

## **SERVICE HIGHLIGHT REPORT – COVID-19 AND KEY SERVICE UPDATES**

<b>SERVICE AREAS:</b>	BID Directorate (Business Intelligence, Transformation, Commercial, Impact and Recovery)
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	Amanda Askham, Director Business Improvement and Development
<b>REPORTING PERIOD:</b>	December 2020
<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council

### **Part 1 - COVID-19**

#### **NEW GUIDANCE AND IMPACT**

This year's Spending Review provides more certainty for councils next year, but the long-term outlook remains unclear (see further details on page 2). Public finances will undoubtedly be under huge strain in the years ahead but investment in our local public services is critical to our national recovery next year and beyond. Further detail is awaited to understand the full impact across Cambridgeshire Peterborough.

Following the end of the national restrictions on 2 December the government reverted to the national tier system. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are in Tier 2 (High) restrictions. Only a very few areas are in tier 1, so effectively Tier 2 is the lowest level of restrictions for most of the country. This is likely to create a further impact within the County.

#### **NEW CHALLENGES AND ACTIVITY**

There is significant ongoing activity in response to COVID-19 in all areas of the directorate alongside critical business as usual activity. New activity in this period has included:

- December GPC will review the draft Strategic Framework for Cambridgeshire County Council
- PCC's Corporate Strategy is being developed with Members for presentation to Cabinet in February 2021.
- Budget/ Business Planning – work continues in preparing proposals for the 2021/22 budget against the backdrop of continued national uncertainty.
- Local Outbreak Plan – continued support is being provided to Public Health to support the logistical and coordination elements of this work ensuring that local action plans remain fit for purpose.

#### **Business Intelligence**

- We have worked with Contracts and Brokerage to model roll out of vaccine to care homes
- Analysis has been provided for planning of Winter Support Grant
- New dashboards have been developed for COVID 19 surveillance for Outbreak Management Team and Health Protection Board

#### **RECOVERY ACTIVITIES**

The first Working Ambition Programme Board will take place in the New Year. This is a Joint CCC & PCC programme to build on the opportunities created as a result of the changes to the way we have all been working during the pandemic. This provides an opportunity to link together a number of strategies including Workforce, IT and Digital, Assets and People.

Recovery work across all services reports into the Recovery Board monthly.

## DECISIONS MADE SINCE LAST REPORTING PERIOD

No material decisions in this period

## NEW COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS SINCE LAST REPORTING PERIOD

The Government announced the results of a one-year Spending Review for 2021-22 on 25 November. This will set the Departmental Expenditure Limit for MHCLG and will provide an indication of the available uplift in funding for the Local Government Finance Settlement which is expected two to three weeks thereafter. Our financial plans currently assume a prudent cash flat position with no inflationary uplifts. There is also considerable uncertainty surrounding the funding formula that may be used to distribute any additional COVID-19 funding; in 2020-21 the Government has moved from a social care-based formula to a deprivation-based approach which is less favourable for Shire Counties.

## WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

**Transformation (CCC):** 5 team members seconded to Co-ordination Hub until 2021, 1 member of the team re-deployed to the Co-ordination Hub to support work around vaccinations and community response until January. 5 additional team members deployed on COVID related activity. 3 members of the team off sick.

The remaining team (around 55% of usual capacity) is fully deployed to projects although capacity is expected to be released at the end of January 2021 as some projects close. Pipeline requests of 20FTE to be fulfilled as soon as capacity is released.

**Strategic Programmes (PCC):** 1 member of the team off sick with COVID (=50% of team)

There has been an increase in mental and physical health challenges across the Directorate.

## COMMUNICATIONS

There are regular communications across all areas of the directorate ensure that all staff are kept aware of current developments.

## Part 2 – BUSINESS AS USUAL ACTIVITY

### KEY SERVICE UPDATES – INTERNAL / EXTERNAL

#### Adults Positive Challenge

- Work continues on embedding practice into business as usual as far as is possible alongside management of COVID related operational demands and pressures in Adult Services.
- Ambition for the development of further opportunities remains high, including consideration of how learning from COVID could inform future transformational activity and strategic relationships between this programme and other key areas, such as Think Communities.

#### SEND

- The Transformation Team continue to support work to progress the SEND Recovery Programme. All work streams continue to be progressed during this period of the pandemic, although the SEND Service capacity remains under pressure.

- Work has begun with the SEND Service Statutory Assessment Team to skill them up to change conversations and adopt a strengths-based model (similar to the approach used in the Adults Positive Challenge Programme).

### **Cambs 2020 (CCC Only)**

- The contractual documents for the disposal of Shire Hall are planned to be shared with Commercial and Investments Committee in March 2021
- The Shire Hall site vacant possession date is anticipated to be late summer/early Autumn 2021 and there will be a clearance/close down period leading up to that date
- A review of contractual documents for construction works has been completed, enabling a COVID clause to be included in future contracts mitigating the risk CCC would be accepting
- The topping out ceremony at the Alconbury Weald Civic Hub took place on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2020

### **Equalities**

- Excellent engagement with senior officers and Members has supported the development of governance arrangements and a clear action plan to progress work in this area.
- During December there will be a focus on collating benchmarking data and the development of initial training packages for staff.

### **Business Intelligence**

- Work is continuing on the Power BI Premium project – we are on track for launch of children’s services dashboards in PCC and CCC in January, replacing the existing systems
- We have completed a substantial piece of work assessing the need for accommodation for older people over the next 10 years with Commissioning
- We are recruiting in CCC for a new Research Team Manager post to build capacity in COVID 19 response and recovery, and link together datasets about our local places
- We are now delivering all business-as-usual performance reports and analysis to services and have integrated COVID 19 work (e.g. traffic and travel monitoring) into our normal business

## **FINANCIAL ISSUES**

### **Cambridgeshire**

BID teams are working closely with Finance to forecast and monitor impact on the budget from increased demand and shortfalls in income.

The public consultation on Council Tax proposals is currently live and running until 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

### **Peterborough**

BID Director chairs the Performance and Transformation Board to ensure savings are on track and that impacts of COVID are minimised as far as possible. Working closely with Finance to support lobbying for additional funding.

## **PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES AND CHALLENGES**

Capacity impacted by sickness, redeployment and vacancies. Re-organisation of the team into new functional areas provides an opportunity to refocus support to ensure continued delivery against priorities in both Councils.

## **UPCOMING ISSUES & HORIZON SCANNING AREAS**

EU Exit – the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020 will mean new rules coming into force from 1 January 2021. Preparations continue both at a national and local level to minimise the implications of this change, however, there could be significant implications across areas of business and our citizens which could mean that additional costs are incurred or challenges to our delivery of services increased e.g. the ability to attract workers for critical roles. BID Director chairs cross council EU Exit action group and links closely with the Local Resilience Forum through Emergency Planning Team.

#### **POSTIVE NEWS STORIES**

**CCC** The first of this year's CUSPE Policy Challenge was presented at the Communities & Partnership committee. This particular CUSPE question and research concerns 'the effect of Council decision making on the ability of Cambridgeshire communities to develop initiatives that lessen the need for formal health and social care services' and includes sections on the 'New Town Blues' phenomenon and the effect of growth and community development on health and wellbeing, how to make localism more inclusive, local community groups' views of the role the Council plays in their work, and more. The research report was greeted with a very positive discussion and it was agreed that a detailed strategy setting out the ways in which recommendations can be driven forward should be developed.