

To: **EXECUTIVE**
22 September 2020

Recovery and Renewal Place based Strategy – Covid-19
Chief Executive

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Council has been responding to the Covid-19 pandemic since early March 2020 and worked to a set of five key principles in making decisions during and after Lockdown. As the council moves forward and begins to recover and eventually renew service delivery it is important to do so in a consistent and planned way. As such a set of principles for this period of the response to the Pandemic have been established, to cover the issues of concern and relevance to residents and businesses located within Bracknell Forest.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Executive approves the Post-Covid Place Based Renewal Strategy principles attached at Appendix 1**

3 Reasons for Recommendation(S)

- 3.1 To provide a clear place-based strategy to deal with the recovery and renewal of council services in response to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council could seek to respond to issues on an ad-hoc basis, however it is considered important to have a place-based strategy against which decisions and actions can be assessed, to ensure a planned and considered approach to recovery and renewal.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 In March 2020 the Government introduced a national lockdown which required strict adherence to measures aimed at slowing the spread of Covid-19. This required Councils to make quick decisions to shut down services, close its buildings and for its workforce to stay at home to work. This was the response phase of the Pandemic. In order to achieve consistent decision making the Council adopted five principles which it used in its decision-making process, these were;

- Follow Government/PHE strategy
- Business Continuity activated and trying to maintain all one to few or non-contact services as far as possible
- Closures of social contact services
- Maintaining service capability when new normal arrives
- Recovery - Framework for approaching recovery decisions itself based upon:

- Overall strategy remains to deliver Council Plan objectives by 2023
- Acceptance that some delivery mechanisms will change
- Operational recovery limited by service capability so phased

5.2 Although the Council remains within the response phase and the pandemic is still being closely monitored, the lockdown has been eased and the Council has begun to reintroduce some of this services such as the reopening of play areas, car parks for its open spaces, some Libraries and some of its face to face services delivered directly to residents.

5.3 In order to work towards a recovery and eventual renewal of council services the Council has established a place-based strategy which is set out in appendix 1. These principles seek to focus on the key issues and impacts for residents and businesses within Bracknell Forest. The focus on the health and economy issues which have come about through the Pandemic. The key principles are to:

- *Work with partners and communities to protect and promote the physical and mental health of our population*
- *Support town and neighbourhood centre vitality and look to support our local economy by retaining businesses within the borough*
- *Provide short term support and refocus some activities to deal with post COVID-19 spikes in demand*
- *Integrate services with partners and locate them wherever possible within the community that use them*
- *Look to involve the community and voluntary sector in supporting people and services wherever possible*

Whilst

- *Containing/reducing expenditure in the long term (including refocussing/ delivering differently/stopping some services)*

And ...

- *Maximising the opportunities to address carbon reduction across all of our activities*

5.4 The above objectives are set against a context of our community leadership role, the need to deliver the Council plan (where possible) and that decision making must consider the financial implications the Covid recovery might have on the council and its future financial position, these elements are set out in appendix 2 of the report. It is intended that these strategies will govern the Council's decision making with regard to response and renewal providing a consistency in decision making.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 *The place-based strategy set out in this report is underpinned by a recognition that notwithstanding the impact of the Pandemic, the Council's statutory duties towards its residents remain and that it therefore needs to reframe its approach to service delivery in order to retain its capacity to fully discharge those duties.*

Director of Finance

- 6.2 The financial implications of individual actions responding to the approach set out in this report will need to be evaluated and included as necessary in the Council's financial plans at the appropriate time.

Consultation Responses

- 6.3 None

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 The proposal and recommendations will support the Council Strategic Objectives and enhance the opportunities for residents and the wider community in the Borough.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 None

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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