

Report of the Chief Executive

UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOVERY PLAN1. Purpose of report

To update the Committee on the response of the Council to the threat and risk COVID-19 poses to the local community and progress in implementing the Council's approach to recovery agreed at Committee in July, included at appendix 1.

2. Detail

Since the last Committee report in September, Broxtowe has experienced a significant rise in numbers of COVID-19 positive tests. Initially this was predominantly within the younger age group of the population. However, more recently the numbers of over 60s affected has risen significantly in all parts of our area whilst numbers of positive tests in the younger age group has declined. At the time of writing the report there is a significant amount of community transmission of the infection. A decision was made to move Broxtowe and the whole of Nottinghamshire from tier 2, High, into tier 3, Very High, from 14 October 2020. This designation was subsequently superseded by a national lockdown which will last for a month from 5 November 2020 until 2 December 2020. The activity of Broxtowe to respond to the latest developments and support the local community is set out in appendix 2. Infection rates show some plateauing in our area at the time of writing the report, but remain above the England and regional average.

A new grant funding scheme to support affected businesses in tier 2, tier 3 and the new lockdown restrictions was launched. An updated schedule of community sector grants given by the Council is attached in appendix 3.

A summary of recent activity in implementing the Council's recovery strategy is set out in appendix 4.

3. Financial implications.

The financial implications are set out in appendix 3

Recommendation

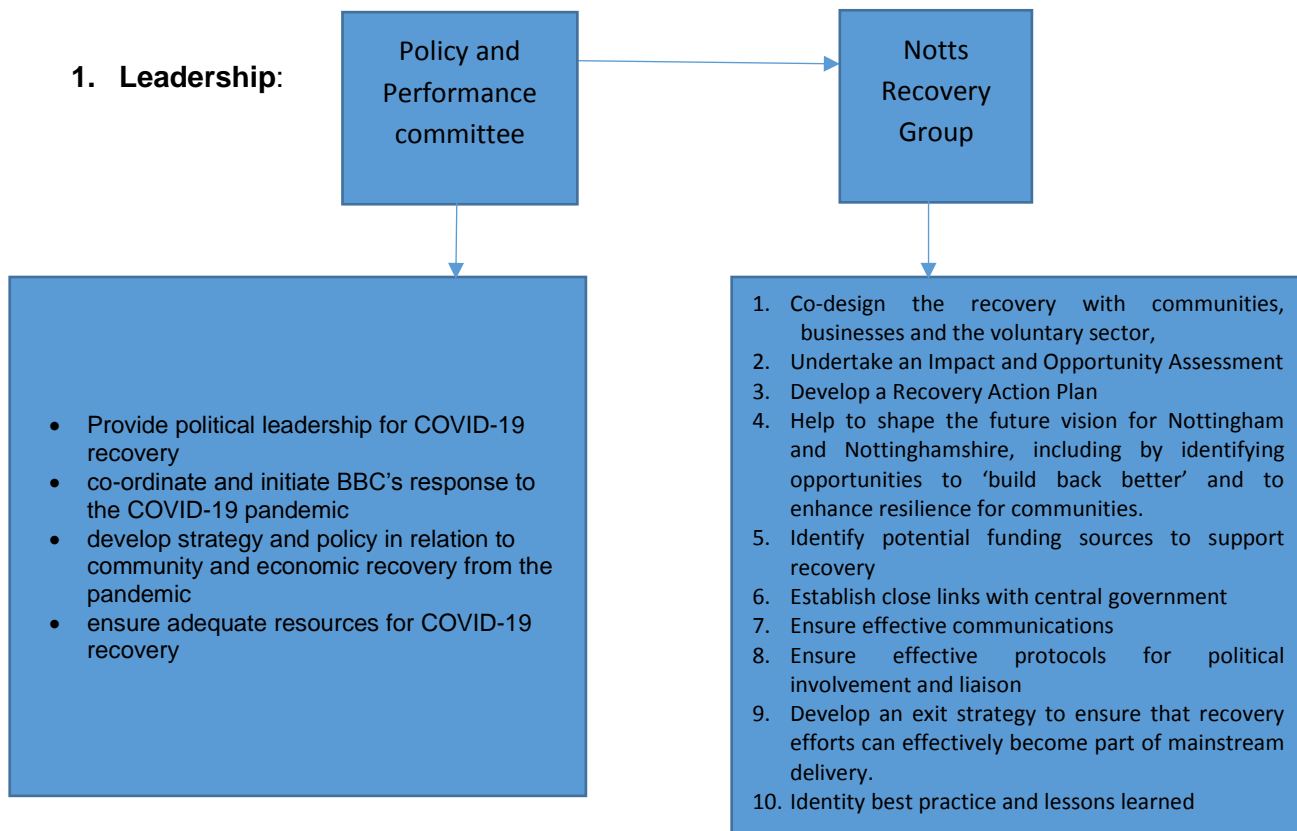
The Committee is asked to NOTE the report

Background papers

Nil

BROXTOWE’S RECOVERY STRATEGY

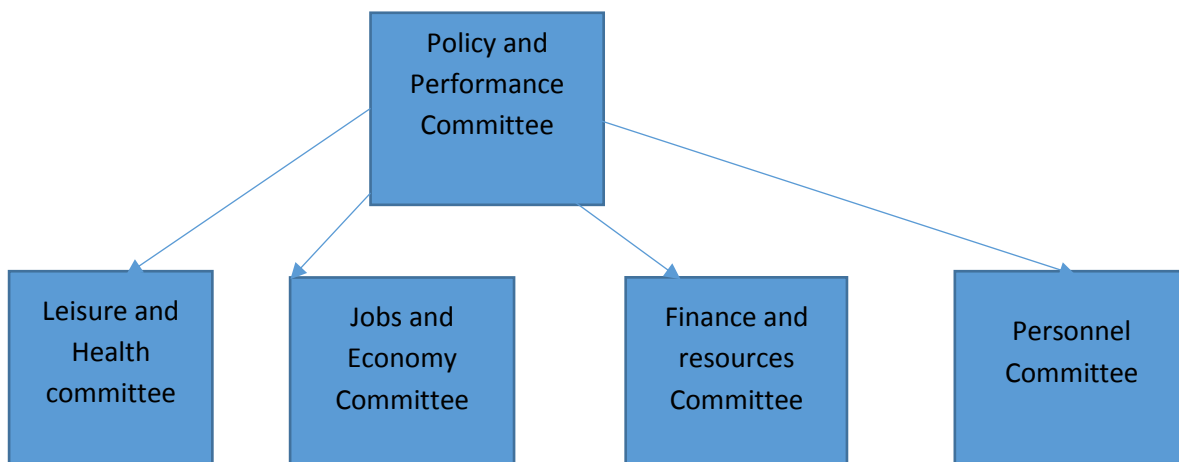
1. Leadership:



2. Vision

The residents and businesses of Broxtowe will not only recover from COVID-19, but emerge with a fairer, more just and enriched community life, better mental and physical health outcomes for all; a sustainable fast growing local economy and a cleaner environment for all to enjoy.

3. Damage and Needs assessment



- Economic needs assessment (Led by Jobs and Economy Committee- see report to that committee 18.6.20)

- Community needs assessment (led by leisure and Health Committee— see report to that committee 10.6.20)
- Internal/BBC services recovery (led by personnel Committee – see report to that Committee 30.6.20)
- Financial recovery (led by Finance and Resources committee) – see report to that committee 9.7.20)

Issues to feed in:

- lesson-learning from the 2020 crisis and how this impacts future emergency planning – particularly with regard to pandemic preparedness and crisis management. (Policy and Performance committee)
- How far BBC and partners might mainstream some of the experiences of very rapid response, adaption, redeployment, and labour flexibility. (Personnel Committee)
- Reflect on implications of more home working and home learning and consequences for economy and place making Need for stable and resilient high bandwidth internet connectivity to sustain. (Jobs and Economy Committee)
- Social impacts: leisure and recreation and the significant impact on these sectors; the highly variable impact of the pandemic on vulnerable groups and communities. (Leisure and health Committee)
- Positive impacts experienced including from increased volunteering, reduction in carbon emissions. (Environment Committee)
- Ongoing financial impacts of the pandemic on the Council's finances (Finance and Resources Committee)

4. Initial phase 1 recovery

(a) Public services resumption

Our own services

- How we establish a “new normal “way of operating as a local authority (might include renting out more space within the Council offices)
- How we can adapt our offices and service points to manage health risks
- Catch up on backlogs in service provision e.g. repairs
- Manage risk, reduce harm and increase resilience

Town centres and public places

- Deep cleaning; public places
- Managing use to reduce risk of harm
- Promoting our town centres and businesses

Communities

- Providing information
- Restoring confidence- PR internal and external
- Celebrating heroes, successes

(b). Supporting private and third sector basic services

- Review/renew and continue grants
- Identify who the key organisations are we need to work with
- Consider flexing our workforce to further support third sector
- Identify resources we can bid for to support private sector and third sector
- Research the needs and impacts of COVID-19 on third sector and business community

(c). Build higher levels of resilience for reopened infrastructure, workplaces and services

- Continue to promote and value the flexibility of workforce agility and homeworking
- Increase resilience of areas like refuse, crematorium, contact centre
- Learn from what we have already done and from good practice elsewhere

(d). Continuing support for those who need it

- Undertake research to identify where our efforts need to be targeted
- Mobilize and enable the community to support one another
- Identify issues relating to inequality of provision, ensure all sections of the community receive the support they need and that all voices are heard.

(e). Manage our finances

- refreshed business strategy
- Consider needs of those in economic hardship: the hardship fund and rent payments, both individuals and businesses

(f). Continue with existing planned Strategic investments to restart the economy

- Stapleford business hub
- Mushroom farm
- Stapleford Towns fund
- Beeston Regeneration phase 2
- Housebuilding programme
- Decisions about future Leisure provision
- Green investment

5. Medium to Longer Term Recovery Strategy**A: ECONOMY**

Develop a **new Economic Development and Regeneration strategy** which

- Ensures a properly balanced and resilient economy, in the light of impacts of COVID-19
- Puts as high a value on the role and contribution of key workers as knowledge workers.

- Review investment strategies in the light of impacts of COVID-19 on existing businesses.
- Promote new technology and full fibre broadband
- Refresh and repurpose place-based anchor institution collaboration post-crisis (e.g. Trent and Nottingham Universities)
- Start planning for Eastwood and Kimberley regeneration
- Actively engage in East Midlands Development company: HS2/Toton Strategic growth as important for the long term prosperity of the area.

B: ENVIRONMENT

Ensure our **Green Futures programme** fully embraces the opportunities of a dramatic reduction in carbon emissions during the lockdown period.

- a new impetus to green agendas
- Rediscovering local green spaces and essential services within a 10 min walking radius of where you live.
- Embedding behavioural change to save the planet: less commuting, more homeworking
- How can we capitalise on changes to previous modes of travel by promoting pedestrianisation, increased cycle infrastructure, promoting public transport.

C: SOCIAL

Develop new strategies for the voluntary sector, Food poverty and fuel poverty

- Map community support. Identify gaps and weaknesses- a risk is that the pandemic will have widened existing inequalities. We need to intentionally strengthen social capital where it is currently weaker.
- Explore the support of ground roots volunteering and encourage street level resident “champions” to increase resilience for future emergencies and capitalise on citizen engagement
- Develop a new voluntary sector strategy to support the community
- Strengthen food banks and consider other key means of social support.
- Support people to keep themselves warm through the Winter months
- Develop initiatives to support mental health- internal and external

APPENDIX 2

Weekly County-wide incident management team (IMT) meetings chaired by the Director of Public Health have been held with public health colleagues, NHS Colleagues, colleagues from the CCG and Broxtowe's own employees including representatives from communications and environmental health as well as the chief Executive. A universities IMT has also been held at which the Council has been represented. The Leader of the Council represented the authority at discussions with Minister Pincher regarding negotiations for the tier 3 restrictions arrangements. All local district councils are represented through the Leader of Bassetlaw on the Local Outbreak board. The Council has been represented through various officers at other local resilience forum meetings including

- Strategic co-ordinating group (SCG)
- Tactical co-ordinating group (TCG)
- Humanitarian action group (HAG)
- Local Authority Cell (LA cell)
- Housing co-ordination group
- Meetings of chief executives and section 151 officers to discuss strategic and financial implications of responses for local authorities
- Meetings of environmental health officers have discussed consistent enforcement approaches

Various interventions have been agreed and implemented including:

- Broxtowe was the first local authority area to make use of the Coronavirus Regulations closure powers in relation to a public house in Kimberley, working closely with the County Council and the local Police.
- Enforcement activity has included the service of an Improvement Notice, a Community Protection warning letter, a Prohibition notice and over 150 written warning letters to ensure non complying establishments improve their safe operating practices. Further interventions are under active consideration. A license is under review.
- Local mobile testing sites were agreed on land owned by the Council in the north and south of Broxtowe and have operated well to enable local people to get tested
- A co-ordinated multi agency weekend of enforcement activity took place on 23 and 24 October when over 100 premises were visited to ensure a high profile for compliance
- Two new COVID-19 Marshalls were employed to support environmental health with enforcement activity.
- The two COVID-19 information officers have continued to patrol the town centres and give helpful advice and guidance to retailers and users of the facilities
- A video targeted at students but useful for all ages was produced and launched to promote safety whilst shopping in Beeston and the town centre retailers particularly
- Targeted communications by letter and leaflet were distributed in areas of most concern.
- Systematic contact tracing to supplement what is done nationally has taken place.
- Provision of advice and guidance was provided as part of contact tracing.

- Work with Nottingham University has taken place on local outbreak planning and communications with students.
- Co-ordinated enforcement activity has been undertaken with the Police in public houses and micro-breweries.
- Provision of advice and guidance to businesses.
- New signage has been installed in the town centres and the Information Officers have been giving out posters for businesses to display around face coverings, getting tests, symptoms and social distancing.
- Extensive work has been undertaken within Revenues and Benefits to administer the complex myriad of business support grants for businesses affected in level 2, level 3 and by complete lockdown made available by government all of which are administered by the district council. A separate report to the finance committee will update on the position relating to these grants.
- Risk assessments for employees have been updated in the light of new guidance
- The Council has worked to support the County Council's humanitarian support hub in making food provision available for those in need or linking people up with sources of mutual aid support.
- Telephone calls have been made to clinically vulnerable people to offer support and help where needed.
- There has been extensive communications activity to warn and inform residents, tenants, and businesses of changing restrictions, availability of help and support and to influence behaviour and encourage COVID-19 safe lifestyles.
- A "shop local" campaign is being promoted in the run up to Christmas to support our local retailers

Most services have continued to be delivered as normal. There are a very limited number of services which have experienced some disruption

- COVID-19 secure Face to face service delivery is available for a limited number of hours and by appointment at the Council offices
- Food safety inspection schedules have been disrupted through being unable to make routine visits (sanctioned by the Food Standards Agency)
- DFG grants have been disrupted due to difficulties in entering people's homes during periods of high infection. However urgent provision has continued to be delivered
- Housing repairs was disrupted for a time during the first lockdown but thanks to very hard work by operatives the backlog was caught up. The second lockdown will result in a similar backlog and it is hoped we will be similarly successful in catching up within the year
- Promotion of recycling in schools has not been possible The holding of Community action teams has been disrupted.
- Rent arrears and council tax arrears have increased
- There has been a significant financial impact on the Council resulting from reductions in income from car parking and other fees and charges. Fuller information relating to the financial impact of the virus has been reported to Finance and Resources Committee.
- Some aspects of delivery of community safety action plans have been delayed
- Leisure services have been badly affected by the COVID-19 restrictions

APPENDIX 3

Group Name	Grant (£)
Eastwood Volunteer Bureau	10000.00
Eastwood Age Concern	10000.00
Middle Street Resource Centre	10000.00
Hope Centre	10000.00
Beeston Rylands Community Association	2000.00
Stapleford Community Group	2000.00
Eastwood Memory Café	2000.00
Brinsley Parish Council	2000.00
Nuthall Parish Council	2000.00
Pulp Friction	2000.00
East Midlands Free Wheelers	2000.00
Kimberley and District Mutual Aid Group	2000.00
Stapleford and Surrounding Area Mutual Aid Group	2000.00
Beeston and Chilwell Mutual Aid Group	2000.00
Nuthall Parish Council	2000.00
Beeston Rylands Community Association	2000.00
The Helpful Bureau (Stapleford)	2000.00
Pulp Friction	2000.00
For the Love of Scrubs	2000.00
Stapleford Community Group	2000.00
Beeston Muslim Centre	2000.00
Total	<u>74000.00</u>

Two additional grants have been paid from the Broxtowe Community appeal fund including £1,460 to Pulp Friction and a further £2,000 to Beeston Rylands Community Association.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOVERY STRATEGY: PROGRESS**ECONOMIC**

- A survey of needs has been undertaken of businesses in Broxtowe and reported to the Jobs and Economy Committee.
- Two COVID-19 Information Officers have continued to be employed and have been actively deployed in Town centres and surrounding areas.
- A new markets officer position has been approved; markets in Beeston have restarted and a new schedule of markets in Beeston, Kimberley, Stapleford and Eastwood has been approved by Jobs and Economy committee.
- A 21 action- point economic recovery plan was approved by Jobs and Economy committee at its meeting on 19 November. Actions include the development of additional business units at Stapleford business hub (under way) and Mushroom Farm (shortly under way) and the promotion of a local shopping campaign in the run in to Christmas
- Work continues on the Stapleford Towns fund bid, due to be submitted in January 2021.
- The house building delivery plan continues to be implemented (progress is reported to every meeting of the Housing Committee). Two dementia friendly bungalows are nearing completion in Beeston. The Council is working with a local developer for the development of land partly in its ownership. Outline permission was granted at Planning committee on 4 Nov. The application will result in 190 units of accommodation, a significant proportion of which will be affordable housing.
- The support of Lee Anderson MP has been secured to lobby the government for a towns fund deal for Eastwood and Kimberley.
- A report on a proposal for the Council to become a founder member of a new interim vehicle for a development corporation to be formed to attract government and private sector investment for the development of the Toton innovation campus and two other sites is contained elsewhere on the agenda.
- Beeston Town centre regeneration continues with the new cinema development progressing well and confirmed to be the first Arc premium cinema in the UK- due to open in the first quarter of 2021/22. The sale of land for residential development in Beeston Town centre has now been completed.
- A new list of sites to focus on bringing forward for development continues to be monitored by the Jobs and Economy Committee
- A new task and finish group to progress the council's approach to renewal of its leisure facilities has been set up following a decision made at this committee's last meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- A new Carbon reduction strategy has been developed and approved by the Environment and Climate change committee. This is a comprehensive 15 strand programme of work designed to enable the council to make substantial progress towards achieving our goal to be an area which is net zero carbon by 2027. Included within the strategy is a new transport and fleet strategy.an update report on strand progress was produced to the last Environment and

Climate Change committee , reporting on progress including the giveaway of 500 trees for planting in gardens; the continuation of the clean and green scheme including expansion of recycling and composting; increasing of meadow planting; creation of the first “pocket park”, the beginnings of mapping of the blue infrastructure as a precursor to improving the biodiversity of these assets.

- A new head of asset management and maintenance position has been created to take forward and implement a new asset management plan. The new Asset Management plan for housing has a number of themes one of which is energy efficiency. This means in the next year spending will focus on
 - Replacement of electrical heating with more energy efficient models and remove all solid fuel heating from our properties
 - Analysis of benefits of Air-Source Heat Pumps and PV solar panels that have been fitted to new build schemes
 - Consideration of retro-fitting of energy efficient measures including Air-Source Heat Pumps
 - Considering fitting PV solar panels when completing roofing work
 - Reviewing the need for increasing insulation, including loft insulation and the approach needed to address properties that are difficult to insulate
 - Identifying all funding opportunities, and make bids for funding where suitable
 - Providing information for tenants to support them to use their homes in the most efficient way
- A report was presented to the last Environment and climate change outlining activity to take advantage of five major funding opportunities at present
 - Energy Company Obligation scheme (ECO) – aimed at those in fuel poverty
 - Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme
 - Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD)
 - Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SDHF)

SOCIAL

- A voluntary sector mapping exercise has been commissioned and the report is almost finalised.
- A mental health action plan for employees was approved by the Personnel Committee at its last meeting.
- A new mental health action plan for the Borough was approved at Leisure and health committee at its last meeting.
- The Broxtowe partnership on 21 October had a special focus on mental health issues and a task and finish group was set up to take forward work to add value to existing efforts and identify gaps in provision.
- A survey has been completed relating to people living with dementia and their Carers and a proposal to support people living in Broxtowe who have

dementia and the carers was approved at a recent leisure and health committee

- Coronavirus Grants continue to be provided to voluntary organisations which are supporting the community to cope with the impact of COVID-19 (appendix 3).
- A report on fuel poverty was produced to a recent housing committee outlining measures being taken to support people with their heating bills. This work is continuing and being broadened out to lead to a corporate fuel poverty strategy.
- A food strategy is being worked on and will be brought to the leisure and health committee in due course.
- The child poverty strategy has been updated and was approved by the Policy and Performance committee at its last meeting.