

Report of:	The Elected Mayor of Middlesbrough; Chief Executive
Submitted to:	Executive – 24 November 2020
Subject:	Revised Approach to COVID-19 Recovery

Summary

Proposed decision(s)
<p>That Executive notes the impact of the recent surge in local cases of COVID-19, the nationally imposed restrictions and resulting impact on the approach to Recovery, approved by Executive in June 2020.</p> <p>That in light of the above, Executive approves the Council’s revised approach to COVID-19 Recovery and notes the revised Recovery metrics and measures, at Appendix 1.</p> <p>That Executive agrees the delegation of approval for minor amendments to in-quarter timescales against Recovery metrics and measure timescales via the Recovery Group. Any significant variation to approach or deliverables, will be reported to and seek approval via the quarterly Strategic Plan progress reports to Executive.</p>

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?
Decision	Yes; covers all wards	No	No

Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan		
People	Place	Business
<p>Activity within the proposed COVID-19 Recovery Plan supports the achievement of all strategic priorities set out within the Council’s Strategic Plan 2020-23.</p> <p>Assumptions on the approach to long-term COVID-19 Recovery, are being considered in revisions to the Council’s Strategic Plan, which will ensure effective delivery of Strategic Priorities from 2021.</p>		

Ward(s) affected
All wards

What is the purpose of this report?

1. To provide Executive with an understanding of the Council's response to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic; in particular the recent surge in local cases of COVID-19, subsequent imposed restrictions from national Government and the resulting impact on the approach to Recovery.
2. This report advises Executive of the requirement to revise the approach to COVID-19 Recovery and related Recovery Plan / Strategy, as approved on 16 June 2020.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

3. Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 the Council has a legal duty (alongside other local partners) to plan for and deliver both a response to an emergency incident and the recovery from it. The Coronavirus Act 2020 created a number of new, and revised other, local authority powers and duties (principally regarding education, social care, volunteering and death management) in order to better enable the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. COVID-19 is an unprecedented global event that will have long-term impacts on life within Middlesbrough and significant implications for the Council's objectives, the way it does business and its finances both in the current and future years.
5. The Council's Scheme of Delegation gives Executive collective responsibility for corporate strategic performance and financial management / monitoring, together with associated action.

Report Background

6. Executive approved the Council's COVID-19 Recovery Plan and associated arrangements for reporting progress and engagement with the Overview and Scrutiny Board, on 16 June 2020.
7. The report to Executive of 16 June 2020 set out in detail the timeline of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, from the first reports of what is now known severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in Wuhan City, China on 31 December 2019 to the declaration of a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on 11 March, and beyond.
8. The report noted that by 7 June, there were 6.84 million confirmed cases worldwide, with 399,000 confirmed deaths. As of 30 September 2020, there had been 33.7m cases in over 200 countries, with 1.019m confirmed deaths. Within Middlesbrough there have been 1,502 cases and 207 deaths to the end of Quarter Two 2020/21.
9. On 11 May 2020, the Government's Recovery Plan was published, 'OUR PLAN TO REBUILD: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy', outlining a 'cautious roadmap' in easing lockdown measures and initiating steps to recovery where possible.
10. Also in May 2020, a national government directive was issued to establish 11 beacon local authority areas, of which Middlesbrough was one, to contribute towards the development of an integrated national and local approach in managing outbreaks of COVID-19, resulting in the development and launch of Local Outbreak Management Plans by 1 July 2020. The Council's plan was published by this date and is operational.

11. Led by the Mayor of Middlesbrough and the Chief Executive, the Council's Recovery Group was established on 9 April 2020 and comprises a number of sub-groups linked to its strategic aims of People, Place and Business, each led by member of Leadership Team. Legal, Finance and Communications advisory groups will support the work of the sub-groups.
12. Through this structure the Council developed a proposed recovery plan for Middlesbrough aiming to rebuild, restore and rehabilitate local communities and business over the next three years, within the context of the UK's national recovery strategy.

COVID-19 Recovery progress

13. Since approval of the Council's COVID-19 Recovery Plan in June 2020, work has been undertaken to ensure plans remain fit-for-purpose and are able to flex in-line with the changing national and local position. Milestone plans are in place to monitor recovery activity, and these plans are reviewed by exception via Gold Command Recovery Group.
14. As at October 2020, progress against the plan (by Strategic Plan aim and Recovery work stream) was assessed as follows:

Strategic Plan aim	Work stream	Headline activities	G	A	R	Overall RAG
People	Health and Wellbeing	4	0	4	0	Amber
	Children's Care	7	4	3	0	Amber
	Adult Social Care	7	5	2	0	Amber
	Education and Skills	4	3	1	0	Amber
Place	Environment and Infrastructure	4	4	0	0	Green
	Town Centre	5	5	0	0	Green
	Business and Economy	4	3	1	0	Amber
Business	Council Services and Priorities	4	3	1	0	Amber
	Total	35	25	11	0	Amber

15. The current Amber status of the plan reflects only minor slippage against original timescales and is reflective of most countries across the world now in the second wave of the pandemic; national and local emergency response and future planning is evolving in real time.
16. Whilst original Recovery actions have continued to progress throughout Quarter Two, in addition to the progress previously reported at Quarter One, such as the reopening of schools, continued town centre re-opening and COVID-secure sign-wrapping, etc., the focus of work has been in response to the move into the second wave of the pandemic and managing those related outbreaks.

Second wave response

17. Significant surges in infection rates of COVID-19 and increased numbers of outbreaks (leading to further community transmission) have occurred across Middlesbrough, the Tees Valley and North East. The rate of seven-day infections in the North East peaked at 8,195 (with specimen date of 9 October 2020), with a rate of 307 cases per 100,000. For this same period, Middlesbrough had 427 cases or a rate of 303 per 100,000 of the population.
18. On 1 October 2020, national Government announced that within the Tees Valley, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool would see additional COVID-related restrictions enforced, in-line with those also imposed upon the seven North East Councils from 15 September 2020.
19. To summarise, those restrictions make it illegal to:
 - have social contact with people from other households, in any home or private garden;
 - have social contact with people from other households, in any indoor setting such as bars and restaurants; and
 - visit care homes, other than in exceptional circumstances.
20. As a result of the enforced restrictions, an additional financial 'ask' of national support was developed and submitted to national Government, totalling £7.4m. The proposal outlined local approaches and activities and the level of support required to contain further spread of COVID-19 over an immediate 15 week period, whilst developing an agreed set of metrics / indicators and associated strategy to provide clarity and manage expectations, resource and activity for exiting enforced restrictions.
21. Lessons learnt from the initial wave of the pandemic have been collated and used to develop a Coronavirus Plan to shape the Council's response to future waves.

Impact on strategic planning and Recovery

22. As reported at Year-End 2019/20 and Quarter One 2020/21, COVID-19, both the response to it and the recovery from it, will have a significant impact on local people and communities, the local economy and will fundamentally change the way the Council does business in the future.
23. Priorities have undoubtedly been impacted as a result of COVID-19; new plans have emerged, and others have been de-prioritised, or are no longer necessary.
24. The second wave implications and enforced restrictions in many areas of the country, including Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley have confirmed the need to reassess and review local response to outbreaks and longer term implications / requirements for Recovery.
25. To that end, a detailed assurance process has been undertaken to understand where Recovery to date has been impactful, in terms of reopening the Town Centre, resumption of frontline services, etc. and it is proposed shall be referenced as Phase 1 of Recovery going forward.

26. In light of the fundamental and lasting impact of COVID-19 on local communities, Phase 2 Recovery will consider longer-term assumptions and impact and will feed in to a revised Strategic Plan for the Council for 2021/22 onwards. A separate report to today's meeting of Executive sets out proposed revised priorities for future years and the proposed approach to consulting with communities on these priorities in advance of finalising the plan in March 2021.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

27. That Executive notes the impact of the recent surge in local cases of COVID-19, the nationally imposed restrictions and resulting impact on the approach to Recovery, approved by the Executive in June 2020.

28. That Executive approves the Council's revised approach to COVID-19 Recovery and notes the updated Recovery metrics and measures, at Appendix 1.

29. That Executive agrees the delegation of approval for minor amendments to in-quarter timescales against Recovery metrics and measure timescales via the Recovery Group. Any significant variation to approach or deliverables, will be reported to and seek approval via the quarterly Strategic Plan progress reports to Executive.

Why is this being recommended?

30. To enable the effective management of delivery and monitoring of progress, against the Council's approach to COVID-19 Recovery and to support delivery of the Council's Strategic Priorities.

31. To advise that regular updates on progress towards COVID-19 Recovery will continue to be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Board and also as part of the quarterly Strategic Plan updates to the Executive.

32. It should be noted that the deadlines associated with the Recovery metrics and measures are dependent on the 'R number' and any associated restrictions enforced as a result. The R number is the average number of people that one infected person will go on to infect. When the R number is 1, one infected person will go on to infect one other person on average. If it is higher than 1 then the number of cases in a population will increase exponentially unless immunity and / or controls are in place. Conversely, if the number is lower than 1 then cases will eventually peter out.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

33. Not applicable; the Council has a legal duty to respond to an emergency incident.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Legal

34. Implementation of the Recovery Plan will enable the Council to meet its legal duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to rebuild, restore and rehabilitate communities and businesses following an emergency incident, and to and continue to meet its other statutory duties, including the overarching Duty of Best Value.

Financial

35. There are significant financial implications relating to some COVID-19 recovery activity outlined in this report. These were summarised in the Revenue and Capital Budget / Projected Outturn Position at Quarter Two 2020/21 report considered by Executive on 24 November 2020.

Policy Framework

36. This report does not seek to amend the Council's Policy Framework.

Equality and Diversity

37. As reported to the Executive on 16 June 2020, the Council's COVID-19 Recovery Plan includes an impact assessment and it should be noted that each Recovery workstream has also undertaken a Community Impact Assessment and Health Inequalities Impact Assessment to inform Recovery efforts.

38. As a result, no negative differential impacts on diverse groups and communities within Middlesbrough are anticipated from the delivery of activity set out within the original COVID-19 Recovery Plan, or indeed the revision to Phase 2 of Recovery measures and metrics which in part aim to address the assumed increase in local inequalities in income, health, educational attainment and other areas arising from COVID-19.

Risk

39. The revised COVID-19 Recovery Plan metrics and measures, as set out at Appendix 1 identify new priorities, timescales and measures of success to address the increased and new risks posed to the Council, as a result of the disruption caused by the resurgence of COVID-19.

40. These risks are formally set out in the Strategic Risk Register appended to the 'Strategic Plan 2020-23 – Progress at Year-End 2019/20' report presented to this meeting of the Executive.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

41. The revised COVID-19 Recovery Plan metrics and measures provide mitigation to the recent surge in local cases of COVID-19, the nationally imposed restrictions and resulting impact on the approach to Recovery, approved by the Executive in June 2020.

42. Progress against the Recovery Plan metrics and measures will continue to be monitored via Recovery Group and reported in the post-quarter Strategic Plan update reports to the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Appendices

i. Proposed Phase 2 COVID-19 Recovery Workstream Metrics

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Executive	COVID-19: the Council's response and Recovery Plan	16 June 2020
Executive	Strategic Plan 2020-23 – Progress at Quarter One 2020/21	1 September 2020
Executive	Strategic Plan 2020-23 – Progress at Quarter Two 2020/21	24 November 2020

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Appendix 1

Proposed Phase 2 COVID-19 Recovery Workstream Metrics	Measure	Pre-COVID	Current	Target
Town Centre / Business and Economy				
Increase town centre footfall to 85% (230k weekly average) of pre-COVID levels	Footfall tracking system	271k	209k (77%)	230k
Increase town centre commercial property occupancy rates to 85% (69.7%) of pre-COVID levels	TC occupancy survey	82%	No new data (annual)	70%
Reduction in registered businesses to not exceed 15% of pre-COVID levels (257.9 businesses per 10,000 of pop)	ONS annual release	303.4 p/10k pop	No new data (annual)	257.9 p/10k pop
Return housing completion rates to meet MTFP expectations of 525 per year	Quarterly housing returns	525	391	525
Maintain cultural participation levels to pre-COVID levels	Town Hall ticket sales	£264k	£228k	£264k
Environment and Infrastructure				
Undertake a review the longer-term effects / impact of COVID on community cohesion by May 2021	Resident survey cohesion measure / %	71%	71%	76%
Resume planned trajectory of increased Street Warden intervention relating to crime and anti-social behaviour incidents by 20% from current levels, impacted as a result of COVID, by March 2023	Number of instructions / FPNs issued each month	0 / 10	640 / 56	768 / 67
Resume planned trajectory of improved environmental standards, impacted as a result of COVID	LAMS system grade B acceptability levels	90%	90%	92.50%
Health and Wellbeing				
Undertake community based Recovery research to understand impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups by April 2021	Completion of research	-	-	Research complete
Co-produce and deliver a Middlesbrough Health and Wellbeing Recovery Plan to address the impact of COVID-19 on health inequalities and relative targeted support by August 2023	Plan in place, aligned measures on-track	-	-	Delivery of plan

Increase the uptake of flu vaccinations across Middlesbrough from 43.3% to 55% by March 2021	Vaccine uptake	43.20%	-	55%
Adult Social Care				
Maintain 5% tolerance in demand prediction modelling within Adult Social Care to address the effects of COVID / long-COVID by September 2021	Demand modelling prediction rate	76%	n/a	75%
Maintain sufficient local residential care capacity to meet local demand, by June 2021	Occupancy levels to not exceed 85%	89%	75%	85%
Maintain sufficient local domiciliary care capacity to meet local demand, by June 2021	Average new care package start time <48hrs	48hrs	72hrs	<48hrs
Develop and maintain appropriate support provision for informal carers, by June 2021	% of SCA showing carer need at 90% min.	85%	82%	90%+
Education and Skills				
Absorb demand and maintain pre-COVID completion rates for EHCP's at 90% (within 20wk timescale) by May 2021	SEN2 National Data	91%	90%	90%
Support all Middlesbrough schools following spikes / outbreaks, ensuring all vulnerable children have continued access to education by December 2021	PEP's completed within end of term timeframe	83%	88%	92%
Provide opportunities and training to support people to move in to work and further training by March 2022	TVCA and ESF contract monitoring	1,555	1,597	2,030
Children's Care				
Increase the number of early interventions where domestic abuse is factor, in response to the upsurge in rates of domestic abuse, as a result of COVID-19	% increase of new completed assessments (with DA links)	29%	33%	50%
Increase Early Help assessments across Newport and North Ormesby to mitigate increased levels of deprivation, unemployment and crime as a result of COVID-19	Increased CYP EH assessments in Newport and North Ormesby	3%	3.20%	6%
Resume service plans impacted by COVID-19 to develop services to support	Increase number of FGC	0	6	28

children to remain with their families e.g. futures for families and family group conferencing	episodes per month			
Council Services and Priorities				
Agree a revised approach to community engagement through agreement of a 'Middlesbrough Community approach' by March 2021	Resident survey improving local area / %	52%	52%	58%
Achieve Council Tax collection rates at levels assumed within the 2020/21 MTFP, by 2023	In-year collection levels, reflected in the MTFP assumptions, 97.4%	91.90%	89%	93.40%
Achieve collection rates for NDR / business rates at levels assumed within the 2020/21 MTFP, by 2023	In-year collection levels, reflected in the MTFP assumptions, 94.3%	98.70%	91%	98.80%
To effectively enable all staff to work from the office environment for a proportion of time, by March 2021	Staff are able to access office space as appropriate, in line with duties	100%	(est.) 15%	100%
Key Council plans (MTFP, Strategic Plan, Business Continuity, Operations Strategy, etc.) will reflect the impact of COVID, to support Recovery / new normal, by December 2020	Revised plans in place	4	1	4