

Subject:	Covid-19: City Recovery Programme. Proposed governance arrangements.		
Date of Meeting:	30th April 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture Executive Lead Officer for Strategy Governance & Law		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposed programme governance and management arrangements that will help prepare and steer the council and the city through the recovery phase of the Covid-19 outbreak.
- 1.2 This document describes how the Covid-19: City Recovery Programme will align and feed into governance structures from central government, regional groups via the Local Resilience Forum, Coast to Capital LEP, Greater Brighton Economic Board. A Programme Initiation Document (PID) is included as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The report also proposes cross-party Member oversight of the Recovery Programme through establishing a Policy & Resources (Recovery) Sub-Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Policy & Resources Committee agrees to establish the Covid-19 City Recovery Programme and approves the Programme Initiation Document in appendix 1.
- 2.2 That Policy & Resources Committee agrees to establish a Policy & Resources (Recovery) Sub-Committee with the terms of reference set out in Appendix 2 for the purpose of decision making and overseeing the delivery of the Covid-19 City Recovery Programme.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This report considers the governance and management arrangements for a Covid-19 City Recovery Programme for Brighton & Hove. Whilst the immediate priority remains protecting the health of our residents and overcoming the Covid-19 outbreak, it is important that the council and its partners also look towards how to shape the city for the future. How recovery efforts are structured could

define our city for decades to come. The City Recovery Programme will aim to build a solid foundation so that Brighton & Hove has the best opportunity to emerge as healthier, equitable and more sustainable place to live, work and visit.

- 3.2 The Covid-19 outbreak represents an unprecedented challenge for Brighton & Hove and major shock to the city's economy and communities. After the initial focus on the immediate crisis response measures, the Council and its partners need to consider the longer-term implications and start planning a recovery programme to support the city once the outbreak stage of the virus has completed.
- 3.3 As the current lockdown restrictions are lifted and moves into the recovery phase, the city will want to see the economy revive as quickly as it possibly can. Getting projects that are paused at the moment, back under way is going to be critical to the recovery. The challenge will be to restore confidence after what has been a big health and economic shock.

Objectives of the Recovery Programme

- 3.4 The core objective of the Programme is to develop a co-ordinated recovery programme that will guide the city and the council through the transition from the emergency response of the outbreak phase of the pandemic towards the steady state post-pandemic city. It is recognised that this might not be a linear transition through recovery, but a series of phases which may see the city more in and out of restrictions to control the Covid-10 outbreak. Whilst the Programme will focus upon recovery, it will also seek opportunities for positive change to shape the future of the city.
- 3.5 The Programme Initiation Document at Appendix 1 sets out the programme governance structure for initiating and organising a series of co-ordinated multi agency actions, during the recovery stage(s) following the Covid-19 outbreak affecting the communities and/or environment of Brighton & Hove.
- 3.6 The Recovery Programme builds upon the *Sussex Resilience Forum Recovery Plan* which Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) members and other organisations use to co-ordinate their efforts to help affected communities to recover and establish a new normality following a major emergency in Sussex. It also has been developed in line with the *Brighton & Hove Recovery Plan* developed by the city council's Emergency Planning Team.

Scope of the Recovery Programme

- 3.7 The programme has been divided into two core areas:
- The **external city-wide** recovery programme
 - An **internal corporate (council)** recovery programme

The overall programme will be co-ordinated by an officer co-ordination group with Member oversight from a Policy & Resources Sub-Committee. Each programme has a number of thematic workstreams or subgroups, which will each develop a clear action plan to drive recovery in that thematic area.

- 3.8 It is not proposed to create a long-term plan at this point. The focus is likely to be upon a more scenario-based approach to strategic planning, with the programme focused upon shorter planning bursts that contemplate the next 3-6 months up to an 18-month period.

Governance of the Recovery Programme

- 3.9 The detailed governance proposals for the Recovery Programme are described in section 6 of the Programme Initiation Document at Appendix 1. The recovery programme will feed into the Sussex Resilience Forum Recovery Cell.
- 3.10 There are a range of stakeholders and partners who will need to be fully engaged in the City recovery programme. Whilst Brighton & Hove City Council will have democratic oversight and decision making, the governance of the programme is designed to ensure that Brighton & Hove Connected partners from the public and private sectors, which includes stakeholders from across the city, are able to contribute. The city council has a key role to play in the overall co-ordination and oversight of the programme, whilst not always delivering every element.

Policy & Resources (Recovery) Sub-Committee

- 3.11 The recovery programme is significant and will impact on all aspects of life in the the City and the region as well as nationally. Given the scale of the challenge, it would not be practicable or most effective to deal with it using existing democratic decision-making arrangements. It is therefore proposed to establish a single purpose Policy & Resources Sub-Committee to provide cross-party oversight and decision making for the recovery programme.
- 3.12 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee consists of 5 Members (2 Labour, 2 Green and 1 Conservative) under current party split.). A draft terms of reference for the sub-committee appears at Appendix 2.

Recovery Programme Sub-Groups

- 3.13 Each thematic sub-group will be tasked with scenario planning, to begin planning now for the recovery, so that when current restrictions are lifted the city is ready to move to recovery. Thematic sub-groups will be developed as the need arises but are likely to include:

For the Citywide element of the Programme:

- Events & Economy
- Infrastructure
- Community Wealth
- Environment & Climate Change
- Housing & Homelessness
- Welfare, Wellbeing & Health
- Crime, Community Safety & Community Cohesion
- Education & Skills
- Public Health Advisory

For the internal corporate (council) element of the programme:

- Workforce & Human Resources

- Financial Recovery & Resilience
- Procurement and contract management
- Technology & Data
- Legal and Governance
- Directorate level Recovery Plans

3.14 The Council is experiencing significant financial impacts as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak. The government has announced funding support for local authorities to mitigate the financial impact. However, if the funding does not match all of the additional costs and income losses experienced by the council it could impact upon financial resilience in the medium term. The Recovery Programme will include work to recover the financial resilience of the council.

3.15 The internal element of the programme will also involve each directorate considering the timing and phasing of re-opening services that have been closed and reduced in line with government restrictions and guidance during the outbreak. Each directorate will also review their 2020/21 directorate plans so that milestones and priorities reflect the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Links to Sussex Resilience Forum and wider city and regional governance

3.16 The programme governance structure will be designed to align with the Sussex Resilience Recovery Cell. The Recovery Programme will also be able to input into and influence the development of wider recovery planning at the Greater Brighton city region and Coast to Capital LEP region level

3.17 The City Management Board is engaged on strengthening and focusing the totality of public service delivery within Brighton & Hove and is made up of the senior officers from the city's public sector agencies, including Sussex Police, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, the Universities, and the NHS. The City Management Board will be key to ensuring that all of the city's public sector agencies are engaged and involved in the design and delivery of the city wide recovery programme.

Scenario-Building

3.18 Clearly the operating environment brought by COVID-19 has been disruptive. Today, there are many nuanced uncertainties at play that need to be considered. None of us knows when the current situation will end, but the ambiguity of the given circumstances in which we find ourselves should not stop us from moving toward the future by first exploring possible realities. The Recovery Programme will aim to be the vehicle to get the city moving towards a future and arrive better prepared and more resilient to future economic and community shutdowns should they take place.

3.19 The fundamental questions that each thematic sub-group will consider when developing their recovery plan include: What are the possible future scenarios we see, and which are the most probable given what we know now? Once potential futures have been explored, including consideration of which one or combination is most likely bear out, the sub-group will create a plan to put into future motion.

- 3.20 Each sub-group of the Recovery Programme will also consider any implications of the Brexit transition period and negotiations between the UK and EU as outlined in paragraph 7.3.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 As the democratic body of the city, the council has a role in leading the preparations for the recovery phase of the crisis. The impacts of the implications of the Covid-19 outbreak are significant so it is proposed to start these preparations now, rather than wait for the outbreak to end.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 We will engage with local communities and businesses through Brighton & Hove Connected and the different partnerships that sit below that as well as direct engagement with specific communities on an issue by issue basis.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Covid-19 outbreak represents an unprecedented challenge for Brighton & Hove and major shock to the city's economy and communities. It also presents the city with an opportunity to shape its future. The Recovery Programme is designed to provide the governance structure for initiating and organising a series of co-ordinated multi agency actions, during the recovery stage(s) following the Covid-19 outbreak affecting the communities and/or environment of Brighton & Hove.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The support for the recovery programme and the establishment of a Policy & Resources sub committee will come from existing resources.
- 7.2 Covid 19 is having a profound effect on the council's financial resilience. The scale of the impact from increased costs and reductions in income (highlighted in the Financial Position Report on this agenda) will use all the emergency response resources from government and is likely to use up a proportion of councils reserves and/or the working balance which is not a sustainable financial position. Therefore, restoring income sources and managing costs as quickly as possible are the priority and the focus on recovery for the city will directly influence recovery for the council. Internally the recovery programme will require each directorate will focus on recovery plans to help restore financial resilience as quickly as possible.

Finance Officer Consulted: James Hengeveld

Date: 21/04/20

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 As the only city-wide democratic leadership and the body with statutory function for promoting the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the City, the

Council is expected to start preparations for the recovery phase of the crisis so that the Council, its residents and businesses are in the best possible position to minimise losses and make best use of opportunities that emerge. This will require a co-ordinated programme and a member level decision-making body that can make decisions quickly and give the programme the focused attention it needs.

- 7.4 Given the overarching role of the programme and given that it impacts on a number of Council functions, this is best led under a programme overseen by a sub-committee reporting to Policy and Resources Committee.
- 7.5 The proposals in the report are consistent with the Council's legal powers and duties and will facilitate the discharge of Council functions during the crisis and the recovery phase.

Lawyer Consulted: Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis Date: 19.04.2020

Equalities Implications:

- 7.6 An aspect of the work on the recovery programme will look at issues of community cohesion, protecting the most vulnerable, enhancing equalities and building on the good will generated among people of different backgrounds during the crisis.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.7 The experience of home working, reduction in public and private transport and a number of HR practices introduced in response to the pandemic give the City the opportunity to explore how some of these could be sustained or at least inform our approach to future planning.

Brexit Implications:

- 7.8 The government has indicated that they are not minded to ask for an extension of the 31st December 2020 deadline for full implementation of Brexit. The EU have indicated that they are unlikely to prioritise preparations for Brexit. There is therefore a risk that we may be moving into the final phase with no trade and people movement agreements in place. This will accentuate the challenge posed by the Coronavirus. The Recovery programme, as part of the economic modelling and impact on businesses on the city, will consider Brexit implications.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 7.9 The programme involves working with the police and our Communities Team to look at Community Safety implications and

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.10 The current risk register will be updated with focus on the recovery and inform the development of the programme.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.11 The programme does not see the transition from containing the spread of Covid-19 to the recovery phase as being necessarily linear. The public health aspect will therefore be central is limiting the risk of new infections and creating an environment that is conducive to opening up businesses and accentuating the recovery.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Programme Initiation Document
2. Draft terms of reference for Policy & Resources (Recovery) Sub-Committee

Background Documents

None

