

## **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

## **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL COVID-19 UPDATE**

### **1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the Council's response to COVID-19 and the arrangements for recovery planning.
- The Council's response to the COVID-19 outbreak has been managed in accordance with Civil Contingencies Act and Humber Local Resilience Forum (LRF) governance arrangements and local business continuity planning frameworks, which includes recovering from emergencies.
  - The response has been guided by legislative frameworks and national guidance issued in the period March 2020 to date and framed under strategic priorities.
  - The Council continues to operate business continuity arrangements as part of its COVID-19 crisis response whilst concurrently planning for recovery and renewal at both sub-regional and place level.
- 1.2 In the context of COVID-19 'recovery' is an umbrella term used to describe the process of moving through a series of transitions and phases.
- 1.3 The Council's approach to recovery and renewal is set in the context of the government's recovery strategy.
- 1.4 Detailed service responses are contained in director reports on this agenda.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The national Coronavirus Action Plan published on 3 March 2020 set out what the UK as a whole has done and plans to do to tackle the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and that the exact response to COVID-19 would be tailored to the nature, scale and location of the threat in the UK. The document describes what steps have been taken and plan to be taken at contain, delay, research and mitigate.
- 2.2 The Council has responsibility for preparing and responding to an emergency under civil contingencies arrangements, depending on the

nature of the critical event or emergency. The local response is the council's business continuity management arrangements (Appendix 1), which were put in place following the government's action plan being published. This mechanism provides the governance for local decision making on service delivery prioritisation.

- 2.3 The Council also co-operates at a sub-regional level as part of the Humber Local Resilience Forum (LRF) (Appendix 1), where emergency response planning is required at scale across multiple agencies. The Humber LRF declared an emergency following the government's publication of its action plan, with the necessary governance and reporting arrangements implemented. The Council and LRF continue in the response phase of the emergency which is anticipated to remain for the foreseeable future.
- 2.4 The business continuity arrangements ensure service responses continue where possible, in line with the relevant legislative frameworks and guidelines. The two relevant pieces of legislation that received Royal Assent towards the end of March: Coronavirus Act 2020 and Health Protection (England) Regulations 2020 to enable the national restrictions to be implemented and enforced.
- 2.5 Operating within an emergency phase requires a flexible and dynamic approach. To ensure business continuity the Council took steps to reshape services in line with priorities, increasing online facilities where possible and many services continuing to work with people in the community. Details of these responses are set out in the director reports on the agenda.
- 2.6 The Council's approach is rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the council plan, through the strong partnerships within North Lincolnshire and framed under the priorities:
- Keeping staff safe and well
  - Protecting vulnerable people
  - Protecting the local economy
  - Enabling communities to flourish

A social media campaign #doonething has continued throughout this period reflecting our enabling approach as well as public health messages to residents, communities and business.

- 2.7 The council is also implementing national initiatives in response to Covid-19 such as shielding, support to business and care home resilience.
- 2.8 The Council continues to operate business continuity arrangements whilst concurrently planning for the gradual return to a new normality.

- 2.9 At a national level the Recovery Strategy 'Our Plan to Re-build', published 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020, sets out the road map for England along with 14 supporting programmes for health, social and economic recovery. The process for recovery planning will be influenced by the government's five tests to ease lockdown and the steps of adjustments to social distancing measures (Appendix 3). Responsibility for implementing some of supporting programmes has been delegated to local areas and upper tier councils. The local governance and recovery frameworks incorporate the relevant aspects of the national programmes.
- 2.10 At a local level, the Council has a lead role in planning recovery and renewal to ensure a co-ordinated and smooth transition through the next phases over the short and medium term whilst continuing to mitigate the risk of COVID-19. To do this we are using existing systems and partnerships for planning and governance. As such the Council remains part of the Humber LRF Covid-19 Emergency arrangements and the LRF Recovery structure is shown in Appendix 2.
- 2.11 The North Lincolnshire recovery and renewal framework guides the council's actions through the different transition phases of 'recovery'. The recovery phases are short and medium term at both Place and Council level. Recovery and renewal is framed in keeping with the Council's strategic vision, ambition and values. Each phase will be guided by national guidance and legislation; Public Health advice and guidance and supported by local evidence, intelligence and information.
- 2.12 The recovery period will be used to assess the changes needed in our long-term strategic plans for recovery and renewal in North Lincolnshire.
- 2.13 To ensure the Council, as an organisation remains resilient and sustainable, recovering from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is also about taking into account the continuing development and transformation in the way we work and how we operate. This includes having strong financial management and governance to meet our priorities.
- 2.14 The short term preparations are set in the context of national recovery strategy - steps for easement of social distancing restrictions and relevant guidance for organisations, facilities and activities. Some immediate milestones have been implemented in response to the national recover strategy. Examples of some immediate steps in preparation for easement of restrictions:
- COVID-19 Secure Risk Assessments for buildings and open spaces
  - Staff wellbeing assessments and training and re-orientation
  - Outdoor facilities re-opening in line with national guidance
  - Setting up new systems for registrations of births

- 2.15 There are some immediate local authority led milestones that have required system partners' engagement and agreement at place level including:
- Implementation of a Care Home Support Plan and assurance framework
  - Development of a Local Outbreak Plan, local authorities are required to develop plans by the end of June 2020.
  - The response phase required the council to provide Business Support grants to local business. As part of the first phase of recovery planning, we have launched discretionary business support grants as part of enabling local economic recovery.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and note the response made to date to the COVID-19 emergency and the recovery and renewal arrangements.
- 3.2 Cabinet are asked to note the concurrent running of business continuity and emergency planning and preparing for recovery and renewal.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The response and actions taken have been in accordance with legislation and government guidance and emergency arrangements governance structures.
- 4.2 Business continuity has been supported by the commitment and flexibility of the workforce; a better use of technology as a means of intra- and inter-organisational working; the swift response of partners to enact data sharing agreements and positive partnership working and strength of relationships across North Lincolnshire.
- 4.3 The emergency responses and business continuity arrangements continue to operate in parallel to the recovery and renewal. Whilst services manage operational responses, resources will be deployed and prioritised according to capacity. This means that they may be disruption to some services until the COVID-19 pandemic no longer poses a threat.

### **5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

- 5.1 The wellbeing of the workforce is a priority and HR policies, procedures and risk assessments have been updated to support this.
- 5.2 The COVID 19 pandemic and response is posing significant financial challenge for the Council. This is outlined in more detail in the Financial

Position 2019/20 report on the agenda. A full assessment on the medium term impact is being undertaken and an update against the Financial Strategy and Planning assumptions will be reported to Cabinet in July 2020.

**6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

- 6.1 Response and recovery planning is in accordance with requirements under Civil Contingencies legislation.
- 6.2 Actions and decisions have been taken in accordance with the Coronavirus Act, associated statutory instruments and national guidance.
- 6.3 An evaluation as to the effectiveness of the response will be included in the Annual Governance Statement reported to the Audit Committee later in the year. This will focus on the following areas which are based upon guidance from Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy:
  - Impact on business as usual in the delivery of services;
  - New areas of activity as part of national response and any governance issues arising;
  - The funding and logistical consequences of delivering the local government response; and
  - Assessment of the longer term disruption consequences arising from the covid-19 pandemic.

**7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

- 7.1 Not applicable to this report

**8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

- 8.1 Throughout the period of the pandemic there continues to be enhanced communications with residents, business, providers, partners and stakeholders. Public Health messages have been a key feature in our public communications. Engagement with the workforce has been maintained and enhanced through information and FAQ through the internal communication system.
- 8.2 The workforce have been consulted on any changes implemented throughout the response phase and we will continue to engage through the relevant well-developed mechanisms e.g. workforce engagement partnership, workforce surveys.

8.3 Regular meetings are being held with the recognised Trade Unions throughout this period.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Cabinet notes the response to COVID-19 and the recovery and renewal framework as outlined in the report.

### DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

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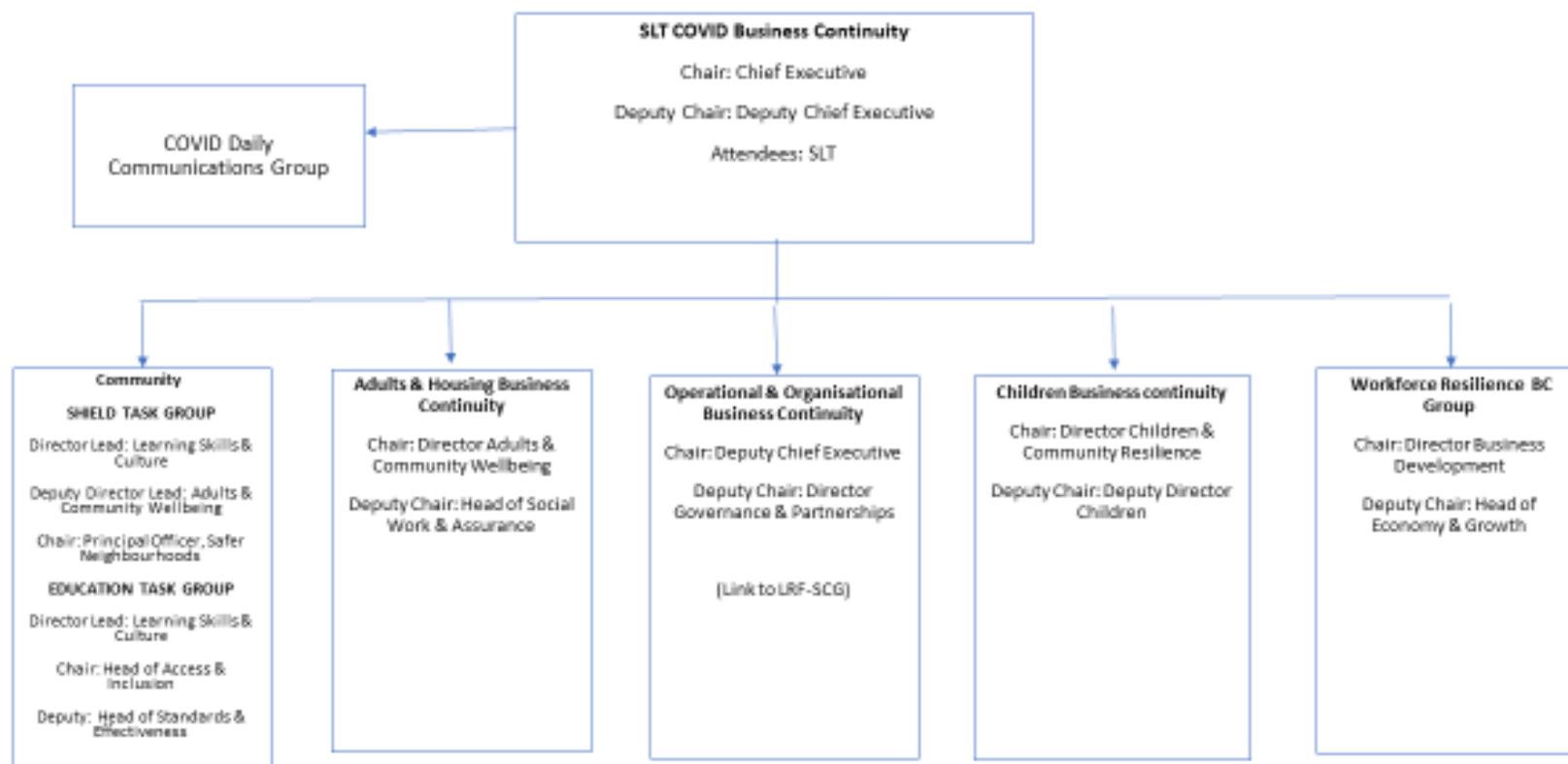
Date: 28 May 2020

### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –**

Coronavirus Action Plan, A Guide to What You Can Expect Across the UK  
Humber LRF Emergency Procedures

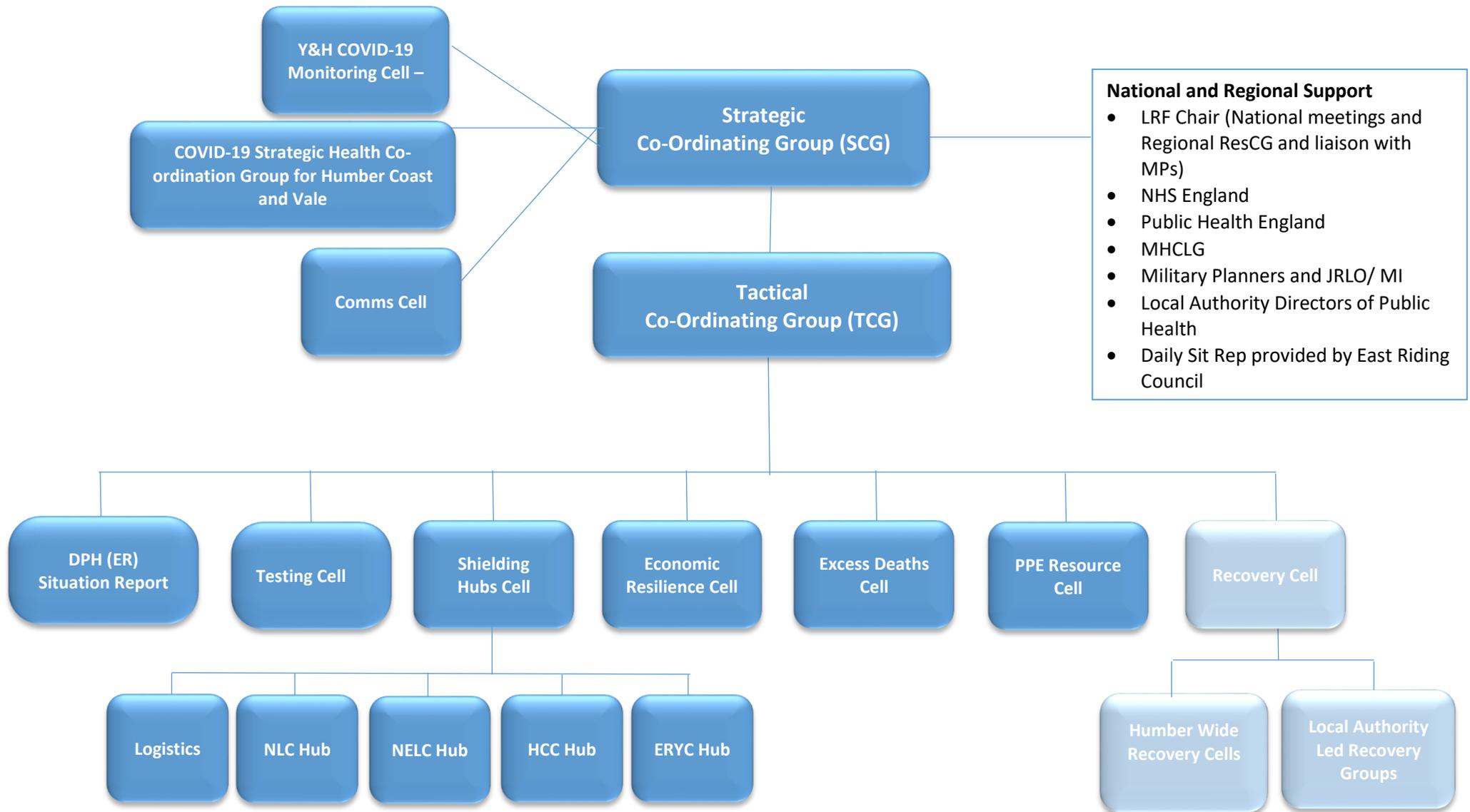
**Appendix 1  
Emergency Response Governance Structures**

## NLC Covid-19 Business Continuity Structure



Sub-groups were dynamic to focus on priority response as required

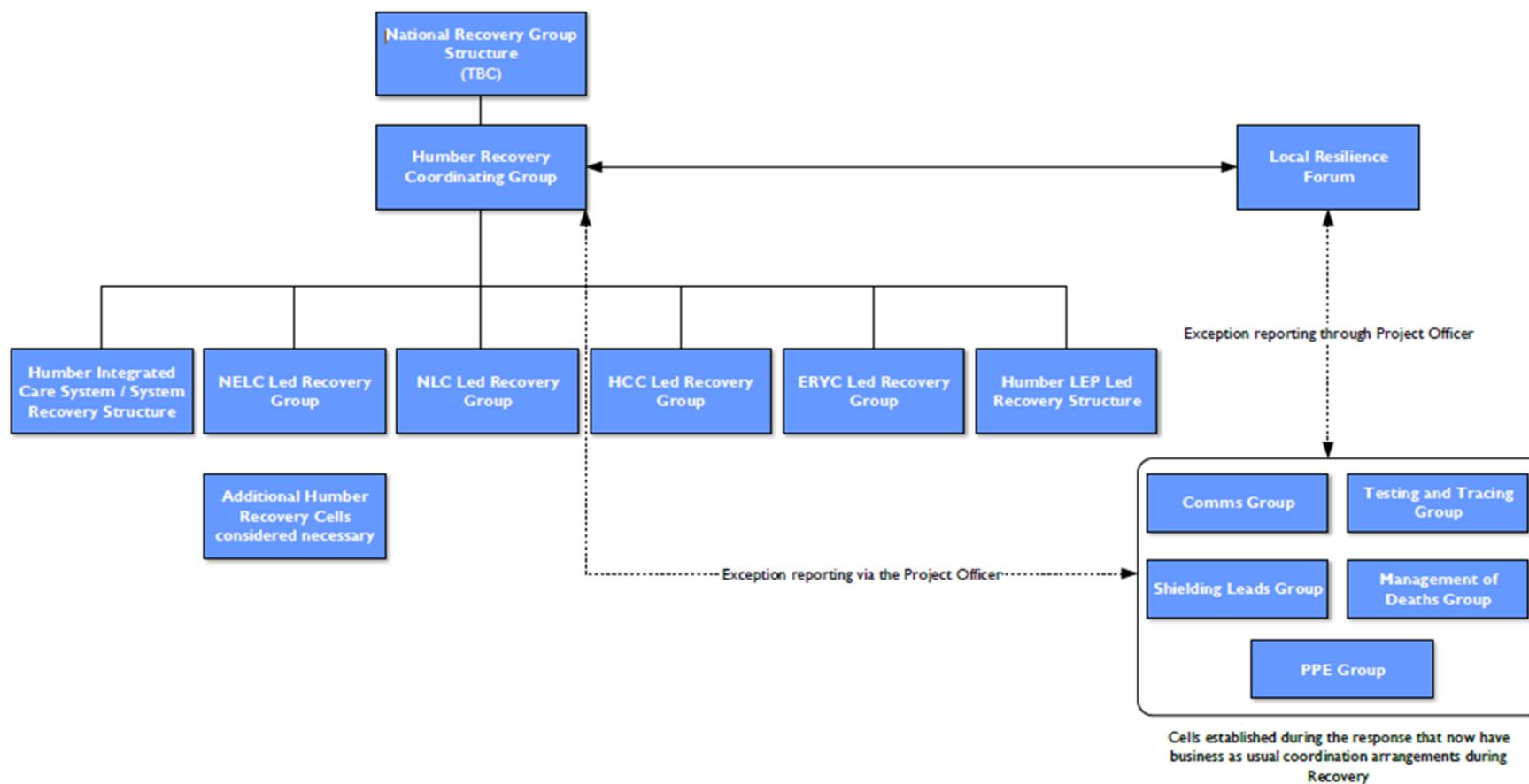
# Humber LRF Covid-19 Response Structure



- National and Regional Support**
- LRF Chair (National meetings and Regional ResCG and liaison with MPs)
  - NHS England
  - Public Health England
  - MHCLG
  - Military Planners and JRLO/ MI
  - Local Authority Directors of Public Health
  - Daily Sit Rep provided by East Riding Council

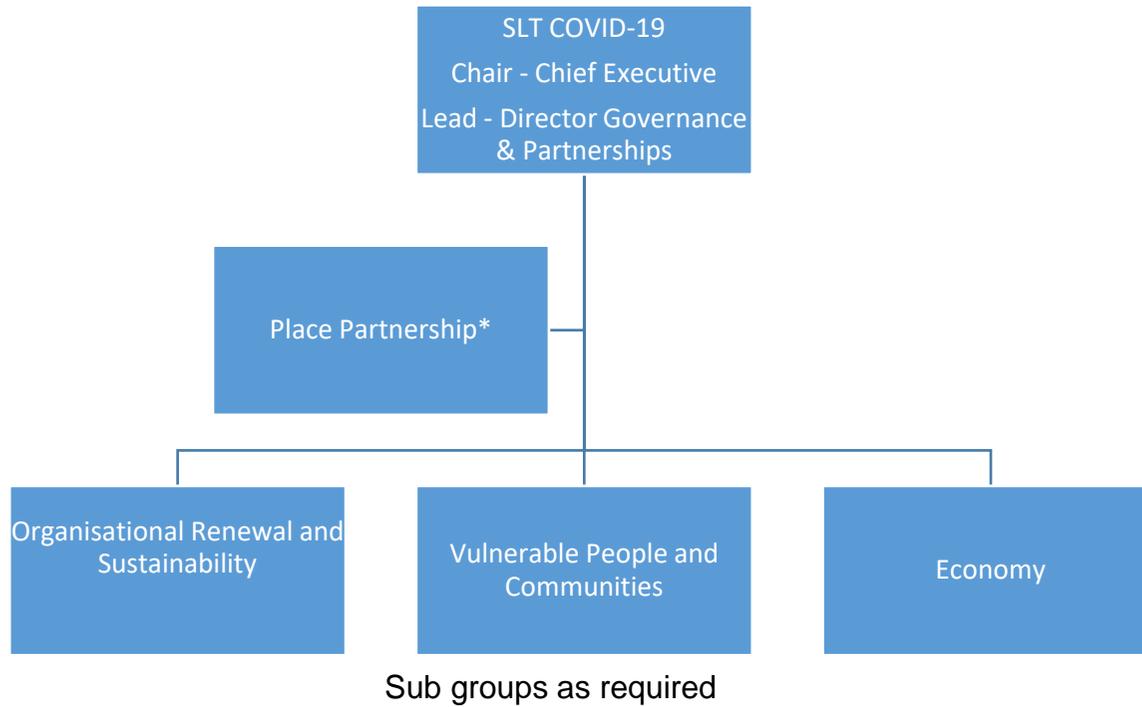
## APPENDIX 2 – RECOVERY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

### Humber LRF Recovery Arrangements Governance



\*Place Partnership is the NL Led Recovery Group shown in LRF structure above

## North Lincolnshire Recovery Governance



\*Place Partnership is the NL Led Recovery Group shown in LRF structure above

## APPENDIX 3

### UK Government 5 tests to ease lockdown

- 1 Protect the NHS's ability to cope. We must be confident that we are **able to provide sufficient critical care and specialist treatment** right across the UK.
- 2 See a **sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rates** from COVID-19 so we are confident that we have moved beyond the peak.
- 3 Reliable data from SAGE showing that **the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels** across the board.
- 4 Be confident that **the range of operational challenges, including testing capacity and PPE, are in hand**, with supply able to meet future demand.
- 5 Be confident that **any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections** that overwhelms the NHS.

## Steps of adjustment to current social distancing measures (national recovery strategy 'Our Plan to Rebuild')

