

Report

Cabinet



Part 1

Date: 16 September 2020

Subject Newport City Council Covid 19 Response and Recovery Update

Purpose To present to Cabinet an update on the Council's progress being made towards recovering services and supporting Newport's communities as part of its Strategic Recovery Aims.

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Head of People and Business Change

Ward All

Summary In March 2020, the Covid 19 health emergency impacted on the delivery of Council services, Newport's communities and businesses as lockdown and social distancing measures were introduced. At the start of the crisis, Newport was one of the first areas in Wales to see significant positive Covid 19 cases across city. The immediate response of the Council and its strategic partners was to preserve life and minimise the spread of the virus; maintain continuity of front line and supporting services; and to support the city's communities and the vulnerable.

In response to the easing of the lockdown measures and to support services to return back to a 'new normal', the Council's Cabinet endorsed the Strategic Recovery Plan. This report provides an overview of the action undertaken by the Council to date. It also outlines the ongoing activities that is being planned and delivered by the Council and its partners to support communities and businesses in their recovery and to manage any future localised outbreaks in the City.

Proposal Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of the report and note the progress being made to date, the risks that are still faced by the Council.

Action by Corporate Management Team

Timetable Immediate

Signed

Background

The Covid 19 health emergency has posed a significant and unprecedented challenge to the way in which Newport Council delivers its services and our way of life. From the initial outbreak in March 2020, the Council and its strategic partners immediate focus was to preserve life and minimise the spread of the virus; maintain continuity of front line and supporting services; and to support the city's communities and the vulnerable. This report outlines the Council's response to the outbreak and lockdown measures and the work that it is doing to support services and communities to recover.

Civil Contingencies / Emergency Response work

Prior to the lockdown measures in March 2020, the Council's Civil Contingencies team alongside the Corporate Management Team (CMT) had begun to make preparations to manage the outbreak of Covid 19 cases in the city in line with the Government and Public Health Wales guidance. The establishment of the Council's Emergency Response team (renamed Covid Gold) enabled the Council to oversee the delivery of the Council's operational and strategic activities. This also meant a suspension of democratic governance arrangements and as per the Council's Constitution delegation of decision making to Heads of Service / Covid Gold whilst ensuring the Council's Cabinet had oversight and as necessary having final approval. This flexibility enabled the Council to action immediately any legislative changes from UK and Welsh Government (WG) and ensured the community had access to necessary services they need.

As lockdown measures have been eased by WG, the Covid Gold group has transitioned from emergency response work to managing the recovery and supporting services to return in the climate of a 'new normal' and has been renamed the NCC Covid Recovery Group. However, as it has been seen in the last four weeks, Covid-19 still remains prevalent in the community and further necessary measures could be implemented throughout this financial year. With this in mind, the group has added flexibility to move back into emergency response work should new clusters / large scale outbreaks occur across the City / wider region.

Multi-Agency Strategic Coordination Group (SCG)

In March 2020 the Gwent Local Resilience Forum (GLRF) established a Strategic Coordination Group following an assessment from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) that the Gwent area would be one of the first areas to experience significant increase in the number of covid cases. Newport Council has played a key role in this Group supporting the coordination of a multi-agency response which has continued to meet and monitor situation across Gwent and Newport. Throughout the crisis Newport Council has been provided regular update reports on the situation in Newport.

Multi-Agency Recovery Coordination Group

To return the community and economy of Gwent, as far as safely practicable, to a new state of normality whilst living with Covid 19, a multi-agency Recovery Coordination Group (RCG) has been established. The role of the RCG is to coordinate the civil contingency recovery across Gwent with particular focus on health and welfare; economic and environmental; communications; and community liaison. Newport Council is chairing the work of the RCG and enabling the coordination of work with its multi-agency partners.

See Appendix 2 for a diagram of the Covid 19 Prevention and Response Structure.

Newport City Council's Covid 19 Response

As soon as it became clear that the UK was heading towards a lockdown situation and the vulnerable were asked to shield, the Council's had mobilised to work remotely from home. In **People and Business Change**, the Council's IT Partner (Shared Resource Service) and Digital Services made arrangements to ensure staff had access to laptops, IT equipment, installation of Microsoft Teams (video conferencing) and were able to access the internet.

Arrangements were also established to ensure front line staff were still able to access Council offices as necessary but ensuring necessary social distancing measures were in place.

Additionally HR suspended the Council's flexi-time working arrangements to enable staff to work more flexibly to undertake child care, home schooling and looking after family members who were shielding. This has enabled the Council to continue to deliver front line and supporting services throughout the crisis.

The Newport Intelligence Hub has also been involved with WG and NHS Wales supporting the distribution of shielding patient data to local authorities across Wales. This was pivotal in enabling the Council to identify residents to access WG food parcel scheme and for the Council to contact shielding residents to ensure they had access to the support and services they needed.

The Business Improvement Team supported the effort across the council including coordinating the voluntary response with the third sector for shielding residents and supporting the work in RIH to assist rough sleepers and the homeless.

For the Council's **Adult & Community Services**, Covid 19 had placed significant pressures on delivering frontline care and support at both residential and non-residential settings. The Council had to manage accessing the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect both staff, residents and service users. Day service delivery drivers have been delivering PPE to all social care providers and schools across Newport. To date the Council has delivered:

- Visors and goggles: 38,425
- Face Masks: 620,250
- Gloves: 947,40
- Aprons: 591,200

Many care homes across the city had been impacted by Covid 19 which had sadly seen many residents and their families affected. Throughout this period the Council's First Contact Service continued to operate 7 days a week on a virtual basis, and the Council's Occupational Therapy team continued to support service users to obtain the necessary equipment, support and services they need. This helped support the hospital discharge and prevent people from entering hospital settings. The Council's Community Connectors continued to offer support to households by sending out food parcels and medicines, shopping and ensuring utilities (gas and electric) were being paid and ensuring they remain in contact with their family members using social media. They had also been signposting those who were shielding to access necessary support services through partners such as Pobl and had distributed over 550 carer packs and handbooks.

The Council's **Children Services** utilised social media to remain in contact with children, young people and their families. Despite social distancing measures Children Services continued to ensure necessary court work, fostering and adoption, family support for vulnerable and disabled children remain in place. Settings such as Oakland's continued to operate during lockdown to ensure families and children had access to respite and care. The Council's Youth Justice Team alongside young people put together Pamper Packs for NHS staff and linking in with care homes.

In **Education services and Schools**, all educational establishments (including the Council's Adult Community learning) across the city had to close. Schools and other establishments had to establish home-learning arrangements for pupils using technology such as Google Classroom and video conferencing facilities. Schools across the city had identified 2,565 learners that were 'digitally excluded' from being able to access these services. This included having access to internet enabled devices, access to broadband and support to households to support their children's education. In response, the Council utilising additional support from WG had loaned 1,300 Mi-Fi units and distributed over 800 devices with licence costs for 1 year paid by WG.

Whilst schools had closed for educational purposes, many schools and the Council's Neighbourhood Hubs (**Regeneration Investment & Housing** (RIH)) continued to provide childcare support for children of key workers and 60 vulnerable learners which has continued on through the summer holiday period. Learners that were entitled to Free School Meals continued to receive food parcels and thereafter fortnightly supermarket vouchers.

In July schools reopened for *check in, catch up and prepare* for the summer and September for learners. In July the Council's Education services outlined their recovery planning to [Cabinet](#) on how schools and learners will be supported back into education for the next academic year 2020/21. More recently, Newport Council welcomes the WG decision to award A Level and GCSE grades based upon teachers assessment. This not only reduces the stresses on pupil's wellbeing but also provides much certainty over their future educational, training and employment opportunities.

Throughout lockdown the Council's **City Services** continued to operate alongside its partners to deliver key services. The Council's waste services and alongside Wastesavers continued to operate household recycling and waste collections. Due to social distancing measures the Council's Waste Recycling Facility, parks and all of the children play areas had to close but have reopened as measures have been eased. The Council alongside Gwent local authorities had to reduce the number of mourners able to attend funeral services but these have increased since the easing of lockdown measures and we understand the impact that this has had for families and friends wanting to pay their respects during the lockdown period. Leisure and cultural services delivered by Newport Live and cultural assets such as the Transporter Bridge, library services and museum also had to close during this period but have also started to slowly return in the last few months.

Collaborating between the Council's Housing (**Regeneration, Investment & Housing**), Supporting People (**Adult Services**) services and our partners at Pobl, Eden Gate, the Salvation Army, Olive branch and Gwent Police we ensured over 70 people presenting as rough sleeping or homeless were provided accommodation, access to mental and health services and hot meals. The lockdown measures has seen increases in demand on the Council's services for those at risk of being made homeless and/or requiring further housing advice and guidance.

In **Finance Services**, the Council's Income Management team was also able to support local businesses by administering over 2,100 grant claims totalling £27m and had also administered over £19m of business rates relief by effectively cancelling rates bills for nearly 1,000 businesses in 2020/21. The lockdown measures have had considerable impacts on the city's economy and have impacted on those that have lost employment or have been furloughed. The Council's Regulatory services has been supporting businesses to ensure that they are compliant with the necessary covid secure legislation and guidance as they have been re-opening. The team has also been ensuring that where non-compliance has been raised that necessary action is taken against those businesses.

In June Regulatory services (**Law & Regulation**), Customer Contact Centre (**City Services**) and other Gwent Authorities has been setting up Contact Tracing centres from scratch. This will be covered in further detail below as part of the Recovery update. The Council's Registrar service (**Law & Regulation**) has also been working throughout lockdown ensuring necessary birth, death and other registrar services are continued.

Finally, ensuring communities are being made aware of the different legislative and health changes has been ongoing throughout the crisis. The Council's Communication team has been sharing daily social media content for the Council with advice and guidance from WG, Public Health Wales and other organisations. Additionally as part of the Public Services Board, One Newport has been providing regular updates for Council and its partnership members. Alongside this work, the Council's Community Cohesion Officers (**People & Business Change**) have been in regular contact with community leaders and community groups ensuring its black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) and marginalised communities are able to access the necessary services, share advice and guidance and ensure that they are able to raise incidents of hate related crime.

Strategic Recovery Aims

In delivering the Council's response to the health crisis, we recognised that we could not continue on the same projected path to fully deliver the Council's services, the Corporate Plan 2017-22 nor the planned activities within service area plans and revenue / capital programme. As lockdown measures have been eased, there is now a new reality in which we have to support the community to work and live alongside new socially distanced measures and guidance until a vaccine or other medical advances have been made

which can mean that we can return back to pre-covid way of life. New opportunities and risks have also emerged as the Council has embraced new technology, found new ways of working and we have adapted to the changes imposed by legislation and regulation. As the Council is planning for recovery, the delivery of these aims will not be a linear process and the Council remains vigilant and flexible to meet the requirements of reintroducing necessary measures and supporting communities across the city.

With these considerations in mind, the Council’s Cabinet in June 2020 endorsed [four Strategic Recovery Aims](#) that supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan’s Wellbeing Objectives but also enables the Council to provide focus for Council services to return and ensure that we build resilience to manage future outbreaks:

- Strategic Recovery Aim 1 – Supporting Education & Employment;
- Strategic Recovery Aim 2 – Supporting the Environment and the Economy;
- Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens; and
- Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19.

To support these aims we have a number of steps that outline the areas of focus that the Council will be undertaking during the year. At the time of the report, service areas had been asked to update their 2020/21 service plans to reflect the work that will need to be undertaken to support the Council’s Corporate Plan but also the Strategic Recovery Aims. In addition to this report, the Council’s Cabinet will receive an overview of the Council’s End of Year performance for 2019/20 and also the Council’s Annual Report in the autumn.

Progress of Delivery against Strategic Recovery Aims

Outlined in Appendix 1 of the report is a detailed update on the progress of delivery being made against the Strategic Recovery Aims. A summary of the progress to date as follows:

<p>Strategic Recovery Aim 1 – Supporting & Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools (primary / secondary / special) are intending to reopen from the 7th September 2020. • Education services alongside strategic partners have been supporting schools to ensure necessary Covid secure arrangements are in place and that mainstream and vulnerable children are supported. • Adult learning will be recommencing from September to enable adults across the city to access training and learning new skills. • Neighbourhood Hubs will be offering online and phone support to people looking for work and new employment opportunities • Supporting Cardiff Capital Region in the promotion of a virtual jobs fair across South East Wales on 16th September. • The Council has made a commitment to encourage and open opportunities for young BAME people to access apprenticeship schemes both in the Council and across the city.
<p>Strategic Recovery Aim 2 – Supporting the Environment and the Economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council established a city centre task and finish group to support the reopening of the city centre for businesses and to encourage shoppers back into the city centre. • Regeneration work on key projects such as Market Arcade, the IAC building and other projects have all recommenced. • Regulatory services has been supporting businesses to become covid secure for both workers and customers. • Newport Council has been further commitment to become net carbon neutral through the installation of solar panels and purchasing of new electric fleet vehicles.
<p>Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newport Council’s Social Services (Adults and Children) have continued to deliver front line services across residential and domiciliary settings in Newport. • Adult services have been working with residential and domiciliary providers to support them with their recovery planning and working with providers to ensure that they are able to remain financially stable for the long term. • Children Services are now conducting their work with families and young people applying necessary social distancing measures.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding from WG has been received to deliver active travel projects in the city centre and at Monkey Island. • Leisure services have started to return within the WG requirements alongside the return of cultural assets such as the fourteen locks and the Transporter Bridge opened to the public. • The Council's scrutiny and regulatory functions will recommence in the autumn with ongoing support and training provided to Elected Members. • Establishment of the Test, Trace and Protect service with Gwent local authorities and ABUHB. • New ways of working will continue to be implemented with HR policies and guidance updated to support officers and managers to work flexibly from home and offices. Council offices are being made Covid secure to ensure social distancing measures can be delivered.
Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newport Council and its Registered Social Landlords have secured funding of over £4.8m to build over 200 new affordable homes. • Continued partnership working to deliver mental health, substance misuse support and develop independent life skills to support rough sleepers to move into permanent accommodation • Strategic development of actions plans relating to long term affordable housing for vulnerable cohorts of individuals experiencing homelessness • Community Impact Assessment is being developed to understand the impact of Covid 19 on communities across Newport. • Participatory budget will be delivered in the autumn for communities to access funding for projects, initiatives and other schemes to help them in the recovery of Covid 19. • Neighbourhood Hubs have reopened on an appointment basis and have continued to provide childcare support for key worker families and offer employment support through virtual/phone contact. • Continuing community cohesion work to support the vulnerable and marginalised communities in Newport, ensure foodbanks remain sustainable, and enable access to Council and other community services.

Financial Summary

In June 2020 the [Council's Cabinet](#) was provided an overview of the Council's financial impact from Covid 19 and regular monitoring reports will be submitted to provide Cabinet an update on the Council's financial forecast against its budget position. As highlighted in previous finance reports, the Council's financial position continues to be closely monitored in light of significant reductions in income and increase in costs to deliver services during the crisis.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (1-5)	Probability of risk occurring (1-5)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Covid 19 Pandemic Risk (Corporate Risk)	4	5	Mitigation measures outlined in the report.	Corporate Management Team

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan 2017-22
Strategic Recovery Aims

Options Available and considered

1. To consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet / Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.
2. To request further information or reject the contents of the report

Preferred Option and Why

1. To consider and note the contents of the report and for Cabinet / Cabinet Members to receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Welsh Government have been supporting local authorities through the pandemic with a Hardship Fund intended to reimburse for all Covid related spend over and above existing budgets and within a set criteria. This will run to the end of the current financial year.

Additional monies have also been made available by Welsh Government for any lost income that local authorities are incurring, and again recently extended this fund to the end of the financial year.

In essence, Covid related, eligible expenditure are predominantly funded by the WG. A revenue budget monitor to end of July, coming to the same meeting as this paper, shows that the current forecast overspend is c£700k and this is mainly a result of delays in implementing agreed 2020/21 budget savings and service pressures in Children's services.

All costs which are not eligible for WG funding will need to be funded from services own budgets and will be reported as and when they develop over the year. Service areas have been asked to minimise these, wherever possible where they create overspending.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. The End-of-Year Performance report has been prepared in accordance with the Council's performance management framework and identifies progress made during 19/20 in delivering the corporate plan and well-being objectives and meeting key performance measures within service plans. Where relevant, the report also identifies the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of operational service delivery and performance, during the final quarter of the year. Although Performance Scrutiny meetings have been suspended during this period and they have not been able to meet to review progress and performance, the Scrutiny members have received written copies of all the performance reports and have been given an opportunity to submit written comments. When remote Scrutiny Committee meetings recommence as from September, then the updated service plans for 20/21 and the impact of the strategic recovery aims will be included within their forward work programme.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

The recovery of the Council's services is important to ensure that we are able to build on the strong collaborative work that the Council has delivered in the last 6 months to manage this crisis. The role of Civil Contingencies, emergency planning and preparation is vital to ensure that the Council is able to continue to deliver services but also minimise the risks posed on Newport's communities.

The Council's supporting services and our partners are building on the advancements made to ensure we are able to operate safely and maintain the necessary social distance guidelines. The progress detailed in this report highlights the continuous work that is being made and build up resilience in the long term.

Comments of Cabinet Member

The Leader of the Council is briefed on all aspects of the Council's strategic recovery.

Local issues

Members to be aware of the impacts that Covid is having on our Local Communities and business.

Scrutiny Committees

NA

Equalities Impact Assessment

The findings outlined in the future Covid Impact Assessment will outline the impacts that Covid 19 and lockdown measures have had on the city's communities. The recommendations will inform future strategic and operational decision making.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Not applicable.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The areas covered in this report demonstrate the progress being made against the Strategic Recovery Aims which also support the Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22. In consideration of the sustainable development principle and 5 ways of working:

Long Term – The progress reported against the Strategic Aims support the long term aims of the Council to improve people's lives.

Preventative – The preventative work outlined in the report support the Council's approach to minimising future covid 19 outbreaks and as necessary provide targeted support to those that need it. Re-establishing services in line with necessary legislation and regulation enables the Council to operate in the new normal.

Integration – The Strategic Recovery Aims have been integrated with the Council's Wellbeing Objectives set in the Corporate Plan as well as Service Plans. Recommendations from the Community Impact Assessment will also shape how the Council can improve the delivery of services across communities.

Involvement – Included in this report are actions to involve Newport's communities to provide assurance and shape the way in which services are being delivered by the Council. Their feedback and involvement in the process will enable the Council to consider how services are delivered in the long term.

Collaboration - The actions in the report are being undertaken in collaboration with partners from the Council's Public Services Board but also strategic partners within each service area. The collaborative work enables the Council to share resources and build expertise and knowledge.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Not applicable.

Consultation

Senior Leadership Team

Corporate Management Team

Officer leads across the Authority

Background Papers

Cabinet Report (Strategic Recovery Aims) – July 2020

Corporate Plan 2017-22

Strategic Recovery Aims

Dated: September 2020

Appendix 1 – Progress of Delivery against Strategic Recovery Aims (as at end of 31st August 2020)

Strategic Recovery Aim 1 – Supporting Education & Employment.

Understand, and respond to, the additional challenges, which Covid19 has presented, including loss of employment, impact on business and on the progress, achievement and wellbeing of both mainstream and vulnerable learners.

Supports Wellbeing Objective 1 – To improve skills, education and employment opportunities.

<p>Support schools and other educational establishments to safely reopen for staff and pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Education service has operational guidance on full –re-opening of schools from Welsh Government (WG). The guidance recognises pupil contact groups should be maintained as far as possible but will not be the same for specific circumstances. • Education Services has met with all Heads (Primary / Secondary / Special) via TEAMS to discuss their return to school plans. No obstacles have been raised and each school is required to complete a health & safety assessment. Schools outside of the Council's cleansing service have will need to ensure arrangements are in place and schools contracted with the Council have been asked what additional cleaning services are required. • Education Services is collating each return to school plan and are aiming to be open from 7th September. Repurposing days will be held on 1st and 2nd September to prepare for the arrival of all pupils. • School Transport (Pupil Transport Unit) have received updated guidance suggesting no requirement for social distancing on dedicated school transport and no mandatory requirement for users to wear face masks. • Post 16 provision is being explored by Secondary Head teachers to see how they can operate successfully but the issue of concessionary sets remains unresolved. • For primary schools there will be no provision for paid school meals until 14th September. Before this date pupils will need to bring their own pack lunch and Chartwells will provide cold "grab-bag" lunches for all free school meal pupils. The aim is for hot meals to be made available after the 14th September. Free school milk scheme for Nursery and Foundation phase pupils will recommence from 7th September. • For secondary schools pupils will have "grab and go" bags which will include a got hand-held product e.g. panini for the first 2 weeks. Further provisions and requirements will be discussed with each school.
<p>Work to prevent and reduce inequality of progress and outcomes in education for mainstream and vulnerable learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG have provided a grant for £1.018m for the Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards: Accelerating Learning Programme including a breakdown of how this funding is allocated to individual schools. Funding will be targeted at specific cohorts identified as most at risk such as those learners in years 11,12,13; vulnerable and disadvantaged children; year 7 pupils to support their transition from Primary to secondary schools. • Guidance has been provided from WG to manage pupil absence following return back in September including recording of registers and support provided to pupils and families through the Education Welfare Service. • GEMS will be supporting parents and pupils to understand the return to school. • Education Services and Regeneration Investment & Housing are working with schools to identify school leavers at risk of becoming NEET. •
<p>Support schools to enhance and develop digital skills; digital teaching and learning platforms;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newport Council Education Services, Digital Services and Shared Resource Service (SRS) will be delivering initiatives through the "EdTech" funding to improve the IT infrastructure in schools.

Strategic Recovery Aim 1 – Supporting Education & Employment.

Understand, and respond to, the additional challenges, which Covid19 has presented, including loss of employment, impact on business and on the progress, achievement and wellbeing of both mainstream and vulnerable learners.

Supports Wellbeing Objective 1 – To improve skills, education and employment opportunities.

and enhanced support for digitally excluded learners	
Support and enable people that are digitally excluded to access community IT programmes, Council services and other public services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newport City Council's Adult Community learning courses will be recommencing from September where people can access IT and digital courses. • The next iteration of the Council's Digital Strategy will be developed this financial year and taking into consideration the findings of the Community Impact Assessment, Covid 19 recovery as areas of strategic focus.
Support people who have been affected by unemployment to access new opportunities through training and re-employment required for post Covid 19 businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Neighbourhood Hubs will be offering courses through the Adults Community Learning from September. • In Addition the Neighbourhood Hubs are offering employment support over the phone or online including help with job searches, CVs, interview techniques as well as free online training courses and one to one mentoring. • Supporting Cardiff Capital Region's Virtual Job Fair on Facebook to support people into work
Ensure our diverse communities are appropriately supported through tailored interventions specific to their needs, including consideration of language, culture and points of access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly BAME e-bulletins including accessible / translated materials and signposting to services e.g. foodbanks, hate crime reporting and funding opportunities. • Establishment of Disability Access Group that has been feeding into the city centre re-opening plans. • Co-ordination of support provided to people with no recourse to public funds. • Looking at mechanisms to encourage BAME young people to advertise and access apprenticeships in the Council and across businesses in the city. • Consideration of standalone scheme working with community based organisations to support BAME young people to access employment opportunities. • Unconscious bias training delivered for senior leaders, managers and those involved in the recruitment process to remove institutional barriers.

Strategic Recovery Aim 2 – Supporting the Environment and the Economy

Understand and respond to the impact of Covid19 on the city's economic and environmental goals to enable Newport to thrive again.

Supports Wellbeing Objective 2 – To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment.

Maintain our focus on regenerating Newport to deliver existing and new investment projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June 2020 the Council presented its <i>Economic Impact and Recovery</i> report to Cabinet. This outlined the Council's approach for supporting the City's economy. • The retail sector is
Enable and support the construction industry to re-establish the supply of new and affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned development programme for 2020/21 has been approved by WG of £4.8m of Social Housing Grant funding to be spent in Newport for the creation of over 200 new affordable housing units.

Strategic Recovery Aim 2 – Supporting the Environment and the Economy

Understand and respond to the impact of Covid19 on the city's economic and environmental goals to enable Newport to thrive again.

Supports Wellbeing Objective 2 – To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment.

Enable and support businesses to re-establish normal operations whilst maintaining the health and safety of their workers and customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of a Task & Finish group between Regeneration Investment & Housing, Regulatory Services, Gwent PSB partners, City Services and Disability Access Group (feeding into plans) to support businesses in establishing Covid safe environments for staff and customers across the city and in the city centre.• Regulatory services continue to provide advice and guidance to businesses whilst also ensuring necessary health & safety arrangements are being complied with.
Enable and support businesses to prepare for future trade arrangements resulting from Brexit negotiations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council's Brexit Task & Finish Group has recommenced since the easing of lockdown and are now looking at the legislative changes / frameworks that may be established from trade arrangements.• The Council's Regeneration team will be looking at ways in which we can provide support to businesses once there is certainty over future arrangements.• The Council's Regulatory Services are awaiting further guidance in relation customs checks and supporting as necessary requirements for businesses that import / export goods and services.
Protect and improve the environment, including air quality and decarbonisation of the city for its residents, businesses and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gwent Sustainable Travel Charter will be presented at Cabinet in September outlining the proposals for moving towards greener fuels, adopting new approaches to travel and commuting; and using alternative transport to travel in / out and across the city.• The Council's Fleet Services will be purchasing new electric vehicles and will be purchasing a new electric refuse vehicle.• New ways of working will also be supporting how officers can work from home, and delivering remote meetings that will reduce the impact of emissions for commuting and travelling to meetings.• Installation of solar panels at the velodrome and other council sites.
Continuing support and safe delivery of the Council's City services including waste, cleansing and highways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City services continue to operate normally and within the requirements of Covid-19 guidance for social distancing and cleaning.• Waste services continue to operate the appointments system at the Household Waste Recycling Site and have recently reopened the Tip shop for reusable items.• The Council purchased a camera car to support Civil Parking Enforcement Officers to prevent and deter unlawful parking across the city.

Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens

Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities

Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient

Support people to remain living independently in their homes and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brynglas Day centre remains closed but a new temporary outreach service has been developed that will support people in their own homes and community. The centre has been cleaned and prepped in readiness for opening.• The virtual First Contact hub continues to operate and is managing all Social Service contacts, offering information, advice and assistance and escalating appropriate cases for further assessment.• NOW assessments continue and preparation for the introduction of LPS (Liberty Protection Safeguards) continues for the new implementation date of 01.04.2022• The Hospital Team and Reablement are operating to deliver Home First and maintain hospital discharge processes, PPE is used and social distancing maintained where possible.
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Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens

Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities

Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domiciliary care services have been operational throughout and are now at full capacity. New packages are being brokered without delay and in June and July of 2020 the Brokers successfully commissioned 1000 new hours of service
Fully restore Children and Adult Services, supporting partners that have been impacted by Covid 19 and ensuring service users and staff are supported and protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staffing levels are good with little agency usage• Circa 5 vacancies in each of the Councils 3 homes, with continued interest for new admissions; Spring Gardens and Blaen y Pant are planning to take up to 5 new admissions from a home in Torfaen that is closing• A system for residents families has been set to facilitate socially distanced visits• Homes have been utilising technology such as iPads in order to communicate with families and other professions such as GP surgeries• Adults training team have been providing a blended approach to training through online and some face to face courses (where essential)• Regular contact with operational teams has continued to ensure that staffing fulfil their regulatory training requirements• Training rooms in Brynglas have been prepped and are ready to deliver training in line with Covid 19 requirements• Commissioning have been working with residential and domiciliary care providers throughout. The team have administered the WG Hardship funding, co-ordinated requests for PPE and testing, distributed guidance and worked closely with Environmental Health, ABUHB and Public Health Wales who have monitored homes and supported them in the implementation and ongoing maintenance of risk management systems.• Commissioning are also currently administering the £500 payment to care workers in adult and children provider services• The Commissioning team are working with regional colleagues to share intelligence and to ensure funding is being allocated in a way that is consistent and equitable.• Community services such as MIND, Citizens Advice Bureau, and the Pobl carer respite service are now beginning to open up move into the next phase of transition.• The Appointeeship service has been operational throughout but modified to reduce the need for face-to-face contact. Some of these changes have worked well and will be retained for efficiency.
Assess the impact and the long-term sustainability of the social care sector in Newport informing future service requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Older persons residential and nursing care providers have been disproportionately affected by Coronavirus and ongoing discussions with providers are addressing issues of long term financial sustainability and the requirement to change the way the service is delivered to ensure the safety of residents and staff.• Discussions are being held with providers across all commissioned service areas about their recovery plans; this includes how they can adapt and modify their services to adhere to social distancing and infection control requirements and how this will affect capacity and deliverability. i.e. some providers have been using technology to run online groups and offer support. This has been very effective in some areas and will continue to form part of the future service offer. We are starting to have discussions with respite and day service providers about how and when they can restore provision.• Social Workers remain in contact with people we support and are monitoring the situation in relation to carer breakdown or changes to circumstances because of the pandemic. This engagement is critical in the determination of how services re-open, to measure demand, offer confidence and support the role of informal carers at a time when those shielding are considering how to return to services.
Safeguard and support children and young people to remain safely with their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children Services are now conducting their work with families and young people applying necessary social distancing measures.

Strategic Recovery Aim 3 – Supporting the Health & Wellbeing of Citizens

Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people, safeguarding the most vulnerable, and building strong, resilient communities

Supports Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children’s homes / settings have remained open and the team continues manage caseload accordingly.• Development of Windmill Farm and Rosedale developments are still proceeding.
Improve opportunities for Active Travel and work towards improved air quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secured WG funding for £600k to install temporary pop up schemes to repurpose the highway for active travel (cycling / walking) and social distancing.• Successful funding allocations of £2.7m for Active Travel schemes at Monkey Island Bridge and works on permanent routes across the city. This also includes further work taking place around St David’s school and across Gaer fort site.
Regulate businesses and support consumers / residents to protect and improve their health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory services continue to support businesses on their Covid-19 secure environments and continue to ensure necessary compliance arrangements are being adhered to for both workers and customers.• The Council’s Environmental Health team have been collaborating with the Gwent LAs and ABUHB on the delivery of the regional Test, Trace and Protect Service. This will support any future isolated, cluster and city wide outbreaks in future. Further information can be found in the Cabinet Report from August 2020.
Work with key partners to safely re-open cultural and leisure facilities including the promotion of the city’s parks, open spaces and coastal paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newport Live Leisure facilities have opened from 10th August with limited capacity due to WG guidance. Reopening of facilities are being undertaken with revised opening hours, staggered access times, reduced capacities, cashless payment systems and necessary Test, Track and Protect requirements.• Work is being undertaken with Tennis Wales and Newport Live to improve tennis courts and commence accessible cycling scheme at Tredegar Park.• In development is the relocation of the MUGA to allow development of the Ringland health centre and Lliswerry Pond has new club for running Lliswerry ponds called Angling Watch UK.• All parks are now fully open including Fourteen Locks canal centre and café facilities.• Transporter Bridge has reopened but unfortunately the Riverfront Centre remains closed until further guidance from WG.
Sustain a safe, healthy and productive workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officers continue to work from home and only those that are required to attend the Civic Centre and other buildings to deliver specific services should be attending.• New Ways of Working report will be presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet in the autumn outlining the short term and long term approach for flexible working in Newport Council.• Health & Safety team, facilities and Newport Norse have been undertaking risk assessments and implementing necessary measures to maintain social distancing. Managers and staff have been asked to undertake DSE Assessments for their home working arrangements and as necessary provided equipment.• Guidance has been / to be provided to managers and staff for re-entering the buildings. This will be limited across the Civic Centre.• Human Resources are developing new policies and procedures to support officer’s wellbeing and working arrangements. Continuous improvements to the Council’s HR system (iTrent) to support remote check ins, flexi time as well as improvements to the recruitment process.• The Council’s Democratic Services and Digital Services have been supporting the Council’s Elected Members to use Teams and video conferencing for Council meetings. Scrutiny and regulatory meetings will be re-established in the autumn as per the Governance and Democratic arrangements report from July 2020.

Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19

Provide people with the resources and support that they need to move out of the crisis, considering in particular the impact that Covid 19 has had on our minority and marginalised communities.

Supports Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities

<p>Work together with our partners to reduce poverty, address homelessness and support our most vulnerable people as a priority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing Needs Unit continue to source emergency accommodation in response to phase 1 objectives of Welsh Government and PHW to accommodate those at risk of and rough sleeping• Continued partnership working to deliver mental health, substance misuse support and develop independent life skills to support rough sleepers to move into permanent accommodation• Strategic development of actions plans relating to long term affordable housing for vulnerable cohorts of individuals experiencing homelessness
<p>Assess and address the inequalities that Covid 19 has highlighted or contributed to within our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People & Business Change and leading work on a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) that will consider the impact that Covid-19 has had on communities in Newport during the Lockdown period. This will be presented to Cabinet in the autumn and will have recommendations for the Council's service areas and partners to implement and consider for future strategic / operational decisions.• Council's commitment to ensure the City's BAME communities have access to services, employment and economic opportunities across the city and in the Council.
<p>Identify, develop and seek to sustain any positive developments emerging during the crisis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Throughout the Covid crisis and continuing into the easing of lockdown measures, the Council's communication team have been utilising social media (Twitter / Facebook) and website to promote the work of the Council, delivery and reopening of services and the community efforts across Newport.• One Newport (Public Services Board) newsletter has been highlighting the positive work of the Council and its partners in supporting the city to recover and various initiatives across communities.• Audit Wales have revised their work programme for the year to provide assurance and share best practice on the work that the Council and other public sector bodies have undertaken in during and after lockdown.
<p>Developing opportunities for people to access suitable and affordable housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planned development programme for 2020/21 has been approved by WG of £4.8m of Social Housing Grant funding to be spent in Newport for the creation of over 200 new affordable housing units.• We have met with funders of our research into the private rented sector. We have agreed a way forward for the research that will abide by current social distancing regulations but will also pick up on issues we may need to address post-COVID.• We held a successful Strategic Housing Forum in July. The issues and challenges arising from COVID were discussed with all partners committing to work together to address the challenges presented to housing and homelessness by COVID.
<p>Deliver a community cohesion programme that effectively responds to community tensions and creates a shared sense of identity across the city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of different groups including Disability Access Group to address concerns / issues in relation to accessing services and facilities.• Multi agency Gypsy and Traveller group to address concerns in accessing services / facilities and to address any tensions within the community• Working with partners to support EU citizens and communities that are experiencing hardship, discrimination and housing issues. Also helping EU citizens to access and apply for EU Settled Status. Working with partners to raise awareness throughout the year to encourage EUSS uptake before the deadline of 30th June 2021.• Supporting foodbanks to respond to increase need for their services and distribution of food to disadvantaged households and individuals. Supporting BAME community groups to signpost and access foodbanks.• Addressing any hate crime, community tensions and emerging issues with Gwent Police.

Strategic Recovery Aim 4 – Supporting Citizens post Covid-19

Provide people with the resources and support that they need to move out of the crisis, considering in particular the impact that Covid 19 has had on our minority and marginalised communities.

Supports Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities

<p>Prevent and address instances of antisocial behaviour impacting upon the residents and the business community of Newport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Newport is the city’s community safety partnership and delivers on emerging local community safety issues and problem solving, working with the police, fire and rescue and other statutory partners we have been working throughout the COVID health crisis to support residents and businesses. • Extensive partnership work has taken place to ensure safe opening of businesses including support for the night time economy. • The two funding streams for Serious Violence and Serious & Organised Crime have now amalgamated in SVOC. Although there is still a significant focus on Newport there are resources invested in this threat area across the rest of Gwent. • Although COVID 19 has had an impact on the delivery of services, there is still work ongoing by St Giles Trust/ Barnardo’s and Fearless to support those who are at risk of participating in Serious Organised Crime • The Home Office are using this and the wider SOC work in Newport as a case study and sharing it as best practice across other police forces • There have been ongoing neighbourhood issues in regards to the Pillgwenlly area of the city. A task and finish group with a range of partners and the community has been set up to work collaboratively to combat the issues faced in the area. The group will have the capability to direct resources to tackle problems and support opportunities to improve the area, with problem solving plans in place.
<p>Re-establish Community Regeneration facilities and services where it is safe to do so for staff and its service users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Hubs have reopened by appointment only. • Flying Start have been providing childcare for key worker’s children. • Providing advice and support for people that are at risk of redundancy or have lost their job during Covid.
<p>Develop opportunities for community involvement participation and engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving the Council’s Citizens Panel to assess the public perceptions of the Council’s response to Covid 19 (up to July 2020) and how the Council supported households and wider communities, provision of information and delivery of services. • This will be followed up by bus WI-FI surveys which will reach a wider audience and demographic. • Involved the Fairness Commission to examine the Council’s Community Impact Assessment and the Council’s Strategic Covid 19 recovery work. • In the autumn the Council will be delivering its Participatory budget programme funded through Public Health Wales (inc. Fairness Commission) that will enable communities to decide on commissioning a range of projects, initiatives and activities to support Covid 19 recovery.

Appendix 2 – Covid 19 Prevention and Response Structure

