

West Berkshire Recovery Strategy

Committee considering report: Executive on 16 July 2020

Portfolio Member: Councillor Lynne Doherty

Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 23 June 2020

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Forward Plan Ref: EX3937

1 Purpose of the Report

To provide the framework for the Council's overarching recovery in respect of Covid-19 and its impact on the district. The Recovery Strategy intends to highlight the key areas of focus for the Council and highlights where action has been taken to date and areas that will be explored further once considered with partners and the community.

2 Recommendation

For the Executive to approve the strategy

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The strategy includes the use of funds allocated through Central Government to fund recovery activities as well as proposals for general funding for the continuation of the Community Hub at @£20k per month. This is currently funded through the Central Government Covid-19 funding (non ringfenced) though if a 3 rd tranche of funding does not occur, the Council will need to utilise its own funds.
Human Resource:	None directly; the strategy will be informed by and consider the internal staff survey. One of the key considerations is reshaping the organisation to be more responsive learning from the Covid-19 response and bring this into recovery. The workforce board will consider this further.
Legal:	None immediately, though workstreams will potentially require legal considerations

Risk Management:	Reputational risk – Council seen to be acting too slowly / ineffectively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to enhance the Council's engagement with residents, partners and businesses through recovery work - This strategy has been drafted quickly and sets out the high level trajectory of work to support our communities. This mitigates some of the above risk through showing steps already taken through recovery and future themes to be developed. 			
Property:	As part of recovery the Council, through the recovery group, is overseeing the re-opening of facilities for residents			
Policy:	Links to Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Berkshire recovery groups' recovery strategies.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	x			The strategy highlights that Covid-19 will have had an unequal impact on residents and businesses and one of the strategy's aims to reduce inequality.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Environmental Impact:	x			This is one of the core 8 themes

Health Impact:	X			This is one of the core 8 themes
ICT Impact:	X			Further work on reshaping the organisation will look to increase digitisation and IT projects to support this; for example through greater participation and engagement in the Council's work
Digital Services Impact:	X			See above
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		The strategy is framed through the overarching vision and should support the work of the Council Strategy
Core Business:	X			The strategy picks up some of the learning from Covid-19 and how this can help improve and offer new services from core business.
Data Impact:		X		None initially through the strategy

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 This report sets out the recovery strategy for West Berkshire. This is being brought to the Executive as an early piece of work that sets out:
- The principles behind recovery work
 - A brief summary of response work
 - The key themes that the Council will focus on as part of the recovery period
 - A summary of key actions undertaken already
- 4.2 Much has changed for our communities due to Covid-19. This strategy highlights some of the changes, the impact and the opportunities. The strategy sets out the key themes the Council will focus on as well as some of the immediate actions undertaken as part of the recovery phase.
- 4.3 The recovery phase itself is expected to last at least eighteen months, and may well overlap with the response phase at points depending on how the Covid-19 virus continues to impact on day to day life. There will be a number of emerging actions that occur, and these will be framed around the themes highlighted in this strategy. Not all of the actions are known as we want to ensure that we work as closely as possible with our communities, partners and businesses to help develop actions. As the wider

economy and social changes emerge through the coming months, this action plan will need to continue to develop and morph; to include a fully costed and detailed action plan now would mean it became quickly out of date as the local picture becomes clearer. What we do know now, and informed through evidence including the residents survey is that there have been some major shifts in recent weeks to:

- (a) The immediate health of our residents
 - (b) Transportation
 - (c) How people are educated
 - (d) Economic output and jobs
 - (e) A longer term impact on health
 - (f) The role of the local community and volunteering
 - (g) Changes to air quality
- 4.4 Through a monthly dashboard, we are collating data to see how changes to the above and many other areas are occurring and will inform future actions for the Council to take.
- 4.5 The recovery strategy is closely aligned to the Council Strategy. Many of the actions as part of recovery will support deliver the overall strategy, and in many cases in a faster timeframe. This link is important as both are based on improving the quality of life for local residents.

5 Supporting Information

The recovery strategy is included in appendix A for review and approval

6 Other options considered

- 6.1 The Council could have waited to produce a recovery strategy. This would have the advantage of having much cleaner and clearer data on which to base decisions; however, this has been discounted as the Council has a fundamental role in the place of West Berkshire to ensure an effective recovery for the quality of life of our residents.
- 6.2 Different themes and emphasis could be placed on the key areas within the strategy. These will be open to debate, but the eight areas provided have been considered through internal consultation across the Council as well as key themes from the LRF.

7 Conclusion

The Recovery Strategy will continue to be a 'live' document; new and different actions will emerge throughout as more work is undertaken with our community and partners to develop solutions to support our community. The strategy itself sets a framework for where we will focus our effort most over the coming eighteen months and beyond to delivery for our residents.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Recovery Strategy

Background Papers:

LRF recovery documentation

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected: ALL

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