

Public Document Pack

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

12 July 2021

Chairman: Councillor Robert Waltham **Venue:** Conference Room,
MBE Church Square House,
Scunthorpe

Time: 2.00 pm **E-Mail Address:**
richard.mell@northlincs.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. Substitutions
2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Personal or Personal and Prejudicial interests.
3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 22 March 2021. (Pages 1 - 4)
4. To note the minutes of the Humber Leadership Board held on the 25 March 2021 (Pages 5 - 8)
5. To note the minutes of the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee held on the 19 March 2021 (Pages 9 - 16)
6. COVID-19 Epidemiology Update: Presentation by the Director of Public Health.
7. Humber Freeport - Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Pages 17 - 22)
8. Proposed merger of the North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Coroner Service Area - Report of the Director: Governance and Partnerships (Pages 23 - 70)
9. Financial Position Update 2020/21 - Report of the Director : Governance and Partnerships (Pages 71 - 80)
10. Council Plan 2018-21 AND COVID-19: Mid-Term Recovery Annual Review - Report of the Director: Governance and Partnerships (Pages 81 - 96)
11. Directors Position Statements 2021

- (a) Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Pages 97 - 104)
- (b) Report of the Director: Adults and Community Wellbeing (Pages 105 - 114)
- (c) Report of the Director: Business Development. (Pages 115 - 122)
- (d) Report of the Director: Children and Community Resilience (Pages 123 - 140)
- (e) Report of the Director: Learning, Skills and Culture (Pages 141 - 150)
- (f) Report of the Director: Governance and Partnerships. (Pages 151 - 158)
- 12. Levelling up Fund - Report of the Director: Business Development (Pages 159 - 164)
- 13. Imagination Library - Report of the Director: Learning, Skills and Culture (Pages 165 - 188)
- 14. Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent by reason of special circumstances which must be specified.

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

22 March 2021

PRESENT: - R Waltham (Chairman)

R Hannigan (Vice Chairman), J Davison, R Ogg, N Poole, J Reed, D Rose, C Sherwood and E Marper

M Ali, S Bainbridge, J Briggs, P Clark, A Davison, T Ellerby, T Foster, C O'Sullivan, D Southern, D Wells, Wilson and L Yeadon

Denise Hyde, Simon Green, Mick Gibbs, Becky McIntyre, Karen Pavey, Stephen Pintus, Peter Thorpe, Will Bell, Adam Lovell, Richard Mell and Tanya Davies attended the meeting.

The meeting was held at the Virtual Meeting Microsoft Teams.

1415 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

There were no declarations of interest declared.

1416 **TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2021**

That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 1 February 2021 having been circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the chair.

1417 **COVID19 EPIDEMIOLOGY VERBAL UPDATE BY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH COVID19 – EPIDEMIOLOGY VERBAL UPDATE** - The Director of Public Health gave a presentation updating the cabinet on the current position within North Lincolnshire. This included –

- The position to date on the Government's 'roadmap' out of lock down and restrictions
- Positivity data over the last 21 days and trends (national and local comparison), and
- Local and vaccination rates/data.

The Director responded to several questions asked by members.

Resolved – That the Director be thanked for his very interesting presentation and update, and he, his staff and staff across the council be thanked for their continuing hard work during the pandemic.

1418 **COVID 19 MID TERM RECOVERY UPDATE - REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR: GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS COVID19 MID TERM RECOVERY UPDATE** – Further to minute 1401, the Director: Governance and Partnerships submitted a report updating Cabinet on the Council's progress responding to COVID-19 as set out in the mid-term recovery plan and provided an overview of the national COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021

CABINET
22 March 2021

and Road Map which would inform actions within the mid-term recovery plan. Appendix 1 of the report set out the council's key highlights achieved against the plan.

The Director in her report explained that the local response to COVID-19 was set within a range of legislative regulations that had been introduced. The two key ones being the Coronavirus Act 2020 and Health Protection (England) Regulations 2020. Government guidance and new regulations continued to be issued which are applied to council operational and strategic response as relevant. The Cabinet Office had also published the COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021 on 22 February 2021 setting out the roadmap for easing of restrictions in England. Her report provided the key points from the national plan in Appendix 2.

The national plan confirmed the need to continue to work with health protection at the heart of the organisation. As place leader the Council would maintain attention on living with and mitigating the risk of COVID-19. The COVID-19 Response set out key tests that will determine each stage of the roadmap:-

- Test 1: The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully;
- Test 2: Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated;
- Test 3: Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS, and
- Test 4: The assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

The report stated that there was a clear role for local authorities in achieving a successful easing of national restrictions and the steps outlined in the Road Map provided a frame for the Council's emergence from the pandemic and reopening and return to some level of normality. These were consistent with our priorities and actions within the mid-term recovery plan which would be revised in line with the road map. The national response document focus on the things that need to be in place and prioritised at national and regional level;

- Healthcare response (Supporting NHS, Vaccines and Therapeutics);
- Keeping people safe and responding to threats (Behaviours, Test, Trace & Isolate and Responding to variants of concern);
- Economic and social support (Economic support, Support for vulnerable people and communities and Support for care homes), and
- Long Term (Transition from pandemic to epidemic, Living with COVID and Resilience for future pandemics).

As well as continuing to meet council priorities and responsibilities the council would need to ensure that there was capacity to respond to the above requirements and emerging national policy changes, in the context of the pandemic.

CABINET
22 March 2021

Resolved - That the report and support the continued delivery of priority actions be noted.

- 1419 **SCUNTHORPE TOWN DEAL - HEADS OF TERMS - REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR : COMMERCIAL SCUNTHORPE TOWN DEAL – HEADS OF TERMS** - The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director: Commercial submitted a report seeking approval of the recommendation of the Towns Fund Board to accept and sign the Heads of Terms for Scunthorpe Town Deal.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director: Commercial in his report explained that Scunthorpe's Town Investment Plan (TIP) was submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for approval of £26.9m in December 2020 for seven projects. The Plan was deemed to be of a strong standard which had enabled the board to move forward to a draft Heads of Terms (HoT) received on the 3 March 2021. MHCLG had confirmed through the Heads of Terms that the Scunthorpe allocation would be £20.9m.

The Heads of Terms offer to Scunthorpe was the start of stage 2, was not a contractually binding document and the offer was subject to various conditions being met. The Heads of Terms would act as a Memorandum of Understanding for the future development and delivery of Scunthorpe's Town Investment Plan and project proposals. It set out joint expectations as the business case development phase commenced. The HoT were presented to the Towns Fund Board on the 8th March 2021 with a timeline attached as appendix A to the report. The board unanimously made the recommendation to the Accountable Body to accept the Heads of Terms by submitting them to MHCLG on the 24 March 2021 and move to the next stage.

Resolved – (a) That the recommendation of the Towns Fund Board to accept the Heads of Terms for Scunthorpe Town Deal be supported and approved, and (b) that the signing of the Heads of Terms be delegated to to the Chief Executive and S151 Officer (Director: Governance and Partnerships) on behalf of the Accountable Body.

- 1420 **A GREEN FUTURE : OUR PLAN FOR POSITIVE CHANGE - REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR : COMMERCIAL A GREEN FUTURE: OUR PLAN FOR POSITIVE CHANGE** – The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director: Commercial submitted a report which introduced the council's plan 'A Green Future', which had been developed to deliver the positive change needed to create a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable North Lincolnshire. It was centred on a vision that:

'North Lincolnshire is a 'net zero' area. The environment is integral to all our decision making and everyone has a positive relationship with the environment. We all play our part in making our area a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable and attractive place to live, work and visit'.

To achieve this vision would require area wide ownership and action, and

CABINET
22 March 2021

with this in mind, area wide engagement was planned.

The report summarised the impact of climate change international, the national response and associated challenges in North Lincolnshire. It also explained that nationally, the 'Environment Bill, A Green Future: A 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' and 'The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution' set out an approach to deliver the government's environment vision. Government asserts that local government had an essential role to play responding to challenges at a local level, leading specific and locally appropriate responses and driving innovation.

'A Green Future' was the council's plan to deliver the positive change needed which included the following eight key aims –

Aim 1: By 2030, North Lincolnshire Council will achieve 'net zero' and we will end the council's contribution to global warming.

Aim 2: Clean Growth - net zero industry and commerce and good air quality.

Aim 3: The shift to net zero embeds decarbonisation in our economic growth. We use decarbonisation as the foundation of our future prosperity.

Aim 4: Net zero living is easy and accessible. It benefits the environment and improves people's lives.

Aim 5: Resources are used more efficiently. The amount of waste North Lincolnshire produces is minimised.

Aim 6: Everyone is connected with our environment. We enhance and protect it.

Aim 7: Everyone has a stake in our environment, and everyone can feel the benefit.

Aim 8: A Network to achieve our vision for 'A Green Future'.

To achieve these aims required significant change. Everyone in North Lincolnshire would need to play their part – residents, businesses, the public sector and non-profit organisations. It was therefore proposed that the council now engaged with residents, businesses, the public sector and non-profit organisations across North Lincolnshire about the aims of 'A Green Future'. This should include seeking feedback on a range of actions that should help us achieve these aims. Following this engagement, a new Environment Policy and Programme would be developed for approval.

Resolved – (a) That the vision, outcomes, goals and aims of 'A Green Future' be noted and endorsed, and (b) that engagement with residents, businesses, the public sector and non-profit organisations be progressed with the intent of developing a greater understanding of how we best support and enable everyone to play their part in owning and taking action to achieve 'A Green Future' for North Lincolnshire.

MINUTES of the VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE HUMBER LEADERSHIP BOARD Held on 25th March, 2021

Present:

<u>Hull City Council</u>	Cllr Stephen Brady
<u>East Riding of Yorkshire Council</u>	Cllr Richard Burton
<u>North Lincolnshire Council</u>	Cllr Rob Waltham Cllr Richard Hannigan
<u>North East Lincolnshire Council</u>	Cllr Philip Jackson Cllr Stan Shreeve
<u>Humber LEP</u> (observer)	Stephen Parnaby
<u>Greater Lincolnshire LEP</u> (observer)	Pat Doody
<u>Hull and East Riding LEP</u> (observer)	James Newman

Officers	Rob Walsh – North East Lincolnshire Council Denise Hyde – North Lincolnshire Council Matt Jukes – Hull City Council Caroline Lacey – East Riding of Yorkshire Council Alan Menzies - East Riding of Yorkshire Council Mark Jones – Hull City Council Simon Green – North Lincolnshire Council Clive Tritton – North East Lincolnshire Council Sharon Wroot – North East Lincolnshire Council Teresa Chalmers – Humber LEP Richard Kendall – Humber LEP Ruth Carver – Greater Lincolnshire LEP (HLB.33 onwards) Paul Windley – North East Lincolnshire Council
----------	---

HLB.28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Councillor Stathers (East Riding of Yorkshire Council).

HLB.29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in any items on the agenda for this meeting.

HLB.30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Humber Leadership Board meeting held on 28th January 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

HLB.31 OFFSHORE WIND UPDATE

The Board received a report received a report providing an update on progress with offshore wind projects across the Humber region.

Councillor Jackson welcomed the report but noted that although there was a commitment in principle for the offshore renewable energy catapult currently located in Grimsby, it had yet to receive funding. He asked that lobbying around how to move this forward be added to the suggested actions in the report.

Councillor Waltham supported the need for lobbying around the contract for difference but felt that specific evidence was required around the benefit to the local economy.

RESOLVED – That the suggested actions within the report now submitted be agreed with the addition of actions to support lobbying around the offshore renewable energy catapult located in Grimsby and in relation to the contract for difference auction.

HLB.32 FREEPORTS UPDATE

The Board received an update on progress with the establishment of the Humber Freeport.

Mr Tritton reported on the success of the Humber Freeport bid, noting that it had been very well received by government. Following on from the announcement, an introductory meeting had been held between the bid team and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. A 'next steps' paper would be submitted to the next meeting of this board. The main issue was likely to be around governance and the accountable body will need to be identified from one of the four local authorities. There was also likely to be pressure to formalise the Memorandum of Understanding. Timeframes were also being worked on and it was hoped that the first phase of the project would be in place by autumn 2021.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

HLB.33 DECARBONISATION

The Board received a report setting out the significance of the Humber region in the achievement of the government’s decarbonisation goal of being a net zero economy.

Councillor Jackson reiterated the need to include lobbying around the offshore renewable energy catapult in the lobbying section of this report.

The board raised concerns about combining the Freeport and decarbonisation in relation to lobbying but noted the need for a joined up approach to avoid duplication.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

HLB.34 MARKETING HUMBER 2021 PROGRAMME

The Board received a paper setting out the Marketing Humber programme for 2021.

Councillor Burton felt that co-ordination across the Humber was vital to raise the profile of the area and maximise opportunities via engagement with the Waterline Summit and Cop 26 in particular.

Mr Doody enquired whether there was expected to be a Humber presence at Cop 26.

While noting that there was a bidding process for Cop 26, Councillor Waltham suggested that an action plan be developed to identify all opportunities for the Humber local authorities and business partners.

RESOLVED – That the Marketing Humber 2021 programme be noted and an action plan be developed to identify all opportunities for the Humber local authorities and business partners.

HLB.35 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Board agreed to schedule its next meeting towards the end of April, 2021 to consider next steps for the Humber Freeport. It was further agreed to continue with monthly meetings beyond that.

RESOLVED – That the next meeting of the Humber Leadership Board be scheduled towards the end of April 2021 and that a schedule of monthly meetings be prepared for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.08 a.m.

**LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

19 March 2021

PRESENT: -

Members -

Councillor M Hill (Lincolnshire County Council) in the Chair

Councillor P Bradwell (Lincolnshire County Council),
Councillors R Waltham and R Hannigan (North Lincolnshire Council),
Councillors P Jackson and S Shreeve (North East Lincolnshire Council), and
Pat Doody (Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership).

Officers -

Debbie Barnes, Andy Gutherson and Lee Sirdifield (Lincolnshire County Council),
Denise Hyde, Simon Green and Becky McIntyre (North Lincolnshire Council),
Rob Walsh and Clive Tritton (North East Lincolnshire Council) and
Ruth Carver (Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership)

Richard Mell (Secretariat – North Lincolnshire Council).

The meeting was a remote/virtual meeting held through Microsoft Teams.

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The chair welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee and invited members and officers present to introduce themselves for the benefit of those watching the live broadcast online.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were declared by members.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Director: Governance and Partnerships, North Lincolnshire Council submitted a report requesting the Joint Committee to confirm its Terms of Reference.

The Director explained that the Joint Strategic Oversight Committee for Greater Lincolnshire had been established as an Executive Committee of the three upper tier local authorities that make up Greater Lincolnshire: North Lincolnshire Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and Lincolnshire County Council.

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
19 March 2021

Its Terms of Reference attached as an appendix to the report set out the scope of the committee, its membership and administrative arrangements for the meeting. The position of chair and secretariat would rotate annually, starting with the Lincolnshire County Council Leader and North Lincolnshire Council respectively. Where formal commitment of resources was required, each local authority would take recommendations back through their relevant decision making process.

The terms of reference had already been considered and agreed by each member Council through its Executive.

Resolved – (a) That the Terms of Reference be confirmed, and (b) that substitute members at meetings be allowed from each member council's executive members.

4 JOINT INTELLIGENCE AND STRATEGY UNIT

The Deputy Chief Executive, North Lincolnshire Council submitted a report which proposed to establish a Joint Intelligence and Strategy Unit (JISU) providing meaningful intelligence, insight and agreed recommendations on strategies and policies to support the agreed agenda of the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee (GLSOC).

The report stated that the core functions of the Greater Lincolnshire Strategic Oversight Committee were to facilitate cooperation and collaboration between Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council, in so far as it related to their executive functions on the following themes: a) the development and application of strategy across the Greater Lincolnshire economic region; b) the development of opportunities to gain greater alignment across Greater Lincolnshire, where scale and scope were required and could enhance upper tier functions, and c) the strategic alignment of investment across Greater Lincolnshire.

To ensure that these objectives were being met and that the upper tier authority Leaders and Chief Executives were informed of key issues through insight and strategy development and to ensure a coordinated conduit for the GLSOC to commission through its partner organisations key work strands and policy development, there was a need to establish a supporting intelligence and strategy unit.

The Deputy Chief Executive in his report explained that the creation of the JISU would ensure added value through enabling both the economies of scale and scope that a Greater Lincolnshire approach offered with commensurate enhancement of capacity and capability that a more singular approach would negate. The JISU would be supported through existing upper tier officers and any request for additional resources would be subject to further GLSOC approval.

Proposed membership of the JISU was - Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council, North Lincolnshire Council, Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, University of Lincoln and a Beis representative.

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
19 March 2021

Specific guests would be co-opted and invited to contribute depending on agreed topics. The initial proposed chair and secretariat of the JISU is through the GLEP.

The Deputy Chief Executive's report concluded that the JISU would develop on behalf of the GLSOC clear outcomes, formalised reports, accountability and provided a summary overview of its activity. Any subsequent requirement for resources would be subject to a further report seeking authorisation prior to required approval through the executive of member authorities.

Resolved - That the proposed creation of the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Intelligence and Strategy Unit as described within the Deputy Chief Executive's report be approved.

5 STRATEGIC THEMES AND SECTORS

The Deputy Chief Executive, North Lincolnshire Council presented a report seeking confirmation of the Joint Committee's strategic statement of ambition and approval of the strategic leadership of key themes and their sector development.

The Deputy Chief Executive referred to the three themes of the GLSOC (minute 4 above refers) and explained that for historic reasons the Greater Lincolnshire area had experienced several differing initiatives and strategic plans which whilst well-meaning and relevant often overlapped and / or failed to encompass fully a true greater Lincolnshire approach to strategic planning. It was also recognised that certain sectors of activity did not carry the same strategic relevance for all upper tier members of the committee.

A number of plans had evolved over recent years with the Strategic Infrastructure Development Plan, 'Lincs Growth' and more recently the 'Greater Lincolnshire LEP Local Industrial Strategy' being good examples of an increasingly unifying approach. To build upon this direction and momentum it was proposed that the GLSOC identified and took on board the strategic leadership of key themes and sectors which demonstrated issues of joint interest for the Committee's members and where a unified greater Lincolnshire approach could add value.

The report therefore proposed a 'Strategic Statement of Ambition', 'Strategic Themes' and a 'Proposed Structure' for the Joint Committee as set out below

-

Strategic Statement of Ambition

By working together across Lincolnshire we will achieve greater economic growth, wealth and influence for the county.

Our residents will see better job prospects, greater investment and genuine devolution as we work in closer collaboration and speak with one voice on statutory responsibilities for the benefit of all.

Proposed Strategic Themes

The Greater Lincolnshire Strategic Oversight Committee takes on board the strategic leadership of the following themes and sector development:

- Tourism
- Food
- Infrastructure
- Skills

Also a joint oversight of the industrial de-Carbonisation agenda with the Humber Leadership Board and a nuanced and targeted approach to marketing for industrial and commercial sectors through the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP).

Proposed Structure

To enable the effective and efficient operation of the Joint Committee's approach a programme management approach be adopted. This would allow the Joint Committee to have strategic capacity and oversight whilst also be aware of the performance of each of the strands of activity. In addition it would also utilise existing structures and assets thus also reducing costs and duplication. It was proposed that this role be undertaken through the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Each new work strand would establish and / or utilise existing structures where possible to feed progress into the Joint Committee whose role was to take action on exception reporting and to agree strategic direction. It was also proposed that to ensure ownership and performance reporting each strand would have a commensurate Local Authority /LEP lead.

The Deputy Chief Executive in his report explained that for the sector work strands of activity it was proposed that each of the Local Authorities /GLLEP each take a lead to ensure single lead and point of contact along with avoiding duplication of resources and the ability to utilise assets appropriately behind each work strand. It was proposed that this was met through existing resources.

To undertake the programme management role and enhanced marketing complementing the key sectors it was also envisaged that additional resources were needed to successfully manage this along with the ability to either commission work or have the relevant research capacity available in-house. Again to ensure efficiency it was proposed that the relevant lead Authority hosts this function the details of which would be brought back to the Joint Committee in a separate report.

Resolved – (a) That the proposed statement of ambition, strategic themes and sectors identified in the Deputy Chief Executive's report be approved; (b) that the programme management approach outlined within this paper and the

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
19 March 2021

lead role on overseeing this being with the Greater Lincolnshire LEP be approved; (c) that the setting policy for place, reinforcing the need for collaborative working and an outcome based approach and the need to speak to Government with one voice be approved; (d) that the Joint Committee note the anticipated need for enhanced resources but that any subsequent decision regarding resource allocation be subject to a further report containing details and implications to be submitted to a future meeting, and (e) that the Joint Strategic Intelligence Unit be requested to report to the three member council's Chief Executive Group on the activity, targets, timescales and delivery of the above prior to a subsequent report being submitted to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.

6 UK FOOD VALLEY - SUSTAINABLE FOOD FROM LAND AND SEA

The Executive Director of Place, Lincolnshire County Council submitted a report seeking confirmation of strategic support for the delivery of the UK Food Valley ambition and the development of the proposition as set out in the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) Board report attached as an appendix, and also recognition of the future resource implications arising from this commitment.

The report stated that the GLLEP had been developing a concept based on demonstrating and accelerating the current Greater Lincolnshire food cluster of land and sea to the UK economy and positioning Greater Lincolnshire as the UK's Food Valley. The report attached as an appendix was considered by the GLLEP Board on Friday 26 February 2021 and its recommendations endorsed.

The Executive Director in his report explained that the ambitions and aspirations set out in the GLLEP Board report were aligned with the strategic priorities being agreed by the joint committee and linked closely with a range of existing projects and initiatives across Greater Lincolnshire, which each of the three upper tier authorities were engaged in. The strategy also set out a longer term approach to a) positioning Greater Lincolnshire as the UK's Food Valley; b) aligning existing and future activity to the position, and c) developing programmes that enhance and support the ambition of becoming the UK's Food Valley from the public sector, the private sector and the education and research sectors.

Resource and legal implications were summarised in the report which referred to likely required future approvals from the three member authorities through their own executive decision making process, especially in relation resource commitment to project development and delivery.

Ruth Carver, GLLEP emphasised the importance of this proposed ambition and strategy for the whole of the Greater Lincolnshire area.

Members welcomed the proposed strategy and commented upon the need to recognise the different sectors of sustainable food production as a joint enterprise, associated supporting public and private sector infrastructure and employment opportunities.

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
19 March 2021

Resolved – (a) That the Joint Committee confirms its support for the UK's Food Valley strategy; (b) that the Joint Committee recognises the need for appropriate resource and capacity to be aligned to supporting the GLLEP project and developing appropriate detailed delivery support as required, and (c) that a further report setting out governance and resource proposals of the strategy be submitted to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.

7 LINCOLNSHIRE DAY

The Executive Director of Place, Lincolnshire County Council presented a report which set out proposals for maximising the impact of Lincolnshire Day and sought support from each member/partner council to work up a programme of activities and requested the Joint Committee to approve a proposed programme of activity across the Greater Lincolnshire area as outlined in the report.

The report stated that Lincolnshire Day, historically celebrated on 1 October could be traced back to 1536 and highlighted the rich heritage that Greater Lincolnshire offered. It provided an excellent opportunity for the three partner authorities to showcase the benefits of working together across the Greater Lincolnshire region to promote the wealth of assets that Greater Lincolnshire offered and to instil pride across Greater Lincolnshire. Activity proposals would see the three member/partner authorities working with organisations such as BBC Lincolnshire, Lincolnshire Agricultural Society (educational team), the tourism industry and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership to both develop and deliver a range of activities to celebrate Lincolnshire Day.

The Executive Director requested the Joint Committee to consider three themes for Lincolnshire Day in 2021. The themes would see a range of initiatives being developed and delivered that demonstrated the importance of Greater Lincolnshire as a key economic region of the UK. The themes were summarised in the report under the following headings:-

- Theme 1: Think Bigger
- Theme 2: Hidden Gems – Rediscovering Greater Lincolnshire
- Theme 3: This Is Us

The report explained that delivery of the selected themes would utilise a range of channels and provided multiple opportunities for business promotion and networking. The approach would also enable schools to get involved in Lincolnshire Day.

The event would also be promoted through engagement with local media, including BBC Radio Lincolnshire, BBC Radio Humberside and BBC Look North. This would link back to Lincolnshire's offer. To further add prominence to the day council buildings would fly Lincolnshire flags and an official Lincolnshire day ceremony with invited representatives from each council and other parties would be held. The delivery of this programme would deliver the following outcomes:

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
19 March 2021

- Increased pride in the County
- An event that goes from strength to strength
- Strong local activity that inspires and celebrates
- Promotional effort that supports our year round campaigns

Each member authority would be required to commit resources to developing the communications and marketing programme required to maximise the impact of Lincolnshire day on the Greater Lincolnshire area. This would be reported to and considered at a future meeting.

Members also discussed the involvement of local partners which would be included in any future progress report.

Resolved – (a) That the themes and associated activities set out in the Executive Director’s report to promote and celebrate Lincolnshire Day be approved, and (b) that the Joint Committee receive a report back to a future meeting on a detailed programme of events and activities for the member/partner councils to endorse in advance of Lincolnshire Day.

8 ANY OTHER ITEMS - FUTURE MEETINGS AND INFORMAL PROGRESS REPORTS

Resolved – (a) That the next meeting of the Joint Committee be held in June 2021 and a draft timetable of meetings for 2021/22 be considered initially with Chief Executives for subsequent approval with Leaders of the three member councils, and (b) that Chief Executives also consider circulating progress briefing reports to all members on a monthly basis in between formal meetings of the Joint Committee.

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Cabinet

Humber Freeport

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on progress with the Humber Freeport.
- 1.3 To confirm Cabinet commitment to the Freeport Memorandum of Understanding and to seek delegation to the Deputy Chief Executive in negotiation with Cabinet Member for the detailed documentation to be developed and agreed to enable the next stage of the Freeport to take place.
- 1.3 To accept the recommendation of the Humber Leadership Board that North East Lincolnshire Council be appointed as the Accountable Body for the Humber Freeport.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 On 16 November 2020, the Government launched a competitive bidding process for Freeports in England and sought proposals from bidding coalitions.

A bidding coalition, reporting to the Humber Leadership Board chaired by North Lincolnshire Council's Leader, including the four Humber local authorities along with private sector interest was formed to shape the Freeport bid.

A bid was submitted in February 2021 that included Customs, Tax and Seed Capital sites across all four local authority areas. The Humber Freeport was announced as successful (subject to business case) in the Chancellor's Budget (March 2021).

The outline business case is expected to be submitted to Government in the summer and the final business case in the autumn with the first Freeports expected to be launched in November 2021.

It is proposed that a Humber Freeport Company will be established and will be responsible for the delivery of the Freeport. The company board is expected to comprise the Leaders from the four Humber Unitary Authorities along with Associated British Ports (ABP) as the Statutory Harbour Authority, the two Local Enterprise Partnerships covering the area and private businesses.

- 2.2 'Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth' has set out how Freeports are a flagship government programme that will play an important part in the UK's post- Covid economic recovery and contribute to realising the levelling up agenda, bringing jobs, investment and prosperity to deprived communities across the four nations of the UK with targeted and effective support.

The Freeport Bidding Prospectus was published by Government on 16 November 2020, inviting bids from areas of the country to bid for Freeport Status for parcels of land within their areas which would be designated to boost the economy and level up the country. The Government set out three objectives they wish to achieve through allocated Freeport areas:

- *Objective 1 - establish Freeports as national hubs for global trade and investment across the UK.*
- *Objective 2 - Promote regeneration and job creation.*
- *Objective 3 - Create hotbeds of innovation.*

- 2.3 The prospectus outlined three elements of a Freeport – Customs Sites, Tax Sites and Seed Capital.

Custom sites

Businesses operating within Freeport custom sites will receive tariff benefits, including duty deferral while goods remain on site, and duty inversion if the finished good exiting the Freeport attract a lower tariff than their component parts. As set out in the Freeport bidding prospectus, subject to the UK's trade agreements, businesses may also be able to take advantage of customs duty exemption on goods that are imported into a Freeport, processed into finished goods and subsequently re-exported. They will also be able to suspend import VAT on goods entering the Freeport. In addition, businesses operating in Freeports will be authorised to use simplified import procedures.

Tax sites

Tax sites will offer businesses a range of incentives. Examples include: Stamp Duty Land Tax relief; Enhanced Structures and Buildings Allowance; Enhanced Capital Allowance; Employer National Insurance Contributions Rate Relief; and, Business Rates Relief. In addition, it is intended that the council in which the freeport tax sites are located will

retain business rates growth for that area above an agreed baseline. This will be guaranteed for 25 years.

Seed Capital

In the bidding prospectus, the government set out that they propose that successful bidders will have the opportunity to access a share of £175 million of seed capital funding. Funding will be subject to the submission of a detailed business case in 2021.

2.4 Humber freeport bid

A Humber Bid for Freeport Status was submitted to Government before the 5 February 2021 deadline. The bid comprised:

- Three Tax Sites comprising 596.1 ha of land. These three tax sites were Goole – 198.8 ha, East Hull – 198.1 ha, and the Able Marine Energy Park located in North Lincolnshire, 199.2 ha.
- Two Seed Capital sites – one in Hull and one in North East Lincolnshire.
- 36 Customs Sites, mainly around the port of Goole, Hull, Grimsby and Immingham.

2.5 The next steps of development for the Humber Freeport is submission of an Outline Business Case for approval. The Outline Business Case submission will be followed by a Full Business Case. It is anticipated that the Outline Business Case will be submitted in summer and the Full Business Case in Autumn.

A Freeport Company

A delivery company must be in place to deliver the Freeport and it is proposed that a Freeport Company will be set up to have responsibility for the long-term governance of the Freeport. The entity will be established as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG).

The CLG membership will comprise the four Humber Unitary Authorities along with ABP as the Statutory Harbour Authority, the two Local Enterprise Partnerships (Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Hull and East Yorkshire LEP) and private businesses who are operating tax and custom sites. The members will select a board which will include the leaders of the respective authorities.

For the purposes of the Humber Freeport CLG, the Accountable Body has been nominated by the Humber Leadership Board to be North East Lincolnshire Council.

To move forward both the governance arrangements and the business cases, several agreements are required to be negotiated and agreed. These include, but are not limited to, Articles of Association for the CLG;

Local Authority Services Agreements; Memorandum of Understanding and Site-specific agreements.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Option 1 – To endorse and support the Progress of the Humber Freeport.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option 1

Endorsing and supporting the role that the Humber Freeport will ensure that significant progress can be made in creating the right economic landscape to support growth across the Humber and Greater Lincolnshire.

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

5.1 Legal

Legal advice will be sought by the Deputy Chief Executive on all matters related to development of the Humber Freeport and all decisions taken will have the legal implications considered.

Financial

All decisions related to the development of the Humber Freeport will be considered in light of the financial impact on the Council. All decisions and agreements will be made in consultation with the council's Section 151 officer.

HR

It is envisaged that internal staffing resources will be used for the next phase of the development of the Humber Freeport. Any decision and agreements made for additional resources will be made in consultation with the Director of Business Development.

Communications

Communication around the development of the Humber Freeport from the council has been undertaken through the Strategic Communications Group.

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

6.1 Equalities impacts

Equalities impacts are covered in the bidding prospectus. The government sets out is it committed to the location of Freeports advancing the equality of opportunity and fostering of good relations for people of protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation). As part of the bid bidders were required to make any relevant representations on impacts on people with different protected characteristics to assist the government's ongoing assessment.

Equality implications have been considered as part of the development of the bid and no negative impacts upon protected characteristic groups were identified. As part of the continual development of business cases, equalities impacts will be further explored and considered.

Council Plan 2018 – 2021

The Humber Freeport can contribute to the achievement of several of the outcomes of the council plan, particularly under the Prosperous outcome – More jobs, better paid jobs; improved skills, Thriving businesses. The aims of the Humber Freeport support the council priorities of Enabling economic growth and renewal and enabling resilient and flourishing communities.

Economic Growth Plan

The development of a Free Trade Zone and port development is an idea directly referenced as Idea 1 in the North Lincolnshire Council Economic Growth Plan.

Environmental

All decisions related to the development of the Humber Freeport will be considered in light of environmental impacts on the local and wider area.

Risk

A risk register is in place for the Humber Freeport. A North Lincolnshire Council Internal Risk Register is in development and will be owned by the Deputy Chief Executive and contributed to by all necessary parties (legal, financial, environmental, business development etc).

Crime and Disorder

It is expected that the Freeport Company will work with land owners to minimise the risks associated with some global freeports such as illegal

activity and money laundering. It is anticipated that any agreements entered into by the Freeport Company will seek to ensure a strong management framework is in place to minimise the risk of illegal activity.

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

7.1 An IIA has been completed on the Humber Freeport proposal based on the initial bid stages. A further IIA will be undertaken for the next stage of the development of the Freeport.

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

8.1 Consultation

Consultation has taken place as part of the development of the Freeport proposal. These include a call for tax sites as part of the site selection for the Humber Freeport bid and several webinars, including a webinar run by North Lincolnshire Council for transport and logistics companies, with a presentation and questions and answers on the Humber Freeport.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That Cabinet endorse and support the development of the Humber Freeport by;

- confirming Cabinet commitment to the Freeport Memorandum of Understanding and to seek delegation to the Deputy Chief Executive in negotiation with Cabinet Member for the detailed documentation to be developed and agreed to enable the next stage of the Freeport to take place.
- accepting the recommendation of the Humber Leadership Board that North East Lincolnshire Council be appointed as the Accountable Body for the Humber Freeport.

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
Author: KR/LP
Date: 25 June 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –

- *Freeports – Bidding Prospectus*, HM Treasury / HM Government, November 2020
- *Humber Freeport Fact Sheet*
- *Humber Freeports bid*, paper to the Humber Leadership Board, 28 January 2021

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

Proposed merger of the North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Coroner Service Area

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the background and supporting information to enable a decision on whether to support the submission of an agreed joint business case from Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council to the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor.
- 1.2 The business case proposes the merger of the two existing coroner areas to create a new, single Greater Lincolnshire coroner area, which would be coterminous with the three authorities.
- 1.3 There are other options available to the Council, including a shared Humberside coronial area, which are also considered in this report.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. North East Lincolnshire Council is the lead authority for providing the coroner service for the coroner area of North Lincolnshire and Grimsby. The Senior Coroner is appointed by the local authority but works to the Chief Coroner under the Ministry of Justice. To support the Senior Coroner, the local authority has a duty to provide coroners officers, administrative support and suitable accommodation for the Senior Coroner to undertake his/her duties to the area.
- 2.2. There are currently 88 coroner areas in England and Wales. In 2016 updated guidance was issued by the Chief Coroner on the merger of coroner areas, which followed the recommendations in the Luke Review of 2003 that recommended: “the number of coroner areas, should be reduced in order to create sensibly sized coroner areas, taking into account the number of reported deaths, geographical size and types of coroner work in the area”.
- 2.3. The Chief Coroner and Ministry of Justice have recently reiterated their long-term plan to reduce the number of coroner areas to 75 and to explore the opportunity of merger of coroner areas when the opportunity arises, invariably when a senior coroner retires.

- 2.4. In December 2018 the Senior Coroner for North Lincolnshire and Grimsby retired and the Chief Coroner and Ministry of Justice confirmed that the current coroner area was too small to be maintained and that a merger with neighbouring coroner areas should be explored. Since that time the Chief Coroner and Ministry of Justice have only agreed to the appointment of an acting Senior Coroner for the area but not a permanent replacement pending exploration of options for merger. Furthermore, following the departure of the Senior Coroner for Lincolnshire in September 2020 a similar embargo has been placed on the Lincolnshire Coroners Service by the Chief Coroner and Ministry of Justice in recruiting a permanent Senior Coroner.
- 2.5. Since the retirement of the Senior Coroner for North Lincolnshire and Grimsby, discussions have been held with both the Hull and East Riding Coroner Service (for which Hull City Council is the lead authority) to create a new 'Humberside' coroner area and latterly and more substantively, under the auspices of an officer project group, with the Lincolnshire Coroners Service (for which Lincolnshire County Council is the administering authority) to create a new 'Greater Lincolnshire' coroner area.
- 2.6. At its Cabinet meeting on 23 November 2020, Hull City Council resolved to make an application to the Chief Coroner for the merger of the two current coroner areas that cover the area for the Humber, namely the East Riding and Hull area and the North Lincolnshire and Grimsby area to create a new integrated Humberside coroner area. A copy of the supporting business case is to be found at Appendix B.
- 2.7. At its meeting on 25 June 2021, the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee considered a report on the progress of the discussions that have taken place over several months between officers of North Lincolnshire Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and Lincolnshire County Council to develop a merged coroner area for Greater Lincolnshire. A copy of the supporting draft business case, which is still evolving, is to be found at Appendix A. The Ministry of Justice has been kept updated throughout of these collaborative discussions.
- 2.8. The Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee resolved that a merger of the current coroner areas for North Lincolnshire and Grimsby and Lincolnshire be pursued to develop a new coroner area for Greater Lincolnshire, with Lincolnshire County Council as the lead authority for the new Coroner Service thereunder.
- 2.9. As stated, business cases for both merger options have been produced by the relevant lead authority, using the business case template prescribed by the Ministry of Justice. A preferred model has emerged during these discussions, for which approval is sought to proceed to the next stages.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 There are three options to consider:

- Option 1 – maintain the current North Lincolnshire and Grimsby coroner area.
- Option 2 – agree to proceed with the Greater Lincolnshire business case and work with partners to develop a merged service plan for a new Greater Lincolnshire coroner area.
- Option 3 - agree to proceed with the Humberside business case and work with partners to develop a merged service plan for a new Humberside coroner area.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Option 1

4.1 The North Lincolnshire and Grimsby coroner area and service has been in place since 1996 - as per The Humberside (Coroners) Order 1996 - and has been providing an effective and low-cost service to residents since. However, this is a difficult option to sustain given the instruction from the Chief Coroner to consider a merger with neighbouring coroner areas to form a larger coroner area.

Option 2

4.2 Merging with Greater Lincolnshire gives rise to a series of opportunities and risks which are considered in the draft business case in Appendix A.

4.3 The main opportunities of a merged and enlarged coroner area, irrespective of which, are as follows:

- The creation of a single coroner team, managed by Lincolnshire County Council as the lead authority, means that the service would have greater capacity
- Harmonisation of best practice processes leading to a more efficient and effective operation
- Better use of technology, with an increased role for technology improving the user experience
- Improved resilience to deliver the service and additional resources to deal with fluctuations in service demand
- Opportunities in respect of maximising geographic advantages, reducing travel/conveyancing where possible
- Enable improved business continuity planning for the service as a whole
- Potential synergies that could lead to reductions in part of the cost base

4.4 However, the merger and creation of a Greater Lincolnshire coroner area would form a single region, consistent with emerging and developing

collaborative arrangements across the three tier 1 councils on a broad range of issues both strategically and service delivery related.

- 4.5 The main risk of a merged Greater Lincolnshire coroner area is the potential impact to the cost base. The North Lincolnshire and Grimsby service is comparatively low cost, whereas the Lincolnshire service is comparatively high cost based on a range of measures (cost per death/capita/referral). The project group have recognised this, and are working to best understand these differences with a view to understanding the fairest way to share, which conforms to the underpinning principles supporting the merger:

1. No increase in cost to any of the three authorities
2. Phased approach to cost sharing to ensure 1
3. Staff and service delivery (inquests) retained in current localities to ensure communities are served appropriately
4. Shared governance through committee and operational board, including decisions on moving to next phase
5. Adoption of relevant IT and technological solutions to improve service to the public and drive efficiencies

Based on the first two principles, the intent is not for one local authority to benefit financially at the expense of another and therefore there is confidence that this risk can be mitigated through further development of the cost sharing mechanism. The phased approach to cost sharing also provides security, in that all parties need to agree before this can be enacted.

- 4.6 In summary, there are potentially significant benefits to the residents of North Lincolnshire of this merger. The merger and creation of a Greater Lincolnshire coroner area and service could improve the experience for bereaved residents, with greater capacity and better use of technology. The resident experience will remain central to service planning. Notwithstanding the financial risk identified, this is the preferred option.

Option 3

- 4.7 As noted in 2.6, Hull City Council resolved to make an application to the Chief Coroner for a merged Humberside coronial service. North and North East Lincolnshire Council reserved their positions on this to ensure all available options were fully developed before considering which to adopt as its preferred option. The supporting business case can be found at Appendix B.
- 4.8 Many of the benefits stated within option 2 also apply to option 3, in that a larger coroner area and service will have increased resilience, capacity and make better use of technology. It would also allow for staff localities to remain unchanged. In addition to this, a merged Humberside coroner area would also have the benefit of aligning with Humberside Police and Fire, and the Humberside Resilience Forum.

- 4.9 However, it is important to consider that it is not a requirement for a coroner area to fall within the boundary of one police/fire authority and as such this should not stop the development of a different solution if the perceived benefits to North Lincolnshire residents could be greater, with improved outcomes in keeping people safe, well, prosperous and connected. Also, working with more than one police force should not be perceived as a negative factor, providing best practice is implemented area wide.
- 4.10 The creation of a new Humberside coroner area would not be consistent with the stated aim of Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council to work collaboratively on a greater Lincolnshire footprint.

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

Financial

- 5.1 There are financial risks which are considered in 4.5. Important to note that this is an identified risk which is being address by the project team and does not require the business case process to pause.
- 5.2 When the merged service delivery plan has been completed, which will include cost base forecasts and allocations, a report will be brought back to Cabinet outlining the financial impact (if any).

Other

- 5.3 This is a formal merger that is not easily dissolved. Therefore, all organisations need to be fully in support prior to final sign up.
- 5.4 Both the North Lincolnshire and Grimsby coroner service, and the Lincolnshire coroner service, are operating without a permanent Senior Coroner which is putting pressure on both services. This combines with both areas dealing with a backlog of jury inquests due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 5.5 There may be some significant service changes up to the point of merger, such as the current tendering exercise being carried out by Lincolnshire County Council for its post-mortem services.

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

- 6.1 All other relevant implications are considered in the supporting business case at Appendix A.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 The supporting business case at Appendix A identifies the impacts of the proposed merger.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 The Ministry of Justice will direct any merger process once the participating councils have indicated their preferred model and lead the consultation process.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That cabinet approve Option 2, the making of an application to the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor for the merger of the two current coroner areas for North Lincolnshire and Grimsby, and Lincolnshire to create a new Greater Lincolnshire coroner area, with Lincolnshire County Council acting as the lead authority for the new coroner service thereunder.

9.2 That further reports be submitted to Cabinet on progress of this proposal, as appropriate.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Church Square House
High Street
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL

Author: Will Bell/Adam Hopley
Date: Thursday 1st July 2021
V3/w

Background Papers:

Chief Coroner Guidance No.14 Merger of Coroner Areas
Ministry of Justice template for Business Case for Merger

Draft V4.2

**Business Case to the Chief Coroner
for merging the
Lincolnshire Coroner Area
and
North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Coroner Area**

Contents

- 1. Information on areas proposed to merge**
- 2. Senior Coroner Appointment**
- 3. Impact of proposed Merger on Service Delivery**
- 4. Impact of merger on those working in the Service**
- 5. Resource implications**
- 6. Risks and Mitigation**

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Map of the proposed Greater Lincolnshire Coroner Area

Appendix 2 – Staff Structure charts

Appendix 3 – Performance statistics

ALTERATION OF CORONER AREAS UNDER SCHEDULE 2 OF THE CORONERS AND JUSTICE ACT 2009¹
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE BUSINESS CASE TEMPLATE FOR MERGERS

NAMES OF CORONER AREAS THAT ARE PROPOSING TO MERGE

- Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area

PROPOSED NAME OF NEW AREA

- Greater Lincolnshire Area

1. INFORMATION ON AREAS THAT PROPOSE TO MERGE

- Please provide key details in the table as follows:

Coroner area	Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby	Proposed: Greater Lincolnshire
Geographical area covered	Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire	Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire
Local authority/ authorities that fund(s) coroner area and %	Lincolnshire County Council 100%	North Lincolnshire 49% North East Lincolnshire 51%	3 stage phased approach culminating on a per capita split Lincolnshire 69.6% (761,224), North Lincolnshire 15.8% (172,763), North East Lincs 14.6% (159,942).
Relevant authority (formerly lead authority)	Lincolnshire County Council	North East Lincolnshire Council	Lincolnshire County Council (TBC)
Police Force(s)	Lincolnshire	Humberside	Humberside and Lincolnshire Police forces
Transport links	East Midlands Mainline train route from London to the north/Scotland A1 main road A52 east/west road Large volume of A roads and country roads Numerous large Royal Air Force	A180 Transpennine Services Grimsby Docks South Humber Bank Industries Immingham Docks Humberside Airport	All combined

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/25/schedule/2>

Coroner area	Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby	Proposed: Greater Lincolnshire
	<p>bases the largest being RAF Waddington. Also RAF Coningsby, RAF Digby, RAF Scampton and RAF Cranwell</p> <p>Boston Docks</p> <p>A16 and A15</p>		
Major hospitals	<p>United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - County Hospital Lincoln - Pilgrim Hospital Boston - Grantham <p>Lincolnshire Community Health Service</p> <p>Hospitals at Grantham, Louth, Gainsborough, Spalding and Skegness</p>	<p>Diana Princess of Wales, Grimsby</p> <p>Scunthorpe General Hospital</p> <p>St Hughes Hospital, Grimsby</p>	All combined
Prisons in area	<p>HMP Lincoln</p> <p>HMP North Sea Camp</p>	None	All combined
Other state detention facilities	<p>Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre Swinderby Lincolnshire</p> <p>Lincolnshire Police Custody Suites Skegness, Grantham, Boston and Lincoln (66 Cells)</p> <p>Secure Centre-Sleaford</p> <p>Mental health Secure unit</p>	<p>Humberside Police Custody Suite (36 cells)</p> <p>Any other secure setting/DoLs</p>	All combined

Coroner area	Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby	Proposed: Greater Lincolnshire
	(NB – large volume of nursing homes in relation to DoLS)		
Courtrooms/ inquest venues	Myle Cross Centre, Lincoln Lindum road, Lincoln Endeavour House, Boston	Grimsby Town Hall Cleethorpes Town Hall North Lincolnshire Civic Centre	All combined
Office/staff accommodation – location and capacity	Structure chart (Appendix 2) Located at Lincoln Registration Offices and Boston ... Smart working introduced to allow flexibility to location/ homeworking.	Structure Chart (Appendix 2) Located at Cleethorpes Town Hall	Combined to one Area Team Structure. Location of staff to be as now. Technology to be maximised to allow flexible locations
Employer of coroner's officers'	Lincolnshire County Council	North East Lincolnshire Council	Lincolnshire County Council (TBC)
Name of senior coroner	Acting Senior Coroner Paul Smith	Acting Senior Coroner Mark Kendall	To be appointed in line with CC guidance
Number of area coroners	1(vacant due to acting up to senior)	None	One
Number of assistant coroners	3	Two including one assistant Coroner currently acting up as Senior Coroner	6 proposed to bring in line with Chief Coroner Guidance to do circa 15 days per year
Number of coroner's officers	1 Coroners Manager 7.5f fte Coroners Officers 0.8 fte Coroners Development Officer	3.06 fte Coroners Officers	1 Coroners Manager 1 Senior Coroners Officer 9.5 fte Coroners Officers 0.8 Coroners Development Officer
Number of administrative support staff	4 fte	1	5 fte

Coroner area	Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby	Proposed: Greater Lincolnshire
Number of deaths reported in the previous calendar year (2020)	3272	1279	Circa 5000
Inquests held in the previous calendar year (2020)	425	114	Circa 540
Post mortem rate as % of reported deaths in the previous calendar year (2020)	38%	38%	Circa 38%

Please note attached map of the proposed area as Appendix 1.

2. SENIOR CORONER APPOINTMENT

- **Why are you seeking a merger now (i.e. which area's senior coroner is stepping down, when and why)?**

The Senior Coroner for Grimsby and North Lincolnshire retired in December 2018, at this point the Chief Coroner advised North and North East Lincolnshire Councils they could not move to appoint a new Senior Coroner but needed to consider the merger with another area as the referral numbers were lower than those proposed under the model coroners area 1,700 rather than 3,000. Following a direction to discount any merger northwards with Hull and East Riding, discussions were held with the then Senior Coroner for Lincolnshire Mr T. Brennan, In September 2020 Mr Brennan moved to take up an appointment in Manchester West, since this date the Area Coroner for Lincolnshire Mr P Smith as acted up as Senior Coroner, leaving Lincolnshire without the benefit of an Area Coroner until the matter of a merger is resolved.

There is positive political and officer support for the merger into a Greater Lincolnshire area, partially down to the collaborative manner in which this proposal has been developed.

1. IMPACT OF PROPOSED MERGER ON SERVICE DELIVERY

- **What will be the impact of the proposed merger on service delivery?**

The current service delivery model in terms of how residents access the coroners service, need not change, it is anticipated that current arrangements will be maintained to ensure there is no impact on service access, and that it continues to be delivered within the local community. However the recent restrictions resulting from Covid have meant that in person hearings have had to be limited, LCC have invested in remote technology to allow participation in parties to participate in hearings. This remote option has been welcomed and is something that will be developed across all court buildings within the merged area.

The creation of a single team and harmonisation of processes and better use of technology can only deliver efficiencies and improved performance for residents. The proposed merger will also give better resilience to deliver the service and additional resources to deal with fluctuations in service demand. It will also enable improved business continuity planning for the service as a whole.

The merger with Lincolnshire would also form a single region, particularly under emerging collaborative arrangements across the three tier 1 councils. The new service is clearly out of kilter with historical regional working across the old Humberside region; however there are strong plans in place across the three councils that make up the Greater Lincolnshire area to work closely on a broad range of issues both strategically and on service delivery.

Will additional coronial or administrative support be provided in the new area? (E.g. will additional coroners need to be recruited or will workloads be increased/redistributed etc.? How will additional caseloads be managed?)

Coronial Support - In terms of coronial support the merger benefits include access to a full time Senior Coroner, full time Area Coroner and a larger pool of assistants, to manage the workload, respond to fluctuations in demand, and improve the timelessness of inquests held. The full time fixed cost of a senior coroner and an area coroner removes the unforeseen impact on budgets in the event of additional day rate inquests costs, which local authorities with part time coroner's experience.

What will be the impact of the merger on associated services – such as post-mortem examinations, and mortuary provision?

The merger to one coronial area would have a positive impact on all three local authorities in terms of resilience of service and longer term cost reduction in post mortem fees, as well as improved performance for families.

Lincolnshire already has a good spread of providers including Hull Royal Infirmary, whilst Grimsby and North Lincolnshire utilise the smaller facilities at Lincoln County Hospital. PM work would be redistributed to ensure minimal transportation for the deceased and their families. The availability of 4 different providers of PM facilities allows for strong resilience of service provision.

The larger pool of pathologists in the new area would improve current resilience and ensure the timeliness of post mortems is maintained, when it is known that nationally there is shortage. Timeliness of post mortems has a significant impact on the whole bereavement journey for families, and affects performance of the local registration service, who endeavour to conduct the registration within 7 days of the date of death, where a post mortem has been conducted.

The new service will also explore the possibility of a Digital Autopsy provision from all its providers, to carry out non-invasive post mortems where possible, to seek greater reduction in costs of post mortems. This approach is increasing nationally within coroner services, responding to customer requests for choice and providing longer term mitigation to the risk of fewer pathologists available to conduct regular evasive post mortems. Coronial pathology is a reducing profession, and digitisation of post mortems is proving to provide an efficient alternative.

How will the relevant local authority administer the new coroner area?

How will administrative governance be achieved between the relevant local authority and other funding local authorities?

It is proposed that Lincolnshire County Council will be the Lead Authority for the new Greater Lincolnshire Area. It is preferred that the merger incorporates a TUPE transfer of staff to Lincolnshire County Council from NE Lincolnshire, to create a newly formed Greater Lincolnshire Team to deliver the service and realise the financial and efficiency benefits of a single team. It is envisaged however that staff will remain in situ within NE Lincolnshire and continue to provide a local service to N/NE Lincolnshire residents. The new area will be governed in the form of an agreed Service Level Agreement across the three constituent authorities. The service level agreement is being developed to ensure no financial disadvantage to any party and will therefore take a phased approach to how costs are shared.

It will be essential for the new combined service to use the same IT systems so that there are shared processes and procedures across the new service. It is proposed to extend the licence for WPC, currently used by Lincolnshire to cover the North and North East Area and thus bring a transformation to existing outdated systems and processes.

The new system provides staff and coroners the flexibility to work remotely, at home and at any location with a Wi-Fi connection. Coroners officers work to a workflow system to receive referrals digitally from other parties (including the direct transfer into the system through a referral portal, and coroners authorise post mortems, sign authorities digitally and can view case files digitally in court or provide paper bundles.

Improved Performance

A merger to one area, harmonising processes and making better use of a digital workflow system will bring the following benefits;

- An improvement in the quality and consistency of the referral – all referrals now received in writing. Information is received in a logical order using a template to receive the information. We also will work closer with local GMC and MEs and therefore anticipate a reduction in the number of referrals.
- The data received is safe and secure, and each referral will pre populate and create a case within the system to prevent re-keying of information by staff. Reducing error rates and supporting our duty under GDPR.
- The system introduces a paperless service, saving on accommodation and storage facilities; the reliance on paper files is being reduced. The need for paper record retention and management is drastically reduced and therefore overtime, costs reduced on physical archiving.
- System available remotely for out of hours cover.

2. IMPACT OF MERGER ON THOSE WORKING IN / WITH THE SERVICE

What will be the impact of the merger on:

Coroners

Coroners' officers

Other staff in the coroner's offices

Pathologists

Coroners – The Senior Coroner personally conducts the more complex, highly sensitive inquests, and believes it is reasonable to be able to take on the additional workload of cases within the extended area, with the support of the Area Coroner. An open competition will be managed to recruit a new Senior Coroner for the merged area.

Coroner's officers – It is proposed that staff currently within NE Lincolnshire will transfer to the employment of Lincolnshire County Council; however arrangements are made for them to remain in their current location, in order to continue to provide the service locally. Lincolnshire has an experienced Coroners Service Manager already in place, to train and support coroners officers. The Service Manager is dedicated to the Coroners service and therefore can focus on developing its officers and service development. All Coroners officers will need to work to the same processes and computer system. Staff have been kept updated as the merger business case has been developed however a formal staff consultation will be required to ensure that this transition is managed smoothly with minimal service impact.

A new Team of 11 coroner's officers will provide greater resilience for the receiving of day to day referrals and will provide opportunities for improved business continuity planning should the operation at any of the individual sites be disrupted for any reason. The new IT system will allow any member of staff to access any case referral, allowing other staff to pick up the work in the absence of others. The Covid 19 situation has also highlighted the benefits of remote working and the ability to access all systems to deliver the service at home. The larger team includes a management and senior officer post therefore allowing for career progression and therefore better staff retention and knowledge development.

The current administrative support staff structure is resourced adequately to support the new combined area.

We see improvements for pathologists with the availability of a dedicated link role via the Coroners Development Officer and Coroners Services Manager. Also the access to electronic report transfers. The development role provides a key contact for contracted parties, whilst also ensuring processes are developed in an evolutionary process.

3. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS OF MERGER

Current Total Service Budgets

The current total budgeted costs for each Coronial Area for 21/22 are shown below.

	Grimsby and North Lincolnshire	Lincolnshire
<i>Senior Coroner</i>	88,571	163,172
<i>Area Coroner</i>		128,809
<i>Assistant Coroners</i>	8,000	20,000
<i>Total</i>	96,571	311,981
<i>Service Team-Officers/Manager</i>	141,200	450,296
Total people costs	237,771	761,752
Contract Costs	317,600	1,428,670
Other Costs	15,200	81,766
Total Cost	570,571	2,272,188

The table below shows total costs per authority based on current cost splits

Authority	Percentage contribution
Lincolnshire County Council	100%
North Lincolnshire Council	52%
North East Lincolnshire Council	48%

Greater Lincolnshire Proposed Costs Split

The end approach will be to split costs based on a per capita basis, however due to the divergence of the current cost basis a phased approach will be taken to cost sharing that will therefore be able to take account of the development of efficiencies in systems and contract reviews. This approach will be managed by a MOU and Service Level Agreement between the 3 authorities.

Table 2 Population and Number of Deaths		
Population	Number	%
Lincs	761,224	69.7%
N Lincs	172,763	15.8%
NE Lincs	158,327	14.5%
Total	1,092,314	100%

Phase 1

All staffing (Coroners and officers) costs to be covered as per current split 77% Lincolnshire 23% to ensure no party pays more than currently.

Contracted services (PM, Removals, Transfers and Storage) to remain as is.

Phase 2

Move to a per capita split for all staffing costs as shown in Table 2.

Contracted services (PM, Removals, Transfers and Storage) to remain as is.

Phase 3

Per capita split for all staffing costs and contracted services. Contracted services have been fully reviewed and re tendered.

Further Expected savings

It is clear that a merger will longer term, achieve efficiency savings from a number of areas, which all local authorities will benefit. The following points are listed as potential areas to consider in more detail,

- Reduction in referrals, leading to a reduction in required staff resource; achieved by working with referring agencies such as ambulance trusts and medical examiners
- Saving on expert medical witnesses attending inquest: achieved by the adoption of technology within the court room.
- Utilise full time Senior and Area Coroner
- Review of Post Mortem contracts including exploration of public mortuary facility
- Review and re procurement of transportation of the deceased.
- Reduction in IT costs, merging to one system, savings can be made to annual maintenance and licence charges.

- The day to day management of the service will be covered by the Lincolnshire Coroner's Service Manager, supported by the development officer continual improvements and efficiencies can be identified.
- Automation of admin process: achieved through WPC capabilities adopted fully.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- **Are you aware of any legal issues that need to be resolved before a merger can go ahead (in addition to the Lord Chancellor making an order under Schedule 2 of the 2009 Act)? If so please give details.**

The TUPE transfer of staff to Lincolnshire Council will need to take place, prior to the merger going ahead.

VIEWS OF THOSE AFFECTED BY MERGER

- **Do all affected local authorities support the merger? Please provide details.**

Yes the proposal has received support from the Leaders and Chief Execs of all 3 councils. Initial discussions with Members show that they support the proposed merger in principle as this business case sets out it will lead to the provision of better services, greater resilience and realisation of savings/efficiencies, to the benefit of all stakeholders and customers, whilst retaining local service delivery. The three upper tier authorities of Greater Lincolnshire have established a joint committee to facilitate cooperation and collaboration in the development of opportunities to gain greater alignment across Greater Lincolnshire, where scale and scope are required and can enhance upper tier

- **Have the local authority councillors / cabinets approved the merger? Please provide details.**

Comments will be added when the business case has been considered by the cabinet/executive of all authorities involved in the merger.

- **What is the view of affected coroners and their staff?**

Initial discussions indicate that the coroner and their staff agree that the merger is the right thing to do to enhance the service.

Comment from Paul Smith HM Acting Senior Coroner fro Lincolnshire

"I fully support this proposed merger of the Coroner areas. As noted within the House of Commons Justice Committee Report of May 2021, for many years the consistency of Coroner services has suffered from the absence of a unified national Coroner Service. Successive Chief Coroners have encouraged the merger of Coroner areas where appropriate, with a view to there being fewer Coroner areas, each dealing with greater numbers of referrals. The quality of service currently provided nationally all too often depends upon the priorities and funding available from each Local Authority.

In Lincolnshire we have recently addressed that issue through our Coroners Transformation Project. That has provided an opportunity to review in depth the quality of the service provided to our bereaved families. It has proved very successful. We have reviewed the relationships between the Local Authority and the Coroner Service and have identified common aims. We have made a number of improvements to our systems,

including the way in which referrals are received, the manner in which our caseload is managed, and how and where inquests are heard. The development of IT has a significant role to play at all stages of our service. We are confident that the improvements made will improve the quality of the service that we provide to our bereaved families. It is crucial that their interests remain at the heart of all that we do.

I believe that the merger of the two areas will permit us to build upon the success of that project. It will enable us to deliver a more consistent, resilient, timely and efficient service across the whole area and will provide a platform for the continued development of Coroner services across the whole area."

- **How will bereaved people be affected by the merger – e.g. travelling to inquests, being able to contact coroners' offices?**

The location to which inquests are held is unchanged, and the new Greater Lincolnshire area will continue to ensure the customer remains at the focus of any developments, service changes. In addition, customers could under the new Lincolnshire area, request the inquest to be held at any one of the designated court rooms across the area, providing greater choice and flexibility.

- **Have you sought the views of other affected stakeholders - such as police authority and constabulary, hospitals, prisons, GPs, faith groups and funeral directors? Please provide details.**

Following the Joint Committee decision to progress this through to the formal decision making process, a short consultation by letter will be carried out with key stakeholders, to gather their views on the Greater Lincolnshire proposal. *Wording of letter to be agreed to ensure the matter is not construed as a predetermination of any formal decision.*

- To provide a more consist and efficient service to communities.
- A larger coronial jurisdiction would create opportunities to share and learn good practice.
- In the medium to long term, the proposal would provide options to deliver some economies of scale.

What are the views of other stakeholders?

Lincolnshire County Council, North and North East Lincolnshire council's support the merger, due to the potential benefits listed above, including potential cost savings, increased resilience a merger brings to the service, and improvements to bereaved families. However the completed business case will need to be approved by all Cabinets.

The national medical examiner service – comments to follow

- **What impact will the merger have in terms of disability, gender and racial equality?**

An Equalities Assessment is to be completed.

4. RISKS AND MITIGATING ACTIONS

- Please provide details of any risks identified and mitigating action (to be) taken.

A Risk Register will need to be created, however initial risks identified below;

Risk	Mitigation
Insufficient capacity to deliver the merged service.	An increased staff team will allow a more flexible service to be delivered and allow for coverage of staff absence. The use of the Area Coroner and experienced Assistants are already in place to support the wider area. Potential changes to the IT system and working electronically will enable coroner's office staff to meet the demands of the new area.
Failure of operations, systems or processes	Lincolnshire has recently under taken a robust transformational review of all its processes, it is expected these along with associated IT will be adopted across the whole area, supported by an SLA. There remains a risk in the short term of operating 2 IT systems and potential issues with the introduction of a single new IT system. However Lincolnshire does have recent experience of merging two areas and is aware of some of the issues that will need to be mitigated
Negative response by staff affected by the merger.	To ensure they are formally consulted and included in any proposals, and their views are taken into account.
Insufficient initial investment required to operate the merged service.	Consideration will need to be given to IT investment into courtrooms. Full cost implications will need to be considered and agreed by all local authorities.
The quality of service drops	To ensure that processes and policies are designed and implemented to ensure there is a seamless service to all customers, and impact is minimal.
Loss of staff	Potential that some staff seek alternative employment if they are not fully engaged. Important to consult at the earliest stage following approval of the merger, and ensure staff understand the benefits of the proposal.
Customers, stakeholders confused as merger takes place and processes change	To ensure there is a clear communications plan, as part of the implementation phase, with key stakeholders and information is clear to customers
The proposed area crosses two different police force areas and several health trusts	This issue will be addressed through good and continuous stakeholder engagement, led by dedicated Manager and Development Support officer.

ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S)

- Please describe other options considered, in addition to the proposed merger, and the advantages and disadvantages for each option.

Other Options have been considered and include;

OPTION 1 – Maintain the status quo,

Advantages

This would maintain the current service provision and be delivered within existing budgets.

Disadvantages

The does not deliver the Chief Coroners clear guidance and longer term aspiration to decrease the number of coronial areas, introduce standardised processes.

Potential savings are not realised maintaining unnecessary cost to the public purse.

OPTION 2 – North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area merge with another area

Advantages

The two South Humber Authorities could merge with the other Humber authorities which would provide a single coroners service that is contiguous with Humberside police area.

Disadvantages

This option would not be consistent with the newly created regional structure for Coroners, where North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire are in the Central region whilst Hull and East Riding are in the North.

Additionally this option would not be consistent with the aspirations of the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Oversight Committee.

CONTACT WITH THE CHIEF CORONER'S OFFICE / MINISTRY OF JUSTICE / CONSULTEES

- **Have you had previous discussions with the Chief Coroner on the proposed merger? (This is a requirement before MoJ can formally consult on the merger.) Please provide details of the discussion.**

No direct constructive discussions as yet pending completion of until the Business Case. However both the Chief Coroner's Office and MoJ have been regularly engaged with and kept apprised of developments. is fully completed. This approach however supports the policy of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, whereby the Chief Coroner and the MoJ are seeking fewer coroner areas with more whole time Coroners covering larger geographical areas.

- **Have you had previous contact with MoJ on the proposed merger? Please provide details.**

Early discussions have taken place and the MoJ are aware of the work needed to consider the best approach for coronial services in Northern Lincolnshire and Humberside. Further communications will be required in order to ensure that political priorities are suitably reflected within the business case.

- **Are you happy for this business case in its entirety to be sent to all consultees? If not please provide details.**
- **Please list consultees for the consultation on the proposed merger – the organisation's name and the most appropriate email address - at Annex B. MoJ will remove email addresses from Annex B before sending the business case to consultees.**
- **Further information on the merger process is available in the form of Chief Coroner guidance at: <http://www.judiciary.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/guidance-14-mergers-of-coroner-areas.pdf>.**

Resource implications of the merger

Table A: Details of current Senior Coroners and Area Coroner/s (if applicable) in each existing coroner area

Position (e.g. Senior Coroner, Area Coroner)	First name	Surname	Current salary (including National Insurance and pension contributions)	Long Inquest Payments (if applicable) or other additional payments	Proposed salary in amalgamated area (if applicable) (including National Insurance and pension contributions)
Acting Senior Coroner LCC	Paul	Smith	2021/22: £163, 282	2021/22 none	£ 130,603 (recognises increased complexity and size of Area)
				2019/20: none	
Area Coroner LCC	Vacant due to acting up		2021/22: £128,464	2020/21: none	£128, 284
			2019/20: £106,760	2019/20: none	
Acting Senior Coroner (temporary wef 01/01/19) NELC	Mark	Kendall	2021/22 88,571	2020/21	N/A
			2019/20	2019/20	

Table B: Office costs

Category	Lincolnshire Area 21/22	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area 20/21?	Total Cost 20/21	Combined Area	Saving
Fees for Assistant Coroner(s)	£443 per sitting	£250 per day		£443	
Salary costs of Coroner's officer(s) <i>(including National Insurance and pension contributions)</i>	£ 450,296	£141,200		£641,774	
Salary costs of administrative staff <i>(including National Insurance and pension contributions)</i>	£56,988 per annum	£24,871			
Staff accommodation	Registration Office, Lincoln and Endeavour Park, Boston	Cleethorpes Town Hall The Knoll Cleethorpes		All combined Costs to be quantified	
Inquest accommodation	Use of various LCC buildings plus £25,965.88 - hire of premises	Cleethorpes Town Hall Scunthorpe Civic Centre Grimsby Town Hall		All combined	
IT costs	£20,199.96 - not inclusive of general IT support.	£4,200		TBC	
Post mortem/Pathologist costs etc	£1,084,179.71 includes all costs relating to PMs, toxicology, histology and body removal	£282,600		TBC	

Category	Lincolnshire Area 21/22	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area 20/21?	Total Cost 20/21	Combine d Area	Saving
Other costs?		£82,500 Service support and Accommodati on charge		To quantify costs for postage printing telephones travel and mileage etc.	

List of consultees

[Please include:

- All effected Senior Coroners, Area Coroners and Assistant Coroners in the areas in question;
- relevant local authority contacts from all neighbouring coroner areas (MoJ can assist with this if necessary);
- all MP's with constituencies within the effected coroner areas;
- pathologist contacts;
- representatives of local funeral directors within the effected coroner areas;
- representatives from hospitals and/or prisons within the area;
- the Chief Coroner (MoJ will have the relevant contact details)
- local police contacts(MoJ can assist with this if necessary and will include a national ACPO contact as standard))

This list is still in development

Organisation	Email address (please note these will be removed when business case is sent to consultees)
Senior Coroner both areas	
, Area Coroner.	
Assistant Coroner	
Assistant Coroner,	
PCC's for Lincolnshire and Humberside	Lincolnshire - Marc Jones marc.jones@lincs.pnn.police.uk North Lincs Jonathan Evison PCC@humberside.pnn.police.uk
MP all for the whole area	Lincolnshire Victoria Atkins victoria@victoriaatkins.org.uk Gareth Davies gareth.davies.mp@parliament.uk Sir John Hayes davieshm@parliament.uk Caroline Johnson caroline.johnson.mp@parliament.uk Sir Edward Leigh edward.leigh.mp@parliament.uk Karl McCartney Karl.McCartney.mp@parliament.uk Matt Warman matt.warman.mp@parliament.uk NE Lincs

	Martin Vickers martin.vickers.mp@parliament.uk Lia Nici lia.nici.mp@parliament.uk
MP	
Police both Chief Constables	Lincolnshire – Chris Haward Haward, Chris Chris.Haward@lincs.police.uk Can only find Chris
LRF both Chairs	
Pathologist all suppliers	
Prison contact	
David Cogen Funeral Director Representative of NAFD Lincs?	
Mark Horton Funeral Director Representative of SAIF	
James Mason, Emergency Planning Officer, East Riding Council	
EMAS Yorks and Humber ambulance contacts	
Mark Kendall Assistant Coroner	Coroners@nelincs.gov.uk
Jane Eatock Assistant Coroner	
Martin Vickers MP Cleethorpes	Martin Vickers martin.vickers.mp@parliament.uk
MP Grimsby	Lia Nici lia.nici.mp@parliament.uk
MP Scunthorpe	Holly Mumby-Croft holly.mumbycroft.mp@parliament.uk
Grimsby Pathology	nlq-tr.enquiries@nhs.net General enquiries e-mail
Grimsby mortuary manager Lincs mortuary providers	
Medical Director Diana Princess of Wales Hospital	Dr Kate Wood
Medical Director Scunthorpe General Hospital	Dr Kate Wood
Medical Director St Hughes Hospital	Ashley Brown – Hospital Director
All Lincs hospitals	
Organisation	Email address <i>(please note these will be removed when business case is sent to consultees)</i>

Appendix 1 –Merged Area Map



APPENDIX 2- Structure Charts

NE Lincs & Grimsby	Lincolnshire	Proposed Greater Lincolnshire
1 x Acting Senior Coroner PT 0.5fte	1 x Senior Coroner	1 x Senior Coroner
	1 x Area Coroner	1 x Area Coroner
2 x Assistant Coroner 12 days pa (1 vacancv)	4 x Assistant Coroners (1 vacancy)	6 x Assistant Coroners
	1 x Coroners Manager	1 x Coroners Manager
		1 x Senior Coroners Officer
3.05 fte Coroners Officers	7.5 fte Coroners Officers	9.5 fte Coroners Officers
	0.8 fte Coroners Development Officer	0.8 fte Coroners Development Officer
1 Coroners Administrator	4 x Business Support	5 x Business Support

Appendix 3 – Performance Statistics

Coroner Statistics	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Num ber	%								
<u>No of Deaths reported</u> Lincolnshire Lincolnshire and Grimsby	3615 1809		3389 1759		3217 1833		3242 1741		3272 1102	
<u>No of Post Mortem investigations/per centage compared to deaths reported</u> Lincolnshire Lincolnshire and Grimsby	1329 383	37 % 21 %	1293 367	38 % 21 %	1253 404	39 % 22 %	1292 422	40 % 24 %	1279 425	39 % 39 %
<u>No. of inquests opened</u> Lincolnshire Lincolnshire and Grimsby	398 205	11 % 11 %	347 165	10 % 9 %	364 141	11 % 8 %	305 114	9 % 6 %	416 140	13 % 13 %
<u>Average time taken for inquests (weeks)</u> Lincolnshire Lincolnshire and Grimsby	37.1 22		45 31		45 38		35 41		37.5 ?	

(source MHCLG)

Registration Statistics				
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Timelessness of death registration following a post mortem (completed within 7 days of the death)				
Lincolnshire	%	%	61%	67%
NE Lincolnshire	68%	67%	50%	31%
N Lincolnshire	70%	63%	45%	31%

(source GRO)

**Business Case
for merging the
East Riding and Hull Coroner Area
and
North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Coroner Area**

Contents

- 7. Information on areas proposed to merge**
- 8. Senior Coroner Appointment**
- 9. Impact of proposed Merger on Service Delivery**
- 10. Impact of merger on those working in the Service**
- 11. Resource implications**
- 12. Risks and Mitigation**

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Map of the proposed Humberside Coroner Area**
- Appendix 2 – Performance statistics**
- Appendix 3 – Staff Structure charts (to be completed)**

ALTERATION OF CORONER AREAS UNDER SCHEDULE 2 OF THE CORONERS AND JUSTICE ACT 2009²

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE BUSINESS CASE TEMPLATE FOR MERGERS

NAMES OF CORONER AREAS THAT ARE PROPOSING TO MERGE

- East Riding and Hull Area, North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area

PROPOSED NAME OF NEW AREA

- Humberside Area

3. INFORMATION ON AREAS THAT PROPOSE TO MERGE

- Please provide key details in the table as follows:

Coroner area	East Riding and Hull	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby	Proposed: Humberside
Geographical area covered	East Riding of Yorkshire and the City of Hull	North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire	Hull East Riding North and North East Lincolnshire
Local authority/ authorities that fund(s) coroner area and %	Hull City Council 44% East Riding Council 56%	North Lincolnshire 49% North East Lincolnshire 51%	To be discussed (TBD)
Relevant authority (formerly lead authority)	Hull City Council	North East Lincolnshire Council	Hull City Council
Police Force(s)	Part of the Humberside Region	Part of the Humberside Region	The whole of the Humberside Region
Transport links	Hull Docks Northern Rail Services Hull Trains direct link to London A63 to M62	A180 Transpennine Services Grimsby Docks South Humber Bank Industries Immingham Docks Humberside Airport	All combined
Major hospitals	Hull Royal Infirmary Hull Children's Hospital Castle Hill Hospital, Cottingham Goole & District Hospital	Diana Princess of Wales, Grimsby Scunthorpe General Hospital St Hughes Hospital, Grimsby	All combined
Prisons in area	HM Hull Prison HM Wolds Prison HM Full Sutton Prison	none	All combined

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/25/schedule/2>

Coroner area	East Riding and Hull	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby	Proposed: Humberside
Other state detention facilities	none	Humberside Police Custody Suite (36 cells)	All combined
Courtrooms/ inquest venues	2 dedicated Courts at the Guildhall Hull Digital Court facility in place for remote participants.	Grimsby Town Hall Cleethorpes Town Hall North Lincolnshire Civic Centre	All combined
Office/staff accommodation – location and capacity	Structure chart (Appendix 3) Located at the Guildhall Hull Smart working introduced to allow flexibility to location/ homeworking.	Structure Chart (Appendix 3) Located at Cleethorpes Town Hall	Combined to one Humberside Area Team Structure. Location of staff to be discussed.
Employer of coroner's officers'	Hull City Council	North East Lincolnshire Council	Hull City Council
Name of senior coroner	Professor Paul Marks	Temporary part time coroner Mr Kendall	Professor Paul Marks
Number of area coroners	One	none	One
Number of assistant coroners	Eight	Two including one assistant Coroner currently acting up as Senior Coroner	Ten
Number of coroner's officers	Eleven 7 Full time 4 Part time	Four 1 Full time 3 Part time	Fifteen 8 Full time 7 Part time
Number of administrative support staff	Three Assistant Coroners Officers	none	Three
Number of deaths reported in the previous calendar year (2019)	2936	1741	Circa 4677
Inquests held in the previous calendar year (2019)	276	114	390
Post mortem rate as % of	32%	24%	TBC

Coroner area	East Riding and Hull	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby	Proposed: Humberside
reported deaths in the previous calendar year (2019)			

Please note attached map of the proposed area as Appendix 1.

4. SENIOR CORONER APPOINTMENT

- **Why are you seeking a merger now (ie which area's senior coroner is stepping down, when and why)?**

The Chief Coroners Guidance No 14 - 'Merger of Coroner Areas' makes reference to three main areas of consideration, these are;

1. Number of reported deaths and complexity of cases
2. Removal of jurisdictions with one part time Senior Coroner
3. The process to appoint a new Senior Coroner
5. Number of reported deaths –

The guidance states that the number of Coroner areas should be reduced in order to create sensibly sized Coroner areas, taking into account the numbers of reported deaths, geographical size and types of Coroner work in the areas. In many cases 3,000 – 5,000 reported deaths would be an appropriate number.

In the previous calendar year of 2019, 2936 deaths were reported to the Hull and East Riding District, and 1741 to NE Lincolnshire and N Lincolnshire combined. A proposed new coronial area of the Humber would therefore report approximately 4,732 simply adding the two reported figures together. Appendix 2 provides coroner area statistics for the period 2015 to 2109. The report shows that they are fairly static, and therefore a combined area together being closer to that deemed appropriate by the Chief Coroner.

6. Removal of part time Senior Coroners –

Guidance No 14 states 'there should be a move away from jurisdictions in which one Senior Coroner operates on a part time basis. It also states that the relevant authority should consider the needs of the newly merged area, the public interest and that terms can be agreed with the Coroner.

The Senior Coroner for NE Lincolnshire left the service in December 2018. There is currently a part time Acting Senior Coroner who was an Assistant Deputy for NE Lincolnshire in post for a temporary period. This resignation therefore allows a scope to review the coronial arrangements of the Humberside Area to determine the potential efficiencies to neighbouring local authorities and benefits to Humberside residents. The merger will also enable cost effective development of the service and a resilient coroner service delivery model to replace the current situation in which the area employs one part time coroner.

7. Process to appoint a Senior Coroner

The Chief Coroner guidance states that the appointment of a Senior Coroner for a new area can be done in one of two ways;

'Option 1 – The Relevant Authority may appoint one of the Senior Coroners from the old areas.

Option 2 – The Relevant Authority can appoint a Senior Coroner following an open competition..... Relevant authorities are advised that Option 1 should usually be the preferred option'

The current Senior Coroner, Professor Paul Marks for Hull and the East Riding is very experienced Senior Coroner. Professor Marks managed two coronial areas in 2013. Whilst being the Senior Coroner for Hull and the East Riding he also managed the Bradford Area under a temporary agreement until a suitable replacement was found.

Paul Marks is an Honorary Consultant Neurosurgeon, a one of few Senior Coroners with a professional medical background. This has served the Hull and East Riding Area by efficiency savings in the need for expert medical witnesses to attend inquests, and a reduction in the number of post mortems required. This also has significant benefits in support for Assistant Coroners and coroners officers with mentoring and training in relation to medical knowledge.

As there is no other Senior Coroners employed in the proposed new area, it is proposed that option 1 is therefore adopted in this case and Professor Marks is appointed as the new Senior Coroner for the new Humberside area.

8. IMPACT OF PROPOSED MERGER ON SERVICE DELIVERY

• What will be the impact of the proposed merger on service delivery?

The current service delivery model in terms of how N and NE Lincolnshire residents access the coroners service, need not change, it is anticipated that current arrangements will be maintained to ensure there is no impact on service access, and that it continues to be delivered within the local community. However the recent installation of live video conferencing facilities to the Court room in Hull will add further benefits and choice to residents on the south bank of the Humber, regarding the location of the inquests.

However the creation of a larger team, and potential harmonisation of processes and better use of technology can only deliver efficiencies and improved performance for N and NE Lincolnshire residents. The proposed merger will also give the current N Lincolnshire and Grimsby coronial area better resilience to deliver the service, being such a small team, and additional resources to deal with fluctuations in service demand. It will also enable improved business continuity planning for the service as a whole.

Information of the deceased show that 113 deaths reported to the East Riding and Hull Coroner in 2018, resided at an address in N/NE Lincolnshire. In practical terms this means that a merger of the north and south bank of the Humber creates more choice for families to decide where best the inquest is held, or local face to face contact with a coroner's officer.

It is clear that the recent pandemic situation has tested contingency plans and resilience of the continuation of critical services. The Humber Local Resilience Forum has experienced the four local authorities within the Humber region come together very effectively to agree an excess death plan and contingencies to maintain critical services, including the coroner's service. Professor Marks has been at the heart of the discussions and decisions regarding temporary mortuary facilities etc, with lead officers from our authorities and emergency services. The relationship with key stakeholders has been crucial and particularly beneficial that Humberside police and Humberside fire services align to the Humber region. Having to communicate to two different regions at a time of an emergency would have been problematic.

Will additional coronial or administrative support be provided in the new area? (eg. will additional coroners need to be recruited or will workloads be increased/redistributed etc? How will additional caseloads be managed?)

Coronial Support - In terms of coronial support the merger benefits the North Lincolnshire and Grimsby area, having access to a full time Senior Coroner, full time Area Coroner and a larger pool of assistants, to manage the workload, respond to fluctuations in demand, and improve the timelessness of inquests held. The full time fixed cost of a senior coroner and an area coroner removes the unforeseen impact on budgets in the event of additional day rate inquests costs, which local authorities with part time coroner's experience.

There is no dedicated administrative support within the current staff structure of the N Lincolnshire and NE Lincolnshire area. The East Riding and Hull Area have 3 administrative staff that are vital in the delivery of an efficient coroner's office.

The Chief Coroners Guidance 'A Model Coroner Area' suggests that coroners and coroners officers should be supported by administrative support staff at a ratio of 3:1. The administrative staff should not usually be carrying out the work of coroners officers, purely administrative support for coroners and coroners officers. Therefore the current administrative resource within the East Riding and Hull Area can provide adequate support for the proposed new Humberside area.

What will be the impact of the merger on associated services – such as post-mortem examinations, and mortuary provision?

The merger to one coronial area would have a positive impact on all four local authorities in terms of resilience of service and longer term cost reduction in post mortem fees, as well as improved performance for families.

Hull City Mortuary is owned by Hull City Council and the Hull Teaching Hospital Trust are commissioned to provide a post mortem service for the East Riding and Hull Area. The hospital Trust provides an excellent post mortem service with a turnaround for delivering a coronial post mortem between 3 and 5 days of the request made by the coroner's office. The North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area has recently approached the Hull Mortuary with a request to make greater use of their post mortem services on a regular basis, and already use the service for complex post mortem cases.

East Riding and Hull coroner area would benefit from the use of another hospital such as the Diana Princess of Wales to conduct independent post mortems and vice versa, reducing the cost of independent post mortem fees for both areas.

The larger pool of pathologists in the new area would also improve current resilience and ensure the timeliness of post mortems is maintained, when it is known that nationally there is shortage.

Timeliness of post mortems has a significant impact on the whole bereavement journey for families, and affects performance of the local registration service, who endeavour to conduct the registration within 7 days of the date of death, where a post mortem has been conducted. Appendix 2 shows the performance of death registrations following a post mortem. It is suggested that greater use of the Hull Mortuary by NE Lincolnshire and N Lincolnshire would improve the death registration process for their local registration services, as well as their current post mortem/body storage costs, transporting the deceased out of the area.

Hull Mortuary is also considering a Digital Autopsy facility on site, to carry out none evasive post mortems where possible, to seek greater reduction in costs of post mortems. This approach is increasing nationally within coroner services, responding to customer requests for choice and providing longer term mitigation to the risk of fewer pathologists available to

conduct regular evasive post mortems. Coronial pathology is a reducing profession, and digitisation of post mortems is proving to provide an efficient alternative.

In order to produce a credible 'spend to save' business case using prudential borrowing of capital, this would require neighbouring authorities to collaborate, sharing efficiencies and bringing those benefits also to north and south bank of the Humber.

How will the relevant local authority administer the new coroner area?

How will administrative governance be achieved between the relevant local authority and other funding local authorities?

It is proposed that Hull City Council will continue to be the Lead Authority for the new Humberside Area. It is preferred that the merger incorporates a TUPE transfer of staff to Hull City Council from NE Lincolnshire, to create a newly formed Humberside Team to deliver the service, and realise the financial and efficiency benefits of a single team. It is envisaged however that staff will remain in situ within NE Lincolnshire initially and continue to provide a local service to N/NE Lincolnshire residents. The new area will be governed in the form of an agreed Service Level Agreement.

East Riding and Hull Coroner Service use the Civica Coroners computer system. Since transferring from the IRIS system there has been a fundamental difference in the way the service is delivered, making better use of digital services, paperless processes and an online portal for key stakeholders to securely communicate with the service, is to be live shortly.

The new web based system provides staff and coroners the flexibility to work remotely, at home and at any location with a Wi-Fi connection. Coroners officers work to a workflow system to receive referrals digitally from other parties, and coroners authorise post mortems, sign authorities digitally and view case files digitally in court.

The merger will create an opportunity for North Lincolnshire and Grimsby to transfer to the Civica system, creating more flexibility for the staff, greater resilience for the whole Humber area as staff can work to any case at any location. Civica have confirmed that a transfer to the system under a merger, compared to a separate procurement of the system will save a fifth of the purchase cost to NE Lincolnshire and N Lincolnshire authorities. This transfer will also ensure consistency of practice resulting in improved performance across the Humberside area. Annual maintenance of the system would remain the same as in effect the new area will maintain one system.

It is understood that North Lincolnshire and Grimsby are currently using IRIS to deliver the coroner service. There will be the need at some point to move to a system that can work with digital applications and workflow, particularly as central government drive the digital agenda of the medical examiner and death registration process. It is also understood that the IRIS system have no plans to carry out this development of their system.

Improved Performance

A merger to one area, harmonising processes and making better use of a digital workflow system will bring the following to N Lincolnshire and NE Lincolnshire;

- An improvement in the quality and consistency of the referral – all referrals now received in writing. Information is received in a logical order using a template to receive the information. Hull has experienced a reduction in the number of referrals since digital referrals was introduced, and no longer accept referrals over the telephone, which may have been cases recorded unnecessarily.
- The data received is safe and secure, and soon each referral will pre populate and create a case within the system to prevent re keying of information by staff. Reducing error rates and supporting our duty under GDPR.

- The system introduces a paperless service, saving on accommodation and storage facilities, there are no paper files.
- Hull reducing the team by 1FTE (saving of £22,000) following benefits realised by the introduction of the new coroners computer system.
- System available remotely for out of hours cover.
- Progression of agreed processes for the Medical Examiner Service, as regionally the service also aligns to the Humberside geographical area.

9. IMPACT OF MERGER ON THOSE WORKING IN / WITH THE SERVICE

What will be the impact of the merger on:

Coroners

Coroners' officers

Other staff in the coroner's offices

Pathologists

Coroners – The Senior Coroner will continue to personally conduct the more complex, highly sensitive inquests, and believes it is reasonable to be able to take on the additional workload of cases within the extended area of N/NE Lincolnshire. In recent years Professor Marks very efficiently managed the East Riding and Hull Area, and also the Bradford Coroner Area. The Area Coroner will also play a part in this role. It is envisaged that all Assistant Coroners will transfer to the new Humberside Area. Professor Marks utilises the assistant coroner resource making best use of their background and experience in their other or previous profession, mindful of the Chief Coroners commitment to ensure the service nationally has adequate succession planning in place for Senior Coroners.

Coroner's officers – It is proposed that staff currently within NE Lincolnshire will transfer to the employment of Hull City Council, however arrangements are made for them to remain in their current location, in order to continue to provide the service locally. Hull has a Coroners Service Manager already in place, to train and support coroners officers. The Service Manager currently manages Coroners and Registration Services for Hull, and is also a qualified trainer which provides additional benefits to staff. All Coroners officers will need to work to the same processes and computer system, which provides many benefits to our Humberside emergency services.

A new Humberside Team of 15 coroner's officers will provide greater resilience for the receiving of day to day referrals and will provide opportunities for improved business continuity planning should the operation at any of the individual sites be disrupted for any reason. It will reduce the risk for the NE/N Lincolnshire team currently of 2.5 FTE to meet a fluctuation of demand. The scenario of a member of staff on leave and then a further member of staff absent due to sickness reduces the team currently to 50% capacity. The Civica system will allow any member of staff to access any case referral, allowing other staff to pick up the work in the absence of others. The Covid 19 situation has also realised the benefits of remote working and the ability to access all systems to deliver the service at home.

The current administrative support within the East Riding and Hull staff structure is resourced adequately to support the new Humberside area.

Pathologist resource will be maintained at the Hull City Mortuary and Princess Diana hospital, and continue to provide post mortem examinations at their current locations, and providing a wider more flexible resource for the area. There is an opportunity to provide independent post mortem support for each other.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS OF MERGER

Service Budgets

The total annual cost of the East Riding and Hull Coroner Service is £975,000 per annum. The total cost of NE and N Lincolnshire Coroner Service is £540,000. The breakdown of costs listed below shows the current costs and percentage splits for each area;

East Riding and Hull Coroner Area	Cost £ 000	Percentage contribution
Hull	420	43%
East Riding	555	57%
Total	975	100%
NE Lincolnshire and N Lincolnshire Coroner Area	Cost £000	Percentage contribution
N Lincolnshire	268	49%
NE Lincolnshire	272	51%
Total	540	100%

The percentage contributions above are agreed on the basis of the population split of each local authority. The merger would need to consider the current costs above totalling £1,515k and the savings of £67k per annum incurred, due to a reduction of a part time coroner within the new Humberside area. The table below therefore shows the proposed costs for the new area, taking into account the reduction in coroner fees, and population split;

	Costs £000	Percentage contribution	Reduction in costs, part time coroner (£67k)	Cost reduction £000	Population	% split in population
East Riding and Hull area	975	64%	927	-48	599,000	64%
N/NE Lincolnshire	540	36%	521	-19	331,000	36%
Total	1515	100%	1448	-67	930,000	

The table above demonstrates that the percentage of population split equates to the percentage contribution, and the savings incurred for each area following the reduction of a part time coroner. There are also a number of other efficiency savings to be achieved from this merger, which is listed in the following section below.

Further Expected savings

It is clear that a merger will longer term, achieve efficiency savings from a number of areas, which all four local authorities will benefit. The following points are listed as potential areas to consider in more detail,

- Reduction in referrals, leading to a reduction in required staff resource. East Riding and Hull area made a saving of £22,000 following the reduction of 1 FTE Coroners Officer.
- Saving on expert medical witnesses attending inquest.
- Removal of the coroner day rate for N Lincolnshire and NE Lincolnshire
- Sharing of post mortem facilities, N Lincolnshire and NE Lincolnshire cost per post mortem is excessive compared to East Riding and Hull area
- Body storage costs, as post mortems will remain within the Humberside area.
- Procurement of transportation of the deceased.

- Reduction in IT costs for N Lincolnshire and NE Lincolnshire, merging to one system, savings can be made to annual maintenance charges.
- Reduction in management resource for N/NE Lincolnshire. The day to day management of the service will be covered by the Hull Coroner's Office Manager/ Coroner's Office Team Leader.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- **Are you aware of any legal issues that need to be resolved before a merger can go ahead (in addition to the Lord Chancellor making an order under Schedule 2 of the 2009 Act)? If so please give details.**

The TUPE transfer of staff to Hull City Council will need to take place, prior to the merger going ahead.

VIEWS OF THOSE AFFECTED BY MERGER

- **Do all affected local authorities support the merger? Please provide details.**

East Riding fully support the proposed merger as this business case sets out it will lead to the provision of better services, greater resilience and realisation of savings/efficiencies, to the benefit of all stakeholders and customers.

Comments needed here from N/NE Lincolnshire:

- **Have the local authority councillors / cabinets approved the merger? Please provide details.**

Comments needed here from Cabinet meetings when presented.

- **What is the view of affected coroners and their staff?**

To be confirmed

- **How will bereaved people be affected by the merger – eg travelling to inquests, being able to contact coroners' offices?**

The location to which inquests are held is unchanged, and the new Humberside area will continue to ensure the customer remains at the focus of any developments, service changes. In addition, customers could under the new Humberside area, request the inquest to be held at any one of the offices across the area, providing greater choice and flexibility.

- **Have you sought the views of other affected stakeholders - such as police authority and constabulary, hospitals, prisons, GPs, faith groups and funeral directors? Please provide details.**

Professor Marks, Senior Coroner for Hull and East Riding has spoken to the Chief Constable Lee Freeman of Humberside Police who has confirmed in writing that he is believes the proposed merger would be a positive step to continue to provide a consistent service to bereaved families in the area. The Chief Constable has highlighted the following points in support of the proposal;

- To provide a more consist and efficient service to the communities of Humberside.

- The proposed coronial jurisdiction would directly align with Humberside Policing area, providing opportunities to enhance working practices and relationships between the coroner's service and the police.
- A larger coronial jurisdiction would create opportunities to share and learn good practice.
- In the medium to long term, the proposal would provide options to deliver some economies of scale.

What are the views of other stakeholders?

Hull City Council and the East Riding of Yorkshire Council support the merger, due to the realised benefits listed above, including potential cost savings, increased resilience a merger brings to the service, and improvements to bereaved families. However the completed business case will need to be approved by Hull City Council Cabinet, as the lead authority.

The HUTH Trust who deliver the Hull Mortuary Service are supportive of the merger, as it adds further resilience to the pathology resource for PMs. The Hull mortuary has the capacity and resource to undertake post mortems for N Lincolnshire and NE Lincolnshire.

The national medical examiner service – comments to follow

- **What impact will the merger have in terms of disability, gender and racial equality?**

An Equalities Assessment is to be completed.

11. RISKS AND MITIGATING ACTIONS

- Please provide details of any risks identified and mitigating action (to be) taken.

A Risk Register will need to be created, however initial risks identified below;

Risk	Mitigation
Insufficient capacity to deliver the merged service.	Senior Coroner for Hull and East Riding, has in previous years managed the role over a greater area. Professor Marks managed the area of Bradford in addition to Hull and East Riding in 2013 for 18 months. The use of the Area Coroner and experienced Assistants are already in place to support the wider area. Potential changes to the IT system and working electronically will enable coroner's office staff to meet the demands of the new area.
Failure of operations, systems or processes	New robust practices and processes, and how the new service will be managed, will be agreed as part of an SLA.
Negative response by staff affected by the merger.	To ensure they are formally consulted and included in any proposals, and their views are taken into account.
Insufficient initial investment required to operate the merged service.	The only investment will be in the IT system. An initial quote has been sought as £8000 to transfer N/NE Lincolnshire's data to a new system, which includes staff training etc. Full cost implications will need to be considered and agreed by all 4 local authorities.

The quality of service drops	To ensure that processes and policies are designed and implemented to ensure there is a seamless service to all customers, and impact is minimal.
Loss of staff	Potential that some staff seek alternative employment if they are not fully engaged. Important to consult at the earliest stage following approval of the merger, and ensure staff understand the benefits of the proposal.
Customers, stakeholders confused as merger takes place and processes change	To ensure there is a clear communications plan, as part of the implementation phase, with key stakeholders and information is clear to customers
The merger decision is influenced by wider local political decisions, rather than the best interests of bereaved families and the importance of effective partnership working between the LAs and emergency services.	To ensure all Members are informed of the benefits realised of one coronial area around the Humber estuary, and business case details in support of the merger.

ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S)

- Please describe other options considered, in addition to the proposed merger, and the advantages and disadvantages for each option.

Other Options have been considered and include;

OPTION 1 – Maintain the status quo,

Advantages

This would maintain the current service provision and be delivered within existing budgets.

Disadvantages

The does not deliver the Chief Coroners clear guidance and longer term aspiration to decrease the number of coronial areas, introduce standardised processes.

This option continues to cause the police operational difficulties, dealing with two coronial areas that have different processes.

This continues to remove the flexibility for families within the Humber region.

The resilience of a small resource in the south bank continues to be a risk to the service delivery.

Potential savings are not realised maintaining unnecessary cost to the public purse.

OPTION 2 – N Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area merge with another area

Advantages

To be confirmed?

Disadvantages

This area does not align to the operational areas of the Police, and other emergency services, who are a fundamental stakeholders to the delivery of a robust coroner's service. This option will continue to cause local police forces operational difficulties, dealing with two coronial areas, who use different systems and processes.

The delivery of a mass fatality, excess death situation or any death situation within the Humber Estuary will be inconsistent, and no clear defined process to determine which coronial area takes the case.

This will continue to remove the flexibility for families within the Humber region

CONTACT WITH THE CHIEF CORONER'S OFFICE / MINISTRY OF JUSTICE / CONSULTEES

- **Have you had previous discussions with the Chief Coroner on the proposed merger? (This is a requirement before MoJ can formally consult on the merger.) Please provide details of the discussion.**

No direct discussions yet until the Business Case is fully completed. This approach however supports the policy of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, whereby the Chief Coroner and the MoJ are seeking fewer coroner areas with more whole time Coroners covering larger geographical areas.

- **Have you had previous contact with MoJ on the proposed merger? Please provide details.**

An email discussion has taken place with David Giles Policy Manager at the MoJ. (3rd September 2018) Davids view is that N/NE Lincolnshire Councils should consider the potential benefits of a merger with the Hull and East Riding area

A further communications from Mr Giles (1st October 2020) requesting the submission of this business case alongside other potential options for the North Lincolnshire and Grimsby region, to the Lord Chancellor.

- **Are you happy for this business case in its entirety to be sent to all consultees? If not please provide details.**
- **Please list consultees for the consultation on the proposed merger – the organisation's name and the most appropriate email address - at Annex B. MoJ will remove email addresses from Annex B before sending the business case to consultees.**
- **Further information on the merger process is available in the form of Chief Coroner guidance at: <http://www.judiciary.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/guidance-14-mergers-of-coroner-areas.pdf>.**

Resource implications of the merger

Table A: Details of current Senior Coroners and Area Coroner/s (if applicable) in each existing coroner area

Position (eg Senior Coroner, Area Coroner)	First name	Surname	Current salary (including National Insurance and pension contributions)	Long Inquest Payments (if applicable) or other additional payments	Proposed salary in amalgamated area (if applicable) (including National Insurance and pension contributions)
Senior Coroner	Professor Paul	Marks	2020/21: £152,704	2020/21 none	2% per NJC negotiations adopted
			2019/20: £149,708	2019/20: none	
Area Coroner	Rosemary	Baxter	2020/21: £109,430	2020/21: none	2% per NJC negotiations adopted
			2019/20: £106,760	2019/20: none	
Acting Senior Coroner (temporary wef 01/01/19)	Mark	Kendall	2018/19 £79,071	2018/19 none	2% per NJC negotiations adopted
			2017/18 £77,236	2017/18 none	

Table B: Office costs

Category	Hull and East Riding Area	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area	Humberside Area
Fees for Assistant Coroner(s)	£375 per day	£250 per day	TBC
Salary costs of Coroner's officer(s) <i>(including National Insurance and pension contributions)</i>	£291,262 per annum	£90,230	TBC
Salary costs of administrative staff <i>(including National Insurance and pension contributions)</i>	£72,864 per annum	£24,871	TBC
Staff accommodation	Coroner's Office The Guildhall Hull	Cleethorpes Town Hall The Knoll Cleethorpes	All combined Costs to be quantified
Inquest accommodation	2 dedicated courts in the Guildhall Hull	Cleethorpes Town Hall Scunthorpe Civic Centre Grimsby Town Hall	All combined
IT costs	£16,574 per annum	£4,200	TBC
Post mortem/Pathologist costs etc	£360,000 p.a. Includes all costs relating to PM,s, toxicology, histology, body removals/storage. All costs relating to inquests, jury, expert witnesses, etc.	£282,600	TBC

Category	Hull and East Riding Area	North Lincolnshire and Grimsby Area	Humberside Area
Other costs?		£82,500 Service support and Accommodati on charge	To quantify costs for postage printing telephones travel and mileage etc.

List of consultees*[Please include:*

- *All effected Senior Coroners, Area Coroners and Assistant Coroners in the areas in question;*
- *relevant local authority contacts from all neighbouring coroner areas (MoJ can assist with this if necessary);*
- *all MP's with constituencies within the effected coroner areas;*
- *pathologist contacts;*
- *representatives of local funeral directors within the effected coroner areas;*
- *representatives from hospitals and/or prisons within the area;*
- *the Chief Coroner (MoJ will have the relevant contact details)*
- *local police contacts(MoJ can assist with this if necessary and will include a national ACPO contact as standard))*

Organisation	Email address <i>(please note these will be removed when business case is sent to consultees)</i>
Professor Paul Marks Senior Coroner Hull and East Riding Area.	
Rosemary Baxter, Area Coroner Hull and East Riding Area.	
Sally Ann Robinson Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
James Hargan Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
Ian Sprakes Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
Lorraine Harris Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
Michael Mellun Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
Oliver Longstaff Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
Alexander Forrest Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
David Rosenburg Assistant Coroner, Hull and East Riding Area	
Andy Brown, Hull City Council	
Gillian Barley East Riding of Yorkshire Council Diana Johnson Hull MP	
Emma Hardy Hull MP	

Carl Turner Hull MP	
Graham Stewart ERY MP	
Dr I. Richmond Pathologist Hull Mortuary	
Hull Prison contact	
Andrea Kaye Hull Mortuary Manager HEY Trust	
David Cogen Funeral Director Representative of NAFD	
Mark Horton Funeral Director Representative of SAIF	
Humberside Police contact	
James Mason, Emergency Planning Officer, East Riding Council	
Mark Kendall Assistant Coroner	
Jane Eatock Assistant Coroner	
Martin Vickers MP Cleethorpes	
Melanie Onn MP Grimsby	
Nicholas Dakin MP Scunthorpe	
Grimsby Pathology	
Grimsby mortuary manager	
Medical Director Diana Princess of Wales Hospital	
Medical Director Scunthorpe General Hospital	
Medical Director St Hughes Hospital	
South Bank Humberside Police	

Appendix 3 – Performance Statistics

Coroner Statistics	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Num ber	%	Num ber	%	Num ber	%	Num ber	%	Num ber	%
<u>No of Deaths reported</u> East Riding and Hull Lincolnshire and Grimsby	3278 1672		3127 1809		3012 1759		2886 1833		2932 1741	
<u>No of Post Mortem investigations/per centage compared to deaths reported</u> East Riding and Hull Lincolnshire and Grimsby	10 27 389	31 % 23 %	946 383	30 % 21 %	933 367	31 % 21 %	910 404	32 % 22 %	933 422	32 % 24 %
<u>No. of inquests opened</u>	345 200	11 %	376 205	12 %	262 165	9 %	266 141	9 %	276 114	9 %

East Riding and Hull		12 %		11 %		9 %		8 %		6 %
Lincolnshire and Grimsby										
Average time taken for inquests (weeks)	19 23		20 22		28 31		36 38		44 41	
East Riding and Hull										
Lincolnshire and Grimsby										

(source MHCLG)

Registration Statistics				
Timelessness of death registration following a post mortem (completed within 7 days of the death)	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Hull	78%	71%	64%	57%
East Riding	77%	77%	65%	60%
NE Lincolnshire	68%	67%	50%	31%
N Lincolnshire	70%	63%	45%	31%

(source GRO)

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

Financial Position 2020/21

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1. To inform Cabinet of the Council's financial performance in 2020/21:
 - 1.1.1. Revenue investment plan of £152.0m, 5% spend below budget.
 - 1.1.2. Capital investment of £28.1m, 64% delivery against plan.
 - 1.1.3. Enhanced financial resilience through £25.4m contribution to reserves.
- 1.2. To update Cabinet on the impact of the outturn on future financial years.
- 1.3. To update Cabinet on the changes to the annual Accounts timetable.
- 1.4. To seek approval for allocation of capital investment previously approved to support the Future High Street Fund match requirement.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council set a revenue and capital budget for 2020/21 in February 2020. The total revenue investment for delivery of its functions and strategic priorities was set at £152.0m and the capital investment limit for 2020/21 at £47.3m although the net effect of additional investment and rephasing reduced this to £43.9m as reported to full council in February 2021.
- 2.2 The table in Appendix 1 provides a summary of the actual use of revenue and capital funding against the planned use in 2020/21.
- 2.3 The council has been able to strengthen its financial resilience and contributed £25.4m to reserves in 2020/21. Appendix 2 provides the reserves account in detail.
- 2.4 The Medium-Term Financial plan approved in February 2021 included the capital programme 2020/24 totalling £127.2m, this is updated to reflect actual investment in 2020/21 as set out at Appendix 3.
- 2.5 By law, the annual accounts must be published in draft by the end of May each year and a final audited version published by the end of July. The Government have recognised the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID 19 pandemic and has again amended this timetable to end of July 2021 for draft accounts and end of September 2021 for publication of the final audited accounts.

3. OUTTURN OVERVIEW 2020/21 Page 71

- 3.1 This section provides an overview of the council's financial position for 2020/21. Individual service area financial performance is subject to separate reporting; highlighted here are council-wide themes and Cabinet is asked to note the following information:
- 3.1.1 The council set a revenue investment budget of £152.0m against which there has been a total spend of £143.4m or 5% spend below budget. This been achieved despite difficult and unprecedented circumstances and has been contributed to by all areas of the Council through a mixture of pro-active cost management initiatives, appropriate use of specific and non-specific government grants and a managed general slow-down in 'normal' core spending while focus has been turned to the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - 3.1.2 The overall revenue underspend has been supported by our relatively high level of in-house service delivery in areas such as leisure services. In line with national COVID-19 restrictions regulations these venues were unable to open at certain periods throughout the year. This provided the opportunity and flexibility for facilities and staff to be deployed to support our SHIELD programme to make best use of our resources.
 - 3.1.3 The capital programme delivery has been subject to some project delays due to the pandemic with the spend in-year of £28.1m being 64% of the Capital Investment planned budget. A further £16m Investment was rephased to 2021/22 at the year-end for ongoing schemes.
 - 3.1.4 Where capital investment has been delayed, the budget has been rephased to 2021/22 and whilst there is no reduction in the overall programme, the change of phasing of the programme has meant a reduction in both interest costs and funding costs totalling £1.6m of revenue saving in-year. See Appendix 3 for more details.
 - 3.1.5 Covid-19 related grants totalling £33.7m for the 2020/21 financial year were received by the Council, some intended to fund the Councils additional costs in response to the pandemic as well as income losses suffered through reduced sales, fees & charges. See Appendix 4 for more details.
 - 3.1.6 The council also received £61.0m of grants to support Businesses. It had paid out £54.4m of this by the end of 2020/21 with £6.6m carried forward for use in 2021/22. See Appendix 4 for more details.
 - 3.1.7 The council set aside £25.4m of reserves in 2020/21, most of this increase was due to grants relating to Covid costs or lost income being provided in advance. In addition, there has been an increase in schools reserves of £4.8m. See Appendix 2 for more detail on council reserves.

4. OUTTURN IMPACT ON FUTURE FINANCIAL YEARS

4.1 The main implications for revenue budgets are the following:

4.1.1 The Council lost around 13% of its budgeted sales, fees & charges and approximately 5% of the expected Council Tax and Business Rates income during the pandemic and although much of this was compensated for through grants these have not continued into 2021/22 although income levels have not fully recovered.

4.1.2 Losses on Council Tax and Business rates during 20/21 will not be recognised in the council's accounts until 21/22 and later years. Government has provided grants to offset most of the council's lost income from 20/21 but the long-term impact on the overall tax yield is not yet clear.

4.1.3 This is the second outturn report that the council has presented in the context of the unprecedented impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. The financial effect on Central Government and the council has been significant. To mitigate the effect on the council the Government had made grants totalling £33.7m available of which the council used £26.7m. This left £7.0m that was carried forward to 2021/22 to manage the future financial uncertainties and provide some financial resilience to the council. In addition to this the government has provided £9.9m to meet the costs of the provision of additional Business Rate Relief in 2020/21. This will be recognised in the council's accounts in 2021/22 and the following two financial years so has been carried forward.

4.1.4 The Government had announced a Fair Funding review and a reset to the Business Rates Retention Scheme would conclude in April 2020. These could impact significantly on the council's finances but have been delayed twice due to the Pandemic. These ongoing uncertainties in funding and demand pressures have been exacerbated by the pandemic and a robust resilience evaluation of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is being progressed to be presented for consideration by Cabinet in September 2021. Although financial resilience has been strengthened by the contribution to the risk and transformation reserve balance, the review of the MTFP will identify how this is likely to be required to smooth the transition to financial sustainability over the next few years.

4.1.5 At this stage, we do not anticipate further pandemic related support funding and so our approach to the pandemic response in mitigating against creating unsustainable legacy demand costs and effective financial management throughout 2020/21 provides the foundations for ongoing financial planning and management being prudently developed on this basis.

4.1.6 The capital programme has been restated at Appendix 3 showing the rephrasing to 2021/22 of spend planned but not achieved in 2020/21. This has been updated to include the Future High Streets Fund investment, a total of £10.7m grant funding secured by allocation of £3.3m match funding.

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

5.1 The only financial implications are those set out in this report.

5.2 The Council aims to present a draft set of accounts to the Audit Committee in July 2021, which is earlier than the revised statutory timeframe, but allows the council's Auditors commence work as soon as possible.

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

6.1 Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Not applicable.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- a. Note the final revenue investment of the council for 2020/21
- b. Note the final capital investment of the council for 2020/21
- c. Note the council's reserves position for 2020/21
- d. Note the changes to the accounts timetable for 2020/21
- e. Approve the restatement of the capital programme at Appendix 3 which includes the allocation of £3.3m from the Capital Investment Allocation as match funding to support the Future High Street Fund thereby securing £10.7m grant investment for North Lincolnshire.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Church Square House
High Street
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL

Author: Nina Torr / Mark Kitching

Date: 2nd July 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Appendix 1: Outturn

Revenue Investment

Priority	Budget £'000	Actuals £'000	Variance £'000
Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities	25,370	23,385	(1,985)
Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal	7,237	6,955	(282)
Keeping People Safe & Well	69,807	65,801	(4,006)
Running The Business Well	49,644	48,202	(1,442)
Priority Investment	152,058	144,343	(7,715)
Funding	(152,058)	(153,066)	(1,008)
Total	0	(8,723)	(8,723)

Capital Investment

Priority	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance £'000
Keeping People Safe & Well	1,323	1,320	(3)
Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities	7,415	7,417	2
Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal	14,900	14,900	0
Running the Business Well	4,504	4,504	0
Total Investment	28,142	28,141	(1)
Capital Financing			
Borrowing	9,026	8,946	(80)
Capital Receipts	286	286	0
Revenue	153	154	1
Grants & External Contributions	18,677	18,755	78
Total Financing	28,142	28,141	(1)

Appendix 2: Reserves

Reserve	Brought forward £'000	2020-21 Movement in year £'000	Carried forward £'000
General Fund Balance	7,158	0	7,158
Risk & Transformation Reserve	15,959	8,372	24,331
Grants Reserve	8,770	6,231	15,001
NNDR Smoothing Reserve	4,027	8,434	12,461
Public Health Grant	1,212	540	1,752
P.P.E. Reserve	0	697	697
Adult Social Care - Staffing	0	430	430
DSG - De-Delegated Items	286	106	392
Licensing	163	110	273
Safety Camera Partnership	255	0	255
Care Leavers Reserve	0	218	218
Scunthorpe Special Expenses	213	(6)	207
Finance Systems Implementation	0	200	200
S106 Revenue Contributions	201	(107)	94
Organisational Development	0	65	65
Cultural Offer Transformation	0	53	53
ICT SharePoint	0	50	50
Planning Improvements	59	(13)	46
Crematorium Enhancement	23	7	30
Highways-Developer Contribution	0	18	18
Council Reserves	31,168	25,405	56,573
Schools Carry Forward	3,196	3,021	6,217
Dedicated Schools Grant	2,069	1,791	3,860
Schools Reserves	5,265	4,812	10,077
All Reserves	43,591	30,217	73,808

Appendix 3: Capital Investment Plan

a) Capital investment summary agreed at full council February 2021

Table 1 – Programme Summary 2020/24

Proposed Programme	2020/21 £000's	2021/22 £000's	2022/23 £000's	2023/24 £000's	Total £000's
Investment in Priority					
Keeping People Safe and Well	3,044	2,275	156	156	5,631
Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities	5,830	7,618	2,233	2,129	17,810
Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal	26,624	29,954	8,412	6,709	71,699
Running the Business Well	8,383	9,413	2,793	2,797	23,386
Total Investment	43,881	49,260	13,594	11,791	118,526
Additional Capital Investment Allocation	0	0	2,825	5,827	8,652
Capital Investment Limit	43,881	49,260	16,419	17,618	127,178
Funding Analysis					
External & Grant Funding	25,942	24,008	9,296	8,618	67,864
Revenue Funding	171	16	0	0	187
Borrowing	16,268	14,736	7,123	9,000	47,127
Capital Receipts	1,500	10,500	0	0	12,000
Total	43,881	49,260	16,419	17,618	127,178

b) Capital investment detail, showing rephasing and additional external grant investment including utilising £3m of the Additional Capital Investment Allocation as match funding to support the Future High Street Fund investment.

	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Total £'000
Approved Investment	43,881	49,260	16,419	17,618	127,178
Additional Investment	276	6,398	6,951	3,000	16,625
Rephasing	(16,015)	16,015			0
Proposed Investment	28,142	71,673	23,370	20,618	143,803

Proposed Programme	2021/22 £000's	2022/23 £000's	2023/24 £000's	Total £000's
Investment in Priority				
Keeping People Safe and Well	5,010	166	166	5,342
Enabling Communities to Flourish	23,022	5,654	3,346	32,022
Growing the Economy	30,175	13,828	10,332	54,335
Running the Business	13,226	2,797	2,797	18,820
Total Investment	71,433	22,445	16,641	110,519
Additional Capital Investment Allocation	240	925	3,977	5,142
Capital Investment Limit	71,673	23,370	20,618	115,661
Financing Analysis				
External & Grant Financing	37,899	16,297	11,618	65,814
Revenue Financing	32	0	0	32
Borrowing	22,028	7,073	9,000	38,101
Capital Receipts	11,714	0	0	11,714
Total	71,673	23,370	20,618	115,661

Scheme	2021/22 £000's	2022/23 £000's	2023/24 £000's
Keeping People Safe & Well			
Good Health & Wellbeing:			
Defibrillators	75	0	0
Disability Accessibility Scheme	42	0	0
Our Home Project	273	0	0
Property Resilience Grants	56	0	0
Safe & Sound Grant	93	0	0
Safer Roads Fund	1,578	0	0
School Safety Zones	2	0	0
Telecare Investment	552	156	156
Investing in our Environment:			
Communities In Bloom	66	0	0
Community Energy Projects	100	0	0
Enhancing Home Composting	10	10	10
Green Homes	1,416	0	0
Greening the Queensway	10	0	0
North Lincolnshire Northern Forest	625	0	0
Waters' Edge Decarbonisation	112	0	0
Total Keeping People Safe & Well	5,010	166	166
Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities			
Clean & Green Spaces:			
Household Waste - Bins & Boxes	100	100	100
Humberhead Levels Landscape Pt	215	0	0
Litter Binrastructure	25	0	0
Public Convenience Investment	50	0	0
Skip Replacement	64	40	40
Community Fund:			
Burton Sports Centre	66	0	0
Community Capital Grants	989	0	0
Community Equipment	124	129	129
Disabled Facilities Grants	5,133	1,500	1,500
Enhanced & Prosperous Communities Fund	1,053	0	0
Home Assistance/RHHA Loan	385	100	100
Parks and Play Areas	250	0	0
War Memorials	15	0	0
Safer Communities:			
CCTV Camera Upgrades	63	0	0
Learning Disability & Tech	118	0	0
Schools Investment:			
Formula Capital Devolved To Schools	762	377	377
Mainstream Inclusion SEND	9	0	0
Schools Investment Programme	12,169	3,008	700
Thriving Communities:			
Cremator Hearth & Relining	104	0	0
Street Lighting & LED	685	300	300
Vibrant Leisure & Culture:			
Ancholme River Path / Isle Cycleways	451	0	0
Baysgarth Park Footpath	4	0	0
Healey Rd Community Play Area	7	0	0
Leisure Equipment Replacement	111	100	100
Library Self Service	70	0	0
Scunthorpe Library Hub Investment	0	0	0
Total Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities	23,022	5,654	3,346
Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal			
Developments & Regeneration:			
Future High Streets Fund	2,619	7,392	4,000
Lincolnshire Lakes Flooding Prevention	348	0	0
Market Investments	230	0	0
Normanby Enterprise Phase 7	49	0	0
Property Trading Account Developments	244	0	0
Infrastructure - better roads & rail and superfast connectivity:			
A18 Melton Ross Railway Bridge	17	0	0
Active Travel Fund	111	0	0
BDUK North Lincs Broadband	1,524	0	0
Flood and Drainage	1,458	700	700
Goxhill Flood Alleviation	676	0	0
Infrastructure Schemes	22,786	5,736	5,632
Town Centre Regeneration	13	0	0
Town Centre Regeneration - Car Parking	100	0	0
Total Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal	30,175	13,828	10,332
Running the Business Well			
Lifecycle Maintenance of Operational Assets:			
Capital Minor Works	548	500	500
Community Buildings Investment - Operational Infrastructure	2,700	0	0
Fleet Asset Management Programme	4,282	1,833	1,833
Organisational Development & Transformation:			
Capital Receipts Flexibility	794	0	0
Community Buildings Investment - Community Hubs	2,762	0	0
Digital & IT Infrastructure	854	440	440
Dragonby Energy Efficiency	111	24	24
Replacement HR/Payroll/Finance system	1,175	0	0
Total Running the Business Well	13,226	2,797	2,797
Capital Investment Allocation			
Additional Capital Investment Allocation	240	925	3,977
Capital Investment Allocation	240	925	3,977
Total Capital Programme	1,978	23,370	20,618

Appendix 4: Covid Grant Funding

Grant	Grant Receipts	Utilised in Year	Unutilised
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Business Support Grant	37,242	37,177	65
Local Restrictions Grant (Closed)	11,011	8,430	2,581
Closed Business Lockdown Pay	7,533	5,628	1,905
Additional Restrictions Support Grant	4,976	2,947	2,029
Local Restrictions Grant (Open with Restrictions)	241	241	0
Grants to Support Business	61,003	54,423	6,580
Covid 19 Emergency Grant	13,200	9,839	3,361
Infection Control Fund	4,433	4,433	0
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	4,332	2,661	1,671
Income Compensation for Sales Fees & Charges	3,480	3,480	0
Hospital Discharge Funding	1,928	1,928	0
Covid-19 Hardship Fund	1,170	957	213
LA Test & Trace Support Grant	855	203	652
ASC Rapid Testing	631	631	0
Covid Winter Grant	547	547	0
Dedicated Home to School Grant	437	384	53
Community Champions	397	164	233
Workforce Capacity Fund	380	380	0
Test & Trace Support (Standard/Discretionary)	340	231	109
Bus Services Support Grant	281	180	101
Business Grant New Burdens	247	0	247
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	202	80	122
Local Welfare Assistance Fund	197	197	0
Re-Opening High Streets Safely	153	33	120
Test & Trace Support (Admin)	113	113	0
Christmas Support Package	95	95	0
Compliance & Enforcement	88	58	30
Community Testing Programme	69	69	0
Next Steps Accommodation Grant (Short Term)	54	54	0
Emergency Active Travel (Phase 1)	33	33	0
Wellbeing for Education Return	29	0	29
Covid Catch Up - Independent Schools	13	0	13
Rough Sleeping Contingency Fund	7	7	0
Council Funding	33,711	26,757	6,954
Total grant receipts	94,714	81,180	13,534

This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCIL PLAN 2018-21 AND COVID-19: MID-TERM RECOVERY ANNUAL REVIEW

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To present a review against the Council Plan 2018-21 in the context of the COVID-19 response and mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 The operating environment during 2020-21 has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the report outlines how we have responded and adjusted our responsibilities in the implementation of government guidelines whilst continue to deliver our core business and improve outcomes for people and place.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In 2020 Cabinet approved the updated Council Plan 2018-21 which sets out the priorities for the council and its longer-term priorities to incorporate the focus required for COVID-19 recovery. This provided a framework for mitigating impact from COVID-19 across North Lincolnshire alongside continuing to deliver our core business and priorities to achieve better outcomes for people and place.
- 2.2 The council's priorities in the Council Plan 2018-21 describe the actions we will take and these were extended to incorporate our COVID-19 Mid-term recovery plan:

<p>Keeping people safe and well</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work hard to keep people safe • Lead partnership working across North Lincolnshire to promote wellbeing and improve health outcomes for everyone • Prioritise the most vulnerable • Provide cleaner and greener space for people to enjoy and use • Reduce the spread of COVID-19 • Protect the most vulnerable in our communities from the impact of COVID-19
<p>Enabling resilient and flourishing communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support people in their wellbeing through trusted sources of information, advice and guidance • Enable our residents to become more involved in community life

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in new conversations about the things that matter most to you • Work in partnership with voluntary and community groups and organisations in COVID-19 recovery • Enable communities to shape the recovery landscape
Enabling economic growth and renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market North Lincolnshire as a place to live, work, visit and invest, • Enable partnership working with businesses to attract high skilled jobs • Invest in town centres including securing external funding • Provide space for businesses and population to grow through new commercial and housing developments • Strive for higher education standards and skills • Protect the local economy through strengthened business support • Stimulate growth through capital investment and infrastructure
Well led council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the focus on workforce wellbeing • Ensure financial resilience and sustainability • Ensure effective business continuity through prioritisation of key services and functions

- 2.3 Since the March 2021 update report we have worked within the national 'COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021' continuing our approach which is rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the council plan. The council response focuses on key priorities to ensure the council remains resilient throughout the crisis and sustained through the recovery and renewal.
- 2.4 As well as responding to the implications of national restrictions, the council continued to keep services running and adapting to the changing environment, led the prevention and management of local outbreaks and worked with businesses and partners to drive economic recovery and growth and in partnership with NHS to enable the successful commencement of the vaccination programme.
- 2.5 A more detailed analysis is provided in director reports on this Cabinet agenda. Appendix 1 provides an executive summary of how we have responded and adjusted our responsibilities in the implementation of government guidelines whilst continuing to deliver our core business and improving outcomes for people and place.
- 2.6 The Council contributes at sub-regional level as part of the Humber Local Resilience Forum (LRF) where emergency response planning was required at scale across multiple agencies. The Humber LRF stepped down the emergency response arrangements in June 2021 and the recovery phase continues through the Humber Recovery Group. The emergency response arrangements will be stepped up again if required.
- 2.7 We have also worked closely with the regional health protection team, Public Health England, including the Department of Health and Social Care,

Department of Education, Ministry for Communities Housing and Local Government and Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy in respect of the local response and arrangements. Local partnership arrangements have been further strengthened working collaboratively to reduce the spread of the virus and minimize the impact to our residents. Progress on the North Lincolnshire Local Outbreak Management Plan is regularly reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board whose role was extended to be public facing outbreak oversight group.

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Cabinet is invited to note the contents of this report and support the publication of a review report highlighting the current position against the council plan and response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.2 A more detailed of the Council Plan report will be presented to Cabinet in the Autumn, when national performance data has been validated.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 A continued focus on the priorities and actions set out in the council plan and the mid-term recovery plan enable the council to deliver its priorities and provide an effective local response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.2 The Council Plan 2018-21 along with the COVID-19 response will be used to inform the strategic plans for the Council and an update will be provided at the next Cabinet meeting.

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

5.1 Finance

- 5.1.1 The Financial Position 2020/21 report on this agenda outlines that the council has delivered revenue investment of £143.4m against the budget of £152.0m which equates to 5% spend below budget. This been achieved despite difficult and unprecedented circumstances and has been contributed to by all areas of the Council through a mixture of pro-active cost management initiatives, appropriate use of specific and non-specific government grants and a managed general slow-down in 'normal' core spending while focus has been turned to the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 5.1.2 The COVID-19 related financial impact in 2020/21 amounts to £28m net expenditure above the Council's approved level of net expenditure. This has been met by government grants that have been provided for both specific additional functions and to cover general financial loss. Of this £5.5m was passported to care providers to support infection control and outbreak management arrangements and £2m to support residents and families with

financial hardship due to COVID-19. Additionally financial support to business was provided amounting to over £54m during 2020/21.

5.2 Workforce Resilience

5.2.1 At the start of the pandemic we continued to prioritise the wellbeing of our workforce and implemented measures to keep them safe and well. Policies were updated to reflect the changing situation, implementing the work from home where possible requirement, reviewing risk assessments and sourcing and supplying relevant PPE. A range of infection control measures were put in place including ensuring all of our workspaces were COVID-19 secure certified through a robust sign off process. Support was provided for staff required to Shield and additional risk assessments undertaken for those employees more vulnerable to COVID 19. Wellbeing assessments took place and were revisited throughout the period and enhanced engagement and communications put in place.

5.2.2 Overall attendance levels improved for 2020/21 compared to previous year. In respect of COVID-19 related absences an average of 0.85 days was lost due to COVID-19 infection and at its peak during the first lockdown availability of the workforce dipped to 86% as a result of a positive test, self-isolation or Shielding, rising to 92% in January when national restrictions were put in place. Workforce availability now stands at 96%.

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

6.1 A council-wide approach to assessing and monitoring the implications and risks associated with delivery of the council plan and its response to COVID-19 has been adopted with mitigations being implemented as necessary in accordance with the legislative framework.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Ongoing consultation and collaboration with a range of national, regional, place partners and other key stakeholders is integral to the delivery of the council priorities and the local response, recovery and renewal from COVID-19.

8.2 There are no conflicts of interests associated with this report.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That cabinet note the contents of the report and support the continued delivery of priority actions as reset and prepare for renewal.
- 9.2 That a more detailed review of the Council Plan will be presented to Cabinet in the Autumn, when national performance data has been validated.
- 9.3 That cabinet support the publication of a review report highlighting the achievements against the council plan and response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Church Square House SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NR
Author: Becky McIntyre
Date: 29 June 2021

Background Papers:

- Council Plan 2018-21
- North Lincolnshire COVID-19 Mid-term Recovery Plan
- Local Outbreak Management Plan and Health and Wellbeing reports

SAFE WELL PROSPEROUS CONNECTED

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2018-21 AND COVID-19 MID-TERM
RECOVERY**

REVIEW – JULY 2021

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The Council Plan 2018-21, first published in 2018 set out our ambition and priorities for North Lincolnshire and has given us a strong anchor point in guiding our response to the COVID-19 pandemic and a frame for our mid-term recovery actions.

Over the past 15 months we have worked hard, alongside our communities and partners to achieve our ambitions and continue to do all we can to realise excellent outcomes together.

The pandemic has amplified the place leadership role of the council, taking a lead in prevention and directing the outbreak response for North Lincolnshire, working closely with regional health protection teams, health and care providers and government departments. Throughout this period of unprecedented challenge to everyday life, the council has continued to promote the prosperity and wellbeing of our residents to minimise and mitigate the impact from COVID-19. We have continued to respond to the needs of individuals and diverse communities, and to help and protect children, young people, families and vulnerable adults, prioritising those most in need and prevent harm.

Despite the pace of change in managing our outbreak response, the council has continued to provide hundreds of essential local government services to residents whilst maintaining high standards. We have worked together with residents, listening to views, increasing community engagement and involvement, for example the groundswell of neighbourliness engendered through the 'Do One Thing' appeal. Where COVID-19 restrictions caused a disruption to normal service delivery we provided up to date information through our website and through newsletters and social media. By adopting an enabling approach to our COVID-19 response we were able to use our resources wisely creating opportunities for individuals to be supported by one another within their community which has created more sustainable solutions to build on.

We have been even more ambitious for the area, making significant progress on our Economic Growth Plan, attracting to over £200m in external funding to the area and through the Towns Fund Board accelerating investment in Scunthorpe. We are shaping the skills landscape through strengthened partnership arrangements with more people employed in highly skilled occupations in 2020 compared to the previous year.

We have continued to change how we do business: being more commercial and progressive we have moved forward our Digital Vision modernising systems and processes to drive up value for money. We have continued to transform the way in which residents can access the community offer with three modernised community hubs opening across the area, with further developments in process and we have facilitated the development of alternative accommodation for people living with dementia and we are enabling people with a learning disability or mental ill health to live in their own home.

This report provides a summary of how we have responded and adjusted our responsibilities to implement government guidelines whilst continuing to deliver our core business and improving outcomes for people and place. It is framed against the council's strategic priorities which were extended to incorporate the focus required for COVID-19 recovery. Annexed to the report is a timeline of key dates in the pandemic and an infographic of the council's response to date.

Priority: Keeping people safe and well

In keeping with the One Family Approach, the aim throughout the considerable disruption of the pandemic is to keep children in their families, in their schools and in their communities. This has been the foundation of our approach to business continuity, working in partnership with school leaders and as a whole council team to respond to the needs of individuals and diverse communities, and to help and protect children, young people, families and vulnerable adults. We have prioritised those most in need to ensure children and young people are safeguarded and could continue to access their learning and support networks as best as possible given the national restrictions.

We have developed closer integration with health partners, strengthened and supported the voluntary and community sector, and built on the already strong relationships with social care providers to ensure their workforce, and the people they support, remain safe and well. We remain rated by Ofsted as Outstanding for Children’s Services and ranked in the top 10 for Adult Services performance.

North Lincolnshire has experienced fewer crimes this year as well as a reduction in the number of people injured in road traffic accidents.

We continue to progress work in creating greener environments, working with volunteers and partners on environmental initiatives to improve air quality and wellbeing 25,000 new trees planted as part of the Northern Forest Project. The council has taken proportionate action through targeted enforcement and increased community engagement on voluntary litter picking activity to keep our spaces cleaner.

Taking Action - We said we will:	Overview of progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to work hard to keep people safe ▪ Lead partnership working across North Lincolnshire to promote wellbeing and improve health outcomes for everyone ▪ Prioritise the most vulnerable ▪ Provide cleaner and greener space for people to enjoy and use ▪ Reduce the spread of COVID-19 ▪ Protect the most vulnerable in our communities from the impact of COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enabled children to live safely in their own families and communities ✓ More adults in need of care and support are supported in their own homes increasing their independence into the future ✓ Worked with partners to enable vulnerable children to attend school through the pandemic ✓ Enabled residents to access the outdoors and travel to work safely by investing in cycle pathways and promoted Cycle Lincolnshire locally to improve health and well-being and reduce carbon emissions in North Lincolnshire ✓ Protected people and place of North Lincolnshire through information, advice and guidance and taking action through enforcement where individuals and businesses are not complying with regulatory requirements. ✓ Maintained and improved our open spaces and parks to support well-being of residents ✓ Promoted physical activity, culture, heritage and learning to support people to stay safe and well ✓ Worked closely with partners to enable residents in North Lincolnshire to access vaccines, mobilising covid secure vaccine centres and lateral flow test centres ✓ Distributed 670,000 items of PPE to council staff and external organisations and enabled delivery of the national PPE training to care homes and educational settings

Priority: Enabling resilient and flourishing communities

Communities have come together through the pandemic, leading to strengthened relationships within neighbourhoods and between the council, individual volunteers, and voluntary and community groups. Working together has been both highly localised and place-based, as well as formal and informal.

This has created the conditions for ensuring residents who may have become vulnerable because of the disruption to their everyday lives were enabled to stay safe, well and connected. Throughout this period we have gathered more views from residents which were used to inform service improvement and future development

Taking Action - We said we will:

Overview of progress

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support people in their wellbeing through trusted sources of information, advice and guidance ▪ Enable our residents to become involved in community life ▪ Engage in new conversations about the things that matter most to you ▪ Work in partnership with voluntary and community groups and organisations ▪ Work in partnership with voluntary and community groups and organisations ▪ Enable communities to shape the recovery landscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supported volunteers and community champions to help themselves and their communities – increasing the number of volunteers – over 450 signed up through the TeamNL Volunteer Hub and enabling existing volunteers to get involved in even more activities ✓ Created a team to enable a community first response to support the most vulnerable. This was done through brokerage and deployment of volunteers, engaging with more than 25 community groups, town and parish councils, recruiting over 300 volunteers in the first 3 weeks of the lockdown ✓ Building on above we continue to work in partnership with voluntary and community groups to embed an agile community offer and creating the Place Cube directory. ✓ Enhanced community networks around the six community hubs ✓ Provided support to help people get online and improve their digital skills ✓ Work has continued to encourage greater community ownership of the council’s assets so that these can be shaped to meet the needs and aspirations of each area. Oasis Community Learning has adopted the former Park library and is creating their own hub. Likewise, Messingham Parish Council has adopted the library site to develop the functionality for their residents. Haxey Library is moving forward towards a volunteer led model. ✓ Normanby Hall secured Arts Council funding for enhancing the visitor experience, including interactive digital displays that bring to life the international heritage of the hall |
|--|---|

Priority: Enabling resilient and flourishing communities

Throughout this period the council has worked hard to promote North Lincolnshire as a place for investment and economic growth. Despite the pandemic work has progressed, with the Towns Fund Board on the major investment projects across the area. In addition the council has been successful in attracting over £217m in external funds to support the delivery of our Economic Growth Plan.

Taking Action - We said we will:	Overview of progress
---	-----------------------------

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market North Lincolnshire as a place to live, work, visit and invest, ▪ Lead partnership working with businesses to attract high skilled jobs ▪ Invest in town centres including securing funding from government ▪ Provide space for businesses and population to grow through new commercial and housing developments ▪ Strive for higher education standards and skills ▪ Protect the economy through strengthened business support ▪ Enable jobs protection and creation ▪ Stimulate growth through capital investment and infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Successfully delivered a range of new infrastructure projects, including the northern roundabout ✓ Continued to support local businesses to thrive, diversify and grow their market share ✓ Improved the quality of the housing offer in North Lincolnshire and exceeded targets for new homes growth ✓ Enabled and supported residents to gain higher level qualifications ✓ Improved and extended gigabit cable fibre broadband provision, increasing from 2% to 12% of properties to support the competitiveness of urban and rural based businesses and as an incentive to attract new enterprises ✓ Enhanced our engagement and communications with business enabling them to continue to operate compliant to COVID-19 requirements. ✓ Co-ordinated over £5m of grant payments to support the care sector through the Covid-19 pandemic ✓ Provided financial support via approximately 14,000 business grants with a combined value of £60m and provided a further package of financial support via approximately £17m in Covid-19 related Business Rates relief ✓ Responded to government guidance to ensure faster payments to our suppliers to mitigate against business disruption |
|--|--|

Well Led Council

The council has continued to maintain services throughout the pandemic by adapting and transforming the way it operates whilst simultaneously adapting to and supporting the overall COVID-19 response.

Financial resilience remains strong as the Financial Position 2020/21 reported on this agenda outlines, we have used our budget wisely, spent within the agreed budget and most of our key performance indicators having good or improved performance.

Transformation of services, systems and process has continued throughout this period whilst maintaining its business support systems, assurance processes, IT systems availability and development. Examples of service delivery transformation include: the community hub program has continued to transform the way in which residents can access the community offer and newly designed fully integrated hubs opened in Brigg, Ashby and Crowle; across the Council and its partners, we have embraced our One Family Approach and is being used and adopted within the provision of all services and plans; alternative accommodation for people living with dementia was built and homes for people with a learning disability or mental ill health enabling them to live independently has been progressed; connectivity across North Lincolnshire is increasing through improved travel options for customers by the introduction of the new “Just Go” demand responsive transport which enables people to book via an APP and improved responsiveness for customers through a modernised customer contact for residents with new digital capabilities, self-service and call-back options.

Our Digital Vision has continued to be implemented at pace with a range of digital solutions at the heart of enabling more efficient and productive ways of working. Improvements have been made in increased access by residents and business to faster broadband.

Taking Action - We said we will:	Overview of progress
---	-----------------------------

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a focus on workforce wellbeing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Updated our HR policies and risk assessment and enabled access to PPE as specified in national guidance |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure financial resilience and sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Launched a virtual live streaming lunchtime fitness class to support the health, wellbeing and mental wellbeing of council staff as part of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing campaign |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure effective business continuity through prioritisation of key services and functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Risk assessed and adapted our workspaces and public building to be COVID-19 secure certified. ✓ Enabled a significant number of employees to follow government guidelines to work from home and as part of COVID-19 risk assessments established COVID-19 safe working practices, such as in bubbles, for those working in the community and public facilities. ✓ Council services were able to continue operating virtually, through several new IT solutions including MS Teams, being deployed. ✓ Ensured council decision making continued with 150 statutory council meetings taking place through MS Teams, enabling public access and participation with over 1000+ hits recorded on the council's website for live streaming |

Overview of progress – cont.

- ✓ Continued to provide opportunities for residents to keep themselves well including introducing Park Fit in Baysgarth Park and Central Park Scunthorpe and launching virtual classes at Baysgarth, Ancholme and The Pods to improve our group fitness programme, facilitating online streaming of our virtual classes
- ✓ Launched Virtual Tours of North Lincolnshire Museum, Normanby Hall, the Rural Life Museum and 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, allowing visitors to continue to access gallery spaces and new exhibitions during closures
- ✓ Worked in collaboration to deliver training courses virtually as an alternative to traditional face to face or classroom environments
- ✓ Worked in partnership to support our most vulnerable families to access home learning resources and support, including the creation and delivery of over 600 reading and literacy packs and distributing 510 laptops for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people
- ✓ Supported the Home Library service, a volunteer led service with doorstep delivery, for residents unable to get out themselves

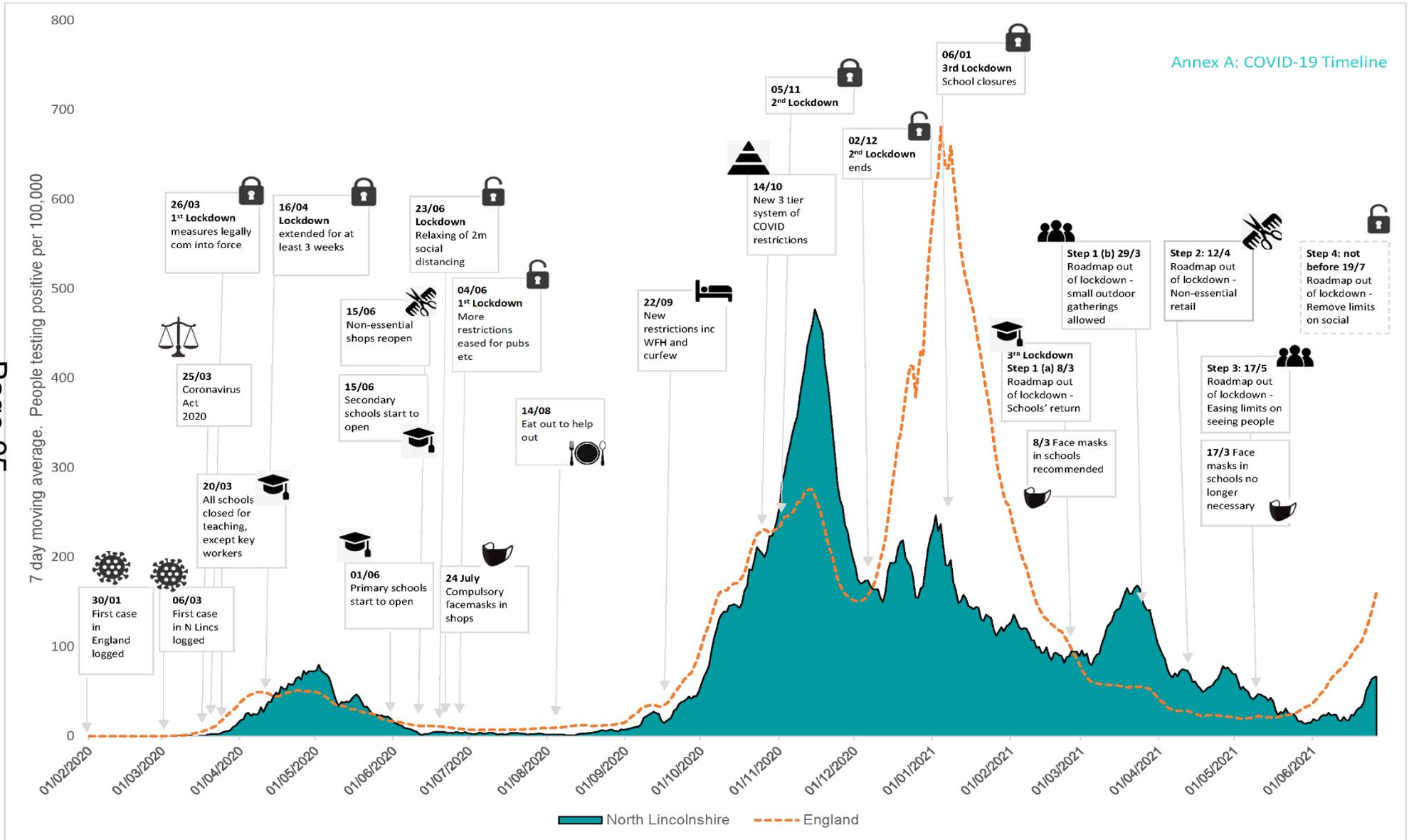
- ✓ Launched the libraries app allowing contactless issue and return of library materials, and universal access to library e-resources. Usage has increased by 200% for books and by 130% for e-newspaper and magazine services.
- ✓ Developed a virtual Hub providing support and advice to the local armed forces community
- ✓ Created a safe and COVID-19 compliant building at Waters Edge Visitor Centre to support those using the Country Park for leisure and exercise
- ✓ The commissioned Adult Substance Misuse service revised delivery models to ensure support is provided during the pandemic in an accessible, safe way, offer of virtual group sessions
- ✓ Development Management Services continue to ensure that we discharge our Local Planning Authority Duties, improving our yearly performance in both major and minor application determination

Overview of progress cont.

- ✓ Continued to discharge our Local Planning Authority Duties, improving the yearly performance in both major and minor application determination
- ✓ Transformed the Registrar service to enable residents to register deaths virtually, births through a 'drive through' facility, and socially distanced weddings, whilst performance has been affected by national restrictions, we have continued to achieve a constant level of customer satisfaction
- ✓ Worked with partners to develop virtual antenatal workshops
- ✓ The Baby Feeding Team have continued to support breastfeeding mothers on the maternity ward and with the use of phones and WhatsApp, developing their own videos to support mothers with topics such as hand expression, positioning and attachment
- ✓ Kept North Lincolnshire connected and road users safe during the winter spreading 5,500 tonnes of salt over 87 network treatments, driving in excess of 33,000 miles

- ✓ There has continued to be face to face contact with children and families in need of help and protection. This has been underpinned by local visiting guidance which is regularly updated to best reflect the current position
- ✓ Key partnership meetings have continued virtually, including the Children's Multi Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board who have continued to have a line of sight on the safeguarding pathway.
- ✓ Care Call has continued to function as part of the whole team approach to supporting the most vulnerable and we have maintained a platinum level of service
- ✓ Adult social care services continued to operate throughout with no requirement to enact the Care Act Easements
- ✓ Waste Services continued with kerbside collections of general waste and recyclable materials throughout the pandemic maintaining kerbside collection rates in excess of 99.9%. In addition, the 8 Household Recycling Centres (HRC's) remained open to the public with social distancing measures in place – NLC were within the 10% of Authorities nationwide who kept their HRC's open and operational throughout the pandemic.
- ✓ Ensured that 100% of Early Years settings have been sustained throughout COVID-19

Annex A: COVID-19 Timeline



COVID-19 in North Lincolnshire – Response



Number of COVID-19 vaccinations administered

210,000



Cost of COVID-19 response 2020-21

£21.3m



Total PPE distributed

906,870



Value of business grants distributed

£60.1m



Number of rough sleepers accommodated

175



Number of volunteers signed up

458



Number of people supported to shield

7000



Number of local contact tracing calls carried out

1057



Number of self isolation grants paid out

573



COVID-19 support grants distributed to care sector

£5.5m



Laptops issued to disadvantaged children

546



COVID prevention visits to businesses

6000

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020-21: OPERATIONS

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To present an annual review against the Council Plan 2018-21 in the context of the COVID-19 response and mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 The report provides an overview of performance for the year and achievement against the ambitions, goals and priorities of the council plan.
- 1.3 It also informs cabinet of the work undertaken across the service to support the response to the pandemic and contribution to the COVID-19 mid-term recovery plan priorities.
- 1.4 As part of the next phase of strategic planning the report highlights areas of focus for 2021-22 and beyond.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2018-21 sets the strategic framework for the operational delivery of council functions. This report demonstrates the activity and performance across the Operations area that has contributed to the strategic ambitions and priorities.
- 2.2 The operating environment during 2020-21 has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the report outlines how we have reacted, responded and adjusted our responsibilities in implementation of government guidelines and to ensure business continuity of council business.
- 2.3 The Council's approach throughout this period have been rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the council plan, and furthered through the strong partnerships, one Council approach, excellent assurance, and financial practice, framed under the following priorities:

- keeping staff and residents safe and well
- protecting the most vulnerable
- protecting the local economy
- enabling communities to remain resilient

2.4 The diverse functions delivered by staff within the Operations area have largely continued throughout the pandemic. Swift adaptations to systems, processes and professional practice, in a rapidly changing operational landscape enabled continuity of services for residents and the council whilst ensuring organisational assurance and sustainability. Key headlines contributing to the Council Plan and COVID-19 priorities include:

2.4.1 **Well Led: Business Continuity** – business has continued across all functions to ensure that the council operates legally, internal controls remain robust, assurance processes are in place, whilst simultaneously adapting and supporting the overall COVID-19 response. Staff are continuing to deliver for the council and residents by making swift adaptations to systems, processes and professional practice to ensure continuity:

- Council buildings remained 'Covid Secure' ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our staff and the public with the Corporate Landlord function processing more than 155 approvals for buildings to reopen.
- As part of the council's response to managing the pandemic, we mobilised covid secure vaccine centres and lateral flow test centres.
- We supported the Coronavirus outbreak management and prevention work within high-risk business settings to reduce transmission. Businesses have welcomed us into their premises, valued our expertise and recognised the role that regulation can play in supporting business to thrive.
- We kept people safe and business operating through the distribution of 670,000 items of PPE to council staff and external organisations.
- We delivered PPE to schools, nurseries and care settings to support the wider community response.
- We enabled staff to work at home by delivering IT equipment.
- Bereavement Services ensured safe funerals continued throughout the pandemic with positive feedback such as many, many heartfelt thanks.
- We helped businesses to navigate the legal requirements to ensure they were Covid secure including:
 - Providing Covid secure advice to 1,320 premises.
 - Visiting 158 premises following the receipt of complaints.
 - Undertaking 2,268 Covid surveillance visits at food retail premises and hospitality venues.
 - Contacted 1,678 business to ensure Legionella prevention measures were conducted.

- Recruited Covid Prevention Assistants to monitor compliance and advise 5,950 businesses.

2.4.2 **Well Led: Transformation** – while reacting and responding to the pandemic has been a significant factor, the drive to transform and develop the way we operate has continued:

- Enhanced ways in which residents and businesses transact with the council digitally, including:
 - An appointment based bulky item collection service to improve service user experience.
- We challenged physical, structural, social and personal barriers to obtaining and maintaining secure quality housing through the creation of a Strategic Housing Partnership.
- We keep the wheels turning in the delivery of council services, contributing to service redesign through the procurement of a modern fleet. We inspect and maintain our fleet to keep our workforce and the public safe.

2.4.3 **Well Led: Financial Resilience and Sustainability** – we have continued to safeguard public funds to ensure that they are available and used for their intended purpose:

- There have been no challenges to procurement activity. Contracts let include the Construction and Highways Professional Services Framework, Highways Labour and Street Lighting Services and Works, the Northern Junction, Demand Responsive Transport and Waste Materials Contracts.

2.4.4 **Well Led: Governance and Assurance** – we have improved and maintained high standards and performance:

- Despite the pandemic customer standards have been maintained with overall complaints across the service reducing by approximately 40%.

2.4.5 **Keeping People Safe and Well:**

- Road safety improved in 2020 with an 18% reduction in the number of people injured on our areas roads compared to 2018 and 2019.
- We perform better than average on satisfaction levels for road safety locally (Quartile 1) – National Highways & Transport Public Satisfaction Survey. Our investment and prioritisation in the unclassified road network has delivered improved standards with roads needing maintenance reducing from 32% in 2017/18 to 21% in 2020/21.
- Our highway maintenance services compare well with the National Highways & Transport Public Satisfaction Survey Average of 50%.
- We kept North Lincolnshire connected and road users safe during the winter spreading 5,500 tonnes of salt over 87 network treatments, driving in excess of 33,000 miles.

- We commenced our new in-house recycling service collecting increased amounts of recycling from residents during lockdown.
- We maintained kerbside waste and recycling collection rates in excess of 99.89%.
- We were one of the 10% of councils who delivered an enhanced Household Recycling Centre (HRC's) offer, keeping the sites open to the public whilst keeping residents safe with social distancing measures in place.
- We are conserving our natural resources by reusing, recycling and composting 54% of household waste and are in the top quartile nationally (as at quarter 3).
- We actively choose to minimise the amount of waste landfilled and we remain in the top quartile nationally (as at quarter 3).
- We improved outcomes for our long-term homeless clients through the 'Everyone in Programme', helping 175 people remain safe and well. We maximised external funding programmes to repurpose long term empty properties to create future sustainable accommodation.
- We worked with people at risk of homelessness and prevented more than 700 cases of homelessness.
- We enhanced our green spaces, including Sheffield Park to enable people to connect and improve wellbeing, with 55 customers sending compliments about the park in a 3-week period. Our improvements included new equipment, disability friendly features, a volunteer presence, community links, and more sustainable planting and horticulture including the largest park meadow planting in the County.
- We facilitated the Crosby Memorial Garden improvement project with input from the local school, UTC, community groups, volunteers, and a range of other partners to provide a safer green space for the community.
- We worked with volunteers and our partners on environmental initiatives to improve air quality and wellbeing resulting in 25,000 new trees planted as part of the Northern Forest Project.
- We have created cleaner and greener spaces through a combination of targeted enforcement and increased community engagement on voluntary litter picking activity.
- We enabled residents to access the outdoors and travel to work safely by investing in cycle pathways and promoted Cycle Lincolnshire locally to improve health and well-being and reduce carbon emissions in North Lincolnshire.
- We supported clinically extremely vulnerable people by collecting and delivering grocery bags and providing a laundry service.
- Working with colleagues in Learning, Skills and Culture we have kept children and students connected to education through 'safe' school transport arrangements.

- We supported the education of children by delivering 100 meals each week to children during lockdown.

2.4.6 **Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities:**

- We provided greater choice to students in how they travel by introducing a new post-16 grant scheme in partnership with colleges to improve connectivity and enable access to education.
- We improved connectivity across North Lincolnshire and improved travel options for customers through the introduction of the new “Just Go” demand responsive transport enabling people to book via an APP.

2.4.7 **Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal:**

- We successfully devolved operational services to all Town and Parish Councils putting decision making at the heart of communities.
- We support regeneration through the capital delivery program including the demolition of the former market site, Northern Junction, Cambridge House and Community Hubs.

2.4.8 **COVID Recovery Plan**

- We will continue to review services to enable us to respond with agility to emerging issues.
- We will continue to align public protection work around the changing landscape around the re-opening roadmap.
- In response to the national roadmap, we will ensure safe spaces and facilities for the public and workforce.
- Continue to work with communities to ensure clean environments to create a feeling of pride and belonging.

2.5 Based on the review of 2020-21 and current position the following areas have been identified for development/action/risk:

- Fly tipping and waste enforcement – nationally increased awareness around fly tipping has created more concerns across North Lincolnshire which are being addressed via a range of proactive enforcement initiatives.
- Following a review of the evidence base for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy we will continue to challenge physical, structural, social and personal barriers to obtaining and maintaining secure quality housing through the Strategic Housing Partnership to improve outcomes for vulnerable people.
- The Integrated Transport Plan will reflect changes to priorities and programmes as a result of the pandemic and government policy on aspects such as active travel and carbon neutral considerations. e.g. active travel/carbon neutral considerations are being built into the Integrated Transport Plan.
- Continue to use the apprenticeship programme to recruit and develop staff in key areas.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and note the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions and response made to date to the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The core functions across Operations have been effectively maintained and a range of systems and processes updated to enable efficient and agile operational delivery and improved customer experience.

4.2 The positive working practices that have been successfully embedded throughout this period will be considered and built on as part of the next phase of strategic planning for the council.

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

5.1 At year end, Operations has an overall underspend of £600K, which is net of £2m in COVID grants now allocated to services.

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

6.1 National advice and guidance has been incorporated into the local response to the pandemic as it has become available. The enactment of the Coronavirus Act 2020 led to certain relaxations of statutory requirements and the introduction of new powers and statutory instruments.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Cabinet notes the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions and response made to date to the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery as outlined in the report.

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NR
Author: Simon Green
Date: 01 July 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None

This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

Annual Review 2020 - 2021: Adults and Community Wellbeing

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To present a review against the Council Plan 2018 - 21 in the context of the COVID-19 response and mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 The report provides an overview of performance for the year and achievement against the ambitions, goals, priorities and outcomes of the council plan.
- 1.3 It also informs cabinet of the work undertaken across the service to support the response to the pandemic and contribution to the COVID-19 mid-term recovery plan priorities.
- 1.4 As part of the next phase of strategic planning the report highlights areas of focus for 2021 - 22 and beyond.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2018 - 21 sets the strategic framework for the operational delivery of council functions. This report demonstrates the activity and performance across Adults and Community Wellbeing contributing to the strategic ambitions and priorities.
- 2.2 The operating environment during 2020 - 21 has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and this report outlines how we have responded and adjusted our responsibilities, implemented government guidelines, and ensured continuity of council business.
- 2.3 The Council's approach throughout the period has been rooted in the values, principles, and ambitions of the council plan, and furthered through the strong partnerships, one Council approach, excellent assurance, and financial practice, framed under the following priorities:

- Keeping staff and residents safe and well
- Protecting the most vulnerable
- Protecting the local economy
- Enabling resilient and flourishing communities.

2.4 Well led - Business continuity

2.4.1 All statutory responsibilities in relation to service provision, statutory returns and publication of the Annual Safeguarding Report have been completed; as well as implementation of additional policies, guidance, operating models, and supplementary reporting requirements arising as a result of the pandemic. Principally the National Care Act Easements guidance, created under the Coronavirus Act 2020, was published in March 2020, setting out how local authorities could ensure that the most urgent and acute needs were met if the easements were to be enacted. The Council put in place a framework to support decision making in relation to enacting Care Act Easements, if required. As a result of agile and flexible working by the workforce, no Care Act Easements have been enacted.

2.4.2 Despite the challenges of the last eighteen months, 'business as usual' activities continued to take place in a COVID-19 safe and secure way, and we continued to meet all the service's statutory responsibilities. This has been achieved through a one council approach, with workforce across the council working in an agile way to ensure social care delivery; enabling key staff to maintain services to vulnerable people.

2.4.3 The rapid development and implementation of new technologies and IT systems has strengthened communication and collaboration across the health and care sector and supported continued contact with the people of North Lincolnshire, providing advice and support in alternative ways.

2.4.4 The swift and successful delivery of the North Lincolnshire PPE strategy, and implementation of a dedicated PPE capability, ensured that all council PPE needs were met, and the needs of the independent and commissioned social care sector were supported until national provision was put in place.

2.4.5 The Council has prioritised the health and wellbeing of the workforce through the development of a one council community and #TeamNL was launched. The rapid implementation of a COVID-19 communication strategy delivering updates, advice and information through a dedicated portal and council wide information webinars. The 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' framework was adopted, and has created opportunities for connectivity, engagement, and support for the wellbeing of the workforce. The Council prides itself on being an agile employer and during the COVID-19 outbreak, the fast development of digital solutions has

enabled the adults workforce to work flexibility within a digital environment.

2.5 Well led – Good governance and performance

2.5.1 During last year, several Adult Social Care Outcome Framework performance indicators were not required to be reported on. These include the measures from the surveys and delayed discharge indicators. Two of the remaining indicators have potentially reduced, both of which were impacted by COVID-19; effectiveness of rehabilitation and reablement has reduced slightly due to people having more complex needs during this time and taking longer to recover. The number of people of working age moving to long term residential care has risen slightly, in part due to carer breakdown and deterioration of people's physical health.

2.5.2 The impact of shielding for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable made it difficult to support more people into work, however employment levels were maintained at 3.2% and remains an area of focus for the Council. The Adult Social Care Annual Report 2020 - 21 will be completed in readiness for publication summer 2021.

2.5.3 The care sector standards were maintained throughout the pandemic being higher than the national average. The Council continues to work with the providers and the new focused CQC inspection regime to enable the best possible care is available to all.

2.5.4 The various COVID-19 related grants were all paid to providers in a timely and appropriate way demonstrating due diligence in their respective application, and effective governance evidenced by the mandatory returns.

2.6 Well led - Transformation

2.6.1 Notwithstanding the challenges of the last eighteen months, the service has continued to transform, including developing alternative accommodation for people living with dementia and enabling people with a learning disability or mental ill health to live in their own home. We have developed closer integration with health partners, strengthened and supported the voluntary and community sector, and built on the already strong relationships with social care providers to ensure the people they support and their workforce, remain safe and well.

2.6.2 The annual report on integration showed a high level of change across health and care and the Health and Care Integration Plan has been revisited and the priorities refreshed. The annual report and plan have now been published by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The plan differentiates the needs between keeping

people safe and living well and keeping people safe and ageing well. This will enable focused time to address emerging needs from younger disabled adults as well as frailty going forward.

2.7 Enabling resilient and flourishing communities

2.7.1 Relationships with the voluntary sector and community organisations have been strengthened, responding to local needs by creating opportunities for communities to build resilient and sustainable support through voluntary and community led projects.

2.7.2 The development of the housing extra care scheme for people with early onset dementia has progressed and is expected to open in July 2021, providing alternative choices for living independently in the community.

2.7.3 People have been supported to move out of residential and hospital settings into the community and empowered to rebuild relationships with their families and communities. The new supported living accommodation has enabled more people to have their own front door, including young people moving from their family home, to live independently. People with a learning disability living independently has subsequently increased over the year.

2.7.4 The citizen partnership groups have continued to meet in a virtual way throughout the pandemic and come together to provide a combined voice in the Adults Partnership. This voice has supported the council to continue to develop services and shape the public information regarding COVID-19. On-line training has taken place, and support continues to enable people to take part in engagement opportunities through a range of digital solutions. People have told us “I have enjoyed our IT training sessions; they have helped me stay connected with you and my family”. The Experts by Experience Group have completed a number of mystery shopping exercises, feeding back their findings to support the development of the council’s website information.

2.8 Keeping people safe and well

2.8.1 New ways of working, implemented throughout the year, have enabled the Council to keep people safe and well and ensure people’s needs are met early. The Council continues to reduce and delay the need for longer term care through providing short term prevention services, enabling people to remain as independent as possible.

2.8.2 The Discharge to Assess operating model became national policy, providing an integrated, person-centred approach for the safe and timely discharge of people from hospital to home, or to an alternative community setting, for the

assessment of their health and, or social care needs. This has resulted in improved experiences for people leaving hospital; enabling them to leave in a timely and structured way, and created an opportunity for health and social care professionals to have joint discussions regarding people's needs. The ethos of 'Home First' has been embedded across health and care, encouraging staff to be resourceful and enabled people to think about the resources they already have that may support their care needs.

- 2.8.3 A joint project with the voluntary sector called 'Welcome Home', has been implemented to support people to return home from hospital, providing help with getting settled when first home, collecting essential shopping and medication. This project also enables Home First Community to increase capacity in the delivery of higher-level rehabilitation and reablement support.
- 2.8.4 The availability of rehabilitation and reablement has increased , ensuring we continue to meet people's needs early to enable them to remain living independently in their own home. Of the people who received rehabilitation and reablement support, 96% told us the quality of care was high or very high.
- 2.8.5 The Council has a strong focus on ensuring people in receipt of longer-term services have maximum choice and control over their lives. All people in receipt of longer-term services have full knowledge of their level of financial subsidy and are able to choose the mechanisms for managing their personal budget. People have told us "My direct payment helps me have control over my daily life."
- 2.8.6 Carers have been a high priority and ensuring more carers have control and full knowledge of their personal budget. The Council has maintained its position of all carers receiving a direct payment during this past year.
- 2.8.7 In the absence of the National Carers Survey, which was paused for 2020 - 21, the Council undertook its own survey to hear the carer's lived experience during this time, and to inform the refresh of the Carers Strategy. Despite the national restrictions, carers told us they found it easy to access help and advice and that the welfare calls they received supported their wellbeing.
- 2.8.8 The Council day support offer has continued throughout the pandemic, adopting a blended approach through working on a one-to-one basis in people's own homes, supporting carer respite and enabling people to access exercise and the community. The dedicated building for people with most complex needs has now been completed within the Ashby Community Hub, providing a place where people can come together and access the community from a safe space.

- 2.8.9 The strong relationships we already had with care sector providers and health partners to be built upon to have an enabling, facilitating, and collaborative approach to supporting care providers, and keeping their staff, and the people they care, for safe and well. To ensure the people they care for were safely supported during the pandemic, the sector has been provided with timely implementation of national guidance and government funding to support the changes required. This has included the distribution of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and access to Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) training.
- 2.8.10 The North Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) conference was held in November 2020 and was facilitated and delivered in partnership with vulnerable adults who chose the title of the event, "Listen to me and hear my voice". The three key themes for the event were identified by these adults as loneliness, fraud, and cuckooing. A key contributor to the event said, "I was over the moon, with the conference, really over the moon. I loved being part of it. I was happy that I was able to give the professionals information and leaflets about what they can do to help vulnerable adults like me. It was very important information".
- 2.8.11 During the COVID-19 pandemic the safeguarding adults approach has been reinforced, resulting in a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all partners in terms of conducting section 42 enquiries; enabling more effective and efficient joint working to support vulnerable adults.
- 2.8.12 The Council safeguarding policies and procedures have been updated and aligned with the boards multi-agency procedures. The safeguarding referral process has also been developed and embedded. Triage takes place at the access point, enabling people already known to social care who have been identified as having a safeguarding issue, to be supported by their existing social workers, delivering 'making safeguarding personal principles'. Leaving the Council specialist team to manage people unknown and the standards and performance of the system with partners.
- 2.8.13 The Carers Support Service, commissioned by the Council, worked with carers to enable them to attend vaccination appointments by providing information and reassurance about the vaccine and sitter services.
- 2.8.14 People who were feeling anxious about receiving and accessing their flu and COVID-19 vaccinations were supported by Scunthorpe and District MIND, in partnership with health partners, to feel confident and able to access them.

2.9 **Keeping the workforce safe and well**

- 2.9.1 Through a partnership approach with the CCG, primary care the VCSE and NLAG there has been a rapid, efficient, and well-coordinated delivery of the vaccination programme across all priority cohorts. This was recognised by the government as being one of the top areas for rolling out the vaccination programme with speed and efficiency.
- 2.9.2 The health and social care workforce were quickly mobilised to have the vaccination as the opportunity presented. The proportion of eligible staff who have received the vaccine is very high.
- 2.9.3 The Council developed a single approach and distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure council and social care workforce were safe and protected in their day-to-day work.

2.10 Protecting the local economy

- 2.10.1 During the pandemic and as restrictions ease, the workforce continues to adapt and work differently; be equipped to be flexible and agile, learning to live with and manage the continued risk of COVID-19. The various published guidance and restrictions are continually reviewed and updated to ensure people with care and support needs are enabled to live safe and well in their own home and communities.
- 2.10.2 Work is underway assessing the impact from the recently mandated vaccination for care home staff: supporting retention, recruitment, and business continuity of the sector in light of the long term nature of the pandemic and the impact on of the track and trace system on workforce capacity.
- 2.10.3 Workforce wellbeing and strategic workforce planning across the whole sector is essential to ensure we can continue to deliver and meet needs across providers of care and health. Therefore, we have established a Care and Health Workforce partnership, to bring providers, employers, and employees together to work collectively to address new expectations, demands and emerging issues.

2.11 In Development

Based on the review of 2020 - 21 and current position, the following areas have been identified for further consideration and development during 2021 - 22.

- 2.11.1 Increased waiting times for some acute interventions, which is likely to impact on a person's wellbeing and mobility, requiring support from the council. 'Waiting Well' work is underway with partners to identify who this is affecting, to establish if they have any care and support needs and to identify a joined-up approach to prioritisation and means to meet those needs.

2.11.2 Increased needs are being seen in relation to mental health, people are experiencing low mood, lack of confidence feeling anxious and having a fear of COVID-19, socialising, and accessing services. Acute Mental Health services have reported significant increased needs of people.

2.11.3 The evidence highlights that some people have been engaging in risky lifestyles during the pandemic which include increased gambling, making unhealthy choices, alcohol, and substance misuse. The data is being gathered locally to analyse and identify the issues and to develop solutions.

2.11.4 Homelessness, rough sleeping, and complexity; a pilot approach routed in trauma-based care is being developed, in support of what appears to be a growing number of people who have complex lives and are vulnerable to easing of restrictions evictions as well as new needs from people engaged in risky behaviours.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and note the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions and response to the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The core functions across Adults and Community Wellbeing have been effectively maintained and a range of systems and processes updated and implemented to enable efficient and agile operational delivery and improved customer experience.

4.2 The positive working practices that have been successfully embedded throughout this period will be considered and built on as part of the next phase of strategic planning for the council to reduce the inequalities this pandemic has brought to focus.

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

5.1 The Council has invested in supporting vulnerable adults in line with its priority of keeping people safe and well. The core service financial outturn position was broadly balanced, however £1.2mi additional payments were made through the Council COVID-19 grant to support providers, carers, and care givers.

5.2 A further £7mi grant payments have been made to the adult social care sector as follows:

Covid Grant payments - Care providers	£594,100
Adults Social Care Infection Control Fund	£2,531,190
Adults Social Care Infection Control Fund Round 2	£1,934,074
Adult Social Care Rapid Testing Fund	£630,833
Workforce Capacity Fund for Adult Social Care	£380,460
Infection Control Fund 2021	£754,629
Rapid Testing 2021	£475,901
Totals	£7,301,187

5.3 Funding the increased demand for social care continues to be a priority, the Better Care Funding and continuation of Hospital Discharge program funding is not secure, and should this be withdrawn, would place enormous pressure on the new hospital to home system.

5.4 The workforce FTE for Adults and Community Wellbeing at the end of 2020 - 21 stood at 375.68 of which 45% had no absences compared to 32% the previous year however more sick day lost have been noted due to the impact of Covid 19.

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

6.1 National advice and guidance has been incorporated into the local response to the pandemic as it has become available. The enactment of the Coronavirus Act 2020 led to certain relaxations of statutory requirements and the introduction of new powers and statutory instruments.

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

7.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

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

8.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That Cabinet notes the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions, outcomes and priorities including the response made to date to the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery as outlined in the report

Director of Adults and Community Wellbeing

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Author: Karen Pavey
Date: 1st July 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

CABINET REPORT 7 DECEMBER 2020: COUNCIL PLAN 2018-21: COVID-19 MID-TERM RECOVERY PLAN AND PROGRESS UPDATE

Report of Director Business Development

Agenda Item 11(c)
Meeting 12 July 2021**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL****CABINET****ANNUAL REVIEW 2020-21: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT****1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To present an annual review against the Council Plan 2018-21 in the context of the COVID-19 response and mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 The report provides an overview of performance for the year and achievement against the ambitions, goals and priorities of the council plan.
- 1.3 It also informs cabinet of the work undertaken across the service to support the response to the pandemic and contribution to the COVID-19 mid-term recovery plan priorities.
- 1.4 As part of the next phase of strategic planning the report highlights areas of focus for 2021-22 and beyond.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2018-21 sets the strategic framework for the operational delivery of council functions. This report demonstrates the activity and performance across Business Development that has contributed to the strategic ambitions and priorities.
- 2.2 The operating environment during 2020-21 has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the report outlines how we have reacted, responded and adjusted our responsibilities in implementation of government initiatives, legislation and guidance to ensure that our services continued to deliver and our role in enabling and supporting businesses, communities and residents continued.

2.3 The Council's approach throughout this period have been rooted in the values, principles, and ambitions of the Council, and furthered through our strong partnerships, one Council approach, excellent assurance, and financial practice.

2.4 Business Development have continued to operate at a face-to-face level where appropriate and agile wherever possible in accordance with government guidelines. Change has been implemented at pace to ensure service delivery without compromising governance and assurance.

2.5 Keeping People Safe and Well:

Despite the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 global pandemic and subsequent series of national lockdowns, the housebuilding industry and the local housing market are clearly showing good signs of recovery with a substantial increase in completions.

The overall total number of homes built during 2020/21 is the highest achieved over the past five years (442) and is a 6% increase on last year's total.

The council's 2021 Housing Growth Plan target of building houses with a value of £1,000,000 by 2021 was met and surpassed 2 years early in 2019/20.

We transformed our Registrar service to enable residents to register deaths virtually, births through a 'drive through' facility, and socially distanced weddings, whilst performance has been affected by national restrictions, we have continued to achieve a constant level of customer satisfaction.

2.6 Economic Growth and Renewal:

The Economic Development team has continued to see significant demand in engagement with businesses, over the full year we have had 33,234 individual contacts with businesses, 7 times the normal annual contacts. Our relationship with businesses has never been better, with an uplift in investment enquiries and non-COVID related discussions.

Significant work to improve our 'digital front door' has taken place with the launch of the Council's new Website, the provision of a digital newsletters, social media. Our digital business newsletter has been delivered to over 6,900 businesses with a 98% open rate and our Twitter/LinkedIn seeing significant growth in engagement and followers.

We have paid grants of £60 million in 2020/21 to businesses in line with government legalisation and guidance.

Inward Investment has managed to successfully complete conversions throughout the year, including several large UK business relocations into North Lincolnshire and existing business growth and diversifying to meet market need. Continual proactive marketing and strengthening of relationships with our partners, and our investment in key infrastructure including broadband, road and rail has ensured that North Lincolnshire is the best place to invest.

Our commercial property portfolio has been strengthened with the addition of newly developed commercial units which were fully let on completion. In addition, we have successfully rented several vacant units within the portfolio reducing our already low vacancy rate. The performance of the portfolio remains strong despite a challenging year.

March saw several positive announcements for the region; Freeports, the Towns Fund, decarbonisation projects and ABLE land infrastructure, which we are looking to build on in the coming months and years to support the delivery of our Economic Growth Plan.

In September 2020, 32,100 (41.1%) of North Lincolnshire residents were employed in highly skilled occupations. This is a significant improvement on the 27,300 (35.9%) recorded for September 2019.

Supported by partners, we have seen an increase in the number of people gaining higher level skills, which has supported more residents in higher level roles within the economy. Four of the inward investment conversions this year have been within sectors which require highly skilled workers (Engineers and Offshore O & M).

We successfully attracted £122m of external funding to NL during the last financial year.

2.7 Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities:

We enabled and delivered infrastructure projects to support the ambitions of the Council, supporting housing and employment growth, whilst ensuring we meet the contractual requirements of the funding to deliver these projects.

Development Management Services continue to ensure that we discharge our Local Planning Authority Duties, improving our yearly performance in both major and minor application determination.

Our markets provision continued to operate throughout lockdown in a Covid Compliant manner ensuring our communities could access food essentials.

Building on our transformation of the Registrars Service, through the pandemic we have increased our approved premises for Wedding Ceremonies – this has supported the service to continue to deliver Weddings in North Lincolnshire.

2.8 Well Led: Business Continuity

We have continued to discharge our statutory function of Registrars.

RIDDOR rates and the number of accidents reported have decreased due to the increase in homeworking.

HR/OD have gone to a virtual and digital environment, launching a new online portal for recruitment, and implementing a joint HR and Payroll system, streamlining two systems into one. The project was winner of the Best Business Transformation award at the #Best Awards 20/21.

We enabled and delivered workforce wellbeing assessments and guidance for managers on wellbeing conversations. All available staff have had a wellbeing conversation.

We have formally recognised the hard work of individuals, teams, and services through the #best awards, celebrating the commitment to achieving the Council's Priorities, Values and Goals.

Land Charges Service was transformed to meet the new demands within the market through a full accessible online service.

2.9 Covid Response:

- We supported over 5000 businesses with over 30,000 contacts including the provision of a weekly newsletter becoming the trusted source for Covid information.
- We enabled and delivered £60m business grants directly with Partnership and Governance Service.
- We designed and led the Coronavirus outbreak management and prevention work within high-risk business settings to reduce transmission.
- We developed and designed the case management system for the management of Covid Outbreaks across NL.
- We enabled our response to our most vulnerable through the provision of good quality data and intelligence to ensure the right resource went to the right place.
- We supported the education of children by delivering 100 meals each week to children during lockdown.
- We enabled staff to work at home by ensuring up to date FAQ's, HR Policies and government guidelines were available on TOPdesk.
- Developed a COVID-19 secure sign off process in conjunction with corporate landlord.
- Health and Safety have signed off 51 work activity risk assessments and 301 covid secure buildings.
- We have worked with our partners to become a trusted source of information throughout the Pandemic.
- We have worked with the CCG to take the Vaccine out to employees.
- We have taken the lead in delivering a local test, track and trace service through our Registrars service and more recently moved to an enhanced targeted service working in partnership with the CCG to keep residents safe and well.
- Through leadership of the Organisation Recovery and Renew Group we have worked jointly across the Council to enable the safe re-opening of Council Assets.

2.10 Based on the review of 2020-21 and current position we will be focussing on the following priorities:

- Embedding our learning from businesses over the last 12 months to enable and deliver our Economic Renewal Plan
- Celebrate and review the success achieved in delivering our Economic Growth Plan to support our new and emerging plan.

- Developing our ambition, vision, and plans for the delivery of our plans for growth and regeneration through the Towns Fund, FHSF and Levelling up Fund.
- Develop and embed a refreshed Organisational Development Plan.
- Undertaking a review of the Commercial Property Strategy and Portfolio to ensure the continued positive impact for the Council and the local economy.
- Working with partners and businesses we will improve the number of people accessing high level skills, opportunities to re-skill and accessing employment.
- Deliver a sound Local Plan that sets the vision for the environment, infrastructure, housing, and employment growth for North Lincolnshire.
- Address and understand the market issues in Catering and Cleaning Service post pandemic.
- As the organisation takes shape, we will transform the HR/OD service to be the driving force for many initiatives: mapping talent to value; making the workforce more flexible; prioritising strategic workforce planning, and reskilling.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and note the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions and response made to date to the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The core functions across Business Development have been effectively maintained, statutory functions of Planning and Registers have continued to deliver performance in the upper quartile whilst dealing with the Covid pandemic. A review of our indicators are at appendix one of the report.
- 4.2 The positive working practices that have been successfully embedded throughout this period will be considered and built on as part of the next phase of transformation and strategic planning of the Council.

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

5.1 Financial

The total cost of operational delivery for Business Development 2020/21, including COVID-19 response was £2m against the allocated budget of £16k.

After applying the COVID-19 specific grants, the net cost of services was £-639k. There were several factors that contributed to keeping overall costs below budget, including a general pandemic related slowdown of spending on core costs such as staffing and supplies and service. Key risks remained around commercial income, specifically Catering, markets and Commercial Property. However, were reduced slightly due to the current climate. The contribution the team have made to the COVID-19 response by redirection of core resources funded by COVID-19 grants enabled effective use of external funding. Additional costs incurred as part of the council response to and recovery from COVID-19 is highlighted below:

Theme	£'000's
Test, trace and isolate	52
Re Opening High street	33
Deferred savings	300
Loss of income	997

5.2 Workforce

The FTE for business development at the end of 2020/21 stood at 331.50 with an improved level of attendance: 67% no absences compared to 53% the previous year; an average of 7.14 days lost to sickness compared to previous year of 10.27 days. Turnover during the year was 9.16% broken down as 32 resignations and 9 retirements.

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

6.1 National advice and guidance has been incorporated into the local response to the pandemic as it has become available. The enactment of the Coronavirus Act 2020 led to certain relaxations of statutory requirements and the introduction of new powers and statutory instruments.

6.2 The key risks to business development going forward are:

- Maintaining current occupancy levels in the Property Portfolio.
- Project Risk
 - Capacity to deliver our £218m development programme.
 - Market Capacity to support our development programme.

These are being managed through the programme risk registers with controls in place and appropriate mitigations being provided.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Cabinet notes the content of the report and the contribution that the Business Development Service has made to the Councils Strategic Plan and the response to the pandemic.

DIRECTOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NR
Author: Helen Manderson
Date: 29 June 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None

This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE: CURRENT POSITION

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To present a review on the work within Children and Community Resilience over the last year, against the Council Plan 2018/21, in the context of the COVID-19 response and mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 The report provides a summary of highlights and achievements against the ambitions, goals, priorities and outcomes of the Council Plan.
- 1.3 It also informs Cabinet of the work undertaken across the service to support the response to the pandemic and contribution to the COVID-19 mid-term recovery plan priorities.
- 1.4 As part of the next phase of strategic planning, the report highlights areas of focus for 2021/22 and beyond.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As a Council and working with partners, we are ambitious for North Lincolnshire and want our area to be the #BestPlace for our residents. The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges, developments and opportunities to the services we provide to children, young people, families and communities. The ongoing progress made in developing services that help and work with vulnerable children, adults, their families and communities placed North Lincolnshire in a strong position to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic through creative, innovative and flexible practices.
- 2.2 Across Children and Community Resilience, we have continued to respond to the needs of individuals and diverse communities, and to help and protect children, young people, families and vulnerable adults, prioritising those most in need, while we support and protect our workforce. It has enabled us to continue the excellent progress towards our ambition for children to be in their family, in their school and in their community.

- 2.3 The Council's approach to its business continuity response to the COVID-19 outbreak and actions taken to implement government guidelines have been rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the Council Plan, and furthered through the strong partnerships, one Council approach, excellent assurance, and financial practice, framed under the following priorities:
- keeping staff and residents safe and well
 - protecting the most vulnerable
 - protecting the local economy
 - enabling communities to remain resilient
- 2.4 Children, families and vulnerable adults remain at the centre of practice as we respond to COVID-19, sustain standards and continue our journey towards recovery and renewal. Children, young people, families and vulnerable adults have, in the main, shown tremendous resolve and resilience in these challenging circumstances leading to much stability and positive outcomes. Those who work closely with us, foster carers, carers and partners, have shown immense care and collaboration through this time, in their ongoing commitment to helping children and families improve their outcomes.
- 2.5 There has continued to be effective leadership and management at all levels with a range of examples of working at pace on new and different tasks. This has required staff to be flexible in order to make the best use of available resources and capacity to manage need and demand. Staff have continued to work hard and show incredible resilience, flexibility and innovation in our response to COVID-19 and as reported to Cabinet in February 2021, provide comprehensive input to the additional expectations required in response to adapting to and preventing the impact of COVID-19. We have prioritised the wellbeing of our workforce and we have continued our focus on creating connectivity and opportunities for reflection; and feedback continues to demonstrate support at all levels.
- 2.6 Children's Services have continued to achieve a high level of performance during COVID-19 which demonstrates that children and families are benefitting from help; that services continually strive to safeguard children; that children in care and care leavers benefit from high quality practice and stable relationships; and that vulnerable groups have the help they need. Examples of key headlines in relation to performance and populations are that:
- Front door contacts, referrals, repeat referrals and assessments have remained consistent evidencing the continued drive to ensure children and families are supported at the right level and at the earliest opportunity

- The children in care population is at its lowest level since before the end of 2015/16, which reinforces our ambition for children to be in their families, in their schools and in their communities
- We have reduced the number of children in external provision enabling them to remain connected to their local support networks and community.

2.7 Key headlines in relation to Children and Community Resilience functions which contribute to the Council Plan and the COVID-19 priorities include:

Well Led: Business Continuity

2.7.1 **Business continuity:** Business has continued across all functions, whilst simultaneously adapting and supporting the overall COVID-19 response. In line with Government guidance, and as deemed appropriate, there has continued to be face to face contact with children and families in need of help and protection. This has been underpinned by local visiting guidance which is regularly updated to best reflect the current position.

2.7.2 **Recruitment and retention:** Children in North Lincolnshire continue to benefit from a stable, skilled workforce where social work practice continues to thrive. There is an ongoing focus on recruitment and retention across the workforce to ensure we maintain our strong position. We have implemented a range of initiatives to further enhance our children's services workforce including working with "Frontline"; developing social work students across the service, some of whom have gone on to secure a permanent position; and refreshed the recruitment landing pages on the Council website to better reflect our One Family Approach and the strength of our practice to incentivise working in North Lincolnshire.

2.7.3 **Social Care workforce:** We have refreshed and developed mechanisms for supporting and protecting the workforce from a practice perspective and also in terms of staff welfare and connectivity. This includes regular clinical and personal supervision including employee performance review meetings; full service team meetings; individual pod meetings; peer reflection sessions and informal peer to peer, relational support.

The Annual Social Work Health Check 2020/21 highlighted that social workers within North Lincolnshire are consistently saying that they perceive the workplace to be highly supportive and a reflective environment where they feel encouraged to make a difference to children and families. Social Workers report positive experiences of supervision that considers both practice and employee health and well-being. They have shared that they value a high support, high challenge, and no blame culture within the organisation.

- 2.7.4 **Professional development:** We have maintained a focus on developing skills and knowledge across the workforce by utilising research in practice and available resources and delivering training programmes. A further key development is our engagement in the National Assessment and Accreditation Scheme (NAAS). The NAAS has been embedded into social workers professional development and a service lead, practice supervisors and the first two waves of social workers have all successfully passed this accreditation. We have also facilitated the Children's MARS education and training programme through e-learning, workbooks and signposting to relevant resources and toolkits as well as virtual training courses.

Well Led: Transformation

- 2.7.5 **Leadership development:** Across the service, we continue to benefit from a strong core of stable middle and senior managers which have helped to provide the conditions for success. There has been further investment in leadership development, and members of the leadership team have worked through the "PRINT" programme to establish a heightened awareness of drivers and motivators. This will further enhance communication and collaboration leading to increased effectiveness as a high functioning team.
- 2.7.6 **Key documents:** The Children's Commissioning Strategy, Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire document and the Children's Challenge have been updated to cover the period 2020-24 and endorsed across the partnership. These strategic documents set the foundations for driving forward partnership action and system change. Through our One Family Approach, we aim to create a system that works for all children, young people and families to achieve our ambition of children being **in their families, in their schools and in their communities.**

- 2.7.7 **One Family Approach:** Across the Council and its partners, we have embraced our One Family Approach. There has been a continued focus on implementation which has been supported by workforce development sessions with leaders, managers and practitioners, and there is evidence that it is permeating through conversations, behaviours and practice. The One Family Approach is being used and adopted within the provision of all services and adopted in the review and re-write of other area wide plans for example the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health, Best Start and Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion plans.
- 2.7.8 **Use of resources and relational practice:** We have maximised digital technology and capacity across the children's social care system through deployment of staff to specific functions to maintain our 'offer to children'. Building on our One Family Approach practice model, we have continued to focus on relational practice and maintaining relationships and connections with our most vulnerable children and families via face to face interactions alongside virtual mechanisms, leading to positive and enhanced engagement and outcomes.
- 2.7.9 **Early Help:** Under the auspices of the One Family Approach, there continues to be a focus on early help, through the prioritisation of early help added capacity to co-ordinate early help and provide constructive challenge and support to meet the needs of children and families at the earliest point. We have integrated services across agencies to strengthen the targeted family support offer resulting in improved outcomes and reduction of risk.
- 2.7.10 **Vulnerable children in education:** We have continued to maintain a focus on vulnerable children in education. The daily tasking meetings, which were established in April 2020 in response to COVID-19, are now embedded into practice and they are continually reviewed to reflect the changing context maintaining a one team approach to supporting more vulnerable children to access education as appropriate.
- 2.7.11 **Partnership Integrated Triage:** We have continued to strengthen practice in our "front door" of social care in order to manage demand and meet need at the lowest level. An example of innovation is the Partnership Integrated Triage (PITSTOP) which was piloted in March 2021 and subsequently mainstreamed into practice. The PITSTOP has been highly effective in embedding the principles of the One Family Approach and improving the quality of contact and referrals. Joint work with the police, health and wider colleagues ensuring that the needs of the children and families are met at the lowest level and by the most appropriate person.

- 2.7.12 **Risk Outside the Family Home:** We have strengthened our approach to Risk Outside the Home incorporating our response to CSE / CCE and other forms of exploitation to focus partnership actions on disruption, prosecution and transforming spaces and ensuring robust connection with the child's individual plans, managing and reducing risk to children. Our joint approach to preventing child criminal exploitation has been shared nationally.
- 2.7.13 **Spaces and places:** There has been collaborative partnership action to transform spaces and hotspot locations for criminality and exploitation within North Lincolnshire to enhance community resilience and reduce risk. There have been a number of arrests of key adults of concern and child abduction notices issued which has reduced risk to identified children as well as the wider community. There has been an increase in intelligence being received due to the increased community engagement and awareness. By changing the spaces, reducing opportunities for exploitation to take place and increasing visibility and improving the overall aesthetics of the area, this has become a place that families who live in the area want to use.
- 2.7.14 **Rebranding of Youth Offending Service:** The principle 'Child First' guides the work of the Youth Justice Board and underpins our work in North Lincolnshire and we have re-branded our 'Youth Offending Service' to become a 'Youth Justice Partnership'.
- 2.7.15 **Armed Forces Covenant:** There has been investment in capacity to implement the covenant and we have continued our support to veterans and their families, including health liaison, housing issues and access to jobs and employment. The online offer has been developed and is well received. The council have also applied and received the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award which demonstrates our ongoing commitment to military families, reservists and cadet instructors.
- 2.7.16 **Service Development:** Through the development of the Strategy, Policy/participation/performance/partnership, Assurance, Children and Evaluation (SPACE) Service, we have adapted the infrastructure to further contribute to the robust effectiveness, standards and regulatory framework relating to children and families across the service, the council and the wider partnership. We have also enabled an opportunity for a care leaver to take up employment within the SPACE Service.

Well Led: Financial Resilience and Sustainability

- 2.7.17 **Reducing inequalities:** Through the Integrated Children's Trust, there is a focus on maximising opportunities and potential to address the hardship that children and families currently face within the context of COVID-19 and to contribute toward reducing inequalities and longer term disadvantage as a result of the pandemic. We have also utilised available funding streams to enable over 7000 children, young people and families to have access to food support, including care leavers and families in low income households with pre-school children, and 16 to 18 years olds in full time education.
- 2.7.18 **Foster Carers:** We have invested in the fostering service which has led to the highest number of North Lincolnshire mainstream carers we have experienced, leading to increased placement choice and improved stability for children in care. Foster carers have continued to help and support children and young people throughout the pandemic. Our foster carers continue to play a valuable role and have demonstrated their incredible commitment to children in care in North Lincolnshire.
- 2.7.19 **Care Leavers Financial Policy:** We have revised the Care Leavers Financial Policy which supports our commitment to improving outcomes for care leavers and enabling them to maximise their life changes leading to improved outcomes. A number of care leavers have secured employment in a range of different sectors, including making use of the Kick Start Programme and the apprenticeship scheme within the council.

Well Led: Governance and Assurance

- 2.7.20 **Commitment to partnership working:** Key partnership meetings have continued virtually and there is evidence of strong partner contributions to assessments, plans and meetings at every stage of the child's journey. The Children's Multi Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board has also continued to have a line of sight on the safeguarding pathway and undertaken independent scrutiny of safeguarding. There has also been a continued commitment to the Community Safety Partnership Board, The Youth Justice Partnership, Prevent Partnership Board and Channel Panel as well as strong partnership work on the front line as required.

- 2.7.21 **Oversight and assurance:** There has been an ongoing focus on undertaking regular Director of Children assurance events which support the process of regular quality assurance, practice learning opportunities and case auditing and is a key element of our learning and improvement framework. Examples of learning highlight that the quality of practice remains high and is underpinned by a strong value base; that we are child and family focussed; and that the One Family Approach is evident in practice. It also adds challenges to reflect on day to day practice.
- 2.7.22 **Independent scrutiny:** Across children’s services, we have invested in independent scrutiny activity for specific complex cases and a number of key areas of practice. The outcomes of independent scrutiny activity have demonstrated the strength of local practice and the positive impact on children and families outcomes. Our ongoing focus on quality assuring our local decision making pertaining complex cases was reinforced through a conversation with the National Panel and demonstrated that this level of scrutiny reinforces good practice whilst ensuring, “no complacency” and continuous learning.
- 2.7.23 **Children’s MARS scrutiny and assurance:** Under the auspices of the Children’s MARS arrangements, there has also been a focus on scrutiny and assurance activity, including independent scrutiny, which demonstrates our partnership commitment to listening, learning, reviewing and adapting across the early help and safeguarding pathway. Learning from scrutiny activity evidences that we are effective in providing help and protection to children and families.
- 2.7.24 **Practice standards:** Services have continued to work within practice standards and we continue to develop creative solutions as part of our COVID-19 response and to meet our statutory and regulatory responsibilities. This is evidenced through regular monitoring, with leadership and management oversight, scrutiny and challenge.
- 2.7.25 **Corporate Parenting:** As corporate parents, we have continued to champion our children in care and care leavers and we have been active in encouraging and celebrating their achievements and successes. A recent corporate parenting self-assessment demonstrated a positive local position regarding corporate parenting arrangements which is underpinned by the strength of corporate parenting across the partnership and positive outcomes for children in care and care leavers.

2.7.26 **Spot Checks:** The Families Initiative (TFI) annual Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) spot check took place in December 2020 and was an opportunity to demonstrate our effective practice and the achievements and challenges of the local programme, which mirrors the principles of the One Family Approach. Positive feedback was received from the MHCLG. We have subsequently signed up to the Supporting Families Programme, which supersedes TFI, and aligns with our One Family Approach.

2.7.27 **Channel Panel/Prevent:** We have reconfigured our local partnership arrangements to respond to the updated national guidance and the new panel chair and deputy chairs have undertaken training and completed an audit against the required competencies. All cases considered at the Channel Panel follow a whole family approach and are tracked and reviewed at regular intervals. Each plan includes mitigation to reduce risk and there is a partnership approach with children's services and adult services inputs as required.

2.7.28 **Inspection preparedness and engagement:** There is ongoing activity to ensure preparedness for potential Ofsted notifications and a responsive approach to changes in inspection frameworks. The Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting took place in November 2020 and was an opportunity to demonstrate a strong self-evaluation of all our services that help and protect children young people and families.

Keeping People Safe and Well

2.7.29 **0 to 2's:** Nationally, there has been growing concern and focus on pre-birth to two year olds. Local practice has been reviewed and further developed to mitigate potential additional risk within the context of the pandemic and to ensure that those babies and children who are the most vulnerable are seen and supported. There are strong management oversight arrangements in place and enhanced connectivity between Children's Centres, FaSST, 0 to 19 and maternity services. This has included ante-natal contacts, young parents, those children requiring 18-month development checks, those children who are eligible for 2-year-old funded places but have not taken these up, and children living in situations of family conflict. This will continue to be quality assured.

2.7.30 **Life Journey work:** We have strengthened our Life Journey Approach to children in care, to support our children having bespoke life story work and collection of memories.

- 2.7.31 **Health and wellbeing:** The health and wellbeing of our children in care, care leavers, foster carers and adoptive parents has been maintained. There has been a specific focus on the emotional wellbeing of our children in care and care leavers to build their resilience and ensure their ongoing connectivity.
- 2.7.32 **Kingfisher Lodge (KFL):** All children in KFL have responded positively to national restrictions, they are all in education provision and there have almost no incidents of missing from care. An Ofsted assurance visit in January 2021, noted that KFL is a well-managed home with dedicated staff that are caring and nurturing and the home replicates a family environment.
- 2.7.33 **Holding On approach:** Where this is a continued risk of children entering care we have continued our Holding On approach for parents with the ambition that they are equipped to care for their children.
- 2.7.34 **Family proceedings:** We have continued to undertake family proceedings court work in timescale and the average weeks for completion has further improved, comparing well to the national average. North Lincolnshire has also led on the chairing of the fortnightly regional Humber Local Family Justice Board Sub Group and there is also a fortnightly youth court and a fortnightly trial court, both of which are operating well.
- 2.7.35 **Family Time:** We have remained committed to our ambition that children remain in their families, in their schools, and in their communities and we have continued to ensure that children and young people have had direct family time to maintain and build their emotional connectively and ongoing relationships with family.
- 2.7.36 **Regional Adoption Agency:** We have partnered with a regional adoption agency to find the best matches for our children across the region and improve the prospects for children to live in families. The 'Family Adoption Links' Regional Adoption Agency went live in October 2020 and North Lincolnshire is committed to contributing to a system that can achieve good outcomes for children and families. There is an ongoing focus on recruitment as a key priority area.
- 2.7.37 **Care Call:** Care Call has continued to function as part of the whole team approach to supporting the most vulnerable and we have maintained a platinum level of service. The Care Call Pendant scheme supports over 5000 vulnerable people and provides much needed support to people in their own homes.

- 2.7.38 **Alarm Monitoring:** The Security Control Centre provide safety and security 24 hours per day and they have continued to monitor over 200 Intruder and Fire Alarms for Council buildings, School premises and private companies.
- 2.7.39 **Domestic Abuse:** We have continued to lead and develop the council's strategic response to domestic abuse. Work is underway to ensure preparedness and compliance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requirements including the development of a new needs assessment and strategy, the establishment of a partnership board and implementation of the safe accommodation duty and support services. A project approach is in place and we are on target to finalise the needs assessment and strategy for sign off at the inaugural partnership board in July 2021.
- 2.7.40 **Participation:** We have strengthened our co-ordination and oversight of participation and we have further developed our consultation mechanisms through the quarterly thematic questions for all children and families who have experienced services and the BIG Q for children in care, the outcomes of which continue to shape and influence practice development and individual outcomes.
- 2.7.41 **Experience of services:** A significant consultation was undertaken with children, families and carers, subject to a variety of plans, and support to ascertain their views regarding services receiving during COVID-19. 549 children and adults provided feedback, the outcomes of which was extremely positive in terms of the support received, the time taken with children and families and the creative ways of intervening. Children, young people and families generally engaged with, and in some cases preferred, virtual engagement, though they articulated that they also appreciated face to face contact. This learning has been used to develop a more blended approach, which is based around the individual needs of the child and family.
- 2.7.42 **Quality and Advocacy:** Advocacy services have continued to deliver business as usual undertaking a mix of home visits and utilising a range of technology in order to offer and deliver independent return interviews to children missing from home and care. This has included prevention and safety advice, advice specific to COVID-19 and provision of any specific welfare information. An enhanced advocacy offer is also in place to capture children's lived experiences and provide support as needed for the very few children placed out of the area or where a child may have increased need such a through a period of transition.

2.7.43 **SENDIASS:** SENDIASS has continued to deliver business as usual through the provision of impartial, confidential and accessible information, advice guidance and advocacy to children with SEND and their parents/carers with respect to their SEND needs. The team have continued their virtual working arrangements, including attending virtual meetings with schools and they have successfully achieved the November 2020 target associated with the Information, Advice and Support Programme (IASP) and have received the full amount of funding available to date. Informal feedback evidences that the team's approach to empowerment is effective in building parental confidence.

2.7.44 **Communications:** An early response to the COVID-19 pandemic was to develop a bespoke children and families communications strategy, with a specific focus on tackling concerns about the 'hidden harm' that may impact upon children during the period of restrictions and school closures. A multi-agency communications group was established to help coordinate and amplify messaging across key agencies, multi-lingual safeguarding posters distributed, online content was reviewed and developed, and the public was encouraged to identify families in need via the #howRUnorthlincs media campaign. A new Families Direct e-newsletter has also been developed, to help target key messages and information aimed at parents and carers. 3238 parents/carers are currently registered to receive the Families Direct e-newsletter.

Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities

2.7.45 **Responding to the needs of communities:** Being flexible in responding to the needs of children, families, and communities, has been a key feature of the children's centre offer throughout the period of the pandemic. This has included maintaining a presence within the local communities, and maintaining contact with vulnerable children and families by telephone, video chat and face-to-face when appropriate in a safe and socially distanced way. Individual direct work with children and parents has continued to support them in a variety of ways to cope with and manage their emotional health and wellbeing, utilising online resources and face-to-face work when assessed as safe and appropriate. A targeted parent training offer has been delivered virtually both on a group work and individual basis to those parents identified as requiring extra help with aspects of family life and caring for children of all ages.

2.7.46 **Digital Inclusion:** We have procured MIFI devices for all care leavers in the community and supported them with access to the internet for those that need it, ensuring that young people remain connected to their support networks and their wider community

2.7.47 EU Resettlement Scheme: We have supported children and care leavers to apply for EU Settlement Scheme (as per government guidance) and provided information and support for children and families who were required to apply. This has enabled them to continue to live lawfully in the UK and access all services they are entitled to. We have also continued to expand the membership of the local UASC forum developing community services and support for this vulnerable group of children. This includes the development of a bespoke pathway that was agreed with partners for all UASC and former UASC who are now care leavers.

2.7.48 Safer Neighbourhoods: There has been a continued focus on protecting vulnerable people through a range of initiatives and community action including:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Panel which focuses on multi-agency responses to ASB victims and offenders
- Neighbourhood Action Teams are meeting virtually
- Crime reduction initiatives have progressed across North Lincolnshire, including car crime, burglary reduction, fraud awareness and cycle theft
- Night Safe Initiative in place to protect people in the Night Time Economy
- Neighbourhood Watch has now extended to over 230 groups
- Deployable CCTV installed to reduce ASB and protect vulnerable victims and communities
- Shop Watch and Town Centre Crime Reduction
- ReSet programme protecting vulnerable women
- Dangerous open water swimming project

Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal

2.7.49 Sector Led Improvement: Systems leaders have engaged in sector led improvement activity, including the regional self-assessment process and leading on peer review processes. It is recognised that our engagement in sector led improvement activity delivers dual benefits, promoting a culture of improvement for both us and the recipient which lends itself to our growth mindset and learning culture.

2.7.50 ADCS Yorkshire and Humber regional chair and co-ordination: The Director of Children took up the chair of the ADCS Yorkshire and Humber Regional Group in January 2020 and led on work across the region and at a regional level to shape and influence policy direction and share best practice. We have led on proactive communications across the region and ensured that meeting structures are responsive to need which provided a solid base on which to react to COVID-19.

2.7.51 Humber shaping and influencing: We have contributed to the development of the Humber Children's Partnership to ensure children and families are a key focus within the Humber Coast and Value Integrated Care System. There is a commitment to working collaboratively to add value and create synergies and improve health services for children and families across the Humber, while maintaining paramountcy of place.

2.8 Throughout COVID-19, core functions have continued to be undertaken and we have used creative methods to maintain and develop direct contact with children and families. This has been implemented through the telephone, video chat or face to face to meet their needs, in line with restrictions and visiting guidance and underpinned by robust risk assessments and operating procedures as required. Building on the outcomes of the Council's insights survey, further staff engagement across Children and Community Resilience and the government roadmap, easing of restrictions planning is underway. Some core functions and activities which have been undertaken virtually throughout COVID-19, have already recommenced face to face in council buildings, based on needs of children, families and staff and in line with government restrictions, including:

- Direct face to face intervention work in Children's Services, for example child protection conferences, children in need meetings and core groups. This enables children and families to be supported to engage and participate in the most constructive way possible and supports the safety and welfare of children, families and staff
- The Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and Integrated Multi Agency Partnership (IMAP) have returned to the physical office environment with appropriate safety restrictions in place.
- Specific support groups for vulnerable children, young people and parents have been approved in line with national guidance.

2.9 Families have continued to receive support as appropriate throughout COVID-19 to meet their individual needs, though it is proposed that some other group activities and interventions will be prioritised to take place face to face as soon as possible prior to the easing of restrictions. These will be underpinned by robust risk assessment to ensure compliance while meeting the needs of children, families and staff. These include targeted family support group work: where people would benefit from a specific face to face group intervention to help achieve improved outcomes.

2.10 Other added value functions and activities will be considered incrementally for easement, in line with the easing of restrictions as per the government roadmap.

2.11 Based on the review of 2020/21 and the current position, the following areas have been identified for further consideration and development during 2021/22:

- Embed the North Lincolnshire “**One Family Approach**” and Supporting Families Programme to ensure we make impact to improve the lived experience of children and families
- Embed the One Family Approach Hub to further strengthen the edge of care offer to maintain children in their families
- Embed the Risk Outside the Home approach across the partnership to further improve our response to children
- Continue to focus on workforce, recruitment, and retention with specific priority to recruit qualified social workers
- Consult and develop a new offer to children and families.
- Contribute to the new Community Safety Plan 2021 and work to address key priorities
- Continue to engage and support vulnerable adults and reduce anti-social behaviour
- Build community involvement in safer neighbourhoods
- Refresh our approach to “PREVENT” as one Council
- Continue to support “resettlement”

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and note the contribution made to the Council Plan ambitions, goals, priorities and outcomes, including the response made to the COVID-19 pandemic and the mid-term recovery

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 The progress made in developing services that help and work with vulnerable children, adults, their families and communities placed us in a good position to respond to COVID-19 through creative, innovative and flexible practices and it has enabled us to continue the excellent progress towards children being in their families, in their schools and in their communities and vulnerable adults safeguarded.

4.2 Business continuity across Children and Community Resilience has continued to be maintained and there is a continued focus on the wellbeing of our workforce.

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

Financial

- 5.1 Services being delivered in line with statutory functions, local responses and meeting need locally, reduces significant costs associated with external placements and growing demand for services. Overall CCR is showing an underspend, and this is reported to be down to the decrease in external agency placements and also due to staff vacancies. It is a priority to fill vacancies and there is a constant task to advertise, attract, appoint and retain staff to maintain our work with children and families and the anticipated longer-term impact of the pandemic on children and families. The overall budget position for children presents a continued risk associated with demand management across the system. This can only be mitigated by a strong and experienced workforce, good effective assessment, decision making and case management whilst at the same time providing local responses to meet need. North Lincolnshire foster carers provide an invaluable role in caring for children locally.
- 5.2 The financial implications of COVID-19 are being closely monitored against the emergency funding from government. The impact of funding assumptions and financial sustainability are regularly reported to Cabinet.
- 5.3 There are children and families who need help and protection as a direct result of the pandemic who would not normally require services. Further support and capacity is likely to be required to support these families within the context of “hardship” and emerging need during the coming months and years.

Workforce

- 5.4 Overall within CCR we have more workers with “no absence” than the average as well as below average “turn over”. We do know that the recruitment and retention of qualified social workers in front line social work contact, referral, assessment and case management is an area that requires constant and priority attention.

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

- 6.1 National advice and guidance has been incorporated into the local response to the pandemic as it has become available. The enactment of the Coronavirus Act 2020 led to certain relaxations of statutory requirements and the introduction of new powers and statutory instruments.
- 6.2 COVID-19 risk assessments have been completed as required.

6.3 Council services contribute toward the community safety responsibilities.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Any decisions and actions taken have been done in consultation as appropriate

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Cabinet consider the report and note the contribution made to the Council Plan ambitions, goals, priorities and outcomes, including the response made to the COVID-19 pandemic and the mid-term recovery

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NR

Author(s): Ann-Marie Brierley, Stuart Minto, Nikki Alcock
Date: June 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None

This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020-21: LEARNING, SKILLS & CULTURE

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To present an annual review against the Council Plan 2018-21 in the context of the COVID-19 response and mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 The report provides an overview of performance for the year and achievement against the ambitions, goals and priorities of the council plan.
- 1.3 It also informs cabinet of the work undertaken across the portfolio to support the response to the pandemic and contribution to the covid-19 mid-term recovery plan priorities.
- 1.4 As part of the next phase of strategic planning the report highlights areas of focus for 2021-22 and beyond.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2018-21 sets the strategic framework for the operational delivery of council functions. This report demonstrates the activity and performance across the Learning, Skills & Culture portfolio that have contributed to the strategic ambitions and priorities.
- 2.2 The operating environment during 2020-21 has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the report outlines how we have reacted, responded, and adjusted our responsibilities in implementation of government guidelines and to ensure business continuity of council business.
- 2.3 The Council's approach throughout this period has been rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the council plan, and furthered

through the strong partnerships within North Lincolnshire, framed under the following priorities:

- keeping staff and residents safe and well
- protecting the most vulnerable
- protecting the local economy
- enabling communities to remain resilient.

Whilst at the same time ensuring the council is well led through a resilient workforce, good governance, and sound financial practice across the Council.

Headlines contributing to the Council Plan and Covid priorities include:

2.4 **Well led: Business Continuity**

2.4.1 The health and wellbeing of residents have been prioritised within our business continuity plans and contingencies. Throughout each phase of national restrictions, community facilities were assessed for Covid security, so that functionality could be resumed in a safe and timely way for residents and staff.

2.4.2 As national restrictions greatly impacted on the usual functionality of much of the council's offer to communities, opportunities were taken to further enhance our online resources and enable a continued offer to residents, including:

- 5,600 people attended nearly 400 livestreaming fitness classes during the second lockdown
- 7,790 'visits' to 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, North Lincolnshire Museum, the Rural Life Museum and Normanby Hall using virtual tours created with innovative 3D modelling technology
- engagement with digital library resources increased by over 200%
- the Music Hub successfully transitioned online, enabling continuous provision for children and young people

Other aspects of the council's core offer continued throughout:

- the world leading North Lincolnshire Imagination Library continued to reach most (91%) of our under 5's, with 7,367 books per month being delivered directly to families
- active lifestyles activators continued to reach out to vulnerable people, making 1,400 contacts throughout the pandemic

2.4.2 Workforce resilience has been exceptional within Learning, Skills & Culture, with nearly all staff available for work throughout the pandemic. Colleagues have shown high levels of adaptability and willingness to be deployed flexibly to meet the demands of the moment. This has included being trained remotely to provide new functions such as contact for

clinically extremely vulnerable people and stepping into new frontline roles such as community enablement and contact tracing.

- 2.4.3 In keeping with the One Family Approach, the ambition throughout the pandemic has been to keep children in their families, in their schools and in their communities. This has been the foundation of our approach to business continuity, working in partnership with school leaders and as a whole council team to ensure children and young people were safeguarded and could continue to access their learning and support networks as best as possible given the national restrictions. Notwithstanding intermittent closures of learner bubbles as required by public health guidance, schools and settings have striven to remain functioning and have done so admirably.
- 2.4.4 Across schools, colleges and settings, workforces have shown very high levels of resilience. Leaders of schools and settings across North Lincolnshire have continued to make informed and well-judged decisions to manage risk at each stage of the pandemic – keeping the welfare and education of children at the heart of decision making.
- 2.4.5 As permitted, priority has been given to ensuring health and social care staff (including staff in special schools and children’s disability services) have been offered the vaccine to provide added protection for vulnerable children and young people. This, along with substantial protective measures taken within settings has added to workforce resilience.
- 2.4.6 With local support and interventions, 100% of early years settings sustained their businesses throughout Covid and all schools were successfully supported to manage leadership succession. 9 out of 10 schools and nearly all early years settings remained good or outstanding as judged by Ofsted.

2.5 **Well Led: Governance and Assurance**

- 2.5.1 The annual governance statement for Learning, Skills & Culture demonstrates the comprehensive approach to assurance and oversight across this diverse portfolio. Essential structures for ensuring partnership governance continued throughout, including the Education Standards Board and SEND Standards Board. Public accountability was maintained through reports approved through the democratic process and through scrutiny panels, for example the SEND Annual Report. Audit reports, external review and contribution to regional peer challenge provided additional oversight and opportunities to further develop practice.
- 2.5.2 The Matrix Standard was reaccredited to the careers information advice & guidance function and attained by Adult Education Community Learning for the first time.

2.6 **Keeping people safe and well**

- 2.6.1 Routine standards and effectiveness functions for monitoring, challenge, support and intervention to schools and settings were largely stood down at the start of the pandemic. The capacity released was diverted to supporting school leaders to manage and interpret the vast quantity of national guidance that was being released at pace in the face of national restrictions and managing the public health emergency.
- 2.6.2 In May 2020, the council provided schools with a set of five principles to shape how the local authority would respond to the pandemic, founded chiefly on the adherence to national guidance, strong support for decision making and high levels of trust and confidence in school leaders to manage for their context. This principled approach created a shared understanding and basis to steer through the events, in the most uncertain of times.
- 2.6.3 Online cluster meetings for school leaders proved an effective means for knowledge exchange, sharing of practice and forward planning as the pandemic unfolded. Training was moved online, as were governor meetings and keeping in touch meetings with representatives of the school-related trade unions and managerial associations.
- 2.6.4 Support for vulnerable children and young people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was sustained and developed. All Education Health Care Plans were reviewed ahead of the summer term, and daily tasking meetings ensured a line of sight to the most vulnerable and their access to in-school learning. Council specialist teachers for vision, hearing, physical disability, autism and social-emotional needs continued to keep in touch with children, young people and their families throughout the pandemic - liaising with schools and settings where needed to ensure that needs continued to be met whether learning was taking place at home or in school. The Cygnets continued to offer overnight short breaks for families of children with disabilities throughout the year and as conditions permitted. Children's disability services continued to provide additional short break activities through a blended approach of remote on-line activity and individually where this was possible. Disability social workers continued to support families throughout the covid challenge using innovative approaches to communication, alongside practical advice and support to families.
- 2.6.5 Vulnerable families were supported to access home learning resources and support, including the creation and delivery of over 600 reading and literacy packs. Laptops and dongles were distributed to disadvantaged children to support online learning. Additional arrangements were made for children transitioning between education phases, particularly year 11 into post-16 to reflect the disruption to their GCSE courses.
- 2.6.6 The North Lincolnshire Free School Meal Scheme was implemented for October half-term 2020 and continued throughout the subsequent school holidays, with almost 6,000 children benefitting from vouchers for the purchase of food from local supermarkets.

2.6.7 Whilst steeped in managing the impact of the pandemic, transformation and developments within education and inclusion functions have continued:

- implementing a digital hub for education, health and care plans to increase family engagement in the process and to speed up assessments.
- reviewing and strengthening arrangements for Initial Teacher Training
- with stakeholders, including families, developing a new SEND and Inclusion Plan for 2021-24
- launching a further SEND capital competition for locality-based social, emotional, mental health provision at secondary age in Winterton and Scunthorpe and complementing that already established in Barton
- establishing a new 20 place provision for key stage 2 age children with social, emotional, mental health needs at Wyredale Road and enabling the relocation of Coritani Academy to high quality accommodation
- ensuring a sponsor was appointed by Department for Education for our post-16 SEND Free School, for September 2022 opening

2.7 Enabling resilient and flourishing communities

2.7.1 The pandemic proved to be a binding factor within communities, leading to strengthened relationships within neighbourhoods and between the council, individual volunteers, and voluntary & community groups. Working together has been both highly localised and place-based, as well as formal and informal. Community volunteering was further strengthened through place-based brokerage and the TeamNL volunteer hub. 458 new volunteers were recruited and deployed to local vaccination centres, to existing community organisations, and to provide targeted support for vulnerable residents. This was in addition to the groundswell of neighbourliness engendered through the 'Do One Thing' appeal. Community Champions were recruited as the credible and informed local voice, providing localised feedback on what was working and helping to shape targeted responses to Covid, e.g. faith and community leaders worked with the council to increase the reach of the vaccination programme. These community first approaches created the conditions for ensuring residents who may have become vulnerable or who were at increased risk were enabled to stay safe, well and connected.

2.7.2 The council led the place level response to enabling residents who were deemed clinically extremely vulnerable to shield from Covid. By employing an approach rooted in organisational development, initially c7,000 residents were able to access support for unmet needs – rising to over 11,000 as the vaccination programme gained momentum. This allowed people to stay safe, with access to food, medicine, and social contact. The shielding response has been the subject of a previous report where it is covered in detail; it remains an exemplar of how outcomes can be achieved for residents by working with and through communities, in the spirit of the council plan and to our organisational values. The legacy

of community enablement will remain at the centre of our approaches into the future.

- 2.7.3 Community facilities and functions have been brought back as national restrictions, staff deployment and local priorities have permitted, with the focus on ensuring a health and wellbeing offer for residents. Currently at stage 3 of the national roadmap, all council run facilities are open with covid secure arrangements in place. Our valued volunteers at community led libraries are being supported and retrained where necessary to recommence functionality of those sites.
- 2.7.4 While reacting and responding to the pandemic has been a significant factor for community functions, the drive to transform and develop the community offer has continued. Backed by £5M of capital investment, the community hub programme has continued to transform the way in which residents can access the community offer. The North Axholme community hub opened in August 2020 at Crowle Market Hall, including a pop-up post office to meet community needs. The Brigg community hub opened in October 2020 at The Angel, with the Ashby Community Hub opening in March 2021. Fully integrated, the six core hubs each provide information, advice and guidance on council and community services and facilities, a library, access to computers, health lifestyle advice, children and adult group activities and community space. Increasingly, the offer at each hub is being differentiated to the community, for example in the provision of adult education and family learning courses.
- 2.7.5. Alongside the six core community hubs, work has continued to encourage greater community ownership of the council's assets so that these can be shaped to meet the needs and aspirations of each area. Oasis Community Learning has adopted the former Park library and is creating their own version of a community hub. Likewise, Messingham Parish Council has adopted the library site to develop the functionality for their residents, and Haxey library is moving forward towards a volunteer led model.
- 2.7.6 The council's ambition to further strengthen and develop the cultural offer within communities has progressed. A consultation was held on the future of Baysgarth House Museum, with a bright vision for the facility being taken forward with new partners to celebrate the heritage of Barton upon Humber and the local area. Normanby Hall secured Arts Council funding for enhancing the visitor experience, including interactive digital displays that bring to life the international heritage of the hall.
- 2.7.7 Transformation in leisure functions continued to yield an impact. Pre-covid, the renewed focus on customer experience, investment in staffing and facilities, and a transformed business model that combined social and commercial value had created a sustainable financial position after many years of in-year deficits. Following investment in the quality of the offer, memberships to Normanby Hall Golf Club increased by 67% over

the year. The Pods was awarded the Best Performing Leisure Centre (2019/20 data) in England by the Association Public Service Excellence.

2.8 Enabling economic growth and renewal

2.8.1 The drive to reach and empower people towards employment has developed further. A partnership with Department of Work and Pensions created a youth hub that has recently engaged 90 young people over a five-month period, with 54 already progressing into apprenticeships, training, or paid employment. The Action Station engaged and supported 388 people virtually, supporting job search and training requests. The North Lincolnshire Building Better Opportunities Programme enabled residents to be supported with their financial affairs, benefit support, housing issues, training and mental health and wellbeing. The potential of Normanby Hall was further developed for providing a safe and nurturing environment for people to gain skills and confidence, with the embedding of on-site partnerships with Skills Plus and most recently, R-Evolve. Adult Education and Community Learning has continued to develop meaningful progression pathways, with the impact of the reinvigorated service being recognised by Ofsted.

2.9 Priorities for 2021/22

Priorities across the portfolio of Learning, Skills & Culture moving forward include:

- embedding the learning from the pandemic and the considerable potential for community enablement into plans that underpin the council priority for *enabling resilient and flourishing communities*
- strengthening the connection between physical activity and health & wellbeing, in support of commissioning intents across the health and care system, including social prescription
- addressing the anticipated shortfall in leisure and culture income until public confidence and behaviours recover from the pandemic
- realising the opportunity to enable greater community engagement in culture and arts by bringing the venue management of the Baths Hall and Plowright Theatre in-house, and developing the partnership for Baysgarth Museum
- developing the ambition and vision for a new, interactive cultural attraction within the heart of Scunthorpe as part of the towns fund plans
- progressing proposals for an Epworth Community Hub through consultation, design and build stages, creating a new integrated facility for the town and improving transport infrastructure
- refreshing and reinvigorating approaches to community literacy
- further developing the local implementation of the Holiday Activity and Food Programme, providing quality experiences for children and young people, especially those eligible for free school meals
- working with partners and businesses to further develop employability and prosperity opportunities for people with additional needs

- providing place leadership in readiness for national policy on skills
- driving forward the place ambition for our youngest children getting the Best Start, including developing the scope for 'shaping places for healthy lives' for which funding has been awarded through competition
- developing the 'high support – high challenge' peer leader approach to school improvement
- working with Schools Forum to mitigate the changes to combined services funding arrangements.
- continuing the transformation to locality-based provision for children with social, emotional, mental health needs and decommissioning centralised provision
- commissioning for the new post-16 free school for young people with complex needs
- working with partners, including the Parents in Participation Forum, to achieve the ambitions within the new SEND & Inclusion Plan
- as an area, being ready for the joint Ofsted and CQC inspection of local arrangements for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and Ofsted inspections of children's services and Adult Education and Community Learning
- further integrating functions within the education and inclusion services

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and note the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions and response made to date to the covid pandemic and mid-term recovery.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The core functions across Learning, Skills & Culture have been effectively maintained and a range of systems and processes updated and implemented to enable efficient and agile operational delivery and improved customer experience.
- 4.2 The positive working practices that have been successfully embedded throughout this period will be considered and built on as part of the next phase of strategic planning for the council.
- 4.3 The overall risk environment across Learning, Skills & Culture has been well managed. Audit reports and the evaluation of the annual statement of governance provide robust evidence of leadership and management oversight.

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

5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 Learning Skills & Culture overall expenditure in 2020/21 was £48.3M, comprised of £25.1M of dedicated schools grant, £10.9M of core council

funding, £3.5M of other income and £10.9M of grants, including covid related grants. Budget management was complicated by the significant disruption across all service areas arising from the pandemic. Fees and charges receipts were lost with the mandated closure of facilities. Prudent management of vacancies, staff deployment and reduced mileage costs offset losses. Covid pressures of £5.413m were identified and additional funding allocated accordingly. Financial closedown allowed £1.042m of core funding to be put to reserves in readiness for an undoubtedly challenging trading year ahead. £1.143m was transferred to the DSG earmarked reserve at the year-end for oversight by Schools Forum.

5.1.2 There are no direct financial impacts of this report. The highlighted risks and opportunities will be managed through the usual processes of the council budget setting and monitoring.

5.2 **Workforce**

Staff within this functional area have completed a well-being assessment and identified needs met. Covid secure arrangements continue in line with national guidance and local risk assessments. At 5.93 days, average staff absence across the 599 employees (461 full time equivalents) within Learning, Skills and Culture continues to be well below the council average of 7.77 days. The large majority (71%) of staff had no sickness absence in 2020/21, compared to 61% of the whole council workforce.

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

6.1 National advice and guidance have been incorporated into the local response to the pandemic as it has become available. The enactment of the Coronavirus Act 2020 led to certain relaxations of statutory requirements and the introduction of new powers and statutory instruments.

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

7.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

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

8.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That Cabinet notes the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions and response made to date to the covid-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery.as outlined in the report.

DIRECTOR OF LEARNING, SKILLS & CULTURE

Church Square House

SCUNTHORPE

North Lincolnshire

DN15 6NR

Author: Pete Thorpe

Date: 29 June 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

2020-21 REVIEW: GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To present a review against the Council Plan 2018-21 in the context of the COVID-19 response and mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 The report provides an overview of performance for the year and achievement against the ambitions, goals, priorities and outcomes of the council plan.
- 1.3 It also informs cabinet of the work undertaken across the service to support the response to the pandemic and contribution to the COVID-19 mid-term recovery plan priorities.
- 1.4 As part of the next phase of strategic planning the report highlights areas of focus for 2021-22 and beyond.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council Plan 2018-21 sets the strategic framework for the operational delivery of council functions. This report demonstrates the performance across the Governance and Partnership area contributing to the council's strategic ambitions and priorities.
- 2.2 The operating environment during 2020-21 has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the report outlines how we have reacted, responded and adjusted our responsibilities in implementation of government initiatives, legislation and guidance to ensure that our services continued to deliver and our role in enabling and supporting businesses, communities and residents continued.
- 2.3 The Council's approach throughout the pandemic has been rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the council plan, and furthered

through the strong partnerships, one Council approach, excellent assurance, and financial practice, framed under the following priorities:

- keeping staff and residents safe and well
- protecting the most vulnerable
- protecting the local economy
- enabling communities to remain resilient.

2.5 Over the period service performance has improved or maintained in most measures, with the few been directly affected by COVID-19 related factors, and these have now rapidly improved during 2021/22. Key headlines contributing to the Council Plan and COVID-19 priorities include:

2.5.1 **Well Led: Business Continuity** - business has continued across all functions to ensure that the council operates legally, internal controls remain robust, assurance processes are in place, information governance remains strong, IT systems maintained available and financial accounts prepared, whilst simultaneously adapting and supporting the overall COVID-19 response. The vast majority of staff within Governance and Partnerships have been working from home since the beginning of the pandemic, continuing to deliver for the council and residents by making swift adaptations to systems, processes and professional practice to ensure organisational assurance and sustainability. For example:

- Facilitating over 150 statutory council meetings through MS Teams, enabling public access and increased participation with over 1000+ hits recorded on the council's website for live streaming.
- Enabled the council to successfully move to an agile at scale model with over 1,800 employees continuing to deliver services virtually from home.
- Facilitated education appeal hearings on MS Teams to ensure admissions arrangements were not delayed.
- Internal Audits were completed virtually to ensure assurance of internal control systems was provided and sufficient evidence to report to the Audit Committee.

2.5.2 **Well Led: Transformation** – while reacting and responding to the pandemic has been a significant factor, the drive to transform and develop the way we operate has continued.

- Modernised customer contact for residents with new digital capabilities, self-service and call-back options improving responsiveness for customers.
- Increasing our efficiency and effectiveness of legal processes by enabling court applications via MS Teams, particularly in support of vulnerable children and adults and moving the majority of prosecutions to electronic court bundling systems.

- Enhancing business resilience, environmental performance and value for money as we continue to migrate council IT systems to the “cloud”.
- Initiating and implementing major IT systems replacements to ensure that service delivery is efficient, modern and enhances end-user productivity.
- Introduced a digital electoral canvass resulting in early publication of electoral registers in readiness for use in the 2021 elections.
- Enhanced ways in which residents and businesses transact with the council digitally, including:
 - An online assessment tool providing a self-service offer so people can understand and plan for potential care costs at the earliest opportunity.
 - An online portal for blue badges applications enabling management of the full lifecycle of the badge together with an online payment facility.
 - Wholly digitised the local land charges function.
 - An appointment based bulky item collection service to improve service user experience.

2.5.3 **Well Led: Financial Resilience and Sustainability** – we have continued to safeguard public funds to ensure that they are available and used for their intended purpose:

- Audited accounts 2019-20 were published within legal timescales – only achieved by 45% of councils.
- Internal audit plan substantially completed and audit opinion produced in line with auditing standards despite the impact of Covid-19 on workloads and priorities.
- Developed assurance processes for the COVID-19 Support Grants to business reducing the risk of fraud and payment errors.
- There have been no challenges to procurement activity. Contracts let include the Construction and Highways Professional Services Framework £6m; Highways Labour and Street Lighting Services and Works £11m, the Northern Junction £4.5m, Demand Responsive Transport £2.5m, the Finance system £1.3m. These account for 59.3% of the whole life value of total contracts let.
- Identified for recovery £839k of unused direct payments to support the financial sustainability of adult services budgets and future service provision.
- Monitored and assured effective use of more than 30 COVID-19 related grants meeting the national reporting requirements.

2.5.4 **Well Led: Governance and Assurance** – we have improved and maintained high standards and performance:

- Coordinated and shaped key strategic partnerships throughout the period, including having local governance as part of the Humber Local Resilience Forum arrangements.

- Maintained nationally accredited public sector standards across information governance, IT connectivity and security capabilities, strengthening the council's credibility, and increasing trust from partners and government departments in data handling and sharing to assist COVID-19 response and planning.
- Improved timeliness on many of our customer transaction process times leading to increased customer confidence and satisfaction.
- Sustained improvement in level of complaints received through resolution at the earliest point.

2.5.5 Keeping People Safe and Well:

- Enabled shielding provision to support vulnerable and extremely clinically vulnerable residents during the Covid-19 pandemic through effective customer contact provision, extended operating hours and outbound welfare calls.
- Enabling the distribution of over 1,500 DEFRA emergency assistance grants to residents to support them with day to day living essentials.
- Supporting around 500 residents, required to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace through timely processing of self-isolation payments.

2.5.4 Enabling Resilient and Flourishing Communities:

- Improved broadband provision with 96% of properties now having access to superfast speeds with 53% having ultrafast coverage, enabling residents to connect to education, learning, employment and wellbeing opportunities.
- enhanced community resilience, capacity and outcomes through the timely and effective provision of community grants.
- Continued to develop and strengthen community partnerships through effective liaison and relationships with Town & Parish Councils.
- Enabling additional support to almost 7,000 residents through a reduction of up to £150 in their Council Tax liability and in addition made available flexible payment options to all households to assist them in managing their household finances.

2.5.3 Enabling Economic Growth and Renewal:

- Extended gigabit capable fibre broadband provision from 2% to 12% of properties in North Lincolnshire to support the competitiveness of urban and rural based businesses and as an incentive to attract new enterprises.

- Enabled the timely provision of changes to business rates and business support grants during the Covid-19 pandemic to provide financial resilience to local businesses.

2.6 Based on the review of 2020-21 and current position the following areas have been identified for further consideration and development during 2021-22:

- Business Rates – performance against tax base assumptions for 2021-22 tax yield.
- Council Tax - review of discounts and supplements to be applied in 2022-23.
- Promote e-billing for Council tax for April 2022 go live.
- Enabling safe and transparent decision making in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines.
- Working with the Local Government Boundary Commission to facilitate completion and implementation of their review of our warding arrangements.
- In accordance with legislative requirements, continue to explore virtual platforms to enhance flexibility of partnership meetings and elected member business.
- Continuous assessment of customer experience, optimising the benefits from the omni-channel system for customer contact.
- Commissioning projects include Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service 0-19 years and Substance Misuse service.
- Drive further improvement in the council's digital maturity by delivering key IT initiatives including core system and infrastructure modernisation, cloud-based services and agile IT desktops which underpin the Digital Vision.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the report and note the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions, outcomes and priorities including the response made to date to the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The core functions across Governance and Partnerships have been effectively maintained and a range of systems and processes updated and implemented to enable efficient and agile operational delivery and improved customer experience.

4.2 The positive working practices that have been successfully embedded throughout this period will be considered and built on as part of the next phase of strategic planning and organisational development for the council.

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

5.1 Financial

The total cost of operational delivery for governance and partnerships 2020/21, including COVID-19 response was £17.4m against the allocated budget of £17.58m. After applying the COVID-19 specific grants the net cost of services was £15.2m. There were several factors that contributed to keeping overall costs below budget, including a general pandemic related slowdown of spending on core costs such as staffing and reflecting improvements in failure demand leading to reduced insurance costs and liabilities. Transformation and improvement made to the council's telephony infrastructure has also contributed to efficiencies. And lastly the contribution the team have made to the COVID-19 response by redirection of core resources funded by COVID-19 grants enabled effective use of external funding. Additional costs incurred as part of the council response to and recovery from COVID-19 is highlighted below:

Theme	£'000's
Test, trace and isolate	417
Agile and digital	208
Elections – COVID secure measures	38
Contribution to Humber Local Resilience Forum emergency arrangements	165
Deferred savings	409
Loss of income	114
Protecting vulnerable people	322

5.2 Workforce

The FTE for governance and partnerships at the end of 2020/21 stood at 262.53 with an improved level of attendance: 67% no absences compared to 50% the previous year; an average of 5.04 days lost to sickness compared to previous year of 7.4 days. Turnover during the year was 6% broken down as 11 resignations and 6 retirements.

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

6.1 National advice and guidance has been incorporated into the local response to the pandemic as it has become available. The enactment of the Coronavirus Act 2020 led to certain relaxations of statutory requirements and the introduction of new powers and statutory instruments.

6.2 The key risks to governance and partnerships going forward are:

- Cyber threats and associated data protection risks.
- Increase cost of insurance premium and level of self-insurance required.
- Project risk - implementation of new finance system.

These are being managed through the operational risk registers with controls in place and appropriate mitigations.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Not applicable for the purposes of this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Cabinet notes the contribution made to the Council Plan strategic ambitions, outcomes and priorities including the response made to date to the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-term recovery as outlined in the report.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NR
Author: Becky McIntyre
Date: 16 June 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None

This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

LEVELLING UP FUND

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To give Cabinet an update on the Levelling Up submission made to Government.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Levelling Up Fund was announced at the 2020 Spending Review to support communities in realising their vision. The Fund will focus on capital investment in local infrastructure thereby building on and consolidating prior programmes such as the Local Growth Fund and Towns Fund.

Government have recognised that levelling up requires a multi-faceted approach, from supercharging our city regions, to supporting our struggling towns, to catalysing industrial clusters in the sectors that will drive the future economy – the Fund will deliver as part of a broad package of complementary UK-wide interventions, including:

- The **UK Community Renewal Fund**, which will provide local areas across the UK with access to £220 million of additional funding as they prepare for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund due to launch in 2022. As EU structural funds tail off after 2022-23, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will succeed them as a programme distinct from the UKCRF and help to level up and create opportunity across the UK in places most in need in a manner distinct but complementary to the Levelling Up Fund, through investment in skills, enterprise and employment.
- The **UK Community Ownership Fund**, which will empower communities to protect vital community assets in their area by providing funding to take ownership over them, in support of the social wellbeing of local communities.
- The **Plan for Jobs**, which builds on DWP's Jobcentre Plus network, offering tailored support to help people find work, including through Youth Hubs, Restart, and Kickstart. The Plan for Jobs will support longer term recovery from the unprecedented economic impact of Covid-19.
- The **Freeports programme**, establishing national hubs for global trade and investment in every nation of the UK, promoting regeneration and job creation and creating hotbeds for innovation that will intensify the economic

impact of our ports and generate increased economic activity in areas in need of regeneration across the UK.

- The **UK Infrastructure Bank**, which will provide financing support to local authority and private sector infrastructure projects to help meet UK Government objectives on climate change and regional economic growth. It will also establish an advisory function to help with the development and delivery of projects.
- The **Towns Fund**, providing £3.6 billion to drive the economic regeneration of deprived towns and deliver long-term economic and productivity growth, by renewing and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that drives growth, improves user experience, and ensures future sustainability.

2.1 Through the Levelling Up Fund, it is expected Members of Parliament, back one bid that they see as a priority.

The number of bids that a local authority in the first category can make will relate to the number of MPs in our area.

We can submit one bid for every MP whose constituency lies wholly within their boundary. Every local authority can submit at least one bid. In our case where an MP's constituency crosses multiple local authorities, one local authority should take responsibility as the lead bidder and local areas should work together to designate that lead bidder.

The Fund will focus investment in, individual projects or a programme of projects that require up to £20m of funding. However, there is also scope for investing in larger high value transport projects, by exception.

Bids above £20m and below £50m will be accepted for transport projects only, such as road schemes, and can be submitted by any bidding local authority.

The first round of the Fund focusses on three themes: smaller transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas; town centre and high street regeneration; and support for maintaining and expanding the portfolio of cultural and heritage assets, in particular:

- **Transport** investments including (but not limited to) public transport, active travel, bridge repairs, bus priority lanes, local road improvements and major structural maintenance, and accessibility improvements. We are requesting proposals for high-impact small, medium and by exception larger local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth, and improve the experience of transport users.
- **Regeneration and town centre investment**, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, **invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction, and bring public services and safe community spaces** into town and city centres.
- **Cultural investment** maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing museums, galleries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces) and heritage assets as well as creating new community-owned spaces to support the arts and serve as cultural spaces.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 North Lincolnshire Council as a priority one area submitted 3 package bids, the bids are aligned with our Economic Growth Plan, emerging Local Plan and Towns Fund Programme:

Package	Constituency	Theme	LUF Ask
1	Brigg and Goole	Employment	£19,997,917
2	Scunthorpe	Town Centre Regeneration – Scunthorpe	£19,999,855
3	NL	Housing	£49,999,811
Total			£89,997,613

3.2 Support is in place from our three constituent MPs and we have an opportunity to submit a joint bid with NELC in the priority 2 round. NLC are acting as lead bidder with ERYC for package 1.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 N/A

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

5.1 Financial

There are no financial implications to report at this moment in time. All projects will be subject to Treasury Green Book full business case.

5.2 Staffing

N/A

5.3 Property

All property issues will be addressed through the formulation of Full Business Cases.

5.4 IT

There are no IT implications.

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

6.1 Nothing to report at this stage in the programme.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 We will undertake programme-wide level impact assessment, relevant project-level impact assessment and relevant Environmental Impact Assessments through Stage 2 of the programme.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Consultation has taken place with all relevant stakeholders, prior to submission.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Cabinet notes the submission of our Levelling Up bids to Government.

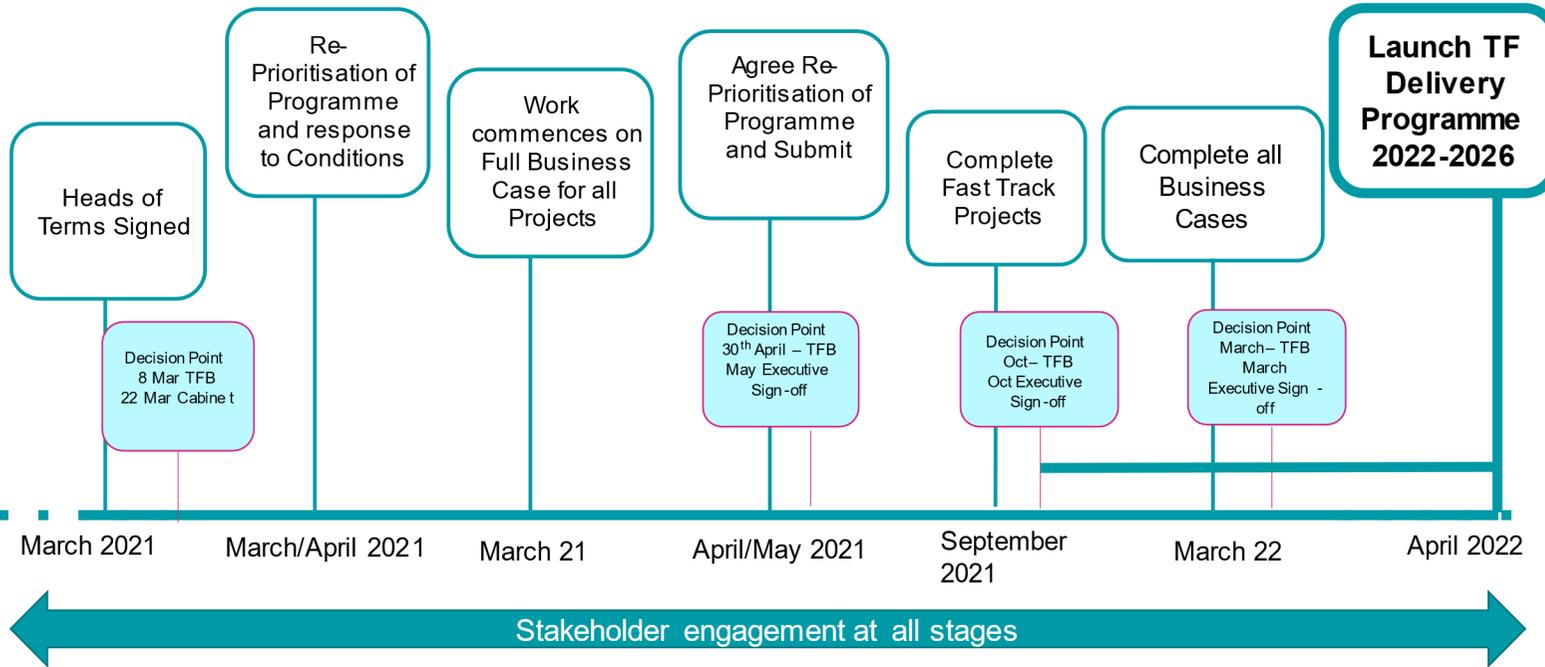
9.2 That Cabinet receives a further report outlining the details of the 3 packages of work as the Full Business Cases are completed.

DIRECTOR: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Author: LP
Date: 22 June 2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –

Timeline: Towns Fund Stage 2



This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

THE NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE IMAGINATION LIBRARY REPORT 2021

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To introduce the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library Report.
- 1.2 To approve and publish the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library Report.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In North Lincolnshire we are passionate about giving all our children the best possible start and we know developing a love of reading is critical to the effective development of a child's future. This report is a celebration of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and the many achievements that have been enabled for children and families. It also sets out our plans for the future ensuring that children's early literacy continues to be a priority within North Lincolnshire.
- 2.3 This report demonstrates the impact of the investment made by North Lincolnshire council since the programme's inception in 2013. Children who first registered with the Imagination Library when it was launched in 2013 reached the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage in 2016. Since 2016, we have collected and analysed data which clearly shows that children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their unregistered counterparts each year. The impact of the Imagination Library is not confined to the EYFS and continues to evidence itself on a child's journey throughout school. In 2017 and 2018 research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts in the end of Year 1 Phonics Screening Test. The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each year. In 2019 further research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts at the end of Key Stage 1. The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each subject area.

- 2.4 The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library continues to go from strength to strength and is promoted as a model of international excellence. North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library is the highest achieving UK programme since its launch in 2013. Parents frequently comment about how lucky they feel that North Lincolnshire Council supports the Imagination Library programme and the difference it makes to their children's lives, and a love of sharing reading in the home.
- 2.5 The extensive reach of the Imagination Library across North Lincolnshire makes the biggest impact on some of our most vulnerable families and young children. In North Lincolnshire the Imagination Library makes a real difference to our children who do not have the same opportunities as their peers or are at risk of underachieving - most notably for summer born children (boys in particular), children with special educational needs and children whose first home language is not English.
- 2.6 By working in partnership and taking a 'One Family Approach' we have created a pathway of expertise and resources that are easily accessible, creative, and simple which enable families to build and extend their children's home learning environment. Almost 2,000 residents access the North Lincolnshire Imagination Monthly newsletter for ideas and inspiration. Sharing books in the home supports so much more than a love of reading. Time together enjoying books promotes secure attachments that support the development of confidence, self-esteem, health, and well-being.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Adopt and publish the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library Report 2021

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 This report is a celebration of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and the many achievements that have been enabled for children and families. It also sets out our plans for the future, ensuring that children's early literacy continues to be a priority within North Lincolnshire.

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

- 5.1 There are no specific financial or other resource implications in relation to adopting / publishing this plan.

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

- 6.1 There are no other relevant implications.

- 6.2 Equalities issues under the Equalities Act 2010 have been considered and included in this plan.
- 6.3 This plan is closely linked to the Council Plan, supporting its aspiration and ambition to be the #BestPlace for our residents and the #BestCouncil we can be.
- 6.4 No environmental implications or significant risks have been identified as arising from the recommendation to adopt this plan.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 7.1 N/A

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 8.1 No conflicts of interest have been identified.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Imagination Library Report for 2021 is approved and published.

DIRECTOR OF LEARNING, SKILLS AND CULTURE

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
Author: Sandra Simmons
Date: 02/06/2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –
North Lincolnshire data and international research led by Swansea University on behalf of Dolly Wood UK.

DRAFT

Page 168

The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library



**North
Lincolnshire**
Council

www.northlincs.gov.uk

Welcome to our report on The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library. North Lincolnshire Council is passionate about giving all our children the best start. A love of reading is critical to the effective development of a child's educational future. Our own research into the impact of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library shows the significant benefit that registering with the programme has on children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and beyond.

The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library continues to go from strength to strength and is promoted as a model of international excellence. North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library is the highest achieving UK programme since its launch in 2013. Nine out of ten children under the age of 5 in North Lincolnshire are registered with the Imagination Library, which means that currently 7,367 children are receiving a free book every month. Families have told us what the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and reading together means to them and their children.

We know sharing books in the home supports so much more than a love of reading. Time together enjoying books promotes secure attachments that support the development of confidence, self-esteem, health, and well-being. Having those special times together builds communication, listening, understanding, and talking skills, and of course helps to lay the foundations of good literacy skills.

This report is a celebration of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and the many achievements that have been enabled for children and families. It also sets out our plans for the future, ensuring that children's early literacy continues to be a priority within North Lincolnshire.



Councillor Julie Reed
Cabinet Member for Children and Families





The Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire continues to be **the most successful programme in the world**, including partnership working with other local authorities.



91% of our under 5's receive a quality age appropriate book delivered to their home address once a month. That is a fantastic **7367 books every month!**



Parents frequently comment about **how lucky they feel** that North Lincolnshire Council supports the Imagination Library programme.



A unique aspect of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire is the **diverse range of complementary activities** promoting the joy of reading. Almost 2,000 residents access the monthly newsletter for ideas and inspiration.



The Imagination Library works in partnership with the Stronger Communities Team, speech and language therapists, the Health and Neo-Natal Ward, young parents, North Lincolnshire Homes, portage and the 2 year funding team **to ensure we are reaching our most vulnerable families.**



The **500,000 book** was delivered in April 2019. Research has shown how important it is for children to have books of their own and to revisit and share the stories regularly to develop **a love of reading.**



The **'Books for Life'** campaign was launched in February 2019 with events for children and their families to celebrate the books they receive with activities and storytelling.



The **Great North Lincolnshire Rhyme Challenge** - "great rhymers make great readers", in collaboration with the Book Trust, was launched in March 2018 as part of the Power of Words Festival.



Imagination Library Champions have been created in all localities - in children's centres, schools, early years providers, child-minders, mother and toddler groups, health visitors, midwives, library service and Rotary Club Members.... even the lady in the corner shop.

91%

of children under the age of 5 in North Lincolnshire are currently registered with the Imagination Library

674,198

books have been gifted since the launch in 2013

19,544

children registered since the launch of the Imagination library in 2013

7,367

children are currently registered with the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire

12,294

children have graduated from the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire since 2013

Page 171



Dollywood UK regularly ask us to share our Imagination Library journey. We are held as an exemplar of best practice, and in 2017 our Imagination Library was recognised as **the most successful of its kind in the world.**



The Imagination Library was launched as a pilot in North Lincolnshire in 2013, and has since been extended to 2021.



Page 172

North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library is the highest achieving UK programme since its launch in 2013 and is fully funded by the council.

Our own research into the impact of the Imagination Library shows the benefit that registering with the programme has on children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and beyond.

We are passionate about this scheme. It has provided a fantastic platform for literacy across our locality. The leaders of our council see this as an invaluable tool to promote a love of reading and learning.



Parents frequently comment about how lucky they feel that North Lincolnshire supports the Imagination Library programme. Comments include how much they value the way the book arrives addressed to the child making it feel a really positive and unique approach to valuing the joy of sharing books. They comment on the quality and variety of the books and how it motivates them to make reading part of the home routine.

In feedback parents tell us that they read more regularly with their children because they receive the books every month. They tell us that their children are excited to receive and share their books with them every month. Families tell us that the books bring their family together for quality time with many older siblings enjoying sharing the books with younger siblings.

Parents are very aware of the value and importance of sharing books with their children from a young age, in terms of future attainment, wellbeing and skills for life, this message continues to be reinforced by the work of the **North Lincolnshire Children's Literacy Trust and the Words Count Campaign.**

"The only thing more important than what we do for our children today is what we will do for them tomorrow. We are so fortunate to have the forward thinking folks at North Lincolnshire paving the way to teach us all how to best sustain our efforts for decades to come. I bet the Children's Literacy Trust will be going strong 100 years from now so I am making my plans to celebrate that milestone!"

- Dolly Parton



Children who first registered with the Imagination Library when it was launched in 2013 reached the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in 2016. Since 2016, we have collected and analysed data which clearly shows that **children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their unregistered counterparts each year.**



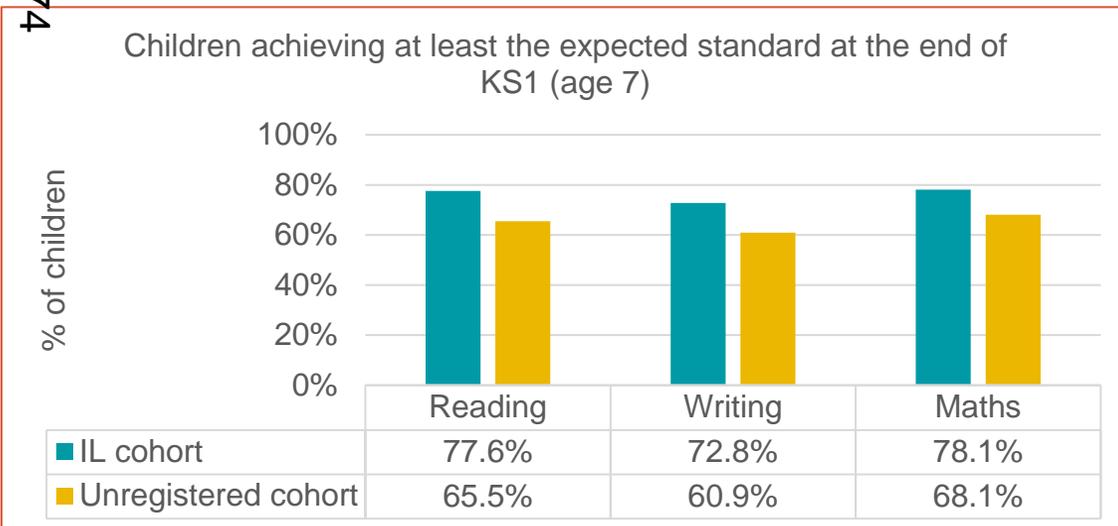
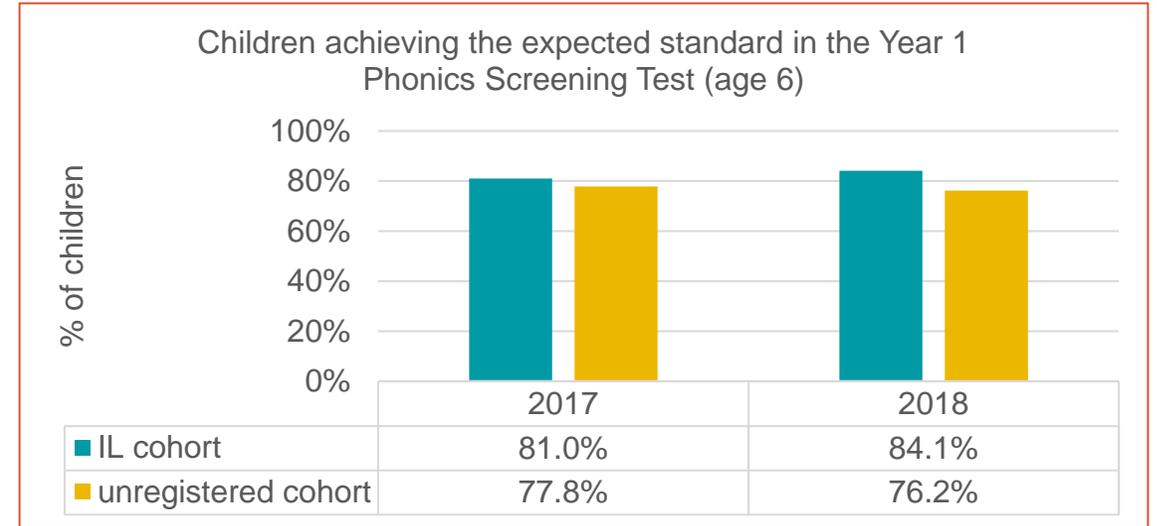
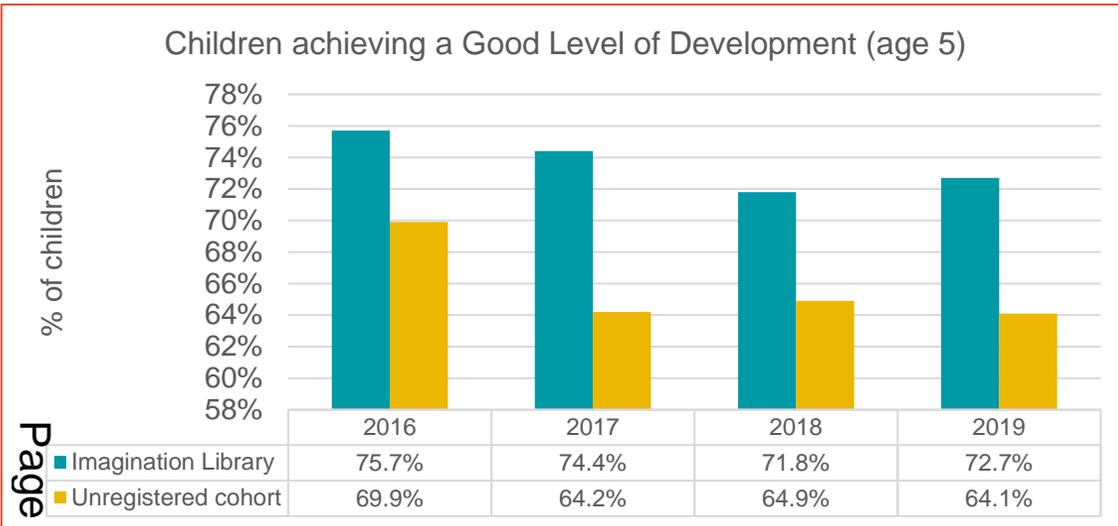
In North Lincolnshire the Imagination Library makes a real difference to our children who don't have the same opportunities as their peers, or are at risk of underachieving - most notably for summer born children (boys in particular), children with special educational needs and children who are not British.



The impact of the Imagination Library is not confined to the EYFS and continues to evidence itself on a child's journey throughout school. In 2017 and 2018 research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts in the end of Year 1 Phonics Screening Test. **The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each year.**



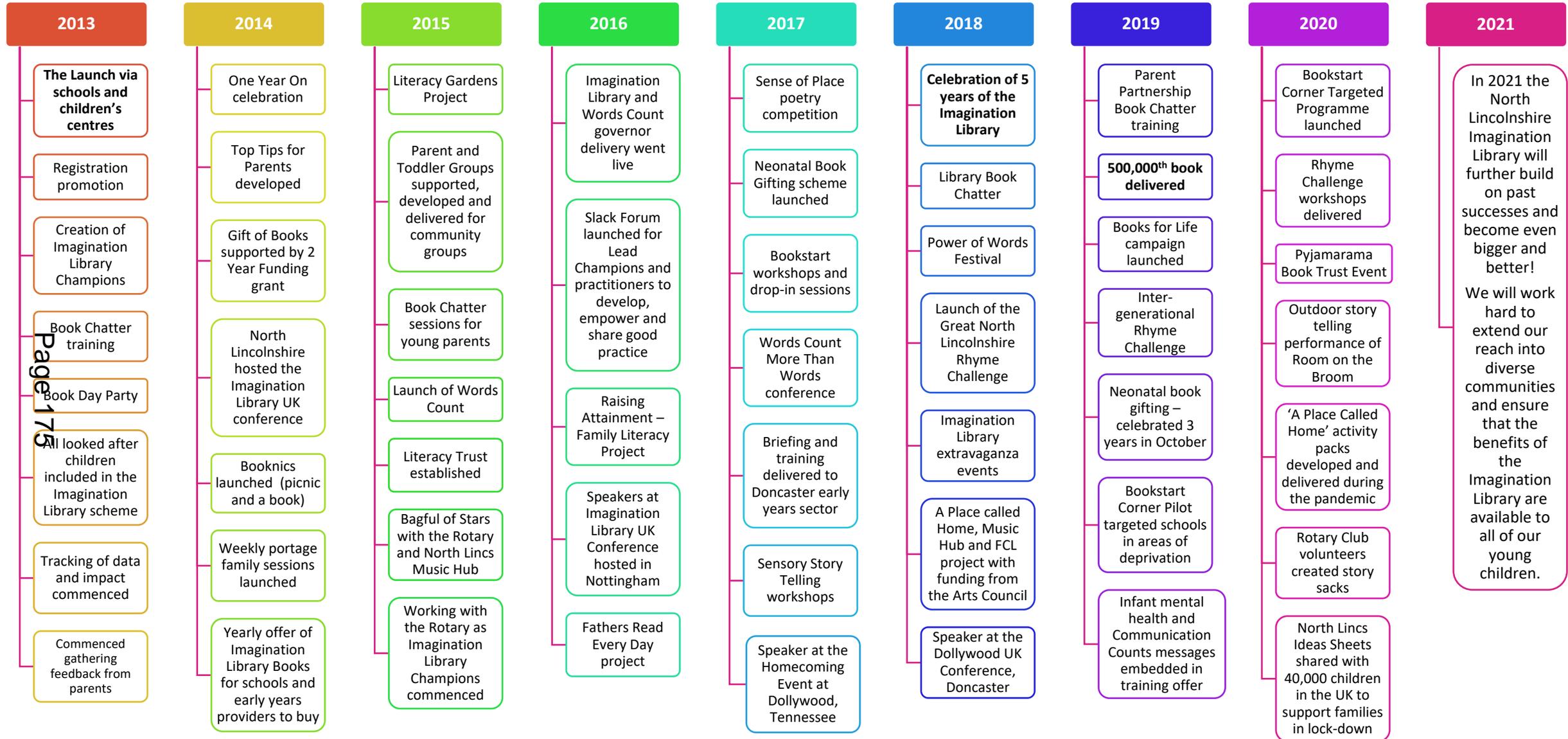
In 2019 further research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts at the end of Key Stage 1. **The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each subject area.**



Our research shows that **children registered with the Imagination Library achieve better outcomes than those children who are not registered** – at age 5, age 6 and at age 7.

The journey so far in North Lincolnshire

The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library



Page 175



2013: Launch of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire



2013: Book Day Party



2014: Booknics



2014: Top Tips for Parents



2015: Dolly and her parents



2015: Literacy Gardens Project



2016: Fathers Read Every Day (FRED) Project



2016: Raising Attainment Family Literacy Project



2017: Performance of Bagful of Stars



2018: Imagination Library UK Conference



2018: A Place Called Home



2018: the Great North Lincolnshire Rhyme Challenge



2019: Books gifted to Scunthorpe Hospital



2019: Teddy appears with Dolly Parton on the One Show



2019: Normanby workshops for the Early Years Sector



2019: Neo-natal Book Gifting



2019: Intergenerational Rhyme Challenge



2020: Story Sacks created by Rotary Club volunteers



2021: Launch of new Ideas Sheets

Why North Lincolnshire parents love the Imagination Library

North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library has been selected to help conduct research on parents'/carers' feelings about Imagination Library books and how they are used in their home. Research has been carried out by Caroline Zwierzchowska-Dod PhD researcher and supervised by Dr Janet Goodall from the School of Education, Swansea University.

"North Lincolnshire Council staff have been more than generous in giving their time to support this research project. We worked collaboratively to design a survey that met both my research needs and their interest in the impact of the Imagination Library program on families, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The project was supported by staff both in ensuring it complied with the Council's own policies and procedures and more widely in promoting the survey and finding families who were happy to take part and to be interviewed. I have been really pleased with the support received, most especially from colleagues in the Community & Family Engagement Participation & Achievement team."

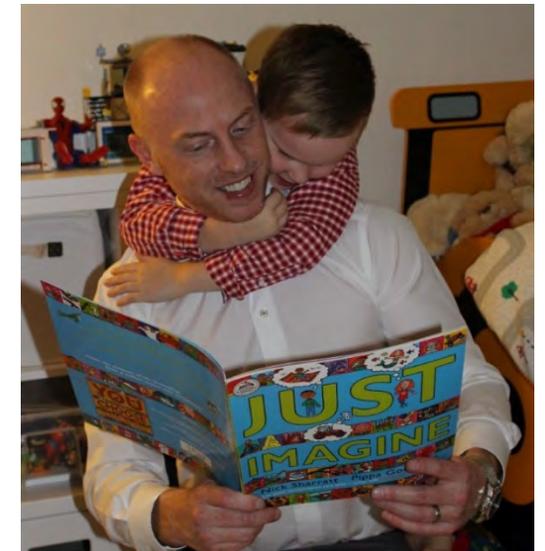
- Caroline Zwierzchowska-Dod

What is the purpose of the research?

Caroline is undertaking a PhD to examine parental engagement and the impact of the Imagination Library. The project aims to understand both the impact of shared reading experiences on children who receive books from Dolly Paton's Imagination Library and the impact on parental practices and beliefs around shared reading.

Why was North Lincolnshire chosen?

North Lincolnshire has a universal programme with over 91% of children under 5 signed up to receive the books, with more than 7,500 children receiving the books every month, so it was a great place for Caroline to undertake further in depth research following a huge early years survey earlier in 2020.



Parents praise 'fantastic' Imagination Library

Friday, 11th December 2020

The North Lincolnshire scheme is so successful it was selected to help carry out international research on Imagination Library books and how families use them. Parents were sent a comprehensive survey about the scheme, with a prize draw for taking part. There were more than 700 replies, with a massive percentage saying they looked forward to receiving the books, especially during lockdown, and that they helped them share special moments with their child.

Parents responded in their hundreds to praise North Lincolnshire Council's Imagination Library, which sends a book every month to every child under five across North Lincolnshire.

Abi and two-year-old AJ won a signed photograph of Dolly Parton. Abi said: "The books are fantastic! My little boy's nursery has commented on how imaginative he is and the way he is able to express himself. I am sure this is due to sharing so many great books with him. His favourite Imagination Library book is The Hungry Caterpillar."

Jen, with daughter Ava and son Toby, won a signed copy of Dolly Parton's book A Coat Of Many Colours.

Jen said: "I feel privileged to receive the books. My little boy talks about one book in particular he calls the Monster book and which he takes everywhere with him. He is only two, but I'm convinced his advanced development is partly down to his interest in the books, his attempt to copy the words I read out and act out the characters. It would be amazing if every child could experience such joy before they start school. Thank you so much to everyone who makes this scheme possible."

Cllr Rob Waltham, Leader of North Lincolnshire Council, said:

"This proves what we knew all along – the Imagination Library is a fantastic way of giving children a love of reading. I would encourage every parent of young children to sign up."



Feedback from the survey



“The book is addressed to my child, which is exciting and will become exciting for her as she grows up. The fact the book is free is amazing as it will promote a joy of reading - it's like a prize”



“It is amazing. Imagination library has helped us so much. We would struggle to afford the number of books we have received”



Page 179

“These books are absolute gems! Many of the books I would not have personally bought myself, but my child has treasured and LOVED every single one. It has reminded me of books I have grown up with, the classics as well as new books”



“We really enjoy receiving the books and can see it will be something my child will look forward to each month as she grows and becomes more aware. Receiving the books has given us a wider variety of different books, including books which promote diversity/culture which is highly beneficial and something which I will promote with my child as she grows”

“My son (4) loves us reading him books and looks forward to his new book arriving each month. Our daughter (18 months) would have us reading to her all day long especially if it has 'ammmm' (animals) in it. The books have been a great way to bond as a family and we often go on to buy more of a particular author after reading on from the imagination library”

“My twin girls absolutely adore receiving their books. They have one each so it means they can look at their own whilst we all read together. We read our imagination library books at least 5 times a day and we always look forward to the next one arriving. Huge thank you for putting on such a fabulous scheme and making it possible for us to have such a huge variety of books to choose from”

Receiving Imagination Library books during the Covid pandemic

Parents' Comments

“It has been a huge help receiving these books through the post. Due to the Covid isolation I always worried I don't be able to provide rich learning opportunities in terms of language development but the books have been a huge a help”

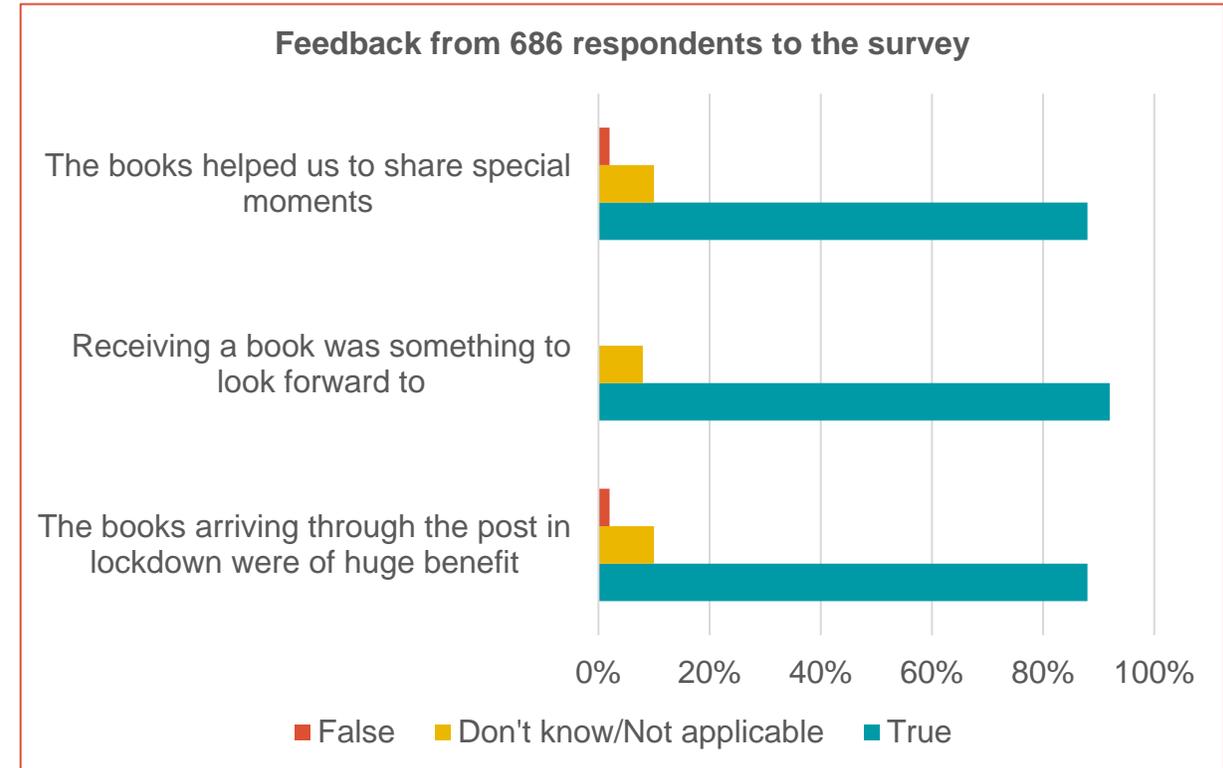
“Thank you so much. Especially in the current world, where going out has become difficult, having a new book each month means a

“I am high risk of Covid so I haven't been out much for leisure time so, receiving Dolly's Imagination Library books is something me and my daughter do together. I really do enjoy the cuddle and the 5 minutes of concentration the book gets out of my daughter, it's been a tremendous help to my young family so thank you so much 😊”

“I am extremely grateful for the book the scheme is amazing and has helped bring back an enjoyment to reading which otherwise wouldn't be there due to most things being electronic I find reading very therapeutic for myself and calming for my children”

Page 180

We explored the experience of receiving Imagination Library books during the Covid-19 pandemic



Three families were interviewed from the North Lincolnshire cohort of respondents.

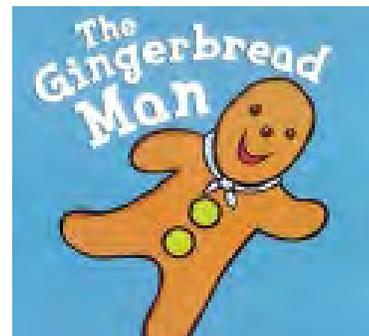
- **Michelle** is an independent parent in her early twenties and is white British. She is a mother of two children, a ten month old girl, and a boy of two years seven months.
- **Marie and Kim** are the mothers of one child who is 20 months old.
- **Joanna** is a Polish mother of three. Joanna’s interview was conducted via an interpreter.

When thinking about her reasons for reading with her children, Michelle described the important of family relationships, “I think it helps to create the bond between the child and the parents and also the siblings who are sharing the book.”

She described how she found that reading ‘relaxes them’ and that they read through the day but particularly as ‘down time’ before bed. Michelle said that both of her children enjoyed books and stories, and throughout the interview her son was bringing books to show, including his favourite ‘The Gingerbread Man’.

Michelle shared how he brings stories to her to read and will chose this instead of playing with his toys. Michelle specifically shares books with her daughter too, giving her a book alongside toys to choose from. “She sits in a chair and reads, it looks like she’s reading it properly.”

When asked about the role reading together plays in their family, Kim referred to their journey as a gay couple to have their son, “Because it’s a bit of a different situation, [our son] isn’t a child that you just have...it was very much ‘arranged’, so for me it’s a very content feeling and makes us feel like a real family unit, and it’s these little things like reading together and having meals together that make us feel more engaged and it feels like ‘the norm’ and acceptance.”

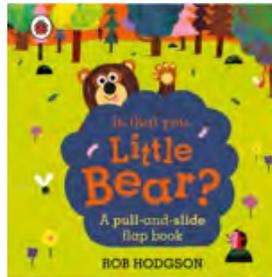


Joanna thought that the process of shared reading brings them together and that her daughter feels more loved because of it. Because of the closeness of the process her daughter feels more confident to gain new vocabulary and can translate what happens in the books into her real-life experiences.

When describing what happens when an Imagination Library book arrives, Marie described her own excitement as well as her son's. "I get very excited [laughs] 'IT'S NEW BOOK DAY!' [our son] runs on the spot like happy feet". When it is opened, "he sits down with me and we'll read it and then that book seems to be like his favourite until the next one comes."

Thinking about receiving the Imagination Library books, Michelle described how her son says 'book' most days when he hears the postman coming as he knows that he gets a book in the post each month. Her little girl doesn't yet understand about the postman but Michelle always opens them with the children and they read them straight away.

Michelle had noticed that her little boy is particularly drawn to colourful books and her little girl likes black and white pictures at the moment. She was very clear on her children's favourites and her son in particular was very enthusiastic about the books she held up to show, talking animatedly when Michelle showed the "When I Grow up...Builder" book.



When an Imagination Library book arrives, Joanne's children ask which one of them it is for and ask questions about what it is about. They always want to read it straight away.

When asked if the Imagination Library had made a difference to her family, Michelle said that "Books can be expensive at times," and noted that with two children receiving books "It helps to grow their book collection up a lot faster than what we would have been able to do." She felt that it "helped the family a lot" as well as being a "present for the children."

"It's really good to get free books... we're able to go out and buy things but some families can't afford to buy children new books each month." Marie said "It's like there's no excuse not to read."

When she chooses books for her children, Joanna looks for books that teach something, particularly those that teach positive social interactions and life skills. She likes books that, for example, teach children about animals and encourage them to make noises. Joanna is also influenced by colourful illustrations, particularly those that encourage children to retell their own stories.



During the spring lockdown North Lincolnshire Imagination Library gave Dollywood UK access to our online support sheets for parents. The materials were highly praised, and several authorities are now working with us to create a full range of support materials each month.

Imagination Library Ideas Sheets - North Lincolnshire Reaches Out

Dollywood Foundation UK shared the Ideas Sheets with 206 affiliate partners, covering nearly 40,000 children.

Of the affiliates, 62 send books to children in care, around 5500 children. Many of the Virtual Schools have emailed the Ideas Sheets out directly to foster carers to support the children, and who are especially grateful when resources are so stretched. One education officer said, "These are marvellous and I have emailed them out immediately, great timing as a foster carer was asking for resources only this morning! Delighted I had these to send out."

Of the large local authority programmes, West Berkshire Early Years team thought the resources were fabulous and a really great way of engaging with families. Small Steps Big Changes, delivering the Imagination Library in Nottingham, were delighted we had shared these and are making sure families can access them and are encouraged to use them with their children during this difficult time.

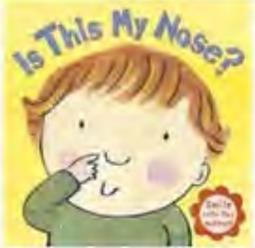


IMAGINATION LIBRARY
North Lincolnshire is working in partnership with the Dollywood Foundation

Group 1
Children Born in 2020



Is This My Nose?
Fun things to do!



Can you find your eyes, nose, mouth, ears and chin? This book encourages little ones to associate words and pictures with their own bodies. Look in a mirror to help them discover their own faces as you read aloud together.

Look in the Mirror Rhyme
Look in the mirror who do you see?
I see looking back at me.
Laughing, smiling and happy as can be.
Look in the mirror who do you see?
I see looking back at me.



Hold the mirror up to your child's face and ask, "Who's that baby?" Then say their name. Pull the mirror away and watch them. Do they smile? Wave their hands and feet? Do they reach out for the mirror? Comment on what they're telling you with their actions.
For more brain building tips visit NSPCC Look Say Sing Play
www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/look-say-sing-play/

How eye contact is key to your baby's language learning
Babies' vision is a bit different to adults' - they can't see things unless they're nice and close. But eye contact does play a key role in their learning.
By making eye contact with your baby and looking at the things they're interested in, you can help them make connections between your words and the world around them. For more information visit Tiny Happy People
www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/lets-talk-baby-talk-eye-contact-ytbsm39



Having a wiggle
Wiggles and wriggles are your baby's way of testing out their muscles and gaining coordination.
By naming the wiggly bits, you'll help them learn the words for different body parts too.



Action Songs are great for wiggle times.
Join in and sing along at the CBeebies Baby Club to the 'The Action Song'.
www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/the-baby-club-the-action-song



Making ten minutes a day to share books with your child will make a huge difference to their development

Words count

www.northlincs.gov.uk/imagination-library

North Lincolnshire Council
www.northlincs.gov.uk

GROUP 3 Born 2019
Book: March 2021

SSBC COMMUNITY FUND North Lincolnshire Council West Berkshire Council

THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR
by Eric Carle

This story is great for learning early counting skills.
Point to the food as you read the words and count along with the pictures.

one two three

Children love role play!
Get out some bowls, saucepans and spoons and let them be a chef. Can they make you a meal? Talk to them and join in with what they say.

Finger painting is great for having fun and getting messy.
You can also introduce new words like 'slippery' and 'sticky' and discuss the colours your child is using. Can they make a hand print butterfly?

1,2,3,4,5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive
1,2,3,4,5,
Once I caught a fish alive,
6,7,8,9,10
Then I let it go again,
Why did you let it go?
Because it bit my finger so.
Which finger did it bite?
This little finger on my right

Small Steps Big Changes - giving every child the best start in life

Page 184

Latest Development:

North Lincolnshire Council, West Berkshire and SSBC Nottingham are working in partnership to share their expertise and resources to develop the ideas sheets. The launch of the new ideas sheets took place in March 2021.

The ideas sheets continue to be mailed to all virtual schools by the Dollywood Foundation.

Marion Gillooly, Executive Director of The Dollywood Foundation UK said

'We are very grateful to our partners in North Lincolnshire Council for their generosity in sharing their ideas sheets. These informative, uplifting resources are packed full of hints, tips and suggestions for parents, which are much appreciated, particularly during this difficult time. We've had some fantastic feedback from families that demonstrates that the sheets have enriched the experience of sharing the Imagination Library books their children have received.'

"North Lincolnshire is delighted to work in partnership with SSBC Nottingham and West Berkshire Councils. The pulling together of resources and expertise is a fantastic way to support families and the home learning environment.

The ideas sheets contain simple activities, information, songs and rhymes to help parents and carers develop communication and language skills for their children birth to 5 yrs. These skills are vital for future learning, health and wellbeing."

- Councillor Rob Waltham, Leader of North Lincolnshire Council

“I think the books are a great service we read them all it also means when a child moves on from me home/adoption etc. they usually have a lovely set of books to go with them of stories they are familiar with which can help them settle especially at bed time.

Reading is something we start with the children from the day they are placed with us as most have speech delay and are unhappy, a cuddle with a book it is easier to accept then a cuddle from a stranger at first (we usually have under 3 year olds).

Some of the children have never been read to so soon they like the idea of their own books especially when I am using my budget to get essentials like clothes shoes etc. In short I think it is a fab and important service. A new book is a great way to remind me to read too”

- Foster Carer



“It has been amazing to receive books from Imagination Library every month through the post. All my children look forward to receiving books whether it's for them or not (two older girls don't get the books anymore). [My 3 and 4 year olds] love being read to and enjoy looking at the pictures. My only criticism is that children don't receive books after the age of five which is such a shame because we LOVE the books”.

- Anwara

“I took the books to our resource base yesterday and they will soon be ready to be distributed to the rest of the children (I delivered a selection of books to one family yesterday which brought a great smile face when the boy opened the door and found the bag on the door handle whilst I stood behind the gate). Some of our staff have already started sharing books virtually too. Can't thank you enough for your donations!”

- Ilona Szolc - Lead Teacher, Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service

Katie's Imagination Library Story

"We joined Imagination Library for Katie when she was born and very thankful we did.

It was very helpful, and gratefully received in the beginning - starting out as new parents you are never sure what to look out for or what is out there for your children. We loved sharing the books with Katie. When she was a baby we would sit together and look through the pictures and let her explore them herself. We would sit and read them to her and as she got older, she started to recognise the pages and remember the words relating to that page, she would flip through the pages and tell us the story before she could read!

We feel this really helped with her speech and language. At age 4 she was diagnosed as being on the Autism Spectrum and sometimes struggled with communicating certain things to us. We believe reading with her played a big role in her development. Katie is now 6 years old and still loves the Imagination Library books she has received; she has her favourites which she now reads to us brilliantly and very often she reads them to her Grandparents on video calls. It has enabled us to explore stories by different authors to find out what type Katie enjoys best, and we have purchased books for her by the same authors to continue her love of reading. I don't think we would have known about some of them if we were not part of the Imagination Library.

We would recommend any parent to register with the Imagination Library, it is an amazing scheme and a brilliant start for children on their reading journey!"

- Sarah, Katie's mum



What are we going to do next?

- Continue to work and engage with parents and carers to develop a shared understanding of the importance of reading and book ownership
- Continue to grow and deepen partnerships across North Lincolnshire to further extend the impact of the programme as part of lifelong learning, including library membership and supporting children's reading journey after they graduate by working through the Words Count programmes
- Ensure all our young children and families have equal access to the whole range of Imagination Library experiences from birth onwards
- Continue to promote the value and impact of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire with parents, carers, partners, settings and schools
- Use our knowledge and experience to promote and inform new programmes and activities for the benefit of our youngest children in North Lincolnshire
- Continue to listen to parents and carers to shape our North Lincolnshire Imagination Library offer
- Extend the reach and role of Community Champions for the Imagination Library, especially for families for whom English isn't the first language



www.northlincs.gov.uk/schools-libraries-and-learning/imagination-library/

Follow us:



@NorthLincsCNews



Northlincscouncil



@northlincolnshirecouncil



North Lincolnshire Council

Page 188

Useful links:

- [Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#)
- [Booktrust – tips on how to read with your child](#)
- [Hungry Little Minds – fun activities for you and your children](#)
- [Words for Life – fun stuff to do together](#)
- [Talking Point – information on children's communication](#)
- [BBC Tiny Happy People – here to help you develop your child's communication skills](#)
- Save the Children Research – [Read On. Get On](#), [Boost your baby or toddler's brain by playing this summer](#), [Too many boys in England fall behind before starting school](#)
- Literary Trust [Research Reports](#)
- Oxford University Press – [Help to Close the Word Gap](#)

