutory period between January and March 2019, 405 representations had been received. Ms Thompson said the final phase of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan work would be the adoption of the Plans by the County Council. She also said the Inspector had found both Plans satisfactory subject to the modifications set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report and in the appendices to the Inspector's report (Appendix A of the papers). Ms Thompson updated the Cabinet on the outcome of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee's consideration of a similar report at its meeting on 17 July and said all but one member, of that Committee had endorsed the recommendations.
- (2) Mr Gough and Mr Oakford thanked Ms Thompson and her team for the comprehensive report.
- (3) Resolved to:
 - (i) note the Inspector's Report on the examination of the EPR and MSP and note his recommended modifications
 - (ii) note the recommendations of the Sustainability Appraisals of the EPR and MSP and
 - (iii) endorse the adoption of:
 - (a) the Kent Mineral Sites Plan (as modified by the Inspector's recommendations) at Appendix B of the report; and

- (b) the modifications to the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan as set out by the Early Partial Review (as modified by the Inspector's recommendations) at Appendix C of the report.
- (iv) note that the decision to adopt the Kent Mineral Sites Plan and modifications to the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan is a matter for County Council and request the County Council to:
 - (a) accept the modifications recommended by the Inspector to the Kent Mineral Sites Plan and modifications to the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (as set out by the Early Partial Review); and
 - (b) adopt the Kent Mineral Sites Plan and modifications to the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (as set out by the Early Partial Review) (as modified); and
 - (c) delegate powers to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport to approve any non-material changes to the text of the MSP and modifications to the KMWLP (as set out by the Early Partial Review) in consultation with the Deputy Leader prior to their publication.
- (v) note and agree the future work activities on mineral and waste planning activities as set out in paragraph 5.5 of the report as the basis for a revised Local Development Scheme.

160. COVID-19 Multi-Agency Recovery

(Item 8)

- (1) Mr Gough said that the work carried out by the Kent Resilience Forum was governed by the Civil Contingencies Act and that upper tier authorities, such as Kent County Council were designated as the lead agency for the recovery phase of any emergency. Mr Hill said the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) was a partnership that brought category 1 and category 2 responders together, however its actions were subject to the individual governance arrangements of each partner organisation. Oversight of the KRF by KCC Members included weekly meetings between the relevant Cabinet Member and corporate director, regular briefings to the Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee and the Scrutiny Committee and monthly reports to the Kent Leader's Group. nationally prescribed organisation chaired by KCC which had a statutory responsibility to lead the recovery phase of an emergency. David Whittle (Chair of Kent Resilience Forum's Recovery Co-ordinating Group) introduced the report which provided an update on multi-agency recovery arrangements. He also gave a presentation which is attached as an appendix to these minutes. He drew attention to the short timescale in which the recovery plan had been drafted, the consultation underway with partners, Kent Leaders, Kent Chief Executives and others prior to its final consideration by Kent Leaders on 6 August and the KRF Strategic Go-ordination Group on 12 August.

- (2) Members were supportive of the report and commented on the high level of partnership working. In addition, Mrs Bell said that some elements of Covid-19 response, such as enabling decision making close to the point of the issue, should continue. She also said technology had enabled agile decision making, and its use to support older residents should continue in the recovery phase. She said disabled people were more likely to depend on voluntary hubs which would be wound down and it would be shame if the goodwill, kindness, and enthusiasm displayed by volunteers during the response phase was lost. She expressed concern at the increase in the number of male suicides and highlighted the importance of the Suicide Prevention Strategy. Mrs Chandler said she had paid close attention to the recovery cell dealing with issues relating to children and young people and drew the Cabinet's attention to the increase in inequalities among children and young people during the lockdown. She also said that she hoped that actions relating to opportunities and mitigating actions would be inter-linked and not be considered in silos. Further support for the report was expressed by Mr Whiting and Mr Hill. Mr Hill also said the co-located Kent Resilience team and the Kent Community Safety Partnership had created opportunities to build relationships between partner organisations which meant that Kent was well-placed to respond to the crisis caused by the pandemic. In response to comments, Mr Whittle said that efforts were being made to capture the positive aspects of lockdown and the agile ways of working developed during the response phase. This included working with the NHS to continue the involvement of the voluntary sector in providing services in the community; and ensuring that the integrated recovery plan avoided siloed thinking. He paid tribute to his team and staff across all partner organisations who had undertaken work in the various recovery cells and contributed to the proposals for recovery. Mr Gough thanked Cabinet Members for their comments on the report and said. Much of the work relating to the recovery phase, particularly the Renewal and Recovery Strategy was already familiar to Cabinet Members. He said it was important to draw on lessons learned during the response phase of the crisis and to retain improvements in ways of working. He also said that the cross-agency partnerships, developed in advance of the current crisis, particularly planning for a 'no deal Brexit', had been deepened during the crisis.
- (3) Resolved that the update on multi-agency recovery arrangements be noted.

Action Plan Update

Cabinet Meeting - 20th July 2020

Page 1

Minute Item 160

Introduction

- Upper-tier local authority has statutory responsibility to lead the recovery phase of an emergency. The KRF recovery process has included 160 individuals from over 50 organisations. All activity has been undertaken virtually.
- Three stages/products to recovery – impact assessments, action plans and recovery strategy.
- Page 2 Draft action plans are currently out for commentary and feedback with KRF partners (including separately to Kent Leaders, Kent Chief Executives and KCC Cabinet)
- Each action has been prioritised as essential, important or desirable.
- Actions have also been split into short-term (action to start within 6 months), medium-term (between 6 and 12 months) and longer-term (later than 12 months).
- 152 actions have been identified; 80 are opportunities, 58 are mitigations and 14 are a mix of both
- 43 actions relate to equality considerations

Actions by theme



Restoring services – actions for restoring and adapting critical services across Kent and Medway, which are essential for economic and civic life.



Resilience – actions for developing financial, sector, market, community or environmental resilience, so Kent and Medway is well-placed to respond to future events and changes



Planning and Preparation – actions to ensure that partners are well prepared and have the right plans and resources in place to respond quickly to further changes, such as a second wave or localised lockdown.



Vulnerabilities and inequalities – actions to better co-ordinate and improve support for vulnerable people, including existing and emerging vulnerabilities and managing new and hidden demand. It includes actions to reduce existing and emerging inequalities, including protected groups.



Lobbying – actions to lobby national Government and other regional or local partners on funding, policy and systemic issues related to COVID-19.



Commissioning – actions to change and improve our commissioning culture, practice and join up commissioning opportunities between partners.



Funding – actions to secure sufficient funding, additional funding or improve access to funding, at a local and national level.



Redesign – actions to redesign and transform services, systems and sectors to benefit Kent and Medway residents.

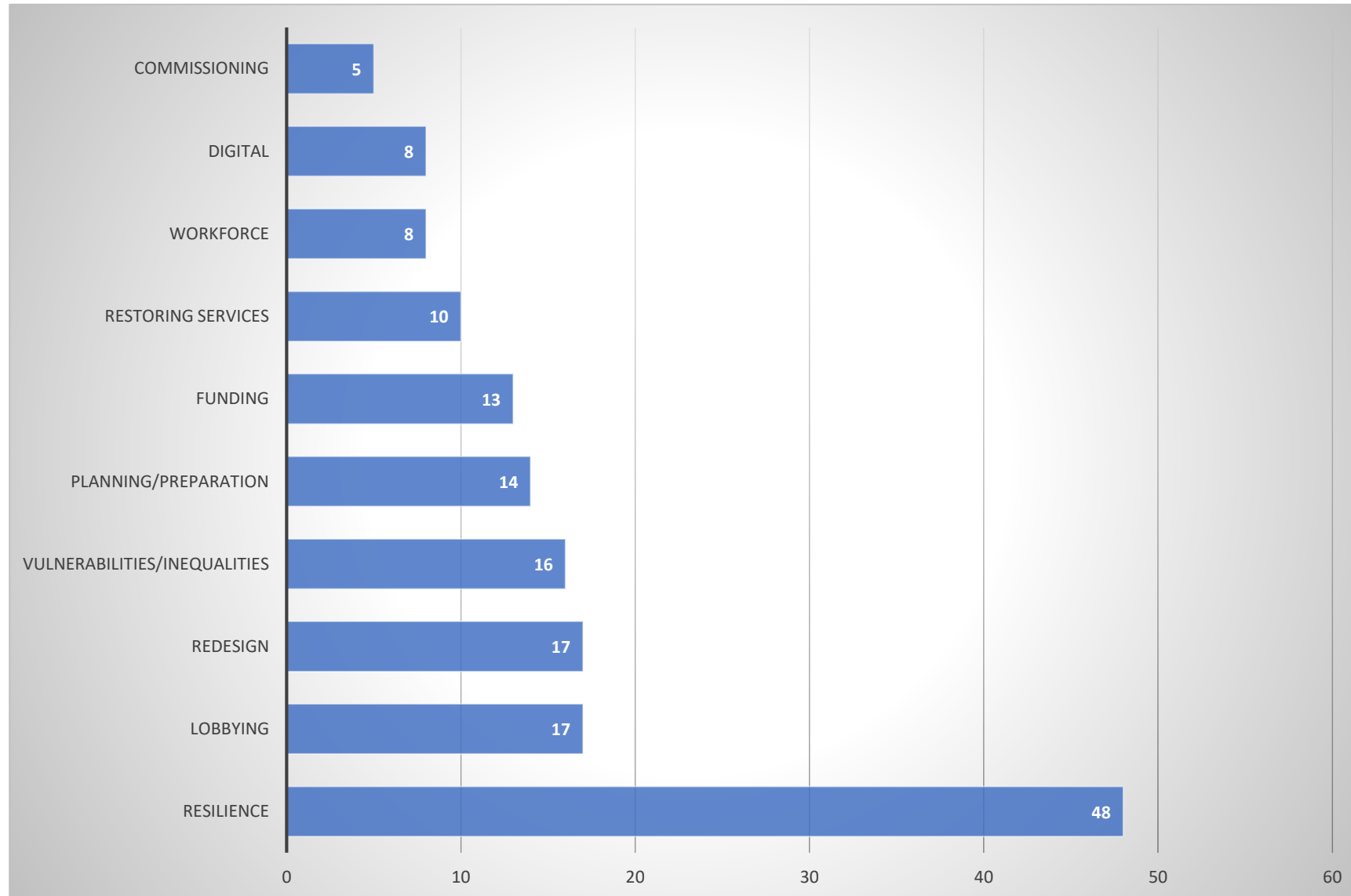


Workforce – actions for training, practical, emotional and professional support and peer support across the workforce, including cultural and behavioural change.



Digital – actions to improve digital access, address digital poverty and enhance digital infrastructure across Kent and Medway.

Count by theme



Mitigating actions

Mitigating actions are critical to achieve a successful recovery as they focus on mitigating risks and managing significant issues and impacts. Overall, 72 (47%) of actions identified in the action plans are mitigating actions (including mitigations and mitigation/opportunities).

Partners are asked to consider prioritising the mitigating actions, particularly essential and short term mitigations which need to be delivered in the next 6 months. 64% of mitigating actions have at least initial resources in place to deliver.

- Of the mitigating actions, 50 actions (69%) are considered **essential** mitigations. The timeframe for essential mitigations included 64% short term, 24% medium term and 6% long term. 70% of essential mitigations have at least initial resources in place to deliver.
- Of the mitigating actions, 17 actions (24%) are considered **important** mitigations and of these 53% have at least initial resources in place to deliver.
- Of the mitigating actions, 5 actions (7%) are considered **desirable** mitigations and of these 40% have at least initial resources in place to deliver.

Opportunity actions

Opportunity actions are important to take forward positive options and opportunities either as individual organisations or partners. Overall, 80 actions (53%) identified in the action plans are opportunity actions. These include actions such as improving the quality of our support offer for vulnerable people or enhancing digital access.

However, by their very nature, opportunities are there to be taken, dependent on partner discretion and whether there is sufficient resource, capacity and appetite to deliver. 65% of opportunities have at least initial resources in place to deliver.

- Of the opportunity actions, 18 actions (23%) are considered **essential** opportunities and of these 61% have at least initial resources in place to deliver.
- Of the opportunity actions, 49 actions (61%) are considered **important** opportunities and of these 67% have at least initial resources in place to deliver.
- Of the opportunity actions, 13 actions (16%) are considered **desirable** opportunities and of these 62% have at least initial resources in place to deliver.

Essential short-term actions

42 essential, short term were identified across the 7 recovery action plans. These are the most urgent actions that need to be progressed across Kent and Medway within the next 6 months.

Typical types of essential short-term actions include:

- ^{Page 7} Putting together a package of economic support measures, including the business helpline, employment task force and initial employment offer.
- Priority lobbying activities, including sufficient council funding, homelessness, housing, public transport, employment support and green recovery.
- Urgent planning activities, including second wave planning, Section 114 financial analysis, return to school plan, economic renewal and resilience plan, winter flu, local outbreak control plan, care home recovery plan, track and trace and demand in health and social care referrals.
- Restoring essential services, including schools and childcare, mental health, recovering delays in Education Health and Care Plans and opening town centres.
- Priority redesign activities, including redesign children's services based on feedback, citizen engagement, digital poverty, all age strategy, flexibilities in contract extensions for VCS providers and core funding and grant funding arrangements for VCS partners.

All actions by lead partner organisation or partnership

The actions will be taken forward for delivery by individual organisations or partnerships, which are identified within the action plans.

There is usually more than one organisation or partnership involved in the delivery of each action, even if there is a lead organisation/partnership who co-ordinates the work to take it forward:

- 61% of actions involve public sector organisations
- The greatest involvement in actions includes Kent County Council (25%), Medway Council (19%), District, Borough and City Councils (11%) and NHS (3% - it should be noted that the NHS have their own Reset Recovery Programme, which the Health and Social Care Recovery Cell is engaged with)
- 19% of actions involve public sector partnerships, which includes groups such as the Kent Finance Officers Group, Kent and Medway Housing Group, Kent Developers Group and Kent Planning Group
- 5% of actions involve COVID-19 Response and Recovery Groups
- Health and social care partnerships (including the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System) are involved in 4% of actions, economic partnerships/providers are involved in 3% of actions, and voluntary and community sector partners/providers are involved in 3% of actions.

Action handover

- Subsequent to any further feedback on Action Plans – the draft Recovery Strategy will be circulated for consultation to KRF partners, Kent Leaders, Kent Chief Executives and KCC Cabinet this week
- The Recovery Strategy will be then be considered by Kent Leaders on 6 August
- It will then be considered by KRF Strategic Co-ordination Group (Gold) on 12 August
- RCG will then write to each organisation/partnership handing over actions and ask for them to be taken forward through normal BAU arrangements – with a focus on short term essential actions that have been identified
- RCG role will then change:
 - light-touch monitoring role of the Recovery Strategy, with any review and update as necessary
 - engagement with ongoing national and regional recovery structures
 - preparation for any further stand-up through COVID-19 and/or EU transition

This page is intentionally left blank