

**CABINET**

**DATE OF MEETING: 1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2020**

**TITLE OF REPORT: NEXT STEPS IN COVID-19 RECOVERY**

**Report of: Joint Chief Executive**

**Cabinet Member: Leader of the Council**

**I PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Council's work to support the district since the last report in July, in response to the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- 1.2 It also provides more detail on the work currently being undertaken to support the recovery phase, an overview of the 'lessons learnt' and our preparations for any local outbreaks. It is key to note that as before this report represents a high-level assessment of the current position. The situation remains live, the pandemic is still ongoing, and work continues to assess the implications on our residents and the Council.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Cabinet
- Notes and endorses the remaining decisions taken under emergency powers prior to cessation of the major incident response phase.
  - That Cabinet notes the preparations for any second or local outbreak of coronavirus.
  - That Cabinet endorses the Councils approach to the utilisation of the 'kick start' and apprenticeship schemes for both recovery and other roles within the organisation
  - Approves the Recovery Plans as outlined in appendix 1, subject to authorising the Joint Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to agree any further variations to the Recovery Plans in recognition that the circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic does change, so there may be a need for these plans to evolve in light of emerging information.
  - Notes the main 'lessons learnt' (appendix 2) from the first wave of the pandemic and endorses the approach to building into second or local outbreak planning
  - Approves the use of the Councils Staff Car Park for use in provision of testing or vaccination facilities for Covid-19 or Influenza, seven days a week.

**3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 As outlined in the report to Cabinet in July, the global pandemic of coronavirus has resulted in an unprecedented challenge to both the Council and the

community that it serves. All public services have been placed under considerable stress, not least of which was the need to continue to operate Council services with the majority of staff working from home. The Council however, responded by maintaining essential Council services, providing support to local businesses, supporting the most vulnerable in our communities and delivering national funding packages.

- 3.2 In our role as a Category One responder under the Civil Contingencies Act, we are required to initiate and take action as necessary to respond to any emergency. The Council is also part of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) which brings together partners and national advisors if required to support response and recovery. There are normally two distinct but overlapping phases in emergency management.
- **Response Phase** – Encompasses the actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of the pandemic. At this point rapid implementation of arrangements for collaboration, coordination and communication are vital. Response encompasses the effort to deal with the direct effects of the emergency itself and the indirect effects.
  - **Recovery Phase** – The recovery phase begins at the earliest opportunity following the onset of an emergency, running in tandem with the response to the emergency itself. It continues until the disruption has been rectified, demands on services have returned to normal levels and the needs of those directly and indirectly affected have been met. In sharp contrast to the response phase, the recovery phase may endure for months, years or even decades.

#### 4 THE MOVE FROM RESPONSE TO RECOVERY

- 4.1 On Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum formally declared coronavirus a major incident. This formally identified that all Category 1 responders (including Hart District Council) were formally in 'response' at a multi-agency level. This enabled, under the constitution for emergency decisions to be undertaken.
- 4.2 The transition from response to recovery, (and transition out of major incidence) required (as set out in the guidance) for the following conditions to be in place;
- That the emergency is contained and there is no known significant risk to life or chance or resurgence and
  - That there are no anticipated scenarios which may require the reinstatement of the Strategic Co-ordinating Group of the Local Resilience Forum, in relation to the emergency, in the foreseeable future.
- 4.3 Clearly, with the continued prevalence of Covid-19, the requirement for quarantine measures on return from a range of countries, the recent changes to social distancing measures as well as a number of areas where local interventions are in place, the risk of resurgence remains.
- 4.4 Anticipating the long nature of this pandemic, during the summer the Government placed responsibility on Public Health Statutory Authorities (for

Hampshire, this is Hampshire County Council) to create Outbreak Response Plans.

- 4.5 This Local Outbreak Plan was formally adopted and on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum formally declared cessation of the major incident, noting that;
- The response had moved from an ‘acute’ phase into a much longer and equally challenging ‘chronic’ phase.
  - All structures and resources remain in place ready to respond should it be necessary to declare a major incident once again.
  - Work on both outbreak planning and recovery would continue as required by the Coronavirus Act, Civil Contingencies Act and associated legislation
- 4.6 On the basis of the above, the Emergency Planning Log, under which emergency decisions were being logged was formally closed and all Councillors were advised of this change on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September. All decisions noted on the Emergency Log not previously recorded in the July 2020 report are outlined below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Decision</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Agreement in principle to the provision of Hart District Council staff car park during the week for the use of Covid-19 Mobile Testing Units.
14 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Leaflets to go to businesses and residential homes in the nearby streets, engaging them on the topic of pedestrianisation of Fleet Road.
16 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Re-establishment of site visits for officers based on a risk assessment approach
24 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Formal closure of ‘GOLD’ the internal meeting created at the beginning of the pandemic to deal with urgent response issues.
24 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	In consultation with Group Leaders that current position with regards to the offices (i.e. that up to 25 officers can be in the office but the remainder work from home) remains a sensible approach.
25 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Agreed by the Leader and Deputy Leader (with the Opposition Leader informed) that in recognition of all the hard work of our staff who have gone ‘above and beyond’ the Council will close between Christmas and New Year. Staff do not need to take annual leave so this does in effect give two days extra annual leave noting Emergency services are still required to be available and It is a period of very low public requests and should have limited impact on residents It was also noted that for a very small number of staff who had truly gone beyond all others, they would receive a fixed financial reward.
2 <sup>nd</sup> September	SCG of the LRF agree the cessation of major incident. Work associated with prevention and outbreak planning will formally pass to the Director of Public Health, Hampshire County Council

Date	Decision
	Work associated with recovery will formally pass to the Chairman for Local Resilience Forum for Recovery (currently the Chief Executive of Portsmouth City Council)

- 4.7. Further to the decision, taken under emergency provisions to enable the Mobile Testing Unit to providing testing facilities for Covid-19, during the working week, we have recently received further requests regarding longer term provision, weekend provision and provision of facilities for Covid-19 vaccination (when available) and flu vaccination
- 4.8 The Joint Chief Executives have (under delegated authority) the ability to make decisions regarding the use of this car park during the working week but would require approval from Cabinet for this site to be used for this purpose, during weekend. The potential financial implications would be up to £2000 per month (pre-covid) but are likely to be closer to the region of £1000 per month at present.

## 5 PROGRESS ON RECOVERY

- 5.1 The Civil Contingencies Act requires Councils to actively work on recovery as a key part of its role in managing emergencies. As part of established emergency planning protocols, the LRF established a recovery group to oversee this complex and long running process. Recovery is defined as “the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency”, but it is more than simply the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected. It is a complex social and developmental process rather than just a remedial process. The broad, interlinked categories of impact that individuals and communities will need to recover from include humanitarian (including health); economic; environment and infrastructure. Although the LRF recovery plan will provide a framework, it is at the local level, with Councils that action must be taken which makes the creation of local recovery plans, vital.
- 5.2 The pandemic and its ongoing effects has the potential to fundamentally change the way people live and work. Recognising this, recovery is best achieved when the plan is created with the affected community; allowing the local recovery plan to be evidence based, intuitive and responsive to changing situations.
- 5.3 To achieve this, our strategy has therefore been to
- establish a ‘sounding board’ (which has now met four times) with key representation from the NHS, Business, the Voluntary Sector, Citizens Advice, Parish and Town Councils and Volunteers who have been on the forefront of the COVID response.
  - carry out a district wide consultation running for six weeks during June and into July, asking residents about the effects of Covid-19 on them and their communities.
  - Carry out a staff survey to consider what activity we need to carry out to best help our staff continue to provide the vital services they deliver.

- 5.4 The 'sounding board' has been instrumental to the creation of the community impact assessments, outlining the key issues, across a broad spectrum of groups that recovery will need to consider and work upon.
- 5.5 This has been triangulated with the wealth of rich information provided by the 1,806 number of respondents to the Councils Covid-19 survey, the outline of which can be seen in the infographic in appendix 3.
- 5.6 From this evidence, Recovery Plans have been created, they are based around the following key five themes; (more details in appendix 1)
- Community Recovery
  - Economic Recovery
  - Financial Recovery (internal)
  - Reallocation of Road Space
  - Revitalise Hart (internal)
- 5.7 Recovery activity now forms the major phase of the Councils activity on Covid-19 and this is reflected in the updated Service Plans that were agreed by Cabinet in July 2020. Whilst a small budget of £30,000 was approved to aid recovery processes it is key to note that with the gradual lifting of lockdown, public and political expectations regarding a return to 'business as usual' service delivery means that resource availability for recovery is significantly impacted.
- 5.8 We are hoping to 'bridge this gap' in a number of ways
- Recruitment to full establishment (the Council normally carries a range of vacancies)
  - Use of the Business Rates Reserve to fund activity specifically aimed to help protect the council's business rates base. Since the implementation of Business Rates retention scheme as the primary funder of Local Government, Hart District Council has safeguarded funds above budget and placed them in a Business Rates reserve, to be used in future to years safeguarding years of very low business rates being paid or be used to encourage inward investment and protect our existing business rates base. We have not, to date, used the Business Rates Reserve for this latter purpose and it comes with its own risks, but the corollary of not using it, does potentially present a greater risk to the economy of the district and future income through business rates.
  - Recruitment of apprentices to provide capacity in the system. Apprentices can be any age but must be on accredited apprenticeship training. The Apprenticeship Levy is a levy on UK employers to fund new apprenticeships. In England, control of apprenticeship funding is put in the hands of employers through the Digital Apprenticeship Service. The levy is charged at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's pay bill. The contribution is compulsory but can be used to fund our own apprenticeships. Our contribution is placed in our apprenticeship service account which we can use to pay for apprenticeship training, assessment and wages for apprenticeships up to the minimum wage. Any additional payments will need to be covered by the Local Authority. Hart District Council has a budget in place to provide the relevant top up to living wage if up to four apprentices are taken on.

- Recruitment of 'kick start' placements – 'kick start' is a scheme announced during the Covid pandemic to help 16-24 year olds who are unemployed on Universal Credit gain workplace skills and experience. Each 'kick start' role must be a new job and not replace or put staff out of work. The government will pay 25 hours per week minimum wage, with placements starting as early as November 2020 and continuing until December 2021. We can access this scheme by working through Hampshire Chamber of Commerce who have established themselves as an intermediary for this scheme.

## **6 COVID-19 LESSONS LEARNT**

- 6.1** As a Category 1 authority, under the Civil Contingencies Act, we have a range of obligations including the requirement to
- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning;
  - Put in place emergency plans;
  - Put in place Business Continuity Management arrangements;
  - Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency;
- 6.2** Whilst we have had plans in place, both for emergencies (including those directly associated with an outbreak of disease) and business continuity, it is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic is different to all previous emergencies we have ever faced. The Council recognised early on, the need to capture any learning from the first stages of the pandemic, to help inform and improve any response required in the face of any resurgence of the disease.
- 6.3** All staff who had been involved were encouraged to feed in their views; as Members may recall, the Council fundamentally changed the way in which it provided its services, with up to a third of the staff reallocated to new roles, to deal with the new obligations placed on the Council
- 6.4** The lessons learnt responses was split broadly into separate areas based around a range of different workstreams. Many of the lessons learnt have already been captured and resolved, albeit some of the items are of a more strategic or long-term nature and may be subject to consultation with staff
- 6.5** The feedback and suggestions were extensive, however the key lessons learnt can be found in appendix 2

**7 PLANNING FOR LOCAL OUTBREAKS**

- 7.1 The Statutory obligation for planning for a local outbreak is vested in Hampshire County Council.
- 7.2 However, in the published Hampshire Local Outbreak Plan, it makes clear that there is a role for District authorities in any outbreak namely;

District/ Borough Services	
Environmental Health*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory role to food, pubs, clubs and other relevant premises on preventing the spread of infection and minimising the risk of outbreaks/clusters of cases.</li> <li>• Enforcement of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Business Closures) (England) Regulations 2020 relating to the closure of pubs, clubs, restaurants and other relevant premises.</li> <li>• Additional support in the event of the escalation of a local outbreak that requires further local capacity i.e. for contact tracing and interviewing.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate wider proactive work to prevent the spread of infection and minimise risk of outbreaks/clusters of cases in key higher risk settings, such as hostels and communal housing.</li> <li>• Liaise with PHE SE HPT (HIOW) and HCC PH to support the investigation and management of outbreaks.</li> <li>• Ensure a focus on people that will be particularly vulnerable as a result of the outbreak and response.</li> </ul>

- 7.3 Additionally, in the event of a local outbreak, District Authorities may be requested to support test and trace services, as well as taking on an enhanced enforcement role.
- 7.4 To ensure effective engagement and collaboration between the County and Districts, the Chief Executive for Winchester City Council has taken the lead for Local Outbreak Planning and has since July sat on the Covid-19 Health Protection Board. In this she is supported by the Joint Chief Executive at Hart District Council, who has been the lead for the Hampshire Districts Welfare Response, since March representing Hampshire at Local Resilience Forum meetings 'Welfare Response' and 'Protecting our Most Vulnerable'
- 7.5 Whilst not seeking to duplicate nor replace the Hampshire Local Outbreak Plan, Hart District Council has created an operational local outbreak plan, which articulates roles and responsibilities should an outbreak occur, building on all the very best of what was learnt during the first stages of the pandemic.

**8 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCING IMPACT**

- 8.1 At present, with the existing budget provided by Cabinet in July 2020 for Recovery, we do not anticipate, at present, the need for an increased revenue budget.
- 8.2 However, it is key to note, that the work being undertaken to deliver our obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act, as part of recovery, is having a

significant impact on staff resources. Whilst it is noted in the Service Plans, adopted by Cabinet in July 2020, that responding to the Covid pandemic and recovery activity associated with it, are the top two priorities, this does mean that other activity highlighted in those service plans, may not be deliverable within this administrative year.

- 8.3 Updates on Service Plan completion are reported to Portfolio Holders during their regular conversations with Heads of Service. The impact of the Covid response and recovery work, will also be identified in the quarterly reports to Overview and Scrutiny on the progress to complete Service Plans.

## **9 LEGAL AND EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1 The Council is a Category One responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and is therefore required to initiate and take action as necessary to respond to any emergency. The Council is also part of the LRF which brings together partners and national advisors if required to support response and recovery in relation to major emergencies which require cross agency cooperation.
- 9.2 Our work has benefited from engagement with our communities either through the Sounding Board, or directly through our consultation which has helped to inform our next steps. Equalities impact assessments have already been carried out for each of the key themes in Recovery and consideration of equalities will continue as the work evolves.

## **10 ACTION**

- 10.1 Subject to the views and adoption by Cabinet, Officers will progress with Recovery work whilst remaining vigilant to the potential for a return to major incident, based on the Covid-19 infection rate and the need for a more coherent multi-agency approach.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Recovery Plan  
Appendix 2 – Key Lessons Learnt  
Appendix 3 - Infographic

**Appendix 1 – Recovery Plan – Workstream Action Plans**

<b>Community Recovery</b>				
Activity	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications	Planned Start of Activity	Anticipated Completion Date
Local insight and evidence of need: Bring together hard data and local intelligence to maintain an up-to-date picture of the need and impacts (including socioeconomic and wellbeing) within communities, to inform our community recovery priorities	The Council and our partners will have a good understanding of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities or specific groups within communities most negatively impacted by the COVID-19 situation or most 'at-risk' of negative impact</li> <li>• Trends over time in wellbeing including socio-economic wellbeing</li> </ul> Where/how to focus our resources to help those most in need and address disproportionate impacts on specific groups	Existing resource (subject to a current recruitment process)	September 2020	Establish baseline picture by November 2020 and regularly update until November 2021
Communication and signposting: Establish a communications framework/plan and coordinate with partners to cascade messages to residents about how they can stay well (over and above specific COVID-19 guidance), and signpost residents to available support including psychological, financial, employment, housing and wider wellbeing	Residents are supported to take steps to keep themselves well and know what services can support them if needed	Existing resource (part of statutory 'warn and inform' requirements)	September 2020	November 2021

<p>Voluntary and community sector capacity: Enhance and promote support for the voluntary and community sector, such as to enable community activity to restart safely and to sustain or build upon community activity established in response to COVID-19 where appropriate</p>	<p>Resilience and capacity of voluntary and community sector Community activity restarts safely resulting in improved wellbeing and a reduction in loneliness and isolation in communities</p>	<p>Existing resource</p>	<p>August 2020</p>	<p>June 2021</p>
<p>Addressing local inequalities: Use the insight gathered in action 1 to develop and deliver a small number of targeted initiatives to address the impacts on specific geographies or groups most affected by the COVID-19 situation</p>	<p>Support is available to those most in need of it and there is a reduction in inequalities within the district. The council has enhanced relationships with specific communities/population groups</p>	<p>Existing resource</p>	<p>November 2020</p>	<p>September 2021</p>
<p>Making it easier to access support and services: Make it easier for residents to access the support they need, when they need it, by enabling more residents to use digital technology and exploring opportunities for the council to collaborate with other community services to have a stronger physical presence in communities, such as through co-location in community hubs</p>	<p>Residents can more easily access services and support including through digital technology. Increasing digital inclusion also resulting in more residents being able to connect with friends, family and the wider community through digital channels</p>	<p>Existing resource</p>	<p>November 2020</p>	<p>November 2021</p>

<b>Economic Recovery</b>				
Activity	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications	Planned Start of Activity	Anticipated Completion Date
1. Procurement of a study on Economic Recovery from Covid-19	Report to set out what actions Hart can take to ensure the Districts economy recovers from the various impacts resulting from Covid-19.	£5,000 (from £30,000 recovery budget)	July 2020	September 2020 Completed
2. Collation of key business and employment statistics	To ensure that the Council has up to date relevant data to inform its decisions and actions in relation to economic recovery	Re-allocation of existing resource (e.g within Business Support)	September 2020	March 2021 – for initial set up of data and then regular updating as required
3a. Prepare and launch new Hart for Business website	To promote Hart District as a location for business re-location and growth.	Existing Economic Development Officer 15-20% of time – website to be launched November.	August 2020	November 2020 - although website will need to be regularly updated to remain a useful and valuable tool
3b. Promotion of Hart District as a place to work/live/visit	High quality promotional material in various formats (video; adverts; leaflets/guides; phone app etc) to promote attract companies/people to the District.	To utilise part (estimate 25%) of Garden Community Communications and Engagement role + Budget for promotional materials to be sourced from existing budgets	October 2020	Ongoing after initial set up anticipated October 2021.

<p>4. Establish a programme of engagement with businesses in Hart</p>	<p>To have a better understanding on how businesses (large and small) have been impacted by COVID-19 and what their short/medium/long terms plans are (also considering Brexit) and how can Hart assist.</p>	<p>Existing resource: Key senior staff to meet/talk larger key businesses.</p> <p>Existing economic development team (50% of time) to capture SME/micro businesses.</p> <p>Set up small focus groups to engage as necessary.</p>	<p>October 2020</p>	<p>December 2020 – ongoing into 2021 given Covid/Brexit uncertainty</p>
<p>5a. Establish a central database of businesses operating in Hart (internal)</p>	<p>To have an up to date business database of who operates in the District.</p>	<p>Re-allocation of existing resource (e.g within Business Support)</p> <p>Could consider apprentice role.</p>	<p>September 2020</p>	<p>February 2021 – although data will need to be regularly updated to remain relevant and useful</p>
<p>5b. Prepare a business directory to be uploaded to the web (on the new Hart for Business website – see 3a above) and allow users to search for types of businesses; clusters; supply chains etc</p>	<p>To have an up to date business directory on the website.</p>	<p>Re-allocation of existing resource (e.g within Business Support)</p> <p>Could consider apprentice role.</p>	<p>September 2020</p>	<p>February 2021 – although data will need to be regularly updated to remain relevant and useful</p>

<p>5c. Prepare a sites/premises register of all available properties to promote Hart as a location to invest/locate to.</p>	<p>To have a comprehensive understanding of what sites/premises are available for companies wishing to grow/relocate.</p>	<p>Re-allocation of existing resource (e.g within Business Support)  Could consider apprentice role.</p>	<p>September 2020</p>	<p>Feb 2021 – although data will need to be regularly updated to remain relevant and useful</p>
<p>6. Widen scope of existing employment and skills advice to support the rise in unemployment and lack of employment opportunities.</p>	<p>To ensure that Hart can offer as much support as possible to those looking for work and training.</p>	<p>To be covered by existing Employment and Skills Co-Ordinator (2 year fixed term contract, post is funded by S106 monies)  No budget currently available for any projects/initiatives – additional budget will be depending on the level of assistance required initial estimate £5,000 - £10,000. Potential use of the recovery budget</p>	<p>July 2020</p>	<p>April 2021 – ongoing after</p>
<p>7. Preparation of Town Centre Strategies/Action Plans</p>	<p>To promote town/village centre activity to ensure footfall continues and grows and existing enterprises</p>	<p>This is a potentially new focus for the Council and whilst some activities are</p>	<p>November 2020</p>	<p>December 2021 – will need to continue to</p>

	<p>thrive and new ones are created</p>	<p>currently covered by the existing Economic Development Officer it would be necessary to fully scope all elements of this activity to understand the nature of the resources required and if it is consequently deemed necessary for an additional resource.</p> <p>This would be subject to a future report to Cabinet.</p>		<p>implement action plans etc</p>
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Reallocating Road Space in Response to COVID-19					
Activity:		Expected Outcome	Resource Implications	Start of Activity	Anticipated Completion Date
Fleet Town Centre - Pedestrianisation of Fleet Road		To expand/enhance 'safe space' within the centre to facilitate social distancing To increase outdoor space for shops, cafes and restaurants to enable social distancing Provide safe space within the centre to hold markets, events and other outdoor activities, which will increase the attractiveness of the centre To increase consumer confidence in the centre	Funding from MHCLG, HCC and LEP  Reallocation of existing officer resources (Head of Technical and Environment, Head of Place and Infrastructure Manager)	August 2020	November 2020
Enhancing pedestrian and cycle provision	Enhanced cycling provision between Fleet Railway Station and Fleet Town Centre	To enhance the existing cycling lane on Fleet Road between Fleet Railway Station and Fleet Town Centre in order to promote cycling along this key transport corridor and facilitate social distancing	Funding from HCC and LEP  Reallocation of existing officer resources Infrastructure Manager or requirement for addition support (from £30K budget allocation in July 2020)	September 2020	March 2021
	Safe routes to school	To identify improvements to existing routes to school	Reallocation of existing officer resources	September 2020	December 2020

		to promote walking and cycling and facilitate social distancing	Infrastructure Manager or requirement for addition support (from £30K budget allocation in July 2020)		
	Key routes across the district	To identify improvements to existing routes to promote walking and cycling and facilitate social distancing	Budget approved by Cabinet 07/2020	September 2020	March 2021

<b>Revitalise Hart</b>				
Activity	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications	Planned Start of Activity	Anticipated Completion Date
HR & Wellbeing - Update and add new policy and procedure documents. Including looking into flexible and agile working.	To bring our policy's up-to-date and reflect the 'new normal'	Existing resource (newly appointed HR Business Partner) Plus potential 'kick start' role to support/ provide administrative cover for all elements of revitalise Hart work stream	October 2020	Dec 2021
HR & Wellbeing – Introduce an employee assistance programme. Training for managers on how to deal with change, supporting staff remotely. Remote working training ect	To make sure all staff, managers and HOS are offered the right training to help them transition in to the 'new normal', and have the right support to make this a success	Existing resource (including newly appointed HR Business Partner)	September 2020	April 2021
HR & Wellbeing – To make sure we have a clear communication plan for staff and councillors. To make sure key conversations are being had in 121s on what to expect and support is offered and reasonable adjustments are made and DSE carried out.	To make sure staff and councillors are update with changes within the organisation.	Existing resource	August 2020	Ongoing
Digital & IT - Telephony replacement	Develop a unified communication platform to provide a cloud-based solution for phone, video	Existing resource	Medium term	April 2021

	and chat capability on any device at any location			
Digital & IT - Website review	Review the current website for user experience, content and functionality. Evaluate hosting and support relationship with current provider and re-tender. Include migration from Drupal 7 to new platform	Existing resource	Long term	December 2021
Digital & IT - Accessibility regulations	Test the site to ensure that it meets new accessibility regulations. Embed a new monitoring culture with content editors. Review role of content editors and editorial process across site	Existing resource	Short term	December 2020
Digital & IT - modern.gov implementation	Replace the existing manual process in Committee Services for issuing agendas, reports and minutes with a fully configured web-based report management system	Existing resource and potential role via the 'kick start' scheme	Short term	December 2020
Digital & IT - Office 365 application education incl. SharePoint	Provide refresher SharePoint training programme for members to ensure application is	Existing resource	Medium term	April 2021

	being used correctly and efficiently			
Digital & IT - Self-service portal review	Review the different customer journeys through each portal from the website and investigate how the Council can consolidate and/or improve functionality for customers across different services	Existing resource	Long term	December 2021
Digital & IT - E-signatures	Implement e-signatures across the organisation, starting as a pilot in Housing for agreements and contracts	Existing resource	Medium term	April 2021
Customer & Communications – Internal and external communications	Provide up-to-date, user centric communications	Existing resource	March 2020	Ongoing
Opportunity for agencies to co-locate in the community building	To investigate the opportunity to deliver a modern flexible co-working hub, which can offer public like-minded organisations a base to work from. Need to consider future running costs and ensure the income exceeds these perceived running costs.	Existing resource	September 2020	December 2021
Promotion of working from home concept	To deliver successful implementation of a flexible working model to improve efficiencies as well as work-life balance	Existing resource	September 2020	December 2021

	across the Council. Additional potential benefits being a reduction of car traffic within close proximity to the Fleet Civic site and a reduction of fixed real estate costs.			
Mobilise key Council services	A key target is improving customer engagement and a key part will be ensuring those residents that face Digital/It challenges can visit a local centre to seek help/ guidance/support.	Existing resource	September 2020	December 2021
Repurpose the building vs moving	To investigate the opportunity to repurpose the Council offices or to relocate (within the framework of discussions through the Civic Regeneration Project). The building is too large and requires significant reconfiguration to meet current Council demands. Need to balance financial, planning, sustainability and environmental opportunities and constraints.	Existing resource	September 2020	December 2021

## **Appendix 2**

### **Key Lessons Learnt from the first stages of the Covid-19 response**

On Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum formally declared coronavirus a major incident. The global pandemic of coronavirus has resulted in an unprecedented challenge to both the Council and the community that it serves. Whilst the council had plans in place, both for emergencies and business continuity, the Covid-19 pandemic presented the council with challenges that it had never had to face before. Whilst the Council quickly rose to these challenges the importance of capturing learning from the first stages of the pandemic, to help inform and improve any response required in the face of any resurgence of the disease was recognised.

Feedback and suggestions were therefore sought from those involved in the response a summary of key points identified is provided below:

#### **What was done well and needs to be included in any future response:**

- Central email address set up to ensure consistent and timely response provided to councillors of particular benefit in the early stages of the pandemic.
- Nomination of deputies for key officers to ensure continuity and support to cover all response work streams.
- Spreadsheet of staff availability and skills set up and used to allocate staff to support the emergency response.
- Staff Newsletter setup to provide regular updates on the response being provided.
- Daily Councillor newsletter provided during the early stages (now a weekly bulletin)
- Recording of meetings – standard template for recording meetings and logging of actions developed and implemented by all work groups.

#### **Hart Response Hub**

- Redeployment of staff from other service areas worked well.
- Rota implemented to co-ordinate staff cover.

#### **Support to our economy**

- Spreadsheet of which businesses were operating during lockdown (hours, type of 'offer' e.g. takeaway or delivery) was set up and maintained. The idea was identified as best practice across Hampshire and adopted by other authorities.

## **Emergency Planning Information Cell**

- A small team reading, summarising the plethora of information and creating a daily information summary.

## **What opportunities there are in the event of a resurgence:**

### **Key themes**

1. Improved communication
  2. Improved IT and access to systems
  3. Plan early/ ensure more staff are emergency planning trained.
- Terms of reference for all work streams to be confirmed at an early stage providing clarity of role and responsibilities
  - Ensure regular staff briefings; whilst we had weekly staff newsletters, we are now also hosting monthly live events, which can increase in frequency if required.

### **Business Continuity**

- Ensure effective IT and phone system is in place – this is now broadly in place but we monitor and provide additional equipment as required
- Ensure all staff are aware of roles of seconded staff within emergency response, this can be via the staff newsletter or live briefings.
- Improve online self-help for public to reduce level of enquiries, this is part of the Councils digital agenda and will be picked up as part of recovery
- Resources centre to be set up with blank templates - we are building a bank of standard documentation useful for a variety of activities.

### **Business grants and support to our economy,**

- Experience has provided guidance on putting in place the resources, should they be required for business grants under any potential future lock down scenario.
- Maintain/update central database of businesses & Provide regular updates to businesses
- Need to support businesses by the promotion of good news stories around those continuing to provide valued services to our communities
- Avoid use of business as usual email addresses for emergency response requests, to ensure that these are dealt with as a priority.

## **Recovery**

- Ensure recovery representation on sounding board
- Identifying resource for recovery sooner.

## **Emergency Planning Information Cell**

- More staff to be emergency planning trained, consider whether this could be built into all future job descriptions.
- Ensure responsibilities within the Information Cell are shared to provide greater resilience.
- Filing system structure is needed and whilst there was no framework at the beginning of the pandemic, a system is now in place
- Continue to provide summary of key issues for decision makers

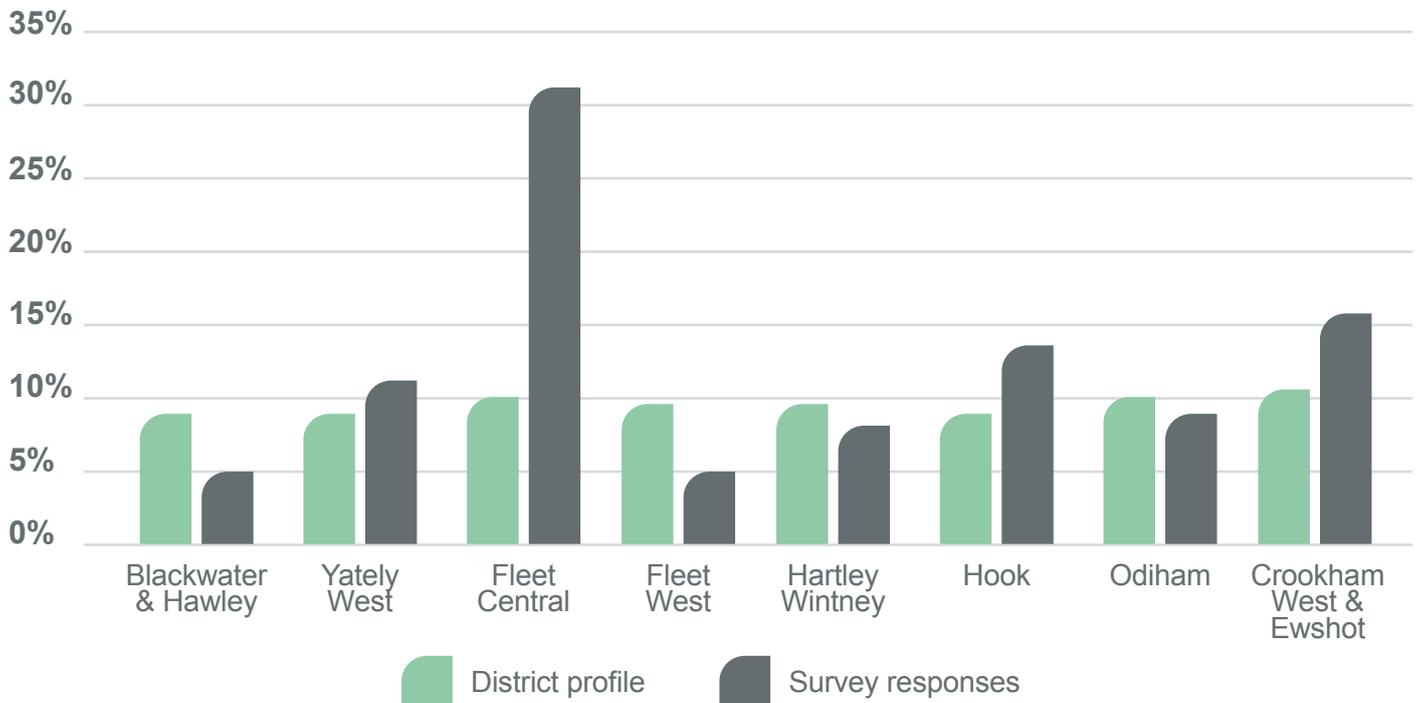
# COVID-19 SURVEY – SUMMARY

## Hart District Council

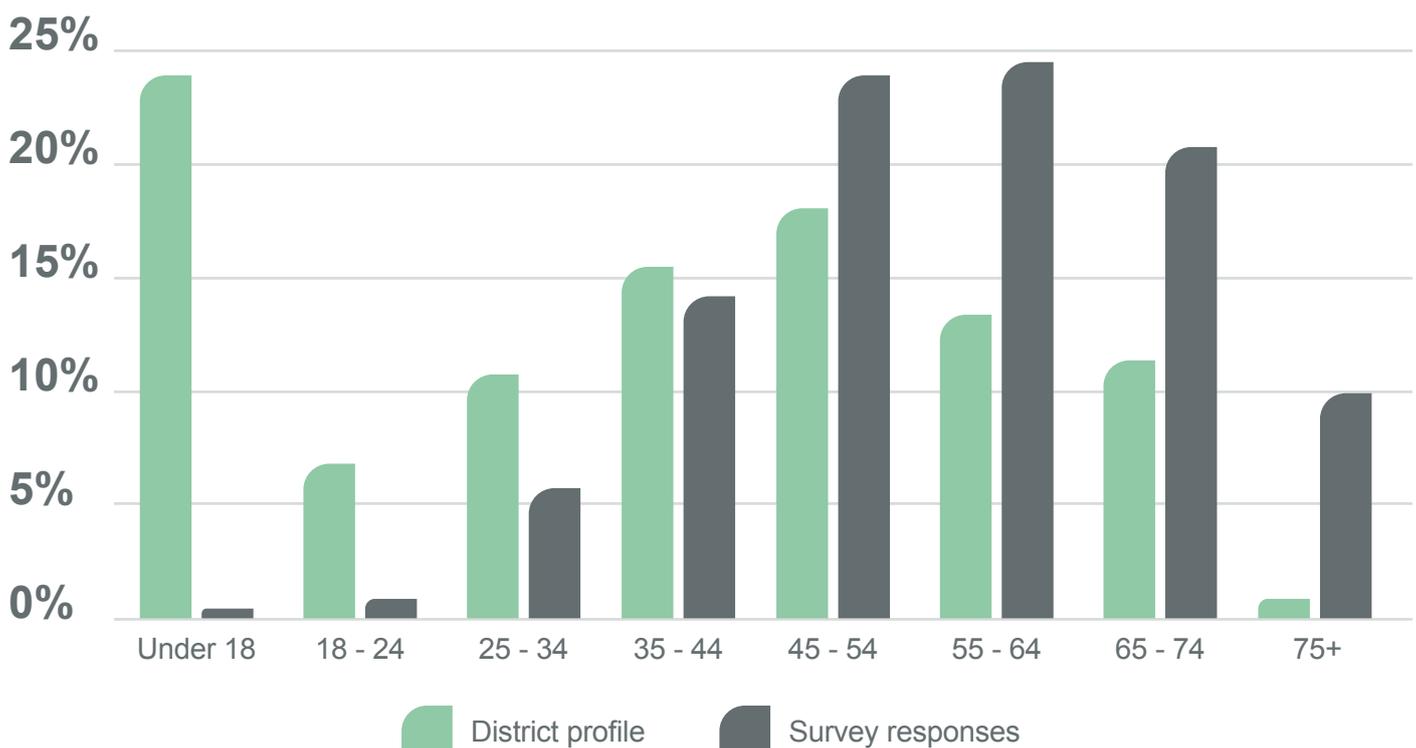
The survey took place between 22nd June and 26th July 2020, 13-18 weeks into the National COVID-19 Lockdown.

### Survey profile - 1,806 responses

#### Responses by wards

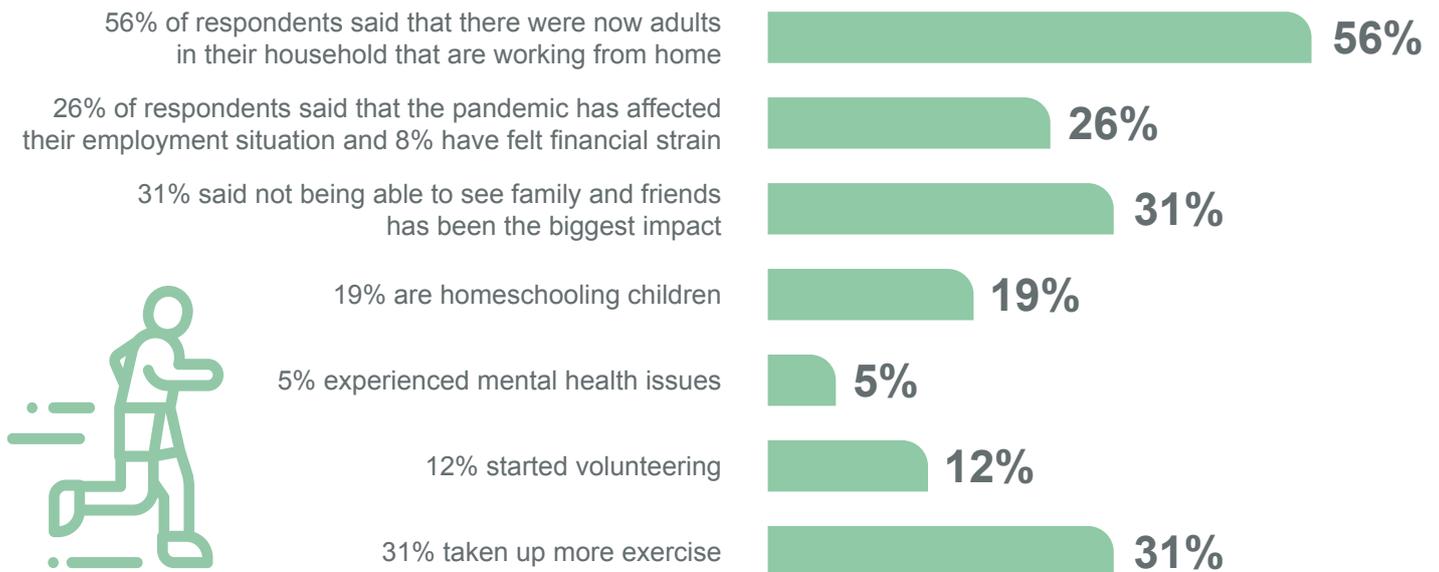


### COVID-19 respondents by age group



59% of participants of the survey were female as opposed to 37.76% respondents who identified as male. 0.42% of respondents identified their gender as 'Other' and 2.81% said they would 'Rather not say'.

## How has COVID-19 impacted our residents?



## What are some of the challenges the communities have faced?



## What would have helped?

More office space at home

Better cycling infrastructure

Tips and recycling centres staying open

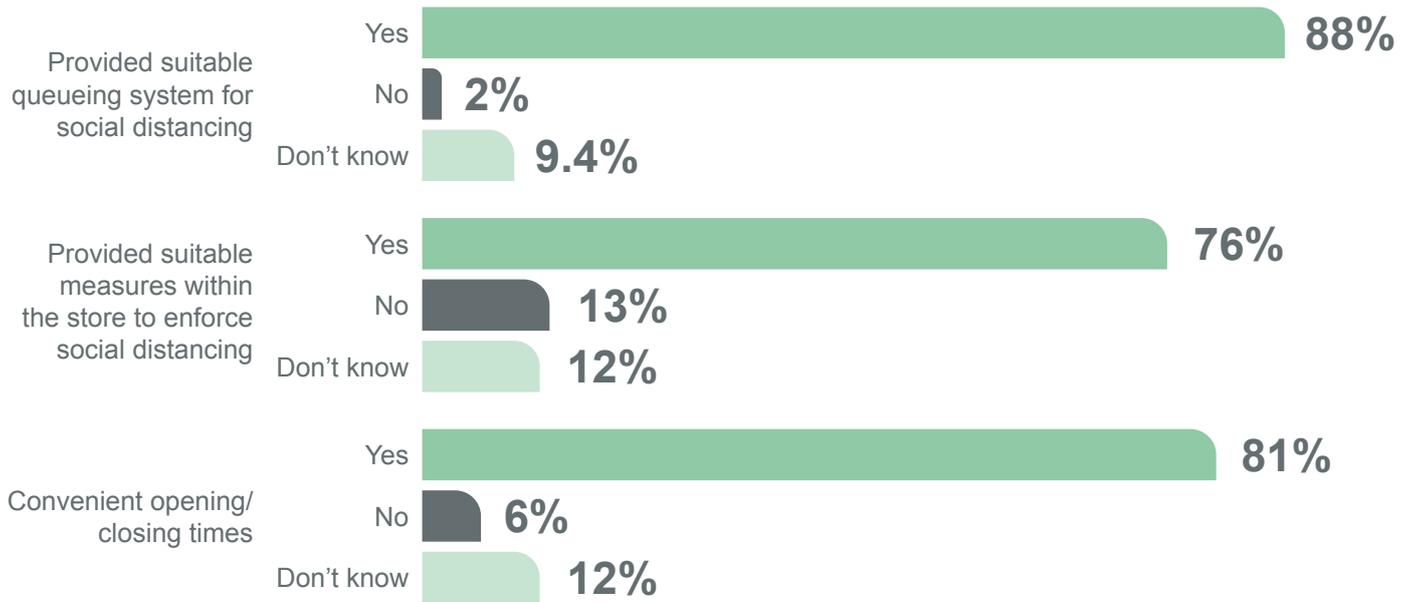
Childcare or having kids back at schools

Paths widened and better maintained

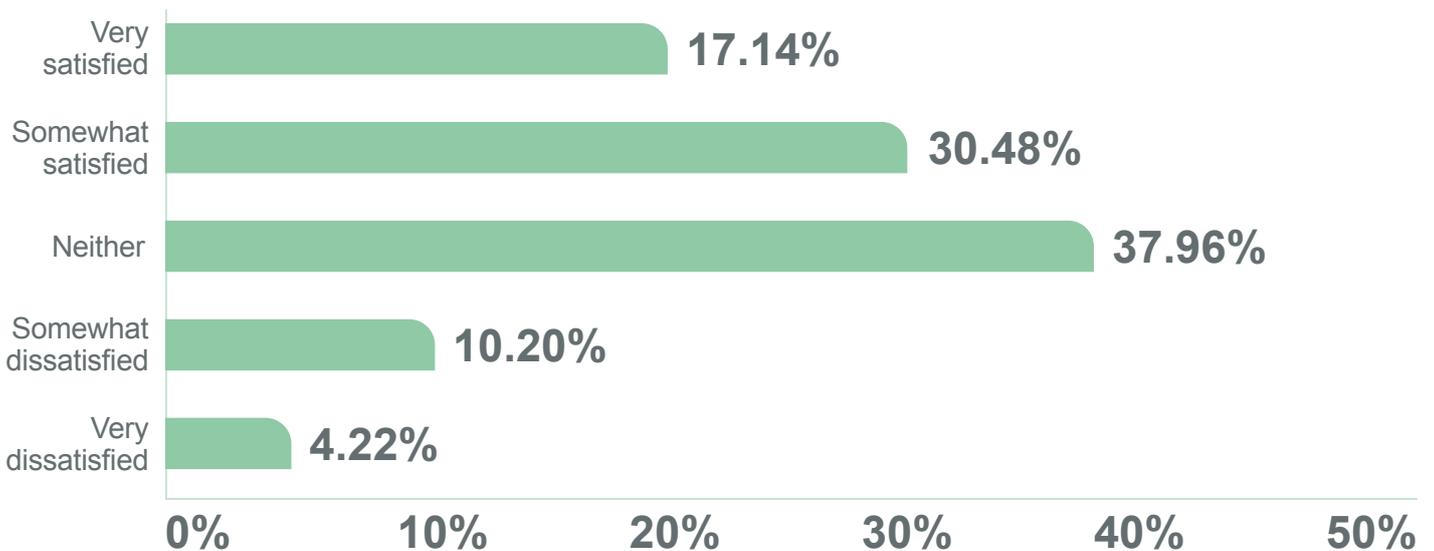
**Better broadband**

Continuing the green waste collection

## How did local businesses respond to the pandemic?



## How satisfied are residents with the Council's response to the pandemic?



## What are some of the areas for improvement?

