

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

COVID-19 UPDATE: OPERATIONS

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the progress responding to COVID-19 across Operations.
- 1.2 The response to date is set in the context of business continuity arrangements, legislation and national guidance and the COVID-19 mid-term recovery plan that was approved by Cabinet in December 2020.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The Council's approach to its business continuity response to the COVID-19 outbreak and actions taken to implement government guidance have been routed in the values, principles and ambitions of the council plan, the COVID-19 Mid-Term Recovery Plan and furthered through the strong partnerships within North Lincolnshire, framed under the following priorities:

- Keeping people safe and well
- Protecting vulnerable people
- Enabling communities to remain resilient
- Protecting the local economy

Whilst at the same time ensuring good governance and sound financial practice across the Council.

2.2 National advice and guidance has been incorporated into the local response as it has become available. The most recent national restrictions were announced on the 4 January 2021 and The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No. 3) and (All Tiers) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 came into force on the 6 January 2021.

2.3 The changing nature of COVID restrictions has required a flexible approach to switching between response and recovery and adapting as the situation changes. Teams across operations have demonstrated a willingness and

ability to work agilely and flexibly to ensure that where possible services and functions are sustained and to provide support to communities and minimising the impact of COVID-19.

2.4 Key headlines in operations functions response to COVID-19 include:

Keeping people safe and well

- 2.4.1 In line with government guidance office-based locations within the NLC portfolio remain closed with staff working from home where possible, with the exception of Church Square House which continues to operate with minimum occupancy levels for essential functions only. Staff who can work from home do so and have all been provided with the required equipment in order for them to do their job.
- 2.4.2 Operational buildings and services linked to service delivery such as highways, fleet, transport, waste services and the crematorium continue to operate in line with COVID secure guidelines. These are monitored by our facilities management team on a regular basis and building risk assessments being carried out.
- 2.4.3 In line with government guidance and restrictions our facilities management team maintain an overview of all council buildings and facilities, which includes regular safety checks on closed buildings and supporting the reopening of facilities when restrictions are lifted.
- 2.4.4 Covid prevention assistants have been recruited and deployed across North Lincolnshire to encourage compliance with government guidelines around social distancing, wearing face coverings etc
- 2.4.5 We have established a central Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) store where purchase, supply and distribution of PPE is coordinated from. This has enabled us to respond rapidly to any requests for PPE and to ensure that our staff have access to the right PPE to keep themselves and others safe. We also support the distribution of PPE to other settings including care homes and education establishments.

Protecting vulnerable people

- 2.4.6 Working in partnership we continue to provide accommodation for rough sleepers where possible.
- 2.4.7 Our transport services have continued through the pandemic adhering to the changing guidelines around transporting vulnerable children and also providing help to deliver essential services and supplies to vulnerable people. This has included the distribution of PPE and also community meals.
- 2.4.8 We continue to work with partners to ensure that council facilities are made available to support the rollout of community testing and vaccination programmes.

Enabling resilient communities

- 2.4.9 We continue to ensure our parks and open spaces remain open and safe for local residents to enjoy and access for their daily exercise. In addition, we have taken extra precautions in our town centres and urban spaces by installing signage and other safety measures to remind visitors to ensure social distancing, wear face coverings etc.
- 2.4.10 Through the pandemic our household recycling centres have remained open. This has enabled residents to continue to dispose of any excess waste appropriately.

Protect and enable the local economy

- 2.4.11 Through the pandemic commercial infrastructure programmes of work have continued wherever possible. This has included a number of highway improvement schemes, including measures to enhance active travel.
 - 2.4.12 .Our transport service works closely with bus operators to help them respond to the covid situation whilst keeping services operating to help people travel safely around the area.
 - 2.4.13 Our public protection team continue to support and advise businesses on their compliance obligations with enforcement actions only taken as a last resort. The team also play a critical role in working with businesses who have experienced a COVID-19 outbreak. This involves advice and assistance being provided in order to reduce the risk of any further transmission or outbreaks in order to help the business resume operations safely and as soon as possible.
- 2.5 Across the operations portfolio of services we continue to monitor guidance and legislation being published by government and apply as required in order to help suppress the virus and keep people safe and well.
 - 2.6 Business as usual is currently operating across all functions, with an agile and flexible approach being applied in order to be able to respond to any changes that arise. On occasions where staffing pressures have presented themselves, we have adopted a model of re-purposing staff to ensure critical services remain operational and in order to miminise service disruption.
 - 2.7 The safety and welfare of our workforce continues to be a priority. We have taken all appropriate measures to ensure our staff are able to operate in safe working environments and we undertake regular wellbeing assessments with staff and make adjustments as necessary.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Cabinet is invited to note the contents of this report.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 A continued focus on the priorities and actions set out in the mid-term recovery plan inform our plans and enable operations to maintain business continuity and support an effective local response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

- 5.1 Resources associated with the council's response to the COVID-19 and the delivery of the mid-term recovery plan continue to be monitored and managed. The impact of funding assumptions and financial sustainability are regularly reported to Cabinet.

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 COVID-19 has been adopted with mitigations being implemented as necessary in accordance with the legislative framework.

- 6.2 Any decisions taken are made in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegations.

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 our local response.

- 8.2 Staff are consulted on any changes implemented and regular meetings are held with recognised Trade Unions to keep them up to date and consult with them as appropriate.

- 8.3 There are no conflicts of interests associated with this report.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That cabinet note the response to COVID-19 as outlined in the report.

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - COMMERCIAL

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