

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