

Normalisation and Recovery Planning

Joint Panel Meeting 25.06.2020

Honor Howell – Assistant to the Chief Executive

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



Introduction

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the council moved into the 'response' phase of our emergency planning/business continuity operating model
- A formal LRF structure was vital to coordinate our response with the collaborative approach of the Norfolk SCG and TCG, which included all blue light services, local authorities, Public Health and MHCLG
- Recovery will be politically and organisationally led, reinforced by the LRF who remain the lead on outbreak control
- The internal recovery structure will follow our existing management structure to minimise overlap and duplication
- Delivery groups will have either an internal or external focus



Phases of recovery



- As restrictions start to lift, existing workstreams will transition into ‘normalisation’ and eventually into ‘recovery’
- Some delivery groups under the NRF structure (e.g. mortality pathway) will disband as no longer required. TCG will be standing down and SCG moving to twice weekly meetings
- Test and trace will be vital and the council must be ready to respond to any local issues that may arise
- Recognise where the response phase has enabled partners to collaborate effectively, how we will move forward and we need to build on these achievements in a meaningful and sustainable way
- Recovery will not be a linear process and will impact on different areas in different ways



Strategic Objectives

- To restore the provision of council activities, taking into account national guidelines and community needs and the new normal
- To acknowledge the significant impact of COVID-19 on our business and the need for our workforce to be flexible and responsive so we can focus on new and emerging priorities, consider our revised budget position and work within new guidance or legislation
- To guide, support and assist the community by enabling, signposting and working collaboratively with the third sector and our partners to provide a co-ordinated and more joined up response for our vulnerable citizens
- To support the economic recovery and related strategic regeneration of the borough, managing expectations whilst helping to restore resident, visitor and business confidence



Key Principles

- Collaboration with public services and agencies, private, voluntary and community sectors
- Business liaison
- Combination of tactical and strategic objectives
- Transparency with reporting through publicly accessible meetings
- Supported by timely internal and external communications
- Application of lessons learnt from the Covid-19 response so far
- Ability to stand up quickly if there is a further peak or local outbreak (test and trace)
- Consideration of climate change
- Adapt, restore, rebuild, agility



Constraints

- Budget position (revised budget to Cabinet on 4th August)
- Uncertain local income generation levels
- National guidelines, policy and legislation
- Brexit
- Local COVID-19 levels
- Staffing capacity
- Community confidence and anxiety
- Collaborative capacity and funding
- Continued social distancing



Recovery Structure

- Recovery Impact Assessment (RIA) conducted by Recovery Workstream of the Norfolk Resilience Forum
- Highlighted issues and mitigations affecting the county
- Corporate Business Plan review
- Key workstreams identified
- Co-ordinated by Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and Emergency Planning
- Portfolio holders to work with Executive Directors and Assistant Directors on their areas of responsibility



Strategic Recovery Structure

Lorraine Gore and Cllr Brian Long – supported by H Howell & Emergency Planning

Internal (Debbie Gates – Supported by N Gromett and appropriate **Portfolio holders**)

- HR/Welfare (Becky Box)
- Facilities (Matthew Henry)
- Members and Council Meetings (Becky Box)
- Finance (Michelle Drewery)
- Corporate Business Plan/Recovery Plan Risk Register (Honor Howell)
- Communications (Sharon Clifton)
- Community Resilience (John Greenhalgh)

External (Geoff Hall – supported by D Gagen and appropriate **Portfolio holders**)

- Economy – Tourism, Retail, Manufacturing (Duncan Hall)
- Housing Construction (Dale Gagen)
- Housing – Homechoice, Homelessness (John Greenhalgh)
- Leisure (Neil Gromett)
- Council Companies (Dale Gagen)
- Planning and Licensing (Stuart Ashworth)
- Test and track planning (Stuart)



Finance

- Pandemic has had a significant effect on all local authorities finances
- Provided with grant funding but not sufficient locally to cover the loss of income
- Income losses expected to continue beyond the initial crisis
- No immediate impact on our cashflow but in the medium term, it could become problematic
- Spending review and Fair Funding Review on hold until 2021



Revenue Finance – Recovery Actions

- Update current year budget and present a revised revenue and capital budget for 2020/21
- Lobby government for more funding so that the council is compensated for the financial impact of COVID-19 (highlight fees and charges and commercial income)

Revenue Finance ...cont

- Revised budget 2020/21
- Wholly owned council companies – Alive West Norfolk income has ceased. Will require financial support of up to £1m
- Business rates growth factored into financial plan
- Continued revenue income (i.e. car parking income) essential for council's budget during recovery



Finance – Capital

- Capital programme will be reviewed and presented to Cabinet on 4th August
- Schemes should reflect the council's current priorities and affordability in new financial landscape
- FHS and Town's Fund realigned to new challenges
- Cabinet and MT meeting to agree capital programme priorities
- Focus on stimulation of economy



Business and the local economy

- Economic recovery will be private sector led. Our role will be to guide, inform and assist
- The council will support the local economy whilst protecting residents and visitors against the virus, avoiding a second peak
- Enforcing powers are limited. Our focus will be on influencing behaviour and providing advice and guidance
- The impact to the employment market could be significant. In April 2020, Universal Credit applications increased by 568% on the previous month and 343% on April 2019
- 15,700 people had been furloughed in the west Norfolk area



Business and Local Economy – Key Actions

- Future High Street and Towns Fund and any additional grant funding – greater emphasis on recovery (stimulation)
- Creating opportunities for the hospitality sector operate under the new normal
- Harness the positives from lockdown, such as increased walking and cycling



Business and Local Economy – Key Actions...cont

- Sustain confidence in the residential and commercial development market by encouraging pre-planning discussions, progress planning applications to decision and drive our growth objectives
- Assess the impact on the visitor economy including culture, leisure, hospitality, events and the night-time economy. Consideration of interventions to support the resilience of these elements



People and Welfare

- Staff have adapted to new ways of working
- Home and remote working
- Development of digital tools for meetings
- Staff adapting to return to work

People and Welfare – Recovery Actions

- Operating in the ‘new normal’ – flexible working and supporting staff in work place
- Operate wider working hours/weekends to accommodate social distancing
- Flexibility within workforce to work on priorities, including temporary or permanent redeployment
- Ensure all staff are working effectively to avoid ‘burn out’ for those working on COVID response
- Services designed to enable effective delivery going forward – including selection processes, training delivery, welfare appointments etc.
- More formalised approach and support for those predominantly working from home
- Continued support for shielding staff



Health, Wellbeing and Homelessness

- ‘Community Hub’ established to support shielded and vulnerable residents, providing food, collection of medicines, befriending etc
- ‘Lily’ well placed to continue work but will require funding and resources
- Level of support will, over time, be reduced as we move out of crisis response
- Collaborative approach with statutory partners and the 3rd sector required – cannot just be based on grant funding or contractual obligations
- Need to understand the issues and needs of service users
- Long term need to maintain holistic support
- Homelessness/rough sleeping - need to maintain wrap-around support and encourage more independent or hostel living



Health, Wellbeing & Homelessness – key actions

- Participate in county-wide review of Community Hub offer
- Review resources and budget requirements for new model of services delivery as the vulnerable/shielded will require ongoing support
- Actively encourage citizens to revert to more sustainable ways of obtaining food and support
- Retain volunteers under the 'AskLily' framework



Health, Wellbeing & Homelessness – key actions cont

- Study emerging trends in equality impacts for minority and vulnerable groups and work with partners to minimise adverse impacts on those identified
- Test and trace
- A strong focus on the health and wellbeing of our communities, recognising the impact of underlying physical conditions with COVID-19, building on the good habits shown during lockdown
- Utilising our leisure offer to support healthy living



Monitoring Progress – Key data and Indicators

- The use of appropriate data will be critical in identifying key issues and measuring success of delivery
- Develop a dashboard of measures to identify the impacts of COVID-19 on the economy, people and communities
- Review the key performance indicators for 2020/21 and remove those no longer relevant



Sources to Measure Impact

- Impact of hardship on residents – local claimant count unemployment, Universal Credit applications, levels of debt to the council (council tax), homelessness applications, food bank referrals
- Impact on businesses – business occupancy data, business closures, BID footfall data, vacancies/arrears in our commercial premises
- Ongoing support/interventions: grant applications, rough sleepers housed, people supported by the community hub, New Anglia Growth hub info on businesses seeking support
- Car parking revenue – High Streets and Coastal areas
- Number of licensing and Planning applications



Next Steps

- Presentation to joint panels 25th June 2020
- Cabinet 30th June 2020
- 1st - 31st July develop detailed actions and link to corporate business plan
- Final plan to Corporate Performance Panel and Cabinet July/August 2020



- Questions