

**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:

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

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

- 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"> <li>▪ Continue to work hard to keep people safe</li> <li>▪ Lead partnership working across North Lincolnshire to promote wellbeing and improve health outcomes for everyone</li> <li>▪ Prioritise the most vulnerable</li> <li>▪ Provide cleaner and greener space for people to enjoy and use</li> <li>▪ Reduce the spread of COVID-19</li> <li>▪ Protect the most vulnerable in our communities from the impact of COVID-19</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Enabled children to live safely in their own families and communities</li> <li>✓ More adults in need of care and support are supported in their own homes increasing their independence into the future</li> <li>✓ Worked with partners to enable vulnerable children to attend school through the pandemic</li> <li>✓ 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</li> <li>✓ 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.</li> <li>✓ Maintained and improved our open spaces and parks to support well-being of residents</li> <li>✓ Promoted physical activity, culture, heritage and learning to support people to stay safe and well</li> <li>✓ Worked closely with partners to enable residents in North Lincolnshire to access vaccines, mobilising covid secure vaccine centres and lateral flow test centres</li> <li>✓ 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</li> </ul>

**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**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support people in their wellbeing through trusted sources of information, advice and guidance</li> <li>▪ Enable our residents to become involved in community life</li> <li>▪ Engage in new conversations about the things that matter most to you</li> <li>▪ Work in partnership with voluntary and community groups and organisations</li> <li>▪ Work in partnership with voluntary and community groups and organisations</li> <li>▪ Enable communities to shape the recovery landscape</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 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</li> <li>✓ 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</li> <li>✓ 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.</li> <li>✓ Enhanced community networks around the six community hubs</li> <li>✓ Provided support to help people get online and improve their digital skills</li> <li>✓ 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.</li> <li>✓ 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</li> </ul> |
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**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"> <li>▪ Market North Lincolnshire as a place to live, work, visit and invest,</li> <li>▪ Lead partnership working with businesses to attract high skilled jobs</li> <li>▪ Invest in town centres including securing funding from government</li> <li>▪ Provide space for businesses and population to grow through new commercial and housing developments</li> <li>▪ Strive for higher education standards and skills</li> <li>▪ Protect the economy through strengthened business support</li> <li>▪ Enable jobs protection and creation</li> <li>▪ Stimulate growth through capital investment and infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Successfully delivered a range of new infrastructure projects, including the northern roundabout</li> <li>✓ Continued to support local businesses to thrive, diversify and grow their market share</li> <li>✓ Improved the quality of the housing offer in North Lincolnshire and exceeded targets for new homes growth</li> <li>✓ Enabled and supported residents to gain higher level qualifications</li> <li>✓ 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</li> <li>✓ Enhanced our engagement and communications with business enabling them to continue to operate compliant to COVID-19 requirements.</li> <li>✓ Co-ordinated over £5m of grant payments to support the care sector through the Covid-19 pandemic</li> <li>✓ 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</li> <li>✓ Responded to government guidance to ensure faster payments to our suppliers to mitigate against business disruption</li> </ul>

## 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.

<b>Taking Action - We said we will:</b>	<b>Overview of progress</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain a focus on workforce wellbeing</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Updated our HR policies and risk assessment and enabled access to PPE as specified in national guidance</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure financial resilience and sustainability</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 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</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure effective business continuity through prioritisation of key services and functions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Risk assessed and adapted our workspaces and public building to be COVID-19 secure certified.</li> <li>✓ 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.</li> <li>✓ Council services were able to continue operating virtually, through several new IT solutions including MS Teams, being deployed.</li> <li>✓ 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</li> </ul> |

**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

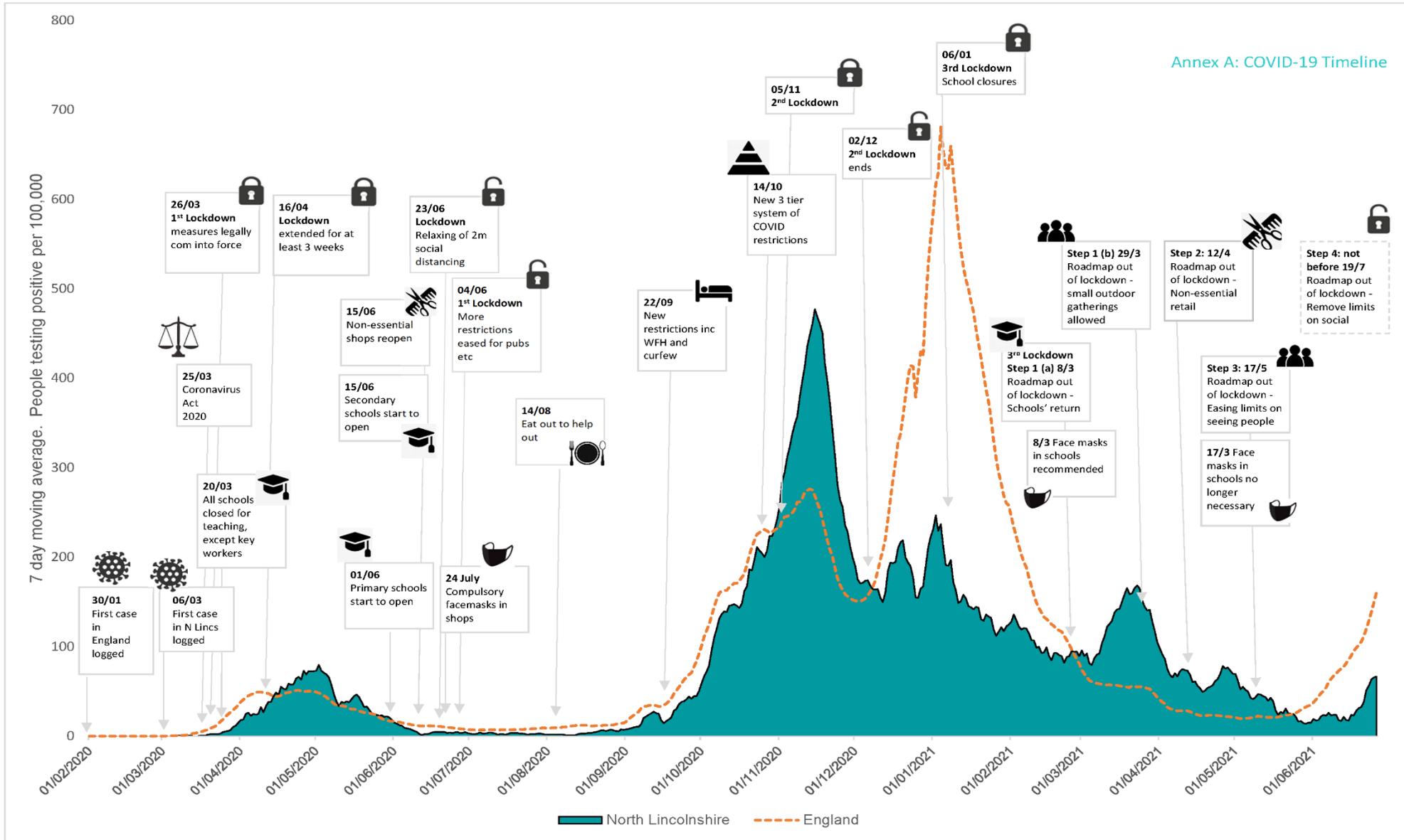
- ✓ Launched the libraries app allowing contactless issue and return of library materials, and universal access to library e-resources. Usage has increased by 200% for books and by 130% for e-newspaper and magazine services.
- ✓ Developed a virtual Hub providing support and advice to the local armed 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**