

Subject:	Greater Brighton COVID-19 Sustainable Recovery Plan		
Date of Meeting:	20th October 2020		
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board		
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LA's affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 When the Greater Brighton Economic Board “the Board” met on 20th July 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic was a key point of discussion. The Board reviewed the findings of the Impact Assessment on the region, which was completed by Hatch. It was clear from the analysis that, like the rest of the UK economy, COVID-19 will have a significant impact on output (GVA) growth in the Greater Brighton region over the coming year. Using the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) methodology to create a coronavirus reference scenario, the figures indicate a loss of 11% in GVA during 2020. The region’s estimated year of recovery to achieve pre-COVID GVA levels is 2028.
- 1.2 The Board has an important role to play in developing an economic recovery strategy (feeding into Coast to Capital’s recovery strategy), to address the wider systemic economic challenges the region will face and to leverage the region’s existing assets in the most economically inclusive way. To this end, the Board has drafted a COVID-19 Recovery Plan in line with the Board’s Five-Year Priorities for approval and delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board approve the recommendations made within the Recovery Plan which is aligned with Coast to Capital’s recovery strategy for the region.
- 2.2 That the Board agrees to work with partners to progress the actions outlined in the plan and report on progress within an agreed timeframe.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The impact assessment for the region presented to the Board in July highlighted six main impacts. A rise in unemployment, closure of local businesses with significant challenges in four main sectors; Creative, Arts and Culture, Education, the Visitor Economy and Transport. The recovery plan looks at these in more detail aligning recommended actions to the Board’s Strategic Priority themes; International, Creative, Connected, Talented and Resilient.

4 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF OTHER OPTIONS

The economic impact of COVID-19 cannot be ignored and a 'do nothing' approach is not feasible. The Board agreed at the last board meeting in July to produce a Sustainable Recovery Plan for the region. The recommended actions within the plan have been shared with Board members for their feedback, the suggestions/amendments included and so represents their views. The recommendations will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with progress against the Board's Five-Year Priorities.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

The Greater Brighton Recovery Plan has been circulated and shared with Board members and officers who have provided their feedback, which has been incorporated into the plan.

6. CONCLUSION

The Greater Brighton region has been impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic, notably in the creative, arts, visitor economy, transport and education sectors. The Recovery Plan highlights the actions the Board can take to mitigate against the impacts and encourage the economy to grow in a sustainable way. The Board must work together and across geographical boundaries to make this happen.

The Greater Brighton Economic Board continue to lobby government for support in the hard-hit sectors. The Board should consider the opportunities provided by new Government programmes and new funding streams; recognise national calls for a 'greener, fairer and more resilient' recovery and use this to frame recovery actions referring to Government narrative on 'levelling-up'.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The COVID 19 Sustainability Recovery Plan details a number of action points to enable the economic recovery of the Greater Brighton region. Amongst these action points are a number of financial actions including the continued lobbying of Government for financial support packages, the monitoring of opportunities for further public sector investment as well as the support of government financial initiatives such as the job Retention Scheme.

Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen, Principal Accountant
Date: 08/10/2020

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 At this stage, there are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Joanne Dougnaglo, Senior Property Lawyer
Date: 07/10/2020

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 Evidence shows that the Covid-19 pandemic has widened some existing inequalities, opened new divides and is disproportionately affecting certain parts of the region's population. National analysis indicates that:
- The most deprived areas, where the most vulnerable live, will be where new jobs will be slowest to appear. They are the places where already fragile high streets are further threatened by online commerce.
 - Sector shutdowns and homeworking have hit low paid workers the hardest. Increased reliance on technology and home working favours the more highly educated, at the expense of others.
 - The self-employed and those with insecure work arrangements more likely to report negative impacts.
 - Young people and women are much more likely to work in shutdown sectors. In terms of gender inequalities, women have also been taking a disproportionate share of the childcare responsibilities' parents are shouldering, with likely longer-term impacts on earnings.

This recovery plan is an important step in addressing some of these disparities and mitigating these impacts.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.4 The UK government has committed to 'Build Back Better, Build Back Greener and Build Back Smarter'. It is supporting the development of national and regional recovery packages that support a green and resilient economy. A green and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 crisis will be at the heart of the UK's COP26 Presidency in 2021 alongside the move towards a zero-carbon economy.

Clean growth has the potential to create jobs, provide cheaper power and stimulate economic recovery. Low-carbon transportation will reduce emissions and improve public health. Adapting and becoming more resilient to climate change through nature-based solutions will help all parts of society. The actions within this recovery plan focus on the region becoming more environmentally resilient. This is supported by the recent adoption of the region's energy and water plans and the GB10 pledges.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Greater Brighton COVID-19 Sustainable Recovery Plan
2. Coast to Capital - Build back stronger, smarter and greener

