

## **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

## **COVID-19: MID-TERM RECOVERY UPDATE**

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

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the Council's progress responding to COVID-19 as set out in the mid-term recovery plan.
- 1.2 Provide an overview of the national COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021 and Road Map which will inform actions within our Mid-term recovery plan.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In March 2020, the council was required to establish business continuity arrangements in order to respond to the COVID-19 global pandemic. As COVID-19 continues to be a significant issue the council continues its focus and operating environment on this, while concurrently planning for recovery and renewal.
- 2.2 In June 2020, the North Lincolnshire COVID-19 recovery and renewal framework was presented to Cabinet. Subsequent to this a mid-term recovery plan was approved by Cabinet in December 2020. Both of these have been framed around the priorities set out in the North Lincolnshire Council Plan and provide a framework for minimising and mitigating impact from COVID-19 across North Lincolnshire.
- 2.3 Our priorities for mid-term recovery are:
  - Keep people safe and well,
  - Protect vulnerable people,
  - Enable communities to be resilient,
  - Protect and enable the local economy,
  - Well led council.
- 2.4 Appendix 1 provides an update against the mid-term recovery plan. Since the last report to Cabinet key highlights include:
  - We have enabled eligible staff to access the vaccination under the Priority 1 and 2

- We continue to work in partnership with health colleagues on the successful roll-out of the national vaccination programme
- We have extended our support offer to residents identified as clinically extremely vulnerable
- There are over 200 trusted community voices active as community champions
- We have provided financial support to around 2,000 families with children as part of the Winter Fund scheme
- We maintained a health and wellbeing offer to residents
- We set a balanced budget for 2021/22

2.5 The local response to COVID-19 is set within a range of legislative regulations that have been introduced. The two key ones being the Coronavirus Act 2020 and Health Protection (England) Regulations 2020. Government guidance and new regulations continue to be issued which are applied to council operational and strategic response as relevant.

2.6 The Cabinet Office published the COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021 on 22 February 2021 which sets out the roadmap for easing of restrictions in England. This report provides the key points from the national plan (Appendix 2).

2.7 The national plan confirms that we will need to continue to work with health protection at the heart of the organisation. As place leader the Council will maintain attention on living with and mitigating the risk of COVID-19. The COVID-19 Response sets 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.
- **Test 4:** The assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

2.8 There is a clear role for local authorities in achieving a successful easing of national restrictions and the steps outlined in the Road Map provide a frame for the Council's emergence from the pandemic and reopening and return to some level of normality. These are consistent with our priorities and actions within the mid-term recovery plan which will 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)
- Long Term (Transition from pandemic to epidemic, Living with COVID)

and Resilience for future pandemics)

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

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

- 3.1 Cabinet is invited to note the contents of this report and support the continued delivery of priority actions.

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

- 4.1 A continued focus on the priorities and actions set out in the mid-term recovery plan enable the council to provide an effective local response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.2 The national COVID-19 Response and associated Roadmap provide specific milestones for the local re-open planning for council activity and functions. As in our previous response to easing of restrictions, all information about opening of facilities will be communicated with relevant stakeholder and updates provided through the council's website and media channels.
- 4.3 The COVID-19 Response will be used to inform the strategic plans for the Council and update provided at the next Cabinet meeting.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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, recovery and renewal.

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

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That cabinet note the content of the report and support the continued delivery of priority actions.

**DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS**

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Date: 8 March 2021

## Cabinet Office: COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021: Summary of Key Points

### Objectives (of plans):

- a. To restore freedoms sustainably, equitably and as quickly as possible without putting unsustainable pressure on the NHS, and avoiding a further lockdown. The Government will take a gradual and cautious approach to reopening in England, guided by science and the data, with resuming face-to-face teaching in schools the priority.
- b. To deploy the vaccine as quickly as possible to maximise protections as restrictions are eased. The more quickly people are vaccinated, the lower their risk of developing the kind of serious infection that requires hospital treatment and may lead to death.
- c. To protect the public and the NHS by having effective long-term contingency plans. The Government will ensure it has the tools to manage local outbreaks, as well as the means quickly and effectively to combat dangerous new Variants of Concern, both domestically and at the border, in close partnership with the Devolved Administrations.
- d. To plan and deliver a national recovery. As the country recovers from the crisis, the Government is committed to building back better, supporting the key public services on which citizens and businesses depend, and working with global partners as the disease moves from a pandemic to an endemic state.

### Roadmap

The roadmap is a step-by-step plan to ease restrictions in England cautiously, starting with schools and colleges. Restrictions will be eased at the same time across the whole of England. Decisions on easing restrictions will be led by data rather than dates. There will be at least five weeks between the steps in the roadmap (based upon having sufficient time to analyse impact of lifting restrictions and to allow a weeks notice of changes). The indicative, 'no earlier than' dates in the roadmap are all contingent on the data and subject to change. Returning face-to-face education in schools and colleges is a national priority. Outdoor activity has been prioritised because the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission is substantially lower in the open air than indoors.

Before taking each step, the Government will review the latest data on the impact of the previous step against **four tests**. The tests are:

- **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.
- **Test 4:** The assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

**Step 1:** 8 March

- Schools and colleges are open for all students. Practical Higher Education Courses.
- Recreation or exercise outdoors with household or one other person. No household mixing indoors.
- Wraparound childcare.
- Stay at home.
- Funerals (30), wakes and weddings (6)

## **29 March**

- Rule of 6 or two households outdoors. No household mixing indoors.
- Outdoor sport and leisure facilities.
- Organised outdoor sport allowed (children and adults).
- Minimise travel. No holidays.
- Outdoor parent & child groups (up to 15 parents).

## **Step 2: At least five weeks after Step 1, no earlier than 12 April.**

- Indoor leisure (including gyms) open for use individually or within household groups.
- Rule of 6 or two households outdoors. No household mixing indoors.
- Outdoor attractions such as zoos, theme parks and drive-in cinemas.
- Libraries and community centres.
- Personal care premises.
- All retail.
- Outdoor hospitality.
- All children's activities, indoor parent & child groups (up to 15 parents).
- Domestic overnight stays (household only).
- Self-contained accommodation (household only).
- Funerals (30), wakes, weddings and receptions (15).
- Minimise travel. No international holidays.
- Event pilots begin.

## **Step 3: At least five weeks after Step 2, no earlier than 17 May.**

- Indoor entertainment and attractions.
- 30 person limit outdoors. Rule of 6 or two households (subject to review).
- Domestic overnight stays.
- Organised indoor adult sport.
- Most significant life events (30).
- Remaining outdoor entertainment (including performances).

- Remaining accommodation.
- Some large events (expect for pilots) - capacity limits apply.
  - Indoor events: 1,000 or 50%.
  - Outdoor other events: 4,000 or 50%.
  - Outdoor seated events: 10,000 or 25%.
- International travel - subject to review.

**Step 4:** At least five weeks after Step 3, **no earlier than 21 June.**

By Step 4, the Government hopes to be able to introduce the following (subject to review):

- No legal limits on social contact
- Nightclubs.
- Larger events.
- No legal limit on life events.

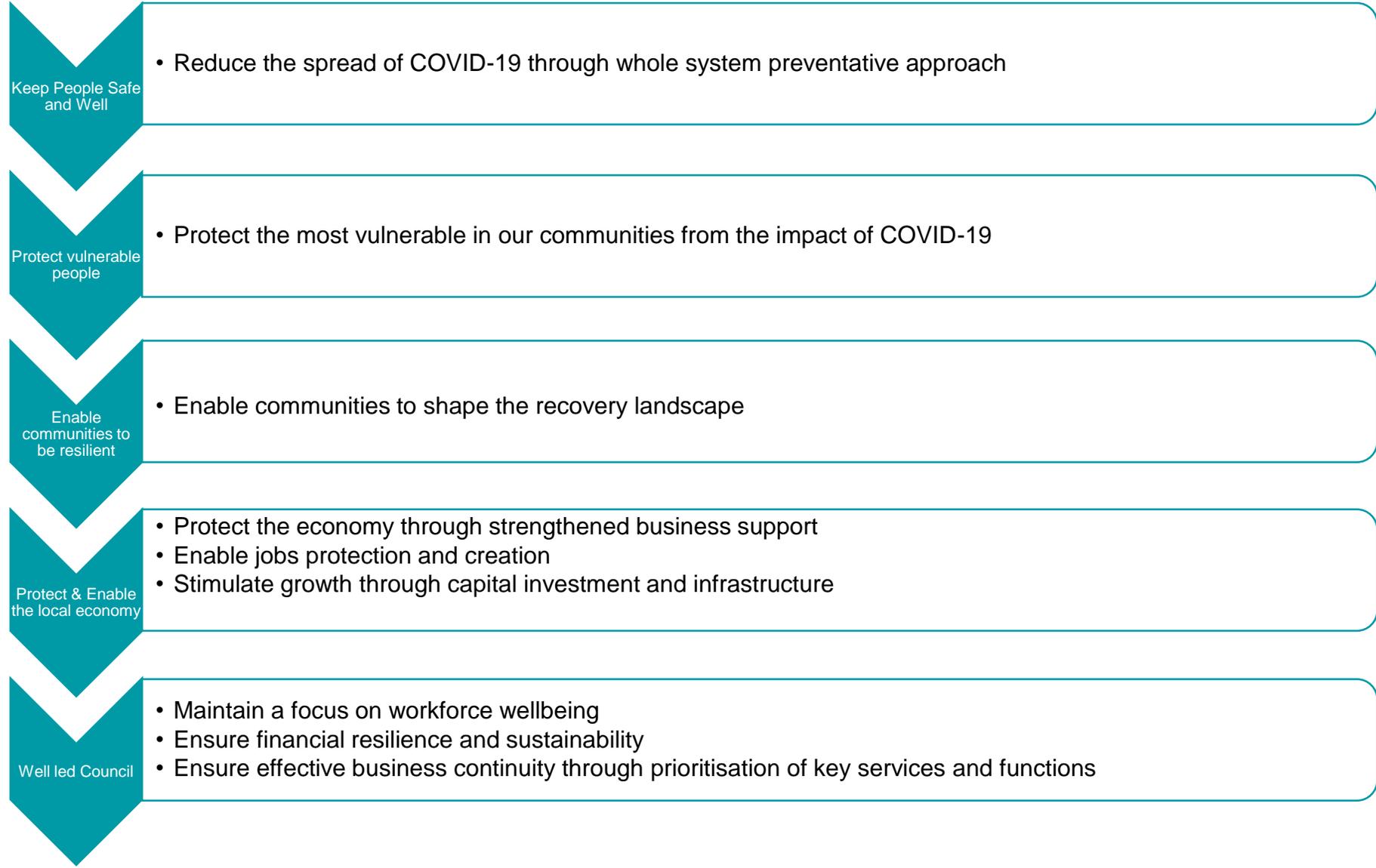
# NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COVID-19 MID-TERM RECOVERY PLAN

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS (March 2021)

**North  
Lincolnshire  
Council**

[www.northlincs.gov.uk](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk)

Enhance digital technologies in order to deliver our council priorities



Value added through partnerships

- In response to the increasing transmission rates the government introduced National Restrictions on 4 January 2021, necessitating response and recovery to operate simultaneously. Our approach is rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the council plan and our response focuses on key priorities to ensure the Council remains resilient throughout the crisis and sustained through the recovery and renewal.
- 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 work with businesses to drive economic recovery and growth and worked in partnership with NHS to enable the successful commencement of the vaccination programme to the priority groups.

Priority	Overview of progress
<p>Keeping People Safe and Well: <b>Reduce the spread</b></p>	<p><b>Safe working practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued to operate working from home arrangements and limited access to office environments. Risk assessments kept under review and updated according to any change in operational procedures or in use of buildings, including use of PPE for those working in the community and in people’s homes.</li> <li>• In line with national guidance eligible roles within the workforce have been offered and accessed the COVID-19 vaccination and targeted use of lateral flow testing for specific roles has also been introduced as a preventative measure to minimise the risk of transmission from a-symptomatic people.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outbreak management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and prevention outbreaks continues to be a priority focus area and progress is reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board on a monthly basis. The schools, care homes and high risk business have responded well to identification, control and mitigation of outbreaks across the settings. Learning and best practice continues to be shared across sectors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Safe places and enforcement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covid prevention assistants continue to undertake proactive work on an intelligence led basis to ensure communities are safe through visits and attendance at venues and places throughout North Lincolnshire.</li> <li>• Public protection team continue to undertake assessments and enforce regulations as appropriate, in close partnership working with Humberside Police.</li> </ul> <p><b>Test, Trace, Self-Isolate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have provided information advice and guidance for eligible organisations to access the national schemes for lateral flow testing, including providing community testing facilities for specified cohorts, including early years providers, taxi and bus drivers, police and fire and rescue.</li> <li>• The local testing site for residents with symptoms continues to operate from Centenary Way. This site is also designated as collection site for home testing kits for school aged families.</li> <li>• Local contact tracing arrangements are in place and are operating well with a contact rate of circa 96%</li> <li>• Financial support to help eligible people to self-isolate continues to be paid and the scheme has been extended to the summer.</li> </ul>

Priority	Overview of progress
Protect vulnerable people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NHS COVID-19 Vaccination programme has been prioritised to protect those most at risk from the infection in terms of risk of infection, severity of illness and hospitalisation or morbidity. We have continued to work in partnership with the NHS to ensure effective deployment through each cohort. North Lincolnshire achieved the mid-February national target for the priority 1-4 cohorts and roll out continues for the priority 5-9 cohorts.</li> <li>• Worked in partnership with health colleagues on the successful roll-out of the national vaccination programme.</li> <li>• In response to the national extension of the criteria for people deemed clinically extremely vulnerable, our local offer was made available to c4,000 more residents, over 11,000 in total. Working through communities to provide support for basic needs.</li> <li>• Where possible rough sleepers continue to be offered temporary accommodation – we have entered into a partnership with Ongo for 6 units with support which are now occupied. In addition, funding has been secured in partnership with Framework for 6 empty homes to be brought back into use for step down accommodation which is currently in development.</li> <li>• In light of national restrictions being introduced a renewed focus on wider vulnerable groups and communities has been initiated, with a particular focus on encouraging communities to look out for and support one another.</li> <li>• The Winter Grant continues to be rolled out: Free school meal vouchers were supplied to eligible families for the half term holidays and financial support has been provided for around 2,000 vulnerable households and families with children to date, with the majority of requests being for white goods, followed by food and utilities. The Winter Grant is now extended to 16 April 2021 therefore we will provide free school meal vouchers for the Easter holidays. Work has commenced to maximize opportunities through the Holiday Activities and Food programme, which will be a largely home-based offer for Easter due to national restrictions.</li> <li>• Needs of vulnerable children and adults identified, risk assessed and met</li> </ul>
Enable resilient communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are over 200 ‘trusted’ community voices active as North Lincolnshire community champions who are enhancing the understanding of public health messages within communities as the pandemic develops. Community Champions receive up to date information regarding Covid-19 on a weekly basis, along with ideas on how to support people within their communities who may be more vulnerable at this time. In return, Community Champions inform the council about what is working and what more might be done to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Many examples of strong engagement within our ethnically diverse communities.</li> <li>• New community hub facilities completed for Crowle, Brigg and Ashby.</li> </ul>

Priority	Overview of progress
Protect the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The local/national restrictions grants have been paid to around 1,300 eligible business including the new national restrictions grant. As at 12/3/21 6,965 grant payments have been made totalling £13.7m since November 2020.</li> <li>• The application system is being updated in readiness for the new restart grant available from April.</li> <li>• A further discretionary grant scheme has been developed to support local economic recovery</li> <li>• Newsletters and hosted Webinars to share learning from managing outbreaks continue alongside provision of information advice and guidance regarding COVID-19 support schemes such as Jobs Retention Scheme</li> <li>• Kick start scheme programme bid has been approved and as the broker we have 100 businesses signed up to provide 6 month work placements for 16-24 year olds.</li> <li>• Local economy projects have continued to timescales such as the Northern Roundabout and the Urban Park which work is progressing well.</li> </ul>
Well led council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council set a balanced budget for 2021/22 and has managed the response to the pandemic within the resources allocated.</li> <li>• The council continues to prioritise business as usual of its operations and responds and adapts flexibly to overcome any pressures and issues as they arise. The vast majority of council services and functions continue to be provided with limited disruption and where national restrictions have been applied, a range of on-line mechanisms have been made available to enable residents' wellbeing, from audio borrow books to virtual Adult Education tuition.</li> <li>• In response to the national Roadmap preparations have commenced for the re-opening of facilities and activities, prioritising aspects that contribute towards public health and wellbeing, while balancing competing demands for workforce deployment</li> <li>• Regular updates have been provided to the workforce in respect of COVID-19 through bulletins and webinars.</li> <li>• The council has maintained robust governance arrangements and decision making continues to operate virtually for all executive and non-executive functions, including Full Council, Planning Committee and Licensing Committee for example.</li> </ul>