

Agenda Item No: 11

Officers have been asked to bring a report to each Policy and Service Committee meeting on the Covid-19 response to date for those services for which the Committee is responsible. A similar report will be brought to each future meeting until further notice. Given the rapidly changing situation and the need to provide the committee and public with the most up to date information possible the Chairman has agreed to accept this as a late report on the following grounds:

1. **Reason for lateness:** To allow the report to contain the most up to date information possible.
2. **Reason for urgency:** To enable the committee to be briefed on the current situation in relation to the Council's response to Covid-19 for those service for which it is responsible.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 7th July 2020

From: Steve Cox, Executive Director – Place and Economy

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: Committee is asked to note the progress made to date in responding to the impact of the Coronavirus.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The coronavirus pandemic has affected every part of life - in Cambridgeshire, across the UK and globally. In the UK, over 220,000 people have been infected by the COVID-19 virus, more than 32,000 have sadly died and the country has been in lockdown for over 7 weeks. Thousands of business are currently closed across Cambridgeshire, with staff furloughed or working from home and every single person in our County has had to change the way they live their lives.
- 1.2. In these very challenging circumstances, the Council has reacted quickly with the dual focus of responding to the crisis and keeping critical services running. Our workforce and our councillors have moved to working from home if possible and, where face to face services are critical, these are being carefully planned and safely delivered. We have changed almost overnight to work in different ways to support the most vulnerable people in our communities, developing new responses and maintaining all critical services.
- 1.3. Local Government around the UK, and indeed around the world, is beginning to think about the longer term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic –the detrimental effects on more vulnerable individuals and groups but also the opportunities for positive change. Officers and Councillors are working with their professional networks to determine the ‘right’ way to tackle recovery, sharing ideas and good practice. To ensure that the Council takes a strategic approach to recovery and redesign, a Recovery Framework has been developed.
- 1.4. The Council’s recovery framework will be built towards ambitious definitions for individual, community and county wide outcomes. It will determine both the immediate and longer term steps the Council needs to take to play its part in achieving these outcomes across Cambridgeshire. Further details of the Council’s Recovery Framework can be found here: [COVID19 and Recovery Report May 20](#)

2. ONGOING RESPONSE

- 2.1 In April, a report to the predecessor to the predecessor to this Committee gave details of the initial response to the Coronavirus pandemic, nationally and locally. Reporting structures and governance were detailed as well as the immediate priorities for the Council, which included:
 - Supporting the NHS, particularly through quick and effective response to new Hospital Discharge Guidance.
 - Supporting our care homes.
 - Establishing a county-wide coordination hub so that shielded and vulnerable self-isolators are supported with supplies of food, medicine, and other essential support.
 - Ensuring that vulnerable children are supported during the pandemic.
 - Implementing measures to protect and support our workforce.
 - Managing our supply chain.
 - Maintaining public trust and confidence by providing good and regular communication and by amplifying public health and government guidance.
- 2.2 During the last few weeks, work has continued in all of these critical areas as it has become increasingly clear that many of our emergency response activities will need to stay in place for several months, at least. Further details on immediate response and how we are shifting

from emergency to 'new normal' services is included in this month's reports for each Directorate, which are available here: [COVID 19 Weekly Reports](#)

2.3 Since the last committee cycle, we have also set up a response to deal with tracking and tracing and are awaiting further guidance on our role in this work. We have set up a Track and Trace sub-group to ensure that we have a robust local system which meets the requirements of the national contract tracing programme. Initial information suggests that contact tracking will predominantly be done at a regional/national level through Public Health England our local role appears to fall into 4 areas:

- Support for people who are told to self-isolate after testing positive who have no immediate support from family/friends.
- Support for local outbreaks, from Public Health and Environmental Health colleagues, working alongside the regional Public Health England (PHE) Health Protection Team.
- A role in the flow of data around this activity – from testing, through contact tracking, to local support for those who need it.
- Communications to amplify the national messages around take up of the NHS app/online reporting of symptoms, getting tested and self-isolation for those with symptoms and for those who have tested positively.

2.4 We are currently reviewing "OUR PLAN TO REBUILD: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy" which was published on 11th May, considering implications for our services and workforce and planning accordingly with our partners.

3. COMMITTEE SPECIFIC HIGHLIGHT REPORTS

3.1 Key highlights in activity that relate to this Committee are as follows:

- The list of Active Travel measures to provide temporary cycle and pedestrian infrastructure and for the reallocation of road space was approved by this Committee on the 16th June. At the time, the indicative allocation for Cambridgeshire was £419k and the eventual award from Government happily has increased to £468k based on the strength of the submission. These schemes need to be delivered within 8 weeks. Over the past week, the team has been prioritising this list, working closely with district colleagues and implementation will commence w/c 6th July. Link officers for each district have been identified and will work closely with district and Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) colleagues on the implementation. This will be a challenging project given the number of individual schemes and their complexity. In many cases, Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders will be used.
- There have been 15 expressions of interest for the 'School Streets' to date within Cambridgeshire, as part of the Active Travel fund.
- Traffic levels continue to increase further following the opening of all non-essential retail and are now close to 70% of pre Covid levels.
- The Mill Road, Cambridge closure project is now in force and traffic levels have reduced significantly and more pedestrian space has been provided. Monitoring of the project and dialogue with traders and others in the area will take place.
- The City Centre & Market Towns recovery measures were all implemented in time for shops re-opening on 15th June. This showed really successful working with City Council and District councils.

- Resident’s parking and bus lane enforcement was reinstated in Cambridge on 15 June to tie in with retail sector reopening. Following that, Pay and Display parking enforcement was restarted in Cambridge on 29th June.
- Changes to Pavement license legislation mean that this will now be run by district councils under planning powers until Sept 2021. The Highways Authority will still be a consultee. This will reduce Council income by £50k per year.
- Park and Ride staff have returned to work as services have returned to a 10 minute frequency. Other bus services also continue to increase their frequency.
- The Council recently adopted its Outbreak Control Plan. This sets out the measures, including, Track and Trace, that will be followed to manage outbreaks of Covid 19. The intention is to reduce the spread when cases are detected and it requires individuals to self-isolate and notify of contacts if they test positive. This process has the potential to disrupt services such as highways if a significant number of staff or operatives within the Council or our supply chain are affected.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The estimated financial impact on the Council has been submitted to The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in two returns, in common with other Councils. In many areas these remain indicative and uncertain estimates contingent on the length of disruption and the impact on activity levels, and it is expected that these will be further refined and validated. General Purposes Committee (GPC) will be asked to approve any necessary budget revisions or grant allocations at that stage. The following table presents the summarised estimated impact, at this stage, for this Committee, as submitted to MHCLG. These do not necessarily relate to what the request in budget revision will be:

<i>Headline full-year estimates for this Committee submitted to MHCLG in late June 2020 £6.569m</i>							
May commitments	Committee name	New commitments	Income forgone	Impaired savings	Gross Total	Specified funding	Net Total
£7.097m	H&T	£1.912m	£4.040m	£617K	£6.569m		£6.569m

4.2 The main explanation for the £0.5m reduction in forecast since the last submission is that the income forecasts have been refined and updated to reflect the lag in time for income to be received. Future income levels are very uncertain and will be regularly reviewed.

5. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 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.

6. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Despite the devastating effects of the Covid 19 virus, as noted by the Covid 19 Environment sub Group, there have also been some positive implications around air quality and the potential for changed long term habits. The challenge will be how to lock these in as

recovery develops.

- 6.2 It is likely that we will see a rise in referrals to children's services both locally and nationally as the pressures on families increase. Demand may also grow in adult services as the effects of interrupted care on chronic conditions emerge. It is therefore essential that we plan for an extended period of response and that the recovery programme rapidly identifies interventions which may minimise detrimental impacts.
- 6.3 In spite of the additional funding that has been allocated by the Government, the Council is still facing a deficit of nearly £8m which, if not supported through further Government funding rounds, will have to be met by considering all options available to this council . A range of scenarios will need to be developed and tested to support business planning. As patterns of demand and behaviour become clearer following the immediate response stage, the organisation will need to have a range of options and contingency plans in place to anticipate and mitigate against financial pressures.
- 6.4 Our COVID-19 response has relied not only on the commitment and hard work of our own workforce and providers but also on the huge number of volunteers and community organisations who have come forward to help in their communities. As part of recovery and redesign work we will be learning from this fantastic community and partner response and further developing our Think Communities approach.
- 6.5 As a Council, our greatest asset is our people. Our workforce has mobilised in many different ways, working wherever they are needed to deliver critical services, often under very challenging circumstances. We continue to work carefully across all teams to ensure our workforce is well equipped, stays resilient and feels supported as we tackle this crisis together.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	YES Chris Malyon
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	YES/NO
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law?	YES Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	YES/NO
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	YES Christine Birchall
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	YES/NO
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	YES Liz Robin

Source Documents	Location
None	