

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

To: Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Date: 7 July 2020

From: Lou Williams: Service Director, Children and Safeguarding
Jonathan Lewis: Service Director, Education

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Outcome: The Council's response to COVID-19 and our strategies for county-wide recovery will have a significant impact on outcomes for individuals and communities.

This report provides an update on:

- the Council's ongoing response to the current Coronavirus pandemic;

Recommendation: a. note the continuing commitment of leaders and staff across children's services and partner agencies to ensure that the needs of all children and young people continue to be met.

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contacts:</i>	
Name:	Lou Williams Jonathan Lewis	Names:	Councillors Simon Bywater & Samantha Hoy
Post:	Service Directors – People and Communities	Post:	Chair/Vice-Chair
Email:	Lou.Williams@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Jonathan.Lewis@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	Simon.Bywater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk samphoy@googlemail.com
		Tel:	01223 706398 (office)

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. This report provides updates relevant to this service committee on the Council's ongoing response to the coronavirus pandemic, our work with partners and communities to protect the most vulnerable and our developing work to help Cambridgeshire to recover from this unprecedented emergency.
- 1.2. Officers and teams continue to work closely with our communities, partners and providers to develop appropriate operational responses to new guidance as it is issued. Further details of the Council's response in service committee COVID-19 update reports: [Council Meetings](#)
- 1.3. The Council Senior Leadership Team continues to run a 'Gold Command' Incident Management Team at least twice weekly to co-ordinate our response. The Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a partnership of local agencies, continues to hold a Strategic Co-ordinating Group at least twice weekly to co-ordinate the multi-agency response.
- 1.4. The Local Resilience forum has also stood up a Recovery Coordinating Group to co-ordinate multi-agency actions. This group is jointly chaired by Huntingdon District Council Managing Director, Jo Lancaster and South Cambridgeshire District Council Chief Executive, Liz Watts.
- 1.5. The Council continues to operate all essential services, with staff working from home wherever possible. Some services remain partially closed in line with government guidance and social distancing measures and are offering online services where possible.

2. COMMITTEE UPDATES

Children & Safeguarding

- 2.1 The latest service update and response to Covid-19 for Children and Safeguarding can be found in Appendix A.

Education

- 2.2 The latest service update and response to Covid-19 for Education can be found in Appendix B.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 A third return to MHCLG accounting for spending and financial consequences resulting from the pandemic was submitted by the Council in June. Subsequent to this, on the 2nd July the government announced further funding support to address spending pressures and in recognition of lost income. The details of the additional support package will need to be worked through to quantify the impact for the Council.

3.2 The latest projected financial impacts for this committee are as follows:

<i>Headline full-year estimates for this Committee as per latest Covid-19 Expenditure Log - 3rd July 2020 £000</i>							
Commitments to end of June	Committee name	New commitments	Income forgone	Impaired savings	Gross Total	Specified funding	Net Total
£1,820	CYP	£5,674	£2,432	£1,436	£9,542	-£8	£9,534

3.3 The financial consequences within the remit of this Committee include:

- Anticipated increase in home to school transport expenditure as a result of DfE guidance. There is likely to be an additional cost for extra vehicles to maintain bubbles, and support staggered start times if implemented. Given the pressures on public transport services it may also be necessary to provide additional dedicated school transport services, including in places where these services do not currently operate. [The government is currently evaluating this position and will set out next steps shortly].
- A loss of income from traded activity for a number of services, most notably those that trade directly with schools.
- Potential increase in staff costs resulting from an increase in the number of referrals leading to the need for assessments and longer term working with families within both early help and children's social care;
- Risks that some or all of anticipated savings targets in respect of budgets associated with children in care placement costs will not be achieved. This is because we expect a continuing placement shortage, meaning that unit costs are likely to increase. The effective launch of the Family Safeguarding approach in children's services has also been affected by Covid-19, with challenges in respect of recruiting and training adult practitioners. Family Safeguarding is associated with lower numbers of children in care, and delayed full implementation of the approach may mean that numbers in care do not fall as expected over the remainder of this financial year.

3.4 Business cases covering the above areas have or are being developed. Once figures are more certain proposals will be presented at a future meeting of the General Purposes Committee (GPC) at which GPC will be asked to approve any necessary budget revisions or grant allocations to support the identified pressures.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1 The current Coronavirus pandemic will have both an immediate and a longer term effect on all of the Council's priorities. The impacts will be monitored and managed through our risk logs and recovery plans and will feed into the annual review of Council strategy.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Following the Government's recovery plans for the UK, it is important for people to get back to school and work, for communities and services to rebuild and for businesses to reopen. As a Council, we will need to carefully interpret guidance as it comes through from central government, and work with partners and communities to ensure that we restart Cambridgeshire at the right time and pace and only when it is safe to do so.
- 5.2 The Council's financial forecasts have changed dramatically since a balanced budget was set in February 2020. Whilst it is too early to predict the full financial impact of fighting COVID-19, we know that we need to continue lobbying government for further funding and maintain strong financial management if we are to emerge from this period with the financial stability we had achieved pre Covid-19.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law?	
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	

SOURCE DOCUMENTS GUIDANCE

It is a legal requirement for the following box to be completed by the report author.

Source Documents	Location
Covid-19 Highlight Reports	